

# Theogony 215-16: Cronos' Golden Hesperides, or Sheep for Apples?

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M. Degener. "Theogony 215-16: Cronos' Golden Hesperides, or Sheep for Apples?."

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## **Abstract:**

The study proposes an alternative correction of the apparent transposition of lines 213 & 214 in *The Theogony* to replace Hermann's proposed correction upheld in M. L. West's standard edition. The alternative ordering of the lines herein proposed provides for the recovery of a homology between *The Theogony* and *The Works and Days* that aligns the Hesperides with the Gold generation. Along with this realignment of the two works there arises a novel perspective on the question as to whether the *mēla* associated with the Hesperides, long supposed to be apples, are rather sheep as is the case in the homologous passage in *The Works*. The prospect of taking sheep for apples here opens a series of issues with ontological and mythical implications leading finally to prospects for exploration of further homologies between Hesiod's and Homer's poems, most pointedly in connection with Odysseus' katabasis.

## **Keywords:**

Hesiod-Theogony-Works and Days-Hesperides-apples-sheep

# *Theogony* 215-16: Cronos' Golden Hesperides, or Sheep for Apples?

## 1. The Homology

The Gold generation is created by those immortals who held Olympus under Cronos. Is it thus possible to identify any homologies between the *Works and Days* and Chronos' tenure in the *Theogony*? I propose that a homology between the Hesperides and the Gold generation has been overlooked because of an incorrect attempt to undo an interpolation of lines 211-218 in the *Theogony*.

Cronos' ignominious rise to power, as narrated in the *Theogony*, is followed by an interlude describing Aphrodite's birth and then the brief, retrospective mention of the Titans at 207-210. Beginning at 211 we learn of the progeny of Night, who bears first Fate and Doom, then Death and Sleep, and the tribes of Dreams. To recover a homology to the *Works* we need only ask a simple question: *who* dies? The introduction of Death signals, implicitly—as it must be born in mind that the *Theogony* represents the divine perspective on cosmic order—the advent of mortals. So is there then a homology to the first race of mankind, i.e., the Gold? The answer is yes, in the reference to the Hesperides to follow. However, a problem with the text has confused matters. M. L. West's edition (120 & 227) follows Hermann's widely accepted transposition of lines 213 & 214 to resolve the problem posed by the transition from 212 to 213. Here is the text he presents:

Νύξ δ' ἔτεκεν στυγερὸν τε Μόρον καὶ Κῆρα μέλαιναν	211	1
καὶ Θάνατον, τέκε δ' Ὕπνον, ἔτικτε δὲ φῶλον Ὀνειρίων:	212	2
<u>δεύτερον αὖ Μῶμον καὶ Ὀιζὺν ἀλγινόεσσαν</u>	<b>214</b>	<b>4</b>
οὐ τινι κοιμηθεῖσα θεὰ τέκε Νύξ ἐρεβεννή,	213	3
Ἐσπερίδας θ', ἧς μῆλα πέρην κλυτοῦ Ὠκεανοῖο	215	5
χρῦσα καλὰ μέλουσι φέροντά τε δένδρεα καρπὸν.	216	6
καὶ Μοίρας καὶ Κῆρας ἐγείνατο νηλεοπίουρας,	217	7
Κλωθὴ τε Λάχεσιν τε καὶ Ἄτροπον		218

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Night bore hateful Doom and black Fate  
 And Death, and she bore Sleep, and bore the tribe of Dreams.  
Then second Blame and painful Misery  
 Dark night bore without having slept with any of the Gods,  
 As well as the Hesperides, who guard the golden apples [or sheep? See below]  
 Beyond glorious Ocean and the trees bearing fruit.  
 And she bore too the Destinies and the ruthless avenging Fates,  
 Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos...

The prospect of a homology seems to be precluded when Hesiod explicitly states in the

*Works* that during the era of the Gold there was neither any toil, *πόνων*, nor *misery*,

οιζύος:

χρῦσεον μὲν πρῶτιστα γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων  
 ἀθάνατοι ποίησαν Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες.  
 οἱ μὲν ἐπὶ Κρόνου ἦσαν, ὅτ' οὐρανῷ ἐμβασίλευεν:  
 ὥστε θεοὶ δ' ἔζων ἀκηδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντες  
 νόσφιν ἄτερ τε πόνων καὶ οιζύος...

(*Op.* 109-14)

First the immortals who held Olympus created  
 The gold generation of men with speech,  
 Those gods who lived during the time of Cronos, who was then the king of  
 heaven.  
 They lived like gods with a carefree spirit  
 And they lived entirely apart from toil and *misery*

For the position of line 214 in West's edition presents the creation of Misery *before* that of the Hesperides, that is, prior to what otherwise, given the reference to the golden apples (or sheep), might be expected to be a divine contemporary to the era of the mortal Gold generation. While we may thank Hermann for drawing our attention to the interpolation that occurred after line 212, I propose an alternate solution that transposes not one line but two, lines 215 & 216. This interpolation is hardly more difficult than Hermann's, for it makes sense that the two lines referring to the Hesperides would not have been separated wherever they were to end up. The resulting transposition not only provides for the creation of the Hesperides before Misery making way for the homology to the Gold generation of mortals, but also recovers another important homology between the texts:

<u>Νύξ</u> δ' ἔτεκεν στυγερὸν τε Μόρον καὶ Κῆρα μέλαιναν	211	1
καὶ Θάνατον, τέκε δ' Ὕπνον, ἔτικτε δὲ φῦλον Ὀνειρώων:	212	2
Ἑσπερίδας θ', ἧς μῆλα πέρην κλυτοῦ Ὠκεανοῖο	<b>215</b>	<b>5</b>
χρῦσέα καλὰ μέλουσι φέροντά τε δένδρεα καρπὸν.	<b>216</b>	<b>6</b>
οὐ τινι κοιμηθεῖσα θεὰ <u>τέκε Νύξ</u> ἐρεβεννή,		213
3		
☒ ☒ ☒ ☒		
<u>δεύτερον</u> αὖ Μῶμον καὶ Ὀϊζὺν ἀλγινόεσσαν	214	4
καὶ Μοίρας καὶ Κῆρας ἐγένετο νηλεοποίνους,	217	7
Κλωθὴ τε Λάχεσιν τε καὶ Ἄτροπον...	218	8

Night bore hateful Doom and black Fate

And Death, and she bore Sleep, and bore the tribe of Dreams.

And the Hesperides, who guard the golden apples (?)

Beyond glorious Ocean and the trees bearing fruit,

without having slept with any of the Gods, dark Night bore.

☒ ☒ ☒ ☒

Then second she gave birth to Blame and painful Misery

And to the Destinies and ruthless avenging Fates,

Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos...

I am proposing that lines 215-216 should simply be shifted back two lines. The result of restoring them to this position is, first, that the Hesperides and their golden “apples” (or are they *sheep*? I will address this presently) are now where they belong, before the creation of Misery, Ἰζὺν (214), and within what now has the appearance of a self-contained narrative section. Note that the section opens with a reference to Night by name, and her bearing, Νύξ δ’ ἔτεκεν (211), and now closes with a very similar, bracketing reference, τέκε Νύξ ἐρεβεννή (213). And as further confirmation that this indeed represents a bracketed section homologous to the self-contained presentation of the first generation of the Gold in the *Works* (the narration of the Gold generation, unlike those that follow, neither refers forward nor back in time), note that the next line begins with a distinct transition, “Then second...”, δεύτερον αὖ; one, moreover, that constitutes *another precise homologue* to the phrase that announces the transition to the next stage in the *Works*, namely the Silver generation:

δεύτερον αὖτε γένος πολὺ χειρότερον μετόπισθεν  
ἀργύρεον ποίησαν Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχοντες,

(*Op.* 127-28)

Then second those holding the houses of Olympus  
Created another far worse race to follow, the Silver...

With this simple correction, it is now possible to discern Hesiod’s purpose. That he is deliberately forging a link from the *Theogony* to the Gold generation of the *Works* through his use of the term for Misery is clear, for while the term appears four times in the *Works*—which stands to reason, as he is speaking in these instances of the mortal misery of the Iron generation—it appears only here in the *Theogony*. Indeed, the term essentially *announces* the onset of Iron woes; for Hesiod, after introducing the Iron

generation at line 176, confirms in the next line that there will be no cessation of “labor and *miser*”, οὐδέ ποτ’ ἤμαρ παύονται καμάτου καὶ οἰζύου (*Op.* 175-76).

Once the link between the Hesperides and the Gold is recovered, and then as well the link indicating the transition to what follows the Gold in both texts in δεύτερον αὖτε... , it becomes evident that the entire passage relating the progeny of Night in the *Theogony* is, in a sense, an encapsulation of the full course of the myth of the generations. This raises another point that must be addressed. For Hesiod’s account of the progeny of Night goes beyond the limit of the Gold generation—that is, beyond the tenure of Cronos—and well into the full list of woes that beset *all* the subsequent generations taken collectively. In other words, once Hesiod begins on Night’s genealogical line, that is, the line of mortals, he follows it through (albeit in an abbreviated and undifferentiated synopsis) to its end, even though he has yet to recount the advent of Zeus.<sup>1</sup> This might at first appear a bit confusing, and certainly makes the task of tracing the homologies between the texts less than immediately straightforward. Yet Hesiod takes this sort of narrative liberty in several places in the *Theogony*, which, despite the general progress of the central *divine* figures (i.e., Earth, Heaven, Cronos, Zeus) incorporates various digressions and tangents. Thus there is no reason to expect that the narrative of Night’s progeny would not progress beyond the stage to which the main line of the genealogical narrative had thus far advanced. And in fact this miniature narrative does progress right into the Iron present, as is evident in the transition from the description of Night’s progeny to that of her daughter, *Strife*, at 225. For we may recall that it is Strife, Ἔρις, that is the first significant figure in the *Works*, appearing at line 11,

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<sup>1</sup> Or, in particular, the Titanomachy, which I would argue is homologous with the Bronze generation.

and that the *Works* is predominantly concerned with the cares of Mankind, in particular, those of Hesiod's Iron contemporaries.

What is more, that the progeny of night represents a narrative digression beyond the main Theogonic line out towards Hesiod's iron present is evident in the general fact that this section concerns itself with mankind as a departure from the *Theogony's* central focus on the divine register. This interjection of mankind is undoubtedly triggered by the advent of Death at the opening of the section. However, the lot of mortals is only implicit up through the reference to the Hesperides, whose description recalls the pacific demise of the first generation of mortals, the Gold, those whose death came like sleep, and who, spent their lives effortlessly enjoying low hanging fruits. And who possessed sheep, too—assuming 120 belongs in the text—along with the fruits that were, however, *not* apples, as we will see in a moment. So at first the reference to the relatively benevolent lot of mankind is only implicit—implied at once by the fact that it is only mortals who are subject to Death, and by the homology of the Hesperides to the Gold generation. Explicit references to the more miserable lot of those generations to follow the demise of the Gold, that is, those generations that follow *irreversibly* the advent of the Silver, δεύτερον αὔτε (*Op.* 126), come in my reordering of the lines in the *Theogony* in the section that follows the self-contained reference to the Hesperides and begins δεύτερον αὔ (Th. 215, following 212). First with βροτοῖσι at 218, then, in juxtaposing men and gods, with αἴτ' ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε at 220, and again with θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσι at 223, emphasizing the pains of mortality, and finally, closing the section with a reference to the ontological situation of mankind, ἐπιχθονίους ἀνθρώπους at 231.

Thus this digressive transition marks as well an intertextual branching off that links, or appends the main topos of the *Works* to the *Theogony*. Nor should we be surprised to see Toil, Πόνος, appear as the first in the list of Iron woes to follow the advent of Strife at *Theogony* 226, as indeed toil was the other of two banes that Hesiod explicitly identified as absent from the Golden era in the *Works*, νόσφιν ἄτερ τε πόνων καὶ οἰζύος (*Op.* 113).<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Sheep for Apples?

Once these homologies are in place, we are in a position to suggest another, while also perhaps gaining further insight into another aspect of the description of the Gold generation at *Op.* 120:

ἄφνειοὶ μῆλοισι, φίλοι μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν.

...rich in flocks, and close to the blessed gods.

West brackets the line, and other editions have expunged it. Yet a homology between the Hesperides and the Gold generation raises another possibility, namely that the text is either correct, or that the line is at least a meaningful intrusion. For now the possibility surfaces of a homology between the word here in the *Works* μῆλοισι, which certainly means “sheep,”<sup>3</sup> and the word at *Th.* 215, Ἐσπερίδας θ’, ἧς μῆλα πέρην κλυτοῦ Ὠκεανοῖο ☞ which has been taken as its homophone “apples”<sup>4</sup> from at least the early sixth century. It is simple enough to see how the reference to them in the *Theogony*,

<sup>2</sup> The significance of the transition to Eris is also evident in key similarities between line 226 and the references of the opening passages to Night: Ἐρις στυγερὴ τέκε (226) vs. Νύξ δ’ ἔτεκεν στυγερόν (211); αὐτὰρ (226) vs. δεῦτερον αὐ (213); Πόνον ἀλγινόεντα (226) vs. Ὀϊζὺν ἀλγινόεσσαν (213).

<sup>3</sup> I am unaware of any instance in which the adjective, ἀφνειός, is used in association with any sort of fruit, while it appears frequently in connection with sheep, as it does here, or more generally with other objects of wealth. In Hesiod it appears in four of six instances explicitly with μῆλα: *Op.* 308; *fr.* 23a3; *fr.* 240.2; *fr.* 10(a).39.

<sup>4</sup> I state this as a shorthand for while Hesiod’s depiction of the Hesperides was no doubt early on widely known and influential we cannot rule out other sources lost to us that may have already undergone a switch from sheep to apples. So, for example, we might wonder whether an early sixth century date for Spartan

closely associated as they are with the fruit-bearing trees, could have been misconstrued.

Yet

even if the Hesperides' *mēla* were, in Hesiod's mind, sheep, they were nonetheless soon to become apples, and would enjoy far greater fame incorporated in that guise into the Heracles complex of tales and iconography. The various traditions of the golden apples of the Hesperides are extensive, and it is necessary here only to recall them broadly.<sup>5</sup>

Although the complex of connections covers a number of different mythic traditions and sources, I would like to target a somewhat narrowed range of associations in connection with the Hesperides, gold, the sun, and sheep, both in the *Theogony* and the *Odyssey*, in an attempt to bring the homologies between Hesiod's texts and certain eschatological issues of the myth of the generations into sharper focus. This line of interpretation will be moving more specifically to comparative reflections that distinguish

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iconography of the Hesperides' apples as proposed by Jane Burr Carter (1989) would necessarily have stemmed from a 'misreading' of *Hesiod's* sheep.

<sup>5</sup> The notion that the apples should be taken as sheep does have antique precedents. Even if it is doubtful they represent a reliable reflection on the meaning of the question in Hesiod, they do perhaps preserve some derivation. A. B. Cook (1894) reports on Pollux's description of a Boeotian tradition of sacrifice of μῆλα to Heracles. It is recounted that the customary sacrifice of a ram could not be carried out on account of the flooding of the river Asopus. So instead, "children playing round the temple [took] a ripe apple [and] propped it on four straws by way of legs, adding a couple above for horns. And according to the poets [and here Cook wonders whether they were Boeotians] they said that they were sacrificing the μῆλον as a πρόβατον." Cook goes on to report that this story was repeated with some variation by Hesychius *s.v.* Μήλων Ἡρακλῆς and Suidas *s.v.* Μήλειος Ἡρακλῆς (114). George Osmun (1956) reports of Palaephatus' account that: "The apples of the Hesperides were really sheep due to a confusion about the Greek word *mēlon*. Heracles stole them after killing the shepherd Draco ("Dragon"). They were 'golden' because their wool was valuable." (135). Stern (2003) speaks to the points of comparison between Palaephatus 18 and Diodorus Siculus 4.26.2-4.27.2 (82).

Of more substantive relevance are such modern findings as Gregory Crane's (1988), in his study of Calypso and the *Odyssey*. He points to an intersection of the Heracles' complex and the golden apples and the golden fleece in that they are both guarded by a snake (12). He goes further in exploring complex overlapping patterns of similarities between Heracles' stealing of Geryon's cattle and the journey to the Hesperides (128ff.) along with the broader relevance of patterns of katabasis to other labors. Crane does also point out that the "Hellenistic historian Agrotas reinterpreted the golden apples as marvelous cattle that were called 'golden' and the snake guarding them as a shepherd, who had earned the epithet 'snake' because of his harsh temper." (145) I refer the reader to Crane as a useful single source to sort through many of the important interconnections including Hesiod, *The Odyssey*, and Stesichorus to avoid having to repeat many of these relevant connections here.

Odysseus' katabasis from Heracles'.

Following a suggestion in a scholion to Apollonius that Hesiod had spoken of Circe traveling to an island called Hesperian on a chariot of the sun, and *Th.* 1011, where Hesiod identifies her as the daughter of Helios, I note her warning to Odysseus against stealing Helios' cattle<sup>6</sup> and *sheep*:

Θρινακίην δ' ἐς νῆσον ἀφίξεις: ἔνθα δὲ πολλαὶ  
βόσκοντ' Ἑλίοιο βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,  
ἐπτὰ βοῶν ἀγέλαι, τόσα δ' οἴων πώεα καλά,  
πεντήκοντα δ' ἕκαστα. γόνος δ' οὐ γίγνεται αὐτῶν,  
οὐδέ ποτε φθινύθουσι. θεαὶ δ' ἐπιποιμένες εἰσὶν,  
νύμφαι ἐυπλόκαμοι, Φαέθουσά τε Λαμπετίη τε,  
ἃς τέκεν Ἑλίῳ Ὑπερίονι διὰ Νέαιρα.  
τὰς μὲν ἄρα θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε πότνια μήτηρ  
Θρινακίην ἐς νῆσον ἀπόκισε τηλόθι ναίειν,  
μῆλα φυλασσέμεναι πατρώια καὶ ἔλικας βοῦς.  
τὰς εἰ μὲν κ' ἀσινέας ἑάας νόστου τε μέδῃαι,  
ἧ τ' ἂν ἔτ' εἰς Ἴθάκην κακὰ περ πάσχοντες ἴκοισθε:

(*Od.* 12.127-38)

Then you will reach the island Thrinakia, where are pastured  
The cattle and the fat sheep of Helios,  
Seven herds of oxen, and as many beautiful sheepflocks,  
And fifty to each herd. There is no giving birth among them,  
Nor do they ever die away, and their shepherdesses  
Are gods, nymphs with sweet hair, Lampetia and Phaethousa,  
Whom shining Neaira bore to Hyperion Helios.  
These, when their queenly mother had given them birth and reared them,  
She settled on the island Thrinakia, far away, to live  
There and guard their father's sheep and his horn-curved cattle.  
Then if you keep your mind on homecoming and leave these unharmed,  
You might all make your way to Ithaka, after much suffering...

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<sup>6</sup> While I hope it will be clear presently why I am beginning here in my attempt to develop a narrowed argument, it is worth pointing out that this reference could also serve as a jumping off point for a broadening of the question, as has been pursued by no few other scholars, of the relationship of cattle rustling and katabasis, say, to point to one important reference, with psychopomp Hermes and Apollo's cattle in the Homeric hymn.





έστηώς κεφαλῆ τε καὶ ἀκαμάτησι χέρεσσιν  
ἀστεμφέως, ὅθι Νύξ τε καὶ Ἡμέρη ἄσσον ἰοῦσαι  
ἀλλήλας προσέειπον, ἀμειβόμεναι μέγαν οὐδὸν  
χάλκεον: ἡ μὲν ἔσω καταβήσεται, ἡ δὲ θύραζε  
ἔρχεται, οὐδέ ποτ' ἀμφοτέρας δόμος ἐντὸς ἐέργει,  
ἀλλ' αἰεὶ ἐτέρη γε δόμων ἔκτοσθεν ἐοῦσα  
γαῖαν ἐπιστρέφεται, ἡ δ' αὖ δόμου ἐντὸς ἐοῦσα  
μίμνει τὴν αὐτῆς ὄρην ὁδοῦ, ἔστ' ἂν ἴκηται,  
ἡ μὲν ἐπιχθονίοισι φάος πολυδερκὲς ἔχουσα,  
ἡ δ' Ὕπνον μετὰ χερσὶ, κασίγνητον Θανάτοιο.  
Νύξ ὀλοή, νεφέλη κεκαλυμμένη ἠεροειδεῖ.

(Th. 744-57)

Here stands the dread house of dark Night covered with black clouds. Before the house stands the son of Iapetus, holding fast the wide heaven on his head and untiring arms, at the place where Night and Day address each other as they pass, crossing over the great bronze threshold: one of them goes down within while the other comes out, so that the house never contains both of them, but one is always outside the house traveling over the earth, while the other is inside the house waiting for the time of her journey to come; one of them brings the far-seeing light to those on earth, while the other, baneful Night covered with murky clouds, carries Sleep, the brother of Death, in her hands.

When “Night and Day address each other as they pass, crossing over the great bronze threshold,” we cannot help but be reminded of *Télépulos*, “where shepherd, driving in his flocks, cries out to shepherd, and the other, driving his flocks out, hears the call.” The Homeric and Hesiodic passages cannot be separated. (61-62)

Indeed, we do find the *mēla* again in the passage to which Frame is referring:

For six days we sailed night and day  
And on the seventh day we arrived in Lamos with sheer cliffs  
Telepylos of the Laistrygones, where one shepherd, driving  
His flocks in hails another, who answers as he drives  
His flocks out; and there a man who could go without sleep could earn him  
Double wages, one for herding the cattle, one for the silvery sheep [μῆλα]  
For there the paths of night and day are close together.

(Od. 10.80-86)

And I also would concur with the connection that Frame makes between the passing of these Laistrygonian shepherds and Hesiod's portrayal of Atlas at this divide of Night and Day, whom, as Frame points out, Hesiod has "previously (*Th.* 518) placed 'at the ends of earth, in front of the Hesperides', in other words, on the western shore of the world" (62).

Ἄτλας δ' οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχει κρατερῆς ὑπ' ἀνάγκης  
πεύρασι ἐν γαίῃς, πρόπαρ Ἑσπερίδων λιγυφόνων

Thus my brief exploration of this rich mythological complex surrounding the *mēla* has joined with Frame's broader investigation of Odysseus' homecoming and liminal experiences at the bounds of the earth. And so it is not surprising to find that the *mēla* play a significant role in Odysseus' *katabasis*, where Circe instructs him that he must sacrifice *mēla* in order to call up the psychæ of the dead,

Then sacrifice one ram and one black [μέλαιναν] female,  
Turning them toward Erebus, but yourself turn away from them  
And make for where the river turns, and there the numerous  
*Psychae* of the perished dead will come and gather about you.  
Then encourage your companions and tell them, taking  
The sheep [μῆλα] that are lying by, slaughtered with the pitiless bronze...  
(Od. 10.527-32)

They must travel to the "bounds of Ocean," ἢ δ' ἐς πεύραθ' ἵκανε βαθυπόρου Ὠκεανοῖο,  
which may be now safely assumed to be in some proximity to the realm of the  
Hesperides, in order to arrive at the city of the Kimmerians,

Hidden in fog and cloud, nor does Helios, the radiant  
Sun, ever break through the dark, to illuminate them with his shining,  
Neither when he climbs up into the starry heaven to earth,  
But always a glum night is spread over wretched mortals.  
Making this point, we ran the ship ashore, and took out

The sheep [μῆλα], and ourselves walked along by the stream of Ocean  
Until we came to that place of which Circe had spoken.

(*Od.* 11.15-22)

And once there, Odysseus promises, following Circe's instructions, one among his flock  
of *mēla* to Teiresias, one that is all-black and most conspicuous,

Τειρεσίη δ' ἀπάνευθεν οἶν ἱερευσέμεν οἴῳ  
παμμέλαν', ὃς μῆλοισι μεταπρέπει ἡμετέροισι.  
τοὺς δ' ἐπεὶ εὐχολῆσι λιτῆσί τε, ἔθνεα νεκρῶν,  
ἐλλισάμην, τὰ δὲ μῆλα λαβῶν ἀπεδειροτόμησα  
ἐς βόθρον, ῥέε δ' αἷμα κελαινεφές: αἶ δ' ἀγέροντο  
ψυχαὶ ὑπὲξ Ἑρέβευς νεκύων κατατεθνηώτων.

(*Od.* 11.32-37)

And to Teiresias apart I would dedicate an all-black  
Ram, the one conspicuous in all our sheep flocks.  
Now when, with sacrifices and prayers, I had so entreated  
The hordes of the dead, I took the sheep and cut their throats  
Over the pit, and the dark-clouding blood ran in, and the *psychae*  
Of the perished dead gathered to the place, up out of Erebos...

So, having been tempted by golden apples, I come to a *black sheep*.

And following this path, I have allowed myself to be led rather far out beyond  
where I began with Hesiod, as will become clear when, following the next steps on  
Odysseus' path, we find first Teiresias warning him against stealing Helios' cattle and  
*mēla*, μῆλα Ἡελίου (11.108-09); then Circe reiterating this warning (at 12.127-38  
addressed above); and finally come to the point where Odysseus, having sighted Helios'  
*mēla* from his *black*, μελαίνη (12.264), ship, himself repeats these warnings to his  
comrades, although ultimately to no avail. We learn how far, indeed, we have progressed  
beyond—or *digressed from*—our starting point with Hesiod's Gold generation, when we  
hear one of Odysseus' companion's reply to his warning,

σχέτλιός εις, Ὀδυσσεῦ: περί τοι μένος, οὐδέ τι γυῖα  
κάμνεις: ἦ ῥά νυ σοί γε σιδήρεα πάντα τέτυκται,  
(*Od.* 12.279-80)

You are hard, Odysseus, and strong. And your limbs  
Never weary. You must be wrought all of iron

only to discover ourselves very much within the range of the miserable lot of Hesiod's Iron generation. Thus it is ironic that as a consequence of his companions' failure to heed the warning not to consume Helios' *mēla* Odysseus ultimately finds himself with Calypso who will offer him quite the opposite of iron death, that is, something more akin to the *immortality* Hercules' won from procuring the *golden mēla* of the Hesperides.

While it may appear that the line of associations might seem to be dissipating as I leave the mythical golden apples of the gardens of the Hesperides behind to track out on the sheep path of the *mēla*, I do again recall that that point of departure provided for by the realignment of the homologies between *The Works* and *The Theogony* can also now be looked to, as I explore in greater depth in my forthcoming book length study XXXXXXXX, as opening up new paths of inquiry into other homologies between Hesiod's and Homer's poems. For the point of alignment of the golden Hesperides with the Gold in the myth of the generations of man serves within *The Theogony* to inaugurate the degenerative line of descent right out into the Toil and Misery of the Iron, the Iron age in which we find ourselves, along with Hesiod, and at the threshold of which Odysseus finds himself in the course of his katabasis.

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