ODYSSEY 8. 166–77 AND *THEOGONY* 79–93

The fact that the *Odyssey* and the *Theogony* share a number of verses in common seemed to most scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reason enough to assume that one work has influenced the other. Now that more is known about the techniques of oral poetry, which have clearly influenced the composition of both works, a greater caution is rightly shown in arguing for the priority of the one or the other on the basis of individual verses or phrases, since these may in fact be formulaic and thus common property which could have been used by any poet working in that tradition.[1] In one case, however, *Odyssey* 8. 166–77 and *Theogony* 79–93, what is common is not a single verse but two and a half lines, so that the possibility of chance occurrence of the same formulas is virtually ruled out. Quite rightly therefore few critics have doubted that here either Homer has directly influenced Hesiod or vice versa.[2] For this reason a good deal of the argumentation for the priority of the *Odyssey* or of the *Theogony* has concentrated on an examination of *Od.* 8. 166–77 and *Th.* 79–93. However, as is usual in such cases, most of the arguments which have been adduced in favour of the priority of the one or of the other are reversible because they are based on subjective grounds such as alleged incompetent adaptation of the earlier work, which is tacitly assumed to be superior. Since these arguments have recently been discussed in detail by Heinz Neitzel in a useful survey,[3] it will not be necessary to review them here.

If we disregard the subjective arguments used in an attempt to establish the priority of *Od.* 8. 166–77 or of *Th.* 79–93, we are still left with at least one objective argument which does indicate which passage was very likely to have been composed first. Friedrich Solmsen acutely observed that the gift of speech which is attributed in the *Odyssey* passage (8. 170) vaguely to 'a god' is specifically assigned in the *Theogony* passage (93) to the Muses, so that 'if the poet [of the *Odyssey*] was familiar with the *Theogony* he must have ignored the fact that the divine giver had in the meantime been identified'.[4] Since it is intrinsically more likely that the development would have been from the unspecified to the specific, we must count Solmsen's observation as a

---

[1] For an earlier attempt to determine priority by an examination of the common verses and phrases v. I. Sellschopp, *Stilistische Untersuchungen zu Hesiod.* Diss. Hamburg (Hamburg, 1934), esp. pp. 42–65. For a recent discussion of this method v. G. P. Edwards, 'The Language of Hesiod in its Traditional Context', *Publications of the Philological Society* 22 (Oxford, 1971), esp. pp. 166–89.

[2] An exception is P. Walcot, 'Hesiod and the Law', *SO* 38 (1963), 5–21, esp. pp. 11–12, who thinks that agreement between the two passages need not mean dependence of one upon the other, but can be explained entirely by the use in oral composition of the same formulas. He does not, however, take into account that the common elements here are (1) mostly non-formulaic and (2) too extensive to be mere chance. Another exception is M. L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony* (Oxford, 1966), p. 183 (on vv. 84 ff.), who does 'not think it safe to assume a direct relationship of dependence' and suggests that 'the *Odyssey* passage is an adaptation, if not of the *Theogony* passage, at any rate of a similar passage in a similar context'. However, even if we should assume the existence of a similar passage in what, since accidental similarity is virtually ruled out, would be a lost intermediary, for which there is in fact no evidence, this would not affect the question of the relative order in which the two extant works were composed.

[3] 'Zum zeitlichen Verhältnis von Theogonie (80–93) und Odyssee (8, 166–177)', *Philologus* 121 (1977), 24–44, esp. pp. 24–40.

[4] 'The "Gift" of Speech in Homer and Hesiod', *TAPhA* 85 (1954), 1–15, esp. pp. 9–10.

strong point in favour of the priority of the *Odyssey*. Although such an argument is not in itself decisive evidence that one work was necessarily composed before the other, nevertheless several similar observations taken together could produce a presumption in favour of priority which it would be unreasonable to doubt.[5]

To Solmsen's objective observation a further one can be added which, to my knowledge, has not been made before. An important difference in the way the two and a half verses common to *Od.* 8. 166–77 and *Th.* 79–93 have been placed in their respective passages will immediately become evident if we set out both passages in full, marking the indentical phrases with a solid line and the metrically equivalent variants with a broken line. For convenience the common verses are numbered as well.[6]

166 ξεῖν', οὐ καλὸν ἔειπες· ἀτασθάλῳ ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.
     οὕτως οὐ πάντεσσι θεοὶ χαρίεντα διδοῦσιν
     ἀνδράσιν, οὔτε φυὴν οὔτ' ἄρ φρένας οὔτ' ἀγορητύν.
     ἄλλος μὲν γὰρ εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνήρ,
170 ἀλλὰ θεὸς μορφὴν ἔπεσι στέφει, οἱ δέ τ' ἐς αὐτὸν
     τερπόμενοι λεύσσουσιν· ὁ δ' ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύει   1
     αἰδοῖ μειλιχίῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισιν,   2
     ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀνὰ ἄστυ θεὸν ὡς εἰσορόωσιν.   3
     ἄλλος δ' αὖ εἶδος μὲν ἀλίγκιος ἀθανάτοισιν,
175 ἀλλ' οὔ οἱ χάρις ἀμφιπεριστέφεται ἐπέεσσιν,
     ὡς καὶ σοὶ εἶδος μὲν ἀριπρεπές, οὐδέ κεν ἄλλως
     οὐδὲ θεὸς τεύξειε, νόον δ' ἀποφώλιός ἐσσι.

                                                           (*Od.* 8. 166–77)

     Καλλιόπη θ'· ἡ δὲ προφερεστάτη ἐστὶν ἁπασέων.
80   ἡ γὰρ καὶ βασιλεῦσιν ἅμ' αἰδοίοισιν ὀπηδεῖ.
     ὅντινα τιμήσουσι Διὸς κοῦραι μεγάλοιο
     γεινόμενόν τε ἴδωσι διοτρεφέων βασιλήων,
     τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσσῃ γλυκερὴν χείουσιν ἐέρσην,
     τοῦ δ' ἔπε' ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα· οἱ δέ νυ λαοὶ
85   πάντες ἐς αὐτὸν ὁρῶσι διακρίνοντα θέμιστας
     ἰθείῃσι δίκῃσιν· ὁ δ' ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύων   1
     αἶψά τι καὶ μέγα νεῖκος ἐπισταμένως κατέπαυσε·
     τούνεκα γὰρ βασιλῆες ἐχέφρονες, οὕνεκα λαοῖς
     βλαπτομένοις ἀγορῆφι μετάτροπα ἔργα τελεῦσι
90   ῥηιδίως, μαλακοῖσι παραιφάμενοι ἐπέεσσιν·
     ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀν' ἀγῶνα θεὸν ὡς ἱλάσκονται   3
     αἰδοῖ μειλιχίῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγρομένοισι.   2
     τοίη Μουσάων ἱερὴ δόσις ἀνθρώποισιν.

                                                           (*Th.* 79–93)

We see at once that the two and a half verses which are shared in common form a unit in the *Odyssey*, whereas in the *Theogony* they are distributed over seven and a half verses.[7] From a purely compositional point of view we may ask which is more

  [5] After surveying the subjective arguments Neitzel, op. cit., pp. 41–4, offers several observations (including Solmsen's) which he considers point to the priority of the *Odyssey*.
  [6] The *Odyssey* is cited from the text of T. W. Allen[2] (Oxford, 1917) rather than, e.g. from that of P. Von der Mühll[4] (Basel, 1971), whose unsatisfactory punctuation in 171 was inspired by a belief in the priority of the *Theogony*, on which v. Neitzel, op. cit., p. 31. In 167, which Von der Mühll rightly considered corrupt, we should read αὔτως for οὕτως; v. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* [1] (Oxford, 1968), p. 175 n. 1. The *Theogony* is cited from West's edition.
  [7] Some, e.g. R. Peppmüller, *Hesiodos: Ins Deutsche übertragen* (Halle, 1896), p. 17 n. 2, have wished to delete *Th.* 88–90, but for a defence v. Solmsen, op. cit., p. 4 n. 13.

likely: (1) that a poet would take a half line (no. 1) and combine it with two verses (nos. 3 and 2) which come five lines later, reversing the order of the latter two, and thus produce a compact unit, or (2) that a poet would pick out from an existing unit a half line (no. 1), use it for his own purposes, and then go on some lines later to make use, with suitable adaptation, of two lines (nos. 2 and 3) which he found together. When we reflect that the later poet was working in what was still an essentially oral tradition without unlimited writing materials for experimentation, then clearly from the technical standpoint alone it would be very much easier to expand a passage which was found as a compact unit than to produce such a unit from scattered elements.[8] In short, the obvious way to account for the arrangement of the common elements in *Th.* 86–92 and *Od.* 8. 171–3 is to assume that Hesiod expanded a text of Homer which was available to him.

Freie Universität Berlin   BRUCE KARL BRASWELL

[8] In the case of the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, which is doubtless later than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, we can see how the poet of the hymn has taken the description of Aphrodite's arrival in Cyprus which he found at *Od.* 8. 362–6 and expanded it for his own description of a similar scene at *h. Ven.* 58–65. Lines 58–9, 61–2, and 64 are taken over in whole or part (with suitable adaptation) from *Od.* 8. 362–6, while 60 and 63 are identical with *Il.* 14. 169 and 172 respectively and 65 after the penthemimeres uses the formula which fills the second half of *Od.* 8. 362. Here the poet of the hymn has clearly taken the compact unit which he found in the *Odyssey* and added other verses to produce his own fuller description. This is obviously the normal way of making use of existing material, whereas it is most unlikely that the unit found in *Od.* 8. 362–6 would have been constructed out of the scattered elements of *h. Ven.* 58–65.