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'ARCHAIC THOUGHT' IN HESIOD

IT is 'commonly asserted', says G. S. Kirk,[1] and 'almost universally assumed', that Hesiod came 'at the point of transition from mythopoeic to rational modes of thought'.[2] H. Diller gives this 'common assertion' a more precise meaning: Hesiod represents 'a bridge from mythical to *philosophical* thought (my emphasis).[3] This view of Hesiod is justified in various different ways. Diller himself stresses the contrast Hesiod makes in the prooemion to the *Theogony* between what is true and what is false but resembles the true; this he interprets as the type of self-conscious rejection of rival accounts which is echoed in the work of the earlier Presocratics like Heraclitus. For O. Gigon this passage in the *Theogony* has a specific reference to Homer: Hesiodic 'truth' is there opposed to Homeric myth, Logos to Mythos.[4] The *Theogony* is also philosophical both in so far as it is concerned with a search for beginnings, and because of the universality of its scope.[5] In addition to these formal features, both Diller and Gigon find philosophical elements in the content of the poem, though on this point their conclusions differ sharply. Diller attributes to Hesiod himself that discovery which is often regarded as one of the main contributions of the Presocratics: the discovery that the world operates in accordance with impersonal laws. Gigon, by contrast, suggests that things in the Hesiodic world are seen as products of will, analogous to the products of human activity.[6] Nevertheless in so far as the genealogies present the world as an ordered whole, they look forward to the idea of natural law; and there are—so Gigon argues—other important points of contact between Hesiod's 'cosmogony' and the cosmogonies of the Presocratics. Indeed Gigon goes so far as to claim that it is Hesiod, rather than Thales, who should be given the title of first philosopher.[7] H. Fränkel similarly asserts that 'the history of Greek philosophy as literature begins not with Anaximander but with Hesiod',[8] though as yet philosophy is not 'separated from myth': we must dig deep for his ideas beneath the mythical narratives. So for example *Th.* 736 ff., on Tartarus, embodies 'profound ontological speculations', which 'Hesiod could not have grasped and expressed in open, uncoded, conceptual language'.[9]

Thus if 'mythopoeic', or 'mythical' thought is a 'chimera', as Kirk suggests,[10] we can at least give some substance to the concept of 'rational' thought, and to the notion that Hesiod comes 'at the point of transition' to it: he does so just in so far as the roots of philosophy (or science)[11] can be traced in his poems. At least one scholar, T. Rosenmeyer, also sees him as having links with that other strand in the Greek 'rational' (or perhaps better 'rationalist') tradition, history: in Rosenmeyer's view, what Hesiod does in the passage on the Five Races of Man in the *Works and Days* is in principle history in the same sense in which Thucydides does history.[12] This view is initially rather less plausible than the others, but it is similar to them in type, and should perhaps

[1] *Myth: Its Meaning and Functions in Ancient and Other Cultures* (Cambridge/Berkeley/L.A. 1970) 238.

[2] Earlier versions of this paper were read to audiences at University College London, The Hellenic Center, Washington, D.C., Boston University, and Vanderbilt University. I am grateful for criticisms and comments made on these occasions, and for helpful points made by Dr G. E. R. Lloyd.

[3] 'Hesiod und die Anfänge der griechischen Philosophie', *A&A* ii (1946) (repr. in *Hesiod*, Wege der Forschung xliv, ed. E. Heitsch [Darmstadt 1966]) 151: 'eine Brücke vom mythischen zum philosophischen Denken'.

[4] *Der Ursprung der griechischen Philosophie* (Basel 1945) 14.

[5] Gigon (n. 4) 22 ff.

[6] Gigon (n. 4) 40.

[7] Gigon (n. 4) 13.

[8] *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy* (Oxford 1975) (trans. of *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*[2] [München 1962]) Index A, 515.

[9] Fränkel (n. 8) 105 ff.

[10] *The Nature of Greek Myths* (Harmondsworth 1974) 276 ff.

[11] I.e. of 'Presocratic' thought, which may be classified as either—or as both: so G. E. R. Lloyd, for example, in *Early Greek Science: Thales to Aristotle* (London 1970) labels the Presocratics generally as 'philosopher-scientists'. The interest of many Presocratics in cosmogony and cosmology, and in the idea of natural law, may in fact appear to link them more closely with the development of science; on the other hand, on any account they stand at (or near) the beginnings of Greek 'philosophy', which typically includes both types of activity in some sense.

[12] 'Hesiod and historiography', *Hermes* lxxxv (1975) 257–85.

be considered along with them. It is the purpose of the present paper to establish whether the picture which such interpretations paint of Hesiod, as a 'transitional' figure in the development of Greek thought, can ultimately stand. My argument will be that there is at least one central feature of Hesiodic thought which makes it necessary to *distinguish* his activity from those of the philosopher, the scientist and the historian alike. At the same time, I shall argue that his thought should not therefore be classified as 'irrational', or 'pre-rational', or 'archaic' in any but a strictly chronological sense.[13] One does not, after all, have to do philosophy, science, or history to count as rational; nor did the rise of these forms of inquiry cause the extinction of the species of non-philosophers, non-scientists and non-historians.[14]

The feature of Hesiodic thought to which I refer is conveniently, if somewhat crudely,[15] described by Fränkel. 'The archaic mode of thought does not deal with an object once and for all, thereafter simply discarding it; rather, its habit is to circle around its object, in order to inspect it ever afresh from changing viewpoints. This applies to Hesiod's *Theogony* in details and as a whole.' It also applies to *Works and Days*.[16] Whether or not the 'mode of thought' Fränkel describes is characteristic of the 'archaic' mind in general,[17] it is certainly characteristic of Hesiod's mind: as we shall see, just such a 'circling around' a subject occurs in numerous contexts, both large and small, in both poems. G. E. R. Lloyd refers to what appears to be the same phenomenon in Homer, where for example Sleep is described both as the 'all-tamer', brother of Death, as 'poured over' a person, and as 'wrapping him round' and 'binding' him.[18] Lloyd also refers us to parallels in ancient Egyptian religious thought.[19] One of his sources is H. Frankfort, who says of the Egyptian that 'his mind tended towards the concrete; his language depended upon concrete images and therefore expressed the irrational, not by qualifying modifications of a principal notion, but *by admitting the validity of several avenues of approach at one and the same time*' (my emphasis).[20] Frankfort suggests that this habit of thought is 'pre-Greek',[21] by which,

[13] Such labels are now perhaps more freely used by classicists than by anthropologists, many of whom reject the idea of a 'primitive mentality', although according to C. R. Hallpike, *Foundations of Primitive Thought* (Oxford 1979), their grounds for doing so are questionable (I owe this reference to Dr Lloyd). We need not, fortunately, venture further into these murky waters here. However much we may be impressed by the new beginnings made by Greek thought in the sixth century and after, it is ultimately unhelpful to interpret these in terms of simple oppositions, which tend to obscure the fundamental *similarities* which on any analysis still remain between the worlds of Homer and Hesiod and of later generations of Greeks. Neither is in any case 'primitive' in any clear sense: if the differences between them tempt us into saying that the Homeric and Hesiodic world is '*more* primitive', that will already tie us to a particular hypothesis about the general development of human thought which may or may not be fruitful in other contexts, but which is of doubtful usefulness for the analysis of changes in a single culture over the space of two or three centuries.

[14] Because of his date, and because the first 'philosophers' in a number of ways clearly look back to him (not least in their interest in origins), it is natural to regard Hesiod as their precursor. But we need to be sure in making this inference that his concerns are really comparable with theirs. I shall provide reasons for thinking that they are not. On the general relation between science and other types of activity after the sixth century, see now G. E. R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge 1979).

[15] I say 'crudely', because I shall want to distinguish between different varieties of the feature in question: see below, esp. pp. 130–3.

[16] Fränkel (n. 8) 105.

[17] That it may be, but it is not restricted to the archaic period. With the example which prefaces the passage cited from Fränkel (*Th.* 758 ff., where 'the same things appear in several distinct pictures: death as death, as the realm of Hades, and as a dog'), we may directly compare e.g. Eur. *Ba.* 274 ff., in which Teiresias identifies Dionysus simultaneously as the discoverer of wine, and as wine itself. W. K. C. Guthrie, *History of Greek Philosophy* iii (Cambridge 1969) 241, uses this passage to illustrate 'how easily *the Greek mind* could slip from the idea of a substance as embodying a living god to that of the god as its inventor or discoverer' (my emphasis). This is precisely the same type of 'inconsistency' as Fränkel finds in the context in the *Theogony*.

[18] *Polarity and Analogy* (Cambridge 1966) 202: references to *Il.* xxiv 4 f., xvi 672, xiv 164 f.; *Od.* xxiii 16 f.

[19] His favourite example, used also in *Early Greek Science* (n. 11) 11–12, is the Egyptian view of the sky either as supported on posts, or as held up by a god, or as resting on walls, or as a cow, or as a goddess, with her arms and feet on the earth. These ideas were evidently not alternative, since 'in a single picture [the Egyptian] might show two different supports for the sky: the goddess whose arms and feet reach the earth, and the god who holds up the sky-goddess' (quoted from J. A. Wilson, in H. and H. A. Frankfort, J. A. Wilson, T. Jakobsen, *Before Philosophy*[2] [Harmondsworth 1949] 53 f.).

[20] *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago 1948) 42.

[21] Frankfort (n. 20) 61.

presumably, he means pre-philosophical, pre-rationalistic. It is certainly in principle *non*-rationalistic. Philosophy must systematise, as must science and history: no one of them can leave different descriptions or explanations of the same thing standing side by side, but must relate them to each other, and if they are in the end incompatible, must choose between them, and say which is the better, the more plausible, the truer—or at least explore the possibility of doing so.[22] If, then, it is indeed the same type of feature which Fränkel is describing in Hesiod, and if it permeates the poems to the extent that he suggests, we shall have a good case for denying Hesiod to be even an embryonic philosopher, scientist, or historian.[23] (*Th.* 27–8 will not in itself constitute an objection to such a conclusion: there are many different kinds of 'truth', and much will depend on the kinds of truth with which Hesiod is ultimately concerned.)[24]

I shall provisionally label the feature in question, after Frankfort, the feature of 'multiple approaches'. I shall employ this label, however, in a rather wider sense than may be suggested by the Homeric and Egyptian examples referred to. Frankfort's ancient Egyptian employs 'multiple approaches' to express the irrational, where 'the irrational' means notions of a religious kind 'which cannot be entirely rationalized—"truths" which are sensed rather than known'.[25] This description roughly fits some of the relevant contexts in Hesiod,[26] but by no means all of them. Moreover, those which it does not fit will turn out to be more important to the issue in hand. If Hesiod is irrational in his theology, then he is not a rationalising or philosophical theologian; but he is not thereby shown to be unphilosophical *tout court* (or unscientific or unhistorical), for it is a matter of common experience that the ways in which a man thinks in matters of religion may be quite unrelated to the ways in which he thinks in other spheres.[27]

First, therefore, I shall examine various different examples of 'multiple approaches' in Hesiod, which between them span a large part of his poems, asking in each case what kind of attitude they imply on his part towards his subject-matter; and in particular whether that attitude is compatible with the view of him as proto-philosopher, philosopher-scientist, or historian. This task will occupy the bulk of the paper. Then, at the end, I shall return to the question whether the habit, or habits, of thought thus analysed are to be explained as a symptom of the infancy of the Greek mind in the eighth or seventh centuries, as Frankfort's and Fränkel's limited accounts suggest, or whether they require some different explanation.

Before I turn to my examples, however, I should first mention a well-known article of B. E. Perry, 'The early Greek capacity for viewing things separately',[28] the title of which might suggest that it deals with a subject related to mine. Perry finds the 'capacity' he has in mind manifested first in a tendency among Greek authors to present their ideas *paratactically*, and secondly in a typical impartiality and detachment of attitude.[29] The phenomenon with which I

[22] This is a necessary rider, since it will clearly sometimes be appropriate for the historian (say) to admit that he is unable to decide between available alternatives (*cf.* n. 70, on just such a feature in Herodotus).

[23] That is to say, I take it that an interest in choosing between accounts is a necessary, even if not a sufficient, condition of the doing of philosophy, science and history. Thus the Egyptian view of the sky is unphilosophical and unscientific at least because it fails to make such a choice.

[24] In other words, we need not interpret the distinction between truth and falsity, as Gigon does, as that between 'philosophical' truth and 'mythical' falsehood. Compare M. I. Finley, 'Myth, memory and history', *The Use and Abuse of History* (London 1975) 14: 'there must be no misunderstanding about one thing: everyone accepted the epic tradition as grounded in hard fact. Even Thucydides.'

[25] *Loc. cit.* (n. 19).

[26] As it might, e.g., his handling of the image of death in the passage on Tartarus.

[27] Partly this may be a question of a difference of subject-matter; but it is also, and more importantly, a question of a difference of aims, and of the methods appropriate to those aims. In particular, we will tend to require different standards of *consistency* of the theologian than we do, say, of the scientist. The ultimate question will be how Hesiod works in contexts which appear to raise issues likely to interest the scientist or the historian; in particular, contexts which are apparently concerned with *explanation*.

[28] *TAPA* lxviii (1937) 403–27. Perry, incidentally, is one of those who think of the Greek mind as following a simple linear development: the early Greek mind, he suggests, 'has much of the childlike in it' (407).

[29] Perry (n. 28) 425: '1. Two or more things (or ideas) that might be logically connected with each other are each viewed separately, and the beholder and narrator is aware of only one at a time—parataxis in various forms. 2. Two things are viewed in juxtaposition or contrast, each of which in some ways denies the

am concerned is neither of these things, although parts of his description of both may apply to it. What I have labelled the feature of 'multiple approaches' consists of a thing's being described or explained in more than one way in the same context, where the descriptions or explanations are not brought into connection with each other, and where they may appear to be—sometimes, I may add, actually *are*—mutually inconsistent. In my view, what Perry describes in his article is not one feature of 'the early Greek mind', but several different features which bear a superficial resemblance to each other. In particular, I am unable to see any deep connection between the 'intellectual detachment' of Thucydides[30] and the paratactical aspect of Homer's thought and expression. This aspect of Homeric (and Hesiodic) style, both on the small and on the large scale, may well bear some relation to the feature under discussion in the present paper, in so far as both involve a lack of concern with relating the elements of a whole to each other, or at any rate a lack of concern with the explicit *expression* of such relations;[31] and 'seeing things separately' might be a good name for this general phenomenon. But it follows from what I have said that I would understand the expression rather differently from Perry.

My first illustration of 'multiple approaches' in Hesiod is obvious and uncontroversial: it is Hesiod's way of conceiving of gods, which shows the same many-sidedness as Homer's.[32] The gods of the *Theogony* can be divided roughly into three types: (i) cosmic entities, like Ouranos and Gaia; (ii) the Olympians, and other primarily anthropomorphic figures, like the Titans; and (iii) 'forces' like Eros, Eris, Momos, etc. (I do not of course mean to imply that Hesiod himself would have regarded these as distinct 'types'; only that we are likely to want to divide them up in this way. Part of my point is precisely that Hesiod makes no observable attempt to distinguish them.) Each of these three types can be conceived of in different ways. (i) Ouranos is both the sky, and an anthropomorphic figure who has emotions, copulates, can be castrated, and gives advice. Gaia, similarly, is both the earth on which gods and men live, and a mother. Night is both mother of Day and what precedes day; both a child of Chaos and a product of Ouranos' visitations upon Gaia. (ii) The Olympians, as I have said, are primarily anthropomorphic, but that is by no means the only way in which they can be conceived. Zeus, for example, can ὕειν;[33] and in that context he is himself, presumably, hardly distinguishable from the sky.[34] When he wields his weapons of thunder, lightning, and thunderbolt, he seems to combine both aspects; but he does not always do so. In the episode of the dressing of Pandora in *Works and Days*, a passage I shall return to shortly, the status of Athena and Aphrodite is ambiguous in a more subtle way. Hence, perhaps, Hesiod's apparent ambivalence about where the gods live, whether on Olympus or in the sky.[35] Among the children of Ouranos, Mnemosyne, for example, could well be classed along with figures like Zelos and Bie: like them, she represents effect as well as cause in her particular sphere. The Cyclopes, again, are not only the craftsmen who make Zeus' weapons; they are also, as their names suggest, the weapons themselves. (iii) With respect to my third rough category of Hesiodic gods, what I have termed 'forces'—Eris, Eros, and the rest, it would surely be pointless to insist on their aspect as personifications. This they are, in so far as they are born as children (Eros is the odd one out here, having no parents and no offspring) and

other, while the onlooker, though intellectually pleased or even deeply moved by the spectacle, nevertheless remains aloof and impartial in his attitude, being affected for the time being far more by the objective reality of things (*theoria*) than by any sympathy, however natural, for one of the two things in conflict—irony, the antithetic style, the intellectual detachment of Thucydides.'

[30] Perry perhaps overstates the degree of Thucydides' detachment from the issues, but that is another matter.

[31] Note Perry's suggestive remark (408–9) that 'such authors as Homer and Herodotus . . . concentrate their artistic efforts more upon the episode *per se* than upon the connection between one episode and another, or upon the effect of the sum total of episodes'. Whether or not this is true of Herodotus, or of Homer, it is certainly and clearly true of Hesiod, as I shall shortly illustrate. *Cf.* also W. Nicolai, *Hesiod's Erga: Beobachtungen zum Aufbau* (Heidelberg 1964), and M. L. West, *Hesiod, Works and Days* (Oxford 1978) 46 ff.

[32] More central examples in M. M. Willcock, 'Some aspects of the gods in the *Iliad*', *BICS* xvii (1970) 1–10.

[33] *W&D* 488; *cf.* 415–16.

[34] *Cf.* West's n. *ad* 416.

[35] *Th.* 117–18, 128.

can also behave like human beings in other respects: Zelos and Bie sit beside Zeus, Aidos and Nemesis cover their faces, and so on. But Zelos and Bie are also aspects of Zeus: they are both cause and effect, both what cause those aspects of Zeus, and those aspects themselves. And Eros, 'most beautiful of the gods', plainly does not 'overcome' (*δάμναται*) the mind in quite the way that Greeks overcome Trojans in the *Iliad*.[36]

A more striking example—and one, incidentally, which is perhaps more obviously like the Egyptian example[37]—is Hesiod's handling of the Moirai. They have two different mothers, one, Night, who produces them parthenogenically,[38] and the other, Themis, who bears them to Zeus.[39] As Solmsen points out, the double parentage expresses the two-sidedness of the Fates:[40] their thread can be black, and in this aspect they are apt daughters of Night; in so far as they appoint us no unexpected or unmerited disasters, they are daughters of Zeus and Themis. This is not, of course, Hesiod's only way of expressing the two different sides of a concept: for the two Erides are *sisters*.[41] Perhaps the difference is that in *Works and Days* Hesiod is thinking of the two sides of Eris simultaneously, whereas the two passages on the Moirai in the *Theogony* are separated by some 700 lines. Or perhaps, as M. L. West and others hold,[42] the second of these passages is not Hesiodic at all. But another entity, Philotes, is handled in what seems to be an analogous way: daughter of Night, and so horrendous;[43] yet also part of the sphere of the lovely Aphrodite, along with billing and cooing and the rest of love's sweet delight.[44] A similar problem of identity might arise here—is Aphrodite's *φιλότης* the same as the daughter of Night? Presumably not, since the daughter of Night is simply black; and if they were the same, what would the consequence be for the picture of Aphrodite? And yet they are presumably connected: they represent two sides of the female, and of love, which Hesiod expresses most clearly in the myth of Pandora. Seduction is delightful, but beware of the traps that lurk beneath. The same point may be implicit in the origin of Aphrodite herself from the ghastly act of castration.

My next example is rather more complex, though related. In *W&D* 60 ff., Zeus orders the construction and decoration of Pandora: Hephaestus is to mould her, and put a human voice and human strength in her, but a divine beauty; Athena is to teach her to weave; Aphrodite is to pour *χάρις* and desire over her; and Hermes is to make her treacherous and cunning. In the event, Hephaestus does his moulding; Athena puts on the girl's girdle and adorns her; the Graces and Persuasion put necklaces on her; the Horai garland her with flowers; Athena, Hesiod stresses, fits on all the girl's adornment; and Hermes puts a treacherous mind in her, and gives her a voice. There are passages in Homer where what is actually done differs from what a person has been told to do. So, for example, in *Iliad* i, Achilles suggests that in appealing to Zeus on his behalf Thetis should remind him of the occasion (of which she had often boasted) when she had helped him against the other Olympians; but her actual appeal makes no explicit reference to the event. But the reason is obvious: she sees the need to be diplomatic.[45] Here, in *Works and Days*, no such explanation is to hand: the changes are likely to strike us just as awkward and odd, as is shown by the embarrassment of the commentators, who proceed to offer a variety of violent remedies.[46] Not so West, who describes Hesiod as simply 'tak[ing] a fresh copy from the picture in his mind', a copy which is influenced, particularly, by the corresponding passage in *Theogony*,[47] where

[36] *Th.* 120–2; *Il.* viii 244, etc.

[37] See n. 19.

[38] *Th.* 217.

[39] *Th.* 904.

[40] F. Solmsen, *Hesiod and Aeschylus* (New York 1949) 36 ff.

[41] *W&D* 11 ff. (It is this passage more than any that seems to guarantee the common authorship of the two poems, in so far as it is plausibly interpreted as containing a reference back to the *Theogony*: *cf.* West *ad loc.* But in any case Hesiodic scholarship, culminating in West, has probably done enough to silence doubts on this general issue—though of course individual sections of both poems may still remain suspect.)

[42] West, *Hesiod, Theogony* (Oxford 1966), regards the whole of 901–1020 as un-Hesiodic. For other views, see e.g. Solmsen (n. 40) 36 n. 112.

[43] *Th.* 224.

[44] *Th.* 205–6.

[45] *Il.* i 394 ff., 503 ff.

[46] See West *ad* 70–80. Solmsen, in the Oxford text, brackets 70–6, declaring them 'partim e *Theog.* 571 sqq. sumpti, partim recentiores genuinis substituti'.

[47] *Loc. cit.*

Athena also plays a prominent role in actually dressing the girl Epimetheus is to have. I would suggest, for my own part, that the account of the execution of Zeus' instructions does not so much represent an alternative to the picture conjured up by those instructions (if this is what West means), as merely an amplification of it. Hesiod begins not from a picture of particular gods and goddesses hastening about their tasks, but from a picture of Pandora herself, as possessing certain fatal qualities: beauty, which makes her desirable, combined with treachery. But if she is desirable, that is the department of Aphrodite; treachery is the department of the burglar Hermes—and of course Hephaestus, the craftsman, must be in charge of constructing the thing itself, the girl. When Hesiod comes to describe the carrying out of Zeus' design, he chooses to give *details* of her beauty, which he ascribes to her dress, and so to Athena; he also chooses to vary his account of its effect on men, by introducing Peitho in place of πόθος. We might ask why, if it was Athena who put on all her adornment, the Charites, Peitho, and the Horai also put it on the girl. The answer is much the same as the answer to the question how the Moirai can have two sets of parents: that Hesiod is describing the same thing from two different aspects. Looked at from the point of view of the connection of Pandora's beauty with her dress, the action belongs to Athena;[48] from the point of view of the effect that her adornment will have, on the other hand, it is the gift of the Charites and Persuasion; and from the point of view that the purpose of the whole business is to make men fall for her, the action belongs to Aphrodite. To put it in another way, 'Aphrodite poured χάρις over her', 'the Charites put necklaces on her', and 'Athena dressed her' can all refer to the same event without contradiction.[49] Our difficulty, in the passage on Pandora, comes from concentrating exclusively on the anthropomorphic aspect of Hesiod's divine figures, when this is only part of his conception. χάρις and πειθώ are simultaneously things that Pandora possesses, and the entities that give those things to her; just as Old Age is both something that afflicts men, a child of Night, and something which can be ascribed to parents,[50] and κράτος is simultaneously something that Zeus exercises and something that sits beside his throne.[51] Athena and Aphrodite are different, in that they are clearly distinguished from their products; but they are still closely tied to their products, and are present to Hesiod's mind only to the extent that these are.

There is another aspect of the same episode in *Works and Days* which calls for comment in the context of the present discussion. Prometheus steals fire from Zeus, and gives it to men; Zeus then proceeds to devise a balancing κακόν for them. 'I will give them an evil ἀντὶ πυρός, in which all of them may take delight in their heart, embracing their own evil, ἑὸν κακόν' (57–8). He orders the construction of Pandora, who opens her jar and allows evils to escape to plague mankind, especially diseases, and hard labour.[52] Lines 57–8 suggest that the evil given is womankind generally, or the consequences of our possession of women; but the sequel seems to tell us that it is what we suffer as the consequence of the action of one particular woman, Pandora. Maybe every woman might be supposed to have a jar of evils; but diseases, at least, can surely only be in Pandora's. If women are like drones, as the *Theogony* tells us,[53] men at least have to work harder because of them; to that extent, perhaps, the necessity for labour might be connected with them. But how could diseases be laid at other women's door? It seems that Pandora simultaneously plays two roles: one as a representative of all women, and one as a particular individual, who performed an action at a particular point in time. What she did was typical of her kind: in all women, as in her, charms are combined with treachery, and we all, like

[48] One may add that there is special point in the emphasis which Hesiod gives to this aspect: Pandora's attractions, he suggests, are not even skin-deep.

[49] We may compare here what Lloyd has to say about Homer's various descriptions of Sleep (*loc. cit.* n. 18): 'None of these can be considered *the* definitive description of sleep. Each image illustrates the phenomenon under a different aspect, though each, if pressed, would seem to imply a slightly different conception of the nature of sleep. But the fact that no difficulty was experienced in reconciling these different images is shown by the way in which they may be combined in a single passage [as e.g. in *Iliad* xxiii 62 f., xiv 252 f.]. They should, then, be treated as *complementary*, rather than as *alternative*, conceptions of the same phenomenon.'

[50] *Th.* 225; *W&D* 185.

[51] *Th.* 49, etc.; *Th.* 386–7.

[52] *W&D* 91–2.

[53] *Th.* 594 ff.

Epimetheus, suffer as a result of being taken in by them. But we also suffer because of what Pandora did, as one individual. On the face of it, then, Hesiod, is giving us two different, if overlapping, accounts of the source of men's suffering. But Hesiod's general point is clear enough: that men's suffering derives from their possession of women. The parallel episode in the *Theogony*[54] argues more subtly. There, a woman may even have some good in her (although even a good wife is bad, in some undefined way); and at least two evils, a man's reaching old age without a son to look after him, and his dying without an heir, are actually consequences of his *not* having a woman. Woman is herself an evil, but is not the direct cause of all evils; other evils are a consequence of the state in which man needs woman—in which he must work, grows old, and dies. Without these things, he would not need her, and would live the life of the gods; and so it is that Hesiod connects the separation of men and gods after Mekone with her arrival.[55] It is this same idea which is expressed in *Works and Days*, by means of the cruder device of Pandora and her jar.

For Hesiod, then, the Pandora episode gives a single explanation of men's suffering, and the two ways in which it is expressed—'men suffer because of women', and 'men suffer because of Pandora'—are equivalent. It would be too strong to say that Pandora is *merely* a 'symbolic' figure, and to that extent the logical difficulties remain. But they affect only the means by which Hesiod makes his point, not the substance of that point itself. Fränkel expresses a similar idea, though in a different context: did Hesiod intend his 'meaningful legends to be understood as *true*', he asks? 'In such matters, . . . there is not only outright belief and disbelief, but various shades between them. . . . In any case he too has myths which can hardly be more than a cover for something which the poet could not formulate directly. A garment can be changed at need, and Hesiod, like Plato, often expresses the same truth through several myths which if taken literally would be mutually exclusive.'[56]

This idea is not, however, sufficient by itself to deal with all the cases which I have so far considered. The twin passages in *Works and Days* on the construction and dressing of Pandora, and the two accounts in *Theogony* of the parentage of the Moirai, are cumulative in effect, rather than expressing a single truth. They are therefore only in a restricted, and perhaps unimportant, sense 'mutually exclusive'. The case of Hesiod's treatment of the gods is different again: his conception is conveyed by what are to us 'mutually exclusive' descriptions because it is in itself paradoxical (the gods both have human shape, and have other features which are incompatible with it). In none of these three cases is there any question of our being able to substitute the accounts offered for one another, as there is in the case of the different accounts of woman as a factor in men's suffering.

If, then, all these cases are included under the heading of 'multiple approaches', it turns out to be a complex affair; complex enough, perhaps, to raise the question whether it will after all be a useful analytical tool, at least in the way in which I have proposed to apply it. There is, however, enough of a broad similarity between the contexts discussed to justify our continuing to treat them together: that is, all in some way illustrate that 'circling around' a subject to which Fränkel referred.[57] We need now to consider how these examples are to be interpreted, and in particular whether they have any bearing on Hesiod's relationship to the development of philosophy, science and history. Towards the beginning of this paper, I suggested that the resort to 'multiple approaches' might be in principle incompatible with the aims of those three types of enterprise, in so far as it was part of the business of philosopher, scientist and historian alike to *choose between* alternative or competing approaches to the same subject. But as we have seen, in the majority of the contexts so far considered the approaches offered are not alternatives, but rather—in one sense or another—complementary to each other, so that the possibility of a choice between them simply does not arise. If they appear to involve mutual inconsistency, that inconsistency must be

[54] *Th.* 585 ff.

[55] *Cf.* J.-P. Vernant, 'The myth of Prometheus in Hesiod', in *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece* (Brighton 1980) (trans. of *Mythe et societé en Grèce ancienne* [Paris 1974]) 168–85.

[56] Fränkel (n. 8) 98.

[57] See above at n. 16.

dealt with in other ways than by asking Hesiod to prefer one to another; mainly by insisting on the difference between poetic (and religious) forms of discourse and others. To return again to the Moirai: provided his point is made, that they have two sides, it does not matter to Hesiod the poet (I shall assume) that they are also left, impossibly, with two mothers, one producing them parthenogenically, the other with help. His method here is, perhaps, merely symptomatic of the relative lack of concern with the rules of strict logic which we might in any case expect of someone who is both poet and theologian.[58] The same type of approach allows us to deal with the one remaining case, where on the face of it the accounts offered *are* alternative: Hesiod's treatment of woman. It would be silly to object that the accounts are incompatible, and that either the first woman took a lid off a jar, or she did not; that is not what the passages are about. Certainly, a historian would not have behaved as Hesiod does here; but though he is making statements about the past, in this instance at least they are not a historian's statements, in so far as an essential part of their meaning lies beneath the surface.[59]

There are, however, two further examples of Hesiod's employment of 'multiple approaches' to a subject which must be considered: first, his accounts in the *Theogony* of Zeus' rise to power; and secondly, his 'explanations' of human suffering. These examples are particularly important, because here, in contrast with the other cases, there appears to be a real incompatibility between the accounts offered. What is more, in both cases it has been suggested that we can actually observe Hesiod rationally and systematically making the necessary decision between his accounts.[60]

In Fränkel's view, Hesiod implies three different accounts of Zeus' rise.[61] First, there is the story of the Cyclopes forging Zeus' weapons;[62] second, the story of the three hundred-armed giants,[63] who play a crucial, if somewhat ill-defined, role in the battle with the Titans; and thirdly, there is the myth of the children of Styx, Zelos, Kratos, Bie, and Nike,[64] which—Fränkel suggests—implies another explanation of Zeus' position as supreme leader: 'Will-to-power, Power, Force, and Victory' bring him rule because he is 'the divine bearer of right'; or in other words, right rules because it is right. 'The legend of the four children', Fränkel concludes, 'was obviously invented by Hesiod in order to express in the pictorial language of myth the truths he had himself discovered. Side by side with his invention, and without regard for strict consistency, he reproduces the more primitive parallel stories of the Cyclopes and the hundred-armed which had come down to him out of old tradition. Stolid ancestral credulity and forward-looking speculations flourished side by side in his head'—and Fränkel emphasises that Hesiod must still have believed 'to a considerable degree' in the literal truth of the older stories.[65] On this account, then, Hesiod is giving us different types of explanation, a 'more primitive' type and a 'forward-looking' type; and of these types he prefers the second, while still not setting his face against the first.[66] In fact I see no evidence in the text for Hesiod's entertaining the second

[58] See n. 27.

[59] We must admit, of course, that Hesiod's readiness to live with a paradoxical conception of the gods is likely to prove him innocent of philosophical theology; but if so, even after the rise of 'rationalism' many share his innocence.

[60] Yet another example, in the description of the geography of Tartarus in *Th.* 720 ff., can perhaps be quickly dismissed. Certainly not all the variant descriptions here can be simultaneously true, in a literal sense; yet since by the nature of the subject there could be no grounds for a decision between them, we might even applaud Hesiod for leaving them side by side (if it was he who was responsible for them: see West [n. 42] 356 ff.). Or, more simply, we might compare this case too with that of Homer's descriptions of sleep: each is again in some sense *complementary* to the others, adding to a whole which, if it were the result of calculated artistry, as well it might be, could be interpreted in terms of a kind of impressionism.

[61] Fränkel (n. 8) 98 ff.

[62] *Th.* 139–46, 501–6, 689 ff.

[63] *Th.* 147–53, 617–63, 713 ff., 734–5.

[64] *Th.* 383–403.

[65] Fränkel (n. 8) 100–1.

[66] Two pages earlier Fränkel interprets the story of the hundred-handers along the same lines as he does that of the children of Styx ('If we follow the line of this myth with the help of our more abstract conceptions, we observe that the brute power by which the god rules cannot be a quality proper to the god himself, but only an instrument which he uses. The forces at his disposal are, so to speak, his obedient servants, and they are themselves divine only because they impose the god's

type of explanation at all: the idea of Zeus as 'the divine bearer of right' derives from Fränkel's general interpretation of Zeus in the *Theogony* as an ethical figure, which is itself in my view mistaken.[67] But even so, we are still left with three accounts of the means by which Zeus secured victory: his possession of thunder, lightning, and thunderbolt; his freeing of the hundred-armed giants; and the presence by his throne of the children of Styx. Of these three, the first and the third can perhaps be regarded in the same way as, say, the different descriptions of the adornment of Pandora discussed earlier: they simply describe Zeus' power from different aspects, the first in terms of his weapons, the third in terms of his own qualities—power, force, 'will-to-power' (to adopt Fränkel's rendering of ζῆλος), leading to inevitable victory. But the other account, which introduces a separate agency in the shape of the giants, cannot be dealt with in the same way, and the tension between it and the others is clearly felt in the episode of Zeus' battle against the Titans, where the presence of the giants is said to be essential to Zeus' victory, and yet the battle is finally turned by Zeus' own intervention.[68]

We may compare with this Hesiod's juxtaposition, in *Works and Days*, of the myth of Prometheus and Pandora and that of the Five Races of Man. Both of these appear, among other things, to suggest 'explanations' of why man's lot is as hard as it in fact is. We may perhaps add a third explanation, from the *Theogony*, in the shape of the birth of the offspring of Night. What is the relation between these three accounts? There is no way in which the *Theogony* account can be married in its literal form with the other two, and the myths of Pandora and of the Five Races are also incompatible, if taken strictly at face value.[69] They follow the same broad pattern, in the shape of the idea of man's fall from an original and better state. But this cannot by itself be the common truth Hesiod is trying to convey, since if it were, we should have to treat the myths as such simply as *fictional elaborations* of a basic theme; and this they cannot be, unless the Prometheus episode in the *Theogony* is fiction too—and that will take the rest of the *Theogony* with it. But how can the *Theogony* be fiction? It bears all the marks of serious theology. Let us then turn to the type of approach suggested by Fränkel's treatment of the other case—that one of the explanations in question is to be preferred to the other. This alternative is the one adopted by Rosenmeyer.[70] According to his view, the Prometheus–Pandora story is myth, but the Five Races is *history*. The issue here is of course essentially about Hesiod's attitude: does *he* think of himself as doing something different in the two cases, and specifically, as deserting myth for another genre? Much of the weight of Rosenmeyer's argument depends upon his interpretation of *W&D* 106, which introduces the Five Races: 'if you wish,' Hesiod says, 'ἐκκορυφώσω a second λόγον'. Rosenmeyer argues that the verb ἐκκορυφοῦν here means 'to state briefly the main points'. 'Hesiod does not wish to go into detail; like Thucydides in his archaeology, he realizes that he cannot supply as full a picture as he wishes. Now as an introduction to a myth, such a comment would be self-defeating, for a myth is always as detailed as its reporter wishes to

will upon the world.') In fact, there is a 'kinship' between all three stories, only in the third the thought has grown 'more mature and more general' (100).

[67] Certainly Zeus is the guardian of 'justice' between men in *W&D*, and it is consistent with this that *Th.* 902 makes him the father of Δίκη. But it is an entirely different question whether any sort of justice or rightness is thought of as characterising his own relationships either with men or with other gods, except perhaps in the unexciting sense that whatever the 'father of gods and men' does is by definition right. If Hesiod regards Zeus' defeat of Kronos, or his treatment of men in the Prometheus episode, as especially 'just', he does not say so; and the Titanomachy is a simple struggle for power.

[68] See my note *ad* 687 ff. in *Essential Hesiod* (Bristol 1978).

[69] *Cf.* West (n. 31) *ad* 106–201.

[70] *Op. cit.* (n. 12). Rosenmeyer also uses the contexts on Tartarus and on Zeus' rise to support his argument. 'Hesiod is not a dogmatist. The doublets at *Theog.* 720–819 are symptomatic; Hesiod gives us several versions of the domicile of the defeated Titans. . . . Again, first Hesiod tells us that Zeus wins his victory over the Titans because of the help of the Hundred-Arms, and then he states that the victory was secured through the thunderbolt of the Cyclopes. . . . Hesiod features [both of these doublets], just as Herodotus will produce two or more tales handed down to him in connexion with one and the same event. Only, where Herodotus gives us a marginal comment to the effect that these are equivalent explanation, Hesiod merely tells them without the theoretical annotation' (268). But this difference is—in my view—a crucial one: it is an essential part of what makes the one a historian, the other a poet. History involves the self-conscious application of a particular kind of method, with which poetry, with its rather different aims, can dispense.

make it, and few reporters, prior to the age of the handbooks, would confess to reporting only the highlights, the skeleton, of the tradition. Prefacing a historical summary, however, the word is thoroughly apt.'[71] But the external evidence, such as it is, may be consistent with a different interpretation of ἐκκορυφοῦν;[72] and even if the verb does bear the meaning Rosenmeyer puts on it, the consequences he suggests do not follow.[73] Much more important are the words ἕτερον . . . λόγον, 'a second λόγος'. If the Five Races is just another λόγος like the last, can we really insist that Hesiod draws a clear distinction of kind between them? Thanks to the Muses, as we know from the *Theogony*, he recognises a difference between truth and lies dressed up as truth; but there is no indication that this contrast is applicable here—indeed, for what it is worth, at the beginning of *Works and Days* Hesiod merely announces his intention to tell Perses the truth.[74] The only contrast which is made visible is that between Prometheus–Pandora and the Five Races as λόγοι, and the hawk and the nightingale as an αἶνος.[75] We are again left, then, in the final analysis, with two rival 'explanations', or three, if we include the *Theogony* version, of the same set of things—explanations which are not reducible to each other, and between which Hesiod expresses no preference.

The two contexts just considered—the treatment of the origin of evil, and of Zeus' rise to the kingship—are the real test cases. In the other cases, what were on the surface mutually inconsistent approaches to the same subject turned out on closer analysis to be complementary, or at least compatible. In the two present cases, however, the charge of inconsistency goes deeper: if Hesiod's purpose is to explain, he must choose between the explanations offered. In so far as he does not, he is neither Fränkel's philosopher nor Rosenmeyer's historian. Lloyd puts the point for philosophy when he suggests that philosophy essentially involves a process of criticism and debate: so, he says, among the first philosophers, or 'philosopher-scientists', as he prefers to call them, it is a tacit assumption 'that the various theories and explanations they propose are directly competing with one another. The urge is towards finding the best explanation, the most adequate theory, and they are, then, forced to consider the grounds for their idea, the evidence and arguments in their favour, as well as the weak points in their opponents' theories.'[76] Such a procedure is quite foreign to Hesiod: far from looking for 'the best explanation' or 'the most adequate theory', he can leave apparently rival accounts jostling side by side, without registering the slightest embarrassment.

What is the reason for this? It is certainly not that Hesiod is incapable of saying 'no, not that, but this', or that he has not thought of doing so, for in one case, albeit a minor one, he actually does say it. This is in *W&D* 11–12, where he appears to correct something he had implied in the *Theogony*: 'I was wrong to say'[77] (if that is the right interpretation of οὐκ ἄρα . . . ἔην) 'that there was one Eris only; in truth there are two'. Alternatively, he corrects someone other than himself; but the point is the same. In just this way *Th.* 27–8 has been taken as intended to contrast Hesiod's ideas as true with those of others as false.[78] This interpretation of the lines is not the

[71] Rosenmeyer (n. 12) 269.

[72] See West (*ad loc.*), whose list of parallels (which includes only one other case of ἐκκορυφοῦν itself) suggests as an alternative meaning 'to bring to a head', i.e. 'to bring to a conclusion', (?) 'round off' (*cf.* Wilamowitz' 'bis zum Gipfel herausarbeiten', mentioned but rejected by Rosenmeyer, 269 n. 2), though he finally decides in favour of 'to state summarily'.

[73] How a user of myth introduces his material surely depends on how he intends to use it; and it is hard to see why it is less appropriate for a didactic, moralising poet to announce that he will 'state summarily' his λόγος than it is for a historian. (Both 'to state summarily' and—particularly—Rosenmeyer's 'to state briefly the main points' also of course lack the metaphorical colouring of Hesiod's ἐκκορυφοῦν.)

[74] *W&D* 10.

[75] The basic meaning of λόγος here is presumably 'something that is said'; not something that is *merely* said (and not necessarily true), but, neutrally, something I and/or others say, an account.

[76] Lloyd (n. 11) 12. Lloyd regards this as one of the two 'distinguishing marks' of the first 'philosopher-scientists', the other being 'the discovery of nature', what Vlastos calls 'the discovery of the cosmos' (G. Vlastos, *Plato's Universe* [Oxford 1975]). See also Lloyd *MRE* (n. 14), which attributes the rise of Greek science especially to 'the experience of radical political debate and confrontation in small-scale, face-to-face societies' (266).

[77] *Cf.* West *ad loc.*

[78] See my opening paragraph.

only one available,[79] but if we were to accept it the passage would constitute additional evidence that at least in certain contexts Hesiod is both capable of, and interested in, the business of comparing and contrasting rival accounts. He proceeds as he does in the case of the myths of Prometheus and Pandora and the Five Races, and elsewhere, not because of a lack of capacity on his part, or of the 'primitiveness' of his habits of thought, but rather because of the nature of his fundamental preoccupations: it is that in the end the business of explanation, in the sense of looking for causes, matters rather less to him than reflection of a different sort, and especially of a moralising sort. This also helps to account for the fact that his 'explanations' generally explain so little. The Pandora and Five Races myths, for example, are not so much disquisitions on the origin of evil as disquisitions on the nature of that evil itself; and they are placed side by side just because of the different possibilities that they offer in that direction. We should not be over-impressed by the fact that the two episodes are cast in the form of chronological sequences of events.[80] After all, we regularly and naturally play down the chronological aspect in the case of the genealogies in the *Theogony*: no one would dispute that it was not the chronological relationship between, say, Night and Old Age, or Night and the Fates which interested Hesiod, but a different relationship—though of course it would be wrong to dismiss the genealogical relationship as if it were a mere *façon de parler*.

The moral of all this is simple: that if we assume that Hesiod is in competition with an Anaximander or a Herodotus (or a Thucydides), then he comes off badly; but though there is some overlapping, as for example in Hesiod's description of the birth of the world, he is really playing a different game, under different rules. Philosophers and historians are in the business of giving precise and systematic accounts of causes; Hesiod is not. Where we do find system and consistency is in his moral attitudes—that is, if we take the *Theogony* and the first part of *Works and Days* (system in any sense is notably absent from the second part).[81] We may perhaps point to the *general* lack of precision in Hesiod's thinking—and also in Homer's—and regard them as inferior on this score to some writers in the fifth century; if, that is, it is precision that matters.[82] But it will still be true that Hesiod is as good at the task he sets himself as the early philosophers are at theirs. That task is to edify his audience, drawing on, confirming and reshaping their perceptions of and their attitudes towards the world in which they live; and also, of course, to entertain them.[83]

We may deal, finally, with the question of Hesiod's relation to the concept of natural law.[84] One view, as we saw at the beginning, finds such a concept already present in his poems, whereas the more usual view attributes its discovery to the Milesians. The issue is not resolved merely by pointing to the fact that Hesiod's world is governed by divine beings,[85] since with few exceptions these beings behave in an orderly and predictable way, especially by contrast with Homer's gods, and they appear rather as parts or aspects of the natural world than as interfering in its workings. What is more, the farmer Hesiod is perfectly well aware of the regularities of nature. But in the end, we cannot succeed in thinking away the idea of supernatural causation

[79] *Cf.* West *ad loc.*: 'contradiction between different legends made it clear that poets did not invariably tell the truth. . . . The Muses seem to be saying, "You have lived your life in ignorance of the truth. But now you shall tell it to men. Admittedly, we sometimes deceive; but when we choose, we can reveal the truth, and we are going to reveal it to you."' In this case, the lines would constitute a simple assertion that what Hesiod is going to say is true (without any necessary comparison of it with what others say). I am uneasy, however, for reasons which by now should be clear, about relying on any awareness on Hesiod's part of 'contradictions' between stories. Another alternative is to interpret the contrast as being between divine and mortal capacities: 'we Muses can either tell lies or truth; you mortals, without our help, can make no such distinction'.

[80] See esp. Vernant, 'Le mythe hésiodique des races: essai d'analyse structurale', and 'Le mythe hésiodique des races: sur un essai de mise au point', in *Mythe et pensée chez les grecs*, i (Paris 1971) 13–79.

[81] Up to e.g. 341, the poem presents a unified and clear (if sometimes repetitive) argument; the contents of the rest are rather more diverse and less well connected.

[82] But again, is their thought always less 'precise' than that of later *poets*? See (e.g.) n. 17 above.

[83] See especially *Th.* 94 ff., where Hesiod explicitly singles out this function of the singer.

[84] See my opening paragraph and n. 76 above.

[85] As Gigon's view perhaps implies (see my first paragraph).

from the poems: at least some things happen just because a god wills them. More importantly, there is no clear distinction, explicit or even implicit, between the categories of the natural and the supernatural. Indeed the way in which things in the world tend to be seen both as things and as persons[86] suggests that *any* event[87] may be redescribed in terms of the behaviour of gods. But in this aspect too, Hesiodic thought should be regarded as unscientific, not as pre-scientific. To take the latter view is once again to place too much stress on the accident of Hesiod's date;[88] for while it might be difficult to envisage the composition of a poem quite like the *Theogony* after the sixth and fifth centuries,[89] outside the specialised spheres of philosophy, science and history the Hesiodic type of world-view continues to dominate Greek culture.[90] The difference between Hesiod and the first 'philosophers' is in essence the same as the difference between unscientific and scientific discourse as a whole: science makes explicit distinctions which unscientific discourse either does not recognise, or recognises only implicitly. Hesiod predates the rise of philosophy and science, and his influence clearly helped to shape the theories of its earliest representatives; but we should not therefore assume too easily that he 'comes before them' in all respects. The model of a smooth progression is not the only possible model for the evolution of thought, any more than it is for the evolution of species.

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[86] See pp. 127–9 above.

[87] Including human actions, in view of the supernatural status accorded to Eros, Eris and the rest. If the 'double causation' which is so regular a feature of the *Iliad* hardly appears as such in Hesiod (his relationship with the Muses is perhaps a special case), this is presumably because he has relatively little occasion to give direct descriptions of human actions.

[88] See n. 14.

[89] By then, for example (despite Pherecydes and the 'Orphic' cosmogonies), the sphere of cosmogony had in effect been claimed by philosophy; and (non-philosophical) poetry had developed different means of expression.

[90] As e.g. Herodotus recognises (ii 53).