

dramatic choices suggests to me, as it has to others, that the Muses' mission was ethical provocation rather than historical preservation.

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### THE *THEOGONY*

STODDARD (K.) *The Narrative Voice in the Theogony of Hesiod. (Mnemosyne Supplementum 255.)* Pp. xvi + 207. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004. Cased, €85, US\$112. ISBN: 90-04-14002-6.

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This is a thorough and frequently illuminating study of the ways in which narrative framing shapes the presentation of the story in the *Theogony*. The approach is explicitly narratological but the author assumes no familiarity with that approach or its terminology, which she explains clearly and in some detail. The book's origin in a doctoral dissertation is evident at several points, especially in the exhaustive review of previous scholarship, but this latter feature will be useful to those seeking an overview of the literature. The book is unfortunately marred by sloppy editing and contains numerous typographical errors, not only in Greek but in English. At a few points these errors produce incoherent sentences.

Despite its meticulous narratological analyses, the book's approach is basically that of the 'New Criticism' of the mid-twentieth century; in fact, it reveals the fundamental compatibility of these two approaches. As Stoddard puts it, 'We must assume that the author has provided us with all the information necessary to understand his words' (p. 179). She rejects the 'autobiographical' approach to Hesiod, epitomised for her by M.L. West, but does not consider the possibility that his persona is a generic one inherited from oral tradition. Instead she reconstructs in detail the 'personality' of the 'implied author' that is projected by the narrative framing of the work and promises in her conclusion to describe in a forthcoming book the very different narrative persona she sees in the *Works and Days*. In the present book she uses the name Hesiod, without inverted commas or other qualification, to stand for the implied author of the *Theogony*.

On many specific points, I found S.'s narratological approach highly illuminating. She exposes in detail the narrative complexities of the Proem and argues that they contribute significantly to the overarching message of the work, namely that a great gulf separates divine and human spheres. In the Proem there are in effect 'two Hesiods', the character addressed by the Muses and the primary narrator, who is indistinguishable from the implied author; the famous 'oak or rock' comment is deliberately 'jarring' and serves to return Hesiod to his role of external narrator while calling attention to that role. The rarity of 'character-text' (direct speech by the characters) in the poem as a whole gives special emphasis to the Muses' address to Hesiod, which is put in riddling terms to stress the gulf between gods and humans – and, as a corollary, the extraordinary privilege given to Hesiod the implied author, who is commissioned to present an account of the gods' doings to a mortal audience. The other rare occurrences of direct dialogue between characters call attention to the passages in which they occur and to the element of conflict which dialogue is well suited to evoke. S.'s analysis of the emotive vocabulary used by Hesiod the narrator, and her contrast between this vocabulary and that of the *Homeric* narrator, leads to

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the interesting observation that Hesiod ‘speaks as if he were a Homeric character rather than the Homeric narrator’ (p. 121).

Especially compelling is S.’s interpretation of the contest between Zeus and Prometheus, including their mutual ironic compliments. She argues that ‘Prometheus’ trick is much more clever than is generally recognized; its beauty lies in the fact that Zeus cannot choose either portion without losing face’ (p. 101). Even if Zeus knows that the more appealing portion is the worse, as S. argues he does, he cannot choose the *ostensibly* worse portion and maintain his claim to the greatest *timê*. In exchange, by creating Pandora, Zeus creates for mortal men another ‘choice that is no choice’, namely the choice of whether or not to marry. (The latter excellent point is inexplicably buried in a footnote, n. 6 p. 102.)

Harder to follow is S.’s account of ‘anachronies’, narrative manipulations of the time-perspective in which events are presented. Her overall intent is to argue that Hesiod uses ‘carefully-placed “flashbacks” (analepses) and “flash-forwards” (prolepses)’ to emphasise the incommensurability of divine and human time: whereas humans live in ‘linear’ time, the gods’ realm is ‘timeless’. For example, ‘Hesiod [narrates] the Titanomachy as if it had a beginning, a middle, and an end – i.e. as if it had taken place in mortal time’ (p. 139). He then opens the Tartarus passage (720–819) with the anachronous description of the nine days and nights it takes an anvil to fall from heaven to Tartarus. By thus interrupting his linear presentation and ‘measuring space by means of days’, Hesiod seeks to ‘confuse the notion of time itself’ and suggest the disparity between the divine and human experience of time. While I can agree that Hesiod is emphasising the latter disparity, I would suggest that there must be *some* linearity in his view of divine time, or the victory of Zeus, so crucial to the plot, would be in question.

Although S. is not overtly anti-feminist, she uses the generic masculine throughout and does not refer to feminist scholarship on the *Theogony* except to defend Hesiod from the charge of personal misogyny (p. 156) – a charge which, while easily refuted, never represented the core of feminist thinking on the poem. In a book that deals so deftly with narratological subtleties, it is regrettable that no thought is given to the relentlessly masculine characterisation of the narrator. Surely this is an overt feature of his self-presentation that needs to be considered as one element of his relationship to the divine sphere, including the Muses, as well as to his mortal audience.

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## SOME ORPHIC FRAGMENTS

BERNABÉ (A.) (ed.) *Poetae epici Graeci: testimonia et fragmenta. Pars II. Orphicorum et Orphicis similium testimonia et fragmenta. Fasciculus I.* (Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana.) Pp. lxxxvi + 394. Munich and Leipzig: K. G. Saur, 2004. Cased, €112. ISBN: 3-598-71707-5.

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Kern’s *Orphicorum Fragmenta* was comprehensive for its time, and it has served us well for over eighty years. But it has its drawbacks. The information relevant to ‘Orpheus’ is often buried in excessively long excerpts from the Neoplatonists, sometimes several texts not obviously connected are put together under one number,

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