

XXXVIII. Aphrodite in the *Theogony*

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Theogony 154–206 can be divided into three sections: 154–87, dealing with the castration of Uranus by his son Cronus; 188–200, the story of Aphrodite's birth from Uranus' severed genitals; and 201–6, which assert Aphrodite's connection with Eros and Himerus and go on to state her *timai* and *moirai*, what we would call her sphere of influence. Felix Jacoby in 1926 attempted to show that 188–206 were an early interpolation into Hesiod's original *Theogony*.¹ Wilamowitz rejected much of Jacoby's position but accepted his excision of part of the passage, 201–6.² I think that none of the section (except line 196) should be excised, but the doubts of Jacoby and Wilamowitz cannot simply be dismissed. The passages do differ in feeling from one another; but I shall try to show in this paper that they consist of material from three different sources, which Hesiod put together without obliterating entirely the disparate nature of their origin.

The ideas in lines 201–6 are based, as we shall see, upon Homer, and what in them is non-Homeric is to be attributed not to another source but to Hesiod's own imagination. Lines 188–200 I consider to have been drawn from a Cyprian cult myth, in which Aphrodite was born from severed genitals but in which there seems originally to have been room neither for Uranus nor for the story of a succession of supreme deities. The source of the story of Uranus' castration (154–87) is less clear to me; it has been traced to a Hurrian myth, preserved in Hittite, in which certain gods succeed each other in the position of supreme power, and in which Kumarbis (a figure somewhat resembling Cronus in that he is, symbolically at least, the father of a weather god) gets power

¹ F. Jacoby, "Hesiodstudien zur Theogonie," *Hermes* 61 (1926) 157–91.

² U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*³ (Basel 1959) 1.93, note 3 (hereafter **Glaube** 1). This note occurs on 1¹.96 (Berlin 1931). Jacoby's excision was likewise rejected by Paul Friedländer, rev. of Jacoby's *Hesiodi Carmina* 1: *Theogonia*, in *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* 193 (1931) 241–66, especially 254–60.

from his predecessor Anus by biting off his genitals and swallowing them.³ If this theory of the origin of 154–87 is correct, it is clear that all three sections ultimately have different sources; but even if it is not,⁴ it is still probable that they do. For the story of Uranus' castration could not have been part of the Cyprian cult myth and does not come from Homer, and it is hard to see how it can have grown out of any of this material since it deals with such entirely different ideas. It follows that some person or persons combined the material in these three sections, and there are several reasons why this person is likely to have been Hesiod. The story of Uranus' castration is generally admitted to be part of the original *Theogony*, which comprises a greater or lesser part of our *Theogony*. Aphrodite, as Wilamowitz said, cannot be absent from a *Theogony* (*Glaube* 1.93), so 188–200 was not brought in *after* Hesiod; yet Jacoby has pointed out that we can still see stylistic evidence of the joining of 188 ff. to what precedes, so the joining can hardly have *preceded* Hesiod. I shall argue later that the concept of Aphrodite's role in the universe is enriched by 188–200 in exactly the same way as by 201–6; that Hesiod saw in 188–200 an expression of Aphrodite as a goddess of fertility, and that this is just the enlargement of the Homeric notion we can see in 201–2. Hence there is certainly evidence that Hesiod himself is responsible for putting *Theogony* 154–206 into much the same form as we read it.⁵

Let us look first at 201–6. The last two lines, 205–6, echo very

³ See James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton 1950) 120–21. There is an article, summarizing much of the recent discussion and giving many references to earlier work, by P. Walcot, "The Text of Hesiod's *Theogony* and the Hittite *Epic of Kumarbi*," *CQ*, n.s. 6 (1956) 198–206.

⁴ The extreme similarity between the emasculation of Uranus and the wish-fulfilment of the Oedipus complex makes it difficult to accept wholeheartedly the theory of borrowing from the Hittite. E. R. Dodds, who accepts the theory that there was some borrowing, finds the presence of the father-castration motive "in the Hittite and Greek theogonies difficult to explain otherwise than as a reflex of unconscious human desires" (*The Greeks and the Irrational* (Boston 1957) 61, n. 103). If this is so, it seems likely enough that both peoples hit upon this detail independently, especially since the Greek story is so very much closer to the Oedipus complex: Cronus is Uranus' son, not merely a successor, and his mother Gaea plays a prominent part in helping him fulfil his wish. Dodds goes on in this note to argue that the birth of Aphrodite symbolizes the son's attainment of sexual freedom through removal of the father-rival. But the birth of Aphrodite is really a separate story; Cronus and Gaea are entirely forgotten, and there is in any case no indication that they became lovers.

⁵ Since I am primarily interested in the *sources* of 201–6 and 188–200, I shall go no further than this in actually defending the harmonist position.

clearly portions of the *Dios apatē* of *Iliad* 14 and present Aphrodite as the goddess of the joys of sexual love:

παρθενίους τ' ὄαρους μειδήματά τ' ἐξαπάτας τε
τέρψιν τε γλυκερὴν φιλότῃτά τε μελιχίην τε.

Of these qualities, dalliance, ὄαρος, and love (probably the act of love), φιλότης, are to be found on the cestus of Aphrodite in *Il.* 14.214–17; while deceits, ἐξαπάται, are expressed by the term (*Il.* 14.217):

πάρφασις, ἣ τ' ἔκλεψε γόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων,

and by the whole action of the *Dios apatē*, in which this cestus plays a vital part. Μειδήματα echoes the epithet φιλομειδής in 14.211 and elsewhere; τέρψις is such an obvious feature of sexual love that we need hardly look for a source for Hesiod's choice of the term; but we can, if we like, find the idea (associated with φιλότης in the sense of love-making) in this scene, for when the cestus is doing its work, Zeus says (*Il.* 14.314):

νῶι δ' ἄγ' ἐν φιλότῃτι τραπέομεν εὐνήθεντε.

The argument that these are all obvious qualities of the love-goddess, that Hesiod could have got such ideas from anywhere, is specious. There is no reason to suppose that Greek poetry before the composition of the *Dios apatē* was so well disposed towards Aphrodite; certainly she is dealt with much less kindly elsewhere in the *Iliad*.⁶ Nor is it at all likely that the vision of the

⁶ Aphrodite's significant appearances elsewhere in the *Iliad* are virtually confined to Books 3 and 5, where her function is the seduction (ἡπεροπενέειν) of women (3.399, where Helen is referring to the exciting picture of Paris at leisure which Aphrodite has just drawn; 5.349, where Diomedes asks Aphrodite whether "it is not enough that you seduce helpless women"). She is here the goddess of sexual intercourse (5.429), but there is no indication that she has decisive power over men of heroic stature. All Dione can say by way of consolation for Diomedes' wound and insult is that if he picks on someone "better than you" (5.411) he will probably regret it; and even this prophecy proves false in the sequel. There is no indication in 5.410–15 of Aegialia's faithlessness, which later authors tell of (cf. Mimnermus in Schol. Lycophron 610, Lycophron 612–13). Since heroes are as capable of sexual and amorous feelings as anyone, we must understand Aphrodite in Books 3 and 5 as a symbol of *devotion* to the sensual life, a goddess whom a man can choose (Paris) or reject (Diomedes). In the Lay of Demodocus (*Od.* 8.266–366) Aphrodite is passive, so that her power over mortals is hard to infer. She herself, of course, is supremely desirable; her name is used elsewhere in the poem as a metonymy for sexual intercourse (22.444): but there is no reason to think that the poet of the *Odyssey* gave any thought to the theological question of the extent to which Aphrodite could be identified closely with the powers of sex and sexual love generally.

goddess in *Iliad* 14 and *Theogony* 201–6 was based upon Greek cult.⁷ And the similarities between these two visions is in one respect striking; both are sympathetic, yet both also stress the fact that she beguiles and seduces; both also emphasize her role in the *act* of love. Hence it seems reasonable to conclude that the *Dios apatē* was the source of *Theogony* 205–6.⁸ It is interesting that Homer and Hesiod assign Aphrodite the same *timai* in quite different ways: Hesiod states outright in 203–4 that this is her sphere; Homer speaks symbolically and defines her role by the qualities he gives her cestus.

Theogony 201–2 use Homer as a starting point, but leave him well behind:

Her Eros accompanied and beautiful Himeros followed

When she was first born, and as she entered the rank of the gods.

"*Ἴμερος*, the quality, is a prominent feature of Aphrodite in the *Iliad*. Δὸς νῦν μοι φιλότῃτα καὶ ἴμερον, asks Hera in *Il.* 14.198; *ἴμερος* is on the cestus, 14.216. "*Ἔρος* is never stated to be in Aphrodite's domain, though in 14.294, where Zeus first sees Hera after she has adorned herself and acquired the cestus, "*ἔρως* enfolded his shrewd mind, just as when they first joined together in the act of love." Homer, unlike Hesiod, does not couple *ἴμερος* and *ἔρος*, and he does not deify either of them.

It is just because these lines start with Homer and go beyond him that we expect to see significance in the vision of this divine

⁷ Aphrodite's appearances as a goddess of love and beauty in cult are very rare; see Lewis R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* 2 (Oxford 1896) 759–60, but several of these are very doubtful, several very late. The data do not say much about Aphrodite's function in cult, apart from her duties outside the sexual realm, which of course have nothing to do with the *Dios apatē*. But it seems *a priori* reasonable that she encouraged human fertility, and several cults seem to confirm this. See Martin Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* 1².524 (Munich 1955), though Nilsson does not approach the evidence quite as I do. How different her cult image can be from what the poets eventually made her we shall see when we look at the Cyprian androgynous Aphrodite below. And it must be remembered that it was this *Venus barbata* whose mythology, as I shall try to show, was the source for *Theogony* 188–200. To Hesiod the contrast between her and the Aphrodite of the *Dios apatē* must have been striking enough.

⁸ The relationship between the *Theogony* and the *Dios apatē* was discussed at length by Friedrich Schwenn, *Die Theogonie des Hesiodos* (Heidelberg 1934) 69–78. Schwenn agrees that there is borrowing but concludes that it was the author of the *Dios apatē* who borrowed. His arguments are well criticized by Friedrich Solmsen, *Hesiod and Aeschylus* (Ithaca 1949) 13–14; if they were valid, I should of course be forced to hold that 201–6 were all the product of Hesiod's imagination, which would not be disastrous for my basic view of how 154–206 was composed.

trio; here the imagination of the poet working with and adding to his source ought to display itself. Eros and Himerus were with Aphrodite from the beginning and at the time when she joined the gods, that is, the qualities they represent are a constant feature of her activity as a goddess. In Homer, the difference between *ἔρος* and *ἡμερος* is not great; both mean "desire," sometimes sexual, sometimes not. But to see no more than this in the *Theogony* is not satisfying. If Hesiod wanted to tell us only that desire is an eternal aspect of sexual love, why did he include both divinities? And why, having the opportunity to mention some other aspect, did he fail to do so? We should like to find evidence that one of these deities expresses a third side of sexual love.

And such evidence is forthcoming. Eros is mentioned in *Theogony* 120–22, where he is not only the god of sexual desire but is by inference vital for procreation. Scholars have long seen that he occupies a position among the primordial deities Chaos, Gaea and Erebus, because without him theogony can only occur by parthenogenesis.⁹ When we read 201–2, we are meant to recall the fact that he is first presented as a god of begetting; when he occurs intimately joined with Aphrodite and Himerus, we are to visualize a close harmony among the three aspects of love: the desire, the act and procreation. I do not mean to compartmentalize, merely to urge that Aphrodite, in this context, suggests the sexual act, Himerus sexual desire, and Eros procreation as well as desire. The association of the three connects Aphrodite with the conceiving of children, and this is a new idea. It is so familiar to us that we may overlook the fact that it never occurred to Homer to connect Aphrodite with birth. Her business is with the act of love for its own sake, her sphere characterized by the desire to devote oneself to love-making as an end.¹⁰

⁹ Cf. Wilamowitz *Glaube* 1².336; Solmsen (see note 8) 26–27. Jacoby's attack (*loc. cit.* [above, note 1] 166–69) on the view that Eros is one of the fundamental natural powers is well refuted by Friedländer (*loc. cit.* [above, note 2] 254–56). The genuineness of *Theogony* 121–22 was also disputed, not very convincingly, by Jacoby, pages 169–75. Even if they are bracketed, Eros must be a god of desire, from the meaning of the word, but of desire conceived of as leading to procreation (from his position among the gods).

¹⁰ Hence her close association with Paris. Even the *Dios apatē*, which is much kinder to Aphrodite than the rest of the poem, does not connect her with birth. I do not imply, of course, that Homer was unaware that love-making might lead to conception; but he did not think—at least he certainly avoided saying—that the one existed for the sake of the other, that, in Hesiodic terms, Aphrodite was indissolubly associated with a divinity of fertility.

I have already suggested that Aphrodite was a goddess of human fertility in public cult (above, note 7); it may be that it was this cult function that led Hesiod not to make of Aphrodite a fertility goddess, but to associate her more closely with fertility than poets had hitherto done.

Lines 188–200, the myth of Aphrodite's birth from the severed genitals of Uranus, are altogether non-Homeric. Nilsson would deny this mode of birth any special significance:

Die Voraussetzungen dieses Mythos ist erstens . . . das Epitheton Urania, aus dem sich der Anschluss an den Mythos von der Verstümmelung des Uranos ergab; Aphrodite wurde so durch eine wunderbare Geburt zu seiner Tochter; zweitens die volksetymologische Deutung ihres Namens auf *ἄφρος*, Schaum; drittens ihre Beziehung zum Meer. Daraus erklärt sich der Mythos restlos.¹¹

There are two things about this analysis that I find unsatisfactory: it denies any intrinsic importance to the most impressive detail of all, the fact of Aphrodite's birth from severed genitals, and it does not ask whether these presuppositions are Hesiod's.

I begin with the second objection. Nilsson supposes that the myth was invented to account for the epithet Urania and for Aphrodite's connection with the sea. Hesiod mentions many epithets of Aphrodite,¹² but never Urania; Urania is instead one of the Muses (line 78) and one of the daughters of Ocean and Tethys (line 350). If, then, we follow Nilsson, we must not only call the genealogy Uranus–Aphrodite pre-Hesiodic, but we must say that it is sufficiently earlier than Hesiod for its *raison d'être*, the desire to explain the epithet, to be forgotten. But the myth at this earlier stage can have been quite different from our myth; in it she may well have been born by a more normal process. We still want to know who first made Aphrodite born of severed genitals, and why. Consider also Aphrodite's birth from the sea; if this is really intended to explain her connection with the sea in cult, it was the intention of someone who composed myth long before Hesiod, who never mentions such a cult or displays any interest in Aphrodite as a sea-goddess. But the hypothesis of

¹¹ Nilsson, *Gesch. d. gr. Religion* 1². 521.

¹² The number depends upon whether or not we accept 199–200, and I find Friedländer's defense absolutely convincing (*loc. cit.* [above, note 2] 256–57). She was born on Cyprus because that was where she first emerged from her womb of foam.

such a pre-Hesiodic mythmaker is not entirely satisfactory, because it seems possible that the concept of Aphrodite *anadyomenê* arose not from the cult of the sea-goddess but from the *Theogony* itself; the myth may, for example, have said that Aphrodite was born from the sea because it wanted to exploit both senses of ἄφρος, semen and sea-foam.

The fact that two of Nilsson's presuppositions are pre-Hesiodic raises a further question: why did *Hesiod* tell the story of 188–200? Let us assume that he had heard that Aphrodite was Uranus' daughter, for this is not an unreasonable assumption;¹³ he certainly heard from Homer or the Homeric tradition that Aphrodite was *Zeus'* daughter. What induced him to choose the non-Homeric story, especially if he was the author of 201–6 and therefore borrowed much from Homer? He had no interest in the epithet *Urania*; he had no desire to account for Aphrodite's role as sea-goddess. He did, admittedly, take advantage of the chance to associate Aphrodite with ἄφρος, but is this really sufficient reason for rejecting the Homeric genealogy?

The second objection to Nilsson is that he does not tell us why *Hesiod* said specifically that Aphrodite was born of severed genitals. The Orphics, for example, were able to make Aphrodite ἄφρος-born without introducing a notion of castration, by having *Zeus'* semen fall into the sea. If the etymology ἄφρος–Aphrodite was so very important to *Hesiod*—and I do not think that it was—he might have achieved some such solution and preserved at least part of the Homeric genealogy. This assumption is of course highly speculative and perhaps not fair to Nilsson, but it is fair to ask why we should consider it *advantageous* to explain the myth in such a way as to make the connection between castration and Aphrodite's birth purely accidental. Should we really dismiss, in effect, this so very striking fact as incidental, in order to emphasize the much less impressive etymology from ἄφρος?

¹³ Nilsson, *Gesch. d. gr. Religion* 1².520–21, argues that this epithet must be Oriental in origin and thus very early; it is an interesting fact, perhaps not decisive however, that we do not find it among her epithets in early poetry. Sanchuniathon, who may be very early indeed (some scholars consider him one of *Hesiod's* remote sources), makes *Astarte* (Aphrodite) the daughter of Uranus, so that even if the epithet is late, the genealogy need not be. For Sanchuniathon's myth, see Philo of Byblus in Müller, *FrHGr* 3.563 ff.; a discussion of his date, with references to other scholarly work, is given by Walcot (above, note 3).

The answer clearly depends upon whether the *Theogony* is the only place where Aphrodite is connected with castration. We know, of course, of goddesses sometimes compared to Aphrodite, such as the Magna Mater of Asia Minor, who were worshiped by castrated priests, but these comparisons are only suggestive; we must look for the source of the birth myth in a cult of Aphrodite herself. The birth myth is clearly Cyprian, so that Cyprus is the place to look for such a cult, and we find what we are looking for on a terracotta figurine found at Perachora and made in Corinth but showing unmistakable Oriental influence. This object, dated to the second quarter of the seventh century B.C., shows a bearded female figure rising from what seems almost certainly to be the genital sac; she has been very plausibly identified as the bearded Aphrodite. "It may be suggested," reads the excavation report, "that the scene portrayed is a Grecized version of the bisexual Aphrodite of the Orient and Cyprus . . . being born from the severed genitals of Ouranos."¹⁴ There is nothing on the terracotta to indicate that these are Uranus' genitals, but otherwise the identification is convincing. Now it seems quite out of the question that the artisan who made this figurine drew upon the text of the *Theogony*, because the Hesiodic Aphrodite is very far from being bearded; surely Hesiod must be the borrower. He knew of a myth, depicted on the Perachora terracotta, in which the bearded Aphrodite was born of severed genitals; he gave many details of this myth but substituted for the bearded form of the goddess a picture based upon the Homeric Aphrodite.

From whose genitals, in this earlier myth, was the bearded Aphrodite born? If they were Uranus', then presumably Hesiod took over the story of 154–200 virtually intact, added only 201–6 and changed whatever in 188–200 he had to change to make that section harmonize with 201–6; but we have no evidence that they

¹⁴ Humfry Payne *et al.*, *Perachora* (Oxford 1940) 232. The date, description and origin of the style of this figurine are given here (231–32) and in Edouard Will's *Korinthiaka* (Paris 1955) 229–31. Both volumes indicate the connection between the terracotta and the Cyprian bisexual Aphrodite, though neither offers a detailed exposition of the relation between her cult and the Hesiodic myth; Will quotes (230) Nilsson's analysis of the myth with approval, though the implications of the bearded form of the goddess on the Perachora terracotta raise certain doubts as to its adequacy. Certain features of the style of the figurine, though not the beard or the genital sac, are traced by P. Riis to Syrian Astarte plaques; see his "The Syrian Astarte Plaques and their Western Connections," *Berytus* 9.2 (1949) 69–90.

were Uranus'.¹⁵ This myth belongs to the bearded Aphrodite; the logical place to turn for information is her cult. Hesychius has, under the entry "Aphroditos": Θεόφραστος μὲν τὸν Ἑρμαφρόδιτόν φησιν, ὁ δὲ τὰ περὶ Ἀμαθοῦντα γεγραφώς Παίων εἰς ἄνδρα τήν θεὸν ἐσχηματίσθαι ἐν Κύπρῳ λέγει.¹⁶ Hesiod indicates that the birth myth he tells is Cyprian, the Perachora terracotta suggests that in the original of the birth myth Aphrodite was bearded, and now Paeon informs us that the bearded Aphrodite belongs on Cyprus. Obviously we are on the right track.

Nilsson has argued that bisexual deities owe their form to their cults, that is, to the form assumed by their worshipers when they put on clothing of the opposite sex.¹⁷ Hence we should expect to find transvestitism in the cult of the bearded Aphrodite of our figurine; and we have reasonably good evidence that there was. There is a passage in Macrobius which begins: "Signum etiam eius (Veneris) est Cypri barbatum corpore sed ueste muliebri cum sceptro ac natura uirili, et putant eandem marem ac feminam" (*Sat.* 3.8.2; *natura* Larcher, coll. Serv. Vergil *Aen.* 2.632, *statura* MSS.).

This does not suit the Perachora figurine precisely, since the terracotta has no sceptre and no *natura uirilis*, whether this be genital or phallus; but it is clearly a representation of the same general idea. The passage continues:

Aristophanes eum Aphroditon appellat. Laeuius etiam sic ait . . . Philochorus quoque in Atthide *eandem* affirmat esse Lunam et ei sacrificium facere uiros cum ueste muliebri, mulieres cum uirili, quod eadem et mas aestimatur et femina.

It is not certain whether *eandem* means the Cyprian Aphrodite or

¹⁵ In neither of the myths which have been suggested as sources for Hesiod's story of Uranus' castration (154-87) is there any indication that Aphrodite, or an Oriental predecessor of Aphrodite, was born of Uranus' severed genitals. In the Hittite myth, Kumarbis, having bitten off and swallowed Anus' members, is warned by Anus that he has been impregnated with the Storm-god, the Storm-god's future attendant Tasmisus, and the Tigris river. From Uranus' castration as told by Sanchuniathon there is no issue, only a stream of blood, and Astarte (Aphrodite) is Uranus' offspring by other means; if there is any truth to the theory that Sanchuniathon was a source for Hesiod, nothing could show more clearly that Aphrodite's birth from severed genitals must come from somewhere else.

¹⁶ The text is that of Kurt Latte, *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon* (Copenhagen 1953) 296, who gives the emendation (of Valesius) Παίων εἰς for παλαιονον.

¹⁷ Nilsson, *Griechische Feste* (Leipzig 1906) 373-74.

merely the bisexual Aphrodite in general, but the context makes it likely enough that the Cyprian is meant; and this is to an extent confirmed by the fact that our other evidence for bisexual Aphrodite points to Cyprus. Now it is of course not certain that, even if Philochorus' ultimate source is Cyprian, it is identical with whatever cult inspired the myth we find represented on the Perachora terracotta. If it is, then the latter comes from a cult with a transvestite ritual, as we expected; if it is not, nonetheless Philochorus' information affords a very powerful analogy from which to argue for transvestitism in that cult. We therefore have good evidence for a cult in which existed side by side the two ideas of men putting on women's clothing and the goddess rising from severed genitals. Now castration and transvestitism are obviously related to each other: one is the permanent, the other a temporary adoption by a man of female characteristics. One therefore wants to relate the mythical birth of the goddess to the form of her male worshipers, and the simplest possibility is perhaps this: the men put on female clothing in order to persuade Aphrodite to discharge some function—to insure fertility, let us say; they were thereby becoming women, temporarily, and could be thought of as temporarily castrating themselves; it was therefore felt that castration would encourage the goddess' activity, would lead to fertility; and this was expressed by saying that the goddess herself was born of castration, of severed genitals. It is of course possible that transvestitism was more than a symbol and was actually a substitute for an earlier and harsher sacrifice of the genital itself.¹⁸

It has been the tendency among scholars to locate the source of the material in Philochorus and Paeon (in Hesychius) more precisely than merely "on Cyprus"; they have wanted to say that it stems from Amathus. Here there was a yearly ritual in honor

¹⁸ We have a parallel for the relation between castration and transvestitism in the ritual honoring the Dea Syria, where the priests after castration were given female clothing to wear, and where one of the foundation legends accounts not only for the transvestitism of the priests but also for an androgynous deity worshiped in the sanctuary (whose relation to the chief divinity is not clear to me). Cf. Lucian, *De dea Syria* 51, and 26–27. Since Aphrodite is generally regarded as eastern in origin, since she entered the Greek world through Cyprus, it is not out of the question that the Cyprian androgynous Aphrodite, with her transvestite worshipers, was actually a form of the Dea Syria; but this possibility cannot be discussed here. I have not included the female transvestites mentioned by Philochorus in my theory, because they are not necessary to the formation of the myth.

of Ariadne Aphrodite, in which a young man imitated a woman in childbirth (Plutarch, *Theseus* 20, quoting Paeon); the myth quoted by Plutarch tends to relate the young man to Ariadne, not Aphrodite, but this may perhaps be a later accretion.¹⁹ We are not told that the young man actually put on female clothing, but it can certainly be argued that, in imitating a woman in childbirth, he is assuming female genitals and may well have been thought of as having lost, symbolically, his male organs. That the Amathusian Aphrodite is bisexual is suggested, first, by the fact that our information concerning Aphroditus comes from a book on Amathus (cf. Hesychius, s.v. "Aphroditus," quoted above); why would Paeon have mentioned Aphroditus in this work if there were no androgynous Aphrodite at Amathus? Secondly, Catullus uses the phrase *duplex Amathusia*; unfortunately he himself cannot mean "bisexual Venus" by this, but perhaps he learned the phrase from a context in which bisexual Aphrodite was meant.²⁰ Neither of these arguments is conclusive; and in fact the cult at Amathus is too little understood for us to say that the Perachora terracotta or the information in Philochorus and Paeon (in Hesychius) actually derives from it. We can, with some plausibility, attach the Perachora terracotta to a Cyprian transvestite ritual of uncertain location; we can argue that the easiest way to relate this object with this ritual is to assume that the transvestitism was a symbolic form of, or even a surrogate for, castration; it will then seem reasonable that the ritual gave rise to a myth in which Aphrodite was born of someone's—we do not know whose—severed genitals.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. Tümpel in *RE* 1 (1894) 2794–95, s.v. "Aphroditos"; Jacoby, *FGrH* 328, F 184 (Philochorus). Tümpel does not go on to identify Aphroditus with Ariadne Aphrodite; Jacoby apparently does, for he identifies the report of Paeon in Hesychius with that of Paeon in Plutarch, *Theseus* 20. Jacoby's discussion of this fragment is excellent, though I disagree with his interpretation of Catullus' *duplex Amathusia* (see below note 20).

²⁰ Catullus 68.51. He has just asked the Muses to help him spread Allius' fame: "nam mihi quam dederit duplex Amathusia curam scitis . . . cum tantum arderem quantum Trinacria rupes . . . Hic, uelut . . . aura secunda uenit . . . tale fuit nobis Allius auxilium." *Hic* shows that *dederit* is aorist, not perfect, and must refer to a single occasion, so that *duplex* cannot mean "now inspiring homosexual, now heterosexual love." Nor can it mean "causing grief and joy together," for the occasion referred to by *hic* was one of anxiety without relief (*neque assiduo tabescere lumina fletu cessarent*, 55–56). The sense "sometimes inspiring homosexual, but now heterosexual love" is absurdly inappropriate; the meaning obviously must be "sometimes gentle but now savage."

I do not wish to conceal the speculative nature of this last argument. But it has strengths as well as weakness. We know that there was an androgynous Aphrodite on Cyprus (Paeon in Hesychius); she was probably honored with a transvestite ritual (Philochorus). Connected with at least some Cyprian cult, quite probably with this one, is the Perachora terracotta, which also served to show that this cult was very early. Then we have the *Theogony*, with its myth of Aphrodite born of castration, which we are virtually told comes from Cyprus. Can we really hold that the myth, the figurine and the data concerning Cyprian cult are unconnected?

Whether it was Hesiod or a predecessor who made Aphrodite rise from the waves for the first time seems to me an unanswerable question, though, if it was Hesiod, it was obviously not because he wanted to explain Aphrodite's role as a sea-goddess. With the addition of this detail we have the basic story of 188-200. This was joined to the story of Uranus' castration because Hesiod, who of course needed an Aphrodite for his *Theogony* and was faced with a choice between the Homeric genealogy (Zeus-Aphrodite) and another tradition favoring Uranus over Zeus, could not help but think that the Cyprian myth of Aphrodite's birth from severed genitals virtually put the matter beyond dispute.²¹

The most obvious objection to this theory of composition is that it seems to use two reasons to explain one fact: Aphrodite was made the daughter of Uranus both because of the epithet *Urania* and because of her birth from severed genitals. If one were impressed with this difficulty, he might offer an alternative theory which omits any mention of the Cyprian cult: Aphrodite *Urania*, bearded, was said to be the daughter of Uranus in order to explain the epithet; since Uranus was castrated, it was said that Aphrodite, bearded, was born of his severed genitals, and this is the myth from which the Perachora terracotta was drawn; finally, Hesiod took over this myth, a myth which combined the castration of Uranus with the birth of Aphrodite, and changed the form of the goddess to suit the Homeric conception. Against this theory there are two objections: it implies that Hesiod took over the

²¹ A further reflection of the Cyprian cult might perhaps be seen in *Theogony* 194-95: when Aphrodite stepped ashore, grass grew up about her feet. If she can cause grass to grow, she is a vegetation deity, and so was Ariadne (Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion*² [Lund 1950] 527), who might have contributed this feature to Ariadne Aphrodite, the Amathusian goddess.

material in 154–87 intact, while we shall see evidence that this is not likely; and if Aphrodite's birth from severed genitals is merely the accidental by-product of her being made Uranus' daughter, how are we to explain the extraordinary coincidence that in the homeland of this myth the goddess who figures in it is so likely to have been worshiped by a symbolic castration? Is there no connection between the fact that Aphrodite is bearded, that she looks just like a castrated worshiper, and the fact that she was born as a result of castration in our myth? And the objections to my theory are specious. I have argued that Hesiod heard from one source, let us call it *A*, that Uranus was Aphrodite's father, from another, *B*, that she was born of someone's excised genitals. I do not know who *A* is, but Sanchuniathon would satisfy all the conditions. In the myth he tells (see notes 13 and 15), which is quite likely to be pre-Hesiodic,²² Aphrodite (Astarte) is the daughter of Uranus; and though he is castrated, she is not born of his severed genitals. (The identification of Astarte and Aphrodite is made by Philo himself, our source for Sanchuniathon, and attributed to the Phoenicians, so that it is quite as sound as any of the other of his identifications, such as Cronus with El.) Nor is Aphrodite apt to be bearded in this story, since she has an affair with Cronus and bears him daughters; this increases the likelihood that both the bearded Aphrodite and the birth from castration come from another source. All we need imagine is that Hesiod, in possession of *A*, a myth like Sanchuniathon's, and hearing from *B* of Aphrodite's birth from castration, concluded that it was really Uranus' castration that was meant.

How do we know that *A* and *B* were not put together before Hesiod? It is certainly clear that *A*, the story of divine succession, is not likely to have been made part of the Cyprian cult myth, in which such matters of theological speculation have no very obvious role to play. The person who put together *A* and *B* was probably a mythologist of speculative bent, therefore probably a poet, or he would not have been telling myth *A*; and this description fits Hesiod so well that it seems foolish to insist on the existence of a predecessor. Furthermore, the *Theogony* itself shows signs of the

²² The date of Sanchuniathon himself is a matter of much dispute; cf. Walcot, *loc. cit.* [above, note 3] 201–2. But the latest date suggested is 500 B.C., and the combined chance that either he was older or that he drew upon older material is great.

joining of *A* and *B*. Jacoby has shown how the castration scene comes to a natural end with 182–87, beginning τὰ μὲν οὗ τι ἐτώσια ἔκφυγε χειρός and describing the birth of the Giants, the Erinyes and the Melian nymphs. Here, as we read along, we might well expect the story to end; there is no *necessity* for the poet to go further; at one time the myth probably did go no further but allowed itself to be rounded off with this conclusion.²³

It is not entirely satisfactory, however, to conclude that Hesiod told the story of Aphrodite this way merely because he was following a tradition, however convincing that tradition may have been. And it is possible to see in this birth story a feature which is likely to have given it an imaginative appeal: we see Aphrodite go through the process of conception and growth in the womb (190–92):

ἀμφὶ δὲ λευκὸς
ἀφρὸς ἀπ' ἀθανάτου χροὸς ὥρνυτο· τῷ δ' ἐνὶ κούρῃ
ἐθρέφθη.

Τρέφω is a word used by Aeschylus of growth in the womb (*Eumenides* 665, *Seven against Thebes* 754) and can scarcely have any other meaning here, since she was born (γέντο, 199) at Cyprus.²⁴ Surely it is not too adventurous to conclude that what happens to her in this myth expresses in a powerful and direct fashion what she herself is: a goddess intimately associated with human (and divine, that is, anthropomorphic) fecundity.

It is possible, therefore, to argue that what Hesiod adds to his Homeric source in 201–6 is comparable to what he sees in the myth of 188–200. In the one passage he stresses Aphrodite's connection with fertility by saying that she is intimately associated with Eros; in the other he sees in the birth of Aphrodite an acting out of the process of conception, growth in the womb and birth, which he wants to regard as the natural purpose of her function as goddess of love-making. The effect of both is to stress the relationship, ignored by Homer, between fertility and the act of love. And if we can see a similar effect in both passages, it is an added piece of evidence for the view that it was Hesiod who brought them both into the *Theogony*.

²³ Jacoby, *loc. cit.* (above, note 1) 176–77.

²⁴ Cf. the brilliant discussion of Friedländer, *loc. cit.* (above, note 2) 256–57.