

A PICNIC, A TOMB, AND A CROW
HESIOD'S CULT IN THE *WORKS AND DAYS*

NATASHA BERSHADSKY

I. THE DISCREET CHARM OF HESIOD'S PICNIC

HESIOD'S "PRESCRIPTION FOR THE PERFECT PICNIC" (to use Martin West's phrase)¹ is one of the most alluring passages in the *Works and Days* (582–596). The voice of the poet conjures an enchanting space that is untroubled by the heat at the height of summer and undisturbed by any pursuit apart from blissfully abundant eating until the point of total contentment. As the passage draws to a close, the only motion left is the gentle stirring of the wind and the flowing of water and wine. The sound effects are exquisite: the fivefold alliterative assonance of *a* in ἀντίον ἀκραέος ἀενάου ἀπορρύτου ἀθόλωτος (596–597) frames a nearly anagrammatic phonetic figure *TRePSanTa PRoSōPa*.²

Ἦμος δὲ σκόλυμός τ' ἀνθεῖ καὶ ἡχέτα τέττιξ
δενδρέω ἐφεζόμενος λιγυρὴν καταχεύετ' αἰοιδὴν

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¹ West 1978:54.

² The repetition of the *a*-sound is noticed by Petropoulos (1994:87). We can observe a similar sound effect in Sappho *fr.* 2, describing another delightful landscape of shadow and running streams (compared later in the discussion with the passage from the *Works and Days*). In line 5, ἐν δ' ὕδωρ ψῦχρον κελάδει δι' ὕσδων 'herein cold water purls through branches,' the repetition of consonants (*n, d, d, r, r, n, d, d, d, n*) is overlaid with a recurrent vowel pattern of *u-o*: ὕδωρ, ψῦχρον, ὕσδων. I am grateful to the anonymous reader of *HSCP* for drawing my attention to this parallel.

585 πυκνὸν ὑπὸ πτερύγων, θέρεος καματώδεος ὥρη,
 τῆμος πιόταταί τ' αἶγες, καὶ οἶνος ἄριστος,
 μαχλόταται δὲ γυναῖκες, ἀφαιρότατοι δέ τοι ἄνδρες
 εἰσὶν, ἐπεὶ κεφαλὴν καὶ γούνατα Σείριος ἄζει,
 ἀυαλέος δέ τε χρῶς ὑπὸ καύματος· ἀλλὰ τότε ἤδη
 εἶη πετραίη τε σκιὴ καὶ βίβλιος οἶνος
 590 μάζα τ' ἀμολγαίη γάλα τ' αἰγῶν σβεννυμενάων
 καὶ βοῶς ὑλοφάγοιο κρέας μή πω τετοκυῖης
 πρωτογόνων τ' ἐρίφων· ἐπὶ δ' αἶθοπα πινέμεν οἶνον,
 ἐν σκιῇ ἐζόμενον, κεκορημένον ἦτορ ἐδωδῆς,
 ἀντίον ἀκραέος Ζεφύρου τρέψαντα πρόσωπα·
 595 κρήνης δ' ἀενάου καὶ ἀπορρύτου ἢ τ' ἀθόλωτος
 τρὶς ὕδατος προχέειν, τὸ δὲ τέτρατον ἴμεν οἴνου.

When the golden thistle is in bloom and the loud-
 sounding cicada,
 perched on a tree, pours down his clearly-heard song
 585 incessantly from under his wings, in the season of
 summer, with all its labors,
 then it is that goats are fattest, wine is best,
 women are most wanton, and men are weakest;
 for Sirius dries up their heads and their knee-caps,
 and the skin gets dry from the heat. At this time, at
 long last,
 let there be a shady place under a rock, wine from
 [Thracian] Biblos,
 590 barley-cake soaked in milk, the milk of goats that are
 reaching the end of their lactation,
 and the meat of a cow fed in the woods, one that has
 not yet calved,
 and of first-born kid goats. That is the time to drink
 bright-colored wine,
 sitting in the shade, having one's heart sated with food,
 turning one's face toward the cooling Zephyr.
 595 Then, from an ever-flowing spring that flows down-
 ward, untainted by mud,

Pour a drink that is three parts water, but make the fourth part wine.³

As it happens, the charm of this passage is accompanied by some striking peculiarities. The first problem is that the passage disrupts the chronological sequence of agricultural labor. The preceding episode in the poem is harvest (571–581), the subsequent one winnowing/threshing (597–599). However, according to the supplied astral cues the feast should happen *later* in the summer than the threshing. A prompt for the beginning of the threshing is the heliacal rising (i.e. the appearance at dawn) of Orion: “when strong Orion first appears” (εὖτ’ ἄν πρῶτα φανῆ σθένος Ὠρίωνος, 598).⁴ The feast, on the other hand, takes place in the period around the heliacal rising of Sirius (whose pernicious diurnal presence overhead causes the parching heat), which indicates a date approximately a month later.⁵ What is the rationale for moving the feast forward to this untimely position in the poem?

Even more incongruous is the very subject of the passage, repose in a shady location. As we have seen, the episode anomalously appears midway into one of the year’s most labor-intensive and strategically important periods. There is heavy emphasis on the necessity of exertion at harvesttime.⁶ In particular, it is necessary to “avoid sitting down in shady places” (φεύγειν δὲ σκιερὸς θώκους, 574). West comments: “It seems that the injunction to work hard ... and not to go sitting in the shade (574–576) led the poet’s thought straight on to the grateful antithesis ...”⁷ Such linking of ideas by opposition, while not impossible, would suggest a lax construction. Can we find a more accurate explanation for the swift shift from labor to leisure?

³ All translations from the *Works and Days*, unless noted otherwise, are by Gregory Nagy. The text is cited from the edition of Solmsen, Merkelbach, and West.

⁴ West 1978:309.

⁵ The time-span depends on how we define the rising of a constellation. West (1978:309) gives June 20 as the date of the heliacal rising of Betelgeuse, Orion’s brightest star. Sirius’ heliacal rising is at the end of July. See West 1978:54, 309; Detienne 1994:100–101, nn9, 10; Nicolai 1964:117, Hamilton 1989:49–50. Edwards (2004:152–153) places the feast before the threshing, following Mazon 1914:128; Edwards’ view, however, is invalidated by the fact that he ignores Sirius’ heliacal rising as a chronological cue.

⁶ See Petropoulos 1994:74–75.

⁷ West 1978:54.

Finally, the summer menu of barley-cakes made with milk, meat of a forest-grazing cow, and the delicate flesh of kid goats (590–592) prompted a tart reaction from a medieval commentator. Tzetzes doubted that Hesiod’s brother, the supposed addressee of these cooking suggestions, would be able to afford such a splurge.

Πῶς δὲ, ὦ Ἡσίοδε, ὁ πρὸ μικροῦ περιλεσχήμενος σὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πένης καὶ ἀγοραῖος ἔξει τοιαύτας τροφὰς, ἃς μόλις ἔξουσι καὶ οἱ τῆς μοίρας ὄντες τῆς κρείττονος; βοὸς ἀγελαίας καὶ ἀτόκου κρέας καὶ πρωτοτόκων ἐρίφων; εἰ μὴ που αἴφνης αὐτῷ τὰ τοῦ Ἴωβ παρεσύρησαν θρέμματα, ἢ αἱ τοῦ Ἐριχθονίου ἀγέλαι προσεπεγέροντο, ἢ πᾶσα σχεδὸν ἡ οὐσία Τριταίχμου τοῦ Βαβυλωνίου τοῦ Ἀρταβάζου υἱοῦ ...

How then, Hesiod, will your brother—who a little while ago was a lounge loafer, a poor man, and a low fellow—have such victuals that even those who are his betters hardly have? The meat of a herd-heifer that has not yet calved, and of the first-born kid-goats? Perhaps the possessions of Job were suddenly swept away to him, or he was credited with the herds of Erichthonius, or possibly with the whole property of Tritaichmus the Babylonian, Artabazos’ son ...?

Tzetzes then exhibits both his rancor and his erudition, gained from Herodotus, by enumerating the wealth of Tritaichmus: a copious daily tribute of silver, sixteen thousand mares and eight hundred stallions (not counting the war-horses), and a myriad of hounds.⁸

Tzetzes’ surprise, somewhat bitter, helps us to appreciate the gastronomic eccentricity of the passage,⁹ an eccentricity obscured by the modern habit of casual meat consumption. We should look for reasons behind this delightful outburst of Hesiodic hedonism.

⁸ Tzetz. Schol. Hes. *Op.* 591.

⁹ The “gourmet” quality of the provisions was noted by Beall 2001:163, Edwards 2004:148.

II. ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODS

The idiosyncrasies of the passage will be my starting points in the exploration of the feast's fare and setting, and of the episode's place in the overall structure of the *Works and Days*. I hope to show that the episode has pervasive ritual and mythical connotations. I will further suggest a previously overlooked source that may offer an insight into the feast scene: the traditions of Hesiod's vita.

The point that myths about Hesiod can be germane to our understanding of the feast scene is central for my argument and constitutes a key methodological issue, so a brief exposition of its logic is necessary. We do not possess any direct historical data about the emergence of the *Works and Days*. However, the internal analysis of the text suggests that the poem was composed and performed orally throughout a long period of its development.¹⁰ We can try to make an educated guess about the specifics of this process, namely, about the historical circumstances of the poem's formation and transmission. A milieu of the poet's cult constitutes a plausible candidate for a locus of the poem's perpetuation.¹¹ There are historically attested cases in which a transmission of the poet's biographical tradition and poetry are tied to the site of the poet's hero cult.¹² Obviously, the framework of a cult is not a neutral setting for the perpetuation of the poem: the myths and rituals of the cult would be immensely important for the audience and would affect the poem's reception. Furthermore, since the oral transmission of the poem involves a constant recomposition-in-performance, we may expect that references to various features of the cult would be incorporated into the poem and could conceivably acquire a great thematic prominence.¹³

¹⁰ Nagy 2009:273–274. Stoddard 2004:1–33 provides a good overview of the literature on the subject.

¹¹ On poets' cult in ancient Greece, see Nagy 1999:279–308; Clay 2004.

¹² Archilochus' cult on Paros is the key example. Nagy 1990b:50–51, 2009:307; Clay 2004:81–82, 95.

¹³ Nagy 2009:282–283.

The existence of Hesiod's cult (or, rather, cults) is strongly suggested by our sources.¹⁴ Moreover, Gregory Nagy asserts that "an ideology reflecting the cult of the poet Hesiod is built into the poetry of Hesiod."¹⁵ Several extant accounts of Hesiod's life, death, and burial can be connected to the worship of Hesiod in particular locations. I propose to compare these accounts to the details of the feast scene that (as I hope to show) are likely to have cultic significance. A correspondence between the feast scene and a particular myth about Hesiod would provide an argument for anchoring the poem at a certain stage in its development to the historical reality of one of Hesiod's cults. If the text reveals affinities with the myths traceable to different cult centers, an examination of the relation between such allusions may offer us a glimpse of the poem's diachronic profile and, ultimately, an outline of its history.

III. (EC)CENTRIC LEISURE AND THE GOLDEN AGE

The chronological irregularity, whereby the feast is placed before the threshing, can be contrasted with the symmetrical features of the episodes before and after it. The harvest (571–581) and the threshing/storage (597–608) are united in a ring composition by the recurrence of several words.¹⁶ On a more general level, the feast passage is embedded in two rings: the episodes of the inner one (571–581, 597–608) relate to the harvest of cereals, while those in the outer one (564–570, 609–614) are concerned with vines.¹⁷

Such a framing of the feast scene—at the expense of the temporal continuity of the narrative—implies that the episode is thematically central. The feast constitutes the apex of the year, the exact opposition to the hardships of the winter scene (504–560).¹⁸ Yet the passage is chronologically deviant, occupationally deviant, even climatically

¹⁴ Nagy 2009:304–308; Compton 2006:76–86; Beaulieu 2004; Clay 2004:63, 75; Burkert 1983:203–204; Lefkowitz 1981:4,6,10; Brelich 1958:322.

¹⁵ Nagy 1990b:48.

¹⁶ βούς (581, 608), δμῶς (573, 608), βίος (577, 601), οἶκος (576, 601): Petropoulos 1994:74–75.

¹⁷ Nicolai 1964:116–117, Riedinger 1992:137.

¹⁸ Nelson 1998:56–57.

deviant, with its sharp shift from the environment that “drains, sears, and emasculates”¹⁹ (586–588) to the comforts of shade and coolness (589–596). Are there any episodes in the poem to which the feast scene can be connected thematically?

Indeed, there are three notable instances of ease and abundance: the Golden Race (109–120), the heroes inhabiting the Isles of the Blessed (167–173), and the city of just men (225–237).²⁰ The human condition of toil and distress is suspended in these situations, and the people enjoy contentment and leisure (a partial one in the case of the just city). Furthermore, both the Golden Race and the inhabitants of the just city are said to take pleasure in feasts (115, 231). The contrast that we have observed in our passage, between the scorching heat “in the toilsome season of summer” (θέρεος καματώδεος ὥρη, 584) and the satisfied relaxation by the stream formally parallels the opposition between the Iron Age, in which people never rest from “toil and distress” (καμάτου καὶ οὐζύος, 177), and the festive existence of the Golden Race.

The similarity of the feast episode to scenes of the idyllic after-life (and, by extension, to the conditions of the Golden Age²¹) grows stronger if we examine descriptions of blissful posthumous existence beyond the *Works and Days*. They tell of clement weather, beautiful vegetation, a mild breeze. More specifically, it is Zephyr (cf. *Op.* 594) that refreshes men—or, as it has been argued, *reanimates* them²²—in Elysium (*Od.* 4.567–568).²³ Pindar’s Isles of the Blessed feature gusts of wind breathing from Okeanos, flowers of gold (*Ol.* 2.71–72), meadows of red roses, shady trees, and sacrifices of oxen (*fr.* 129.3–4, 12).²⁴

¹⁹ Lamberton 1988a:128.

²⁰ These passages are connected by the formula καρπὸν ... ἔφερε/φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα—“the grain-giving earth bore/bears them fruit” (117, 172–173, 237). See Knox 1989:15; Nelson 1998:129, 216n22, with further references. Bonnafé 1984:246 observes the similarity between the feast scene and the just city.

²¹ Nagy 1999:168–171 shows that the Hesiodic depiction of the Golden Age is homologous with the traditional descriptions of the Isles of the Blessed as transmitted by Pindar. See also Brown 1998.

²² Nagy 1999:167–168 (especially §28n2), 196; cf. Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008:31–33.

²³ Zephyr also continually engenders and ripens fruits in the paradisiacal garden of Alcinous on Scheria (*Od.* 7.118–119).

²⁴ See also a new elegiac fragment by Simonides (22 West²), discussed by Mace 1996.

Aristophanes' *Frogs* portrays the initiates down in Hades dancing in groves and meadows full of flowers (*Ran.* 440–449); descriptions of the afterlife found in the 'Orphic' gold tablets also refer to springs, meadows, groves, and the availability of cool water to the thirsty dead.²⁵

The feast scene is situated in the real world: only a golden thistle, rather than the Pindaric fruits and flowers of gold, is blossoming.²⁶ However, the parallels to the Golden Age/Isles of the Blessed are sufficiently strong for us to presume that such associations are built into the passage. We will return to the discussion of their significance. At the moment let us change our focus and examine the list of the picnic's victuals that so much riled Tzetzes.

IV. MEATS, WATER, AND WINE

Tzetzes' bewilderment appears justified when we consider the Ancient Greek diet. Beef was eaten rarely, and suckling kids, at least in the Classical period, were regarded as an expensive treat.²⁷ However, the flare-up of opulence in the poem acquires a different hue as soon as we remember that meat-eating in the Greek world was inseparably connected with sacrifice. There was, in the words of Marcel Detienne, an "absolute coincidence of meat-eating and sacrificial practice."²⁸ Thus, the feast in the *Works and Days* cannot be reduced to an extravagant "picnic:" what is described is a sacrificial meal. Indeed, the specifications about the cow—forest-grazing, not yet calved—are best

²⁵ On the connection between the gold tablets and Pindar's depictions of the afterlife, see Deonna 1939; Zuntz 1971:370–374; Burkert 1985:293; Lloyd-Jones 1985:245–279; Edmonds 2004:47–48; Calame 2007:45–47; Bernabé and Jiménez San Cristóbal 2008:25–36, 174–177, 196–197.

²⁶ "Golden thistle" is a standard translation for σκόλυμος (LSJ). However, at least in the later period other thistles could also be called σκόλυμος. For example, Pliny describes σκόλυμος as having a purple flower which then turns white (*HN* 20.262–263). On the possibility of σκόλυμος being a generic name for various edible thistles, see Dawkins 1936:6.

²⁷ Dalby 1996:60, 2003:213,160. Dalby (1996, 91) also believes μάζα ἀμολγαίη (590) to be analogous to ἄμης 'milk cake,' which he describes as the "most delicate and elaborate" way of preparing cereal. See also Dalby 1996:240.

²⁸ Detienne 1989:3. See also Casabona 1966:80; Robert and Robert 1970:511; Berthiaume 1982:65; Vernant 1989:25–26; Zaidman and Pantel 1991:23; Pierce 1993:234–240 (and 236n63 for earlier literature); Ekroth 2002:291.

paralleled not by self-indulgent gastronomic suggestions²⁹ but by common ritual stipulations regarding the gender, age, color, and other characteristics of an animal to be sacrificed on a particular occasion.³⁰ A familiar example comes from the *Odyssey*. Circe instructs Odysseus concerning a sacrifice to the dead in the Underworld (*Od.* 10.527–528):

ἔνθ' ὄϊν ἀρνειὸν ῥέζειν θῆλύν τε μέλαιναν
εἰς Ἔρεβος στρέψας

Sacrifice a young ram and a black female sheep there,
turning them toward Erebus ...

A few lines earlier, an exact parallel to the Hesiodic cow appears: Odysseus is to promise that, upon his return to Ithaca, he will sacrifice to the dead a cow that has not calved (στεῖραν βοῦν, *Od.* 10.522=11.30).³¹

Another detail that finds its best parallel in the realm of ritual is an instruction concerning the pouring of water and wine (596):

τρὶς ὕδατος προχέειν, τὸ δὲ τέτρατον ἴμεν οἴνου.

Pour a drink that is three parts water, but make the
fourth part wine.

²⁹ The iambic poet Ananius (conventionally dated to the sixth century BC) recommends a shrimp in a fig-leaf in the spring, she-goat in the fall, and mutton in the summer, when “the cicadas chirp” (ὅταν θέρος τ' ἦι κήχεται βαβράζωσιν, fr. 5.6). He considers a fattened ox to be delicious both night and day (Anan. fr. 5.9–10). Athenaeus, citing Ananius' poem, concludes with the following remark: “I quoted Ananius at length because I believe that he offers this sort of advice to lecherous individuals” (τῶν τοῦ Ἀνανίου πλεόνων ἐμνημόνευσα νομίζων καὶ τοῦτον ὑποθήκας τοῖς λάγνοις τοιαύτας ἐκτεθήσθαι, Ath. 7.282c, trans. Olson 2008). Dalby 1996:117 is uncertain about Ananius' degree of seriousness; however, the poem's fastidious gluttony seems to be an inversion of normative values characteristic of iambic poetry. Cf. Nagy 1990a:396–400 on Archilochus; particularly relevant for the present discussion is Nagy's observation of the analogy between the notion of *iambic* and Bakhtin's concept of *carnival*, with its desire to recapitulate the Golden Age: Nagy 1990a:398. Fittingly, Teleclides' comic play *Amphictyons* (cited in Ath. 7.268a) portrayed the Golden Age as a glut of self-producing foods, and among rivers of broth and streams of sauces, little milk-cakes (ἀμητίσκων, Telecl. fr. 1.12), flying into people's throats, make an appearance.

³⁰ See Graf 2002:119.

³¹ The meat of kids (ἐρίφων, 592) also twice appears in the *Odyssey* in a formulaic description of a sacrifice (*Od.* 17.242, 19.398).

The verb χέω regularly denotes the pouring of a libation,³² and προχέω is attested in the same sense (Hdt. 7.192.2). Accordingly, Evelyn-White translated the line as referring to a libation: “thrice pour an offering of water, but make a fourth libation of wine.” West rejects this translation for the following reasons. First, the time for libations prescribed in the *Works and Days* is sunrise and sunset (339, 724), not midday. Second, libations are “not such great fun that they deserve a place in this catalogue of pleasures.” Finally, the gods would not “want quite so much water, although it appears beside mead and wine in the libation to the dead in *Od.* 11.26–28.”³³ This logic is not water-tight. What if this episode is *not* just a catalogue of pleasures? What if the gods do want water sometimes,³⁴ or the recipient of the libation is not a god but, say, a dead hero?

A passage that bears numerous correspondences with the pattern of drink-pouring in the *Works and Days* is a famous instruction that the chorus gives to Oedipus about his libation to the Eumenides (*OC* 469–484). The Chorus tells Oedipus to fetch sacred drink-offerings from a perennial spring (ἱεράς ἐξ ἀειρύτου χοᾶς / κρήνης, 469–470). Then he should pour the drink-offerings while facing the dawn (χοᾶς χέασθαι στάντα πρὸς πρώτην ἔω, 477). Three libations (lit., “three streams”—τρισοᾶς γε πηγᾶς, 479)³⁵ are to be poured: the first two with pure water, the third with a mixture of water and honey (481). When the ground (described as μελάμφυλλος, ‘darkened by foliage,’ 482) has received the libation, Oedipus is to utter a prayer (484).

This ritual diverges to a degree from the action in the *Works and Days*: the libation in Sophocles is wineless, while the Hesiodic passage mentions wine; Oedipus is told to face East, while the recipient of the instruction in the *Works and Days* is described as “turning his face toward the cooling Zephyr” (ἀντίον ἀκρᾶέος Ζεφύρου τρέψαντα πρόσωπα, 594), i.e. to the West. Nevertheless, the two passages have

³² Casabona 1966:279–297.

³³ West 1978:308. West himself admits that if line 596 is taken as a recipe for wine-mixing (1:3), the resulting drink is oddly weak: νηφάλιος καὶ ἀδρανῆς κρᾶσις, “sober and ineffective mixture,” in Plutarch’s words (*Quest. Conv.* 657c9). Dalby 1996:243.

³⁴ See Henrichs 1983:96–97.

³⁵ Kamerbeek 1984:84.

much in common. In both, the water, drawn from a perennial spring, is poured out a specific number of times, and after that a different liquid is poured. The action is set in a shady location, and the orientation of the actor (East vs. West) is indicated.³⁶

The similarity suggests that the pouring of liquids in the *Works and Days* is likely to be a libation. However, a combination of actions that is overtly portrayed as an integrated ritual gesture in the *Oedipus at Colonus* (pouring libations while facing West) is not presented as a unified act in the *Works and Days*. In the same way, no explicit reference to animal sacrifice appears in the Hesiodic passage, and we can only infer its presence from the mention of the meats. We will consider the problem of this opacity later on. Now I would like to address two different questions. If there is a sacrifice and a libation described in the feast scene, what is their occasion? And where do they happen?

V. THE DOG STAR AND THE WIND

In our search for the potential occasion of the feast, let us first examine a fragment by Alcaeus (fr. 347a Campbell), closely related to lines 582–588 of the passage from the *Works and Days*.

τέγγε πλεύμονας οἴνω, τὸ γὰρ ἄστρον περιτέλλεται,
 ἃ δ' ὥρα χαλέπα, πάντα δὲ δίψαισ' ὑπὰ καύματος,
 ἄχει δ' ἐκ πετάλων ἄδεα τέττιξ ...
 ἄνθει δὲ σκόλυμος· νῦν δὲ γύναικες μιαρώταται,
 λέπτοι δ' ἄνδρες, ἐπεὶ <δὴ> κεφάλαν καὶ γόνα Σείριος
 ἄσδει

Drench the lungs with wine, for the star returns,
 the season is harsh, all is thirsty from the heat,

³⁶ For the importance of orientation in a ritual offering compare εἰς Ἦρεβος στρέψας “turning [the sheep] toward Erebus” (*Od.* 10.528), cited above. The action of sitting down (cf. ἐζόμενον in *Op.* 593) also can be incorporated into the prayer act: on Scheria, Odysseus comes to Athena’s sacred grove, sits down, and makes a prayer (*Od.* 6.321–323). Another detail that may bear a trace of cultic connotations is Bibline wine (589). It is perhaps significant that the earliest non-fragmentary reference to it (apart from the *Works and Days*) appears in a description of a libation to Apollo (*Eur. Ion* 1195). On the suggested places of origin of the wine, see West 1978:306, Gow 1951:250–251.

the sweet cicada shrills from the leaves,
 the golden thistle flowers, and now women are the
 foulest,
 and men weak, since Sirius parches the head and
 knees.³⁷

The two poems, with their shared diction and metrical variation, have to derive from a common precursor.³⁸ Petropoulos extends this argument, suggesting that modern Greek harvest songs, featuring motifs of female desire and a singing cicada, are descendants of the same tradition.³⁹ Petropoulos then retrojects the modern practice into the Hesiodic passage, assuming it to be a harvest celebration.⁴⁰ It may seem straightforward to connect the scene with the celebration at the end of harvest,⁴¹ yet, as Lamberton notices in his review of Petropoulos' book, the chronology of the feast episode prevents it: "the Dog Days fall nearly two months after the grain harvest in Hesiod's reckoning."⁴² The peculiar order of the episodes, in which the feast anachronistically intrudes between the harvest and the threshing, and the cursory treatment of the threshing in the narrative⁴³ also argue against perceiving the feast as a happy finale to the regular agricultural sequence.

Richard Martin offers different comparanda for the passages of Hesiod and Alcaeus: seasonal songs in general, and in particular the tradition of Russian calendar-songs (*koljadki*), whose references to seasonal abundance can function as wish-incantations. He proposes that a seasonal song was adapted by the sympotic poetry of Alcaeus and the didactic poetry of Hesiod.⁴⁴ The idea that the Hesiodic passage "quotes" a song of an incantatory nature, whose aim is to alleviate the

³⁷ Trans. Martin 1992, modified.

³⁸ Hooker 1977:80–81; Nagy 1990a:462–463; Martin 1992:23; Petropoulos 1994:17, 81–82. Ar. Pax 1159–1171 and Av. 1088–1100 are further thematically connected compositions.

³⁹ Petropoulos 1994.

⁴⁰ Petropoulos 1994:75.

⁴¹ Cf. Kledt 2000:1003n6.

⁴² Lamberton 1996:79. Nelson 1998:50 emphasizes that haste is normally expected at the transition from harvest to threshing.

⁴³ Nelson 1998:56.

⁴⁴ Martin 1992:23.

hardships and augment the joys of the season, is particularly appealing in light of the sharp atmospheric shift that occurs in the scene. Right after the last image shared by the Hesiodic passage and Alcaeus' song—the parching of the flesh by Sirius—there is a transition, marked by the expression ἀλλὰ τότ' ἤδη, “at this time, at long last” (588), to the portrayal of a “world characterized by extraordinary abundance,” a “refuge” from the detrimental influence of the Dog Star.⁴⁵ The implicit incantatory force of the seasonal song surfaces in the optative εἴη (589): let there be shade, wine, meat, breeze.

We possess a mythical account (and references to an attendant ritual) that is concerned precisely with mitigating the deleterious effect of Sirius.⁴⁶ The tale's season is the Dog Days. Sirius burned in the sky (ἔφλεγε, Ap. Rhod. 2.516), causing a plague. Aristaeus was commanded by Apollo, his father, to go to Ceos. On Ceos, he sacrificed to Sirius and to Zeus. As a result, the cooling Etesian winds started to blow, and the plague stopped. Since then the Etesian winds have blown for forty days after Sirius' rising. The Ceans kept the practice of sacrificing before the heliacal rising of Sirius. They and other Greeks render divine honors to Aristaeus.⁴⁷

The motifs of harmful Sirius, a beneficent wind, and an alleviation of blazing heat all occur in the feast scene. We can hypothesize that the occasion of the animal sacrifice and libation in the Hesiodic passage is a festival similar to the Cean one, whose aim is to bring relief during the Dog Days of summer.

VI. THE JOYS OF ALSOS

In what kind of locale does the feast happen? There is a rock that provides shade (589), and a perennial spring (595). Further, if we interpret the reference to the cicada (582–583) not only as a temporal cue but also as a detail of the setting, we can add to our list of landscape

⁴⁵ Lamberton 1988a:128.

⁴⁶ For the list of ancient references to Sirius' fever-inducing quality, see West 1978:262; Detienne 1994:9, 114.

⁴⁷ Ap. Rhod. 2.516–527, Diod. Sic. 4.82.1–3; see Burkert 1983:109–111 for a discussion and further references. For the cults of Aristaeus, see Lloyd-Jones 1977.

elements a tree on which the cicada is perching. Perhaps there is more than one tree, since cicadas are commonly associated with wooded locations.⁴⁸ In an Iliadic simile, chirping cicadas are situated in the woods (*Il.* 3.151–152):

τεττίγεσσιν ἑοικότες οἳ τε καθ' ὕλην
δενδρέω ἐφεζόμενοι ὄπα λειριόεσσαν ἰεῖσι

... similar to cicadas who, through the woods,
perching on trees, send out their lily-like voice.⁴⁹

The logic by which a forest sprouts from a casual mention of a cicada can appear precarious. Yet, when we apply the same reasoning in a parallel case, it works accurately. In the *Shield*, the season of a fight between Heracles and Cycnus is described in the following way (*Sc.* 393–397):

ἦμος δὲ χλοερῶ κυανόπτερος ἠχέτα τέττιξ
ὄζω ἐφεζόμενος θέρος ἀνθρώποισιν αἰίδειν
ἄρχεται, ᾧ τε πόσις καὶ βρῶσις θῆλυς ἔέρση,
καὶ τε πανημέριός τε καὶ ἠῶος χέει ἀυδήν
ἴδει ἐν αἰνοτάτῳ, ὅτε τε χροῖα Σείριος ἄζει

When a dark-winged loud-sounding cicada, perched on a
green
shoot, starts to *sing* to men
of *summer*—his food and drink the delicate dew—
and both all day long and at the break of dawn he *pours*
his voice
in the most terrible heat, when *Sirius dries up the skin* ...

Formulaic similarities with our passage are prominent. This description may look just like a seasonal vignette, but the text explicitly identifies the setting of the fight as a sacred grove of Apollo's sanctuary at Pagasae (*Sc.* 70, 99–100). So, at least in this instance it appears that

⁴⁸ Arist. *Hist. an.* 556a21–22. See Petropoulos 1994:83–84.

⁴⁹ Nagy (1994:421n22) suggests that the tradition of a drinking song reflected in our Hesiodic passage and Alc. fr. 347 is also evoked in these lines.

the reference to the cicada can function both as a temporal and local marker, evoking a wooded location in high summer.

The mention of Apollo's sanctuary brings us to our next subject. We have observed some similarities between the feast episode and the descriptions of the Golden Age and the Isles of the Blessed. However, another group of setting descriptions bears a closer resemblance to the Hesiodic scene. One may think of a sheltering shade of roses, and a cold stream purling amid apple branches in Sappho's invocation of Aphrodite (Sapph. fr. 2); green glens, alive with nightingales, in the choral eulogy of the Eumenides' sacred grove (OC 668–693); a verdant resting spot on the bank of Ilissus—a “holy place of some nymphs and of Achelous”—enthusiastically described by Socrates (*Phdr.* 230b–c). All these beautiful locales happen to be sanctuaries, and I propose that the setting of the feast in the *Works and Days* is also a sacred precinct.⁵⁰

The nexus of a spring and trees, usually in the form of a sacred grove (*alsos*), repeatedly appears in conjunction with sanctuaries both in archaic and classical literature and in the reality of the cult.⁵¹ The

⁵⁰ These descriptions of scenery, as well as the feast scene itself, are typical examples of a *locus amoenus* (Schönbeck 1962:61–87; Elliger 1975:180–181, 289–290; Thesleff 1981; Bonnafé 1984:247, 1998:6–7, 18, 25–26, 52–56, 81; for the classical definition of *locus amoenus*, see Curtius 1953:195). Thesleff (1981:31) asserts an association between the *locus amoenus* and religious experience. Cf. Motte 1973. Kledt (2000:1010) also remarks that “in der Antike die Beschreibung eines *locus amoenus* quasi automatisch den Gedanken an heilige Plätze hervorrief, an denen man zu Ehren der Götter Feste feierte.” However, Thesleff (1981:42) singles out the Hesiodic feast and Archilochus' Cologne Epode as principal examples of “secularized” *loci amoeni*. Since the publication of Thesleff's article, it has been shown that the setting of the Cologne Epode is a sacred precinct of Hera (Miralles and Pòrtulas 1983:136n16, 17; Nagy 1990a:399–400), which calls for a reassessment of the notion of a “secular” *locus amoenus*. A comprehensive examination of the relation between *loci amoeni* and sacred space is beyond the boundaries of this paper, but as a preliminary hypothesis I would like to suggest that the *locus amoenus* is always a numinous topos in archaic and classical literature. *Loci amoeni* figure as settings of the Golden Age and of posthumous paradise, a scenery found in the margins of the world, landscapes of myth and sites of sanctuaries. I am particularly interested in shifts of register that often characterize representations of a *locus amoenus*, such as an alternation of idyllic and ominous (Segal 1974, Petrone 1998:180), or a modulation between seduction and initiation (Calame 1992 and 2007). The *locus amoenus* appears to have a high potential for multilevel diachronic signification, shuttling between the realms of myth and ritual.

⁵¹ Some literary examples are *Il.* 2.305–307; *Od.* 6.291–292, 17.205–211; *h. Ap.* 3.383–385; Sappho fr. 2; *Ibyc.* fr. 286; *Bacchyl.* 11.118–120; *Soph.* OC 668–693; *Eur. Ion* 112–127;

connection between sacred precincts and groves was so strong that the word *alsos* was at some point metonymically extended in poetic speech to denote any sanctuary.⁵² A lushness of vegetation could serve as a tell-tale sign, identifying the area's sacred status. For example, from the profuse growth of laurel, olive and vine, Antigone deduces that the site to which she has led Oedipus is sacred (OC 16–17).⁵³ Moreover, the natural beauty of a locale could be perceived as a manifestation of its numinous resident.⁵⁴ A piece of striking (if late) evidence for such a mentality is Philostratus' *On Heroes*. The setting of the *On Heroes* is the vineyard and gardens around the tomb of the hero Protesilaos. There are springs, whose water is deliciously varied in taste, and tall trees, whose branches intertwine, garland-like (5.3); the site is permeated by the "divine" (θεῖον, 3.4) scent of plants. As the Phoenician visitor (and the reader) is introduced to the mystery of Protesilaos' cult by a vine-dresser who works the land around the tomb, it becomes apparent that the marvelous smell of the flowers derives from the sweetness of the hero's breath (10.2, 11.3). The beauty of the precinct "becomes the ultimate epiphany of the cult hero."⁵⁵

The *On Heroes* brings us back to the topic of the Golden Age. The Phoenician visitor at once discerns that the life-style of the vine-dresser has qualities reminiscent of the existence of the Golden Race (*Her.* 2.1).⁵⁶ Similarly, practices and beliefs evocative of the Golden Age are attested in association with some sacred groves.⁵⁷ In a recent

Pl. *Phdr.* 230b–c; *Theoc.* 1.1–11, 5.45–59, 7.135–157, 25:18–22. See also Burkert 1985:85–86; Edlund 1987:54; Jost 1994:217; Pedley 2005:39. Water and springs in particular were inherently sacred: Cole 1988:161, Segal 1974:21. The archaeologist John Camp observes: "Wherever there is water one can expect to find a sanctuary." See Hägg, Marinatos, and Nordquist 1988:172. Springs in sanctuaries: Cole 1988. Springs as a habitat of nymphs: Larson 2001:8–10.

⁵² οἱ δὲ ποιητὰὶ κοσμοῦσιν, ἄλση καλοῦντες τὰ ἱερὰ πάντα κἄν ἢ ψιλὰ, *Str.* 9.2.33 (quoting Pind. fr. 51a as an illustration). *Alsos* is the most common type of sacred place in Homer. See Polignac 1995:16; Sourvinou-Inwood 1993:4–5; Vermeule 1974:105–106, 108. On *also* in general, see Bonnechere 2007, Birge 1994, Graf 1993, Birge 1982.

⁵³ On the ways of recognizing a sacred space in antiquity, see Cole 2004:40–44.

⁵⁴ Cf. Bonnechere 2007:26.

⁵⁵ Nagy 2001:xxvii–xxviii; cf. Whitmarsh 2004:245.

⁵⁶ Maclean 2004:254–255, Whitmarsh 2004:242–243.

⁵⁷ Graf 1993.

article, Bonnechere argues that the link with the Golden Age should be extended to most Greek sacred groves. He describes the groves as “sites of exceptional purity, irreducible to the nature-culture opposition because their nonculture was that of the Golden Age and its plenty.”⁵⁸ The environment of an *alsos*, with its pleasures of shade, fresh water,⁵⁹ and a leisurely, unproductive pastime, perfectly fits the description of the feast’s venue and the scene’s associations with the Golden Age. The fact of meat-consumption, as we have discussed, gives an additional indication that the episode is set in a cultic space.⁶⁰ Cumulatively, the menu and the venue strongly suggest that the feast takes place in a sanctuary.

VII. A ROCK OR *THE* ROCK? THE SETTING OF THE FEAST AND HESIOD’S *VITAE*

At this point a new issue arises: is the scene a generic depiction of a stylized festival, or does it portray a specific situation? Let me rephrase the question slightly: the scene has been indubitably perceived as generic for a long period of the poem’s existence; but could there have been a particular referent (or referents) at a certain point?

The depiction of the setting lacks strong individuating details. A spring and trees, as we have seen, are typical features of sacred precincts. The only other element of the landscape is a rock or, possibly, a cave, in the shadow of which the feast takes place (πετραίη τε σκιή, 589). Rocks and caves are less common in sanctuaries than are springs and groves, but they are still numerous.⁶¹ The description of the feast’s fare, on the other hand, is suggestively precise. How does one decide whether the scene is generic or specific? I propose that this question can be tackled by taking into consideration plausible scenarios of the poem’s creation and transmission.

⁵⁸ Bonnechere 2007:27. Cf. Nagy 1999:189–190 on sacred precincts named Elysium and Isles of the Blessed.

⁵⁹ Jacob 1993:43.

⁶⁰ See Marinatos 1993:228 on ritual dining in sanctuaries. She argues that sacrificial meals were “the primary activity which took place in sanctuaries.”

⁶¹ For example, *Od.* 17.208–211. See Burkert 1985:85, Ustinova 2009.

The feast scene appears to contain a cluster of cultic elements. Hesiod also was a figure of cult, and, as I said earlier, it is probable that the sites of his cult played a crucial role in the formation and dissemination of Hesiodic poetry. A cultic setting would exert a powerful influence on the poetry, making the references in the poem gravitate toward the local sacred realia. Therefore, I suggest that even a relatively broad correspondence between the cultic details of the feast scene and a local myth about Hesiod deserves careful scrutiny, since we could be encountering a potential site of a junction between Hesiodic poetry and Hesiod's cult, and a clue concerning the history of the poem's development.

Let us review what is known about the transmission of the *Works and Days*, and about various locales of Hesiod's cult. We have a few pieces of evidence pointing toward Helicon and the city of Thespieae as sites of perpetuation of the poem. Pausanias was shown a lead tablet with the text of the *Works and Days* (minus the first ten lines) by the Hippocrene spring (Paus. 9.31.4). He also reports that the oldest tripod dedicated on Helicon was the one received by Hesiod for his victory in a poetic contest in Chalcis (Paus. 9.31.3). Sandwiched between the mention of the tripod and the tablet is Pausanias' remark that the people of Thespieae celebrate a festival and games called Mouseia in the grove of the Muses. Calame suggests, accordingly, that, in parallel to the Muses, Hesiod was honored at the spring of Hippocrene with a cult focusing on his victory in Chalcis.⁶² Nagy further connects the reception and transmission of Hesiodic poetry at Thespieae with the activity of an association called "co-sacrificers (*sunthutai*) to Hesiodic Muses," attested in an inscription (IG VII 1785, 3rd c. BC).⁶³

These indications that Hesiod's cult on Helicon and in Thespieae was associated with the perpetuation of Hesiodic poetry, and of the *Works*

⁶² Calame 1996:51, 54; cf. Nagy 1999:296, Brelich 1958:321–322. Calame (1996:51) also observes that the attribution of the foundation of Ascra and the first sacrifice to the Muses to the same characters, Otus and Ephialtes, reinforces the idea of Hesiod's heroic status on Helicon. Lamberton (1988b:493) argues that the Mouseia was instrumental in the formation of the persona of Hesiod. He believes, however, that the Mouseia originated in the late 3rd c. BC (Lamberton 1988b:496–497).

⁶³ Nagy 1990a:29n66.

and *Days* in particular, corroborate the working hypothesis of this paper about the role of a poet's cult in the formation and transmission of his or her poetry. The interface between the cult of Hesiod on Helicon and Hesiodic poetry is, thus, an important question deserving a separate investigation.

The locus of Hesiod's cult on Helicon presents an obvious candidate for the referent of the feast scene. However, can we point to a locale that would fit the setting of the feast in the environs of the Valley of the Muses? There are, certainly, streams, groves and caves there;⁶⁴ however, to the best of my knowledge, no ancient source singles out any particular grove, spring, and rock/cave on Helicon as belonging to an integral whole. In particular, no tradition describing Hesiod's life or cult mentions a constellation of a rock, spring, and grove connected to Hesiod on Helicon. We need to extend our search for a referent of the feast scene to other sites of Hesiod's cult.

An important locus of Hesiod's cult was in West (Ozolian) Locris. The myth of his death in Locris is attested as early as Thucydides, who describes the Athenian forces camping in the Locrian "precinct of Nemean Zeus, in which Hesiod the poet is said to have been killed by the people of the district, it having been foretold to him that he should suffer that in Nemea" (ἐν τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Νεμείου τῷ ἱερῷ, ἐν ᾧ Ἡσίοδος ὁ ποιητῆς λέγεται ὑπὸ τῶν ταύτη ἀποθανεῖν, χρησθὲν αὐτῷ ἐν Νεμέᾳ τοῦτο παθεῖν, Thuc. 3.96.1). The *Contest of Homer and Hesiod* preserves a fuller version of the myth. After his victory in the poetic contest in Chalcis, Hesiod sails to Delphi, where the Pythia greets him with an assurance of world-wide fame and an admonition to avoid the grove of Nemean Zeus:

ὄλβιος οὗτος ἀνὴρ ὃς ἐμὸν δόμον ἀμφιπολεύει,
 Ἡσίοδος Μούσησι τετιμένος ἀθανάτησιν·
 τοῦ δ' ἦ τοι κλέος ἔσται ὄσσην τ' ἐπικίδναται ἠώς.

⁶⁴ There is the grove of the Muses and Hippocrene (as well as numerous other streams on Helicon). Among other sights on the approach to the grove, Pausanias also mentions a small cave sanctuary of Linus, to whom heroic honors were rendered in conjunction with the cult of the Muses (Paus. 9.29.6). On the connection of the ancient sites in the Valley of the Muses and Helicon with modern topographical and archaeological features, see Wallace 1974 and Aravantinos 1996.

ἀλλὰ Διὸς πεφύλαξο Νεμείου κάλλιμον ἄλσος·
κεῖθι δέ τοι θανάτοιο τέλος πεπρωμένον ἔστιν.

Cert. 219–223

This man is blessed who attends my house,
Hesiod, honored by the immortal Muses;
his fame will reach as far as the Dawn spreads.
But beware the beautiful grove of Nemean Zeus,
For there the fulfillment of death is ordained for you.⁶⁵

To keep away from Nemea, Hesiod goes to Oenoe in Locris, not recognizing that it is a region sacred to Nemean Zeus. There he is suspected by his hosts of seducing their sister; they kill him and throw his body into the sea. Dolphins pick his body up and bring it to the shore at Rhium at the time of a festival.⁶⁶ Plutarch's narrative follows the same lines, adding that Hesiod was killed in the vicinity of the temple of Nemean Zeus, and was buried there after the dolphins brought his body ashore.⁶⁷ At this point it is pertinent to cite Gregory Nagy's observation that the rescue of Hesiod's body by the dolphins is "a narrative scheme that is particularly appropriate to a cult hero in whose honor a festival is founded."⁶⁸

We gain further information about the Locrian burial place of Hesiod from Pausanias' narrative about the transfer of Hesiod's bones from Locris to Orchomenus (Paus. 9.38.4).⁶⁹ The Orchomenians were

⁶⁵ The oracle abounds in the vocabulary of hero cult. On *olbios*, 'blissful', as a description of a cult hero in an afterlife, *telos* as 'fulfillment' or 'ritual of initiation' and *timē* as the 'honor of cult', see Nagy 1990a:244–249, 1999:118§1n2.

⁶⁶ *Cert.* 215–236 Allen, with a reference to Alcidas' *Museum* as a source in line 240. On the traditional nature of Alcidas' narrative, see Nagy 2009:299.

⁶⁷ *Plut. Conv. sept. sap.* 162d–f.

⁶⁸ Nagy 1990b:50, 2009:306. Nagy compares the rescue of Hesiod's body with a myth about dolphins rescuing the body of Melicertes/Palaimon, in whose honor the Isthmian games were instituted. Cf. Burkert 1983:203–204. The suggestion that the story of Hesiod's Locrian death is an aetiology for a ritual is as old as Nilsson 1906:383–384.

⁶⁹ Hesiod had a hero cult in Orchomenus, but his tomb was situated in the agora (Tzetz. *Proleg.* in *Hes. Op.* p. 92 Colonna), so the Orchomenian site of worship is not directly relevant for the analysis of the feast scene. For the discussion of the Orchomenian cult and its relation to the *Works and Days*, see Section X below.

suffering from a plague,⁷⁰ and were told by the Delphic oracle that their sole remedy was to bring the bones of Hesiod to Orchomenus from the region of Naupactus.⁷¹ The Pythia stated that the location of the bones would be revealed by a crow. Upon disembarking, the envoys saw a rock (πέτρα) in the vicinity of the road, and on the rock a bird.⁷² They found Hesiod's bones in the cleft of the rock (καὶ τοῦ Ἡσιόδου δὲ τὰ ὄστα εὗρον ἐν χηραμῶ τῆς πέτρας).⁷³

We have one more text that portrays Hesiod's burial, this time in supernatural terms, and alludes to cultic honors for him in Locris (*Anth. Pal.* 7.55):

Λοκρίδος ἐν νέμει σκιερῶ νέκυν Ἡσιόδοιο
 Νύμφαι κρηνίδων λούσαν ἀπὸ σφετέρων
 καὶ τάφον ὑψώσαντο· γάλακτι δὲ ποιμένες αἰγῶν
 ἔρραναν ξανθῶ μιζάμενοι μέλιτι·
 τοίην γὰρ καὶ γῆρυν ἀπέπνεεν ἔννεα Μουσέων
 ὁ πρέσβυς καθαρῶν γευσάμενος λιβάδων.

In a *shady glade* of Locris the Nymphs bathed
 Hesiod's body with water of their *springs*
 and raised up a tomb; there *goatherds* sprinkled *milk*

⁷⁰ Cf. the story of Aristaeus stopping the plague (Ap. Rhod. 2.516–527).

⁷¹ Compton 2006:84 lists analogous instances of the relocation of heroes' bones meant to ward off a catastrophe. Cf. Blomart 2004.

⁷² Remarkably, Lucian (*De mort. Peregr.* 41) in painting a picture of a false hero—who is *not* going to be accompanied by signs of heroic status in death—tells that there will be no cicadas or crows at his tomb: 'Εννόει τὸ λοιπὸν οἶα εἰκὸς ἐπ' αὐτῶ γενήσεσθαι, ποίας μὲν οὐ μελίττας ἐπιστήσεσθαι ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον, τίνας δὲ τέττιγας οὐκ ἐπάσεσθαι, τίνας δὲ κορώνας οὐκ ἐπιπτήσεσθαι καθάπερ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἡσιόδου τάφον, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα. "Imagine what is likely to happen in his honor hereafter, how many bees will not settle on the place, what *cicadas* will *not* sing upon it, what *crows* will *not* fly to it, as they did to the *tomb of Hesiod*, and so forth!" Trans. Harmon 1996, mentioned in Clay 2004:173n105. It is tempting to interpret the juxtaposition of cicadas and crows as an additional indication of the affinity between the feast scene and Hesiod's Locrian tomb.

⁷³ Pausanias' account belongs to the tradition that situated the (first) tomb of Hesiod in the precinct of Nemean Zeus. Plutarch's narrative provides an explicit connection, portraying a situation in which the Locrians conceal the exact location of Hesiod's tomb in the precinct of Nemean Zeus, in order to thwart the efforts of the Orchomenians, who, according to an oracle that they have received, desire to carry the relics away. Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 162e–f. See Section X below for further discussion.

mixing it with yellow honey.
 For such voice the old man breathed forth,
 having tasted the pure streams of the nine Muses.

The beautiful shady grove of Nemean Zeus, springs of the Nymphs, a rock or a cave keeping Hesiod's bones, and libations of goat milk: this combined description of Hesiod's Locrian tomb tallies well with the feast scene.⁷⁴ The elements—the rock, the springs and the grove—coalesce into the landscape of Hesiod's death, entombment and worship. The idyllic setting appears to be carrying Hesiod in its midst.

VIII. HESIOD AT THE FEAST

I have conjectured that the site of Hesiod's tomb in Locris is a referent of the feast scene. The sacrifice and libation that are obliquely invoked in the episode belong, I suggest, to a religious festival honoring Hesiod as a cult hero. Below I provide some evidence strengthening this proposition, and examine how my interpretation resonates with the major themes of the *Works and Days*.

First I would like to substantiate the claim that the feast scene, involving the eating of meat and the libation of wine, fits with our current conceptions regarding the rituals of hero worship. I cite the conclusion of a recent treatise on sacrifice in hero-cults: “The basic ritual in hero-cults was a sacrifice at which the worshippers ate.”⁷⁵ *Thusia*, a sacrificial banquet, was equally common and central in the worship of both heroes and gods.⁷⁶ Wine libations in hero-cults also seem to be the normal practice:⁷⁷ wineless libations, usually cited as a

⁷⁴ The requirement that the cow whose meat is consumed in the feast scene be ‘fed in the woods’ (ὕλοφάγοιο, 591) can be connected to the wooded surroundings of the temple of Nemean Zeus in Locris, as is suggested by the very term Nemean (from νέμος ‘wooded pasture, glade’) and by “νέμεϊ σκιερῶ” of the epigram (7.55). For sacrificial animals grazing in the sanctuaries, see Lupu 2005:27–28, with further references.

⁷⁵ Ekroth 2002:341.

⁷⁶ Ekroth 2002:169, 212–213, 287–301, 303–304; Burkert 1985:205; Nock 1972:575–602.

⁷⁷ Examples in Brelich 1958:162–163; Jameson, Jordan, and Kotansky 1993:70; Ekroth 2002:179n213 and 220–221; Lupu 2005:372–373.

sign of a cult with a chthonic character, were rarely poured to heroes.⁷⁸ Offerings of cakes (sometimes later consumed by the worshippers) are abundantly attested in hero-cults.⁷⁹ Libations of milk in hero-cult are attested relatively rarely,⁸⁰ but they are mentioned, for example, in Plutarch's description of the honors to the heroic war dead at Plataiai.⁸¹

The representation of Hesiod as a dead hero finds a counterpart in the corpus of other archaic poets: Nagy shows that, in certain poems of Alcaeus and Theognis, the voice of the poet can be dramatized as speaking out of the tomb.⁸² Hesiod's farming expertise may also be linked with his cult hero status: the very ability of Hesiod to give advice concerning the proper ways of working the land can be compared with a special knowledge of agriculture possessed by the hero Protesilaos, who is portrayed by Philostratus as helping and instructing his worshipper in farming (*Her.* 2.8; 11.3–5).

As we have seen, Philostratus describes the devotee of Protesilaos as leading a life comparable to the Golden Age (*Her.* 2.1). The evocation of the Golden Age in the feast scene, with its clement weather and plentiful food, can be understood as a parallel phenomenon: the presence of a hero transforms the Iron Age into the Age of Gold. I construe the anachronistic placement of the feast scene as intentional and iconic, indicating a holiday, a momentary break in the chain of succes-

⁷⁸ Henrichs 1983:98–99, esp. n58; Ekroth 2002:317. The semantics of libations to heroes are still not well understood (Ekroth 2002:130), and a study is necessary that would explore the significance of variations in substances and proportions. For example, Henrichs 1983:99 states that unmixed wine was standard for heroes (and for the dead), while Jameson, Jordan, and Kotansky (1993, 72) assume that wine mixed with water was normal in libation to heroes and gods.

⁷⁹ Jameson, Jordan, and Kotansky 1993:69; Jameson 1994:36, 37–39, 43, 46; Van Straten 1995:97; Ekroth 2005:276,281,283. μάζα, 'barley-cake', served as a customary offering to Trophonios (Paus. 9.39.11) and Ino (Paus. 3.23.8). On the modes of offering cakes, see Gill 1991:7–15; Jameson 1994:37–39.

⁸⁰ On libations of milk see Graf 1980 and Burkert 1983:57n35, both with further references.

⁸¹ Cited in Henrichs 1983:99n58, Ekroth 2002:102. In Philostratos' *On Heroes*, the vine-dresser describes his offering milk to Protesilaos at the time of a full moon in the early spring. The vinedresser presents the milk, saying "these are the streams of the season; drink!" (τὸ τῆς ὥρας νᾶμα, σὺ δὲ πῖνε). As soon as he leaves, the milk disappears in the blink of an eye (*Her.* 11.9).

⁸² On Theognis: Nagy 1985:68–81, 1990b:273–274. On Alcaeus: Nagy 1993.

sive tasks.⁸³ The festival cannot stop the cycle of the works and days, restoring the Golden Age forever; but it can suspend the cycle for a short while, giving to the participants a brief glimpse (and a taste) of immortality.

The festival is positioned in the poem at the crucial moment of the agricultural cycle, between harvest and threshing. Such arrangement can indicate the notional importance of the festival for the successful completion of the crop-gathering. The festival also implicitly resolves the *neĩkos* with Perses. At the start of the poem, Hesiod admonishes Perses that there is little time for quarreling until the harvest is stored inside; only when Perses is satiated (κορεσσάμενος, 33), can he start wrangling over others' property (30–34). This advice to postpone the litigation until the harvest is over implies that after reaching prosperity Perses would no longer be interested in instigating a court case.⁸⁴ Indeed, the description of the threshing, whose diction echoes the language of Hesiod's admonition,⁸⁵ is not followed by the reexamination of the *neĩkos*. Instead, the feast scene portrays a person who is satiated with food (κεκορημένον ἦτορ ἔδωδῆς, 593) and is clearly not in a litigious mood. I submit that the festival scene settles the *neĩkos* with Perses by rendering the fairest possible judgment: the proponent of justice, Hesiod, receives a hero cult. Thus the conflict between *dikē* and *hubris*, between Hesiod and Perses,⁸⁶ spills over from the poem into the real world, and is settled in the real world. As long as Hesiod receives his fair share, a hero cult (whose focal event is the summer festival), the city (or cities) rendering the cult would remain governed by *dikē*. The continuation of Hesiod's hero cult is understood to be equivalent to the upholding of *dikē*—one guarantees the other, and one is impossible without the other.⁸⁷

⁸³ Cf. Burkert's formulation that festivals "interrupt and articulate everyday life." Burkert 1985:225.

⁸⁴ Edwards 2004:41.

⁸⁵ Compare βίος ἔνδον ἐπηετανός and Δημήτερος ἀκτῆν (31–32) with Δημήτερος ... ἀκτῆν (597), βίον (601), ἔνδοθι (601), ἐπηετανόν (607).

⁸⁶ On Hesiod and Perses as exponents of, respectively, *dikē* and *hubris*, see Nagy 1990b:74–75.

⁸⁷ Cf. Nagy 1990b:69 on the instructions in the latter part of the *Works and Days*: "moral and ritual correctness are consistently made parallel."

Nagy makes a case that the *Works and Days* “dramatizes the actual passage of time required for the working of *Dikē*,” ultimately *dikē* prevails in the poem.⁸⁸ The triumph of justice, celebrated in the festival scene, is embedded in the fabric of the year. The conception of *dikē* is dynamic and cyclical: the performance of the yearly cycle of works, crowned with the harvest and the festival in honor of Hesiod, brings the Golden Age back; once the round of works and days starts over again, the Iron Age struggle between *dikē* and *hubris* resumes.⁸⁹

Another important theme present in the feast scene is the fraught relationship between men and women. During the Dog Days, male and female desires are out of balance: “women are most wanton, and men are weakest” (μαχλόταται δὲ γυναῖκες, ἀφαιρότατοι δὲ τοὶ ἄνδρες, 586).⁹⁰ Detienne and Vernant show that the reference to the parching female desire at the peak of summer is part of Hesiod’s systematic representation of the woman as “a fire created by Zeus as a counterpart to the fire stolen by Prometheus.”⁹¹ The presence of the cicada is particularly appropriate in this context, since according to one of the myths the cicada is what remains of Tithonos, consort of Eos, “withered counterpart of her eternally renascent desire.”⁹² However, the feast in the shadow of the rock remedies the situation, providing “a refuge [...] from women, whose lust is represented as an exceptional threat at this brutal season.”⁹³

⁸⁸ Nagy 1990b:66, 67.

⁸⁹ *Dikē* vs. *hubris* is a central theme of the Myth of the Generation: the Golden Generation is marked by *dikē*, while the Iron Generation is characterized by an ongoing struggle between *dikē* and *hubris*. Vernant 1965:20, 24–26; Nagy 1999:154–55.

⁹⁰ On the subject of balance and measure in the *Works and Days*, see Slatkin 2004.

⁹¹ Vernant 1989:67. A woman can sing her man without a torch (704–705). See Detienne 1994:120–122, 191n111 and 112; Vernant 1966:256n1, 1989:67–68; Oliensis 1991:121; Nagy 1994:421–423.

⁹² Oliensis 1991:121. Interestingly, Rosen (1990:107–109) draws a parallel between the cicada and Hesiod.

⁹³ Lamberton 1988a:128. Pliny reports that ingestion of *scolymos* with wine has an aphrodisiac effect, citing the passages of Hesiod and Alcaeus (fr. 347a) as corroborating evidence (*HN* 22.86–87); thus the drinking song about male impotence during high summer might implicitly contain advice for regaining potency. Lowrie 1991:421; Nagy 1994:422.

It is interesting to juxtapose the protective quality of the feast scene, sheltering men from deleterious female desire, with the story of Hesiod's death. Hesiod dies on account of a woman: the two brothers who host him in Locris kill him in the belief that he has seduced their sister. Different traditions exist concerning Hesiod's culpability: one claims that he was wrongly accused, another holds him responsible.⁹⁴ Aristotle's *Constitution of the Orchomenians* (fr. 565 Rose) belongs to the latter strain, reporting that the poet Stesichorus is Hesiod's son from that liaison.⁹⁵

At this point I will revisit the hero Aristaeus, who saves the Ceans from the plague caused by the Dog Star. Aristaeus' son is Actaeon, and Diodorus Siculus makes the following proto-structuralist comment about the significance of the dogs in Aristaeus' life (Diod. Sic. 4.82.3):

τοῦτο δ' ἂν τις συλλογιζόμενος εἰκότως θαυμάσαι τὸ τῆς περιπετείας ἴδιον· ὁ γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν κυνῶν ἰδὼν τὸν υἱὸν τετελευτηκότα, οὗτος τῶν κατὰ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἄστρων τὸ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον προσηγορίαν καὶ φθείρειν νομιζόμενον τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἔπαυσε, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις αἴτιος ἐγένετο τῆς σωτηρίας.

Now the man who ponders upon this event may reasonably marvel at the strange turn which fortune took: for the same man who saw his son done to death by the dogs likewise put an end to the influence of that star which, of all the stars of heaven, bears the same name and is thought to bring destruction upon mankind, and by so doing was responsible for saving the lives of the rest.⁹⁶

We can, in the same way, “reasonably marvel” at the theme of women in Hesiod's life, poetry, and cult: the poet is undone by a woman,

⁹⁴ Paus. 9.31.6, Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 162d; *Certamen* 234 Allen. O'Sullivan (1992:98–99) argues that the account acknowledging Hesiod's guilt is a more archaic version of the story; Compton (2006:82n28) disagrees.

⁹⁵ Lefkowitz 1981:4–5 notes a correspondence between this account of Stesichorus' birth and *Op.* 270–274.

⁹⁶ Trans. Oldfather 2000.

whereas the summer festival helps to keep the destructive feminine power in check.⁹⁷

IX. FURTHER AFIELD IN THE *WORKS AND DAYS*

I have attempted to demonstrate that the biographical tradition concerning Hesiod's death in Locris can be fruitfully considered as a context for the feast scene. Logically the next question is, are there other passages in the *Works and Days* in which connections with the myths about Hesiod may be present? I believe that there are, indeed, such passages. I shall provide a brief outline of my reasons for selecting two episodes of the *Works and Days* as potential foci for further research; I shall consider one more instance of a possible interaction between the poem and narratives of Hesiod's cult in greater detail in the next section.

My first example is a passage from the winter scene (526–535):

οὐ γάρ οἱ ἥελιος δείκνυ νομὸν ὄρμηθῆναι,
 ἀλλ' ἐπὶ κυανέων ἀνδρῶν δῆμόν τε πόλιν τε
 στρωφᾶται, βράδιον δὲ Πανελλήνεσσι φαίνει.
 καὶ τότε δὴ κεραοὶ καὶ νήκεροι ὕληκοῖται
 λυγρὸν μυλιόωντες ἀνὰ δρία βησσήεντα,
 φεύγουσιν, καὶ πᾶσιν ἐνὶ φρεσὶ τοῦτο μέμηλεν,
 οἷ σκέπα μαιόμενοι πυκινούς κευθμῶνας ἔχουσι
 κὰκ γλάφυ πετρῆεν· τότε δὴ τρίποδι βροτοὶ ἴσοι,

⁹⁷ Cf. Nagy 1990b:4 on the connection between the catastrophe of a myth and the regularity of a ritual. A particularly interesting parallel to the figure of Hesiod in the *Works and Days* and *vitae* emerges from the discussion of the hero Lityerses in Karanika 2009. The song of Lityerses, as stylized in Theoc. 10.40–55, contains advice concerning harvest and threshing, and bears numerous similarities to the poetry of the *Works and Days*. In myth, Lityerses is a reaper who kills those who lose in a reaping competition with him. He is killed by Heracles, and lamented in harvest songs (Phot. *Lexicon* λ 227, 228, and scholia to Theoc. 10.41). Particularly interesting is Karanika's suggestion that Lityerses' agricultural advice in Theoc. 10.40–55 contains implicit references to his death. An analogous tradition of harvest songs, lamenting the death of a hero and giving agricultural advice, may be in the background to the episodes of the harvest and the feast in the *Works and Days*. Athenaeus (10.415b) describes Lityerses as a glutton: this mythical detail finds a correspondence on the level of ritual in the abundance characterizing the Hesiodic feast.

οὐ τ' ἐπὶ νῶτα ἔαγε, κάρη δ' εἰς οὐδας ὀράται·
τῷ ἵκελοι φοιτῶσιν, ἀλευόμενοι νίφα λευκὴν.

The sun shows him [the octopus] no range to head
towards.

Instead, it comes and goes over the community and the
city of dark-skinned men.

But it shines more tardily for *all the Hellenes*.

Then it is that the creatures of the forest, horned and
unhorned alike,

gnash their teeth pitifully as they flee through the
woods of the glens.

For all of them there is one thing in their hearts:

how to find some cover in cozy nooks

in a hollow rock. Then, like a *three-legged one*,

whose back is broken down and whose head looks down
upon the ground,

like such a one they range about, trying to escape the
white snow.

The depiction of the animal hordes, running through the woods, gnashing their teeth, is wonderfully strange. But it is their destination that is really remarkable, in light of the previous discussion: it is a rocky hollow (γλάφυ πετρῆεν, 533). The shadow-producing rock of the feast-scene turns out to have a counterpart.⁹⁸ It is most appealing to interpret the rock in line 589 and the rocky hollow in line 533 as relating to the same cave-like structure, apparently enjoying its own microclimate year round, cool in the summer and warm in the winter. The cave's ultra-sheltering nature, and its role as the focus of a centripetal motion, suggest its special status. The occurrence of the rocky hollow in the winter episode strengthens my interpretation of the shadow-giving rock in the feast scene as a locus enclosing Hesiod's bones; furthermore, the description of the animals' flight to the cave

⁹⁸ On the symmetry between the summer (582–596) and winter (504–563) scenes, see Nelson 1998:56. I note in particular the mention of first-born kids (πρωτογόνων δ' ἐρίφων, 543) and of an ox (βοός, 541, 544) in the winter scene, replicating the meats eaten in the summer feast. Cf. West 1978:295.

gains an unexpected possibility of cultic significance. Interestingly, Bonnechere mentions in his discussion of the Golden Age-like characteristics of the sacred groves that “wild beast were often imagined to live there comfortably instead of struggling for life.”⁹⁹

The animals who first run toward the cave are next portrayed as imitating a three-legged man in his wanderings. Hamilton observes that there are only two occurrences of τρίπους in the *Works and Days*: the three-legged man and a tripod that Hesiod wins in the contest in Chalcis (657). A further link between the winter passage and the contest episode is forged by the mention of pan-Hellenes (Πανελλήνεσσι, 528) and Hellas (Ἑλλάδος, 653), the only two references to Greece or Greeks in the poem. Hamilton concludes that the passages must be thematically connected.¹⁰⁰ More specifically, it is attractive to conjecture that the man with a tripod and the wandering three-legged man, emulated by the animals, are one and the same: Hesiod himself.

In my second example my analysis starts off from a very small detail. Introducing the description of the contest in Chalcis, Hesiod claims that he never sailed over the sea in a ship, apart from a short crossing from Aulis to Euboea (650–651). The surprising element is a focus particle γε, following the mention of a ship (650):

οὐ γάρ πώ ποτε νηὶ γ' ἐπέπλων εὐρέα πόντον

for never yet have I sailed in a ship γε over the wide sea

West comments that γε cannot have restrictive force in this case, since the statement about never sailing in a *ship* absurdly implies the possibility of a shipless sailing: “as if there were other means of crossing the sea.”¹⁰¹ For usual mortals, indeed, ships are the only option; however, Hesiod’s biographical tradition furnishes an episode of his sailing the sea by other means.

⁹⁹ Bonnechere 2007:28.

¹⁰⁰ Hamilton 1989:72–73.

¹⁰¹ West 1978:319. On the frequent restrictive force of γε, see Denniston 1954:114–115, 140. Some examples of the restrictive γε in the Homeric epics are *Il.* 4.372, 17.27, 19.218, 20.211, 21.291, 23.77; *Od.* 14.512, 24.251. The particle γε again appears after the word ‘ship’ in line 660, enclosing in a ring composition the description of Hesiod’s victory in the poetic contest in Chalcis.

After Hesiod is killed, his murderers throw his body into the sea. Enter the dolphins: they take the body up and bring it to the shore at Rhium in the Gulf of Corinth.¹⁰² Even more interestingly, the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod* specifies that the corpse was cast into the sea between Locris and Euboea and brought to Rhium by the dolphins on the third day (*Cert.* 232–236).¹⁰³ If we follow this tradition, Hesiod’s body, before finally coming into the Gulf of Corinth, must have sailed through the Euboean Gulf and around all of the Peloponnese. The dolphins had a long journey to cover in three days.

The biographical tradition reported by Pausanias aligned Hesiod with Poseidon: Hesiod’s murderers are said to have “sinned against Poseidon” (ἀσεβήσασιν ἐς Ποσειδῶνα, Paus. 9.31.6).¹⁰⁴ The connection with Poseidon extends to Hesiod’s home city: Oeclus, one of Ascra’s mythical founders, is a son of the nymph Ascra and Poseidon.¹⁰⁵ This positive relationship between Hesiod and Poseidon in the biographical traditions can be contrasted with a strikingly negative stance of the *Works and Days* toward sailing:¹⁰⁶ for example, the people of the just city do not travel on ships (236–237). And yet, the *Nautilia* operates on the extended metaphor connecting poetry with sailing.¹⁰⁷ I wonder whether the ambiguities and ironies of the Hesiodic attitude to sailing may perhaps be connected to a pattern of antagonism towards Poseidon during Hesiod’s lifetime and a symbiosis with Poseidon in death.¹⁰⁸ Intriguingly, the feast scene features wine from Biblos in Thrace,¹⁰⁹ making Gow comment in disbelief that the imported wine

¹⁰² Plut. *Conv. sept. sap.* 162e, *De soll. an.* 984d; *Certamen* 231–232.

¹⁰³ West (2003:343n15) considers “between Locris and Euboea” a mistake to be emended; however, see Nagy 2009:306.

¹⁰⁴ A sacrifice to Poseidon is also reported at Rhium (Paus. 10.11.6). See Burkert 1983:203n37.

¹⁰⁵ Paus. 9.29.1–2, quoting a poem of Hegesinus transmitted through Callippus of Corinth.

¹⁰⁶ Nelson 1998:165, 228n43.

¹⁰⁷ Nagy 1990b:77–78; Rosen 1990; Graziosi 2002:169–171; Dougherty 2001:20–25.

¹⁰⁸ On a god-hero antagonism in myth and a symbiosis in cult, see Nagy 1999:118–150. On the sharp shifts of attitude to sailing in the *Nautilia*, see Griffith 1983:60–61; Lamberton 1988a:131; on the *Nautilia* disrupting the orderly sense of a year’s cycle see Nelson 1998:167.

¹⁰⁹ West 1978:306.

“seems out of the question” for Hesiod.¹¹⁰ However, apparently Hesiod’s tolerance of overseas journeys has increased greatly in his Locrian afterlife. Fittingly, the season of safe sailing starts just after the feast (663–672).¹¹¹

X. HESIOD’S HOME AND THE TRAVEL OF TRADITION

I have referred before to the peculiar opacity of the cultic allusions in the feast scene. Indeed, if the Locrian festival is central to Hesiod’s hero cult and poetry, why are the ritual overtones not more explicit, and why is the geographical location of the feast not indicated? Part of the answer has to be the pan-Hellenic trend, bleaching the local color out of the poetic tradition.¹¹² Another factor is a mystical obfuscation, typical for the descriptions of hero cults.¹¹³ Finally, a potential third factor emerges from a consideration of another, at first glance unrelated, passage in the *Works and Days*.

Among the painstakingly detailed advice at the end, one piece stands out for its obscurity (746–747):

μηδὲ δόμον ποιῶν ἀνεπίξεστον καταλείπειν,
μή τοι ἐφεζομένη κρώξη λακέρυζα κορώνη.

When you are building a house, do not leave it rough-hewn,
or a cawing crow may settle on it and croak.¹¹⁴

West comments: “The roof is to be smoothed off so that the crow cannot easily get a foothold.”¹¹⁵ The recommendation does not sound very practical: it would seem that an attempt to make a house crow-proof by careful smoothing of the roof is bound to prove futile, or at least would involve a massive amount of work. In any case, the aim of such an undertaking is unclear. West conjectures that the crow cawing

¹¹⁰Gow 1952:250; Lambertson 1988a:128.

¹¹¹West 1978:323.

¹¹²Nagy 1990a:52–81, esp. 56–57, 1990b:128.

¹¹³Nagy (2001:xx) comments that “opaque signification is a vital aspect of the traditional essence of hero cults.” See also xvi, esp. n4, xixn9.

¹¹⁴Trans. Evelyn-White 1982.

¹¹⁵West 1978:341.

on the roof forebodes some evil for the house, and muses that “it is typical of the human mind to find comfort in averting an omen of ill, as if the ill itself were thereby averted.”¹¹⁶ Perhaps I can offer a more specific interpretation of the crow’s significance.

Pausanias’ narrative about the Orchomenians carrying Hesiod’s bones off from Locris (Paus. 9.38.3–4) fits the two lines from the *Works and Days* surprisingly well. In Pausanias’ story, a crow on a rock indicates Hesiod’s tomb—his sacred *abode*¹¹⁷—to the Orchomenians. As a result, the Locrians suffer the loss of Hesiod’s presence.

A further correspondence between the two passages emerges from the consideration of the hapax ἀνεπίξεστον (746). A related (and rare) adjective ἄξεστος appears in *Oedipus at Colonus* in the context of a sanctuary: Antigone offers to Oedipus, whom she led to the sacred grove of Colonus, to sit down on an “unhewn stone” (ἄξεστου πέτρου, OC 19). Later in the play a similar description of the same stone is given: “this holy seat, *not shaped by an axe*” (ἀσκέπαρνον, OC 101).¹¹⁸ Thus, ἄξεστος has an aura of a sacred inviolability. We can hypothesize that ἀνεπίξεστον should express a comparable idea, denoting a pristine natural state; such an adjective seems remarkably appropriate if applied to Hesiod’s rock in Locris.

In Orchomenus, according to Paul Wallace’s conjecture, Hesiod’s bones were held by a Mycenaean tholos.¹¹⁹ The basis of this suggestion is Pausanias’ description of a *tholos*, followed by the mention of Hesiod’s grave (Paus. 9.38.2–3):

θησαυρὸς δὲ ὁ Μινύου, θαῦμα ὄν τῶν ἐν Ἑλλάδι αὐτῇ καὶ
τῶν ἑτέρωθι οὐδενὸς ὕστερον, πεποίηται τρόπον τοιόνδε·

¹¹⁶West 1978:341.

¹¹⁷The meaning of δόμος as ‘house of a god, temple’ is widely attested (LSJ): cf. *Od.* 7.81, among many other examples. On a parallel phenomenon of *oikos/oikeō* relating to a hero’s precinct, see Nagy 1985:76–77, 1990a:268–269; Edmunds 1981:223n8; Henrichs 1976:278.

¹¹⁸The scholiast actually glosses ἀσκέπαρνος as ἄξεστος. *Scholia in Sophoclem*, OC verse 100.

¹¹⁹Wallace 1985:167–168. The archaeological data indicate that the tholos was a site of cult in the Roman period, and probably also in the Hellenistic period. Hall 1995:585n55; Alcock 1991:462–463, 1993:183; Antonaccio 1993:67n39; Schliemann 1881:19–25.

λίθου μὲν εἴργασται, σχῆμα δὲ περιφερὲς ἐστὶν αὐτῷ,
 κορυφὴ δὲ οὐκ ἐς ἄγαν ὄξυ ἀνηγμένη· τὸν δὲ ἀνωτάτω τῶν
 λίθων φασὶν ἀρμονίαν παντὶ εἶναι τῷ οἰκοδομήματι. τάφοι
 δὲ Μινύου τε καὶ Ἡσιόδου·

The treasury of Minyas, a wonder second to none either in Greece itself or elsewhere, has been built in the following way. It is made of stone; its shape is round, rising to a rather blunt apex; they say that the highest stone is the keystone of the whole building. There are graves of Minyas and Hesiod.¹²⁰

Immediately following is the story of the transfer of Hesiod's bones from Locris. The tholos in Pausanias' account is an ultimate feat of stone construction, a building that would be the very opposite of the unhewn rock that housed the bones of the poet in Locris. Viewed in this context, advice not to leave the house that you are building rough-hewn, lest a crow should settle on it,¹²¹ sounds extremely like a taunt that the Orchomenians could have addressed to the Locrians after the transfer of the bones. The insecurity of keeping the bones in the natural "rough-hewn" rock contrasts with the supreme safety of lodging them in an architectural tour de force.

If we interpret the advice about the crow and the house as an Orchomenian taunt incorporated into the *Works and Days*, a variant reading ἀνεπίρρεκτον 'unconsecrated,' attested in scholia (Schol. vet. Hes. Op. 746 p. 227 Pertusi), acquires a point. Rather than presuming that the variant is due to a scribal error of copying the word from two lines below (748), we can perceive the mockery of the resulting line:

μηδὲ δόμον ποιῶν ἀνεπίρρεκτον καταλείπειν ...

¹²⁰ Trans. Jones 1979.

¹²¹ Rosen (1990:111) suggests that ἐφεζομένη in line 747 (the crow settling on a house) recalls ἐφεζόμενος in line 583 (a cicada perched on a tree). These are the only two instances of ἐφεζομαι in the *Works and Days*. The repetition of ἐφεζομένη in line 747 may be taken as the poem's internal evidence of the crow's connection with the feast scene; it functions as an ironic echo of the feast's description, especially as the participles ἐφεζόμενος and ἐζόμενον (583, 593) frame the feast scene.

when you are building a (sacred) abode, do not leave it
without offerings ...¹²²

—or the hero will grow angry with you, and then the communicative crow will come, followed by the Orchomenians. The taunt implies that the Locrians are to blame themselves for the loss of Hesiod, since they neglected to give him his due offerings.

What is the exact relation between the Locrian and Orchomenian cults of Hesiod? If these two traditions were originally independent of each other, then the story of the transfer of Hesiod's bones must be a later attempt to harmonize the contradictory claims of the two cities. However, it seems to me that the evidence points to the Orchomenian cult presupposing the existence of the Locrian one. The tradition of Hesiod's two burials is attested in an epigram transmitted through Aristotle's *Constitution of the Orchomenians* (fr. 565 Rose):

χαῖρε δις ἠβήσας καὶ δις τάφου ἀντιβολήσας,
'Ἡσίοδ', ἀνθρώποις μέτρον ἔχων σοφίης.

Hail, you who twice were young and twice received a
tomb,
Hesiod, you who hold the measure of wisdom for
human beings.¹²³

We do not have any reference to the Orchomenian cult of Hesiod that is incompatible with the idea that Hesiod's tomb first was located in Locris.¹²⁴ All extant narratives of Hesiod's death situate it in Locris;

¹²² For ἀνεπίρρεκτον as 'lacking offerings' cf. ἐπιπρέζεσκον, 'made offerings', in the description of the Nymphs' fountain in *Od.* 17.211.

¹²³ Trans. Most 2006. Tzetzes attributed this epigram to Pindar (Tzetz. Proleg. in Hes. *Op.* p. 92 Colonna). For discussion, see Scodel 1980.

¹²⁴ An important piece of information, deriving from Plutarch and Aristotle's *Constitution of the Orchomenians*, is passed on by the scholia (Plutarch fr. 82 Sandbach = Schol. vet. Hes. *Op.* 633–40 p. 202 Pertusi., Arist. 565 Rose): ἀοίκητον δὲ αὐτὸ (τὸ πολίχνην τὴν Ἄσκραν) ὁ Πλούταρχος ἱστορεῖ καὶ τότε εἶναι, Θεσπιέων ἀνελόντων τοὺς οἰκοῦντας, Ὀρχομενίων δὲ τοὺς σωθέντας δεξαμένων. ὅθεν καὶ <τὸν θεὸν> Ὀρχομενίοις <προστάξαι> τὰ Ἡσίοδου <λείψανα λαβεῖν καὶ θάψαι παρ' αὐτοῖς>, ὡς καὶ <Ἀριστοτέλης> φησὶ γράφων τὴν Ὀρχομενίων πολιτείαν. ("Plutarch narrates that it [the little town of Ascra] was uninhabited in his time too, because the Thespians killed the inhabitants and the Orchomenians took in the survivors. For this reason, he said, the god had ordered the

similarly, all extant narratives of Hesiod's death mention the later relocation of the bones by the Orchomenians.¹²⁵ The only account that requires comment in this respect is Plutarch's *Dinner of the Seven Wise Men*. It dramatizes a situation in which Hesiod is buried near the Locrian temple of Nemean Zeus, and the location of his grave is kept secret, so that the Orchomenians, who have been prompted by an oracle, would not be able to steal the body (*Conv. sep. sap.* 162f). I believe that in this case we are not dealing with an independent tradition that denies the transfer of the bones to Orchomenus,¹²⁶ but rather with Plutarch's narrative device, staging the sages' banquet at the point in the past when the transfer has not yet happened.

Thus, I consider the transfer of Hesiod's bones from Locris to Orchomenus essentially a historical event,¹²⁷ whose probable consequence should have been an accompanying shift in the locus of transmission of Hesiodic poetry, with ensuing subtle "Orchomenization" of the *Works and Days*. Wallace identifies a plausible historical context for the transfer of Hesiod's bones in the middle of the fifth century BC.¹²⁸ At this date we would expect the tradition of the *Works and Days* to be relatively crystallized,¹²⁹ the presence of the "Locrian" feast scene already fixed in the poem. It is possible that at this point the scene was stripped of any reference to the festival's location at the sanctuary of Nemean Zeus in Locris, since such references would have been incongruous at

Orchomenians to take Hesiod's remains and bury them in their own city, as Aristotle too says in his *Constitution of the Orchomenians*" [trans. Most 2006, modified]). In this account, it is not clear from *where* the Orchomenians should take Hesiod's bones; indeed, Nagy (1990b:49) interprets ὅθεν as referring to Ascras. However, ὅθεν can also be translated as "in consequence of which" (so West 1978:317), with Apollo ordering the Orchomenians to bring the remains of the poet *from Locris*—a reading perfectly in line with the story in Paus. 9.38.3–4 and Plut. *Conv. sep. sap.* 162f.

¹²⁵ Arist. fr. 565 Rose; Paus. 9.31.6, 9.38.3–4; Plut. *Conv. sep. sap.* 162e–f, *Cert.* 224–253 Allen, Tzetz. Proleg. in Hes. *Op.* p. 92 Colonna..

¹²⁶ Contra Nagy 2009:305.

¹²⁷ For other instances of the hero cult transfer in ancient Greece, see Blomart 2004.

¹²⁸ Wallace builds on Larsen's argument that Orchomenus and not Thebes was at the head of the formation of the Boiotian confederacy in 447 BC (Larsen 1960:9–18). "Orkhomenos, as the bulwark and guardian of the old traditions, would have found in that period some advantage in having the old poet's bones" (Wallace 1985:167).

¹²⁹ On the crystallization of Hesiodic poetry, see Nagy 1990b:79.

Orchomenus. In addition, the Orchomenian mockery of the Locrians has apparently been incorporated into the canonical body of the *Works and Days*. It is significant that the two lines concerning the crow come from the end of the poem—a part that would be performed less, and accordingly would crystallize more slowly,¹³⁰ allowing the incorporation of the new materials at a relatively late date.

XI. FURTHER QUESTIONS

My analysis of the cultic background of the *Works and Days* produces numerous further questions. They concern the history of Hesiod's cults, and its implication for our understanding of Hesiodic poetry. What is the significance of variants existing within the tradition of Hesiod's death in Locris?¹³¹ Plutarch's Hesiod seems different from the Hesiod of the *Constitution of the Orchomenians*: how did the perception of Hesiod as a cult hero change through the ages? What was the ideological and political framework of the transfer of Hesiod's bones from Locris to Orchomenus? What was the relation between the Locrian, Orchomenian and Heliconian/Thespian cultic and poetic traditions, and did it vary through time? What is the relation of these (reconstructed) traditions to our text of the *Works and Days*? Can details of other Hesiodic poems—for example, of the *Theogony*—be connected to Locris or Orchomenus? What was the stance of Athens vis-à-vis different locales of Hesiod's cult?¹³²

In his analysis of Hesiodic biographical traditions, Gregory Nagy emphasizes the multiplicity of disparate myths about Hesiod, stemming from rival hero cults: “we cannot speak of any single perspective—not to mention any single truth value inherent in these myths.”¹³³ The poetry of the *Works and Days*, it appears, exhibits a similar multi-

¹³⁰ Lord 2000:17. The end of the *Odyssey* provides an example of such lesser fixity, with scholia reporting Aristarchus' athetization of the text following *Od.* 23.296, as well as of *Od.* 23.310–43, 24.1–204. See Nagy 1996:182n107.

¹³¹ Cf. Paus. 9.31.6. At least two alternative accounts, by Alcidas and by Erasthenes, are attested in *Certamen* 240–244.

¹³² On the recomposition-in-performance of Hesiodic poetry in Athens in the sixth century BC, and the Athenian efforts at appropriation of the figure of Hesiod in that period, see Nagy 2009:294–296, 302–303.

¹³³ Nagy 2009:307.

vocality, joining the personae of Hesiod the Ascraean, Hesiod the Locrian, Hesiod the Orchomenian, the hero of ritual and of myth. The task of clarifying the patterns of agreement and argument played out by these voices remains to be done.

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