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**Children of Zeus in the *Homeric Hymns*
Generational Succession**

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This chapter explores how Zeus' displacement of his father Kronos in the succession myth of Hesiod's *Theogony* is reflected in *Homeric Hymns* honoring his offspring. It examines how the triangular structure of the mother and son united against the father, reiterated in three generations of the *Theogony* and leading to a 'revolution' in the first two cases—Kronos and Gaia against Ouranos, Zeus and Rhea/Gaia against Kronos—finds expression in *Hymns* to two of Zeus' offspring. In principle, unless the father and son reach a mutually beneficial accommodation, 'son' always entails a suppression of 'father'.¹ Both Athena and Apollo (in *Hymn* 28 and *Hymn* 3, and other archaic Greek texts) invert their father's narrative and end up as his staunch and reliable allies. Yet they both retain traces of an 'as if' narrative that reduplicates (at least in part) the life-story of Zeus as told primarily in Hesiod's *Theogony*.

At two moments in typical Greek hero tales and in the story of Zeus' coming to power a son confronts his father and either yields to him or challenges and often supplants him. One is at birth and the other at the peak of youth, which the Greeks call ἡβη (*hēbē*). The Homeric formula, 'when he reached the *metron hēbēs*', marks this second critical moment, while an oracle (predicting a confrontation, or the father's defeat at the hands of his son, or hatred of the one toward the other, or simply excess energy in either) marks the first. The following schema sets forth the plot sequence typical of tales of intergenerational strife; it includes variants at discrete moments in the chain of events:

1. The father sires a series of sons.
2. He hates and/or fears some of them.
 - a) because of their excessive manhood, size, or monstrosity (hybridity).
 - b) because he has learned from an oracle that one of them will displace him.
3. He tries to obliterate those dread sons

¹ Pucci (1992), drawing on Lacan, is particularly insightful on this point.

- a) by repressing (= obliterating) them.
 - b) by swallowing them as each is born.
 - c) by swallowing the pregnant mother.
4. With this act he dishonours/violates their mother.
 5. He also dishonours/violates the sons.
 6. The mother is enraged and in pain.
 7. She betrays her spouse
 - a) by enlisting the aid of their youngest son.
 - b) by rescuing the threatened son and instructing him to retaliate later, at the peak of youth (*hēbē*)
 8. The youngest son embraces her plan and punishes (= displaces) the father
 - a) by castrating him
 - b) by defeating him (or his generation) in battle.
 - c) he may receive aid from an ancestress (mother or grandmother)
 9. The victorious son becomes king, takes a bride, and sires sons.
 10. The defeated father may curse or threaten his youngest son or all his sons.
 11. The victorious son exiles or murders his father (= parricide)

Alternatively, the second half of the sequence can develop as follows:

- 6b. The mother betrays her spouse by saving a threatened son and instructing him to retaliate later at the peak of youth (*hēbē*).
- 7b. The rescued son grows up in hiding, away from his natal home
- 8b. At *hēbē* he returns to carry out his vengeance.
- 9b. He receives aid from an ancestress (mother or grandmother).
- 10b. He defeats his father (and his allies) in a war or other contest.
- 11b. He exiles or murders his father (= parricide).
- 12b. The victorious son gains the kingdom and a bride as queen.

Another alternative ending, instead of 9 b–12 b, is:

- 9c. The father defeats his son and eliminates him as a threat (through murder or exile).

10c. The father retains his kingdom and his wife as queen.

The plot sequence extracted from Hesiod's text for the succession myth reveals the two critical moments of tension between father and son: at the child's birth and at the peak of his youth. Zeus, for example, outstrips Kronos twice in his rise to power: at birth, when (aided by Gaia and Rhea and the trick of the swaddled stone) he avoids being ingested like his siblings, and at the peak of his youth, when he returns from Crete, wins the intergenerational Titanomachy, and banishes the vanquished Titans, including his own father, to Tartaros. Once Zeus is victorious, all the blessed gods (the Olympian victors), through the plans of Gaia, urge him to become king and to rule (*Th.* 881–5; cf. in the proem 112–13 and 72–4).

On his pathway to kingship, and even after his election as king, Zeus faces a series of challengers who would have usurped his kingship. These include: 1) Prometheus; 2) Typhoeus; and 3) a child of Metis.² In the 'life-history' of these last two challengers—Typhoeus and the unnamed, unborn son—their birth (or anticipated birth) is marked as menacing to Zeus: Typhoeus immediately challenges Zeus and Metis' son never gets that opportunity (since he is never conceived, much less born).

In the *Homeric Hymns* to Athena (28) and Apollo (3) these two critical moments of potential conflict are collapsed into one, the moment of 'arrival'. In both cases, tensions rise and are marked by divine or cosmic disorder. While Apollo's parents, Leto and Zeus, diffuse the aggression of their bow-armed son, Athena dispels tension by disarming herself and thus making her father Zeus rejoice. In Apollo's case, the aggressive energy or impulse to attack is translated into his struggles against females and monsters, while Athena channels her energy through heroes she supports and, in *Hymn* 11, through citizens at war.

Among Zeus' own divine offspring, Athena and Apollo 'inherit' the revolutionary trait from their progenitors. Each one *could*, in principle, undermine cosmic order. Yet in different ways, and for different reasons, each overcomes or redirects any such tendencies, becoming in the end a supporter of the cosmic order over which Zeus will continue to preside. In each case, the avoidance or resolution

² On the Prometheus and Typhoeus episodes as part of the theogonic tale, see Vergados (2007), 51–4.

of conflict allows the fourth-generation offspring to take up his or her place in the now fully established order of things and to assume an appropriate identity without seriously challenging the position of the one whose signal epithet, ‘father of gods and men’ (πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε), denotes his supreme patriarchal authority.

Gaia, as primal mother, has a decisive role in the succession myth of the *Theogony* even after she sanctions the rule of Zeus, and this maternal role provides a model for one subset of mothers of potentially rebellious sons. Gaia, as a bivalent figure, functions in two incompatible capacities, as both an enemy and a friend of order.³ As a character in the story she has her own personal goals and plans, according to which she acts as a helper or an obstructor, combining disorderly traits with a need for security and stability. On the one hand, she has monstrous qualities, like several of her Ancient Near Eastern prototypes.⁴ Gaia expresses her monstrosity through the products of her womb, most notably the Cyclopes, the Hundred-Handers, and finally Typhoeus. She is frequently called ‘monstrous Earth’ (Γαῖα πελώρη; *Th.* 159, 173, 479, 821, 858; cf. 505, 731, 861) and the implement with which she has Kronos castrate Ouranos shares that epithet (179: πελώριον ... ἄρπην, ‘monstrous sickle’). At the same time, Gaia’s order-loving side informs her actions for most of the poem, until Zeus defeats her last monstrous offspring Typhoeus. For one thing, Gaia knows the future: she is the source of prophecies, especially those having to do with future kings. Moreover, right after she comes into being, Gaia is the stable seat for two constituencies, the celestial (Olympian) and the chthonic gods:

...αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

Γαῖ’ εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἕδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
ἀθανάτων οἳ ἔχουσι κάρη νιφόεντος Ὀλύμπου,
Τάρταρά τ’ ἠερόεντα μυχῷ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης (*Th.* 116–19)

‘But then Gaia the broad-breasted, the ever unshakable seat of all the immortals who possess the peaks of snowy Olympos

³ Mondi (1984), 334 comments that it is ‘useless to try to make synchronic sense out of the shifting allegiances of Gaia in the various episodes of the *Theogony*’.

⁴ On Gaia’s relation to her Mesopotamian precursors see West (1966), 25–30 and Penglase (1994) 103–4 and 189–90.

and murky Tartaros in the recess of the broad-pathed earth...⁵

The phrase ‘ever unshakeable seat’ (ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ) is a metaphor for an evolved, stable state of the cosmos. As she evolves from ‘then’ to ‘now’ time, Gaia is fundamentally tied to cosmic stability: as a character in the story, she is both committed to it and particularly sensitive to disturbances of it. In a sense, then, her purpose and the direction of the poem are one and the same. She is a kind of temporal glue persisting across generational orders.

As time moves forward in the succession plot, Gaia relinquishes some of her initial power. When she parthenogenetically produces Ouranos equal to herself, in her first act of creation, there is a gap between her intention, expressed in two sequential purpose clauses, and what almost immediately transpires:

Γαῖα δέ τοι πρῶτον μὲν ἐγείνατο ἴσον ἑωυτῇ
 Οὐρανὸν ἀστερόενθ', ἵνα μιν περὶ πάντα καλύπτῃ,
 ὄφρ' εἴη μακάρεσσι θεοῖς ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ (Th. 126–8)

‘Gaia first of all bore, equal to herself,
 starry Ouranos, so that he might cover her on every side,
 in order that he/there would be an ever unshakable seat for the blessed gods.’

The first purpose clause, ‘so that he might cover her on every side’ (ἵνα μιν περὶ πάντα καλύπτῃ), indicates Gaia’s intention, capturing her focalization (what she sees or visualizes) as she implements her plan: she produces Ouranos expecting that they will be commensurate (symmetrical and equal) and knowing that, on her own, she cannot maintain cosmic order. Yet the connotations of the verb καλύπτῃ exceed Gaia’s vision: to ‘cover’ can also mean to ‘bury’, to ‘eclipse’. Thus she is mistaken in believing that the presence of Ouranos equal to herself will stabilize the cosmos. As it turns out, the fact that that Ouranos is ‘equal to herself’ is the source of their eventual conflict. On a physical level, the image of Sky covering or roofing over Earth, both having identical dimensions, invokes a stable form. It is also an

⁵ Translations of Hesiod are my own. Those of the *Hymns* are by Rayor (2004).

anthropomorphic image of coitus, with the traditional ‘male on top’, thus implying male domination and female subordination.⁶

The translation of the second purpose clause is problematic: is the subject of εἶη (‘would be’) Ouranos, which seems most natural, or Gaia herself;⁷ or could εἶη even be existential, ‘so that there would be an ever immovable seat for the blessed gods’? If the subject is Ouranos, then Gaia is relegating to her son and first mate half of her initial prerogative to be the ever immovable seat for Olympian and chthonic gods. Now *he* is to be that stable seat for the blessed gods who inhabit Olympus—the μακάρεσσι θεοῖς—while she retains that prerogative for the chthonic gods who inhabit Tartarus.⁸

Gaia’s belief that stability will require a male consort accounts not only for her production of Ouranos equal to herself but also for her successive support of one male entity after another to be the ruler of gods and men. She consistently expects the right king to maintain order and stability. With this in mind, she acts, time and again, to tip the balance in favour of one potential male ruler or another. She also encounters one disappointment after another. As a character in the story (and not as the first prophetess), Gaia is neither clairvoyant nor perspicacious. She herself evolves over time, at first producing the Cyclopes and Hundred-Handers with no particular forethought, but later giving birth to Typhoeus out of exasperation: she is enraged because Zeus’ lightning and thunderbolts have devastated her and disturbed the other elements within the universe, the sky and the seas.

⁶ Cf. Lakoff and Johnson (1980), 14–21 on ‘orientation metaphors’, such as up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, and central-peripheral. They have to do with spatial orientation.

⁷ To translate 128, ‘so that she would be...’, as in Most (2006), requires a difficult change of subject; a more natural subject of εἶη is Ouranos, the subject of the preceding verb καλύπτωι (see West [1966], 198). But an existential translation, as I have proposed, makes sense as well, since Gaia’s capacity to remain a stable seat forever is intimately tied to the existence of such a stable seat. The goal of ensuring such stability is projected forward into the ‘now’ time of the poem.

⁸ In any case, Gaia expects to retain to the end of time (αἰεὶ) the value she has from her birth, not on her own but through the anticipated stabilizing existence of Ouranos.

Although hatred between generations is most intensely expressed as hatred between father and son,⁹ in Hesiod's *Theogony* 'monstrous Gaia' helps create the conditions for such mutual hatred—in part by producing dread children (δεινὰ τέκνα), in part by fueling competition between an existing male power, such as Ouranos, and new creations who might vie for the position of king of gods and men. For example, enraged at Ouranos for keeping some of their offspring in her recesses, she incites the young Kronos to castrate his father. Here, as often, hatred between father and son may already have existed, but Gaia helps ignite it.

In the *Theogony*, δεινός ('dread') marks a child (τέκνον) as menacing to its parents. The adjective reflects the focalization of the vulnerable and replaceable father, to whom, in particular, an offspring appears to be dread.¹⁰ The superlative 'most dread of children' (δεινότατος/-οι παίδων) depicts Kronos at 138 and certain offspring of Gaia and Ouranos at 154 (ὅσοι...Γαίης τε καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἐξεγένοντο).¹¹ This derogatory adjective is regularly used as well for monsters within and outside the poem, deformed creatures that threaten cosmic order. Along with synonyms

⁹ The emotion of hatred permeates tales of intergenerational conflict. Hatred of a father motivates a son's act of aggression—as in the case of Kronos' castration of Ouranos or Zeus' defeat of Kronos in the Titanomachy. A father's hatred for his offspring is often proleptic: he especially hates the son predicted to dislodge him, the one he expects to usurp his throne. Aggression between fathers and sons often involves damaging their respective bodies or banishing and relocating the loser in the contest. The struggle determines who will occupy (and monopolize) the seat of power—who, as king, will wield the scepter, assign tasks and prerogatives to his subordinates, and mediate quarrels, and who will have superior bodily strength/energy (ἀλκή/μένος). Zeus' body is augmented by the accoutrements of thunder and lightning—metonymic extensions of his embodied self.

¹⁰ The use of δεινότατος/-οι ('dread') for rebellious or overly powerful sons underscores their potential to harm the father's domain or realm or indeed (as for Ouranos) his very body. These designations align despised or despicable sons with the brood of monsters, deformed enemies of cosmic order for whom the adjective δεινός ('dread') is regularly used, often accompanied by a string of adjectives.

¹¹ The relative ὅσοι ('as many as') probably designates only the Hundred-Handers and the Cyclopes but not the first brood of Titans. Yet this interpretation remains problematic, especially if one locates the hiding place (λόχος) from which Kronos ambushes and castrates his father (174, 178) inside the recesses or womb of mother Earth.

such as ἄπλητος (‘unapproachable’), this derogatory adjective is regularly used as well for monsters within and outside the poem, oversized, often deformed creatures that threaten cosmic order; in particular, the descendants of Phorcys and Ceto (*Th.* 270–336). The use of δεινός to describe potential usurpers as well as genuine monsters aligns both types of disrupters of order in the same paradigmatic set. While some ‘dread children’ (δεινὰ τέκνα) are literally monstrous (the Hundred-Handers, Typhoeus, hybrid creatures); for others their ‘monstrosity’ indicates their anticipated rebellion against their father or against the king. The designation of Kronos and the second and third of Ouranos’ broods as ‘most dread’ points to their capacity to wreak havoc, destabilize the cosmos, and usurp whatever power (or license) is held by their father Ouranos.

The last of the challengers of Zeus in the third generation of the succession myth is also a ‘dread’ (δεινός) creature—Typhoeus—the youngest (ὀπλότατος) and final offspring of Gaia after she mates with Tartaros through golden Aphrodite (820–52). Like his older half-siblings, especially the Hundred-Handers, Typhoeus is monstrous in his deformed body, with a hundred heads of a dread serpent (δεινοῖο δράκοντος) coming from his shoulders (824–5). Moreover, the hypothetical statement, ‘he would have ruled over the mortals and immortals, had not the father of men and gods taken note’ (καί κεν ὃ γε θνητοῖσι καὶ ἀθανάτοισιν ἄναξεν, | εἰ μὴ ἄρ’ ὄξυ νόησε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, 837–8), designates Typhoeus as an ‘almost-usurper’. In this respect he resembles and is in the same set as Kronos and Zeus.

Gaia, in the end, values not random disorder but political and cosmic stability, which explains her active role in the succession myth: ultimately, at her urging, the gods elect Zeus king.¹² She comes to fully support him in the belief, never stated outright, that, under him, there will be stability. Before that, Gaia in

¹² This election precedes Gaia’s production of Typhoeus, which, in a synchronic reading, can be understood either as Gaia having second thoughts about Zeus’s capacity to rule or, perhaps, as Gaia wishing to present Zeus with one last challenge to overcome. In the story and as a character, the former is more plausible. Hesiod exerts great effort to legitimize Zeus’ kingship and affirm the principle that Zeus will never be overthrown. The perpetuation of Zeus’ hegemony must have had an important political function in archaic Greek society. On Gaia’s motivations in the *Theogony*, see Clay (2003), 26–7 with n. 43.

the *Theogony* is the prototypical mother who supports a son against a powerful and unjust father.

Theogonic elements lurking beneath the surface of the *Homeric Hymns* to Athena and Apollo help underscore the vast gap between the early days of Olympian ‘history’ and its later denouement, a gap that Clay articulates when she writes:

‘Between theogonic poetry and epic there remains a gap, one that is filled by the Olympian narratives of the longer hymns. The major hymns, then, serve to complete the Olympian agenda and provide the clearest account of ... the politics of Olympus.’¹³

In the case of *Hymn 28* to Athena, as Càssola puts it in his commentary, ‘the tradition received by the rhapsode contaminates the myth of Athena with a myth of divine succession’.¹⁴

I. ATHENA: *Hymn 28*

Athena’s birth, as recounted in *Hymn 28* and in a few other ancient sources, notably Pindar’s *Olympian 7* (35–8), is a disruptive cosmic event.¹⁵ She is fourth in the patriline that extends from Ouranos to Kronos to Zeus. As such, she shares a set of parents with the son who would have supplanted Zeus as king of the cosmos, had he been born (*Th.* 897–9). In this section, I will first demonstrate the presence of the usurper trait in Athena and then explore the manifold ways in which she differs from other divine offspring that threaten the cosmos. Using selected passages from Hesiod’s *Theogony* and Homer’s *Iliad*, Book 8, I will show how deeply *Hymn 28* is

¹³ Clay (1989), 15 argues plausibly that ‘the hymns fill a gap between Hesiod’s *Theogony*, which depicts the conflicts of the older gods and Zeus’s rise to power, and the settled Olympian pantheon of Homeric epic, where Zeus’s supremacy is assured and conflicts between gods are confined to squabbling’.

¹⁴ Càssola 419: ‘la tradizione accolta dal rapsodo contamina il mito di Atena con un mito di successione divina.’

¹⁵ On Athena’s birth in full panoply, see AHS 424–5; Penglase (1994), 230–6; and Deacy (2008), 21–5 and cf. Pindar’s account (*Ol.* 7. 38), where Hephaestus delivers the goddess, and Sky and Mother Earth react to her birth with voiceless agitation and absolute immobility.

imbued with cosmogonic and theogonic conflicts and how Athena evolves in the course of that short *Hymn* to become her father's powerful ally. *Hymn* 11 captures her as she has evolved into a 'defender of cities' (ἐρυσίπολις). In that capacity, she will channel her extraordinary force toward positive and orderly ends for the host of citizens she protects as they come and go (*Hy.* 11. 4: ἐρρύσατο λαὸν ἰόντα τε νισόμενόν τε). This civic role is in line with her traditional support of heroes against their (often monstrous) enemies.¹⁶

Athena's power for good develops precisely from the fact that, had not Zeus swallowed her pregnant mother and given birth to her as his own, and had she not exhibited self-restraint, she would have undermined his power. In her unrealized narrative, she would have replicated what, in previous generations, Zeus did to Kronos and Kronos to Ouranos: displaced her father.

In Hesiod's account Zeus has been elected king of the gods when he takes his first wife, Metis:

Ζεὺς δὲ θεῶν βασιλεὺς πρώτην ἄλοχον θέτο Μῆτιν,
 πλεῖστα θεῶν εἰδυῖαν ἰδὲ θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων.
 ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ ἄρ' ἔμελλε θεὰν γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην
 τέξεσθαι, τότε ἔπειτα δόλω φρένας ἔξαπατήσας
 αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν ἔην ἐσκάτθετο νηδύν,
 Γαίης φραδμοσύνησι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος·
 τὼς γὰρ οἱ φρασάτην, ἵνα μὴ βασιληίδα τιμὴν
 ἄλλος ἔχοι Διὸς ἀντὶ θεῶν αἰειγενετῶν.
 ἐκ γὰρ τῆς εἵμαρτο περίφρονα τέκνα γενέσθαι·
 πρώτην μὲν κούρην γλαυκῶπιδα Τριτογένειαν,
 ἴσον ἔχουσαν πατρὶ μένος καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν,
 αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' ἄρα παῖδα θεῶν βασιλῆα καὶ ἀνδρῶν
 ἤμελλεν τέξεσθαι, ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ ἔχοντα·
 ἄλλ' ἄρα μιν Ζεὺς πρόσθεν ἔην ἐσκάτθετο νηδύν,
 ὡς οἱ συμφράσσαιτο θεὰ ἀγαθόν τε κακόν τε. (*Th.* 886–900)

'Zeus, king of the gods, took Metis (Wisdom) as his first wife,

¹⁶ Athena supports winners, like Heracles, Theseus, and Bellerophon, against monstrous adversaries, according to Willcock (1970), 6.

she being the most wise of gods and mortal men.
 But right when she was about to give birth to the goddess, bright-eyed Athena, then, after
 deceiving her mind through cunning
 and with guileful words, he put her into his belly,
 by the crafty plans of Earth and of starry Sky;
 for this was how they had declared it to him, lest
 another of the eternally living gods should have the kingly honour instead of Zeus.
 For it was destined that exceedingly wise children would be born of her:
 first she would give birth to a maiden, bright-eyed Tritogeneia,
 owning strength equal to her father and sound counsel,
 and then she would give birth to a son, a king of gods and of men,
 with an extremely violent heart.
 But before that could happen Zeus put her into his belly,
 so that the goddess would advise him about good and evil.’

Here Hesiod highlights the joint role of Gaia and Ouranos in counseling Zeus, with the use of φραδμοσύνησι (‘by their cunning plans’, 891) and its cognate φρασάτην (‘the two of them declared/advised’, 892). The purpose clause introduced by ἵνα (‘lest some other one of the eternally living gods hold the kingly honor instead of Zeus’, 892–3) indicates that, at this juncture, they both support Zeus’ remaining in power. The prophecy itself is given in indirect discourse. It pairs Athena and her potential younger brother, designating them both as exceedingly wise children (περίφρονα τέκνα). That they are both in the prophecy and that the prophecy motivates Zeus to swallow Metis pregnant with Athena mark Athena too as a potential threat, like other children (τέκνα) in prophecies. Moreover, the positive term περίφρονα (‘wise’) applies to the brother as well, who, as we soon learn (897), is destined to become king. At 895–6 the two are differentiated: the maiden Tritogeneia, first born, will possess ‘might equal to her father’ and sound counsel, while her brother, whom Metis ‘was going to bear as king of gods and men’, will possess ‘a very violent heart’, like the Cyclopes at 139 (ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ ἔχοντας, ‘having overweening hearts’) and the Hundred-Handers at 149 (ὑπερήφανα τέκνα, ‘overbearing children’). Though the two participial clauses, introduced by ἔχουσιν (896) and ἔχοντα (898) respectively, distinguish the siblings sharply from one another, the equation of Athena’s strength (μένος, 896) with her father is surprising and arresting, especially if we recall that Gaia produced Ouranos ‘equal to herself’.

This ‘equality’ seems to invite competition. Should we imagine that, despite being female, being born from Zeus’ head and having sound counsel (ἐπίφρονα βουλήν), Athena could have held the kingly honor instead of Zeus? This (and this alone) would explain why Zeus swallows Metis as she is about to give birth to Athena and why he feels the need to usurp the prerogative of the female womb.

Moments of theogonic tension in Homeric epic look back to Zeus’ victories over his predecessors, which must have been part of the extensive oral poetic tradition. The *Iliad*, in particular, preserves traces of dissent which threatens to disrupt the cosmic order now consolidated under Zeus’ kingship, despite the general truth that ‘the Homeric poems show us the fully perfected and stable Olympian pantheon in its interaction with the heroes,’ while ‘the *Theogony* reveals the genesis of the Olympian order and ends with the triumphal accession to power of Zeus’.¹⁷ A brief overview of these traces reveals four main points that illuminate *Hymn 28*: 1) the treatment of Athena as if she were Zeus’ son and heir; 2) the collusion against Zeus by Athena and Hera and Zeus’ angry reaction, which includes a threat to hurl any disobedient Olympian to gloomy Tartarus; 3) Zeus’ appeal to his might and his boast of being superior to all the other gods put together; and 4) Zeus’ reference to Athena’s sword in his final threat to his daughter as πελώριον, ‘huge, monstrous’ (*Il.* 8. 424), the same epithet that Hesiod applies to Kronos’ implement, the sickle, with which he castrated his father (*Th.* 179: πελώριον ... ἄρπην).

As Book 8 begins, Zeus commands all the gods to stay out of the fray and to refrain from protecting the Achaeans against Hector (8. 5–27), re-asserting his supreme power. He threatens to hurl all who disobey his command to gloomy Tartarus (13–16)—a traditional motif.¹⁸ Athena is the first to object. After acknowledging his strength (31–2), she says simply, ‘We (i.e. she and Hera) pity the Danaans’ (Δαναῶν ὀλοφυρόμεθ’, 33). Zeus, smiling, tries to placate his dear child

¹⁷ Clay (1989), 15.

¹⁸ Harrell (1991), 307–18 argues that the *Iliad* poet and Hesiod took this traditional “*rhipto* motif” from a common tradition. She cites two Hesiodic fragments: fr. 54a M.-W. (= *P. Oxy.* XXVIII 2495 fr. 1a) and fr. 30 M.-W. (= *P. Oxy.* XXVIII 2481 fr. 1. 15–23). The former, though poorly preserved, seems to suggest that Zeus, in anger at Apollo, was about to hurl him to Tartarus and would have killed him, presumably for attacking the Cyclopes (cf. ps.-Apollod. 3. 10. 4).

(φίλον τέκος, 39) and claims: 'I want to be gentle to you' (ἐθέλω δέ τοι ἥπιος εἶναι, 40). The epithet ἥπιος ('gentle') is used especially for a father, or a king like a gentle father,¹⁹ as opposed to the reckless father (ἀτάσθαλος πατήρ) of Hesiod's succession myth, as we shall see.

When the quarrel resumes at 8. 350–484, Hera and Athena form an alliance that structurally parallels Gaia's alliance with Kronos. At *Theogony* 164–6 Gaia addresses her offspring as 'sons of mine and of a wicked father' (παῖδες ἐμοὶ καὶ πατρὸς ἀτασθάλου). She asks them to obey her and together avenge their father's evil outrage, since he was the first to devise unseemly deeds (ἀεικέα μήσατο ἔργα). Similarly, at *Il.* 8. 350–6 Hera approaches Athena to urge that the two of them join forces because of the evil works of Hector, thus blaming a human, not Zeus, for her revenge. The two goddesses, Zeus' wife and daughter, act as partners in an act of disobedience: together, they will disobey Zeus' earlier command and try to enter the fray.

Athena's response to Hera at *Iliad* 358–80 resembles that of Kronos to Gaia at *Theogony* 170–2, when he accepts her challenge and tells her of his disregard for Ouranos. Athena characterizes Zeus as mad and evil and a thwarter of her intents:

ἀλλὰ πατήρ οὐμὸς φρεσὶ μαίνεται οὐκ ἀγαθῆσι
σχέτλιος, αἰὲν ἀλιτρός, ἐμῶν μενέων ἀπερωεύς (*Il.* 8. 360–1)

'But my father rages in his evil mind.

Hard, forever wicked, he is the thwarter of my impulses.'

Then she indirectly aligns herself with Hera through her opposition to Thetis. She claims that, although Zeus is in her debt, he does not remember how she protected Heracles (362–9); i.e., he is ungrateful to her. Then, in strong language, she adds that he hates her (στυγέει, 370) and has accepted the plans of Thetis, but that 'there will be a day when he will again call her his dear bright-eyed one' (ἔσται μάν ὅτ' ἂν αὖτε φίλην γλαυκώπιδα εἶπη, 373). Her rivalry with Thetis for Zeus' attention recalls Hera's own rivalry when she detects that Zeus has conspired with Thetis to honor

¹⁹ See Felson (2000), 89–98 and (2002), 189–200 on these two divergent paradigms of fatherhood.

Achilles at the Achaeans' expense (1. 539–43 and 552–9). Even though Athena aligns herself with her father's wife, the quarrel does not escalate: Hera and Athena eventually back down and comply with Zeus' command.

Collusion between Athena and Hera against Zeus is a familiar motif in the *Iliad*: the two heckle Zeus at critical moments in the *Iliad* when he acts, or threatens to act, unilaterally, as when he expresses his desire to rescue his son Sarpedon and Hera objects and reminds him that not all the other gods may approve him (16. 431–9) or when he expresses his desire to rescue Hector and Athena reacts with similar language (22. 178–81).

In Book 8, after railing against Zeus, Athena urges Hera to arm for battle (374) and she herself takes off her *peplos* and dons the *chiton* of cloud-gathering Zeus (385–8), implying (by wearing his garment) that she is taking his place. When Zeus learns of their defiance, instead of carrying out his earlier threat to hurl them to Tartarus, he sends Iris to deliver further threats: that he will lame their horses, cast them from their chariots, and shatter their chariots, using his thunderbolt, 'so that the bright-eyed one may come to understand what happens when she fights with her father' (ὄφρ' εἰδῆ γλαυκῶπις ὅτ' ἄν ᾗ πατρὶ μάχηται, 406).

In the *Theogony*, mother-child collaboration and father-child alienation precede the violent crossroads confrontation, whereby the son replaces the father. In *Iliad* 8, though, Zeus never comes to blows with Athena and Hera; the menacing speeches they exchange express a weaker form of the kind of sedition that we find in the theogonic mother/son conspiracies to unseat or unman a father and king. Moreover, the subversive alignment between the hyper-masculine Athena and her disgruntled stepmother Hera parallels the intergenerational alliances in the *Theogony* between Kronos and Gaia, Zeus and Rhea, Zeus and Gaia, and Typhoeus and Gaia.

Against this background, I now turn to *Hymn* 28 to Athena. This hymn encapsulates an essential feature of the representation of the goddess, the juxtaposition of her two distinctive traits of rebelliousness and self-restraint. The former trait appears at the first of the two possible moments of intergenerational conflict: right after birth but not at *hēbē*. I have divided the *Hymn* into eight segments, as follows (line numbers in brackets):

- A. conventional beginning, including a string of traits (1–4)
- B. relative clause (4–6)
- C. reaction of immortals (6–7)
- D. event 1 (7–9)
- E. reaction of cosmos (9–14)
- F. event 2 (14–16)
- G. reaction of Zeus (16)
- H. conventional couplet ending (17–18)

A. [Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην, κυδρὴν θεόν, ἄρχομ' αἰεΐδαιν
 γλαυκῶπιν πολύμητιν ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσαν
 παρθένον αἰδοίην ἐρυσίπτολιν ἀλκήεσσαν
 Τριτογενῆ,] B. [τὴν αὐτὸς ἐγένετο μητίετα Ζεύς
 σεμνῆς ἐκ κεφαλῆς, πολεμήϊα τεύχε' ἔχουσαν
 χρύσεια παμφανόωντα:] C. [σέβας δ' ἔχε πάντας ὄρωντας
 ἀθανάτους:] D. [ἦ δὲ πρόσθεν Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
 ἔσσυμένως ὤρουσεν ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο καρῆνου
 σεΐσας ὄξυν ἄκοντα:] E. [μέγας δ' ἐλελίζεν Ἵολυμπος
 δεινὸν ὑπὸ βρίμης Γλαυκώπιδος, ἀμφὶ δὲ γαῖα
 σμερδαλέον ἰάχησεν, ἐκινήθη δ' ἄρα πόντος
 κύμασι πορφυρέοισι κυκώμενος, ἔσχετο δ' ἄλμη
 ἔξαπίνης· στήσεν δ' Ὑπερίονος ἀγλαὸς υἱός
 ἵππους ὠκύποδας δηρὸν χρόνον] F. [εἰσότε κούρη
 εἴλετ' ἀπ' ἀθανάτων ὤμων θεοεΐκελα τεύχη
 Παλλάς Ἀθηναίη:] G. [γῆθησε δὲ μητίετα Ζεύς,]
 H. [καὶ σὺ μὲν οὕτω χαῖρε, Διὸς τέκος αἰγιόχοιο·
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς.] (Hy. 28. 1–18)

'A. [I sing the glorious goddess Pallas Athena,
 owl-eyed deity with crafty wisdom and steady hear,
 revered virgin, stalwart guardian of the city,
 Tritogeneia.] B. [From his august head, cunning Zeus
 himself gave birth to her, born in warlike armour
 of gleaming gold.] C. [Awe seized all the gods watching.]
 D. [She sprang quickly from his immortal head
 and stood in front of Zeus who bears the aegis,

shaking her sharp spear.] **E.** [Great Olympus reeled violently beneath the might of her shining eyes, the earth let out an awful cry, and the deep shifted, churning with purple waves. Suddenly the sea held still and the shining son of Hyperion halted his swift horses a long while] **F.** [until the maiden Pallas Athena lifted the godlike armour from her divine shoulders,] **G.** [and wise Zeus rejoiced.] **H.** [Hail, child of aegis-bearing Zeus— but I will remember you and the rest of the song.]'

The string of Athena's attributes is enumerated within the invocation (**A**), with cumulative force, a rhetorical strategy that underscores the hybridity and the excess of monstrous offspring.²⁰ The goddess has an implacable heart (ἀμείλιχον ἦτορ ἔχουσαν, 2); in the *Theogony* she has a life-force equal to her father's and prudent counsel (ἴσον ἔχουσαν πατρὶ μένος καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν, 896), while her brother has an excessively violent spirit (ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ ἔχοντα, 898). Athena in the *Hymn* is a chaste virgin, a mighty protector of cities, Triton-born. In the relative clause at **B**, she is the one whom Zeus, after swallowing Metis, bore from his august head in full panoply; a second string of attributes describes her weapons (5–6). Then a series of three reactions ensues. First, at **C**, awe (σέβας, 6) grips the immortal gods as they witness the birth. The narration of the birth event (**D**) tells what they see even as it reiterates **B**, adding details. One detail in particular suggests aggressive belligerence: brandishing the sharp javelin (σεῖσασ' ὄξυν ἄκοντα, 9). To all this—the birth in full-panoply and the brandishing of the javelin—the cosmos responds with anxious anticipation (**E**).²¹ At this pivotal moment in the story, the listener/reader wonders what will happen next. From the focalization of not only the immortal gods (**C**) but all the natural elements which see Athena emerge in her full panoply, this particular goddess, so much like her father, has the potential to disrupt cosmic order.

²⁰ Cf. *Th.* 146 (Cyclopes), 148 and 153 (Hundred-Handers, 297–300 (Echidna), 307 (Typhon), 312 (Cerberus) and 320 (Chimera).

²¹ For other sources on the birth in full panoply, see Càssola 419–21.

The cosmic turbulence in the *Hymn* (9–14: E), is brought on by the birth of a fully armed Athena brandishing her javelin. With great compression, three elements—sky, earth and sea—experience commotion. Suddenly, the sea and the son reverse the situation, each by a surprise move that seems to get Athena’s attention. Her response is to remove her armour from her shoulders, and this act immediately introduces calm. Before that, noisiness and commotion are evident in Earth’s letting out an awful cry (ἀμφὶ δὲ γαῖα | σμερδαλέον ἰάχησεν, 10–11) and in the churning motion of the deep (ἐκινήθη δ’ ἄρα πόντος | κύμασι πορφυρέοισι κυκώμενος, 11–12).

Section E shares themes and formulaic diction with the upheavals, respectively, of the Titanomachy (*Th.* 629–721) and especially the Typhonomachy (*Th.* 820–900). In the former, the first cosmic battle, noise and widespread conflagration signal the scale of the upheaval and the collapse of order: ‘All around, the life-giving earth roared as it burned, and all around the great immense forest crackled; the whole earth boiled, and the streams of Ocean and the barren sea’ (ἀμφὶ δὲ γαῖα φερέσβιος ἔσμαράγιζε | καιομένη, λάκε δ’ ἀμφὶ πυρὶ μεγάλ’ ἄσπετος ὕλη. | ἔξεε δὲ χθῶν πᾶσα καὶ Ὠκεανοῖο ῥέεθρα | πόντος τ’ ἀτρύγετος; 693–6). Moreover, noise provides the ground for the comparison in the striking simile, which invokes an image either of the first coupling of Earth and Sky—a regression to the time when earth and sky were not yet separate—or of a cataclysmic collapse of Sky on Earth as a result of strife:²²

ὥς εἰ Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὑπερθεν
πίλνατο· τοῖος γάρ κε μέγας ὑπὸ δοῦπος ὀρώρει

²² I read the Titanomachy and Typhonomachy synchronically, while acknowledging the ways in which they reduplicate one another and the problematic joins: cf. especially Solmsen (1982) and, on the possibility of a synchronic rather than a diachronic reading of the *Theogony* and of a middle ground between a Unitarian and a neoanalytic approach to the poem, Mondì (1984) 325–44. For Most (2006), 59 n. 38, the simile implies that Zeus’ actions in this epic intergenerational battle are undoing the union with which Gaia instigated change: ‘the analogy is not to some cataclysmic final collapse of the sky onto the earth, but instead to the primordial sexual union between Sky and Earth.’ I would add that the imagery of Ouranos dominating Gaia from above suggests a violent and conflictual sexual union, perhaps even drawing on the image of a (male) victor raping a vanquished (female) city.

τῆς μὲν ἐρειπομένης, τοῦ δ' ὑψόθεν ἐξεριπόντος·
τόσσοις δοῦπος ἔγεντο θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνιόντων. (*Th.* 702–5)

'It seemed just as if Gaia and broad Ouranos up above
were approaching one another²³: for such a great thud rises up
as she is dashed down and as he dashes her down from on high;
so great a thud was produced as the gods ran together in strife.'

The reeling of Sky, the awful cry of Earth, and the churning of the deep in the *Hymn* resonate with the turbulence of the same three elements in the Typhonomachy, where parallel diction and theme (even without the destruction by fire, caused by Zeus' lighting and thunderbolt in the Typhonomachy) assure us that here too we have a case of cosmic unrest.²⁴

At **F** in the *Hymn*, 'after a long while' (δηρὸν χρόνον) Athena lifts her armour from her shoulders. The duration of time allows Athena to take time considering her next move. The conjunction εἰσότῃ ('until'), introducing **F**, implies that this cosmic unrest ends with Athena's act of self-restraint, whereby the goddess breaks the pattern of conflict and next-generation (usually male) usurpation. Moreover, because she is a virgin, she will not replicate the female propensity in the succession myth toward using the womb as an instrument to retaliate against male brutality by producing a challenger. Thus neither as a 'male' nor as a female will she attempt to unseat her father and threaten the cosmic order. The verb γήθησε ('he rejoiced', 16) in **G** gives us access to Zeus' focalization not so much on the birth in full panoply of his daughter as on her decision to disarm.²⁵ The placement of Zeus' rejoicing right after Athena's removal of her weapons marks it as a sign of relief and

²³ The verb πῖλνατο ('approach'), can have a hostile valence, as here, or a positive one.

²⁴ Cf. especially how, in the Typhonomachy, 'great Olympus was shaken...and the earth was groaning' (μέγας πελεμίζετ' Ὀλυμπος | ... ἐπεστονάχιζε δὲ γαῖα, *Th.* 842–3), 'all the earth was seething, and the Sky and Sea' (ἔζεε δὲ χθῶν πᾶσα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἠδὲ θάλασσα; *Th.* 847), and 'huge/monstrous Gaia was groaning' (στονάχιζε δὲ γαῖα πελώρη, *Th.* 858). The turbulence that arises from this clash between Zeus and Typhoeus is the very opposite of the 'stable seat forever' (ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ) of the earlier purpose clause (*Th.* 128).

²⁵ On γήθησε ('he rejoiced') as relief cf. Odysseus at *Od.* 13. 250, when he realizes he has come home.

not simply an indicator of a father's pride in his offspring and joy at her birth. As noted earlier, births are intrinsically unsettling: in the *Theogony*, anxious fathers greet with apprehension the birth of sons (especially ones that are huge, monstrous, and over-manly). Here, the hymnist defers the account of Zeus' reaction to Athena's birth until the new-born daughter has herself eliminated the possibility that she will become a fourth generation usurper. In the last couplet of the *Hymn* (17–18), as the hymnist bids farewell to Athena, he surrounds the child (τέκος) by two genitives that describe her father (Διὸς and αἰγιόχοιο, 'of aegis-bearing Zeus').²⁶ This arrangement points to Athena's destiny, to be her father's obedient and unrebelling child.²⁷

The *Hymn* thus encapsulates both Athena's potential to challenge her father and establish her own rule and her voluntary subordination to her father's cosmic order. It celebrates her signature quality, the practice of self-restraint: she will use her energy (μένος) 'equal' to her father's to uphold the cosmos over which he presides as king. And she will channel this energy to protect cities against their enemies and help citizens as they come and go (*Hy.* 11), as she traditionally enhances both the μένος ('energy') and ἀλκή ('might') and often the μῆτις ('cunning') of the victorious heroes whom she favours.

II. *Hymn* 3 to Apollo

The *Hymn to Apollo* recounts the distinctive ways in which Apollo's potential for rebellion is tamed and redirected. Even though Apollo reduplicates (and thus threatens) his father in multiple ways, he turns out to be reliable and orderly and comes to assume a legitimate place in his father's household. Though Apollo starts out as a potentially threatening child, soon becomes a supporter of cosmic stability under his father. The *Hymn* tells the story of how (and why) he directs his formidable energy against unruly forces, such as Pytho and Telphousa. Apollo, then, belongs to the class of heroes who return home at *hēbē* to assume their legitimate role in their father's household and kingdom. His story, as recounted in the *Hymn*,

²⁶ On the aegis, especially in Homeric epic, cf. Gantz (1993), 84–5.

²⁷ Cf. Athena's claim, not attested till the fifth century (*A. Eu.* 827–8), to know where Zeus keeps the thunderbolt.

belongs to the tale-type of divine succession myths, a large category that incorporates (with a difference) hero-tales of exile and return, like the stories of Jason, Theseus, and Bellerophon.

The proem of *Hymn 3* encapsulates both Apollo's capacity to disrupt order and his entry into the divine community:

μνήσομαι οὐδὲ λάθωμαι Ἀπόλλωνος ἐκάτοιο,
 ὄν τε θεοὶ κατὰ δῶμα Διὸς τρομέουσιν ἰόντα:
 καὶ ῥά τ' ἀναΐσσουσιν ἐπὶ σχεδὸν ἐρχομένοιο
 πάντες ἀφ' ἐδράων, ὅτε φαίδιμα τόξα τιταίνει.
 Λητώ δ' οἴη μίμνε παραὶ Διὶ τερπικεραύνω,
 ἥ ῥα βίον τ' ἐχάλασσε καὶ ἐκλήϊσε φαρέτρην,
 καὶ οἱ ἀπ' ἰφθίμων ὤμων χεῖρεςσιν ἐλοῦσα
 τόξον ανεκρέμασε πρὸς κίονα πατρὸς ἐοῖο
 πασσάλου ἐκ χρυσοῦ: τὸν δ' ἐς θρόνον εἴσεν ἄγουσα.
 τῷ δ' ἄρα νέκταρ ἔδωκε πατήρ δέπαϊ χρυσεῖω
 δεικνύμενος φίλον υἷον: ἔπειτα δὲ δαίμονες ἄλλοι
 ἔνθα καθίζουσιν: χαίρει δέ τε πότνια Λητώ,
 οὔνεκα τοξοφόρον καὶ καρτερόν υἷον ἔτικτεν. (*Apoll.* 1–13)

'I will remember and not forget far-shooting Apollo.
 Gods tremble as he approaches the home of Zeus:
 all rise from their seats as he draws near
 when he stretches his gleaming bow.
 Only Leto stays beside Zeus who delights in thunder.
 She unstrings Apollo's bow, closes his quiver,
 lifts the bow from his mighty shoulders,
 hangs it from a golden peg on a pillar near his father,
 leads him to his throne and bids him sit.
 His father hands him nectar in a golden cup,
 welcoming his dear son—then the other gods
 return to their seats. Queen Leto rejoices
 that she bore a strong son, an archer.'

In the proem, which chronologically takes place at Apollo's *hēbē*, the young god approaches Olympus with bow drawn taut, as if he is on the attack.²⁸ The gods tremble at his arrival and only take their seats after Leto has removed his weapons and Zeus has offered nectar, greeting his son with a welcoming toast that incorporates the young god into the divine community and into his father's home. Together, these benign parental acts eliminate any threat the youth might have posed. This opening scene on Olympus, where Apollo appears brandishing his bow and frightening the assembled gods, gives substance to the rumor Delos quotes at lines 67–9, when she explains to Leto her reluctance to become the birthplace of Apollo.

The depiction of Apollo's arrival on Olympus captures one of his salient features: he is the quintessential *kouros* ('young man'), as his regular epithet, ἀκερσεκόμης ('of the unshorn hair', 134), indicates.²⁹ In terms of the story pattern for intergenerational rivalry presented above, Apollo arrives home (i.e., to his father's house) at *hēbē*, returning like countless heroes (and like Zeus at *Th.* 492–3) once he is of age, with his bow fully drawn and his mood aggressive. For the young Apollo, as for the δεινὰ τέκνα ('dread children') in the *Theogony*, there are two critical moments of danger: at his birth and upon his arrival at Olympus.

In these first thirteen lines of the *Hymn*, the behaviour of each of Apollo's parents differs markedly from that of succession-myth parents in the *Theogony*. In fact, all the family members in the *Hymn* (mother, father and son) treat one another in a manner opposite to their theogonic counterparts. Leto, who disarms Apollo, contrasts with Gaia, the mother of Kronos, a most dreadful (δεινότατος) offspring,

²⁸ For a full discussion of the tenses in the proem, see Clay (1989), 23–9 who emphasizes the timeless quality of the aorists, and especially Bakker (2002), 65–7, 76–7, who treats the present tenses like the *comparans* of a simile, framing the series of aorists. The latter are not temporal but 'perceptual aorists'. My focus on Apollo's arrival at *hēbē* does not preclude their interpretations. The arrival at *hēbē* can also be seen as a timeless, exemplary arrival.

²⁹ Cf. his role as the one who guides Telemachus to manhood at *Od.* 19. 86–8, where the beggar-Odysseus reassures Penelope that, even if Odysseus himself has perished, 'here is Telemachus, his son, by grace of Apollo grown such a man' (ἀλλ' ἤδη παῖς τοῖος Ἀπόλλωνός γε ἔκητι, | Τηλέμαχος). Whatever else this passage suggests about the bow contest at the festival of Apollo (see Austin [1975], 245), it also marks Apollo as the god who escorts a young boy to manhood.

whom she arms and provides with a plan, a hiding place, and an implement for castrating Ouranos (*Th.* 161–2, 179–81). Zeus in the *Hymn* welcomes Apollo into the Olympian community, while Ouranos banishes his children, at least the second and third broods, relocating them in the bowels of Gaia (*Th.* 156–8) and binding them in Tartarus (*Th.* 501–6 the Cyclopes, 617–23 the Hundred-Handers), and Kronos swallows his as each emerges from Rhea’s womb (*Th.* 459–62). While theogonic fathers fear they will be overthrown by their sons, Zeus in the *Hymn*, by now secure in his kingly power, harbours no such fear with respect to Apollo. Benign gestures from his parents defuse Apollo’s desire to take Olympus by storm.³⁰ Later in the *Hymn* (186–8) Apollo is completely and harmoniously incorporated into the community of the gods, when he leads them in the dance.³¹

When Delos responds to Leto’s request for a birth-place by openly expressing the reasons for her hesitation to grant it, she not only articulates the fear of all the lands previously visited by Leto but introduces a negative characterization of the god (even while disclaiming any responsibility for it):

λίην γάρ τινά φασιν ἀτάσθαλον Ἀπόλλωνα
 ἔσσεσθαι, μέγα δὲ πρυτανευσέμεν ἀθανάτοισιν
 καὶ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν ἐπὶ ζείδωρον ἄρουραν. (*Apoll.* 67–9)

‘They say that Apollo will be someone exceedingly reckless
 and will lord it greatly over immortals
 and mortal men along the life-sustaining field.’

Delos’ use of the term ἀτάσθαλον (‘reckless’) to explain why she is reluctant to provide a birthplace for Apollo places him in a paradigmatic set with theogonic usurpers (as well as ‘atasthalic’ figures in Homeric epic, like Aegisthus and the

³⁰ Cf. how, in the *Odyssey*, Odysseus includes Telemachus in his plans and how, at the Bow Contest, Telemachus desists from attempting to string the bow in obedience to a signal from his father.

³¹ Cf. *Il.* 1. 472–4. On the relation between this later arrival scene and the arrival on Olympus in the proem, see Bakker (2002), 80–1.

Suitors).³² By attributing the charge of recklessness and haughtiness to rumor ('they say', φάσιν), the island avoids incurring the god's wrath. Yet her fears remind the *Hymn's* audience of Apollo's aggressive behaviour in the proem and, in a sense, reinforce the notion that ἀτασθαλία ('recklessness') is integral to his character.³³

Apollo's rumored recklessness is an indicator of his potential to be the son who unseats his father; it identifies the newborn, even before his birth, as destined to terrify and usurp, and is isomorphic with (or performs an analogous function to) all the theogonic prophecies that predict a son's overthrow of the father. As it turns out, however, females and humans, not father Zeus, have the most to fear from Apollo.

As Apollo comes of age, he directs his energy against a serpent that resists him (Pytho) and a land/spring that defies (lies to) him (Telphousa). He also orders and threatens humans who might disobey him (the Cretan servants). Like his father, he uses violence to implement cosmic order.

Apollo's management of his violent attributes and tendencies cements his bond with his father, rather than undermining their relation. The hymnist accentuates the resemblance between father and son by incorporating a long digression on Hera's rage at Zeus for giving birth by himself and Hera's active choice to produce Typhon as Zeus' rival (300–54). Whether or not this episode was part of an imagined 'original' hymn to Apollo, or has been interpolated at a later time (perhaps when the Delian and Pythian portions were joined), is beyond the scope of this paper.³⁴ The important point about the Hera episode is how very *theogonic* the goddess' complaint, plan, and implementations are and how much

³² On ἀτασθαλία ('recklessness') as a mark of adolescent excess, see Felson (2000), 89–98. As the quintessential term for a disruptive individual in archaic poetry, 'recklessness' is inappropriate for an Olympian god. In the context of cosmic evolution and cosmic stability the terms 'reckless' (ἀτάσθαλος) and 'dread' (δεινός) tend to characterize the same entities.

³³ Moreover, Delos' trembling (ἀλλὰ τόδε τρομέω, 66) not only reiterates the trembling and fear of the previously visited lands (ἐτρόμεον καὶ ἐδείδισαν, 47) but re-invokes the trembling of all the gods except Leto upon Apollo's arrival at Olympus (τρομέουσιν, 2).

³⁴ See Richardson (2010), 126–31 on the Typhaon episode; he argues against considering it to be an addition to the original version of the *Hymn* (126), as many have suggested; cf. in this volume Chappell (p. 70).

they form a continuation of the theme of the myth of divine succession, with its goal of ensuring a stable seat forever.

The key role of the mother in the succession plot is evident in the *Hymn to Apollo* not only in the actions of the gentle mediator, Leto, but in those of Hera, her polar opposite. In the Hera episode, beginning at line 300 and focalized entirely by the goddess, Hera blames Zeus for starting the contest by producing Athena from his head apart from her (καὶ νῦν νόσφιν ἐμεῖο τέκε γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην, | ἢ πᾶσιν μακάρεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισιν, 314–15). Athena's preeminence (μεταπρέπει) exacerbates the offense and contributes to her claim that cloud-gathering Zeus is the first to dishonor her (ὡς ἔμ' ἀτιμάζειν ἄρχει νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς, 312). The offense is further compounded by the deformity of the child whom she bore alone, Hephaestus, a cripple (ῥικνὸς πόδας, 317). When she hurls him in anger from Olympus, Thetis rescues Hephaestus and cares for him, thereby thwarting Hera's destructive plan to destroy (or at least evict) her child. Such an opposition between the two goddesses and rivals can also be seen in Book 1 of Homer's *Iliad* (493–611).

From her public complaint to the rest of the Olympians Hera now turns to Zeus, whom she reviles in direct address, using language that corresponds to his (perceived) slight to her. Most strikingly, she threatens to devise some new evil thing in answer to his offense:

σχέτλιε, ποικιλομήτα, τί νῦν μητίσσαι ἄλλο;
 πῶς ἔτλης οἶος τεκέειν γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην;
 οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ τεκόμην; καὶ σὴ κεκλημένη ἔμπης
 ἦα ῥ' ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν, οἳ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν.
 ἀφράζω νῦν, μή τοί τι κακὸν μητίσομ' ὀπίσσω.
 καὶ νῦν μὲν τοι ἐγὼ τεχνήσομαι, ὡς κε γένηται
 παῖς ἐμός, ὅς κε θεοῖσι μεταπρέποι ἀθανάτοισιν,
 οὔτε σὸν αἰσχύνασ' ἱερὸν λέχος οὔτ' ἐμὸν αὐτῆς·
 οὐδέ τοι εἰς εὐνὴν πωλήσομαι, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ σεῖο
 τηλόθ' ἐοῦσα θεοῖσι μετέσσομαι ἀθανάτοισιν. (*Apoll.* 322–30)

'Cruel, cunning trickster, what else will you plan?
 How dare you bear owl-eyed Athena on your own?
 Could I not have borne her? I was still called yours
 among the immortals who live in wide heaven.

Watch out that I do not devise some evil in return.

I will scheme to bear a child who will be preeminent among the immortal gods.

I, at least, will not shame our holy marriage,

but I will not approach your bed. Being far away

from you, I will still be among the undying gods!

Thereafter, Hera prays to Earth and wide Heaven above and the Titans to grant ‘a child apart from Zeus, in no way weaker in strength than he, a child greater than Zeus by as much as Zeus is greater than Kronos’ (καὶ δότε παῖδα | νόσφι Διός, μηδέν τι βίην ἐπιδευέα κείνου: | ἀλλ’ ὃ γε φέρτερος ἔστω, ὅσον Κρόνου εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς, 337–9). Then she dramatically enacts her threat by striking the earth with her massive hand (ἴμασε χθόνα χειρὶ παχείῃ, 340). The earth shifts in response (κινήθη δ’ ἄρα γαῖα φερέσβιος, 341) and Hera rejoices in the sight, believing her prayer will be fulfilled (ἦ δὲ ἰδοῦσα | τέρπετο ὄν κατὰ θυμόν, 341–2).

In this long digressive passage, Hera quarrels with Zeus and attempts to thwart his will. They contend over who has the prerogative of childbirth, based on who produces the superior child. Hera, enraged, behaves toward Zeus in ways reminiscent of her foremothers, Gaia and Rhea, in the *Theogony*. She reacts like Gaia, when Ouranos interferes with her birthing and represses several of her broods of offspring (pressing them back into her recesses) and like Rhea, when Kronos undoes her birthing by ingesting each of her offspring. Hera first threatens to retaliate and bear a child, who would be preeminent among the immortal gods (καὶ νῦν μὲν τοι ἐγὼ τεχνήσομαι ὡς κε γένηται | παῖς ἐμός, ὅς κε θεοῖσι μεταπρέποι ἀθανάτοισιν, 326–7). Then she affirms her intention to undermine Zeus’ kingship by producing a monstrous child (τέκνον): ‘let him be as much stronger than Zeus as Zeus is stronger than Kronos’ (φέρτερος... ὅσον Κρόνου εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς, 339). In her speech, Hera aligns herself with Gaia of the *Theogony*. Like Gaia, she is using her womb as an instrument of revenge. Moreover, by her action of striking the earth with her palm, she involves Gaia in the production of her chthonic child. Hera’s quarrel with Zeus, though not of the magnitude of Gaia’s with Ouranos or Rhea’s with Kronos, is in the same paradigmatic set as part of the succession myth. All these quarrels are cosmogonic.

To be sure, the lengthy Hera passage has the feel of an insertion into the text of a pre-existing episode, like the Typhoeus episode in the *Theogony*. It has,

however, come down to us embedded in a *Hymn* in which Hera, in the Delian portion, detains Eileithyia in order to obstruct the birth of the dragon-slayer Apollo. Therefore, it is appropriate to read the episode synchronically as undergirding the deep polarization of male versus female in the *Hymn*.

The *Hymn to Apollo* enacts the transformation of the rebellious son eager to dominate into the obedient son eager to emulate his father without ever replacing him. The role of the gentle mother in upholding family harmony rather than fueling the natural antagonism between father and child is enacted by Leto in the proem, while Zeus' extension of hospitality to his feisty son, when he returns home at his *metron hēbē*, is the gesture that invites filial obedience. For Apollo, the son, obedience to his father guarantees that he will have a legitimate place in the universe and will have a number of realms in which he can be preeminent. Thus the tone of the *Hymn* that recounts the birth and exploits of the god Apollo draws on the narrative pattern of the succession myth to depict, by way of contrast, the harmonious, stable, evolved hierarchic positioning of the new child within the cosmos.

The *Hymn* celebrates the young god as a figure who, instead of rebelling, attacks and eliminates two female entities, Pytho (357–62) and Telphousa (382–7), and thereby consolidates his masculinity.³⁵ In his defeat of these two, Apollo replicates his father's victory over Typhoeus in the *Theogony* (853–68). He will, in addition, disseminate the word of Zeus the father through his own oracle at Delphi (132).

By the end of the poem, Apollo is incorporated and tamed: he will never undermine or challenge his father, though he may (like other youths), experience 'benign regression'.³⁶ He has evolved from a potential menace to his father's staunch ally. He dominates a series of potentially dangerous females much as Zeus in the *Theogony* incorporates Metis: first he 'acquires' the name and locale of Delos, then of Telphousa, and finally of Pytho. He specifically resembles his father not only in his

³⁵ Cf. Felson (1994), 86–7 on Telemachus' motivation for hanging the twelve maidens.

³⁶ Felson (1994), 72, 167–8 n. 22. Cf. Apollo's 'benign regression' in *Hymn 4* (to Hermes), where he vies for a place in the cosmic hierarchy with his newborn brother and their father, Zeus, good-humoredly mediates the quarrel. On their sibling rivalry and its resolution, see Harrell (1991), 307–18 and Vergados (2007).

aggressive arrival on Olympus, ready for combat, but in his slaying of the dragon that guards Delphi, Pytho, which corresponds to Zeus' slaying of Typhoeus.

The *Homeric Hymns* to Athena and Apollo present each god as an ally of Zeus who might have been, or might have remained a rival. Both *Hymns* partake of the theme of intergenerational conflict and in both, Zeus' position as king of gods and men is strengthened once each god is incorporated into his regime. Given the scholarly opinion on how the major *Hymns* relate to the *Theogony* and to the politics of Olympus,³⁷ it is fascinating to find *Hymn 28* functioning in a manner similar to the long *Hymns*, including the *Hymn to Apollo*. In this short but nonetheless dramatic poem, Athena's self-restraint, when she removes her armour, brings joy and relief to her enthroned father; in *Hymn 3*, though his capacity for rebellion may remain, Apollo channels his potentially subversive energy against female menaces to order. The actions of each child of Zeus illustrate how rapport can be established and tension resolved in time between a potentially menacing (monstrous) offspring and a potentially hostile (dread) father. If the rapprochement is successful, the offspring will never threaten to upset cosmic order by unseating the father. Consequently, as Gaia wishes in the *Theogony* (128), the 'seat' (ἔδος) of the cosmos will remain, indeed, 'stable forever' (ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ).

³⁷ See esp. Clay (1989), and in this volume (Ch. 11). For a contrary view regarding *Apoll.* see Chappell in this volume (pp. 70–8).