CHAPTER TWO

HESIOD

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Theogony

The subject matter and general structure of the *Theogony* proper (116ff.; on the introductory ‘Hymn to the Muses’ see below) are dominated by the genealogies of the Greek pantheon, which are presented in what essentially is a chronological order. After asking the Muses to tell him ‘from the beginning’ (*ex arkhēs*) and to ‘say what thing among them came first’ (115), the Hesiodic narrator opens the *Theogony* as follows: ‘First (*prōtista*) came the Chasm (Chaos); and then broad-breasted Earth (Gaia) ...’ (116; tr. West). He goes on to narrate the birth of the gods and divinities who belong to the first generation (children of Chaos and Gaia), the second (children of Gaia’s children Uranus [the Titans] and Pontus, and of Chaos’ child Night), the third (grandchildren of Pontus and Uranus; esp. Zeus and his Olympian siblings) and the fourth (the children of the Olympians) respectively.¹ While the general sequence of these genealogies is chronological, it is clear that the narrator’s goal is not to maintain a rigid chronology. He regularly pushes ahead and narrates the birth and experiences of divine characters who belong to the same family branch, especially if ‘the end of a branch is in sight’.² Genealogical method and transparency prevail over strict chronology. An illustrative example comes from the passage on Pontus’ children Phorcys and Ceto and their children: Ceto gives birth, among oth-

¹ Scholars have long noted that the first three generations of gods occur, in reverse order, in the ‘Hymn to the Muses’: 11–21. For an attempt to explain the reverse order see Muellner 1996: 54–55 with n. 7 (but cf. n. 31 below). Note that the counting of divine generations (first, second, etc.) is a modern abstraction. The Hesiodic narrator himself always speaks in terms of genealogy. Contrast the myth of the races in *Works and Days*, where the counting is his own. Occasionally, the narrator indicates the sequence of children that are born from the same mother (cf. n. 9).

² M.L. West 1966: 38.

ers, to the Gorgon Medusa (276), who, together with Poseidon (278), begets Chrysaor and Pegasus (281), with Perseus acting as an unusual ‘midwife’ (he cuts off Medusa’s head, 280). Chrysaor, together with the nymph Callirhoe, begets Geryoneus (287), who is killed by Heracles (289) on account of his cattle (the tenth of Heracles’ labors). The narrator gives up strict chronology in order to make clear the details of a family tree. Not only does he push down the family line by several generations (when the section on Phorcys and Ceto and their offspring comes to an end in 337, the narrative will return to the Titans Oceanus and Tethys, who belong to the same generation as Phorcys and Ceto), he also accepts the mild paradox that his narrative presupposes the presence of characters who strictly speaking are not born yet: in the present case Poseidon (birth narrated in 456), Callirhoe (351), and Heracles (943). While it is true that the Hesiodic narrator has no difficulties with the presence of such characters, it must also be said that the relevant passages mostly are comparatively short (i.e. summary; see below).³ Some scholars treat passages with ‘unborn’ characters as a form of prolepsis, which is a less than fortunate extension of the concept.⁴ The narrator does not really ‘look ahead’ to the future birth of a character, but simply allows his narrative to jump ahead to a time when the character was born already.

Such chronological ‘inconsistencies’ (if the term is appropriate) occur regularly and at both a larger and a smaller scale. An example of the former is the passage that has just been interpreted. An example of the latter can be found in the passage about the birth of Aphrodite. Cronus cuts off Oceanus’ genitals and throws them behind himself into the sea, while Gaia receives the drops of blood: ‘and as the year went round she bore the powerful Erinyes and the great Giants in gleaming armor with long spears in their hands and the nymphs whom they call Meliai on the boundless earth’ (184–187). After briefly indicating what happens to the blood drops, the narrator sets back the clock, so to speak, by one year and returns to Oceanus’ genitals, from which Aphrodite is born

³ Cf. Meyer 1887: 21–22, who argues that, in the sequence of the *Theogony*’s story, Zeus’ birth precedes Prometheus’, because Hesiod did not want to confront Prometheus with an ‘unborn’ Zeus in this extended scene. The objections by J.S. Clay 2003: 105 n. 12 do not address Meyers’ point about the *length* of the relevant passage.

⁴ Cf. esp. Stoddard 2004: 145–153, similarly her mentor J.S. Clay 2003: 15. Stoddard’s use of ‘prolepsis’ appears to be indebted to Robert [1905] 1966: 163, who, of course, did not know Genette’s model.

(188–192). Whether on a large scale or small one, the narrator adheres to a form of narrative economy in that he can deal with the relevant character or topic once and for all (they usually do not return in the course of the *Theogony*). By sacrificing a strictly chronological narrative and allowing himself to cover the same *temporal* ground twice, he frees himself of the necessity to cover the same *thematic* ground twice.⁵

Perhaps one can even argue that a transparent chronology matters little to him. Not only does he not count the generations (n. 1), there are virtually no temporal markers such as ‘in the meantime’, ‘to return to X’, etc., which would help the narratees orient themselves.⁶ As a result, it is not always easy to determine the exact temporal relationship between events. And if it can be determined (Hecate’s birth, for example, apparently precedes the Titanomachy, *Th.* 424), this determination is usually due to ‘circumstantial evidence’ and not to the narrator’s efforts to clarify the temporal picture. He seems to have little interest in providing this kind of information.⁷

Yet another ‘violation’ of a purely chronological narrative can be found in the well-known story of Prometheus. It is presented as follows (521–534): Zeus bound Prometheus and sent an eagle that would torment him. Later, Zeus allowed Heracles to kill the eagle, thereby giving up his previous grudge against rebellious Prometheus. At this point, the narrator steps back in time and explains (introduced by *kai gar*, 535) in some detail how Prometheus twice attempted to outwit Zeus. At the end of the long section, which includes the creation of Woman (called ‘Pandora’ in *Works and Days*) and its consequences for humankind, the narrative returns to Prometheus’ in chains (616), that is, the approximate point where the narrator had left the chronological sequence of events.⁸ It could perhaps be argued that the bulk of the Prometheus

⁵ This explanation, which in essence is M.L. West’s (1966: 37–39), has been criticised as ‘rather mechanical’ and ‘not very helpful’ (J.S. Clay 2003: 13 n. 3). To my mind, J.S. Clay’s (2003: 12–30) own analysis (indebted to Muellner 1996: 52–93), which cannot be rehearsed here, does not force us to dismiss M.L. West’s insights.

⁶ An exception is the completing analepsis in *Theogony* 617–623. It recounts the Hundred-Handers’ binding by their father Uranus, which contains the explicit temporal marker ‘when first’ (*hōs prōta*).

⁷ This, of course, is not to say he could not do it. Some scholars seem to lean in that direction (e.g. M.L. West 1966: ad 450), but it might be more prudent to say that the Hesiodic narrator shows little interest in maintaining strict chronology.

⁸ ‘Approximate point’, because the present tense in 616 (*erukei*) describes a permanent status and not a specific moment (note that in Hesiod’s version Heracles does not release Prometheus, M.L. West 1966: 313). Whether the eagle is still thought to be alive

scene (535–616) is in fact an explanatory analepsis, which itself is narrated in chronological order. In any case, the events of 535–616 precede those narrated in 521–534.

If the *Theogony* at large is determined by the sequence of divine generations, a similar pattern can be seen at work on a smaller scale too. The order in which the members of one family are born usually determines the sequence in which these members and their respective offspring are taken up by the narrator.⁹ While this usual sequencing of events applies to the bulk of the *Theogony*, the clearest counter-example can be found with the Titans. ‘The order in which they are listed in 133–138 bears no relation to that in which their families are catalogued in 337–511’.¹⁰

As we have seen, the *Theogony* exhibits a good number of passages that do not preserve a strictly chronological order of events. Conversely, neither of the two devices that are normally treated as instances of ‘anachrony’, analepsis and prolepsis, is particularly frequent.¹¹ Probably the most striking example of a completing analepsis is when the narrator relates that Uranus had put the Hundred-Handers in chains (617–623, marked off by ‘when first’; cf. n. 6). Similar, though shorter and therefore less noticeable, is 502 on the binding of the Cyclopes.¹² Elsewhere the analepsis seems to emphasize the difference between two different stages (in which case the analepsis is repeating): while the tide of the battle has turned now in favor of Zeus’ side, the Titans and Olympians had before (*to prin*) been fighting on equal terms for a long time (711–712). Still other instances have the typical function of providing the logical or factual basis of the current situation, for example when Cronus swallows all his children, ‘for he learned from Earth (Gaia) and starry Heaven (Uranus) that it was fated for him to be defeated by his own child, powerful though he was, through the designs

in 616 remains unclear. While the eagle is not specifically mentioned in 613–616, the same passage speaks of Zeus’ anger (*kholos*), which, according to 535, he gives up when he allows Heracles to kill the bird.

⁹ In this connection, the narrator occasionally specifies that a child is the ‘youngest’ (*hoplotatos*): Cronus at 137, the apple-garding serpent at 333, Zeus at 478, etc.

¹⁰ M.L. West 1966: 38–39.

¹¹ The analysis of anachrony in the *Theogony* by Stoddard 2004: 126–161 must be used with caution (cf. above with n. 4).

¹² The anachronies as such are noted by M.L. West 1966: ad 502, 617, who, however, makes compositional problems (ad 502) or a violation of Zielinski’s law (ad 617, similarly ad 711–712) responsible for what he appears to consider a flaw of the narrative. But why should the Hesiodic narrator not be allowed to insert completing analepses?

of great Zeus' (463–465, introduced by *gar*).¹³ All these analepses are internal. External analepsis is *a priori* excluded, because the *Theogony* begins at the very beginning (116).¹⁴

Narratorial prolepsis is rare in the *Theogony* (e.g. 'and he [Zeus] boded evil in his heart for mortal men, *which was to come to pass*', 552). There is, however, a particularly memorable example that resembles the explicitness of Homer's *nēpios*-passages. Instead of the infant Zeus, Rhea has Cronus swallow a stone wrapped in a cloth. The Hesiodic narrator comments: 'the brute (*skhetlios*), not realizing that thereafter not a stone but his son remained, secure and invincible, who before long was to defeat him by physical strength and drive him from his high station, himself to be king among the immortals' (488–491). The explicit narratorial comment in the form of a prolepsis draws particular attention to the imminence of what the narrator arguably considers the most important event of the *Theogony*: Zeus' accession to the throne. In this particular case, it is clear that the prolepsis is internal. In other cases (if there were any), the determination might turn out to be difficult because there is no way of telling where exactly the *Theogony* ends.¹⁵

Examples of actorial prolepsis are not very frequent either. Uranus utters the threat that the wanton behavior of his children, the Titans, will be punished (210). This threat of punishment can be seen as a prolepsis of their defeat in the Titanomachy with subsequent confinement to Tartarus.¹⁶ Likewise, Gaia predicts that the Olympians will defeat the Titans if they enlist the Hundred-Handers as allies (627–628). Elsewhere, it is the vagueness (or even absence) of an actorial prolepsis that is noticeable. Thus when Rhea's parents tell her 'all that was fated to come to pass concerning Cronus the king and his stern-hearted son' (475–476), the prolepsis remains tellingly vague. However, the narratees will have known or guessed that Cronus' time is over.

One of the more prominent temporal features of the *Theogony* is the frequent changes in narrative speed: short and therefore summary

¹³ Cf. 505 (previously, Gaia had hidden thunderbolt and lightning), 894–898 (destiny regarding Metis' children; this narratorial analepsis encloses an actorial prolepsis).

¹⁴ Frazer 1981 ignores this when he argues that passages such as *Theogony* 711–712 precede the time of the main narrative and are therefore in accordance with what he considers Zielinski's law.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g. J.S. Clay 2003: 30.

¹⁶ M.L. West 1966: ad loc.

passages (usually genealogical and often catalogue-style) alternate with fairly extensive stretches of narrative (usually with a non-genealogical subject matter).¹⁷ The latter are perhaps best described as expansion of the former:¹⁸ the narrator decides to add narrative flesh to the bare bones of the genealogical skeleton. Needless to say, some of the most memorable episodes of the *Theogony* fall into this category: Gaia's plan with subsequent castration of Uranus by Cronus and the birth of Aphrodite (154–206*), Zeus' birth and the subsequent overthrow of Cronus (453–506), Prometheus' tricks and punishment (521–616*), the Titanomachy (617–720*), Zeus' fight against Typhoeus (820–868). In several cases (indicated by *), the narrative speed is further slowed down by the insertion of speeches. Contrary to these passages of 'slow' narrative, the instances where the narrative is allowed to jump ahead in time tend to remain summary and not linger on the subject matter. Exceptions are the somewhat longer passages on Styx and Hecate (389–403, 411–449). The latter is in 'omnitemporal' narration.

Changes of narrative speed can, of course, occur within a single episode. Thus in the passage that finally leads to the overthrow of Cronus, the swallowing of the other children is narrated summarily (459–467). Once the narrative is about to reach the climactic moment (signaled by the temporal marker 'but when ... then', *all' hote dē ... tot' epeita*, 468–469), the narrative is slowed down by the insertion of more details. If the tension is increased here by reducing the narrative speed, elsewhere a similar effect of suspense is achieved by inserting a non-narrative element: when Zeus exposes the inequality of Prometheus' meat portions, his angry reaction is postponed by an aetioloical explanation of human sacrifice (556–557), a quite un-Homeric way to handle the climax of a story.¹⁹ Another good example of retardation comes from the Titanomachy. An alliance with the Hundred-Handers will lead to a victory by the Olympians (627–628), and the relevant conversation is treated in some detail (643–664). If the narratees, however, expect that the new allies will cause an immediate victory, their

¹⁷ Some scholars treat only the latter as narrative. For a defence of the genealogies as narratives see Muellner 1996: 56. The difference is simply one of narrative detail, that is, speed.

¹⁸ E.g. Muellner 1996: 60 on *Th.* 154ff. Cf. also the pattern 'initial summary with subsequent elaboration' (→ Homer, → Pindar, → Herodotus) and in general van Groningen 1958: 66.

¹⁹ Cf. *SAGN* 1:30.

expectations are thwarted. A fairly long account of the battle (esp. the various cosmic reactions to it) precedes the actual victory, which is dealt with rather summarily (711–720).

As to the time span that these ‘slower’ passages cover, there is a certain variety. A comparatively short time span can be assumed (the narrator does not say) for the castration of Uranus (159–182). Conversely, the story about Zeus’ birth covers a time span that is somewhat longer, as can be gathered from the temporal markers. Rhea gets to Crete ‘during the black night’ (481). More importantly, a marker of temporal ellipsis shows that ‘within a year’ (493) Cronus is defeated by an apparently grown-up Zeus.²⁰ One year, of course, is a very quick coming of age (typical of gods), but nevertheless makes this account one of the ‘longer’ stories in the *Theogony*. The longest in absolute terms is the Titanomachy, the beginning of which is an analepsis (see above). After they are put in chains by their father Uranus, the Hundred-Handers suffer ‘for a long time’ (623) until Zeus enlists them as allies against the Titans. This fight has been going on ‘for a long time’ (629), which is then specified as ‘ten full years’ (636). It is, however, true that this long period is only mentioned *en passant* in the form of an explicit temporal ellipsis, whereas the actual fighting in alliance with the Hundred-Handers is a comparatively short matter (cf. the treatment of the Trojan war in → Homer). The Hesiodic narrator does not specify its length, but ominously mentions ‘that day’ (*ēmati keinōi*, 667) when the decisive battle took place.

Another prominent feature of the *Theogony* is directly related to its subject matter. Given that the overwhelming majority of the characters are immortal, the narrator inevitably resorts to simultaneous iterative narration when he describes their functions and spheres of activity.²¹ It goes without saying that the same holds true for any narrative that happens to deal with the eternal characteristics of immortal beings (→ Homer, → Homeric hymns, → Callimachus). The sole difference is that the frequency of passages in simultaneous iterative narration is directly related to the prominence of the divine characters in a particular text.²² Therefore, they are comparatively frequent in the *Theogony*. Examples include the workings of the following divinities: Eros (120–122), the

²⁰ Cf. the similar marker in 184 (pregnancy of Gaia).

²¹ For the argument that such passages should nevertheless be treated as narrative see *SAGN* 1:26.

²² For a differentiation of this view see Homeric hymns (→).

Fates (218–222), the Harpies (268–269), Eos (372–373), Hecate (416–420, 426–449), Night and Day (748–757), Death and Sleep (759–766), Cerberus (769–773), Styx (780–787, 793–804), etc.

Apart from these passages, which are not only simultaneous but also contain a certain element of repetition, the bulk of the *Theogony* is characterized by a narrative mode that is subsequent and singulative.²³ Occasionally, however, the narrator resorts to iterative narration. A good example is Uranus repeatedly hiding away his several children (157).²⁴ Even more memorable (due to its horrible implications) is the eagle that ‘fed on his (Prometheus’) liver, which grew the same amount each way at night as the great bird ate in the course of the day’ (524–525). Subsequent narration means that the action is located in the past, which, given the subject matter of the *Theogony*, most likely is a very distant past, but the issue remains vague.²⁵ Conversely, passages in ‘omnitemporal’ narrative mode automatically affect the narrator’s own time too (witness the present tenses). This effect on the narrator’s own time is made particularly clear on one occasion when the section on Hecate’s workings is introduced by the telling remark ‘even now’ (*kai gar nun*, 416).²⁶

The introductory ‘Hymn to the Muses’ (1–115) is best treated separately for the purposes of a narratological analysis.²⁷ A temporal feature that sticks out is the high proportion of simultaneous iterative narration as opposed to subsequent singulative narration. The latter mode, which is overall much more common in narrative literature, pertains to the Hymn’s best-known scene, the *Dichterweihe* (22–35), to most of the passage on the birth of the Muses (53–60), including lines 68–71, which

²³ This poses a problem to the view of Neitzel 1980: 397–398, endorsed by J.S. Clay 2003: 65–66, that *ta t’essomena pro t’eonta* (‘things of the future and things that were aforetime’) in *Theogony* 32 does not refer to ‘Menschliches und Zeitliches’, but designates ‘das ewig Göttliche’ and ‘besagt nichts anderes als *ta aien eonta*’ (‘things that are for ever’), in which case one would expect considerably more simultaneous iterative narration in the *Theogony*. It is true, however, that there is virtually no ‘prophecy’ (i.e. prior narration) either. The correlation between *Theogony* 32 and the *Theogony* itself remains difficult.

²⁴ Marked by iterative *hopōs* + opt. in the subordinate clause and the frequentatives *apokruptaske* and *ouk anhieske* in the main clause. Cf. the frequentative *kaleeske* in 207 (of Uranus calling his children ‘Titans’; the past tense is at first surprising, but can perhaps be explained in such a way that a god bound in chains is as good as dead).

²⁵ Occasionally (291, 390, 667, 836), the narrator singles out a particular day (‘on that day when’). However, the temporal precision is apparent only because these single days are up in the air and not part of a continuum.

²⁶ Cf. the aetiological explanation of sacrifice in 556–557, also *nun* in 942.

²⁷ Cf. *SAGN* 1:25.

narrate that the Muses ascended to Mt Olympus, probably in order to join the other Olympian gods (a typical story element). Conversely, the three previous accounts of the Muses' dancing and singing (2–21, 36–45, 65–67) are presented in simultaneous iterative narration: they are envisaged as happening repeatedly or, perhaps, permanently (hence 'omnitemporal narration').²⁸ The same sense of permanent repetition underlies the passage on the workings of the Muses, especially their good influence on the talent and rhetorical ability of kings and poets (79–93, similarly 94–103).

It has been noted long ago that the subject matter of the Muses' songs bears resemblances to that of the *Theogony* itself in ways that can hardly be coincidental. In the present context of temporal analysis, it is the order of events that deserves particular attention. No one will fail to notice that the Muses, too, 'celebrate first (*prōton*) in their song the august family of gods, from the beginning (*ex arkhēs*), those whom Earth (Gaia) and broad Heaven (Uranus) begot, and the gods that were born from them' (44–46). The sequel of the program is equally straightforward ('second [*deuteron*] they sing of Zeus ..., and again [*autis*] they sing of the family of men and of powerful Giants ...') and it is not impossible to equate it with that of the *Theogony* and the subsequent *Catalogues*.²⁹

The same cannot be said about the sequence of the Muses' 'first' song (11–21). While it reproduces the three divine generations that form the backbone of the *Theogony*, they are in fact in reverse order: Olympians—Titans—Gaia/Oceanus.³⁰ This not only 'contradicts' the order of the *Theogony*, but also that of the Muses' 'second' song. The difference would perhaps not bother us too much, were it not for the fact that both passages are 'omnitemporal'. How can the Muses be imagined as permanently singing a song that is both chronological and in reverse order?³¹ However, the question may be more hairsplitting

²⁸ In the case of the first passage (*Th.* 2–21), this view is not shared by all scholars; for a discussion of the various views see *SAGN* 1:26 with n. 9 (among recent contributions, J.S. Clay 2003: 54 and Stoddard 2004: 130 appear to be unaware of the arguments put forward by M.L. West 1989).

²⁹ M.L. West 1966: ad 44.

³⁰ J.S. Clay 2003: 54–55 points out that *Theogony* 11–21 do not exactly match the three generations of the *Theogony*, but she agrees that they are in reverse order.

³¹ The explanation given by Muellner 1996: 54–55 ('either forward, in performance sequence [45–51, etc.], or backward, in thought sequence [11–21]') fails to address the songs' omnitemporality. Essentially the same objection applies to other explanations of the difference between the sequence of the two songs (e.g. J.S. Clay 2003: 54–56).

than is perhaps justified, and the Muses may simply be imagined as repeatedly singing two songs that display a different order.

Of the passages in subsequent singulative narration the *Dichterweihe* is located in an unspecified past ('once', *pote*; → Homeric hymns, → Pindar) and narrated chronologically.³² The passage on the birth of the Muses comprises an explanatory completing analepsis in iterative narration: 'Nine nights Zeus the resourceful lay with her [sc. Mnemosyne], going up to her holy bed far away from the immortals' (56–57).³³ One temporal marker that sticks out is the explicit temporal ellipsis of the period between conception and birth of the Muses that covers two full lines and nicely steps down from year to season to months to days (cf. schol. ad loc.): 'And when the year came and the seasons turned about and the months passed away and the long tale of days was completed, ...' (*Th.* 58–59).

Works and Days

It has been argued in *SAGN* 1 that the distinction of narrative levels is not immediately evident, because line 10 ('I should like to tell Perses words of truth') can arguably be interpreted in such a way that *Works and Days* is an example of a 'pseudo-diegetic' text (hence 'primary' etc. narrative in inverted commas).³⁴ To this line of interpretation should be added that large portions of the 'primary' narrative are in fact not narrative in the sense that they tell a story, but are perhaps better described as a form of instruction and argumentation.³⁵ In recognition of this difficulty for the present analysis, the following paragraphs will mainly focus on the narrative sections proper within *Works and Days* (esp. the myths of Pandora and the five races).

The myth of Pandora (47–99) is meant to explain why humankind must work for a living.³⁶ Structurally, the passage is perhaps best ex-

³² Curiously, Stoddard 2004: 126 n. 2, 129–136 considers the *Dichterweihe* an analepsis.

³³ Parallels for the notion that the number of children corresponds with the number of intercourses are listed by M.L. West 1966: ad loc.

³⁴ *SAGN* 1:32.

³⁵ These passages are dominated by 'omnitemporal' tenses (present tense, timeless aorist).

³⁶ This is not the place to rehearse the difficult question in which way the Pandora myth does or does not illustrate the assertion in 42–46; cf. e.g. M.L. West 1978: 155; J.S. Clay 2003: 117–119.

plained as ‘initial summary with subsequent elaboration’ (→ Pindar) or ‘header’ (found from → Homer onwards). To put it in the form of a very loose paraphrase: ‘Zeus made life difficult for men because he was angry with Prometheus; let me explain ...’, at which point (49) the elaboration begins. The prevalent narrative mode is subsequent-singulative and the order is essentially chronological (including one analepsis; see below). The whole passage presupposes and hence invites comparison with the Prometheus myth as narrated in the *Theogony*.³⁷ Focusing on the treatment of time, the observation can be made that Hesiod presents very summarily the passage that had been dealt with ‘slowly’ in the *Theogony*: the trick regarding the division of meat (*Th.* 535–564), which is presupposed rather than narrated in line 48.³⁸ Conversely, the theft of the fire is slightly expanded (*Th.* 562–569 vs. *W&D* 47–58) and, equally important, has a different focus: the speech of Zeus (54–58) in which he announces (internal actorial prolepsis) great trouble for Prometheus, on the one hand, and humankind, on the other. While the former of these threats is then passed over in silence (contrast *Th.* 521–525, 613–616), the making of Pandora (as she is called in *Works and Days*) is substantially expanded (*Th.* 570–589 vs. *W&D* 59–99),³⁹ that is, presented in a ‘slower’ narrative mode. Part of this expansion is achieved by a feature that is typical of early Greek poetry: after reporting (in indirect speech, 60–68) Zeus’ instruction to create Pandora, a modern author might simply add or presuppose ‘and they did as told’. Not so the Hesiodic narrator, who recounts the execution in some detail (69–82), which results in a form of repetition.⁴⁰ At the end he adds Pandora’s ‘box’, which, notoriously, has no equivalent in the *Theogony*. One can conclude that the version in *Works and Days* treats the part of the story that affects humankind more slowly than it does the effect on the purely divine realm, for the divine realm takes center stage in the *Theogony*. This phenomenon may well be indicative of the difference in outlook between the two poems.⁴¹ However, one should

³⁷ Philips 1972–1973.

³⁸ This is the *communis opinio* (e.g. M.L. West 1978: ad loc.); for the opposite view that 48 alludes to Prometheus stealing the fire see J.S. Clay 2003: 104, 118 n. 42, with doxography.

³⁹ Cf. J.S. Clay 2003: 104.

⁴⁰ Instruction and execution do not exactly match (cf. M.L. West 1978: ad loc.). Note that, in the *Theogony*, the narrator does not expressly report Zeus’ instruction. He only mentions that Hephaestus created the woman ‘by Cronus’ son’s design’ (*Th.* 572).

⁴¹ J.S. Clay 2003: ch. 3.

perhaps not rule out the possibility that the narrator also avoids covering a second time a topic that had been dealt with in some detail in the *Theogony*.

The section on Pandora includes an explanatory analepsis in subsequent iterative narration (*W&D* 90–92, the anachrony being marked by *prin* ‘formerly’) that describes how, previously, men used to live free of cares, until, that is, Pandora opened the lid of her box. It was, so to speak, a golden age, but the narrator does not specify whether or how it should be equated with the golden race in the myth of the five races (109–201). To these questions I now turn.⁴²

In this passage, the sequence of the races is chronological and describes a gradual decline, exemplified by four metals: gold, silver, bronze, and iron.⁴³ Whereas the sequence of metals is not complete (the fourth race of Demi-Gods is not characterized by one), the counting of races is: first (109), second (127), third (143), fourth (157), and fifth (174). While the first four races represent a former stage and are therefore presented in subsequent narration, the fifth race clearly is the narrator’s own (174–176, including the telling phrase *nun gar dē genos esti sidēreion* ‘for now it is a race of iron’). However, the prevalent narrative mode here is not, as one might expect, simultaneous, but prior (future tenses abound). This phenomenon should not be explained as a permanent or eternal prolepsis (for which → Homeric hymns), for it is expressly stated that this fifth race, too, will eventually be destroyed (180). Likewise, the context makes it clear that the passage is meant to recount how the fifth race *is*, and is not, for example, a warning, a gloomy anticipation or the like. Generic influence of literary models from the East⁴⁴ cannot be ruled out, but the prior narration in 176–201 remains a puzzling feature in the specific context of *Works and Days*.

If the Iron race is identified with the narrator’s own time, the former races are ‘dated’ too. The Golden race is contemporaneous with Cronus’ reign (111). The Silver race, probably created by the Titans,⁴⁵

⁴² J.S. Clay 2003: 104 seems to equate the two golden ages.

⁴³ While the sequence of metals primarily stands for a general decline (this is the *communis opinio*, challenged by Most 1997) and is therefore indicative of an essentially pessimistic outlook, it is remarkable that the Bronze race is characterized by the absence of iron (*W&D* 151). This not only points to a ‘historical’ distinction between ‘Bronze Age’ and ‘Iron Age’, but may well represent a sense of progress that in a way contradicts the pessimism.

⁴⁴ Thus M.L. West 1978: 198.

⁴⁵ The phrase *Olūmpia dōmat’ ekhontes* (128) need not point to the Olympian gods (i.e. Zeus’ generation) but can designate the Titans in Hesiod (M.L. West 1978: ad 110).

is destroyed by Zeus (138), who creates the Bronze race (143–144). He also creates (158) the Demi-Gods (*hēmitheoi*) or Heroes, who are identified with Oedipus and his children and with Helen and the armies at Troy. Needless to say, these ‘dates’ remain rather vague, and so does the time span covered by the story.⁴⁶

The prevalent subsequent narrative mode in these four races is interspersed three times with simultaneous iterative narration, which at first sight is surprising, because the characters in question are not immortal. The narrator, nevertheless, identifies the race in two cases ‘with objects of current popular respect: the Golden race with *daimones* who walk the earth and concern themselves with men’s fortune, the Silver with the occupants of certain venerated graves’.⁴⁷ Similarly, some of the Demi-Gods are said to live now on the islands of the Blessed (170–173).

While the creation and destruction of the individual race is a singulative event and therefore narrated in the corresponding narrative mode, all five sections abound in generalizing statements about the race (‘they did X, they did not do Y’), that is, are presented in iterative narration (112–119, 130–137, 145–151, 161–165, 176–196; the last is in prior narration).

The ‘(auto)biographical’ passages (esp. 633–640, 650–659, 662) provide interesting (if not always unambiguous) background information.⁴⁸ However, their temporal features are straightforward and unspectacular. The prevalent narrative mode is subsequent (located in an unspecified past: *pote*, 635, 651; contrast *kai nun* ‘even now’, 396), singulative (except for 634 on the father’s seafaring, which is iterative) and essentially chronological (two analepses, at 659 and 662, call back to memory the crucial incident of the *Dichterweihe*, narrated in *Theogony* 22–34).

Although it falls outside the narratological scope of the present volume, it may not be superfluous to mention that ‘a considerable part [sc. of *Works and Days*] is taken up by advice relating to the agricultural tasks that arise in the course of the year’ (often referred to as *Bauernkalender* in German scholarship) and ends ‘with an almanac of days in the month that are favourable or unfavourable for different operations’.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ An exception is *Works and Days* 130: the Silver race spent a hundred years with their mothers until they had grown up.

⁴⁷ M.L. West 1978: 181, with a view to *W&D* 121–126 and 140–142.

⁴⁸ The present analysis leaves out the particularly thorny passage about the ‘law-suit(s)’ with Perses (*W&D* 35–39), on which no two scholars can agree.

⁴⁹ M.L. West 1978: 1.

To conclude: while the narratives of both Hesiodic poems display an order that is predominantly chronological, the *Theogony*, in particular, shows that chronological rigor is not the narrator's main goal. This pertains especially, but not exclusively, to stories involving characters who appear only once in the poem. The result is a fair number of passages that are 'out of sequence'. Conversely, the other typical forms of anachrony, narratorial analepsis and prolepsis, are comparatively rare. The narrator's limited concern for exact chronology can also be inferred from the relative scarcity and vagueness of explicit temporal markers. The picture looks quite different in the case of varying the narrative speed. Both poems contain several remarkable instances of acceleration and deceleration, the story of Prometheus being particularly instructive, because the two versions can be compared with each other. In a related matter, the pattern 'initial summary with subsequent elaboration' is a feature that the Hesiodic poems share with many other Greek narrative texts. The unusually high proportion of 'omnitemporal' narration is most likely due to the predominance of immortal characters and the description of their characteristics. Conversely, the unexpected use of prior narration in the passage on the fifth race (*W&D* 176–201) has not yet received a fully satisfactory explanation.