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The Future of a Hellenistic Illusion

Some observations on Callimachus and religion

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When Demetrius son of Antigonus, Poliorcetes, very much a politician, very much a soldier, and very much a man, rode into the subject-city of Athens in August of 291 B.C., the Athenians, those victors of Marathon, greeted him with the notorious hymn which began:

Ὡς οἱ μέγιστοι τῶν θεῶν καὶ φίλτατοι
τῇ πόλει πάρεισιν·
ἐνταῦθα ⟨γὰρ Δήμητρα καὶ⟩ Δημήτριον
ἅμα παρῆχ' ὁ καιρός.
Χὴ μὲν τὰ σεμνὰ τῆς Κόρης μυστήρια
ἔρχεθ' ἵνα ποιήσῃ,
ὁ δ' ἱλαρός, ὥσπερ τὸν θεὸν δεῖ, καὶ καλὸς
καὶ γελῶν πάρεστι.
Σεμνόν τι φαίνεθ', οἱ φίλοι πάντες κύκλῳ,
ἐν μέσοισι δ' αὐτός,
ὅμοιον ὥσπερ οἱ φίλοι μὲν ἀστέρες,
ἥλιος δ' ἐκεῖνος.
Ὦ τοῦ κρατίστου παῖ Ποσειδῶνος θεοῦ,
χαῖρε, κἀφροδίτης[1].

We possess very few literary texts written outside Alexandria whose express purpose was mundane exposition of the divine status of a human ruler, and

* An earlier version of this essay was delivered as a paper at Harvard University in October 1982, in London in December 1983, and in Bern in July 1984. I am much indebted to the friends and colleagues who gave generously of their comments and criticisms on each of these occasions. I am especially indebted to Linda A. Colman who prompted me to reflect on the nature of Callimachus' child-gods and was very generous with her own thoughts and ideas on the subject.

1 J. U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* (Oxford 1925) 173–175. In v. 3 γὰρ Δήμητρα καί is a supplement provided by Toup, but is required both by the sense of the following lines (v. 5 χὴ μέν ...) and by the metre. The text is preserved by Athenaeus 253 D–F, quoting from the twenty-second book of the *Histories* of Duris of Samos, a contemporary of Demetrius (FGrHist 76 F 13). The author of the verses is not given, but it may have been one Hermocles (otherwise unknown): Athenaeus 697 A quotes Philochorus (FGrHist 328 F 165) as saying that in the case of Antigonus and Demetrius Ἀθηναίους ᾄδειν παιᾶνας τοὺς πεποιημένους ὑπὸ Ἑρμίππου τοῦ Κυζικηνοῦ, ἐφαμίλλων γενομένων τῶν παιᾶνας ποιησάντων καὶ τοῦ Ἑρμοκλέους προκριθέντος where Schweighäuser corrected ὑπὸ Ἑρμίππου to ὑπὸ Ἑρμο-

these lines are therefore invaluable; indeed the whole hymn is somewhat diagnostic for the modern reader of early Hellenistic religious poetry, for we see just how direct and uncomplicated the equation of man with god could be. Demetrius is incorporated straightforwardly into the royal Olympian family, with all the familiar concern that the new Hellenistic rulers had for their ancestry: not only is he cast in the role of Dionysus, by the suggestive collocation with Demeter on the occasion of the festival of the Eleusinian mysteries, but he is made directly the son of Poseidon, and also of Aphrodite[2].

The Athenians were certainly not alone in their treatment of Demetrius: for example, Athenaeus 253 B refers to Polemon for the Theban foundation of a whole temple to Aphrodite Lamia, one of Demetrius' mistresses (L. Preller, Polemonis Periegetae Fragmenta, Leipzig 1838, fr. 15). But it was the Athenians who blurred the distinctions between man and god for Demetrius most extensively, setting up an altar to him as 'Kataibates' on the spot where he first

κλέους. The occasion referred to by Philochorus may have been the same as that mentioned by Duris (Athenaeus refers to Philochorus only as one in a list of indirect citations, without context), which we know from the twenty-first book of the *Histories* of Democharesof Athens to have been Demetrius' return from Leucas and Corcyra (cited by Athenaeus 253 B–D = FGrHist 75 F 2, just before his quotation from Duris). F. Jacoby, FGrHist 3b (Suppl.) 1 p. 541f. considered this to have been the restoration of ἐλευθερία and πάτριος πολιτεία in 307/6 after the capture of Munichia, but K. J. Beloch's dating of 291 (or 292) has been generally accepted because of the reference to the Aetolian situation in vv. 21–30 of the hymn (*Griechische Geschichte* IV 2, Berlin ²1927, 248f.: see C. Habicht, *Untersuchungen zur politischen Geschichte Athens im 3. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Vestigia 30, 1979, 39ff.). – For useful discussion and notes see L. Cerfaux and J. Tondriau, *Le culte des souverains* (Tournai 1957) 180–187, for an important analysis of the religious motifs see O. Weinreich, *Antikes Gottmenschentum*, Neue Jahrbücher 2 (1926) 633–651, and in general see K. Scott, *The deification of Demetrius Poliorcetes*, AJP 49 (1928) 137–166. 217–239, and V. Ehrenberg, *Aspects of the Ancient World* (Oxford 1946) 179–198 'Athenian hymn to Demetrius Poliorcetes'.

2 The ancestry was no Athenian invention. Demetrius, much of whose success was based on naval strength, appropriately claimed Poseidon for his own, and the Earthshaker brandishing, or holding, his trident appears as a standard image on the reverse of Demetrius' coinage from about 300 B.C. on: see E. T. Newell, *The Coinages of Demetrius Poliorcetes* (London 1927) 24ff. Aphrodite's presence is generally explained as representing Demetrius' active love-life and/or his good looks (so, for example, K. Scott, *The deification* p. 233 [see n. 1 above], F. Taeger, *Charisma* I, Stuttgart 1957, 272); this is unsuitable to her role here as a parent, and she must rather be the marine Aphrodite, Euploia, Pontia, Galenaia, etc., a familiar cult-figure around the Aegean islands and coastline and a normal associate of Poseidon in this role: see L. R. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States* II (Oxford 1896) 636f., L. Preller and C. Robert, *Griechische Mythologie* I (Berlin ⁴1894) 364f., and for an important discussion of the spread of marine Aphrodite's cult in Egyptian territories, in formal association with Arsinoe II, see L. Robert, *Un décret d'Ilion et un papyrus concernant des cultes royaux*, in: Essays in Honor of C. Bradford Welles (New Haven 1966) 175–211 and esp. 199–202. Another 'son' of Poseidon and Aphrodite was Rhodes: scholia to Pindar *O.* 7, 24f. (= Herodorus FGrHist 31 F 62, Herophilus FGrHist 533 F 4). – For marine and naval iconography in Demetrius' important new foundation on the Gulf of Pagasae, Demetrias, see U. Kron, *Das Siegel der Stadt Demetrias: Ikonographie*, Mitt. d. dt. archäol. Inst., Athen. Abt. 93 (1978) 149–160.

stepped down from his chariot (Plutarch, Demetrius 10, 5) as if he were Zeus or Apollo, and voting, on the suggestion of the politician Stratocles[3], even to embroider the images of Demetrius and Antigonus alongside those of Zeus and Athena on the latter's sacred πέπλος (Plutarch, Demetrius 10, 5) as well as allowing him to live in the opisthodomus of Athena's Parthenon (Plutarch, Demetrius 23, 5). Hence, as Athenaeus 252 F remarks, the behaviour of the Athenians towards Demetrius became a notorious example for writers of all periods on the topic of flattery (διαβόητος δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ κολακείᾳ καὶ ὁ τῶν Ἀθηναίων δῆμος). Democharés, a nephew of Demosthenes, recorded, somewhat implausibly, that even Demetrius himself was taken aback and thought the less of contemporary Athenians (Athenaeus 253 A–B quoting book 20 of the Histories = FGrHist 75 F 1), and the gods of longer, Olympian, standing made their views plain too: we know from the Athenian comedian Philippides (Kock CAF III 308 fr. 25) and Plutarch, Demetrius 12, 3 that at the Great Panathenaea of 302 B.C., as the πέπλος was being paraded in procession, a hurricane descended, ripped the garment in two and smashed the sacred mast and spar on which it was carried – furthermore, an extraordinary and unseasonable frost destroyed the grape, fig and corn crops, and all round the altars set up to Demetrius and Antigonus hemlock sprouted[4]. Before long the Athenians were struggling for liberation from this 'divine' Macedonian[5].

These were difficult and confused times, and while the familiar, traditional religious attitudes and practices continued with the tenacity that habit and repeated ritual do give to the expression of man's spiritual needs, much was inevitably changing in the relationship between man and god. The eleva-

3 Diodorus 20, 46, 2; Plutarch *Demetrius* 10, 2–11, 5 suggests that the Athenians far exceded any others in their adulation of Demetrius and Antigonus, and that they were prompted in this primarily by Stratocles.

4 It was Philippides who played an important part in persuading king Lysimachus, before the battle of Ipsus, to donate a new mast and spar (as well as a supply of corn), and for this and other contributions to the welfare of Athens the poet was officially honored by the assembly in 283/2 (IG II² 657 = SIG³ 374). For a discussion of events in Athens at this time, and the difficult question of the sacred πέπλος, see T. L. Shear, *Kallias of Sphettos and the Revolt of Athens in 286 B.C.*, Hesperia Suppl. 17 (1978) 36 (and Appendix no. 11 for a text of IG II² 657). The other manifestations of divine displeasure are described in Plutarch *Demetrius* 12, 4–5.

5 The Athenians should perhaps have relied on Athena from the start. An inscription from the acropolis of Lindos from 99 B.C. (the 'Lindian chronicle', in: *Lindos, fouilles de l'acropole 1902–1914: II Inscriptions* ed. C. Blinkenberg (Berlin/Copenhagen 1941, no. 2 section D) gives an account of three epiphanies of Athena in dreams to her priests on critical occasions in the city's history: the third was when Demetrius Poliorcetes besieged Rhodes in 305/4, and Athena's advice that the Lindians write to Ptolemy for assistance was successful. While the Athenians were admiring the divine qualities of Demetrius as their Saviour the Lindians were able to thank their traditional protectress. – This uncomfortable period in Athens' history is discussed in detail by C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum und griechische Städte* (Zetemata 14, ²1970) 44–58 ('Die Kulte der Antigoniden' 20. 21). 213ff. 230ff.

tion of ruling men and women to the status of gods was not a one-sided affair, and just a question of escalating flattery: rulers, after all, presented themselves as gods and promoted worship by their subjects. Plutarch tells us (Demetrius 2, 3) that Demetrius imitated Dionysus above all amongst the gods, as being the most redoutable in war and the most apt at promoting the joy and delights of peace: and this was not just abstract propaganda, for he seems to have minted coinage depicting himself as the god, and public opinion certainly thought that he regularly invited the same honours and treatment that would have been accorded to Dionysus[6]. Similarly in Egypt, Ptolemy Soter was presenting himself wearing the aegis of Zeus and Athena and attended by the divine emblems of eagle and thunderbolt[7], and although the early Ptolemies seem to have adopted a policy of gradualism in claiming full divine honours within the Greek theocracy (thus, for example, Ptolemy I was not given full cult-worship as a god until after his death, probably in 279/8 B.C.[8], and living rulers seem not to have been accorded explicit divine worship until Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II were declared 'Theoi Adelphoi', 'Brother-Sister Gods', in 269/8 [P. Hibeh 199][9]), nonetheless it is quite clear that the early Ptolemies collabo-

6 The evidence is presented and discussed extensively by K. Scott, *The deification* (above n. 1) 221–233; also useful is J. Tondriau, *Dionysus, Dieu royal,* in: Παγκάρπεια: Mélanges Henri Grégoire (Brussels 1953) 441–466 (and especially 456f.). For the exceptional importance of Dionysus in connection with the image and cult of the Hellenistic ruler see P. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972) I 201–207, and the literature cited in II 342–351.

7 See J. Tondriau, *Rois Lagides comparés ou identifiés à des divinités,* Chronique d'Egypte 23 (1948) 127–146, and *Esquisse de l'histoire des cultes royaux ptolémaïques,* Rev. Hist. Rel. 137 (1950) 207–235.

8 Outside Egypt Ptolemy Soter received divine honours and worship on Rhodes and some of the Aegean islands from 304 B.C. on (see C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum* [above n. 5] 109–115. 258f.), but in the specific form commonly given to an outside power whose intervention as a protector and benefactor a state wished to acknowledge, 'Soter'. Within Egypt Ptolemy I was honored with sacrifices and the establishment of games, Ptolemaea, by his son Ptolemy II: H. von Prott, *Das* ἐγκώμιον εἰς Πτολεμαῖον *und die Zeitgeschichte,* Rhein. Mus. 53 (1898) 460–476 had pointed out that since IG XII 7, 506 (= SIG³ 390) refers to the games as isolympic the festival was probably founded in 279/8, the fourth anniversary of Soter's death, and this seems to have been confirmed by the recent discovery of the Athenian Callias decree, Agora inv. no. I 7295 (see T. L. Shear, *Kallias of Sphettos* [above n. 4] 33–39).

9 *P. Hibeh* 199 refers to Macedonian regnal year 14 as that in which the name of the eponymous priest for the Theoi Adelphoi was added to contracts. There has been considerable scholarly discussion this century about the dating system used by the early Ptolemies, and there is still no consensus. I accept here the results of A. E. Samuel, *Ptolemaic Chronology* (Munich 1962), according to which Ptolemy II calculated his first 16 regnal years from the date of his father's death in 282, but thereafter calculated from 285/4, the year when he became co-regent. P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972) II 364f. sticks to a date of 272/1 for 'year 14' and asserts that Samuel's results have been 'proved false': they have not, since the few documents sometimes referred to as contradicting Samuel (some demotic ostraca, a papyrus and an inscription) all turn out on inspection to be quite inadequate. I shall deal with this complicated problem elsewhere. The most authoritative dating for *P. Hibeh* 199 is still that of Samuel, as discussed by him in the introduction to *P. Yale* 28 = *P. Hibeh* 128

rated actively with native Egyptian belief, according to which the ruler was infused with divine power and stood in relation to the gods as a son to parents, and was in fact *the* only priest who could intercede effectively with the gods. This made for a state of affairs in Egypt that was radically different from that of, say, a Demetrius in Athens. Relief-sculptures and inscriptions at the major centres such as Memphis show Ptolemy, and his queen, dressed in the full Egyptian royal panoply, falcon-god not Greek, Pharaoh not Ptolemy; it was to Memphis that they came for the traditional coronation as rulers of Egypt, and when Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions describe Ptolemy and Arsinoe travelling through the country, to visit Pithom and worship there on the occasion of his birthday, or depict them participating in the installation and worship of the sacred goat at Mendes, for example, it is in terms of the divine Egyptian pharaoh, with full and elaborate titulature, visiting the temples of the traditional Egyptian religion[10]. Athenaeus (196 A–203 B) preserves a description by

(J. F. Oates, A. E. Samuel, C. Bradford Welles, *Yale Papyri,* Am. Stud. in Papyrology 2, New Haven 1967, 66f.).

10 The relationship between the Greek writers in Alexandria and established Egyptian religion is far from simple or direct, but most modern interpreters of Callimachus and Theocritus pay far too little attention to the possible influence of Egyptian ways of thinking on Hellenistic poetry. The crucial role of the divine pharaoh in traditional Egyptian belief is well summarised by J. Bergman, *Ich bin Isis* (Historia religionum 3, Uppsala 1968) 66ff. (with references to other literature); see also E. Winter, *Der Herrscherkult in den ägyptischen Ptolemäertempeln,* in: Das ptolemäische Ägypten, ed. H. Maehler and V. M. Strocka (Mainz 1978) 147–160. Documents for the early Ptolemaic period are few and sketchy, but that the Greek rulers recognized and acted upon the importance for Egyptians of their pharaonic role is clear from various indications: 1. iconographical representations of Alexander the Great and the early Ptolemies with the attributes of Greek and Egyptian gods: see G. Grimm, *Die Vergöttlichung Alexanders des Grossen in Ägypten und ihre Bedeutung für den ptolemäischen Königskult,* Das ptolemäische Ägypten (above) 103–112; 2. involvement in crucial Egyptian ceremonial, such as Alexander's coronation at Memphis: see J. Bergman, *Ich bin Isis* (above) 92ff.; we have no hard evidence that the early Ptolemies were crowned at Memphis, but it seems almost inconceivable that they were not: cf. J. Quaegebeur, JNES 30 (1971) 245; 3. representation of the Ptolemies and their families in Egyptian temple-reliefs with the dress, panoply and titles of Egyptian rulers, such that they are indistinguishable from the Egyptian pharaohs who preceded them: see, for example, J. Quaegebeur, *Reines ptolémaïques et traditions égyptiennes,* in: Das ptolemäische Ägypten (above) 245–262, *Documents concerning a cult of Arsinoe Philadelphos at Memphis,* JNES 30 (1971) 239–270. – For the account of Ptolemy II Philadelphus' travels to Pithom (Heroopolis) and depictions of worship there see the hieroglyphic stone of Pithom (inscribed in 265/4 B.C.), in E. Naville, *The Store-City of Pithom* (London ^{4}1903) 18–21 (French text and somewhat fuller notes in E. Naville, *La stèle de Pithom,* Zeitschr. f. Ägypt. Sprache u. Altertumskunde 40, 1902/3, 66–75). For Philadelphus' involvement in the cult of the sacred goat at Mendes, where the temple was restored under his patronage and where the importance of Ptolemy's involvement with the cult is continually stressed, see the hieroglyphic Mendes stele (265/4 B.C. or later), first published in translation by H. Brugsch, *Die grosse Mendes-Stele aus der Zeit des zweiten Ptolemäers,* Zeitschr. f. Ägypt. Sprache u. Alterthumskunde 13 (1875) 33–40 with an important supplement noted by H. von Prott, Rhein. Mus. 53 (1898) 464. New translations of the Pithom and Mendes texts,

Callixeinus of Rhodes of the famous procession in Alexandria of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which is notorious among modern scholars not only for its lavish expenditure on exotic animals and sumptuous materials but also for its symbolic juxtapositions of Dionysus, Alexander the Great and Ptolemy (amongst others)[11]. The combination of religious symbol and political ideology in this major public parade is notable enough in Greek terms, but we would do well to bear in mind, as always, the extent to which this kind of display was in accord with Egyptian expectations of their ruler as being somewhat apart, and, in an un-Greek way, divine.

I have said that this was a confused time. It must also have been confusing. The 'old' Greek religion was clearly felt by many to be as valid and powerful as ever, and the mentality of the new ruling class of Egypt was profoundly Greek; but the encounter with the established religions of Egypt was bound to create strong pressures and tensions for change, as Greek attitudes accommodated themselves to their new environment. We should not be surprised if Greek views and beliefs of this period sometimes seem strangely disturbed and wayward. The dislocation of the early Hellenistic world, psychological and spiritual as well as geographical, must have been immense.

When we examine the writings of one of the most acutely sensitive intellectuals of this period, Callimachus of Cyrene, the sense of paradox and even puzzlement is especially evident. So striking is it, indeed, that modern scholars have come up with strongly contradictory interpretations of Callimachus' religious poetry, and this phenomenon, this extraordinary lack of interpretative consensus, itself merits explanation. Put very simply, why does Callimachus, as an exponent of religion, seem so utterly different to different readers?

Consider for a moment what kind of different and awkward explanations modern scholars have for the way Hellenistic poetry deals with the juxtaposi-

with introductory comments, were published in G. Roeder, *Die ägyptische Götterwelt* (= Die ägyptische Religion in Texten und Bildern I, Zürich/Stuttgart 1959) 108–128 and 168–188 respectively. – The introduction of Greek cultural and religious ideology to the traditional Egyptian sites was sometimes of equal importance: cf. the semicircle of Greek poets and philosophers set up in the exedra at the end of the sacred way in Memphis (including Homer, Pindar and Plato) as well as representations of the infant Dionysus and accompanying animals (J. P. Lauer and C. Picard, *Les statues ptolémaïques du Sarapieion de Memphis,* Publ. de l'Inst. d'Art et d'Archéol. de l'Université de Paris III, Paris 1955) and C. Picard, *Le Pindare de l'exèdre des poètes et des sages au Sérapeion de Memphis,* Fondation Eugène Piot, Monuments et Mémoires 46 (1952) 5–24 (cf. also CRAI 1951, pp. 71–80); the early Hellenistic date proposed by Lauer and Picard for these statues is not, however, entirely secure: see P. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972) II 404. – For an important and suggestive discussion of the possible influence of court protocol on the poetry of Callimachus and his modes of address to members of the royal family see Thomas Gelzer, *Kallimachos und das Zeremoniell des ptolemäischen Königshauses,* in: Aspekte der Kultursoziologie. Aufsätze ... zum 60. Geburtstag von Mohammed Rassem (Berlin 1982) 13–30.

11 For a full text and discussion of the Greek background see E. E. Rice, *The Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus* (Oxford 1983).

tion of religious devotion and politics. Many view this simply as a matter of the poet serving the requirements of public cult and the flattery of royal patrons. This has turned Callimachus into anything from an establishment hack to a career hypocrite: not that he is called that so directly, but these are certainly the logical implications of many of the works on the period today. Most recently on Callimachus, for example, Claude Meillier[12], while purporting to look for a glimpse of "the man himself and his conscience" (p. 8 "l'homme lui-même et sa conscience"), in fact concludes that his hymns were written for civic cults, that Callimachus was a patriot who had a sincere admiration, even veneration, for the greatness of the royal family, and a deep sense of religion (see, for example, pp. 231. 239). True, Meillier does acknowledge a slight discomfort with the lack of profound political thought in the hymns (p. 238 «ces œuvres ne manifestent aucune pensée politique profonde"), but essentially he sees these poems as 'social documents' and thereby avoids dealing with this as an issue. Callimachus the parasite, then.

Fifty years earlier Emile Cahen could declare that although Callimachus was surely not a sincere and true follower of Apollo or Demeter, nonetheless "he doubtless thought that the individual's scepticism should respect the social and civic value of traditional belief; moreover that he should proclaim it"[13]. Callimachus the hypocrite. The nineteenth century was more honest and direct: Franz Susemihl, in his great history of Alexandrian literature, described the hymns as dry, learned and rhetorical, forced court-poetry with little religious or poetic content[14].

12 Claude Meillier, *Callimaque et son temps* (Publ. de l'Univ. de Lille 3, Lille 1979).

13 E. Cahen, *Callimaque et son œuvre poétique* (Paris 1929) 409: "il pensait sans doute que le scepticisme de l'individu doit respecter la valeur sociale et civique de la croyance traditionnelle; plus, qu'il doit la proclamer." If this makes Callimachus' position sound remarkably similar to that of a Parisian academician of the late twenties, Cahen himself asks explicitly a few lines later: "Est-ce là une situation d'esprit que nous ne puissions comprendre? ... l'Alexandrin est-il si loin de beaucoup d'entre nous?" Cahen sees the relationship between Callimachus and the Egyptian world as one of simple antithesis, and a matter, for a Greek, of self-protection and exclusion (p. 410), and thus speaks, almost inevitably, of "la banalité classique de sa théologie" (a very strange way to describe Callimachus' Hymns). It is a common failing of interpreters of Alexandrian poetry that they restrict their enquiry to perusal of the Greek poetic texts; scrutiny of the wider range of documentation (which is quite abundant, even if complex) from both Greeks and Egyptians in the cities and towns outside Alexandria quickly shows that syncretism of Greek and Egyptian was profound and extensive. The process was naturally intricate, and varied widely from place to place, but even in Alexandria, the most Greek city of them all, the accommodation of Greek and Egyptian to one another is evident in every dimension of life, whether social, economic, administrative, religious or intellectual; there can have been scarcely anyone for whom living in Egypt will have consisted in a simple set of nationalistic or ethnic choices, and we only distort matters if we insist on applying uncomplicated, mutually exclusive labels such as 'Greek' or 'Egyptian'.

14 Franz Susemihl, *Geschichte der griechischen Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit* (Leipzig 1891) I 362: "Diese künstlichen Producte verrathen nun aber sehr deutlich, dass Kallimachos sie

Even critics who have tried to take Callimachus seriously have felt it necessary to assume a paradoxical split in his poetic personality. Heinrich Staehelin in his sensitive monograph, Die Religion des Kallimachos (Diss. Zürich; Tübingen 1934), argued that the old beliefs were played out for Callimachus, and that his use of myth, while extensive, was just poetising; but that, on the other hand, the experience of god in man's daily experience was real for him, and indeed man's closeness to god reached the point of having a *mystical* quality (pp. 13. 55f. 62ff.). Thus Staehelin turns Callimachus into a profound believer who lacked a credible text.

There is an important methodological problem here (as well as an emotional one), I think. These attempts to 'save Callimachus' generally involve an over-simple inclination to believe what we appear to be being told when it comes to 'cult', and to assume that since cult implies devotional *act,* therefore a cult-text must necessarily be 'sincere'. This is the documentary fallacy. To assume that a poetic text is a document, and that it stands primarily in a documentary relationship to its so-called 'social context', is very foolish; to assume that a poem by Callimachus can be treated as a document is likely to be disastrous. Any good poet is likely to be mad, and in some way a visionary; what he will not be is typical or representative, but although his outlook may be idiosyncratic, he may be more profoundly in tune in some way with the pulse of his time, if we only know how to read him. Callimachus was one of the most psychologically subtle and aware writers of any period.

The six hymns of Callimachus are indeed the most overtly religious literary texts which we have from the early Hellenistic period. Conventionally they are divided into two groups: the mimetic and the non-mimetic. The mimetic hymns (to Apollo, Athena and Demeter) recreate the exciting atmosphere at festivals shortly before the epiphany of the divinity involved and are spoken in the voice of an official addressing other celebrants. The others (to Zeus, Artemis and Delos) are addressed directly to gods in traditional manner and celebrate each divinity's birth and some of their more famous qualities and achievements. But what is most striking about this latter group is not their external format as cult-texts, but rather their poetic view-point towards their respective gods: in each case the gods are presented primarily as very young children. Two contrasting points have to be acknowledged here: 1. Greek religion always does give prominence to the birth and upbringing of its gods. The Homeric Hymn to Hermes is the classic example of this, and indeed the extraordinary precocity of the one-day old trickster Hermes (who could invent the lyre, steal a whole head of cattle, etc.) is its main devotional feature. In Callimachus himself even the hymn to Artemis, which begins with the young

nicht mit rechter Lust und Liebe, sondern unter dem Zwange des Hofdichters gearbeitet hat. Sie sind trocken und gelehrt, rhetorisch aufgeputzt, aber arm an religiösem und poetischem Gehalt."

goddess sitting on her father's knee asking as a primary-school child not for toys and trinkets but for perpetual virginity and hunting-companions, and which was once thought to typify Hellenistic 'charm', was recently discovered to correspond closely to an archaic text by Sappho or Alcaeus[15]. 2. However the emphasis given to children and childish things has also been seen as a characteristically Hellenistic preoccupation, and is often referred to as 'Kleinmalerei'. The standard work here is that of Georg Huber (Lebensschilderung und Kleinmalerei im hellenistischen Epos, Diss. Basel 1926), and modern readers of Hellenistic poetry often pay lip-service to Huber's view that the depiction of small children, and mothers giving birth to children, reflects a wider Hellenistic concern with 'realism' and an inclination to construct small, self-contained vignettes which need no more justification than their 'charm'. It is easy to point to the plastic arts of the period for a parallel, and easy also to see 'Kleinmalerei' as corresponding to the stylistic, programmatic move in poetry away from heroic writing and to the attempt to renew the poetic tradition by drawing on material from the local real world (so Huber pp. 1ff. 103f.).

This is all very plausible, but however much 'Kleinmalerei' may satisfy the taxonomic urge of the scholar, how adequate is it as an explanation for the *mentality* of writers such as Callimachus? If the divine world seems often to be populated largely by ultraprecocious infants is it really just a question of style or aesthetics? Surely there is more to the matter than this. We may begin by noting that these child-gods are restricted almost entirely to Callimachus. Huber himself acknowledges this point, but only as a matter of classification: p. 18 "Unter den alexandrinischen Dichtern fällt für die Behandlung der Motive des kleinen Götterkindes vor allem Kallimachos in Betracht"; p. 29 "Apollonios Rhodios macht vom Motiv des Wickelkindes selten Gebrauch"; and again p. 9 "Neben Kallimachos bietet das hellenistische Epos fast keine Beispiele für die Geburtswehen und die Geburt mehr". Surely we ought to be reluctant to ascribe such a singular idiosyncrasy to general artistic taste.

First, in the non-mimetic hymns some recurrent features stand out in Callimachus' presentation of the child-gods.

1. In the Hymn to Zeus, which deals extensively with the search by the goddess Rhea for a spring in Arcadia when about to give birth to Zeus, the birth itself, the nursing of Zeus in secret by the nymphs and especially by the goat Amaltheia, and the swift maturation of the god into a power who gained Heaven by being stronger than his brothers, vv. 42–45 are striking[16]:

15 *P. Fouad* inv. no. 239, first published by E. Lobel and D. L. Page, *A new fragment of Aeolic verse*, CQ 2 (1952) 1–3 (= Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta 304, Lyrica Graeca Selecta 139). Lobel and Page drew attention to the striking parallel with Callimachus in their first edition and noted that the marginal scholion contained in the papyrus to column i vv. 2–3,]ωκαλλι, may have referred to him.

16 For an important analysis of the 'trick' by which Callimachus effects the transition in vv. 42–43 from Arcadia to Crete see A. H. Griffiths, BICS 17 (1970) 32f.

εὖτε Θενὰς ἀπέλειπεν ἐπὶ Κνωσοῖο φέρουσα,
Ζεῦ πάτερ, ἡ Νύμφη σε (Θεναὶ δ' ἔσαν ἐγγύθι Κνωσοῦ),
τουτάκι τοι πέσε, δαῖμον, ἄπ' ὀμφαλός· ἔνθεν ἐκεῖνο
Ὀμφάλιον μετέπειτα πέδον καλέουσι Κύδωνες.

This is a bizarre 'aetiological' detail, but one which is thrown into even greater incongruous prominence by that vocative Ζεῦ πάτερ in v. 43 addressed to the newly-born *infant*.

2. In the Hymn to Artemis the young child who wants virginity and hunting-companions cannot even reach her father's beard while sitting on his lap, though she fearlessly enters the terrifying workshop of the Cyclopes to order her bow and arrows (and demands hunting-dogs from Pan), before hunting down deer larger than bulls; when she returns home to Olympus she is met by Heracles demanding beef-steak. The last section of this hymn (vv. 183–268) may detail the patronage of Artemis (her city cults and her followers in myth), but the first 182 lines play constantly on the incongruous contrast between Artemis' tiny size and the huge, brutish company which she keeps. What is particularly significant and telling here is the effect which the first long section has had on two sensitive and acute modern commentators: Wilamowitz and Staehelin both felt obliged to describe this section, on the goddess of myth, as *travesty*. "Hier ergeht sich die Travestie der Götterwelt (anders kann man es nicht nennen) am freiesten" said Wilamowitz most emphatically, in Hellenistische Dichtung (Berlin 1924) II 54, referring to it again on pp. 56f. as "eine Travestie der olympischen Szenen" (so too Staehelin in Die Religion des Kallimachos 14ff.).

3. Finally, the Hymn to Delos is a more than curious text. Its starting point is the Delian section of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo[17]. But whereas the Homeric Hymn merely *lists* the names of all the places which were reluctant to receive the pregnant Leto for fear of jealous Hera (vv. 30–46) and devotes its major part to a narrative of Leto's acceptance by Delos, her labour, and the birth of Apollo the great patron of Delos (vv. 47–178), Callimachus constructs a wholly different poetic world: Leto chases round the Aegean while every city, river and island scatters (literally) before her (v. 70 φεῦγε μὲν Ἀρκαδίη, φεῦγεν δ' ..., 75 φεῦγε καὶ Ἀονίη, 103 φεῦγε δ' Ἄναυρος, 105 φεῦγε δὲ καὶ Πηνειός). Even when river Peneius offers sanctuary, Ares threatens to bury him and Apollo's mother has to chase on. The discomfort (or sense of dislocation and disturbance) that any reader feels here is not to be explained away by reference to Hellenistic rhetorical characteristics. The plain fact is that the pregnant Leto brings geographical anarchy to the Greek world. This is not just formal 'inversion' of the Homeric text (to use a popular tag), but the product of

17 Fundamental here is U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Die Ilias und Homer* (Berlin 1920) 440–462.

a very bizarre, and one might say frenzied, imagination. Furthermore, this hymn contains another equally bizarre feature: the unborn Apollo gives prophecy twice from inside his mother's womb, once to threaten Thebes rather peevishly (vv. 88–98), and once to advise his mother against the island Cos since this would be the birthplace of the mighty Ptolemy Philadelphus (vv. 162–195). We have to ask: What sort of a world is this?

Is 'Kleinmalerei' the most important or illuminating thing to say of these texts? or 'wit' or 'humour'? Should we not rather acknowledge that these hymns are very strange indeed, and that the state of mind which they betray towards religious matters and the divine seems very disturbed, even fractured? The almost febrile wit which Callimachus deploys should not mislead us: for all the amusement that oracular fetuses and falling navels provide, they also signify a distressingly disordered state of things. There is more than a touch of madness in the laughter here. Of course there is a certain comfort to be derived from reducing powerful beings to child-like dimensions. E. R. Dodds, commenting on the sincerity of Hellenistic ruler-worship, remarked[18]: "So far as they have religious meaning for the individual, ruler-cult and its analogues, ancient and modern, are primarily, I take it, expressions of helpless dependence; he who treats another human being as divine thereby assigns to himself the relative status of a child or an animal". We might add that, conversely, to reduce a deity to child-like status may mitigate the fearsomeness of being so helplessly dependent on that divine power; and there may also be some compensation for the elevation of rulers to divine status in Callimachus' vision of these gods as children. But the relief *is* only temporary, for behind the child-gods the terrifying potency remains, and in any case children, however cute, can have strange demonic powers of their own, as Iris Murdoch has often reminded us recently.

If these three hymns, formally cult-texts with a devotional purpose, suggest a troubled religious perception, we should look for further guidance to the

18 E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (California U. P. 1951) 242. Dodds is one of the few modern scholars to have attempted an inquiry into the psychological basis of 'ruler-worship' (the last chapter of his book being forthrightly headed 'The Fear of Freedom'). C. Habicht, *Gottmenschentum* (above n. 5) examines the historical context thoroughly and in Chapter 4 ('Bedeutung des Kultes') considers the political circumstances in which divine honours were accorded to mortals, but although it is true that cities honored men when they had offered significant help (p. 232 "Die Zeitgenossen haben es gelegentlich offen ausgesprochen, dass ein Machthaber deshalb göttliche Ehren erhielt, weil er der Stadt wirksamere Hilfe gewährte als die Götter"), this still leaves open one of the most important questions. Habicht remarks (p. 234): "Tritt ein Mensch in der Rolle des Schutzpatrons der Stadt an die Stelle der Götter, *so nimmt es nicht Wunder,* dass er bei seinem Einzug in die Stadt wie ein Gott empfangen wird" (my emphasis); I would have thought that the opposite is true. Divinifying political rulers at the least signifies an unhealthy, and potentially dangerous, condition of society. We have to ask *why* denial of reality was so pronounced at this time, what forms it took and what effects it had.

works which deal more directly with encounters between man and god, the mimetic hymns, and especially those to Athena and Demeter.

The most striking characteristic of these poems is the extraordinary degree to which they convey the mounting religious excitement of the celebrants who are awaiting a divine epiphany. We may expect that the issues at stake will be serious.

First, the Hymn to Demeter. This poem certainly focusses on powerful sentiments: the pious women have been fasting all day long and await the official break of evening so as to bring their abstinence to a close; while they wait the speaker tells a cautionary tale, the story of Erysichthon who chopped down Demeter's sacred grove to build, appropriately, a dining hall – he was punished, of course, with unquenchable, perpetual hunger and thirst. What is formally significant for the underlying religious concerns of the poem is that the punishment not only fits the crime, but it also befits the worshippers' piety: *they* will end their fast with a banquet, which will both celebrate Demeter's bountifulness and satisfy their hunger, while he, who refused to acknowledge the goddess, will be condemned to a 'fast' which can never be satisfied. Bounty and gluttony are perfectly juxtaposed for a clear moral declaration. I have suggested elsewhere that although the stated subject of the narrative is a traditional religious one, the narrative *form* shows the actual issues of the text to be social and human[19]. We may now take the discussion to its next stage: if the real concerns are the human issues (the effect of Erysichthon's punishment on his parents, for one thing) what are the *religious* implications? The closing section of the narrative is particularly suggestive:

μέστα μὲν ἐν Τριόπαο δόμοις ἔτι χρήματα κεῖτο,
μῶνον ἄρ' οἰκεῖοι θάλαμοι κακὸν ἠπίσταντο.
ἀλλ' ὅκα τὸν βαθὺν οἶκον ἀνεξήραναν ὀδόντες,
καὶ τόχ' ὁ τῶ βασιλῆος ἐνὶ τριόδοισι καθῆστο
αἰτίζων ἀκόλως τε καὶ ἔκβολα λύματα δαιτός.
Δάματερ, μὴ τῆνος ἐμὶν φίλος, ὅς τοι ἀπεχθής,
εἴη μηδ' ὁμότοιχος· ἐμοὶ κακογείτονες ἐχθροί. (VI 111–117)

Callimachus' account ends with Erysichthon begging publicly at the crossroads, and bringing shame to his family, whereas Ovid, who also narrates this story (Met. 8, 738–878) concludes with Erysichthon gruesomely eating *himself* (877f. *ipse suos artus lacerans divellere morsu / coepit*). Now although Wilamowitz dismissed the autophagy as Ovidian vulgarisation[20], it is surely inconceivable that this should not have been a feature, or, rather, an available version,

19 *Callimachus' Erysichthon, Homer and Apollonius Rhodius,* AJP 98 (1977) 97–123.

20 *Hellenistische Dichtung* II 33 n. 5 (D. Fehling [see n. 21] also regards this as an Ovidian addition).

of the traditional Greek story: we hear already in Herodotus 6, 75 of the horrible death of Cleomenes by self-mutilation, allegedly in punishment for his part in cutting down the sacred grove of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis, and other references too suggest that cannibalism was always a possible consequence if Demeter's benefits were ignored or denied[21]. Callimachus simply does not *mention* Erysichthon's terrible death. One could regard this omission

21 Evidence for the Erysichthon story itself before Callimachus is almost non-existent. At present our primary source is Hesiod fr. 43, from which it is clear that Erysichthon's daughter Mestra appeared in the *Catalogue of Women*: Erysichthon's hunger is mentioned, but not its cause or its conclusion, and Mestra seems to help feed her father by using her ability to change form at will (43c = Philodemus *De piet.* p. 49). Apart from Hesiod our only other pre-Hellenistic witness is Hellanicus of Lesbos (Athenaeus 416 B = FGrHist 4 F 7), who is known to have referred to Erysichthon's insatiable hunger (the subject of Achaeus' satyr-play *Aithon* [Snell TrGF I 20 F 5a–11] is not known). But despite the gaps in our documentation it is thoroughly unreasonable, and methodologically weak, to insist that the earliest surviving mention of a feature in the Erysichthon story must also be the moment when it was actually invented (thus Wilamowitz [above n. 20] makes Ovid the inventor of Erysichthon's autophagy, while D. Fehling, in *Erysichthon oder das Märchen von der mündlichen Überlieferung,* Rhein. Mus. 115, 1972, 173–196, wants Callimachus to be the inventor of his sin against Demeter). Historical coincidence rarely works so neatly in our favour that only the crucial evidence survives; the comparative material seems to indicate quite clearly that the essential features of the myth of Erysichthon's crime, punishment and autophagy were fully consonant with Greek thinking about impiety towards Demeter by at least the fifth century. Three parallel incidents, along with their contemporary interpretations, revolve around the same fundamental motifs of offense, hunger and the perverse butchery of the flesh, of oneself or one's own (cannibalism): – 1. Herodotus 6, 75, 3 Κλεομένης δὲ παραλαβὼν τὸν σίδηρον ἄρχετο ἐκ τῶν κνημέων ἑωυτὸν λωβώμενος· ἐπιτάμνων γὰρ κατὰ μῆκος τὰς σάρκας προέβαινε ἐκ τῶν κνημέων ἐς τοὺς μηρούς, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μηρῶν ἐς τε τὰ ἰσχία καὶ τὰς λαπάρας, ἐς ὃ ἐς τὴν γαστέρα ἀπίκετο καὶ ταύτην καταχορδεύων ἀπέθανε τρόπῳ τοιούτῳ· ... It was the Athenians who attributed Cleomenes' death to an offence against Demeter in Eleusis: like Erysichthon ἔκειρε τὸ τέμενος τῶν θεῶν (Herod. 6, 75, 3). (According to the Argives it was because he burnt down one of their sanctuaries in which some Argives had taken refuge, and Herodotus notes that outside Athens and Argos people thought Cleomenes' death was connected with his political machinations in Sparta.) – 2. Pausanias 8, 42 records an important incident from the fifth century in Arcadia. After the Phigalians had ignored the cult of their Black Demeter they were punished with famine, and the Delphic oracle pointed out that even worse would happen if they did not restore the goddess: v. 5 of the oracle specified καὶ σ' ἀλληλοφάγον θήσει τάχα καὶ τεκνοδαίτην (cf. H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle,* Oxford 1956, I 323f.; II 200). The verses reported to Pausanias are probably much later than the fifth century, but the tradition which the local story contains was doubtless an ancient one. (Cannibalism was viewed as the polar opposite of Demeter's agricultural benefits in later anthropological theory also: see Mnaseas of Patara as quoted in the scholia to Pindar *P.* 4, 106a.) – 3. Lysias 6 begins by referring to the fate of someone who offended Demeter by insulting her sanctuary and was condemned by her to die of hunger in the midst of plenty: θανάτῳ τῷ ἀλγίστῳ ἀπώλετο, λιμῷ· πολλῶν γὰρ καὶ ἀγαθῶν αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τὴν τράπεζαν παρατιθεμένων ὄζειν ἐδόκει τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ τῆς μάζης κάκιστον, καὶ οὐκ ἐδύνατο ἐσθίειν. (We may compare one later piece of corollary evidence: Lucan *Pharsalia* 3, 429ff. describes the reaction of Caesar's soldiers when instructed to chop down the primitive sacred grove at Marseilles: 430f. *si robora sacra ferirent, / in sua credebant redituras membra securis.*) – For

as a sign that Callimachus was more concerned with the social embarassment of the parents than with the religious issues inherent in the myth[22]. But perhaps Callimachus *does* refer to Erysichthon's autophagy: in vv. 116–117. These two lines are a kind of old-fashioned, 'simple-minded' maxim: "may that person never be my friend who is hateful to you, Demeter, nor my neighbour; so far as *I* am concerned enemies are bad neighbours." They express an unthinking, vernacular, crude piety[23]. Now look at what immediately precedes, vv. 113–115. After Erysichthon's father Triopas has complained to his own father Poseidon that his son has even eaten the family cat, the narrator remarks that so long as there was still something left in the house only the family knew of their misfortune; vv. 113ff. "but when his teeth had dried up the rich house, then the son of the king sat at the crossroads begging for scraps and the refuse thrown out from (other people's) feast". Every listener now waits for the ending which must follow: Yes, and *then* ...? Abruptly the narrator stops, *right at the climax,* crosses himself, and utters an incongruously down-home 'thank the Lord I never mix with that sort'; immediately the poem returns to the ritual frame with an address to the celebrants (118 "⟨Sing,⟩ girls, and add your voices, mothers ..."). The very fact that we are rushed away from the actual death of Erysichthon, and that in its place we have such a simplistic piece of piety, leaves us *dwelling* on the ending that has been omitted, and only half listening to the formal invocations to Demeter which make up the last twenty-one lines of the poem. It is an old trick, this one, but very effective.

But suppression of the true climax is not the only tactic which Callimachus employs here. The ineffectual plea for help by Triopas to Poseidon may also contain some directive comments by the poet which are crucial for understanding Callimachus' narrative; as so often, the poet makes his comments not on the surface of the text, but indirectly through suggestive reminiscence of Homer (the passages alluded to are drawn, characteristically, from well-known and striking episodes in the Iliad and Odyssey). Two important Homeric allusions are worth considering here, I believe. First, when the narrative at 96ff. describes Triopas as putting his hands to his grey hair and imploring Poseidon,

discussion of the development of the Erysichthon story see T. Zieliński, *Erysichthon,* Iresione II (= Eos Suppl. 8, 1936) 1–37 (a supplemented version of an article originally published in Philologus 50, 1890, 138–162), and D. Fehling cited above (the latter suffers from not taking account of the early comparative material).

22 That was my conclusion in 1977, AJP 98 (1977) 114f. The major shift of emphasis and 'new realism' for which I argued then still seems to me very evident in the Sixth Hymn, but I now think that there are significant implications here also for the religious outlook of the poem (and its author).

23 Important confirmation that this is the tone of these lines is found in Hymn III 136f. These lines express a similar prayer in similar language, and come at the end of a distinctively archaic section (vv. 122–135) modelled quite explicitly on Hesiod *Op.* 225ff.

may we not catch an echo of the Cyclops appealing to *his* father when he realises that Odysseus has tricked him (Od. 9, 526ff.)?[24]

Ὣς ἔφατ', αὐτὰρ ἐγώ μιν ἀμειβόμενος προσέειπον·
"αἴ γὰρ δὴ ψυχῆς τε καὶ αἰῶνός σε δυναίμην
εὖνιν ποιήσας πέμψαι δόμον Ἄϊδος εἴσω,
ὡς οὐκ ὀφθαλμόν γ' ἰήσεται οὐδ' ἐνοσίχθων."
Ὣς ἐφάμην, ὁ δ' ἔπειτα Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι
εὔχετο, χεῖρ' ὀρέγων εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα·
"Κλῦθι, Ποσείδαον γαιήοχε, κυανοχαῖτα·
εἰ ἐτεόν γε σός εἰμι, πατὴρ δ' ἐμὸς εὔχεαι εἶναι,
δὸς μὴ Ὀδυσσῆα πτολίπορθον οἶκαδ' ἱκέσθαι
υἱὸν Λαέρτεω, Ἰθάκῃ ἔνι οἰκί' ἔχοντα.
ἀλλ' εἴ οἱ μοῖρ' ἐστὶ φίλους ἰδέειν καὶ ἱκέσθαι
οἶκον ἐϋκτίμενον καὶ ἐὴν ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
ὀψὲ κακῶς ἔλθοι, ὀλέσας ἅπο πάντας ἑταίρους,
νηὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίης, εὕροι δ' ἐν πήματα οἴκῳ."
Ὣς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε κυανοχαίτης.
(Od. 9, 522–536)

καὶ δ' αὐτὸς Τριόπας πολιαῖς ἐπὶ χεῖρας ἔβαλλε,
τοῖα τὸν οὐκ ἀίοντα Ποτειδάωνα καλιστρέων·
"ψευδοπάτωρ, ἰδὲ τόνδε τεοῦ τρίτον, εἴπερ ἐγὼ μέν
σεῦ τε καὶ Αἰολίδος Κανάκας γένος, αὐτὰρ ἐμεῖο
τοῦτο τὸ δείλαιον γένετο βρέφος· αἴθε γὰρ αὐτόν
βλητὸν ὑπ' Ἀπόλλωνος ἐμαὶ χέρες ἐκτερέϊξαν·
νῦν δὲ κακὰ βούβρωστις ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι κάθηται. (VI 96–102)

Two distraught sons of Poseidon raise their hands and appeal to their supposed father for help; Triopas is grey-haired, compared to Homer's dark-haired Poseidon, but, more important, Poseidon listens to the Cyclops but not to Triopas. What is more, Odysseus' words to the Cyclops immediately before the latter's prayer have an ominous prescriptive significance for Triopas: 9, 525 "for not even the Earthshaker shall heal your eye"; Triopas says in v. 102 that it is in Erysichthon's *eyes,* ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι, that his terrible hunger sits (scholars

24 K. J. MacKay, *Erysichthon: a Callimachean Comedy* (Mnemosyne Suppl. 7, 1962) 111 already compared VI 98f. with *Od.* 9, 529. – I might add that there *does* seem to me to be an echo in Triopas' prayer of Eumaeus' prayer in *Od.* 17, 238–246, from the Odyssean episode that is used so extensively in the Erysichthon narrative (see my article referred to in n. 19 above and comments in n. 30 below). Both prayers have the same structural lay-out: an 'as surely as' conditional, an optative wish, and reference to the livestock being consumed by gluttonous, uncontrolled banqueters. As throughout, reference to the disguised Odysseus returning home provides an ironical contrast with Erysichthon; Eumaeus' prayer will be answered, unlike that of Triopas.

have sometimes found Callimachus' phraseology here problematical: a reminiscence of Homer could explain his choice of words).

The shadow of another son of Poseidon, a half-brother, falls across Triopas as he prays, and if the Cyclops is lawless and grotesque[25], he is also a figure of pathos who earns some of our sympathy for his very vulnerability and for his loss.

The second allusion to Homer is at v. 102. The notable expression κακὰ βούβρωστις "terrible ox-hunger" comes straight from Iliad 24, 532, as has long been recognised. But perhaps the line borrows more from the famous Homeric passage than the striking phrase[26]. The Homeric words are used by Achilles to describe the unpredictability of man's lot, and the two urns of Zeus, and I think that the whole context of Achilles' phrase may come with these two words:

ᾧ δέ κε τῶν λυγρῶν δώῃ, λωβητὸν ἔθηκε,
καί ἑ κακὴ βούβρωστις ἐπὶ χθόνα δῖαν ἐλαύνει,
φοιτᾷ δ' οὔτε θεοῖσι τετιμένος οὔτε βροτοῖσιν.
ὣς μὲν καὶ Πηλῆϊ θεοὶ δόσαν ἀγλαὰ δῶρα
ἐκ γενετῆς· πάντας γὰρ ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους ἐκέκαστο
ὄλβῳ τε πλούτῳ τε, ἄνασσε δὲ Μυρμιδόνεσσι,
καί οἱ θνητῷ ἐόντι θεὰν ποίησαν ἄκοιτιν.
ἀλλ' ἐπὶ καὶ τῷ θῆκε θεὸς κακόν, ὅττί οἱ οὔ τι
παίδων ἐν μεγάροισι γονὴ γένετο κρειόντων,
ἀλλ' ἕνα παῖδα τέκεν παναώριον· οὐδέ νυ τόν γε
γηράσκοντα κομίζω, ... (Il. 24, 531–541)

Like Erysichthon (whom Hellanicus also described as a son of Myrmidon) Achilles was the only son in the family, which had a rich house (Callimachus stresses several times the wealth of Triopas), but the father was to be bereft of his son in old age. In his long consolatio to Priam Achilles refers to his own impending death, speaking to a father who has just lost his son. Thus, as Triopas speaks Callimachus ensures that his words evoke our sympathy, even for a rather witless giant such as Erysichthon, and in particular remind us of the terrible fragility of human fortune[27].

25 These qualities are appropriate for Triopas also in the larger construct of the Erysichthon myth. Some variant versions have Triopas as the offender against Demeter (Diodorus 5, 61; Marcellus in IG XIV 1389 II 36ff.; Hyginus 2, 14). Another son of Poseidon, Halirrhothius, attacked the olive of Athena with an axe but succeeded only in chopping off his own foot (Scholia to Aristoph. *Nub.* 1005).

26 This constitutes a retraction of what I wrote in AJP 98 (1977) 109 n. 16.

27 The Erysichthon story became a stock theme in at least one schoolmasterly tradition: a fourth-century A.D. papyrus containing an anthology of exercises in hexameter composition on various themes concentrates mostly on main-line epic-Homeric topics (for example 'What would Calliope say to console Thetis?'), but on II recto addresses the question [⟨τί ἂν εἴποι⟩ Τριόπας Ἐρ]υσίχθονος ἀν[α]λίσκοντο[ς πᾶσαν | τὴν αὐτοῦ] οὐσίαν καὶ μὴ κόρον ἐσχ[η-κότος; (Graves papyrus II recto 6–7: E. Heitsch, *Die griechischen Dichterfragmente der römischen Kaiserzeit,* Göttingen 1961, no. XXVI = Pack² 1844).

But regardless of whether we are justified in seeing allusions to Homer in the Sixth Hymn, the religious atmosphere of Callimachus' text is surely quite stark, and notably different from the outlook of the pre-Hellenistic world. Achilles, a few lines after the passage which I have referred to, tells Priam that "the Uranian gods have brought this affliction on you» (v. 547 αὐτὰρ ἐπεί τοι πῆμα τόδ' ἤγαγον Οὐρανίωνες); Callimachus, at the beginning of his Erysichthon narrative, uses an expression which betrays a profoundly different emphasis: vv. 31f. ἀλλ' ὅκα Τριοπίδαισιν ὁ δεξιὸς ἄχθετο δαίμων, when the favorable daimon became annoyed / grew fed up with Triopas' family, / (then poor counsel took hold of Erysichthon)". For Achilles the gods are involved in every aspect of men's life, including the bad fortune; in Callimachus' world the gods can just give up on you. If misfortune is attributable to the gods, there is at least order, and possibly sense, to the world; but if a patron-god can simply 'get annoyed' the *dis*order which this presupposes is very alarming indeed. That is also why the end of the Erysichthon narrative (or rather the skilful absence of an end) leaves us focusing *not* on punishment as retribution, but on shame and personal disaster. The effect is profoundly significant. When all is said and done at the end of the Hymn to Demeter, the gruesomeness of Erysichthon's fate, and its consequences (for his family as well as for himself), far outweighs the rewards enjoyed by Demeter's faithful celebrants; the pious celebrants of the text may be satisfied with the correctness of their cult, but we *readers* of the text, the larger public, are left not so much with a sense of piety as with an awareness of the terrible anxieties which underly our need for such pious illusions in the first place.

But it is in the Hymn to Athena that Callimachus exposes most frankly, I think, the nature of divine influence on the human world. (This poem is probably later in date than the Hymn to Demeter.)[28] Ostensibly the hymn presents an official in the city of Argos assembling and addressing with mounting excitement the women celebrants of Athena, and then invoking the goddess directly, as they wait for Athena's statue to emerge from the temple to be driven down to the river for the annual ritual bath of purification; the official warns all males to avoid contact with the ceremony, then turns to the female celebrants again and tells them, as they await the goddess, the cautionary tale of Teiresias and his encounter with Athena at her bath on Mt. Helicon. We are told of the great friendship between the goddess and Teiresias' mother Chariclo (like the celebrating women of Argos, a follower of Athena), then given a stunning description of the ominous noonday quiet on the mountain as the two women bathed – only to be interrupted by the unwitting Teiresias; Teiresias is blinded, and when Chariclo cries out in protest Athena explains that the punishment was inevitable, by divine law, and that in fact another intruder in the

28 See AJP 98 (1977) 97–123.

future (Actaeon) will suffer a much worse fate, but that because of the special relationship between herself and Chariclo she will give Teiresias gifts of compensation: the powers of special insight, longevity, and the retention of his mental powers even after his death.

Now at first, and even second, sight, this looks like a very cogent account of the nature of divine power as traditionally conceived in Greek religion, and the effect of male intrusion on a sacred female preserve. There is clearly a code, or system, at work here, with checks and balances and compensations, and however much we may pity the unfortunate Teiresias, since he did not intend an offence (as Callimachus himself stresses), there is nonetheless a comprehensible order in the world. But as soon as we look at the details the apparent 'justness' of Athena and the orderliness of the world crumble, and we find that our true instinctive response is one of very mistrustful unease.

First, let us be clear what the central issues of the Teiresias narrative are. The intruder is Teiresias, and the blinding and compensatory gifts are his, but his part in the drama is totally passive: his crime is unwitting and his response to the punishment is silence. The protagonists are Athena and *Chariclo,* and it is their relationship, their 'friendship', which dominates the narrative, and for which everything is at stake. An outline analysis demonstrates this very clearly[29]:

A^1	57–69	the friendship
B^1	70–84	Teiresias' intrusion and punishment
C^1	85–95	Chariclo's grief
C^2	96–106	Athena's response to Chariclo's grief
B^2	107–118	Actaeon's intrusion and punishment
A^2	119–136	gifts of friendship

The whole narrative can be seen as comprising six sections, chiastically arranged: the friendship, extensively developed as a theme in the first thirteen lines, encloses the theme of crime and punishment. Central focus is frequently used structurally in Hellenistic poetry: here at the centre of this narrative is, not Teiresias, nor his offense, but the grief of his mother Chariclo, expressed in an outburst of emotion against Athena, and the goddess' response to that grief. The crucial question is Chariclo's at v. 86 τοιαῦται, δαίμονες, ἐστὲ φίλαι; How well is it answered? What Athena says, in vv. 97ff. is: 1. *she* did not blind Teiresias, 2. ancient divine law prescribes this punishment, 3. it was Teiresias' fate, 4. it could have been worse (look at what will happen to Actaeon), 5. because of her friendship with Chariclo Athena will compensate Teiresias. Now at this point comparison with another text will help us assess Athena's reply. Callima-

29 For the structural analysis and the comparison with Euripides *Hippolytus* which follows see also my *Callimachus: the Fifth Hymn* (Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 26, Cambridge 1984) 47–53. 163.

chus' hymn has some very close corresponsions with the closing scene of Euripides' *Hippolytus,* where Artemis justifies herself, first to Theseus, then to Hippolytus himself. I am not sure that we should see a specific reminiscence here, but that makes little difference to the comparison. At Hipp. 1327ff. Artemis' justification is strikingly similar to Athena's: '*I* did not do this, Aphrodite did; and this is divine law (that the gods not engage openly as opponents)', θεοῖσι δ' ὧδ' ἔχει νόμος. Later, to the dying Hippolytus Artemis justifies her abandonment of a faithful servant, and offers compensation for his misfortune (the establishment of a cult in Trozen).

σοὶ δ', ὦ ταλαίπωρ', ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν κακῶν
τιμὰς μεγίστας ἐν πόλει Τροζηνίᾳ
δώσω· κόραι γὰρ ἄζυγες γάμων πάρος
κόμας κεροῦνταί σοι, δι' αἰῶνος μακροῦ
πένθη μέγιστα δακρύων καρπουμένῳ.
ἀεὶ δὲ μουσοποιὸς ἐς σὲ παρθένων
ἔσται μέριμνα, κοὐκ ἀνώνυμος πεσὼν
ἔρως ὁ Φαίδρας ἐς σὲ σιγηθήσεται. (Eur., Hipp. 1423–30)

ὦ ἑτάρα, τῶ μή τι μινύρεο· τῷδε γὰρ ἄλλα
τεῦ χάριν ἐξ ἐμέθεν πολλὰ μενεῦντι γέρα.
μάντιν ἐπεὶ θησῶ νιν ἀοίδιμον ἐσσομένοισιν,
ἦ μέγα τῶν ἄλλων δή τι περισσότερον.
γνωσεῖται δ' ὄρνιχας, ὃς αἴσιος οἵ τε πέτονται
ἤλιθα καὶ ποίων οὐκ ἀγαθαὶ πτέρυγες.
πολλὰ δὲ Βοιωτοῖσι θεοπρόπα, πολλὰ δὲ Κάδμῳ
χρησεῖ, καὶ μεγάλοις ὕστερα Λαβδακίδαις.
δωσῶ καὶ μέγα βάκτρον, ὅ οἱ πόδας ἐς δέον ἀξεῖ,
δωσῶ καὶ βιότω τέρμα πολυχρόνιον.
καὶ μόνος, εὖτε θάνῃ, πεπνυμένος ἐν νεκύεσσι
φοιτασεῖ, μεγάλωι τίμιος Ἀγησίλᾳ. (V 119–130)

We might conclude, then, that Athena's position is hard to take, but plausible: she, no more than Artemis, could alter what happened, and her gifts are an appropriate counterbalance for the punishment. But *that* is for Teiresias. What about Chariclo? The pious devotee who was punished in the Hippolytus was Hippolytus: in Callimachus' hymn Teiresias was blinded and compensated, but Chariclo was the pious devotee. Consider the difference between these two religious worlds. Hippolytus had choices to make and balances to maintain; Aphrodite makes it absolutely clear in her speech which opens the play that Hippolytus' failure to honour her was what constituted his offence (vv. 7ff.): "I do not begrudge him his worship of Artemis", she says, "why should I? But I shall avenge his offence against me." Aphrodite wanted τιμαί, and although in

psychological terms having to honour both Artemis and Aphrodite could involve terrible conflicts, Euripides does at least allow us the possibility that there may be some way of resolving this paradox within the given theodicy: Hippolytus is not so perfect in his behaviour that we feel he could not have done better. But Chariclo? What could she have done that was different?

At this point it is crucial that we remember the psychological circumstances which Callimachus has created for the audience of his hymn (the 'rules' of the text, we might say). Callimachus has induced us into imagining ourselves to be Argive women; *for us as celebrants in the ritual Chariclo is the equivalent in the myth.* Most of us will be, or will become, mothers like her. And so the question inevitably arises: would *you* want to be Chariclo? And would *you* then want to consort with a goddess whose primary characteristic is, as Callimachus insists in the closing section of the narrative (vv. 131ff.), that *"no mother bore her"* (v. 134 μάτηρ δ' οὔτις ἔτικτε θεάν)? Athena does not even have the *capacity* to understand, or to meet Chariclo and us on our own terms.

I said earlier, with reference to the Demeter hymn, that in Callimachus' world the gods can just give up on you. That is terrifying enough; but now we find that they can be randomly and unpredictably violent, even to the closest friends, and scarcely even acknowledge the friendship. Artemis at least speaks of Hippolytus as "the dearest of all men to me" (v. 1333 ἄνδρα πάντων φίλτατον βροτῶν ἐμοί): Athena says coolly that "it is not pleasant to take away children's eyes" (vv. 99f.). There is no theology or theodicy with which to make sense of this rather demonic power, for all our religious enthusiasm.

Often in Callimachus the gods are presented as precocious children, but for all their cuteness they are also potent; when *they* are the adults we become the children. Demeter addresses Erysichthon as 'child' (v. 47 τέκνον ἐλίνυσον, τέκνον ...: a line where metrical irregularity underlines the goddess' menacing tone[30]), and in the Athena hymn not only is Teiresias referred to as a child

30 VI 47 is the only hexameter line in the Hymns to break the 'rule' that in Callimachus a masculine caesura is accompanied by an additional break after either the seventh element (as here) or the eighth element and that in the former case the sixth element is disyllabic, i.e.:

1 ⏑⏑ | 3 ⏑⏑ | 5 || ⏑ ⏑ | 7 || ⏑⏑ | 9 ⏑ ⏑ | 11 ⏑

P. Maas, *Greek Metre* (trans. Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Oxford 1962) § 93 characteristically excised v. 47 as an interpolation. Deviation from metrical practice (not 'rule') frequently signifies expressive effect, not corruption: here the effect is to stress both the break after the first half of the line and the word which immediately follows it, τέκνον. (Cf. also A. Wifstrand, *Von Kallimachos zu Nonnos,* Lund 1933, 39f.). – In v. 47 Demeter addresses Erysichthon as being πολύθεστε τοκεῦσι. The unique adjective, whatever its intended meaning, surely looks to the Homeric *unicum* ἀπόθεστος at *Od.* 17, 296 (δὴ τότε κεῖτ' ἀπόθεστος ἀποιχομένοιο ἄνακτος). Later in the sixth Hymn Callimachus will refer extensively to the encounter of Melantheus with Eumaeus and Odysseus at the grove of the nymphs (*Od.* 17, 197–253: see my article in AJP referred to in n. 19 above, and also n. 24 above); here he refers to the famous episode which immediately follows it, the arrival of Odysseus at the palace and the greeting

(vv. 82. 87. 92. 93. 118), the whole Teiresias narrative is addressed to *us* as παῖδες (v. 57, its opening word), at v. 34 we celebrants are παῖδες, and Athena speaks in terms of taking *children's* eyes (v. 99); to children the behaviour of adults often seems random and inexplicable, and, of course, since adults have so much power children often dream of a world without adults.

Not more than one hundred years before Callimachus, Sophocles presented a world where divine power has terrifying consequences for man, but where that power is at least *systematised* and comprehensible (indeed, that is what makes it so inescapable and merciless). Euripides frequently looked at the paradoxes and the weaknesses of conventional religion. But in Callimachus we can see a different stage of religious perception, I think. I would hesitate to make any guesses about Callimachus' personal beliefs or hopes, but I would say that his religious poems present a very non-simplistic, distrustful view. He is not a nihilist, to be sure, rejecting religion out of hand, but when he examines accepted religious values he finds that they do not work as a system in the way that they should, and that for any observer who is thoughtfully aware of complexities (such as what it must be like to be a *parent* of a sinner) the orderliness assumed by traditional religion is illusory. The illusion, then, the religious illusion, has broken and does not seem to have much of a future. Callimachus does not propound this in terms of an explicit philosophical or theological theory, of course; as a poet he is more concerned with the complex whole of human feeling and experience. But whenever religion is scrutinised in one of its specific aspects in his poems it is found *not to connect* with the adult world in which we, his audience, try to live our lives. He is, one might say, in his poetic madness, a realist, and might have agreed with Sigmund Freud when he said, with reference to man's need for religious belief: "man cannot remain a child forever; he must venture at last into the hostile world. This may be called 'education to reality'."[31]

of his dog Argos, with the uncomfortable comparison of the impious prince, soon to be cast out, and the loyal dog that lies ἐν πολλῇ κόπρῳ. Odysseus' words to Eumaeus just before the Argos scene could almost be a prescriptive motto for Callimachus' cautionary tale: *Od.* 17, 286f. γαστέρα δ' οὔ πως ἔστιν ἀποκρύψαι μεμαυῖαν, οὐλομένην, ἣ πολλὰ κάκ' ἀνθρώποισι δίδωσι ... (The sixth Hymn has many references to *Od.* 17, not all of which have been fully recognized or discussed; for ἀπόθεστος ~ πολύθεστος see Pfeiffer on fr. 325 and Drögemüller in *LfgrE* s.v.).

31 *Die Zukunft einer Illusion* (Leipzig/Vienna/Zurich 1927) § IX "Der Mensch kann nicht ewig Kind bleiben, er muss endlich hinaus, ins 'feindliche Leben'. Man darf das 'die Erziehung zur Realität' heissen." (*The Future of an Illusion*, vol. XXI of the Standard Edition, ed. J. Strachey, London 1961, 49.) Just before this Freud remarks of the man who has been brought up 'sensibly' (i.e. without religion): "Gewiss wird der Mensch sich dann in einer schwierigen Situation befinden, er wird sich seine ganze Hilflosigkeit, seine Geringfügigkeit im Getriebe der Welt eingestehen müssen, nicht mehr der Mittelpunkt der Schöpfung, nicht mehr das Objekt zärtlicher Fürsorge einer gütigen Vorsehung. Er wird in derselben Lage sein wie das Kind, welches das Vaterhaus verlassen hat, in dem es ihm so warm und behaglich war."

It is in a hostile world that Callimachus' characters such as Chariclo or Triopas do indeed live; and if modern readers have had such contradictory reactions it is at least partly because Callimachus' own outlook is so uneasy and because such 'education to reality' involves facing the contradictions which orthodox religion often tries to ignore. The contradictoriness is intrinsic to Callimachus, and we have to accept the full implications of that, and not try to explain it away. It is the religious sensibility itself that is fractured here, and at least in part Callimachus' scrutiny of traditional religious values is an aspect of the pressures and accommodations of this time.

Freud suggested that a good part of the psychological basis of religious belief was man's terrifying sense of helplessness, and defencelessness against the superior powers of nature and fate, and the consequent need for protection (an illusory wish learned already by every individual in childhood) provided by a parental figure. The effect of Callimachus' bizarre and troubled treatment of the gods in the Hymns is not so different from Freud's position. Callimachus also examines religion in terms of childhood neurosis, in two ways: first, by stressing that man's relationship to god is often precisely that, the relationship of a child, and indeed with the consequent infantile status and *lack* of power that any child has; and, secondly, by emphasizing that these 'parents' are beings who in reality can themselves be very childish and child-like. This is the critique of 'reductio ad absurdum': the supposed comfort and advantages of this kind of security are seen to be no more than illusions, and very worrying illusions at that[32].

32 Cf. *Die Zukunft einer Illusion* § VIII "Es stimmt dazu auch gut, dass der Frommgläubige in hohem Grade gegen die Gefahr gewisser neurotischer Erkrankungen geschützt ist; die Annahme der allgemeinen Neurose überhebt ihn der Aufgabe, eine persönliche Neurose auszubilden" (Standard Edition XXI 44). To the modern historian Freud's explanation of the complex phenomenon of human religiosity as a 'universal neurosis' may seem over-simple, but his insistence on a link between the ways in which religion tries to tend to some of man's needs for emotional security and the attitudes and behaviour learned in childhood still seems apt and illuminating, and it is certainly tempting to see the writer of Callimachus' Hymns as being in process of forming his own 'personal neurosis'.