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THE ANCIENT QUARREL
BETWEEN POETRY AND PHILOSOPHY
IN CALLIMACHUS' HYMN TO ZEUS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By
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The Ohio State University
1997

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ABSTRACT

The age of Callimachus, the third century BC, was one which experienced a widespread revival of poetry. This was the case in the Greek world generally, but particularly so in Alexandria, the new political, economic, and cultural capital. This renaissance can be seen in the large number of poets, and in the development of new poetic genres, new forms, and new metres. In the theoretical realm, poetry's new importance is attested to by the Alexandrian project of collecting, editing, and interpreting all known Greek texts, and by the vitriolic debates among poets, scholars, and philosophers on the function and value of poetry, of methods of poetic interpretation and evaluation. I examine the place of Callimachus' Hymns in that revival, the ways in which they engaged in the critical cultural debates of the third century BC concerning the place and value of poetry, and the challenge they offer to the rationalistic philosophers who had appropriated the poet's traditional cultural authority. This revises the traditional view of Callimachean poetics as the declaration of the autonomy of art and the demand that poetry be judged only by aesthetic and technical criteria.
I begin by surveying the origin and terms of the debate between poetry and philosophy. I then analyze how all of the hymns, in different ways, raise questions about the value, function and even the very possibility of poetry in a rationalistic age. These questions, in turn, center on the problem of establishing or defining the nature of the poetic voice, which I address in a detailed interpretation of the first, and in my view programmatic, Hymn to Zeus. This hymn sets up the collection by subordinating the voice of transcendental truth, pragmatic probability, moral and generic appropriateness, and political exigency to that of the poet, whose unique power is shown to derive from poetry's capacity for continual deception. In turn, the Hymn to Zeus demonstrates that it is that capacity alone which can speak to and for the multivocal mythopoetic tradition and the community which inherited it.
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INTRODUCTION

The age of Callimachus, the third century BC, was one which experienced a widespread revival of poetry writing. This was the case in the Greek world generally, but particularly so in Alexandria, the new political, economic and cultural capital. This renaissance can be seen in the large number of those engaged in writing poetry (of which the majority survive as names only or in small fragments), and in the development of new poetic genres (e.g. New Comedy, Bucolic, epyllion), new forms (e.g. pattern poems), and new metres. In the theoretical realm, poetry became the focus of attention on a scale previously unsurpassed. This is attested to by the Alexandrian project of collecting, categorizing, cataloguing, editing, and interpreting all known Greek texts, as well as by the fierce competitiveness and vitriolic debates among poets, scholars, and philosophers on the function and value of poetry, on methods of interpretation, and on the appropriate criteria for evaluating a poem. I will examine the place of Callimachus'...
Hymns in that revival, the ways in which they engaged in the critical cultural debates of the third century BC (especially concerning the place and value of poetry), and the challenge they offer to the rationalistic philosophers who had appropriated the poet's traditional role as cultural authority. This reading constitutes a revision of the traditional view of Callimachean poetics as the declaration of the autonomy of art and the demand that poetry be judged only by aesthetic and technical criteria.

At the beginning of the third century BC, the prospects for the writing of original poetry did not look particularly bright. The prose genres of philosophy, history, and oratory were so clearly in the ascendancy that Plato's proposed ban on poets in the Republic seemed to be well on its way to being realized. The paltry extant remains of fourth century BC poetry has led to the current consensus of opinion that the new poetry being written was small in volume and inferior in quality relative both to the output of the past and to the concurrently great flow of prose works. This poetic decline was, in fact, a preoccupation of the poets themselves, who tended to locate its source in a sense of exhaustion, a feeling of despair that perfection had been reached in all possible genres, that all paths of song had been fully explored. As an explanation for the collapse of poetry in

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2 Traces of this feeling are found even as early as the end of the fifth century BC. The most often cited example is that from Choerilus of
the fourth century and the form it took when it returned to prominence in the third, the emphasis placed by many modern literary scholars (following the ancient poets themselves) on this crisis in confidence and sense of exhaustion caused by the "burden of Homer/ the past" is, I suggest, misleading. Homer, after all, had both inspired and intimidated poets since the archaic age. A more complete story of the fall and rise of poetry during this period would include a wide range of political, philosophical, cultural and economic factors.

This dissertation attempts to highlight and explore the role of one of those factors: the rise of rationalism and the philosophical appropriation of the poet's role as interpreter of the past, arbiter of the present and prophet of the future.

Samos' Persica in H. Lloyd-Jones & P. Parsons (Eds.), Supplementum Hellenisticum (Berlin & New York 1983), 317:

Happy the man who at that time knew how to sing as servant of the Muses, before the meadow was mown. But now, after everything has been broken up and the arts have come to an end, we are so to speak the last ones remaining in the field, and look where one may it is just no longer possible to come across a newly harnessed steed. (Translation T. Gelzer)

For other examples and for a careful literary-historical survey of the "crisis" of poetry in this period see T. Gelzer, "Transformations," in A. Bulloch et al. (Eds.), Images and Ideologies (University of California Press 1993), 130-151.

In Callimachus and His Critics (Princeton 1995), A. Cameron has forcefully argued against the current overemphasis on the burden of Homer as a factor for Callimachus, though he possibly goes too far towards the opposite extreme of suggesting he was not a factor at all.

See Gelzer (above n. 2), and, on the impact of writing and literacy, see P. Bing, The Well-Read Muse (Göttingen 1988), especially 10-47.
As early as Xenophanes in the sixth century BC, there were rationalist voices raised against assigning excessive cultural authority to what they considered to be the irrational and lying voice of the poet. This approach culminated in the fourth century BC with Plato's sweeping critique of poetry and his full-scale attempt to dislodge the poet from his position as cultural hegemon in order to replace him with the philosopher. By the third century BC, the rationalist philosophers had largely appropriated the traditionally privileged status of the poet as public educator, embodier of the public conscience, and preserver of the common cultural heritage. It would, therefore, not be surprising if the resurgence of poetry in the third century BC was disturbing to the philosophers, and, in fact, there is substantial evidence that this was the case. In the sudden and dramatic rise of literary scholarship and discussions of poetic theory during this period (which I will examine in Chapter 1), we can trace their attempts to supervise poetry's return and circumscribe its potential influence in such a way that they might retain their cultural initiative. For example, the dogmatic Stoics and Epicureans sought to

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* Besides theoretically undermining poetry, philosophy undermined it practically as well. Outside of the civic forums, new community centres opened up in the form of schools of philosophy (and rhetoric). In most cases, these spaces appropriated the religious aura that had commonly defined the space of poetic performance in that they were designated as consecrated ground; in particular, the poet's patrons, Apollo and the Muses, were appropriated as the patrons of philosophy. The importance of this physical space is indicated by the fact that the schools came to
prescribe how poetry was to be interpreted so that it would conform to their philosophies, or at least not challenge them. Even the Alexandrian Library scholars, many of whom were poets themselves, seem to have felt that the best way to defend poetry against the influential rationalist critique was to claim that it aimed only at entertainment, not at instruction, and was therefore exempt from attack on educational grounds. The result is that they, too, became part of the attempt to restrict poetry's field of influence.

According to a long-standing view, Callimachus fits quite comfortably into this Alexandrian literary scene as a playful, clever experimenter in poetic technique, a creator of "art for art's sake," a proponent of the view that poetry be judged only according to aesthetic principles. From this perspective, his poems consist of mere scholarly games and puzzles for a learned elite, combined with a measure of political flattery, and thus could not be expected to address the crucial cultural issues of his day. I propose to show that Callimachus was in fact engaged in such larger issues in his poems, that he was opposed to the restriction and control of the poetic voice by the rationalist voice, and that the Hymns were probably his earliest attempt at challenging the rationalist cultural hegemony in order to reclaim for poetry the right and power to speak as a cultural authority.

be known by and identified with their location, e.g. the Garden of Epicurus, and the Stoa.
I suggest that in his challenge, Callimachus reinvents an older model of poetic competition. Prior to Plato, it was the agonistic, competitive nature of the Greek poetic tradition that facilitated its role as a medium for negotiation between past, present and future. Poetic competition in a political and religious context afforded a space in which a poet could give both individual and communal voice to the issues involved in identity and self-determination. In the world of the Hellenistic monarchs the various literary agones continued to flourish. However, the autocratic Ptolemies usurped the people's political right to self-determination while the philosophers appropriated the didactic authority of the poetic voice in the service of the rationalizing of religion and the world. What remained as the locus for poetic competition was the aesthetic aspect; we see a marked increase in concern for form and technique. These three developments—political, philosophical, and poetic—have in common a concern with order and hierarchical structure which reduces the individual (and community to which he belongs) to a state of passive acceptance. This is particularly evident in the language of the philosophical

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'This role, and its connection with a publically competitive context, is memorably depicted in Aristophanes' *Frogs*—a play whose central *agon* between Euripides and Aeschylus concerning their relative merits as verbal artists and community teachers employs critical and evaluative terminology which reappears in Callimachus' "programmatic" statement at the beginning of the Aetia. For an analysis of Callimachus' deployment of this terminology see D. L. Clayman, "The Origins of Greek Literary Criticism and the Aitia Prologue," *WG* 11 (1977), 27-34.
schools who, despite their differences, all express a desire to explain the world in such a way that the individual may best play out the role assigned to him / her in life rather than create his / her own.

Callimachus, in my reading, sought to replace the negative, destructive form of philosophical opposition—which attempted to silence the poetic voice, make it conform to the rational standards of philosophy, or reduce its domain to exclusively aesthetic concerns—with a positive form of competition between poetry and philosophy which would preserve the cultural authority of both. However, rather than in turn erase, ban, or exile the philosophic voice, he would subsume it within the poetic, thus, in effect, turning philosophy back into poetry and making possible the return of the generative poetic rivalry and competition that had existed among his predecessors. For such a project to succeed, the audience / reader too had to be delivered from the passive role assigned to it and be involved more actively in the interpretive re-creation of the text. Poetry was an ideal means through which the individual, as well as the poet, could regain control of their identities by actively creating and manipulating their roles.

I begin in Chapter 1 by surveying the origin of the quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy and the terms in which the debate was framed and developed. Chapter 2 analyzes how all of the hymns, in different ways, raise questions about
the value, function and even the very possibility of poetry in a rationalistic age. These questions, in turn, center on the problem of establishing or defining the nature of the poetic voice. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are based on a detailed interpretation of the first, and in my view programmatic, hymn, the *Hymn to Zeus*. This hymn sets up the collection in the way in which it subordinates the voice of transcendental truth, pragmatic probability, moral and generic appropriateness, and political exigency to that of the poet, whose unique power is shown to derive from its capacity for continual deception. In turn, the *Hymn to Zeus* demonstrates that it is that capacity alone which can speak to and for the multivocal mythopoetic tradition and the community which inherited it.
CHAPTER 1

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO MYTH AND POETRY: 
THE HELLENISTIC CONTEXT OF CALLIMACHUS' HYMNS

It has become commonplace in Hellenistic studies to talk of the literary polemic which Callimachus directed against his rivals and critics, and of the Hellenistic literary world as a hot-bed of fierce, often vitriolic literary debate. It is usually said that this debate turned mainly, if not wholly, on questions of form and technique. Our prose sources, however, tell a rather more diverse and complex story of Hellenistic poetic theory. Here, I give an overview of these third century BC debates among philosophers and scholars concerning the value and function of myth and poetry; I examine how they worked to limit poetry's influence by attempting to circumscribe both poet's and audience' control over their respective voices. I do not attempt to discuss the entire history of philosophy's quarrel with poetry. Nor do I try to give a complete account of the literary and linguistic theories that lie behind the critique; besides the limitations of space in the present project, not all aspects of these theories are relevant to my immediate purpose. Rather, I concentrate on those aspects
which are dominant concerns for the third century BC philosophers and critics and which Callimachus made the focus of his challenge in the Hymns.

The importance attached to these concerns is indicated not only by the huge volume of works from this period on poetry, poets, and music, but also by the fiercely hostile and often vicious manner in which rival theorists, both philosophers and literary scholars, are reported to have attacked and criticized each other. Their debates were satirized by contemporaries as the trivial quibbling of intellectuals, but in fact, given the holistic nature of Hellenistic philosophical schools, what ultimately was at stake were not philological abstrusities, but a whole way of life. However, regardless of their differences—of whether they claimed to be attacking or defending poetry's value, constraining or liberating the poet's voice—the outcome was always the production of various sets of rules and principles to which poetry was held accountable, thus circumscribing the discursive and practical spaces within which poetry was legitimately to operate. The two most common, and related, issues, and the ones which I shall treat here, are

1 Hellenistic philosophical schools were known as haireseis, "choices." A. A. Long comments, "Choice among philosophical school was not comparable to selecting among universities. It was a decision about the whole orientation of one's life," in A. Bulloch et al. (Eds.), Images and Ideologies (U.Cal.Press 1993), 299. P. Woodruff adds, "A hairesis brings with it a systematic attitude toward everything--toward the cosmos, society, and the full details of your life, right down to, and including, your attitude to such details as this morning's breakfast," in P. Green (Ed.), Hellenistic History and Culture (U.Cal.Press 1993), 157.
whether poetry's function was education or entertainment, and
whether its merits and characteristic features lay in the
domain of form or of content. ²

Making Poetry Tell the Truth: Poetry and Education

Beginning with Xenophanes in the mid 6th century BC, the
philosophical critique of poetry and myth directed itself at
dismantling the authority of poets, particularly Homer and
Hesiod, as "teachers" of the Greeks. ³ This critique came
mainly from an ethical and religious perspective, focusing on
the depictions of the gods' immoral activities. ⁴ However, the

² For the larger history of the issues, see N. J. Richardson, "Homer
ic Professors in the Age of the Sophists," PClPhS n. s. 21 (1975), 65-81, as
well as his "Pindar and Later Literary Criticism in Antiquity," PLLS 5
(1985), 383-401; R. Pfeiffer, History of Classical Scholarship from the
Beginnings to the Hellenistic Age (Oxford 1968); W. Nestle, Vom Mythos
zum Logos (Stuttgart 1962); G. A. Kennedy (Ed.), The Cambridge History
of Literary Criticism, volume I: Classical Criticism (Cambridge 1989);
D. A. Russell and M. Winterbottom, Ancient Literary Criticism (London
1972); D. A. Russell, Criticism in Antiquity (London 1981); J. W. H.
Atkins, Literary Criticism in Antiquity (London 1952); R. Barriot,
Poetry and Criticism Before Plato (London 1969); G. B. Walsh, The
Varieties of Enchantment: Early Greek Views of the Nature and Function
of Poetry (Chapel Hill 1984). The fragments of the Epicurean
Philodemus' work are particularly important for any study of Hellenistic
poetic theory, for his method involves surveying and criticizing all
relevant current opinions. See E. Asmis, "An Epicurean Survey of Poetic
N. A. Greenberg, The Poetic Theory of Philodemus (New York 1990); R.
Janko, "Philodemus on Poems and Aristotle on Poets," Cronterc 21
(1991), 5-64; D. Obbink (Ed.), Philodemus and Poetry (Oxford
University Press 1995).

³ e.g. Herodotus 2.53; Plato Republic 10.606e; Xenophanes B10.

⁴ e.g. πάντα θεοίς ἀνέθηκαν Ὀμηρός Θ' Ἡσίодός τε
όσα παρ’ ἄνθρωποις ὄνειδα καὶ ψόγος ἔστιν,
κλέπτειν μοιχεῖειν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεῦειν. Xenophanes B11
critics who castigated the poets for their alleged impiety and immorality were a minority voice, and indeed the range of subjects about which the poets were considered to be educational was much broader than theology. For instance, Strabo, the first century AD Stoic geographer, claimed adamantly, against Eratosthenes, the third century BC Alexandrian librarian, that Homer was the first expert in geography, and in this he represented a long-held majority view.¹

The underlying cause of philosophy's opposition to poetry's cultural authority seems to have been the fact that poetry's power tended to express itself as absolute freedom; that is, as uncontrollable by, and not responsible or accountable to, any rational, logical or ethical standards of truth (whether that truth be moral, religious, historical, geographical, or metaphysical). This kind of freedom is expressed by the Muses' words to Hesiod, Theogony (27) that they can tell lies like the truth, and the truth "εὖτε ἔθελωμεν, when we want to." The ability to do something "when

"Homer and Hesiod attributed to the gods everything that among humans is a disgrace and source of reproach: stealing, committing adultery, deceiving each other."

¹ Strabo 1.1.2. See D. M. Schenkeveld, "Strabo on Homer," Mnemosyne 29 (1976), 52-64. In the Ion, Plato's challenge of the Homeric rhapsode's claims to knowledge about such matters as war, charioteering, and fishing, based on his reading of Homer, presupposes that it was a common assumption that Homer imparted such factual and practical knowledge. See also Republic 10.598-9. For more on Homer's didactic potential, see Strabo's twentieth century equivalent: W. Jaeger, "Homer the Educator," in Paideia I (Berlin-Leipzig 1934), 63ff.
you want" is a distinguishing characteristic of divine power in Greek poetry. Since it suggests that such power can be and is used arbitrarily, it is representative of the unaccountability of poets and their gods which lies at the heart of the philosophical critique. Thus Hesiod's Muses indicate that truth in poetry can be seen as subject to the arbitrary caprice of its divine inspirers and spokeswomen, and even then it is effectively inseparable from falsehood.

From Plato onwards, the problem of poetic accountability to truth, or reality, is usually discussed under the heading of mimesis in its sense of (objective) representation, and is considered one manifestation of poetic deception. Plato tried to demonstrate that this freedom was not evidence of power, but lack of it, both in his charge that poets lack knowledge about and therefore can not represent the truth, and in his repeated claim that poetry is unable to give an adequate account of itself. According to Plato, and as we shall see, contrary to the Stoics, the solution was not to be found in allegorizing or etymologizing its content since this

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7 Plato's critique of poetry was revolutionary and all subsequent developments in Graeco-Roman poetic theory depend and build on it. I mention it here (and in the section on poetry as entertainment) in abbreviated and simplified form only as part of a cursory historical overview of the situation prior to the Hellenistic period. The relevant bibliography is immense. See E. A. Havelock, Preface to Plato (Oxford 1963); J. Moravscik and P. Temko (Eds.), Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts (Totowa NJ 1982); G. R. F. Ferrari, "Plato and Poetry," in The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Vol. I, and their bibliography.
process is too complicated for the young, who stand to be harmed the most by an education informed by poetry's epistemological, psychological, and political deceptions. The only possibility, therefore, was philosophical censorship of its content: through the expulsion of poets, or, barring that, by the careful circumscription of their work to hymns and encomia.®

As I elaborate later in this chapter, in the Poetics Aristotle "saves" poetry from the most extreme consequences of Plato's critique, bringing the poet back to the city by redefining the problem of artistic mimesis so that it need be accountable neither to Plato's standard of truth nor his didactic program. Regardless, by the third century BC philosophy had been so successful at limiting the cultural domain of poetry that one of the leading literary debates concerned whether poetry, especially Homer, could be said to be in any way educational, informative, or instructional. It should be noted that the very terms and disjunctive form in which such issues were framed are themselves a product of rationalist discourse and predetermine that any affirmative answer will likewise necessarily be framed in terms of the kinds of Truth that poetry and myth can be shown to contain, teach, or represent.

The strongest proponents of the view that poetry serves an educational function were the Stoics, who emphasized the

® See Republic Book 10, 608a-609b.
exclusive power of Stoic philosophy to make poetry's content accountable to their (predominantly ethical) truth. The Stoics wrote a large number of books on poetry and were fond of quoting poets in support of their doctrines. Chrysippus, in particular, was notorious for quoting poetry at every opportunity. This philosophic practice was widespread—even Plato and the equally hostile Epicureans did so. The Stoics also favored the use of poetic passages as "starting-points" for philosophical discussions, particularly for the young and/or philosophically untrained. However, both of these


10 Zeno's 5 books of Προβλήματα Ὀμηρικά (Homeric Problems) and Περὶ Ποιητικῆς Ἀκούσεως (On Listening to Poetry) (D.L.7.175); Cleanthes' Περὶ Τοῦ Ποιητοῦ (On Homer) (D.L.7.175); Chrysippus' Περὶ Ποιημάτων (On Poems) and 2 books of Περὶ Τοῦ Πῶς Δεῖ Τῶν Ποιημάτων Ἀκούσειν (On the Right Way to Listen to Poetry) (D.L.7.200). None of these are extant. For the available sources of information about Stoic poetic theory, see De Lacy, 242f.

11 D.L. 7.181 quotes Apollodorus of Athens as saying, "If one were to strip the books of Chrysippus of all the extraneous quotations his pages would be left bare." See also n. 33.

12 D.L.10.137 relates that Epicurus quoted Sophocles' Trachiniae 787ff., where Herakles cries in pain as his flesh is consumed by the poisoned robe, in support of the point that humans avoid pain by nature. On other allusions to poetry made by Epicurus, see D. Clay in Lucretius and Epicurus (Ithaca 1983), 16.
educational applications of poetry were only to be undertaken with the guidance of a suitably trained philosopher.\textsuperscript{13}

The Epicurean position on all matters related to poetry is a vexed issue. Epicurus himself is said to have been in favor of banning poetry altogether due to his opposition to the traditional education as corrupted and corrupting. However, there is some evidence that his followers more pragmatically faced the fact it was at least necessary to develop a strategy with which to combat the dangers of poetry.\textsuperscript{14} By the end of the second century BC, we find Zeno of Sidon, head of the school, and his student, Philodemus, actively involved in writing on poetic theory. Philodemus' \textit{On the Good King according to Homer} uses "\textgamma{\varphi}\textomicron\mu\textomicron\nu", starting-points," which can be taken from Homer "for the correction of positions of power."\textsuperscript{15}

Although this heuristic practice suggests that the poets' authority still counted, in fact it speaks much more of a practical approach, a strategy of containment for the potential dangers and uses of poetry. Rather than suggest that the poets are important and valuable thinkers, it works to reinforce the notion that poetry is only valuable when

\textsuperscript{13} See, for example, D.L.7.19.


philosophy points out or explains its useful and beneficial parts, and then primarily as a way to prepare the uneducated and the young for the genuinely and supremely valuable practice of philosophy—which speaks the language of prose. Philodemus says that whatever good thoughts a poem may express, it does not do so qua poem, and could have done so more clearly and effectively in prose. This type of philosophical exploitation of poetry is of a piece with the most typical method of argumentation between the competing Hellenistic philosophical schools, which is to use an opponents' words (here, poets') against them by showing how they actually lead to conclusions which support their own views.

Another device, this one particular to the Stoics, for making poetry tell the truth was the rewriting of objectionable lines so that they conformed with Stoic doctrine. For example, Zeno is said to have rewritten Hesiod Erga 293f, "He is the best of all men who finds things out for himself; good too is he who follows good advice," reversing the order, in the interests of Stoic education, so that they read "He is the best of all men who follows good advice; good too is he who finds out things for himself." A slightly less drastic and more commonly used approach was

17 DL.7.25; for other examples see Nussbaum (n. 9) 132f, and H. von Arnim, Stoicorum veterrm fragmenta (Leipzig 1903-24), I.63.16f.
to insert guiding or correcting interpolations in the text. As Nussbaum argues, "In such ways the Stoic thinkers maintained their control over the text, and showed the pupil that in the poetic experience, philosophy was always in charge." 18

Cleanthes the Stoic is well-known for assigning even more value than his colleagues to poetry's educational function. According to Philodemus, 19 he thought that "poetic and musical examples are better" than prose and himself turned to poeticizing philosophy in his *Hymn to Zeus*. 20 Cleanthes is said to have compared his use of poetry to the way in which a trumpet amplifies the breath and thus clarifies sound. 21 His approach was not (or at least was more than) an exploitation of poetry's pleasure-giving capacity in order to attract potential new students; as he conceived it, poetry was better able to express the truth of Stoic thought, theology in particular: prose "does not have the diction that is proper to divine greatness," but "meters, melodies and rhythms come as close as possible to the truth of the contemplation of divinity." 22

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18 Nussbaum (n. 9), 133.
20 H. Diels, Poetarum Philosopherorum Fragmenta (Berlin 1901).
21 Seneca Epistles 108.10.
22 Philodemus On Music 4 col.28.1-22.
As appealing for the philosophers as using poetry to teach and support doctrine could be, the main problem with such an approach is that it was considered to be the nature of poetry to mix lies in with its truths in order to be more pleasing. The Stoics and other rationalists considered it their duty and unique privilege to find principles and criteria by which to separate the two out. The Stoics treated poetry's content as "significant poetic diction" and thus as a form of logos in the Stoic sense of speech signifying or imitating a certain meaning. As such, a poet's words fall under the study of logic and are thus accountable to the same logical tests of truth or falsity as any other logoi. An interesting example of this approach is provided by a set of exercises which test the possibility of turning negative sentences from a number of poets into affirmative ones. The point of the exercise seems to be that

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23 Plutarch On Listening 14E; De Lacy (n. 9), 267, 270.

24 The Stoics divided language into lexis (diction) and logos (φωνη σημαντικη απο διανοια εκπεμπομενη). Speech with meaning that has its source in thought D.L.7.56). As two types of signifiers (σημαινοντα) they are joined with the signified (σημανονμενον) under the study of Dialectic which is itself a subdivision of the study of Logic. The definition of the terms ποίησις (λεξις ημετρως ή ευρυθμως, diction that is metrical or rhythmical), and ποίησις (σημαντικων ποιησις, significant poetic diction), attributed to Posidonius (by D.L.7.60), suggests that they are the specific poetic terms for the more general lexis and logos. See N. A. Greenberg, "The Use of Poema and Poiesis," HSCP 65 (1961), 263-289.

25 De Lacy, (n. 9), 245: "meaning or thought as such constitutes for the Stoics a distinct branch of logic, and there is no such thing as an exclusively poetic meaning."
if this can be done, then the original sentence can be considered to form a logical proposition, and hence either true or false.  

The oldest attested method of separating out the "truth" of Greek poetry is that of allegory, whose discovery Greek tradition associated with Theagenes of Rhesium, in the sixth century BC. The practice probably began with the etymologizing of gods' names, some of which remained standard identifications throughout antiquity, e.g. Hera as air. Allegory (often supported by etymologies) was commonly used to point to a moral or scientific truth behind the poet's words and became a very popular Hellenistic interpretive tool. It was especially associated with the Stoics, and their extensive, often idiosyncratic, use of it

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26 SVF II.52-8, e.g. "There is or is not an affirmative proposition contradictory to the sentence, 'We do not thus bury sailors who have perished.'" (from Euripides, Helen 1245).


28 As the poets themselves practiced, e.g. Hesiod Erga 2-3 on Zeus' name.

29 See Plato's Cratylus and Cicero, De Natura Deorum.

was derided by Epicureans and Alexandrian scholars, but it was by no means exclusive to them. Since the Stoics believed, unlike the Epicureans, that names exist by nature and thus imitate and express the essence of the things they name, they were particularly interested in etymology as a way of getting to the "true" meaning of a word, in the service of finding the true allegorical meaning of a poetic passage. One of the most famous examples of Stoic allegorical interpretation is that offered by Chrysippus for Athena's birth from Zeus' head in Hesiod's Theogony as meaning that Athena represents Wisdom or Reason which is grown inside Zeus and emerges through the mouth (by synecdoche from the head) in speech. This example is particularly important for early Stoic views of poetry; if the thumos is the seat of reason, then passions are


1 SVF II.44.41-2 φύσει (sc. τὰ ὀνόματα) μιμομένων τῶν πρώτων φωνῶν τὰ πράγματα.

A variety of terms cluster around the Stoic discussions of how poets' words signify something beyond or other than their surface reference: etymology, metonymy, symbol, catachresis, metalepsis, enigma, emphasis. See De Lacy (n. 9), 259f.

3 Probably in Zeus' thumos since he also quoted extensively from Homer and others to show that reason is located in the thumos. See Galen De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis 3.2-3, P. De Lacy (Ed.), (Berlin 1977-84).

4 SVF 2.908f. ἄλλου τινὸς συμβόλου ποιοῦντ' ἐμφασιν.
judgments, but false ones, and since poetry affects the thumos, it should be able to produce correct judgments also.\(^{15}\)

Other attempts were equally reductive in making poetry and myth accountable to historical, scientific, geographic and other truths. Such efforts are especially associated with what are called "rationalizing" techniques, such as Euhemerism. Euhemerus' (c.300 BC) *Sacred Scripture*\(^{16}\) claimed that those gods worshipped by the Greeks were actually only human kings and their families who had been deified by their subjects in thanks for their exceptional benefactions. Whether this should be considered as bringing the gods down to human size or elevating humans, it conforms to a rationalist principle of separating truth from falsehood, i.e. that what is impossible in the current world must have been impossible in the past of which myths tell, and the presence of the impossible in myth must be the result of the poet's elaboration and imagination in the interests of pleasing and shocking his audience. Like allegory, this form of rationalization is a technique used since archaic times which became particularly popular and widespread in the Hellenistic age and was used in the service of extracting historical truth from the mythopoetic tradition. A characteristic practitioner is Palaiphatos (end of fourth

\(^{15}\) See Nussbaum (n. 9).

\(^{16}\) G. Vallauri (Ed.), *Euemero di Messene: Testimonianze e Frammenti con Introduzione e commento* (Turin 1956).
century?), who, for example, denied that Pelops possessed winged horses on the grounds that such creatures did not exist in his own time, and explained their presence in myth as the product of a poet's imaginative and sensationalizing reference to Pelops' ship, on which, he argued, winged horses were painted.\textsuperscript{17}

It is in the Hellenistic period, especially among the Alexandrians with their monumental cataloguing efforts, that we see the rise of large-scale mythographic projects. These were attempts at organizing the chaos of Greek myth, with its multiple cultic and literary variants, into a single, universalizing, chronologically and genealogically coherent narrative which was considered to relate Greek prehistory.\textsuperscript{18} Faced with multiple versions of the same myth, the Greeks seem to have been reluctant to simply dismiss or reject the alternatives unless it was unavoidable as, for instance, in the case of elements which could be offensive to a god's dignity. The Greeks never questioned the essential historical truth of their legends such as the Trojan war,\textsuperscript{19} or

\textsuperscript{17} See P. Wipprecht, \textit{Quaestiones Palaephateae} (Heidelberg 1892), and \textit{Zur Entwicklung der rationalistischen Mythendeutung bei den Griechen I} (Tübingen 1902), and P. Veyne, \textit{Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths?} transl. P. Wissing (Chicago 1988).

\textsuperscript{18} This is a continuation of scattered efforts since sixth century. See N. Festa (Ed.), \textit{Mythographi Graeci} 4 Vols. (Leipzig 1902); A. E. Wardman, "Myth in Greek Historiography," \textit{Historia} 9 (1960), 403-13.

\textsuperscript{19} This is the case even with the "scientific" Thucydides and Eratosthenes. See Veyne (n. 37).
the historical existence of their heroes, and so preferred to find a way to explain variants away (via such techniques as allegory and rationalizing) or fit them in elsewhere. There were two particularly common methods for making room for multiple versions of a myth: 1) it could be argued that a poet had confused two or more different places or characters with the same name; or 2) it could be argued that different versions of one event in a character's life stem from the conflation of a chronological sequence of similar events. Aitiologies also played an important part in confirming the truth of myth and poetry on the basis of still existing monuments and practices.40

The Alexandrian Library project to determine the one authoritative text of Greek authors, especially Homer, is the product of a similar concept in that it used rational methods to separate out the original "true" text from the numerous "false" additions, interpolations and distortions that had accrued over the years, as well as to separate out an author's genuine works from the pseudepigrapha.41 Their principles will be discussed below under "Form," since they are usually based on critical assumptions about the nature of style and coherence, but the concept itself is a product of

40 Note the powerful appeal in this respect of _ktiseig_, legends of the foundation of cities and their Hellenistic popularity. See Veyne (n. 37).

41 See P. M. Fraser, _Ptolemaic Alexandria_ (Oxford 1972), and Pfeiffer, (n. 2).
the pursuit of objective truth. The search for the Ur-text, Ur-narrative, Ur-History, and Ur-myth are all of a piece in this respect.

One slightly different but no less rationalistic form of extracting historical truth from poetry was based on the assumption that it was possible, even among the dramatic poets, to pinpoint moments when the author was speaking in his own voice or at least using a character to express his own thoughts. From this came the practice of extracting "biographical" information about authors from their works and often using that information to interpret the works themselves: for example, Chamaeleon explains that Aeschylus wrote his tragedies while drunk on the basis of the "fact" that he was the first to have drunken characters.42 This practice seems to have begun with the Peripatetics and Alexandrian scholars (although the details of Homer's biography had long been discussed) and soon became quite widespread.

Behind all these approaches—the heuristic, the allegorizing, the secularizing, the historicizing—is the common rationalist assumption43 that poetry and myth contain an essential kernel of truth which it aims to impart but which has been either disguised in symbols or misguided


43 See Veyne, (n. 37).
distorted: a truth which it should be the aim of literary criticism to ascertain and which is only possible by rational means. As Nussbaum says\(^*\) of the result of the Stoics' methods, but which could be applied more generally to this period, "the poets have been banished—not from the city, but from control over their own meanings, their own truths."

Making Poetry accountable to Verisimilitude:
Entertainment, Emotions, and Form

In the long history of the rationalist critique of poetry, the poet's ability to provide entertainment was never questioned per se, only its value and possible negative results. Its entertaining qualities were credited to its particular capacity for working on the passions. It was this, however, which was also considered to be the underlying source of its unaccountability to rational standards. Further, it is often noted that this capacity was facilitated and enhanced above all by its performative or theatrical nature, for the experience of reciting or hearing a poetic text was viewed as a passive and unmediated one, one in which a performer's or audience's thoughts and emotions were directly assimilated to those contained in the poem's words.\(^4\)

The performative element remained critical even in this

\(^*\) Nussbaum, (n. 9), 149.

\(^4\) As I noted earlier, it was also the public performative and competitive context of Greek poetry which had endowed poetry with both its cultural authority and its multivocal essence.
literate Hellenistic world where written texts were the primary means of access to poetry, for the solitary reader would still read aloud and thus create a performance. This experience, which for the audience generates identification with the characters and thoughts of a poem, is described as a form of mimesis and is considered another potentially dangerous form of poetic deception.

Two strains emerge in the third century BC rationalist response to the psychological dynamics of poetic entertainment, both of which focus on the formal aspects of the experience. The Platonic strain concentrates on finding ways to limit the impact of the form by resisting emotional identification, and is best represented by the Stoic approach; the Aristotelian looks rather to allow for and perhaps facilitate some kinds of identification by limiting the possibilities of the form. The Alexandrian scholars are most representative of this strain, for whom Eratosthenes of Cyrene, contemporary of Callimachus, librarian c. 245 BC, is a good spokesman when he claims: "Every poet aims at entertainment / ψυχαγωγία, not at teaching / διδακτικός."48

46 Stoic texts and others continue to talk of listening to rather than reading a text.

47 The Stoics also incorporate some elements of the Aristotelian strain but for different ends. See below.

48 Strabo 1.15.
The first strain derives from Plato who discusses this poetic and performative mimesis as a chain reaction, the passing on of an infectious disease from author to performer to audience, as if all were metal rings hanging by magnetic power from the inspiring Muse.\textsuperscript{49} He claims that, since it aims at affecting and encouraging irrational emotions, reason therefore is suspended. The audience neither has nor is given the means to discriminate between what is bad and good in the poem, nor does the performative context allow time to pause and question the text, so the audience surrenders itself utterly. The danger in this surrender lies in the audience's identification with immoral characters and questionable opinions with no basis in knowledge; for Plato, however, an even greater risk lies in identification with multiple characters and multiple perspectives in the space of a performance which produces a very dangerous fragmentation of self.\textsuperscript{50}

In order to eliminate this danger, Plato initially suggests a philosophical censorship of poetry's content, yet this does not solve the problem of its performative form. His more radical solution is to ban poetry, except hymns about the gods and eulogies of good men, and replace it with philosophy. Plato also indicates that an audience may still

\textsuperscript{49} Ion 533d-536c.

\textsuperscript{50} Republic 10 603d-e.
enjoy poetry if it has the protection of a philosophical training. It may then distance itself from identification by means of humor, that is, by laughing at the characters' follies, and by continually reminding itself of the lessons of philosophy. This process is described\(^\text{51}\) as reciting "this argument of ours to ourselves as a charm to prevent us from falling under the spell of a childish and vulgar passion."

Following Plato, the ethical orientation of philosophy in the third century BC meant that all schools were united in their concern to limit susceptibility to and disturbance by potentially harmful emotions, of which poetry was a significant and powerful cause. In the debate over whether poetry's value and function lay in education or entertainment, the discussions on entertainment were directly linked to poetry's ability both to inspire and affect the emotional disposition of its audience, and hence to the dynamics of performance. The Stoics, and to a greater extent the Epicureans, repeat Plato's concerns about the dangers of audience identification that result from poetry's performative nature and its lack of the rational proofs or arguments which are necessary for making reasoned discrimination between what should and should not be identified with. However, in their attempts to find solutions, neither school, unlike Plato, seems to have considered radical censorship as viable. They concentrated

\(^{51}\text{Republic 10.608a.}\)
instead on finding ways to eliminate the effects of the form by promoting audience detachment from the performance; that is, by changing the audience's relationship to the performance rather than changing the text. For the early Stoics, as I explained above, poetry was valuable primarily for its potential as an educational tool. It was thus particularly important for them to find ways of limiting its dangerous emotional effects while still keeping the reader/audience emotionally and intellectually engaged. The Epicureans, on the other hand, clung to the view that poetry's primary function was entertainment, regarding it as a natural but unnecessary pleasure, and thus were more concerned to create as much emotional distance from it as possible.

I have already discussed the Stoic use of allegory, etymology, rewriting, and textual interpolations in the service of making poetry tell the (Stoic) truth. These same devices also served as a means of detaching the reader from direct identification with the text's thoughts or characters. Allegory and etymology, for example, encouraged a reader or audience to see characters as symbols rather than as fellow human beings in the world. These means were more viable in the literate Hellenistic age than they had been in Plato's because, although poetry was still experienced as

52 Note Plato's objection to them in Republic 378df.
performance, it could be mediated by the physical text, thus allowing for notes, interpolations and the time to reflect, re-read, and analyze the text.

For both Stoics and Epicureans it was necessary that an audience be armed with philosophy as a protection against poetry. For the Stoics, the armor is designed not only to keep the reader / audience safe from harm, but also to allow to him / her the means to develop a critical perspective. These means take the form of philosophical dialogue with the text, in which philosophy provides the absent arguments and judgements, along with a sense of temporal and emotional distance. On Nussbaum's description, "the spectator is encouraged—first by example, gradually in her own efforts—to provide a running commentary on the action of the work she hears." Chrysippus' own discussion of Euripides' Medea may well be an example of how such a commentary would develop. We hear of two techniques which are especially useful. First, it is advocated that humor, especially of a satirical nature, be directed towards those characters' passions (i.e. "judgements" in Stoic terms) identified as mistaken or excessive, as a way of consolidating and continuing distance from those characters' perspectives. Second, characters'

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53 Nussbaum, (n. 9), 139.


55 Nussbaum, (n. 9), 141.
expressed judgements or reactions should be evaluated by applying them to other situations to see if they have a universal value and validity or are the product of one person's limited and mistaken perspective. Plutarch\textsuperscript{56} reports an example given by Chrysippus: "when they listen to Odysseus' rebuke to Achilles, as he sits idly amusing himself with the maidens in Scyrus, they are to think how this rebuke applies to other profligate and wasteful people."

The Stoic approach as a whole is probably best represented by Plutarch's proposal comparing young people listening to poetry to Odysseus facing the Sirens' song: "Shall we, standing them up against some upright standard of reason, and binding them there securely, straighten and watch over their judgment, so that it will not be carried away by pleasure toward that which will harm them?"\textsuperscript{57} Although these techniques might seem to empower a reader and answer Plato's criticism that poetry makes its audience passive, in fact, they deny the reader (and poet) any independence, for it is philosophy that provides both the form and substance of the dialogue with poetry.

While Plato and his followers would censor poetry and employ forms of philosophical prophylaxis to guard against

\textsuperscript{56} On Listening 34bf.

\textsuperscript{57} On Listening 15d. These devices could also have been discussed under "Poetry as Education" since they involve making poetry conform to the Stoic truth; I discuss them here because they are designed to deal with the dangers of the form especially.
its effects, the anxieties that motivate these measures reflect a respect for the power of poetry to generate a variety of emotional, practical and political responses. Aristotle's defense of poetry\(^{18}\) seeks, first, to address some of these anxieties; part of his argument hinges on his claim that poetry does, in fact, attain the standards of mimetic fidelity Plato would deny it: as Hubbard argues,\(^{19}\) "Plato had claimed that an instance of mimesis has less reality than an individual particular, which in turn has less reality than the idea. Aristotle replies that the statements of the poet, so far from being inferior to statements of particulars, are more comprehensive and more philosophical." This metaphysical (with its epistemological implications) defense is important; more important, however, in terms both of the emphasis Aristotle gives it and its later impact, is his analysis of poetry's function. Aristotle, as I mentioned earlier, clears out a space in which poetry can have value; it is, however, a narrowly demarcated space, in that it constricts the possibilities of affective response to one that Plato had not entertained: catharsis. In the best of circumstances, the complex dynamic of audience identification


\(^{19}\) Quoted in Russell and Winterbottom, (n. 2).
with poetry's formal intricacies (which is what enables catharsis) could lead to the purgation of negative emotions in a politically safe context; at its worst, it could limit the scope of poetry to a form of escapism and entertainment, its power to the removal of something negative rather than the creation of something of positive cultural consequence.

What remains important to poetry are those means which facilitate the realization of this final cause, which ultimately hinges on the poet's observation of canons of propriety and consistency. These canons remove from poetry the responsibility for strict Platonic mimesis, for the standards of correctness for poetry are not the same as for other matters; "correctness in poetry is not the same thing as correctness in politics, nor yet is it the same as correctness in any other art."⁶⁰ Aristotle required instead that it conform to his principle of achieving its peculiar telos, i.e. "effecting through pity and fear the catharsis of those emotions."⁶¹ The appropriate standards will thus be those which contribute towards the successful achievement of that telos: "the poet's job is saying not what did happen, but the sort of thing that would happen, that is, what can happen in a strictly probable or necessary sequence."⁶²

⁶⁰ Poetics 60b 13-15.
⁶¹ Poetics 49b27-8.
⁶² Poetics 51a 36-8.
The scholars in Alexandria seem largely to have followed Aristotle's lead. Most of our information comes from the Homeric scholia and later authors. It is important to note the form in which the early scholars seem to have recorded their literary comments. Porphyry notes that when faced with an interpretive dilemma or perceived textual problem, the custom of the Alexandrian scholars was to phrase it as a question first to which they then go on to give one or multiple answers (λύσεις). This form is used in many extant scholia and seems to go back at least as far as Aristotle. I suggest that this form itself is derived from the method of dialectic and an indication of the extent to which philosophy informed and controlled forms of thinking and talking about

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poetry. Aristotle had recommended using dialectical reasoning as a means of reconciling the apparent contradictions of poetry: "The contradictions found in the poet's language one should first test as one does an opponent's confutation in a dialectical argument."

The scholars whose comments are preserved in the scholia write as defenders of poetry's value and importance, but on the grounds that it has a positive effect on the emotions as a form of entertainment. Hence they tend to focus on those aspects which help it achieve its telos, whether in Aristotelian terms of catharsis or more broadly as a pleasant diversion: i.e. its aesthetic qualities, internal coherence, plausibility, and degree of verisimilitude. Thus, like the philosophers, they have much to say about the way in which an audience responds to poetry. They share their concern with Aristotelian plausibility with the Stoics, who also subscribed to the view that poetry imitates the actions, characters, emotions of real life. For the Stoics, this interest is in part a necessary consequence of their belief in the imitative relation between words and things as discussed above. However, whereas the Aristotelian strain values appropriateness for its contribution to verisimilitude and the psychological telos of poetry, for the Stoics, it is

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66 Poetics 1461b.

67 De Lacy, (n. 9), 256.
valued for its contribution to the educational function of poetry: " Appropriateness is in poetry what consequence is in logic, or what causation is in physics, for appropriateness implies conformity to reason."  

The comments preserved in the Homeric scholia are replete with praise for, and evaluations of, the various ways in which the poet achieves verisimilitude. Feeney comments that they "insisted that the critic's duty lay in respecting the poet's right to exploit the freedom which went with the distinctive nature of the form," but his words point to the double-edged nature of such an enterprise, for the poet's rights and freedoms are only those granted to him by philosophy and are subject to the predetermined guidelines of what constitutes the form.

Their comments coalesce around three pervasive and interconnected ways of achieving verisimilitude: (pictorial) vividness, appropriateness, and plausibility. A brief survey of representative examples will highlight the restrictive nature of their approach.

68 De Lacy, (n. 9), 271.

69 The degree of verisimilitude was itself prescribed in the hierarchical division of narratives, probably of Hellenistic origin, into istoria (history) plasma (fictitious story), and muthos (myth). See Meijering, (n. 63), 76-83.

Vividness

The quality of vividness is what makes an audience experience the actions of a poem as if they were happening before their eyes, i.e. it is understood in specifically visual terms. It is often referred to as ἐνάργεια or the product of φαντασία. The scholia assign it to the use of details, and it is valued for its contribution to the creation of plausibility; for example, bTl5.695 praises the vivid detail of the passage where Zeus "pushes Hector from behind with his huge hand." Elsewhere, the mention of all the places through which Hera traveled is said to take the audience with her "in a process of imagination / φαντασία and visualization / ὅψις."

Appropriateness

At the minutest level, the sounds of words and the rhythm of a passage should not be inappropriate to their sense in context, and onomatopoeia is especially valued, for example, Duris praises the simile at Iliad 21.257-62 for its mimesis (ἐκμετάλλησις) of the act of irrigation in that rhythm, homoioteleuton, and enjambment contribute to creating

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2 Feeney, (n. 70), 49.

the effect of the effort of swinging a mattock to clear away rocks and the sound of the water beginning to run through.

A large body of commentary is devoted to considering the appropriateness of the diction to the particular action, context or character. In these sections, appropriateness consists of either what is prepon,4 i.e. morally seemly or befitting the dignity of the character or context, or what is pithanon, i.e. what is likely or probable that a character would have said; we are told that Zenodotus athetized 11.1.3-4 as dubious on the grounds that δαντός is appropriate only for a shared human meal, whereas the passage concerned animal food. Aristophanes accepted the passage but emended δαντός to πᾶσα on the same grounds.5

The same conception of appropriateness as either prepon or pithanon applies to the comments on how actions should fit their agents: in 11.16.665-7, after Lycian Sarpedon dies in battle, Zeus orders Apollo to take care of Sarpedon's corpse. A scholiast (T) comments: "Zenodotus athetized this. For he says that it is unfitting / ἄτομος for one who is without grief to tend to such matters. But the order was given on the grounds that he [Apollo] is held in honor in Lycia."

When such comments concern the gods, they usually concern supposed offenses against to prepon, thus echoing the moral

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character of Xenophanes' criticisms, e.g. Zoilus' comment that Demodocus' song in the *Odyssey* about the illegitimate affair of Ares and Aphrodite is ἄτομον / out of place and morally objectionable, presumably because it is degrading to divinity to be depicted as involved in adultery. However, for criticisable actions involving the gods other than specifically moral offenses, e.g. a god using a key to open a door, the concept of *to pithanon* is usually invoked, and the poet defended on the grounds that it is plausible given the anthropomorphic conception of the gods. This practice is itself defensible as being traditional and also contributing to vividness, e.g. when Zeus laments for Sarpedon, one scholium reads "οὐ μεμπτέον, the poet is not to be reproved, for he must either drop the kinship between men and gods or else speak consistently with it." As another example, when Homer says Dawn brings light to gods as well as men it is "in consistency with the fiction" that the gods live on a mountain and so are in darkness sometimes.

**Plausibility**

"Probability" is a notion invoked in both of the above categories, but plausibility is more concerned with the

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75 See Pfeiffer, (n. 2).
76 Feeney, (n. 70), 30.
77 Feeney, (n. 70), 47.
78 Feeney, (n. 70), 48.
contribution of coherency of plot development and consistency to the creation of verisimilitude. As Aristotle says, "one ought to prefer likely impossibilities to unconvincing possibilities," and similarly "a convincing impossibility is preferable to something unconvincing, however possible." Thus any inconsistencies must be explained away: e.g. on Od. 5.385, "Problem: the statement 'Athena broke the wave before him' is inconsistent with saying three lines later that he roamed for three days on a big wave. Solution: Athena stopped the waves produced by the other winds and sent Boreas alone to blow"; and on Od. 11.286, "Problem: here we are told that Chloris bore three sons to Neleus. Elsewhere we are told that Neleus had twelve sons. Solution: Neleus must have had more than one wife." It is clear from this last example that it matters little whether the intent is to attack or defend Homer, for in either case the principles valued and required are the same, in the last case that of consistency of facts. In fact, the same requirements are made of myth generally: for the scholiasts, coherency and the explaining away of inconsistencies or contradictions are

79 Poetics 60a26-7.
80 Poetics 61b9-12.
82 Combellack, (n. 81), 219.
of prime importance in their project to construct a universal and chronologically structured mythological narrative.

The scholia also consider that the use of particularizing details of place, name, event, monument, etc. (as with vividness) especially helps create plausibility:

e.g. in the same passage mentioned above under vividness, another scholium claims that Homer's naming of the places Hera traveled through helps make it more plausible/πιθανότατην than if he took her straight there. In such cases, the prescriptive nature of their comments becomes particularly clear, for they claim that not only is plausibility the effect of such details, but it is their only raison d'être: it is said that Homer gives the height from which Poseidon looks down on humans for the sake of being plausible / πιθανός.

Thus, although the scholars repeatedly emphasize poetry's special freedom to bend the truth and its unaccountability to normal rules and principles of discourse, nevertheless they remain firmly (whether deliberately or not) within the rationalist project of limiting poetry's power, disenfranchising it from cultural authority, and constraining its voice with philosophically determined boundaries,

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84 Feeney, (n. 70), 49-50.

85 Feeney, (n. 70), 50.
inasmuch as they erect stylistic and technical standards for it to conform to and relegate it solely to the realm of entertainment. We do occasionally find comments supporting the idea that poetry may contain educationally useful and informative material, but such aspects are treated as incidental, not part of the function and value of poetry except inasmuch as they help create plausibility.

In sum, the Hellenistic philosophers and scholars, whether from a conscious impulse to undermine the value of poetry or preserve it, are active in creating an atmosphere in which both the writing and reading of poetry was expected to proceed in accordance with certain guidelines. Foucault's description fits the general impression created by our sources: "It is as though these taboos, these barriers, thresholds and limits were deliberately disposed in order, at least partly, to master and control the great proliferation of discourse, in such a way as to relieve its richness of its most dangerous elements; to organize its disorder so as to skate round its most uncontrollable aspects." 66

CHAPTER 2
THE PROBLEM OF VOICE AND SONG

Many scholars have explored the effects on Hellenistic poets of the changed conditions under which they composed, particularly the fact that, faced with the collective weight of the entire body of Greek poetry amassed in the Alexandrian library, they perceived themselves as "late-comers" with limited options, and that their poetry was predominantly to be read by a select elite of learned men rather than publicly performed. I have tried to suggest that these factors need to be supplemented with what I consider to be a more significant and pervasive influence, that is, of the philosophers and rationalists and the ways in which their methods of approaching poetry exerted constraints on the poet's voice and the reception of his material.

In this chapter, I will argue that the potential difficulties and complexities of writing poetry under such circumstances are manifest in the hymnists' various efforts at defining and authorizing their voice in Callimachus' Hymns. I first survey the critical moments in each of the six hymns as a way of mapping out their discursive
faultlines, those moments when the hymnists announce their song (or tale, in the case of hymns 5 and 6) and foreground the relationship between poet, song, and audience. I then go on in the next chapter to explore the implications in a close examination of the most important and complex example, the programmatic proem of the *Hymn to Zeus*.

In the announcements of song, there are three features in all six hymns which together open up and draw attention to the peculiar nature of the hymnic voice, and in turn about the nature of his / her song and his / her audience. First, one of their most striking aspects is that, in different ways and with varying degrees of explicitness, all six hymns contain elements which point to a performative context. This has prompted generations of scholarly debate concerning whether they were actually performed or not, and at which particular ritual event. It is now almost universally acknowledged that Callimachus' *Hymns* were in fact not performed, nor intended for performance at particular religious events, be they literary contests or cult rituals.

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1 Naturally, in most, but not all, cases these moments appear at the beginning of the hymn. Among the most stable and consistent features of the hymnic genre throughout its long history are those which open and close a hymn; thus, it is here that deviations from the norm and any unusual aspects might be expected to stand out more clearly. See W. H. Race, "Aspects of Rhetoric and Form in Greek Hymns," *GRBS* 23 (1982), 5-14; R. Janko, "The Structure of the Homeric Hymns: a Study in Genre," *Hermes* 109 (1981), 9-24; D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford 1981); A. M. Miller, "From Delos to Delphi: A Literary Study of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo," *Mnemosyne Suppl.* 93 (Leiden 1986); W. D. Furley, "Praise and Persuasion in Greek Hymns," *JHS* 115 (1995), 29-46.
In fact, contextual information, such as the occasion of composition, would be assumed by a real performative occasion. Our attention is thus drawn to the consequently unusual nature of the hymnic voice, particularly its varying forms and degrees of pretense that it is speaking in a public context.

Hymns 2, 5, and 6 are in fact usually referred to as the "mimetic" hymns because their hymnists present themselves as present at an on-going ritual event. Each one describes aspects of the ritual and gives commands in the manner of a "master /mistress of ceremonies" as if addressing those present at and also participating in the celebrations.

Hymns 1, 3, and 4 are more in the traditional "rhapsodic" style, but they do contain elements of mimesis. The first hymn begins with a reference to its supposed setting, "at libations to Zeus." Here, the reference is, as Hopkinson points out, no more than a "slight hint." There is a similar hint in the Hymn to Artemis. In this case, it is a suggestion not of the context but of an audience in the opening parenthetical explanation, Ἄρτεμις (οὔ γάρ ἐλαφρῶν ἄειδόντεσσι λαθέοθαι / ὑμνέομεν (1-2), which "presupposes that the narrator is addressing an audience and anticipating a question from it ("why are you going to sing of Artemis?").

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2 N. Hopkinson, "Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus," CQ 34 (1984), 139.

Similar moments recur in this hymn: for example, after addressing a series of questions to the goddess about her favorite places and people, the hymnist says: "Speak, goddess, you to me / us, and I will sing to the others" (187). The Hymn to Delos does not give a specific ritual occasion but hints at the existence of one in its emphasis on the time, the "nowness" of the song. The hymn opens with the question: "My heart / soul, what time or when will you sing of the holy/ Delos...?"(1-2), which is answered at line 9: "To Delos now I will give a share of song."

The problematic status of the performative context is suggested by a second, more striking and unusual, element: all the hymns contain some sort of explanation for why the hymnists are singing or speaking. This fact in itself is odd in two ways: 1) It is a marked difference from their Homeric models, which never give a reason for singing but merely state the fact that they are singing, or will sing, and then only in order to specify the particular divine recipient. Nor do they give a reason for choosing the particular addressee; 2) the fact that it is a god is reason enough. The issue of choice and justification in traditional hymns only comes up concerning which aspect of the god is to be hymned.

* With one exception, Homeric Hymn 25.
2) Whether we look to literary or cult hymns, the purpose of song—to praise the god and to do so well enough to win his or her favor—is inherent in the genre and performative context. If, as in the case of ritual or personal hymns, there is a particular favor to request, it is not mentioned initially, and usually not until the very end.

In addition to the very existence of an explanation, the type of explanation Callimachus' hymns give is also problematic. Hymns 1, 3, and 4 leave the particular purpose of song as encomium implied in their generic identification of themselves as hymns. They do, however, indicate reasons for singing of the particular deity, and the unusual manner in which they do so tends to assign their motivation and choice to factors external to and unconnected with the merits of the divinity, in some cases, as we shall see, with the suggestion of being constrained, which works to undercut the presumed encomiastic intention of the hymnic genre.

In Hymn 1 to Zeus, the reason for a song to Zeus implied by the rhetorical question, "What better to sing at libations to Zeus than the god himself?" (1-2) is that the occasion, and not the god, demands it; libations to Zeus require a song to Zeus.¹ The hymnist of The Hymn to Artemis is more explicit; he explains straightaway that he is singing of

¹ This is unusual in its suggestion that it is answering the prior, and more disturbing, question of "Why sing at all?" and in the implication that it is a requirement of the occasion: libations require song.
Artemis in particular οὐ γὰρ ἔλαφρον ἀειδόντεσσα λαθέοθαί. "for it is not a light / easy matter for singers to forget her"(1), suggesting that the hymnist may be motivated primarily by fear of punishment. The Hymn to Delos contains the most explicit and elaborate explanation; in fact, the hymnist gives three interconnected explanations: first, in terms of Delos' desires: Δῆλος δ' ἔθελε τὰ πρῶτα φέρεσθαι / ἐκ Μουσέων. "Delos wants to carry off the first prize / from the Muses" (4-5); then, Apollo's: ὡς Μοῦσαι τὸν ἄοιδὸν ὅ μὴ Πίμπλειαν ἀείση / ἔχουσιν. τῶς Φοίβος ὧτις Δῆλοιο λάθηται. "Just as the Muses (feel for) the singer who does not sing of Pimpleia / hate, so Phoebus (does for the one) who forgets Delos" (7-8); and finally his own: ὡς ἀν Ἀπόλλων/ Κύνθιος αἰνήσῃ με. "so that Apollo / of Mt. Cynthus may praise me" (9-10).

In the case of hymns 2, 5 and 6, the announcement is complicated by their unusual formal structure, in which the hymn's traditional opening and closing frame is replaced by the mimetic evocation of a ritual event. In each case, the hymnist assigns a purpose or function to their song (spoken tale in 5 and 6). They do not focus on explaining their choice of divinity (a choice presumably predetermined by the specific ritual occasion), but they do make reference to the

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* The explanatory phrase is highlighted by the hyperbaton.

* In the Hymn to Apollo, hymn 2 this is added to by the problem of where the hymn supposedly begins, how many hymns there are, and what actually constitutes the hymn. In Hymns 5 and 6, the hymnists do not even refer to song but talk of tales they tell / speak.
topos of choosing the particular stories to tell. The most explicit comment about the function of song in Hymn 2 is when the hymnist attributes the continued existence and welfare of the entire community to pleasing Apollo with song and dance:

"Let the boys not keep the lyre silent nor their step noiseless when Phoebus is present, if they are going to achieve marriage and cut their hair when it is grey, and if the city wall is going to stand firm on its ancient foundations" (12-15). The hymnist of Hymn 5 implies that her tale is intended to entertain the celebrants while they wait for Athena's arrival: "In the meantime, I will say something to these women" (55-6). The hymnist of Hymn 6 announces that the story will be one told for two specific purposes. First, it is "a warning to men that they avoid transgression" (22), i.e. it has a morally didactic purpose; and second, it is κάλλιον, "better" for Demeter, so that she does not cry (17f), i.e. to divert her from her sorrows: entertainment for the god, education for the human audience.

Third, this tendency to give explanations is also part of a more pervasive feature: the fact that all the hymnists obviously put such effort into authorizing their voice by means of an assortment of elaborate strategies. That a hymnist (or any poet) should attempt to establish an appropriately trustworthy and persuasive ethos is to be

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* See Harder, (n. 3), *passim.*
expected, even required. What is unusual and problematic about Callimachus' hymnists, and which, as we shall see, leads to complications in the successful accomplishment of their task, is the amount of time and effort they spend on doing this, their obvious concern to draw attention to it, and the strategies they use.

One of the most important and often used techniques in the Hymns is the traditional one of the aporetic rhetorical question (with priamel) as a way of introducing or making a transition into their theme, which I discuss at length below. In Hymns 1, 3 and 4, the hymnists are in particular concerned to prove that they are knowledgeable and their stories true; thus, they direct their efforts especially towards explaining how they know what they say and what evidence they have. Particularly important is their appeal to the language and principles of logical argumentation, their use of empirical evidence, and their enlistment of divine testimonial. The hymnists of the mimetic hymns (2, 5, and 6) spend the ritual frame creating a picture of themselves as moral and ritual authorities, giving instructions, separating out those allowed to be present and those not, explaining ritual practices or signs and symbols, and giving appropriately pious commentary on the events.

These three features--intimations of a performative context, explanations of song, and elaborate, foregrounded
use of strategies of authorizing the hymnic voice— are unusual in terms of generic convention but also in and of themselves. They work to generate a whole set of problems and questions about the hymnists, their songs and their audiences. If a praise poet takes it upon himself to refer explicitly to making a choice of song or theme, it speaks of a high degree of self-consciousness, for it is at such moments that the various dynamics of the (triangular) poet-song-audience relationship are articulated. For my purposes in particular, these moments are critical, for it is the (unaccountable) power behind this dynamic and the volatile nature of the circuit which (as I showed earlier) rationalists of all dispositions tried in various ways to control, either by wedging the philosopher and his voice into its links or transforming the circuit into a one-way flow of cause and effect.

Possibly the oldest (and certainly the most famous) examples of such a self-conscious moment are in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo, where an aporetic rhetorical question (with priamel) forms the transition into the hymnic theme. It is worth considering these examples briefly to see how they work before returning to the Callimachean ones, several of which look specifically to the Homeric passages. Indeed, this Homeric hymn is a particularly apposite model for Callimachus' purposes, for it is one in which, as Bergren
comments, "the poetics of the Homeric hymn—the context of performance, the relation between hymnist and his subject, his audience, and his 'father' Homer—are an overt theme."⁹

At line 19, the Homeric hymnist turns to address Apollo:

πώς τ' ἄρ σύμνησα πάντως εὐμνον ἔόντα:
πάντη γάρ τοι. Φοίβε, νόμοι βεβλήσατ' ἁρδοῖς...  

How, then, shall I hymn you who are in all ways worthy of song?  
For everywhere, Phoibos, paths of song have fallen to you...
Or, (shall I sing) how...

The technique is used again at the point of transition from the Delian to the Pythian section of the hymn, (207ff). The same first line is repeated, followed this time by a series of alternatives connected by "or," the last of which, the search for an oracle, is taken up as the theme of the section.

As Miller notes, this "dramatizes the process of poetic decision-making" and displays an "artistic self-consciousness of a type rare in the Homeric Hymns."¹⁰ The technique provides a place for the hymnist to prove his ethical merits by demonstrating both that he possesses extensive knowledge of stories about the god and that he has gone to the trouble of selecting the right one for this occasion. It also serves an encomiastic function in that the god is worthy of such

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⁹ See A. L. T. Bergren, "Sacred Apostrophe: Re-Presentation and Imitation in the Homeric Hymns," Arethusa 15 (1982), 83-108; and note the importance and role of Pindar also as the most self-conscious hymnist prior to Callimachus.

¹⁰ A. M. Miller, From Delos to Delphi: A Literary Study of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo (Mnemosyne Suppl. 93, Leiden 1986).
efforts by the hymnist and in the very fact that a choice, and a difficult one, must be made from the many possible stories. The dilemma thus revolves around competing value claims, and the criterion for selection is the encomiastic and honorific potential of each. All of this is a given of the genre and not stated explicitly by the hymnist, not even the particular criterion for eventually choosing one story over the others.

The Hymn to Apollo (Hymn 2)

The priamel, on the Homeric model, works both to articulate the relationship between poet and god and ensure the continued possibility of song; as Miller comments, the foil material is not passed over and eliminated, the abundance is not exhausted or abrogated by the poet's selection of one topic, but still remains as a reservoir of choice. Callimachus' Hymn to Apollo differs significantly from the Homeric model in its application of this technique at lines 30-1:

οὔδ’ ὁ χαρός τῶν Φοίβου ἐφ’ ἐν μόνῳ ἠμαρ ἄεισθ.
ἔστι γὰρ εὐμένιος. τίς ἄν οὐ ρέα Φοίβον ἀείσθ;
Nor will the chorus sing of Apollo for one day only, for he is good for song. Who could not easily sing of Apollo?

11 See E. L. Bundy, Studia Pindarica I (Berkeley 1962).

12 Pindar does tend to state explicitly his criteria, but they do not deviate from the ethical / encomiastic ones left implicit by the Homeric hymnist.

13 See Miller, (n. 10).
These lines clearly echo the Homeric passage, specifically, by the mention of the possibility of many songs for Apollo and the use of the rhetorical question. However, Apollo's quality of being εὐμυνως is not introduced to indicate the need to make a difficult choice from a wide selection of themes, but to explain why the singing will go on for more than one day; that is, it will require more than one day to sing all the possible themes. Thus, it does not fulfill the function of a focusing priamel; no selection needs to take place, for the implication is that nothing will be left out. Williams quotes Bundy to the effect that "a wealth of subject matter may equally well be treated as an embarrassment or as a source of ease in composition." But the implication of the speaker's rhetorical question here is that anyone could easily sing of Apollo, which undercuts both the encomiastic implications of Apollo being εὐμυνως and the chorus' / speaker's claims to being worthy of the task and of Apollo's honor.

Further, the implication that the chorus will sing for more than one day in order to cover all the possible themes or songs means that there is assumed a definite and finite number of possible songs (which are thus unchanging, unless we imagine that they never stop singing), and that it is the chorus' duty to sing them all. If so, it also follows that

1) this hymnist does not consider his function to be a creative or constructive one; nothing new will happen on this occasion, but merely the repetition of a collected and unchanging body of material; 2) if that is his conception, nothing new will ever happen here, no new songs can come to be; 3) if this is the proper way to hymn Apollo, there is not even room allowed for future selection from among the themes, for that would not assign Apollo sufficient honor.

Not only is this application of the rhetorical technique not encomiastic, but it also verges on the hubristic to suggest both that anyone at all would find it an easy matter to properly honor Apollo in song, and that it is humanly possible to sing all the songs. This is particularly significant in light of the fact that this hymnist immediately prior to this passage, and indeed throughout the hymn, sets himself up as a moral authority with regard to what constitutes themis and hubris. Yet, despite this, his comments repeatedly have a hubristic air; in fact, he prefaces his comment on the ease of song with the statement τὸν χορὸν ὑπόλλον.../ τιμήσει. "Apollo will honor the chorus" (28-9), which reverses the proper direction of praise, since the function of song is to praise the god, not to receive praise.

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15 Apollo as the upholder of themis opposed to hubris is one of the main themes of the Homeric Hymn.

from the god. We should note here, to which point I return below, that hubris was one of the main themes of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo, and that it concluded (as, somewhat similarly, Callimachus' hymn does) with Apollo's advice to those charged with administering his worship on earth; in that hymn, Apollo warns the Cretan priests that if they commit hubris, "then other men will be your masters, and you will be bound by necessity for all days" (542).

The second point at which the Callimachean hymn comes close to the Homeric passage is at 69f:

ɔpollon, polloi se boedromion kaleousai,
pollloi e Klárion, pánnti de to oúnomea pouly.
santáre ego Karneion, emoi patroion oútω.
O Apollo, many call you Boedromius,
many (call you) Clarius, everywhere your name is many.
But I call you Carneius; for such is the ancestral (way).

The situation is again one in which the hymnist selects his theme by means of an aporetic priamel. The Callimachean hymn verbally echos the Homeric model: πάντη δέ τοι οὕνωμα πουλύ. (70), as Williams notes, is another variation on the Homeric Hymn to Apollo's "many-namedness." The Callimachean hymnist this time dispenses with the rhetorical question but keeps the reference to abundant possibilities and uses it in a focusing priamel, "but I call you Karneion." He then gives a justification for this choice, "for such is the ancestral way," which, as Race notes, "is, strictly speaking, not

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17 See Knight, (n. 16).
18 Williams, (n. 14), ad loc.
necessary, and quite unlike the economy of the earlier poets." Further, not only is it unnecessary, it also shows that the selection was based, not on what would most praise and honor the god, or on what would suit the poet's aesthetic or moral principles, but on a matter of tradition: "I call him Karneion because my people always have." The abundance of names for Apollo thus produces neither an aporetic embarrassment of riches nor a confident assertion on the part of the poet; rather, the priamel shows that the matter is not even open to choice, since the decision is predetermined by matters that have nothing to do with Apollo's many-namedness as it was traditionally approached. We expected a selection priamel at 30f but didn't get one, because no selection was to be made; here, we think we have a selecting priamel when it turns out we didn't need one at all, because no free choice is available.\(^\text{20}\)

Thus the hymnist has twice eschewed the matter of choice or selection. But the principle behind the second demurral is at odds with that behind the first, and both are at odds with the hymn as a whole, inasmuch as it is the shortest in the collection and has clearly exercised choice of material.

\(^{19}\) W. H. Race, The Classical Priamel from Homer to Boethius (Mnemos. Suppl. 74, Leiden 1982).

\(^{20}\) Further, both examples suggest that despite his moralism, piety, and expressed concern for the city as a whole, he might have more personal motives or stakes in this song and ritual, for both these turning points are associated with personal references—my king, my city, my forefathers.
The final twist is found in the appearance of Apollo at the end of the hymn. Here, Apollo expresses in the form of a selection priamel the value (and indeed reverential piety) of principled selection. Rhetorical form matches content, and the unique form of this ending has content which praises and endorses unique form and content for a praise poem and thus contributes to its fulfillment of its own aims. What then of the hymnist, whose conception of his role is thus at odds with Apollo's and the poem as we have it? It is tempting to consider the hymnist and his chorus as representative of the mythopoetic tradition as a whole; it contains all songs thus far and those songs are the result of the dynamic interplay in performance of a combination of community, political, religious, moral, and personal concerns and motives. Its voice speaks in this poem, but if it were to presume (as this hymnist does) that its voice was unchanging and unchangeable, that it contained within itself all possible (in addition to all currently existing) songs it would, like Momos, be doing the opposite of its praising function, and would, like Pthonos, be at odds with the principles of its own divine patron; it would be hubristic and lay itself open, like the Cretan priests of Delphi at the end of the Homeric Hymn, to be bound by necessity and made to serve other men.  

21 Knight, (n. 16), 19, discusses the problematic morality and piety of this hymnist, but, nevertheless, suggests that the hymn attempts to resolve those problems by integrating "the images of religious experience with the language of literary criticism." I suggest that the
The Hymn to Delos, Hymn 4. 1-30:

My heart/soul, what time or when will you sing of the holy Delos, Apollo’s nurse? Indeed all the Cyclades, the holiest of the islands lying in the sea, are good for song; but Delos wants to carry off the first prize from the Muses, because it was Apollo, ruler over songs, that she bathed and swaddled and she first praised him as a god. Just as the Muses (feel for) the singer who doesn’t sing of Pimpleia hate, so Phoebus (does for the one) who forgets Delos. To Delos now I will give a share of song, so that Apollo of Mt. Cynthus may praise me who take thought of his (dear) nurse. ...

But if very many songs run/ circle around you in which one shall I entwine you? What is pleasing to you to hear? Is it the one of how in the beginning...

This hymn most closely relies on the Homeric model; in fact, much of the hymn can be seen as a reworking of the Delian part of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo. Here, the reference to forgetting Delos (8) evokes the (itself unusual) beginning of the Homeric Hymn, Μνήσομαι οὐδε λάθωμαι Απόλλωνος. “I will remember and not forget Apollo.” Similar also to Hom.Ap. 19f is the combination of (apparent) aporetic ...

two realms are linked in the hymn, but in ways that highlight their ill fit rather than integration.

22 The reference to praising the poet may be an allusion to the unique and famous ending of the Delian section where the poet asks for praise.
rhetorical questions (1 and 28-30) with a selection priamel. As Race comments, line 30 is "a direct imitation" of H.Hom 3.19f. Specific verbal echoes include εὖμνω (6), and the introduction of the theme by ἥκως (30). Thus, the hymnist imitates another unique feature of the Homeric hymn; as Race comments, "I know of no other example where ἥ signals a climax of a priamel." Also, the theme chosen will turn out to be that of the "birth" of Delos as an island, as the Homeric hymn chose the birth of Apollo.

The Callimachean hymnist does not ask "How?" but the more peculiar question of "When?" Such a question does not perform any of the functions of the Homeric hymnist's question. Rather it suggests that the fact of song and the choice of subject has already been determined by the supposed performative occasion. The only question left to ask, then, is when the hymnist will carry out his task. However, by thus drawing attention to what is a given of the context, not only does it not perform the usual encomiastic and ethical function, but it detracts from those functions by its implication that the hymnist had no choice and is merely fulfilling an obligation. This implication is strengthened by the subsequent priamel in which the hymnist does in fact

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23 See Race, (n. 19).

24 See Race, (n. 19).

25 Note that in this respect it is similar to the beginning of the Hymn to Zeus.
explain the choice of Delos as subject in terms which, as Knight notes, suggest "a certain compunction as a motive": Delos expects it (ἐθελεύ. 4); Apollo would hate him if he didn't (7-8); his song is the paying off of a debt (ἀποδάσσωμαι. 9).

The source of the problems with this voice lies in part with its peculiar mimetic status (which is in turn highlighted by the peculiarities in the voice): its performative context is only imaginary. Thus, it wavers between the form and gestures appropriate to a real occasion, in which such explanations would be unnecessary, and those appropriate to a lack of any occasion, which would make such explanation fitting. Similarly, when the hymnist answers his first question with "now" (9) and makes explicit the answer implied by his rhetorical question, he also makes explicit and emphasizes the purely rhetorical or fictional status of this hymn's rhetorical and fictional context. This can be seen as (partially) the result of the Hellenistic poet either having no public voice and occasion or having one where he operates under constraint, without choice. Delos would be a particularly good hymnic subject for Callimachus.
to use to make this point since (see below) there really is only one theme or song for Delos. This hymn in particular, then, highlights the problem of Hellenistic poetry's lack of an authentic public voice as well as forum.

The second rhetorical question: ei ëì λìν νολές σê περιπροχώσων άοιδαϊ/ ποιήν ἐνυπλέξω σê: "If full many songs run circling around you / into which one shall I weave you?" (28f), is very close to its Homeric model in form. In this case, however, it is not the form or the context which makes it problematic and inappropriate, but the subject to which it is applied. Thus far, the hymnist has indicated that Delos is to be praised as an anthropomorphic divinity (rather than merely a geographical location), but as such there is only one possible theme—her role in the birth of Apollo—for after this Delos becomes fixed as an island and can no longer act but merely provide the location for actions. The hymnist's own words hint at this problem, for to say that songs "run around" (28) Delos, and to speak of "weaving" (30) Delos into a song, is to suggest that there aren't songs about Delos in her own right, only ones which may involve her. Again the encomiastic and ethical function of the device is subverted. Thus, the critical Homeric technique articulating the hymnist-song-audience dynamic is again misused such that the links are broken, or at least made problematic.
The Hymn to Artemis, Hymn 3

The Hymn to Artemis alludes to the Homeric Hymn but does not employ its technique. Its first line, οὐ γὰρ ἔλαφρων ἀειδόντεσσα λαθέσαι, also evokes the Homeric Hymn to Apollo’s "I shall remember and not forget." In fact, as several scholars have shown, this hymn sets itself up in rivalry with both the Homeric and the Callimachean Hymns to Apollo, especially with regard to Apollo’s polyonymy and multiple songs. Since a characteristic feature of both those hymns is their use of the aporetic rhetorical question with priamel technique, in the Hymn to Artemis it is particularly conspicuous by its absence. Indeed, at the transitional moments where it would be appropriate (or expected), we find something strikingly different in form.

'Αρτεμις (οὐ γὰρ ἔλαφρὸν ἀειδόντεσσα λαθέσαι) ὑμένειν.
Artemis (for it is not a light/easy matter for singers to forget her) / we sing of, (1-2)

The hymn thus begins by pre-empting an audience question—"Why sing of Artemis?"—which is consequently left unexpressed and elided. The explanation given looks like it is making the same encomiastic (μουρια κελεύθα) claims as the Homeric aporetic technique: i.e. it is not easy for singers to forget her, because there are so many possible songs. It makes ethical claims as well: i.e. "I know Artemis deserves a song and that there are many songs; you, my audience, can

See M. J. Depew, Aitia in Callimachus' "Hymns" (Diss. Univ. of California at Los Angeles 1989).
be confident in my ability to know my duty and in my vigilance in taking care of any questions you might have."

However, the hymnist's explanation actually creates more questions and turns us into questioners: does the specification of singers mean that it is easy for others who are not singers to forget Artemis? If ἐλαφρὸν means "trivial" rather than "easy", is this a reference to the risk of severe punishment from Artemis (a characteristic this hymn will later emphasize)? Would such punishment be specifically for the singers or for the community they represent? As Haslam comments,²⁹ such devices in this hymn prompt "the probing of details that would otherwise be merely accepted without ado. Sometimes they yield answers, sometimes they don't; but by problematizing its hermeneutics the text engages the reader in an unusually active search for meaning." The question whether ἐλαφρὸν means "easy" or "trivial" affects how we view the hymnist's account, since it affects how he views his task. The hymnist will seem either confident or fearful about his task; if confident, he might seem excessively so in the light of a tradition in which difficulty is encomiastic, and if fearful, what kind of praise will this be that is the product of intimidation? ³⁰

²⁹ M. W. Haslam, "Callimachus' Hymns," in M. A. Harder, R. F. Regtuit, and G. C. Walker (Eds.), Callimachus (Gröningen 1993), 114, referring to a later episode in the hymn but applicable here.

³⁰ When he does ask questions, like the hymnist of Hymn 1 and Hymn 4, he addresses them to the divinity. In the Hymn to Artemis they are
The Hymn to Athena, Hymn 5

The Hymn to Athena is unique in the collection in that its hymnist says nothing about her choice of story. She simply states that she will say something without any indication of why she chose the story she tells, or that there was any difficulty of choice. This is particularly odd, given the fact that she has spent much of her time up to this point referring to mythological stories about Athena as explanations for the current ritual practices for Athena, such that we are led to expect that this story will have a similar function. She even distances herself from responsibility for the story by saying μόνος δ' οὐκ ἐμός, ἀλλ' ἔτερον. "the story is not mine but others'" (56). This may be connected to the fact that this is the only hymnist who does not assign a function to her story other than to pass the time. If this is its only role, then the implication for the world of this hymn is that there is nothing culturally at stake (religiously, socially, politically, or ethically) in the telling of stories at ritual occasions; thus, there are no other concerns or principles to be articulated.

questions which make transitions in the song, but where selections are to be made, they are assigned the goddess: e.g. what is your favourite harbour, city, nymph, etc.? All of the questions are in form rhetorical questions to which answers are then given. None of them are encomiastic like the Homeric hymnist’s; they do not express rhetorical or encomiastic aporia of the muria keleutha type but ask for specific pieces of information--where did you go then? What did you do next? They read more like the questions and answers of the Homeric scholia. Although they are transitional devices, they have the effect of making the transitions seem awkward and contrived.
In fact, the story itself turns out to be somewhat at odds with the hymnist's frame, for it is in form a cautionary story--Teiresias is blinded because he saw Athena naked. However, as a caution it applies to the men of the city who have been prohibited from seeing Athena naked (51-4), but they are not the audience of the tale, for the hymnist explicitly states that the tale is to be told to the women only (55-6). Further, the Athena depicted in the story (feminine, enjoying peaceful activities with female companions in a rural setting) is at odds with the Athena invoked in the ritual (masculine, martial, defender of cities). Though the tale may be encomiastic in and of itself, it has the opposite effect here in its ill fit with the ritual occasion. Thus, the hymnist's apparent belief that stories publicly told and collectively owned can be divorced from the public context, granted an autonomous existence, and reduced to diversionary entertainment is shown to be a misconception, and a dangerous one for the community given that the success of the invocation of Athena as protector of the city depends upon the proper fulfillment of the honorific ritual and encomium.

The Hymn to Demeter, Hymn 6

In Hymn 6, 17–22, the hymnist employs a slightly different, but related, transitional rhetorical technique:

67
μὴ μὴ ταῦτα λέγωμεν ἄδικρυν ἄγαγε Δηναῖοι
κάλλιοι, ὡς πολέσσαν ἐαυτὰ τέθυμα δῶκε.
κάλλιοι, ὡς καλόμαν τε καὶ ιερὰ διάγνατα πράτα
ἀσταχών ἀπέκοψε καὶ ἐν βόσκα ήκε πατήσαι,
ἀνέκα Τριπτόλεμος ἀγαθὰν ἔδοικεντο τέχναν
κάλλιοι, ὡς (ὑα καὶ τις ὑπερβασίας ἀλήται)...
No, No, let us not say things which brought tears to Demeter,
better (to tell of) how she gave pleasing ordinances to cities;
better (to tell of) how she first cut the straw and holy sheaves
of cornears and put in oxen to tread them,
when Triptolemus was taught the good techne.
Better (to tell of) how, so that one may avoid transgression, ...

According to Fuhrer, Callimachus here:

"offers a choice of themes that reflects the hymnist's conventional
aporia when faced with an abundance of topics... while manifesting
his poetic skill and learning by showing that he is familiar with
hymnal tradition of aporia, he also combines it with the Pindaric
rejection of an improper and inappropriate story ...."31

The Pindaric recusatio is a similar gesture to that of the
Homeric hymnist32. Like the expression of aporia, a recusatio
is a rhetorical encomiastic strategy whereby the poet
actually elaborates on the rejected subject matter in the
very act of rejecting it and does so in a way which
emphasizes its importance and worthiness. It has much in
common with the priamel as a focusing and/or selection
device.

Although the hymnist does here evoke those rhetorical
gestures, they work very differently. There is no suggestion
that s/he has any difficulty making the choice for the

(1988), 53-68.

32 According to Bundy, (n. 11): "It is most familiar from Latin poetry
where it usually appears as a form of introduction to the poem and most
characteristically involves the rejection of epic / heroic themes."
reasons usually given. The principle behind his / her rejection of the Persephone story is not that it does not praise Demeter, that it is in some way inappropriate to her dignity or offensive to her; nor is it that it is not appropriate to this occasion (which it clearly is, given the fasting context and the fact that the hymnist began with this story as parallel to the ritual). We are thus led to wonder what the hymnist means by the selection principle she claims to be applying, that is, what is κάλλιον.

The (religiously) didactic function assigned by the hymnist to the tale fits his / her pious and moralizing character as it is depicted in the frame: s/he draws a specifically moral and social conclusion from the story—"may the man who is hateful to you never be my friend nor ever share a party-wall with me. Bad neighbors to me are enemies" (116-7), echoing Hesiod's Erga, 346-8. However, although the story s/he tells does plotwise fit the function s/he gives it, yet it is undercut by the manner in which s/he relates it, for it is comic rather than serious and explores secular or social rather than religious or moral implications.¹³


¹³ It could, however, be said to fit the other purpose implied by the hymnist, which is to tell a story which does not make Demeter cry by giving a comic story. If both purposes are united as being κάλλιον, it points to a radical imbalance in the relationship between goddess and celebrants, for what is κάλλιον for Demeter is cautionary for the celebrants. The hymnist's sense of obligation to Demeter and that to the celebrants are at odds. This itself does not fit the close
Finally, the implication behind her rejection of the Persephone story is that not only is it not κάλλιον now, but that it never will be κάλλιον; if it is rejected because it makes Demeter cry, it is not the case that there will ever be an occasion on which this story does not make Demeter cry. Thus this story, the focus of the Homeric Hymn, the most famous of Demeter stories and the foundation story for the Eleusinian Mysteries, is permanently excluded from the body of possible songs.

The Hymn to Zeus, Hymn 1

The Hymn to Zeus contains the most sustained application of both the Homeric and Pindaric forms of rhetoric gestures (aporetic questions, priamels, recusationes). In fact, it is structured around and out of them. The most important and complex use occurs in the proem, which I will examine in detail in the next chapter. Here, I will note two of the other relevant examples in the hymn, those which begin and end it. The hymn begins:

Ζηνός έοι τί κεν ἄλλο παρὰ σπονδήσαν ἄειδεν λόιον ἢ θεόν αὐτόν;.....
To Zeus, what else than, at libations, to sing better than of the god himself..? (1-2)

Here, as in all the Callimachean hymns, the traditional appeal to the Muses has been displaced by another rhetorical parallelism between the celebrants' ritual actions and Demeter's described by the hymnist at the end of the hymn.

15 My translation aims to reflect the awkwardness of the Greek syntax.
technique to announce the theme. By means of this rhetorical question, the hymnist immediately demands that his presence be noticed, and sets himself up as firmly in control of this hymn's progress as the self-confident center of authority.  

None of the Homeric models for this collection begins with such a gesture. Rather, the tone and form are closer to Pindar's "authorial independence."

The hymnist, in fact, subordinates all other considerations to this presentation of his voice and ethos, and it effectively monopolizes the proem. Even the hymn's very subject matter and addressee, Zeus, is eclipsed by it. Although the hymn opens in the traditional Homeric way with the name of the god to be hymned as the very first word, a strategy which usually "confirms the primacy of the subject," yet Ζηνός turns out to be a genitive dependent on the prepositional phrase παρὰ σπονδῆσιν, "at libations," and thus foregrounds the performative occasion, not the subject of song. The remainder of the proem (4-9) gives a dramatization of the "singer at work" analyzing, evaluating and making selections from his source material, and similarly both

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36 Note that rhythm also bolsters this impression of the hymnist's ethos for, as Hopkinson notes in "Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus," CQ 34 (1984), the "regularly balanced, easy flowing rhythm of 2-3" help to "give a confident tone and suggestion of ease, aided by the enjambement of 1-2."

37 Knight, (n. 16). In fact, the beginning of a Pindaric prosodion, fr.89a, is probably the specific model here: "What is better/ finer for those beginning or ending than to sing of...?"

38 Hopkinson, (n. 36).
foregrounds the hymnic persona and his personal involvement in his narrative and demonstrates his confident control of his material.

This foregrounding of the hymnic voice raises certain problems. Why is so much time, effort and emphasis put into this "self-presentation"? Why does the hymnist find it necessary and important to explain and account for the conditions of his work, e.g. why he is singing, why he is singing to Zeus, why he has chosen the Arcadian story, what the logical processes involved in his choices are etc.? Why is it such an emotional matter for him that his thumos is involved (ἐν δοιὴ μάλα θυμός. 5), and that he is led to the vitriol of his venomously alliterative question πότεροι, πάτερ. ἡψεύσαντο, (7) "who lied?" This hymnist's personal involvement is even more surprising and noticeable given the fact that the style of hymn he is composing is modeled on the rhapsodic Homeric hymns, which traditionally had an impersonalized, objective, omniscient hymnic persona.

The impression created at the rhetorical and formal level is undermined by that created at the grammatical and syntactic level, which instead portrays a hesitant, submissive and detached voice. The personal and confident rhetorical question is couched in grammatically impersonal form: ἐγὼ τί θεόν ἄλλο ... ἀείδειν/ λέον ἡ. Its abstractness is emphasized by the use of the continuous present infinitive.
And the potential optative ἐοι, expressing a less distinct, hypothetical possibility to the narrator's mind. This both distances the narrator from the act he is engaged in and undermines the assertiveness of the rhetorical form. Further, the syntax of the opening question is extremely tortuous and ambiguous. In addition to the contorted word order, the syntactic function of key words is open to competing interpretations. Thus, the question's difficult and halting progress undercuts the easy confidence and control suggested by both the question and the flowing rhythm.

Finally, one implication of the opening rhetorical question is that not only does song happen to accompany libations but that it must, a point highlighted by the ambiguous syntax of "At libations, what is better to sing than Zeus?" which could also read (at least provisionally up to the end of line 1), "At libations what is better than singing?" By thus emphasizing the occasion instead of the divinity at the outset, the hymnist seems to be implicitly explaining both why he is singing now (because he is present at libations) and why he is singing of Zeus (because those

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19 It is emphasized also by its rare form.

40 E.g. the jarring postponement of the interrogative τί; λωίον in hyperbaton.

41 E.g. ἐοι as potential optative or in tmesis with κεν; Ζηνός as genitive with σπουδήσων or λωίον; ἐδείξειν as epexegetic with λωίον or impersonal.
libations are to Zeus). Thus it seems that it is the hypothetical context (εἰς...παρὰ...σπουδὴν) which determines and justifies the choice of subject and theme, rather than the greatness of Zeus, and the note of "authorial independence" is undermined by that of submissive compliance with context.

The hymn, then, begins by setting form and content, hymnic self-confidence and hesitation in tension, and of the many surprising and disorienting turns that this hymn takes, not least is the one which ends it:

90f χαίρε μέγα Κρονίδη πανυπέρτατε δώτορ ἔαων.
δώτορ ἀπημονής τεά σ' ἐργματα τίς κεν ἀείδαιι:
oὐ γένετ'. οὐκ ἔσται τίς κεν Δίος ἐργματ' ἀείαι.
χαίρε πάτερ χαίρ' αὐθί: δίδου δ' ἀρετὴν τ' ἀφένος τε.
oὐτ' ἀρετῆς ἄτερ ὅλος ἐπίσταται ἀνδρας ἄξειν
οὐτ' ἀρετὴ ἀφένος. δίδου δ' ἀρετὴν τε καὶ ὅλον.
Hail greatly, most all-high son of Kronos, giver of good things, giver of painlessness/ troublelessness! Who could sing your deeds? There has not been, there will not be, someone who could sing the deeds of Zeus.
Hail father, Hail again! Give both arete and abundance.
Not without arete does happiness / wealth know how to increase / grow men
nor does arete (know how to) without abundance. Give both arete and happiness/wealth.

The hymnist has moved quickly from describing the special status of "our ruler" in Zeus' eyes to what seems to be a traditional closural formula, χαίρε μέγα Κρονίδη πανυπέρτατε... "Hail mighty one, most high of all, son of Cronos" (91). The transition is decidedly abrupt (in itself not a rare phenomenon). Maclennan notes that the usual form

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"Depew, (n. 28): "The narrator suggests that it is because he is present at "libations to Zeus" that he is led to his choice of theme."
of such a hymn was "an account of the gonai and aretai of the
god." The first half dealt with the gonai (birth), and the
second half began by suggesting that it would deal with the
aretai (great deeds) (66), that is, the ἔργα / deeds by which
Zeus attained power. However, the hymn took a tangential
turn, thwarting our expectations, by means of a complex
priamel structure, to focus on Zeus' patronage of human
kings, especially "our ruler." Thus, we realize that the
reference to Zeus' ἔργα, deeds, at line 66 was not an
announcement of a new theme, but part of a transition.

The move towards closure may seem abrupt, but not
startlingly so. That is, not until the hymnist adds the
(disarming) question in 92: τέα δ' ἔργματα τίς κεν ἀείδοι: "Who
could sing your deeds?" This apparently simple question
suddenly opens up a host of others. Is this the familiar
rhetorical question which expresses encomiastic aporia at the
vastness of the subject and which will lead to the selection
of one aspect on which to focus? Was the suggestion of
closure in χάρις."hail," (91) really just a transitional
device? Was the entire section on earthly kings but a
digression? Was the reference to Zeus' ἔργα, deeds, at line
66 really an announcement of a theme deferred but resumed

G. R. Maclennan, Callimachus: Hymn to Zeus: Introduction and
Commentary (Roma 1977), 129.

Note that τίς is postponed for maximum effect.
here? Yet again, at the very moment that the hymn employs
the traditional hymnic signposts, it creates a problem
concerning what it actually is, has been, and will be about.

Haslam suggests that "the justification for cutting the
poem short, not delivering an account of ἐργα, purports to be
praise but doesn't hold up as such. It is a subterfuge, a
bold faced inversion of one of the most conventional motifs
of praise poetry--the aporia in the face of myriad paths of
song."45 Again, the difference is important. The change from
"How?" to "Who?" puts greater emphasis on the hymnist's role,
one that has been the focus throughout the hymn, as the
hymnist's analysis of perceived problems has revolved around
the authors of the various traditions. Again, this is key to
the role of rhetoric in this hymn. Many of the difficulties
of this hymn are generated by the use of a hymnic persona who
is excessively concerned with the establishment of a
rhetorically persuasive ethos and dismantling the ethos of
authors with whom he disagrees. The question "Who is
speaking?" and more specifically, "Liars or truth-tellers?
Good or bad liars?" is the dominant one of the hymn, for us
and for the hymnist himself. Again, it is one of those
questions which is more problematic because of the
Hellenistic context and the problem of rhetorical gestures
when there is no audience, both for the present poet and

45 Haslam, (n. 28), 115.
those lying silently on the shelves, and when the nature of the audience's reaction to the speaker's ethos is politically and culturally irrelevant."

The rhetorical question here implies the answer "no-one could sing of Zeus' deeds," but the tradition implies that this answer be supplemented with a qualification: "Unless he had the Muses help," or "because the list would be so great that the poem would never end," or "because such matters simply transcend the power of human speech." This could be the implied answer to the first question at line 92, but when the hymnist answers the question he only gives the first part, "no-one" and does not supply any other qualification or explanation. By doing so, and because of the fact that he has been providing such explanations all through the poem to similar problems (thus provoking such an expectation in the reader here when we recognize the tactic), he makes it a problem. Instead of providing the usual supplement, the reader is left with a further question, a literal one—"Why not?" This question remains unanswered and unaddressed, and

Note that again it puts the hymnist rather than Zeus or Ptolemy to the forefront and whatever inclinations we might have towards praise or blame are thus directed towards him.

See Iliad 17.260, cited by MacLennan, (n. 43), ad loc.

Note MacLennan's comment, (n. 43), 129, that 93 "implies that it is not possible for anyone to sing the deeds of Zeus." While the first question implied it, the second states it categorically. MacLennan mistakes the implications of the conventional trope for Callimachus' novel treatment of it.
the encomiastic trope (for Zeus, Ptolemy, and the Poet) becomes potentially denigrating. But "potentially" is an important qualification for this poem, which throughout hangs disturbingly between praise and blame. The lack of explanation here thus creates a similar effect to the overabundance of explanations earlier; it creates difficulties where traditional poetry would not; it coerces the reader's involvement and, initially at least, molds the reader unconsciously into becoming the same type of reader as the rationalistic hymnist, for to ask oneself the question "why not?" is to employ exactly the same reading strategy as the hymnist. The question is particularly problematic since the hymnist has deprived us of all possible answers; it cannot be the limits of the hymnist's knowledge, because he has shown us his belief in the ability to find out the real truth by logical analysis; it cannot be because such things transcend human speech, since throughout the poem other such potentially transcendental subjects have been treated in a literal manner.49

The hymn gives an answer to the rhetorical question, thus turning it in retrospect into a real, literal one: οὐ γένετ', οὐκ ἔσται, τίς κεν Διὸς ἔργαματ ἀέως. "There has not been, there will not be someone who could sing the deeds of Zeus"

49 See also Maclennan, (n. 43), 130, who comments that Zeus' deeds "are not, of course, completely ignored; they are, Alexandrinus more, briefly alluded to in passing as ...3 and 57."
Depew comments, "The statement concerning Zeus effects a traditional recusatio." Similarly, according to Maclennan, "Callimachus' language in 11.92-3 recalls the recusatio formula favored by Augustan poets. But Callimachus provides no true recusatio, for he does not dwell on the exploits of Zeus." To put the two observations together, it both is and isn't a recusatio. By treating what appears to be a figure of speech in a literal manner, the hymnist turns an encomiastic device into its opposite, an opening gesture into a closural one. This can be seen as a dramatization and emblem of what has happened to the mythopoetic tradition in the hands of the rationalists: entombed in the library scrolls, reduced to words on paper to be catalogued like a monument to dead war heroes, the rhetorical poses of the living authors on an ancient stage are reduced to empty gestures; rhetorical devices imply an audience, and without such an audience they are fingers pointing at empty space, soliloquies, questions that have to be answered, because we cannot assume there is anyone there to make the required assumptions and implications. Hence, the figurai has to

50 There are some textual problems here: 1. The variant manuscript readings: Ἄειος and Ἄειος. 2. The grammatical ambiguity: is τί an interrogative beginning a new clause or a relative?

51 Depew, (n. 28), 45.

52 Maclennan, (n. 43), ad loc.
become the literal because there is no intervening or mediating consciousness that will make the transformation.

Thus the closural device, justifying why the poem ends here, in fact works in exactly the opposite manner as the question "why not sing of Zeus' deeds?" presses upon us. It demands the possibility of such a song and declares the limitless power of the poetic medium and poet at the same time as it denies that possibility. Thus, by treating a conventional rhetorical gesture as a real question, he has also turned personal aporia into an authoritative pronouncement on the permanent exclusion of this theme from song for all poets for all time,53 and turned the suggestion of the topos of the Homeric hymnist's promise of beginning again and the availability of multiple paths of song into a denial or rejection of that claim. The hymn thus opens with a rhetorical question about a hypothetical song and ends with a rhetorical question about a hypothetical singer. If hymns tell of birth and deeds and this hymn has told of birth, the only true account, and denies the possibility of telling of deeds it also declares itself to be the only possible and valid hymn to Zeus—there can never be another, and the only possibility for future singing of hymns to Zeus then would be the repetition of this hymn.

53 Thus also contradicting Aratus' claim that men never allow Zeus to be ἄρρητος in Phaenomena 2.
When philosophy replaced poetry as cultural hegemon, it appropriated the authority to determine a new program of truth. This program based on the necessity of establishing uniformly valid criteria for separating out truth from falsehood, such that truth becomes one and absolute rather than multiple and contextually constructed. As Foucault argues:

"The highest truth no longer resided in what discourse was, nor in what it did: it lay in what was said. The day dawned when truth moved over from the ritualized act--potent and just--of enunciation to settle on what was enunciated itself: its meaning, its form, its object and its relation to what it referred to."

As we saw in the previous chapter, in this movement, from "the ritualized act... of enunciation," to the law of philosophically, morally, and, as we shall see later, politically responsible signification, poetry is caught in a series of double-binds between the conflicting imperatives of rationalist and archaic poetics; thus, the problem of the poetic voice for Callimachus, given the historical and

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philosophical constraints placed upon it, is not only how it works, but whether it works or could even be possible.

Any attempt at critically addressing these issues, either for Callimachus or for Hellenistic poetry in general, should pass through the proem of the *Hymn to Zeus*, where Callimachus most directly explores the implications and stakes of the philosophical appropriation of cultural authority by staging a rationalistic hymnist in the act of applying its principles to poetry and myth. Through this hymnist, Callimachus challenges the authority of that program of truth by 1) demonstrating that its principles and claims in action are exclusionary, reductive, and constricting, thus questioning their validity and usefulness for poet and community; 2) exposing its status as a program, and its claims to authority, as poses, rhetorical gestures, and maneuvers; and 3) consequently opening up a space for the poet's voice to act authentically again, and within this space dramatizing the potentially generative and liberating role of poetic deception.

This proem is among the more complex passages in Callimachus. It is one of the most densely allusive passages, making references to and between previous and contemporary literature; current philosophical and literary debates; physical relics and popular thought. It is also composed of the multiple Protean transformations of which
Callimachean text is capable, for a reader is constantly challenged to find a secure foothold in a text whose tone, imagery, persona, perspective, and syntax constantly shift and slide. Such features are characteristic of Callimachus' style generally. What is notable here is first, that they are so numerous and so densely compacted within a brief span, suggesting the importance of the passage; and second, that they are programmatically used in introducing this hymn, and with it the whole collection of hymns.

The proem (4-9) forms a preface to the narration of Zeus' birth (10-54), in which the hymnist explains how and why he came to choose this version of the story for, as he tells us, there were contradictory accounts of Zeus' birth. Deciding which account is true turns on the question he poses in line 4: πῶς καὶ μὲν. Δικταῖον ἀδέσφομεν ήὲ Λυκαῖον: "How should we sing of him, as Diktaion or Lykaion?" This question of title stems from a dispute about Zeus' birthplace, implying that the resolution of one question will lead to the resolution of the other. He then turns to address Zeus directly, Ζεῦ (6, 7), sets the problem before the god in the form of contrary claims σὲ μὲν...φασὶ../ σὲ δὲ... "some on the one hand say... others on the other hand say" (6-7), and appeals to him to solve the dilemma: πότεροι. πάτερ. ἔψευσαντο: "which ones lied, father?" (7). On receiving the answer, Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται. "Cretans are always liars" (8), he goes on to give supporting
proof for that statement, and consequently begins his narrative with an account of Zeus' birth in Arcadia.

Here the hymnist dramatizes the selection process and draws attention to himself as in control. He gives a fairly explicit account of his views, his rational principles, his means of making discriminating judgements, and his arguments. It becomes clear that his main selection criterion aims at single, rational, factual truth, and that his method of determining that truth is a process of deductive reasoning from what he treats as empirical evidence and authoritative sources.

In rhetorical terms, the proem might initially look like the hymnist is making the transition into the particular myth he is going to sing by means of two typical hymnic gestures, that is, by modulating from an aporetic rhetorical question ("how should we sing of him...?") through a priamel form ("some say... others say..."). However, if we compare this with the manner of the Homeric hymnist, as discussed in the previous chapter, the differences are telling.

Unlike the Homeric hymnist, the Callimachean hymnist does not give the alternative possibilities as foils for his final choice, thus leaving them available for selection on another occasion, but in disjunctive form, as mutually exclusive alternatives, Diktaion or Lykaion. The next three lines (5-7) further emphasize the fact that there are only two possibilities and that they are in direct competition.

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with each other: the hymnist's soul is divided in two (ἐν δύοις 5); it is a matter of competition or ἐρίς (ἁμαρτίας τοῦ 5); there are two opposing claims ("some on the one hand say... others on the other hand say," 6-7). When he explains that his doubt about which to tell is caused by contrary sources, rather than, for instance, a concern over which title best fits the current context, he suggests what he then makes explicit with the question "Who lied?": that he considers what had been for previous hymnists a question of encomiastic and ethical potential rather to be one of competing truth claims. Consequently, he turns what would traditionally be an aporetic rhetorical question about how to hymn so great a god into a real question, and a logical problem.²

The dilemma in which this hymnist finds himself is not original to him or to Callimachus; the hymnist of the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus, to which Callimachus alludes, faces a similar problem in fixing the birthplace of Dionysus. In that hymn, the hymnist dismisses all the previous accounts of the god's birth with an emphatic "They lied" before going on to give his own, new, version. The Homeric hymnist raises the matter of conflicting accounts as a rhetorical gesture, by means of which he ascribes to himself the authority to develop his account. When Callimachus' hymnist raises the issue as a question, however, he does so, not in order to

² He does this twice: the second time in the question "Who lied?" which is a logical reduction of the rhetorical statement "they lie" in the
authorize the creation of a new variant and competing
narrative, but in order to invoke a set of criteria by means
of which he will reduce the chaos of the multivocal
mythopoetic tradition to a single, objective, univocal truth.

The means by which the hymnist tries to make the
tradition accountable to such standards is to invoke
techniques of deductive logic, argumentation, and empirical
evidence. Here, his method takes the form of three linked
logical forms. The first, a disjunctive syllogism, takes as
its premise that Zeus was born either in Arcadia or Crete. A
disjunctive syllogism is a valid argument of the form
"Either A or B; not A; therefore B." The second, an
enthymeme, is implied here in support of the first, and holds
that Zeus was not born on Crete because Cretans are liars.
The third is a conditional syllogism: if the Cretans built a
tomb for Zeus, then they claim he is dead; Zeus is not dead,
because he is immortal; they built a tomb for Zeus;
therefore, they are liars. In supplying backing for these
arguments, the hymnist appeals to several types of evidence:
the tomb in Crete is a piece of empirical data, while the
quote, "Cretans are always liars," concatenates literary and
divine authority, as the quotation from Epimenides is placed
in Zeus' mouth. The implication the hymnist draws from this
process of inquiry is that, because the Cretans are liars,
Zeus was born in Arcadia.

Homer, Hymns to Dionysus.
We should note here that the hymnist's question, addressed to Zeus, treats Zeus as the source and guarantor of factual truth, a capacity traditionally assigned to the Muses. This transformation of Zeus' normal role suggests an ambivalence in the hymnist's attitude towards Zeus. While he apparently takes Zeus' answer at face-value, he goes on to give his own proof of the truth of the answer he has received by means of deductive reasoning. Thus, he not only demands a single truth of the tradition, but also thinks that truth is humanly and rationally determinable: not even Zeus' word is sufficient.

As Callimachus' hymnist stages it here, the picture comes to resemble the Hellenistic dialectical philosopher, pursuing truth by a question and answer process, syllogistically demonstrating conclusions, thus turning Zeus himself into the interlocutor of the dialectical process. It is also reminiscent of the scholarly procedure of commenting on Homer by a process of question and answer, which, as I suggested earlier, was itself based on philosophical dialectic. As Bing comments: "To our astonishment, the ruler of the universe is depicted as a man of letters citing literary antecedents to adjudicate a scholarly dispute."

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2 P. Bing, *The Well-Read Muse* (Göttingen 1988), 76.
This proem thus works as an attempt to make poetry accountable to rationalism in two ways. First, it requires and shows that poetry and myth contain a truth (logical, ethical, historical, factual), which is rationally determinable. This approach corresponds with the philosophical censorship of poetry; the truth in poetry is to be rationally distinguished from the falsehood and only the true retained. It would involve the rejection and erasure of all alternatives and preserve only that part of poetry, or that kind of poetry, which conforms to logical, rational standards. In scholarly terms, this corresponds with the approach of the Alexandrian scholars to poetic texts, whose agenda was to analyze variant readings to distinguish between those acceptable and retainable and those to be rejected, erased or less radically athetized according to rational criteria; and also to the development of a canon of authors and the universal mythology project.

Second, the hymnist's explanation of his selection-process and the fact that it prefaces his narrative fits the requirements set by the philosophical schools for the conditions which are to accompany the experience of poetry. The hymnist himself provides the arguments behind his views and thus the required guidance for making judgements about the poem's content and truth value. He performs the role of rational commentator and analyst, which the philosophical schools required both to protect the audience from dangers of
poetry's lies and deceptions and to foster emotional and intellectual detachment from the experience by mediating it with a rational analysis, thus promoting identification instead with the philosopher's views and making poetry conform to the philosopher's standards of rational and ethical truth.

However, this hymnist's commitment to a univocal, factually truthful tradition involves him in a number of specious moves which consequently undermine the tenability of such a position. In order to get to the point where he can say there are two mutually exclusive accounts, the hymnist has already drastically impoverished the rich poetic tradition by ignoring or talking over all the other voices claiming different locations for Zeus' birth, and there were many. In fact, the hymnist himself cannot stop some of them from whispering through him. In the expanded version of the problem ("some say that you were born on the hills of Ida; others say in Arcadia " 6-7), he mistakenly equates the Idan hills with Dicte, whereas Cretan Ida had its own claim to being the birthplace of Zeus separate to and competing with that of Dicte; moreover, the Greeks knew of many Mount Idas in addition to that in Crete, also with their own claims to be Zeus' birthplace. Previous poets took advantage of the variants preserved in the rich mythic tradition and depended on the existence of those variants to give force and freedom to their own versions. By demanding of the tradition a
single objective truth, the hymnist of Callimachus' hymn seeks to violate its multivocal nature and erase all other accounts.

In order to remain loyal to his principle or standard of truth, he / we must also ignore the numerous and various attitudes to the nature of mythic or poetic truth that were preserved in the tradition and the texts themselves, many of which are alluded to by the hymnist's own language and words. I have already mentioned the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus alluded to in lines 6-7 and its hymnist's rhetorical truth. There are a number of others which I return to below.

The very issue raised of which name to call Zeus as depending on his birthplace assumes only one possible origin, aition, of these cult names, an assumption which would seem to result from the hymnist's impulse to restrict the proliferation of other stories. This assumption is clearly false, since divine epithets of geographical reference can be bestowed for numerous reasons, of which the most common is simply a way of designating the god as worshipped at the local level. It is also disproved in this very poem: the narrative shows how he is entitled to both by being born in Arcadia and reared in Crete. When he does finally receive an epithet, it is neither of these but ὐπάνε (55).

Because of his demand that the tradition be univocal, he expresses the variant claims as deriving from a single
source. Ζεύς, οὐ μὴν .... φασὶ / Ζεύς, οὐ δ' (6-7) contrasts two Zeuses, not two sources or sets of claimants. One set of people are given as the source, φασὶ, of these two mutually negating truth claims. However, his question "Who lied?" (and indeed all his subsequent deductions) only makes logical sense if there were two separate groups of claimants. Otherwise, the tradition which he has just cited as an authority providing his evidence now has its very status as an authority challenged with this charge of falsehood.

Like his requirement that there be a single objective truth in poetry, his corollary assumption that this truth is determinable by rational means results in contorting and distorting the tradition by the application of logical operations. The incommensurability of rationalist and poetic principles is indicated by the fact that the hymnist only "succeeds" by resorting to invalid procedures.

The identity, and thus authority, of the voice which answers "Cretans are always liars" is left indeterminate and indeterminable, although it would be most natural (see above) to assume it is Zeus'. If Zeus was born in Crete and so a Cretan he would, according to these (his own) words, lie, and thus have generated the liar paradox. In fact, whatever choice we make in assigning a speaker, the words are always ultimately a quote from Epimenides' Theogony and, since Epimenides himself was a Cretan, will always generate the
logical problem of the liar paradox. The fact that the hymnist ignores its paradoxical nature and accepts it at face-value, as signifying that the Cretans lied in their claim that Zeus was born on their island, further undermines his credibility and methodological principles.

However, even ignoring the potential for paradox, the statement could only have any argumentative value at all if we also assume that the Cretan people are the imagined subject of the claim σὲ μὲν Ἰδαίοιον ἐν οὐργῇ φασὶ γενόεσθαι, "some say you were born on Ida"(6); yet i) we saw that grammatically the subject of φασὶ, "they say", is the source for both Cretan and Arcadian versions; ii) the assumption that only Cretans would claim Cretan birth for Zeus is belied by the fact that the most well-known and widely-accepted account was the poetic one of the Boeotian Hesiod in his Theogony.

When he proceeds to give his own empirical evidence as the basis of a supporting proof for the Cretans always lying, he mentions that the Cretans built a tomb for Zeus whereas Zeus is immortal, therefore he could not have died, therefore the Cretans lied. Yet again we see the hymnist convicting himself of faulty argumentation, for proving that the Cretans lied once is not proof that they lie always, and lying about Zeus' death has no bearing on their claims about his birth.
There are further problems with his use of the Cretan tomb as evidence. The tomb itself was the product of the Cretans, and is cited here as if it were equivalent to the statement "the Cretans say that Zeus is dead." But what truth-value can evidence created by liars have? In fact, the hymnist has generated an extension of the liar paradox and a reformulation of the problem raised earlier in the question "Who lied?": if the Cretans are always liars, then their tomb--i.e. claim that Zeus was dead--is also a lie. If it is possible to ignore the authority of the tradition's claim that Cretans are always liars, as he does here by assuming that the Cretan tomb of Zeus was truthful, then the authorizing status of the pronouncement "Cretans are always liars" is challenged. Again, the hymnist's logical procedure is faulty, and his attempt to give evidence to support the statement "Cretans are always liars" can only undermine it.

Finally, as Knight points out, the form in which he cites Zeus' immortal status as proof of the Cretan lie regarding his death may involve an unconscious allusion to another contemporarily popular paradox of the "mortal immortal." This is a form of the Sorites paradox which was used by the Skeptics to attack the Stoic view of the gods and man by showing that to take the Stoic view to its logical conclusion would mean that there is no difference between men and gods. Such an allusion would necessarily undermine the assumption on which the hymnist's argument here is based. In
fact, it begins to look as though once committed to an enterprise like that of the hymnist here, it would be almost impossible to find language which would be free from such compromising implications in the Hellenistic age, to such an extent had philosophy taken control of discourse about the divine.

Thus, the hymnist's application of his own methodology and rational principles have been shown inadequate, and with it his status as a credible authority in this poem. By using a rationalistic hymnist to question the adequacy of the rationalist account and the appropriateness of rationalist principles for poetry, the philosophers' own interpretive methods are used against them. The philosophical means of appropriating control of poetry and the cultural heritage are reappropriated by the poet in the service of opposing such philosophical authority. The attempt to produce identification with the rationalist hymnist and consequently detachment from anything not conforming to his view actually produces the very reverse effect.

We could say that Callimachus uses the hymnist to demonstrate that philosophy distinguishes itself from poetry by its appeal to logic rather than rhetoric, and to show what philosophy has done and is doing to poetry by attempting to reduce its rhetoric to logic. However, given the transparent invalidity of this hymnist's application of logical techniques, as readers, we are then faced with several
questions: is their invalidity entirely due to this particular hymnist's incompetence? If so, then the proem functions as a parody of rationalism. Or, more radically, does the speaker's failure perform, not simply a demonstration of the incompatibility of rationalism and poetry, but of the irreconcilability of those rationalist principles with themselves?

That Callimachus is not using the hymnist's difficulties simply for parodic, destructive purposes is clear if we note, first, that the use of rationalist principles by the hymnist has ethical implications, for he enlists them in the service of authorizing his voice. I noted earlier that he transforms traditional rhetorical techniques into logical structures. However, if indeed his narrative were the truth, his approach would still function rhetorically to make encomiastic claims for the hymn and ethical ones for the hymnist as one who knows the truth. Of a similar rhetorical function is his foregrounding of the efforts he put into making the decision, and his personal, emotional investment in it (e.g. his locating of his concern in his chumos; the anger and passion in the question πότεροι, πάτερ, ἔψευσαντο; "which ones lied, father?"). Thus, rationalism here works to legitimate, ethically and epistemologically, the poet's voice in the absence of the social, religious, or political occasion to speak, allowing him in part to arrogate to himself forms of
authority that, in Homeric times, would have been granted to him by virtue of his status as spokesman for the collective imagination. This appropriation of the discursive mannerisms of rationalism as a means of legitimating the hymnist’s voice suggests that Callimachus is here exposing the way in which philosophy / rationalism itself functions as a mode of rhetoric. This is underscored by the very availability of those mannerisms to be appealed to as authorizing techniques.

My reading of these lines here is sharply at odds with the traditional model for their interpretation: typically, they have been taken to suggest a picture of Callimachus himself as a scholar-poet at work. This view, which equates the hymnist with the poet, should be considered suspect in the light of recent work on poetic personae in the ancient world. It is also deliberately undermined in this poem as a result of the way in which we come to distrust, or perceive as unreliable, the hymnist. When we do so, we separate ourselves from that hymnist, we begin to see him as a construct, a fiction, and feel that we must take the burden of interpretation on ourselves. This imperative is, in turn, sharply at odds with the practical implications of the Hellenistic philosophies (and indeed religions) contemporary

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3 See Foucault, (n. 1), 220: “True discourse, liberated by the nature of its form from desire and power, is incapable of recognising the will to truth which pervades it; and the will to truth, having imposed itself upon us for so long, is such that the truth it seeks to reveal cannot fail to mask it.”
to Callimachus: what they all had in common was an attempt to free man from fear of the arbitrary world either by withdrawing from it, by renouncing the belief that it is possible to know about it, or by positing either a rational order or the dominant force of chance; regardless of the particular strategy, all these positions hold that we can effectively do nothing. All thus assigned a passive place for man; happiness comes from recognizing this and realizing how to accept it. In the face of the methodological constraints and practical ramifications of these rationalist projects, Callimachus, in his poems, recreates the possibility of an active role for man in the interpretation, construction, and transformation of his world.

Thus, in direct contradiction of the philosophical claim that poetry makes the reader helpless to resist, this hymn demands that the reader be actively engaged in the creation of its meaning which includes resisting the hymnist's interpretation. This may initially lead us to believe that meaning and truth in this poem will be an entirely subjective matter, that we are free to adopt whatever interpretation we wish. We may take this as representing the Hellenistic poet's loss of authority. However, this will turn out to be just one of the stages through which the poet guides us; as readers, we are led through a dismantling process before we can begin to reconstruct and realize the benefits of other views.
Given this increased freedom, the reader may reflect on the multiple allusions these lines make to other texts. Here we have clear evidence of the new context of poetry in a writing culture, for it requires that we continually reread the poem. After realizing the problems with the hymnist we are at liberty to go back and examine the consequences of his interpretation for our own. These allusions point to the multivocal nature of the mythopoetic tradition, to other approaches to the issue of poetic truth, to other modes of interpretation within the literary tradition itself. By doing so, they further challenge the hymnist's apparent assumption of a single form of truth in the tradition, and his interpretive methods of determining that truth. They reveal its inadequacies, its reductiveness in purging the world, and the poetic tradition which spoke to and for it, of their rich multivocal nature. This is not to say that they erase the rationalistic hymnist's voice completely, for that too would be reductive, and in this poem would lead to the exclusion of the Arcadian myth from the tradition. They do, however, reject the hymnist's claim to absolute or even greater authority over the cultural heritage.

Line 5 is an adaptation of the first line of a *Hymn to Eros* by Anatagoras. The words are placed in the mouth of the Academic philosopher Crantor, who lists various mythic accounts of Eros' parentage, as he discusses one of the most
problematic genealogies in Greek myth, one much debated by scholars, and the most famous example of the multivocality of the mythic tradition:

ευ δοιμὴ μοι θυμός, ὦ τοι γένος ἀμφίσβητον.
η ςε θεῶν τὸν πρῶτον ἀειγενέων. Ἐρος, εἶπο... 6

Crantor mentions the existence of variant accounts of Eros' parentage were as a problem, and then solves it by claiming that the variants are all metaphoric ways of expressing one underlying truth: that Eros the god is a mythic way of talking about the concept of Love, a symbol for Love, and that Love is a fundamentally ambiguous concept, a dual thing. Thus Callimachus' hymn alludes to poem which expressed a belief that rational truth is to be derived from myth by synthesizing its many variant voices into a single one.

In turn, lines 6-7 of the Hymn to Zeus are modeled on the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus, where the hymnist also lists various mythic accounts of Dionysus birth-place before dismissing them all as lies and giving his own, presumably true, version. This claim to tell the truth in the homeric hymn can be considered a rhetorical gesture which plays to the competitive context of the hymn's performance and not an expression of belief in the absolute, non-fictional truth of his own version. 7 Thus, the hymn also alludes to poem with a

6 Powell, no.1.

different approach to truth, that is, that mythic truth is a rhetorical, fictional construct. Further, these two allusions point to contradictory approaches to poetic truth and demonstrate once again how this poem turns the philosophical appropriation of poetry against itself: Anatagoras' Hymn to Eros also looks to Plato's Symposium and the discussions there concerning Eros and how to interpret the traditions about him. In that hymn, Crantor makes his case by alluding to the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus in order to show his correction of that hymn's attitude to mythopoetic truth. When Callimachus also alludes to the same Homeric Hymn in the next lines, he does so not merely to point to other modes of interpretation as a contrast to that of Crantor, he also adapts the lines so that they actively reject Crantor's interpretation.

In lines 6-7 of the Callimachean hymn, while the syntax suggests that the variant claims are derived from a single source, the use of μὲν... ἔ is actually contrasts two Zeuses, not two sources. Whereas Antagoras/ Crantor synthesized a notion of the dual nature of one god from multiple sources, here, the syntax suggests that a single source created two gods with two different histories. Thus, it indicates that it is the nature of the tradition to speak against itself by making mutually negating truth-claims, or (in other words) by speaking in paradoxes. If that is so, the rationalist
synthesis is open to the charge of being an inadequate and reductive representation of that tradition. Thus, Callimachus' allusion to the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus contradicts and rejects Anatagoras' correction of it, and reappropriates the poetic tradition back from the rationalists.

Thus far then we have heard representatives of various (traditional) approaches to the nature of mythopoetic truth: the hymnist and his absolute, rationally determinable truth; Crantor's metaphoric truth and via him back to Plato; and the Homeric hymnist's rhetorical truth. There are yet more voices to be heard in this proem.

As I said, lines 6-7 allude to the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus and that hymnist's attitude to poetic truth as a rhetorical construct, unaccountable to the standard of rational truth. In the Callimachean hymn, the Homeric hymnist's dismissal of other accounts with the confident and authoritative "They lied" is changed into a question to Zeus about who lied. Zeus is thus addressed, like the Muses were traditionally, as the source of factual information. This is not the stance of the Homeric hymnist but rather it is very like that of the Homeric hymnist when he appeals to the Muses for factual information as e.g. at the beginning of the catalogue of Ships in Iliad Book 2. These lines thus allude to what are the clearest representatives of two different, apparently opposed, approaches to truth in ancient poetry.
The Callimachean hymnist's question is answered by a quote from Epimenides, line 8 Κρήτες ἄει ψεύσται, which is in fact taken from the introduction to Epimenides' *Theogony*. The full line reads:

Κρήτες ἄει ψεύσται, κακά θηρία, γάστερες ἄγραι.
Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies

This line is clearly modeled on the first line of the Muses' address to Hesiod at the beginning of his *Theogony* (26-8) which is followed by two of the most famous and themselves ambiguous lines on the nature of poetic truth and falsehood:

ποίμενες ἄγαυλοι, κακ' ἑλέγχεια, γάστερες οίνων
Ἰσμέν ψεύδεσα πολλὰ λέγειν ἑτύμωσιν οὐσία.
Ἰσμέν δ' εὖτ' ἐθέλωμεν. ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι.

It not only alludes to the *Theogony* passage but its use here can be seen as a reformulation or interpretation of it. These various approaches have occupied the attention of scholars, ancient and modern, interested in the problem of truth and falsehood in poetry. Homer and Hesiod were the central texts of the traditional education and hence of philosophy's attack on poetry. Thus, these few lines evoke the issues, texts and stances which were the kernel of the quarrel between philosophy and poetry.

Other variant voices and other possible approaches to the nature of mythopoetic truth are evoked in this proem. The Homeric Hymn 1, to Dionysus was itself a subject for scholarly dispute as to whether it was complete or missing an introductory section, beginning as it does, uniquely in the
Homeric collection, with a priamel, as does this Callimachean hymn. Thus, at the very moment that he demands the tradition's univocality, he alludes to a poem which is a generic variant. Not only does the Hymn to Zeus preserve a deviant voice in the tradition, but one that also validates wrong readings. The Cretan tomb of Zeus to which he refers (8-9) preserves the misreading by the Cretans of their own heritage. It was well-known in Callimachus' time that the particular monument referred to contained an inscription which had been broken off at the beginning, so that instead of reading "this is the tomb of Minos, son of Zeus," it read "This is the tomb of Zeus." Having lost its first part, it thus began with a misleading genitive form of Zeus, as does this hymn, and so was interpreted to be the tomb of Zeus. Thus, Cretan myth could be seen to grow out of a misreading of their own heritage. Such a view was the basis of the Euhemerists' rationalistic explanation of the gods and mythic truth. The scholiasts on these lines refer to the possibility that the Cretans deliberately built a tomb for Zeus to protect him from Cronos by pretending that he was already dead and Cronos need look for him no longer. Either, then, the Cretans later believed it really was the tomb of Zeus and again misinterpreted their own mythic heritage, or myth also contains deliberate lies.
The works alluded to in Callimachus' proem (Antagoras' Hymn to Eros; Homeric Hymn 1 to Dionysus; Homeric Hymn 4 to Hermes; Epimenides' Theogony; Hesiod's Theogony) all concern i) deceptions involving divinity: Eros the paradigmatic deceiver and beguiler; Semele's concealment of Dionysus at birth; Hermes the thief of Apollo's cattle and liar; the Muses' potentially deceptive inspiration; ii) the issue of poetic truth and falsehood: the varying accounts of Eros' genealogy; the lies of previous poets concerning Dionysus' birthplace; Hermes' lyre's capacity for falsehood; the Muses' potential for speaking falsehoods. The capacity for deception on both the poetic level and the divine level with which poetry is associated manifests itself in this passage in the use of contradictions and paradoxes, and is given a positive value in the way that it rescues Zeus and the poetic tradition from the would-be fatal imposition of univocality.

The Theogony passage in particular was variously interpreted and reformulated throughout the literary and scholarly tradition. The quote from Epimenides which alludes in turn to this Hesiodic passage is the hinge of the proem and the first half of the hymn. One way to read the hymnic proem is as a complex network of re-interpretations, reformulations, and adaptations of those Hesiodic lines.

One interpretation of the Muses' speech is that the contrast between "lies like the truth" and "the truth" refers
to the false and lying nature of other poetry, often specified as that of Homer, as opposed to the truth of Hesiod's.® They are taken as a guarantee that what the Muses tell Hesiod and what he tells us is the truth. This is very close to the Callimachean hymnist's interpretation of the Epimenides' quote which I described earlier.®

Another interpretation claims that the Muses' distinction refers to the difference between accounts of events about which factual knowledge is possible, true accounts, and those of events about which we can never have certain knowledge, e.g. the birth of the gods, accounts which can therefore only represent opinions constructed to meet the standards of probability and propriety.® This is similar to the Callimachean hymnist's approach in attempting to render his interpretation of the Epimenides quote more plausible by means of syllogistic reasoning, which is based on a prior assumption, in accordance with the demands of propriety, that Zeus is immortal. Both of these approaches / interpretations are shown to be reductive in that they would result in the rejection/erasing of the Cretan tradition.

® See E. Belfiore, "'Lies unlike the Truth': Plato on Hesiod, Theogony 27," TAPhA 115 (1985), 47-57 for a survey of possible interpretations of these lines.

® This may have been Epimenides' interpretation, or application, for it has been suggested that the words were spoken to the poet by the goddess Truth. See T. E. Knight, E Kathare Libas: A Study of the Programmatic Unity of the Callimachean "Hymns" (Diss. Berkeley 1988), Appendix D.

® This is Plato's interpretation according to Belfiore, (n. 9).
Earlier I explained how the credibility of these approaches are undermined in the proem. It is important to remember here that despite being undermined they are not rejected out of hand and their voices completely erased, for that would have an equally reductive result in rejecting the Arcadian version.

A third interpretation considers the Muses' "lies like the truth" to be a reference to the beautiful fictions of poetry, a celebration of its power to deceive, an acknowledgment that all poetry is essentially fictional and its success depends on how well it maintains its illusion or how credible its pretenses are.

The Callimachean hymn also assigns a positive role to lies and associates them with the deceptive power of poetry. This can be seen e.g. in the narrative of Zeus' birth where the care of the mythological characters for the new-born Zeus is defined by the fact that they conceal him. The purpose of this concealment and the fact that it is a form of deception emerges at lines 52-4, where it is said of the Couretes that they dance round Zeus, striking their armor in order to deceive Cronos, to prevent him from hearing Zeus' cries. The chain of allusion also suggests a parallel between the Cretans and poets / shepherds, and thus Callimachus, in terms of their deceptive nature. The Cretans and Callimachus have Zeus as the common object of their deceptions, and they both aim to conceal him, just as in the various mythical accounts
of Zeus' birth the one common factor is that it occasioned concealment and deception in order for Zeus to escape being swallowed by his father.

Thus the question at line 7, "Who lied / deceived?" could be read not as a question about competing truth claims but rather about who had the ability to successfully conceal Zeus at his birth by deceiving Cronos. This would thus turn the question back into one of competing value-claims, and the answer given in the Epimenides quote—that the Cretans are always liars—would strongly assert the validity of the Cretan claim and their version of Zeus' birth. The extension of the verb ψεύδομαι to refer to actions as well as words was also used by Aratus\(^\text{11}\) to describe the Couretes' concealment of Zeus at birth, and is implied here when the hymnist uses the Cretan construction of a tomb for Zeus as evidence of their lies. Further, the verb used to describe the construction of the tomb, ἔτεκτήμαντο (9), often has connotations of deliberate deception and thus could suggest that it was a deliberate ruse on the part of the Cretans to conceal Zeus' presence in Crete.\(^\text{12}\) However, this relegation of poetry entirely to the world of falsehood is also reductive, for

\(^{11}\) See Phaenomena 35, ἓποτεύδοντο. "when the Diktaian Couretes were deceiving Cronos."

\(^{12}\) This implication is picked up by one of the scholiasts on this passage, who suggests that the Corybantes deliberately pretended to build a tomb for Zeus in order to hide and protect him.
again it results in rejecting or erasing the claims of part of the mythopoetic heritage, the Arcadian account.

Finally, the Muses' words to Hesiod are sometimes interpreted as representing the view that in poetry truth and falsehood are indistinguishable, not because of its essentially fictional nature, but because of its unaccountability to rational standards of truth, its freedom which tends to express itself in double, ambiguous language, or, in logical terms, contradictions and paradoxes. This is more than the capacity to tell plausible lies; it is the ability to tell lies which always lie.

Negation, refutation, and contradiction in poetry does not necessitate the erasure of the rejected alternative, but conversely ensures that it is kept in mind as the background against which the accepted alternative is constructed. Metrical form may assist in this process; as Griffith notes, "The 'adding-on' style of dactylic hexameter composition allows an author to proceed one verse at a time, ... to exploit alternative patterns of expectation, to add a new version without obliterating the previous which we had temporarily accepted." 13 He gives as an example the beginning of the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus, one of the models for the proem of Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus. One example from the

13 "Contest and Contradiction in Early Greek Poetry," in M. Griffith and D. Mastronade (Eds.), The Cabinet of the Muses: Essays on Classical and Comparative Literature in Honor of Thomas G. Rosenmeyer (Atlanta 1990), 197.
proem of how this works is at line 4, where we see the exploitation of syntax and word order to create alternative readings: ἡ τῷ καὶ μὲν, Δικταῖος ἆδισμεν ἔτι Λυκαιὸν. "How are we to sing of him as Diktaion or Lykaion?" Maclennan¹⁴ points out that the form ἀδίσμεν is ambiguous, that it could be a short vowel aorist subjunctive forming a deliberative question with τῷ, or a rare future active form; and that the ambiguity of the form is brought out by its placement in the line between the two alternatives so that we initially read the sentence as "How can I sing of him as Diktaion?" Thus not only is the version to be rejected held before us, but, helped by the pause before the bucolic caesura, we momentarily accept this reading. Further, by the very mention of the title the hymnist is actually in the act of singing of Zeus as Diktaion. The subsequent addition of the alternative "or as Lykaion?" transforms the syntax and creates a contradiction, but that does not erase the previous reading, just as the subsequent rejection of the Cretan version does not erase it.

In the Callimachean hymn, the speaker of the response that Cretans are always liars is left unidentified (and unidentifiable); however, as I mentioned earlier, the words are in any case a direct quote from Epimenides and thus evoke the logical puzzle of the Liar paradox. In fact, Epimenides' words may have formed the basis of Euboulides' formulation of

the Liar Paradox, which became notorious in Callimachus' time and in Alexandria itself through its use by the dialectician Diodorus Cronus. This way of interpreting the Epimenides' quote as a generative paradox in the hymn, unlike other interpretations, is not reductive, for it denies the possibility, and desirability, of deciding between the two mythic accounts and preserves the claims of both.

Thus, at the beginning of all three theogonic poems (Hesiod, Epimenides, Callimachus), an authoritative voice speaks to the hymnist in an ambiguous way concerning truth and falsehood. In Epimenides (possibly) and Hesiod it is the Muses who speak; in Callimachus the speaker is unidentified, yet the question it answers is one apparently requesting facts and it is as a source of facts that the Muses were appealed to in Hesiod and archaic poetry generally. Further, the replies of Hesiod's Muses, like the one in Callimachus, are ambiguous, even paradoxical, incapable of being defined as true or false. However, the hymnist significantly did not put his question to the Muses but to Zeus, thus opening up the possibility that Zeus, in the hymnist's eyes at least, has usurped the role of the Muses. It is clear then that what is really at stake in the issue of the speaker's identity is not a determination of the truth-value of his answer but a question of who assumes the authority of the

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15 See Knight, (n. 14), 42-5, and D. Sedley, "Diodorus Cronus and Hellenistic Philosophy," ECPS 203 (1977), 74-120.
Muses to speak for the poetic tradition. In answering ambiguously, the unidentified speaker thus indicates that the poetic tradition is itself ambiguous. Further, since the reply creates a chain of allusion stretching back to Hesiod, there is a sense in which the poetic tradition is itself the speaker.

The repetition of the "aei" sound in the proem, \( \alpha\varepsilon\iota\delta\varepsilon\nu \) (1)...\( \alpha\varepsilon\iota\delta\varepsilon\nu \) (2)...\( \alpha\varepsilon\iota\delta\varepsilon\mu\nu \) (4)...\( \alpha\varepsilon\iota \) (8)...\( \alpha\iota\iota \) (9), further links the Cretans and Callimachus with Zeus; it is the fact that the Cretans always lie which continually hides and protects Zeus so that he may continue to exist always, and the immortalizing power of poetry is suggested here to be associated with its capacity for continual deception. In this programmatic passage, that capacity is intimately connected with the power of contradiction and paradox, of Eris. At line 5 the hymnist refers to Zeus' \( \gamma\nu\omicron\nu\varsigma\,\alpha\mu\phi\omicron\omicron\iota\sigma\omicron\omicron\upsilon\omicron\nu\nu\); as \( \epsilon\omicron\omicron\iota\varsigma \) wraps itself around (\( \alpha\mu\varphi\sigma\- \)) Zeus' birth, so it conceals and protects him. Likewise, the poet exploits the potential of contradiction and paradox to obscure the exact location of Zeus' birth. Just as the sphinx dies when her riddle is solved, so Zeus would be swallowed up by his father if his birthplace could be fixed, and so poetry (or the poetic tradition) dies if its paradoxes are reduced to logical propositions and fixed meanings.
The multiple allusions of this proem to previous texts and approaches to the issue of poetic truth point to the multivocal nature of the mythopoetic tradition and exposes the power of poetic language to point in many directions at once, to reach out beyond its syntactical, grammatical, and logical functions in a complex web of signification and allusion. They reveal the inadequacy of the philosophic voice to represent that tradition since that voice attempts to erase all others. By contrast, in this poetic proem the many voices of the tradition are not only preserved but also speak to each other and interact, generating multiple perspectives and interpretations. However, they are not isolated voices; they speak to and against each other; each is heard against the background of the others. Thus, though we may distrust the hymnist, Callimachus does not erase his voice. The rationalistic voice did not exist alone; it arose in response to the mythopoetic, it defined itself against that voice, and its very existence as a discrete voice depends on the existence of its opposite. In the way that Callimachus lets multiple voices speak in the proem, he shows their interdependence. Philosophy is attacked only in as much as it attempts to erase other voices; the peculiar positive quality of poetry is that not only does it not attempt to erase voices, it alone is capable of embracing both / all.
The hymn suggests that the source of poetry's unique power to maintain multivocality lies in its capacity for continual deception, which is characterized particularly as the ability to tell lies which always lie, which are logically irresolvable contradictions or paradoxes. As Caraher notes, contradiction "indicates the conflicted and conflictual nature of philosophical thinking, aesthetic experience and literary language. Contradiction does not cancel, undermine or paralyze cognition and discourse but helps to constitute these activities in intriguing and sometimes disturbing perplexity," and they "speak the possibility, even the truth, of things in ways that our models of severe representation cannot completely repress. ... They generate rather than vacate possibility." Further, the Greek poetic tradition was particularly amenable to, even encouraging of, such multivocality because of its competitive nature. Once the philosophic voice appropriated poetry's role as cultural authority, the only locus for competition that remained was the aesthetic.

Finally, since Callimachus shows us not only different attitudes to myth but also how interpretations have varied in time, by his use of mediated allusions he also shows us how myth is essential to a society's interpretation of itself.

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because of its essential multivocality. He not only invests his text with evocations of other texts but with evocations of other interpretations of those texts (e.g. Epimenides-Hesiod; Antagoras-Plato). This speaks not only of an attempt to preserve and foster multivocality but also of a concern with understanding his poetic, cultural, and political heritage, how it has developed and changed, how various parts of it interacted, partly as a means to understanding who his contemporaries were, and partly as an investigation of who is to speak for it, with what claims to authority, with what stakes. A large part of Callimachus' project in dismantling the authority of the philosophic voice is to make it possible for poets to compete once more in a situation where the stakes extend to the cultural, social, religious and political. The proem's many voices in dialogue sets philosophic voices against poetic ones, and poetic voices against other poetic ones. Thus, it not only makes a case for challenging philosophy and reinstating culturally significant poetic competition, but it also itself enacts such a competition.
CHAPTER 4
"WHAT BETTER TO SING OF THAN THE GOD HIMSELF?"

I turn now to consider the hymnist's application of his principles to the narrative and descriptive sections of the Hymn to Zeus. I will show how the same rationalistic model dominates these sections as well: it shapes the materials out of which they are constructed and the ways in which these materials are and can be connected; it determines what are, and what are not, the valid issues and questions that are woven into the narrative's texture; and it places on the hymnist, at every turn, the burden of not just narrating, but of proving as well the truth of what is narrated. I will also argue that this appropriation of (or by) rationalism and of rationalist discourses should be viewed, not as a manifestation of the learned playfulness of Callimachus the poet or of his inevitable and unconscious infection by the rationalism of his age, but as a deliberate feature of the construction of this particular hymnist's approach (which he shares in many ways with that of the other hymnists). As in the proem, the hymnist's project, along with its theoretical underpinnings, are subverted by the very techniques he
invokes, such that the hymn’s encomiastic mission seems to be gravely jeopardized. Again as in the proem, the process by which the hymnist’s project is exposed as misplaced, misdirected, misconceived, and inadequate is also one which generates an alternative, more satisfying approach, based on the deceptiveness and multivocalism of poetry. This generative approach will not only bring the hymn back from the brink of generic failure, but also Zeus and the poet back from oblivion and irrelevance. This redemptive reading will be the focus of the next chapter; here, I wish to examine the hymnist’s articulation of the rationalist project, so that by considering where and how it breaks down, we can see why it fails and begin to examine the consequences of such a failure.

Once the hymnist has determined, to his own satisfaction at least, who is telling the truth about Zeus’ birth, he plunges abruptly into narrating the "true" version with the plain statement ἐν δὲ σε Παρρασίᾳ Ῥεϊν τέκεν. "It was in Parrasia that Rhea bore you" (10). By common consent, the narrative that follows is decidedly odd in its general emphasis and in its specific details. This is the moment we have been waiting for since the hymnist first announced the theme: Zeus’ birth, his first epiphany. However, as soon as he has mentioned it, the hymnist immediately turns his eye away from Zeus himself (Θεόν αὐτόν 2) and back to describing the
geographical location: its consequent name Peîns/ ωγύγιον... λεχών "primeval childbed of Rhea" (14), its restricted access έυθεν ο χώρος/ ίερός, ουδέ τι μιν κεχρημένον Ειλειθυία/ έρπετον ουδε γυνη ἐπιμύσῃται, "since then the place is holy, and no creeping things that has need of Eileithyia, nor any woman approaches it" (11-13), and its lack of any river for Rhea to wash in (18-27). Similar geographical and aitiological interests inform the rest of the birth narrative, overshadowing Zeus himself. Fully ten lines (approximately a quarter of the birth narrative) are devoted to listing and describing the numerous underground (at that time, the hymnist claims) rivers of Arcadia (18-27). The brief narration of Zeus' washing, swaddling and entrustment to the nymph Neda for hiding (32-34) is nestled between a much longer description of Rhea's creation of a river (28-32) and a seven-line account of the naming of the river after the nymph Neda, together with a description of its geographical course (35-41). Then, in an apparent volte-face from his position in the proem, the hymnist incorporates the Cretan tradition by making it the place where Zeus was reared (42-54). Here, the narrative is almost entirely occupied by the domestic tasks of a motley crew of mythological characters.

1 Note that the first relative clause in a hymn usually refers to the divinity hymned, but here refers to the location, "where indeed...."

2 Mirroring the way in which most references to Zeus in this narrative make him an pronominal object nestled between subject and verb which are the main concern.
The hymnist's answer to the question, "What else would be better to sing of than the god himself?" seems to be "practically anything."

Explanations for the peculiarities of this narrative range from the much-cited Hellenistic preference for obscure or little-used details of myth as a way of avoiding the "much-trodden path" of previous poets, to a desire on Callimachus' part to highlight aspects which Egyptian creation narratives and Greek theogonies had in common as a means of supporting Ptolemaic religious and cultural imperialism in Egypt. What becomes lost in these explanations is precisely what the narrative itself obscures: that is, the presence of Zeus, Ἄρις θεός. The former approach at most takes this as evidence that Callimachus' interests lay elsewhere and that his use of the hymnic genre is simply intended to highlight his sophisticated distance from the naive concerns of the archaic hymnists. With regard to the latter approach, regardless of whether the hymn is ultimately seen as supporting or subverting Ptolemaic propaganda, it must succeed as a hymn first. The fundamental problem for any hymnist is how to praise the god, and it is not at all immediately apparent how this particular hymnist has done so up to this point in the hymn.

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1 See F. Wasserman, "Agyptisches bei Kallimachos" PW 46 (1925) 1277, and S. Stevens (forthcoming)
We saw in the proem that this hymnist approaches praise in terms of truth and so we should first consider whether the hymn succeeds on his own terms. I will show that in this narrative section his concern is to amass a wealth of details as corroborative evidence for, and hence an extension of, his earlier efforts to prove the truth of the Arcadian account. As in the proem, if this narrative represents what the hymnist considers to be necessary, sufficient, and appropriate praise of Zeus, then his "praise" consists solely of rationalistically establishing the truth about Zeus' birth title. Since the hymnist lacks empirical evidence, his method is to locate Zeus' birth at the intersection of several strands of the mythopoetic, mytho-historical, philosophical, and scientific traditions. Since this evidence is circumstantial and none of it has any prima facie connection with Zeus, he invokes a variety of rationalist techniques designed to establish these connections' 1) validity, in the sense that they conform to and are consistent with philosophical, scientific and mytho-historical truth; and 2) verisimilitude, in the sense that they claim to be a) representationally accurate and b) articulated in a realistically consistent account that follows a plausible sequence, developing along the way.

As M. Depew says: "the birth account functions ... as an extended proof or gloss on the poet's choice of the epithet Άυκατος." Aitia in Callimachus' Hymns (Diss. UCLA 1989), 29.
possible causes for the origin of the false Cretan account. Thus, the hymnist brings his narrative in line with several of the prevailing rationalistic approaches outlined in Chapter One.

**Names and Things—Aitiologies, Etymologies, Mythography**

The names of mythological characters and geographical locations played a critical role in the rationalist appropriation of the mythopoetic tradition. Most commonly, they were etymologized and/or woven together into genealogical networks to reveal philosophical and scientific as well as historical truth. Chronological, geographical, and genealogical anomalies or inconsistencies could be explained away by claiming that two or more characters/places shared the same name, usually as a result either of a genealogical link (e.g. a Heracles the grandson of the more famous Heracles), or an ethnographic/ethnological one (e.g. Gortyns in Crete was colonized by the inhabitants of Gortyns in Arcadia). Eponymous beings could be created to facilitate such processes (e.g. the Arcadians claimed that Cydonia in Crete was named after an Arcadian prince, Cydon, who colonized the area, yet there is no other trace of such a prince). The same methods were applied to divine and human beings, but in the case of major divinities a syncretic approach was more common both within the Greek tradition (e.g. Rhea = Gaia), and between it and foreign traditions.
(e.g. Hermes = Egyptian Thoth). The common factor in this rationalist process of synthesis and syncretism is the shared belief that myth contained a unified and coherent truth which, in many cases, could be reconstructed via the names which formed its skeletal structure.

The hymnist's case in the Hymn to Zeus is built out of the aitiologies and etymologies of a series of names, which make a claim to "'prove' the truth of this poet's assertions on the origin of Zeus by an appeal to names and places still in existence."⁵ There are four explicit aitiologies. Three of these—the name of, and prohibited access to, Zeus' birthplace (11-14), the naming of the Omphalion Plain (43-44), and the origin and name of the Panacran bees (49-50)—are used as corroborative "proof" of the hymnist's account, but will be discussed in my next section since they also have a critical function in the creation of verisimilitude. The fourth explains the origin of the river Neda, both of the river that rises in Mt. Lykaion,⁶ and of its naming after a nymph, Neda, present at Zeus' birth. After giving birth, Rhea desires to bathe the new-born Zeus' (15-17), and this standard hymnic topos motivates a vain search for a river (18-27), leading to

⁵ N. Hopkinson "Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus," CQ 34 (1984), 141.

⁶ Pausanias, 8.41.3 and 8.38.2, and Strabo 348.

⁷ It has also been suggested (K. Kuiper Studia Callimachea I (Lugduni Batavorum 1896)) that the λύματα (17) which Rhea wishes to wash off in a river may be another etymological-aitiological reference, that is, to
the necessity to create the one which becomes the Neda (28-32). Characteristically, this hymnist is not content to merely assert a connection between the two previously separate "birth" stories (of Zeus and of Arcadian rivers), for his account involves a number of features which work to "confirm" this connection. This effort turns out to be a complex affair and dominates almost all the Arcadian section of the birth narrative (15-41). In fact, it forms the critical structural backbone of the narrative on which the success of all other forms of proof and persuasion hinge.®

The rationalistic tool of etymology is used both to demonstrate the truth of the hymnist's account and to assert an essential or necessary connection between the two events. The "truth" of the area's lack of water at this time is indicated/shown in the name of its people, 'Αμνωνες (14) which may be derived from α-μνειν, "not-drinking", and its

the Arcadian river Λύμις which falls into the River Neda (Pausanias 8.41.1).

® As Depew comments (n. 4), 30 "it is the conjoining of traditions whose connections may otherwise have remained undisclosed that interests the poet. The expectations that the poem might raise in its overt appeals to the hymnic genre... will be subsumed in the end to this interest."

® Hopkinson (n. 5), 141 refers to them as "reassuring points of fixity in the text, pinning down precise meaning" and as providing "a satisfying and demonstrable truth."

formerly unattested and drawn attention to as in emphatic position at end of line and because of the unusual use of the verb ...
land, 'Αζηνίς (20) which may be etymologically related to ἀζαίνειν, "to dry, parch up." Thus the two etymologies, of names of the land and its people, reinforce each other. The essential connection between the arrival of Zeus and that of the river(s) in Arcadia is made with the derivation of 'Αζηνίς (20), from α-Ζην, "no Zeus." The synthesis of the two derivations points both to the cause of the previous dryness (no Zeus, therefore no water), and the consequently necessary solution (Zeus, therefore water), which the hymnist is now narrating. While it is true that this etymological link is consistent with Zeus' well-known role as a god of rain, it is important to note that the causal connection between the presence of Zeus and that of water can be inferred purely from the synthesis of the two derivations; it is thus a more rational use of etymology, akin to that of the Stoics.


The two names are in fact linked in this respect by the scholiast on Dion. Per. 415: Ἀπία-τινές δὲ φασίν ἔτει μὴ εἶχε πίθακας μηθ' ὕδωρ τὴν ἀρχήν, δέν καὶ Ἀζηνίς ἐκάλετο, ὡς Καλλίμαχος "μῆλλεν δὲ μάλ' εὐνοῦχος καλέσθαι."

See A.B. Cook Zeus (Cambridge 1914-40), 1.76, and Pausanias 8.8.3-4, on the spring Bagno (one of the nymphs, according to Pausanias, who attended Rhea at Zeus' birth and who had this spring therefore named after her) on Mt. Lykaion, which was considered capable of producing rain if there was a drought. Note also the hints at the common connection made between water and life in διέρος (24), the derivation of Zeus from ζῆν, to live, and the possible allusions to the Nile whose waters were seen as life-giving.
These devices work to confirm the "fact" of the connection between the two events. This hymnist, however, characteristically goes to the trouble of explaining the more precise mechanics of the connection. The mere appearance of Zeus does not here cause a spontaneous and simultaneous appearance of water. This may be in keeping with the "realism" or "rationalism" of this passage, in that Zeus is depicted as being as helpless as a human baby; he has not yet become οὐράνιος "heavenly" (55), and so presumably has not yet achieved his role as rain-god. Thus, his mother plays the role for him in the meantime by creating the river:

\[ \text{ἐντανύσασα δὲ ἡ μέγαν ύψωθι πῆχουν} \\
\text{πληξεν ὅρος σκῆπτρῳ, τὸ δὲ δίχα ποιοῦ διέστη} \\
\text{ἐκ δὲ χεῖρον μέγα χεῦμα. (30-2)} \]

Raising her great forearm up high, the goddess Struck the mountain with her staff. And it split far apart in two, and a great flowing stream poured forth.

The possibility of Rhea performing such a role and the particular manner in which she does so are accounted for by further etymologies, especially one usually credited to the Stoic Chrysippus. Prior to Chrysippus, there were two main explanations of Rhea's name.\(^{15}\) One derived it from ῥεῖν, "to flow".\(^{16}\) There are a number of possible hints at this derivation in the early part of the narrative which work in part to authorize or make plausible her subsequent role in

\(^{15}\) See Hopkinson's citations and bibliography in "Rhea in Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus," JHS (1984), 176-77.

\(^{16}\) Plato, \textit{Cratylus}, 402b-c.
the production of water. The second derived it from ἐρα, "ground" by metathesis, by which means she was connected to, and it seems often confused with, the goddess Gaia (Rhea=ἐρα =γαῖα=Gaia). As Hopkinson comments, Rhea's creation of water by striking the ground thus apparently "reconciles the two alternatives of ρέων and ἐρα." The reconciliation which Hopkinson assigns to the Callimachean hymnist in fact seems to have been that of Chrysippus himself: Χρύσιππος δὲ λέγει τὴν γῆν 'Ρέων κεκληθοσαί, ἐπειδὴ ἀπ' αὐτῆς ρέω τὰ ὕδατα, "Chrysippus says that the earth is called Rhea because it is from it/her that waters flow." The authority of philosophical etymologizing thus also contributes to the plausibility of this striking scene. This method of synthesizing two apparently divergent etymologies by constructing a causal connection between them is the same as that used by the hymnist with the etymologies of 'Αζηνίς (20) above. Further, since the Stoics' interest in etymologies lay in their claim that language, properly understood, had a necessary representational truth, the

17 Cf. Hopkinson (n. 5), 141-2: "an undercurrent of etymologizing on the name of Rhea is discoverable in this passage: ρόου ὕδατος (16), ἐρρεεν (18) and 'Ρέη (21) point the paradox that a goddess named from flowing water was unable to find even a spring." and "Rhea in Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus" JHS (1984) 176-77. Note that a μέγας κόλπος is the Adriatic in Aesch. Εύβ 837, and note the possible etymological meaning of Parrasia as place of "all flowing."

18 This was probably the more common version, see Hopkinson (n. 16).

19 Hopkinson (n. 16), 176.

20 SVF ii 318
hymnist may here, and with 'Αζήνις (20), be attempting to move from the merely "plausible" to asserting the "truthful".

The river thus created on Mt. Lykaion was known to the Greeks by the name of Neda. To strengthen the aetiology's value as "proof," the hymnist must also account for the name, which he does by inventing a story and a nymph, Neda,21 who is entrusted with taking Zeus into hiding, Νέδη δέ σε δώκε κομίζειν/ κευθμόν ἐσω Κρηταίου (33-4). As a reward, Rhea names the stream she has produced Neda, after the nymph, οὔς ἄλλην ἀπέτεισε θεῇ χάριν, ἀλλὰ τὸ χεύμα/ κεῖνο Νέδην όνόματι (37-8). The imperative of narrative, mythological, and historical consistency lies behind the way in which this account is elaborated. Greek mythology abounds with beings whose names are attached to geographical features. Thus, mythographers and historical writers alike increasingly came to posit the existence of such beings (mythological and historical) when faced with places whose names had no other aetiological explanation attached to them, as the hymnist does here. More importantly, the hymnist follows standard mythographic (and historical) practice in authorizing such hypothesized beings by relating the naming to a particularly notable or worthy deed (here, the concealment of Zeus), and by giving an

21 G. R. MacClellan, Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus: Introduction and Commentary (Roma 1977) ad loc.: "Callimachus is the first to name the nymph after whom the river and town were named." That the eponymous being would be female is suggested by both the feminine form of the name and the fact that males do not attend births.
explanation of the being's identity and place in the complex
mythological world by means of a genealogical framework:

πρωτόγονη Νηλεόν αἱ μὲν τὸι μαίσσαντο.
πρωτίστη γενεὴ μετά γε Στύγα τε Φιλύρην τε (35-6)
eldest of the nymphs who then attended her at birth
in the earliest generation after Styx and Philyra.

It is usual in Greek mythology for nymphs to attend
divine births, but Neda's particular place in the divine
family as an Oceanid,22 appropriate to her connection with the
river, is asserted by association with the two named
Oceanids, Styx and Philyra.23 The hymnist is careful to
highlight that Neda is appropriately ancient, πρωτόγονη (35).
παλαιότατον (40); but he also assigns her a more specific
chronological position in the divine genealogy, πρωτίστη γενεῆ
μετά... (36), relative to the more well-known Styx and Philyra.
The mention of the Styx, a spring in Arcadia, further
reinforces the location of the birth scene. Philyra seems to
serve as a reinforcing mythological cross-reference, for the
mythic tradition specifies that it is immediately after Zeus'
birth that she mates with Cronos, producing the centaur
Chiron, the only existing story in which she plays a role.
Finally, this genealogical and geographical identification of
Neda forms another confirmatory cross-reference back to the
beginning of the aitiology, where the catalogue of rivers

22 A scholiast on this passage says Neda is a "νήφη ὅκεανίη."  
23 For Styx, see Theogony 361-2. The scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius
1.554 refers to Philyra as τῇ ὅκεανοῦ.
began with what can now be seen as her brother, the Arcadian river Ladon, son of Ocean and Tethys according to Hesiod, and ended with his daughter, the Arcadian river Metope.

Another similar but more elaborate system of genealogical and geographical cross-referencing serves to incorporate Neda, and with it and her the birth narrative, into an even larger mythological framework:

\[ \text{And it (Neda) is some abundance by the very city of the Caucones, which is called Lepreon joins together with Nereus, and its most ancient water do the grandsons of the bear-daughter of Lycaon drink.} \]

This complicated and convoluted formulation situates Neda geographically in relationship to peoples (Caucones, great-grandsons of Lycaon), and to a city (Lepreon), which are themselves located in a chronological framework as places named eponymously after a series of beings in the lineage of Lycaon. The genealogy invoked is one which connects all these beings with Zeus, for he is their ancestor through his relationship with Lycaon's daughter Callisto. Her metamorphosis into a bear, referred to here (41), provides the etymology of her son's name, Arcas, who in turn becomes

\[ \text{Hesiod, Theogony, 344.} \]

\[ \text{Scholiast on Pindar, Olympian, 6. 84.} \]

\[ \text{The reference to Lycaon at the close of the Arcadian section also provides a link back to the beginning of the section, for the location} \]
the eponymous ancestor of the Arcadians. According to one
genealogy, one of his sons was Caucon, eponymous ancestor of
the Caucones, who was the father of Lepreius, after whom the
city of Lepreion was named. This helps to demonstrate the
validity of his Arcadian story by making it fit into a wider
mythological and geographical context, processes again
characteristic of rationalism. The picture created here is
of the hymnist striving to organize an assortment of
information, derived from cultic and literary sources, into a
whole that is logically, geographically, and chronologically
coherent, that is consistent with and that has a place within
the rest of the mythological framework.

The complex aitiology of the river Neda has so far
served to substantiate the hymnist's designation of Zeus as
Lykaion, as well as to weld together all the circumstantial
"evidence" into a mythologically consistent and narratively
coherent whole. Neda is now involved in a final synthesizing
step. Consistent with his approach to the mythopoetic
tradition thus far, the hymnist now synthesizes parts of the
rejected Cretan account with the "true" Arcadian one by

Parrasia was considered to be so named after Lycaon's other child,
Parrhasus, who gave his name to Mt. Parrhasus, according to a scholiast.

Scholiast on Od. 3. 366.

M. Haslam, commenting on the Cretan genealogies, but relevant also
here, observes: "We sense that these poems are a gigantic cross-
referencing system, making connections not just with but within the
preexistent literature," 121, in "Callimachus' Hymns," in M. A. Barder,
historicizing Zeus' two epithets, making them part of a chronological progression: Zeus Lykaian refers to his birth in Arcadia; Zeus Diktaian refers to his rearing in Crete. It is the nymph Neda who provides the narrative link by carrying Zeus from Arcadia across the sea to Crete, a role for which her identity as an Oceanid makes her eminently suitable.²⁹

The Cretan and Arcadian traditions are further synthesized, and this synthesis, like that of the births of Zeus and Neda, is constructed largely around a series of ambiguous geographical names and mythological genealogies in ways which affirm and confirm this account while providing explanations for the possible cause of the falsities of the Cretan tradition. At the beginning and end of Neda's journey, the hymnist uses a place-name which could refer to both Arcadia and Crete. In line 34, Rhea hands Zeus to Neda to take and rear κευθυμένος ἔως Κρηταῖον. Κρηταῖον might seem to refer unambiguously to Crete; however, there was also a place near Lykaion in Arcadia called Kretea which also claimed to

R. F. Retguit, and G. C. Wakker (Eds.), Callimachus (Gröningen 1993), 111-126.

²⁹ A journey which may be inspired by the peculiarities of Arcadian rivers discussed above. Arcadia had a number of rivers which were said to disappear under ground and reappear further away. The most famous of such Arcadian rivers is the Alpheus, conspicuous by its absence from the hymnist's list, which was said to travel both underground and across an Ocean to reappear in Sicily. Pausanias 8.54.1 writes of Alpheus and others; cf. 8.23.1 and 8.22.3 of a river near Stymphalus. At 8.7.2f he discusses water from a plain that disappears in a chasm and rises at Dine in Argolid as a sea-stream of fresh water rising in the sea.
be the place where Zeus was reared. In 42-3, the hymnist refers to a place called Thenai. Since up till now the entire narrative has been in Arcadia, we would readily assume that Thenai refers to the Arcadian town by that name. However, the hymnist then informs us that this Thenai was near Knossos and hence refers to the Cretan town of the same name. Thus, twice the hymnist makes use of a name which could refer to Crete or Arcadia, and hence provides a possible explanation for the conflicting sources. Finally, Zeus' arrival in Crete is marked by the aetiology of the name of the Omphalion Plain (44-5, discussed below under anthropomorphism), and his reaching his final destination near Mount Ida is similarly memorialized in the aition of the bees known as Panacran (50-1, discussed below under science).

Zeus' hiding place in Crete turns out to be rather densely populated with mythological characters--none of whom appear in the Hesiodic account and some of whom appear here in connection with Zeus for the first time in literature. As Zeus will later be shown establishing a divine division of labor (72f), so here, at his birth, the tasks of child rearing are divided among these characters. The Meliae

Cf. Pausanias 8.38.2.

The same motive may explain his reference to the Cydonians (45), for the Arcadians also laid claim to an prince Cydon. See Paus. 8.53.3-4. Hopkinson (n. 5), 143: "Variation and repetition of the phrase 'Idaean mountains' from line 6 ('Ιδαίου ὄρους 6 - 'Ιδαίου ὄρους 51) implies that Neda's transportation represents an attempt to reconcile the two birth-stories."
receive and embrace him, Adrasteia puts him in a cradle, Amaltheia provides milk, the Panacran bees appear to provide honey, and the Couretes protect him from Cronos by drowning out his cries with their loud dance. Their presence and connection with Zeus' birth is established by a now familiar method of cross-referencing between mythological genealogies. They never appear connected in a group as here, but they can be linked by a synthesis of various traditions: Adrasteia is variously identified as the sister of Amaltheia and of the Couretes. The Meliae may be considered the sisters of the Couretes through an allusion to Hesiod. But the Meliae are introduced as Κυρβάντων ἔταραι (46), "companions of the Corybantes", which suggests that the Couretes here, as often in Greek literature, are being syncretized with the Corybantes. This syncretism is facilitated by another commonly made one between Rhea, to whom the Couretes are usually attached, and Cybele, whom the Corybantes often accompany. This latter syncretism may be implied by the presence of Adrasteia here in connection with Rhea's son, but

12 Hopkinson (n. 5), 143 claims, "This section of the hymn is concerned largely with etiology and definition of roles."

13 Scholiast ad loc.

14 Scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius 3.132f.

15 Fr.10[a] 17-19 τὰς τῶν δ’ οὐρεια Νύμφαι θεαί ἔζεγνοντο/ καὶ γένος οὐτιδανών Σατύρων καὶ ἄμηχανοεργῶν/ Κουρῆτες τε θεοὶ φιλοπαῖγμον ἀρχηγῆς. They may also be linked to Adrasteia as Nemesis, since in Hesiod's Theogony the Meliae are blood sisters of the Furies, vengeance-spirits, as Nemesis.
more commonly associated with the Phrygian Cybele. Two implied etymologies further reinforce the link between Zeus, Κουριζωντος, and Couretes, and between the Couretes (whose task here is to hide Zeus) and the Corybantes, for the unusual form of their name here may be derived from the verb κρύψειν, "to hide."  

Verisimilitude

The process of establishing narrative validity in the practice of the hymnist here, involves making new narratives consistent with the body of previously-existing narrative, making that body of narrative itself consistent, and expanding it to address previously unaccounted-for phenomena. Verisimilitude, again judging from this hymnist's practice, is also defined in part in terms of consistency; however, "consistency" here has more to do with the internal dynamics of the narrative itself, with its relationship to the representationally "reliable" discourses and rhetoric of science, and the ways in which divine actions are made to appear plausible, coherent, and realistic. If "validity" is preoccupied with problems that are essentially logical, "verisimilitude" is more rhetorical, and is concerned not so

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36 See Maclennan (n. 22) ad loc.

37 See H. Reinsch-Werner, Callimachus Hesiodicus (Berlin 1976), 45, and Hesychius κυρβαδωμεν, κρυψωμεν; Herodian παρα το κρυπειν Κυρβαντες. Κυρβαντες.
much with the internal housekeeping of the system of Greek myth, as with the imperative of making poetry convincing.

**Technical terms/Science:** The hymnist liberally peppers his narrative with scientific and other technical terms; this tendency works to draw to his account the authority and prestige of empirical science and technology. For example, the birth narrative contains a number of medical or gynaecological terms. Rhea produces Zeus from her κόλπον (15), meaning here "womb" rather than "lap, breast"; she searches for a river in which she may χυτλώσατο (17) the soilure of birth, meaning here "wash off" rather than "anoint"; σπείρωσε (33) used for Rhea's swaddling of Zeus; Ὠνάφαλος (43) in the medical sense of "umbilical cord" rather than "navel."

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18 In general, see G. Zanker's chapter "The Appeal to Science" in Realism in Alexandrian Poetry: A Literature and its Audience (Croom Helm 1987), 113-132, esp. 124-7. For similar examples in the other hymns see H. Opperman, "Herophilos bei Kallimachos," Hermes 60 (1925), 14-32; G.W. Most, "Callimachus and Herophilus," Hermes 109 (1981), 188-96; Hymn 6, 103; and in his other works e.g. medical terminology in Fr. 75, 12-14; Aristotelian zoology in the nautilus epigram 14.

19 See also Leto's birth position in the Hymn to Delos.


41 The meaning at the only previously attested occurrence of the verb Od. 6.80. See Tandy (n. 41) ad loc., who cites Galen 11.531.

42 Tandy (n.41) ad loc. says it "may well be a medical term, 'wrap (coil) in swaddling clothes' for its only attested occurrence is Hippocratic de Ossibus (15)"
Science is not only important as a source of diction; in two cases, both connected with an *aition*, science plays a critical role in the construction of the narrative. The first concerns the method of Rhea's production of water (28-32), the dominant/organizing *aition* of the birth/Arcadian section. The second concerns the sudden appearance of bees in Crete on Zeus' arrival (50-1), and will form a critical link with the final section of the poem. In both cases, an appeal to science provides the hymnist with rationalist explanations, and the authority they carry with them, for actions whose otherwise supernatural nature might overreach the limits of credibility.

Rhea's method of river creation—by striking the ground—is quite plausible in the context of Greek mythology, which records several parallel instances:* It seems to have been particularly popular with Hellenistic poets e.g. Apollonius Rhodius 1.1145-8, and 4.1446; Aratus 219-20; Theocritus 7.6-7.

* The latter example is possibly evoked by the allusion in line 20-1 (μέλλειν δὲ μάλ' ἐνυδρον καλεσθαι/αὐτίς.) to Hesiod fr. 128 which relates how Argos was turned from being ἄνυδρον to ἐνυδρον (Strabo 8.6.8 claims by the Danae, Eustathius on Iliad 4.171 says by Danaus himself).

* E.g. Paus. 8.10.3, on sea water periodically rises up in the sanctuary of Poseidon; Paus. 8.29.1, a spring which stops every other year and fire emerges.
particularly involving rivers which suddenly dry up only to suddenly explode forth, were well-known and much discussed in scientific and geographical works. In fact, it is known that Eratosthenes, head of the Alexandrian library in Callimachus' time, worked on these very problems. It is in terms of such scientific work that the hymnist attempts to ground his account, thereby situating the gods' actions within a rationalistic, scientific context. His description of Arcadia as waterless uses the technical term, ἀβροχος (abrochos), for the failure of the inundation of the Nile. More importantly, his account turns on the same two problems which scientific explanations of Arcadian hydrological phenomena sought to explain: 1) the role of underground chasms which hold water: here, the hymnist describes at length (18-27) the abundance of water lying below the ground, which is metaphorically transformed into an underground womb from which Gaia / Earth produces water; 2) the role of earthquakes in opening up (and blocking) those chasms: here, they are anthropomorphically depicted by Rhea's violent cleaving of the earth to release the water within it. Thus, the hymnist

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46 Strabo 8.84.

47 See Maclennan (n. 22) ad loc. and Tandy (n. 41) ad loc.

48 See Strabo 8.84, which includes Eratosthenes' theories; Pausanias 8.14.1; and generally Aristotle Meteorologika 1.13.

49 There may also be a suggestion of lightning here in Rhea's use of the sceptre.
is able to combine the vividness of anthropomorphized divinity in action with the authority of scientific allegory.

As with Rhea's creation of the Neda, the emergence of bees on Crete is narrated so as to incorporate myth within the discursive boundaries of science. In keeping with the rationalizing tendencies of this hymnist, Zeus is depicted as little different from any human baby and so is fed not on the usual divine items, nectar and ambrosia, but on the very human fare of honey and goat's milk. The availability of milk is explained by the presence of the goat Amaltheia (47-8), but honey also has to be accounted for. Thus, the hymnist relates the aition of the Panakran bees who suddenly appeared upon Zeus' arrival in Crete, γένος γὰρ ἐξαπωναία Πανακρίδος ἔργα μελίσσης (49). The generation of bees was a notorious scientific problem which Aristotle discusses at length.50 Represented in this passage are two theories: that bees spontaneously generated, and that worker bees (μέλισσαι), as opposed to drones, could only be generated when the Queen Bee was present in the nest.51 The Queen Bee was commonly known as the ἡγέμων, leader or βασιλέως, king.52 Zeus' presence is thus assimilated to that of the Queen / King Bee, fed on

50 Aristotle, Generation of Animals 759a8f, who begins his account with the comment that the issue "ἐχει πολλὴν ἀπορίαν."


52 e.g. Arist. Gen. Anim. 759a20-1 on generation ἐκ τῶν καλουμένων βασιλέων καὶ ἡγεμόνων.
the ἐργα (49) of the μαλίσσης (49), worker bee, who spontaneously generated to perform this function once Zeus, the Queen/King bee, was present in Crete. (This would seem to indicate an increase in stature or status for Zeus; if his mere presence in Arcadia was not enough to spontaneously produce the necessary water, he has at least reached the point where he can make bees appear.) The appeal to zoological studies is appropriate to the "realistic" portrayal of the baby Zeus' nourishment; moreover, it gives an aetiology for Cretan bees compatible with contemporary science, and a scientific etymology for Zeus' cult title (especially in Crete), Melissaios.

Geographical and Chronological Precision: I have previously discussed the use of geographical names in relation to the hymnist's attempt at demonstrating the validity of his account by means of aetiologies, etymologies, and genealogies, but geography is also relevant to the creation of verisimilitude in that, simply by the frequent mention of such names, whatever use they may be additionally put to, the hymnist gives the kind of particularizing details that the literary scholars praised for creating enargeia, pictorial vividness. The geographical references also mark

53 Note Aristotle's comment, Gen. Anim. 761a5, that there is something ὄνομα divine, in the tribe of bees.

54 It will also act as an important rationalistic link with the second half of the poem concerning Zeus' rise to power (see Chapter 5).
the stages of the narrative so we can follow the characters' movements.\(^55\) This procedure was specifically recommended by the literary scholars, especially in connection with the movements of divine beings whose ability to travel huge distances quickly might otherwise lose or confuse the reader.\(^56\) Of a similar function are the numerous specific chronological references. Earlier I discussed how they help formulate the critical genealogical framework of the narrative, but they also help point out stages in the narrative's development, and thus contribute to vividness and comprehensibility. For instance, chronologies are especially numerous in the list of Arcadian rivers (18-27) and serve to mark its alternations between past, present and future.\(^57\)

The hymnist also adds further geographic details in his extended descriptions as a means of making them plausible. The best example is the description of the birth site, which also involves an aitiology (10f). Restricted access to a sacred site is normal Greek practice and thus an entirely

\(^55\) Mountains: "\(\text{Ιδαίοι ἄγερησεν, τὰ τε κλέιονες Πάνακρα 50; Δικταίαι 50; lands: Παργασία (10): Αἰχαλί: κεντράν...Κρηταίων 34; cities/places: ὁ Λέπτεριον πετάται 39; Θεοὔς...ἐπὶ Κυκάσσοι...Θεσαῦρών ἐγγύθι Κυκάσσος 41-2: Ὀμφάλιον 44; peoples: Ἀπιδανθές 14: Καυκόκων 39 Κύκών 44; rivers: Λάδων. Ερύμιανθος 17: Ἡάνω 21: Μέλας 22: Καρυνίων 23: Κραμίου. Μεσσαίου 25."

\(^56\) See the scholiast quoted in chapter 1 praising the way Homer gives the places Hera passes on her journey for enargeia and plausibility—the most similar example here is Neda's journey from Arcadia to Crete.

\(^57\) The river Ladon ὄυπνο, not yet flowed, Arcadia was ἄτρι, still waterless, but μέλλει, it was going to be called well-watered ἀυτίς, anon. τυμόδε, at that time, ὅτε, when Rhea gave birth, Iason and Melas were dry, and
plausible detail in itself. Here, the prohibition only applies to the pregnant, suggesting that the hymnist has tailored his description in order to bolster this site's connection with a birth-place.® His source for this information is the Arcadians themselves, καλέουσιν 'Απίδανης 14,® whom he has already "proven" to be truth-tellers in the proem.® The fact that it is a mountain covered over by dense bushes, ὄρος θάμνωσι περοσκεπές (11), and hence isolated, makes it appropriate to the dignity of the goddess and to her need to conceal Zeus (not expressed until the end of the section (54) but well known), while allowing it to remain faithful, in this respect, to the "traditional" Hesiodic account, which links Zeus' birth with a wooded mountain.®

The area's lack of rivers, ἐτὶ Δ' ἄβροχος ἦν ἄπασα (19-20). See Pausanias 8.38.6 on the sanctuary on Mt. Lykaion, who says that no-one at all may enter the area.

® As Maclennan notes, (n.22) ad loc., the grammatical subject, 'Απίδανης, is emphasised by this use of the verb which usually points to an unusually named object, whereas here it is the subject's name which is highly obscure. Note that he makes reference to "sources" elsewhere in the Arcadian section but without identifying them precisely as here, καλέομαι 19, πεφάτσται 39.

®® And who might anyway be reliable sources given 1) they were widely reputed to be an ancient people and around at the "primeval" time of Zeus' birth, as is indicated explicitly later (25) when we hear of a man walking across dry rivers; 2) the common (and Stoic) opinion that the more ancient the source the more authoritative since such a source would be closer to the events themselves and less likely to have their stories overlaid with the false elaborations of later imaginations.

®® In Theogony 484, after Zeus was born he was hidden on Mt Aigeos. See Reinsch-Werner (n.38)
"All Arcadia was still waterless," tends to confirm the isolation of the spot (for as we hear later (41), communities are located near rivers), and helps to give credence to Rhea's choice of a site whose lack of water would otherwise make it implausible. The subsequent list of Arcadian rivers (18-27) which did not then, but would later, exist, proves that the hymnist has done his homework and counters the possibility of any objection based on the fact that Arcadia was famous for its many streams, or that there was already a river which flowed from Mt. Lykaion, namely the Neda.

**Anthropomorphism:** The depiction of the gods as anthropomorphic had been a focus of rationalist attacks on poetry since Xenophanes. By the third century BC, something of a compromise seems to have been reached about the problem. Its use was both excused as a poetic convention, and praised as a means to convey vividness, but it was still subject to rationalist guidelines of propriety and plausibility. There is, in fact, a noticeable tendency among Hellenistic poets and artists to depict divinity in increasingly human terms; this tendency is generally considered to be a result of the rationalizing age in which they lived.\(^{63}\)

\(^{62}\) Tandy (n. 41) on ἶ (22) refers to Denniston on the use of this to indicate subjective certainty and translates "I know for a fact that..." in connection with the lack of river water in Arcadia at that time.

\(^{63}\) See G. Zanker above (n. 39) who terms this "Realism," a notoriously difficult concept to apply, for which reason I have used the less controversial "verisimilitude."
The rationalistic tenor of this hymnist's depiction can be seen most clearly by comparison with the archaic manner of anthropomorphism. First, archaic poetry is full of references, predominantly formulaic in kind, to divine body parts such as arms, feet, ankles, hair, etc., but this hymnist goes one step further and is even more specific, for he also includes internal organs, for example Rhea's big womb (15), as well as unusual details like Zeus' umbilical cord (44). Second, whereas archaic poetry usually makes reference to them only in passing, this hymnist lingers on them; for example he devotes three lines to Rhea's womb, its size, and her need to wash her own and Zeus' skin of the soilure of birth, and he does so to the exclusion of any other form of description. Whenever a deity is mentioned it is always in the context of a bodily function or a physical attribute. Third, and most important, all the bodily functions and physical actions mentioned concerning Zeus are of the humble, everyday type: bathing, eating, drinking, sleeping, crying. While the infant Apollo drinks nectar and eats ambrosia, Zeus here drinks goat's milk and eats honey—very ordinary, human fare. While both the archaic Hermes and Apollo perform

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44 Tandy (n. 41) *ad loc.*: "note that Rhea's arm is appropriately μέγας as were her κόλποι (15)."

45 Except where it is the focus of the narrative, as e.g. Aphrodite's toilet in the Homeric Hymn.

46 *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 124-5.

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supernatural acts on the very day of their birth, Zeus here is entirely passive, accepting the care of others and responding with either sleep or cries, never doing anything beyond the capacity of a normal human baby.

As, in the proem, the hymnist demanded of the mythopoetic tradition a single, literal truth, so here he treats the anthropomorphic conception of the gods as a literal truth and depicts the baby Zeus in the same terms as an actual human baby. Further, just as in the proem the hymnist uses rigid logic to arrive at his literal truth, so here details like Zeus' umbilical cord falling off, his sleeping and crying, are the result of applying logical extremism, even at the expense of the god's dignity and the principle of to prepon, to the literal truth of the anthropomorphic conception.67

Problems with Rationalism

Underlying all the features discussed so far is the fundamental rationalistic (and fundamentally Stoic) principle that there is a one-to-one correspondence between language and objects in the world. The hymnist's evident endorsement of this principle can be seen in his belief that Diktaion and Lykaion cannot both refer to Zeus' birthplace, in his repeated use of etymological proof (which works to establish

67 Note the hints of personification of the rivers (18-27) e.g. Iaon lifted. 1.30 σωμάρηται is usually of people meeting and so is
for etymologized words an original, if subsequently corrupted, referent), in the need to make the narrative cohere with a wider mythological context, and in the belief that there is only one truth and that language is or can be made to be only capable of articulating that truth. Every one of these assumptions, however, is questioned in the course of the narrative. In the proem, we saw that the hymnist's credibility as well as the viability of his approach was undermined by his rigid application of reason and logic to the mythopoetic tradition; here, the ability of poetry to lie successfully, its facility for paradox, again confounds the hymnist's attempt to find and prove a single absolute truth in myth. The failure of the hymnist's attempt has far-reaching consequences which I discuss at the end of this chapter. For the moment, I will confine myself to explaining how and why he fails.

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appropriate here for Neda the nymph meeting Nereus the god; yet the discussion requires us to conceive of them as metonymical references.

"Inasmuch as the hymnist here is seeking to reduce the multiplicities of the mythopoetic tradition to a totalizing master-code, grounded in the link between name and object, Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Freud is applicable: "The proper name can be nothing more than an extreme case of the common noun, containing its already domesticated multiplicity within itself and linking it to a being or object posited as unique. ...Freud counted on the word to reestablish a unity no longer found in things. Are we not witnessing the first stirrings of a subsequent adventure, that of the Signifier, the devious despotic agency that substitutes itself for asignifying proper names and replaces multiplicities with the dismal unity of an object declared lost?" G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus (U.Minnesota Press 1991), 27-8.
Despite the hymnist's apparent insistence on geographical precision, his references turn out to be elusive, and we remain unable to pinpoint any particular location mentioned with absolute certainty. For example, Zeus' birth-place is specified as a mountain in Parrasia. Parrasia itself appears extremely rarely in literature, and its reference here is unclear, since it may be synecdochic for Arcadia, for a region in Arcadia, or for that matter not even Arcadia at all, but a preservation of a Homeric variant for Parnassos. This ambiguity is not in itself a problem; what makes it a problem is that the hymnist himself makes precision in language and reference the critical factor in establishing the truth in myth. As another example, in line 20 we are told that Rhea could not find a river because all Azania was still waterless. Like Parrasia, Azania is apparently being used to designate another particular region in Arcadia, but could be used as well as for the whole country. If the narrative is to be coherent, Parrasia must refer to a specific region and Azania be synecdochic for Arcadia, in which case the hymnist is being, according to his own criteria, inconsistent and imprecise, and the validity of his method and account becomes questionable. If the hymnist is to be consistent, both must be synecdochic for Arcadia, in which case their precise reference is lost and with it

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44 At its single occurrence in Homer the mss. contain the variant Parnasie, as here also.
their value in supporting the hymnist's case for Lykaion. The designation of the inhabitants as Apidanians provides no help, for the name is unattested elsewhere. Thus, three ambiguous geographical names are used to designate the Arcadian location: Parrasia, Apidanians, Azania.

The etymologies of these three names plays an important role in corroborating the hymnist's account. However, many other derivations of these words are possible (e.g. Azania as named after Azan, a grandson of Zeus via Arcas; Apidanians for the people from Ida (either Cretan or Trojan), or as named after Apis, a Peloponnesian king), and even the ones which may support his account can be used to question it: the etymology of Parrasia as "all flowing" and of Rhea from ἄρε, "to flow", which is important for the narrative development, equally (as Hopkinson comments) suggests the paradox of this situation and shows that names may in fact indicate situations which are the exact opposite of "reality": the etymology of Azania from α-Ζην, no Zeus, may suggest precisely that Zeus was not (and may never have been) in Arcadia.

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70 A similar problem arises later: at 45 the hymnist tells us that the Cydonians named the plain where Zeus umbilical cord fell off Omphalion; yet that plain is not in Cydonian territory. Either the hymnist is wrong or he must be using the term Cydonian in a loose synecdochic way for Crete generally.

71 Steph. Byz. s.v. 'Αζην.

72 Tandy (n. 41) ad loc.
Further, although the extended description of the mountain in Parrasia seems to add identifying information, there is no trace anywhere of a place with the name given here as 'Πείνης/ Ὀγύγιον..λεχώιον (13-14). More importantly, such a name only associates the location specifically with Rhea, not Zeus, and as such it could refer to the birth-place of any of the children of Rhea. The word λεχώιον(14) indicates that the place has something to do with childbirth, but its unusual form, probably a coinage, leaves its precise meaning in doubt; such a word could be used to designate Rhea’s own birth-place rather than Zeus'.

Examples abound of the hymnist’s failed attempts at referential precision. Kuiper\(^7\) has suggested that the mention of λύματα (17) which Rhea wishes to wash off may be an etymological/ aitiological reference to the Arcadian river Lumax, and Tandy\(^4\) comments “This seems to be borne out by the similar secondary implication in λούσσα at the end of the verse.” But he also note that λούσσα may be a reference to the Lousios which, according to Pausanias, was the river in which Zeus was bathed at birth.\(^5\) Thus, reference to two different rivers of bathing, one connected in tradition with Zeus, the other with Rhea, frame the verse, and neither of

\(^7\) Kuiper (n. 7).

\(^4\) Tandy (n. 41) \textit{ad loc}.

\(^5\) Pausanias 8.28.2.
them is the Neda. In the catalogue of rivers (18-27), a number of rivers are mentioned complete with a description. However, while Ladon, Erumanthos, Krathis and Metope are known and previously attested as rivers in Arcadia, yet, the rivers Iaon, Melas and Karnion have eluded all attempts at identification. Melas appears here for the first time as the name of an Arcadian river, previously attested for several rivers in other areas; Iaon and Karnion appear here for the first time in Greek literature.

The hymnist's (surprisingly) vague, obscure references undermine his attempt at precision and hence his attempts at proving his case. Further, as such they also undermine his attempt at mythological ordering; for example, the references to Thenai and the Cretan cave, which appear to provide a possible origin for the deviant Cretan version, could equally be used to explain why and how the Arcadians could have mistakenly come to believe that Zeus was born in their region.

Given the complex and contradictory raw materials the hymnist must reconcile to maintain the desired mythological order, it is no wonder that he runs into problems at every turn: another narrative argument used by the hymnist to fix the birth in Arcadia—the invocation of the complex lineage of Lycaon—is fraught with problems. The Arcadian setting would seem to fix his identity as the Arcadian king of that name. However, Lycaon was also associated in the tradition
with an act of great impiety against Zeus—offering him the cooked flesh of a human child. In some accounts this child is Arcas, who is a critical link in the hymnist's genealogical framework (probably hinted at in the word ἄρκτοι (41)), and this act is responsible for the great flood sent by Zeus, in which case the references to his descendants drinking abundant water (38-41), the long description of much water waiting underground to be released, and the reference to a time when Arcadia will be called έυδρός (20), "well-watered," may take on much more sinister implications. The land of such an impious king would not make a very appropriate birth-place of Zeus; certainly not on the logic of this hymnist who has already used the Cretan tomb of Zeus as evidence against Crete as the birth-place on the grounds of its impious implications. There are, however, other Lycaons in the mythological tradition. One was a son of Priam, killed by Achilles in the Iliad, Book 21. In fact, when Rhea commands Gaia to produce water (29) her words "Γαῖα φίλη τέκε καὶ οὐ" (29), evoke those of Achilles to this Trojan

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76 Hesiod, according to Scholiast on Aratus, Phaenomena.

77 See PW on Lycaon.

78 In keeping with this is paradoxical nature of the description of rivers, referring to the kind of adunata/ impossibilities that are usually mentioned in descriptions of the flood e.g. wagons driving along watery paths, a traveller kept thirsty in the midst of abundant water, animal homes in the river, etc.
Lycaon just before he kills him: "άλλα, φίλος, θάνει καὶ ous"79. I have already noted some of the problems with the hymnist's use of geographical references, but it should be added that many of his Arcadian names are equally at home in Phrygia:80 Parrasia, Azania, Apidanians (if derived as "the people from Ida"), Kaukones,81 as are Adrasteia and the Corybantes in the Cretan section. I do not mean to suggest that the whole account is an elaborate puzzle whose solution involves locating the entire narrative in Phrygia, but merely that the language and names of the mythopoetic tradition are so multivalent that the hymnist cannot control his references in the manner he demands.

One problem faced by the hymnist here is that, for many of his aitiologies and etymologies to work, they must serve to connect a name to a divinity and then, in turn, to an object or place; this gives rise to logical and narrative contradictions, once again according to his own rationalist principles. For example, in order for his account of Arcadia's rivers being underground at the time of Zeus' birth to be plausible, he must assume that the divine beings

79 Iliad 21.106.

80 The etymology of whose name also indicates its dryness.

81 An old chestnut among mythographers, geographers and literary scholars, since this is one of the occasions where the Iliad and the Odyssey are inconsistent with each other. In the Iliad they are allies of the Trojans Il. In the Odyssey, they seem to be a Greek people near Ithaka Od. 3.366 See Strabo 8.317 and 345f.
associated with such rivers are detachable from them, for otherwise Styx could not be present at the birth without also the Arcadian spring with which she was associated, nor indeed could Rhea, as derived from ῥεῖν, "to flow", be present without water. Yet the hymnist is inconsistent, for at other times his narrative depends on blurring the line (or erasing it) between divinity and associated natural features, e.g. Nereus (40) must be understood to refer metonymically to the sea and not the marine divinity. The most critical occasion on which this happens puts the status of his whole account as proof in jeopardy. At line 29, Rhea turns to appeal to her mother Gaia for help: "Γαῖα φίλη, τέκε καὶ σὺ, τεσοὶ ὡδῖνες ἔλαφραί." Here, clearly Rhea and Gaia are separate anthropomorphic beings, mother and daughter. When, however, Rhea proceeds to strike the ground in order for her mother to give birth to the river, Gaia is conflated with the physical earth in a way which is inconsistent with the necessity of separating the two out as mentioned above. More problematically, it contradicts the crucial etymological synthesis of Rhea=ἐρεὶς=γαῖα=Gaia, and indeed suggests other etymologies which are equally potentially damaging for the hymnist's case, e.g. taking ὡδῖνες in its usual meaning of "offspring", we can make the connection ἔλαφρᾶ=ῥεῖς=Rhea.

Most of the hymnist's problems here arise from the ways in which he violates his own canons of representational
propriety. These local failures are troubling enough, given his rationalist disposition; they suggest, however, a more global crisis at the level of the hymnic genre, for these failures (and the project of which they are a part) speak of the incompatibility between the imperatives of Hellenistic rationalism and the archaic poetic models and materials that give form to the hymnist's encomiastic intention here. This crisis (which I shall discuss in more detail momentarily) is especially pronounced in relation to the narrator's use of anthropomorphism—not surprising, given its already vexed position within the rationalist project. In the process of treating the anthropomorphic conception of the gods in a literal, rationalist manner, the hymnist violates the very standards of *to prepon* and *to pithanon*. Although in the *Homer Hymns* we see the infant Hermes burping in Apollo's face, the earthy detail is quite in keeping with his roguish character in the hymn and is also a deliberate action on his part. The humble details of Zeus' umbilical cord falling off (44) and his crying (54) are both apparently beyond his control and hardly in keeping with the character of the future king of the gods. Rhea's arm is designated a μέγαν...πῆχυν (30), literally, "a large cubit". The anthropomorphism here works as an oxymoron that draws attention to the incommensurability of human and divine terms.
Thus the hymnist's credibility and the viability of his approach is undermined by the fact that at the local level of details, rhetorical and descriptive, his narrative does not support his principles and assumptions. It is important to remember that this failure at the level of details is critically damaging for the hymnist's approach precisely because he himself has made them the crucial foundations of his narrative. Although it might be possible to analyse other passages in Greek literature for such inconsistencies, it is the hymnist who leads us to become readers of this type by presenting himself as the purveyor of a coherent, consistent, and truthful narrative. By drawing attention to the fact that he bases and evaluates the appropriateness and value of his encomiastic gesture (and hence the success of his hymn qua hymn) on these criteria, he requires that we, too, judge this particular hymn on these terms; the implication, however, of his approach is that it should apply to all poetry.

The hymnist's approach is unsatisfactory in other ways, for as a hymn it falls short of its generic purposes. It has been argued of the hymn by Bergren that "The rhetorical figure at the heart of the genre ... is apostrophe, or the direct address by the poetic voice," a figure which "demonstrates the most basic capacity of the voice, to 'represent,' to 'make present' something by the sheer act of
uttering it." The most fundamental gesture of the hymnic genre thus points to a divine epiphany. This particular section of the hymn concerns the topic of the god's first epiphany, his birth. However, as we have seen, this hymnist expresses interest in everything but Zeus, directing our attention to geography, etymology and aitiology, and other myths and figures; Zeus himself is kept out of focus, often relegated to a bare personal pronoun, the object of others' actions.

Second, the principle aim of the literary hymn is to praise the god. We have seen that the hymnist fails to do so on his own terms, wherein praise amounts to truth-telling. He also fails in more traditional terms, for he not only spends little time on Zeus himself, but when he does so he provides nothing of a laudatory nature: rather, Zeus' dignity and status are diminished by the realistic portrayal of his actions as an infant, whose actions never rise above the level of the ordinary, mundane ones of a human infant.

Third, in addition to being of the hymnic genre, this poem also functions as a theogony; this is indicated by its content (the birth of Zeus, his rise to supremacy, and the establishment of the Olympian hierarchy) and by the hymnist's repeated allusions to the most famous example of the genre, Hesiod's Theogony, along with the two Homeric Hymns which fit

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82 In "Re-Presentation and Imitation in the Homeric Hymns," Arethusa 15 (1982), 84f
this category, to Apollo and to Hermes. Knight\textsuperscript{83} identifies the two characteristic purposes of theogony as thelgmatic and philosophical. These aspects have a common origin in the fact that it is the very nature of theogonies to establish or posit and make intelligible a divinely-ordered cosmos. That order is soothing in as much as it gives reassurance that, even if the ways of god are difficult for mortals to discern or understand, they are nevertheless part of a universal pattern or scheme which is moral and rational. As I have shown, though, in this poem, given that the hymnist's rationalism has been undermined, the assumption—that there is a world order which is rational and so capable of being comprehended to a certain degree by human reason—is already questionable. Further, the narrative itself depicts a world which is even more deeply paradoxical, bewildering, and contradictory than that of previous theogonic texts: it denies the possibility of pinpointing any geographical and chronological reference, it consistently confounds the hymnist's attempt to make one-to-one correspondences, and thus depicts a world which cannot be reduced to a logically coherent and determinable truth, even as it insists that it must be so reduced. As such, it works against the generic aim of presenting a comprehendable world order, and does so by positing a rationalism whose realization, if we are to

\textsuperscript{83} T. E. Knight, \textit{A Study of the Programmatic Unity of the Callimachean "Hymns"} (Diss. Berkeley 1988), 59-73.
take the poem as any indication, is quite impossible. The second traditional feature of theogonic poetry, that is, to present the comforting moral basis of the world order, is almost completely absent in this section. The gods' actions do have beneficial consequences for mankind, e.g. the provision of water for the inhabitants of Arcadia and the supply of honey in Crete. However, these benefits are not given in return for man's virtues or good deeds; they are merely the accidental by-products of divine action carried out for purely selfish reasons. There is even a reminder of the way in which the gods', particularly Zeus', relationship with humans can be immoral or amoral, in the reference to Callisto (41) and her transformation into a bear, which evokes the story of her being raped by Zeus.

The Concealment of Zeus

The hymnist has, thus far in our reading, effectively staged the conflict between the principles of Hellenistic rationalism and the essentially archaic generic models and narrative materials out of which he builds the hymn, as

"The passage evoked by the quote from Hesiod in line 79 asserts that when poets sing of past heroes and hymns, men forget their sufferings; his picture will be of the birth of gods and the allotment of wealth and honours. Similarly, as J. J. Clauss mentions, in "Lies and Allusions: The Addressee and Date of Callimachus' Hymn to Zeus," CA 5 (1986), 155-170, Hermes sings a Theogony on the lyre, telling how each god got his portion; its effect is to make the angry Apollo forget his anger. Apollonius 1.469f makes Orpheus sing a Theogony for the same reason. The mollifying effect of Theogonic poetry would not seemed to be acheived by Callimachus' hymn, which everywhere raise rather than silences conflict."
Knight has pointed out. As a result, the hymnist's authority is doubly undermined as both a philosopher and as a poet. Knight wishes to claim, in consequence, that this leaves the reader caught in a sceptical either/or, suspended between two seemingly irreconcilable options, poetry or philosophy; on his account, if a choice must be made, the weight of sympathy if not of evidence lies in favor of the now irrecoverable archaic poet. This resolution, however, not only begs the critical questions raised by the poem, but amounts to rejecting the benefits, prestige, and insights of the rationalist tradition, attempting to silence its critical voice in this poem, as well as in other Hellenistic poems. Such a sceptical resignation leaves intact the binary opposition between the rational and the archaic; it is, however, one of the poem's achievements that it works to undermine that opposition by situating the former as a moment within the latter, validating poetry's power for creative deception and the play of the creative voice as necessary conditions for the survival of culture, be it archaic, rationalistic, or divine.

In the Hymn to Zeus, this process turns on the action of a number of characters who work to conceal the newborn Zeus by means of deception. During the birth and rearing of Zeus, our attention is repeatedly drawn, not to the passive Zeus,
but to the mythological characters that populate the narrative and to their actions. All these characters share the same role in the myth; that is, they are caretakers of the newborn Zeus. The exclusive emphasis on their actions, rather than on Zeus, itself serves to keep the god just out of focus. But if we look more closely at the form this care takes, we see that their actions share the common feature of being ones which conceal Zeus from sight and / or hearing. Rhea bears him in a covered place ὄρος θάμνωσι περισκεπές (11). After washing him, she immediately wraps him up / enfolds him, σπείρωσι (33), and gives him to Neda to conceal in a cave κομίζειν / κευθύον ἔσω Κρηταῖον, ἵνα κρύφα παιδεύοι (33-34). The Meliae envelop him in their arms, προσπεπχύσαντο (46). Adrasteia enfolds him in a cradle where she puts him to sleep and hence silence οὗ ἔκοιμεν Ἀδρήστεια / λίκνῳ ἐνὶ χρυσῷ (47-8). As the Couretes encircle him with their dance, they also cover his cries with their song and armour noises οὗ περὶ πρύλιν ϑρυχήσαντο / τεύχεα πεπλήγοντες, ἵνα Κρόνος οὐασιν ἡχὴν / ἀσπίδος εἰσαθοι καὶ μῆ σεο κουρίζοντος (52-54). Thus, the concealing of Zeus would seem to be the defining characteristic of the caretaker’s role.

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86 Note that the word used to describe the birth, ἀπεθήκατο (14), can also mean “bury.”

87 The Meliae are described as Κυρβάντων ἑτάραι (46) Hesychius explains that the name derives from the verb κυρβάδωμεν glossed as κρύψωμεν. The way they are named hints at the nature of their role.
According to the most common version of Zeus' biography, as told in Hesiod's *Theogony*, secrecy is critical at Zeus' birth to protect him from his father, Cronos, who plans to swallow him as he has done with all Rhea's children, in fear of being overthrown by his own offspring. Although the hymnist has rejected the Cretan birth tradition as told by Hesiod, he remains faithful to its emphasis on keeping Zeus hidden. It is, however, only when the purpose of Neda's transportation of Zeus is stated, 'να κρύφα παιδύοιο (34), that we know that this concealment is not just a matter of privacy, for example, but of deliberate secrecy. By the time we are told of the Couretes' dance (52-4), we realize that the caretakers of Zeus are in fact also actors in an elaborate conspiracy, to which we too seem to have become a party. It is not until the last line of this narrative section (54) that we are given an explicit statement that it is Cronos from whom the secret is being kept. Thus, the concealment in which all the mythological characters are involved is shown to be not just a matter of keeping Zeus secret, but also a conspiratorial act of deliberate deceptions, all of which are motivated by a need to protect and preserve Zeus.

The intentional concealment of Zeus by deceptive means is thus given a positive value in the narrative; in fact, it turns out to be the essential prerequisite for the continued existence of Zeus. If that is the case, then the hymnist's
own narrative is radically at odds with itself, directed as it is at proving that he has accurately determined the location of Zeus' birth. The narrative's imperative to hide Zeus not only speaks out against the desireability of the hymnist's project, but designates it as precisely that which would lead to the permanent elimination of Zeus. That is, not only does his attempt at proving the truth fail on its own terms, and with it his encomiastic gesture which was defined in terms of truth—a failure which would reduce the hymnist to an incompetent rationalist and the hymn to a parodic representation—but the very project itself is shown by his own narrative to be entirely at odds with the hymn's encomiastic function in as much as, in the case of Zeus, the truth is fatal. This goes beyond any formulation of a sceptical approach to truth, which would hold that the truth is ultimately unknowable, or relative, or plural, to a position which suggests that the truth is in fact dangerous. The moment in the narrative at which this problem with the pursuit of truth becomes unavoidable and manifest is the very last line (54), when the purpose of the Couretes' dance is spelled out. It thus functions similarly to the moment in the proem when we realize that the statement "Cretans are ever liars" can be read as a paradox, in that it allows, even demands, that we detach ourselves from the hymnist's perspective not simply to stand aside in sceptical criticism...
but to reread with increased engagement the multiple voices, traditions, and possibilities which the hymnist synthesizes.

Thus, as we saw in the proem, the hymnist's own words speak against him and his project, and the narrative slips away from his control. As readers, we again find ourselves in the position that we seem to know more than the hymnist and can now re-read the text with some measure of detachment from his directing perspective. The process (and necessity) of reading past the hymnist involves transforming him into a narrative device, a puppet of the actual poet, Callimachus. When we re-read the narrative in this light, we will see that the hymnist's failures—to persuade us that he has determined the truth about Zeus, and to meet the generic demand/requirement to "present" Zeus—are part of an elaborate and deliberate deception by which Callimachus consistently conceals Zeus.

The deception is perpetrated at every level of the hymn, in its syntax, diction, imagery, and narrative and rhetorical structure. The very beginning of the hymn gives a programmatic indication, at the level of syntax, of the way in which precisely at those moments when the poet seems to be directing our attention towards the god himself, he immediately displaces him to a position just out of focus.

Ζηνὸς ἐοι τὶ κεν ἄλλο παρὰ σπουδὴςον ἀείδειν/ λόιμον ἡ θεὸν αὐτόν. "At libations to Zeus, what other to sing of/ better than the god
himself? (1-2). The first word Ζηνὼς (r) seems to follow generic models in declaring the subject of the hymn, by name, at the beginning. This declared subject, however, turns out to be dependent on the prepositional phrase παρὰ σπονδῇσιν (1), "at libations to Zeus." As we readjust our understanding of the syntax, the focus moves away from the subject of song—Zeus—to the occasional context—libations. In the rest of the proem, the god is similarly displaced from focus, (rhetorically) as the presentation of Zeus is replaced by the hymnist's self-presentation, and (cognitively) as we become involved not in the contemplation of the central subject but in the centrifugal process of evaluating the conflicting traditions about the subject's birth-place. This conflict is described as the problem of Zeus' γένος ἀμφήριστον (5), a formulation which verbally mirrors the envelopment and occlusion of Zeus in the proem, for here ἐπὶ wraps itself around (ἀμφὶ) him.

It is, however, in the narrative of Zeus' birth (10-54) that we see the critical importance of the concealment of Zeus, and the complexity of Callimachus' deception/deceit. In fact, one of the final ironies will be that despite the fact that we are put in the position of knowing more than the hymnist, in the end, we will still not know where Zeus was born. By far the most obvious means by which the narrative

** According to Hopkinson, this "confirms the primacy of the subject" (n.5.139).
hides Zeus from view is the way Callimachus uses the hymnist's rationalist preoccupation with truth and proof to concentrate our attention on the context of Zeus' birth, especially the geographical locations and their inhabitants, rather than the god himself. In the previous chapter I showed at length how the narrative turns entirely on such matters to the virtual exclusion of the supposed subject of song, Zeus. The god himself is barely mentioned. During his own birth, he appears only twice in the form of the accusative pronoun στό... 'Ρεῖν τέκεν (10), στ' ἐπεὶ μὴτωρ μεγάλων ἀπεθήκατο κόλπων (15). This is in a section which, as we saw, concentrates almost exclusively on the location and its history. The third time his birth is referred to he has disappeared altogether, leaving mention only of Rhea's action 'Ρη ὦτ' ἐλώσατο μῦτην (21). In all three references to birth it is used merely as a jumping-off point for describing the circumstances, land, aitia, etc. After the birth, he

9 The foregrounding of places instead of the god is (programmatically) established at the very beginning of the narrative section. Generically speaking, the first relative pronoun/clause in a hymn refers to the divinity and marks the transition from introduction to narrative. At line 10 the relative clause introduced by Ἡξί does mark this transition, but it refers to Zeus' birthplace, not the god himself.

90 Here Zeus appears enclosed in a prepositional phrase describing the location, separated from its verb, not even the antecedent of the immediately following relative clause; this last is the more striking for it is the first relative clause of the hymn and, generically speaking, should refer to the divine subject of the hymn.

91 Here Zeus appears in a subordinate clause giving the time of Rhea's search for water.
disappears completely from lines 18-31 and subsequently appears only obliquely, as the possessive adjective τοῦ (33) and accusative pronoun ας (33). Here again he is merely the object of Rhea’s actions in a narrative which concentrates on the location’s lack of water. While in the Cretan section (42-54), his presence is more marked, he is still largely reduced to pronominal form, usually in the accusative case (42-3, 46, 47, 52), twice in more oblique forms (44, 54), twice in the vocative (43, 44).

In addition to using geographical concerns to direct our gaze away from Zeus, the poetic landscape itself turns out to be deceptive, concealing things below its surface. The birthplace is described as ὁ πόταμοι περισκέπτες. περισκέπτες is a Callimachean invention® apparently used passively here, “covered over,” but open to active usage also, “covering over.”® This may contribute thematically to the passage in describing the location as one which is not only itself concealed by bushes, but, which is thus capable of also concealing Zeus.® Lines 18-27 further suggest this concealing capacity of the landscape in their extended description of the rivers of Arcadia, which did not exist at the time of the narrated events. The rivers are named, given

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®See Mclennan (n.21) ad loc.

®® As is shown in Hymn 4.23.

®® Note the Homeric model of this word, περισκεπτός, which means far-seen, seen on all sides.
characteristics which include "wetness," and assigned actions. However, their waters as yet remained underground. Like Zeus, they are present, they can be named and described, but not seen. It is one of those rivers, later named Neda, which will in turn help to conceal Zeus. We have also seen that we are repeatedly required to adjust the way we view the landscape, as references to it slip back and forth between those that can only be describing a concrete physical feature and those which must be describing an anthropomorphic divinity. The most glaringly abrupt example is when Rhea's request for her mother to give birth, which requires that we see Gaia in vividly anthropomorphic terms, is immediately followed by Rhea's striking the ground to produce water, which demands that we conceive of Gaia as the physical earth, and only the physical earth if Rhea is to avoid being seen as committing domestic violence. Quite literally in this hymn, there is no stable ground beneath our feet.

The hymnist's failed attempt at geographical and chronological precision can also be seen as a device to make Zeus' location not just difficult but impossible to pinpoint at any particular time. The clearest example occurs at the critical point of Zeus' transferral from Arcadia to Crete. The hymnist asserts precision in place and time: ἐντὸς ᾿Οξνας

95 The lines themselves help to conceal this fact from the reader by the use of ambiguous language. Again, the lines of text mirror or enact their content.
...ένθεν.../ ...μετέπειτα (42-45). However, as we saw in the last chapter, Zeus' journey is obscured by the use of the place-name Thenai, which is ambiguous in that it is the name of a place in Arcadia as well as in Crete. More importantly, when we read that Zeus was leaving Thenai, we assume that Arcadian Thenai is meant and that at this point we are following his journey from Arcadia. When the hymnist explains that Thenai is in Crete, we realize that we lost track of Zeus at some unspecifiable place and time between the first reference to Thenai and the second, and by the time we make the cognitive adjustment he has already moved on.

Thus, the poet, who has responsibility for Zeus in this hymn, acts like the mythological characters of the narrative. He fulfills his role by concealing Zeus from view, and he does so by deceptive means, continually misleading the reader and denying us the possibility of assigning absolute truth or falsehood to anything said. The prime device he uses to accomplish this is the hymnic persona. This persona is unique among the characters in the hymn both in his desire to tell the truth about Zeus and in the fact that, although he, too, is an actor in this drama of deception, he does so unwittingly. The irony of this situation is most marked in the concluding lines of the birth narrative where he describes the deceptive dance of the Couretes. This is a
crucial passage for the interpretation of this narrative, and indeed of the entire hymn, and merits further consideration.

*Couretes, Cretans and Poets: Banging the Drum for Zeus*

oúla dé Koúρητες σε περὶ πρύλιν ὄρχησαντο
teúchea peplήγοντες, ὅuα Κρόνος οὐσαίν ἰχάν
ἀστίδος εἰσαται καὶ μή σκο κουρίζοντος. (52-4)
And the Couretes (oula) danced a war-dance around you beating their armour/ weapons, so that Cronos with his ears might hear the echo of the shield and not of you crying.

In their actions here, the Couretes are the mythic/ritual analogue of the poet in this hymn. Their clashing of shields for Zeus in this myth preserves and hides Zeus. Traditionally, as we see in other hymns, such a dance is done in celebration of a deity, as it was too in Crete in historical times. Thus, their dance is both celebratory and preservative, using music and action to hide Zeus and deceive Cronos. These functions are interdependent in this hymn; to preserve Zeus is to celebrate him, but to preserve him one must also hide him. The two sounds (shields and crying) are not to be separated, for if Zeus were not crying there would be no cause for the Couretes' dance and song; and if the Couretes' music was not playing, Cronos would find Zeus and there would no longer be a Zeus to cry.

Similarly, we have at least two main narrating voices in this hymn, that of the poet and that of the rationalist hymnic persona. The poet preserves and praises Zeus by hiding him, with this deception effected by the song, words, or
noise of the hymnist. The poet uses the hymnist to misdirect our focus from Zeus, refusing to let us pinpoint him in time or space. Though we hear both and know they are distinct, yet we cannot entirely separate them out. To remove the poet's voice would be to leave only the reductive and destructive hymnist's. To remove the hymnist's voice is to lift the veil of deception that protects Zeus. The Couretes' dance works in a similar way. Their music overlays and preserves the voice of Zeus as the hymnist's voice overlays and preserves many others from the literary tradition. However, as I said above, the voices are interconnected. To remove the hymnist's voice completely is to remove the Couretes' shields. Truth and lies are bound inextricably together in celebrating and preserving Zeus.

The Couretes' dance, moreover, described as a πρύλιν, war-dance, is itself a dramatic mime, an imitation of war. This military mimesis is an analogue of the poet's simulated conflict about Zeus' birthplace. Here, literally, eris encircles Zeus. This action of banging shields for Zeus and hiding him matches the general impression of the narrative. At first its purpose and value is obscure. Its purpose should be to celebrate, praise, and preserve Zeus, and yet it conceals him. If its purpose is to prove the truth of the hymnist's account, it repeatedly denies that possibility.

96 Like Apollo's bow/lyre his song is both instrument of war and music/celebration.
Other goals have also been assigned to the narrative: to account for why there are two conflicting traditions, or to account for various details in the world and their connection with Zeus, either with serious, didactic intent or merely for entertainment. All these other functions direct attention away from the epiphany and praise of Zeus, which is the generic purpose of the hymn, just as the Couretes distract Cronos and mislead him as to their purpose in singing and dancing.

The narrative ends with a clear reference to the Hesiodic account of Cronos' threat and with the first mythic statement about an audience for these events, and the person towards whom the deception is directed. That Cronos here is a mythic paradigm/analogue for a potential audience of the poem is indicated by the close similarity between these lines. ἱνα Κρόνος οὗσαι ἡχήν / ἀσπίδος εἴσαθο(53-4), and the hymnist's subsequent plea, ψευδοίμην ἄιοντος ἄ κεν πεπόθοιεν ἀκουή(65). Further, the implication of the two statements above links them back with the Cretans of the proem, Κρῆτες ἄει ψεύσται(8), for all three express the idea of telling lies which cannot be separated from the truth. As we saw in the proem, the paradoxical expression Κρῆτες ἄει ψεύσται(8) links Cretans with poetic deception via its allusion to the words of Hesiod's Muses in the Theogony. Here, the Cretan Couretes are also linked with poetic deception through the echo of line 65 and
the expression of the desire to tell lies which persuade the
listener. In both cases, the situation concerns truth, lies
and deceptive mimesis. 97

The Couretes', Cretans', and poet's aims are all to
persuade and deceive with regard to Zeus. What Cronos hears
is not the sum total of sound emitted; there is no one-to-one
correspondence here between sound produced and sound heard by
Cronos. Yet Cronos must believe or be persuaded that he does
hear everything if Zeus is to remain safe from him. On the
poetic level then, the kind of reader or audience who seeks
to find and pinpoint Zeus represents a threat to the power
and continued existence of the god. Like the hymnist and
Cronos, such a reader will believe s/he has a grasp on the
absolute truth and the hymn will remain for him/her, as it in
the rationalistic hymnist's hands, empty of Zeus, a generic
failure, devoid of purpose or profit.

There is, however, a final irony suggested by the
Couretes' dance. We have only the hymnist's word that Zeus
is located in the middle of the dancing Couretes, that is,
the word of a fictive persona who has throughout been shown
to be unreliable and who has been exposed as an instrument of
the poet's deceptions. However adept we become at listening

97 This framing is reinforced by the possible etymological connection of
Kρήτης-Kouρήτēς. See Lycophron, who uses Couretes to mean Cretans (1295),
and by Aratus, to whom this hymn possibly alludes in several other
places, who uses the verb ψεύδωμαι to describe the actions of the
Couretes towards Cronos (Phaenomena 35), as Callimachus uses it to
describe the Cretans' action with regard to Zeus' birth (7).
to voices other than that of the hymnist, eventually we will always meet the impenetrable wall of the Couretes’ shields and find ourselves no more able to hear Zeus crying than Cronos can.

According to this hymn, for the continued vitality and value of the divine, for the preservation of the mythopoetic heritage in a way faithful to its essence, mimesis must be deceptive. If it were not, all would be truth, Cronos would hear Zeus’ cries, and Zeus would exist no longer. This is the threat posed by the rationalistic philosophers’ appropriation of the poetic heritage and the role of cultural hegemon. The poetic voice, on the other hand, is shown to be both creative and preservative. In this hymn, the poet creates Zeus with his words and preserves him. The relationship between the poet, the gods and the mythopoetic tradition is, like that of Zeus and the dancing Couretes, reciprocal, symbiotic, interdependent, and interactive.
CHAPTER 5

"Ιχνια δοια: RATIONALISM AND THE DYNAMICS OF PATRONAGE

Thus far, I have been discussing the intersection of poetry and philosophy, with regard to the mythopoetic tradition, via Callimachus' challenge to the single truths of literary and philosophical scholars. It is my contention that Callimachus chose to enact this challenge in the hymnic genre because of its uniquely important status in the Greek poetic and philosophical tradition,¹ and because, as we saw in Chapter One, the core of the rationalist critique of poetry concerned the representation of the gods. Callimachus begins with a hymn to Zeus for, as ruler of the gods, the structure and meaning of the divine world as model for the earthly stands or falls with him, and analogously so does the poet's claim and authority to speak to and for both worlds. Regardless of their particular theological perspective, the philosophers' attempts to control, stabilize, and fix the

¹ Aristotle, Poetics 1448b27, considers the hymnic form the oldest of literary forms. D. Obbink, "How to Read Poetry about Gods," in D. Obbink (Ed.), Philodemus and Poetry (Oxford University Press 1995), 194, comments, "many pre-Socratic philosophers like Empedocles, Parmenides, and Xenophanes had actually adopted for their revelatory discourse the rhapsode's traditional poetic form of a hymnic proem, placing themselves in direct competition and symbiosis with the mythological tradition."
relationship between language and reality, words and things, which can be seen in their attacks on the nature of poetic mimesis, is analogous to their attempts to regulate, fix, and control the perceived relationship between gods and humans, the transcendental and the temporal. The rationalist orientation of literary and mytho-historical scholarship similarly involved attempts to circumscribe, limit, and regulate these two analogous relationships within the confines of to prepon and to pithanon. The philosopher produces abstract conceptions of divinity; the rationalist produces gods who are not only of human form but who are also required to act, speak and think like humans too. These approaches had long existed, but the Hellenistic period's thrust towards comprehensive, totalizing systems of thought tended to push them to their most extreme and rigid forms. To go too far in either direction, anthropomorphizing or abstraction, equally results in a fixed interpretation of the divine. The danger this causes for the mythopoetic tradition lies in the fact that this effectively closes off the possibilities of using the divine in the manner in which poets especially had long been accustomed and on which they had depended; that is, as rhetorical spaces for the personal and communal construction of the self in intellectual, emotional, social, and political terms.

For Callimachus, and presumably other Alexandrians, this danger was not a theoretical difficulty but an immediate and
concrete problem because of the nature of Ptolemaic rule and patronage. I have suggested that Callimachus' case for reclaiming the poet's role as cultural hegemon is built on reclaiming the authority to speak about the divine, beginning, as the philosophers themselves did, with Zeus; but to speak about Zeus, if not any of the divine family, in the city of a ruling family, not to mention patrons, who not only claimed descent from Zeus but also made that claim one of the keystones of their efforts to legitimate their rule, implicates the Ptolemies, regardless of the poet's intentions, and inevitably so, after the posthumous deification of Ptolemy Soter and the move towards deifying his son, Philadelphus, during the latter's lifetime. The problems which this inevitable implication causes for any poet are legion, and they are broached directly in the final section of the Hymn to Zeus, where Zeus' patronage of earthly kings and his favour of one of them in particular is described. This especially favoured king is called "our ruler" (81), and much of the scholarship on the Hymn to Zeus deals with identifying this ruler as a particular Ptolemy (Soter or Philadelphus), and analyzing how the hymn functions as political encomium within the dynamics of Ptolemaic patronage. My analysis will focus on the way in which

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1 Ptolemaic coins, for instance, depicted Ptolemy on one side and Zeus on the other. See L. Koenen, "The Ptolemaic King as Religious Figure," in A. Bulloch et al. (Eds.), Images and Ideologies: Self-Definition in the Hellenistic World (University of California Press 1993), 25-115.
Callimachus uses the rationalist hymnist to demonstrate that it is virtually impossible on his terms to negotiate the connection between Zeus and Ptolemy without gravely offending the dignity of one or the other, or both, and that to avoid this offense requires re-opening the divine as a rhetorical space of possibility and not of fixity, a manoeuvre only the deceptive poet can successfully carry out.

Rationalism and circular logic

The second half of the Hymn to Zeus moves rapidly through Zeus' maturing to his success in becoming king of the gods. While Zeus' position is not disputed, it is disputed as to how he came to acquire it. In this section, as in the proem, the hymnist employs an openly argumentative style as he evaluates alternative poetic traditions. He explicitly rejects those poets who made Zeus acquire the throne by lot, which include Homer and Pindar, and again levels an enthymematic argument against the rejected version:

\[ \text{The steps of the argument are: lots are drawn for equal things, therefore it is foolish to draw lots for unequal} \]

\[ ^{1} \text{Iliad 15.187f, Pindar, Olympian 7.54f, see also Plato, Gorgias 523a.} \]

In making Zeus the youngest child of Rhea and Cronos, the hymnist has already implicitly rejected Homer's account, in which he is the eldest; see e.g. I1.13.355; 15.166; Od.13.142, in favour of Hesiod's account, see e.g. Theogony 478, 453. In rejecting Homer's account of the lots, he implies that he is also following Hesiod in this matter.
things; the three realms are unequal, therefore lots were not drawn; or, Zeus is not a fool, therefore he did not draw lots (61-4). As in the proem, the hymnist's method is undermined by faulty reasoning (proving that Zeus didn't get Olympus by lot does not constitute proof that he didn't become ruler by lot), and misunderstanding of tradition (lots were in fact cast for unequal prizes, not, as the hymnist asserts, for equal ones).*

The passage begins with the rejection of previous lying poets, δηναιοὶ δ' οὐ πάμπαν ἀληθείας ἦσαν ὄντες (61). The hymnist seems to be once again setting himself up as the arbiter and purveyor of truth. However, when he concludes his argument against the ancient poets with a wish that he might tell falsehoods that persuade, ψευδοίμην ἄλοιτος κεν πεπιθομεν ἀκουήν (65), we realize that his rejection is based not on the fact that previous poets lied, but that they did not lie persuasively. This statement, which contradicts his earlier demand for and claim to give the one absolute truth by way of positing deception as his aim, has been seen as a typically Callimachean piece of ironic playfulness. Knight\(^5\) describes it as the moment when "the hymnist turns the tables on us.

\(^{1}\) M. Depew, Aitia in Callimachus' Hymns (Diss. University of California at Los Angeles 1989), 39: "And yet of course one does not cast lots ἐν' ἱστοτίᾳ, especially in Greek myth," and refers to Ili.15.191, 24.400; Hdt 3.128. She calls the hymnist's stance here a "feigned display of outraged reason."

[and] forces us to reconsider all that we have read up to this point"; and Goldhill's comments that here "at the moment when he appears to proclaim the value of his poetic utterance, he does so in language the ambiguity and irony of which blocks the security of our reading." Yet, it is important to note that by itself the claim can be seen as entirely consonant with his rationalist outlook: in a situation where truth is unknowable, the verb ψεύδομαι may simply indicate that which is not known to be true, though it may be an honest and plausible opinion, and persuasiveness for the hymnist is judged in terms of plausibility, probability, or what is likely, ἕνωκε (63). The statement's ambiguity stems in large part from the fact that ψεύδομαι may denote the product of an intention to distort or deceive as

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7 Note that ὁ πάμπα καὶ ἀλήθες (60) is ambiguous—not at all or not altogether. Either the old poets were complete liars or or they were not complete truth-tellers. If the former, the hymnist's complaint will be that they were simply not good liars. In fact, we cannot tell, because of this ambiguity, whether the poets told all lies or told some truth, that is, the ambiguous expression here mirrors the Muses' words; we cannot separate them out. Even more so with the hymnist's own expressed desire to lie—if indeed he does persuade with his lies then we shall not be able to tell truth from falsehood.

6 Depew (n. 5), 39: "Earlier in the poem aitia were appealed to as productive of truth; here plausibility would seem to be the operative criterion."

9 This is close to the Platonic view, or Plato's reading of the Muses' speech to Hesiod (according to E.Belfiore, "'Lies unlike the Truth': Plato on Hesiod, Theogony 27," TAPA 115 (1985), 47-57), in which we should aim at the truth in matters about which factual knowledge is possible, but where it is not, we can only have plausible opinion.
well as of an honest intention, and its irony from the fact that this formulation with the verb \( \psi\varepsilon\upsilon\delta\omicron\omicron\alpha \) in the optative mood once again suggests the liar paradox, since it is can be functionally equivalent to the poet saying "I am a liar." For Knight,\(^10\) this amounts to an affirmation of "the subjectivity of truth"; similarly, for Goldhill,\(^11\) this demonstrates a typically Hellenistic "ironic and ambiguous attitude to the assertion of truth and to the status of the poet as teller of truth." Both views, however, depend on believing that there is one point of stability in the line, that is, that \( \psi\varepsilon\upsilon\delta\omicron\omicron\alpha \) expresses a conscious wish to deceive. If we could be so sure about this, if we knew that the poet's intention is to willfully lie and distort, we might not be able to know what the truth is but we could at least determine what is false, and if so, we could also come to some determination about the truth-value of his later praise of Zeus and "our ruler." But the critical ambiguity here is that we cannot even be sure whether his intentions are in fact deceptive or honest.

Equally important is the fact that the hymnist is here treating the divine by analogy with the human, and that his argument only has any bearing at all if we accept this analogy to hold true. The gods' decision-making processes are assumed to work the same way as that of humans, that is,

\(^10\) Knight (n. 6), 78.

\(^11\) Goldhill (n. 7), 30.
they make their decisions based on calculations of probabilities and likelihoods. This assumption is the crucial basis of the next stage of his argument, which concerns Zeus' decision-making process: that Zeus chose to patronize human kings (70-84), and among them to favour our ruler in particular (85-88). The account of Zeus' choices is constructed out of a series of parallel priamels.

The climax of the priamel is the lines quoted from Hesiod's Theogony 96f, "But from Zeus are kings," thus

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12 See T. Fuhrer, "A Pindaric Feature in the Poems of Callimachus," AJP 109 (1988), 58: "The myth has to be rejected, not because it is not kalon, as Pindar says in O.1.35, but because it is implausible (cf 63: ἦτοι) that the gods would act so foolishly. When Callimachus implies that Zeus would not have been such a fool as to leave the seizure of power to chance, he bases his disapproval of the older poets' tale on rationalistic considerations. The motivation for disapproving the story is not primarily a moralistic concern but intellectual reasoning... the chief interest seems to be not the religious issue but displaying his wit and sophistication." Also, Pindar implies that deception comes from charis, as Fuhrer says, 59: "The charm of a thrilling tale makes the hearer believe even what is apiston. Callimachus, on the other hand, makes quite the opposite point, denying the rejected tale all plausibility with the words: 65 ψευδομην."
enlisting the weighty authority of the archaic poetic
tradition on behalf of his contentions. Race comments:

the force of the climax is considerably attenuated by the
additional and somewhat bathetic commentary. It is as if the
grand self-confidence of the earlier poets has been lost and
Callimachus feels compelled to justify himself at each turn, even
to the point of belaboring the obvious.\(^{13}\)

Not only is the process belabored, but the logic is clearly
circular: e.g. the rulers of cities are the most powerful,
therefore Zeus chose them and gave them cities to rule; and
the circle turns on the weighty testimony of Hesiod—nothing
is more divine than the kings of Zeus, because kings are from
Zeus, therefore Zeus chose kings.\(^{14}\)

Here again Zeus is depicted as making his decision as a
human ruler might, purely in terms of political expediency:
his own rule rests on might (\(\varepsilon \gamma \alpha \delta \chi \epsilon \rho \omega \nu\) 66-7) and he
chooses among humans those who are the mightiest (\(\varphi \rho \tau \alpha \tau \iota \omicron\)
70). As Knight observes,\(^{15}\) "The god discriminates among men
purely on the basis of Realpolitik; moral qualities and
personal virtues are irrelevancies under this system."  God
is measured by the human standards of logic, plausibility and
pragmatism. Similarly, it is reason that measures poetry and
assigns it a practical telos which it designates as

\(^{13}\) W. H. Race, *The Classical Priamel from Homer to Boethius* (Mnemos.
Suppl. 74, Leiden 1982).

\(^{14}\) Alternatively, if kings are from/ \(\varepsilon \xi \) Zeus how can it be said that Zeus
chose them from/ \(\varepsilon \xi \lambda \omicron\) (73) the available options?

\(^{15}\) Knight (n. 6), 78.
plausibility and persuasion. The same standards are invoked when the hymnist turns to cite "our ruler" (81) as concrete proof of the nature of Zeus' rule: ἐστὶ δὲ τεκμήριον ἡμετέρῳ μὲν δὲντι (80-1), "it is fitting/ reasonable to infer from our ruler"; but we shall see that it is at this point that the particular telos of this hymn becomes problematic.

Encomium--does Zeus valorize Ptolemy or vice versa?

Most interpretations of this section of the hymn involve seeing the reference to "our ruler" as an allusion to a Ptolemy (Soter or Philadelphos). The hymn is thus considered to combine the generic function of praising Zeus with the practical function of flattering Ptolemy, ultimately subordinating the generic to the practical as the climax and close of the hymn. In the words of Couat:

This sovereign Zeus ...whose eagle carries thunder and proclaims prodigies, unmistakably resembles...Ptolemy Philadelphus. From
among the attributes of Zeus and the innumerable details of his fabulous history, Callimachus chose those that would best express this resemblance. 16

The parallels between Zeus and Ptolemy which form the foundation of this interpretation are of two kinds: details in Zeus' biography which parallel historical events in Ptolemy's biography, that is, Ptolemy's accession to the throne over his elder brothers, as Zeus' in this poem; and verbal and imagistic parallels between the descriptions of Zeus and "our ruler" within the poem.

More generally, Zeus' patronage of human kings, and his favour of "our ruler" (85-90) in particular, is described at length in a manner which explicitly makes the divine kingship an analogue of the earthly, and which hints that the special status of "our ruler" involves a much closer parallel between him and Zeus which may include divinity.

Lines 57-67 refer to the circumstances in which Zeus assumed the position as king of the gods. It is emphasized that despite being the youngest of Cronos' sons (γνωτοί πρωτερηγενεῖς περ ἑόντες 58), his elder brothers did not begrudge him this position (οὐκ ἐμάγηραν 59) because of his evident merits which derive from both his mental (ἐτι παρθύνω ἔφρασσο ἑναν πάντα τέλεια 57) and physical (ἔργα δὲ χειρῶν 66) capacities. Thus, the version which claims Zeus achieved his position by lot is to be rejected (60-66). It is widely

16 A. Couat, Alexandrian Poetry under the First 3 Ptolemies (London 1931), 210f.
agreed that such details in Zeus’ history are emphasized in order to draw a parallel with the historical circumstances of a particular (and contemporary of Callimachus) earthly ruler. The most popular candidate for the earthly rule is Ptolemy Philadelphus, under whose rule most of Callimachus’ life falls. Philadelphus was appointed co-regent with his father, Soter, in 285/4 over his older brothers, and became sole ruler on Soter’s death in 283. Clauss also argues that Philadelphus celebrated his accession on his birthday in 285/4 with a feast in honour of Zeus Basileos. Thus, Clauss claims, the hymn situates itself at a festive occasion in honour of Zeus (Ζηνὸς...παρὰ στοιχεῖων 1), and emphasizes those aspects in Zeus’ biography that are most relevant to Philadelphus, i.e. his birthday, accession to power, and patronage of earthly kings.

Other than the generally encomiastic element for a Ptolemy of thus linking him with Zeus, the particular point of the connection will vary according to whether we assume the particular ruler posited is Philadelphus or Soter (for whom claims are also made), and if Philadelphus, according

17 G. R. MacIennann, Callimachus’ Hymn to Zeus: Introduction and Commentary (Roma 1977), ad loc., thinks that regarding the disputed identity of “our ruler,” “it is possibly better to assume that Callimachus is simply toying with the different literary traditions.”


to the date assigned to the hymn. However, all such interpretations are agreed that this parallelism plays to the early Ptolemies' interest in legitimating their rule.

The anthropomorphism of this section, which the birth narrative has prepared for, is essential to the hymn's apparently double encomiastic intent: to praise both Zeus and "our ruler," one in terms of the other (although who, ultimately, is praised, and on what terms, is, as we shall see, an open question). The elaborate priamel structure referred to in 83 as "our ruler", is not Philadelphus because i) the extended description of Zeus' birth and infancy has no connection with Philadelphus (as adolescent?); ii) Zeus' settlement was peaceful whereas Philadelphus' was violent (except for a short period immediately after being appointed as co-regent). Be claims that the ruler mentioned refers rather to Philadelphus' father, Soter, because i) the description of the tripartite division of the world with Zeus' accession is more similar to the rivalry over Alexander's empire after his death (Perdiccas, Ptolemy Soter, and Seleucus for Greece, Egypt, and Asia) than to that over Egypt alone (except as a form of flattery i.e. Egypt is the Greek world); ii) in antiquity there were conflicting accounts of how Soter got Egypt: some said by lot, some that a council decided by debate; iii) Soter's military achievements are more appropriate to be compared with those of Zeus; and iv) the poem's ostensible context is a libation, and Zeus Soter was one of the main gods invoked on such occasions.

It is usually agreed that the hymn was written at an early date in the careers of both Callimachus and Philadelphus since such flattery would be most appropriate then. However, there is evidence that Philadelphus' brothers did in fact object, especially Ceraunus in 284. Thus the hymn must have been written after his appointment but prior to their threatening moves. Prior to his appointment would have been too dangerous if in fact one of the other brothers took over. If it was after opposition was expressed, the hymn would have to have an admonitory function, otherwise it would be too obviously insulting to Philadelphus (Couat: "cruel sarcasm"). It could be assigned to the period after the opposition was overcome, in which case the supposed function of the poem as a plea for patronage is problematic since it would be when Callimachus' career was already established. According to Couat, n.17, 211, it was only after Philadelphus got rid of his family rivals that he "became the redoubtable monarch, the all-powerful Zeus of whom Callimachus sings."
emphasizes the parallel generally between Zeus ruling over the gods as kings do over men. Similarly, in 74, various classes of human are said to be ὑπὸ χειρα, "under the hand" of kings, just as earlier (66) Zeus was said to have achieved his power by the deeds of hands. Thus, both Zeus and kings have a power which is characterized by dependence on physical strength. The specific connection of Zeus with "our ruler" begins when Zeus' selection of earthly kings as his domain of interest is mentioned: σὺ δ' ἔξελεο πτολιάρχουσι/ αὐτούς, 73-4, "you chose rulers of cities/ themselves." Here, the emphatic position of αὐτούς in enjambement at the beginning of the line draws attention to the fact that elsewhere in the poem Zeus is the only animate being to whom αὐτὸς refers. Further, αὐτὸς, "you yourself", at line 90 refers to Zeus, although "our ruler" had been the subject of the previous four lines. As Maclennan comments, "The confusion is probably deliberate, a reflection of Callimachus' desire to equate Ptolemy and Zeus in the latter part of the hymn."  

21 In lines 2 (the subject of the hymn Ὑὲὸς αὐτοῦ), 82, and 90.

D. W. Tandy, Callimachus' "Hymn to Zeus": Introduction and Commentary (Diss. Yale 1979), ad loc.

22 Apart from kings, the only other item mentioned which Zeus chooses for himself is the eagle (67f), which was an important part of Ptolemaic iconography because of its association with Zeus. Ptolemaic coins, for instance, depicted on one side a head of Zeus with thunderbolt and eagle and an eagle probably crowned Ptolemy's symposium tent. There was also a tradition of an eagle as portent of the founding of the Ptolemaic dynasty (Suda), which worked to link them with the line of Zeus.
The unequal division among gods is matched by that among human kings. Zeus has given prosperity πᾶσι μὲν, οὐ μάλα δὲ ἰσον. (85) "to all, but not equally." Among those who have been especially favoured is "our ruler" ἐνὶ ὑμητέρῳ μεῖκοττι περιπρὸ γὰρ εὐρὺ βέβηκεν. it is plausible to judge from our ruler, for he has far outstripped them (85-6)." Ptolemy then is not proof of the fact that Zeus gives abundance but that he does so unequally. Ptolemy's abundance is a sign of his having been selected by Zeus, and functions, in a (circular) turn, as validation of Zeus' good judgement. Indeed, most of the parallels elaborated in this section of the hymn suggest elective affinities between Zeus and Ptolemy, if not essential identity, a gesture fraught with problems reminiscent of Euhemerus' work. The problem here, from the point of view of the hymn's encomiastic intention, lies in the degree to which Ptolemy and Zeus are equated and assimilated, and in which direction the equation flows. If Ptolemy is depicted as Zeus-like, all is well for Ptolemy and Zeus except that this is a hymn to Zeus, not Ptolemy, and those elements highlighted in Zeus are those very ones which make Zeus Ptolemy-like, which is not manifestly encomiastic for Zeus.

Crisis of Encomium--Does the hymn praise anyone?

Aside from the general question as to whether it is appropriate (or blasphemous) to identify "our ruler" with the
king of the gods, the hymn raises the more specific, and troubling, question of whether it constitutes praise for either Ptolemy or Zeus. These difficulties concern what the parallels suggest about the nature and character of such a rule. They are compounded when the hymnist goes on to make the parallels even closer, and concern broadly the suggestions it raises about the workings of Ptolemaic rule and the ruler-cult.

The first problem centers on the foundation of Ptolemaic power. When the hymnist explains that Zeus was made ruler by the "deeds of hands," not by lot (66), he seems to be rejecting the Homeric (and Pindaric) versions of Zeus' accession in favour of the Hesiodic.\textsuperscript{14} The "deeds" would then refer to the armed conflict of the Titanomachy.\textsuperscript{25} While this is perfectly acceptable and praiseworthy for Zeus, it has disturbing implications for any earthly ruler: 1) It evokes the succession motif in Hesiod's \textit{Theogony} (problematic for any member of a dynasty) and thus, if fully worked out, would make Soter (or Alexander) equivalent to Cronos, the violent, child-eating tyrant; 2) The implication that the ruler's power was gained and maintained by physical force is a difficult fit for Philadelphus since his rule was not

\textsuperscript{14} See n. 3.

\textsuperscript{25} Note the possible reference to this in the opening of the hymn, Hesiodic \textit{Via} and \textit{Kratos} personified, and in the reference to Zeus as "son of Cronos."
significant for any glorious military exploits. More importantly, such force would not in itself be a positive comment from the perspective of any part of the Greek tradition, including the rationalistic, since it could refer specifically to the kind of arbitrary, unchecked violence of a tyrant. If we look for a helpful qualification of the nature of this force we do not find one, for the hymnist conspicuously declares himself unable to sing of the deeds of Zeus: οὐ γένετ' ὁκ ἔσται τις ΚΕΝ ΔΙΟΣ ἔργματ' ἀξίσει (93). The possibility of despotic violence and force thus remains open.

There are also implications made in this section that the raw power at the disposal of this ruler is not checked by any ethical or intellectual considerations. Very little is asserted about the actual skills or abilities and function of rulers. Their praiseworthy qualities—military skill, eloquence, justice, wealth, virtue, knowledge/wisdom—remain at the level of suggestion by allusion and analogy (as discussed above). However, the manner in which these implications are made is such that they can also suggest the exact opposite, detaching rulers from these attributes at the very moment that they connect them. Indeed, the hymn suggests that "our ruler" may be possessed of few of the valuable, traditional skills of statecraft. The belaboured and extended priamel section (70-80), which purportedly explains Zeus' choice of earthly kings to patronize, spends a great deal of time explaining the division of honor and labor
among the gods as inaugurated by Zeus. Each god is assigned a specific occupation or skill of which to be in charge and which matches or parallels their own talents: agriculture, war, sailing, metal-working, hunting, poetry/music. Zeus chooses kings, whose specific skill seems to be guarding cities, administering justice, and presumably overseeing their own division of labour. The belabouring of the parallels in this systematic way and the emphasis on "one god-one skill," however, draws attention to the fact that this would mean that earthly kings, "our ruler," and for that matter Zeus himself, control but may not themselves possess the abilities in those areas—poetry/music, war, etc.

Further, kingship is the only occupation not characterised by language suggesting knowledge (sailors are knowledgeable about ships, ἐμπέραμους (70-1), warriors have skill with the spear, ἄρις (74), poets "know well" the paths of song, εὖ εἰδότας (79)).

In the Hesiodic passage evoked by the quote in 79, eloquence is a gift of the Muses to both poets and kings. In the case of the king, its purpose is persuasion in the service of justice. In the Callimachean hymn, it is the poet who claims persuasion, ψευδομην ἄιντος κεν πεπίθοιεν ἄκουην (65),26 and the strict division of labour seems to suggest

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26 Also in the service of justice, as the correct apportioning of praise, blame, etc.
that therefore kings do not have it. Power enforced without persuasion constitutes for the Greeks political violence.

Persuasion is not the only attribute that this hymn's kings seem to be lacking. Having placed the kings in charge of cities, Zeus watches over their administration of justice from a vantage point on the high spots of the city and distributes to them wealth and prosperity, but not equally to all (80-4). The implication is that Zeus matches the amount of wealth he sends with the degree of the ruler's justice, and that since "our ruler" outstrips all others he must be the most just. The hymnist appeals to the archaic, aristocratic ethic that "prosperity is the gift of the gods to those who are just"; "The rich, qua rich, are just."27 However, the connections are not explicitly made,28 and when we reach the poem's concluding lines, we find the hymnist somewhat pedantically separating out wealth and virtue, by requesting both and emphasising that one needs the other.

Other human realms have knowledge; Ptolemy has just raw power of divine provenance and is hence uncontrollable essentially. Zeus is both wise and powerful; Ptolemy is only powerful. The quote of, and parallels with, Hesiod not only reveal the king lacking wisdom and persuasive powers but also lacking the ethical perspective he has in Hesiod, which is

27 Maclennan n.18, ad loc.

28 The discomfort with the lack of such an explanation is evident in some attempts to emend this passage or suggest that some lines must have disappeared.
crucial for his role as judge; it is that which marks him out and is part of what gives him the ability to succeed and enforce his will, thereby legitimating his rule.

If rulers lack these traditional attributes, what remains for them? One of the ways in which the modulation between Ptolemy and Zeus is made is through a scientific metaphor which is of dubious honorific potential for either of them. Consistent with this picture is the later statement that Zeus became ἐχθρία (queen Bee," not through lot, but through the deeds of hands. As well as being rationalistic, this facilitates the connection with "our ruler" in two ways: 1) Zeus and our ruler will be paralleled in their characteristic as bureaucrats, whose greatness is indicated by their ability to get things done quickly, as they direct and delgate the division of labour. The image of the Queen Bee is thus appropriate both to their position and the fact that they themselves don't do the work, though they do receive the fruits of this labour and are nourished and fostered by it; 2) Part of Aristotle's solution to the problem of how bees generate was that the "kings" are only produced from "kings". The Ptolemies claimed descent from Zeus via Heracles and Dionysus. While such claims are common throughout the history of Greek nobility, it particulary facilitated the move towards divinizing the Ptolemies. When the hymnist quotes Hesiod, "from Zeus come Kings," in his discussion of Zeus' patronage of earthly rulers, he can thus
use "ἐκ/from" to indicate dependence on Zeus and also actual blood descent. This genealogical connection is thus strengthened by the Bee metaphor.

The problem with this connection is that it emphasizes the lowest common denominator in the connection between Zeus and our ruler, i.e. they command and receive but do nothing, and it suggests that the "deeds of hands" by which Zeus came to power were in fact not those of his own hands, but that he, like our ruler, rose to power on the backs of others. The hymnist seems to clarify "deeds of hands" by the following line; "your might and strength which you have made to sit beside your throne." Although this sentence begins by suggesting the strength is Zeus', the reference to seating them gives them an element of personification. This, together with the fact that the line alludes to Hesiod's Theogony, 385f., (where Strength and Might are the children of Styx, separate beings in their own right, as they are also in Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound, where they work as Zeus' henchmen), reinforces both the idea that the deeds were those of others, not Zeus, and the suggestion that violence or brute force formed the basis of power. Thus, the declared inability to sing the deeds of Zeus, and by implication of Ptolemy, stems from the practical consideration that they may not ultimately do anything.
If the parallels are pushed to their logical limits, as is usually the tendency in this hymnist, both are reduced to being divine heads of tyrannous bureaucracies that operate without ethical basis. If the two are actually equated, the result is potentially not flattering for either. If this were all, we would have a hymn to Zeus whose ambiguities allow readings of both praise of Ptolemy and criticism. The problem seems to lie partly in the inherent tensions of the Ptolemaic program itself. Goldhill, discussing Theocritus' court poetry, succinctly describes the difficulties this program caused for a hellenistic poet:

in discovering the correct strategy to praise a king, within a Greek tradition that regularly stigmatizes tyranny; in Alexandria, an Egyptian city--in a tradition that regularly valorizes Greekness over foreignness; in a vast polyglot city--within a Greek tradition that promotes the polis as the context of praise; for a family that is incestuous and proclaims itself divine--in a tradition of the praise of limits that abhors hubris and sexual transgression.

Any poetic representation of this program will tread a very fine line--push it too far and the loose ends will come to the fore. In such a world it was not possible to sing of gods and not evoke such problems, and if it was not possible, then how to promote the Ptolemaic project, how to maintain Greekness, how to keep poetry and its heritage? As in the first half of the hymn, Zeus is depicted in very human terms, and though this facilitates the parallel with earthly kings,

it degrades Zeus. Likewise, to compare kings with a degraded Zeus does little to elevate them. Here, in part, the hymn challenges the value of the single truths of Ptolemaic political ideology. When a Zeus-like being walks among us, what need do we have of a Zeus?

**Double tracks and Hermes**

A denser, more complex net of connections between Zeus and "our ruler" (especially if this ruler is Ptolemy Philadelphus) is cast via their similarity to a third figure suggested by allusions to two poems: the king loved by the Muses in Hesiod's *Theogony*, and Hermes in the *Hymn to Hermes*. Lines 79f evoke Hesiod's *Theogony* with a direct quote (but Kings are from Zeus) and go on to discuss Zeus' patronage of kings and "our ruler" in particular. The wider Hesiodic context (*Theogony* 80–97) describes the birth of a king who is loved by the Muses, rules with straight justice, accomplishes his deeds with ease, and possesses great wealth. Further, when the hymnist says of Zeus'...

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10 Theocritus calls Philadelphus φιλόμουσος, *Id.* 14.61.

11 Zeus as king was dispenser of justice, a fact referred to in the opening lines of the hymn, Zeus as δικαστὸς, and in 79f. where he watches over kings to see who rules with straight justice and who with crooked.

12 As do Zeus and "our ruler," see above on Hermes.

13 As kings do in the Callimachus passage (84), and as Zeus himself does, since he both distributes it to kings (84), and is requested at the end to grant it, presumably to the poet, although no recipient is specifically mentioned.
patronage of kings that he chose what was φέρτατος of human beings (70 most excellent/powerful), we may recall Hesiod calling Zeus φέρτατος of gods and see the choice of adjective here as designed to equate Zeus and Ptolemy/kings.

The extensive network of allusions to the Homeric Hymn to Hermes works to connect Zeus and "our ruler" by linking both to the actions and abilities of Hermes in that poem.34 When explaining what makes "our ruler" stand out from and surpass other kings, the hymnist identifies this ruler's ability to achieve in the evening, sometimes sooner, what he thought of in the morning (87f "In the evening he accomplishes what he thinks of in the morning/ In the evening the greatest things, the lesser things as soon as he thinks of them").35 This passage alludes to Hermes' exploit in the Homeric Hymn which helped him achieve his place on Olympus: that is, stealing the possessions/cattle of his older brother Apollo on the evening of the day on which he was born.36 Thus divine-like abilities are assigned to the ruler. But Callimachus' hymn goes further in drawing a connection

34 See Clauss, (n. 19).

35 Note also that Philadelphus celebrated his birthday and accession on the same day.

36 Homeric Hymn to Hermes 17f: "In the morning he was born, in the middle of the day he played the lyre/ in the evening he stole the cattle of Apollo."
particularly with Zeus. The allusions to the Homeric Hymn
in the first half often link Zeus with Hermes. In fact,
Zeus' abilities have already been described in similar terms.
As Depew comments, the description of the ruler at 87f is
"analogous to the description of Zeus' similarly marked
abilities in 57f." In that passage, Zeus' swift thought and
effectiveness is described as being that he planned/thought
all things teleia. Further, the ruler's effectiveness is
described by the verb τελεία. Both 57f and 87f use a version
of this word in their descriptions. The link is reinforced
by a further lexical connection. The word used to refer to
"our ruler", μεσοντι (86) elsewhere in Greek literature is
used as a participle and applied to gods, in the case of
Homer, always of Zeus. Here, however, it is used as a noun
and applied to a human king, thus allusively awarding divine
status to Ptolemy.

Clauss uses these parallels (together with allusions to the Theogony
of Hesiod), to suggest that the poem is in fact written as a suggestion/
ammonishment towards reconciliation between Philadelphus and his brother
Keraunos as was achieved by Hermes and Apollo in the Homeric Hymn. The
Homer's quarrel was ended by Hermes' gift of the lyre on which he had
sung a theogony as, Clauss suggests, Callimachus is also suggesting
reconciliation through poetry/song.

Depew (n. 5).

Tandy (n. 23), ad loc. points out that in Greek poetry Zeus is often
linked with this verb and its derivatives. MacClellan (n. 18), ad loc.
goes further to propose that the verb was chosen specifically to suggest
a connection with Zeus Teleios.

See MacClellan (n. 18), ad loc.
But the allusions themselves are multivalent, and play different and conflicting roles as our perspective on the hymn is adjusted. Although they work to help establish the series Zeus-Hermes-Ptolemy, they also suggest an alternative series: Zeus-Hermes-Poet, and this latter series makes strong the very links which were problematic in the former (e.g. the absence of persuasive speech as an attribute of kings). Both Hermes and the poet work towards their desired status in similar ways. Hermes achieves his Olympian status by means of his creations (lyre, wings), his thefts and lies, and his singing of theogonic poetry. The poet establishes his poetic authority by his deceptions, despite, like Hermes, claiming to tell the truth. Again, the poet conceals Zeus at the moment of his first appearance as Hermes conceals the lyre and the stolen cattle. Theft, concealment, and lies are the key to power for both figures.

This poet goes one step further than Hermes in his deceptions. Hermes’ deception was effected by the ἰχνιασοῖα (342) of the cattle which seemed to point to Apollo, the owner, but in fact lead backwards to Hermes, the thief. This poet’s deceptions are also made up of ἰχνιασοῖα. In the first part of the hymn, the tracks point both to Arcadia as the birthplace of Zeus and Crete. The hymnist reverses tradition

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11 The scholarship so far has often commented on these allusions, but has opted for one or the other alternative as the basis of interpretation i.e to draw attention either to the similarities between Zeus and Hermes, e.g. Clauss, or the differences, e.g. Knight.
by making Zeus travel from Arcadia to Crete (instead of beginning in Crete), but his manner leaves open the possibility for the journey to go the other way, Crete to Arcadia. He surpasses Hermes in that we cannot determine which way the tracks lead, or even if the track itself is entirely false. However, it is important that a track of some kind exists. Presumably Hermes could have erased the cattle prints altogether, but it was critical for his ambition that there be evidence that a deception had been perpetrated, that Apollo seek to solve the puzzle and succeed in finding the perpetrator. This in part is the function of the rationalist hymnic persona. It is why it is important to think of him as a separate persona rather than an ironic pose of the hymnist. In the hiding of Zeus in this hymn, unlike the Hesiodic account, it is crucial that it be known that some deception has gone on. Without that the poet has no case/evidence for his claims to cultural authority. But if the poet were simply ironic or openly deceptive, we might be able to solve the puzzle, or, possibly more dangerous, give up trying. The hymnic persona holds out the possibility that there might just be some attainable truth, and as long as that possibility exists, we should continue to look for Zeus. Unlike Hermes, it is important for Callimachus that the search does not end.

12 Note ἐν δοιᾷ μάλα θυμός (5).
In the second part of the hymn, the parallels continue. It is only through the deeds of poets that Zeus is whoever he is and has the power he does, as is also the case with the earthly ruler. If Zeus and Ptolemy share Hermes' ability to accomplish their plans it is only because others, most significantly the poet, make it so. It is the poet's ability to make things no sooner said than done which creates this Zeus and this ruler. In fact, the source of Ptolemy's power is both Zeus and the poet, as he shows when he accounts for his claims by saying "we sing"; they are so because we poets say they are. Thus, since the poet is the authority for this parallel of Zeus and King, it is the poet who is really the evidence/ tekhrion of Zeus' actions and choices not Ptolemy.

These parallels point to the interconnectedness and interdependence of god, the mythopoetic tradition, and this particular poem/ poet. Poets can only be poets/ creators while there is both a tradition remaining to belong to and room for change. They need to preserve the heritage but also preserve its multivocality, the source of its power. Since the gods are at the heart of that tradition, poetry needed to preserve the traditional gods and also their multivalency. If the tradition is fixed, so are the gods which populate them. Multivocality, made possible only by the deceptive nature of language in poetry, is the essence of the power of god, the mythopoetic tradition, and the poet.
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