

**Allusions of Grandeur:
Gigantomachy, Callimachean Poetics,
and Literary Filiation**

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Fashioning Literary History: Parody Theory and Ancient Texts	11
Chapter 2: There Were Giants Then: Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i>	31
I. The Early History of the Giants	32
II. The Titanomachy	36
III. The Seeds of Epic Parody	44
IV. Typhoeus the Interloper	46
Chapter 3: Purest Springs of Fire: Giants and Callimachean Poetics in <i>Pythian</i> 1 and 8	52
Chapter 4: Like Bees to Deo: Alexandrian Callimachus and the Callimachean Pharoah	77
I. The Telchines in Pindar and Callimachus	78
II. The Giants in Callimachus	86
III. Ptolemaic Kingship and the Gigantomachy	92
Chapter 5: Propertian Irony and the Limits of Callimacheanism	104
I. <i>Callimachus Romanus</i>	108
II. Gigantomachy and the Propertian <i>Recusatio</i>	132
III. Passing Through the <i>Gigantea ora</i> : Poem 1.20	143

Chapter 6: Refashioning Literary History:	
Ovid and the Poetics of Gigantomachy	150
I. <i>Amores</i> 2.1 and the Poetics of Daring	151
II. The <i>Metamorphoses</i> and the Poetics of Imitation	172
III. <i>Tristia</i> 2 and the Poetics of Power	192
Epilogue: Ovid in Sicily	207
Conclusion	211
Bibliography	215

Introduction

Perhaps the most famous representation of Gigantomachy in art or literature is the Altar of Zeus at Pergamum. A massive, highly emotionally charged frieze running around the outside of the enclosure to the Altar depicts the gods and giants in their cosmic struggle. Unfortunately, the precise dating, purpose of the Altar, and interpretation of the sculptural program of this Hellenistic monument are all murky and vexed questions. We can say with certainty that the Altar was constructed sometime in the first half of the Second Century BCE.¹ The Altar may have celebrated a victory over the Gauls, who are frequently depicted as Giants in Hellenistic and Italian art, but there is no way to know this for certain.² It is also possible that it was simply a celebration of the prosperity and good fortune of the city of Pergamum. It has been suggested that it represents Stoic cosmological allegory, influenced by a lost work of Cleanthes, *On the Giants* (Περὶ γιγάντων),³ or that it may be based on a lost epic poem.⁴ Whatever the inspiration for this monument was, it is clear that, as Pollitt writes, “behind its tumultuous, writhing, theatrical surface, the frieze is a very learned, perhaps at times even academically obscure, monument.”⁵

There does clearly seem to be a direct connection between the Pergamene Altar and the Parthenon. We know that the Parthenon contained a depiction of Gigantomachy

¹ The pottery found around the Altar provides a *terminus post quem* of 185-170, while the interior capitals are dated to about 160. The first securely dated dedication on its terrace was set up in 149/8, so the Altar must have been in use by then: Stewart (2000) 39.

² Stewart (2000) 34. On the depictions of the Gauls as Giants in Hellenistic literature and art, see Barbantani (2002-3) and Vian (1952b) 10.

³ See Zanker (2004) 97, Pollitt (1986) 105-9 and Onians (1979) 88 with further references.

⁴ Stewart (2000) 42.

⁵ Pollitt (1986) 101.

on the eastern metopes, and that the statue of Athena had this myth on her shield.⁶ Furthermore, the Gigantomachy was the subject of the peplos woven for Athena during the Panathenaic festival.⁷ Whereas Giants had previously been depicted as fully humanoid hoplites, it seems that under the influence of the depiction on Athena's shield, Giants start to be shown at this time wearing animal skins and heaving boulders.⁸ In other words, they have become barbarians, symbols of the chaos that the Athenians had recently subdued in their victory over Persia. The Pergamene Altar appears to allude to the Parthenon, styling Pergamum as the new Athens;⁹ as Onians remarks, “. . .the Pergamene Gigantomachy is truly a reincarnation of the art of Classical Athens to match the Attic wisdom of the Pergamene library and the Attic heroism of the Pergamene armies.”¹⁰ The Altar is certainly not a copy of the Parthenon, however; the Giants have become more extreme in their scale and monstrous appearance. This may be due in part to the influence of traditional Italian depictions of Giants.¹¹ I suggest that it is also a capping device, a way of asserting that Pergamum has in fact surpassed the Athenians.

The easiest and most traditional way to explain the Gigantomachy in general is as a political metaphor.¹² In the case of the Pergamene Altar, such an interpretation is obviously available. There is something else at work here, however; in fact, the Altar is the perfect distillation of the entire aesthetic and set of artistic concerns that define the Hellenistic period. Perched in the colonnade directly above the Gigantomachy were

⁶ Pliny 35.54, 36.18.

⁷ Carpenter (1991) 75.

⁸ Carpenter (1991) 75.

⁹ Onians (1979) 81-7.

¹⁰ Onians (1979) 87.

¹¹ See de Grummond (2000) 259-61 for an overview of the development of images of Giants in Italy.

¹² The classic treatment of Gigantomachy as a political metaphor, in this case in Vergil's *Aeneid*, is Hardie (1986).

statues of the Muses, perhaps joined by members of the Attalid imperial family.¹³ The presence of the Muses suggests that the Gigantomachy beneath them is a commentary on art. This is further supported by the contrasting nature of the second frieze inside the monument, the Telephus frieze. Here we find a series of panels depicting the obscure myth of Telephus, a son of Herakles who was heralded as the mythological founder of Pergamum and ancestor of the Attalid dynasty. This suggests that the entire monument, not just the Telephus frieze, is an attempt to link the city of Pergamum with the mythical past of Greece.¹⁴ The Telephus frieze has been shown to exhibit many of the qualities we associate with Hellenistic literature in the Callimachean style.¹⁵ It tells an obscure myth in a series of snapshots of key moments, leaving the viewer to fill in the details.¹⁶ It is fashioned on a different, smaller scale than the Gigantomachy frieze, and places great emphasis on details of landscape and minor characters. Furthermore, the figures are depicted in a more restrained style, with more controlled expressions and movements.¹⁷ As Onians writes, “At no stage should it be thought that the opposition between large and small, and their related stylistic traits, meant that the one excluded the other.”¹⁸ In this dissertation, I will argue that the form of aesthetics represented by the Pergamene Altar – what in the realm of literature has come to be called Callimacheanism – large and small, Gigantomachy and Telephus relief, exist in a relationship of complexity rather than competition. In literature, “large” means epic and “small” – for Callimacheanism as it

¹³ Stewart (2000) 41-2.

¹⁴ Zanker (2004) 128-9.

¹⁵ Onians (1979) 146 discusses the correspondence of the frieze with Callimacheanism. For a concise summary of the “Callimachean program”, see Clausen (1964) 182-5.

¹⁶ Zanker (2004) 89, 99; Onians (1979) 144-5; Pollitt (1986) 200.

¹⁷ Onians (1979) 144-5.

¹⁸ Onians (1979) 144.

would develop over time – means elegy. Elegy and epic, especially the epic of Homer, are in a symbiotic relationship with each other; the Callimachean takes the epic past and breathes new life into it by drawing out the Alexandrian elements already contained within it. On the political level, a poet like Callimachus requires a ruler like Ptolemy who will engage in occasional Gigantomachies, who will beat back the barbarian hordes in order to create a space that is safe for Callimacheanism. The Pergamene Altar is the perfect crystallization of these ideas; the exterior wall, the one the public would have encountered first (or perhaps exclusively), contains the outspoken and bombastic celebration of the epic elements of Hellenistic life. Within the inner sanctum, present for those who can understand it,¹⁹ is Callimacheanism transferred into the artistic sphere. The two exist side by side, each propping the other up, and only when taken together can we see the whole of the Hellenistic aesthetic.

The pairing of the Muses with the Gigantomachy points to the intensely artistic focus of the myth: Gigantomachy both represents and comments directly upon the epic tradition. At this point I must define how I am using the term Gigantomachy. In the strictest sense, this word refers to the battle of the gods and the Giants (*Gigantes*), and this is the myth represented on the Altar at Pergamum. Already in ancient times, however, this battle was conflated with several others in which gods fought against enormous beings who sought control over Olympus.²⁰ This includes the Titanomachy, when Zeus and the Olympians fought Kronos and the other Titans for supremacy; the

¹⁹ The idea that the Gigantomachy was meant for public consumption and the Telephus frieze for the learned few belongs to Onians (1979) 146.

²⁰ On the ancient conflation of these myths, see Vian (1952a) 169-74 on the Giants and Titans and Ogden (2013) 73 with n. 21 on Typhon.

Typhonomachy, when Zeus fought the last challenger to his reign, the monstrous Typhon; and the Aloadae Otus and Ephialtes, who piled up Pelion and Ossa in an effort to reach Olympus. As the ancients routinely conflated these myths, I too will refer to the entire mytheme by the term Gigantomachy.²¹

I am not the first to study the Gigantomachy, but traditionally it has been seen primarily as a political metaphor. In one of the most important and widely consulted works of this nature, Hardie analyzes gigantomachic imagery in the *Aeneid*, concluding that this myth represents the struggle of order over chaos on a cosmic level.²² He sees the Gigantomachy as operating on political, religious, and moral levels of allegory, but does not discuss its metaliterary potential. Innes had moved in this direction by pointing out that the Gigantomachy, because it involves gods and giants waging a cosmic battle, is “high epic, the most extreme example of the ‘thundering’ style opposed to that of the slender elegance of Callimachus.”²³ What I do with the Gigantomachy that is new is to engage in a sustained analysis of the way the Gigantomachy operates as a metaliterary topos throughout Greek and Latin literature. Not only is it “high epic,” but it is used repeatedly to comment upon the epic and non-epic traditions, to delineate a particular poet’s own style and his place within literary history. The Gigantomachy is not just high epic, it is overly high epic. The subject matter is so extreme that it demands an overwrought, bombastic style.

²¹ To distinguish between the Giants proper (the *Gigantes*) and other kinds of giant beings, I will use the capitalized form Giants to refer specifically to the *Gigantes*.

²² Hardie (1986) esp. 85.

²³ Innes (1979) 166; cf. Hinds (1987a) 129-30.

Due to its extreme nature, Gigantomachy easily lends itself to epic parody. Accordingly, another innovative aspect of my approach is the use of the parody inherent in Gigantomachy to explain how it functions on the metaliterary level. In Chapter One, “Fashioning Literary History: Parody Theory and Ancient Texts,” I explain the aspects of parody theory that undergird my discussions of individual poets in the following chapters. The hallmarks of parody are exaggeration and incongruity, but these features often comment self-reflexively upon the parodying author’s own work as much as they comment upon a predecessor. In fact, I discuss parody not as a means of ridiculing a predecessor, but rather as a means of transforming a literary tradition from within in an effort to reposition the new author at its head. Parody changes how we read the text(s) that came before, and thereby grants a special kind of authority to the parodying author.

This is a different way of understanding how literary filiation works. In his classic study *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom posited an Oedipal relationship between a poet and his predecessor. According to Bloom, we can never read a poet by himself – we always read him through other poets and through his poetic pedigree, and “[e]very poem is a misinterpretation of a parent poem.”²⁴ Therefore, “[a] poem is a poet’s melancholy at his lack of priority.”²⁵ In my treatment of the poems studied here, I reverse Bloom’s formulation. I have found that most Callimachean poets are not filled with anxiety about their relationship to their predecessors; the anxiety is more about their future reception. They do not have to feel anxiety about their predecessors because they have the poetic power, via the tools of allusion and parody, to insert themselves into their predecessors’

²⁴ Bloom (1973) 94.

²⁵ Bloom (1973) 96.

texts, thereby gaining their own anteriority. Others who have studied this process whereby a poet writes a poem in such a way that it becomes anterior to its predecessor (but without my focus on parody) include Barchiesi, Keith, and Nappa.²⁶ Hinds, very influentially, has opened up the world of allusion and intertext, changing how we view the multidirectionality of an allusion. He suggests that allusion may be used “to redescribe (the) tradition as, in effect, something mobilized by poets for the particular purposes of particular poems . . .”²⁷ He demonstrates how many poems may be understood to situate literary history within themselves, rather than situating themselves in literary history.²⁸

After the theoretical preliminaries of the first chapter, in Chapter Two, “There Were Giants Then: Hesiod’s *Theogony*,” I analyze the portrayal of Giants, Titans, and Typhoeus in Hesiod, demonstrating that they are already being used as a commentary on older, traditional material. Within Hesiod’s poetry, we find the seeds of later “Callimacheanism” and epic parody in the idea that the only way to write a successful narrative of the Gigantomachy is to use it to comment parodically on the futility of writing such a work. I continue to trace the development of Callimacheanism in the poetry of Pindar in the third chapter, “Purest Springs of Fire: Giants and Callimachean Poetics in *Pythian* 1 and 8.” In this chapter, I first lay out the Callimachean elements to be found in Pindar’s poetry, and then examine how giants are used metapoetically in these two odes. Here the combination of politics and poetics is introduced, as we see Pindar using the inherent moral ambiguities of Gigantomachy to (re)position his patron

²⁶ Nappa (2002); Barchiesi (1993); Keith (1992a) esp. 30.

²⁷ Hinds (1998) 123.

²⁸ Hinds (1998) 123-44, esp. 124.

within the community. The giant figure serves as a foil for both poet and victor; however, an element of irony is introduced in that what seems opposite to the giant (such as the lyre in the opening of *Pythian* 1) also conceals gigantomachic potential. Therefore, Pindar uses features of “Callimacheanism” to ensure that his poetry does not tip into the overly epic, even hybridic realm; he must balance and hold in tension the epic and non-epic qualities of his genre.

Chapter Four, “Like Bees to Deo: Alexandrian Callimachus and the Callimachean Pharaoh,” brings me to Callimachus himself. In the first part of this chapter, I explore the gigantomachic themes evoked by the Telchines in the *Aetia* prologue, as well as several explicit references to giants. Particularly when read against the backdrop of the Hesiodic and Pindaric presentations of Gigantomachy, these references reveal much about how Callimachus situates himself in the literary tradition. Callimachus is not opposed to the epic world of Gigantomachy *per se*; it simply does not fit within his own poetry except in highly allusive form. Epic and elegy, large and small, extended narrative and allusive vignette are not so much in competition with each other as they are working in tandem, each informing the other. This leads to a discussion on Ptolemaic kingship and the way Callimachus represents Ptolemy in his poetry, as seen through references to Gigantomachy. In the world of Ptolemaic Alexandria, the values of poet and ruler are aligned, even if their lived realities are not always (Ptolemy must sometimes engage in warfare to keep his kingdom peaceful and prosperous).

In the different world of Augustan Rome, Callimachus therefore stands not only for a certain style of writing, but also for this alignment of poetics and politics. Where

Callimachus had used Gigantomachy to comment upon the intersection of these worlds, Propertius uses it to highlight how disjointed and at odds they are in a Roman context. Therefore, he only explicitly mentions Gigantomachy in order to say that he cannot write about it. This is new; other Callimachean poets had been very careful in how they handled the topic, clearly viewing it as material suitable only for purposes of parody or allusion, not a serious sustained narrative. In Propertius' poetry, however, even this use of Gigantomachy has become problematic. Augustus has changed what it means to be epic by turning himself into the epic hero of Rome (and one whose heroism is inextricably linked to civil war) thereby forcing poets like Propertius into the elegiac and Callimachean realm. Propertius responds by exaggerating his Callimacheanism and incongruously juxtaposing epic and elegy throughout his poetry; the effect is one of deep irony and even parody. This is not necessarily to say that Propertius' poetry is anti-Augustan, but it does mean that Propertius is pointing to the difficulties involved in pretending that the world of Augustan Rome is the same as the world that came before it, whether on the socio-political or the literary level. Augustus made a point of presenting himself and his program as the restoration of the past, rather than innovation; Propertius begs to differ. He seems to be telling Augustus that he cannot be Homer to Augustus' Achilles nor Callimachus' to Augustus' Ptolemy; those models do not work anymore. Propertius' stance as the *Callimachus Romanus*, therefore, is really an exploration of the limits of Callimacheanism as a valid mode of expressing the tensions inherent in the Augustan world.

Unsurprisingly, the poet who presents himself as the answer to Propertius' quandary is Ovid. In my final chapter, "Refashioning Literary History: Ovid and the Poetics of Gigantomachy," I demonstrate how Ovid weaves together the strands of everything that Gigantomachy has meant to all the poets discussed in the previous chapters. Callimacheanism now means demonstrating that one can write in every genre. If the world has become a confusing, mixed-up place, then poetry must follow suit. Ovid's distinctive blending of genres and styles demonstrates his complete mastery over literary history. He can turn anyone into a monster or a god, into an epic or elegiac character. Gigantomachy is no longer off limits; rather, it becomes a potent tool for meditating on the nature of poetic reception and authorial power.

There are many ways one could analyze the Gigantomachy. It is tempting to ask what the Gigantomachy "means" as a larger cultural product. For example, how does it function as a feature of religion, philosophy, or art? These questions, while worthwhile, are not the subject of this study. My purpose is to answer the question, "How does the Gigantomachy function as a literary *topos*?" I seek to demonstrate that this set of myths is a sustained *leitmotiv* throughout Greek and Latin poetry that gets at the heart of the issues facing every poet: how he will respond to the tradition that came before him, and where he will set his poetry within that tradition; the stylistic choices he will make, and what those choices reveal about his broader view of his place within the political and literary culture of his own time; and finally, how he will transcend the world in which he finds himself to earn undying fame.

Chapter 1

Fashioning Literary History: Parody Theory and Ancient Texts

Parody, as a mode of discourse, is inherently as elusive as it is allusive. Some parodies seem to exist only to be parodies in the traditional sense, to mock a target text²⁹ (either a specific one or a type or genre) and reveal its absurdities through exaggerating its typical features. Such parodies may have the effect of either satire or pure entertainment. Another type of parody, however, has a larger purpose beyond its parodic content, to participate fully in the history and formation of the genre involved. For example, when Ovid parodies Vergil in the *Metamorphoses*, while he may use humor as a tool for distinguishing himself from his predecessor, he is also working fully within the epic genre himself, simultaneously commenting upon its literary pedigree and producing a new work that can stand on its own merits. Thus, the parodying author is a Janus figure, looking backward and forward at the same time and functioning as the portal to literary time. He determines how readers will receive the past and at what point in literary history they will place his work, and he has the power to influence the future of the genre. In other words, the use of allusion and especially parody (I shall discuss the relation between the two below) urges upon the reader a synchronic rather than diachronic view of literary history.

First, however, a discussion and clarification of terms is in order. It will be easiest to begin a definition of parody by describing several forms which are similar to

²⁹ Because I am treating literary topics, I will use literary terms in this discussion. Many of the points made, however, could equally apply to other kinds of “texts” in the broader sense, including film, visual arts, architecture, music, or any other media.

but different from parody: burlesque, travesty, persiflage, pekoral, pastiche, and satire. Most of these terms can be seen as a subset of parody, a tool that can be used to achieve parody, or a genre in which parody is sometimes used to create additional effects. Thus the distinctions between these various forms are not as neat as we might like them to be.³⁰ Nevertheless, using these terms to think with can be quite helpful in conceptualizing what does and does not make up parody. Ultimately, it will also be necessary to situate parody within the broader system of quotation, intertextuality, allusion, and reference.³¹

“Burlesque,” usually derived from the Italian *burla* (“joke, trick”)³² has often been used as a synonym for parody because the contrast between style and subject matter is intrinsic to both forms. For Householder, the key distinction between the two is that parody is modeled on a specific work or author, while burlesque is modeled on a class of works or no particular work.³³ Following a tradition begun by critics in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, many scholars have used the term burlesque to refer either to

³⁰ I will analyze these terms differently than Genette ([1982] 1997), who makes the following distinctions based on the relation between texts (transformation versus imitation) and function of the later work (satirical or non-satirical) (27):

	non-satirical	satirical
transformation	parody	travesty
imitation	pastiche	caricature

³¹ These terms do not all necessarily mean the same thing, though they are often used as if they do. Thomas, for example, would like us to distinguish a reference from an allusion, because the latter by its etymology implies a kind of playful interaction that is not present in every reference; see Thomas (1999) 115 n. 8 and *passim*. Intertextuality is generally used now as an umbrella term for all kinds of reference and allusion, though for Hinds (1998) xii “allusion” implies a degree of intentionality on the part of the author that the term “intertextuality” does not. Edmunds (2001) 138 cautions that the word “intertext” has been used for so many different components of the intertextual relation that it is best either to avoid it or carefully define how one is using it. He prefers “quotation” as being more encompassing than the other possibilities (134).

³² Rose (1993) 54.

³³ Householder (1944) 1. Dentith (2000) 7 points out that some people refer to a work targeting a single text as “specific parody” and a work targeting a group of texts, a genre, or a “kind of discourse” as “general parody.”

the use of a high, epic style to describe lowly characters (such as ancient mock-epic like the *Batrachomyomachia*) or a work in which great characters are depicted in a humble, ridiculous way (some satyr plays or comedies by Aristophanes could fit this description). Some would classify the latter (high subject matter, lowly style) as travesty (from *travestire*, “to disguise, to change clothing”).³⁴ By certain of the strictest definitions, travesty (high subject matter, lowly style) can therefore be said to be the opposite of parody (lowly subject, high style). Some modern critics loosen these terms slightly and focus merely on whether high is compared to low or low to high; they define parody as “high burlesque” (comparing the low to the high) and travesty as “low burlesque” (comparing the high to the low), ignoring Householder’s distinction between parody and burlesque and focusing more on the comic spirit of the word. As Rose points out, however, the problem with such neat distinctions is that they “break down . . . if both categories are applied to the extant examples of ancient parody. Hence, when Homer’s heroes are replaced by ‘anti-heroes’ . . . or by animals . . . we have the anti-heroes or animals raised ironically to the level of ‘heroes’ at the same time as Homer’s heroes are ironically reduced to, and compared with, the ‘lower’ levels of the ‘anti-heroes’ by the latter’s imitations of them.” Furthermore, incongruity between form and content is only one way that parodists can transform a work, as Rose points out.³⁵ Finally, Hutcheon makes the key distinction that burlesque and travesty both require ridicule, while parody does not (most people confuse burlesque and parody in this respect).³⁶

³⁴ Rose (1993) 55-9.

³⁵ Rose (1993) 60-64; quote on 61.

³⁶ Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 40. On the way many modern critics have reduced the concept of parody to burlesque, see Rose (1993) esp. 5, 27-8, 49-50, 54-68.

Persiflage, pekoral, and pastiche are all easier to define. Persiflage refers more to the attitude of the parodist than the form or content of his work. It is that which some people would reduce parody to, a frivolous and mocking way of mimicking someone.³⁷ Pekoral is a work which is unintentionally humorous because written by an incompetent poetaster.³⁸ Pastiche is the combination of elements from different works to create what appears to be a new, original work. The word itself is really a neutral term for compilation; any added meaning depends upon a value judgment made by the reader, including his perception of the author's intent. It could be considered forgery, but the author may also seem to be using old material to align himself with a tradition or even update it. Therefore, while pastiche is not itself equivalent to parody, because it performs similar functions, pastiche may be used to create parody.³⁹

The distinction between parody and satire is perhaps the most difficult to pin down, mainly because it is notoriously challenging to define satire (or parody, for that matter). The two most certainly can interact, and often do. With satire, however, the target is often outside of the text and distinctly different from the author (though self-parody and irony may often enter in and complicate the picture). Parody, on the other hand, fully incorporates its target into itself, to the point that the text world of the target text becomes an inextricable part of the text world of the parodying text.⁴⁰ Thus, as Hutcheon writes, “[o]vertly imitating art more than life, parody self-consciously and self-

³⁷ Rose (1993) 68.

³⁸ Rose (1993) 68.

³⁹ Rose (1993) 72-7. Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 38, however, states that the difference between parody and pastiche is that pastiche aims at similarity, parody at difference.

⁴⁰ See Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 43-9 and Rose (1993) 81-2. By “text world” I am referring to everything that makes up a given text, including its author, social and literary context, style and content, *and* the reader's response to and formulation of these elements. See Rose (1993) 39-40.

critically points us to its own nature.”⁴¹ To be sure, the *persona* of the satirist is often a key part of the joke; in the case of modern satirists like Stephen Colbert, for example, the obvious discrepancy between the assumed character of the satirist and what we perceive to be his true feelings is the reason we can and do laugh at statements which if spoken in all sincerity would be highly offensive. The parodist, on the other hand, so completely entwines his own work with that of another that to comment upon one is to comment upon the other. Parody, in this sense, does not only reveal the differences between target and parodist, but the complex interplay between difference and similarity, self and other. It may use comedy as a tool for signaling and navigating this aspect of itself, but it is not as dependent upon humor as satire is.

So much for what parody is not. There are as many definitions of what parody is as there are scholars of parody theory. Here I will add my own: *parody is an allusive mode that creates a playful, critical, and paradoxical combination of incongruity and relatedness between self and other.*

“Allusive mode” situates parody as a special type of intertextuality. “Mode” stresses that parody is not itself a genre, but a way of handling whatever genre is being employed.⁴² The word “allusive” has been chosen carefully and precisely for its ludic implications. Furthermore, I have not used “quotation” or “reference” because they are too diachronic and one-sided. “Allusion” to me evokes a more open-ended conversation between reader and text that can have implications for how we read past, present, and

⁴¹ Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 69.

⁴² Dentith (2000) 37 also understands parody as a “mode” of intertextuality.

even future texts.⁴³ Parody can even allow the parodying author to become an anterior rather than reactionary text.⁴⁴ This may or may not be intentional on the part of the author; my concern is the effect on the reader. The relation between the James Bond and Austin Powers movies provides a striking modern example of this phenomenon. I have noticed that there is a generation of people now who became familiar with the world of Austin Powers before seeing any of the classic James Bond films, and because of this they “read” the earlier films through the lens of the parody. For example, the villains of SPECTRE are read primarily as versions of Dr. Evil and his associates, and in general, they watch the first James Bond movies with an eye for finding traces of Austin Powers, not the other way around. I would suggest that a similar phenomenon has happened in the way we read Callimachus: rather than seeing him on his own terms, we read him as a proto-Propertius. And can we really read Propertius (or Vergil, or Homer) the same way after we have read Ovid? After all, when we study intertextuality as readers of texts, we are really the ones who are doing the “playing” with the material before us.

The word “playful” has been chosen for my definition in response to Rose’s “comic incongruity.”⁴⁵ Parody does not have to be comic, especially in the sense of mocking. It does, however, convey a certain tone that distinguishes it from just any kind of intertextuality. “Playful” therefore encompasses the comic, but also modes that would more accurately be described as “witty” or “ironic.”⁴⁶ I have kept Rose’s term

⁴³ I should point out that while I do hear the notes of intentionality in a word like “allusion,” my focus is on the reader’s perception of the author’s intention and how a given text interacts with the reader, not on the impossible task of trying to reconstruct an author’s original intent.

⁴⁴ Nappa (2002) demonstrates how Ovid does this with Vergil’s *Georgics*, though with less emphasis on parody.

⁴⁵ Rose (1993) 32 and *passim*.

⁴⁶ So also Lelièvre (1954) 71-2.

“incongruity,” as there is always an aspect of parody that marks its difference from the original in a surprising or unexpected way. This may be “a dissimilarity or an inappropriate similarity between texts.”⁴⁷ A parody also has a critical aspect - not necessarily polemical, but engaging in a metaliterary conversation.⁴⁸

Perhaps one of the reasons parody has become so linked to comedy is that the two are both recognized by similar devices. At the heart of parody (as in comedy) lies the disruption of reader expectations. It has long been recognized that humor results from raising expectations of X and then giving something not-X, thereby creating an “incongruous contrast,” as Rose writes.⁴⁹ Because parody also depends upon incongruity and contrast, it is easy to see why it has been so closely linked to comedy; indeed, although I do not believe parody *must* be comic, that is not to say that it does not often include humor. In fact, the presence of humor in a contrast between the author’s own work and another work or genre is one of the ways we can recognize the presence of parody. Authors can signify parody in other ways, including the use of irony; exaggeration of style, form, or subject matter; or a mismatch of form or tone and content. All these techniques are ways of creating an incongruous effect; the key to creating a true parody, however, is that there must also be a sense in which the author is revealing the paradoxical combination of difference and similarity between himself and his target.

The Russian Formalists, a school of literary theorists writing in the early Twentieth Century, posited that the purpose of literary art, as opposed to ordinary speech,

⁴⁷ Rose (1993) 34.

⁴⁸ For Dentith (2000) 9, 18, parody does have to have a polemical edge – but this polemicism does not have to be directed at the target text; it can be directed at the world, making use of the authority of the parodied text.

⁴⁹ Rose (1993) 171.

is to reveal the inner working of language through a process called “defamiliarization” (Russian *ostraneniye*, literally “making strange”).⁵⁰ When a reader encounters a difficult form or complex image, he cannot gloss over it and still understand what he is reading; he must slow down and notice each word in a detailed and new way. In other words, what would be easy and familiar in ordinary prose, and therefore not given much attention, is made difficult and unfamiliar in order to aestheticize the very process of perception.⁵¹ This idea is important for parody because although he does not discuss it at length or explicitly, Victor Shklovsky, one of the chief figures of the Russian Formalists and proponents of the ideas just discussed, appears in his writings to understand parody “as making something new from an old or dead form by ‘laying bare’ its devices . . .”⁵² Thus, parody does for features of a genre that have become so common as not even to be properly noticed anymore what the artistry of literature does for language in general. Another Russian Formalist, Yuriy Tynyanov, analyzed the “double-coded” nature of parody, finding that a parody could in fact be sympathetic to and admiring of its target. Parody, he suggested, has “dual planes”: one work stands behind another, and the way a parody has both a creative and destructive function creates a dual relationship with the target text. For example, if a parody of a tragedy is comic, the resulting work has the dual planes of tragedy and comedy. This creates incongruity.⁵³

⁵⁰ Lemon and Reis (1965) 4.

⁵¹ This idea can be found in Victor Shklovsky’s essay “Art as Technique” in Lemon and Reis (1965) 5-24 (see esp. 11-12).

⁵² Rose (1993) 110.

⁵³ Rose (1993) 117-124. Rose points out that Tynyanov’s other example, a comedy turned into a tragedy, is harder to imagine, because some of the comic overtones of the parodied text will always remain. A good example might be Vergil’s use of Catullus *c.* 66.39 (*invita, o regina, tuo de vertice cessi*), which has comic overtones, in the tragic context of *Aen.* 6.460. The irony of the resulting incongruity has long troubled

Bakhtin developed Tynyanov's theory of "double-planed" parody by writing about parody "as both a 'double-voiced' form and one which is based on contrast and dissonance."⁵⁴ Bakhtin gets at the metaliterary nature of parody when he writes that parody, stylization, and dialogue are "artistic-speech phenomena" that are "two-ways directed":

All these phenomena, despite very real differences among them, share one common trait: discourse in them has a twofold direction – it is directed both toward the referential object of speech, as in ordinary discourse, and toward another's discourse, toward someone else's speech. If we do not recognize the existence of this second context of someone else's speech and begin to perceive stylization or parody in the same way ordinary speech is perceived, that is, as speech directed only at its referential object, then we will not grasp these phenomena in their essence: stylization will be taken for style, parody simply for a poor work of art."⁵⁵

Bakhtin, however, understands these double voices to be clashing with each other in a hostile manner,⁵⁶ whereas I and many other recent scholars of parody would contend that while they do clash, it does not necessarily have to be in a hostile manner.

Let us now look at an example of how these ideas work by considering the opening of Ovid's *Amores* 1.1. Its first word, *arma*, has long been recognized as an allusion to the opening of Vergil's *Aeneid*. There is clearly an intertextual relation between the two texts, as Ovid is recusing himself from writing an epic, embarking upon an elegiac project instead. I have chosen this passage because it provides a clear example of how an allusion becomes parody. We must ask two questions: How can we recognize

Vergil's readers. For an analysis of this test case for the limits of intertextuality, see Edmunds (2001) 151-2, Barchiesi (2001) 143-6, and Wills (1998).

⁵⁴ Rose (1993) 126.

⁵⁵ Bakhtin ([1929] 1973) 185.

⁵⁶ Bakhtin ([1929] 1973) 198-204.

that this is not just an allusion, but a parody? And what is being parodied – Vergil, epic, or something else?

Ovid creates incongruity by using the very Vergilian and generically charged word *arma* in the wrong context. As the first word of his poetry collection, it not only sets the tone for the entire work, but would normally even become the name of the collection. To make *arma* the first word of a collection of love elegies is jarring. It raises certain generic expectations which are immediately thwarted. Part of the brilliance of this poem is that Ovid represents himself in the same position as the reader in this regard: he (or his persona) thought he was going to write epic, for which *arma* would be an appropriate beginning, but his own expectations are thwarted by Cupid. Thus the workings of parody and humor are themselves dramatized for us as readers. Ovid lays bare the trappings of genre in his story about Cupid stealing a foot from his poetry and defamiliarizes the word *arma*, usually such a common word and one which had become practically metonymy for epic poetry.

Thus, so far we have found humor, irony, and a mismatch of language, style, and content. Ovid is also clearly making a statement about his own poetry, both aligning himself with a Vergilian project and distancing his final product from it.⁵⁷ But is Vergil really the target of the parody? I suggest that he is not. Rather, the target text is the elegiac genre, and more specifically, the tradition of the *recusatio*. This form had become so commonplace that in order to breathe new life into the trope, Ovid had to parody it. In doing so, he makes us more keenly aware of the inner workings of the

⁵⁷ Cf. Hannoosh (1989) 114: “Moreover, a parody must even allow for a critique of itself such as it has performed on the original . . . This distinguishes parodic renewals from more generally intertextual ones . . .”

recusatio and takes part himself in that tradition, but in a new way, in a way that is both X and not-X at the same time. As can be seen from this analysis, therefore, this poem perfectly fits the definition I have put forth for a parody: an allusive mode that creates a playful, critical, and paradoxical combination of incongruity and relatedness between self and other.

It would be fair to say, as most people would, that my definition of parody much more closely resembles a post-modern rather than ancient definition of the term. An examination of the ancient terminology, however, reveals that the tension post-modern scholars have found in parody exists in its very etymology. The word parody is in fact a Greek term. The form used by Aristotle (*Poetics* 1448a5) is *παρωδία*, clearly formed from the prefix *παρά* (which has the basic meanings of both “beside” and “against”) and the noun *ᾠδή* (“song, ode”). Related forms include *παρωδή* (the word for parody used by Quintilian in *I.O.* 9.2.35), the verb *παρωδέω* (“to parody, to write parodies”), and *παρωδός* (“parodist,” “composer of parodies”).⁵⁸ The tension I am referring to is in the prefix *παρά*. As Lelièvre notes, “*παρά* may be said to develop two trends of meaning, being used to express such ideas as nearness, consonance, and derivation as well as transgression, opposition, or difference.”⁵⁹ Everything parody does is encapsulated in this little prefix: it creates a link between authors through the similarity of their work, acknowledges a possible debt of the later author to the former, and inextricably joins together the text worlds of both authors, while simultaneously highlighting the

⁵⁸ Householder (1944) 2 (with n. 2) and 8 suggests that the agent-noun (*παρωδός*) developed first, in contrast to *ῥαψωδός*, followed first by *παρωδή* and then by *παρωδία* and *παρωδέω*. He is basing this judgment on principles of word-formation, not written evidence.

⁵⁹ Lelièvre (1954) 66.

differences between the two and often transgressing all sorts of literary rules, including those of genre, time and priority (that is, it can infiltrate a chronological reading of literary history by influencing how we read prior texts), and literary pedigree and esteem (the master author may be brought low through his ability to be manipulated, and/or the parodist may be raised to the level of the master). As Linda Hutcheon writes, “People usually stress the meaning ‘counter’ or ‘against’ for para in parodia. But it can also mean ‘beside’ and therefore there is a suggestion of an accord or intimacy instead of a contrast . . . The pleasure of parody’s irony comes not from humor in particular but from the degree of engagement of the reader in the intertextual ‘bouncing’ (to use E.M. Forster’s famous terms) between complicity and distance.”⁶⁰ It is not sufficient to choose one or the other meaning of παρά when defining parody; both meanings must be present. This co-occurrence of singing “against” and singing “alongside” is what distinguishes parody from related forms like satire, travesty, and simple imitation.⁶¹ Scholars have therefore had a difficult time giving a definition of parody based on the ancient word παραφδία; some examples (from most succinct to most colorful) include “a beside-or-against song,”⁶² “something sung – or composed – conformably to an original but with a difference,”⁶³ and “singing off key; or singing in another voice – in counterpoint, or again, singing in another key – deforming, therefore, or *transposing* a melody.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 32. See also Rose (1993) 46 for the implications of the double meaning of παρά.

⁶¹ Rose (1993) 49.

⁶² Chambers (2010) 3.

⁶³ Lelièvre (1954) 66.

⁶⁴ Genette ([1982] 1997) 10.

Aristotle uses the term in his discussion of the difference between tragedy and comedy. Artists, he says, can depict men as they are, worse than they are, or better than they are. Homer made his characters better (βελτίους), Cleophon (who wrote hexameter poems in everyday language depicting daily life) made his characters like (ὁμοίους) ordinary people, and Hegemon of Thasos, the first writer of parodies according to Aristotle, made them worse (χείρους).⁶⁵ Aristotle does not seem to make a distinction between the function of parody and comedy here; both show men as worse than they really are. It should be noted, however, that he does distinguish Hegemon as the first writer of parodies (τὰς παρωδίας ποιήσας πρῶτος), thereby implying that parody is a distinct form, even though he does not elaborate on what makes it distinct.⁶⁶ There is further evidence that there were contests specifically for parodies; Hegemon won a number of times, including in 413 BCE for a *Gigantomachy*.⁶⁷

Despite the potentially broad applications of their terminology, as far as we can tell, the ancients seem most often to have used “parody” to describe what we now call “mock-epic,” that is, “a narrative poem of moderate length, in epic meter, using epic vocabulary, and treating a light, satirical, or mock-heroic subject.”⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the only complete extant work of this type is the *Batrachomyomachia* (*Battle of the Frogs and Mice*). In this tale, a frog offers a ride across a pond to a mouse; when a water snake suddenly appears, the frog dives down into the water, accidentally drowning the mouse.

⁶⁵ *Poetics* 2 (1448a1-7).

⁶⁶ For more on the tradition of epic parody in 5th and 4th c. Greek literature, see Athenaeus *Deip.* 15.698-9, with discussion in Olson and Sens (1999) 5-12.

⁶⁷ Olson and Sens (1999) 7.

⁶⁸ Householder (1944) 3.

The mice wage war against the frogs in retaliation, and would have destroyed the race of frogs, had not some crabs entered the battle and scared away the mice.

This work, once attributed to Homer but almost certainly Hellenistic, is important for this discussion not only because it shows us how an ancient poet went about parodying Homer and the epic tradition, but also because in its prologue it contains a blend of epic parody, Callimacheanism, and a reference to the Gigantomachy, thus containing in eight lines the perfect *précis* of the strands of thought I will be weaving in, out of, and together throughout this dissertation. The proem goes as follows:

Ἀρχόμενος πρώτης σελίδος χορὸν ἐξ Ἑλικῶνος
ἐλθεῖν εἰς ἔμὸν ἦτορ ἐπέυχομαι εἶνεκ' αἰοιδῆς,
ἦν νέον ἐν δέλτοισιν ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ γούνασι θῆκα,
δῆριν ἀπειρεσίην, πολεμόκλονον ἔργον Ἄρης,
εὐχόμενος μερόπεσσι ἐς οὐατα πᾶσι βαλέσθαι
πῶς μύες ἐν βατράχοισιν ἀριστεύσαντες ἔβησαν,
γηγενέων ἀνδρῶν μιμούμενοι ἔργα Γιγάντων,
ὡς λόγος ἐν θνητοῖσιν ἔην; τοίην δ' ἔχεν ἀρχήν.

As I begin my first page, I pray that the choir from Helicon come into my heart for the sake of the song I just placed in tablets upon my knees, praying to cast into the ears of all mortals a boundless contest, the raucous work of Ares, how the mice proved their valour against the frogs, imitating the deeds of the Giants, the earth-born men, as the story went among mortals. Such a beginning did it have.⁶⁹

This proem exhibits several Callimachean qualities. First of all, there is the reference to the written page and placing the physical text in tablets upon the poet's knees. We can compare Callimachus' statement in the *Aetia* prologue that Apollo came to him when he first put a tablet on his knees. These references to writing highlight the fact that this is not oral poetry composed in the manner of the Homeric bards. Then, the reference to the Heliconian Muses evokes Hesiod's *Dichterweihe* in the *Theogony*, which

⁶⁹ I am following the Greek text of Allen and Munro. All translations in this dissertation are my own, unless otherwise indicated; where I have kept a published translation, I felt I could not improve upon it.

Callimachus also takes as his model for the *Aetia* (and indeed the preference for Hesiod over Homer as a model of a slimmer type of hexametric writing is a feature of Hellenistic poetry).⁷⁰ Garnier has shown how the words used in line 1 directly imitate line 1 of the *Theogony*: Μουσάων Ἐλικωνιάδων ἀρχώμεθ' αἰείδειν.⁷¹ Finally, the reference to a story circulating among men could be seen as an acknowledgment of a certain amount of belatedness: this story has been told before (though perhaps only circulated orally).

The description of the subject matter of the poem forms a sharp stylistic contrast with these Callimachean elements. The contest is “boundless” and produces the raucous din of war; such qualities are the antitheses of the contained, small-scale, polished and refined Hellenistic work. There is a definite sense of incongruity here, as the diminutive heroes of the work imitate the deeds of the Giants, who are both physically unusually large and also represent the ultimate epic subject matter.⁷² As we shall see in the following chapter, the cacophony of the battle and its boundless nature (it stretches over many years and over land and sea with nearly cataclysmic results) are emphasized in Hesiod’s account of the Titanomachy. Indeed, it is an important irony that the original (extant) written account of various instantiations of the Gigantomachy motif is in Hesiod;⁷³ the first model for the ultimate epic subject matter is contained within the more “Hellenistic” of the two great archaic writers of hexameters, Homer and Hesiod. It cannot be coincidence that our one surviving mock epic likens its subject matter to the Gigantomachy.

⁷⁰ Reitzenstein (1931); on the *Dichterweihe* motif, see Kambylis (1965).

⁷¹ Garnier (2011) 113.

⁷² Innes (1979).

⁷³ There are mentions of Gigantomachy in Homer, but there is not a sustained narrative of the myth.

The *Batrachomyomachia* makes use of many Homeric forms and phrases.⁷⁴ The presence of archaisms, epic formulas, and heroic epithets gives the work a Homeric flavor and aligns the author with the project of writing Homeric epic. At the same time, the application of these linguistic units to frogs and mice rather than human heroes produces Rose's "comic incongruity." Many of the names and epithets are humorously adapted to suit the little creatures, such as Crumb-Snatcher (Ψιχάρπαξ), who proudly proclaims in lines 27-9 that he is the son of "great-hearted" Bread-nibbler (Τρωξάρταο πατρός μεγαλήτορος) and Mill-licker, daughter of King Ham-nibbler (Λειχομούλη, θυγάτηρ Πτεροτρώκτου βασιλῆος). There are several epic type scenes, as well. There are two humorous arming scenes; Ares himself arms the mice with the sort of armor Homeric heroes wear, but adapted for comic effect (for example, their little helmets are made of nut shells). There is a divine council in which Athena refuses to help the mice because they nibbled holes in her peplos, and having borrowed to do her weaving, she now has nothing to make repayment (she will not help the frogs either, because their croaking keeps her awake at night).

The product of all this is a remarkable blend of styles, especially Homeric and Callimachean.⁷⁵ It is a good example of parody as a "beside-*and*-against song." In other words, the author of the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice* simultaneously aligns himself with the epic tradition by using its language and subject matter and proclaims himself as distinct from that tradition by diminishing both his style and material. In addition to adding humor to the work, the choice of such small creatures to be the heroes of the work

⁷⁴ Garnier (2011) 107-13 provides numerous examples of lexical and syntactic archaisms in the text.

⁷⁵ Garnier (2011) 120.

fits with the stylistic aesthetic of this Hellenistic, “*genus tenue*” work. The humble status of the characters also fits the Hellenistic aesthetic; even the gods are brought down to earth, as they have more mundane, human concerns than the Homeric gods do, as seen in Athena’s reasons for not helping the creatures.

However, the mice and frogs, despite their small size and humble nature, are not anti-heroes. They are fully capable of waging a Homeric style battle, even without help from the gods. The proem states that they fought “imitating the deeds of the Giants” (7). This image contrasts the small size of the frogs and mice with the size of the Giants, and suggests that the actions of the tiny creatures were no less great than the earth-shaking deeds of the Giants. The fact that they are *imitating* (μιμούμενοι) the Giants’ deeds is important: it suggests that they are rivaling their predecessors’ actions, thereby also acknowledging that they are following in the footsteps of someone else (and perhaps there is a sense of playing at imitating them, the way children imitate adults). The metaliterary implications are clear: the author of the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice* stands in the same relation to Homer as his characters stand to the Giants.⁷⁶

There are three reasons why giants are so important in parody. First of all, as Innes as demonstrated, they represent the ultimate epic subject matter.⁷⁷ A battle of gods and giants is as large, heavy, and thunderous a subject matter as one can find, and this naturally brings the style of writing to the forefront as well: either the style will fit the

⁷⁶ A similar phenomenon occurs in Vergil’s *Georgics* 1.118-21, where the “wicked goose” (*improbis anser*) damages “the labors of men and oxen” (*hominumque boumque labores*); there is humor and incongruity in the juxtaposition of *improbis* and *anser* and in the notion that this ridiculous creature carries such a grave threat. The passage does not have a mocking tone, however, and the seriousness of the subject matter remains. For discussion of this passage and the question of how to understand *improbis*, see Nappa (2005) 34-6.

⁷⁷ Innes (1979).

subject matter, providing the ultimate examples of *genus grande* writing, or it will not, and will thereby draw attention to itself by its incongruity. One of the ways parody can be recognized is by the presence of exaggeration; the exaggerated quality of the subject matter of the Gigantomachy allows for easy play with exaggeration in style, whether that be an extra heavy epic style, a pointedly Callimachean one, or a blend of the two that deliberately flouts the rules of both archaic epic and Callimachean aesthetics.

Secondly, the Gigantomachy is a myth about succession and the ordering of the universe. It is tinged with ambiguity about the consequences of succession. Dueling traditions make Kronos/Saturn both a cannibalistic tyrant and the overseer of the Golden Age. The Golden Age, in turn, is a time to which we may or may not want to return.⁷⁸ Zeus/Jupiter may be regarded as the rightful ruler who overcame the forces of chaos to usher in a new era of rational justice, or as yet another tyrant who usurped his father's place by force. As we shall see, these tensions and ambiguities surrounding the succession myth become convenient images for Greek and Roman poets to use to talk about both politics and metapoetics.

To understand the final reason why giants play such a large role in parody, we must turn to Bakhtin's discussion of the role of the grotesque in carnivalistic literature. In his book *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin discusses the way folk carnival humor operated in the Medieval and Renaissance cultures: "[a] boundless world of humorous forms and manifestations opposed the official and serious tone of medieval ecclesiastical and feudal culture. In spite of their variety, folk festivities of the carnival type, the comic

⁷⁸ For analysis of the ambiguity inherent in the Golden Age myth, especially in Vergil's various treatments of it, see Perkell (2002) and Johnston (1980).

rites and cults, the clowns and fools, giants, dwarfs, and jugglers, the vast and manifold literature of parody – all these forms have one style in common: they belong to one culture of folk carnival humor.”⁷⁹ The function of the carnival is to celebrate a temporary freedom from the hierarchical order of society. By creating a period of time in which everything is topsy-turvy, carnival paradoxically also affirms and renews the normal order.⁸⁰ This is what parody does, as well: at the same time that it denies, mocks, or tears down the parodied text, it also breathes new life into it.

The grotesque is an important part of carnival. Because the physical body represents the common people, there is a great focus on it in grotesque realism, and everything relating to the body becomes “grandiose, exaggerated, immeasurable.”⁸¹ This is exactly what giants are: grandiose, exaggerated, immeasurable bodies.⁸² Monsters in general are anomalous beings, “that which does not fit into usual classifications or transgresses normal limits, and hence may be considered dangerous.”⁸³ Greek monsters are usually hybrid creatures; for example, they may be part human, part beast, or combine different species. They also often have the wrong number of features, represented by a multiplication of limbs, or only one item of a pair.⁸⁴ The giants and Typhoeus with their many snaky legs or the Hundred-Handers with their hundred arms fit this description well. Furthermore, monsters often contradict ideological dichotomies such as mortal/immortal, young/old, male/female, and so forth.⁸⁵ Bakhtin connects the monsters

⁷⁹ Bakhtin ([1965] 1984) 4.

⁸⁰ Bakhtin ([1965] 1984) 10-11.

⁸¹ Bakhtin ([1965] 1984) 19.

⁸² Cf. Bakhtin ([1965] 1984) 341: The giant is “an essentially grotesque image of the body.”

⁸³ Clay (1993) 106.

⁸⁴ Clay (1993) 106.

⁸⁵ Clay (1993) 106.

of mythology to the figure of the buffoon, suggesting that they represent a different ordering of the world: “Actually the grotesque . . . leads men out of the confines of the apparent (false) unity, of the indisputable and stable. Born of folk humor, it always represents in one form or another, through these or other means, the return of Saturn’s golden age to earth – the living possibility of its return.”⁸⁶ Indeed, the giants of myth do represent an ordering of the cosmos different from that under Zeus/Jupiter, being earth-born and allied to Kronos/Saturn. They are also monstrous and dangerous, and as previously discussed, the desirability of a return to the Golden Age is dubious in Greek and Latin texts. Therefore, the image of a giant may conjure up many different political and metapoetic readings, from that of an upstart hubristically challenging the place of the rightful ruler (whether political or literary) to a hero overthrowing a tyrant. In any case, the combination of the ambiguity built into the myth and the grotesque nature of its protagonists make it an ideal myth for parody.

⁸⁶ Bakhtin ([1965] 1984) 48.

Chapter 2

There Were Giants Then: Hesiod's *Theogony*

It is in the nature of the parodic and carnivalesque that the seeds of later criticisms of archaic epic would be found within the body of that genre itself. The problem with writing a full-scale Gigantomachy is that the subject matter is so enormous and ungainly that it ends up caving in on itself, thus producing something that succeeds more the more it fails. It produces a *creative* failure in that while it does not result in a successful epic, it does by its very nature foster the tools poets needed to express their reception of the epic tradition: Callimacheanism and parody. Thus it is no accident that the seeds of both these tools (which are not at all mutually exclusive), are to be found in the earliest treatment of gigantomachic mythology, Hesiod's *Theogony*.⁸⁷ We tend to think of Homer and Hesiod as standing at the head of literary history, but just as Minnesota Public Radio often reminds its listeners that "at one time, all music was new," so too were all poets once new. There was a long line of bards working before Hesiod, and he is not immune to the anxiety of influence just because he is ancient to us.⁸⁸ Through his use of gigantomachic mythology, Hesiod introduces into literary history that combination of "Callimachean"

⁸⁷ There is much bibliography on the reception of Hesiod by Callimachus. Some of the most influential studies include Reitzenstein (1931), who suggests that Callimachus wrote in a *genus tenue* style associated with Hesiod that contrasted with Homer's *genus grande*; Kambylis (1965), who analyzes the reception of Hesiod's *Dichterweihe* in later poets, including Callimachus, Ennius, and Propertius; and Reinsch-Werner (1976), who highlights verbal reminiscences of and allusions to Hesiod in the works of Callimachus. Cameron (1995) 362-86 questions these readings, and Sistikou (2009) brings more complexity to the issue by pointing to the differences between Callimachus and Hesiod.

⁸⁸ The phrase "anxiety of influence" belongs to Bloom (1973). By "Hesiod" I am referring to the poet's persona as presented in the text.

poetic aims and parody of the bombastic epic style that would become so defining in the Hellenistic and Augustan periods.⁸⁹

I. The Early History of the Giants

There are two mentions in the *Theogony* of the Giants. One is in the proem, at line 50, when the poet is describing what the Muses sing:

αἰ δ' ἄμβροτον ὄσσαν ἰεῖσαι
θεῶν γένος αἰδοῖον πρῶτον κλείουσιν ἀοιδῆ
ἐξ ἀρχῆς, οὓς Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρύς ἔτικτεν,
οἱ τ' ἐκ τῶν ἐγένοντο, θεοὶ δωτῆρες ἑάων·
δεύτερον αὖτε Ζῆνα θεῶν πατέρ' ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν,
[ἀρχόμεναί θ' ὑμνεῦσι θεαὶ + λήγουσαί τ' ἀοιδῆς,]
ὄσσον φέρτατός ἐστι θεῶν κάρτει τε μέγιστος·
αὐτίς δ' ἀνθρώπων τε γένος κρατερῶν τε Γιγάντων
ὑμνεῦσαι τέρπουσι Διὸς νόον ἐντὸς Ὀλύμπου
Μοῦσαι Ὀλυμπιάδες, κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο. (43-52)⁹⁰

They cast their immortal voice and first celebrate in song the revered race of gods, starting from the beginning, with those whom Gaia and broad Ouranos begat; from them came the gods, givers of blessings; next they sing of Zeus, father of gods and men, [the goddesses start and end their hymns with him,] how he is the best and mightiest of them; then the Olympian Muses, daughters of Zeus who brandishes the aegis, delight the mind of Zeus within him, as they sing of the race of humans and of the mighty Giants.

The other mention comes at line 185, which is the birth of the Giants from the blood of Ouranos' severed genitals:

⁸⁹ One could argue whether Homer and Hesiod belong to the same genre or not. Because he wrote hexametric *epos* and was frequently compared with Homer by ancient readers, I treat Hesiod as an author of a kind of epic. The existence of the *Contest Between Homer and Hesiod* attests to this view. At the same time, because of the smaller scale of his works and greater sensitivity to literary critical issues, I understand him as simultaneously operating within the epic genre and commenting upon it (hence his appeal to Hellenistic authors). See Koning (2010) 25-126 on the grouping of Homer and Hesiod in antiquity, and pages 299-357 on the differences between Homer and Hesiod, including Hesiod as a writer of didactic *epos* (differing in theme and style from Homer's poetry).

⁹⁰ I have followed West's edition of the Greek text.

ὄσσαι γὰρ ραθάμιγγες ἀπέσσυθεν αἱματόεσσαι,
πάσας δέξατο Γαῖα· περιπλομένων δ' ἐνιαυτῶν
γείνατ' Ἐρινῦς τε κρατερὰς μεγάλους τε Γίγαντας,
τεύχεσι λαμπομένους, δολίχ' ἔγχεα χερσὶν ἔχοντας,
Νύμφας θ' ἄς Μελίης καλέουσ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν. (183-7)

For as many bloody drops as were shed, Gaia received them all; and as the years rolled round, she bore the mighty Furies and great Giants, shining in their armour and holding long spears in their hands, and the Nymphs whom they call “Ash Nymphs” upon the boundless earth.

These passages raise two questions: What do they tell us about the Giants, and why is their battle with the gods left out?

They are described with similar epithets in both passages, “mighty” in the first and “great/large” in the second. The description of them in line 186 is a small ecphrasis of the monsters, as we are invited to visualize them gleaming in their armor. The Giants and Gigantomachy were popular subjects in art; there are over six hundred representations extant.⁹¹ In the archaic and classical periods, the Giants were always depicted as anthropomorphic hoplites (they do not acquire anguipede form in Greek art until after 400 BCE).⁹² Hesiod follows this tradition, and may well have had such visual depictions in mind. In fact, one can see a gradual progression in artistic representations of the Giants. In the earliest depictions of the Gigantomachy, we can recognize the Giants not by their appearance, but because we see a large number of gods, including Zeus, fighting against a large host (often given individual names). Herakles is often

⁹¹ Ogden (2013) 82; Vian (1951) has catalogued many of these depictions along with a small sampling of representations of Typhoeus.

⁹² Ogden (2013) 82-3; Gantz (1993) 446-7, 452-3; Fontenrose ([1959] 1980) 242-3. The Giants' later anguipede form developed in Magna Graecia, where depictions of Typhoeus (who is always anguipede) were especially popular. Conflation of the myths is probably the cause, as well as, perhaps, the more baroque tendencies of Hellenistic art. For an overview of the development of images of giants in Italy and its possible influence on Greek depictions, see de Grummond (2000) 259-61.

present as well.⁹³ Beginning in the 420s, red-figure depictions of the Giants start to show less civilized beings, now throwing boulders instead of carrying hoplite armor, and attempting to scale Olympus. The first time we find them in anguipede form is on a lekythos from c. 380 BCE (Berlin: PM VI 3375), and, as Gantz remarks, “Such a motif, and indeed the whole theme of the battle, will achieve its fullest expression in the frieze of the Great Altar of Pergamon.”⁹⁴ Thus it may be that originally, the Giants (whose Greek name, *Gigantes*, does not refer to size, but their birth from the earth) were not associated with monstrosity of form the way Typhoeus was, but were instead emblematic of an excess of hubris and warrior spirit, contained within a primarily human form. We may note the close association of humans and Giants in *Theog.* 50, where the Muses sing of the *genos* of both.⁹⁵ In some sources, particularly from the Fifth Century, the Giants seem to be men, while in others (including Homer) they are semi-divine.⁹⁶ The close relation between humans and Giants will be made more explicit in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, when he claims that humans were first born from the blood of the defeated Giants.⁹⁷ The Giants are not human, though, and we are reminded of this fact by their shared birth with the Furies and Ash Nymphs.⁹⁸

Thus, for Hesiod, the Giants seem to represent not multiform chaos, but rather the fierceness of nature given form. Full of dark hubris and bellicosity, they gleam. The *Theogony* may not include the Gigantomachy, but it does give a very prominent place to

⁹³ Gantz (1993) 450-2.

⁹⁴ Gantz (1993) 452-3; quote on 453.

⁹⁵ Clay (1988) 329 n. 27 observes that “this phrase indicates one *genos* for both Giants and human beings.”

⁹⁶ West ad *Theog.* 50; Hom. *Od.* 7.56-60, 10.120.

⁹⁷ *Met.* 1.156 ff.; cf. *Lyc.* 1356 ff.

⁹⁸ The Meliai are also associated with bellicosity, as the Bronze Race is born from them in the *Works and Days* (line 145), and spears were sometimes made of ash-wood (e.g. at *Sc.* 420, Hom. *Il.* 16.143); see West ad 187, who nevertheless doubts that Hesiod had these facts in mind here, and Vian (1952a) 182.

the Giants in the proem. The Muses' song starts with Gaia and Ouranos begetting the Titans and ends with the Giants. In the center is Zeus, who will be the one to impose order on the primordial chaos. Zeus, the Muses, and Hesiod are all involved in the same project: to mold chaos into order. They do not eliminate chaos, but they shape and polish it into something manageable, Zeus by relegating his opponents to Tartaros, and the Muses and Hesiod by folding them into poetry that has form and a pleasing sheen. The Giants' negative qualities are therefore downplayed in a way they could not be if Hesiod had included a Gigantomachy in the *Theogony*. His Giants do not represent exactly the same thing as his Titans or his Typhoeus do. To include a Titanomachy, Gigantomachy, and Typhonomachy in one work would be redundant, and Hesiod may not have wished to show so many threats against the Olympians' power once it had been established.⁹⁹ Given the way the Gigantomachy was represented artistically at this period, it would not have fulfilled Hesiod's purposes either, which are to make Zeus a mythological dragon slayer who subdues the primordial forces of chaos. At this period, it is in the Titanomachy and Typhonomachy that we find these forces most clearly represented.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Clay (2003) 113-14.

¹⁰⁰ It is also possible that because Zeus required so much help in the Gigantomachy - he needed the help of both a mortal, Herakles, and a Titan, Prometheus - it was difficult to fit into Hesiod's program (Clay [2003] 114). See below, however, for my discussion of the aid the Hundred-Handers provide in the Titanomachy; perhaps to have the supreme god require so much help in two battles was too much for Hesiod. It is possible that the battle is subtly alluded to at line 954, where Herakles' "great deed among the gods" (μέγα ἔργον ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν) is referenced; West ad loc. suggests that this is the case, but also points out (ad 186 and 947-55) that this passage is likely post-Hesiodic. The battle is definitely mentioned at fr. 43.65 M-W, so Hesiod did know of it. The Aloadae, Otos and Ephialtes, seem to have been mentioned in the *Catalogue of Women* (see fr. 19-20 M-W).

II. The Titanomachy

Like the *Iliad*, Hesiod's narrative of the Titanomachy begins *in medias res* in the tenth year of fighting. The description of this battle has three stages: the appeal to the Hundred-Handers to be the Olympians' allies (lines 617-86), the *aristeia* of Zeus (lines 687-712), and the final routing of the Titans by the Hundred-Handers and victory for the Olympians (lines 713-33).¹⁰¹ In the first stage, the appeal to the Hundred-Handers, we learn that these creatures (named Briareos, Kottos, and Gyges) had been bound and kept beneath the earth by Kronos. Kronos, "wondering at their overweening arrogance, their form and their great size, made them dwell beneath the wide-wayed earth" (ἠνορέην ὑπέροπλον ἀγώμενος ἠδὲ καὶ εἶδος καὶ μέγεθος· κατένασσε δ' ὑπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης, 619-20). The verb ἄγαμαι has a wide semantic field ranging from "admire, wonder at" to "feel envy, be jealous, bear a grudge."¹⁰² We can read the word here almost as a zeugma: Kronos was both "bearing a grudge at their arrogance", and "marveling at/jealous of their form and size." The emphasis on both form and size highlights the extreme epic nature of the Hundred-Handers; monstrously huge, so much so that they seem to frighten the mighty Kronos, they practically personify the extreme of epic writing. In confirmation of this fact, they dwell beneath the "wide-wayed" earth, a place that is the direct opposite of Callimachus' narrow path. The extremity of their living situation is again emphasized in line 622 with the doubling in sense of ἐπ' ἐσχατιῇ μεγάλης ἐν πείρασι γαίης ("at the furthest point, at the ends of the great earth") and use of another adjective of size to describe the earth.

¹⁰¹ Mondi (1986) 27.

¹⁰² LSJ s.v. ἀγάομαι / ἄγαμαι.

We then learn that Zeus has received information from Gaia that he can only defeat his father and the other Titans with the help of the Hundred-Handers. Accordingly, Zeus goes to them, offers them nectar and ambrosia, and addresses them in reverential, epic language: “Hear me, splendid children of Gaia and Ouranos . . .” (κέκλυτέ μεν Γαίης τε καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀγλαὰ τέκνα, 644). Blaise and Rousseau suggest that by these actions, Zeus establishes a reciprocal relation of *philotes* with the Hundred-Handers, thereby civilizing them.¹⁰³ The Hundred-Handers represent not only brute force, but also excess.¹⁰⁴ In addition to their exaggerated size, they have fifty heads and one hundred arms each (671-3); as discussed in the previous chapter, a multiplicity of limbs or otherwise wrong number of features is a defining characteristic of Greek monsters.¹⁰⁵ As such, they seem to belong to the world of the Titans, the forces of disorder. Zeus, however, has to learn throughout the *Theogony* that simple suppression by brute force is not enough to hold back the tides of chaos and succession; he has to incorporate the strengths of his enemies (including both cunning and brute force) into himself and his ordered world. This scene marks the beginning of this integration.

The Hundred-Handers agree to fight for the Olympians, and their entrance into the battle gives the gods increased enthusiasm for the war (665-8). The Hundred-Handers hurl boulders at the Titans, and the heavy sounds of the battle shake Olympus and reach down to Tartaros as the combatants’ war cries strike the stars. Thus the whole of the cosmos is filled with the sound of fighting. This is indeed the ultimate example of

¹⁰³ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 230-1.

¹⁰⁴ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 229 refer to them as “puissances de l’excès.”

¹⁰⁵ Clay (1993) 106.

“thundering” martial epic, as Innes has suggested.¹⁰⁶ Everything about it, including the combatants, the weapons, the sounds, and the cosmic ramifications, is as large, heavy, and thunderous as possible.

The second stage of the narrative of the Titanomachy (lines 687-712) is often referred to as the *aristeia* of Zeus. It begins, interestingly, with an upsurge in the god’s fighting strength (*menos*): “Nor did Zeus keep holding back his might, but now at once his heart was filled with his own might, and he showed forth all his force” (οὐδ’ ἄρ’ ἔτι Ζεὺς ἴσχευ ἐὼν μένος, ἀλλὰ νῦ τοῦ γε εἶθαρ μὲν μένεος πλήντο φρένες, ἐκ δέ τε πᾶσαν φαῖνε βίην, 687-9). One of the characteristics of an *aristeia* is just such an increase in the *menos* supplied to the hero by the gods; it is somewhat problematic that here, Zeus must supply his own increased strength to himself.¹⁰⁷ Hesiod seems to emphasize this point by his use of the possessives in ἐὼν μένος and τοῦ γε εἶθαρ μὲν μένεος; the γε both intensifies the possessive quality of τοῦ and gives a concessive flavor to the phrase. The problem is that these lines imply that the god’s strength had been diminished for some reason prior to this moment.¹⁰⁸ A human hero, in his *aristeia*, temporarily takes on superhuman might by the favor of the gods; the king of the gods, as the source of this power, should always fight with such strength, or he would be no better than a mortal hero. The particles used in the Greek are important. In the first clause, οὐδ’ ἄρ’ ἔτι Ζεὺς ἴσχευ ἐὼν μένος, the ἄρα indicates an action that is not only successive, but also consequential. Zeus’ fighting spirit is increased both after and *because* of the success of

¹⁰⁶ Innes (1979) 166.

¹⁰⁷ Mondt (1986) 40.

¹⁰⁸ Contra is West ad 687, who suggests that Zeus has not been abstaining from the fight, but that we just have not heard about his activity yet; line 687 represents a transition from the general to the particular. This still leaves us with the problem that Zeus’ fighting has been ineffective for ten years.

the Hundred-Handers. The phrase οὐδ' . . . ἔτι suggests that Zeus had previously been holding back; this could be Hesiod's way of discouraging the suggestion that Zeus, like a human hero, did not have this *menos* available to him to turn on at will, and had to wait for it to be supplied to him. This brings up another troubling issue, however: why did the god not fight with his full force prior to this, during the ten years that all the Olympians were fighting against the Titans without the help of the Hundred-Handers? Why did it take the intervention of Gaia and her giant offspring to inspire Zeus to victory? We must believe that Zeus was incapable of delivering a decisive blow against the Titans without the help of the Hundred-Handers, or at least that he did not believe he could do it and fought half-heartedly prior to receiving Gaia's prophecy and his new allies. Furthermore, Zeus' *aristeia*, although it creates universal conflagration and turns the battle (ἐκλίβθη δὲ μάχη, 711), does not end the struggle; in the third stage of the narrative (lines 713-33), it is the Hundred-Handers who finish off the Titans and then guard them in Tartaros.¹⁰⁹

Critics have long been troubled by the Titanomachy, especially the double determination of the battle and the role the Hundred-Handers play in it. Furthermore, the style in the Titanomachy narrative is more extreme than the rest of the *Theogony*.¹¹⁰ Thus, in the Nineteenth Century, a large number of critics athetized the *aristeia* as an interpolation by an overzealous poet who wanted to increase Zeus' glory.¹¹¹ Most scholars now leave the passage in, but still have to find a way to explain it. One

¹⁰⁹ Pucci (2009) 63 reads this scene differently than I, suggesting that the Titanomachy demonstrates Zeus' "political shrewdness" and "skill in military leadership."

¹¹⁰ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 214. Cf. West ad 617-719 ("[f]or the most part, modern taste has found it bombastic") and Lambertson (1988) 87 ("[i]n a corpus characterized by extremes the poetry of this battle narrative stands out as extraordinary").

¹¹¹ See Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 215, Mondi (1986) 27, and Said (1977) 183-5 for further discussion. On the ancient criteria for distinguishing between authentic and pseudo-Hesiod, see Schwartz (1960) esp. 43-6.

interpretation argues that the *aristeia* of Zeus and fighting of the Hundred-Handers are simultaneous, not successive, actions. To present simultaneous actions paratactically in this manner has been demonstrated to be a practice of archaic composition known as Zielinski's Law.¹¹² It may very well be true that Zeus' *aristeia* and the final routing of the Titans by the Hundred-Handers occur at the same time, but the text is very clear that Zeus and the Olympians had been fighting for ten years before the Hundred-Handers entered the battle, that only after they started fighting did Zeus unleash his might, and that Zeus does not defeat the Titans alone, but needs the Hundred-Handers to achieve victory.¹¹³ Thus, none of the interpretive problems with the text have really been solved by applying Zielinski's Law, even if it is correct to do so.¹¹⁴

Mondi has suggested a more fruitful solution, that these issues exist because Hesiod was innovating within traditional material. The Hundred-Handers' defeat of the Titans is part of the old story; Hesiod added the *aristeia* of Zeus in order to bring the myth in line with his program of glorifying Zeus.¹¹⁵ As Mondy writes, "In the narratives of the Prometheia and the Titanomachy we have two examples of a consistent program on Hesiod's part to portray Zeus in accordance with a strict ideological vision in the face of a sometimes contrary tradition; *and in each case he has employed the same*

¹¹² Frazer (1981) argues that Hesiod's Titanomachy is an example of Zielinski's Law, which was first set forth in Zielinski (1899-1901).

¹¹³ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 219-22 suggest that the *aristeia* of Zeus is neither a doublet of the actions of the Hundred-Handers, nor a simultaneous action to theirs, but rather follows the logic and sequence of a Homeric battle that combines *aristeia* with phalanx fighting. Gaia plays the role of the gods in Homer by announcing the conditions necessary for victory, and once Zeus (like the Homeric hero) sees these conditions met, he can unleash his *menos*.

¹¹⁴ Furthermore, as West ad 711-12 points out, Hesiod breaks Zielinski's Law when he returns to the actions of the Hundred-Handers after the *aristeia* section.

¹¹⁵ Solmsen (1982) 4-5, following West, argues that we have in our version of the text "a conflation of earlier and later versions" (5).

compositional techniques of compression, expansion, and shift of emphasis to accommodate the demands of that tradition to the requirements of this theme” (emphasis mine).¹¹⁶ The portion of Mondi’s statement that I have italicized could be written in any handbook on *Hellenistic* poetics on the ways in which Callimachean authors manipulate traditional material to suit their own poetic aims. The Titanomachy stands out stylistically because Hesiod is signposting its innovative nature and metapoetic importance. When Zeus breaks through the fog of tradition and flashes onto center stage, so does the poet. It is critical to note, however, that he does not do so by writing a full-scale, epic Titanomachy. Hesiod is not so concerned with making form and content match in the traditional sense. Granted, the *Theogony* is written in dactylic hexameter and would be technically classified as *epos*, but it is clearly different from Homer and the Epic Cycle in its relatively small size and use of the very qualities mentioned in the quote by Mondi above: compression, expansion, and shift of emphasis. The ultimate epic subject matter has been squeezed into a smaller form, resulting in the impression that the story is almost bursting at the seams, barely containable by the poetic structure containing it, just as the universe is nearly destroyed by the cosmic battle contained within it. In this sense, Hesiod has made form and content match, but in a new way. He is emphasizing the strain such a narrative puts on a poet and his work as he attempts to do justice to such a grand topic.

Mondi’s suggestion that the contradictions in the narrative arise because Hesiod has expanded the role of Zeus and shifted the emphasis away from the Hundred-Handers is intriguing and may very well be correct. Of course, without direct access to the oral

¹¹⁶ Mondi (1986) 47.

tradition Hesiod was drawing from, there is no way to prove this definitively. It does seem, however, that the story has trouble accommodating both Zeus and the Hundred-Handers. Even if Mondi's theory is correct, we still have to explain why Hesiod kept so much attention on the Hundred-Handers; to say that Hesiod is reflecting the traditional story is not enough. If Hesiod really did augment the role of Zeus, why did he not go further in downplaying the help the god requires from his allies?

I suggest that the Hundred-Handers are not just a relic of a traditional narrative, but are crucial to the themes of the work. It is now well known that to stop the chain of succession, one of the things Zeus has to incorporate into his rule is cunning intelligence, or *metis*.¹¹⁷ This is most obviously symbolized by his swallowing of the goddess Metis and subsequent incorporation of her traits into himself. Something equally important for the young god to learn is how to use brute force and the primordial. For ten years, he and the other Olympians are incapable of defeating the Titans; their strength alone is clearly not enough. Two things are needed to win the battle: first, Zeus disorients the Titans with his lightning bolts, then the Hundred-Handers finish them off with their boulders. Both lightning bolts and Hundred-Handers are examples of primordial elements and brute force incorporated into civilization under Zeus. The lightning bolt is nature harnessed into a manageable form by technical skill.¹¹⁸ It is not coincidental that the Cyclopes, another race of giant, monstrous, chthonic creatures, are the ones who forge these

¹¹⁷ Detienne and Vernant (1978) 89-91 discuss how Kronos must use cunning as well as force to defeat his father, though not to the extent that Zeus does. Ouranos and Kronos, in their ways, both exhibit a lack of self-control and moderation. Kronos is a kind of intermediate figure between Ouranos and Zeus: "In his struggle against Ouranos he is a subtle and ingenious god, the founder of sovereign power and as such is close to Zeus. But in his conflict with Zeus he is, by reason of his uncontrolled nature so given to excess, still close to the primordial and thus to Ouranos" (90). Zeus combines all the qualities of his predecessors.

¹¹⁸ Detienne and Vernant (1978) 78.

weapons. These are primordial weapons, representing the ultimate brute force of the cosmos, yet their power is carefully molded into a form controllable by the god so that he can use them judiciously. As Blaise and Rousseau point out, by using the lightning bolt, Zeus harnesses and uses the same kind of primal force that the Hundred-Handers use. In fact, the same adjective, *stibaros*, qualifies the arms of the Hundred-Handers (lines 675, 715) and Zeus' arms as he casts the thunderbolt (line 692).¹¹⁹ Zeus and his monstrous allies are not so different in that respect. Like the thunderbolt, the Hundred-Handers are themselves another kind of primordial excess that gets coopted into the new order of the cosmos. When Zeus exchanges nectar and ambrosia with them, he is bringing them into a relationship of *philotes* with himself, thereby civilizing them to a certain extent; this is a way of integrating brute force into an ordered world.¹²⁰ After the battle, they literally become the boundary between the world of the Titans and that of the Olympians by acting as guards in Tartaros, thereby becoming a stabilizing force in the cosmos and reign of Zeus.¹²¹ They are raised from primordial beings who dwell in Tartaros, to liminal beings who guard Tartaros. They cannot be fully incorporated into Olympus, as they are too overwhelming and Titanesque, but they must be accounted for. This is the lesson Zeus learns that enables him to win: he has to find a way to bring brute force and cunning intelligence together, to balance nature and culture through the tools of civilization.

¹¹⁹ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 228.

¹²⁰ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 228, 230-1; West ad 639 ff.

¹²¹ Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 228-9.

III. The Seeds of Epic Parody

Likewise, the poet must balance his own version of brute force and cunning intelligence, or the demands of the epic narrative and his poetic craft. Here we begin to see how the theories of parody discussed in the previous chapter operate already in Hesiod. I am not suggesting that the *Theogony* is a parody of epic, but rather that we can see in it the parodic potential that would be developed by later authors into actual parody. Here it may be helpful to recall the definition of parody that I proposed in the previous chapter: *parody is an allusive mode that creates a playful, critical, and paradoxical combination of incongruity and relatedness between self and other.* It is difficult, without the target texts (which in this case is likely an oral tradition), to say to what extent the *Theogony* is in an allusive mode. It does seem, however, to be making use of and responding to a traditional body of material. I have also argued that an important component of parody is play with literary time, as the alluding author positions himself within or even prior to his “model.” Anteriority is also an important part of Hesiod’s text; that is, it is part of a world which is always already over. I do not mean that it was written earlier or that its mythology is part of the past, as all mythology was, but that even in mythological terms, it happened before the race of heroes that forms the subject matter of Homer and the Epic Cycle. To return to it is to return to a time when Zeus was not yet the ruler of gods and men, to a time when Zeus’ glory had not yet happened and the glory of men as seen in Homer was not yet possible.¹²² It takes place in a time when

¹²² Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 223 also point out that the outcome of Hesiod’s battle will make Homer’s battles and the cosmic order that surrounds them possible. I am not making any claims as to the relative chronology of the Homeric and Hesiodic works as we have them; on this question, see Koning (2010) 40-6.

the universe was unstable and had not yet found the divine order that would make Homeric poetry or even Hesiod's own initiation possible. In fact, it is to go back to the time *before* even the Muses could sing Zeus' glory. In addition, it is a myth of succession; in terms of poetic succession, to go back to the Titanomachy is to put oneself at the head of the line, to go back to the source when Zeus defeated the forces of chaos, begot the Muses, and made poetic harmony possible at the same time as cosmic harmony. It is also temporarily to unsettle the present order. When a poet returns to this subject matter, in some ways he becomes a figurative Prometheus. He controls the secret of succession, this time poetic, and by going back to the beginning uses his knowledge to unbind himself from the control of his predecessors. In other words, he does not re-write the heroic saga. He re-sets the stage for everything that came after, thereby becoming the new anterior text. As we shall see, this would become a powerful tool for later authors.¹²³

Comic incongruity occurs in two ways in this episode. The first is Zeus' *aristeia*, in which the king of the gods (the highest possible subject) is presented in slightly lower trappings (a normally *human*, albeit noble, event, because the gods do not require it). Thus, Zeus' *aristeia* almost fits the definition for burlesque. The god rages so much that he nearly destroys the earth, yet it is apparently not enough to defeat the Titans. One *could* read Zeus as a blustering figure who acts out in an extreme yet ineffectual manner. As I will demonstrate in a later chapter, it seems that this is how Ovid would read the

Neitzel (1975) argues that Hesiod was imitating Homer; I am simply arguing that he responds to a body of traditional material, whether it included Homer as we have it or not.

¹²³ For a similar approach to Ovid, see Nappa (2002), Barchiesi (1993), and Keith (1992a) esp. 30.

passage, and offer his own corrective version. The second locus of incongruity is the role of the Hundred-Handers. With their fifty heads, one hundred arms, and boulder heaving, they are both extreme and ridiculous creatures. I have already suggested why they are necessary to Hesiod's narrative, but read another way, these multi-limbed monsters are like extraneous growths on the story, vestigial limbs of a bygone version of the myth. Ovid will simply write them out of his version.

IV. Typhoeus the Interloper

The other major battle in the *Theogony* between Zeus and a challenger to his position is the Typhonomachy (lines 820-80). After the defeat of the Titans, Gaia mates with Tartaros to produce Typhoeus,¹²⁴ a huge, dreadful creature with snake heads that produce all sorts of sounds.¹²⁵ We are told that Typhoeus “would have become the lord of gods and men that day” had not Zeus been keenly perceptive (836-7). This time, Zeus fights alone; again, he wields his thunderbolts with natural disaster resulting. The god wins singlehandedly, and Typhoeus is cast into Hades.

Clearly, the Typhonomachy has much in common with the Gigantomachy and Titanomachy.¹²⁶ Typhoeus is the capping event in the series of battles between Zeus and these various would-be usurpers. We have many depictions of Typhoeus, generally with

¹²⁴ This figure is variously named Typhoeus, Typhaon, Typhon, and Typhos.

¹²⁵ Many have found Gaia's motivation here puzzling, as she had just helped to put Zeus in power. Clay (2003) 17-18 offers the explanation that Gaia always encourages a younger god to challenge the older generation, and as such represents the female “force for constant change” in the work. Her role in the poem “as kingmaker among the gods and orchestrator of succession is perfectly consistent . . .” (27). Cf. Blaise and Rousseau (1996) 213.

¹²⁶ West ad 820-80 and Pellizer (1996) 244-6 provide structural comparisons of the Titanomachy and Typhonomachy. On the association of Typhoeus with the Giants, see Fontenrose ([1959] 1980) 80 n. 10 and 241 with n. 32.

a human head and torso and a multitude of snaky legs. His serpentine appearance is emphasized in all sources, even if it is mixed with human characteristics.¹²⁷ Thus, in archaic and classical era art as in Hesiod, Typhoeus is even more monstrous than the Giants or Titans. Detienne and Vernant call him “a power of confusion and disorder, an agent of chaos.”¹²⁸ He also seems to have been a real threat to Zeus’ reign that would have been realized had Zeus not been especially perceptive. Here the monstrosity of the challenger is not the only element of the story that is heightened, but also the prowess of Zeus. He perceives the threat and deals with it swiftly and singlehandedly, whereas in the Titanomachy he fought a messy, ten-year battle that required the help of allies to win.¹²⁹

Typhoeus’ multiplicity of limbs and voices is also important. Too has argued that the many and varied voices of Typhoeus have a metaliterary function, representing disordered and chaotic discourses that Zeus silences.¹³⁰ Hesiod tells us that the monster is capable of reproducing the sounds of all sorts of beings, including various kinds of animals, humans, and even gods. As Too writes, “Through his myriad voices, the creature has in effect a limitless capacity to lie and deceive, to be mistaken for other than what he really is.”¹³¹ This should immediately make us think of Hesiod’s Muses and

¹²⁷ Fontenrose ([1959] 1980) 80-81.

¹²⁸ Detienne and Vernant (1978) 117.

¹²⁹ Gantz (1993) 49 points out that the Typhoeus episode gives Zeus a chance to show off his power, without help from the gods. For Clay (2003) 25-6, the Typhonomachy is not only necessary so that Zeus can defeat an opponent single-handedly, but also (and more importantly) so that he can put an end to Gaia’s productivity.

¹³⁰ Too (1998) 18-19. In the *Phaedrus* (230a), Plato will use Typhoeus as a metaphor for convolutedness.

¹³¹ Too (1998) 21. He further discusses how polyphony is usually a positive trait, as it is for the Delian Maidens in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, or when poets use the “many mouths” *topos*. Too’s solution is that a multiplicity of voices is only a positive trait when it is authorized by the gods, especially Zeus or Apollo (22-3).

their famous dictum, “we know how to speak many lies resembling the truth, and we know, when we wish, how to speak the truth” (ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, / ἴδμεν δ’, εὔτ’ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι, 27-8). An important difference between Typhoeus and the Muses is that the latter are divinely sanctioned. They do not represent a threat to the order of the cosmos under Zeus’ rule, but rather uphold it by informing poets like Hesiod of the material they need to sing the god’s glory. Typhoeus uses his polyphonic capabilities to try to deceive the gods; because he can imitate the gods themselves, he threatens the order of things and confuses the sources of power. In Hesiod, language often mirrors reality, and, as Too writes,

Hesiod’s Typhon-narrative is one which emphatically recognizes the need for language, and particularly extraordinary language, to be authorized by those who govern the order of things . . . As a narrator of cosmogony, the poet is no less implicated in the production of discourses which establish and reinforce the position and authority of Zeus as leader of mortals and gods . . . Zeus’ treatment of Typhon in the Theogony dramatizes the exclusion from the community of discourses which are not sanctioned by beings who hold power.¹³²

The purpose of this, in Too’s theory, is to provide a metaphor for a leader discriminating between just and unjust voices among the people. Political authority is not above some deception and manipulation in epic, but the just ruler is the one with the authority to decide what kinds of discourse will be sanctioned within the community and manipulate language to his own (just) ends; those that are not sanctioned will be silenced and excluded.¹³³

Too’s explanation is not entirely satisfactory; his portrayal of the just ruler easily shades into a Machiavellian autocrat. Furthermore, I think his discussion of the

¹³² Too (1998) 22, 24-5, 29.

¹³³ Too (1998) 29-36.

metapoetic implications of Typhoeus' voices is slightly misdirected. In Hesiod's text, the point is that by imitating the language of the gods, Typhoeus has crossed a boundary. He is using language, along with brute force, as a weapon against the gods, by attempting to usurp the speech that is properly theirs.¹³⁴ In doing so, he mixes the categories of beast and god.¹³⁵ Later authors would see Typhoeus as a kind of anti-Muse. As I will discuss in the next chapter, in *Pythian* 1, Pindar uses the monster as an example of one who is not dear to Zeus, and therefore trembles at the sound of the Muses' song (lines 13-16).¹³⁶ Ovid's anti-Muses, the Pierides who challenge the Muses in *Metamorphoses* 5, will choose Typhoeus as their subject, and Nonnus' Typhoeus, who is called a "song-loving giant" (Γίγας φιλόαιδος, 1.415) has been recognized as a metaliterary figure whose protean sounds are linked to Nonnus' own brand of poetics.¹³⁷

In his presentation of the Typhonomachy, Hesiod again makes use of a more extreme style. Lamberton calls it "the most baroque and audacious language in the corpus . . .," while Solmsen ascribes to it "the intention of going it one better" than the Titanomachy.¹³⁸ Solmsen continues, "This objective has been achieved but at the price of fantastic exaggeration both in *inventio* and in *elocutio*. To the ὄγκος and the

¹³⁴ On the language of the gods, see West ad *Theog.* 831.

¹³⁵ Clay (1993) esp. 106-7 discusses how monsters in Hesiod by definition are hybrids that mix physical (human, beast) and ideological categories (such as mortal/immortal, young/old, male/female). Cf. Hardie (2012) 216-17: "Hesiod lays especial emphasis on the din of voices from the heads – voices of gods, bull, lion, puppies – transferring to the auditory level the polymorphous nature of the beast. Zeus's first response is also sonic, as he crashes out the sound of his own thunderbolt (*Theog.* 839)."

¹³⁶ Ford (1992) 190-1 also makes this connection, and analyzes the emphasis on sound in this passage; he sees Typhoeus as a kind of anti-Muse.

¹³⁷ On the metaliterary nature of Typhoeus in Nonnus, see Shorrock (2001) and Hardie (2012) 214-25; while Shorrock sees the monster as an anti-Zeus, Hardie argues that he is a double for both Zeus and the epic poet. He also sees a connection between Typhoeus and the description of *Fama* in the *Aeneid*. Hardie's larger argument is that *Fama* stands for the epic tradition, just as I am arguing giants do.

¹³⁸ Lamberton (1988) 53; Solmsen (1982) 11.

κακοζηλία of this section no parallel can be found in early Greek epic.”¹³⁹ This (not Homer) is exactly the kind of writing that Callimachus expounds against in the *Aetia* prologue.¹⁴⁰ I am not suggesting that Callimachus was responding negatively to Hesiod, but that he and Hesiod both in their own ways responded negatively to the same bombastic epic style, Hesiod through a direct imitation and Callimachus through more subtle allusion.

The style of the Typhoeus passage has led some scholars to suspect interpolation.¹⁴¹ Curiously, many critics have also seen the Typhon narrative in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* as an intrusion into the text of the hymn.¹⁴² Clay, though she sides with those who defend the passage, comments on “the extraordinary length of the digression [and] its indirection.”¹⁴³ It seems that whenever Typhoeus enters a text, he causes misdirection, digression, duplication, and a generally convoluted or extreme style to emerge, causing scholars to question the authenticity of the passage. I find it more likely that this is due to the nature of the material than that every early Typhoeus narrative is an interpolation. Typhoeus represents disordered speech, the speech of the poetaster who does not know how to handle such material properly. He threatens the

¹³⁹ Solmsen (1982) 11.

¹⁴⁰ In fact, there may be a connection between Callimachus’ use of the braying of the ass as foil for the song of the cicada in *Aet.* fr. 1.29-32 Harder (=Pf.). The ass is connected to Typhon in Isiac religion: see Andrews (1998) 7 and Walsh (1994) xxxi-xxxii.

¹⁴¹ See Blaise (1992) for a full discussion.

¹⁴² See Clay ([1989] 2006) 64; she defends the passage.

¹⁴³ Clay ([1989] 2006) 65.

poet's project, because he represents the old order of things, the force of tradition and polyphonous mass of material already told by countless bards and poets.¹⁴⁴

As Bloom wrote, "Every forgotten precursor becomes a giant of the imagination."¹⁴⁵ Every poet has to find a way to manage the weight of tradition. The best poets do this not by destroying their predecessors, but by gaining such mastery over them that the new poet becomes the authoritative tradition. Zeus does not kill Typhoeus (he cannot), but he contains him in such a way that the ground may sometimes shake, lava flow, or winds blow, but the essential order of the cosmos is not threatened. Likewise, the new poet writing in the Hesiodic style cannot ignore the force of tradition, or it will overwhelm him. He must find a way to incorporate both refined skill and brute force into his narrative style. Hesiod does not do this seamlessly, which is why his gigantomachic narratives stand out from the rest of his text. We have not yet reached Callimachus, but the most basic idea behind Callimacheanism is already present. But before Callimachus, we will need to visit another "early" poet, Pindar, whose work, like that of Hesiod, already possesses the seeds of Callimachean aesthetics. The Pindaric victory ode represents the next stage in the development of Callimacheanism through the adoption of a more allusive and condensed style, in a genre that, while connected in several important ways to epic poetry, must make it very clear that it is not epic.

¹⁴⁴ As Pucci (2009) 65-66 points out, the myth of the snake fighting the storm-god is a very old Near Eastern motif, and therefore represents an old myth threatening the newer myth of the young king. On the origins of Typhoeus, which are outside the scope of this discussion, see Vian (1960).

¹⁴⁵ Bloom (1973) 107.

Chapter Three

Purest Springs of Fire: Giants and Callimachean Poetics in *Pythian* 1 and 8

There are several Gigantomachy passages in Pindar; those treated most extensively and therefore most important for this study are the references to Typhon in *Pythian* 1 and 8. Traditionally, the giants in these passages have been interpreted as examples of *hybris*. Always a foil for the victor, they represent those who extend themselves beyond due measure (*kairos*) either in their expectations of praise or in political situations. I propose an additional way of reading Pindar's giants, as metaliterary foils for the poet and his work. As such, they are a part of a nexus of images in the Pindaric corpus that anticipate the aesthetic program so often attributed to Callimachus. The political component is not to be discounted, however; rather, in Pindar we find the beginnings of the unity of political and poetic purposes, which will be subtly developed by Callimachus and then overtly problematized by the Augustan poets.

Scholars have noted a connection between Pindar and Callimachus before, although this topic has not been examined from the perspective of Gigantomachy. In 1967, Newman pointed out several connections between Callimachus and Pindar, including their allusive treatment of mythology, use of the words σοφός and σοφιστής for “poet” and σοφία for “poetry,” the importance of φθόνος in their poetry, and their use of the “pure path” (κέλευθος καθαρὰ) metaphor.¹⁴⁶ Newman argues that the reason

¹⁴⁶ Newman (1967) 45-8. Prior to Newman, Smiley (1914) had published an article that amounts to little more than a list of correspondences between Callimachean and Pindaric phrases.

Callimachus turned to Pindar was that he wanted to restore lyricism to Greek poetry.¹⁴⁷ In 1980, Poliakoff published an article demonstrating that Callimachus “derives important elements of his critical terminology from Pindar,”¹⁴⁸ focusing especially on images of water and sweetness. Richardson wrote in 1985 about how Pindar’s comments about his own art and the previous tradition anticipate the language of later literary critics, including Callimachus.¹⁴⁹ The same year, Newman also published an article arguing that Pindar’s poetry reveals a self-consciousness that anticipates the Alexandrian movement.¹⁵⁰ Three years later, Fuhrer elucidated the specific stylistic features of Pindaric poetry which Callimachus reproduces, including “discontinuity in narrative, preference for unusual elements, and allusiveness” as well as “Pindar’s habit of digressing in order to alter, reject, or break off certain myths” and his technique of “interweaving personal statements into the narrative.”¹⁵¹ Where Callimachus digresses from Pindar, according to Fuhrer, is that Pindar uses these features out of religious scruple or to make his poetry more fitting to its encomiastic purpose, whereas Callimachus’ goal is to display his “wit and sophistication.”¹⁵² Bing and Depew have both argued that Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos* includes many allusions to Pindar, according to Bing in order to bring out the nature of Delos as a pure, small, peaceful place symbolic of Callimachus’ own poetry and the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (that is, Callimachus is aligning himself with Pindar’s presentation of Delos, in opposition to

¹⁴⁷ Newman (1967) 45, 48.

¹⁴⁸ Poliakoff (1980) 41.

¹⁴⁹ Richardson (1985) 383-4, 394 and *passim*.

¹⁵⁰ Newman (1985) 177.

¹⁵¹ Fuhrer (1988) 53, 58-9.

¹⁵² Fuhrer (1988) 58.

the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*), while for Depew Callimachus' aim is to play a "learned game" by using Pindaric allusions to undercut expectations and show how he differs from both Homer and Pindar.¹⁵³ Recently (2007), Steiner has written about avian imagery in Hesiod, Pindar, and Callimachus, demonstrating how Callimachus promotes "Hesiodic and Pindaric aesthetics even as he dismantles and revises the models these poets proposed."¹⁵⁴

Before proceeding to my own analysis of this intertextual relationship, it is necessary to consider some aspects of Pindar's encomiastic genre.¹⁵⁵ Through its meter, performance context, and subject matter, important differences and similarities with epic are visible. Dactylo-epitrite is the meter of about half (23) of Pindar's epinician poems, the others (20) being in Aeolic meters (*Olympian 2* being an exception). Nagy demonstrates how the meter of epic, dactylic hexameter, can be understood as a blend of dactylo-epitrite and Aeolic metrical features.¹⁵⁶ Therefore, epinician is marked by its meter as akin to epic, but distinctly different as lyric. The performance context of the two genres likewise shows similarities and differences. Both are orally delivered public performances. Epic is a performance by one person of material collectively developed over generations, while epinician is the work of one man performed by a chorus. Both genres have Panhellenic qualities, but epinician is composed for specific occasions, unlike epic. Regarding content, both are concerned with ἀρετή, nobility, competition,

¹⁵³ Bing ([1988] 2008) 91-143; Depew (1998), esp. 160 and 181-2.

¹⁵⁴ Steiner (2007) 195.

¹⁵⁵ For discussions of Pindar's genre, see Currie (2005) 21-24 on the difficulty of defining the epinician genre and Kurke (1991) 3-7 on the social performance context. Bundy (1986) is a foundational study of many of the tropes and aims of the genre, and Nagy (1990) thoroughly compares and contrasts Homeric and Pindaric poetry.

¹⁵⁶ Nagy (1990) 416-17.

and immortalization through poetry. Both could be called the κλέα ἀνδρῶν. But epic deals with the distant past, while epinician links ancient heroes with figures of the poet's own time; its main concern is the here and now.¹⁵⁷ Nagy further argues that while both epic and epinician represent κλέος, Pindar's poetry (and not epic) is also αἶνος, "a code that carries the right message for those who are qualified and the wrong message or messages for those who are unqualified."¹⁵⁸ There are requirements of the audience in terms of learning and perception that are absent in Homeric epic, but very much present in Hellenistic poetry. Finally, the heroization of the *laudandus* in epinician poetry, with the very real possibility of receiving posthumous hero cult, links the *laudandus* to ancient heroes and Pindar to the epic poets, but the greater focus on the existence of hero *cult* in Pindar and focus on the present day benefits of the hero to his city distinguish epinician from epic.¹⁵⁹ Thus, in Nagy's neat formulation, epic is one element contained within epinician: "Pindaric song is both staying in the present and reaching back into the past within itself."¹⁶⁰

According to Robbins, "Pindar is in fact the first Greek poet in whom we find repeated and ubiquitous reflection on the nature of his role as poet and on his art."¹⁶¹ The way he formulates this self-reflection anticipates many of the elements of the

¹⁵⁷ Nagy (1990) 150, 192.

¹⁵⁸ Nagy (1990) 148.

¹⁵⁹ Currie (2005) 3, 29-84.

¹⁶⁰ Nagy (1990) 437.

¹⁶¹ Robbins (1997) 261. Bundy (1986) revolutionized the study of Pindar by arguing against biographical interpretations of the poems, arguing instead that we can only understand Pindar's works through comparative study of the odes (35). Bundy's basic interpretive principle is that "there is no passage in Pindar and Bakchylides that is not in its primary intent enkomiastc . . ." (3); anything that is not laudatory is a foil for the primary interest of the poem (5). While Bundy's work provided a crucial, much-needed shift in Pindaric studies, he is overly concerned with the strictures of genre at the expense of seeing Pindar's individual voice and contributions to learned, allusive poetry. As often happens, the pendulum of Pindaric scholarship swung from one extreme side to the other, and is now coming back to the middle.

“Callimachean” program. Before going into a detailed analysis of the Typhon passages in *Pythian* 1 and 8, I will sketch out some of the elements of the Pindaric program that were attractive to Callimachus. The list is intended to be illustrative, not complete.

One of the most commonly cited passages in discussions of the relation between Pindar and Callimachus is Pindar *Paeon* 7b. 9-13.¹⁶² This fragmentary paeon appears to tell the story of Apollo and Artemis’ birth on Delos.¹⁶³ The lines in question make some kind of programmatic statement (what, exactly, is disputed) regarding Pindar’s relationship to Homeric poetry. Maehler prints the text as follows:¹⁶⁴

κελαδήσαθ' ὕμνους,
Ὀμήρου [δὲ μὴ τρι]πτον κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν
ἰόντες, ἀ[λλ' ἀλ]λοτρίαις ἀν' ἵπποις
ἐπεὶ αὐ[π]τανὸν ἄρμα
Μοισα[]μεν

Sing hymns, going not along the worn-down wagon-road of Homer, but upon the horses of another, since we [drive?] the Muses’ winged chariot

The passage has undergone various reconstructions;¹⁶⁵ I agree with Rutherford that while we cannot be certain as to the correct text, it is most plausible that some sort of contrast is being drawn between Pindar and Homer. Rutherford has demonstrated that this paeon includes key differences from the myth as told in the *Homeric Hymn*, and that it therefore

¹⁶² See e.g. Poliakoff (1980) 46, Newman (1985) 182, Furley and Bremer (2001) 153-6, Rutherford (1988) and (2001) 243-52, Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 250, Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 70-71. The major *loci* for the Callimachean program are the *Aetia* prologue (fr. 1 Harder [=Pf.]), the envoi of the *Hymn to Apollo* (lines 105-13), and *Epigrams* 27 and 28 Pf.

¹⁶³ What remains of the title suggests that the hymn was performed on Delos: Rutherford (1988) 65 with n. 3.

¹⁶⁴ I have used the edition of Snell and Maehler for all quotations of Pindar.

¹⁶⁵ Newman (1985), D’Alessio (1992), Di Benedetto (1991), D’Alessio (1995). For a summary of the history of scholarly views on the text, see Furley and Bremer (2001) 153-6 and Rutherford (2001) 243-52.

makes most sense for the poet to be distancing himself from Homer in this statement.¹⁶⁶

In any case, what is most important for my present purpose is simply to note that Pindar is already taking this issue into consideration and presenting Homeric epic as a “well-trodden” path to which there is an alternative.

It is widely believed that Callimachus was influenced by this passage when he wrote fr. 1 of the *Aetia*, especially the following lines (25-8) in which Apollo addresses the poet:

“πρὸς δὲ σε καὶ τόδ’ ἄνωγα τὰ μὴ πατέουσιν ἄμαξαι
τὰ στείβειν, ἑτέρων ἵχνια μὴ καθ’ ὁμά
δίφρον ἑλᾶν μηδ’ οἶμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
ἀτρίπτους, εἰ καὶ στείνωτερον ἐλάσεις.”¹⁶⁷

“And I bid you this, not to tread on paths which wagons trample, not to drive your chariot along the tracks of others nor on a broad road, but on untrodden paths, although you will drive a narrower way.”

One can clearly see the verbal reminiscences of the Pindaric passage in Callimachus: the metaphor of poetry as a wagon-path, the worn-down paths of previous poetry and existence of a choice to use “others” means of conveyance, and possibly the image of the composing poet as “driving” some sort of vehicle.

¹⁶⁶ Rutherford (1988) *passim* and (2001) 252. By contrast, Furley and Bremer (2001) 156 suggest that we have been too eager to see Pindar as distancing himself from Homer because of our own familiarity with the Alexandrians. They believe the passage means: “‘I will follow in Homer’s well-trodden track but riding on others’ (sc. the lyric Muses’) mares.’ In other words, his matter will be drawn from epic narrative (such as the *HHApollo*) but his manner will be special to him: choral lyric favoured by the Muses.” This merely means, however, that Pindar is contrasting his *form* with Homer’s, even if not his subject matter; it still amounts to a refusal to write epic. Furthermore, Rutherford has pointed out that in other places where Pindar uses the “path of poetry” metaphor, it refers to subject matter: (1988) 67. For example, in *Olympian* 6.23-25 Pindar asks Phintias, the man who drove the victorious mule chariot, to hitch up the mules for the poet, “so that we may mount the chariot and reach the ancestry of these men on a pure path” (ὄφρα κελεύθω τ’ ἐν καθαρᾷ βᾶσομεν ὄκχον, ἴκωμαί τε πρὸς ἀνδρῶν καὶ γένος). Obviously the chariot driving is here a metaphor for Pindar’s poetry writing, and the pure path, as in Callimachus, is metapoetic.

¹⁶⁷ For all citations of Callimachus’ *Aetia*, I have followed Harder’s edition; her numbering is consistent with Pfeiffer’s in all the passages cited in this study.

In Callimachus, the path the poet should take is not just pure, but also short. Pindar is well known for stopping mid-stream in order to recuse himself from telling too long a story. Such statements are found in both *Pythian* 1 and 8, to be discussed later; they appear elsewhere, too. In *Pythian* 9, Pindar writes that “great achievements are always accompanied by many stories,” but that to write for the wise, the key is to pick out and embellish upon just a few items (ἀρεταὶ δ’ αἰεὶ μεγάλαι πολὺμυθοὶ βαιὰ δ’ ἐν μακροῖσι ποικίλλειν ἀκοὰ σοφοῖς, 76-8). These “great achievements” are not only the athletic victories about which Pindar writes, but also the heroic stories he tells. The emphasis on the size of the achievements and the multitude of stories they bring indicates epic poetry. By contrast, Pindar will carefully select a few moments from mythology to narrate and expand upon, rather than run through the whole epic cycle.¹⁶⁸ In *Pythian* 10, Pindar says that “the choicest of victory songs flits from story to story like a bee” (ἐγκωμίων γὰρ ἄωτος ὕμνων ἐπ’ ἄλλοτ’ ἄλλον ὥτε μέλισσα θύνει λόγον, 53-4). *Nemean* 4 also contains statements that the poet must not dwell on any one theme for too long (τὰ μακρὰ δ’ ἐξενέπειν ἐρύκει με τεθμός ὦραί τ’ ἐπειγόμεναι, 33-4) and that he is incapable of running through the whole of the Aiakids (71-2). *Nemean* 10 contains a *recusatio* in the form of a refusal to recount all the glories of Argos, as it would be too long for his mouth and tedium would ensue (βραχὺ μοι στόμα πάντ’ ἀναγήσασθ’ ὅσων Ἀργεῖον ἔχει τέμενος μοῖραν ἐσλῶν· ἔστι δὲ καὶ κόρος ἀνθρώπων βαρὺς ἀντιάσαι, 19-20). *Isthmian* 1 contains a line similar to *Nemean* 4.33-4: “my song, with its short length, forbids me to narrate everything... but often that which has been passed

¹⁶⁸ It may also be possible to see *Pythian* 4 as an early example of the Hellenistic and later tendency to miniaturize epic.

over in silence brings greater pleasure” (πάντα δ’ ἐξειπεῖν... ἀφαιρεῖται βραχὺ μέτρον ἔχων ὕμνος. ἧ μὰν πολλάκι καὶ τὸ σεσωπαμένον εὐθυμίαν μείζω φέρει, 60-63).

Isthmian 6 repeats the theme that Pindar cannot go through all the Aiakids, as it would be too great a task (56).

Within this system, the poet is also to write light, sweet poetry as opposed to mighty, thundering epic (one thinks of Callimachus’ βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός: “thundering is not for me, but for Zeus,” *Aet.* fr. 1.20). In an interesting line in *Olympian* 1, we get the sense at the end of the poem that this has been lighter work than Pindar might do, when he says, “The Muse is fostering her strongest arrow with might” (Μοῖσα καρτερώτατον βέλος ἀλκᾶ τρέφει, 112). At first glance this might seem an uncallimachean statement to make of one’s poetry, but the fact is that it refers to the poetry Pindar might write in the future for additional victories of Hieron; therefore, by contrast, he has not yet written his mightiest work. We find the “sweet” motif in *Olympian* 7, where poetry is referred to as “streaming nectar” (νέκταρ χυτόν, 7). One might also think again of the image of the little bee flitting from flower to flower as metaphor for the poet flitting from theme to theme (*P.* 10.53-4, quoted above) and compare it to the bees that bring spring water to Deo in Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo* (110).

The Callimachean poet also speaks to the learned reader (*lector doctus*) as a *poeta doctus*. We saw at *Pythian* 9 that short poetry is written for the wise. At *Pythian* 1.83-6, Pindar says that his “swift arrows” (i.e. compressed poetry), “speak to the understanding, but the crowd requires interpreters ([βέλη] φωνάεντα συνετοῖσιν, ἐς δὲ τὸ πᾶν

έρμανέων χατίζει, 85-6). Thus this poem, which contains a little-understood description of the afterlife, anticipates the tradition of the poet-scholar who writes for a learned reader. Part of writing in this learned vein is to use new or obscure versions or parts of myths. One of the most famous Pindaric examples of such mythological innovation is *Olympian* 1. At lines 28-29, he engages directly with his poetic predecessors: “Wonders are many, and somehow the report of mortals, contrary to the true account - stories fashioned with colorful lies - is deceptive” (ἦ θαύματα πολλά, καί πού τι καὶ βροτῶν φάτις ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀλαθῆ λόγον δεδαιδαλμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι). This could be an allusion to the Muses in the proem to the *Theogony*, who say, “We know how to speak lies resembling the truth, and we know, when we wish, how to tell the truth” (ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλά λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, ἴδμεν δ’, εὔτ’ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι, 27-8). If so, Pindar refuses to write in that tradition. He certainly recuses himself from writing the way previous authors had written the myth (υἱὲ Ταντάλου, σὲ δ’ ἀντία προτέρων φθέγξομαι, 36; ἀφίσταμαι, 52). Thus, this passage fits under the category of *recusatio*.

Finally, in the opening of *Olympian* 3, Pindar explicitly states that his poetry is something new, “And so, Muse, be present for me as I discover a shining new way to harmonize my celebratory voice to Dorian step” (Μοῖσα δ’ οὔτω ποι παρέστα μοι νεοσίγαλον εὐρόντι τρόπον Δωρίῳ φωνὰν ἐναρμόξαι πεδίλῳ ἀγλαόκωμον, 4-6).

This statement is in line with the later tradition of the poet as discoverer of something new as found in Roman poetry, and with the Hellenistic interest in the *protos heuretes*.¹⁶⁹

Now we may turn to *Pythian 1*, starting with a close reading of especially the first half of the poem. It begins with a signal that it is not an entirely typical hymn, since it is addressed not to a god, but to the lyre. The first few lines speak to the enchanting, even divine power of the instrument: golden (a symbol of the divine in Pindar), it has the power to quench the lightning bolts of Zeus and put his eagle and fierce Ares to sleep (1-12). As Zeus puts down his thunderbolts and Ares his spears, the lyre takes over as the slinger of shafts, κῆλα (12), but its shafts enchant the hearts and minds of the gods rather than fight them. As beautiful as this imagery is, we ought not to overlook the powerful and potentially dangerous aspect of the lyre. According to the scholia, everywhere else in Greek poetry κῆλα refer to the destructive weapons of the gods.¹⁷⁰ It is also significant that the eagle is said to be “held fast by your [the lyre’s] ῥιπαῖσι” (9-10). According to LSJ, the primary meaning of ῥιπή is the “swing or force by which anything is thrown”; it may be used of the “flight” of a javelin¹⁷¹ and often refers to the “blasts” or “rush” of the wind, or even to a wind storm.¹⁷² A secondary meaning is quick-moving, such as the “flapping” of wings or “quivering” of stars;¹⁷³ LSJ suggest that in this passage only it refers to the “quivering notes” of the lyre. Slater gives its most common meaning in Pindar as “blast, rushing of wind, sea,” the second as “onslaught, blow” and only in the

¹⁶⁹ Gildersleeve (1890) 157 says “[t]he novelty consists in the combination of honor to God and honor to man, of theoxenia and epinikion.”

¹⁷⁰ Drachmann (1910) 11; cf. Burton (1962) 96.

¹⁷¹ Cf. *Il.* 16.589, 12.462; *Od.* 8.192; *E. Hel.* 1123; *Pi. N.* 1.68.

¹⁷² Cf. *Il.* 15.171, 19.358; *Pi. P.* 4.195; *Id. P.* 9.48; *A. Pr.* 1089; *A.R.* 1.1016, *S. OC* 1248.

¹⁷³ Cf. *A. Pr.* 126; *E. Fr.* 594.4; *S. El.* 106.

present passage as “throbbing note.”¹⁷⁴ Nisetich translates it as “trembling strings.”¹⁷⁵ While this provides the most elegant translation, keeping the meanings “thrust” or “blast” makes the poetic import of the word much clearer. First of all, it is in keeping with the meaning of the word elsewhere in Pindar. Secondly, it works with κῆλα to present a picture of a lyre with martial potential. As Skulsky points out, “in *Pyth.* 3.57 ῥίπτω is used, significantly, of Zeus hurling the lightning-bolt. The most important passage is *Nem.* 1.68, in which the word is used of the force of the arrows shot by Heracles during the battle with the Giants.”¹⁷⁶ The winds, children of Typhon, are also tied to gigantomachic imagery, as Hardie has shown.¹⁷⁷

Pindar has singled out particularly martial elements of Olympus for the lyre’s shafts to overcome: the thunderbolts and eagle of Zeus and Ares himself.¹⁷⁸ Given that we are about to have an extended reference to Typhon, this sequence of images activates gigantomachic themes – that is, an attempt to disarm Olympus. What Pindar has done is to create a sort of *oppositio in imitando* of the Gigantomachy, borrowing imagery and themes from this epic motif, but transforming them into a picture of serenity.

Apollo’s presence in these lines is equally double-edged. The first twelve lines describing the lyre’s power are bookmarked by two references to Apollo and the Muses as its joint and rightful owners. As Clay has demonstrated, in the Homeric Hymn tradition, Apollo is presented as the son who could have been a threat to Zeus as a

¹⁷⁴ Slater (1969) s.v. ῥίπᾶ.

¹⁷⁵ Nisetich (1980).

¹⁷⁶ Skulsky (1975) 10-11.

¹⁷⁷ Hardie (1986) 90-97.

¹⁷⁸ Skulsky (1975) 9 points out that the lyre spellbinds into calm “minds that might otherwise incline to discord and violence” and that the lyre itself “is not so much persuasive as compelling.”

potential successor, but instead is brought into Zeus' fold.¹⁷⁹ We should not overlook the fact that here Apollo and the Muses are teamed up in an activity that successfully disarms Zeus.

As if in answer to this problem, Pindar proceeds to reassure us that the Muses are still as closely tied to Zeus as they are in Hesiod: "For as many as Zeus does not hold dear are distraught with fear at the cry of the Muses as it soars over the earth and unconquerable sea" (ὅσσα δὲ μὴ περιήληκε Ζεύς, ἀτύζονται βοᾶν Πιερίδων αἶοντα, γᾶν τε καὶ πόντον κατ' ἀμαιμάκετον, 13-14). He continues with the specific example of one "who lies in dread Tartaros, an enemy of the gods, hundred-headed Typhon" (15-16). By postponing Typhon's name for a whole line, Pindar makes even stronger the connection between this particular myth and the larger pattern of myths that include the Titanomachy and Gigantomachy. The naming of Typhon secures the gigantomachic imagery that had been lurking behind the description of the lyre, and also emphasizes the difference between the lyre and Typhon.

Typhon is a decidedly epic character in this lyric poem. The way he is described creates a focus on size and weight. The next word after his name is a seven-syllable epic epithet meaning "hundred-headed" (ἑκατοντακάρανος, 16); this word both describes Typhon as huge, monstrous, and heavy himself, and lends weight to the actual poem. The description continues,

¹⁷⁹ Clay (2003) 19-22.

τόν ποτε

Κιλίκιον θρέψεν πολυώνυμον ἄντρον· νῦν γε μάν
 ταί θ' ὑπὲρ Κύμας ἀλιερκέες ὄχθαι
 Σικελία τ' αὐτοῦ πιέζει
 στέρνα λαχνάεντα· κίων δ' οὐρανία συνέχει,
 νιφόεσσ' Αἴτνα, πάνετες χιόνος ὀξείας τιθήνα· (16-20)

whom once the Cilician cave of many names reared, but now the sea-girt banks at the base of Cumae and Sicily press upon his shaggy breast; the pillar of the sky holds him fast, snowy Aetna, the nurse of fierce winter year-long.

If we play the game Euripides and Aeschylus play in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, we can say that caves, sea-girt banks, Sicily, the pillar of the sky, and Aetna are all extremely heavy things, rendering these lines themselves heavy. On the acoustic level, the piling up of p, t, and k sounds lends an audible weight to the lines that allows us to feel the weight that piled up on Typhon himself. On the other hand, the cave “of many names” suggests the possibility of a catalogue that is left out for the sake of economy, and of a certain level of mythological learning that is held back from the reader, who is expected to know it on his own.

Burton has described the introduction of Typhon and Aetna thus: “Opening at v. 16 with what looks like a lyric adaptation of material from epic sources – the stock epithet ἑκατοντακάρανος, the Κιλίκιον...ἄντρον, the impression of a living creature conveyed by v. 19, and the conventional type of apposition complex in vv. 19-20 – it quickly becomes at v. 21 an eye-witness account of a volcano in eruption.”¹⁸⁰ The

¹⁸⁰ Burton (1962) 97-8. He links this description to the eruption of Aetna in 479, as dated by the Parian Marble and described also at Aesch. *PV* 350 ff., and suggests that Pindar and Aeschylus had a common epic source for the Typhon material (98).

eruption section of the poem is famous for its *melopoeia*, as the next six lines (21-26) contain 21 plosive (p, b, and f) and 14 guttural (k and g) consonants.

In the first phrase, Pindar mixes two images familiar to us from later poetry: the most pure and holy spring and the belching forth of monstrous fire.¹⁸¹ To readers of Callimachus and Vergil, this sentence seems a perverse mingling of the pure springs of the Hellenistic poet and the epic flame belching of a monster like Cacus. The next two lines incorporate both of the other kinds of water which readers of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* will connect to kinds of poetry: rivers and the sea. These, as in the later hymn, are not at all pure; the rivers pour out streams of smoke by day, and "in the dark a rolling crimson flame carries boulders into the deep expanse of the sea with a crash" (ἀλλ' ἐν ὄρφναισιν πέτρας φοίνισσα κυλινδομένα φλόξ ἐς βαθεῖαν φέρει πόντου πλάκα σὺν πατάγῳ, 23-24). This is the work, we are told, of Typhon, who (again) sends up "springs of fire" (Ἀφάιστοιο κρουνοῦς, 25) which are "most dreadful" (δεινοτάτους, 26).

What we can see here is a kind of dialogue between Pindar and his successors. The earlier poet, though perhaps unaware, is already playing with imagery that would later be enshrined as programmatic language by Callimachus and his Roman interpreters. Without suggesting that these images meant exactly the same thing to Pindar as they did to later poets, I think it is safe to say that at the very least Callimachus and others were

¹⁸¹ Skulsky (1975) 13 with n. 7 notes the difficulty with the word ἀγνόταται (12); it does not mean "pure" elsewhere in Pindar and seems an odd choice for a description of an impious giant. Commentators have tied it to sulphur used in purification rituals, or to the notion that it is a divine fire from the depths of the earth, to be distinguished from fire kindled by humans. Skulsky believes the fire is sacred because it manifests Zeus' wrath. Without discounting these explanations, and admitting that this is probably what the phrase meant to Pindar, my use of the word as "purest" highlights the fact that I am reading Pindar *in dialogue with* Callimachus and other post-Pindaric writers.

inspired by Pindar's early use of them, and at most that Pindar was already starting to think about poetry in similar metaphors. To say that Pindar was doing something new formally with epic subject matter is no stretch, certainly. What he has done here is to present very epic material, a challenge to Zeus and an exploding volcano, in a carefully crafted, small-scale work. In other words, he has forced torrents of fire out of the most pure spring.

Pindar had introduced the Typhon passage by innovatively using the monster as an example of someone who hates poetry and music, marking him as an enemy of Zeus and the Muses.¹⁸² At the end of the passage, he turns away from the story by finally turning toward the proper recipients of the hymn, Zeus and Hieron, by asking to be in Zeus' good graces, just as favorable winds carry sailors home. As Typhon was considered the mythological parent of the storm winds that wreck ships (*Theog.* 869-70), this simile is an emphatic reversal of the Typhon passage and skillfully leads the transition into praise for the good that comes from the land of Aetna, particularly Hieron. This passage is yet another example of an early *recusatio*. Pindar briefly flirts with writing about one of the most heavily epic topics available, that is, the challenges to Zeus' power by the Giants, Titans, and Typhon, and gives us a small tour de force – a sample of the epic Pindar. He holds himself back from writing a full-scale Typhonomachy, or, in other words, he holds back his lyre's potential to release the dangerous shafts of such full-blown poetry.¹⁸³ It is important to Pindar to keep the

¹⁸² Cf. Callimachus' description of the Telchines in *Aet.* fr. 1.

¹⁸³ In *Olympian* 9, Pindar refers to the story that Herakles once battled against the gods (as in Hom. *Il.* 5.395-400) but refutes it as babbling (λαλάγει, 40) and says that "to revile the gods is hateful poetry" (ἐπεὶ τό γε λοιδορῆσαι θεούς ἐχθρὰ σοφία, 37-8). "Let war and all battling remain far apart from the gods," he

connection among Zeus, Apollo, the Muses, and himself a tightly constructed one, and while he shows us that he could write a Typhonomachy outright if he wished to, he turns away from this project, opting to stay in Zeus' good graces instead.

The poem continues with praises for the Deinomenid dynasty in Sicily, including the defeat of the Carthaginians at Himera in 480 and of the Etruscans at Cumae in 474.¹⁸⁴ As Skulsky discusses, there is a subtle connection between the military victories of Hieron and the Gigantomachy.¹⁸⁵ Pindar briefly alludes to Philoctetes at lines 50-55, saying that Hieron “fought in the army in the manner of Philoctetes” (τὰν Φιλοκτήταο δίκαν ἐφέπων ἐστρατεύθη, 51). There is debate as to what exactly this means; some have seen a reference to Hieron's kidney stones which caused him to fight in pain. More importantly, it suggests that the war could not be won without Hieron, just as the Trojan War could not be won without Philoctetes' bow; likewise, Philoctetes received the bow from Herakles, without whom the gods could not have won the Gigantomachy.¹⁸⁶

Burton has suggested that the context for the poem is a Coronation Hymn for the crowning of Deinomenes, son of Hieron, as king of Aetna.¹⁸⁷ Certainly the poet seems to be giving cautionary advice to the prince about how to keep harmony in the state in lines 85-100.¹⁸⁸ In a political reading of the poem, it has been suggested that themes of

continues (ἔα πόλεμον μάχαν τε πᾶσαν χωρὶς ἀθανάτων, 40-41). It is interesting that he does not say that a mortal should not fight the gods, but that *all* fighting should be kept away from the gods. In the Typhon passages, the creature is always already conquered and unquestionably held in captivity; we do not actually witness Zeus fighting him in Pindar's poetry. As *Olympian* 9 itself treats aspects of the Trojan War, we clearly cannot say that Pindar would not write of fighting, period. He is willing to entertain some epic subject matter, but not to carry it so far as to depict gods fighting.

¹⁸⁴ Burton (1962) 91.

¹⁸⁵ Skulsky (1975) 18-20.

¹⁸⁶ Skulsky (1975) 18-19.

¹⁸⁷ Burton (1962) 91.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Burton (1962) 104: we may detect a note of warning in Pindar's advice to the prince.

harmony and praise are contrasted with those of chaos and discord; the former are represented by the lyre, the latter by a series of foils including Typhon, the Phoenicians and Etruscans, and Phalaris.¹⁸⁹ By eliminating the enemies of the state, just as Herakles slew the giants and Philoctetes ended the Trojan War, Hieron's successes have cleared the way for a peaceful transition of power.¹⁹⁰ If Burton is correct, it is significant that Pindar uses gigantomachic imagery in a poem celebrating succession, since both the Titanomachy and Typhonomachy are famously included in Hesiod's succession myth. This is to be a peaceful succession, however, imbued with harmony and good will; the song of praise for the father's victories is also a source of delight for the son.

Such a reading, however, ignores the destabilizing images behind the lyre discussed above. For example, there may be an intratextual resonance among the words *κατασχόμενος* used of Zeus' eagle at 10, *συνέχει* of the pillar of heaven holding down Typhon at 19, and *κατέχει* of hateful speech holding Phalaris everywhere at 96. It is problematic that, by this analogy, the eagle, symbol of Zeus, corresponds to Typhon and Phalaris, and the lyre (or poetry) to that which checks evil things. Similarly, the description of Zeus' thunderbolt as *αιενάου πυρός*, "of ever-flowing fire" (6), ties Zeus to the description of Aetna.¹⁹¹ If we understand Typhon and Phalaris not as forces of political chaos, but of potentially chaotic, grand epic subject matter, however, the problem disappears. The eagle may represent the warring Zeus, while the lyre keeps the poets' writing in check; the thunderbolts and Aetna are not different as agents of order

¹⁸⁹ Cf. Burton (1962) 92-3.

¹⁹⁰ Skulsky (1975) 19.

¹⁹¹ Skulsky (1975) 9 suggests that the image of everflowing fire is used to stress the impermanence of the lyre's effect. Further visual and verbal echoes among various parts of the poem and the description of Aetna may be found in Skulsky (1975) 12-13, 21, and 26.

and chaos, but similar as markers of epic. Though *capable* of unleashing epic shafts, made metaphorically equivalent here to an assault on Olympus, Pindar's poetry will restrain itself in Apolline fashion and write small-scale, lyric poetry instead. Likewise, he will not write a full-scale Typhonomachy, nor detail the deeds of Phalaris.

The *recusatio* nature of this poem is made explicit in lines 81-4:

καιρὸν εἰ φθέγξαιο, πολλῶν πείρατα συντανύσαις
ἐν βραχεῖ, μείων ἔπεται μῶμος ἀνθρώ –
πων· ἀπὸ γὰρ κόρος ἀμβλύνει
αἰανῆς ταχείας ἐλπίδας,
ἀστῶν δ' ἀκοὰ κρύφιον θυμὸν βαρὺ –
νει μάλιστ' ἐσλοῖσιν ἐπ' ἄλλοτρίοις.

If you speak in due season, having brought together the strands of many topics briefly, less blame follows from men: for irritating tedium dulls swift hopes, and listening to the noble deeds of others secretly weighs down the heart of citizens.

There is one level on which this passage is standard epinician language that says, “Don’t give excessive praise, but briefly touch upon someone’s achievements, so that the audience doesn’t get envious and angry.” On another level, however, it is an extremely Callimachean passage, emphasizing speaking (or writing) just what is necessary at the appropriate place; bringing together many various strands, like a weaver; and not exposing the audience to tedium or weighing them down (the literal meaning of βαρύνω) with overly heavy, that is, epic, material. It also bears some resemblance to the envoi to Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo*, where Envy (Φθόνος) comes secretly (λάθριος) to Apollo and criticizes him for not writing longer poetry; in Apollo’s reply, the refuse (συρφετόν) carried along by the Assyrian river functions similarly to Pindar’s κόρος, in that it is the result of “extra” and unnecessary poetic material that makes the poem unattractive to its listeners. Finally, the Callimachean hymn ends by telling Blame (Μῶμος) to go away

with Envy. Φθόνος and Μῶμος are both repeatedly figured as the enemies of Pindar's poetry, another Pindaric trope which is picked up by Callimachus.

Another important word in the Pindaric passage is *καίρος*. The meaning of this word is demonstrated well by Dickie in a discussion of Pindar's plea for Damophilus to be able to come home again at the end of *Pythian 4*:

The main ground given for the plea being granted is that Damophilus has learned to hate the man of *hybris* and neither engages in strife with *agathoi* nor extends any end to too great lengths (284-86). That the appropriate limit (*kairos*) has a short measure (*metron*) amongst men is the explanation given for Damophilus' not extending his goals too far. That is Damophilus now knows his place and does not push things beyond the brief limits proper for a mortal. The connection in thought rests on the contrast between extending things too far (μακύνων) and the short measure (βραχὺ μέτρον) that the *kairos* of mortals allows. A similar contrast between looking to that which is too great (τὰ μακρά) and being too short (βραχύς) to attain heaven is to be found in the generalizing remarks on the limitations of mortal existence at I. 7.43-44.¹⁹²

Pindar may be compared to Damophilus in this description in terms of his poetics. The giants represent looking too far and trying to attain heaven, or in other words, trying to be Homer, while Pindar recognizes that he must observe limits and keep his poetic scope comparatively small.

Another poem in which both Typhon and *recusatio* figure prominently is *Pythian 8*. This ode is addressed to personified Tranquility, Hesychia, the daughter of Justice who holds the supreme keys to counsels and wars (1-4). He writes of her, "You know how to do and experience alike what is gentle and mild with exact precision" (τὸ γὰρ τὸ μαλθακὸν ἔρξαι τε καὶ παθεῖν ὁμῶς ἐπίστασαι καιρῶ σὺν ἀτρεκεῖ, 6-7). Like that of the lyre in *Pythian 1*, however, the presence of Hesychia is double-edged, as she routs

¹⁹² Dickie (1984) 88; he discusses *P.* 1.81-3 and the *malthakon* victory song at 96.

those who are hostile to her and throws them into the abyss (ἐν ἄντλῳ, 12).¹⁹³ We are given the examples of Porphyriion, the king of the Giants, and, once again, of “hundred-headed Cilician” Typhon. Pindar changes the myth slightly this time, saying that these monsters were conquered “by the lightning bolt and arrows of Apollo” (17-18). It is unusual to name Apollo as a giant-slayer or helper to Zeus in his battle against Typhon; in fact, Apollo gets more emphasis in this passage than Zeus himself does. This is a transitional device.¹⁹⁴ The sentence continues, “(Apollo) who, with gracious mind, received the son of Xenarkes from Kirrha, crowned with the Parnassian plant and Dorian song” (18-20); thus, the function of Apollo as god of music is tied to his role as giant-slayer, newly connected to the Gigantomachy and Typhonomachy.¹⁹⁵

Bundy has written in detail about the nature of *Hesychia* in Pindar’s poetry, and concludes that she represents peace not between but within cities (the opposite of *stasis*), and especially the reconciliation of individual ambition and achievement with the security, well-being, and achievement of the whole polis.¹⁹⁶ Kurke also has suggested that the ultimate goal of epinician poetry is to reintegrate the heroic victor into a harmonious community.¹⁹⁷ By including the city in his praises and rejecting *hybris* or excessive ambition, the poet seeks to avoid *phthonos*.¹⁹⁸ Figures like Porphyriion and Typhon therefore function as foils to the victor, would-be usurpers of power whose model the victor must not emulate. It is the poet’s job to maintain this equilibrium

¹⁹³ Bundy (1954) 5-6.

¹⁹⁴ Lefkowitz (1977) 211.

¹⁹⁵ Dickie (1984) 99-100 writes, “The appropriateness of having the forces of *hybris* defeated by Apollo, the god who as god of music and civilization does more than any other god to promote the quiet restraint of *hēsychia*, is obvious.”

¹⁹⁶ Bundy (1954) 7-21.

¹⁹⁷ Kurke (1991) 6-7.

¹⁹⁸ Kurke (1991) 195, 209-18.

between glorifying the victor and maintaining harmony in the community. Therefore, his poetry and Hesychia share the same qualities. As Bundy writes of Hesychia, “her dual nature is summed up in τὸ μαλθακόν (line 6) and τραχύς (line 10).”¹⁹⁹ These words are elsewhere used to describe the qualities of sound and poetry.²⁰⁰ Therefore, we have here a true linking of poetic and political purposes: the style of the poetry expresses the political purpose of the poem.

The following strophe and antistrophe contain another *recusatio*. Pindar says that the home of the victor, also the home of the Aiakidae, has continued to keep its glory from the beginning, and its heroes have been sung by many for their victories in contests and battles (21-28). With an emphatic εἰμὶ δ’ at line 29, Pindar parts ways from these previous singers, saying, “But I am not at leisure to impart the whole long-winded story with my lyre and mild voice, lest it become tedious and chafe [the audience]” (εἰμὶ δ’ ἄσυχολος ἀναθέμεν πᾶσαν μακραγορίαν λύρα τε καὶ φθέγματι μαλθακῶ, μὴ κόρος ἐλθῶν κνίση, 29-32).²⁰¹ The history of Aigina is the material of Homer and the Epic Cycle, which Pindar refuses to sing because it will be tedious and long-winded and does not suit his own style. Again we see the word κόρος used to describe the surfeit of poetry that will arise from writing such poetry. This is an extremely Callimachean refusal to write epic.

Olympian 4 is an important companion piece to *Pythian* 8, as it includes references to both Typhon and Hesychia. This is an interesting little poem; it literally

¹⁹⁹ Bundy (1954) 6. In his Appendix (183-9), he provides a list of all the places *malthakos* and its synonyms are used in Pindar (most instances are related to music).

²⁰⁰ Krevans (1993) 157-9.

²⁰¹ The word used to describe Pindar’s voice, *malthakos*, is the Greek equivalent of the Latin *mollis*, the word used by the elegists to contrast their poetic voice with that of epic.

starts with a bang as Zeus “supreme driver of horses with untiring feet of thunder” (Ελατήρ ὑπέρτατε βροντᾶς ἀκαμαντόποδος Ζεῦ, 1) is invoked and the poet announces that his theme is “the greatest contests” (ὑψηλοτάτων...ἀέθλων, 3), yet this is a very short poem. The poem continues with mention of how the noble rejoice at hearing that one of their own has triumphed; Typhon is then presented as the foil to this celebration and a symbol of Zeus’ ability to repress enormous forces (whereas in lines 1-2, he was the driver of them).²⁰² The weighty, dark, and windy qualities of Typhon and Aetna are again emphasized, as in *Pythian* 1, and he is again called “hundred-headed” (7). The very next words are “the Olympic victory, receive for the sake of the Graces” (8-9). It is poignant that Pindar locates the word “Olympic victory,” a whole line by itself, immediately after the description of Typhon, who had unsuccessfully and hubristically sought victory over Olympus. By contrast, Pindar asks for favor for the victor at the Olympian games, emphasizing the Grace of the victory song. The Graces serve as intercessors between the poet and Zeus, and Typhon is pitted against them. Among the good qualities which the victor has is a pure regard for Hesychia (16). The poem concludes with a minor episode pulled from the Argonaut mythology (another “Hellenistic” moment).

Pythian 8 has often been interpreted politically in light of current events in Aigina. The date given by the scholia and generally accepted for the poem is 446 BCE.²⁰³ In 457 BCE, Aigina had been forced to join the Delian League and been treated very harshly by the Athenians. It is thought that between 457 and when this ode was

²⁰² Gildersleeve (1890) 164.

²⁰³ Pfeijffer (1999) 425.

written, there were likely conflicts in Aigina between the established aristocracy and a new pro-Athenian rulership; in 447 Athens was facing revolts, and there was probably an air of potential revolt and internal *stasis* in Aigina.²⁰⁴ Read against this background, *Pythian* 8 becomes a political poem; Hesychia represents internal tranquility within the city,²⁰⁵ while Typhon and Porphyryon represent “the violence which disturbs tranquility” and perhaps even Athens itself.²⁰⁶ Gildersleeve has commented that in this poem, “*Hesychia* is to Aigina what the lyre is to Syracuse [in *Pythian* 1]”;²⁰⁷ that is, she is the harmony which keeps the political strife represented by the giants at bay and ensures that all is in a sort of cosmic order.

In the myth in this poem, Amphiaraios gives a prophecy about the hero Alcman as he views the Epigonoι at Thebes. “The nobility of fathers by nature shines forth as the courage of their sons,” he says (φυᾶ τό γενναῖον ἐπιπρέπει ἐκ πατέρων παισὶ λῆμα, 44-5). Aristomenes, the recipient of the ode, exemplified this claim when he won his wrestling match and brought glory to his clan, the Meidyldai (35-42). Scholars have seen two reasons for the choice of this myth; one is to highlight the connection between Aristomenes and Alcman, and the other is to tie current events to the past, representing the recent invasion of a central Greek city by a Peloponnesian army, as the Spartans had recently invaded Athens.²⁰⁸

Another resonance in this myth which has been ignored is that of succession.

This may not be a succession hymn *per se*, as *Pythian* 1 is, but it does focus on sons and

²⁰⁴ Pfeijffer (1999) 429-31; Cole (1992) 101-11.

²⁰⁵ Gildersleeve (1890) 325; Burton (1962) 175.

²⁰⁶ Burton (1962) 180; Cole (1992) 101.

²⁰⁷ Gildersleeve (1890) 325.

²⁰⁸ Cole (1992) 104-8.

their role in carrying on the nobility of the father. Any time a poet chooses to write about the Epigoni (especially when he has already explicitly refused to write about the Aiakidae), he is choosing to write about a later generation of heroes, not *the* generation which formed Homer's subject matter. Pindar writes for a son, rather than a father, emphasizing this fact; he writes about sons, not fathers; and he refuses to write the same material as the father of poetry, Homer. However, the sons in this ode are not presented as outshining the fathers, but as revealing and furthering the fathers' noble deeds. Similarly, Apollo now takes part in the battles that cemented his father's reign (Typhon and the Gigantomachy), doing so not to surpass his father, but to make it possible for him to do his own work (music and crowning at the games) under the peaceful rule of his father. Thus I would argue that there is some succession anxiety in this poem. This is fitting in a time when the Aiginetans may have been wondering what would happen to their city and who would control it – the old aristocracy, represented by the Meidylidai, or the new, pro-Athenian contingency. But it also belies a poetic anxiety, as Pindar helps to put the giants to rest poetically and moves on to new things as a successor to Homer who must find a way toward a positive, harmonious break with the past that still honors it and reveals its nobility. It is not coincidence that both of the major Typhon poems have elements of succession tied to them.

In both these poems, as in *Olympian 4* as well, Typhon or the giants and Hesychia are set up in contrast to each other. Though the word *hesychia* is not used in *Pythian 1*, she is equivalent to the peace that steals over the bellicose aspects of Olympus under the spell of the lyre. There is always a threat of violence, of *hybris*, of destruction – the lyre

holds gigantomachic potential, and Hesychia herself may become violent. But, these elements are all held in check; Dickie describes *hesychia* as “a state opposed to *hybris*. It may also be used to characterize instances of restrained conduct and as such may be set against *hybris* as a trampling on another’s dignity or honor.”²⁰⁹ Pindar uses poetic restraint to ensure that he does not commit poetic *hybris* by trampling on the dignity of the gods or of Homer by doing a poor job of imitating his style, but instead ushers in a new poetic style that would change the way Hellenistic, and then Roman, poets would view their role as poetic successors.

²⁰⁹ Dickie (1984) 86.

Chapter Four

Like Bees to Deo: Alexandrian Callimachus and the Callimachean Pharaoh

From Hesiod to Pindar to Callimachus, we can see a trajectory in the use of Gigantomachy. Hesiod uses narrative presentations of both the Titanomachy and Typhonomachy to comment on traditional epic material, illustrating through the style of his narrative the inevitable and inherent failure of writing such bombastic epic, except for the purposes of defining over against the *genus grande* a different style of writing. This stance contains the seeds of both Callimacheanism and epic parody. The next step in the development of Callimacheanism is found in the poetry of Pindar. He adopts a much more condensed and allusive style than Hesiod, thereby creating a poetics that is more emphatic in its declaration of similarity and difference from epic poetry. In Callimachus' works (such as they are currently extant), references to Gigantomachy are present, but they are few, scattered and highly allusive.²¹⁰ We have moved even further from narrative than we had with Pindar, fully into the realm of Alexandrianism. Callimacheanism may start long before Callimachus and continue long after him, shifting and developing with each new author, but Callimachus still has a unique brand of poetics, and one which could only have happened under the historical circumstances of Ptolemaic

²¹⁰ Given the frequent depiction of the Gauls who invaded the Greek world in the 2nd c. BCE as giants (see Barbantani [2002-3], Vian [1952b] 10), the loss of Callimachus' *Galatea* is regrettable. If Pfeiffer is correct to attribute fr. 379 to the *Galatea*, then the Gauls were a part of this poem; presumably they were introduced as the descendants of Galates, the son of Galatea. Written in hexameters, an epic poem on Galatea, with mention of the Gauls (and therefore likely to contain references to Gigantomachy), must have been a fascinating blend of genres and subject matters. The *Galatea* and the *Hecale* are the only epic poems we know to have been written by Callimachus: Trypanis et al. ([1958] 2004).

Alexandria.²¹¹ By unpacking these few highly allusive, very learned references to Gigantomachy in his poetry, we get a rich vision of Callimachus' poetics, a poetics in which epic and elegy are in a truly symbiotic relationship, and in which politics and poetics merge and become inseparable, thus paving the way for Roman Callimacheanism.

I. The Telchines in Pindar and Callimachus

The first place in the *Aetia* where the force of Gigantomachy can be felt is not actually a reference to giants, but to mythological beings who have much in common with them: the Telchines.²¹² These wizards and craftsmen were not entirely evil; they also did many useful things with their skill. In some versions of their mythology, as the first people to work with bronze and iron, they created Kronos' sickle (Strabo 10.3.7, 19; 14.2.7) and Poseidon's trident (Callim. *Hymn* 4.30-31). If it is these same Telchines who are described in Pindar, *Olympian* 7, they are described in glowing terms:

..... κείνοις ὁ μὲν ξανθὰν ἀγαγὼν νεφέλαν {Ζεὺς}
πολὺν ἕσσε χρυσόν· αὐτὰ δὲ σφισιν ὤπασε τέχνην
πᾶσαν ἐπιχθονίων Γλαυκῶπις ἀριστοπόνους χερσὶ κρατεῖν.
ἔργα δὲ ζῳῶσιν ἐρπόντεσσι θ' ὁμοῖα κέλευθοι φέρον·
ἦν δὲ κλέος βαθύ. δαέντι δὲ καὶ σοφία μείζων ἄδολος τελέθει.

(Pind. *Ol.* 7.49-53)

²¹¹ Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2012) set Callimacheanism in the broader context of Greek poetics, tracing its development from Plato through the Augustan poets. Stephens (2003) is an important study for its incorporation of the place of Ptolemaic Alexandria, with its blend of Egyptian and Greek elements, into our understanding of Callimachus' poetry. On the historical context of Ptolemaic Alexandria, see Stephens (2010).

²¹² I do not wish here to enter the debate over the dating and position of the prologue within the *Aetia*, choosing rather to treat it as a metaliterary and programmatic statement which, whenever it was written, reflects upon Callimachus' aims throughout his body of work. On this issue, see Harder (2012) 7-9, 11 and the detailed discussion in Cameron (1995) 104-84. Wimmel (1960) 31 also comments that the Telchines belong to the world in which Gigantomachy takes place, even if they are not themselves giants.

Zeus gathered a blond cloud and showered much gold upon them,
and the grey-eyed goddess herself gave them every skill, to outshine
mortals by being the best at working with their hands. Their paths bore
works resembling living, moving beings, and their glory was
profound, for even for the learned, the superior craft is without guile.

Given the strong influence which Pindar has been shown to have exerted on Callimachus,
there is no reason to think that the latter poet was not familiar with this passage.²¹³

Several features stand out. Gold in Pindar is associated with the divine, and the
Telchines' gifts come directly from Zeus and Athena. Thus there is a divine quality to
their craft. This craft is described as τέχνη and σοφία, both important words to describe
the poet's craft in Pindar and Callimachus.²¹⁴ In *Aetia* fr. 1.17-18,²¹⁵ Callimachus tells
his Telchines to “judge poetry (σοφίην) by its skill (τέχνη).” Pindar's learned (δαέντι)
craftsmen are also without guile, creating artistic products that mimic real life in every
detail. Because of this, they achieve “profound glory” (κλέος βαθύ), making them akin
to epic heroes.

The problem with the Telchines, which Pindar (in typical fashion) omits, or rather
corrects by omission, is their ultimate fate. Given to envy (they are connected with the
use of the Evil Eye) and *hybris* (they thought they could control the weather, like Zeus),
they were struck down by Zeus' thunderbolt.²¹⁶ There are therefore many points of

²¹³ I provide a full treatment of the relation between Pindar and Callimachus in Chapter 3; see especially Bing ([1988] 2008), Steiner (2007), Depew (1998), Fuhrer (1988), Newman (1985), Richardson (1985), Poliakoff (1980), and Smiley (1914).

²¹⁴ See Harder ad Callim. *Aet.* fr. 1.17-18 and Newman (1967) 46 on Pindar and Callimachus' use of σοφία to mean poetry.

²¹⁵ All references to the text of the *Aetia* follow Harder's edition; the numbering is consistent with Pfeiffer's edition in all the passages I cite.

²¹⁶ Callim. fr. 75.64-69. On why Callimachus chose the Telchines, see further Wimmel (1960) 72-4 and Kamyblis (1965) 76-9. As both these scholars discuss, another reason for using the Telchines is their connection to the sea; as Kamyblis cautions us, however, we should not associate Pontus in the envoi to the

contact between the Telchines and the giants. Like the Cyclopes, they are divine craftsmen who take raw material and fashion it into wondrous, polished works, including some important godly attributes. They participate in the Succession Myth by providing Kronos with his sickle, the necessary tool for enacting his rebellion. They attempt to usurp the rightful domain of Zeus (by controlling the weather),²¹⁷ and are defeated when they are struck by Zeus' thunderbolt. Thus we could say that, while not themselves giants, the Telchines do overlap significantly with the broader mytheme of Gigantomachy.

If Pindar's Telchines resemble the poet to a certain degree, it makes sense that he would omit the negative features of their mythology. Pindar is very concerned in his poetry that he not commit *hybris*, as, for example, Typhon did.²¹⁸ As a poet, he must not overreach, but has to maintain a delicate balance between the epinician function of his poem (including his praise of the victor and the exaltation of himself as the poet who grants κλέος to the victor) and not exciting the envy or blame (φθόνος, μῶμος) of the community or the gods. This balance is expressed poetically through his adherence to "Callimachean" principles of writing and the judicious use of carefully controlled epic moments.

Hymn to Apollo with the unclean Assyrian River; Pontus stands for what is big, but pure (cf. Williams ad Callim. *Hymn* 2.105-13).

²¹⁷ This mythological detail may be behind Callimachus' final statement to the Telchines in the *Aetia* prologue, that "to thunder belongs not to me, but to Zeus" (βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός, *Aet.* fr. 1.20): Andrews (1998) 6 n. 26; Wimmel (1960) 31.

²¹⁸ See my discussion of Typhon as foil for the poet both in Hesiod (Chapter 2) and in Pindar (Chapter 3).

In Callimachus, the Telchines are explicitly tied to poetry, but what is emphasized from their mythology is inverted from Pindar’s version.²¹⁹ Now, they are envious, malicious, hubristic, and lack good poetic taste. Callimachus completely omits the fact that the mythological Telchines also possessed τέχνη. In fact, he has almost turned them into animals through the kinds of sounds he associates with them. In the first line, he says that the Telchines “mutter against” him (ἐπιτρύζουσιν). This word brings up two different associations. Most of the time, it is used of animal sounds.²²⁰ As Krevans has demonstrated, sound is an important element of Callimachus’ poetic program.²²¹ Apollo tells Callimachus to fatten his sacrificial animal as much as possible (ὅττι πάχιστον, line 23); the word παχύς, as Krevans shows, can mean several things. It can be a size word, “thick”, with an implication of stupidity as well, but can also mean “excessively ornamented, over-detailed” or refer to sounds that are “rough, course, impure.”²²² Callimachus contrasts his cicada-like purity of sound with the braying of asses (ὄγκήσαιτο, line 31); ὄγκος may also denote the bombastic style of some epic writing.²²³ As I noted in my discussion of Hesiod’s Typhonomachy in Chapter Two, there may in fact be a connection between Typhon with his cacophonous plurality of

²¹⁹ My focus is on how Callimachus has fashioned his Telchines and the way they function in the prologue; I am not concerned with identifying historical persons behind them. On the identification of the Telchines, see Cameron (1995) 185-232 and for a very different approach from Cameron’s, Schmitz (1999), who focuses on the implied author and implied reader(s) created by the poet, and Lefkowitz (1981) 117-28. For Schmitz, the Telchines function as “anti-readers,” an “out-group” who serve as a foil for the reader the poet desires for his work (*passim*, but esp. 162). Harder (2012) 8, 14 takes the middle ground, arguing that the dispute with the Telchines must be creations of the poet based in some historical context.

²²⁰ Harder ad loc.

²²¹ Krevans (1993) esp. 156-8; cf. Ambühl (1995).

²²² Krevans (1993) 157.

²²³ LSJ s.v. ὄγκος II.3; see e.g. Arist. *Rh.* 1407^b26 ff., *Po.* 1459^b28; Demetr. *Eloc.* 36.

voices, and Callimachus' use of the braying of the ass as foil for his own style, as the ass was connected to Typhon in Isiac religion.²²⁴

In addition to contributing to this poetics of sound and bestial picture of the Telchines, the word ἐπιτρύζουσιν also evokes the Homeric *hapax* τρύζητε, used by Achilles in *Iliad* 9.311, when he is rejecting Agamemnon's offer of recompense as reported by Odysseus.²²⁵ As Andrews points out, it is significant that Callimachus aligns himself with Achilles, and that he alludes to a place in Homer's epic where people on the same side of the war are fighting with each other.²²⁶ Achilles is known for having the most colorful and poetic language of all the characters in the *Iliad*, to the point of resembling the voice of the poet,²²⁷ and in this particular Homeric scene, he is acting the bard by singing the κλέα ἀνδρῶν when the embassy comes upon him. He has withdrawn from actively participating in the production of new κλέα ἀνδρῶν through epic warfare, and is instead reflecting upon past glories, when people who are supposed to be on his side interrupt him and "mutter" like animals to him. If this is the analogy Callimachus wishes to create for himself, then he still sees himself as part of the epic universe. There is nothing in the *Aetia* prologue to suggest that Callimachus thinks himself incapable of writing epic. He does write at least one epyllion, the *Hecale*, as well as works in all sorts of other genres. The fact that Apollo has to come to him to stop him from writing too large a work suggests that he needed to be stopped and sent in a different direction than he might naturally have taken. As we shall see, Propertius may

²²⁴ On the connection between the ass and Typhon, see Andrews (1998) 7; Ambühl (1995) 211; and Walsh (1994) xxxi-xxxii.

²²⁵ Harder ad loc.; Andrews (1998) 4-5.

²²⁶ Andrews (1998) 4-5.

²²⁷ Martin (1989) 147-9, 223-5.

style himself the *Callimachus Romanus*, but the Roman who is most like Callimachus is actually Ovid. Callimachus is not filled with anxiety over his place in literary history. He is not filled with anxiety over the fact that he is not Homer. In the first line of the *Aetia* prologue, he likens himself to Achilles; he is part of the Homeric world. His job, through his poetry, will be to apply a different lens to that world (much like Achilles provides a different perspective on his world). What the Telchines do not understand is that for Callimachus, Homeric epic and his own poetry are in perfect symbiosis. In the world of Alexandria, each needs the other to reach its full potential. What Alexandrianism does with epic is not to reject it or even compete with it, but to breathe new life into it by seeing new possibilities within it. Whole worlds of meaning are developed out of a single *hapax*. New angles are taken in the discussion of what it means to be a hero. Aspects of the epics that are confined to similes, minor characters or passing moments are opened up and explored for their full potential. This work is not a rejection of epic, it is a deep exploration and broadening of some of the most poetically creative moments in epic. It takes a poetry which depends upon the formulaic for its composition and points out what is most creative, individualistic, and touching in it. In some ways, Homeric poetry and Hellenistic poetry are like two mirrors facing each other: what seems opposite at first is actually a reflection.

The Telchines have an entirely different relation to Homeric epic. Rather than work with and within the text, they would attempt to replicate or even replace it with completely new epic.²²⁸ They, not Callimachus, are engaged in a struggle for succession.

²²⁸ It is useful to remember that the loss of most of the epic poetry from the Hellenistic period means that we may be unduly influenced by Callimachus' negative assessment of it: so Ziegler (1934) esp. 7-8, 38. As

They think they need a new Zeus, when what is really needed is an Apollo. Consider the one explicit reference to a Giant in the *Aetia* prologue, when Callimachus says that old age weighs upon him like Sicily upon Enceladus.²²⁹

θηρὶ μὲν οὐατόεντι πανείκελον ὀγκήσαιτο
 ἄλλος, ἐγὼ δ' εἶην οὐλαχὺς, ὁ πτερόεις,
 ἄ πάντως, ἵνα γῆρας ἵνα δρόσον ἦν μὲν αἰίδω
 προίκιο]ν ἐκ δίης ἠέρος εἶδαρ ἔδων,
 αὔθι τὸ δ' ἐκδύοιμι, τό μοι βάρος ὅσσον ἔπεστι
 τριγλώχιν ὄλοῶ νῆσος ἐπ' Ἐγκελάδω. (Callim. *Aet.* fr. 1.31-36)

Let another bray just like the long-eared beast,
 but let me be the small one, the winged one,
 ah surely!, so that I may sing, fed on dew
 freely given from the divine air, and
 slough off old age, which weighs as heavily upon me
 as the three-pronged island upon destructive Enceladus.

Acosta-Hughes and Stephens have remarked that in this section of the prologue,

the ostensibly aesthetic criteria of weight, measure, and volume undergo one final transformation, into the physical circumstances of the poet and the Telchines. Length becomes old age, the weight of old age has its analogue in the island that sits upon Enceladus, and the poet's persona morphs into the slender, enduring voice of the cicada, while the Telchines are equated with braying asses . . . Those who are not friends of the Muse . . . presumably end up weighed down like Enceladus, a giant punished for his hubris . . .²³⁰

In addition to the mythological connections previously discussed between Enceladus and the mythological Telchines, there are linguistic connections here as well; as Acosta-

Hughes and Stephens point out, the word ὄλοός is used of both parties in the *Aetia*

Bullock (1982) 543 reminds us, "Hellenistic readers had an appetite for the sensational as well as the refined, the sentimental as well as the cerebral . . ."

²²⁹ It does not matter for my argument when in his life Callimachus wrote these words about old age, as the image had long been a poetic trope; see e.g. the poetry of Mimnermus, who is named and, it seems, praised in the *Aetia* prologue (line 11). On the dangers of reading biographical details into the poem, see Harder (2012) 7-9, Schmitz (1999), and Lefkowitz (1981) 117-28; for discussion of old age in Greek thought and literature and its implications for this fragment, see Cameron (1995) 174-84. It should also be noted that the image of Sicily weighing on Enceladus as a metaphor for old age is an allusion to E. *HF* 637 ff.: Harder ad Callim. *Aet.* fr.1.32-40. This supports the argument that Callimachus had poetic and not merely biographical aims in this passage (if we should read it biographically at all).

²³⁰ Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 245.

prologue, and the rare *τριγλώχιον* is used in connection with the Telchines in the *Hymn to Delos*.²³¹ Here, the weight of Sicily stands for the weight of literary tradition.²³² By setting off on a new path, Callimachus can rejuvenate and renew poetry, fashioning himself not as a *rival* to archaic epic poets – a hubristic stance - but as something different and new. He brings out this aspect of his poetry through his focus on Apollo. As Clay has demonstrated, when Apollo enters in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, he carries the threat of violence, should he choose to try to overthrow his father.²³³ He takes another path, however, bringing music, culture and order without threatening the stability of the current system. He is the new generation that seeks not to overthrow the old, but to exist alongside it and enhance it, and even protect it by shooting down would-be giants.²³⁴ In addition, Apollo is always young, representing what is new and attractive in the divine order.²³⁵ Similarly, the Telchines' view of Callimachus as a child (*παῖς ἄτε*, line 6), which Callimachus later spins into a positive and poetically charged feature (lines 31-36), ties the young poet fending off the giant-like Telchines with the mytheme of the young god (for example, Zeus or Apollo) challenging older, chthonic forces.²³⁶ Despite his perennial youth, one would not call Apollo a late-comer, though; once he arrives, one gets the sense that he has always been there. Nor is he a successor, since he does not challenge the older generation, though he is capable of doing so. Therefore, through this

²³¹ Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 245.

²³² Harder ad Callim. *Aet.* fr. 1.35-6; Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 75.

²³³ Clay ([1989] 2006) 19-22. She also understands Typhon as a kind of anti-Apollo: “The legitimate and mighty son who furthers his father’s Olympian agenda stands in powerful contrast to the unnatural offspring, would-be usurper, and destroyer of the Olympian order” (65).

²³⁴ For example, Apollo is credited with shooting down the Aloadae: Hom. *Od.* 11.318-20, Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.487-9.

²³⁵ In the *Hymn to Apollo*, Callimachus calls the god *ἀεὶ νέος* (36).

²³⁶ Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 245.

image of Sicily weighing down Enceladus, Callimachus acknowledges that he must engage with the literary past, or it may overwhelm him; but by aligning himself with Apollo and not the giant-like Telchines, he refuses to commit poetic hybris by styling himself as a rival to his predecessors and instead embarks on a new path, one which nevertheless, once it has appeared, seems always to have been there in its Hesiodic seeds.²³⁷

II. The Giants in Callimachus

We have seen in previous chapters that play with anteriority is a major aspect of parody, and that the Gigantomachy, dealing as it does with issues of succession and priority, is an ideal myth for playing with poetic time. Callimachus makes subtle use of this aspect of the myth in another reference to Giants, in fr. 119:

Μηκῶνην μακάρων ἔδρανον αὐτίς ἰδεῖν,
ἦχι πάλους ἐβάλλοντο, διεκρίναντο δὲ τιμάς
πρῶτα Γίγαντιοῦ δαίμονες ἐκ πολέμου.

To behold again Mekone, seat of the blessed ones,
Where the gods cast lots and distinguished their honors
First, after the war of the Giants.²³⁸

Several important features stand out in this passage. Mekone is the site where Prometheus tricks Zeus at the first sacrifice. “To behold *again*” is a clear metapoetic

²³⁷ There is much bibliography on the reception of Hesiod by Callimachus. Some of the most influential studies include Reitzenstein (1931), who suggests that Callimachus wrote in a *genus tenue* style associated with Hesiod that contrasted with Homer’s *genus grande*; Kambylis (1965), who analyzes the reception of Hesiod’s *Dichterweihe* in later poets, including Callimachus, Ennius, and Propertius; and Reinsch-Werner (1976), who highlights verbal reminiscences of and allusions to Hesiod in the works of Callimachus. Cameron (1995) 362-86 questions these readings, and Sistakou (2009) brings more complexity to the issue by pointing to the differences between Callimachus and Hesiod.

²³⁸ Translation by Clay (2003) 114, which I could not improve.

marker – an Alexandrian footnote, even - that Callimachus is returning to Hesiod’s text.²³⁹ The passage emphasizes the anteriority of the myth: he is going back to when the gods “first” established the divine order. There are also corrective changes to Hesiod. In the *Theogony*, which does not include a Gigantomachy (proper), the gods’ honors are divided after the Titanomachy, not at Mekone. The time setting after the Gigantomachy is new.²⁴⁰ I suggest that this switch from Titanomachy to Gigantomachy was deliberate. First, it is an example of the Hellenistic tendency to light upon a detail in a previous text that is obscure or quickly passed over, and to expand it to a place of prominence. Secondly, it sets the division of honors after a battle which is less problematic than the Titanomachy, which could be construed as a civil war.²⁴¹ We do not know the context of this fragment, but if it had any political associations, it would have been desirable to clean up the tradition in this way.²⁴² Most importantly, however, by associating Mekone with the Gigantomachy, Callimachus alludes to Prometheus. We are reminded of that character’s role in the Succession Myth, and that Zeus *needs* Prometheus’ secret to keep his power. Callimachus, as Promethean poet, is going back to the Hesiodic source and not merely alluding to it, but inserting himself into it, thereby making himself not a

²³⁹ The term “Alexandrian footnote” originates with Ross (1975) 78; see also Hinds (1998) 1-5.

²⁴⁰ Harder ad Callim. *Aet.* fr. 119.3. As she points out, it is possible that Callimachus is referring to the division of the world after the Titanomachy, and has conflated the myths. I agree with Clay (2003) 114 n. 14, who thinks “[i]t is difficult to believe that so learned a poet as Callimachus might have confused the Titanomachy with the Gigantomachy . . .” Perhaps this passage is his acknowledgement of the conflation and malleability of the two traditions.

²⁴¹ Vian (1952b) discusses the problematic nature of the Titanomachy and its rather embarrassing implications for some Greek thinkers.

²⁴² There is, however, in the *Hymn to Delos*, an explicit reference to Ptolemy Philadelphus fighting “latter-day Titans” (line 174). For the implications of this reference, see my discussion of this passage below. See Harder ad Callim. *Aet.* fr. 119 for possible contexts of these lines within the *Aetia*.

belated successor to Hesiod, but someone who is capable of manipulating the tradition so that he, not Hesiod, now stands at the head.²⁴³

The other references to giants in Callimachus' poetry come from the *Hymns*. The first comes at the beginning of the *Hymn to Zeus*, in a string of epithets:²⁴⁴

Ζηνὸς ἔοι τί κεν ἄλλο παρὰ σπονδῆσιν αἰεῖδεν
λῶιον ἢ θεὸν αὐτόν, αἰεὶ μέγαν, αἰὲν ἄνακτα,
Πηλαγόνων ἐλατῆρα, δικασπὸλον Οὐρανίδησι; (Callim. *Hymn* 1.1-3)²⁴⁵

What better to sing of at libations to Zeus,
than the god himself, ever great, always lord,
router of the Pelagonians, lawgiver to the heavenly ones?

According to Strabo (vii. 331, fr. 40) and Hesychius (s.v.), Πηλαγόνες was another name for the Titans. The manuscript tradition reads Πηλογόνων, or “Mud-born ones,” thus referring to the earth-born Giants. This is the reading of the scholiast, who wrote, “πηλογόνων· τῶν γιγάντων παρὰ τὸ ἐκ πηλοῦ γενέσθαι, τουτέστι τῆς γῆς.” It matters little which form is correct, as in either case it is a reference to the complex of Gigantomachy myths.²⁴⁶

This “resounding four-word line,” as Hopkinson calls it,²⁴⁷ nearly breaks Callimachus' own rule against thundering in his poetry. Yet, it makes sense that a hymn to Zeus would have a resounding opening, leaving the poet in a bit of a paradox. If you are Callimachus, how do you write about Zeus and the story of how he came to power, a

²⁴³ Bloom (1973) 79, 115, and 119 also uses Prometheus as a metaphor for the relation between a poet and his predecessors. Unlike Bloom, I am not attributing any anxiety of influence to Callimachus, but focusing more on Prometheus as self-confident keeper of the secret of succession. I do like Bloom's formulation that the “strong poet” is both a Prometheus and a Narcissus, “making his culture, and raptly contemplating his own central place in it” (119).

²⁴⁴ These three lines have been shown to combine elements of Homeric, Hesiodic and Pindaric diction: Reinsch-Werner (1976) 49-51 and McLennan ad Callim. *Hymn* 1.1-3.

²⁴⁵ For the hymns of Callimachus, I have followed Pfeiffer's text.

²⁴⁶ Barbantani (2011) 187 provides other suggestions. Cf. McLennan ad Callim. *Hymn* 1.3.

²⁴⁷ Hopkinson ([1988] 1999) 123.

story which necessarily includes wars of succession and Gigantomachy? And how do you then incorporate praise of Ptolemy Philadelphus into that hymn, when his divine model (or even double) took power by wresting it away from the previous generation in what was essentially a civil war?

The answer is to turn the hymn into a witty conversation with Hesiod and other preceding poets.²⁴⁸ Callimachus criticizes other poets for writing unbelievable lies (such as that Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades would have cast lots for power over the realms of the cosmos). Yet he seems opposed not to lying but to bad lying, acknowledging that he may lie himself, but wishing that, if he does, it would at least be believable (ψευδοίμην αἰόντος ἃ κεν πεπίθοιεν ἀκουήν, literally “may I lie such things as persuade the listener to hear,” line 65).²⁴⁹ Clearly there is a connection to Hesiod’s Muses and their lies that resemble the truth.²⁵⁰ It may be helpful to think in terms not so much of “lies” as of “fictions.”²⁵¹ “Fiction” does not have the malevolent connotation that “lie” does, and even contains a positive suggestion of creativity. Whereas Hesiod presents himself as repeating the poetic creations (the fictions) of the Muses, Callimachus wants to be the

²⁴⁸ Stephens (2003) 79-91 discusses non-Hesiodic intertexts in the poem, while Reinsch-Werner (1976) 24-73 contain a detailed examination of all the Hesiodic elements.

²⁴⁹ As Hopkinson ([1988] 1999) ad loc. points out, there are two possible meanings for this phrase: “‘If I lie, I hope to be more persuasive than that!’ and ‘May *my* lies. . . be more convincing than that!’” Reinsch-Werner (1976) 48-9 discusses the unpredictable behavior of the poet in this *Hymn*, which she says is meant to warn the reader not to take the poet too seriously in his handling of his models.

²⁵⁰ As Reinsch-Werner (1976) 56 points out, Callimachus rejects a Homeric version of mythology by alluding to a programmatic Hesiodic thought.

²⁵¹ Elizabeth Belfiore first pointed out this alternative translation to me; on this and other readings of the Hesiodic phrase, see Belfiore (1985).

one who molds his version of events into something believable, who creates fiction that resembles the truth; he is emulating Hesiod's Muses, not Hesiod.²⁵²

In the *Hymn to Zeus*, right after he expresses this wish to write believable fiction, Callimachus mentions that Zeus won his supreme place in heaven not by lot, but by physical prowess:²⁵³

οὐ σε θεῶν ἐσοῖνα πάλοι θέσαν, ἔργα δὲ χειρῶν,
σὴ τε βίη τό τε κάρτος, ὃ καὶ πέλας εἶσαο δίφρου. (Callim. *Hymn* 1.66-7)

Lots didn't make you king of the gods, but the deeds of your hands,
your force and your strength, which you set beside your throne.

These deeds of Zeus' hands were, of course, the various battles encompassed by the Gigantomachy.²⁵⁴ Perhaps we are then to understand this statement as a fiction as well:

²⁵² Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 1-17 discuss how the relationship among poet, predecessor or model, and sources of divine inspiration (i.e. Apollo, Dionysus, or the Muses) changes from the early Archaic to Hellenistic periods. For them, the model poet becomes the guarantor of the new poet's work, either beside or even in place of divine *enthousiasmos*. I believe this is sometimes the case, but that more often than not in Callimachean poetry, the opposite is true: the new poet becomes the guarantor of the predecessor's work. The source of divine inspiration becomes a sort of guide or model for the new poet as to how to accomplish this. Depew (1998) 168 suggests that this very phenomenon happens in the *Hymn to Delos* when Apollo utters his prophecy from the womb: by setting his narrative prior to that of the *Homeric Hymn*, Callimachus "authenticates" both his own and the older text. Thus we could say that the predecessor guarantees the new poet's work in a way, but not as model so much as the fulfillment and proof of the later poet's words. For similar approaches regarding another Callimachean poet, Ovid, see Nappa (2002), Barchiesi (1993), and Keith (1992a) esp. 30.

²⁵³ Henrichs (1993) 140-41 points out that young gods repeatedly have to earn their powers in Callimachus' *Hymns*, whether it be "through hard work (Zeus), prenatal effort (Apollo) or special pleadings (Artemis). . ." This fits with Henrichs' larger thesis that the gods in Callimachus' *Hymns* are "more active than gods in other Greek religious poetry . . ." (127). I suggest that the earning of divine powers also implies that Ptolemy Philadelphus earned his position, which could be particularly useful given that he was not the oldest son; so also Reinsch-Werner (1976) 52. Furthermore, the Hellenistic fashion for creating more down-to-earth gods could have helped ease the tension inherent in having a ruler who was portrayed as a god on earth; as often in comedy and parody, the poets use humor to open up a space for dialogue and cognitive dissonance to exist. On this function of humor in court poetry, cf. Stephens (2003) 75, and on the humor and irony created in Callimachus' portrayal of young gods, see Haslam (1993) esp. 111-12 (on the *Hymn to Artemis*). Bulloch (1982) 568 suggests that the wit and irony of the *Hymn to Delos* make it palatable; without these, it would come off as gross flattery. The classic study on the motif of the child god (as a means of following in Homer's footsteps while simultaneously being unhomeric) is Herter (1975).

²⁵⁴ Line 67 also appears to be a reference to both Hes. *Theog.* 385-7, in which Kratos and Bia are said always to have a place beside Zeus "of the deep-roaring thunder" (πάρ Ζηνὶ βαρυκτύπῳ), and to the opening scene of Aesch. *PV*. The former presents a Zeus of epic who uses power and violence judiciously

surely Zeus, the *real* Zeus, would not have participated in something as ridiculous as Gigantomachy. Given the tradition that has amassed around him, however, Callimachus expects his audience to be on board with him as he refashions a world in which Zeus would do just that.

There was already a tradition in place that associated the Gigantomachy with the lies poets told about the gods. Xenophanes 1 describes the well-ordered symposium. He states that the events should begin with a hymn to accompany the libations made before the drinking begins. Callimachus' *Hymn to Zeus*, based on its opening lines, is presented as being just such a hymn.²⁵⁵ Xenophanes has prescriptions for the content of these hymns:

οὐ τι μάχας διέπειν Τιτηνῶν οὐδὲ Γιγάντων
οὐδέ κ' Ἰκενταύρων, πλάσμα(τα) τῶν προτέρων,
ἢ στάσις σφεδανᾶς· τοῖς οὐδὲν χρηστὸν ἔνεστιν·
θεῶν δὲ προμηθεῖην αἰὲν ἔχειν ἀγαθὴν. (Xenophanes 1.21-24)²⁵⁶

Nor speak of the battles of Titans and Giants
or of Centaurs, the fictions of our ancestors, or violent factions;
there's nothing good in these subjects.
But rather always have good consideration for the gods.

to establish an ordered cosmos, while the latter depicts him as a tyrant within a tragedy. This supports the idea that Zeus, particularly the Zeus who is involved in the Succession Myth, may be read as one wishes.
²⁵⁵ Hopkinson ad Callim. *Hymn* 1.1 and Stephens (2003) 77 n. 7. There is much uncertainty and debate over the performance context (or lack thereof) of Callimachus' *Hymns*. Depew (1993) discusses the issue and concludes that Callimachus uses references to "lived religious experience and meaning" in order to undercut them, thereby "highlighting the essential textuality (and inter-textuality) of his poetic recreation" (59). Bing (1993) examines the tension between the sense of immediacy in the *Hymn to Apollo* and the poem's written nature, as well as the blurring of lines between the ritual community within the text and the community of readers outside the text, while Harder (1992) questions the traditional division of the *Hymns* into "mimetic" (2, 5 and 6) and "non-mimetic" (1, 3 and 4) texts. Cameron (1995) esp. 44-103 argues for the existence of real, traditional performance contexts for Hellenistic poetry, including the symposium. On the possible performance contexts of the *Hymn to Zeus*, see Barbantani (2011) 182-4, Clauss (1986) esp. 159 with n. 13 and Stephens (2003) 77-8.

²⁵⁶ I have followed West's (1980) text of Xenophanes.

According to Vian, who traces the history of the use of Gigantomachy in philosophical contexts, the myth of the Titanomachy was particularly embarrassing (“gênant”) in this strain of Greek thought because of the way the gods behave. Because of this, Vian argues, Homer puts the myth firmly in the background, Hesiod shows a gradual progression from chaos to order, and the myth then becomes especially subject to philosophical criticism and reflection, generally as an allegory for a battle between what is rational and orderly versus the forces of chaos.²⁵⁷ The Gigantomachy (proper), as opposed to the Titanomachy, was less troublesome, because it does not represent a civil war; the Giants are lesser beings than the Olympians without the same kind of immortality possessed by the Titans.²⁵⁸

III. Ptolemaic Kingship and the Gigantomachy

To return to Callimachus’ *Hymn to Zeus*, toward the end of the hymn, the line between Zeus and Ptolemy Philadelphus is blurred as the earthly ruler is compared to the heavenly one (lines 85-90).²⁵⁹ Whether we ought to identify Zeus with Ptolemy in general in this hymn is a contested point.²⁶⁰ The emphasis on kingship in the hymn suggests that the poem does contain a message about the ruler, whether or not we go so far as to equate Ptolemy with Zeus. As Stephens points out, Callimachus was aware of an intellectual climate in Alexandria that was debating the nature of kingship; in fact, “he was an active participant in these ongoing debates, and his poetry was a locus for the

²⁵⁷ Vian (1952b) 2. It is not my purpose here to go through philosophical treatments of the Gigantomachy in detail; for a discussion of the non-poetic uses of the myth, see Vian (1952b).

²⁵⁸ Vian (1952b) 2-3.

²⁵⁹ Cf. lines 56-9, about Zeus: Stephens (2003) 108-9.

²⁶⁰ See the discussion in Stephens (2003) 78-9.

interplay of inherited as well [as] experimental notions of kingship and their attendant mythologies.²⁶¹ Stephens is referring to the mythologies of Greece and Egypt, places with distinctly different traditions regarding kingship. In Egypt, the pharaoh was a god on earth;²⁶² in fact, he was the incarnation of Horus, who in Egyptian mythology defeated Seth, the representative of chaos whom Greek writers routinely equated with Typhon.²⁶³ The succession of a new pharaoh meant a new creation and new victory in the unceasing battle of order versus chaos. Thus it would have been very easy to combine the Greek succession myth and defeat of such monsters as the Giants, Typhon, and Python with the Egyptian mythology of kingship.

In a direct quote from Hesiod, Callimachus writes that “kings are from Zeus” (ἐκ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες, Callim. *Hymn* 1.79 = Hes. *Theog.* 96). In the Hesiodic context of this quote,²⁶⁴ the Muses also play an important role in the speech of kings who render straight judgments.

ὄντινα τιμήσουσι Διὸς κοῦραι μέγαλοιο
 γεινόμενον τ' ἐσίδωσι διοτρεφῶν βασιλῶν,
 τῶ μὲν ἐπὶ γλώσση γλυκερὴν χεῖουσιν ἔερσην,
 τοῦ δ' ἔπε' ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα· οἱ δέ τε λαοὶ
 πάντες ἐς αὐτὸν ὄρωσι διακρίνοντα θέμιστας
 ἰθίησι δίκησιν· ὃ δ' ἀσφαλῆως ἀγορεύων
 αἰψά τε καὶ μέγα νεῖκος ἐπισταμένως κατέπαυσεν. (Hes. *Theog.* 81-7)

²⁶¹ Stephens (2003) 75.

²⁶² This may explain why the king can be invoked in a hymn, a genre normally reserved for gods (humans are praised in epinicia): Stephens (1998) 171 and (2003) 78.

²⁶³ West (1966) 379-83 and Stephens (2003) 46, 102, 110. Stephens discusses on 104 and 116-17 the correspondences among the births and early childhoods of Horus, Zeus, and Apollo. According to Herodotus (2.146), Horus/Apollo was conveyed to the floating island Chemmis to hide him from Typhon. This clearly corresponds to the story of Apollo's birth on Delos as narrated in Callim. *Hymn* 4.

²⁶⁴ This context and its ramifications are thoroughly discussed in Bing ([1988] 2008) 77-82.

And whomever of Zeus-cherished kings
 the daughters of great Zeus honor and look upon as he is born,
 upon his tongue they shed sweet dew,
 and from his mouth flow gentle words;
 and all the people look to him as he gives his verdicts
 with straight justice; and he, speaking steadfastly,
 swiftly and skillfully puts a stop to a great strife.

Hesiod's king, with sweet dew on his tongue, sounds like the poet of the *Aetia* prologue.

In both poems, there is a clear link between the functions of poets and rulers. The

“Callimachean” ruler, like Hesiod's giver of straight judgments, will swiftly and skillfully end strife, rather than carry out protracted wars to be the subject of epics.

Poetics and politics thus serve to reinforce each other. A good example of this comes in the envoi to Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*.

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὐατα λάθριος εἶπεν
 'οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὅς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος ἀεῖδει.'
 τὸν Φθόνον ὠπόλλον ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὦδε τ' εἶπεν·
 'Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ
 λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἔλκει.
 Δημοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
 ἀλλ' ἥτις καθαρὴ τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
 πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.' (Callim. *Hymn* 2.105-12)

Envy spoke secretly in Apollo's ear:
 “I don't like the poet who doesn't sing as much as the sea.”
 Apollo kicked Envy and spoke thus:
 “The flow of the Assyrian River is great, but it drags much
 filth of the earth and much refuse in its water.
 Bees carry water to Deo not from every source,
 but the pure and undefiled stream which wells up
 from a holy spring, a small stream, the choicest and best.”

There is no doubt that this passage is about poetry; Envy's statement ensures this. But this passage may carry a political statement overlooked by most scholars.²⁶⁵ As Williams

²⁶⁵ One exception is M. Brumbaugh, who has suggested that the Assyrian river is a political (and polemical) reference to the Seleucids, in a paper entitled, “Kallimachos and the Euphrates: Trashing the Seleukid

explains in his commentary, there has been some debate as to how to understand the reference to bees. They may be priestesses of Demeter carrying out a ritual function, or simply the animals, “the paragon of purity and fastidiousness.” Or, they may stand for the poet, as commonly.²⁶⁶ What Williams does not point out is that the bee was also a prominent symbol of kingship in Egypt,²⁶⁷ while Demeter, for her part, represented Isis (and, by extension, the queen). The pharaoh was closely associated with the prosperity of the kingdom via the flowing of the Nile; therefore, a bee that carries sweet, holy water surely would have evoked images of kingship in an Egyptian context. In this way, the action of Alexandrian poet and Alexandrian ruler are aligned, as each holds back the forces of chaos and promotes the prosperity of a creation that is at once new and the same, as each new ruler or poet goes back to the beginning paradoxically to enact a new age that is part of the same cycle repeated over and over.

One of the ways the poet does this is by not writing a narrative Gigantomachy, but merely alluding to the myth. The irony, of course, is that by alluding to something, a poet activates that topic in the reader’s mind and thereby really does write about it. Similarly, in order to keep the forces of chaos at bay, sometimes a ruler has to involve himself in warfare. In Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos*, Apollo, while still in utero, tells Leto that he cannot be born on Cos, as another god (Ptolemy Philadelphus) is destined to be born there:

‘Nile,’” delivered at the 2012 Annual Meeting of the American Philological Association:
<http://apaclassics.org/annual-meeting/23brumbaugh/>.

²⁶⁶ Williams ad Callim. *Hymn* 2.110.

²⁶⁷ Stephens (2003) 1-5, 107-8.

ὠγυγίην δῆπειτα Κόων, Μεροπηίδα νῆσον
 ἴετο, Χαλκιοῦπης ἱερὸν μυχὸν ἠρωίνης.
 ἀλλὰ ἐ παιδὸς ἔρυκεν ἔπος τόδε· ἴμῃ σὺ γε, μήτηρ,
 τῆ με τέκοις. οὐτ' οὖν ἐπιμέμφομαι οὐδὲ μεγαίρω
 νῆσον, ἐπεὶ λιπαρὴ τε καὶ εὐβοτος, εἴ νύ τις ἄλλη·
 ἀλλὰ οἱ ἐκ Μοιρέων τις ὀφειλόμενος θεὸς ἄλλος
 ἐστί, Σαωτήρων ὑπάτων γένος·

 καὶ νύ ποτε ξυνός τις ἐλεύσεται ἄμμιν ἄεθλος
 ὕστερον, ὀππότε' ἂν οἱ μὲν ἐφ' Ἑλλήνεσσι μάχαιραν
 βαρβαρικὴν καὶ Κελτὸν ἀναστήσαντες Ἄρηα
 ὀψίγονοι Τιτηῆνες

(Callim. *Hymn* 4.160-66, 171-4)

Next she reached primal Cos, island of Merops,
 the holy recess of the heroine Chalkiope.
 But the following speech of her child stopped her:
 “Don’t bear me here, mother. It’s not that I blame
 or feel a grudge toward the island,
 rich and abounding in pasture as any other;
 But another god is owed by the Fates,
 the supreme race of Saviors

 and someday there will come a shared struggle for us,
 later, when the latter-day Titans raise
 barbarian dagger and Celtic Ares
 against the Greeks

It was a common practice among Hellenistic poets to compare the Successor Kings’
 pacification of the barbarians with Zeus’ defeat of the Giants or Titans,²⁶⁸ especially in
 conjunction with the Gallic invasions. Here Ptolemy, by reenacting the Gigantomachy,
 will subdue the forces of chaos, thus fulfilling his role as Horus and leaving

²⁶⁸ See n. 1 above. Usually, they are compared to Giants, not Titans: see Mineur ad Callim. *Hymn* 4.174. To my mind, it is most likely that Callimachus knew of the confusion between the myths and deliberately used it to play with a contrast between ὀψίγονοι and προτερηγενέας, the word by which they are described in Antim. fr. 45 Wyss. For Callimachus, giants (and not Alexandrianism) have come to be associated with epigonality. On both this specific reference to Antimachus and Callimachus’ attitude toward Antimachus in general, see Krevans (1993) esp. 153. For the view, with which I disagree, that Hellenistic poets were attempting “to compensate for a perceived epigonality,” see Bing ([1988] 2008) esp. 62-3, 75 (quote on 75).

Callimachus free to write the kind of poetry he wishes.²⁶⁹ What we have, then, is the great paradox of Callimacheanism: in order to have Callimacheanism (in poetry or politics), one must simultaneously espouse Callimachean values while allowing for the uncallimachean to exist (even in one's own work). In other words, Callimacheanism cannot exist in a vacuum, as by its very nature it defines itself against the uncallimachean. This is not to say that it is derivative; on the contrary, as I argued above, the Callimachean reinvigorates what is traditional by taking new approaches to it.

The *Hymn to Delos* is a good example of this phenomenon, as it clearly combines allusion to a particular model, the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, with considerations of both Alexandrian poetics and Ptolemaic politics. The choice of both model and subject matter reflects this set of concerns. As Bing has argued, Callimachus makes extensive use of the *Homeric Hymns* precisely because they suited his poetic purpose: "they were pleasing in their limited size and lack of epic bombast, yet could be viewed as genuinely 'Homeric.'" Their use as a model would permit Callimachus to turn the Homeric tradition to productive use *without* trying to rival it, for here he would find those aspects that were less known, atypical, unfaded.²⁷⁰ The *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* is not free of Gigantomachic overtones, however. Typhon and Python, who are essentially doubles of each other, lend a decidedly epic presence to the poem. They are both part of the pre-Apolline universe which is dominated by chthonic, multi-formed, cacophonous bombast.

²⁶⁹ There may be further irony in the historical circumstances of Ptolemy's defeat of the Gauls. When the Gauls attacked Delphi in 279, as alluded to in this poem, it was really the Aetolians and Antigonos Gonatas who defeated them; later, Philadelphus hired Gallic mercenaries who had survived the Delphic invasion to fight against his half-brother Magas. The Gauls mutinied and were then defeated by Philadelphus. These historical realities could undercut the praise of Philadelphus in the *Hymn*: for one event, he gets more credit than is due, and for the other, he is being praised for ending a situation that he arguably helped create.

²⁷⁰ Bing (1993) 182.

In Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos*, this is represented by Hera and Ares. In their attempt to prevent Apollo from being born, both of these gods make sounds of the sort Callimachus inveighs against. Hera brays dreadfully, like an epic ass, at line 56 (δεινὸν ἐπεβρωμάτο), and later the din of Ares' weapons is modeled on Pindar's description of Typhon in *Pythian* 1:²⁷¹

ὡς δ', ὀπότε Αἰτναίου ὄρεος πυρὶ τυφομένοιο
σειόνται μυχὰ πάντα, κατουδαίοιο γίγαντος
εἰς ἑτέρην Βριαρῆος ἐπωμίδα κινυμένοιο,
θερμάστραι τε βρέμουσιν ὑφ' Ἡφαίστοιο πυράγρης
ἔργα θ' ὁμοῦ, δεινὸν δὲ πυρὶ κμητοῖ τε λέβητες
καὶ τρίποδες πίπτοντες ἐπ' ἀλλήλοις ἰαχεῦσιν·
τῆμος ἔγεντ' ἄραβος σάκεος τόσος εὐκύκλιοι. (Callim. *Hymn* 4.141-7)

As when all the inner recesses of Mt. Aetna
smoking with fire are shaken as the giant under the ground,
Briareus, shifts to his other shoulder,
and beneath the tongs of Hephaestus the furnaces
and his works together roar, and fire-wrought cauldrons
and tripods tumbling against each other shriek dreadfully;
so great then was the ringing of his well-rounded shield.

The word used to describe Mt. Aetna, τυφομένοιο, evokes Typhon, as does the image of the giant trapped beneath the mountain;²⁷² however, Callimachus changes the giant to Briareus, one of the Hundred-Handers. I contend that this is a reference to Homer, *Iliad* 1.401-6. There, Achilles is asking Thetis to supplicate Zeus on his behalf, and reminds her that she once helped Zeus when the other gods had bound him and sought to usurp his place. Thetis freed Zeus and summoned the giant, whom the gods call Briareus but men call Aigaion, to act as Zeus' protector. This episode is a failed attempt to continue the succession myth, and, as Slatkin observes, Thetis involves Briareos to remind the other

²⁷¹ Bing ([1988] 2008) 123-4; Ambühl (1995) 211, who discusses the unmusical sounds of donkeys both in this passage and elsewhere.

²⁷² So also Mineur ad loc.: "The name of Briareus in the next line thus comes as quite a surprise."

gods of the way Zeus successfully used the Hundred-Handers in the Titanomachy.²⁷³

Where Typhon represents the final threat to Zeus' reign, which is swiftly put down by the supreme god, Briareus represents the force Zeus uses to defeat his enemies, a force which, though contained beneath the earth now, is always ready to be reactivated if necessary. Furthermore, by using the name the gods use for Briareus/Aigaion, Callimachus is asserting for himself the authority of speech that Homer had received from the Muses, the access to divine language. This entire description is cast in an epic simile and makes use of epic forms and language; this demonstrates that Ares is an epic presence in the poem, a relic of a bygone era.²⁷⁴ The allusion to Pindar, *Pythian* 1 suggests that this malignant, strident and epic force will soon be subdued by the sweet sounds of Apollo's lyre.

By contrast to Hera and Ares, Delos is the Callimachean character in the poem. She is small, slender, delicate, pure, song-loving, and peaceful, thus resembling Callimachus' own programmatic aims.²⁷⁵ Delos was also known for being immune to earthquakes,²⁷⁶ making the island the antithesis of Mt. Aetna. Bing and Depew have demonstrated that Callimachus took much of Delos' pre-Apolline mythology (as the floating island Asteria) from Pindar, *Paeon* 7b.²⁷⁷ Other Pindaric features of the hymn identified by Depew include its greater focus on "praising an island, and only incidentally a god"; the "pacing and motivation" of the narrative, the amplification of elements previously missing or underdeveloped in the *Homeric Hymn* (such as Hera's anger, the

²⁷³ Slatkin (1991) 69.

²⁷⁴ Bing ([1988] 2008) 123-4.

²⁷⁵ Bing ([1988] 2008) 94. See e.g. lines 28-9, 99, 197, 276-7.

²⁷⁶ Hdt. 6.98, Thuc. 2.8.3; see further Barchiesi (1994).

²⁷⁷ See Bing ([1998] 2008) 96-110 and Depew (1998).

catalogue of Leto's wandering, and the backstory of the island Asteria); and the compression of the narrative of the birth itself.²⁷⁸ The purpose of the Pindaric narrative, and Callimachus' reason for alluding so heavily to it, is to emphasize the pre-Apolline existence of the island.²⁷⁹ I would add to this discussion the observation that aside from the eternal fixity of Delos and the honor bestowed upon it, the island as Asteria is not so different from Delos. Asteria is always small and pure (she rejects Zeus' advances), and for this reason she is the kind of island that Apollo wants to be born on. On the metaliterary level, this suggests that the Callimachean element existed already in the epic-dominated world, and was simply waiting for the right poet to bring it to light.

Apollo is a mixed figure in the hymn, falling somewhere between the worlds of Hera and Ares and that of Asteria/Delos. He chooses to be born on Asteria because he is fond of that which is small, pure, delicate, and peaceful. Yet he also prophesies that he will fight alongside Ptolemy against the giant-like Gauls, alluding to the Gauls' attack on Delphi in 279/8 BCE. As Bing points out, only Callimachus includes the detail that this attack coincided with the celebration of Apollo's victory over Python; thus, the defeat of the giant-like Gauls becomes a repetition of the defeat over Python,²⁸⁰ which mythologically is itself a repetition of the Gigantomachy. God and ruler are caught in a never-ending cycle, keeping the forces of chaos and discord at bay (as indeed the Egyptians understood the pharaoh in his role as Horus to do). In my discussion of Pindar's *Pythian* 1 in the previous chapter, I demonstrated how the lyre that lulls the martial elements of Olympus to sleep itself conceals gigantomachic potential. This is the

²⁷⁸ Depew (1998) 162.

²⁷⁹ Depew (1998) 163.

²⁸⁰ Bing ([1988] 2008) 129-131.

essence of Apollo, the god who superficially represents what is new, song-loving, and peaceful (like Asteria or Pindar's lyre), but who holds the same epic potential as Zeus (consider the Apollo represented in *Iliad* 1.43-52), and in fact establishes himself through a reenactment of Gigantomachy in his defeat of Python.²⁸¹ Likewise, Ptolemy Philadelphus can be a "Callimachean" ruler in the sense that he shares values with the poet and creates a world where the poet can exist, but any attempt to fully integrate himself into this world will result in failure.²⁸² If Ptolemy refuses to participate in Gigantomachy, then chaos will ensue, and Callimachus will not have the security necessary to write Alexandrian poetry.

The Ptolemaic attempt to bridge tradition and innovation also mirrors and informs Callimachus' Alexandrian poetics. The Ptolemies needed to be at once Greek and Egyptian, and appear as legitimate holders of authority to both populations. They therefore developed a strategy of linking themselves to traditional imagery and mythology, for example by playing up ties between their family and Heracles. In this way, something very new to the Greek world (Hellenistic kingship) could be viewed as a continuation of what was traditionally and paradigmatically Greek.²⁸³ Similarly, on the Egyptian side, they had to integrate themselves as just another repetition of the pharoanic line. By casting Ptolemy as a giant-slayer, Callimachus points up the irony of the ruler's

²⁸¹ Just as Gigantomachy, as an ultra-epic moment, lends itself to parody, so too does Apollo's defeat of Python. I would argue that Ovid's treatment of Apollo and Python in *Met.* 1.416-65 is a very exaggerated, parodic telling of the myth.

²⁸² The beauty of using Gigantomachy to write about politics, however, is that how it is read is up to the reader: is it straightforward praise of a giant-slayer, or does it raise questions about the morality and nature of the ruler's "success?" Cf. Stephens (1998) 183, who suggests that much court poetry is by nature designed to offer a plurality of meanings.

²⁸³ Note also the Hellenistic fascination with foundation legends.

self-portrayal, that one cannot be “Callimachean” (new, innovative, and peace-loving) without using the trappings of tradition.

Apollo’s prophecy about Ptolemy in the *Hymn to Delos* therefore has several functions. First, as Henrichs notes, it turns the poet into a “mouthpiece” for two complementary sources of poetic patronage, Apollo and Ptolemy. “Divine performance becomes synonymous with royal performance through the medium of the poetic voice . . . as the god, the king and the poet join forces.”²⁸⁴ Yet, the irony of showing a “Callimachean” king and god engaging in Gigantomachy underscores their need for the poet: Callimachus is the only one of the trio who can actually live in a Callimachean world, and ruler and god both depend upon him to fashion that world the way they want it to be fashioned. Callimachus does so not by creating a whole new poetic world, a world which is epigonal to the Homeric world, but rather by positioning himself at the head of literary history, within Homer and Hesiod, so that he can then draw out the Callimachean elements that were already there. This is what I have been calling Alexandrianism.

Thus both ruler and poet need each other to make this system work. The central paradox of Callimachean poetry, that it needs the uncallimachean to exist, ensures that one of the salient features of the movement is a self-conscious awareness of the irony of its position. In Hesiod, this took the form of an examination of the creative failure that is inherent in the Gigantomachy motif, as the overly heavy subject matter caves in on itself in a sort of proto-parody of epic. In Pindar, the political element was introduced, as we saw the poet exploring the more dangerous implications of using Gigantomachy in a praise poem, and the gigantomachic potential in what would seem to be the opposite of

²⁸⁴ Henrichs (1993) 141.

the giant figure. In Alexandrianism, Gigantomachy becomes a means of pointing to the ironies of attempting to present oneself (whether as poet or king/pharaoh) as simultaneously different and the same, innovative and traditional, the last and the first. This effort, and what I have called “Callimachean values,” unite ruler and poet.²⁸⁵ Both present themselves as something that has always been present, yet is only fully developed in the context of Ptolemaic Alexandria. The key difference between the two is that the ruler ultimately becomes yet another instantiation of a repeating pattern, while the poet, by embracing the irony of his position, has the ability to manipulate the tradition to position himself at its head. It is in Roman Callimacheanism, to which I now turn, that we see a split between the aims or values of *princeps* and poet, in which the greatest irony comes from the poets’ triumph through the parodic failure of Gigantomachy.

²⁸⁵ Bing ([1988] 2008) also discusses the relationship between poet and king; we reach some similar and some different conclusions. For him, there is a significant gap between poetics and politics, and he reads Callimachus in the *Hymn to Zeus* as distancing himself from those under the king’s sway (82), although he later argues about the *Hymn to Delos* that “. . . political and musical harmony came to be viewed as merely different aspects of a single force” (139). I agree with Bing that Ptolemy’s actions provide the security that Callimachus needs for his poetry to exist, and that the “very existence of this poem [the *Hymn to Delos*] testifies to the success of Ptolemaic rule” (140).

Chapter Five

Propertian Irony and the Limits of Callimacheanism

*sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.* (Prop. 2.1.39-42)

but neither does Callimachus thunder forth the Phlegraeian uproars of Jove and Enceladus from his slender breast, nor is my breast fit to establish the name of Caesar among his Phrygian ancestors in hardy verse.²⁸⁶

There is an inherent tension in styling oneself the new Callimachus, as Propertius does (4.1.64). By taking this model, the poet is stating that he is doing something new that will revitalize how the reader views the received hierarchy of genres and what sort of stylistic elements each genre may or may not contain. Because Callimachus had already done this, however, Propertius is in fact traveling a trodden path. Therefore, for a Roman poet really to do something new – something truly in the spirit of Callimachus – he must redefine what Callimacheanism is. I am not speaking of the rules of Callimachean style, for example, small scale, refinement, allusivity, and so forth, nor will it be a major concern in this chapter to demonstrate how Propertius follows a Callimachean style; this has been done.²⁸⁷ Rather, I will demonstrate how Propertius creates a complex relation between the epic and elegiac genres that must be read ironically. Whereas Callimachus does not demonstrate anxiety regarding influence or genre,²⁸⁸ Propertius embraces this sort of anxiety as a tool for creating a distinctly Roman version of Callimacheanism, one

²⁸⁶ Throughout this chapter, I have used Fedeli's (2006) edition of the text of Propertius.

²⁸⁷ See e.g. Boucher (1965) 161-204, Hubbard (1974) and Hollis (2006) 106-7, 110-24. Puelma (1982) is an important study on the influence of the *Aetia* prologue on Roman love elegy in general.

²⁸⁸ Bloom (1973) is the classic treatment of the "anxiety of influence."

that simultaneously emulates the past and maintains an ironic distance from it. Bloom's term "anxiety of influence" suits Propertius quite nicely; however, while Bloom analyzes the poet-predecessor relationship in terms of an Oedipal struggle between parent and child, I analyze Propertius' relationship with the epic tradition in terms more appropriate to the elegiac genre, the beloved. Epic becomes both the rejected and the unattainable beloved in Propertius' poetry, another sort of mistress who can be *dura* and unyielding, yet whose attractions keep the poet coming back to her. This tension between desire and rejection, presence and unattainability, are mirrored in the tension between epic and elegy in Propertius' poetry.

The Gigantomachy is the perfect tool to express this complex of ideas. It simultaneously represents the old epic tradition and a struggle against the previous generation. Because of its extreme nature and emphasis on size and power,²⁸⁹ it provides a neat contrast to the Callimachean writing of the powerless poet-lover. Finally, it lends itself to parody, a quality of the *recusatio* that has been noted in Ovid, but not enough in other Augustan writers. Parody provides Propertius with the critical distance he needs from his predecessors.

It is impossible fully to understand these metaliterary functions without some consideration of Propertius' political stance, as well. Barchiesi, writing on the poetry of Ovid, makes the point that

[w]e often consider ourselves authorized to establish explicit boundaries between poetics and politics, thus defining fields that are in reciprocal opposition one to the other. But this operation is always carried out under our own responsibility: it is we who create this dichotomy by means of an

²⁸⁹ Innes (1979).

initial decision, as for example when we assign Augustus to the field of politics and Callimachus to that of aesthetics. If we make this distinction in the world of Ovid's poetry we are likely to miss a great deal, as close reading often reveals that 'Augustus' can also be an aesthetic issue and 'Callimachus' a political point.²⁹⁰

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated what the "political point" of "Callimachus" is: that in Callimachus' poetry, the values of poet and king are aligned, as both prize the peaceful, song-loving, and delicate. There is a deep irony underlying this formulation, however, as kings are unable to keep peace without sometimes engaging in war, and poets are unable to be Callimachean if they do not have uncallimachean poetry to which to respond. I demonstrated that epic and elegy, for Callimachus, are in a reciprocal (not competitive) relation to each other. Alexandrian style elegy draws out the Callimachean elements which were always hidden within epic, while epic is necessary for the Callimachean to exist.

It is now well accepted that Callimachus was not opposed to epic, but to bad epic. By referencing the Gigantomachy in his *recusatio*, Propertius is not saying that he cannot write good epic; he is saying that he will not write *bad* epic, overblown epic that is part of a misguided attempt to rival Homer. If Propertius were to write an epic about Augustus, he would be forced into the realm of Gigantomachy. Given that one could not depict Octavian - Augustus triumphing over other Romans, the panegyrist must either paint the opposing side as unroman or gloss over the precise nature of Octavian - Augustus' victories. In a Gigantomachy, we would be left wondering who is the god and who the giant, or as Vergil asks in the *Aeneid*, whether *furor* can only be checked by greater *furor*.

²⁹⁰ Barchiesi (1997) 40.

But this is not to say that Propertius' poetry is thoroughly anti-Augustan. It means that Augustus is a problematic figure, inherently hard to pin down and define. By adopting a Callimachean stance, Propertius is acknowledging that Augustus has created a world that makes Propertius' poetry possible,²⁹¹ that he needs Augustus to exist; but this is so because Augustus provides the tension and irony that are so fundamental to Augustan poetry.

In this chapter, I first explore what Callimacheanism means to Propertius by analyzing several poems in which the relationship between epic and elegy is a focal point: 1.7, 1.9, 2.10, and 3.1-5.²⁹² This list is meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Setting Gigantomachy aside for the moment, I first demonstrate how the metaliterary and political valences of Callimachean allusions function together in these poems, and the degree of irony underpinning Propertius' presentation of himself, his literary project, and his political stance. After establishing this framework for understanding Propertius' poetry, I turn to the poems in which Gigantomachy is explicitly mentioned, 2.1 and 3.9, in order to explore the full ramifications of these allusions. I end with an epilogue on the way in which the Phlegraean Fields, site of the Gigantomachy, may be read as literary space in 1.20.

²⁹¹ So Keith (2008) 164-5. There is a striking parallel at the end of Vergil's *Georgics* (4.559-66), where Vergil credits Octavian with providing him the *otium* necessary to write his poetry; meanwhile, Octavian is thundering on Olympus in a manner that has gigantomachic overtones, as I will argue in the following chapter.

²⁹² Traditionally, scholars have seen a change in style and subject matter among Propertius' four books, the emphasis on Callimachus only being introduced in 2.1: see e.g. Hubbard (1974) and Boucher (1965) 166. I agree with Ross (1975) 60-70 and Fedeli (1981) that the elements of literary polemic and Callimachean poetics begin right away in Book 1. For the flip side of the issue (whether Propertius abandons Cynthia as a subject as he becomes more Callimachean), see Lonie (1959) 22 on the poetics of Book 3: "The most we can say is that there is a new articulateness about method, and about his place in tradition; but he still sees himself as the poet of love."

I. *Callimachus Romanus*

Poems 1.7 and 1.9 form a pair addressed to the epic poet Ponticus.²⁹³ The standard interpretation of these poems is that they are a sort of disguised *recusatio* in which elegy is privileged above epic.²⁹⁴ This reading depends upon a series of contrasts between Ponticus and Propertius, and the latter's position as *praeceptor amoris*. In the first two lines of 1.7 we learn that Ponticus is writing a *Thebaid*. Such a work, with its emphasis on fraternal warfare (*armaque fraternae tristia militiae*, 1.7.2), may well have resonated with Caesarian politics, and could be the sort of work which an Augustan poet would have been expected to write. Propertius presents such writing as competing with Homer (*primo contendis Homero*, 1.7.3); by expressing this idea in this way and naming Homer as *primus*, Propertius turns Ponticus' work into a sort of succession struggle of which he wants no part. Ponticus has chosen to rewrite part of the Epic Cycle, one of the most uncallimachean things a poet can do. Meanwhile, Propertius is forced (*cogor*, 8) to write about his love affair (*amores*, 5) with his mistress (*dominam*, 6), in service not so much to his poetic talent as to his own feelings of discouragement (*nec tantum ingenio quantum servire dolori*, 7). This will be the source of the elegist's fame, to be the only one to have pleased a learned girl, endured her threats, and benefitted other unlucky lovers by example (9-14). Therefore he ties his fame not to his *ingenium*, but to his lived

²⁹³ It has been suggested that the name Ponticus is a pun on the Greek word for sea, *pontos*, which in the Callimachean system stands for Homer or epic: Keith (2008) 75. On *pontos* as metaphor in Callimachus, see Williams (1978) 85-9. Hollis (2006) 102-3 suggests that Ponticus is Antimachus, an epic poet forced by love to write elegy.

²⁹⁴ Ross (1975) 57-8.

experience.²⁹⁵ This experience is more potent than any poetic aspirations, and if Ponticus should fall in love, he too will have to change his poetic program (15-20).²⁹⁶

At the end of poem 1.7, however, Propertius reverses a key component of his position; when Ponticus falls in love and attempts to write his own elegy, he will realize just how talented a poet Propertius is, and rank him higher than Rome's great talents (*tum me non humilem mirabere saepe poetam, / tunc ego Romanis praeferar ingeniis*, 21-22).²⁹⁷ The word *ingeniis* stands out, as Propertius had previously disavowed *ingenium*. By undercutting his previous statement in this way, Propertius forces us to re-read the whole poem ironically. In fact, the contrast between the two poets is undercut at every turn. In line two, the *arma* which form the subject of Ponticus' epic poetry are called *tristia*; the quality of being *tristis* is thereby translated from its normal generic association (elegy) to epic.²⁹⁸ We might compare this with the *dolor* that Propertius serves instead of *ingenium* in line 7. Propertius wishes for the fates to be gentle, *molli*, to Ponticus (line 4), a word which, again, we normally find in elegy referring to the elegiac poet's work (in line 19, he says that Ponticus will desire in vain to write a *mollem versum* if he falls in love). By contrast, Propertius says that he will continue to "seek out something against

²⁹⁵ I am not referring to the actual life experience of the man Propertius, as in a biographical reading, but rather the experiences of the poet's *persona* as presented within the text, whatever connection that may or may not have with the historical Propertius. Griffin (1986) views Augustan poetry as a direct response to lived experience; for an exposition of the grave problems with such readings, see the review of Griffin by Thomas (1988b). See also Wyke (1989) on whether we can learn anything about real Roman women by reading about elegiac mistresses.

²⁹⁶ Fedeli (1981) 229 points out that the theme of elegy as a way of life is a Propertian addition to Callimacheanism; cf. Lonie (1959) 30. For a description of the traditional elements of the elegiac lifestyle (e.g. *otium*, poverty, the refusal to serve in the military or hold public office, and the emphasis on the erotic and literary life), see Boucher (1965) 13-39. Fedeli also suggests that *ingenium* here does not mean inspiration in general, but specifically the inspiration to write epic poetry (230).

²⁹⁷ Stahl (1985) 49-57 suggests that Propertius is here asserting that he, too, is a serious poet. Callimachean aesthetics are valued, but not so much the point here; where elegy really proves its value and its superiority to epic is in the human experience.

²⁹⁸ So Heyworth (2007) 43 on a similar use of the word at 1.9.13 and Fedeli (1981) 230.

[his] harsh mistress” (*atque aliquid duram quaerimus in dominam*, 6). The word *duram*, which we might expect to modify epic poetry, instead refers to Propertius’ work.²⁹⁹ This effect is strengthened by the placement of *duram* next to *aliquid* and separated from its proper referent, *dominam*, which is delayed. Furthermore, if Cynthia represents in some sense not a real woman, but the text of Propertius’ love poetry,³⁰⁰ then he is here calling his poetry *dura*. The other description of the content of his poetry refers to “complaining about the hard times of [his] life” (*aetatis tempora dura queri*, 8). Here is the word *dura* again applied to Propertius’ subject matter. It seems that epic and elegiac poet are not so different after all: both write about “sad” and “harsh” events. Propertius is appropriating epic to the elegiac worldview. The image of the poet enduring the threats of his girlfriend and the idea that these deeds of his, rather than his poetic talent, will earn him *fama* aligns the elegiac poet with the epic hero.

It turns out, however, that it does take a great deal of talent to make art imitate life. To the average reader, Propertius will seem to be writing from personal experience, serving *dolor* rather than *ingenium*. In the poem, the person who will understand that this is not the case is Ponticus, another poet. Once he has attempted to write Propertian poetry himself, Ponticus will realize the artistic genius of Propertius’ poetry. Therefore, Ponticus stands for the learned reader who can recognize the true nature of Propertius’ work and the complex and ironic interplay between generic tropes contained within it.

In poem 1.9, Ponticus has indeed fallen in love. Propertius again presents his work as something that is not his own choice, but the effect of his pain: *me dolor et*

²⁹⁹ Maltby (2006) 169 discusses the paradoxical use of *durus* and *mollis* in poem 1.7.

³⁰⁰ On the *scripta puella*, see Keith (2008) 86-114 and Wyke (1987) and (1989).

lacrimae merito fecere peritum: atque utinam posito dicar amore rudis (“pain and tears have made me deservedly skillful; if only, love set aside, I could be called unpolished/ignorant,” 7-8). Note, however, that Propertius does not say that pain and tears have forced him to write inconsequential poetry; rather, they have made him skilled, *peritum*, whereas they leave Ponticus wishing he could write good elegiac poetry but unable to do so. Once again, Propertius undercuts his own words by implying that he is actually possessed of quite a bit of *ingenium*.³⁰¹

The next bit of the poem alludes to the aesthetics set forth in Callimachus’ *Aetia* prologue. He calls Ponticus’ epic a *grave carmen*, a “heavy poem,” (9) and states that Mimnermus is worth more in matters of love than Homer is (11). “Gentle Love,” he says, “seeks mild poems” (*carmina mansuetus lenia quaerit Amor*, 12). Elegy is contrasted with “those sad books of yours” (*tristis istos . . . libellos*, 12); again, epic is called *tristis*. In lines 15-16, he uses a metaphor that Ponticus is a madman demanding water as he stands in the middle of a river. Read as Callimachean symbolism,³⁰² Ponticus (“Ocean-like”) the epic poet has been standing in the middle of a river (the Epic Cycle) as he tries to compete with Homer the true ocean; now he is trying to write from the pure spring, but finds he cannot.

There is no evidence in the poem that Ponticus has actually tried to write elegiac poetry; on the contrary, I suggest that the real problem is that he is trying to write epic

³⁰¹ Richardson (1977) 164 sees a gradual progression in poem 1.7 from a position of humility and admiration for Ponticus to confidence in his own achievement. Hodge and Buttmore (1977) 117-18 liken the poet’s (insincerely) self-deprecatory stance to the *captatio benevolentiae*.

³⁰² See Stahl (1985) 65-6; Yardley (1981) 324 with n. 8. Heyworth (2007) 45 thinks Stahl is probably wrong to see an allusion to the Callimachean Euphrates, as there is no indication in the text that the river is muddy or large, but admits that Yardley may be right in seeing “a less specific evocation of water inspiration.”

love poetry, and failing. Otherwise, why would he have to be told to choose Mimnermus over Homer, or to “put away those sad volumes of yours, and sing of what the girl you want would like to know about” (*i quaeso et tristis istos compone libellos, et cane quod quaevis nosse puella velit!*, 13-14). All the references to Ponticus as a lover refer to his feelings and experiences, while the references to his writing all still point to epic. Ponticus’ “error” (33) is therefore the improper application of *die Kreuzung der Gattungen*, the “blending of genres.” At lines 23-24, Propertius informs him that Love has never offered “easy wings” to anyone without pressing him “with alternating hand”; clearly this is a reference to the alternating lines of the elegiac meter. Ponticus did not get the lesson of poem 1.7, that a really successful, Callimachean blend of epic and elegy cannot simply be erotic epic, but must engage the ironies of the poet-lover’s situation by encasing the hero of the poem in elegiac trappings. In other words, the poet-lover has epic aspirations, not as a writer of epic, but as a hero who earns everlasting *fama* through his struggles, but in order to be successful he also has to deny what epic is. He has to present his persona as living an un-epic life, and his poetry must have an un-epic exterior to match.

Nevertheless, Propertius is unable to stop flirting with the idea of writing epic. Poem 2.10 begins with a reverse *recusatio*, a declaration that the poet will now turn to more epic material:

*Sed tempus lustrare aliis Helicon choreis
 et campum Haemonio iam dare tempus equo.
 iam libet et fortis memorare ad proelia turmas
 et Romana mei dicere castra ducis.
 quod si deficiant vires, audacia certe
 laus erit: in magnis et voluisse sat est.
 aetas prima canat Veneres, extrema tumultus:
 bella canam, quando scripta puella mea est.* (2.10.1-8)

But it's time to encircle Helicon with other dances,
 and time now to give the field to the Haemonian horse.
 Now it pleases also to recall brave troops in battles
 and to speak of the Roman camps of my general.
 But if my strength fails, certainly there will be
 praise in my daring: in great matters it is enough to have been willing.
 Let youth sing of love affairs, old age of uprisings:
 I will sing of wars, once my girl has been written.

Wimmel has commented that poem 2.10 would be quite easy to understand if it stopped at this point. It is a typical feature of some *recusationes* to have a surge in energy and aspiration to write loftier poetry, followed by a retreat from this position as the poet realizes that it is not possible.³⁰³ In this particular poem, however, the retreat seems out of place, as it is undercut by the next section of the poem:³⁰⁴

*nunc volo subducto gravior procedere vultu,
 nunc aliam citharam me mea Musa docet.* (2.10.9-10)

Now I wish to proceed more seriously with raised eyebrows,
 now my Muse teaches me another cithara.

The sentiments expressed here are more problematic than they seem at first glance.

There is tension between what the poet wishes to do and what he is actually capable of

³⁰³ Wimmel (1960) 194.

³⁰⁴ Wimmel (1960) 196.

doing. The anaphora of *nunc* in lines 9-10 creates a sense of immediacy and encourages us to think that Propertius is writing epic poetry now. Yet, the *volo* of line 9 echoes *voluisse* in line 6, causing us to wonder if perhaps Propertius merely *wishes* to write epic, and if that is enough. Propertius was not yet in his *extrema aetas* when he wrote this poem, and as we find when we continue to read his poetry, he does not in fact stop writing of love affairs in favor of martial epic. It is more likely that what exists here is a promise to write in the future, not *since* but *when* his girl is done being written. *Docet* in line 10 may be read as a begun and continuous action – “my Muse is in the process of teaching me to write epic [but she isn’t finished yet].”

The following eight lines may then be read as a small sample of the sort of epic writing Propertius will do. As Wimmel explains, the cataloguing of epic subject matter (“großer Stoffe”), in order to reject it, is one of the surest signs of the apologetic style.³⁰⁵ Here, the poet has to summon all his strength just to create six lines of martial poetry:

surge, anime, ex humili! iam, carmina, sumite vires!
Pierides, magni nunc erit oris opus.
iam negat Euphrates equitem post terga tueri
Parthorum et Crassos se tenuisse dolet:
India quin, Auguste, tuo dat colla triumpho
et domus intactae te tremat Arabiae;
et si qua extremis tellus se subtrahit oris,
sentiat illa tuas postmodo capta manus! (2.10.11-18)

Rise, my spirit, from your humble station! Now, poems, take up your strength! Pierides, now there’s need of a big mouth.
 Now the Euphrates refuses to keep safe behind it the Parthians’ horsemen and regrets that it held back Crassus:
 In fact, Augustus, India bows its neck to your triumph and the home of untouched Arabia trembles before you; and if any land withdraws itself on the edges of the earth, let it afterwards feel your hands, captured!

³⁰⁵ Wimmel (1960) 198, 218.

The small scale of this brief catalogue is in keeping with the otherwise Callimachean nature of this poem. The subject matter is thoroughly uncallimachean, however, as the reference to the Euphrates indicates. All the battles Propertius mentions in this catalogue involve the domination of foreign lands; there is no mention of civil war. This poetry, the kind that Propertius would *like* to write, is analogous to the epics written about the Hellenistic Successor Kings' defeat of foreign barbarians. Propertius would like to be able to do the same for Augustus. He cannot though, as the next lines make clear:

*haec ego castra sequar; vates tua castra canendo
 magnus ero: servent hunc mihi fata diem!
 at caput in magnis ubi non est tangere signis,
 ponitur † hac † imos ante corona pedes;
 sic nos nunc, inopes laudis conscendere culmen,
 pauperibus sacris vilia tura damus.
 nondum etiam Ascraeos norunt mea carmina fontis,
 sed modo Permessi flumine lavit Amor.* (2.10.19-26)

These camps I would pursue; as your poet I will be great
 by singing of your camps. May fate preserve this day for me!
 But when it's not possible to touch the head on great statues,
 a garland is placed at the bottom of its feet;
 thus now we, unable to ascend the peak of praise,
 give cheap incense in a poor man's rites.
 Not yet do my poems know the Ascræan font,
 but now Love washes it in the river of Permessus.

The poet is *inops*, without the necessary recourses to reach the height of poetic glory. Permessus was a river at the foot of Mt. Helicon; in Vergil, *Eclogue* 6. 64-73 a Muse conducts the poet Gallus from Permessus to the height of Mt. Helicon, symbolizing his attainment of the Hesiodic gift of poetry. That Propertius must stay by Permessus is traditionally interpreted as a sign that he is limited to "a relatively modest form of poetic

inspiration, i.e. that required for love-elegy; whereas higher up the mountain is another spring from which a higher inspiration could be drawn.”³⁰⁶

Propertius’ relationship to Hesiod is complex. Wimmel identifies three ways Hesiod is important in the Roman *recusatio*: he is the archaic model for Callimachus of “fine” (λεπτός or *tenuis*) poetry, he is the earliest known example of literary criticism, and he is the creator of Helicon as the site of the Muses and the accompanying imagery of poetic initiation.³⁰⁷ Wimmel is partially correct; these are elements of the Alexandrian and Augustan reception of Hesiod. In some places, however, such as poem 2.10, Propertius seems to associate Hesiod with a grander style of writing. In fact, as Hardie has shown, there are two concomitant receptions of Hesiod at work in Latin poetry. On one hand, there is the “Alexandrian Hesiod” which is “not Homer,” symbolic of a “lesser” genre and poetic self-consciousness. On the other, there is the Hesiod that comes out of “the more direct use” of the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, which, “paradoxically perhaps, encourages a seriousness of purpose and a socially and politically committed poetic voice, deriving primarily from the *persona* of the *Works and Days*, and a sublimity of subject-matter deriving primarily from the grand subject-matter of the *Theogony*, that both pull away from the ironic self-deprecation of the ‘Alexandrian Hesiod.’”³⁰⁸ Hesiod is, after all, the author of the Titanomachy. Propertius makes use freely of both of these Hesiods as it suits his needs. This fits with what I am arguing is Propertius’ stance in his own composition, which is that there is a certain ironic tension between his insistence on being a Callimachean poet and the way he is constantly drawn to incorporate epic

³⁰⁶ Camps ad Propertius 3.10.25-6. See also Ross (1975) 31-4 and Puelma (1982) 296.

³⁰⁷ Wimmel (1960) 238-9; for further discussion, see pages 238-41.

³⁰⁸ Hardie (2005) 287.

elements into his poetry. As I discussed in the previous chapter on Callimachus, the great paradox of Callimacheanism is that it needs the uncallimachean to exist; it can only be if it can define itself against something else. Therefore, the Callimachean poet is forced to find a way to incorporate uncallimachean elements (Wimmel's *großer Stoffe*) into his poetry. This is why so many *recusationes* allude to and catalogue epic topoi.

At this point, it will be useful to digress momentarily to discuss the limits of genre and how the elegiac poet transcends them. Conte discusses how genre limits a text expressively and stylistically: "A means of signification incorporated into the text to give form and meaning to the discourse and instructions to its readers, the genre is in fact the horizon marking the boundaries of its meaning and delimiting its real possibilities within the system of literary codification."³⁰⁹ One important function of the *recusatio* in Roman love elegy is to define these generic boundaries by saying what it is not. In Propertius 2.1, for example, the Gigantomachy is one such signifier of the world outside of the elegiac genre because of its status as quintessentially epic material. The outside world is not forever lost to the elegiac poet, however; as Conte also demonstrates, Augustan love poets frequently take traditional cultural values from the world outside of their generic field and give them a new set of meanings within the elegiac system. Conte provides the example of the *militia amoris*, which is a way to "transcodify" the values of war, glory, and heroism into the elegiac world, which would otherwise not permit of them.³¹⁰ Thus

³⁰⁹ Conte (1994) 35-36; quote on 36.

³¹⁰ Conte (1994) 37-8.

elegy incorporates cultural values (other examples might be *fides* or *amicitia*), but changes them to fit the elegiac world.³¹¹

When this process occurs, a change happens in what the value in question signifies. For example, the *militia amoris* does not signify the same thing as *militia* does. As Conte explains it,

...those values elegy recuperates from the universe of the culture...cease to be signifieds and become signifiers of different signifieds. But the creation of this new kind of signifieds is a process rather than a result: the act of reinterpretation retains a full awareness of the substantial difference between the text of origin and that of arrival (and synthesizing new meanings is precisely an effect of rhetorical codification). **This creates a tension within elegy which is never resolved and those contradictions that make it an unstable and ephemeral literary experience...**³¹²

Anyone who has enclosed himself within a world that is only and wholly love and cannot see beyond this horizon will regard the suffering of love as total and incomprehensible. **If he then decides to import into that world elements recuperated from outside (needs otherwise lost, 'words' he does not know how to do without), he will thereby create a condition of permanent discomfort, a tension between irreconcilable rhetorics.**³¹³

This process of transcoding and its resulting tension may be felt in Propertius in his use of the term *durus*. I have already demonstrated how this word is used inconsistently in poems 1.7 and 1.9. Equivalent to the Greek *τραχύς*, this poetically charged word originally belongs to the epic genre and the “grand” style of writing. Propertius “recuperates” the word in the elegiac universe to apply to the *domina*, as at 1.7.5. He is

³¹¹ Kennedy (1992) discusses how the meanings of abstract terms are subjective and ideologically determined. However we understand a term (like “war” or “peace,” for example), it will always also carry the trace of its opposite within it. Thus oppositional readings can actually serve to legitimize the power and authority of the dominant ideology.

³¹² Conte (1994) 40; emphasis mine.

³¹³ Conte (1994) 41-2; emphasis mine.

inconsistent in his use of this word, however; at 2.1.41, for example, *duro versu* signifies epic poetry:

*sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.* (2.1.39-42)

but neither does Callimachus thunder forth the Phlegraeian uproars of Jove and Enceladus from his slender breast, nor is my breast fit to establish the name of Caesar among his Phrygian ancestors in **hardy verse**.

Thus, it is not just the case that Propertius has recuperated and transcoded an epic word in the elegiac genre. Rather, there is transcontamination. Sometimes the word points to its elegiac signified, while at other times it is an intruder from the epic genre into the elegiac universe. In other words, the process of recuperation is incomplete. Epic is still very much present as a potential signified of this word, and therefore whenever we see it we as readers are left open to think of both signifieds.

The reason for this is that the poet himself presents a tension between epic and elegy throughout his works. Propertius makes it clear that epic has no place in his world, but at the same time he keeps returning to the subject. This tension is perhaps best seen in poem 3.3. As the poem begins, Propertius is reclining on Helicon by Hippocrene (alluded to rather than directly named, by “the water of Bellerophon’s horse”) and is trying to write about Roman history. This is presented as an epic task, *tantum operis* (4). To help him, the poet had taken a sip from the spring. The way this action is described indicates that it is out of place for Propertius: “I had moved my little mouth to so great a spring” (*parvaque tam magnis admoram fontibus ora*, 5). The contrast between his small

mouth and the great spring points up that he is meant for “smaller” works, the spring to inspire poets of “larger” works. This is Hesiodic territory, but clearly the more serious Hesiod of the Titanomachy, not the “Alexandrian Hesiod.” Propertius says that Ennius drank there, and is in the process of listing a few of the topics Ennius wrote about when Phoebus appears to him.

Apollo’s words to Propertius are highly reminiscent of the same god’s speech to Callimachus, and full of Callimachean imagery:

*Quid tibi cum tali, demens, est flumine? quis te
carminis heroi tangere iussit opus?
non hic ulla tibi speranda est fama, Properti:
mollia sunt parvis prata terenda rotis;
ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus,
quem legat exspectans sola puella virum.
cur tua praescriptos evecta est pagina gyro<s>?
non est ingenii cumba gravanda tui.
alter remus aquas alter tibi radat harenas,
tutus eris: medio maxima turba mari est. (3.3.15-24)*

“What business do you have with such a stream, idiot? Who ordered you to touch upon the work of heroic song? Not here should you hope for any fame, Propertius: soft meadows should be worn down by small wheels; so that often your little book may be tossed on a bedside table, which a girl reads while waiting alone for her man. Why has your page been carried away from its prescribed rounds? The skiff of your talent must not be overloaded. Let one of your oars brush the water, the other the shore, and you’ll be safe: the greatest crowd is in the middle of the sea.”

Two different kinds of Callimachean imagery operate in this speech. The first consists of words denoting size, the second, water images. The water in this passage is particularly interesting. First of all, Apollo calls Hippocrene a *flumen*, not a *fons*. While this word may just mean a flow of water or a stream, its primary meaning is river. Apollo, like Propertius himself, is associating this place with epic writers. This is a fascinating twist,

since Callimachus was taken here in his dream to be initiated into the rites of the “Alexandrian Hesiod.” Gallus also receives poetic initiation in this place in *Eclogue 6*. Propertius is experiencing the reverse: he is to stay away from Hippocrene. His Apollo corrects the *Aetia* by arguing that an elegiac poet really should stay away from Helicon all together if he truly wants to write personal poetry. The other water image in this speech is also a corrective reference. Unlike the Apollo of Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo*, the god here does not tell Propertius to write like a pure spring, but instead tells him to keep one oar in the water and one on land. Propertius must be in at least a river, if not the sea. The next line, about the crowd being in the middle of the sea, suggests that this is to be read consistently as a “sea” metaphor. Is Propertius thus to keep one eye on epic at all times? In fact, this is what he does in his poetry. Propertius is more self-conscious and more anxious about the fate of his poetry than Callimachus is. *Aetia* fr. 1 reveals a poet who is confident in his stylistic choices and their eventual success, whatever other people may say. Propertius, on the other hand, keeps coming back to his desire and total inability to write more serious poetry and over and over expresses concern for the fame of his poetry after his death.³¹⁴ In some ways, he is more Callimachean than Callimachus himself. Hugging the shore is a metaphor for the line Propertius must walk between tradition and innovation, the approval of others and an intensely personal poetics. Whereas Callimachus may plunge into the pure spring with abandon, Propertius must keep one eye on the crowd in the middle of the sea, even though he knows he can never join them. This also expresses the sense of unattainability that is present in Propertian

³¹⁴ There may have been some concern that the inability topos would be misread as a statement that his talent is lacking; Ovid seems to read Propertius this way, in what may be a creative misreading done to parody the notion that an elegiac poet cannot write epic as well.

elegy, if not all love elegy. It is another instantiation of the desire for the beloved, which this time is epic poetry and the eternal glory that accompanies it. At the same time that the poet is reaching out with one hand for the desired object, he is pushing it away with the other. This is why in Propertius we find *recusationes* that swear off Gigantomachies, yet include small epic-style praises of Augustus.³¹⁵

To return to Propertius poem 2.10, I have translated *sequar* in line 19 as “would pursue”; this is an impossible wish disguised as a future verb (it could be read either way, depending on the reader’s inclinations). The logic of the passage is as follows: “I would pursue this line of praising you, and if I did that for you, I definitely would be elevated to the status of a great epic poet. I cannot do it, though, so please accept my Callimachean offering instead.” The reason Propertius cannot write this type of poetry for Augustus is twofold: as a Callimachean poet, such a task does not suit his style and talents, and he also cannot ignore the more morally ambiguous and socially destabilizing victories that Augustus achieved through civil war.

To understand what Propertius is doing in this poem, it is necessary to understand how Callimachus may function as a political, as well as poetic, image. In the previous chapter, I argued that the aims and values, if not the lived realities, of Ptolemy Philadelphus and Callimachus were in line with each other. In Propertius’ poetry, the problem is not so much that Propertius is a Callimachean rather than an epic poet. Augustus presented himself as a patron to both; there is room in his world for the

³¹⁵ This gains further point when we recall that the Gigantomachy was frequently used in political metaphors by Vergil and Horace, for example, to celebrate Augustus’ deeds. This was modelled after a Hellenistic practice of comparing the Successor King’s conquests to Jupiter’s defeat of the giants; see Hardie (1986) 87.

Eclogues and *Georgics* and for the *Aeneid*. The political message of Callimachus' poetry, as I have demonstrated, had been first to point out the inherent irony in having a ruler who espoused "Callimachean" values (that is, one who values what is peaceful, song-loving, and delicate), thereby opening the space needed for Callimachean poetry to exist, and the reality that, in order to protect those very values, that same ruler must engage in "epic" activities from time to time. Second, through images of Gigantomachy and succession struggles, Callimachus' poetry emphasized the inevitable failure of attempting to present oneself as new and traditional at the same time (as the Ptolemies did by propagating their ties to traditional Greek mythological figures, especially Heracles, and the Egyptian pharoanic tradition, to mitigate the newness of the Hellenistic kingship). In this way, the Ptolemies are a very important precursor to Augustus, and Propertius' Callimacheanism can become a political statement as much as a poetic one.

In poem 2.10, therefore, when Propertius recuses himself from writing of Augustus' foreign exploits, he is not merely saying that he cannot or will not be one of Callimachus' Telchines. He is saying that he cannot write simple praise of Augustus; it inevitably must be tinged with irony. This is not to say that this is an "anti-Augustan" poem. One could even argue that Propertius is preserving Augustus' dignity by using Callimacheanism as an excuse for recusing himself from writing an epic which inevitably will not turn out the way Augustus would like it to. This poem is not "anti-Augustan" or "pro-Augustan," it is an examination of how Callimachean politics would play out in an Augustan space.³¹⁶

³¹⁶ Kennedy (1992) 40-41 analyzes the terms "Augustan" and "anti-Augustan" as "merely a function of reception." Both terms carry within them traces of their opposite and break down upon closer examination.

This combination of poetics and politics, elegy and epic is worked out quite fully in several poems at the opening of Book Three. In terms of sheer accumulation of metapoetic symbols, poem 3.1 is one of the most Callimachean of Propertius' poems. After asking Callimachus and Philitas to allow him into their grove, he uses the *primus* motif found strikingly (and paradoxically) often in Latin poetry: *primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos Itala per Graios orgia ferre choros* ("I enter first from the pure spring as a priest to carry Italian rites through Greek dances," 3-4). Hinds has discussed the *primus* topos in Vergil and Ennius, and argues that the motif proclaims an end, an antiquated quality, for those who used the motif before.³¹⁷ Also important here are the imagery of the pure spring, a symbol drawn from the envoi to Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, and the combination of Italian and Greek. What he seems to be saying is that he will bring Italian subject matter into Greek (Callimachean/Philitan) form and style in a way that makes any previous attempt to do so outmoded. The next few lines are rife with Callimachean vocabulary. He asks them in what cave they made slender (*tenuastis*) their songs, and what water they drank (a reference back to the pure spring). He wishes farewell to whomever delays Phoebus in arms, drawing a contrast between epic and elegy and also indirectly alluding to the Apollo of the *Aetia*. He says that verses should be finished with fine pumice (*exactus tenui pumice*), and that Cupids (*Amores*, thus also "Love Poetry") ride in triumph with him in a small chariot (*in curru parvi*), thus eliciting the theme of the *militia amoris*. A broad path to the Muses is not granted (*non datur ad Musas currere lata via*). Then there comes a little *recusatio*: many other poets will write annals of Roman history and glorify the Roman imperial project, but Propertius' poetry is

³¹⁷ Hinds (1998) 52-63, esp. 55.

for peacetime and has been brought down from Helicon (*de monte Sororum*). Crowns that are *mollis* and *dura* are contrasted, Propertius asking the Muses for the former, rather than the latter. He calls the Muses Pegasides, which is a learned allusion to the mythical formation of the Hippocrene spring by Pegasus. It is significant here that the source of Alexandrian small-scale poetry was created by a character who belongs to the heroic cycle; epic paved the way for elegy, which draws its strength from the traces of epic even as it rejects it.

Propertius then asks that he receive the honor after death that a jealous crowd withholds from him in life (lines 21-4); this is reminiscent of the invidious Telchines in the *Aetia*. Finally, after a discursus on how Troy and its heroes would not be remembered without Homer and how a poet's glory increases with age, Propertius predicts that he, too, will achieve glory after death (lines 25-38). The god who approves this is Lycian Apollo (line 38), the same Apollo who appeared to Callimachus in the *Aetia*. In this poem, it is almost as if Propertius is trying to outdo Callimachus in his Callimacheanism.³¹⁸

Poem 3.2 opens with the notion that Propertius writes the kind of poetry he does because it pleases his girlfriend:

*Carminis interea nostri redeamus in orbem,
gaudeat ut solito tacta puella sono.* (3.2.1-2)

Meanwhile, let us return to the realm of our kind of song,
so that my girl may rejoice, touched by the customary sound.

³¹⁸ Similar is Hubbard (1974) 76. Hollis (2006) 11-12 writes of poems 3.1-3, "I confess to feeling that Propertius has somewhat overworked his Callimachean motifs . . . Propertius' Helicon seems too much cluttered with poetic symbols."

This should remind us of poems 1.7 and 1.9, where Propertius tells Ponticus to write the kind of poetry that will please his object of desire. Getting the girl is not the only purpose here, though; all three of these poems, 1.7, 1.9, and 3.2, also emphasize the fame Propertius will acquire from writing this kind of poetry. The emphasis in all these poems on the reception of Propertius' poetry by young lovers reinforces the idea that he has chosen this type of poetry because that is how he can best get *fama/κλέος* in the Augustan milieu. He casts an ironic glance at himself by undercutting the notion that he does it all for love.

I have already enumerated the Callimachean elements of poem 3.3; what remains is to discuss the ironic underpinnings of the poem. Ennius is an important figure in this poem.³¹⁹ He is usually taken to signify epic, and he does, but this image needs to be complicated. Ennius is known for having an inspirational dream (a Hesiodic and then Callimachean motif) in which he received the spirit of Homer.³²⁰ In poem 3.3, Propertius is having his own inspirational dream, so clearly this tradition is being evoked. Ennius represents an epic poet whose inspiration (*ingenium*) is mediated by the trappings of a Hesiodic experience. Propertius, even when he is dreaming of writing epic, cannot conceive of writing in that genre without blending it with Hellenistic elements. As Nethercut points out, at the end of the poem, when Calliope anoints the poet with water from Philetas' spring, that water comes from the same "Gorgonean pool" that the doves of lines 31-2 drink from. In other words, it comes from Hippocrene. The doves

³¹⁹ Butler and Barber ad loc. point out that lines 7-12 "outline the theme of Ennius' *Annals*."

³²⁰ Skutsch (1985) 8, 371 suggests that Callimachean influence can be seen in Ennius' dream and in the proem of Book 1 and possibly of Book 7. Ziegler (1934) 21-7 sees Ennius' combination of mythological and historical material as a feature of Hellenistic epic.

themselves have bills that are *punica*, “crimson,” but also reminding us of Ennius’ account of the Punic Wars. “This,” Nethercut argues, “makes it clear that we can expect the poet to write jointly of situations suited for carefully-spun, erotic verse, and of more heroic themes.”³²¹ At the end of the poem, Ennius remains a valid model for Propertius. The difference which Apollo urges upon the elegist is one of form. Only a small part of the doves, their beaks, is epic. They drink from the same water as Ennius (ultimately, all poetic *ingenium* goes back to the Homeric source), but they (and Propertius) are not out in the open at Helicon drinking from the *flumen*; they are inside a grotto (*spelunca*) drinking from what is described at line 32 as a *lacus*, and at 51 as a *fons*. Likewise, in 3.1.5, Propertius had asked Callimachus and Philetas in which cave (*antro*) they had made their songs delicate (*tenuastis*). The grotto in 3.3 has little gems affixed to it, symbolizing the style of the small, finely-wrought poem, and timbrels hang from hollow pumice (*hic erat affixis viridis spelunca lapillis, pendebantque cavis tympana pumicibus*, 27-8), reminding us of the pumice that polishes a poem until it is *tenuis* (3.1.8).³²² The spring inside the grotto is a contained and Callimachean space, which comes from giving a certain form to the waters flowing from the more sprawling space of Homeric epic.

The tension or anxiety over epic is felt nowhere more strongly than in the transition from 3.3 to 3.4. In the last line of 3.3, Calliope wets Propertius’ lips with the water of Philetas. Then, the first three words of 3.4 are *arma deus Caesar*. It does not get heavier or more epic than these three words piled next to each other. In fact, as Nethercut shows, Propertius is here capping the start of the *Aeneid*, opening with *arma*

³²¹ Nethercut (1970) 392-3; quote on 392.

³²² Cf. Catullus c. 1.1-2: *Cui dono lepidum novum libellum arida modo pumica exolitum?*

but replacing *virum* with *deus*.³²³ The poem actually fits very well after 3.3, as a meditation on what it means to have one oar on land and one on sea in practice. It begins like a triumph poem, celebrating the boundaries of empire (again, it should be noticed that Augustus' more problematic victories are left unmentioned).³²⁴ There is a parodic twist at the end, however, when Propertius wishes to witness a Caesarian triumph and read the titles of the captured towns – while reclining on his mistress' breast (13-16). Propertius does not want to *participate* in the imperial project – that would mean getting out into the middle of the sea with poets like Vergil – rather, he wants to view it from an elegiac vantage point, from the outside looking in. In this poem, Caesar represents the sea, Propertius' girlfriend the shore to which he clings.

Scholars have noted the contrast between 3.4 and 3.5,³²⁵ particularly in the opening lines:

Arma deus Caesar... (3.4.1)

Pacis Amor deus est... (3.5.1)

The repetition of *deus* and similarity of sounds in *arma* and *amor* link these opening phrases. Line 3.5.2 is an extremely skillfully wrought little *recusatio*: *stant mihi cum domina proelia dura mea* (“harsh battles with my mistress are enough for me”). The assonance and word order in *domina proelia dura mea* visually illustrate the mixing up of battles and mistress and almost apply *dura* to both *domina* and *proelia* (of course, vowel

³²³ Nethercut (1970) 394.

³²⁴ In contrast, Boucher (1965) 114-18 reads poems 2.10 and 3.4 as expressing pride in the glory of imperialism.

³²⁵ Hubbard (1974) 81; Boucher (1965) 137. Boucher reconciles his view that 3.4 is a positive statement on the spread of empire by arguing that Propertius writes what is simultaneously an homage to the princeps and Roman imperialism and a personal refusal to engage in *militia*.

length forbids this, but the way the words look on the page allows us to flirt with the possibility momentarily). We have already seen that *durus/dura* is a poetically charged word with slippery generic signification. Sometimes it applies to the elegiac mistress, and other times it marks out epic writing. Here, Propertius has mixed the two – battle and mistress – to make an ironic statement about his participation (or lack thereof) in public life.

He does the same thing a bit further in the poem, when he says that because of emotions, “we are tossed far out into the sea by the wind and seek an enemy and join new arms with arms” (*nunc maris in tantum vento iactamur et hostem quaerimus atque armis nectimus arma nova*, 11-12). He is here referring to the greed that causes imperialism, but the same thing could be said about Propertius’ perpetual desire to write something epic. 3.5 is, at its heart, a poem about Propertius’ poetic choices and his plans for future writing. The central and longest portion of the poem describes how the poet is happy to have spent his youth cultivating Helicon (again, we see Propertius’ flexibility in his reception of the Hesiodic tradition), and that in his older years he will turn to didactic poetry. References to *arma* surround this central portion. They represent the great temptation of Propertius’ career against which he must fight: he can write other kinds of poetry besides love elegy, now that he is older, but he cannot allow his emotions to let him get swept out to sea.

Poems 3.4 and 3.5 both evoke the *militia amoris* through their contrast of public military service and the private relationship between the poet and his mistress. Gale has analyzed how this topos sets up a certain tension by simultaneously accepting and

rejecting the social value of *militia*. That is, in order to reject the public life, the elegiac poet must acknowledge that system as a viable alternative to his choices.³²⁶ If we recognize this tension, we will no longer see poems like 3.4 as distinctly pro- or anti-Augustan.³²⁷ Gale states of another such poem, 2.7, in words that could equally apply to 2.10 or 3.4-5:

the poem sets up a series of oppositions – between poetry and war, between love and respectability, between the ‘elegiac lifestyle’ and Augustan ideology – which it then proceeds to undermine and collapse in various ways. In the end, the individual reader may choose to interpret the poem as pro-Augustan or as anti-Augustan; but in either case, the possibility of an ironic sub-text still persists.³²⁸

Compare Gale’s statement with these words by Kennedy:

. . . what as abstracts are logically opposite by the process of definition which sets them off against each other, can co-exist within discourse without contradiction, as ‘war’ (its meaning ideologically determined) and ‘peace’ (its meaning also ideologically determined) do in the ideology which generated the power and position of Augustus.

The meaning of *pax* (and ‘peace’) is in part constituted by the process of contestation over what it is to mean. That is the politics of language. The politicising question (‘What practices are getting called by the word *pax*, by whom and in whose interests?’) directs us towards seeing language as a dynamic process, with signifiers having a fluid and changeable relation to signifieds . . .³²⁹

³²⁶ Gale (1997) 79.

³²⁷ Kennedy’s (1992) discussion is important here. He demonstrates how the terms “Augustan” and anti-Augustan” are functions of a text’s reception, rather than inherent, objective feature within the text itself (41). As he further argues (writing of Ovid ideas that apply equally to all Augustan poetry): “Readings of Ovid (then and now) as ‘oppositional’ or ‘subversive’ may have had the unforeseen consequence for those involved of consolidating the position of ‘Augustus’ . . . Modern reading practices mimic their [ancient reading practices] categories and interpretative procedures and assumptions, and in so doing reproduce and perpetuate the notion of the special, unique individuality of Augustus” (46).

³²⁸ Gale (1997) 78.

³²⁹ Kennedy (1992) 40, 47.

It is in this “ironic subtext” and play with the incongruity of certain public ideologies with the demands of his poetry that we find parody in Propertius’ texts. Parody has the power to change how we receive another text. In Propertius, one of those “texts” is Augustus. Augustus had a particular self-image that he wanted to project, which included a social agenda. Propertius simultaneously acknowledges the potency of this image and turns it on its head by suggesting that too much emphasis on what is public, martial, and epic will only drive people (and literature) toward the other extreme, toward the private, peaceful, and Callimachean. At the same time, Propertius needs Augustus not just as someone who brings a peace to Rome that allows poets to devote their lives to writing Callimachean poetry. He also needs him as an epic figure, as a foil for his own persona, in order for his poetry to work. Propertius does not reject epic outright in his poetry; he has a complicated relationship with epic in which he wants what epic can give him – *fama* – but knows that any attempt to write epic will end in failure. This is not so much because he lacks the ability to write about grand subjects, as it is because he cannot write without adopting an ironic stance toward himself, his literary models, and the society around him. His solution is to blend epic elements into his elegies, but in a way that points out the incongruities of his situation.

II. Gigantomachy and the Propertian *Recusatio*

Poem 2.1 contains one of the most famous references to the Gigantomachy in Augustan poetry.³³⁰ This *recusatio* begins with the poet's disavowal of divine inspiration; his girl creates his talent (*ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*, 4). The next two lines may be a reference to Philitas of Cos. Keith has suggested that the lines "if she goes out gleaming in Coan silk,³³¹ this whole volume will be made from a Coan garment" (5-6) have the metapoetic meaning that his *scripta puella*, that is, his poetry, will be adorned in a Philetan manner.³³² In lines 13-16, he plays with conventions of both genre and gender.³³³ He and Cynthia compose long *Iliads* when they make love, and "whatever she's done or whatever she's said, from nothing the greatest history is born" (*seu quidquid fecit sive est quodcumque locuta, maxima de nihilo nascitur historia*, 15-16). What Cynthia says and does, as well as her and Propertius' lovemaking, are precisely the *materia* of the poet's elegiac works, not the stuff of epic, yet Propertius has playfully merged his elegiac *materia* with grander forms.³³⁴ As Miller discusses, "[t]he overt inversion of genres in this passage is paralleled by an implicit inversion of genders as the epic *hostis* metamorphoses into the *puella* of the poet's *militia amoris*." The use of

³³⁰ Traditionally, there has been debate over whether poem 2.1 is one or two poems: see Wiggers (1977) and Camps ad 2.1, both of whom argue for one unified poem. This issue does not affect my discussion of the poem here.

³³¹ There is a crux in the text here: *sive illam Cois fulgentem incedere †cogis†*. The basic meaning, however, is clear.

³³² Keith (2008) 77. It is nearly certain that Philetas' poetry was compared to Coan draperies already by Callimachus: Hollis (2006) 104 n. 34 and 105.

³³³ Zetzel (1983) 92 goes through the ways in which lines 1-16 evoke a myriad of genres, including "Propertius' own elegy, through encomiastic poetry, lyric, etiological poetry, epic, and history. Propertius is suggesting that love elegy, even though it is a self-absorbed and private poetic form, can be a vehicle for expressing the concerns of far grander forms."

³³⁴ Cf. Wiggers (1977) 336: "His tone is playful (note the pun on *ilia* in *Iliadas*), but beneath the levity lies the realization that he must convince his readers that elegy is a worthy substitute for more serious work. The idea of epic surfaces here as a joke, but soon comes to dominate the aesthetic assumptions of the poem."

durus/dura to describe both epic and Cynthia reinforces this idea.³³⁵ Later in the poem, after stating that everyone sees to his own area of expertise, the poet remarks that, “we, on the other hand, engage in battles in a narrow bed” (*nos contra angusto versamus proelia lecto*, 45). Here, *angusto* recalls another use of the same word to describe the breast of Callimachus (line 40) within the poet’s *recusatio* in the lines quoted at the head of this chapter, while *versamus proelia* evokes the *militia amoris*.³³⁶ Propertius and his art (represented by Cynthia) are engaged in an erotic action, described in epic terms, in narrow confines; read metapoetically, this line indicates that Propertius is playfully yet passionately mixing up elements of the two genres within the elegiac form. He is at once the hero of his epic and the poet-lover of his elegy, *durus* and *mollis*, male and female. The incongruity of these seemingly binary opposites creates parody.³³⁷ This parody is focused not on mocking epic, but on pointing out the ironies of the position Propertius finds himself in. He is in a world in which those who are in power are calling out for epic, but have created a world more suited to elegy. The realities of Roman life are such that the focus is shifting to one’s private experience over a public career. There is not opportunity for most Roman men to be the hero of epic or history; Augustus has taken over all of this role. The only experience someone like Propertius has with the martial world is to have seen the devastating effects of civil war. How is such a poet to write martial poetry, when the only experience of *militia* available to him is the *militia amoris*?

³³⁵ Miller (2004) 138; on *durus* and *mollis* as gendered terms, see Kennedy (1993) 31-3 and Wiggers (1977) 341.

³³⁶ Wiggers (1977) 338.

³³⁷ Cf. Wiggers (1977) 338: “In 47-48 we find the reasoned arguments of the formal *recusatio* giving way rather suddenly to mock-heroic language and rhetorical flourish.”

How is he to respond to Augustus' challenge to write heroic epic, when the world created by Augustus is telling him to turn inward to his own thoughts and experiences?

To adopt a Callimachean pose is not really an acknowledgment that Augustus has made the world safe for Callimacheanism. It is a rebellious, deeply ironic act that points to the problem with trying to import Callimachean values into Rome. At Rome, public involvement and military accomplishment were valued and even defining elements of a man's worth in a way that they were not for Callimachus in Ptolemaic Egypt. Callimachus had no desire to live his life or write his poetry in an epic manner. He was content to let Ptolemy be the locus of irony, the one who espouses Callimachean values while needing to act in an epic manner at times. With Propertius' poetry, that irony has expanded to include the poet's self-image. Propertius exaggerates his Callimacheanism precisely because it is an element of parody on a socio-political level.³³⁸ While Augustus was trying to maintain an image of tradition as he actually did something quite new and revolutionary, Propertius responded by outwardly maintaining a revolutionary attitude via methods which were in fact quite traditional – Callimacheanism, a means of responding to the presence of epic forces since the days of Hesiod.

Following the play with significations of genre and gender in lines 1-16 comes the first explicit *recusatio* and the first mention of Gigantomachy in the poem.

³³⁸ Boucher (1965) 32 points out that the elegiac ideal does not offer a solution to the social crisis to which it responds: "il se limite à un art de vivre qui en fait suppose l'acceptation implicite d'autres conditions." In other words, it presupposes the social conditions that it creates and ignores real public crises. I disagree in part with this formulation; elegy may not offer a viable solution to the problems of the real world, but it is deeply engaged with that world. The creation of the alternative lifestyle of the elegist implicitly acknowledges the potency of Augustan realities outside of the world of the text. As Kennedy (1992) discusses, readings of texts as "subversive" or "oppositional" can actually lend legitimacy to the status quo.

*quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,
ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus,
non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo
impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter* (2.1.17-20)

But if the fates had given me such great talent, Maecenas, that I could lead heroic bands into arms, I would not sing of the Titans, nor of Ossa piled on Olympus to make Pelion a path to heaven

The apodosis of this unreal condition informs us that even if he could write epic, he would not choose the standard fare. This is the passage which, above all others, proves that the Gigantomachy motif represents one of the Greek epic *topoi par excellence*.

There are five categories of subject matter that Propertius lists as standard epic topics: Gigantomachy (the Titans and Aloads), the epic cycle (Thebes), Homer/Troy, Greek history (Xerxes), and Roman history (Romulus and Remus, Carthage, the Cimbri and Marius). Instead, he would write about Caesar and Maecenas (25-6).³³⁹ These other topics are what people would expect an epic poet to write about, among them the Gigantomachy. The implication behind the *recusatio* is that it is no longer possible to write a traditional epic, because the tradition has been redefined as Augustus and his retinue.³⁴⁰ Augustus and Maecenas are the new Achilles and Patroclus, or Theseus and Pirithous (2.1.37-8).

There follows a little catalogue, a sample of the sort of things Propertius would write about from Augustus' career. It all fits into eight compact lines filled with place names and allusive in style; it has a Hellenistic, not epic, quality. As often as he would

³³⁹ Gurval (1995) 171-4 demonstrates that all the mythological and historical examples provided by Propertius in lines 19-24 have to do with defeat, destruction, and/or excessive arrogance. Cairns (2006) 264 suggests that they all point to *hybris*, while Wiggers (1977) 336 sees an emphasis on internal vs. external war.

³⁴⁰ My thanks go to Tara Welch for this observation.

sing of these things, he says, his Muse would weave (*contexeret*) Maecenas among them (35) as the faithful friend of Caesar. The focus here on the companions of great heroes, rather than on the heroes themselves, is a twist on the epic material that has a Hellenistic flavor.

Unlike the catalogue in 2.10, where Propertius focuses on foreign campaigns, here he takes on key battles in Octavian's civil war: Mutina, Philippi, the defeat of Sextus Pompey, Perusia, and Actium. These allusions held painful associations certainly for Propertius, and likely for Augustus as well.³⁴¹ What is the difference between 2.1 and 2.10, that the poet would choose such different subject matter? In 2.10, Propertius parodies a triumph poem, and emphasizes the kind of epic he *would like* to write. To portray Augustus as a conqueror of foreign barbarians would be to tap into that Hellenistic tradition of portraying the Successor Kings' victories over barbarians as a kind of Gigantomachy, the routing of the forces of chaos. Callimachus, as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, acknowledges that this kind of action is what allows his poetry to exist; he plays with the irony of this situation, but in the end gives the reader the sense that the aims and values of poet and ruler are the same. Propertius cannot portray Augustus as giant-slayer because he is a much more complicated figure. His civil war victims cannot be represented as victories over barbarians (like the Gauls fought off by Ptolemy), and they absolutely cannot be represented as victories over other Romans. I submit that when Propertius states that he is incapable of writing a Gigantomachy, he does not mean that he is incapable of writing epic (this is not really

³⁴¹ Camps ad 2.1.27-9 makes this observation, but does not attach any significance to it, unlike Gurval (1995) 175-9, who sees Actium as here "presented as the culmination of the death and destruction of civil war" (179).

part of Callimacheanism), but rather that, should he write about Augustus, he would not be able to write a Gigantomachy. That is, he cannot fashion Augustus as a giant-slaying Jupiter. Augustus is not the embodiment of tradition that he would like people to think he is; he is something quite new. The emphasis on Maecenas supports this reading; we might summarize the *recusatio* as follows: “If I were to write an epic, I wouldn’t use Gigantomachy to do it, because Augustus does not fit into that tradition. If I were to write such a work, I would end up writing about civil war, and be at risk of turning Augustus into a tyrannical Jupiter or even a Giant. It is not Augustus’ military achievements that make *my* poetry possible, it is his patronage – so I would have to write about Maecenas.”³⁴²

There is a second reference to Gigantomachy in this poem, the lines with which I opened this chapter:

*sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.* (2.1.39-42)

But neither does Callimachus thunder forth the Phlegraeian clashes of Jupiter and Enceladus from his narrow breast, nor is my heart fit to establish Caesar’s name among his Phrygian ancestors in hardy verse.

Here we have several important features of Propertius’ reception of Callimachus. First of all, he explicitly states that the Gigantomachy is an inappropriate topic for Callimachus (and, it follows, for Callimachean writers). Secondly, we have the word *intonet*. This is

³⁴² Wiggers (1977) 337 makes an important additional point, that “the analogy between the Roman statesmen and the Greek heroes has a double function: it legitimizes Augustus and Maecenas as epic figures, but it also reminds us of the personal sacrifices which are an inevitable part of heroism.” In fact, I would add, Patroclus and Pirithous both perish because of the choices made by the heroes they had befriended.

most likely a reference to Callimachus' own *Aetia* prologue, in which he says "to thunder is for Zeus."³⁴³ The verb is something which Jupiter would do; thus, if the poet were to "thunder forth the Phlegraean clashes," he would in some sense be taking part in the Gigantomachy in his reenactment of it. For Propertius, there is much less separation between poet and poetic *materia* than there is for the epic poet, who is able to distance himself from the action within his poetry. Thirdly, the words *angusto* and *duro* are Callimachean buzzwords. We have seen how Propertius plays with the generic signification of *durus* in poem 1.7; here it is restored to its association with epic poetry. Finally, line 42 is probably a reference to the *Aeneid*.

As I suggested in the introduction to this chapter, these lines do not so much mean that Propertius cannot write epic of any kind, but rather that he refuses to write bad epic. He also refuses to participate in the project of blending Augustus into traditional Greek and Roman mythology and imagery, as the *Aeneid* does (though, not unproblematically). He takes this stance by refiguring epic as another kind of mistress, unattainable and harsh, yet beloved. He responds to Augustus' attempt to epicize himself by elegizing epic. This is a way of pointing to the discrepancies and tensions in the attempt to be both new and traditional at the same time.

What does it mean, then, that Cynthia finds fault with *levis puellas* and disapproves of the *Iliad* because of Helen (2.1.49-50)? *Levis* is of course one of the qualities of elegy as opposed to epic, and the *puellae* of elegy have been shown often to stand for the poetry itself. Helen, as a woman given over to erotic passion, is the most elegiac part of the *Iliad*. On one level, this passage just means that Cynthia is hard to

³⁴³ Hollis (2006) 110.

please, and that even Propertius' love poetry is not guaranteed to be successful in keeping her to himself. On another level, Cynthia may here be a stand-in for society and the expectations that are placed upon a poet of Maecenas' circle. It is as if his one mistress (Cynthia) hates his other mistress (Helen); in other words, it is a metaliterary way of saying that elegy and epic are in tension with each other because they are kindred spirits. Even Cynthia, as beloved and as poetry, is drawn to epic, and does not want elegy infringing on her epic. On the final level of meaning here, Cynthia stands for the beloved, the desired object, in this case, to have a name for his poetry and to be someone in Maecenas' circle. That desire creates a tension with his elegiac bent - thus his wish at the end of the poem for Maecenas to remember him when he is gone. Maecenas is to say over Propertius' grave, "A harsh girl was the end of this wretched man" (*huic misero fatum dura puella fuit*, 78). Now the girl/elegy has become *dura* again; she is the judgment leveled against the poet and his work, and an epic element infringing upon his elegy. We have already seen that Cynthia has a taste for the *durus* and disapproves of the *levis*; in the end, it is Propertius' anxiety over his poetics and their reception that make him *miser* because he can never quite attain his desired objective. This is the curse of self-conscious poetry, that, like Narcissus looking in the pool, its self-involvement causes the beloved ever to be just out of reach.

Poem 3.9 begins with a request to Maecenas not to send Propertius out on the sea of writing (*quid me scribendi tam vastum mittis in aequor*, 3.9.3). Large sails, he continues, do not suit his raft: *non sunt apta meae grandia vela rati* (3.9.4). Thus the imagery of 3.1 is carried through to this poem, too. Further in the poem he refuses to

write about Thebes or Troy, equating this with Maecenas' decision not to pursue military glory (though he will find glory through humbler means as Caesar's companion).

Propertius says that it is enough for him "to have pleased among the little books of Callimachus and to have sung in your meters, Coan poet [i.e. Philetas]" (*inter Callimachi sat erit placuisse libellos et cecinisse modis, Coe poeta, tuis*, 3.9.43-4). He contrasts this type of writing two lines later with the Gigantomachy:

*te duce vel Iovis arma canam caeloque minantem
Coeum et Phlegraeis Eurymedonta iugis;*³⁴⁴ (3.9.47-8)

Under your leadership I would even sing of the arms of Jupiter and Coeus threatening heaven and Eurymedon on the Phlegraean ridges

This passage is most easily read as an *adynaton*; Maecenas will never be a general, and Propertius will never write a Gigantomachy. As Hubbard points out, however, the items which follow are not necessarily things that would be impossible for Propertius to put into elegiacs.³⁴⁵ In fact, they include two subjects that Propertius does write about: the early days of the Palatine and Romulus and Remus (4.1) and Antony (3.11). If we look at each of these poems, however, we find that they are not without their own sets of difficulties.

3.11 contains an allusive reference to the Gigantomachy. The poem begins with a catalogue of women who have used their erotic powers to overpower men, including Medea, Penthesilea, Omphale, Semiramis, and even the various loves of Jupiter. This leads him to mention Cleopatra and to curse the land of Egypt, where a triple triumph

³⁴⁴ Coeus is named as a giant in the *Georgics* (1.279), and a child of Gaia in Hesiod (*Theog.* 134). Eurymedon is named as the king of the Giants in the *Odyssey* (7.58). There is a textual problem with Eurymedon's name: the manuscripts have Oromedon, which is otherwise unknown. The context makes it clear, however, that Propertius is talking about a giant.

³⁴⁵ Hubbard (1974) 114.

was taken away from Pompey; “your death would have been better on the Phlegraean field,” he tells Pompey (*issent Phlegraeo melius tibi funera campo*, 37). This reference operates on three levels. On the first, it means that Pompey would have been better off had he died when he was sick in Naples in 50 BCE.³⁴⁶ Secondly, it is a political metaphor. The second option Propertius lists as a better fate for Pompey is to have surrendered to Caesar (38). The Gigantomachy was often used as a political metaphor by Hellenistic writers, who compared Zeus’ defeat of the forces of chaos to the Hellenistic rulers’ defeat of the barbarian nations. This motif was picked up by the Augustan writers and used to celebrate the exploits of Augustus. Thus, the Phlegraean fields may have a political resonance here, though it is unclear – perhaps intentionally – whether Caesar or Pompey is intended as Jupiter. Finally, since the Gigantomachy has clearly been shown to have metapoetic import in Propertius’ poetry, there is support for such a reading here as well. Propertius is telling Pompey that it would have been better for him to die in a Gigantomachy, that is, in a traditional epic poem. “Epic” may be used somewhat loosely here, since it includes in this instance the *Theogony*. Propertius has done a Hesiodic thing in this poem by writing a brief catalogue of women. This is an appropriate place to write about Antony, one of the original “Mad Lovers” of Rome, as Johnson calls him,³⁴⁷ but not of Pompey, for whom Propertius seems to have more respect. It is more noble to die in the *Theogony* than in the *Catalogue of Women*, and Propertius seems almost to be apologizing to Pompey for including him in this anti-heroic treatment of the events at Actium.

³⁴⁶ So Camps ad loc.

³⁴⁷ Johnson (2009) 120.

In 4.1 Propertius begins by listing all his new themes, which include Rome's early history. This is where he calls himself the Roman Callimachus (line 64), and indeed he seems to be attempting to write a Roman *Aetia*. He is stopped in his tracks, however, by Horos. He calls him *vage*, "wanderer" (71); Propertius is wandering from his true Callimachean purpose, and Apollo is opposed to it (73). He tells him to write elegies (*at tu finge elegos, fallax opus (haec tua castra!)*, 135) and to engage in the *militia amoris* (137-8). This is, again, Propertius being more Callimachean than Callimachus: if Apollo comes once to Callimachus to set him on the right path, he has to keep coming back to Propertius to push him back onto a path which is narrower than that of the poet of the *Aetia*, or of Ovid's *Fasti*.

Returning to 3.9, then, we see now that Propertius may be able to write about subjects like the Palatine and Antony, but that they are problematic for him. He cannot write epic, and every time he tries to make his elegy loftier, Apollo shows up wagging his finger. What we see in 3.9 is part of a pattern which runs throughout the Propertian corpus.³⁴⁸ Epic, like the beloved, is at once alluring, seductive, and unattainable, because the poet has been precluded from living in the world of epic. And so his response is to go to the other extreme, to out-Callimachus Callimachus in his rejection of epic. *Te duce* therefore means that Propertius would happily write even the most extreme and traditional epic if he had the proper patronage to do it. He did not, as it happened, live in that kind of a world.

³⁴⁸ I therefore read 3.9 as a continuation of the same line of thought begun in 2.1; *contra* is Ross (1975) 127, who reads 3.9 as effectively "a palinode" to 2.1: "Propertius' poetry will remain *inter Callimachi libellos* even though (as he clearly suggests in the next lines) he accepts the challenge of Augustan themes."

III. Passing Through the *Gigantea Ora*: Poem 1.20

In 1.20 Propertius offers advice to another poet, Gallus. Whether or not this Gallus is the famous elegiac poet is a contested point.³⁴⁹ I read him as the poet, Cornelius Gallus; throughout the *Monobiblos* Propertius has frequently addressed other figures (Bassus and Ponticus) whom we know to have been poets. The highly metaliterary nature of poem 1.20, and in particular its connections to Vergil, *Eclogue* 10, also support this reading.³⁵⁰

This poem contains the first reference in the Propertian corpus to the Gigantomachy, and the only such reference in the *Monobiblos*. Propertius is listing places where Gallus should be careful if he wanders, lest he lose his beloved as Hercules lost Hylas:

*hunc tu, sive leges umbrosae flumina silvae,
sive Aniena tuos tinxerit unda pedes,
sive Gigantea spatiabere litoris ora,
sive ubicumque vago fluminis hospitio,
Nympharum semper cupidus defende rapinas
(non minor Ausoniis est amor Adryasin)
ne tibi si[n]t duros montes et frigida saxa,
Galle, neque expertos semper adire lacus...* (1.20.7-14)

This boy you, whether you wind your way along the streams of a shady wood, or dip your feet in Anio's water, or walk about the shores of the Giants' coast, or wherever [you might dally] in the wandering hospitality of a stream, always defend against the greedy plunders of Nymphs (Ausonian Nymphs have no less love [i.e. than Greek ones]), lest you always be wandering harsh mountains and frigid rocks, Gallus, and untried pools...

³⁴⁹ For the view that Gallus is not the poet, see Fedeli (1981) 235-6, Syme (1978) 99-103 and Hubbard (1974) 25. Scholars who do see Gallus the poet in this poem include Keith (2008) 8, 66; Pincus (2004) 168-72; Petrain (2000) 414-16; King (1980); Ross (1975) 83.

³⁵⁰ I recognize that there are complexities in this issue; it is hard to reconcile all the references to a Gallus in the *Monobiblos* (1.5, 10, 13, 20, 21, 22) as one person, let alone as the historical poet. For a summary of the issues involved, see Janan (2001) 33-4.

Though the Phlegraean fields are sometime located in Thrace, most commonly they are situated in Italy, in the area around Baiae.³⁵¹ Given the emphasis on Italian geography here (the Anio and Ausonian nymphs), clearly the Italian setting is meant; it also makes sense that, given the characterization of Baiae as a place given over to licentious pleasure-seekers, Gallus would have to worry about losing his love there.³⁵² Given the Hellenistic nature of this poem, Propertius' use of gigantomachic imagery elsewhere as a stand-in for epic poetry, and the explicit comparison of Roman to Greek nymphs at line 12, this passage is ripe for metapoetic interpretation.

What we see here is a catalogue of literary *loci*: the shady grove, different kinds of water, and the Phlegraean fields. Gallus is wandering in and out of elegy, ever in danger of losing his literary touchstone, signified by his beloved (just as “Cynthia” often stands for Propertius' literary *oeuvre*). Gallus seems to have a slight proclivity for epic, dipping his feet into a river (the Callimachean symbol of the post-Homeric epic writer) and wandering about the fields of the Giants.³⁵³ Gallus may stick to Roman *loci*, that is, Roman topics, but he does not realize that Roman topics, if written in a Greek style, can be just as dangerous as the Greek originals. He may as well be writing a Gigantomachy. If Gallus does manage to lose his beloved, he will wander endlessly in search of him, through *duros montes* and *frigida saxa*, symbols of epic writing in the harsh and frigid style, *and* by constantly approaching untried pools (*neque expertos...lacus*), which are

³⁵¹ Richardson (1977) and Camps (1961) ad loc.

³⁵² See Camps in his introduction to the poem.

³⁵³ Hodge and Buttimore (1977) 204 make the interesting suggestion about lines 7-10 that “the hexameters cast him [Gallus] in a more active, heroic role, as a Hercules-figure, while the pentameters see him more as a Hylas.”

writings in a new style. In other words, Gallus, like Ponticus in 1.7 and 1.9, because of his infatuation, does not understand how to walk that fine line between admiration and criticism of epic models, the line the Callimachean poet takes by breathing new life into his models through his elegiac poetry.

We might compare the wanderings of Propertius' Gallus to the wandering of Vergil's Gallus in *Eclogue* 10 (who is explicitly identified with the famous poet) and of Propertius' Melanion in poem 1.1. In the *Eclogue*, Apollo appears to Gallus, who has lost his love, and admonishes him,

*'Galle, quid insanis?' inquit. 'tua cura Lycoris
perque nives alium perque horrida castra secuta est.'* (Ecl. 10.22-3)

"Gallus, what madness is this?" he asked. "Your love Lycoris through snow and bristling camps has followed another."

Gallus replies that he is forced to leave the soft Arcadian meadows to pursue his love, metapoetically meaning that he is leaving the world of the *Eclogues* behind to follow his beloved into the world of epic.³⁵⁴

*hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori,
hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer aevo.
nunc insanus amor duri me Martis in armis
tela inter media atque adversos detinet hostis.
tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere tantum)
Alpinas, a! dura nives et frigora Rheni
me sine sola vides. a, te ne frigora laedant!
a, tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!* (Ecl. 10.42-9)

Here are ice-cold springs, here soft meadows, Lycoris,
here a grove; here I would be consumed by eternity itself with you.
As it is, insane love detains me among the arms of harsh Mars,
in the mist of weapons and hostile enemies.

³⁵⁴ King (1980) 224 points out that Callimachus *Ep.* 28 Pf. suggests "a correspondence between 'epic' and a wandering lover."

You are far from your homeland (it's too much to believe),
Ah! you see Alpine snows and the harsh chills of the Rhine,
alone, without me. Ah, let the cold not harm you!
Ah, may the rough ice not cut your tender feet!

In the remainder of his soliloquy, Gallus laments that he will wander over field, forest,
and cliff to find his beloved, frequently emphasizing the chill (*frigora*) of these locations.

In Propertius 1.1, Milanion endures similar *labores* in pursuit of his girl:

*Milanion nullos fugiendo, Tulle, labores
saevitiam durae contudit Iasidos.
nam modo Partheniis amens errabat in antris,
ibat et hirsutas ille videre feras;
ille etiam Hylaei percussus vulnere rami
saucius Arcadiis rupibus ingemuit.* (Prop. 1.1.9-14)

By eschewing no labors, Tullus, Milanion
broke down the fierceness of the hard daughter of Iasus.
For now he would wander crazed in Parthenian caves,
then go confront shaggy beasts;
he even, struck with a wound from Hylaeus' club,
injured, groaned his way over the Arcadian cliffs.

There are many points of comparison between these two poems.³⁵⁵ Both describe a lover
madly searching over all kinds of harsh terrains for his beloved. They undertake an epic
quest for an elegiac purpose. In Vergil, Lycoris seems to have deserted the poet for
military camps; read in a metaliterary way, if Lycoris is also a *scripta puella* who
represent Gallus' poetry, his elegies have turned to epic subjects. The emphasis in this
poem on cold (*nives, frigora, glacies*) and harsh (*dura*) places is a comment on style; he
is afraid that the frigid, harsh style of epic will harm the delicate (metrical) feet of his
elegy. Both of these poems, *Eclogue* 10 and Propertius 1.1, are explicitly concerned with

³⁵⁵ This resonance has been noted by Clausen ([1994] 2003) 291 and Ross (1975) 90-1. There are many other echoes of *Eclogue* 10 in the *Monobiblos*, including Propertius' wish that Cynthia's feet not be harmed by the snow in 1.8.5-8 and the image of the poet carving his love on trees in 1.18.19-21; this latter image comes from Callim. *Aet.* fr. 73 Harder (=Pf.).

the implications of genre and writing within the *genus tenue*. By repeating the wanderings of Milanion and Vergil's Gallus, the Gallus of Propertius 1.20 is also journeying to discover how to find his elegiac muse. Hylas is chosen as a well-worn topic which had been used in both epic (the *Argonautica*) and bucolic/pastoral poetry (Theocritus and Vergil).³⁵⁶ Propertius warns Gallus that he must tread a fine line in his treatment of these models. The poem is itself the lesson: how to use parody to write while simultaneously looking backwards to the Greek tradition and forwards to a new, Roman elegiac aesthetic. Hylas getting pulled into a spring and therefore lost to his lover, Hercules, is symbolic of the danger of elegiac material becoming so self-conscious and self-involved that it literally gets pulled into Callimachus' spring; it becomes overly Callimachean and in the process loses its own voice, vainly crying out to the world of tradition that is represented by Hercules, by epic, and by the political regime of Augustan Rome for which Propertius refuses to write. On the other hand, neither does one want to be a Hercules (or a Ponticus), searching for his poetic material and unable to find it because he is just too epic, too traditional. Propertius tells Gallus at the end of the poem, "warned by these [two characters], you will preserve your *amores*" (51); all the meanings of *amores* seem to be present here: beloved, love affair, and love poetry.

Many scholars have noted an element of parody in this poem. Hubbard demonstrates that the style of this poem is different from the rest of the *Monobiblos*; it has a more Alexandrian style. She believes that the poem suggests pastiche.³⁵⁷ Similarly, Hodge and Buttimore call it "the least controlled, sometimes needlessly

³⁵⁶ Cf. *Geo.* 3.6: *Cui non dictus Hylas puer . . . ?*

³⁵⁷ Hubbard (1974) 37-40.

obscure, over-luxuriant, awkward” poem in the *Monobiblos*. “It is close to a poetic exercise, almost a parody of his distinctive style, an interesting, revealing poem rather than a successful one.”³⁵⁸ They describe the language around the departure of the Boreads as “so elevated as to seem like parody.”³⁵⁹ Bramble, in discussing Propertius’ Theocritean model, notes the “comic incongruity” in the relationship of Herakles and Hylas,³⁶⁰ while Curran writes that the warning at the end “takes the form of a splendidly exaggerated comparison of the lovers with Hercules and Hylas, climaxing in the mock-heroic injunction to save the boy from ‘ravishing’ by ‘Ausonian Adryads’ and himself from grief of Herculean proportions [1-16].”³⁶¹ McCarthy points to the “humor of the comparison between myth and reality in 20 – consider the incongruity of Herculean grief on the beaches of an Italian resort . . .”³⁶² Finally, Petrain understands the whole poem as “an elaborate jest very much in keeping with its light-hearted, humorous tone.”³⁶³

The parody of this poem develops out of Gallus’ effort to relieve his amatory pain through epic poetry. This is what Gallus says he will do in *Eclogue* 10 quoted above, and Propertius is making such a project ridiculous. Gallus is very much like Ponticus in poem 1.9. Calling Baiae the *Gigantea ora* highlights Gallus’ mistaken poetics: rather than fully live in the elegiac world of Rome’s fashionable districts, Gallus wanders through Greek epic spaces. To be a *Callimachus Romanus* (and do it well) does not

³⁵⁸ Hodge and Buttimore (1977) 202.

³⁵⁹ Hodge and Buttimore (1977) 207.

³⁶⁰ Bramble (1974) 84.

³⁶¹ Curran (1964) 282.

³⁶² McCarthy (1981) 206.

³⁶³ Petrain (2000) 418.

mean turning every reference to Roman realities into an obscure Greek allusion;³⁶⁴ this produces an overblown, odd sounding, incongruous style that will cause the poet ultimately to lose the heart of the matter, his subject matter (his Hylas or Ὕλη).³⁶⁵ Hylas is no better: he becomes a Narcissus so obsessed with the spring of Callimacheanism that he is enveloped by it.³⁶⁶ Incongruous pair as they are, Herakles and Hylas are made for each other. Each seeks what he is striving after by becoming a stereotype of Greek poetic tropes, whether that be Herculean epic or Callimacheanism. Neither will work in the strange new world Propertius finds himself in, unless he can find a way to bring the two together in a Roman landscape. Ultimately, this may be an impossible task, as Propertius recognizes. Parody therefore becomes a means of processing this impossibility, of embracing the inevitable failure of becoming the Roman Callimachus or the Roman Homer. This impasse can only be managed through irony and parody, through a poetics of failure and loss, of perpetual striving after the elusive, allusive beloved.

³⁶⁴ Cf. Curran (1964) 290: "References to water are used to set off the real Italy against the landscape of Greek legend . . ."

³⁶⁵ Curran (1964) first notices this punning etymology, and Petrain (2000) discusses its metapoetic import.

³⁶⁶ For Hylas as Narcissus, see McCarthy (1981) 198, Bramble (1974) 90-91 and Curran (1964) 292.

Chapter Six

Refashioning Literary History: Ovid and the Poetics of Gigantomachy

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated that both Gigantomachy and Callimacheanism are used in new ways in the poetry of Propertius. Faced with a radically new socio-political climate, Propertius' only option is to turn to irony and parody as he exaggerates his Callimachean stance and turns epic into a new kind of beloved object, seductive and appealing yet ultimately unattainable. His inability to write Gigantomachy is not an indication of inferior poetic ability, but rather the impossibility of writing about Augustan Rome in traditional, Greek ways.

Ovid is similar to Propertius in that he too gives us some of the clearest views into his poetic project and authorial persona through his references to the Gigantomachy. He is unlike Propertius, however, in that he transforms the anxious irony of Propertian elegy into full-fledged parody which, completely free of anxiety, engages the tradition not to set himself within it, but rather to update it and carry it into a poetic future defined by Ovid's own poetics. In other words, rather than defining himself in relation to the tradition, he defines the tradition in relation to himself. Through references to the Gigantomachy in *Amores* 2.1, *Metamorphoses* 1 and 5, and *Tristia* 2, we can observe how Ovid accomplishes this highest function of parody.

I. *Amores* 2.1 and the Poetics of Daring

The Gigantomachy appears in Ovid's erotic works in one place, *Amores* 2.1. The poet tells us that he was in the process of writing a Gigantomachy when Corinna suddenly slams the door shut. To gain entry, he is forced to switch from writing epic to composing elegiac verses that will win over the girl.

*ausus eram, memini, caelestia dicere bella
centimanumque Gygen (et satis oris erat),
cum male se Tellus ulta est ingestaque Olympo
ardua devexum Pelion Ossa tulit.
in manibus nimbos et cum Iove fulmen habebam,
quo bene pro caelo mitteret ille suo.
clausit amica fores: ego cum Iove fulmen omisi;
excidit ingenio Iuppiter ipse meo.
Iuppiter, ignoscas: nil me tua tela iuvabant;
clausa tuo maius ianua fulmen habet.
blanditias elegosque leves, mea tela, resumpsi:
mollierunt duras lenia verba fores. (11-22)*

I had dared, I remember, to tell of wars in heaven
and hundred-handed Gyges (and that was enough of a mouthful),
when Earth wickedly avenged herself
and steep Ossa piled up on Olympus bore sloping Pelion.
I had clouds and thunderbolt in my hands with Jupiter,
which he would cast well on behalf of his heaven.
My girlfriend closed the doors: I dropped the thunderbolt with Jupiter;
Jupiter himself departed from my mind.
Jupiter, forgive me: your bolts weren't doing me any good;
the closed door has a greater bolt than yours.
I took up again flattering and light elegies, my weapons:
mild words softened the hard doors.

This is a programmatic beginning to the second book, and elements of parody are apparent from the first lines. In line 3, Ovid claims divine mandate for his work (*hoc quoque iussit Amor*, "Love ordered this too"); this phrase points back to *Amores* 1.1 with its parodic choice of Amor as the commanding deity rather than the typical Apollo or

Muse.³⁶⁷ The remainder of this line, *procul hinc, procul este, severi* (“stay far, far away from here, you serious people”) recalls several other passages, including *Aeneid* 6.258 (*procul, o procul este, profani*, “stay far, far away, you uninitiated”), Callimachus *Hymn* 2.2 (ἐκὰς, ἐκὰς ὅστις ἀλιτρός, “far, far away, whoever is sinful”), and somewhat more loosely, as Booth has argued, with the opening stanza of Horace 3.1³⁶⁸

These allusions should alert us to the parodic function of this poem. Linda Hutcheon defines parody as “a form of repetition with ironic critical distance, marking difference rather than similarity.” It consistently exhibits a “tension between the potentially conservative effect of repetition and the potentially revolutionary impact of difference...”³⁶⁹ Ovid marks his difference from his predecessors with the word *severi*.³⁷⁰ Their lines were written in contexts stressing purity of both ritual and audience. Ironically, Ovid also writes for the pure, as he tells us in the following lines that he would like to be read by a maiden (*virgo*, 5) and an “unskilled boy touched by unfamiliar love” (*rudis ignoto tactus amore puer*, 6), but this is a kind of naïve, prurient purity which is waiting to be corrupted by Ovid’s text; it is a far cry from the ritual purity of the other

³⁶⁷Keith (1992b) 331; Luck (1970) 464; Wimmel (1960) 303.

³⁶⁸Booth (1991) 24. I would suggest that the parallel references to giants in Horace 3.1.7 and *Amores* 2.1.11-14 strengthen her claim. Boyd (1997) 191 says that these references show that Ovid is preparing for his role as *vates*. I disagree; I think he is distancing himself from the *vates* role by parodying these lines. Similarly, I disagree with Luck (1970) 469, who says that these lines, more than simply parody, express a “religion of love.” One might also compare these lines with *A.A.* 1.31-4 and Catullus *c.* 5.2.

³⁶⁹Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) xii.

³⁷⁰Giangrande (1981) 35-6 demonstrates how this example of *paraprosdokia* is a Hellenistic technique. Throughout his article, he systematically goes through *Am.* 2.1 and shows how it is thoroughly imbued with Hellenistic topoi (with variations).

texts, which is to be preserved.³⁷¹ Thus Hutcheon's description, "repetition with ironic critical distance," is appropriate.

Other points of parody may be detected as well. The Callimachean passage is a hymn to Apollo, and the Sybil, who is inspired by the same god, speaks the Vergilian line. Thus, immediately after Ovid has stated that he has been ordered by Amor, reminding us that his inspirational deity is not, in fact, Apollo, he alludes to that god, but in a completely contrasting manner from the original citations. There are further points of parodic contact with the god's epiphany in the Callimachean passage: in the hymn, bolts give way so that a door may open to reveal the god (lines 6-7), while in Ovid's poem a door slams shut, held by a mighty bolt, to keep the mistress concealed.

Another contrast is his treatment of the Gigantomachy from Horace's in *Odes* 3.1.5-8:

*Regum timendorum in proprios greges,
reges in ipsos imperium est Iovis,
clari Giganteo triumpho,
cuncta supercilio moventis.*

As kings have power over their own flocks,
power over the kings themselves belongs to Jove,
famous for his triumph over the Giants,
he moves the world with his eyebrow.

³⁷¹ Horace also says that he is singing for maidens and boys (*virginibus puerisque canto*, 3.1.4). Booth (1991) 24 characterizes the similarities between the Ovidian line and Horace 3.1.1-4 as "a certain mischievous parallelism" but makes the important distinction that "Horace is about to dilate on the need for moral purity, not on the ups-and-downs of sexual love." Cahoon (1985) 30, who takes a harsher view of the poet's persona in this poem than I, thinks it should "shock and upset us" that Ovid intends this poem for a virgin in love for the first time: "Now elegy is to corrupt innocence and to turn genuine and spontaneous affection into a calculating and manipulative game. The meaning of *nequitia* seems now not to be the levity of 1.1 but rather a wantonness that exploits sexual innocence." I tend to see the serious message of the poem as being about poetic choices, not sexual ones.

This is a celebratory and regal presentation of the Gigantomachy.³⁷² The ordinary mortal is presented as being twice removed from Jupiter, who has absolute power and can do anything with ease. By contrast, as we shall see, Ovid in his poem is so entwined with his Jupiter that he has his thunderbolts *in manibus* (15), yet Jupiter is useless in moving the one thing Ovid wants moved: his mistress' door.

To introduce his Gigantomachy, Ovid tells us that he “had dared to write of wars in heaven” (*ausus eram, meminī, caelestia dicere bella*, 11).³⁷³ This is a significant departure from the standard *recusatio*. Ovid does not say that he was about to write about celestial wars, when a god stopped him, or that he would if he could but lacks the ability; he says that he had in fact written them. He underscores the boldness of this act by using the verb “had dared.” As we saw hinted at in Pindar’s poetry, to write a Gigantomachy, the myth of the ultimate act of daring *hybris*, is itself a daring, even hubristic act,³⁷⁴ since it means contending with the old generation of epic writers and having to show the gods at their most vulnerable or at their greatest, depending on how the battle is shaped.

Several other works of Augustan elegy contextualize the language of daring in connection with the Gigantomachy. Book 3 of Manilius’ *Astronomica* begins with a

³⁷² It may also be a political reference. Allegorical, political uses of the Gigantomachy, especially those in the *Aeneid*, have been thoroughly treated by Hardie (1986) and are beyond the scope of this dissertation. For a good example of a poem which makes use of the Gigantomachy for political reasons, see Horace 3.4, of which Hardie writes, “The levels of interpretation at which Horace works are the political (assault on the ruler of the world), the religious . . . and the moral . . .” (88). The emphasis is on the contrast between the monstrous and chaotic, represented by the giants and standing for Cleopatra’s army at Actium, and the forces of order, represented by the Olympians and standing for Octavian’s army (Hardie 98-99). Because it does not seem particularly metapoetic, however, I have not included it in my discussion. Another such example is Tibullus 2.5.9-10.

³⁷³ Wimmel (1960) 304 suggests that *ausus eram* alludes to *visus eram* in Prop. 3.1.1, thus situating the Ovidian passage more firmly in a Callimachean context. I find this an attractive but highly speculative and unproveable conjecture.

³⁷⁴ Cf. McKeown (1998) 11.

typical *recusatio* in which the poet lists the topics he will not write about; the first is the Gigantomachy, followed by Troy, Jason and Medea, the Second Messenian War, the Theban Cycle, the Persian War, Alexander the Great, and the founding and early history of Rome (3.1-26). The opening lines are:

*In nova surgentem maioraque viribus **ausum**
nec per inaccessos metuentem vadere saltus
ducite, Pierides. vestros extendere fines
conor et ignotos in carmina ducere census.
non ego in excidium caeli nascentia bella,
fulminis et flammis partus in matre sepultos...* (1-6)

Lead me, Pierian Muses, who, rising to topics new and greater than my strength,
have dared to walk without fear through unapproachable glades.
I am attempting to extend your boundaries
and bring unknown riches into song.
I will not [sing of] wars conceived for the destruction of heaven
and offspring buried in their mother by the flames of the thunderbolt . . .

The first four lines have clear Callimachean echoes (*nova*, *inaccessos*, *ignotos*) as well as echoes of the opening of the *Metamorphoses*, especially the first two words (*in nova*).³⁷⁵

Manilius uses the word *maiora* (a Callimachean buzzword) to describe his current undertaking, and strikingly claims to be fearless while acknowledging that he may not be up to the task. Comparing this to the opening of the *Ciris* from the *Appendix Vergiliana* may shed some light on what Manilius is doing here, so I will turn to that work briefly before continuing my discussion of the *Astronomica*.

³⁷⁵ Manilius' dates are not known, but this work is generally believed to have been written after (and under the influence of) the *Metamorphoses*, perhaps around the end of Augustus' reign. One of the reasons for dating his work after the *Metamorphoses* is that his hexameters show Ovidian influence. For a full discussion of the problem of dating Manilius' work and the evidence for various dates, see Volk (2009) 137-61; one problem is that it is often unclear whether the "Caesar" in the text is Augustus or Tiberius, and if the former, whether he is alive or not. Volk (2009) 161, 260 believes Manilius wrote the *Astronomica* under Augustus, and dates it roughly to the second decade of the first century CE. We do have a *terminus post quem* for the work from 1.896-903, a reference to the defeat of the Roman army at the Teutoberg Forest in 9 CE.

The first hundred lines of the *Ciris* are also a *recusatio*; in it, the poet compares writing poetry to weaving and gives a small ephrasis of Minerva's peplos (29-41). On the peplos are depictions of the Gigantomachy and of Typhon piling Pelion onto Ossa. He had previously said that his *mens* had thought of seeking other loftier topics, such as astronomy (*ad...sidera...ascendere*, 7-8), writing that his mind "dared to ascend the hill pleasing to few" (*et placitum paucis ausa est ascendere collem*, 8). In his description of Typhon, he uses the phrase *conscendens aethera* to describe the attempt upon Olympus (33). Thus, he both connects the Gigantomachy with lofty subjects he will not treat, and creates a verbal link between his mind daring to take on such a topic and Typhon trying to assault Olympus.³⁷⁶

In both these works, then, a connection is drawn between the attempt to write a hexameter work on astronomy and the image of giants trying to reach and conquer Olympus.³⁷⁷ The Gigantomachy is particularly appropriate here, as it literally involves wars over control of the heavens and a hubristic attempt to reach the skies. It also evokes the idea of overreaching. Volk has dubbed this idea that the "blasphemous attitude of the giants" can be used as a metaphor for a "blasphemous human attitude, especially in discussion of ontology and cosmology," the "intellectual gigantomachy."³⁷⁸ As Volk has demonstrated, this motif can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle,³⁷⁹ "the gigantomachy

³⁷⁶ Cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 1.307-8: *sic petitur caelum, non ut ferat Ossan Olympus / summaque Peliacus sidera tangat apex*, with discussion in Barchiesi (1997) 179-80.

³⁷⁷ Clay (1997) 191 makes a similar statement about Lucretius 5.110-121. For a positive reading of the Gigantomachy in Lucretius, see Volk (2001) 107-8; she argues that Lucretius uses the myth to describe people who use their reason to attack "heaven" (= *religio*). "By casting Epicurus as a giant, Lucretius stresses the radical nature of the philosophy he wishes to propagate, while at the same time enhancing the sublimity of his poetry with what is, after all, also a grand epic motif" (108).

³⁷⁸ Volk (2001) 103; for her discussion of "intellectual gigantomachy," see pages 102-14.

³⁷⁹ Volk (2001) 103-5.

could generally be used as an image for any mistaken cosmological approach.”³⁸⁰ This is what Manilius says he will not do in the lines quoted above. The problem is that at other times Manilius does write about Gigantomachy, and in a seemingly positive way. The celebration of human *ratio* at 1.97-112 is one such place, in which we learn that reason “scales heaven” (*caelum ascendit*, 97) and “has snatched from Jupiter his thunderbolt and strength of thundering” (*eripuitque Iovi fulmen viresque tonandi*, 104), both of which activities are giant-like.³⁸¹ Volk reconciles these differing uses of the “intellectual gigantomachy” by suggesting that Manilius sometimes adopts a cosmic, top-down perspective, and at others a human, “bottom-to-top” one.³⁸² I would add to her conclusions that there is a difference between writing a Gigantomachy and alluding to the topos. The former is much more daring than the latter. Furthermore, in the passage celebrating *ratio* (quoted above), Manilius is not discussing writing, but the activities of the student of astronomy; Gigantomachy is used as a metaphor for a certain activity, which Manilius then writes about, but he is not writing a Gigantomachy. When he talks about the act of writing, as in 3.1-26, that is when he rejects the Gigantomachy; he will not write a narrative of the myth, but will merely allude to it (as one must in order to reject the topic, ironically).

Another Augustan passage in which daring, giants, and (anti-) Callimachean language figure together is Grattius 61-66:

³⁸⁰ Volk (2001) 105.

³⁸¹ Volk (2001) 111; (2009) 257. She compares 4.392, where the task of Manilius’ student is described as scaling heaven (*scandere caelum*), and 2.127-8 (*capto potitur mundo*).

³⁸² Volk (2009) 264. This is a partial revision of her thesis in Volk (2001) that Manilius is simply drawing on different literary images, sometimes in a way that is self-contradictory, in an effort to have his cake and eat it too.

*magnum opus et tangi, nisi cura vincitur, impar.
 nonne vides veterum quos prodit fabula rerum,
 semideos – illi aggeribus temptare superbis
 <caeli> iter et matres ausi <a>trectare deorum-
 quam magna mercede meo sine munere silvas
 impulerint?*³⁸³

[The chase] is a **mighty task** and too much to undertake, unless it is mastered with care. Don't you see the demigods, whom the **account of ancient matters** records – the ones who **dared** with their arrogant piles to attempt a path to heaven and to assault the mothers of the gods – at how great a price they struck at the woods without the benefit of my teaching?

First, Grattius says that the chase (which may also stand for his work) is a *magnum opus*; in other words, it is not a Callimachean work. It must, however, be handled with *cura* – one might even say with *ars*³⁸⁴ – which shows that this is an epic topic which nonetheless requires Callimachean refinement. Then, he turns to the ultimate *fabula veterum rerum* (that is, grand epic topic) for an example of a daring action (*ausi*). By asserting that the giants could have benefitted from his advice, he is placing himself within the epic tradition and perhaps even making the bold suggestion that older poets could have learned something from reading his work; specifically, they could have learned how to proceed with more *cura*, thereby not destroying their material (*silva*) with their presumption.

³⁸³ I have printed the text as it appears in Enk (1976), except that I removed a comma after *veterum*. The correct reading of line 64 is disputed. Codex A has † *iret freta* † *matres ausit trectare deorum*, and some have seen this line as a reference to the Argonauts (Enk (1976) *ad loc.*). The preceding line, however, seems to be a clear reference to the Aloadae, and therefore it makes sense that line 64 would refer to the giants. Several scholars have suggested that the first word should refer to the sky in some way (*caeli iter et* Enk, *aethera tum* Heinsius, *aethera et a* Haupt, *sidera et ad* Vollmer, *aethera matronasque ausi* Grotius). In the middle of the line, the proposed emendations are *ausi attrectare* Heinsius, as printed by Enk, and *ausi tractare* Sannaz. In either case, the sense here is clear.

³⁸⁴ Cf. the emphasis on *artes* in lines 1-23. Enk places lines 61-66 immediately after line 23.

Returning to Ovid, we see that while he is employing a topos in connecting the verb *audeo* with the Gigantomachy, his explicit assertion that he is capable of and willing to write one, and in fact was writing a narrative of the Gigantomachy, is jarring. With typical Ovidian brashness, he sets all anxiety about *hybris* aside and states, “with Jove I had clouds and thunderbolt in my hands” (*in manibus nimbos et cum Iove fulmen habebam*, 15). As McKeown points out, Ovid is here “exploiting the convention whereby the poet is said to be doing what he describes being done . . . By thus adopting a Jupiter-like role, Ovid was transgressing Callimachean principles . . .”³⁸⁵ Unlike Manilius in his more daring moments, Ovid had not dared to be a giant – he had dared to be Jupiter.³⁸⁶ Then the door literally slams shut and the poet is forced to drop his thunderbolts (*clausit amica fores: ego cum Iove fulmen omisi*, 17). The anaphora of *cum Iove fulmen*, in the same *sedes*, just two lines down, very cleverly highlights this sudden change,³⁸⁷ while also making the reader think at first that Jove has also let go of his thunderbolt, as opposed to Ovid letting go of the thunderbolt and Jove as topics. It is as if Jupiter himself becomes epic or elegiac at Ovid’s whim.

Ovid then reveals that the only reason he abandoned his epic project was sheer utility.³⁸⁸ “Your weapons weren’t helping me at all,” he says to Jupiter, for “a greater

³⁸⁵ McKeown (1998) 14.

³⁸⁶ There may be a level on which Ovid is vaguely playing with Vergil’s allusion to Octavian supplanting Jupiter in the *Georgics* (see below).

³⁸⁷ So also Boyd (1997) 192, who further points out that “each of the four hexameters [in lines 15-18] end in a trisyllabic verb” . . . all the repetition in this passage “effects an explicit parallel between Jupiter’s cosmic struggle and the *militia amoris* of the lover-poet.”

³⁸⁸ As Booth (1991) 25 points out, there are “no Callimachean ideals or Augustan diffidence here” to keep Ovid from writing epic. On the surface, this is true; I do think that those tensions are at work, however, and can be found in the poet’s references to Propertius and other poets. Cahoon (1985) suggests that Ovid used the Gigantomachy to create a contrast “not only between epic and elegy or between real warfare and the *militia amoris*; the important difference between the two subjects is that the Gigantomachy . . . has to do

bolt (*maius...fulmen*) than yours holds the locked doors” (20). There is also great irony in Ovid’s use of *maius* here; Jupiter’s weapons are the greatest weapons, and the Gigantomachy was the greatest epic battle; yet these very same weapons have been trumped by another *fulmen* wielded by a girl.³⁸⁹ By exerting such sportive control over his use of Jupiter and his weapons, Ovid both inserts himself as directly as possible into the epic tradition and maintains the critical distance from it that is necessary for parody to exist. Jupiter thunders or fades away at Ovid’s whim as he manipulates tradition.³⁹⁰

The parodic effect of this passage can be seen even more clearly when it is contrasted with Propertius 2.1.³⁹¹ It cannot be a coincidence that both poets choose to open their second books with programmatic poems featuring the Gigantomachy; certainly Ovid was aware of the Propertian poem and is responding to it here. Propertius had used the Gigantomachy to illustrate the sort of work he could not write, while Ovid asserts his ability to write whatever he finds useful.³⁹² The utility theme first appears in elegy in Tibullus:

with the distant, mythological, Greek, and divine in order to emphasize by contrast the daily, contemporary, Roman, and human realities of the *Amores*. Thus, while at the same time admitting that earthly love is a literally lower subject than *caelestia bella*, he implies . . . that it is also more immediately useful and universally relevant to human beings.”

³⁸⁹ While there is much I disagree with in Otis (1938), I think he is correct that “the contrast between Jupiter and Corinna is the sort of comic incongruity [Ovid] likes . . .” (201 n. 47).

³⁹⁰ More parody can be seen in Ovid’s inversion of the “many mouths” topos at line 12: *et satis oris erat*. We would expect a *recusatio* to contain a statement such as, “I would write a Gigantomachy if I had one hundred mouths” *vel sim.*, but Ovid says, “I wrote a Gigantomachy, and that was enough of a mouth.” Hinds (1998), in discussing this topos, states that “[o]ne of the ways in which an epicist marks his genre as the highest and most ambitious is to stress his incomplete capacity to control it” (94; for a detailed discussion of the topos, see pp 34-42). Ovid, on the contrary, asserts total control over it. For the double entendre in this line (“enough grandiloquence/ enough cheekiness”), see Booth (1991) 100 and McKeown (1989) 12.

³⁹¹ This correspondance is also noted by Wimmel (1960) 304, Otis (1938) 200-1, and Neumann (1919) 47-50.

³⁹² Cf. Morgan (1977) 16. She calls the passage a direct contradiction of Propertius and says that Ovid includes it to reject both the “lack of talent” motif in Propertius and Propertius’ “parochialism about elegy.”

ite procul, Musae, si non prodestis amanti (2.4.15)

Go away, Muses, if you're not useful to a lover

ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero (2.5.19)

I seek easy access to my mistress through my songs

Propertius had then stressed the utility of elegy in erotic pursuits in his poems to Ponticus (1.7 and 1.9).³⁹³ Ovid has taken on the role of both Ponticus and Propertius, of the *praeceptor amoris* who *also* knows how to write epic. This point is made in *Amores* 1.1 as well, and comparison with this poem may help us to hear the parody in 2.1.

As in *Amores* 2.1, Ovid announces that he *was* setting out on an epic project.³⁹⁴

This is not a *recusatio* in the sense of a *refusal* to write epic so much as a playful and temporary setting aside of a very possible epic project. He begins his collection with an explicit parody of Vergil: *Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam* (1).³⁹⁵ Here the indicator of parody is repetition with a difference, and the parodic sense is continued in the playful description of Cupid stealing a metrical foot from Ovid, thereby transforming his poetry into elegy. Significantly, the word that changes the metrical pattern from possibly being hexameter to definitely being elegiac couplets is *conveniente* (2). This is

Cf. Booth (1991) 25. I understand Ovid as creatively misreading the “lack of talent” topos in Propertius in a particular way so as to criticize the notion that elegists can only write elegy.

³⁹³ Cf. Maltby (2006) 170; McKeown (1998) 2; Booth (1991) 25; Morgan (1977) 12-14, 17 n. 23. A fair bit of work has been done on the presence of Propertius in Ovid's poetry. The foundational study is Neumann (1919); more recently, see Morgan (1977) and Keith (1992b) with further references. As the first edition of the *Amores* was probably finished around 15 BC and Propertius I-III were likely published between 28 and 22 BC, it is safe to assume that Ovid knew Propertius I-III when he was writing the *Amores*; see Morgan (1977) 5 with n. 17-18. Du Quesnay (1973) 6 asserts that every poem of the *Amores* contains Propertian echoes in some way.

³⁹⁴ Barsby (1973) 41 n.1 suggests based on *Am.* 2.1 that the epic Ovid was writing was a Gigantomachy. There is no evidence for this.

³⁹⁵ This has been noticed by many; for a recent treatment see Keith (1992b) 328 with further references. McKeown (1989) 12 makes the delightful observation that “[d]espite Ovid's reference here to serious poetry in a grand style, the couplet is as light as it could be, being completely dactylic . . .”

metapoetically ironic, since this is the word that describes how his *materia* for his epic “fit” his hexameter meter.³⁹⁶ Perhaps more importantly, however, it is also frequently taken as an allusion to Propertius 2.1.41-2 (*nec mea **conveniunt** duro praecordia versu / Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos*).³⁹⁷ Thus Ovid is defining himself over against Propertius, mainly by separating himself from his *materia*. Propertius presents a persona in which his life, his *materia*, and his capabilities are all inextricably linked; he lives and breathes elegy, as he literally has an elegiac constitution. He and his *puella* are the embodiments of his writing. Ovid refuses to present himself in this way; he does not have to make himself “fit” the material. He has a poetic and generic freedom that Propertius does not. Thus the only aspect he is “fitting” to his *materia* in this line is meter. Ovid is not making a superficial statement, however, but a deeply self-conscious one, and one which gets at the heart of what it means (or perhaps what it need not mean) to have an elegiac persona.

Ovid’s characterization of Cupid is more complex than it may seem at first glance. He usurps the position of deities who have more clout than he does, Apollo and the Muses.³⁹⁸ In lines 13-14, Ovid asks Cupid, *sunt tibi magna, puer, nimiumque potentia regna: cur opus affectas ambitiose novum* (“you have great and all too powerful kingdoms, boy; why are you ambitiously striving after a new task?”). *Affectas* is a significant word. While it can simply mean “strive for, pursue,” and is the word usually

³⁹⁶ Keith (1992b) 337 and Barchiesi (1997) 23 have also noticed this.

³⁹⁷ See Keith (1992b) 338 with further references. She further notes that *duro...versu* corresponds to Ovid’s *gravi numero*, and that “Propertius seems as generically self-conscious as Ovid will be in his placement of an adjective alluding to epic composition in the hexameter of his elegiac couplet.”

³⁹⁸ Morgan (1977) 9-10 sees Prop. 3.3 as the Propertian equivalent to this poem, since there the poet meets an authority figure. Ovid introduces humor by making Cupid the authority figure.

used of pursuing a political office, it often carries a pejorative sense (to strive after something hubristically)³⁹⁹ and in post-Augustan literature even comes to have the meaning “to imitate a thing faultily or with dissimulation, to affect, feign.”⁴⁰⁰ Vergil had used it of Octavian at the end of the *Georgics*:

..... *Caesar dum magnus ad altum
fulminat Euphraten bello victorque volentis
per populos dat iura viamque **adfectat** Olympo.* (4.560-62)

..... while great Caesar thunders in war
by the deep Euphrates and victorious gives laws
throughout the willing peoples and **strives for** a path to Olympus.

This passage has been taken to suggest that Octavian is supplanting Jupiter.⁴⁰¹ Caesar is *magnus*, suggesting that he is both one of the great gods and a topic for “big” poetry, epic. He thunders, reminding us of Callimachus’ injunction, βροντᾶν οὐκ ἐμόν, ἀλλὰ Διός (“thundering is not for me, but for Zeus,” *Aet.* fr. 1.20). In fact, this is the first time this verb is used of a personal subject other than Jupiter.⁴⁰² The whole passage is ambiguous and has gigantomachic overtones, since *viam adfectat Olympo* is literally what the Aloadae did, and striving to supplant Jupiter is what all the giants did.⁴⁰³ Furthermore, Caesar thunders by the Euphrates, the river which is generally accepted as the symbol of uncallimachean poetry in Callimachus’ *Hymn to Apollo* (line 108).⁴⁰⁴

³⁹⁹ Cf. *Am.* 3.8.50-2, where Ovid discusses humanity’s fall from the Golden Age: *cur non et caelum, tertia regna, petis? / qua licet, adfectas caelum quoque – templa Quirinus, / Liber et Alcides et modo Caesar habent.*

⁴⁰⁰ Lewis and Short s.v. *affecto*.

⁴⁰¹ See Thomas (1988a) 240.

⁴⁰² Thomas (1988a) 240.

⁴⁰³ Nappa (2005) 216-18 interprets the passage as deliberately ambiguous. If Octavian has learned anything from this didactic poem, he could join the gods in a positive (or “optimistic”) sense; if not, his attempts to reach Olympus will be as vain and hubristic as those of the giants (a “pessimistic” reading). The choice is Octavian’s.

⁴⁰⁴ Williams ad Callim. *Hymn* 2.108.

Therefore, in *Amores* 1.1, when Cupid “ambitiously strives after” a new task, especially with the word *regna* just before this line, this too activates these gigantomachic overtones. This is not to say that Ovid was necessarily thinking of the Gigantomachy when he wrote these lines, but that he is evoking the themes of overreaching and attempting to usurp someone else’s position.⁴⁰⁵ The irony is that Cupid is trying to get Ovid to write in a smaller, “lesser” genre, elegy, rather than the more ambitious project for which he was striving. In line 18 Ovid says that Cupid “diminishes my strength” (*attenuat nervos . . . meos*). *Attenuo* or *tenuo*, like the related adjective *tenuis*, are Callimachean words when applied to poetry, corresponding to the Greek λεπτός. Keith has demonstrated how Ovid’s use of *attenuat* is paralleled in Propertius 3.1.5-8, a programmatic and clearly Callimachean passage:⁴⁰⁶

*dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro?
 quove pede ingressi? quamve bibistis aquam?
 a valeat, Phoebum quicumque moratur in armis!
 exactus tenui pumice versus eat.*

Tell me, in what cave did you both **refine** your song?
 On what foot did you enter? What water did you drink?
 Ah, farewell, whoever delays Phoebus in arms!
 Let my verse run polished by **fine** pumice.

Thus, Ovid’s Cupid is an elegizing, Callimachean force who ambitiously strives for new kingdoms. The series of *adynata* in lines 7-12, in which the poet suggests that Cupid would have all the gods trade duties, follows this sense of confusion of images. It is

⁴⁰⁵ Habinek (2002) 47 discusses how Cupid’s “victory over Ovid is presented as an illegitimate extension of jurisdiction . . . an instance of political expansionism . . . and a form of sexual dominance . . . Ovid is but the victim of Cupid’s universal ambition . . .”

⁴⁰⁶ Keith (1992b) 338-9.

almost as if Ovid's Cupid represents *die Kreuzung der Gattungen*.⁴⁰⁷ He is a fitting choice for Ovid's inspirational deity, since he is himself a mixed figure; while often playful and "small" because he is a child, there also stands behind him the figure of Eros, a mighty and very powerful force; indeed, in 1.1 Ovid acknowledges Cupid's *potentia regna* (13) and the power of his arrows.⁴⁰⁸

Once the arrow hits the poet, he immediately becomes a Propertius-like character. The first words he speaks are *me miserum*, recalling Propertius 1.1.1., and he says, *uror*, "I burn," a typical statement for a Propertian elegiac lover.⁴⁰⁹ Ovid is not finished playing with us, however, since the next words, *et in vacuo pectore regnat Amor* ("and Love rules in an empty heart") are ambiguous. They could mean that Love now rules in a previously empty heart, or that Love (i.e. Elegy) rules in a still empty heart.⁴¹⁰ It is not clear whether Ovid has found his elegiac *materia* or is going to make it up. A clue may

⁴⁰⁷ Boyd (1997) 14 points out that "much of Roman Callimacheanism is focused precisely" on a "tension between generic freedom and the conscious violation of generic boundaries."

⁴⁰⁸ Keith (1992b) 340 suggests that Ovid's choice of deity may be an allusion to Propertius 1.1.1-4 (340):

Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,
 contactum nullis ante **cupidinibus**.
 tum mihi constantis deiecit lumina fastus
 et caput impositis pressit **Amor** pedibus

Cynthia first caught wretched me with her eyes,
 infected before by no desires.
 Then Love cast down my ever haughty look
 and pressed my head with feet imposed.

She points out that Ovid may have seen a metrical pun in *impositis ... pedibus* (341).

⁴⁰⁹ For *me miserum* as a reference to Propertius, see Boyd (1997) 148; Keith (1992b) 343; McKeown (1989) 27. Hinds (1998) 29-34 discusses the phrase as both a specific allusion to Propertius and as it is generally situated in Roman culture. For references to love as fire, see Barsby (1973) 43 n. 6; McKeown (1989) 27.

⁴¹⁰ I would add to Keith's discussion of the intertext between this poem and Prop. 1.1.1-4 (see n. 41) that in the line *et in vacuo pectore regnat Amor* Ovid is alluding to Propertius' *contactum nullis ante cupidinibus*. The critical differences are that in Ovid, while Amor has control over Ovid's poetic choices, the all-important word *ante* is missing. Ovid leaves the relationship between how he felt before and how he feels after his encounter with Cupid vague, leaving us to wonder if there has been any change at all.

be offered by the final words of the poem: they are not passionate words of love written to a mistress. They are all about his meter, which is how he started his poem. He has not changed his approach to his poetry through the course of this poem; it ends much as it began. *Me miserum* and *uror* should therefore be read, I suggest, as markers of the genre he is now writing in, not as true indicators of how he (or his persona) actually feels.

Amores 1.1 therefore serves as an important background text for poem 2.1 in several ways. It establishes the relationship between Ovid and Propertius as one in which the repetition serves to highlight the differences between the two and create a critical distance between the two poets' personas, to use Hutcheon's terms.⁴¹¹ In other words, it creates parody. But the purpose of this parody is not to ridicule or shut the door on Propertian elegy.⁴¹² The situation is far more complicated than that. First of all, we have here what Hutcheon refers to as "double-directed irony," which means that the irony is directed at both the self and the other and the difference between the two; in recent discussions of parody, double-directed parody is stressed rather than the ridicule of the anterior text.⁴¹³ Secondly, parody has the power to ensure the continuation and even renewal of the model text. We are given a new way of reading Propertius through the

⁴¹¹ Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) xii.

⁴¹² Many critics are trying to get away from the use of parody to understand Ovid's poetry. For example, Hinds (1987b) 13 states that "Ovid does not 'debunk' or 'parody' Propertius. Rather, he interprets him, he alters his emphases . . ." Cf. Myers (1999) 191: "Ovid's relationship to his literary past is seen now in terms of a truly intertextual dialogue involving reinterpretation of his tradition rather than reductive parody" and Barchiesi (2001) 39. Similarly, Boyd (1997) 12 has proposed "to disentangle Ovidian humor and irony from parody. To do so, it will be essential that we move beyond the generic fallacy and recognize that Ovid is not only little interested in sounding the deathknell of elegy but, if anything, eager to reinvigorate it . . ." I do not disagree with any of these scholars; I am using a different understanding of how parody works. Parody is often a force of renewal and can give new life to that which has become commonplace: cf. Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 115. It is not mockery, but a highly sophisticated form of reception and interpretation that examines the relationship between self and other. Du Quesnay (1973) offers a view of Ovidian parody complementary to my own.

⁴¹³ See Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 31-2.

lens of Ovid's poetry. Drawing on Bakhtin's work, Hutcheon posits that the paradox of parody is

its authorized transgression of norms... The recognition of the inverted world still requires knowledge of the order of the world which it inverts and, in a sense, incorporates. The motivation and the form of the carnivalesque are both derived from authority: the second life of the carnival has meaning only in relation to the official first life . . . Even in mocking, parody reinforces; in formal terms, it inscribes the mocked conventions onto itself, thereby guaranteeing their continued existence."⁴¹⁴

In other words, when Ovid parodies Propertius, he is tacitly acknowledging Propertius' authority as an elegiac poet and is helping to ensure the earlier poet's immortality by continuing his work. He is also proving that the "lighter" genres of poetry can bring immortality no less than the more serious ones by demonstrating Propertius' immortality in his own poetry.⁴¹⁵

A further complication, however, is that Propertius was already parodying the epic tradition in his poem 2.1. Thus, Ovid is not just looking back to Propertius, but is looking back through Propertius and everyone else who had ever written a Gigantomachy all the way back to Hesiod.⁴¹⁶ The Propertian passage is itself double-directed parody, since it points up the discrepancy between the Propertian project and epic material, sometimes quite playfully (as in lines 1-16).⁴¹⁷ Ovid, therefore, is not only responding to

⁴¹⁴ Hutcheon ([1985] 2000) 74-5.

⁴¹⁵ Morgan (1977) 23-24.

⁴¹⁶ This phenomenon is often called a "window reference," for which see Thomas (1999) 130-2; he demonstrates how the alluding author corrects the intermediate model in the process of using it to bring up the version of the ultimate source text.

⁴¹⁷ See the previous chapter for a fuller discussion of this poem and the parody contained within.

the tradition, but is responding to Propertius' response to the tradition.⁴¹⁸ What he finds is a very complicated relationship with Hesiod, and one which does not always mean the same thing, as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter. Where Propertius kept wavering back and forth, sometimes expressing desire to write in the style of the epic Hesiod, but then always finding a reason not to, Ovid simply states, "I dared to do it."⁴¹⁹

I have argued that part of this attitude of Propertius that Ovid is reacting to is the way he fashions epic as another sort of beloved that he simultaneously desires and rejects. Epic is always on his mind and present as a point of comparison in his poetry, yet absent, as he was incapable of producing it. Hardie has proposed that we ought to see in Ovid's poetry a serious examination of the nature of desire, particularly desire in and as absence. He argues that we can see this quality of Ovid's poetry in two of the very traits which people often point to as "symptoms of frivolity and detachment," namely, "the emptiness and unreality of the Ovidian erotic object, and secondly the writtenness of Ovidian scenes and narratives of desire. . ."⁴²⁰ A parodic interpretation does not rule out readings like Hardie's, since an author who is parodying may have a very serious and

⁴¹⁸ As Morgan (1977) 7-8 reminds us, Augustan poets were responding to conflicting pressures to be a *vates* and write "serious, socially significant poetry" and to write "personal, lighter poetry" in the Callimachean style. Ovid is interested in Propertius' "poetic reaction to the various pressures."

⁴¹⁹ Boyd (1997) 8 writes, "From its earliest history we see a tension arising between, on the one hand, the Romans' perception of their culture as heir, *epigonos*, to Greece and so in some sense doomed to a cultural inferiority complex and, on the other hand, compelling evidence to suggest that, on the part of individual writers, this historical situation provides just the impetus necessary for a creative explosion against a traditional backdrop." Propertius feels this tension acutely; Ovid parodies it and manipulates it creatively so as to situate himself as a key player within it. For an example, see Nappa (2002) on how Ovid frequently fashions himself as the model to which Vergil alludes, thus making his text the "tradition" rather than the reception of the tradition.

⁴²⁰ Hardie (2002) 30-31; quote on 31.

engaged purpose.⁴²¹ In the case of *Amores* 2.1, Ovid is indeed writing about the nature of desire as it relates to absence and presence. When Ovid alludes to Callimachus *Hymn* 2 but reverses the imagery (his bolts and doors close), the poet's lack of access to Corinna is thereby contrasted to the epiphany and closeness of the god in the hymn.⁴²² Desire to win over his girl controls his poetic choices. Where the parody comes in, however, is that Ovid, unlike Propertius, maintains that he has the ability to make a choice regarding what kind of poetry he will write. Furthermore, he is not dependent upon literary history in the same way Propertius is. Propertius (or rather, his persona) is filled with Callimachean anxiety, and his relationship to Hesiod is viewed through a Callimachean lens. Ovid, on the other hand, goes straight back to the source, not merely alluding to the Gigantomachy (an act which carries with it the baggage of all who have written Gigantomachies), but writing his own version. At least, this is what he will do when he writes the *Metamorphoses*; in *Amores* 2.1, he is asserting a program.

The parody continues as Ovid tells us how he won back his girl at lines 21-22: *blanditias elegosque leves, mea tela, resumpsi: mollierunt duras lenia verba fores* ("I took up again flattery and light elegies, my weapons: my mild words softened the hard doors"). Here Ovid mixes and plays with epic and elegiac words. His light elegies are weapons, and words soften the hard, that is, epic doors (note also that the words *lenia verba* are in between *duras* and *fores*: his elegiac words are worming their way inside the doors). He continues to speak about how powerful poetry is, capable of casting various

⁴²¹ Therefore I disagree with scholars like Davis and Otis, who read Ovid as parodying the tradition in order to make it ridiculous (Davis (1981) 2462, Otis (1938) 197). On the question of "seriousness" in Ovid's poetry and the history of the now often discounted view that he is not a "serious" poet, see Elliott (1985).

⁴²² See Hardie (2002) 32-5 on the absent presence of the *puella* and her connection with the *praesens deus*.

spells and unlocking doors. Light verses turn out to be a more powerful weapon in his hands than Jove's thunderbolt, while epic will get him nowhere with his girl; he specifically names Achilles, the Atreidae, and Hector, and alludes to Odysseus (who – parodically – does not get a name) as subjects which will do him no good, and bids them farewell:

.....*heroum clara valete
nomina; non apta est gratia vestra mihi!* (35-6)

Farewell, famous names of heroes! Your favor's not fit for me!

In these two lines we see two new things which Ovid does with the elegist's relationship to epic, as contrasted with Propertius: he asserts control over that type of material (he can write it well if he wants to, or he can send it away), and he ascribes *gratia* to it. This word may have several meanings, all of which may be in service here and none of which one would expect a Callimachean poet to use of heroic epic. In one sense, it is equivalent to the Greek χάρις and means pleasantness, charm, loveliness, grace, and so forth. This meaning is the most jarring poetically, as one does not usually associate these qualities with epic heroes. Pindar does not do it; he writes poems full of χάρις.⁴²³ Other possible meanings of *gratia* include service, favor, or kindness or the gratitude or favor shown in exchange for a service rendered. In line 30 Ovid uses the phrase *agere pro* (*quid pro me Atrides alter et alter agent*), which “is used mostly of patrons acting on behalf of their clients, especially in court . . . By an easy extension of the standard Roman *recusatio*, whereby the poet declines to attempt an ambitious poem in honour of a contemporary

⁴²³ So far as I have been able to discover, the only mortal individual who has χάρις in Pindar is the horse Pherenikos (*Ol.* 1.18).

patron . . . Ovid rejects the patronage of the Homeric heroes.”⁴²⁴ A more fruitful way to look at this passage is not to focus on why Ovid uses the word *gratia*, but how he phrases it – not, as Propertius would have, “I’m not fit for you (epic),” but “you (epic) are not fit for me.” In one sense, the Homeric heroes are not going to serve Ovid in his attempt to get Corinna to open the door. In a broader sense, though, Ovid is refusing to act as their patron, as the person who will further their careers. Epic is doing no good for him in this poem because it does not suit his *materia*, the elegiac relationship. I suggest therefore, that the “me” of line 36 is not referring to Ovid the poet in general or even at this period of his life, as it does for Propertius, but rather Ovid as poet-lover.

Given the amount of parody in this poem, it stands to reason that we should understand Ovid’s *Gigantomachy* as parodic as well. I do not believe, with Green, that, “Ever since the *Amores* . . . Ovid had been tinkering with the idea of writing an epic *Battle of Gods and Giants (Gigantomachia)*.”⁴²⁵ Ovid is very serious that he is capable of writing an epic work. His reference to the *Gigantomachy*, however, must be understood within his larger, parodic context. He began his first book of *Amores* with a parody of the Latin epic, the *Aeneid*. To begin his second book, he one-ups himself and parodies the topic which is itself so often a parody of epic writing, the *Gigantomachy*, and which stands for the whole tradition of epic writing, going back to Hesiod. He presents a caricature of himself as the poet who is adept at all art forms, thereby making fun of the poets who felt the need to recuse themselves from writing epic. It is a parody of the

⁴²⁴ McKeown (1998) 20. He ties the use of *gratia* to this idea and understands it primarily as “patronage, influence” (23).

⁴²⁵ Green (1994) 224. Booth (1991) 100 explains why we do not have to take Ovid’s assertion of writing a *Gigantomachy* seriously. See also McKeown (1998) 10-11.

tension found in Propertius between epic and elegy, of the longing of the earlier poet's persona to write epic and his insistence that he cannot and that it is not useful for the elegist to do so. Therefore, this poem should not properly be called a true *recusatio*, but a parody of the *recusatio* tradition.

II. The *Metamorphoses* and the Poetics of Imitation

Turning to the *Metamorphoses*, here too the Gigantomachy serves as a tool for exploring the nature of literary imitation and originality, closely tied to the notion of the rules of genre. In Book 5, the Emathides (or Pierides, as they are called, turning them into an inferior doublet of the Muses), sing a poorly constructed Gigantomachy that is a derivative *farrago* of aesthetic and generic characteristics. They serve as a foil to the poet himself, who in Book 1 demonstrates how to properly write a Gigantomachy. Ovid also blends aesthetic and generic properties, but does so in such a way that he becomes not an imitator of tradition, but a new source text that resets tradition.

As Hardie writes, "Ovid, true to his intention of flouting the rules of Roman Alexandrianism, includes a direct narrative of Gigantomachy in book one of the *Metamorphoses*."⁴²⁶ One way this has been read is as political allegory, "the parallel creation of order and victory over evil by Augustus" as the Olympians create order in the cosmos.⁴²⁷ Wheeler sees it as part of the destruction of the order of the newly formed cosmos, which is "undone by passions, both mortal and divine, that confuse the elemental categories originally defined by the demiurge." It is part of a "pattern of boundary

⁴²⁶ Hardie (1986) 88.

⁴²⁷ Hardie (1986) 88, following Buchheit (1966).

violation” which now “takes cosmic proportions.” All of the upheaval, from the decline of the races of man to the flood, end with the renewal and transformation of the cosmos, thus forming a grand metamorphosis.⁴²⁸ I will examine this episode from a metapoetic perspective, particularly looking back to Hesiod and forward to Ovid’s presentation of the Gigantomachy in Book Five by the Pierides, a radically different account from that in Book One.

In line 1.152, Ovid marks the beginning of his Gigantomachy with an Alexandrian footnote, *ferunt*.⁴²⁹ This clues us in that he is going to be allusive. The line begins with the important verb *adfectasse*, which we saw in *Georgics* 4.562 and *Amores* 1.1.14, and ends with *Gigantas*; thus the Giants and their overreaching action are surrounding the *regnum caeleste*, mimicing the action in the scene. Initially, the giants and the force of tradition are in control of this passage. When Jupiter enters the scene, however, the indirect statement triggered by *ferunt* stops; his actions are vividly portrayed in the indicative. Then, when we return to the Giants, there is another *ferunt* and more indirect statement, so that all their actions are in either the subjunctive or infinitive (156-60). When we begin reading this passage, we think it is going to be all a nod to Hesiod, but then Ovid’s own voice bursts onto the scene along with Jupiter. Just as the two were linked in *Amores* 2.1, here too they are connected. This is part of a corrective allusion. Hesiod’s Zeus, while he is victorious, is not the most heroic of figures. He needs a great deal of help to conquer the Titans and secure his reign; he hurls many thunderbolts, which burn up the earth, but are not, in the end, what clinch the battle

⁴²⁸ Wheeler (1999) 32.

⁴²⁹ The term “Alexandrian footnote” originates with Ross (1975) 78; see also Hinds (1998) 1-5.

(the Hundred-Handers actually turn the battle: Hes. *Th.* 713-33). Ovid's Jupiter acts swiftly and decisively, with a single thunderbolt (154-5). Later, when he is addressing the other gods, he conflates the Giants and Hundred-Handers, saying that they had snaky legs and one hundred arms (183-4). Ovid is writing the Hundred-Handers out of the myth entirely, absorbing them into the threat against Zeus/Jupiter. In fact, Jupiter says that all the Giants were of one group; the Gigantomachy came from "one body and one source" (*nam quamquam ferus hostis erat, tamen illud ab uno corpore et ex una pendebat origine bellum*, 185-6). Here Ovid takes the various gigantic creatures, the Titans, the Aloadae, the Giants, the Hundred-Handers, and Typhon, and combines them into one. His Jupiter did not have to fight multiple wars to maintain his status – he flicked his wrist once, let go a thunderbolt, and it was over. Ovid is not just acknowledging the conflation of the different myths that had happened since Hesiod; he is using a hyper-conflated and very compressed version of the myth to correct the original version.

The purpose of this compression, however, is not to portray Jupiter as a guilt-free king of all things orderly and right. In the next line after the Gigantomachy, Jupiter is called *pater Saturnius* (163). Ovid had suppressed the Titanomachy in his account of the Ages, merely saying: *postquam Saturno tenebrosa in Tartara misso sub Iove mundus erat* ("after Saturn was sent below shadowy Tartarus, the world belonged to Jupiter," 113-14). By calling Jupiter *Saturnius* immediately following the Gigantomachy, Ovid subtly reminds us that these fights with various giants were part of a succession struggle. This shows how Ovid handles his own literary succession struggle, by positioning himself as the correct version of Hesiod. Furthermore, by choosing to write his Gigantomachy with

Alexandrian footnotes, Ovid activates the Hesiodic Zeus in our minds, even if he does correct that version. This passage is a lesson in subtle irony. It is a straightforward, pious account of Jupiter's actions with ironic overtones that the reader may choose to buy into or not. This is in sharp contrast to the Pierides' handling of the Gigantomachy in Book Five, to which we must now turn.

Most scholars agree that the contest between the Muses and Pierides in *Metamorphoses* Book Five is in some way a metaliterary examination of competing poetic programs. What stance each side represents and how their poetic product should be viewed remains in dispute. For example, Anderson points to the impiety of the Pierides, but nonetheless finds the Muses' poetry long-winded and of poor quality,⁴³⁰ and Johnson thinks that "Ovid transforms Helicon into a setting unsafe for poets, and the Muses into the tyrants of their domain, jealously guarding their prerogatives and silencing those who challenge their version of the truth."⁴³¹ Zissos, on the contrary, believes the Muse skillfully adapts her song to suit the taste of her internal audience, something which the Pierides were unable to do,⁴³² while Otis sees in the whole episode an example of Ovidian "Divine Comedy" in which Ovid "preserves appearances by an epic tone and decorum" but brings out the humor in Muses who do not realize that their story is much like the Pierides' "blasphemous Gigantomachy."⁴³³ Heinze opened the question of genre in this episode when he compared what he found to be the epic telling

⁴³⁰ Anderson (1997) 525ff.

⁴³¹ Johnson (2008) 73.

⁴³² Zissos (1999) 98 and *passim*.

⁴³³ Otis (1970) 153.

of the story in the *Metamorphoses* with the elegiac version in the *Fasti*.⁴³⁴ Stephen Hinds improved upon Heinze's conclusions by demonstrating how Ovid plays with genre in both works.⁴³⁵

I will analyze the Pierides' and Muses' speech in terms of their use of Callimachean or anti-Callimachean principles, not as markers of genre but of poetic aesthetics within the epic genre. Focusing especially on lines 250-345, I will examine how each group receives the other's poetry, particularly where their poetics shift or become ambiguous. Ultimately I argue that we should move away from defining either group as followers of the opposing "grand" or "Callimachean" schools of epic composition, and instead look at how they combine and adapt these two poetic programs.⁴³⁶ This, in turn, sheds light on Ovid's own poetics throughout the *Metamorphoses*.

Starting at line 250,⁴³⁷ Minerva leaves Perseus' epic battle and makes her way to Helicon. The description of her journey already gives subtle markers that we are approaching a more Callimachean space. Line 252 could be said to contain a miniature geographical catalogue, but more to the point are the next two lines: *bellica Pallas*, as she was called at 5.46, leaves behind the scene of battle in order to visit Helicon, home of the Muses and traditionally the font of poetic inspiration. The incongruity of her epic presence in this pastoral, Callimachean space is the first indication that Ovid is parodying

⁴³⁴ He identifies their salient characteristics as "das δεινόν" (the epic *Metamorphoses*, with its focus on anger and quick temperedness) versus "das ἑλεεινόν" (the elegiac *Fasti*, which has more focus on lamentation and grief), (1972) 322.

⁴³⁵ Hinds (1987a) esp. 115-34.

⁴³⁶ Galinsky (1975) 2 has made the excellent point that "Ovid's relation to the Hellenistic poets was similar to the attitude of the Hellenistic poets themselves to their predecessors . . ."

⁴³⁷ All line numbers from here to the end of this section refer to *Met. 5* unless otherwise noted.

this system of images.⁴³⁸ Ovid describes Minerva’s journey thus: “Where the path over the sea seemed shortest she sought Thebes and virginal Helicon” (*quaque super pontum via visa brevissima Thebas / virgineumque Heliconam petit*, 253-4). The fact that Minerva takes the shortest path is reminiscent of Apollo’s injunction to Callimachus to drive his wagon on a narrow path, coupled with the idea that shorter, well-crafted poetry is better than long-winded (*Aetia* fr. 1). This is the first “size” word in this passage, and there is an implicit contrast between the *via brevissima* and the *pontum*; the mighty ocean was by this point a metaphor for poetry on the grand scale, especially Homer. Thus there is an interesting collocation of ideas here, as Minerva seeks the shortest path over the ocean as she heads for Thebes (one of the typical subjects of the sort of cyclical epic that Callimachus hates)⁴³⁹ with the ultimate goal of the Heliconian spring, significant not only for the reasons given above, but also because springs are the metapoetic contrast to the ocean (or mighty rivers) in the Callimachean program.⁴⁴⁰ Finally, Helicon has just been created; here it is still virginal. Within the internal chronology of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid’s work precedes the famous experiences of Hesiod and Callimachus at that place; in fact, by creating Hippocrene, Ovid makes those poets’ encounters with the Muses possible.⁴⁴¹

That Ovid is being metaliterary in this passage becomes even clearer in line 255, where the Muses are called “learned sisters” (*doctas . . . sorores*). The tradition of the

⁴³⁸ Cf. Johnson (2008) 47-8: “Hers is an undeniably epic presence in a pastoral setting, and recalls the incongruity, as framed by the Augustan poets, of military and literary pursuits, of battlefields and pastoral or mountain retreats, of *officium* and *otium* . . . Critics have suggested that Minerva’s appearance alongside the pastoral Muses in the episode therefore constitutes a programmatic ‘hint’ that poses the question: will the product of this union be an epic, an elegy, or a hybrid?”

⁴³⁹ Call. *Ep.* 28 Pf.

⁴⁴⁰ Call. *Hymn* 2.105-12; for a concise summary of the “Callimachean program”, see Clausen (1964) 182-5.

⁴⁴¹ See Nappa (2002) on the idea that Ovid fashions his work as the anterior text to his predecessors’ work.

docta Musa or *doctus poeta* is firmly set within the Hellenistic tradition. We as readers are now positioned to expect that we have transitioned away from the grand epic of Perseus' battle to a more Hesiodic / Hellenistic mode.

We are not disappointed: when the Muse Urania begins to speak, she does so in a highly allusive and learned way. Hinds has discussed this passage in great detail, so I will only summarize here. *Origo* (262) brings to mind the Hellenistic fascination with *aetia*. This recalls not only Callimachus' *Aetia*, but also Aratus' *Phaenomena*, and Hinds has shown how Ovid ties this passage to Aratus' description of the Pegasus constellation. In addition, the verb *deduxit* is a poetically charged word used to describe the slender, "fine-spun" poetry of the Callimachean aesthetic.⁴⁴²

In line 269, an unspecified Muse tells Minerva that she could have been one of them, too, "if *virtus* had not borne you to greater work (*opera ad maiora*)." These *opera maiora* seem to be the work of *bellica Pallas*, battles and heroes. It is interesting that Minerva cannot do both, especially given that she already presides over other forms of artistic creation. The Muse seems to be giving a sort of reverse *recusatio* for Minerva: instead of the typical formula "I *would* write about battles and heroes, but my Muse is a slender one," she tells Minerva, "You *would have* been a Heliconian Muse, but instead you are involved with battles and heroes." The use of the word *maiora* here also brings up the idea of size again: if what sets Minerva's work apart from the Muses' is that it is "bigger," then logically the Muses must think of their work as "smaller." The Muse goes on to illustrate her distaste (fear, in fact) for the mixing of her world with that of fierce

⁴⁴² Hinds (1987a) 14-21. He also sees the sort of learned wordplay of a *doctus poeta* writing for a *doctus lector* in lines 262-4, especially in the words *Pegasus*, *fontis*, and *pedis ictibus*.

warfare when she introduces the story of Pyreneus' recent attempt to rape them: *Daulida Threicio Phoceaue milite rura / ceperat ille ferox iniustaque regna tenebat* (275-6).

Note the collocation of *milite* and *rura*, as well as the characterization of the king as *ferox* and his rule *iniusta*; the Muse's (pastoral) countryside was invaded by (epic) warfare, and this terrifies her.

When the Pierides, now transformed into birds, enter the scene, they are described as "imitating everything" (*imitantes omnia*, 299). Assuming that, as often in Ovid, they have retained their salient human characteristics in their metamorphosis, this is a precious peek into the style of the Pierides' speech and poetics, since most of their contest song is reported to us indirectly by a hostile narrator (the Muse). Several other words are significant in this passage as well: in 305 we hear that "the crowd of stupid sisters was swollen in its number" (*intumuit numero stolidarum turba sororum*). First of all, *stolidus* is a word used more than once by Ovid's Ulysses to insult the ineloquent Ajax (*Met.* 13.306, 327). Secondly, the sisters are a crowd, a *turba*, which makes them sound like the sort of abundance of amateur poets Callimachus and his Roman successors would have sneered at. Perhaps most importantly, *intumuit numero* is a double entendre. The sisters are arrogant because they are nine, the same number as the Muses, but they are also arrogant and *swollen* (i.e. anti-Callimachean) in their poetry (*numero*).⁴⁴³ The Muse continues this image of the Pierides when she uses the words *committit proelia* (307) to introduce Pierid direct speech.

The Pierid's first words to the Muses are, "Stop deceiving the unlearned crowd with empty sweetness" (*desinite indoctum vana dulcedine vulgus / fallere*, 308-9). The

⁴⁴³ Hinds (1987a) 131.

poetically charged words *indoctum* and *dulcedine* immediately stand out; clearly the Pierid is accusing the Muse of being uncallimachean. The verb *fallere* recalls the famous passage of the *Theogony* (set in this very same place, Helicon) when the Muses approach the poet, insult their human audience and then say, “We know how to speak many lies resembling the truth, and we know, when we wish, how to speak the truth” (ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, / ἴδμεν δ’, εὔτ’ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι, Hes. *Theog.* 27-8).⁴⁴⁴ Thus the Pierides seem to be turning the tables and rebuking Hesiod’s Muses. This would still be in keeping with their overweening haughtiness. It also fits with their characterization as anti-Callimachean, since Callimachus (and Hellenistic poets in general) looked to Hesiod as their model for writing slim *epos*, and Callimachus himself seems to have imitated this scene from the *Theogony* in the *Aetia*.⁴⁴⁵ *Dulcedine* brings to mind the ideal of the small, sweet, well-crafted poem (as opposed to thundering epic).⁴⁴⁶ The Pierid seems to be criticizing the Muses for being too clever; their learned poems trick the crowd, who do not understand them, into thinking that they are clever or truthful, when in fact they are really devoid of substance. I hear the Pierid delivering this line with a sarcastic tone.

This is an odd line, though, and we must also take into account another way it could be interpreted. Anderson characterizes it as “an arrogant Hellenistic put-down.”⁴⁴⁷ One could argue that the Pierides here mean, “We know how to compose truly learned

⁴⁴⁴ Johnson (2008) 54 has also noticed the parallel, but uses it somewhat differently than I; she focuses on the possibility that everything the Muses say is a lie.

⁴⁴⁵ *Aet.* fr. 2. Note also that the meter slows down dramatically when the Pierid begins to speak; her speech is “heavier” than the Muse’s.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. Callim. *Aet.* fr. 1, esp. lines 16 and 20.

⁴⁴⁷ Anderson (1997) 528.

poetry with substance; you can fool the unlearned crowd, but let's see how you do against *real* poets.” While this is a possible interpretation, I believe my reading of the line as sarcastic and hostile to the Callimachean program is correct. This reading also allows us to give Ovid credit for very cleverly constructing an anti-Callimachean insult within a highly allusive, Callimachean line. Nevertheless, this being Ovid, I do not think that the line's ambiguity is an accident; we are supposed to be somewhat confused by the poetics of the Pierides, since they themselves do not have a clear understanding of them, as becomes more evident in the following lines. This is a great example of a technique used frequently in the *Metamorphoses*, where “there exists a basic tension between form and content which generates meaning.”⁴⁴⁸ The presence of a jarring disconnect between form or tone and subject matter is one of the classic indicators of parody. Ironically, *as a parody*, understood here in the more familiar sense of the mockery of traditional material, the Pierides' song works. Crucially, however, they do not understand that the highest function of self-conscious poetry as expressed through parody is not to mock, but to transform traditional material from within, using the very terms and tropes of tradition to simultaneously preserve them through (often exaggerated) imitation, but in a way that produces a completely new end product.

Returning to the text, I do agree with Anderson's characterization of line 312: “The pretentious, Alexandrizing Pierides produce a flamboyant hexameter, with hiatus here at the central caesura, a series of unusual words, and more hiatus at the end.”⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁸ Myers (1999) 193.

⁴⁴⁹ Anderson (1997) 529.

Lines 312 and 313 both make learned, allusive references to a list of places in the style of a *doctus poeta*.

By contrast, the Pierid chooses to sing a Gigantomachy: “She sings of the wars of the gods” (*bella canit superum*). As I have demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the Gigantomachy is the ultimate marker of *genus grande* epic composition.⁴⁵⁰ *Met.*

10.149-52 proves that this is the case in the *Metamorphoses* as well, and serves as a nice contrast to the Pierides’ project. Orpheus speaks:

..... *Iovis est mihi saepe potestas
dicta prius; cecini plectro graviore Gigantas
sparsaque Phlegraeis victricia fulmina campis.
nunc opus est levioere lyra . . .*

..... I always sing of the power of Jupiter
first; I sang with a heavier lyre of the Giants
and the victorious thunderbolts scattered in the Phlegraean fields.
Now I have need of a lighter lyre . . .⁴⁵¹

This passage clearly shows that the Giants are associated with “heavier” poetry. Such poetry is not forbidden; just as Ovid in *Am.* 2.1 had sung of the Giants, so Orpheus has done so, too. But there is an appropriate time and place for it, and the material and style must match. Furthermore, Orpheus’ version obviously was complimentary to Jupiter, unlike the Pierides’.

Like Orpheus’ statement in line 10.150 and Ovid’s at 1.152, the first line describing the Pierid’s speech ends with the word *Gigantas*, with its alliterative *g* and *a* sounds, giving an appropriately heavy, thunderous line end. This fits the grand style of

⁴⁵⁰ See also Innes (1979).

⁴⁵¹ By saying that he will sing of Jupiter first, Orpheus uses a standard hymnic formula. Barchiesi (2001) 56 points out that it is also logical for him to begin with Jupiter, since he is about to speak about Jupiter with ironic blasphemy.

Ovid's and Orpheus' content; for the Pierid, as we shall see, it commences a blend of styles that is problematic. The rest of the sentence states, "she places the giants in false honor and diminishes the deeds of the great gods" (*falsoque in honore Gigantas / ponit et extenuat magnorum facta deorum*, 319-20). The problem is that the verb *extenuo*, like *attenuo*, is another poetically charged word meaning "to make slender / small", thus making it part of the Callimachean program. The Pierid's style seems to be an inconsistent mishmash of aesthetics which is wholly inappropriate to her content, making her song both ridiculous and impious.

Then again (this being Ovid), I think the Pierides deserve a closer look. The content of her song as described in lines 321-6 is clearly epic, as the Titan Typhoeus, with Greek name and epic compound epithet (*terrigenam*, 325), battles the gods. Line 326 (*et se mentitis superos celasse figuris*) may be a humorous touch on Ovid's part, since Athena appears in *mentitis figuris* several times in the *Odyssey*, most notably as Mentor or Mentos. Since the Muse's audience is Minerva herself, perhaps this is a subtle signal to Ovid's learned readers that the Muse is not quite as thoughtful as we might like her to be.

We must remember that the Pierid's song is being summarized by a hostile internal narrator. It is not clear whether we hear the end of it or not. Lines 332-3 (*Hactenus ad citharam vocalia moverat ora; / poscimus Aonides . . .*) are ambiguous: do they mean that the Pierid stopped singing because she was finished, and it was then the Muses' turn, or that she had only gotten so far, when she was stopped and the audience demanded that the Muses take over? There is a slight chance, therefore, that she would

have ended the story with the victory of the Olympians, although that is pure speculation. Anderson believes that the Pierides only do to the gods what Ovid does to them throughout the *Metamorphoses*,⁴⁵² but I think he ignores the all-important factor of power. Ovid's gods may take on various forms to deceive humans, and they may be a rather vicious, amoral (even immoral) lot, but the gods have always been beyond the reach of morality, going back to Homer. The key is that they have *power*, and Ovid's gods have this. The problem with the Pierides is that they strip the gods of their power; they do this to a greater or lesser extent depending on whether we have the end of their song or not (and if not, how they would have ended it), but they do nonetheless "diminish the deeds of the great gods."

Leaving aside the question of impiety, the Pierides' song is actually rather interesting. Their catalogue of the transformations of various gods (327-31) is a Hellenistic endeavor. It is a series of *aetia*, and reflects the broader, more syncretistic worldview of Hellenistic Greece. Their accounts of most of the gods mentioned require some sort of knowledge of mythology (or even the *Metamorphoses*) to understand the references. Moreover, perhaps the most famous telling of the Gigantomachy is Hesiod's *Theogony*, where it represents Zeus' establishment of cosmic order under his enduring reign. The Pierides are competing with Hesiod's Muses, and do so by extracting and rewriting a small bit of the very work which opens with Hesiod's initiation on Helicon by those Muses. They are undoing their competitors' own poetry. Granted, the song is not

⁴⁵² Anderson (1997) 529.

without problems, as discussed above, and is not exactly beautiful poetry (at least, not as represented by the Muse), but one must admit that this is rather clever.⁴⁵³

It is tempting to attach significance to the fact that Calliope is chosen to sing the Muses' song. The Muses had not yet been divided into their separate spheres when Ovid was writing, but Calliope, being the eldest of the Muses, seems already to have been considered especially appropriate for weighty *epos*.⁴⁵⁴ While I do not dispute that, I do not think the point ought to be pushed so far as to use Calliope as evidence that Ovid is portraying Muses who sing epic on a grand scale. Callimachus himself claims Calliope as his Muse: μῦθος ἐς ἡμετέραν ἔδραμε Καλλιόπην (*Aet. fr. 75.77*).⁴⁵⁵ Callimachean poets can write *epos*; the question is one of style.

When Calliope begins to sing, she starts with a hymnic proem; an epic form, certainly, but one of the "slimmer" variety appropriate to a Hesiodic Muse.⁴⁵⁶ In fact, I argue that she ends her proem with a suggestion of a *recusatio* which is quite at home in Augustan poetry. How deliciously Ovidian for Calliope to recuse herself from producing grand epic, and how much more Ovidian that the exact meaning of her words is illusory. Here is the text in question (344-5):

⁴⁵³ Johnson (2008) 61 reads the passage in a similar way: ". . . the Emathides' version [of the Gigantomachy] is not only an anti-encomium but also a rebellious contribution to aetiological epic, a very Alexandrian project indeed."

⁴⁵⁴ Hinds (1987a) 125-6.

⁴⁵⁵ Even if Callimachus was using Calliope as synecdoche for "the Muses" in general, this just proves the point that her presence need not automatically signify grand epic.

⁴⁵⁶ Zissos (1999) goes through all the features of this proem that make it hymnic. Both he and Hinds (1987a) 98 point out that this is the only place where she uses a hymnic format, which, as Hinds says, "no longer embracing the whole narrative as in the Homeric poem, is now restricted to a preface . . ." This would make the Homeric bard and his poem a preface to Ovid; see Nappa (2002) for how Ovid does this same kind of thing with Vergil's poetry.

*illa [Ceres] canenda mihi est; utinam modo dicere possim
carmina digna dea! certe dea carmine digna est.*

I must sing of her; if only I could sing songs worthy
of the goddess! Certainly the goddess is worthy of song.

At first glance, there does not seem to be any problem; the Muse is merely saying, “May I be able to sing songs worthy of the goddess,” meaning that that is precisely what she is about to do, and in keeping with the appeal of other epic poets for the Muses to inspire their poetry. This is already odd, though, since she is the Muse to whom poets appeal – to whom is Calliope addressing this wish, then? What does it mean if she is not sure she is capable of the task?

If I seem to be looking into a formulaic passage too deeply, let us consider that this line, as Hinds has demonstrated, cannot but allude to a fragment of Gallus:

*tandem fecerunt carmina Musae
quae possem domina deicere digna mea (P. Qasr Ibrîm 6-7)*

finally, the Muses made poems which I could speak,
worthy of my mistress

As Hinds points out, Ovid has left out most of the first line because it would be odd for the Muse to say this of her own poetry; but, as I have just discussed, I do not think we should just gloss over that detail. He continues:

When Gallus makes his programmatic claim to have produced (with his Muses) *carmina* worthy of a *domina*, he means that he has written good love elegy. When Ovid’s Calliope recalls this but says that she wants her *carmina* to be worthy of a *dea*, she evidently has something more ambitious in mind for her hexameters: a specifically elegiac programme is being upgraded into an epic one.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁷ Hinds (1987a) 124.

Here is a further wrinkle, though, which Hinds does not discuss. Gallus' *possem* is subjunctive because it is in a relative clause of characteristic. Ovid's *possim* is subjunctive because it is an optative subjunctive expressing a future wish. Now, a wish in the present subjunctive is capable of fulfillment, but the subjunctive mood creates a nuance of uncertainty. How we translate this line makes a tremendous difference: is Calliope saying "May I be able . . ." or "If only I could sing a song worthy of the goddess"? If this were a human poet speaking, the phrase would be less problematic. Given that this is the Muse, the source of the ability to sing *carmina digna dea*, this line should make us stop and question what is meant. As Hinds does note, "The specifically epic aspiration is present; but it is not altogether unproblematic."⁴⁵⁸ I do not think we must or even should choose between the two ways of translating and understanding this line. The Latin is what it is, in all its ambiguous subjunctive glory, and we ought not to restrict it with more specific English when we do not have to. Like the Pierides' taunt of the Muses at 308-9, I think here too, we should allow ourselves to hear both possible interpretations at once. To quote Hinds again,

We have a Calliope, then, who simultaneously embraces and undermines her epic pretensions . . . do they [the pressures on Calliope in Book 5] not also evoke in their individual way the tension alluded to by Ovid back in the proem to the *Metamorphoses*, the tension which in some sense informs his whole enterprise?⁴⁵⁹

I will not go through the whole of Calliope's song here, as to do so would be largely to repeat the work Hinds and Johnson have already done.⁴⁶⁰ Instead, I will limit

⁴⁵⁸ Hinds (1987) 125; Zissos (1999) 111 argues that "the epic Muse is lamenting the *impossibility* of living up to her aspirations," but that it is impossible not because she is incapable of it, but because the necessity of the situation and her audience (the nymph judges) dictate that she must compose a different kind of poetry than the *Gigantomachy* of the Pierides.

⁴⁵⁹ Hinds (1987a) 132.

⁴⁶⁰ Hinds (1987a); Johnson (2008).

myself to pointing out several places which illustrate the tension between “big” and “small” poetry or heroic epic and the Callimachean aesthetic.

At line 416-17, when Cyane prefaces the story of her love affair with “but if it’s permitted for me to compare small things with great (*componere magnis parva*),” setting the love affair of a nymph in the midst of a myth about the Olympians (and the ordering of the universe), is from a literary standpoint “putting *parva* together with *magnis*.” In line 420, the collocation of the words *Saturnius iram* is evocative of the *Aeneid*. The metamorphosis of Cyane from the bold, “hard” nymph who heroically tried to stand up to Pluto into a “soft” (elegiac) spring (Callimachean) is full of these key words:

*et, quarum fuerat magnum modo numen, in illas
extenuatur aquas. molliri membra videres,
ossa pati flexus, ungues posuisse rigorem;
primaque de tota tenuissima quaeque liquescunt,
caerulei crines digitique et crura pedesque
(nam brevis in gelidas membris exilibus undas
transitus est); post haec umeri terqusque latusque
pectoraque in tenuous abeunt evanida rivis; (428-35)⁴⁶¹*

And she **dissolved** into those waters over which she had just been the **great** power. You could see her limbs **grow soft**, her bones endure bending, her nails putting off their **stiffness**; the parts which were were **most delicate** become liquid first of all, her cerulean hair, fingers, legs and feet (for the transition for **slender limbs** into icy water is brief); after these her shoulders, back, sides, and frail chest depart into the **thin streams**

The little *aetion* of Ascalabus’ metamorphosis is also marked by several “small” words:

parvasque fores (448), *brevem formam* (457), and *parvaque minor* (458). The epic

⁴⁶¹ Zissos (1999) 104-5 points out the humor in the characterization of Cyane as a *magnum numen*, since nymphs “are the proverbial bit-players. . .” This would then be another way that Calliope is being Alexandrian. Segal (1969) makes the very interesting point that water (either pure or impure, or moving from one to the other) is a unifying presence in all the stories within Calliope’s song; water (especially pure versus impure water), of course, was the primary metaphor used by Callimachus to distinguish between different styles and qualities of poetry (Callim. *Hymn* 2. 105-12).

wanderings of Ceres are compressed in this telling,⁴⁶² but we know they have been of epic proportions, since Arethusa tells Ceres, “*frugum genetrix* [epic epithet], *immensos siste labores* (490). At 555, the Sirens are called *doctae*. When the unnamed Muse finishes reporting Calliope’s speech, she says, “*Finierat doctos e nobis maxima cantus* (662).”

We might summarize this entire episode as follows: Pallas leaves the sight of an epic battle and comes to Helicon, an automatically literary place and one with a Hellenistic aesthetic tied to it both by tradition and Ovid’s portrayal of it here. The Pierides challenge Hesiod’s Muses to a singing contest; the Pierides’ speech reveals that they are certainly excessively arrogant about their art, but that they are unclear as to what their poetics are. This ambiguity continues in their song: they seem mostly to be following the tradition of weighty epic, yet Alexandrian touches are scattered here and there, and there is an undeniably Ovidian cleverness in the way they subvert the Hesiodic Muses. Calliope’s proem is equally ambiguous. If she is going to compete against the Pierides with a contrasting style, then she would probably need to be overtly Callimachean, which she is not – but neither is she overtly on the side of weighty epic. There are many epic features to her song (the hymnic proem, the relative length of her song, using the gods as her subjects and a *Homeric Hymn* as her source), but it is also shot through with undeniably Callimachean buzzwords and other characteristics of Callimachean *epos* (such as expansion of minor events and characters and compression of epic moments). And what *are* we to make of her odd almost-a-*recusatio*?

⁴⁶² As Zissos (1999) 111-12 also notes.

Rather than think we must label both the Pierides and the Muses with a specific style of poetics which contrasts with the other, I suggest that they are both attempting to do the same thing, which is also what Ovid is doing throughout the *Metamorphoses*: instead of choosing between Callimachean and anti-Callimachean aesthetics, they both try to blend the two into something new. In other words, the *Metamorphoses* does not create a tension between the *perpetuum carmen* and *deductum carmen*, it combines the two into a seamless whole. This is why the Pierides' and Muses' aesthetics are so hard to pin down; they are neither one nor the other, but both at once (which allows the reader to see in them what he wishes to see). The difference between the Pierides and the Muses is that the Muses do a better job of this.⁴⁶³ The Pierides' song is not seamless; the Callimachean elements in it do not fit the topic. Their subversion is too obvious; they lack the subtlety of an Ovid. They are too dismissive of the literary tradition (in the form of the Hesiodic Muses). Wheeler points out that they actually take on the role of the giants, in that they are trying to take over Olympian Helicon.⁴⁶⁴ When Ovid enters into a Gigantomachy, by contrast, he always aligns himself with Jupiter. This is not only because the giants are impious, hubristic beings, but also because as Jupiter Ovid can exert complete control over the raw material of the tradition. The Pierides are mere imitators, who, like the giants, attempt to wrest away control of the tradition by cleverly subverting it, but do not know how to do so. Their version of parody does not respect the

⁴⁶³ As Glenn (1986) points out, since Ovid had to write the song for both sides, he in effect has to top himself in this contest, which nicely fits my argument that both contestants represent Ovidian poetics, but that the Muses do a better job of it.

⁴⁶⁴ Wheeler (1999) 84.

power of tradition, transforming it from within. They are outsiders without a place in literary history, mere imitators.

Calliope, on the other hand, acknowledges the tradition (of course, she really *is* the tradition) and makes any rejection of it (especially her *recusatio*) so subtle that we cannot even be sure if it has happened or not. She is able to spin out a narrative which rewrites an archaic source text in a new, more Callimachean way, but without insulting the original.⁴⁶⁵ The Pierides twist the literary tradition abruptly; the Muses absorb and transform it. In this way, they are the model for Ovid's own poetics. His work incorporates all the defining features of weighty epic (battles, gods, and heroes) in many thousands of lines, but maintains a finely-spun style. The two are no longer at odds with each other,⁴⁶⁶ which frees the poet to fit the style to the material in each story.⁴⁶⁷ By forcing Callimachean aesthetics to undergo their own metamorphosis, Ovid has created his own new form of *epos*.⁴⁶⁸ The final metamorphosis of Ovid's work is the transformation of epic itself, into a work that does it all, that mixes genres and styles, established categories of form and ideology, that touches upon the whole of the tradition that came before it. The monstrous creatures that blend physical and ideological

⁴⁶⁵ Hinds (1987a) esp. 72-98 examines in great detail how Calliope's story interacts with the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, as do Zissos (1999) and Johnson (2008) 63-73. It seems that Ovid also drew (perhaps heavily) on Nicander's version of the story, which appeared in Book 4 of the *Heteroioumena*. According to Hinds (1987a) 14, Nicander is the only other author we know to have depicted a competition between the Muses and Pierides. Based upon the brief epitome of the story by Antoninus Liberalis (Papthomopoulos [1968] 16, with notes on 87-89), it appears that Ovid kept some of his basic structure (Nicander also included the stories of Typhoeus and Ascalabos in Book 4), but changed quite a few details.

⁴⁶⁶ I agree only in part with Knox (1986) 10; I agree that "there is no paradox" in Ovid's combination of *carmen perpetuum* and *carmen deductum*, but disagree with his argument that this would not have been a paradox for Callimachus, either. For *Ovid*, the question is one of "style, not length"; for Callimachus, I think length did matter (cf. *Aet.* fr. 1). Conversely, I think that genre was more an issue for Ovid than it was for Callimachus.

⁴⁶⁷ So also Kenney (1973) 132 and Galinsky (1975) 12-14.

⁴⁶⁸ Cf. Kenney (1973) 116-17.

categories become a symbol for Ovid's own hybrid epic and its blend of forms and styles. What Ovid is parodying is not any particular author or genre, but rather the notion that a given poet has to write exclusively within the established norms of his genre.

III. *Tristia* 2 and the Poetics of Power

Just as in the *Metamorphoses*, the ideas of exerting control over the tradition through one's poetry and allowing the reader to control reception are also key to understanding *Tristia* 2. This poem divides into two halves: an attempt to soften up Augustus and then a parodic defense of Ovid's work. In his first reference to the Gigantomachy in this poem, Ovid uses the myth as part of the not-so-subtle divinization of Augustus (line 71), marking his project as both a political and metaliterary one.⁴⁶⁹ In the second (line 333), he uses an overabundance of references to the elegiac tradition to create parody. On the surface, Ovid uses the Gigantomachy in two standard, Propertian *recusationes*. On a deeper level, however, he is asserting such control over poetic history and tropes that he can mold even the figure of Augustus-Jupiter and turn their political struggle into a metaliterary one of simultaneously epic and elegiac proportions. Epic and elegy are inseparably mixed in this poem, which brings into question whether genre has any meaning at all. The Gigantomachy is transformed from an epic topos into an elegiac one, as the elegiac poet becomes a thunderstruck victim rather than the poet-lover. This is partially achieved through subtle parody of Propertius and the elegiac tradition – and some very bold parody in the literary catalogue section. Taken as a whole, the exilic

⁴⁶⁹ Barchiesi (2001) esp. 80 contends that we cannot separate the literary and political functions of the poem.

corpus can almost be read as an “elegiac epic.”⁴⁷⁰ “He has converted [through the myth of exile] the exile of a Roman aristocrat, to a Graeco-Thracian city during the closing years of Augustus’ regime, into an heroic state. What he has created, is essentially Roman, and has no Hellenistic precedent.”⁴⁷¹

As the poem begins, Ovid uses three overlapping sets of generic markers to set the theme and scope of this work: the personae of the elegiac poet-lover, the Callimachean poet, and the victim of a gigantomachic event.⁴⁷² Besides the meter, words such as *perii* and *miser* in line two set an elegiac tone at once, as does language of madness and disease: in line 15 he says that “such great madness attends my sickness” (*tanta meo comes est insania morbo*), and in the next line, 16, he refers to “bringing back [his] injured foot to that rock [which hurt it]” (*saxa malum refero rursus ad ista pedem*), which carries the double entendre of employing once again the meter of the poem which got him in trouble. At line 97 he uses the exclamation *me miserum*, marking his full transformation into a Propertian figure.⁴⁷³

The second set of images in these opening lines is Callimachean. In line one he addresses his *libelli*. *Ingenium* and *ars* are frequent themes, the latter often serving as another double entendre meaning both the *Ars Amatoria* and Ovid’s poetic craft, as in lines 7-8: *carmina fecerunt, ut me moresque notaret iam demi iussa Caesar ab Arte meos* (“my poems have brought it about that Caesar censured me and my character because of

⁴⁷⁰ Claassen (1989b) 166.

⁴⁷¹ Claassen (1989b) 168.

⁴⁷² See Harrison (2002) 89-93 on the ways Ovid rewrites love-elegy in the exilic corpus.

⁴⁷³ For the elegiac pedigree of this exclamation, see Hinds (1998) 29-34, Boyd (1997) 148, Keith (1992b) 343, and McKeown (1989) 27. Claassen (1999) 213-14 discusses how in the exilic corpus “the hardships of love” is inverted into “the hardships of exile” (213) and how the poet engages in not the *militia amoris* but a different kind of fight with an angry god. I disagree with her, however, that the purpose of this is to “[negate] the poet’s earlier amorous creativity” (214).

my *Ars*, now ordered to be destroyed”). He also calls the Muses the “learned sisters” and implies that he had been one of their camp, that is, a Callimachean writer, when he says, “if I had been wise, I would rightly have hated the learned sisters” (*si saperem, doctas odissem iure sorores*, 13). Ironically, if we believe that Ovid is being sincere here (as we should not, as my reading of the poem below shall show), this line implies that Ovid was too clever for his own good, and that wisdom or prudence (as opposed to cleverness) should have told him to be less “Callimachean” and to do what the Telchine Augustus wanted him to do, thereby ensuring his physical and political freedom but inhibiting his poetic choices. This is the beginning of a series of statements Ovid makes in this poem that are double directed in that they are to mean one thing to Augustus or the politically conservative reader, and another to those who read his poetry *correctly*, the free-thinking Roman elite;⁴⁷⁴ furthermore, it is double directed in the sense that it is both a political and a metaliterary statement, and in that it may be read as sincere or tongue-in-cheek. Thus there are six different ways such statements can be read; it is my argument that all six ways of reading are meant to be operative at once in this poem, sometimes aligning or intersecting in different ways like a turning kaleidoscope, and at other times creating a jarring, incongruent – that is, parodic – effect.⁴⁷⁵

On the political level, Ovid uses the Gigantomachy as part of his divinization of Augustus. This strategy begins at lines 21-28, in which Ovid seamlessly moves from the

⁴⁷⁴ Williams (1994) 160-1, 208 and Wiedemann (1975) 271. Hinds (1987b) 23-29 discusses how Ovid develops a style of panegyric in which he always has a “hermeneutic alibi” – the reader can see straightforward praise or subversive irony, depending on his perspective: “what Ovid actually does is to turn elements of apparently intert panegyric into an effective rhetoric of subversion” (29).

⁴⁷⁵ As Barchiesi (1997) 30 comments, in reading *Tristia* 2 everything must be read with “a double interpretation” as the poem “deals with ways in which poetry can be read.” On the inconsistency in the poem, see Gibson (1999) and on incongruence as a feature of parody in Ovid’s poetry in general, Du Quesnay (1973).

magnos deos to Julius Caesar to Augustus, speaking of them as if they were on the same plane. At lines 22-23, the transition from *magnos ... deos* to *ipse quoque ... Caesar* at once links Julius Caesar with the great gods and creates a tie between Ovid and Augustus' adoptive father, since the point here is that Julius Caesar made use of *carmina* to soften the gods, just as Ovid is now attempting to soften Augustus' anger with his *carmen* (21). At lines 27-28, Ovid does several important things.

*his precor exemplis tua nunc, mitissime Caesar,
fiat ab ingenio mollior ira meo.*

By these examples now, I pray, most mild Caesar,
may your anger become softer by my talent.

He creates an unbroken line from the great gods to Julius Caesar to Augustus, as mentioned above. *Nunc*, however, suggests that Augustus is the most important god at the moment, the *praesens deus*. As a god filled with *ira*, he is an epic god. Ovid is surrounded and overwhelmed by the epic features of princeps and place in the exilic works. He find himself literally *in ponto*, (in the place Pontus and in the literary "ocean"), "a *vir* surrounded by *arma*"⁴⁷⁶ and relegated by an epic Jupiter figure.

Ovid hopes that he will be able to soften the princeps and his current situation through his Muse. Ovid asks Augustus to become more elegiac, *mollior*, in direct response to his poetry. We have already seen Ovid take Jupiter through this very process, in *Amores* 2.1, where there is the suggestion that Jupiter lays down his thunderbolt when Ovid stops writing his Gigantomachy. In the *Metamorphoses*, ironically an epic poem,

⁴⁷⁶ Barchiesi (1997) 24; see also 15-16. Cf. Williams (1994) 19-23 and Hinds (1987b) 23.

one can find many instances of gods behaving in elegiac ways.⁴⁷⁷ To bind the gods within the rules of a specific genre is to limit their power. Ovid is walking an extremely delicate line at this point of *Tristia* 2; it is a line where gigantomachic imagery will serve him well, given that it could be read as a compliment to the *princeps*, but carries ironic undertones for a sensitive reader.

Ovid's next carefully chosen words are an admission of guilt (29-30). Line 33 begins the comparison of Augustus with Jupiter, by suggesting that just as Jupiter does not cast his thunderbolts every time a human errs (or else he would soon be out of them), so Augustus should overlook Ovid's error.⁴⁷⁸ He continues by celebrating Augustus' moderation and clemency in war (41-50).

Several times in the exilic poetry, Ovid explicitly likens himself to one struck by a thunderbolt. Here are several examples from *Tristia* 1.1 and *Tristia* 2:⁴⁷⁹

venit in hoc illa fulmen ab arce caput. (1.1.72)

From that citadel a thunderbolt has come upon this head.

*me quoque, quae sensi, fateor Iovis arma timere:
me reor infesto, cum tonat, igne peti.* (1.1.81-2)

I admit that I too fear the arms of Jove, which I have felt:
When he thunders, I think that I am being sought with hostile fire.

*parce, precor, fulmenque tuum, fera tela, reconde,
heu nimium misero cognita tela mihi!* (2.179-80)

Spare your thunderbolt, I pray, and put away your fierce weapons,

⁴⁷⁷ One thinks, for example, of Apollo in Book 1 or the many erotic pursuits of Jupiter himself. The elegiac transformation of Mars in the *Fasti* is comparable; see Harrison (2002) 86 and Hinds (1992), esp. 88-90, 93-5, 98-105.

⁴⁷⁸ For Augustus as Jupiter, see McGowan (2009) 63-92; Claassen (2001) 35-7; Kenney and Melville (1992) xvi-xvii; Ward (1933). For the way Ovid constructs his own mythology of exile, see, in addition to McGowan, Huskey (2002), Claassen (2001) and (1999) 30, 191, 227, Evans (1983) 14.

⁴⁷⁹ Extensive lists of such passages can be found in Evans (1983) and Scott (1930).

weapons alas too familiar to wretched me!

When one takes the theme of the thunderstruck poet together with the upcoming gigantomachic imagery in *Tristia* 2, it may be tempting to view Ovid as the giant fighting against Jupiter-Augustus.⁴⁸⁰ Furthermore, the giants were exiled to the furthest reaches of the earth for their insolence, just as Ovid was relegated to Tomis. Ovid stresses, however, that he did not bear arms against Augustus, nor even any ill will (56). In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.2.9-14 he repeats this assertion, this time literally stating that he is no giant:

*non ego concepi, si Pelion Ossa tulisset,
clara mea tangi sidera posse manu,
nec nos Enceladi dementia castra secuti
in rerum dominos movimus arma deos,
nec, quod Tydidae temeraria dextera fecit,
numina sunt telis ulla petita meis.*⁴⁸¹

I did not conceive, even if Pelion had borne Ossa,
that the bright stars could be touched by my hand,
nor did I, following the demented camp of Enceladus
stir up arms against the gods, lords of the universe,
nor, what the rash right hand of Diomedes did,
were any gods sought by weapons of mine.

Thus, the poet depicts himself as a giant while denying that he is so. Critics who have read Ovid straightforwardly as a giant caught in a battle against Jupiter-Augustus miss the force of this ambiguity. One of the main themes of *Tristia* 2 is that people will find in any poem what they wish to see.⁴⁸² Ovid's genius lies in his acknowledgment of this truth and manipulation of it. The ambiguity over his status as a giant is one example of

⁴⁸⁰ Barchiesi (1997) 42-3 comments on the irony of this situation.

⁴⁸¹ Green (1994) 317 points out in a note that this is very sly, since in the *Ars Am.* and *Amores* he did not take up arms *against* Aphrodite, but could be said to have taken up her and Cupid's arms.

⁴⁸² Williams (1994) 154-8.

this technique. Those who wish to see Ovid as giant may do so, and they will come away from the poem with a solid, biographically correct image of poet and ruler. But this is only part of the full picture. To complete the image Ovid creates in this poem, we must step away from this equation to take a broader view of the giants as literary tradition and Ovid as the manipulator of that tradition.

Both the references to the Gigantomachy in this poem are couched in a *recusatio*. In lines 67-76, he says that Augustus' glory cannot be increased by poetry, but that nevertheless he will surely enjoy hearing about his exploits, just as Jupiter takes pleasure from hearing about the Gigantomachy. Ovid will not be the one to produce the work, however, since he doesn't have required ability. Still, as the gods will accept a small sacrifice, so too Augustus should accept Ovid's offerings.

*non tua carminibus maior fit gloria, nec quo,
ut maior fiat, crescere possit, habet.
fama Iovi superest: tamen hunc sua facta referri
et se materiam carminis esse iuvat,
cumque Gigantei memorantur proelia belli,
credibile est laetum laudibus esse suis.
te celebrant alii, quanto decet ore, tuasque
ingenio laudes uberiore canunt:
sed tamen, ut fuso taurorum sanguine centum,
sic capitur minimo turis honore deus.*

Your glory doesn't become greater by poetry, nor does it have anything by which it could grow, so that it become greater. Jupiter's fame surpasses: nevertheless it pleases him to have his deeds reported and himself to be the subject of a poem. When the battles of the war of the Giants are recalled, it's believable that he takes joy in his praises. Others celebrate you, with as great a mouth as is fitting, and sing your praises with a richer talent: but nevertheless, just as by the blood of bulls poured out, so too is a god won over by the smallest honor of incense.

On the surface, this is a fairly typical *recusatio* in the style of Roman Callimacheanism. There are several interesting complications in it, however, which bear fleshing out. In the phrase *maior fit gloria* in the first line (67), *maior* could easily be understood as “epic.” The phrase *facta/opera maiora* generally means epic deeds in poetry, as for example, at *Metamorphoses* 5.269, as discussed above.⁴⁸³ By this reading, Ovid would be asserting that Augustus should stop trying to be an epic character, as the wrathful Jupiter is, and instead should embrace a softer, *mollior*, style of ruling.⁴⁸⁴ Furthermore, in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.8, Ovid dares to say that gods are made by poetry, and that their majesty *needs* poets:⁴⁸⁵ *di quoque carminibus, si fas est dicere, fiunt, tantaque maiestas ore canentis eget.*⁴⁸⁶ In *Metamorphoses* 5, he says that the Pierid with her blasphemous Gigantomachy “places the giants in false honor and diminishes the deeds of the great gods” (*falsoque in honore Gigantas / ponit et extenuat magnorum facta deorum*, 319-20). This directly conflicts with his statement that the glory of Augustus-Jupiter does not need poetry and cannot be affected by it.

Secondly, Ovid distances himself from the Gigantomachy by using the passive *memorantur*. He is not writing a Gigantomachy himself (a potentially hubristic act), but is activating in the readers’ minds the literary pedigree of the Gigantomachy motif.

⁴⁸³ At *Trist.* 2.63 Ovid calls the *Metamorphoses* a *maius opus*.

⁴⁸⁴ Nappa (2005) 6-9, on the *Georgics*, reads Octavian as simultaneously a god to be invoked, a subject of discussion of the poem, and one of the poem’s most important addressees, who is to learn from it what sort of issues he ought to be considering as a ruler.

⁴⁸⁵ See Ingleheart (2010) 103 for other statements of this topos in Greek and Latin poetry.

⁴⁸⁶ Only two lines after this statement we find a mention of the giants (59-60). This epistle is addressed to Germanicus; McGowan (2009) 26 suggests that Ovid is writing to him to teach him “that poetry had always held a position of importance in transmitting knowledge of divine succession and had also played a part in making his adoptive grandfather an object of religious worship.” Ovid claims a partial stake in the way gods and rulers maintain their divinity through poetic immortality and also undercuts it by showing “the kind of vengeful gods the Caesars could become” (28).

There is a place for grandiose epic in literary history, as evidenced by Jupiter's pleasure at hearing of his deeds. Augustus has missed the point, however, that Ovid had not been talking about Augustus when he wrote about the Gigantomachy previously, but about poetry.⁴⁸⁷ His Augustus is, or should be, *mollior*, just as Ovid's epic, the *Metamorphoses*, has distinctly elegiac features. In fact, as we see in the catalogue of literary interpretations that forms the second half of *Tristia* 2, Ovid impresses upon Augustus an elegiac world-view and view of literary history in this poem, as he gives an erotic reading of most of the great Greek and Latin poets, beginning with Homer and including the *Aeneid* (*et tamen ille tuae felix Aeneidos auctor / contulit in Tyrios arma virumque toros*,⁴⁸⁸ "and nevertheless that fortunate author of your *Aeneid* brought arms and the man into Tyrian beds," 533-4).⁴⁸⁹

The use of the indicative in *te celebrant alii* instead of the perhaps expected *te celebrent alii* has an adversative undertone.⁴⁹⁰ "Let others celebrate you" might imply that Ovid wishes he could celebrate Augustus the same way others do, by writing a grand Augustan epic. Rather, he distances himself from these other writers completely.⁴⁹¹ Ovid never denigrates his own poetic abilities.⁴⁹² He is not a Propertius who wishes he

⁴⁸⁷ Cf. Barchiesi (2001) 90: "On this playground, come what may, the Princeps will have to learn the rules of a new game: how to interpret an elegiac text that becomes ever more self-referential."

⁴⁸⁸ Gibson (1999) 37 points out that the use of *tuae* just as Ovid is demonstrating Augustus' lack of control over the reception of the *Aeneid* is ironic.

⁴⁸⁹ On Ovid's reading of the *Aeneid* in *Tristia* 2, see Barchiesi (2001) 93-4, 171 n. 20 and (1997).

⁴⁹⁰ Contrast *Fast.* 1.13: *Caesaris arma canant alii: nos Caesaris aras.*

⁴⁹¹ Williams (1994) 173: "Ovid . . . explicitly dissociates his praise of Augustus from an epic celebration of the emperor's heroic *facta*."

⁴⁹² Ingleheart (2010) 105. Claassen (1999) 218 demonstrates that "counter-*recusatio* accompanies nearly every claim by the exile-poet of waning powers."

could write the epic Augustus is looking for; Ovid is not interested.⁴⁹³ Line 76 is a reference to Propertius 2.10.19-24,⁴⁹⁴ a poem which is rife with Hesiodic/Callimachean anxiety. Ovid, however, is confident in his unique blend of Callimachean and epic qualities. Ovid is parodying Propertius and others like him who felt this anxiety over genre and style. Augustus, as a reader, seems to have fallen into their camp, expecting Ovid to be either a Homer or a Callimachus. Evidently, finding poetry that was simultaneously both and neither, constantly shifting and transforming both self and other, was something he found disturbing.

The second reference to the Gigantomachy in *Tristia* 2 is so full of Propertian language that it becomes parody by exaggeration.

*arguor inmerito. tenuis mihi campus aratur:
illud erat magnae fertilitatis opus.
non ideo debet pelago se credere, siqua
audet in exiguo ludere cumba lacu.
forsan (et hoc dubitem) numeris levioribus aptus
sim satis, in parvos sufficiamque modos:
at si me iubeas domitos Iovis igne Gigantas
dicere, conantem debilitabit onus.
divitis ingenii est inmania Caesaris acta
condere, materia ne superetur opus.
et tamen ausus eram . . . (327-37)*

I'm accused without merit. The delicate field is plowed by me:
that was a task for great fecundity.
The rowboat shouldn't trust itself to the sea,
even if it dares to play on a little lake.
Perhaps (and I'm inclined to doubt it) fit for lighter meters,
I could be enough, and suffice writing in a small manner:

⁴⁹³ Cf. Ingleheart (2010) 105: "Unlike his elegiac predecessor Propertius, Ovid does not elsewhere claim inability to write in the 'higher' genres . . . Nor does Ovid here claim that he cannot write as *alii* do; he simply observes the difference between other's writing and his own." I argue in Chapter 5 that we should understand Propertius' protestations of inability differently, as an inability caused by external circumstances more than inherent ability. This does not, however, mean that Ovid could not pick up on the inability *topos* and treat it the way others have traditionally read Propertius.

⁴⁹⁴ Ingleheart (2010) 106-7 provides this and other analogous passages.

but if you order me to speak of the Giants conquered by
Jove's fire, the burden will debilitate me as I strive to do it.
To establish Caesar's enormous deeds is a task for a rich talent,
lest the subject matter surpass the work.
And yet, I had dared

The numerous words contrasting the small and slight with great things in this passage are clearly Callimachean,⁴⁹⁵ but they are Callimachean as read through Propertius. This is seen in the general anxiety inherent in the *recusatio* as well as the image of the boat playing on a small lake (cf. Propertius 3.3.21-4). Lines 333-6 also recall Propertius 2.1 through the reference to Gigantomachy followed by the verb *condere* used of writing Caesar's deeds.⁴⁹⁶

*sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygiis condere nomen avos.* (Prop. 2.1.39-42)

Furthermore, there may be an echo in line 326 of *Amores* 1.1.2:

*Arma gravi numero violentaque bella parabam
Edere, **materia** conveniente modis.* (1.1.1-2)

These lines from *Amores* 1.1 are rich in intertextual allusion themselves, as discussed above, evoking Callimachus, Vergil (both the *Eclogues* and *Aeneid*) and Propertius⁴⁹⁷ in order simultaneously to align Ovid with the elegiac tradition, reject epic, and announce that his poetry will be different from Propertius'. *Ausus eram* in line 327 of *Tristia* 2 looks back directly to *Amores* 2.1, which also appears to look back to 1.1 (*ausus eram*,

⁴⁹⁵ See Ingleheart (2010) 273-6 for numerous parallel passages.

⁴⁹⁶ *Condere* is also an important word in the *Aeneid*.

⁴⁹⁷ Harrison (2002) 80 with n. 8.

memini, caelestia dicere bella, 2.1.11).⁴⁹⁸ Thus, in the middle of a parody of a Propertian *recusatio*, Ovid includes a moment of self-parody, as he references his own prior use of Propertian tropes.⁴⁹⁹ This emphasizes the intensely literary nature of this Gigantomachy and helps to illustrate the nature of Ovidian parody as an examination of the relationship between self and other. In the *Amores*, Ovid's concern was to align himself with the elegiac tradition while distinguishing himself from it, not to ridicule the tradition, but rather to highlight and take to the next level the potential inherent in prior elegiac writing. This potential lies in its generic flexibility.⁵⁰⁰ In *Tristia* 2, he is still at pains to align himself with this tradition, particularly since those authors were safe from censorship. He also wants to distinguish himself as someone who understands that the reader ultimately constructs meaning.⁵⁰¹ As such, he takes the same poetic system he has employed since the *Amores*, one of genres and styles mixed and stretched to their furthest potential, and takes it even a step further, to the point that the incongruity of *Tristia* 2 becomes the key to its meaning.⁵⁰² By writing a poem which both continues his poetic project and parodies it, sets itself firmly within a tradition and defends its place within that literary milieu while also challenging it, Ovid has created a text which takes control by giving it up. That is, he recognizes that the author's control lies not in shaping how an

⁴⁹⁸ For discussion of whether Ovid is referring to a real attempt to write a *Gigantomachia*, see Ingleheart (2010) 278, Williams (1994) 191, and for an old-fashioned argument in favor of such a lost work, Owen (1967) 63-81.

⁴⁹⁹ On Ovid's frequent reworking of his own material, see Tarrant (2002) 27-9. Williams (1994) 192-3 discusses how Ovid's reference to *Am.* 2.1 here is subversive.

⁵⁰⁰ See Harrison (2002) 79 on Ovid's extraordinary stretching of the elegiac genre.

⁵⁰¹ Gibson (1999) 25-7, 30, 37.

⁵⁰² Cf. Barchiesi (2001) 102: "*Tristia* 2, if Augustus knows how to listen, is above all a lesson on one important aspect of poetry, its instability of meaning. Attempting to control the meaning of *Tristia* 2 leads to a collapse of the interpretation already given to erotic works by the interpretive community of Roman readers."

audience will receive his work, since he cannot control this, but in how he receives and shapes the work of his predecessors within his work as a reader himself. Ovid is a reader of literary history and a reader of Augustus in *Tristia* 2, and these two strands come together in his presentation of the Gigantomachy.

Parody is, at its core, a meditation on reception. When a poet alludes, exaggerates, or distorts, he is reading the target text a certain way and making a statement about how he reads. In the process, we also learn something about the parodist's artistic, cultural, or political values. When Ovid sets out to write a poem about reception, it is therefore going to make significant use of parodic techniques. The point, however, is not to denigrate, but to breathe new life into the poetic tradition.⁵⁰³ Ancient poetic theory, with its emphasis on rules and prescriptions for different genres, needed someone to shake things up by the time Ovid came along.⁵⁰⁴ Barchiesi writes of Ovid's pre-exilic elegy,

Just as before in the *Amores*, [so too in the *Heroides*] Ovid assumes that elegy is already fully crystallized *elsewhere*, and takes pains that the reader not forget this. We know that Ovid can now look at the elegiac scenario from the outside . . . By now he has attained a detached perspective . . . from whose vantage point there now exists an 'old-fashioned' elegy. This kind of Ur-elegy is distinguished by closure, absoluteness, and the purposeful union of poetics and life-choice.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰³ In an article that demonstrates how Ovid alludes to the *Aeneid* in *Tristia* 1.3, Huskey (2002) 104 discusses how this technique is, among other things, a demonstration of the power of poetry, since poetry depends on allusion and quotations for its continued afterlife.

⁵⁰⁴ Zetzel (1983) 100 attributes this to the Hellenistic poets: "The ultimate import of the Alexandrian definition of genre in strictly formal terms was that genre no longer mattered. The true poet could shape his chosen genre or genres in whatever way he chose; as a poet, his sole obligation was to leave his own stamp on what he wrote, to become the master of tradition, not, as has been the case with the oral poets of early Greece, its vehicle." This is what Ovid does with the movement begun by the Hellenistic poets; prior to Ovid, even those poets who were interested in *die Kreuzung der Gattungen* were still bound by the rules of Callimacheanism. As Tarrant (2002) 22 writes, "Callimachean literary values were now [in the Augustan period] conventional and Ovid's way of maintaining a Callimachean lightness of spirit is to treat them with irony."

⁵⁰⁵ Barchiesi (2001) 34.

The political and cultural climate under Augustus was also one which tried to control people's perceptions of the way the world was constructed and of the princeps' place in the cosmos.⁵⁰⁶ In a steady progression which begins in the *Amores*, blossoms in the *Metamorphoses*, and reaches its culminating statement in the exilic poetry,⁵⁰⁷ Ovid throws the definitions and fixed structures of his literary and socio-political heritage into question. Readers have a tendency to define: a work is heroic epic, or love elegy; it is written in the grand or slender style; it is Callimachean or uncallimachean; political or metapoetic; and so on. By throwing these boundaries into question, Ovid has stepped outside of the flow of literary history, or, to use Linda Hutcheon's phrasing, adopted a pose of ironic critical distance from it, thereby parodying the entire process. He also creates a poetry that should not properly be called pro- or anti- Augustan; it is simply "Augustan" in the sense that it could only come about in the unique environment of Augustan culture.⁵⁰⁸ Ovid's message to Augustus and the elite of Augustan society is a reflection on the status of art and culture and a didactic lesson in how to read and write in an ambiguous world.⁵⁰⁹

The way he picks up on other poets' generic anxiety, represented through their allusions to the Gigantomachy, is emblematic of this stance. Having suffered the

⁵⁰⁶ Myers (1999) 199 points out how keen Augustus was to control the reception of his monuments; this may lie behind Ovid's readings of the temple decorations in *Tristia* 2.

⁵⁰⁷ Williams (2002) 238-9, Kenney and Melville (1992) xxi-xxv, and Luck (1961) demonstrate that Ovid's exilic poetry does not decline from his previous work, despite the poet's own assertions; Hardie (2002) 286, Claassen (2001) 14 and *passim*, and Williams *loc. cit.* also demonstrate the thematic unity between the exilic and pre-exilic works (244-5). For the position that Ovid's exilic poetry is sincere panegyric and to be taken at face-value, see Evans (1983) 10-30.

⁵⁰⁸ Thus while I agree that this poem makes an issue of Augustus, I do not agree that it forces the reader to take a stand on one side of the issue or the other (Ingleheart (2010) 26; Gibson (1999) 21; Evans (1983) 11).

⁵⁰⁹ Barchiesi (2001) esp. 79, 102 treats *Tristia* 2 as a text with a "didactic addressee" (Augustus).

consequences of his own lack of control over how his poetry will be received, in this poem Ovid takes back power where he can, in the literary tradition. He uses the divinization motif to remind Augustus that as a poet, he controls memory. Just as Jupiter can be anything from a hero to a tyrant to a parody of himself in the Gigantomachy, so Ovid can fashion Augustus in different ways. Ultimately, one's power comes not from his position as author, however, since he is beholden to his readers' reception of his text, but his position as a reader of his predecessors' texts. Unlike Callimachus, the Roman Callimacheans *are* aware of their status as belated poets.⁵¹⁰ And unlike Propertius, Ovid doesn't feel anxiety about this. Rather, he takes it as a challenge to exhibit control over the literary past in such a way that he does not rival but renews it all. His aim is to make people read poetry differently, to look at old poems with fresh eyes, and to question their cherished definitions and boundaries, thereby gaining his own immortality by establishing a new standard at the head of literary history. Burrow has argued that "literary history goes forwards as well as backwards. When writers do things to a genre or a topos they may be commenting on their present historical milieu, and they may also be adapting and commenting on modes of writing from the near or distant past. But they are also often attempting to affect how people after them write."⁵¹¹ Through his transformation of the literary tradition, Ovid opened new avenues for poetic explorations of the nature of tradition and power. Furthermore, through his poetics of ambiguity and reception, he takes back control when it has been taken away from him, since, while he cannot control the answers a reader will reach reading his poetry, he does choose which

⁵¹⁰ Cf. Harrison (2002) 80.

⁵¹¹ Burrow (1999) 273.

questions to prompt, thus forcing the reader to decide for himself what he thinks about Augustus and about the precepts of the literary tradition.⁵¹² As Claassen writes, “The *carmen* which brought about Ovid’s ruin, is the same *carmen* that has assured the exiled poet’s immortality. The Muse that offended the emperor Augustus, is the same Muse that has effectively and negatively coloured posterity’s judgement of that emperor. That the exiled poet was aware of his immortal power, is not to be doubted.”⁵¹³

IV. Epilogue: Ovid in Sicily

In *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.10, Ovid writes to his friend Macer, describing a journey the two took together. Macer is a poet working on the Epic Cycle (lines 13-14). Ovid calls this a wiser course of action (*sapientius*, 11), recalling his sentiment in *Tristia* 2 that he would more wisely have eschewed the Callimachean path (*Tr.* 2.14). As in the earlier poem, here too the word has a sense of “prudent” (cf. *Ex P.* 2.10.15, *Naso parum prudens*) and even “safe,” since Ovid’s point is that Macer kept himself out of trouble by writing traditional, epic material. Ovid continues, “but nevertheless poets have shared sacred rites between them, though each of us follows a different path” (*sunt tamen inter se communia sacra poetis, / diversum quamvis quisque sequamur iter*, 17-18). On one level, this poem is a nostalgic letter to a friend that laments Ovid’s relegation. At the same time, however, it is an unapologetic look back at Ovid’s poetic career, as he and Macer travel through Ovidian literary spaces. In this poem, Ovid is not as interested in

⁵¹² In *Tr.* 3.7.43-52 Ovid explicitly asserts that Augustus cannot control Ovid’s fame and talent.

⁵¹³ Claassen (1989a) 266; cf. Claassen (1999) 210 and (1989b) 169. Augustus is powerless to control Ovid’s immortality as a poet: Williams (1994) 197-8. Ovid reminds Augustus that the princeps will also be immortalized in Ovid’s poetry: Williams (1994) 198, 200. Augustus is powerless to control interpretation: Gibson (1999) 37.

distinguishing himself from writers of traditional epic material, but instead shows how his work may coexist in friendship with cyclic epic. Just as Ovid is depending upon Macer to continue to be his friend, so he has throughout his career depended upon the foundation of the literary tradition to make his poetry meaningful. The essence of Ovidian parody is the interdependence of tradition and innovation (*not* the negating of one by the other), expressed in *Epistulae ex Ponto* 2.10 through the metaphor of a pleasant odyssey traveled with a friend. This is a poem about poetry and genre.⁵¹⁴

In lines 17-18 quoted above, Ovid takes a very different stance from Callimachus. Callimachus, with his distaste for the Epic Cycle, would have disapproved of Macer's work. Ovid evokes Callimachus in line 18 by his use of the path of poetry metaphor, but stresses the united purpose of poets. The phrase *communia sacra*, emphasizing as it does both the sacred and communal nature of the two poets' work, directly contradicts Callimachus, who lumps the Epic Cycle in with "everything common," which he hates (σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια; *Ep.* 28 Pf., line 4).⁵¹⁵ Ovid, on the other hand, presents Macer (and his epic) as a friend who lightens his woes (line 20), an ironic twist, given that the elegist is usually considered the "lighter" poet.

Ovid travels his journey in this poem "with you (Macer) as leader," *te duce*. This phrase, repeated two times in as many lines, recalls Propertius' same words to Maecenas at 3.9.47:⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁴ Williams (1994) 42-8.

⁵¹⁵ It also evokes the tradition of the poet as priest: cf. Hor. *Od.* 3.1.3 and Prop. 3.1.1-4, 4.6.1-10. Camps (1966) 53 suggests the topos may have come into Latin under the influence of Callimachus' *Hymns*.

⁵¹⁶ The allusion is also noted by Hardie (2002) 323 w/ n. 95, who makes the connection with the Gigantomachy and epic material here; see also Williams (1994) 42-8 and (1991) 174. Is it coincidence that Macer is alliterative with Maecenas?

*te duce vel Iovis arma canam caeloque minantem
Coeum et Phlegraeis Eurymedonta iugis*

Under your leadership I would sing of Jupiter's weapons and
Coeus threatening heaven and Eurymedon on the Phlegraean ridges

Under Macer's leadership, Ovid follows an Aenean path,⁵¹⁷ starting in Asia and going to Sicily (21-2), where he sees Typhoeus belching forth (24). The phrase he uses to describe the giant, *vomit ore Gigans*, alludes to *Metamorphoses* 5.353, *vomit ore Typhoeus*.⁵¹⁸ *Vomit ore cruorem* is a Vergilian phrase (*Aen.* 10.349 and *Geo.* 3.516). Therefore, *vomit ore Gigans* alludes to epic in general, and specifically to Ovid's epic, the *Metamorphoses*. Furthermore, it references his story of the rape of Persephone in *Metamorphoses* Book Five. As previously discussed, this part of the *Metamorphoses* is especially concerned with Ovid's poetics and the coexistence of epic and elegiac elements. The remainder of Ovid's description of his trip to Sicily also recalls elements of his depictions of the Persephone story in *Metamorphoses* 5 and *Fasti* 4.⁵¹⁹

[*vidimus*] *Hennaeosque lacus et olentis stagna Palici,
 quaque suis Cyanen miscet Anapus aquis.
nec procul hinc nympha, quae, dum fugit Elidis amnem,
 tecta sub aequorea nunc quoque currit aqua.*

[we saw] Enna's lake and the pools of rank Palicus,
 and where Anapus mingles his waters with Cyane.
Nor is the nymph far from here, who, while she fled the river of Elis,
 even now runs concealed beneath the sea water.

What we have here, therefore, is Ovid traveling Aeneas' route with a writer of cyclical epic poetry, to a gigantomachic place which recalls Ovid's own meditations on

⁵¹⁷ Williams (1991) 174.

⁵¹⁸ Williams (1991) 175 and Hinds (1987) 141 n. 1.

⁵¹⁹ Williams (1991) 175.

the interplay between elegy and epic, all contained within a short, elegiac epistle. On Sicily, Ovid finds the nexus of influences that has shaped his poetry, led by his twin guides of epic and elegy, represented by Macer and Propertius. At the same time, this journey, and the presence of Macer and Propertius in it, are created and shaped by Ovid. Sicily is a place where rivers and springs mingle their waters, surrounded by the ocean. Likewise, Ovid creates a literary space where epic and elegy meet, and where giants still exist, but no longer threaten.

Conclusion

Ovid ends the *Metamorphoses* with words that evoke the image of the thunder-struck poet and contrast the undying fame he will receive from his work:

*Iamque opus exegi, quod nec Iovis ira nec ignis
nec poterit ferrum nec edax abolere vetustas.
cum volet, illa dies, quae nil nisi corporis huius
ius habet, incerti spatium mihi finiat aevi;
parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis
astra ferar, nomenque erit indelebile nostrum;
quaque patet domitis Romana potentia terris
ore legar populi, perque omnia saecula fama
(si quid habent veri vatum praesagia) vivam.* (Met. 15.871-9)

And now I have completed my task, which neither the wrath nor fire of Jupiter nor iron nor consuming time will be able to abolish.
When it will, let that day, which holds no power but over this body,
enclose the span of my life;
yet with the better part of me I shall be borne over the lofty stars,
eternal, and my name will be imperishable;
wherever Roman power extends over conquered lands,
I will be read on the lips of the people, and through all the ages, in fame
(if the prophecies of seers hold any truth), I will live.

The politics of this statement are complex. Ovid realizes that his physical self may suffer the same fate as the giants and ultimately perish due to Augustus' anger, but he also acknowledges that Augustus' epic actions (the extension of Roman power and culture) play a role in the preservation of Ovid's own poetry. As long as Roman power is intact, so will Ovid's poetry be read. Likewise, wherever Ovid's poetry is read, Roman and particularly Augustan influence will continue to be felt. Moreover, the first two lines of this passage represent a combination of the epic tradition and Augustan Rome. The anger and fire of Jupiter refer to Augustus' anger at Ovid, but also raise the spectre of

Gigantomachy and all that it represents. The martial valence of *ferrum* alludes to the *arma* of epic poetry, while the *edax vetustas* may, on a symbolic level, represent the notion that the poet could be swallowed up by the enormity of literary history. Ovid will live through his *fama*, which Hardie has shown may itself stand for the epic tradition.⁵²⁰ Ovid achieves this *fama* through his manipulation of that very heritage; rather than feel the weight of tradition upon him, Ovid exerts his own weight upon the tradition.

We have seen this idea at work in multiple authors who refer to Gigantomachy. After a preliminary discussion of my theoretical framework (Chapter One), I demonstrated how Hesiod uses Gigantomachy to highlight the difference between his kind of epic and epic bombast (Chapter Two). Pindar used it to comment upon the gigantomachic (that is, epic) undertones in his lyric poetry, and to discuss in tandem the roles of poet and patron in the community of the *laudandus* (Chapter Three). Callimachus uses the myth to talk about the symbiotic relationships between epic and elegy, poet and king (Chapter Four), while Propertius (Chapter Five) turns Callimacheanism on its head by stressing the tensions in these relationships. Finally, Ovid uses Gigantomachy to express the power of reception, especially his own reception of both Augustus and the literary tradition (Chapter Six).

One of the themes that has emerged from this study of Gigantomachy is the complex interrelationship of politics and poetics. The Gigantomachy is both political and metaliterary metaphor; the richest readings of these allusions come when we examine how their political and poetic messages work together: are they in sync with each other, or are they incongruous, creating tension and/or irony? The political and poetic goals of

⁵²⁰ Hardie (2012).

poet and patron are identical in Pindar's poetry, as each seeks to strike a balance between praise and envy, glory and blame. Callimachus introduced a king with Callimachean values, and explored the irony that is created when Callimacheanism (whether in poetics or politics) can only be born out of epic warfare. In the poetry of Propertius, a deeper irony, bordering on parody, emerges in the way he plays epic and elegy against each other and uses an exaggerated Callimachean style to comment on his inability to write in the political spirit of Callimachus. Ovid plays at being a political giant only to assert his position as Jupiter figure, that is, the one who holds the poetic power via his ability to turn anyone (be it political figure or literary predecessor) into whatever kind of figure he requires, epic or elegiac, great or small, monstrous or Callimachean. I have no doubt that further study on how these ideas play out in images of Gigantomachy in imperial literature would be fruitful.

Another major point that I have sought to demonstrate is that Callimacheanism is not a monolithic phenomenon. It shifts and develops through time, starting with Hesiod (well before the birth of Callimachus) and continuing through the Roman poets. It always contains the idea that it is distinguishing itself from certain kinds of epic, but as we have seen, this does not preclude the inclusion of bombastic epic elements in poems that are otherwise Callimachean.

Finally, I have suggested a new way of reading parody. The purpose of parody is not to ridicule a particular text or genre, but to set the parodying author in a particular relationship to other texts and to the world surrounding them and his own work. We have seen that parody frequently plays with literary time and the idea of anteriority by

positioning the parodist within or even prior to another work. This serves two purposes: it comments upon the parodist's own work and breathes new life into the prior work by forcing the reader to view it from a different angle. This is a method of understanding how poetic filiation works which could be applied to many kinds of texts.

Rarely are giants actually killed in mythology; they may be struck down, suppressed, relegated, and buried, but not eliminated. Trapped just beneath the surface, they make their presence known when they shift and turn and occasionally erupt in torrents of fire. Neither can the Callimachean poet deny the force of the epic tradition. He must find a way to incorporate it into his program. Each of the poets I have studied does this in a different way, but they all do it. Furthermore, they all use Gigantomachy to work out and express how they will incorporate epic into their program, what epic means for them, how it can benefit their poetry and legacy, and what anxieties, tensions, or ironies may arise in this process. In the end, it is only by accepting the giants that exist inside his own poetics and in the political and literary worlds around him that a poet can successfully refuse to write epic. His inner sanctum, his Telephus frieze, may be Callimachean, but he must acknowledge that he is surrounded and propped up by Gigantomachy. As on the Pergamene Altar, it is when the two are in dialogue with each other that we get the richest, most enticing set of poetics.

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