Aetiology and Descriptions of Works of Art in Callimachus: the ethics and politics of Callimachean ecphrasis

A. Preliminary remarks
1. Hopkinson (1984, p. 141) « aetiologicalizing… was more than a learned game : it provided a link between past and present highly valued in Greek society ». Cf. Harder 1993, 304.
2. The Ptolemaic overtones: Harder 2012, e.g. I 39-41 and passim in II; Stephens 2012, 14-16, (The Hymns and the Ptolemies, cf. 17, 51 on Zeus; 18-19 on Apollo : 19-20, 108 on Artemis ; 18, 162 on Delos ; 238 with Manakidou 2013 on Athena ; 15, 21, 268 on Demeter).
3. Harder 1993, 304: « a picture of the world emerges in which «there is a certain tendency towards expansion, progress and civilization supported by the adherence to specific moral values » ; 2012, I, 28: « a great deal of undermining and variation of the old didactic genre in several ways»; 2012 I, 21: « the references to Hesiod in fr.2.1.ff. are not just indicators of genre, but seem to foreshadow issues which were to be of prime importance in the Aetia.»
4. fr.2.5 (4.5 M) 『έκχων ώς έτέρω τις ἔως κακόν ἦπαιν τεύχει «that if one prepares evil for another one prepares it for one’s own liver» – W&D 265 of τ’ αὐτῷ κακά τεύχει ἀνήρ δαλίω κακά τεύχων («that if one prepares evil for another one prepares it for himself») ; l. 6 ζωοὶ δὲν ἔντοιχες 1.7 τάντας σε.
4.a. Hunter 2008, 569 : (the Aetia) «promulgate the pious moral attitudes which the certain existence of the Olympian order requires». Cf. Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004, 51-60. Already Harder 1993, 302: « At a moral level the notion of evil people causing their own destruction is illustrated by a number of stories.»

B. Callimachus’ Zeus
1. lambus VI, fr. 196 Pf.: The statue of Pheidias’ Zeus at Olympia (text and translation)

... 23 καὶ τυμπάθθον τῷ θρόνῳ(ν) τὸ χρύσος τὸν έπάλταιν. and the gold base of the throne
... 25 ...βρένον πέντε τετράχθαντα ἔθνη. four times five feet
...πέντε τις θύρας. four palms long
...τεσσαρακοσία tis of Lydian craftsmanship upon which the holy image
...ἐν τίνι κάθηται in height three times
...μὲν τρίς έτος τῷ μακρὸν ἴδιον...[...] δέκα in breadth twenty
... εὔρος
...τέκνη[...] τεσσαράκοσία
...τῆς τοίχου Ἴλιον. [...] the height of the wall
...τοῦ τεύχους and Victory twice
37 Αὐτὸς δὲ οἱ διάμετροι πέντε[ν] ἴδιος εφεδρὸς[δος] and the god himself is taller than the throne
..[...] παρασκεύης μάσσων by five cubits
...τὴν Νίκαν χίλια δυκαλίαν and Victory twice
...τοῦ νομοῦ έπαινος and the god himself is taller than the throne
...τὸ τεύχον τῆς τοίχου they do not fall short of the women who are one fathom
...τοῦ[...] τοῦ οὐδέν they do not fall short of the women who are one fathom high by so much as a peg.

For the virgin Seasons say: And as to the expence of these – for you are greedy
...τὰς άνατιμῶσις – λήγοντας ἐσσάι not to be reckoned not even
...τὰς τοῦ θεοῦν and as to gold
...τοῦ τευχοῦν...[...] not to be reckoned not even

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The content: 1. the introduction; 2-21 missing, something about locality Πιστος and itinerary and 22 the hair and the tortoise. Before the words we read either ως (with Lobel) or δς (= ἐως with Pfeiffer) hint at Aesopic fable either 226 Perry or 106 Perry home ὁκός φίλος, κόκος ἀριστός; 23-28 the pedestal; 29-36 the throne; 37-44 αὐτός β' ὤ δείμων: the victory in his right hand 39, the three-figures groups of the Horai and the Charites 42-44; 45-47 the costs ἰδακισμωμα and the curiosity of the interlocutor ἄγος for a difficult task to be answered; 48 the golden material; 50-57 missing; 58-62 Pheidias, his father, something about Athens and 61 ἀπερέυχα. b. Some interpretations: overview in Petrovic 2006, 31, n.93 and Schroeder 2008, 195: «Reductionist attitude of the speaker» (Kerchever 1999, e.g. 157, 179: «Zeus was reduced to his corporeal dimensions by scholarly literal-mindedness»); ironical display of erudition (Puelma Piwonka 1949, 294-5; Pfeiffer 1941/1960; Hutchinson 1988, 27; pace Manakidou 1993, 242); bitter irony and criticism against local guides in accordance to invective tone of the Iambic genre: Schmidt 1990, 129-7 based upon one idea of Wilamowitz, Kleine Schriften V 1, 514-6; pictorialism (Zanker 1987, 64f.); Iambic tone combined with elevated subject-matter (Acosta-Hughes 2002, esp. 288-94); metamorphic (Petrovic 2006: literary allegory on different manners of poetry, Zeus=Homer, Callimachus against Homeric epics; satire against Posidippus’ descriptive epigrams (Prioux 2007); Zeus-statue at Cyrene, personal visual experience vs travelng (Schroeder 2008, Priestley 2011 : Callimachus vs. Herodotean autops). 2. Zeus in the Iambi: fr. 191. 10 Pf. (οὐ τὸν τάλαντον Πάθησον αὐτός σάλας Ζαυγα γέρων ἁλώνων: the fictive one created by Euhemerus); fr.192.6 (δικαίος ὁ Ζαυγα, οὐ δικαίους Δίος ἀληθεύειν: he is the just ruler but not justly ruling) ; fr.194.103-4 (ὡς δὴ μ᾽ ἡμῶν καὶ σου; μή με πολὴν Ζεὺς τοῦτο: Zeus is named as supreme god); fr. 202.14 (the first participant in the gift-celebration). See on fr.191.10, Kerchever 1999, 23: « The Sarapeum of Parmenio enshrined a statue of Zeus modelled on those same Homeric lines which were supposed to have inspired Phidas’ statue of Olympian Zeus – a link to lambi? VI ? » 3. Hymn to Zeus 92-93 τε δ’ ἔργαμα τις κεν ἁείδοιοι νεόν τε θεός τε κεν διός ἔργαμα ἀφειές: who would sing of your deeds? There has not been, there will not be; who shall sing of the deeds of Zeus? (transl.S.Stephens) 3.1. Stephens 2015, 48: «the association of god and king in the hymn belonged to mainstream Alexandrian cultic behaviors. Local audiences would have been neither confused nor astonished by Callimachus’ link of monarch and divinit». See especially Müller 2009 passim. C. Callimachus’ Apollo and his relationship to Zeus 1. Ἀεί Ταίοι τὸν ᾽ θεόν ἀλλὰ Διός: 22 ἀπόλλων ἔτειν δὲ μοι Ὅλικος... 2. Ημνύ 2. 29 δύναται γάρ τιν ἐπεὶ δι ἀξιός ἦσατι. 3. Ημνύ 4. 57-58 οὐκετα μούνη (sc. Λετο)/ Ζην τεχνὲς ἡμέλλε φιλατερήν ἄρεος υόθ. 4. Ημνύ 2. 19 ἔντεα : Bassi 1989, 225: «his attributes are emblematic of an intrinsic link between poetry and combat». 5. Αεία fr. 114 Pf. (Addenda 1, 502; Πλ. Πρὸς τον Ηημνύνων), H. I, 1-3, 4-17 (fr. 64 Massimilla) : The Statue of Apollo at Delos (uncertain location; after the Victoria, beginning of Book 3?; Lobel, Pfeiffer, Bonavoco 1994; D’Alessio 1995, Harder 2012, 2.878-881 between the Victoria and the Attic Thesmophoria 63; after the Somnium of Book 1: Herter, Kassel; after the Prologue: Livrea); uncertain connection of lines 1-3 with fr. 115 Pf. (Onnes and Tottes, = 113a Harder = 65 M.) and with fr. 114.18-25 ( the horses of Diomedes of Thrace [or Argos ?] = 114a Harder = 64.18-25 M.). 1 πυλώνιοι φαίρεται farewell (?), polygonal (a Milesian statue of Apollo) next to the entrance door of the boy. 3 παίδει ἐπὶ τρόφυρος yes the Delian. ; ] "ναι, Δηλησος," ἢ "ο σετη;[ yes I swear it to myself ;]ο, "ναι μα τον αυτον ἐμε;" yes of gold, why are you without clothes µούν ζωμα μέσον στρέφεται (yes) only a belt (?) (surrounds) my waist τε δ’ ἐνεκα σκατῇ μεν ἔχεις χερι Κύνθιε, τοῦτον, (why) in your left hand, Cynithian, you hold your bow τας Δ’ ἐπι δεξετριφ’ σας ιδανάς Ἱδρατάς; and (in your right hand) your comely Charites ? ἦν ιεν θρονος ύππρ, fools insolent ( insolence ?) ζηναδίς ἀργευ; the virtuous I tend (orgia : D’Alessio) ὑποτε κολασα τι punishment μονο οιρος more (reuelant ; pigro D’Alessio) ἦν φίλα χερι δαττοι ηις οιρος loving and with the hands ἦν ετι ηματα καὶ το νησιοι always ready 17 ἑμα τι βασιλείτ is it good for the king a. Harder (2012, 2, 893): « This aition is of an allegorical nature… In this respect it seems to differ from other aitna about statues, in which a statue is explained by some event... but where as far as we can judge from the fragments there no indications of this kind of allegorical explanation»… «a certain topical interest... touching aspects of Ptolemaic political and ethical values” together with metaphorical overtones » (894).
Ptolemies and the Argeads at Olympia. The Visual evidences.

Fig. 7: Reconstruction of the Ptolemaic Monument, Olympia. Drawing: after W. Hoepfner, Zwei Ptolemaiberbauten, AM Beih. 1 (Berlin 1971) Beil. 21.
PHILIPPEION, OLYMPIA (restauration by Leventis foundation)
The topographical connection of the monuments.

Hintzen-Bohlen 1992, p.80. The topographical connection of the monuments.