

# Blindness and Insight in Argos: Narrators and Audiences in Callimachus Fifth *Hymn* (*The Bath of Pallas*)

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Alphabetic writing was introduced into the Greek world during the eighth century BCE, basic literacy spread in the seventh and sixth centuries, and reading became a mode of reception of literature during the fifth century.<sup>1</sup> Yet it was only in the late fourth and third centuries BCE that the full impact of reading and writing became clear. One decisive factor was the ‘globalization’ of Greek culture through the conquests of Alexander the Great: authors were no longer producing primarily for members of their own community (in general, the city-state), but they were now writing for a reading public scattered through vast geographical areas. Another factor was a new way of relating to cultural tradition: there was a large number of Greeks throughout the Hellenistic world who were no longer living in their ancestral cities; new Greek communities were founded, and their inhabitants had to find new ways to develop and preserve a cultural identity. Culture had to become relocatable, and written texts were perhaps the easiest way to provide this diaspora with a tradition that they could relate to.<sup>2</sup> This development is especially visible in Alexandria: founded by Alexander the Great himself, this city in Egypt was home to a powerful dynasty of Greek rulers, the Ptolemies, who went to great length to demonstrate their Greek heritage. The most conspicuous symbol was undoubtedly the great Library, which was to influence the fate of Greek texts for several centuries.<sup>3</sup> Its aim was to collect all Greek literature written in the preceding centuries, and thus to become a universal *lieu de mémoire* | of Greek culture in a foreign environment and a prominent symbol of Ptolemaic power.<sup>4</sup>

We must remember that the Alexandrian Library was as momentous for the literary production of its own days as it was for the transmission of Greek texts. It was part of a greater complex called the *Museion*, which attracted numerous scholars, poets, philosophers, and historians and offered them a framework for their intellectual activity.<sup>5</sup> Many of the Alexandrian poets were scholars as well as creative writers, and it is in the context of the Library that some of the most sophisticated and challenging Greek poetry was written and that Greek literature became fully aware of its own ‘textuality.’<sup>6</sup>

Callimachus is perhaps the best, certainly the most important representative of this new mode of literary production (and reception). He was born into a powerful family in Cyrene, an old Greek colony on the Northern coast of Africa,<sup>7</sup> and he came to Alexandria in the early stages of the establishment of the Library. Callimachus was assigned the important task of writing a comprehensive

1 For a basic overview, see Blanck [6:22–39]; Svenbro [73].

2 There is an excellent account of this function of literature in Asper [3]; Asper [4:173] sums up this aspect in these words: “[...] one may read some of Callimachus’ works as an attempt to create a Greek cosmos for Greek readers.” It should be noted that this also entailed a good deal of cross-cultural influence, as has been persuasively argued by Stephens [72].

3 On the Library of Alexandria and Hellenistic libraries in general, see Cavallo [12]; for a splendid overview of the archeological evidence, see Hoepfner [37].

4 For the Library as a site of memory, see Jacob [48]; for the political aspirations, see Erskine [20].

5 On the scholarly and literary activities at the Museion, the account in Pfeiffer [61] still remains indispensable; cf. Fraser [23:1.305–35].

6 On the impact of reading and writing on Hellenistic literature, see Bing [5].

7 For Callimachus’ ties with Cyrene, see Manakidou [54:354 with n. 10].

bio-bibliographical index of all books in the Library, the *Pinakes*; he produced numerous other scholarly works which are connected with this endeavor.<sup>8</sup> He was the perfect embodiment of the role of the *poeta doctus* which, by way of its Roman reception, was to dominate Western poetry for many centuries.<sup>9</sup>

Hellenistic literature, or more precisely the small elite of avant-garde writers active at the Alexandrian Museion, is thus an area of Greek culture where we should expect to find the level of textual self-awareness and narratological sophistication that invites writers and readers to experiment with devices such as the construction of narrative voices, the framing of different diegetic levels, and the playful or challenging breaking-down of boundaries and roles. Moreover, Hellenistic literature is keenly aware of the importance of media, and explicit as well as implied reflections on the relation between literacy and orality, text and image, or different genres and their ideological stances are key themes in its texts.<sup>10</sup> It is thus not surprising that we should look for traces of metalepsis in Hellenistic literature, and the scholar-poet Callimachus is an especially promising candidate.

The text which we will analyze in this contribution is the fifth in his collection of *Hymns*. They are the only extended work of this poet that has been preserved as a continuous text. However, the *Hymns* have not been transmitted as a text in its own right; instead, they are included in a number of miscellaneous medieval manuscripts which contain poems that the copyist(s) saw as somehow related by their religious nature, such as the *Homeric Hymns* or the Orphic *Argonautica*.<sup>11</sup> We have no certain information about the date of composition, the cultural or religious context, or the form in which these poems may have been performed or recited or read. Our collection comprises six hymns which are dedicated to five deities (the hymn to Delos is actually a hymn to Apollo and Artemis).

Title	Length	Metrical Form	Dialect
1: To Zeus	96 lines	Hexameter	Ionic
2: To Apollo	113 lines	Hexameter	Ionic
3: To Artemis	268 lines	Hexameter	Ionic
4: To Delos	326 lines	Hexameter	Ionic
5: Bath of Pallas	142 lines	Distichs	Doric
6: To Demeter	138 lines	Hexameter	Doric

**Table 1.1** The corpus of Callimachus' Hymns

As can be seen in Table 1.1, the poems differ in formal aspects such as length, meter, and dialect. Some scholars have claimed that they were written for actual religious performances and for cultic purposes. This assumption cannot be ruled out with absolute certainty, but it has little to recommend itself, and a number of arguments speak against it.<sup>12</sup> The six *Hymns*, then, appear to be composed as a collection with a certain structure, to be read in the order in which we still see them today.<sup>13</sup>

8 On Callimachus and the *Pinakes*, see Schmidt [67]; Blum [7]; Krevans [50].

9 On Callimachus' later influence, especially in Rome, see Wimmel [77]; Hunter [42].

10 On literacy and orality, see Morrison [59]; on literature and the visual arts, see Zanker [78]; on genre hybridization and related phenomena, see Fantuzzi/Hunter [22].

11 On the transmission of the *Hymns*, see Bulloch [9:53–83], McKay [56:10–11].

12 On the question of a religious performance, see Bulloch [9:3–13]; Hopkinson [38:37–9]; Hutchinson [47:63]; the most recent critic who argued for public performance is Cameron [10:63–7]. Fraser [23:2.916 n. 289] and Morrison [59:106–9] maintain an intermediate position between these opposing views.

13 See Hopkinson [38:13]; Ukleja [74]; Morrison [59:105–6] (with further bibliography at n. 16); Fantuzzi [21:448–53]; Depew [14:117–8]. Hunter/Fuhrer [46:145] are cautiously optimistic about the possibility of a collection made by Callimachus himself; Hutchinson [47:63–4] is more skeptical.

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The | majority of recent scholarship accepts that these are literary showpieces, not texts for ritual performance.

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While the *Hymns* are certainly not neglected texts, modern discussions of Callimachus' work focus more on his *Aetia*, his epyllion *Hecale*, or even his epigrams than on the *Hymns*, and a similar trend can already be observed in antiquity: when we look at the papyrus finds from Oxyrhynchus, we see that fragments of the *Hymns* are far outnumbered by those from the *Aetia*.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, they are important and fascinating texts in which Callimachus tested his literary innovations and experimented with dialects, narrative forms, modes, and voices.<sup>15</sup> This contribution will study the only hymn in elegiacs,<sup>16</sup> *The Bath of Pallas*.

In a very rough manner, we can divide the text into three parts:

1. In the first section, an unidentified speaker asks the women of the city of Argos to prepare for the annual ritual bath that Pallas, i.e., the wooden statue of the goddess Athena,<sup>17</sup> will take in the river Inachus. Orders to the bath-pourers (λωτροχόοι) are intermingled with addresses to the goddess herself<sup>18</sup> and with announcements that her epiphany is now imminent. At the end of this first part, the speaker warns the male inhabitants of Argos that they must avoid at all costs to look at the statue of Athena on its way to the river, and while the female participants in the ceremony wait for the goddess to come, the speaker will tell them a tale (ll. 46–56):<sup>19</sup>

καὶ γὰρ δὴ χρυσῶ τε καὶ ἄνθεσιν ὕδατα μείξας  
 ἤξει φορβαίων Ἴναχος ἐξ ὀρέων  
 τᾶθ' ἀνά τὸ λωετρὸν ἄγων καλόν. ἀλλά, Πελασγέ,  
 φράζεο μὴ οὐκ ἐθέλων τὰν βασιλείαν ἴδης.  
 ὅς κεν ἴδῃ γυμνὰν τὰν Παλλάδα τὰν πολιοῦχον,  
 τῶργος ἐσοψεῖται τοῦτο πανυστάτιον.  
 πόντι' Ἀθηναία, σὺ μὲν ἔξιθι· μέσφα δ' ἐγὼ τι  
 ταῖσδ' ἐρέω· μῦθος δ' οὐκ ἐμός, ἀλλ' ἐτέρων. |

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“Inachos, mingling its waters with gold and flowers, will come from the nourishing mountains, bringing Athena her beautiful bath. But you, Pelasgian, beware lest unwitting you see the queen! Whoever sees Pallas, the keeper of our city, naked, will see Argos the very last time. Lady Athena, you come out; in the meantime, I will speak to these women. The story is not mine, but belongs to others.”

2. The narrative announced in these lines constitutes the second and longest part of the hymn: it is a cautionary tale about Tiresias, the famous Theban prophet, an episode from his youth. Once upon a time,<sup>20</sup> Athena befriended Tiresias' mother Chariclo, who used to accompany the goddess while she was roaming the landscape around Thebes. One day, the hapless Tiresias stumbled upon the goddess and her retinue while Athena was taking a bath. His punishment is swift and cruel: Tiresias loses his eyesight. His mother cries out in pain and criticizes the goddess for her merciless

14 See Harder [28:76].

15 On Callimachus' innovative use of narrative forms and voices, see Harder [29].

16 For the significance and tradition of the meter, see McKay [56:77–82]; Hunter [43:18–22]; Fantuzzi/Hunter [22:32–3, 193].

17 Hutchinson [47:33 n. 15] cautions against too ready an assumption that “Athena” in the poem refers exclusively to a statue: “The goddess is never referred to in the ceremony as a statue, and such lines as 17, 31 f., 53 f. demand the living body of the heavenly deity” (a similar point had already been made by Kleinknecht [49:224]). Heath [34:75 n. 10] speaks of “the dramatic fusion of the cult image and the goddess herself.”

18 On addresses to gods in Greek hymns, see Jacqueline Klooster's contribution in this volume.

19 The text is Pfeiffer's; the translation follows Bulloch's [9], but attempts at some places to stay closer to the Greek original, sacrificing Bulloch's elegance.

20 On the significance of ποτα = ποτε, see Fantuzzi/Hunter [22:192–4].

behavior, but Athena points out that her son has been lucky: in the future, Aristaeus and his wife Autonoe would be happy if their son Actaeon were merely blinded by Artemis when he sees her in her bath unwillingly. His punishment will indeed be much worse: he will be torn to pieces by his own hunting dogs (ll. 107–9): πόσσα μὲν ἄ Καδμηϊς ἐς ὕστερον ἔμπυρα καυσεῖ, | πόσσα δ’ Ἄρισταῖος, τὸν μόνον εὐχόμενοι | παῖδα, τὸν ἀβατὰν Ἄκταίονα, τυφλὸν ἰδέσθαι. “‘How many offerings will Cadmus’ daughter later burn, how many Aristaeus, praying to see their only son, young Actaeon, blind!’”

3. After this narrative, the hymn closes with a brief epilogue of three distichs, an announcement that the goddess is now really on her way, and a closing prayer that she may be kind upon Argos and her inhabitants (ll. 137–42):

ἔρχετ’ Ἀθαναία νῦν ἀτρεκές· ἀλλὰ δέχεσθε  
τὰν θεόν, ὃ κῶραι, τῶργον ὅσαις μέλεται,  
σύν τ’ εὐαγορία σύν τ’ εὐγμοισι σύν τ’ ὀλολυγαῖς.  
χαῖρε, θεά, κάδευ δ’ Ἄργεος Ἰναχίω.  
χαῖρε καὶ ἐξελάοισα, καὶ ἐς πάλιν αὖτις ἐλάσσαις  
ἵππων, καὶ Δαναῶν κλᾶρον ἅπαντα σάω.

“Athena is now really arriving, so greet the goddess, maidens, whose task this is, with acclamation, with prayers and with joyous cries. Hail, goddess, look after Inachian Argos. Hail as you drive out, and as you drive back in again your horses, and protect the entire Argive estate.” |

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The type of ritual which the hymn alludes to (but never clearly describes) is known from inscriptions and testimonies for a number of female deities; in particular, it resembles the Athenian ceremony of *Plynteria*, in which a statue of Athena was stripped of its dress and its jewelry, bathed in the sea, and then presented with a new ceremonial dress and taken back to its temple in a festive procession.<sup>21</sup> Most scholars assume that there was a similar ritual in the city of Argos. Callimachus’ readers are not necessarily expected to bring more than a general knowledge about similar ceremonies to the text;<sup>22</sup> there are no aspects of the text which presuppose precise knowledge of topical details. However, it is striking that we have absolutely no evidence of such a ritual at Argos except for this hymn. This has motivated Hunter to make the heretic suggestion that the entire ceremony may be a figment of Callimachus’ imagination, that this is just a fantasy world so our author could show off his knowledge of the Doric dialect and of a somewhat arcane myth.<sup>23</sup> While we will never be able to prove this assumption, it strikes me as being fascinating and plausible. Alluding to a ritual that did not actually exist may seem too modernist a device of almost Borgesian quality, but given what we know about Hellenistic literature and about the many ways in which it played with its readers’ expectations, it would not be completely impossible. Hence, let us temporarily entertain this nagging doubt about the existence of a reality behind (or below) the text: maybe the text is all there is.

One could argue that the uncertainty we feel about the existence of the Argive ritual reflects the social reality of Callimachus as an author and of his readers as an audience. For us, Argos is a place far remote in time and space; we only have access to its reality through the medium of texts (or images). Callimachus writes for a readership in Alexandria, but also in many other places of the huge Hellenistic world. For many of those readers, “Argos” was no more than the name of a prestigious

21 See Bulloch [9:8–12]; cf. Manakidou [54:351 with n. 3].

22 Against Bulloch [9:8, 16] that readers may have had at least some knowledge of the Argive ceremony and that our modern attempts at understanding the poem may be hampered by our lack of information, see Hunter [43:13–4].

23 Hunter [43:14]. Hopkinson [38:3–4] had already made a similar suggestion for the sixth hymn: “This is a disconcerting effect: the setting is ‘real’ in so far as we in imagination make it so; but attempts to pinpoint an exact locale only confirm the success of an illusion.”

179 old city somewhere in mainland Greece, a city whose myths and history they knew through the  
 180 medium of texts (or images), but which they had never seen themselves. Callimachus himself is  
 unlikely to have had first-hand knowledge of religious life in Argos;<sup>24</sup> for him as well, this ritual was  
 just something he had read about in one of the many book scrolls in the Alexandrian Library, in  
 some poetical and/or historical account about Argos.<sup>25</sup> Just two or three centuries earlier, poets wrote  
 songs which would most likely be performed at the festivals of their own city-states, and many of  
 them would participate in these performances. For the poet and for his audience, there could not be  
 any doubt about the existence of extratextual referents. In Callimachus' times, however, the supposed  
 Argive ritual had no certain existence outside of books and libraries. It is thus no coincidence that  
 the ritual in our *Hymn* has such a shadowy existence. By confining it to the peripheral vision of the  
 public, by refusing to provide a clear and unequivocal view of what is going on, Callimachus may  
 be making a sly reference to this social reality (and this reading works equally well if the ceremony  
 existed and if it is wholly invented): to the extent that Greek traditions became relocatable and  
 universal in the Hellenistic world, their existence became more and more “textualized.”<sup>26</sup>

On a formal level, our hymn is an example of the so-called mimetic poem, a form which is common  
 in Hellenistic literature.<sup>27</sup> Morrison gives a good description of this type of poem:<sup>28</sup> “[...] the narrator  
 appears to be a participant in a religious rite, rather than being identified as the conventional narrator  
 of a hymn [...], and we as readers are given the sense of watching a religious festival in progress.” The  
 salient feature of this type of poem is the mixture of dramatic and narrative elements. Like other  
 narrative texts, mimetic texts are delivered by a fictional speaker (or several speakers), but instead  
 of presenting a narration about past events, they gesture towards an action which unfolds as this  
 speaker delivers her or his speech. These developments usually are not narrated or described directly,  
 but are only alluded to; the audience must deduce the main action from these allusions. Mimetic  
 poems thus provoke reflections on the relation between narration and reality, between the text and  
 the reading experience. |

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 181 The use of this mimetic form thus touches upon a number of topics which are at the core of  
 a discussion about metalepsis. (1) Mimetic texts make their recipients question their assumptions  
 about the hierarchy of event and narration. Unlike most other forms of narrative, mimetic texts  
 do not even pretend that the extratextual action precedes its narration in time.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, readers  
 are never allowed a clear view of what is going on, but must, as it were, constantly squint to get a  
 glimpse of the main events. (2) Hence, mimetic texts present a challenge to their audience; recipients  
 are not merely asked to believe in the ‘reality’ of the depicted world, they are actually witnessing the  
 creation of this world in discourse. They are thus invited to contemplate the complex relationship  
 between world and text, between words and their real or imagined referents. Mimetic texts, then,  
 are prime examples of ‘laying bare the device’ of fictional narrative; by drawing their audience’s

24 Even if we do not accept fr. 178.32–3 as being strictly autobiographical (as Bulloch [9:4] with n. 1 seems inclined to do), we have to keep in mind that there is not a shred of evidence for Callimachus ever going to mainland Greece; cf. Morrison [59:213–4]. On Callimachus’ “imaginary Greece,” see Asper [4:160–70].

25 For speculations about the (lost) prose sources, see Bulloch [9:16–7].

26 But see n. 31 below.

27 The standard account is Albert [2]; cf. McKay [56:56–8]; Morrison [59:109–15, 245–7]; on the mimetic element in Callimachus’ *Hymns*, see Harder [30]. Hunter [43:12 n. 8] and Morrison [60:29 n. 15] have some qualms about the term, but it has now become established.

28 Morrison [60:29].

29 See Pier/Schaeffer [62:14]: “Metalepsis seems to be particularly important for understanding the specific nature of fictional narrative compared to factual narrative. It is a device reserved for fictional narrative, yet at the same time, it lays bare the paradoxical communicative situation which is characteristic of fiction: by short-circuiting the boundary between the world of the narration and the narrated world, it emphasizes the fact that in fictional narrative, unlike in factual narrative, the narrated world is ontologically dependent upon the act of narration which creates it” (my translation). Cf. Wagner [76:250]; on the importance of temporal relations in metalepsis, see Häsner [33:16–20].



attention to the creation of a fictional world, they prevent readers and listeners from assuming an unproblematic, simplistic model of textual representation. (3) Mimetic texts heighten their public's awareness of questions of mediality. As we have seen, the Hellenistic age was the period when the gradual movement from a predominantly oral culture to full literacy reached its decisive phase.<sup>30</sup> The mimetic form is a way of negotiating this transition: it incorporates the old occasional, oral, or ritual frame into the text, thus making it a con-text instead of an extratextual setting. With a bit of exaggeration, we might formulate: in 550 BCE, people in Greece went to the market place or to the temple and listened to a singer or a chorus perform for the gods; in 250 BCE, they sat in an armchair and read a poem about a singer performing a song for the gods.<sup>31</sup> It is this immensely important | transition in media which must have contributed to raising the general awareness of diegetic levels and boundaries:<sup>32</sup> the absence of the living voice of the performer drew attention to the separation between narrator and narration.

When we look at our *Hymn*, we see these factors at work. We are never told explicitly that the ceremony is really taking place, that Athena's statue is indeed being driven to the river Inachus; however, we get a strong sense that *something* is happening, that things are developing (the word μέσφα "in the meantime" in l. 55 is a strong signpost: in the meantime *of what?*<sup>33</sup>). But since we are never explicitly told what is happening, we become aware that our reconstruction may rest on a fragile base, that our understanding of the words may be wrong. This sense of doubt and bewilderment is heightened by the end of the *Hymn*: the speaker has repeatedly asked Athena to appear (ll. 2, 33, 43, 55) and assured the audience that her arrival is imminent (l. 3, 14), so readers may expect that after the intermezzo of the Tiresias narrative, Athena will at last arrive – but even now, the goddess has not come yet; she is simply again announced as "really arriving."<sup>34</sup> This is an element that *The Bath of Pallas* shares with the *Hymn to Apollo*, in which Apollo's arrival is also announced repeatedly, but is not narrated in the text.<sup>35</sup> This frustration of our expectations is entirely in line with the content of the poem: we have been told that no male viewer may ever behold Athena and that horrible punishment will ensue, should this happen (ll. 51–6). The text thus makes sure that its readers (if they happen to be male) will not actually 'see' the goddess.<sup>36</sup> We walk away from the text with more questions than answers: did something take place, except for the speech-act itself? If so, what? And how do we know? |

Mimetic texts introduce at least one secondary narrator and focalizer. In most mimetic poems,

30 A vivid and insightful analysis of this process can be found in Goldhill [24:223–5].

31 For the sake of contrast, I give a much reduced and simplified image both of archaic and of Hellenistic poetry and their respective social setting. I am in complete agreement with Morrison [59:109–15], who argues persuasively that these mimetic tendencies of Hellenistic poetry are already visible in a number of archaic texts. On the other hand, I want to emphasize that religious ceremonies continued to take place in the Hellenistic period, and texts continued to be performed. As Peter von Möllendorff rightly points out, it is this 'double vision' which must have been especially fascinating for Hellenistic readers: since they had first-hand experience of choral performances and religious ritual, they must have perceived the depiction and incorporation of such performances in written texts as an invitation to compare both experiences and to reflect on the ontological status of poetical discourse.

32 There are perceptive remarks about these developments in Goldhill [25]. I have discussed some of the implications of this change of medium in Schmitz [68].

33 On the metaleptic potential of narrative formulae such as "in the meantime," see Häsner [33: 53–7].

34 L. 137 ἔρχεται Ἀθαναία νῦν ἄτροκέες. On the meaning of ἄτροκέες, see Bulloch [9:244]; Hutchinson [47:34] writes perceptively: "[...] the word ἄτροκέες 'in truth' ironically separates the world of the poem from reality." Irene de Jong helpfully points out that in the *Odyssey*, ἄτροκέως often serves as an introduction to a lying tale; with this word, "an Odyssean character stresses that he will tell the truth, only to proceed with a lie" (de Jong [16:355] on 14.192). Callimachus may have expected his readers to be familiar with these Homeric connotations of the word.

35 Vestrheim [75] has given an excellent interpretation of this feature in both hymns; see his conclusion (183): "[...] the poem is only a metaphorical epiphany, the actual epiphany is beyond its scope. [...] This is as close as we can come. The poem is our vision."

36 See Hunter [43:12–3].

the position and identity of the speaker are clearly defined; in our poem, however, this is not the case: the identity of the speaker and her or his position in the ritual remain elusive.<sup>37</sup> Superficially, the speaker appears to hold some official function at the ceremony since (s)he addresses the other participants in the ritual as “children” (παῖδες, l. 57) and thus assumes a position of authority; (s)he gives orders to the “bath-pourers” and to the general populace of Argos, and (s)he addresses the goddess in prayer. This invites readers to construct the role of the speaker as a priestess or a ‘master of ceremonies.’<sup>38</sup> In this case, the speaker should probably be a female for, as we are told, males were not allowed to participate in the ceremony. But not all elements of the text can be reconciled with this interpretation: why should an official at a festival tell the long story about Tiresias in ll. 57–136, which is introduced in such a casual manner? The voice in this passage clearly resembles the voice of the scholar-poet in other Callimachean poems. The speaker’s insistence that the tale (s)he is going to narrate is not her or his own invention, but a traditional story, is a typically Callimachean feature, the ‘Alexandrian footnote’;<sup>39</sup> critics have aptly compared fr. 612 “I sing nothing which is unattested” (ἀμάρτυρον οὐδὲν ἀείδω).<sup>40</sup> Seen in this light, the speaker would seem to be male because erudition and the public display of scholarly achievements are male areas in the context of Greek culture. It is certainly true, as Morrison has argued, that the ambivalent sex of the speaker reflects the sexual ambiguity of the goddess Athena celebrated in this *Hymn*. Athena is described at length as being a ‘masculine’ goddess:<sup>41</sup> she does not use perfumes or anointments which are typical of other women or goddesses, but a “manly olive oil” (ἄρσεν [...] ἔλαιον, l. 29).<sup>42</sup> |

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But what is more important for the question at hand: Callimachus crosses the boundaries between fictional secondary narrator and actual author when he gives the speaker traits which contemporary readers would connect with himself.<sup>43</sup> This is certainly metaleptical; however, as the speaker’s identity remains vague, this is not a metalepsis of the ‘shock and awe’ type, but more a playful hide-and-seek: the primary narrator/author leaves clues and traces pointing to his own identity on inferior levels of the narration. This is a feature which we will see in other areas of the poem as well.

Metalepsis is a device which depends on the existence of narrative framing: every transgression presupposes the existence of boundaries.<sup>44</sup> Extradiegetic narrators usually do not share the diegetic level on which their story ‘lives,’ and stories within stories multiply the boundaries and thus the opportunities to transgress them. As is the case with many Hellenistic texts, our hymn offers an elaborate structure of frames which we can illustrate in the following schematic diagram:

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The entire text is produced by the implied author Callimachus, who shares many features, but should not be confused with the historical person Callimachus of Cyrene.<sup>45</sup> He is a scholar and poet at the Library of Alexandria whose texts challenge their readers by their allusions and their intertextual play, by their use of traditional poetic material in a number of innovative ways, and by

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37 The following paragraph is heavily indebted to Morrison [60], who has proposed the interpretation I summarize here and who gives further bibliography on the question.

38 See the doxography at Heath [34:87].

39 The term has been coined by Ross [65:78].

40 See Fraser [23:1.657]; Manakidou [54:353]; Bulloch [9:161–2]; Hopkinson [39:116]; on fr. 612, see Meyer [57].

41 Hadjittofi [27] has argued that the Callimachean Athena shares traits with Aphrodite and that our hymn contains a number of allusions to the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, but her arguments do not carry conviction; in the text of our hymn, Athena and Aphrodite are opposed in their behavior in 21–5, as Heath [34:74] 74 points out; cf. Depew [15:419–21].

42 Cf. Depew [15:420–1]. As is well known, Tiresias was a sexually ambiguous figure himself. Callimachus does not mention the story of his sex change, but it may very well be that his contemporaries would remember this myth when they thought about the ambiguous gender of the speaker in this poem; cf. Morrison [60:42].

43 Morrison [59] aptly calls this feature ‘quasi-biography’; cf. especially 45–67, 212–5.

44 On the terminology of ‘narrative frame’ vs. ‘diegetic level’ and its implications, see Herman [35:135–6]; Malina [53:4–5].

45 See Schmitz [69:158–8]; Morrison [59:178–95].

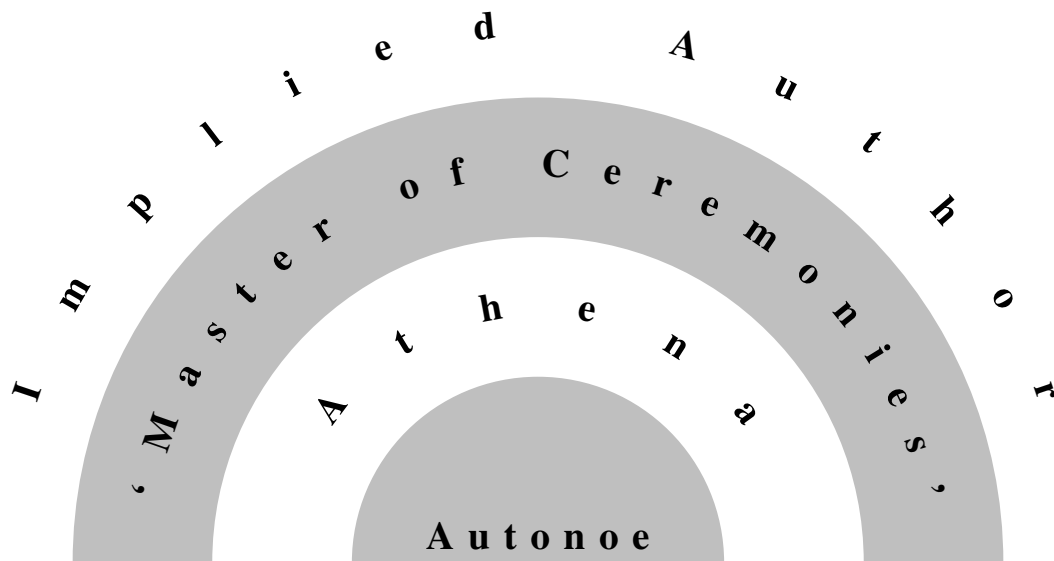


Figure 1.1 Speakers and narrators in the Bath of Pallas

their experiments with narrative voices and perspectives. This implied author creates, in the second narrative frame, our first-person narrator whose identity is so difficult to pinpoint; as we have seen, this is true in terms of gender and in terms of the role in the ritual which (s)he fulfills. This speaker narrates the mythical tale about the punishment of young Tiresias for seeing the goddess Athena in her bath. Within this tale, we find a further embedded narrative: in the dialogue between Chariclo and Athena, the goddess tells another tale of divine punishment, the story of Actaeon who is killed by his own dogs.<sup>46</sup> Within this story, we hear at least an echo of what will be the voice of Autonoe (whose name is not given in Callimachus' text), mother of Actaeon; even if she has only an indirect speech (in ll. 117–118, quoted below), she can be considered another narrator, nested even more deeply into the text.

In a playful reversal of normal narrative conventions, the story that Athena relates does not refer to the past, as is usually the case in mythological examples, but to the future: this *will* happen soon.<sup>47</sup> Another narrative complication can be found in the fact that both stories refer to each other and thus draw attention to their status as mythological paradigms (ll. 115–8):

τὰ δ' υἱέος ὄστέα μάτηρ  
 λεξείται δρυμῶς πάντας ἐπερχομένα·  
 ὀλβίσταν δ' ἔρεει σε καὶ εὐαίωνα γενέσθαι  
 ἐξ ὄρέων ἀλαὸν παῖδ' ὑποδεξαμένην.

“The mother will gather her son's bones, going round all the thickets. She will say that you are most blessed and happy because you received a blind son from the mountains.”

Autonoe will refer to Tiresias' story as a mythical example just as Athena refers to Actaeon's story; both narrations thus refer to each other in an endless series of mirrors. Again, this is a feature

46 There are good reasons to assume that Callimachus has adapted both tales to make the parallel between Tiresias and Actaeon more apparent; see Kleinknecht [49:253–8]; Heath [34:79–80]. If Depew [15] is right in assuming that Callimachus' hymn is alluding to a passage from the Hesiodic *Catalogue* in which the punishment of Actaeon was narrated, the shared traits between both stories may have been even clearer to his contemporary readers than they are to us.

47 This reversal of the usual conventions of narrative is again a procedure which is typical of Hellenistic texts; see Kleinknecht [49:252–3]; Bulloch [9:218] with n. 2; Heath [34:78] with n. 221.



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of Callimachus' text which challenges readers to question their assumptions about the stability of narrative framing: mythological paradigms usually function as a one-way street; speakers draw on mythical figures as analogies, counter-examples, or points of reference. In our case, however, the glass wall between the example and its application is broken down; as Athena and Chariclo watch their counterparts in the mythological story, they are in turn being watched by them.<sup>48</sup>

With these observations, we have already touched the most important theme of our hymn, vision and blindness. This is the central element which holds all narratives together:<sup>49</sup> because seeing Athena is strictly forbidden for males, the narrator tells the mythological tale about Tiresias; because Chariclo is shocked that her son has been blinded, Athena foretells the punishment of Actaeon. The motif of the male gaze on Athena is already present at the beginning of the poem, when Athena's aversion to all sorts of female cosmetics is described (ll. 18–20): the 'master of ceremonies' mentions the judgment of Paris, when Athena, Hera, and Aphrodite had to appear naked before the Trojan prince, another occasion when the male gaze brought misfortune to the viewer. When will Athena really appear? Who is allowed to see her? Who will actually see her? And what will be the consequences for him or her? These questions are central to reading and understanding our hymn.

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As we have seen, the main mythological example which serves as an illustration of this destructive gaze upon Athena is the story of young Tiresias, who stumbles upon the goddess in the mountains as she is taking a bath. In the beginning of the narrative proper (which puts readers into the slightly uncomfortable position of being peeping Toms themselves), Callimachus gives a masterful description of the scenery and the time of the day when this fateful encounter takes place; the syntax, with its repetitions of the semantic nucleus 'midday' and 'quiet on the hill' closely imitates what it is describing, the sultry atmosphere of a Mediterranean noon when nature appears to come to a standstill (ll. 70–74):<sup>50</sup> δὴ ποκα γὰρ πέπλων λυσαμένα περόνας | ἴππῳ ἐπὶ κρήνῃ Ἐλικωνίδι καλὰ ῥεοίσῃ | λῶντο· μεσαμβρινὰ δ' εἶχ' ὄρος ἄσυχία. | ἀμφοτέραι λῶντο, μεσαμβρινὰ δ' ἔσαν ὥραι, | πολλὰ δ' ἄσυχία τῆνο κατεῖχεν ὄρος. "For once, they had undone the pins from their robes and were taking a bath near the horse's fair-flowing fountain on mount Helicon. Midday quiet held the hill. Both were taking a bath, and it was the hour of midday, and deep quiet held this hill."

These lines are more than a mere description of trivial detail: midday is a critical time when gods are particularly likely to appear and when humans are in danger from such epiphanies. But there is even more to this time specification than is visible at first sight, as the next lines make clear: the geographical location of the encounter mentions Hippocrene, the "horse's fountain," which has been connected with the Muses ever since Hesiod had described it as their bath in the proem to his *Theogony* (ll. 5–7).<sup>51</sup> And we know that poets in Hellenistic time placed Hesiod's encounter with the Muses at midday.<sup>52</sup> The encounter between Tiresias and Athena thus does not take place at a random time or location, but it is especially marked as connected with the Muses and it carries with

48 Nonnus, in his late antique epic *Dionysiaca*, has Actaeon himself refer back to Tiresias and call him "blessed" at the moment of his death (5.337) because his punishment was less severe. In a passage which is full of allusions to our hymn, as Hopkinson [40:124] points out, Nonnus thus takes up Callimachus' account and lets his readers see the scene from the opposite angle. For Callimachean influence in Nonnus, see Stefani/Magnelli [71:557–62], with the bibliographical material given at 557 n. 92.

49 An additional layer of allusion may be added by the fact that the Argive Athena was known as "Oxyderkes" "the sharp-sighted," see Kleinknecht [49:221–2]; Hopkinson [39:112]. Bulloch [9:14–6] seems a bit too skeptical: "we should beware of assuming that Athena Oxyderkes [...] has any bearing on our text"; McKay [56:28–30] is overconfident in his own reconstruction. Moreover, there is an etymological pun in l. 91: Chariclo describes Tiresias as hunting δόρκας, a word which ancient etymology connected with δέρομαι "view," see Bulloch [9:202].

50 See Bulloch [9:177–8].

51 See Heath [34:82–3].

52 See Hunter [44:158], on Theocritus, *id.* 7.21; on the general significance of midday, see Kleinknecht [49:244–6]; McKay [56:38–9]; Bulloch [9:179–80]; Hunter [44:74].

it connotations of poeticality and literariness,<sup>53</sup> both in general terms and as a reference to particular texts.<sup>54</sup>

This connection of the Tiresias example with the poetic tradition is reinforced in the exchange between Athena and Chariclo: when the mother complains about the cruel punishment of her son, Athena makes three arguments in her own defense and as a consolation for Chariclo:<sup>55</sup> (1) what happened was ordained by the immutable ‘law of Cronus’ and is not subject to Athena’s will; (2) Tiresias can be considered lucky when compared to Actaeon, whose fate will be much worse; (3) Tiresias will receive a recompense from the goddess: he will be a prophet and will be able to interpret bird omens. It is this third argument which will interest us here (119–130):

ὦ ἑτάρα, τῷ μὴ τι μινύρεο· τῷδε γὰρ ἄλλα  
 τεῦ χάριν ἔξ ἐμέθεν πολλὰ μενεῦντι γέρα,  
 μάντιν ἐπεὶ θησῶ νιν ἀοίδιμον ἔσσομένοισιν,  
 ἧ̃ μέγα τῶν ἄλλων δὴ τι περισσότερον.  
 γνωσεῖται δ’ ὄρνιθας, ὅς αἴσιος οἳ τε πέτονται  
 ἦλιθα καὶ ποίων οὐκ ἀγαθαὶ πτέρυγες.  
 πολλὰ δὲ Βοιωτοῖσι θεοπρόπα, πολλὰ δὲ Κάδμω  
 χρησεῖ, καὶ μεγάλοις ὕστερα Λαβδακίδαις.  
 δωσῶ καὶ μέγα βάκτρον, ὃ οἱ πόδας ἐς δέον ἀξεῖ,  
 δωσῶ καὶ βιώτῳ τέρμα πολυχρόνιον,  
 καὶ μόνος, εὔτε θάνῃ, πεπνυμένος ἐν νεκύεσσι  
 φοιτασεῖ, μεγάλην τίμιος Ἄγεσίλῃ.

“My friend, do not cry: many gifts await him from me because of you, for I will make him a prophet who will be a subject of song to future generations, far superior to all others. He will recognize the birds, those who are auspicious and those that fly without purpose and those whose wings are ill-omened. Many prophecies will he make for the Boeotians, many for Cadmus and later for the great Labdakidans. And I will give him a great staff that will guide his feet the right way, I will give him a very long span of life, and he alone, after his death, will be conscious when he walks among the dead, honored by mighty Hagesilas.”

Athena mentions three specific contexts in which Tiresias will be active as a prophet: he will give divine counsel to Cadmus and to the children of Labdacus, and he will be the only human being who retains consciousness and reason even after his death. It is not difficult to see that Athena is here referring to three mythical situations which are well-known from Greek literature: (1) Tiresias’ connection with Cadmus is known from Euripides’ *Bacchae*, where Tiresias calls upon Cadmus to

53 See Heath [34:82–3].

54 The majority of scholars today accepts that the prologue to the *Aetia* was composed late in Callimachus’ life, though see the skeptical remarks in Lohse [52:41–3]; Cameron [10:104–18, 174–84]; Schmitz [69:159–61] (there is a good summary of the discussion up until 1996 in Massimilla [55:1.34–40]). If this is the case, and if the collection of *Hymns* was not written still later in Callimachus’ life (against attempts to establish an early date for *The Bath of Pallas* as suggested by, e.g., Fraser [23:1.656], see Bulloch [9:38–43], esp. 40–1 and 42 with n. 1), contemporary readers would have been unable to read our *Hymn* as an allusion to the *Aetia* prologue, which contained clear references to the poem of Hesiod’s *Theogony*, and which probably narrated an encounter between Callimachus and the Muses on mount Helicon, possibly at midday (see Hunter [45]). However, we must admit that the connection between the *Aetia* prologue proper and Callimachus’ dream as well as the question how far the dream narrative extended into the *Aetia* remain puzzling problems, not least because there are almost no readable fragments from this part of the poem; cf. Harder [31]; Cameron [10:119–32]; Massimilla [55:1.231–7].

55 I am not here concerned with the question whether Athena’s consolation is marked by “an imposing union of warmth and control” (Hutchinson [47:36]; cf. McKay [56:43–9]; Heath [34:81]), or whether it is tactless and grotesque (Morrison [60:36–8]; Morrison [59:166–7]; Depew [15:425]; Heyworth [36:154–5]).

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join him in celebrating the Dionysiac dance and warns Pentheus not to fight against the new god; (2) the connection with the children of Labdacus points to Tiresias' role in the myth of Oedipus, best known from Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone*, where he warns Oedipus and Creon and is the voice of truth; (3) his special role in Hades is of course a reference to the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, where Tiresias gives Odysseus information about his future adventures. What Athena is predicting for Tiresias in these lines, then, is his literary career, his survival in classical texts.<sup>56</sup> Looking at heroes (or gods) at a point in their life when their main exploits are still in the future is a favorite Hellenistic device; Callimachus himself gives a wonderful example in his third *Hymn*, where we see Artemis as a three-year-old sitting on the lap of the giant Brontes, plucking out hair from his chest; another case is Hercules in Theocritus, *id.* 24, where the hero is depicted as a baby, strangling the snakes sent by Hera to kill him. Tiresias is especially attractive for this sort of playful depiction because most of his literary appearances show him as an old man. Athena's speech emphasizes that he still has his most illustrious moments before him and thus approaches his mythical story as an Alexandrian poet would do. We are not stretching the evidence, then, when we say that in these lines, Athena appears as a literary scholar, as someone who has read her classics and knows the poetical tradition in which Tiresias will appear. Again, we notice that the seemingly clear boundaries between narrations and narrators become permeable; the Callimachean scholar, whom we saw appear in the guise of the 'master of ceremonies,' makes a second appearance as Athena. It is important to note the limits of this form of metalepsis: there is no violent breach of the narrative frames and borders, no actual appearance of narrators or characters on narratological levels on which they do not belong. Instead, we see a gradual assimilation of narrators and characters across boundaries, a masquerade which puts the apparent order of narrative frames into doubt.<sup>57</sup>

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This metaleptical and metapoetical reading of our passage is bolstered by the words ἀοίδιμον ἔσσομένοισιν "a subject of song to future generations" in l. 121. Superficially, these words can be understood as referring to Tiresias's future career as a character in poetry. But they possess an intertextual potential which conveys additional layers of significance to this passage. If there is a word in Greek literature which could be called a signpost for metalepsis, it would certainly be *aidimos*. When Callimachus used it in this passage, it already had a rich history and would alert readers to the special significance of this line. It occurs only once in the Homeric epics, in a remarkable passage which constitutes a metalepsis. In the *Iliad*, Helen refers to herself and her husband Paris as people who will be "a subject of song to future generations" (6.357–8): οἷσιν ἐπὶ Ζεὺς θῆκε | κακὸν μῶρον, ὥς καὶ ὀπίσσω | ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' ἀοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισι. "Zeus has put a bad fate upon us, so that even later we may be a subject of song to future generations."

This passage is a clear case of metalepsis in the oldest narrative text of the Western world:<sup>58</sup> Helen appears to be self-conscious about her role as a character in epic narrative. These Iliadic lines are not isolated, they can be compared to a number of passages in the *Odyssey* in which epic heroes demonstrate awareness of their status as literary characters.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, it is not a coincidence that these words are uttered by Helen: Helen plays a prominent, unsettling and ambiguous role both in the *Iliad* and in the *Odyssey*.<sup>60</sup> Readers of the *Iliad* had already seen her in the third book of the epic, weaving a tapestry that shows the sufferings of the Trojans and the Achaeans "which they endured for her sake at the hands of Ares" (3.126–8): Helen here is both the narrator of and an actor in her

56 See Heath [34:84–5].

57 This sort of metaleptical transgression can be compared to the "blending of voices" in epinician poetry analyzed in Irene de Jong's contribution to this volume.

58 See de Jong [17:195–8]; de Jong [18:98–9]; for an analysis of this sort of metalepses, see Häsner [33:72–81] on "transgressives Figurenbewußtsein," esp. 80 with n. 121 for examples in ancient literature (without reference to the Homeric passage).

59 See de Jong [16:219–20].

60 See Roisman [64]; de Jong [16:97], both with further bibliography.

own tale, an image of self-referential metapoetics.<sup>61</sup>

We find clear evidence for the assumption that Helen’s use of the phrase ἀοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισι “a subject of song for future generations” struck a chord with readers in antiquity. The word *aidimos* is used several times in passages with clear metapoetical reference. Simonides’ Plataea Elegy, which was recently discovered and first published from a papyrus in 1992,<sup>62</sup> compares the Spartans who fought at Plataea to the heroes of the Trojan War, or, to be more precise: to the heroes of the Homeric *Iliad*. Simonides makes a pointed reference to Homer’s use of *aidimos* (fr. 11.13–8 W):<sup>63</sup>

τοὶ δὲ πόλιν πέρσαντες ἀοίδιμον [οἴκαδ’ ἵκοντο  
 ]ων ἀγέμαχοι Δαναοί[,  
 οἷσιν ἐπ’ ἀθάνατον κέχυται κλέος ἀν[δροῶς] ἔκητι  
 ὃς παρ’ ἰοπλοκάμων δέξατο Πιερίδ[ων  
 πᾶσαν ἀληθείην, καὶ ἐπώνυμον ὄπ[λοτέρ]οισιν  
 ποίησ’ ἤμιθέων ὠκύμορον γενεή[ν. |

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“The Danaans returned home after destroying the city which is famous in song [*aidimon*]. They are bathed in immortal fame because of the man who had received from the dark-tressed Muses the entire truth, and he made the short-lived generation of demigods famous to younger men.”

When Simonides refers to Troy as being “famous in song,” *aidimon*, he is clearly pointing to the Homeric *Iliad*, as can be seen in the following lines where Homer is explicitly mentioned as the man “who had received the entire truth.” Moreover, Simonides seems again to refer to Helen’s ἀοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισι in l. 17, where he uses the metrically and semantically equivalent, but un-Homeric ἐπώνυμον ὄπ[λοτέρ]οισιν.<sup>64</sup> Simonides refers to this unique Homeric passage twice within a few lines, thus making clear that he has understood its metapoetical potential.<sup>65</sup> When Pindar, in one of his most self-conscious poems, the sixth *Paeon*, which gives an extended narrative of the capture of Troy, calls himself “the *aidimos* prophet of the Pierian [Muses]” (fr. 52f.6: ἀοίδιμον Πιερίδων προφάταν), this means more than merely “renowned,” as most translations have it: it is again an intertextual marker evoking the Homeric tradition of Trojan epic.<sup>66</sup>

It is thus plausible that Callimachus wanted to express much more than simply saying that Tiresias would be “famous” when he called him ἀοίδιμον ἔσσομένοισιν: these words constitute a clear intertextual pointer to a Homeric passage which had already engendered a rich literary tradition. Moreover, the word is pronounced by Athena, who is a narrator within a narrated narration (see above, figure 1). It is significant that Athena fulfills three narratological functions in the text: she is the subject of the *Hymn* (third person), she is addressed in the closing lines of the text in the second person, and she is the speaker of the central mythological exemplum (first person) who points to the future literary career of Tiresias. Callimachus thus appears to have made a playful inventory of

61 On Helen’s weaving, see Roisman [64:9–11].

62 The papyrus has elicited a good deal of scholarly attention; see Boedeker/Sider [8].

63 Not all supplements in West’s text are certain, but my argument does not depend on any disputed reading. The passage from Simonides has already been quoted by de Jong [17:195–6].

64 Ἐπώνυμον in the sense “famous” is unusual, and there is no exact parallel; nevertheless, I still see this as the most plausible meaning in our context, despite the arguments by Capra/Curti [11:29–30], accepted by Rutherford [66:179–80].

65 A form of *aidimos* occurs in a fragment from Stesichorus’ *Iliupersis* (S 103.5–6 PMGF), following a line which contains the name “Helen,” but the text does not permit any attempt at reconstruction. Euripides, *Trojan Women* 1244–5 does not use the word *aidimon*, but an equivalent expression when he has Hecuba say that if Troy had not been destroyed, “there would be no song about us, and we would not be a subject for the Muses of people in the future” (οὐκ ἂν ὑμνηθεῖμεν ἂν | μούσας ἀοιδὰς δόντες ὑστέρων βροτῶν). For more examples, see de Jong [18:98–9].

66 The Pindaric passage is quoted by Heath [34:84 n. 45].

191 all narrative possibilities in her character (just as he has integrated narratives about the present, the  
 ——— past, and the future into the *Hymn*). |

192 Let us conclude our analysis of Callimachus fifth *Hymn* by looking at one last element that  
 demonstrates the self-consciousness of Callimachean narratives. Athena announces that Tiresias will  
 be a famous seer. It is one of the fun facts of Greek mythology that the most famous bird-watcher was  
 actually blind. This is not Callimachus' invention; other writers before him had proposed solutions  
 to the riddle of how a blind man could observe bird omens.<sup>67</sup> The effect of Athena's punishment and  
 her compensation is that Tiresias will no longer have unmediated, direct access to reality; instead, he  
 will become an interpreter of signs; he will no longer *see* reality, but he will have intellectual access  
 to it (γνωσεῖται, 123). When we remember that the Greek word for reading is ἀναγιγνώσκειν, we  
 understand that Tiresias will become a reader of reality. And when we remember that reading and  
 textuality were at the core of our hymn, that its public had only textual, no direct access to the reality  
 of the Argive ritual, that the disembodied, ambiguous voice of the speaker was a purely textual  
 function, it is no exaggeration to say that Tiresias becomes an allegorical figure, an image of the  
 Hellenistic reader (and writer) – and it is difficult not to think of one of the greatest readers and  
 writers of the twentieth century, the blind librarian Jorge Borges (who, incidentally, was a master in  
 the art of metalepsis, both in the practice of his writing and in theoretical analysis).

In conclusion, we can say that Callimachus' Fifth *Hymn* contains a number of elements which  
 transcend the boundaries between narrative frames and levels and which can be termed 'metaleptic.'  
 Callimachus pretends to produce a strictly nested framework of narratives and narrators, yet if we  
 take a closer look, we detect that all narrators share interests with the implied author 'Callimachus':  
 they are keenly aware of the literary tradition, they point to precise intertexts, and they share his  
 scholarly interests and activities. The two mythological paradigms in the poem are structured as  
 a series of self-reflecting mirrors in which different diegetic levels are aware of and refer to each  
 other, thus breaking down the barriers between framing and framed narrative. Readers will perceive  
 the entire hymn as a challenge that makes them question their assumptions about the hierarchical  
 relation between reality and text: is reality merely produced by the text, or is the text a reflection  
 192 of any preexisting reality? Tiresias, the central character of the mythological narrative, is given the  
 ——— ability to decode signs in exchange for an unmediated access to reality; | he thus becomes an allegory  
 193 of reading, reminding the audience of their own situation when they try to come to terms with this  
 challenging text.<sup>68</sup>

It could be shown that similar strategies and procedures occur in many other works of Calli-  
 machus: in the *Aetia* with its complex framework of dream, dialogue with the Muses, and learned  
 discussion of recondite scholarship, or in his book of *Iambi* where the poet Hipponax, the classical  
 representative of the genre, comes back to life, yet the identity of the iambic speaker constantly  
 seems to be wavering between the resurrected Hipponax and the implied author Callimachus him-  
 self. And it could be shown that Callimachus is a particularly striking, but not atypical example of  
 tendencies which can be observed throughout Hellenistic poetry. But this is beyond the scope of this  
 contribution and would demand a big book, something Callimachus was not very fond of.

Callimachus and Hellenistic literature in general did not 'invent' metalepsis; as we have seen,  
 he referred to a Homeric passage which already contained this device and which had been quoted  
 by archaic and classical poets. Yet the new modes of 'writerly' production and 'readerly' reception  
 heightened the awareness of both authors and readers for this phenomenon. As the living voice of the  
 performer was gradually replaced by modes of reception dominated by books and reading, narrators  
 and narrations moved inside texts and created more opportunities for erecting and breaking down

67 See Bulloch [9:233]: some accounts say that his hearing was particularly sensitive, some have him rely on the help of others who describe the flight of birds.

68 See the analysis of "metapoetical metalepsis" in Ruurd Nauta's contribution to this volume.



barriers between diegetic levels. By connecting the metaleptic procedures in his text with a famous Homeric metalepsis, Callimachus shows that he is conscious both of these new opportunities and of their traditional precedents.

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