NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

PARONOMASIA IN HESIOD *WORKS AND DAYS* 80–85

In Hesiod *Works and Days* 80–85, the poet engages in etymological wordplay with the name of Pandora:

> ὀνόμηνε δὲ τήνδε γυναῖκα
> **Πανδώρην**, ὅτι **πάντες** Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
> **δῶρον ἐδώρησαν**, πῆμ' ἀνδράσιν ἀλφηστῇσιν.
> αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δόλον αἰπὺν ἀμήχανον ἐξετέλεσσεν,
> εἰς Ἐπιμηθέα πέμπε πατὴρ κλυτὸν Ἀργεϊφόντην
> **δῶρον** ἄγοντα, θεῶν ταχὺν ἄγγελον·

> . . . and he named this woman Pandora, Allgift,
> because all the dwellers on Olympus made her their gift—a calamity
> for men who live by bread. When he had completed the precipitous,
> unmanageable trap, the father sent the renowned dog-killer to Epimetheus
> taking the gift, swift messenger of the gods.[1]

Pietro Pucci has remarked on "the playfulness and irony of the etymology: Pandora, the all-giving, is instead a gift-bane to man, and (or because) she takes gifts from everybody."[2] While ironic, the wordplay is perhaps not surprising; in the *Theogony* Hesiod puns on the name of the Titans (Τιτῆνας~τιταίνοντας~τίσιν, 207–10) and on the name and epithets of Aphrodite (Ἀφροδίτην~ἀφρῷ, etc., 195–200).[3]

1. Translation by M. L. West (*Hesiod, "Theogony," "Works and Days,"* with an introduction and notes [Oxford, 1988], 39).

2. P. Pucci, *Hesiod and the Language of Poetry* (Baltimore, 1977), 98.

3. O. Lendle (*Die Pandorasage bei Hesiod* [Würzburg, 1957], 119–20) provides a list of some of the etymologies and wordplays in Hesiod. See also K. von Fritz et al., *Hésiode et son influence,* Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 7 (Geneva, 1960), 53–57; H. Troxler, *Sprache und Wortschatz Hesiods* (Zurich, 1964), 8–13; and E. Risch, "Namensdeutungen und Worterklärungen bei den ältesten griechischen Dichtern," in *Eumusia: Festgabe für Ernst Howald zum sechzigsten Geburtstag am 20. April 1947* (Erlenbach, 1947), 72–91. The Homeric poems also contain their share of puns, notably the Οὖτις/οὖτις trick of *Od.* 9.364–412; for more examples of wordplay in Homer, see W. B. Stanford, *Ambiguity in Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1939), 97–114, and, more recently, B. Louden, "Categories of Homeric Wordplay," *TAPA* 125 (1995): 27–46. For etymological punning on Greek and Roman names, see E. S. McCartney, "Puns and Plays on Proper Names," *CJ* 14 (1919): 343–58, and C. J. Fordyce, "Puns on Names in Greek," *CJ* 28 (1932): 44–46 and 290. Useful summaries of wordplay in Greek and Roman literature can be found in J. O'Hara, *True Names: Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996), 1–56, and in J. M. Snyder, *Puns and Poetry in Lucretius' "De Rerum Natura"* (Amsterdam, 1980), 52–73.

I suggest, however, that in addition to the obvious wordplay on πάντες and δῶρον, the Pandora passage contains another, subtler play on words.[4] Sandwiched between two references to Pandora as a δῶρον is a description of her as a δόλον, a trap (83).[5] This is not a case of a pun playing on two homophonous words, or on two meanings of the same word, but instead it is *paronomasia,* a play on similar-sounding words that denote different concepts.[6] The irony that Pucci sees in the etymological wordplay is present here as well: as a gift, Pandora ought to be a blessing, but instead she proves to be a trick.

A look at the phonological similarities of δῶρον and δόλον suggests that they are sufficiently alike to make the pun work. As the Greeks themselves noticed, /r/ and /l/ are phonetically related sounds; Dionysius Thrax lists λ, μ, ν, and ρ as ἀμετάβολα ("unchangeables") or ὑγρά ("liquids") in his *Ars Grammatica,*[7] and Aristophanes, in *Wasps* 44–45, includes a pun that depends on Alcibiades' lambdacism, or replacing ρ with λ, so that κόρακος ("of a crow") becomes κόλακος ("of a flatterer").[8] Significantly, both δῶρον and δόλον have the shape d-R-n (R = resonant or continuant), which makes the wordplay more musical than if, for example, one of them had an obstruent like /t/ or /k/ in the middle.[9] The quantity of the first vowel is different, but difference in vowel quantity or quality was no obstacle to ancient etymologizing or

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4. F. Ahl suggests that wordplay, both obvious and subtle, is frequently overlooked in classical literature, mainly because it is not seen as worthy of "serious" poetry; see Ahl's *Metaformations: Soundplay and Wordplay in Ovid and Other Classical Poets* (Ithaca, N.Y. and London, 1985), esp. 17–19.

5. Note that the interpretation of line 82 was disputed already in antiquity; it may mean "they gave her a gift" or "they gave her as a gift." Proclus denied that the second interpretation was possible on the grounds that Pandora was the gift of Zeus alone, not all the gods. More recently the second interpretation has found favor. C. Robert ("Pandora," *Hermes* 49 [1914]: 17–38) and M. L. West (*Hesiod, "Works and Days,"* edited with prolegomena and commentary [Oxford, 1978], ad 82) both prefer the second interpretation, as does P. Mazon (*Hésiode, "Les Travaux et les Jours"* [Paris, 1914], ad 81–82): "le mot δῶρον, dans le passage, désigne toujours Pandore elle-même." The pun with δόλος works better if δῶρον refers to Pandora in line 82, but does not require it in order to work, since δῶρον in line 85 clearly refers to Pandora.

6. The term, called *adnominatio* in Latin, is defined in the *Rhet. Her.* (4.29) as follows: "Adnominatio est cum ad idem verbum et nomen acceditur cum mutatione vocum aut litterarum, ut ad res dissimiles similia verba adcommodentur" ("*Adnominatio* is the approximation of a particular verb or noun, with a change in the sounds or letters, so that similar words are applied to dissimilar things"). For discussions of *paronomasia*, see W. D. Woodhead, *Etymologizing in Greek Literature from Homer to Philo Judaeus* (Toronto, 1928), 36–41, and R. D. Anderson, Jr., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms,* (Leuven, 2000), 93.

7. G. Uhlig, ed., *Grammatici Graeci,* pt. 1, vol. 1, *Dionysii Thracis "Ars Grammatica"* (Leipzig, 1883; reprint, 1965), 14. Dionysius Thrax explains the term ἀμετάβολα as follows: ἀμετάβολα δὲ λέγεται, ὅτι οὐ μεταβάλλει ἐν τοῖς μέλλουσι τῶν ῥημάτων οὐδὲ ἐν ταῖς κλίσεσι τῶν ὀνομάτων ("They are called 'unchangeables' because they do not change, either in the future tense of verbs or in the inflection of nouns" [Uhlig, 14]). Dionysius of Halicarnassus uses a different term, grouping λ and ρ together among what he calls ἡμίφωνα or "semivowels" (*Comp.* 14). We see a frequent interchange of λ and ρ in Greek papyri of the Roman and Byzantine periods, especially in the papyri of the Fayum, but there is no Archaic Greek evidence for this phenomenon. See F. T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods,* vol. 1, *Phonology* (Milan, 1976), 102–7. Gignac concludes that the interchange is probably due to bilingual interference (107). I thank Ann Hanson for this last reference.

8. See S. Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes and the Politics of Language in Ancient Greek Culture* (Oxford, 1999), 285. M. Vickers sees puns based on Alcibiades' lambdacism elsewhere in the Aristophanic corpus; see, e.g., "Alcibiades on Stage: Aristophanes' *Birds*," *Historia* 38 (1989): 267–99.

9. On the ancient Greek fondness for euphony and assonance, see W. B. Stanford, *The Sound of Greek: Studies in the Greek Theory and Practice of Euphony* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1967), esp. 74–98, and, by the same author, "Sound, Sense, and Music in Greek Poetry," *G&R* 28 (1981): 127–40.

punning,[10] as Hesiod himself shows at *Theogony* 144–45, where he derives the name Κύκλωπες from κυκλοτερής.[11]

Despite the phonological similarities between δῶρον and δόλον, the appearance of these words in nearby lines could be a coincidence, were it not for several other cases in the Hesiodic corpus where the words appear together. Three times in the *Catalogue of Women* the words δῶρον or δῶρα appear in close proximity to δόλος or its derivatives. First, there is 141.1–3 M-W, a fragmentary description of Europa and the bull, where we see the poet playing with δῶρον, δόλος, and perhaps even ὕδωρ:

....]πέρησε δ' ἄρ' ἁλμυρὸν **ὕδωρ**
....] Διὸς δμηθεῖσα **δόλοισι**.
τῆι δὲ μίγη φιλότητι] πατὴρ καὶ **δῶρον ἔδωκεν**

Europa, conquered by the schemes (δόλοισι) of Zeus, has crossed the water (ὕδωρ) on the bull's back and, after the pair have consummated their brief affair, he gives her a gift (δῶρον ἔδωκεν). Here there is no indication that the δῶρον itself is a δόλος, but by placing similar-sounding words at the end of each line, the poet draws our attention to the relationship between them: the δῶρον is given as a sort of consolation prize or souvenir for a lover who was the victim of a δόλος.

The second passage, 33a.17–19 M-W, deals with the battle between Periclymenus and Heracles. Periclymenus' gifts (δῶρα) of metamorphosis, given to him by Poseidon, trick (δόλωσε) him, and he is defeated by the hero:[12]

εἶχε δὲ **δῶρα**
παντοῖ' οὐκ ὀνομαστά, τά μιν καὶ ἔπειτα **δόλωσε**
βουλῆι Ἀθηναίης·

He had gifts
of all sorts, not to be named, which tricked him then
by the will of Athena.

Once again, the placement of the punning words at line end points up the contrast between them; δῶρα become δόλοι, and what should be Periclymenus' strengths prove to be his undoing.

The final passage is 76.6–10 M-W, where Atalanta is described as scorning the δῶρα of Aphrodite while Hippomenes, δολο[φρονέων, addresses her and asks her to receive the gifts he has brought—the apples that will allow him to win the footrace. These lines seem particularly relevant to the Pandora passage, since they contain one δόλος- derivative framed by δῶρα in lines 6 and 10:

10. This also appears to be true in Latin, as Ahl (*Metaformations* [n. 4 above], 56) notes: "Difference in vowel length does not prevent etymologizing wordplay."

11. Socrates does the same in the *Cratylus* when he suggests that Ἥρα might be derived from ἐρατή "lovely" (404b–c), and relates σῶμα and σῆμα (400b–c). Even if these examples are meant to be satirical, they still illustrate that ancient etymologies often overlooked differences in vowels. Louden ("Categories" [n. 3 above], 30) quotes a wordplay from Homer that appears to be an even better parallel with δῶρον/δόλος: χωλός "lame" punning on χόλος "anger" (*Od*. 8.304–8).

12. See Hesiod 33b (M-W) for the scholia that explain how this happened: with the help of Athena, Heracles got Periclymenus to metamorphose into a fly or bee and then killed him. For a brief discussion, see M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society,* trans. J. Lloyd (Hassocks, Sussex and Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1978), 109–10.

ἵετ' ἀναινομένη **δῶρα** [χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης,
τῶι δὲ περὶ ψυχῆς πέλε[το δρόμος, ἠὲ ἁλῶναι
ἠὲ φυγεῖν· τῶι καί ῥα **δολο[φρονέων** προσέειπεν·
"ὦ θύγατερ Σχοινῆος, ἀμ[είλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσα,
δ]έξο τάδ' ἀγλα[ὰ] **δῶρα** θε[ᾶς χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης

She ran, spurning the gifts of golden Aphrodite,
while for him the race was for his life, either to die
or to escape. And he spoke to her, intent on trickery:
"Daughter of Schoeneus, with a relentless heart,
accept these shining gifts of the goddess, golden Aphrodite. . . .

Just as Zeus succeeded in tricking Epimetheus with Pandora, a δῶρον who is actually a δόλος, so too in these last two examples both Periclymenus and Atalanta are tricked by δῶρα that prove to be δόλοι. In isolation, any of these passages could be interpreted as a likely case of *paronomasia,* playing with the contrast between a gift and a trick. But taken as a group, together with the passage from the *Works and Days,* they suggest that the poet—or the poetic tradition—was particularly fond of word-play involving these two terms. Pandora, who judging by her name ought to be all δῶρον, proves instead to be all δόλος. [13]

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13. Perhaps the combination of these two terms would have reminded the Greek listener of another δῶρον that was a δόλος: the Trojan Horse, which Homer calls a δόλος at *Od.* 8.494. W. Moskalew ("Myrmidons, Dolopes, and Danaans: Wordplay in *Aeneid* 2," *CQ* 40 [1990]: 275–79) has demonstrated that Virgil, in *Aen.* 2 (esp. 2.44), plays with the notion of the Trojan Horse as a *donum* and a *dolus*—precisely the play on words that I am suggesting for the Hesiod passages. This raises the possibility that Hesiod's δῶρον / δόλος is the ultimate source for Virgil's play on *donum* and *dolus.*

BELUS IN THE *SACRED HISTORY* OF EUHEMERUS

Euhemerus of Messene (fl. c. 300 B.C.E.) wrote a fictitious narrative called the *Sacred History* (*Hiera Anagraphe*) in which he claimed to have sailed to Panchaea, an island beyond Arabia on the Ocean, and there discovered a stele on which was written the story of the time when the gods were mortal men and rulers of the whole earth. Ever since, there have been arguments over whether Euhemerus was an atheist or a revolutionary philosopher, whether he was an historian or a theologian, and whether he wrote in response to the political, or the religious reality of his day. Although the discusssion of Zeus in the *Sacred History* is known to us only at third hand (from Eusebius' summary of Diodorus' rendition,[1] and from Lactantius' citations of Ennius' Latin translation[2]), it seems clear that Belus of Babylon held a place of importance in the story, and may help us to answer some of our questions in regard to Euhemerus.

1. *Praep. evang.* 2.2.59B–61A; Diod. Sic. 6, fragmenta.
2. *Div. inst.* 1.11 (and 13, 14, 17, 22).