

MACIEJ PAPROCKI

University of Wrocław  
ORCID: 0000-0003-2612-3394  
[maciej.w.paprocki@gmail.com](mailto:maciej.w.paprocki@gmail.com)

APOLLO, KRONOS'S AVENGER?  
DIVINE INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICTS  
IN LIGHT OF 'THE CURSE OF KRONOS'  
(*PROMETHEUS BOUND* 907–12)\*

ABSTRACT. Paprocki, Maciej. *Apollo, Kronos's Avenger? Divine Intergenerational Conflicts in Light of 'The Curse of Kronos' (Prometheus Bound 907–12)*

Within the Greek mythos, supremacy among the gods passes down from father to son in a series of coups, from Ouranos to Kronos to Zeus; Zeus faces many pretenders to his throne but evades the fate of his father. The following article examines ancient Greek texts that represent Apollo as Zeus's potential successor. I read references to Apollo's unruliness against the so-called curse of Kronos (ἀπὸ Κρόνου, *Prometheus Bound* 907–12). I argue that analyzed texts insinuate that Apollo could have avenged his grandfather and restarted the divine succession, a notion reframed by different authors to give Zeus another worthy challenger.

Keywords: Apollo; Greek mythology; succession myth; Zeus; Kronos; Asclepius; Cyclopes; Moirai; Erinyes

INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE IN MOTION

In Hesiod's *Theogony*, the progressive ordering of the Greek universe unfolds through violent divine takeovers; Ouranos was defeated by his son Kronos (173–82), only to be defeated by his son Zeus (729–31). By analogy, one would expect that one of Zeus's numerous offspring will perpetuate this vicious circle of violence and eventually overthrow him,<sup>1</sup> but the king of gods implements

---

\*This paper has undergone a long journey before finding home in this journal. I am grateful to the journal's anonymous reviewers for their thoughtful suggestions and comments. I also express my warmest thanks to my dear friend Gary Vos, with whom I have frequently discussed Apollo's succession troubles over the years; his learning and wit helped shape this text into what it is. Conversations with Bernardo Ballesteros Petrella and Ellie Mackin Roberts helped me tease out the finer intricacies of divine behavior in the Greek mythic storyworld. Above all, this analysis would not exist were it not for Jenny Strauss Clay, whose approach to the politics of Olympus continues to be an inspiration.

<sup>1</sup>Felson 2012: 270.

measures to ensure no one ever will,<sup>2</sup> holding the cycle of succession in stasis. Amongst Zeus's many heirs, this article examines Apollo as Zeus's potential successor and frequent opponent. Renowned even before his birth as an "overly reckless" (ἀτάσθαλον) god who "will greatly lord it over immortals and mortals" (μέγα δὲ πρυτανεύσμεν ἀθανάτοισι | καὶ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν),<sup>3</sup> Apollo remains incompletely integrated into Zeus's power base.<sup>4</sup> An eternal *kouros* on the cusp of adulthood,<sup>5</sup> Apollo never completely matures and visibly chafes under Zeus's paternal power; in turn, Zeus twice punishes Apollo's rebelliousness with enforced menial servitude among mortals.<sup>6</sup> Relevantly, Apollo's punitive labors at (a) Laomedon's and (b) Admetos's courts can be respectively linked to (a) Apollo's postulated participation in the abortive coup against Zeus in the *Iliad* (1.396–406)<sup>7</sup> and to (b) Apollo slaying the Kyklopes in retaliation for Zeus smiting Apollo's son, Asklepios.<sup>8</sup> Twice failing to overpower his father, embittered Apollo explodes with anger at the Erinyes (Ἀραί, Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 417) who goad him on about Zeus defeating Kronos (640–51). I link Apollo's outburst in the *Eumenides* to the so-called Kronos's curse (ἄρά) in the *Prometheus Bound* (907–12, Palmer 1993) and argue that a continuous thread runs through all narrative forms mentioned above: Apollo should have avenged his grandfather and restarted the divine succession, a notion derived from the Homeric / Hesiodic corpus and entertained in the Classical Greek drama.

Before I begin my analysis of the source material, I need to stress that, in many ways, this article may be interpreted as an attempt at reconstructing a mythical character's biography, an arduous and counterintuitive task in face of myth's inherent polyphony. I do not claim that one can neatly combine all references to Apollo's deeds into a linear, coherent narrative (although the set of sources analyzed below occasionally seem to encourage such an approach). Instead, I propose to treat these snippets as "a plurimedial constellation of ostensibly inconsistent and yet densely interconnected narratives" that comment upon and explain Apollo's position in Zeus's cosmos.<sup>9</sup> In doing so, I partially

<sup>2</sup>At least two of Zeus's lovers (Metis and Thetis) were fated to bear a child stronger than its father (Metis: Hes. *Theog.* 886–900, Thetis: Pind. *Isthm.* 8.26–45).

<sup>3</sup>*Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 67–69, trans. N. Felson.

<sup>4</sup>Felson 2012: 271–75; 2011: 275–83; Strauss Clay 2006: 19–27; Harrell 1991: 312–13.

<sup>5</sup>Hubbard 2013: 101.

<sup>6</sup>*Cf.* Panyassis fr. 3 [West] = Clem. Al. *Protr.* 2.35.3, who enumerates several instances of divine servitude among mortals (Matthews 1974: 91–95).

<sup>7</sup>Porter 2014: 520–26 argues that Apollo probably partook in the Olympian plot to overthrow Zeus (*vide* Σ *ad* Hom. *Il.* bT 1.400ab [Erbse]) and in punishment had to tend Laomedon's flocks, whereas Poseidon expiated by building Laomedon's walls (Hom. *Il.* 21.446–52).

<sup>8</sup>The motif of Apollo slaying the Kyklopes first surfaces in the *Catalogue of Women* (Hes. fr. 54(a) [Merkelbach-West] = fr. 58 [Most]) and is fully verbalized in the *Library* (Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.15, 3.10.4).

<sup>9</sup>Paprocki 2020: 194.

adopt the narratological approach masterfully employed by Sarah Iles Johnston: I recast the Greek mythic corpus as a “storyworld”, a mental universe in which numerous narratives, directly connected or not, coexist and unfold.<sup>10</sup> Notably, the storyworld approach prioritizes narratives over texts of culture within which they are contained, tracing connections fuzzier than distinct authorial allusions. What makes storyworlds distinctive and attractive for Greek myth scholars is both their self-referentiality and polyphony. Narratives within a single storyworld share an imaginary setting: its history, geography, ecology, and ontology. Fictional characters within such a storyworld, reimagined by a number of creators, frequently differ from text to text: as Johnston underlines, they “develop composite identities and in some cases take on existencies that transcend the works that described them”.<sup>11</sup> This dynamic transcendence rings particularly true for characters like Greek gods, unencumbered by human limitations of time and space.<sup>12</sup>

In terms of my research method, I draw from both storyworld and intertextual approaches to examine the paternal relationship between Kronos, Zeus, and Apollo, analyzing a range of sources that position Apollo as Zeus’s intended usurper and Kronos’s avenger. Significantly, I do not claim that this antagonistic vision exhaustively depicts the polyphonic complexity of Apollo’s cooperation with Zeus. Neither do I claim that postulated connections between narrative variants always mirror overlaps between texts that embody them. Instead, I draw attention to fascinating yet elusive links in narratives on Kronos and Apollo, reading them against the divine succession narratives. Crucially, my complementary approach simultaneously traces demonstrable intertextual allusions and sketches broader parallels between far-flung narratives that do not unambiguously come from a single or composite authority. Some of the narratives analyzed below (like the story of Apollo’s birth and exploits in his eponymous *Homeric Hymn* and his clash with the Erinyes in the *Eumenides*) imply that authors of these texts consciously built on older texts and traditions that reinforced their points. Other narratives I consider (such as those contained in texts narrating Apollo’s violent clashes with Zeus) include elements that do not clearly derive from a single examined source but represent broader thematic

<sup>10</sup> Johnston 2015: 287.

<sup>11</sup> Johnston 2018: 26. Accordingly, characters within a storyworld are both *plurimedial* and *accretive* inasmuch as their portrayals differ across narratives and media (*plurimediality*) and an audience’s impression of them “gradually *accrues* traits from some or all of those instantiations” (27). Crucially, plurimedial characters of storyworlds do not demand a source-focused intertextual approach in that one needs not trace precisely their textual interdependencies to appreciate their efflorescence (158–159). See also 2018: 148–63; 2015: 292–94, 299–300.

<sup>12</sup> Johnston 2018: 27 stresses that “characters such as [Greek gods]—characters for whom there is no clear original and whose existences are anchored instead in within the drifting overlaps of traits shared by different portrayals—can be adapted in bolder ways than can other types of characters”.

intersections within the so-called divine succession myth. Combining these two perspectives, I believe, offers a more exhaustive look at the amassed material and allows one to appreciate its depth and subtlety.

In terms of structure, this article traces narratives that position Apollo as Kronos's putative avenger across an array of passages in ancient Greek epic, hymn, drama, and other genres. In light of the innate interconnectedness and diffusion of the Greek mythic storyworld, the passages analyzed in the following sections do not follow chronologically but rather thematically, charting correspondences in narratives on Kronos and Apollo. The first two sections consider the vicious circle of intergenerational divine violence. If Hesiod's *Theogony* (c. 700 B.C.E.) depicts conflicts between divine fathers and sons and narrates Zeus's ascendance, then the pseudo-Aeschylean *Prometheus Bound* (463–430 B.C.E.?) verbalizes Kronos's alleged prophecy about Zeus's defeat at the hands of his child, with the Erinyes and the Moirai working to fulfil it. The following sections of this article examine selected narratives that depict Apollo as Zeus's potential challenger, from Apollo's daring and outrageous deeds at birth (*Homeric Hymn to Apollo*), to his violent clashes with Zeus in the *Iliad*, *Catalogue of Women* and *Alcestis*, to the resolution in Aeschylus's *Eumenides*, where Apollo comes to blows with the Erinyes, who deride his dependence on Zeus and failure to depose him.

#### THE MYTH OF DIVINE SUCCESSION AND THE FINAL WORDS OF DEPOSED FATHERS (HES. *THEOG.* 207–10)

The vicious circle of divine succession, a motif probably borrowed from or influenced by Near Eastern sources,<sup>13</sup> features prominently in the Greek mythic corpus and forms the backbone of the earliest surviving theogonic epic, Hesiod's *Theogony* (c. 700 B.C.E.). The text has Ouranos, the first king of the universe, incite the hatred of his mother-wife, Gaia, by shoving their children—and his potential heirs—back into Gaia's body as soon as they have been born (Hesiod *Theogony* 154–59): overstuffed and infuriated, Gaia calls Ouranos wicked (ἄτασθάλου, 164—a marked word choice that links Ouranos to yet-to-be-born Apollo!) and exhorts her children to help her exact revenge. She conspires with her youngest, Kronos, and helps him maim and vanquish Ouranos (159–82). Ouranos's ichor falls on Gaia and impregnates her: in time, the goddess births the Erinyes, avengers of crimes against the natural order, incarnations of the

<sup>13</sup> The succession myth, as found in Hesiod's *Theogony*, closely parallels other narratives of intergenerational divine violence in the Hittite and Mesopotamian literature (see especially López-Ruiz 2014; 2010: 84–129 and Haubold 2017). The studies on the Hesiodic and Near Eastern *comparanda* were pioneered by West 1997: 276–305 and Walcot 1966: 1–54; however, some of their observations have since been proven incorrect.

very first transgression of a son against his father (182–87).<sup>14</sup> Fading Ouranos harshly reprimands his sons, calls them Titans (Τιτῆνες, Strainers) and warns them that, since they have overextended (τιταίνοντας) themselves in performing an evil deed against their father, they would reap retribution (τίσις) at some later point (207–210).<sup>15</sup> At this juncture, Hesiod rapidly shifts his focus to narrate the birth of the offspring of Nyx (Night) and her daughter Eris (Strife) (211–32), a brood of dark deities, personifications of social ills, violence, and decay. This compositional arrangement signals that the patricide of Ouranos starts the vicious circle of violence, set to continue with every generation.<sup>16</sup>

The second act of the divine succession begins when Kronos marries his sister Rhea; he is warned by Gaia and Ouranos that one of his offspring will eventually overthrow him and, to avoid it, he swallows five of his offspring as soon as they are born (453–67). Rhea, aggrieved and newly pregnant with her youngest, Zeus, seeks assistance from Ouranos and Gaia,<sup>17</sup> who devise a substitution trick to save the new-born: they feed Kronos with a rock disguised as an infant (468–91). Having escaped the fate of his siblings, Zeus matures and frees them from his father's gut; the children of Kronos join forces with the Kyklopes, Titans, and Gaia and manage to overcome their progenitor in the second episode of the divine succession (492–506, 617–720). Emerging victorious, Zeus faces other challengers to his rule in the remainder of the *Theogony* (such as Gaia's youngest, terrible Typhoeus, 820–68) but eventually consolidates his power; subsequently, he starts siring a great number of children with goddesses and mortal women alike (886–929, 938–44).<sup>18</sup>

Since Zeus begets divine children, the succession danger arises again, its third and final episode. Zeus's first wife, Metis, is foretold by Gaia and Ouranos to produce two children: first, a daughter equal to Zeus in might and wisdom (ἴσον ἔχουσιν πατρὶ μένος καὶ ἐπίφρονα βουλήν, 896), and then, a son of exceedingly violent/powerful heart (ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ, 898) who would supplant Zeus.<sup>19</sup> Creatively imitating his father, Zeus swallows pregnant Metis before she bears their daughter; Athena is eventually born from her father's head, but her younger brother born of Metis never comes to exist (886–900, 924–29). After Metis, Zeus unites with six other goddesses, all of whom bear him beautiful

<sup>14</sup> Solmsen 1949: 180; Anderson 2010: 142n3.

<sup>15</sup> These two terms form a clever wordplay: see West 1966 *ad locum*.

<sup>16</sup> Strauss Clay 2003: 19.

<sup>17</sup> It remains uncertain what kind of agency Ouranos would have at this juncture (*cf.* West 1966 *ad* 463).

<sup>18</sup> Strauss Clay 2003: 29; Ramnoux 1987: 155–64. Other sources—such as the *Iliad* and the *Homeric Hymns*—narrate that these children, unruly and fractious, will eventually start to compete with one another and their father for power and prestige.

<sup>19</sup> Ὑπέρβιος, just like ἀτάσθαλος, connotes strength, brutality and overweening pride (*cf.* *Theog.* 139 for Kyklopes: ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ ἔχοντας, and Felson 2011: 267). Both adjectives were used to describe Apollo (Ὑπέρβιος: Bacchyl. *Ep.* 3.37; ἀτάσθαλος: *Hom. Hymn. Ap.* 3.67).

and unthreatening daughters (901–23); however, his last two partners, Leto and Hera, also bring forth sons: respectively, Apollo and Ares (918–23). Finally, the son of Kronos fathers two divine sons out of wedlock, Hermes from the nymph Maia (938–39), and Dionysus from the demigoddess Semele (933–37, 940–42); his ultimate son in *Theogony* is Herakles, an immortalized demigod hero (943–44, 950–55). Here the line of Zeus ends: however, the succession issue is not entirely resolved within the text.<sup>20</sup>

What has not been stressed strongly enough before is the oracular/protective role of grandparents in Hesiod's divine succession narrative.<sup>21</sup> Ouranos and Gaia, the primordial pair, work on behalf of their grandson Zeus and his supporters. Although they impartially reveal prophetic knowledge to all interested parties (including their son, Kronos),<sup>22</sup> they will actively hinder Kronos and aid Zeus, arranging a substitution trick at Zeus's birth for Rhea's sake and warning Zeus about his future children with Metis. Ouranos's long-standing grievance against his son translates into proactive support of his grandson: Zeus's rule should be secured against both previous (Kronos and the Titans) and future generations (Zeus's children, that is, Ouranos's great-grandchildren). Tellingly, the birth of Athena's younger brother does not come to pass because both the mother and the grandfather are taken out of the equation: Metis is assimilated and Kronos is imprisoned. The children of Zeus are rendered rootless in the *Theogony* that they cannot count on their paternal grandfather's support against their father: all their recourse is to Zeus. Nevertheless, we shall see that the familial connection between Kronos and his descendants was not always thought to have been completely severed. The *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, pitting Hera against Zeus, has the goddess re-establish this link and call upon Kronos and deities in Tartaros to impregnate her with a child stronger than Zeus, Typhaon (3.331–54).

Also relevant is the positioning of Apollo and Athena's births in the catalogue of Zeus's offspring in the *Theogony*. The unborn son of Metis would be Zeus's eldest son; as this birth is averted, Apollo becomes Zeus's first-born son and heir apparent, with Athena's miraculous birth postponed until after Zeus's marriage to Hera. Within the text of the *Theogony*, nothing explicitly foreshadows any succession danger on Apollo's part: the text formulaically and blandly describes

<sup>20</sup> Felson 2012: 270 observes that although Zeus has neutralized the succession issue through careful alliances, "Zeus's position as king of gods and men remains somewhat precarious even at the end of the *Theogony*: the generational rivalry and the violent successions of the Olympians that brought him to power are not irreversibly resolved." This view is opposed by Strauss Clay 2003: 29, who holds that "no one of his sons can offer a serious threat to Zeus's supremacy".

<sup>21</sup> The arrangement of grandchildren working with grandparents undergirds the entire pattern. Strauss Clay 2006: 67–68 draws attention to parallels between Hera and Gaia, mothers of monsters, in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. West 1966 ad 463. Tellingly, loyalties of Gaia remain notoriously divided throughout the *Theogony* (Felson 2011: 260; Mondì 1984: 334).



him and his twin sister Artemis as the loveliest among Ouranos's descendants (ἱμερόεντα γόνον περὶ πάντων Οὐρανιόνων, 919). Apollo and Artemis' births are recounted after those of Zeus's delightful and esteemed daughters, the Horai (Seasons), the Moirai (Destinies), the Charites (Graces), Persephone, and the Muses; in turn, they are followed by the births of Hera's progeny, Hebe (Youth), Ares, and Eileithyia. The succession narrative, however, encircles and encroaches upon this harmonious domestic tableau. The poet precedes the catalogue of Zeus's peaceful children with Ouranos and Gaia's warning about Metis's future offspring and concludes it with the astonishing birth of Athena.<sup>23</sup> Zeus's first—and, after a fashion, last—legitimate child, Athena, surfaces from her father's head as an “awful battle-rouser (...) who delights in din and wars and battles” (δεινὴν ἐγρεκύδοιμον [...] ἧ κέλαδοί τε ἄδον πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε, 925–26), adumbrating the averted birth of her brother, Zeus's successor.<sup>24</sup> Thus framed, the entire catalogue of Zeus's offspring reverberates with unease: not only did Zeus narrowly avert the birth of his successor from Metis but he also fathered other sons who may challenge his power. As I demonstrate in the later part of this article, Hesiodic divine imagery can be deceiving: “rabble-rousing” Athena generally remains one of Zeus's staunchest supporters, whereas “lovely” Apollo becomes one of Zeus's bitterest opponents.<sup>25</sup>

#### PROMETHEUS BOUND: THE CURSE OF KRONOS (907–12)

Preoccupation with the divine succession and destiny, prominent in the *Theogony*, also underscores the plot of *Prometheus Bound*, a mid-or-late fifth century tragedy (463–430 B.C.E.?) of uncertain authorship, traditionally (yet erroneously) ascribed to Aeschylus.<sup>26</sup> The enigmatic and multi-layered play depicts the early days of Zeus's sovereignty. Having imprisoned the rebellious Titans, the newly-established monarch rearranges the divine social order: he

<sup>23</sup> Analogies can be drawn between birth of Athena from Zeus's head and birth of Poseidon's children, Pegasus and Chrysaor, from Medusa's severed head (276–94): in both cases, protracted and wondrous “pregnancy” telescopes the narrative and causally ties its origin (a fatuous sexual union) to its resolution (birth of wondrous children).

<sup>24</sup> My translation. The birth of Athena is often framed as an awesome, terrifying event that unsettles the entire cosmos: cf. Pind. *Ol* 7.35–38; *Hymn. Hom. Min.* 28.9–12; Felson 2011: 265–75.

<sup>25</sup> For a thorough appraisal of the succession danger posed by Athena and Apollo to Zeus, refer to Felson's compelling analyses (2011: 265–83; 2012: 269–80).

<sup>26</sup> The play is now thought to have been produced or amended by another, possibly Aeschylus's sons, Euphorion and Euaion, or his nephew, Philokles (Manousakis 2020: 25–45, 223–25; Ruffell 2012: 16; Sommerstein 2010: 232; West 1990: 67–72). The date of the first staging remains uncertain but can be narrowed down to a period between 463 and 430 B.C.E. (Ruffell 2012: 13–19; Sommerstein 2010: 231–32). Manousakis (2020: 221–22), employing computer science authorship attribution methods, dates the play to 440–430 B.C.E..

apportions privileges to his next of kin, the new gods (230–33, 439, 960) and coerces unassimilated non-Olympian deities into compliance. These actions are met with a chorus of disapproval from loosely defined “elder gods”: deities who lost their standing in the new regime (148–51).<sup>27</sup>

The plot of the play revolves around the punishment of the wily Titan Prometheus, who was chained to the rocks of Caucasus for helping mortals against Zeus’s will (18–36, 101–13, 201–260, 447–68, 476–506). The text of the play has a bevy of Okeanides visit the fettered Prometheus and commiserate with his plight. Conversing with the water maidens, embittered Prometheus discloses that Zeus, despite his grandstanding, is not the most powerful deity in the universe. According to the Titan, the king of the gods must eventually yield to the forces of Destiny, personified in “the triple Fates and the unforgetting Furies” (Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ’ Ἐρινύες, 516); even more significantly, Zeus’s fate is not to reign eternally (519). This awesome (σεμνός, 521) revelation rearranges the cosmic structure of the play and, indeed, the Greek mythic storyworld. The Moirai, spinners of destiny, and the Erinyes, personifications of the curse of a wronged parent,<sup>28</sup> work against Zeus’s supremacy and scheme his eventual downfall.

Gifted with oracular knowledge by his mother,<sup>29</sup> Prometheus progressively reveals throughout the play that the agent of the Moirai and the Erinyes will not be one of Zeus’s contemporaries or elders, but someone from the as-yet-unborn generation—specifically, one of Zeus’s offspring. In the later part of the play, Prometheus exposes that Zeus’s fall will begin with an ill-omened marriage (γαμεῖ γάμον τοιοῦτον ᾧ ποτ’ ἀσχαλᾷ, 764) but refuses to divulge the name of the bride-to-be (168–79, 189–95, 519–25, 757–70). The complementary sources elucidate the maiden in question is Thetis, daughter of Nereus and Doris (Hesiod *Theogony* 240–44),<sup>30</sup> if Zeus impregnates her, their astounding, indomitable child (δυσμαχώτατον τέρας, Aesch. *PV* 921)<sup>31</sup> will discover a weapon deadlier than Zeus’s thunderbolt and break Poseidon’s trident (κεραυνοῦ κρείσσον’

<sup>27</sup> The author of the play draws distinct lines between the elder and younger generations of Greek gods, building on ideas expressed in Hesiod and beyond: Fontenrose 1971: 101–3, Solmsen 1949: 181–86, 190–93. Mackin Roberts 2020: 14–18 surveys the complicated history of the distinction between “Olympian” and “Underworld” deities in ancient Greek thought and religious praxis.

<sup>28</sup> Palmer 1993: 151n23. The Erinyes, born out of the blood of wounded Ouranos that spilled on Gaia, embody *par excellence* the transgressive unfilial conduct (Hes. *Theog.* 182–87; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.3.)

<sup>29</sup> Themis, here identified with Gaia (ἐμοὶ δὲ μήτηρ οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον Θέμις, καὶ Γαῖα, πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφή μία, 211–12).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Hyg. *Fab.* 54; Pind. *Isthm.* 8.30–37; Solmsen 1949: 128, 162.

<sup>31</sup> Literally, a wrestler (παλαιστήν, 920), cf. Pausanias’ remark on Zeus outwrestling Kronos to win sovereignty over the cosmos (5.7.10, 8.2.2; Vander Waerdt 1982: 37n47–49). The imagery of gods wrestling for the control over the cosmos reverberates throughout *Prometheus Bound* and the *Oresteia*.



εὐρήσει φλόγα ... τρίαينαν, αἰχμὴν τὴν Ποσειδῶνος, σκεδᾷ, 922, 925).<sup>32</sup> Thus, the play intertextually alludes to and complements the succession myth in the *Theogony*. Metis and Thetis—aunt and niece, the former Zeus's first wife, the latter potentially his last—are recast by the author as a complementary pair, instruments of the Moirai and the Erinyes.<sup>33</sup> The succession circle has not been decisively broken: one of Zeus's marriages, one of Zeus's children, still has the potential to restart it.

Most significantly, the text of the play extends the narrative of the divine succession to incorporate Kronos and his grandchildren. Hesiod's *Theogony*, written from an Olympian-centered perspective, celebrates Zeus's triumphs and mostly glosses over the hints of intergenerational divine violence between him and his children. Conversely, the *Prometheus Bound* has Prometheus not only foretell Zeus's future defeat but also rationalize it as a result a curse (ἄρα) uttered by deposed Kronos (*PV* 907–12, trans. Sommerstein):

ἢ μὴν ἔτι Ζεὺς, καίπερ αὐθάδης φρενῶν,  
ἔσται ταπεινός, οἷον ἐξαρτύεται  
γάμον γαμεῖν, ὃς αὐτὸν ἐκ τυραννίδος  
θρόνων τ' ἄιστον ἐκβαλεῖ· πατρὸς δ' ἄρα  
Κρόνου τότε ἤδη παντελῶς κρανθήσεται,  
ἦν ἐκπίτνων ἡρᾶτο δηναίων θρόνων.

I declare to you that Zeus, arrogant though his thoughts are, will yet be brought low: such is the union he is preparing to make, which will cast him out of his autocracy and off his throne into oblivion. Then indeed the curse (ἄρα) of his father Cronus, which he uttered when he fell from his ancient throne, will be completely fulfilled.

A surprising yet logical development, the curse of Kronos (ἄρα Κρόνου) has not drawn much attention from the scholarly community. D. Palmer (1993) makes a case that the curse has no parallel within the corpus of Greek literature and must be an authorial invention, albeit a very clever one—an allusion to the abovementioned Hesiodic episode of Ouranos rebuking his children for violence against him and foretelling their imminent defeat at the hands of the younger generation (Hes. *Theog.* 207–10).<sup>34</sup> I argue that, within the narrower context

<sup>32</sup> This is almost certainly an allusion to the Pindaric notion of Poseidon and Zeus's quarrel over Thetis' hand in marriage (Pind. *Isthm.* 8.30–37): the author of *Prometheus Bound* either drew from Pindar's account or from a hypothetical common epic source, the so-called Thetis-poem (Burnett 2005: 115n30; Lesky RE s.v. Peleus, col. 296; Stoessl 1988: 57n128). The author of this article believes that the Zeus-Poseidon quarrel motif, echoing primordial divine conflicts, predates Pindar and the *Iliad* (cf. Hom. *Il.* 13.345–360 [especially 358–60], 15.157–67, 185–199, 206–17).

<sup>33</sup> Detienne and Vernant exhaustively explore a web of correspondences between doublet figures of Metis and Thetis in the Greek mythical imaginarium (1991: 133–74).

<sup>34</sup> Palmer 1993: 149–52. Gary Vos has suggested to me that the very existence of the curse of Kronos could be an invention as well: the “crooked-minded” Titan (cf. Hes. *Theog.* 546) could lie

of the play and the broader context of the Greek mythic storyworld, “the curse of Kronos” most cogently expresses the cognitive pattern behind the divine succession narrative, highlighting the central role of the grandfather-grandchild relationship. The play names the aggressor, the victim, the transgression, the punishment, and the avenger. Zeus defeated Kronos, but Kronos in retaliation cursed Zeus, to be beaten by Kronos’s grandchild; the Moirai and the Erinyes ensure the outrage is redressed, and goddesses such as Thetis (and Metis) become their instruments—traps laid to ensnare Zeus.<sup>35</sup>

Crucially, the retribution scheme appears open-ended: it specifies the crime, the target, and the intended harm to befall the target, but it remains vague by which means and whose designs the harm will come to pass. The intertextual oscillation between dangerous marriages, between Metis and Thetis, signals to the reader that the birth of a child stronger than its father is not a unique quirk of fate, but a manifestation of a concerted behind-the-scenes effort to make Zeus answer for unfilial conduct against Kronos. The polyphony of the Greek mythic storyworld suggests there is more than one such child, more than one potential successor to Zeus: as I will demonstrate in the next section, the portentous birth of Apollo indicates he may also qualify as a claimant to his father’s throne.

#### THE ENTRANCE OF APOLLO (*THE HOMERIC HYMN TO APOLLO 3*)

In the preceding sections, I discussed how the unfolding divine succession narrative in the *Theogony* expands to encompass Kronos and his grandchildren in *Prometheus Bound*, the succession danger materializing anew in Zeus’s powerful children. Consequently, in this section I will examine Apollo as Zeus’s potential successor through the lens of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo 3* (the sixth century B.C.E.). The immense significance of the *Hymn* to my argument stems from its theological and political underpinnings. In this article, I follow Jenny Strauss Clay’s interpretation of the major Homeric Hymns: these poems narrate the intermediate, semi-flexible stage of the divine history—after the violence of the Titanomachy but before the fossilization of the Olympian order—and recount how the gods received their powers and privileges under Zeus and hence

---

about an oncoming challenger and thus curse Zeus with an ever-lasting fear of deposition. No matter if true or deceiving, Promethean oracles become self-fulfilling, since they perfectly capture the vicious and self-sustaining nature of divine succession quarrels: Zeus will create his own enemies.

<sup>35</sup> Marston 2007: 121–33 convincingly argues the original audience of *Prometheus Bound* would interpret the play’s opening as depicting a magical binding ritual (κατάδεσμος) against Prometheus, with Hephaistos set in a role of ritual specialist and Zeus (represented by Kratos and Bia) acting as clients requesting the binding. The imagery of cursing would then reverberate, I claim, in the “curse of Kronos”: Prometheus, believing himself to have been wrongly bound and punished, retaliates by reminding the audience about another curse that will work against his oppressor.

rearranged the Olympian power structure.<sup>36</sup> The *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* is traditionally divided into two parts, the Delian and the Pythian section:<sup>37</sup> the first part of the *Hymn* retells the wondrous birth of Apollo, whereas the second one recounts Apollo's first daring exploits: establishing the oracle at Delphi, slaying the serpent that lurked there, and retaliation against a local nymph, Telphousa, who tried to deceive Apollo.

Significantly, the *Homeric Hymn* represents Apollo as a potentially disruptive force that—in general scholarly opinion—was eventually assimilated into the Olympian regime.<sup>38</sup> In my reading, however, I deemphasize Apollo's alleged complicity with Zeus in favor of concentrating on three passages that point toward the god's shadier side: (a) the scene of Apollo's entrance at the beginning of the *Hymn* (1–13); (b) the prophecy and circumstances of his birth (62–88); and (c) the parallels between the birth of Apollo (51–132) and the birth of Typhaon (305–54), respectively found in the Delian and Pythian sections of the *Hymn*. Interpreted one by one, these three scenes merely hint at Apollo's innate power and boisterousness. Examined within the broader storyworld context, the analyzed passages overtly link Apollo to Titanic forces of disorder, positioning him as Zeus's potential replacement and, arguably, Kronos's avenger.

In the proem to the Delian section of the *Hymn*—and, indeed, in the entire *Hymn*—Apollo is represented as an awesome god, wonderful yet terrifying. When he enters Olympus to join the heavenly banquet, he draws (τῑταίνει, 4) his bow like an avenging Titan: all other deities tremble (τρομέουσιν, 2) and leap in fright, settling down only when Apollo's mother Leto disarms her son and Zeus hands him a cup of nectar (1–13). The vagaries of tense usage in this evocative passage suggest that Apollo's epiphanies consistently stir up dread and delight.<sup>39</sup> Even though Apollo has once been neutralized and appeased, his every entrance reverberates with the unspoken danger and makes the readers and the gods alike

<sup>36</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 15–16.

<sup>37</sup> Scholars have spilt much ink over the *Hymn*'s bipartite composition, arguing for or against the text's initial coherence (for exhaustive surveys of this debate, refer to Chappell 2011: 59–81; Strauss Clay 2006: 18n.; West 2003: 10–12; Janko 1982: 99–132; Förstel 1979: 20–62). Since this article adopts a narratological perspective and casts the Greek mythic universe as a storyworld, the initial unity of the text or lack thereof is of little relevance to the argument at hand. What I am interested in is how the divine succession motifs reverberate in both the Delian and the Pythian parts of the *Hymn*.

<sup>38</sup> Chappell 2011: 75–77; Strauss Clay 2006: 35–38, 44.

<sup>39</sup> Many scholars were troubled by the incoherent tense usage in the *Hymn*'s proem. In a single scene, the behavior of the gods is expressed in the present (2: τρομέουσιν, 3: ἀναΐσσουν, 4: τῑταίνει), imperfect (5: μίμνε), aorist (6: ἐχάλασσε, ἐκλήισσε, 8: ἀνεκρέμασε, 9: εἶπεν, 10: ἔδωκε), and present tense again (12: καθίζουσιν, χαίρει). Strauss Clay interprets this as an informed artistic choice: every action of a deity fully expresses her or his innermost essence, reflecting and commenting upon other such actions—consequently, it acquires a timeless quality, exceedingly difficult to convey temporally (2006: 23–29). Due to scarcity of *comparanda*, one cannot assess whether this tense usage is the hymnist's idiosyncrasy or an established formula. For a recent comprehensive overview of scholarship on this passage, see Chappell (2012).

recall violent theomachies of the foregone era: as such, the god's entry has to be framed with Leto's perpetual pacifying gestures.<sup>40</sup>

At this juncture, the hymnist expresses Leto's joy at having borne a powerful archer son (13), a poetic choice that curiously complements line 919 in Hesiod's *Theogony*, where Apollo and Artemis bear the bland distinction of being "the loveliest among Ouranos's descendants" (ἡμερόεντα γόνον περὶ πάντων Οὐρανίωνων). Leto of the *Hymn* takes pride in Apollo's strength instead: the hymnist deemphasizes the god's beauty in favor of his power, made manifest in his arrogant and callous behavior throughout the text.<sup>41</sup> Pitted against Apollo of the *Theogony*, Apollo of the *Hymn* resembles more closely Metis and Zeus's unborn son of exceedingly violent heart (Hes. *Theog.* 898)—in fact, I argue that the choice to depict Apollo's drawing of his bow (τιταίνει, 4) at the very beginning of the *Hymn* expressly alludes to Hesiod's naming of Titans (τιτᾶνες) and their crime against Ouranos (207–10). Remarkably, the hymnist ambiguously highlights and glosses over the darker aspects of the god's persona. Drawing upon the violent theogonic tradition, the poet nevertheless labors to assure the audience that Apollo directs his terrible anger solely against Zeus's foes; however, as Nancy Felson has superbly demonstrated, the poet empathizes to a degree with Apollo's female opponents (Telpousa and, by proxy, Hera), inviting alternative readings of Apollo's deeds.<sup>42</sup> Once entertained, the notion of Apollo's cosmic danger lingers in the text, weighing on two other scenes that comment upon his character.

The hymnist expands on Apollo's volatile nature in the scene depicting circumstances of the god's birth (62–132), including an otherwise unattested rumor or "prophecy" about the cosmic danger posed by unborn Apollo. The poet has Leto, heavily pregnant, travel the earth in search of a place to give birth (30–49). Just like the gods assembled on Olympus, the lands tremble (ἐτρόμεον, 47) at the approach of Leto and unborn Apollo, refusing to host them.<sup>43</sup> Eventually, Leto alights at the island of Delos, a barren wasteland, and petitions the personified island for hospitality. Although known as gentle, Leto proves to be a tough negotiator: she concurrently coaxes and coerces Delos into granting her request with an offhanded remark that the island's unfortunate condition will likely never improve—unless it were to aid her and Apollo (51–60).<sup>44</sup> Delos responds in turn: the island acknowledges its destitution but cautions that the alternative may be even worse—a persistent rumor (ἔπος, 66)

<sup>40</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 19–30. However, Felson 2011: 273–74 notes that the scene constitutes a reversal of traditional theomachy patterns as found in the *Theogony*: Leto, unlike Gaia and Rhea, works towards reconciliation between her son and his father—by choice.

<sup>41</sup> Chappell 2011: 76; Davies 2007: 49; 1997: 47, 57–58.

<sup>42</sup> Felson 2012: 269–71.

<sup>43</sup> Felson 2011: 274n33.

<sup>44</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 34–35. Leto's shrewdness in the *Hymn* clashes to a degree with her insipid mildness in the *Theogony* (404–8); arguably, the *Theogony* consciously overemphasizes Leto

from an unknown source has it that Apollo will be a wrathful, distempered god (66–69, my translation):

ἀλλὰ τόδε τρομέω, Λητοῖ, ἔπος, οὐδέ σε κεύσω:  
 λίην γάρ τινά φασιν ἀτάσθαλον Ἀπόλλωνα  
 ἔσσεσθαι, μέγα δὲ πρυτανεύσέμεν ἀθανάτοισι  
 καὶ θνητοῖσι βροτοῖσιν ἐπὶ ζείδωρον ἄρουραν.

But I tremble (τρομέω) at a certain rumor, Leto, which I will not conceal from you:  
 They say that Apollo will be an unruly rabble-rouser (ἀτάσθαλον)  
 and will greatly lord it over immortals  
 and mortals all over the grain-giving earth.

This otherwise unknown prophecy matters enormously to my argument: aptly describing Apollo's behavior in the *Hymn* as ἀτασθαλία, it also puts Apollo's birth side by side with other momentous births foretold in the succession myth as depicted in the *Theogony*. Crucially, ἀτάσθαλος is a shockingly offensive epithet to be directed at another god—especially a god to be praised in a hymn.<sup>45</sup> A high-untranslatable term, ἀτάσθαλος has been variously rendered in English: Strauss Clay proposes “excessively overbearing”, Felson puts forward “overly reckless”, and West supplies a rustically-tinged “all too wild sort”.<sup>46</sup> Ultimately, ἀτασθαλία denotes unruliness, distemper, wrath, savagery, premeditated violence, and flagrant disregard for communal rules—qualities modern commentators on the *Hymn* noted in Apollo's image in the *Hymn* but could not always explain.<sup>47</sup> Jenny Strauss Clay persuasively links Apollo's prophesied ἀτασθαλία to his behavior in the *Hymn* and the divine succession myth in Hesiod's *Theogony*, arguing that Apollo could have challenged his father but instead sided with him, choosing to proclaim Zeus's will to mortals in oracles (*Hom. Hymn. Ap.* 3.131–32).<sup>48</sup> In contrast, Felson (2012) interprets the *Hymn* from the perspective of Apollo's victims and underlines the traces of tension between Zeus and Apollo: in her view, the dynastic conflict has not been satisfactorily resolved and still rumbles at the roots of the world, its echoes resounding in the tremor of the gods (2) and the lands (47, 66) at Apollo's approach.<sup>49</sup> Crucially, Apollo's prophesied ἀτασθαλία

and Apollo's positive traits in lieu of their more ambiguous ones (such as Leto's excessive pride and jealousy towards Niobe, expressed in *Hom. Il.* 24.602–12).

<sup>45</sup> Felson 2011: 279n32; Strauss Clay 2006: 36.

<sup>46</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 35–36; Felson 2011: 278–79; 2012: 271–72; West 2003 on 67.

<sup>47</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 36–38, 36n56. Chappell 2011: 74–77 underplays the theomachy connotations and claims that Apollo's ambiguous character in the *Hymn* aligns with his representations in other sources. For further discussion on ἀτασθαλία, see Loney 2010: 24–26 and Bakker 2013: 107 (who links ἀτασθαλία to folly and greed brought about by excess abundance).

<sup>48</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 44.

<sup>49</sup> Felson 2011: 274n33. Relevantly, the birth of Athena (another potentially disruptive child of Zeus) in the *Homeric Hymn 28 to Athena* causes a massive earthquake (9–11, Felson 2011: 267–70). Cf. *Hes. Theog.* 629–721, 820–900.

parallels and echoes ἀτασθαλία of Ouranos decried by Gaia in the *Theogony* (164). In line with my earlier readings, I build on Felson's interpretation and consider Apollo's ἀτασθαλία in the context of the Greek mythic storyworld. I believe that the hymnist employs the rumor to evoke Ouranos and Kronos's pronouncements, a traditional motif upon which the *Theogony* and *Prometheus Bound* elaborated.

Although the rumor in the *Hymn* has no manifest source, its scope and subject closely parallel Ouranos and Kronos's retributive prophecies against their unruly children: all these utterances presage the coming of a god with a potential to upturn the cosmic balance.<sup>50</sup> This connection has not been significantly stressed by interpreters of the poem, who mostly focused on the rumor's author. Strauss Clay calls it "the universal misapprehension concerning the new god" and dismisses it as slander spread by Hera, Apollo and Zeus's opponent in the *Hymn*.<sup>51</sup> In turn, Chappell opposes Strauss Clay's interpretation and stresses that nothing links the Hera of the Pythian part to the rumor; nevertheless, he does not ponder the rumor's source.<sup>52</sup> Finally, Felson recognizes the rumor's intertextual significance and dwells on Apollo's potential to unseat his father.<sup>53</sup> In my view, Hera may have taken advantage of the rumor to malign Apollo, but, in the theogonic frame of the *Hymn*, she does not start it. Tellingly, this tantalizing yet seemingly inchoate snippet of gossip would not have been included by the hymnist had the *Hymn*'s intended audience lacked the knowledge to frame it. In light of the *Hymn*'s conspicuous intertextual allusions, I argue that the rumor as relayed by Delos should be interpreted as nothing less than an expression of unspoken universal expectation that Zeus's rule will be successfully challenged at some point, given that Zeus's crime against Kronos remains unredressed. Embedding the *Hymn* in the divine succession frameworks, the hymnist redevelops the birth narrative to set Apollo *Atasthalos* as yet another potential claimant to his father's throne, Leto's child to fulfill the destiny denied to the unborn children of Metis and Thetis, all grandchildren of Kronos.

<sup>50</sup> Having analyzed a number of stories concerning conflicts between Zeus and his challengers, Felson draws attention to the oracles in the Greek myth that herald the birth of a usurper heir, "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" that demands resolution (2011: 257).

<sup>51</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 44.

<sup>52</sup> Chappell 2011: 75. Hera of the *Hymn*, though powerful, reads as an ineffectual opponent. In the Delian part, she easily loses control of Eileithyia once other goddesses bribe her with a necklace (97–116), whereas in the Pythian part she works on the false assumption that Zeus begat Athena alone, with her attempts to reproduce resulting in flawed children, first Hephaistos (311–17), and then Typhaon (331–54). To start such a terrifying rumor that makes all lands tremble would endow her with a measure of precognition inconsistent with her misdirected anger in the text.

<sup>53</sup> Felson 2011: 279: "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."



Finally, the *Hymn* narrates the circumstances of the conception and birth of monstrous Typhaon (305–56), scourge (πῆμα, 306, 352) to mortals (βροτοῖσιν, 306) and gods (θεοῖσιν, 352)<sup>54</sup> alike: structural parallels between Typhaon and Apollo's births call upon succession themes and suggest a latent affinity between one and another.<sup>55</sup> Typhaon in the *Hymn* comes to exist due to Hera's envy:<sup>56</sup> the hymnist relates the goddess took umbrage that Zeus apparently generated a glorious child, Athena, without her assistance while siring sickly and misshapen Hephaistos on Hera (311–325). The slighted goddess contrives to outdo Zeus and bear a son greater than him: removed from other gods, she strikes the earth with her hand and prays (334–39, trans. West):

κέκλυτε νῦν μεν, Γαῖα καὶ Οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὕπερθεν  
 Τιτῆνές τε θεοί, τοὶ ὑπὸ χθονὶ ναιετάοντες  
 Τάρταρον ἀμφὶ μέγαν, τῶν ἔξ ἄνδρες τε θεοὶ τε:  
 αὐτοὶ νῦν μεν πάντες ἀκούσατε καὶ δότε παῖδα  
 νόσφι Διός, μηδὲν τι βίην ἐπιδευέα κείνου:  
 ἀλλ' ὃ γε φέρτερος ἔστω, ὅσον Κρόνου εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς

Hear me now, Earth and broad Heaven above, and you Titan gods who dwell below the earth around great Tartarus, and from whom gods and men descend: all of you now in person, hear me and grant me a son without Zeus's help, in no way falling short of him in strength, but as much superior as wide-sounding Zeus was to Kronos.<sup>57</sup>

Cognizant that she cannot independently produce a powerful son, Hera collectively asks primordial deities to father this child on her. In doing so, she consciously restarts the vicious cycle of divine succession as described in Hesiod's *Theogony*:<sup>58</sup> not only does Hera's prayer in the *Hymn*

<sup>54</sup> Following the Moscow manuscript (M), West in line 352 supplies θεοῖσιν against βροτοῖσιν, the latter postulated for the lost archetype Ψ (2003: 23).

<sup>55</sup> West (2003: 11–12), following the prevalent scholarly tradition (cf. Strauss Clay 2006: 64n145), reads Hera's episode in the *Hymn* (305–56) as a "crass" interpolation inserted ca 523/2 B.C.E. to please Hera's worshippers on Samos (cf. Chappell 2011: 71–73). In turn, Strauss Clay 2006: 64–68, building on studies by Förstel 1979 and Miller 1985, defends the textual coherence of this episode by virtue of framing the *Hymn* in the context of the divine succession myth, her arguments seconded by Richardson 2010: 126–31.

<sup>56</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 65–66 sides with Miller 1985: 85 and Janko 1982: 119 in belief that the hymnist knew of and consciously included elements from several divergent accounts on Typhoeus's birth, "as if the poet had attempted to roll all succession stories into a single paradigmatic account" (Strauss Clay 2006: 66).

<sup>57</sup> Hera's curse/prayer/oath in the *Hymn* has striking parallels with two scenes in the *Iliad*. First, Hera concludes a deal with Hypnos by promising him Pasithea's hand in marriage: taking hold of the earth and sea, the goddess swears upon Styx, Kronos, and the Titans (14.270–79). Second, Meleager's mother prostrates herself, beats the earth with her hand and prays to Hades and Persephone to give death to her son (9.567–73). Faraone 2010: 398–99 juxtaposes and ties these archaic scenes with the subsequent magical praxis of invoking Kronos and the Titans to lend power to curses.

<sup>58</sup> Strauss Clay 2006: 68–71; Ramnoux 1959a: 49–52. Hera's actions echo the unbridled primordial (and incestuous) fertility of Gaia and Near Eastern mother goddesses (Felson 2011: 260, 281).

specifically invoke Zeus's uprising against Kronos but it also invokes earlier pronouncements of Ouranos and Kronos against their children and posits her future child as the prophesied avenger of Kronos.<sup>59</sup> In the frame of the *Hymn*, Hera's child envy over Athena would predictably extend to Apollo as well: Apollo, fruit of an extramarital affair, and Athena, born without her assistance, shine brightly against Hephaistos.

Significantly, the conception and birth of Typhaon in the *Hymn* directly contrasts and yet calls to mind Apollo's (and Athena's) coming, glory and terror commingled.<sup>60</sup> At face value, the hymned god and monster have little in common, the circumstances of their births as divergent as possible. The hymnist pits Leto's mildness and foresight against Hera's brash ignorance,<sup>61</sup> splendor of Zeus's own Apollo against horror of fatherless Typhaon. Within the theogonic frame of the *Hymn*, however, a tangled intertextual thread ties Typhaon's paternal descent to Apollo's. Extending Hesiod's divine succession narrative, the hymnist juxtaposes ostensibly monogenetic pregnancies of Zeus and Hera. For Zeus of the *Hymn*, left unsaid are circumstances of Athena's conception, Metis's disappearance, and the danger posed by Metis's unborn son. For Hera of the *Hymn*, left unsaid is Typhaon's paternity. Yet, the hymnist has Hera evoke the terrible sovereignty Zeus claimed over Kronos and the latter's intent of revenge, in effect insinuating that Ouranos, Kronos, or some elder god somehow sired Typhaon upon Hera. Either Ouranos or Kronos would appear equally appropriate in this context, but I follow Jenny Strauss Clay in believing that the poet of the *Hymn* may have intended Kronos as the sire. In doing so, the hymnist may have alluded to a curious parallel found in a scholium to *Iliad* 2.783 (possibly reflecting an Orphic tradition): Hera, angry at Zeus, connived with deposed Kronos and hatched Typhon from two eggs Kronos had smeared with his semen.<sup>62</sup> Reimagining Hera as the dark counterpart to parthenogenetic Gaia in the *Theogony*, the hymnist deftly combines several myth strands on divine succession,<sup>63</sup> capitalizing on Hera's parentage to obliquely

<sup>59</sup>Faraone 2010: 399 frames Hera's request as "an opportunity for the Titans to redress Kronos's defeat at the hands of Zeus".

<sup>60</sup>Strauss Clay 2006: 65n152, Drerup 1937: 126 and Forderer 1971: 196 note intriguing parallels between Apollo's and Typhaon's births.

<sup>61</sup>The hymnist also contrasts Leto and Hera by stressing their divergent loyalties. Leto swears an oath upon Gaia, Ouranos, and Styx (an ally of Zeus) in order to further Zeus's cause, whereas Hera prays to Gaia, Ouranos, and collective Titan gods (enemies of Zeus) to support Kronos against Zeus. Gaia and Ouranos, it appears, can support either faction.

<sup>62</sup>Σ B in Hom. *Il.* 2.783 = Kirk, Raven, and Schofield 1983: fr. 52 (58–60); Ogden 2013: 73; Strauss Clay 2006: 67n157; Gantz 1993: 50–51. For an overview of ancient sources on Typhon, see Ogden 2013: 69–80. Although monster of the *Theogony* is not the one of the *Hymn*, the texts confuse the distinction with the indiscriminate use of related name forms. The *Theogony* uses both variants for a single character (Typh(a)on: 306, Typhoeus: 821, 869); it remains likely but unproven that the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*'s Typhoeus (367) and Typhaon (306, 352) are also one.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. n. 56.

imply that “fatherless” Typhaon came from a recursive incestuous union between Kronos and his daughter. Conceived as Kronos’s descendant, Typhaon in my interpretation would share in Apollo’s disruptive potential, the Earth trembling (47, 66) and moving (341) at their approach, as it did at Athena’s birth in the *Homeric Hymn* 28.<sup>64</sup>

In the preceding paragraphs, I traced how the author/compiler of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* employed the divine succession tradition to appoint Apollo as an “almost-usurper” to Zeus, drawing a constellation of elusive parallels between the overweening god and his Titanic forebears. Continuously appeased by Leto’s overtures, Apollo ἀτάσθαλος of the *Hymn* sides with Zeus yet retains an untapped potential for chaos, his birth in the poem set against births of other potentially disruptive descendants of Kronos, first Athena and then, implicitly, Typhaon.

In the following section, I will follow this narrative strand to examine two bitter conflicts between Apollo and Zeus that almost led to an Olympian coup d’état and locked father and son in a vicious circle of violence. Apollo’s continuing unruliness transcends what Felson dismisses as “benign regression” in his relationship with Zeus.<sup>65</sup> I argue that Apollo’s behavior falls into and epitomizes the reprisal pattern expressed through the Promethean curse of Kronos, with the Moirai and Erinyes willingly embroiling themselves in the intergenerational divine conflict.

APOLLO IN EXILE: CONFLICTS BETWEEN ZEUS AND APOLLO  
IN THE *ILIAD* (1.396–406), HESIODIC CORPUS (FRR. 55–59 [MOST])  
AND EURIPIDES’ *ALCESTIS* (1–14, 24–37)

In the section below, I consider ancient Greek sources on two clashes between Zeus and Apollo, the latter god punished with menial labor among mortals: I argue that these passages, read against the succession narrative of the Greek mythic storyworld, draw on and contribute to the tradition that connotes Apollo as Zeus’s usurper and Kronos’s avenger. The first source to be considered, the *Iliad*, relates that Apollo and Poseidon have once served (θητεύσαμεν, 21.444) the Trojan king Laomedon: Poseidon built the walls of Troy, whereas Apollo shepherded the king’s flocks (21.441–60).<sup>66</sup> Poseidon in

<sup>64</sup> ἔμασε χθόνα χειρὶ παχείῃ, κινήθη δ’ ἄρα Γαῖα φερέσβιος, 340–41 (“she [Hera] struck the earth with her massive hand, and the life-giving Earth shifted”) (my translation). Cf. Felson 2011: 273–74 and Hes. *Theog.* 629–721, 820–900.

<sup>65</sup> Felson 2011: 282n36 traces this temporary relationship crisis to the fraternal conflict between Apollo and Hermes in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, eventually amicably resolved by Zeus. Harrell 1991: 307–18 proposes a slightly less optimistic reading of that *Hymn*.

<sup>66</sup> Porter 2014: 523. Hom. *Il.* 7.452 implies that Apollo and Poseidon jointly erected the walls of Troy. Cf. Pind. *Ol.* 8.30–33; Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.5.9.

the *Iliad* relates that Laomedon refused to pay their wages and threatened to maim and enslave both gods, who nonetheless did not exact their revenge on him. The pair's humiliation indicates that they have no recourse to Zeus and remain at his sufferance, most probably atoning for some grave crime.<sup>67</sup> Apollo and Poseidon's wrongdoing in the *Iliad* remains uncertain, but Tzetzes' scholium to Lycophron's *Alexandra* indicates that the two gods probably participated in an otherwise unknown Olympian coup d'état recalled by Achilles in the *Iliad* (1.396–406).<sup>68</sup> Hera, Athena, and Poseidon are said to have bound Zeus, who was eventually untied and rescued by Thetis (1.396–400, trans. Murray/Wyatt):

πολλάκι γάρ σεο πατὴρ ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἄκουσα εὐχομένης ὅτ' ἔφησθα κελαίνοφει Κρονίωνι  
οἷη ἐν ἀθανάτοισιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμύναι, ὅππότε μιν ξυνδῆσαι Ὀλύμπιοι ἤθελον ἄλλοι Ἥρη  
τ' ἠδὲ Ποσειδάων καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη;

Often I have heard you boasting in the halls of my father, and declaring that you alone among the immortals warded off loathsome destruction from the son of Cronos, lord of the dark clouds, on the day when the other Olympians were minded to put him in bonds, Hera and Poseidon and Pallas Athene.

Laden with ambiguities, the passage on a war among the Olympians (*Olympiomachia*) has been deemed a Homeric invention,<sup>69</sup> with Porter and Slatkin defending its authenticity by virtue of its inter- and intratextual resonance.<sup>70</sup> Relevantly to my argument, Athena's unexpected participation in the coup against

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Panyassis (fr. 3 [West] = Clem. Al. *Protr.* 2.35.3), who enumerates several instances of divine servitude among mortals (Matthews 1974: 91–95). Characteristically, Apollo does not engage Poseidon in the frivolous theomachy in Book 21 of the *Iliad* (461–67): I believe that, recognizing their shared circumstances, Apollo remains unwilling to mock fight Poseidon—a fellow conspirator against Zeus (1.396–400) and, possibly, another pretender to Zeus's throne (15.159–67, 185–215, Σ *ad* Lycophr. 34 [Scheer])—solely for Zeus's malicious pleasure. Cf. notes 68–72 below.

<sup>68</sup> As noted by the anonymous reviewer of this paper, Tzetzes' scholium *ad* Lycophr. 34 [Scheer] comments on the divine coup in the *Iliad*: ἡ δὲ ἱστορία τοιαύτη· τῶν θεῶν βουλομένων δῆσαι τὸν Δία γνοὺς τοῦτο Ζεὺς ἐκ τῆς Θέτιδος τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους θεοὺς ἔτισε, Ποσειδῶνα δὲ καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα ἔπεμψεν ὑπηρετῆσαι τῷ Λαομέδοντι (“The story goes as follows: when the gods wanted to bind Zeus, he, having learnt their intent from Thetis, punished the other gods, but sent Poseidon and Apollo to serve Laomedon” [my translation]). Porter 2014: 520–25, apparently unaware of this scholium, independently arrived at the same conclusion that Apollo partook in the coup.

<sup>69</sup> E. g. Willcock 1977: 41–53; 1964: 141–54.

<sup>70</sup> Porter 2014: 520–25; Slatkin 2011 [1991]: 57n6. *Olympiomachia* is Porter's neologism. Zeus most probably alludes to the *Olympiomachia* when he invites all other gods to pit their strength against his and bind him with a golden cord (*Il.* 8.18–27), perhaps not unlike the one he was bound with (cf. 1.396–400). Appropriately, Hera remarks that Zeus's strength, though great, is not infinite but merely “not easily subdued” (οὐκ ἀλαπαδνόν), since it had already been brought low once by the concerted Olympian effort (Porter 2014: 511).

her cherished father has been rejected by a subset of ancient scholiasts, with some (most famously Zenodotus) substituting Apollo for Athena.<sup>71</sup> Expanding on Porter's observations, I maintain that the scholiasts' choice to replace Athena with Apollo, one potentially disruptive Zeus's child with another, not only justifies Apollo and Poseidon's stay at Laomedon's court and testifies to the scholiasts' familiarity with tensions between Zeus and Apollo (on which more anon) but also emphasizes Apollo's part in the divine succession narrative that forms the backdrop of the divine plot of the *Iliad*.<sup>72</sup> Significantly, it is extremely unlikely that Apollo would have stayed neutral in the said conflict or supported Zeus.<sup>73</sup> Counted among children and grandchildren of Kronos who turned against and bound Zeus, Apollo, by his overt or implicit inclusion in the Iliadic coup, stands for Zeus's most likely challenger.

Apollo's putative participation in the Iliadic coup against Zeus and his subsequent servitude at Laomedon's court complements yet another strand of

<sup>71</sup> Σ 1.400a [I 114] (Erbse): "Ἡρῃ τ' ἡδὲ Ποσειδάων καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων" ("Hera, Poseidon, and Phoibos Apollo"). Cf. Σ bT 1.400b: τινὲς δὲ γράφουσιν "καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων" ("and some write 'and Phoibos Apollo'") and Σ ad 21.444d: ἠθέλησαν γὰρ συνδῆσαι τὸν Δία "Ποσειδάων καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων" ("for they wanted to bind Zeus, 'Poseidon and Phoibos Apollo'"). For a short overview of Athena's role in the plot and arguments for/against the substitution with Apollo, see Porter 2014: 523–25. The uprising against Zeus could have been a general Olympian uprising against Zeus and not a typical palace plot led by a single party. Σ bT 1.400b specifies that many gods had their reasons to rise against Zeus: οἱ δὲ "Ἦραν μὲν διὰ τὸ πολλαῖς μίγνυσθαι, Ποσειδῶνα δὲ διὰ τὸ πλεονεκτεῖσθαι εἰς τὴν διανομήν, Ἀθηνᾶν δὲ διὰ τὸ ἀναγκασθῆναι ζευχθῆναι Ἡφαίστῳ" ("Hera, because of Zeus's many affairs, then Poseidon, on account of his avaricious disposition in regard to the distribution [of spheres of power], and Athena, since she was forced to wed Hephaistos"). Apollo's *atasthalia* and pride perfectly complement the scholiast's list and parallel Poseidon's avarice. Refer to Porter 2014: 524n.44–45 for comments on divine grievances harbored by Olympians against Zeus. Notably, Tzetzes' cursory *scholium*, cited in note 68, appears to suggest an alternative sequence of events: the binding of Zeus never occurred, thanks to Thetis' forewarning, with Apollo and Poseidon singled out and, I argue, punished more harshly through menial servitude among mortals (as the coup's leaders?).

<sup>72</sup> Gary Vos has brought to my attention the curious role Poseidon played in the discussed episode. If we accept Porter's reconstruction and argue that Apollo and Poseidon jointly rose with other Olympians against Zeus, then one could wonder whether Poseidon did not fear Apollo as another claimant to the Olympian throne. The mass participation in this divine coup (see note 71) implies that it was perhaps a spillover of popular disenchantment with Zeus's policies and not a concerted effort to replace him with a single party such as Poseidon or Apollo. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how Zeus's opponents could have chosen a single leader among so many: had the coup lasted longer, they would have been reduced to in-fighting. Then again, Tzetzes' *scholium ad Lycophr.* 34 [Scheer], already discussed in notes 68 and 71, does imply that Apollo and Poseidon in some versions led the movement and were accordingly punished more shamefully.

<sup>73</sup> See note 67 above for other Greek deities being punished for their actions. To reinforce my previous points (notes 70–72), if we accept the link between the *Olympiomachia* (1.396–400) and Zeus's extended grandstanding (8.18–27), then it is more than likely that the coup in 1.396–400 involved more than three deities, with those mentioned epitomizing the entirety (or a significant faction) of the Olympian collective (cf. note 71).

myth of critical relevance to this paper: Apollo was said to have slain Zeus's thunderbolt-makers, Kyklopes, and to have been sentenced to serve another mortal man, king Admetos. The motif of Apollo's transgression against the Kyklopes, first surfacing in an early assemblage of fragments of what might have been the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* (Hes. fr. 55–59 [Most]), is expanded upon in Euripides' *Alkestis* (1–14) and fully verbalized in the *Library* (Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.9.15, 3.10.4).<sup>74</sup> Set against one another, our fragmentary sources relay a following tale. Zeus struck down Apollo's son, famed physician and wonderworker Asklepios, for raising the dead.<sup>75</sup> Apollo avenged his son by killing the Kyklopes and thus depriving Zeus of the weapon that killed Asklepios.<sup>76</sup> As Robert Fowler emphasizes, “[t]his would effectively dethrone Zeus, which is of course unacceptable (and as a total upheaval of natural order, [...] semantically equivalent to Asklepios's cancellation of death).”<sup>77</sup> Enraged (χολωσάμενος)<sup>78</sup> Zeus initially intended to cast Apollo into Tartaros, but ever-forgiving Leto persuaded him instead to send Apollo to serve as a wage-laborer (θήζ) for a mortal man, the Thessalian king Admetos, for a term of one year.<sup>79</sup> Growing fond of Admetos, Apollo granted him numerous favors,<sup>80</sup> but none

<sup>74</sup> Hubbard 2013: 92–93 provides an exhaustive survey of ancient sources on Apollo's servitude at Admetos's court, noting that the tradition could have been widespread by the sixth c. B.C.E. and is well-attested for the fifth (by, *inter alia*, Pherecydes of Athens (*FGrH* 3F35a = fr. 35 [Fowler]) and Panyassis of Halicarnassus (fr. 3 [West] = fr. 16 K [Matthews] = Clem. *Protr.* 2.35.3; cf. Matthews 1974: 91–95; Huxley 1969: 70).

<sup>75</sup> Ancient authors disagreed over whom Asklepios resurrected and why (consider, *inter alia*, *Carmen Naupactium* fr. 10 [West] *cum* 281n.46; Panyas. fr. 5 [West]; Pherecyd. fr. 35 [Fowler]; Stesich. fr. 194 [Page]; Pind. *Pyth.* 3.54–58; Diod. Sic. 4.71.1–4).

<sup>76</sup> Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.10.4; Diod. Sic. 4.71.3; Hyginus in *Fabulae* 49 specifies that Apollo attacked the Kyklopes because he could not touch his father directly. Aguirre and Buxton 2020: 243 draw our attention to the, “[l]ess familiar, but eminently logical [...] idea that Zeus himself slew the Cyclopes to prevent them from making weapons with which his own power might ultimately be destroyed (the Prometheus syndrome),” surviving in Pind. fr. 266 [Snell-Maehler].

<sup>77</sup> Fowler 2013: 75; Markantonatos 2013: 27. Fowler 2013: 74 notes that “[t]he story of Asklepios presents a series of episodes revolving around existential questions of life vs. death, mortality vs. immortality. In this perspective, the story of Admetos and Alkestis is not a sequel to the Asklepios myth, but its conclusion”.

<sup>78</sup> [X]ολω[σ]άμ[ε]νος: Hes. fr. 58 [Most]; χόσσαι: Hes. fr. 55 [Most]. Walsh's study on Homeric anger terms (2005: 21–31) designates χόλος as a fierce kind of anger—intense, quickly aroused and abated. Markantonatos 2013: 27 underscores Apollo's smoldering resentment at Zeus in Apollo's introductory speech in *Alkestis* (χολωθεῖς, 5), observing that, “[t]he use of the historic present (κτείνω, 6) [...] brings out in sharp relief the violent passions that are as yet far from dormant”.

<sup>79</sup> According to different authorities, Apollo's service lasted either a year or eight years (cf. Matthews 1974: 91–92).

<sup>80</sup> Apollodorus's *Library* relays that Apollo: (1) as Admetos's herdsman, he made all cows bear twins (3.10.4); (2) he helped Admetos to woo his future wife, Alkestis, by accomplishing the task Alkestis' father set for all potential suitors: to yoke a chariot with a boar and a lion; (3) he appeased Artemis when Admetos neglected the goddess in his marriage sacrificial rites and she retaliated by filling his marriage chamber with snakes (1.9.15).



greater than this: learning that Admetos was fated to die young, Apollo bargained with the Moirai to have his death postponed for the price of someone dying in Admetos's stead. Euripides' complex play *Alkestis* (438 B.C.E.) tells the story of this ultimate sacrifice: Admetos's wife died for her husband and eventually returned to the realm of the living thanks to Herakles, who had literally wrestled Death into submission to win her back. The well-attested yet late mythical tradition claims that thunderstruck Asklepios eventually became a healer god,<sup>81</sup> yet Apollo's part in Asklepios's ascension remains ill-defined. A lone and very late testimony on the matter, Ovid in the *Fasti* implies that that Apollo, having returned from his banishment, eventually reconciled with Zeus, mollified by Zeus's resurrecting and deifying Asklepios.<sup>82</sup>

What undergirds the arrangement of fragmentary narratives recapped above is "the continual oscillation between desire and renunciation of the unobtainable, submission and defiance",<sup>83</sup> life and death, mortality and eternal life. Both Apollo and Asklepios interfere with limits of the human and divine condition, defying rules upheld independently by Zeus and the Moirai. If Asklepios finds a way to bring dead mortals back to life, then Apollo contrives some fearsome means to murder the ostensibly immortal Kyklopes:<sup>84</sup> in result, the young god not only deprives Zeus of his signature weapon (fulfilling, after a fashion, the prophecy uttered in

<sup>81</sup> Edelstein 1945 II: 75–76 (T. 232–56). Asklepios's release from the underworld/deification was thought to have been brought about either by Zeus's direct pardon or (symbolically) by the physician's death by thunderbolt (Currie 2005: 360–63), with the narrative's denouement explaining Asklepios's widespread cult (Markantonatos 2013: 143n21).

<sup>82</sup> Ov. *Fas.* 6.761–62. Ovid may have excerpted this motif from lost Hellenistic sources. Allusions to Apollo's political struggle with Zeus and his vanquishment of the Kyklopes and other earthborn monsters echo in the later Greek and Roman literature: for example, Vos (2023) and Savage (1962) detected them in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*, Catullus 64, Virgil's Fourth and Tenth *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid*, Propertius 2.31, Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*, and Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica*.

<sup>83</sup> Fowler 2013: 75.

<sup>84</sup> Ancient authors recognized but remained uneasy in the face of the fact that Apollo found a way to kill beings who, "in all else being like the gods" (Hes. *Theog.* 142), were supposedly immortal. Among surviving sources, only Pherecydes (Scholia in Euripidem, Ad *Alkestim* 1 = T. 71 [Edelstein]) and Crates of Mallus (Hes. fr. 57 [Most] = Scholium ad Hes. *Theog.* 142) sought to explain away this discrepancy by claiming that Apollo slew the mortal sons of the Kyklopes and not the thunderbolt makers themselves. Most ancient authorities rejected that solution (Rautenbach 1984: 49–50), since (as I contend) it would remove both the gravity and semantic equivalence of Apollo and Asklepios's crimes against immortality. Markedly, the same authorities (Hellanicus fr. 88 [Fowler]) knew of three different tribes of Kyklopes: the divine descendants of Ouranos (Hes. *Theog.* 139–46; Rautenbach 1984: 48–50), the lawless kindred of Polyphemos (Hom. *Od.* 1.68–74, 9.105–15), and the builders of the walls of Mycenae and Tiryns (see Rautenbach 1984: 46–48 for a survey of sources). For further information on Kyklopes in the Greek myth, refer to Fowler 2013: 53–56, Gantz 1993: 12–13, Mondi 1983: 17–19, Rautenbach 1984: 41–55 and, most relevantly, to Aguirre and Buxton's exhaustive compendium (2020).

Aesch. *PV* 920–251<sup>85</sup>) but also, I argue, precipitates an existential crisis among his fellow (im)mortals.<sup>86</sup> The outrageous crime calls for a fitting punishment: to hurl (ῥίψειν) Apollo into Tartaros to join the deposed Titans.<sup>87</sup> Relevantly, Sarah Harrell highlights that hurling a deity into Tartaros (ῥίπτω/*rhipto*) or threat thereof “occurs in Homer and Hesiod at moments when Zeus’s control of the Olympian hierarchy is threatened”, with the Iliadic Zeus explicitly naming Tartaros the dwelling place of defeated Kronos.<sup>88</sup> Should we accept Porter’s hypothesis that Apollo’s servitude in Troy expiated for his participation in the coup against Zeus, then the slaying of the Kyklopes would constitute recidivism and spur Zeus to impose the harshest penalty known to gods, usually meant for political challengers. Rescued by Leto’s intercession, banished Apollo continues to irk Zeus by meddling with human mortality, first saving Admetos from an untimely demise and then indirectly engineering the rescue of Alkestis from death. A conjectured earlier treatment of the Alkestis myth in a germinal drama by pioneer dramatist Phrynichus (*fl.* 511–476 B.C.E.)<sup>89</sup> might have gone as far as to claim that Apollo sought to turn Admetos immortal, a reading supported by the Erinyes’ offhand remark in Aeschylus’s *Eumenides* (458 B.C.E., 723–724).<sup>90</sup> Such an interpretation would draw attention to Apollo’s troublesome temperament: having narrowly evaded Tartaros, Apollo continues to try his father’s patience in his exile, interfering with the limits of divine and mortal (im)mortality.<sup>91</sup>

<sup>85</sup> κεραυνὸν κρείσσον’ εὐρήσει φλόγα. If Zeus’s thunderbolt merely incapacitates deities, then Apollo’s undisclosed weapon or tool destroys godlike Kyklopes altogether. Here we touch again upon the perspicacity of Prometheus’s ambiguous prophecy about the Curse of Kronos (*cf.* n. 34): no matter if true or fabricated, the forewarning accurately conveys the pattern of escalating violence among divine fathers and sons.

<sup>86</sup> The Greek mythic storyworld occasionally hints at deicide. Paprocki 2020: 202 highlights that, “early Greek poets were either drawn to (Homer, Stesichorus) or nonplussed by (Hesiod) by the concept [of divine vulnerability], yet they could not entirely ignore it”. See Vermeule 1979: 124; Neal 2006: 151–84.

<sup>87</sup> Hes. fr. 58.5 [Most]: ῥίπειν ἤμελ[λεν ... ἀπ’ Ὀλύμ]που. Perhaps Apollo’s descent was meant to parallel that of the Kyklopes, who were repeatedly thrown into and released from Tartaros (Hes. *Theog.* 501–5; Apollod. 1.1.2, 1.2.1; Rautenbach 1984: 52). Further parallels could be drawn between recklessness of Apollo and innate violence (ὑπέρβιον ἦτορ, Hes. *Theog.* 139) of the Kyklopean spirit.

<sup>88</sup> Harrell 1991: 307–318. Harrell juxtaposes Apollo’s fraternal threats of hurling Hermes into Tartaros in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* (256, 374) with a number of early Greek texts employing the same formula (Hes. *Theog.* 868: ῥίψε; Hes. fr. 27.22 [Most]: ἔρριψ’; Hom. *Il.* 8.13: ῥίπω). Zeus in the *Iliad* identifies Tartaros as the dwelling place of Kronos (Hom. *Il.* 8.477–83), as does Hera in the previously discussed passage in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (3.334–39).

<sup>89</sup> Markantonatos 2013: 90–92.

<sup>90</sup> Aesch. *Eum.* 723–24: τοιαῦτ’ ἐδρασας καὶ Φέρητος ἐν δόμοις | Μοίρας ἐπεισας ἀφθίτους θεῖναι βροτοῦς (“Erinyes to Apollo: You did just the same sort of thing in the house of Pheres, inducing the Fates to make mortals immortal” [trans. Sommerstein]). For an interpretation that Apollo meant to immortalize Admetos, see Markantonatos 2013: 90 and Hubbard 2013: 102n57.

<sup>91</sup> In her analysis of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Jenny Strauss Clay 2006: 225–26 notes that Demeter’s attempt to immortalize a mortal child without Zeus’s knowledge constitutes

At this point, we are finally in a position to reconsider myths of Apollo, Asklepios, and Admetos vis-à-vis the retributive pattern set out by the Promethean curse of Kronos, triangulating the multifaceted relationship between Zeus, Apollo, and the collective of underworld gods spearheaded by the Moirai and the Erinyes. As I demonstrated previously, the curse of Kronos in *Prometheus Bound* (907–12) verbalizes an open-ended narrative formula, specifying the aggressor (Zeus), the victim (Kronos), the transgression (unfilial conduct), the punishment (defeat by one's own child), the enforcer (the Moirai and the Erinyes) and the avenger (one of Zeus's children). Prometheus's prophecy (920–25) adduces that Zeus's astonishing child will combat him for sovereignty, discover a weapon deadlier than Zeus's thunderbolt, and break Poseidon's trident (κεραυνοῦ κρείσσον' εὐρήσει φλόγα ... τρίαينαν, αἰχμήν τὴν Ποσειδῶνος, σκεδᾷ, 922, 925).<sup>92</sup> I argue that, within the telescopic vision of the Greek mythic storyworld, Apollo's brief disarmament of Zeus and slaying of the seemingly immortal Kyklopes fulfills the conditions set by the curse-prophecy, if only *in nuce*. Leto's staying the hand of Zeus would in effect literally stay the vicious circle of the divine succession, since, as the *Theogony* teaches us, divine kings mistreating their children do not stay in power. Nonetheless, what we have not addressed so far is the role the Moirai and the Erinyes, the helmswomen of Necessity (ἀνάγκης ... οἰακοστρόφος, *PV* 515), play in the conflict between Zeus and Apollo. Is Apollo an agent or an instrument of the Moirai/Erinyes? How much does he know about the relationship between the underworld goddesses and Zeus? How is their relationship construed within the mythic storyworld?

A constellation of excerpts from early epic and classical drama implies that the family of Zeus and the underworld deities have a troubled relationship which borders on abuse, even if the latter perform a crucial—even if underappreciated—role in upholding the Olympian regime. In Hesiod's *Theogony*, Nyx, the Mother of a host of grim personifications, opposes and supplants Zeus, the Father of benevolent abstractions. Nyx, the daughter of Chaos, parthenogenetically spawns a brood of negative personifications, the Nyktides (211–33): one may only enumerate the Fates, Old Age, Death, and Strife. Strife further procreates by scissiparity, birthing deities such as Famine or Lawlessness. This dark branch of the great divine family remains fiercely independent from other deities: in Hesiod's account, no descendant of Chaos ever had children with a descendant of Earth,

---

a direct threat to his sovereignty: the exiled goddess contrives to nurse and raise a challenger to the king of the gods. Roberto Nickel astutely identifies a so-called wrath-withdrawal-return pattern in the *Hymn*'s narrative, noting that gods who temporarily leave the divine community frequently connive against and pose danger to the current divine administration (2003: 59–82).

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Hes. fr. 294.8 [Most]: Zeus swallowed Metis, “fearing lest she bear something else stronger than the thunderbolt” (δείσας μὴ τέξῃ κρατερότερον ἄλλο κεραυνοῦ) (trans. Most).

a self-enforced “theological apartheid”.<sup>93</sup> In functional terms, the Olympians gift humans with mixed blessings, fortunes good and ill; in turn, the Nyktides preside solely over all things dark and gloomy in human life (*cf.* Hom. *Il.* 24.525–33), their authority asserted through the unsealing of Pandora’s pithos (Hes. *Op.* 90–104).<sup>94</sup>

Their unique privilege, as P. A. Vander Waerdt elegantly argues, concerns upholding the great ontological divide between mortals and immortals. When the pseudo-Aeschylean Prometheus relates he discovered how to blend cures and ward off diseases, the underlying assumption has it that the Titan would have eventually contrived some cunning *techne* to make mortals immortal (*cf.* *PV* 235–36 and *Eum.* 723–24), which, in Vander Waerdt’s words, “threatens the ancient dispensations of the Moirai (*cf.* *Eum.* 169–73, 723–28)” and demands Zeus’s swift reprisal.<sup>95</sup> The conceptual juxtaposition between the Nyktides and the Olympians lingers in works beyond Hesiod, with Aeschylus and Euripides stressing their enduring enmity: although the two groups do establish a working relationship,<sup>96</sup> the Olympians, overly fond of their mortal favorites, repeatedly encroach—by bribery or by force—upon the rights of the Nyktides, who suffer adverse consequences.<sup>97</sup> In case of Apollo, I argue, this encroachment affects

<sup>93</sup> Most 2013: 166. *Cf.* Apollo’s intentional innuendo on the Erinyes (Aesch. *Eum.* 68–70), “with whom no god ever holds any intercourse” (αἷς οὐ μείγνυται | θεῶν τις) (trans. Sommerstein).

<sup>94</sup> Very few studies have been devoted to the Nyktides as a collective, with a notable exception of Clémence Ramnoux’ seminal monograph (1959b); in contrast, later Hesiodic scholars tended to mention these deities only in passing. William Sale observed that the Nyktides’ “divinity is of an altogether different sort, dark, grim, antithetical to the glad visitation of Aphrodite and the Charites” (1965: 679). Mark Northrup (1980) elaborated on this antithesis and juxtaposed the Nyktides with Zeus’s progeny, noting that select descendants of Zeus, positive personified abstractions, counter the Nyktides (223–32). For example, Old Age is balanced by Youth, the daughter of Zeus and Hera (Hes. *Theog.* 921–23), whereas Strife opposes Harmony, Aphrodite and Ares’ daughter (933–37). Even the Fates perform a double role: Hesiod lists them not only as the offspring of Nyx (217–20), but also as daughters of Zeus and Themis (904–6). In Stephanie Nelson’s view, Zeus—in order to check Night’s power—deliberately distributes certain shares of honor among his siblings and descendants so that they become opposite numbers of the Nyktides (1998: 45–46, 103–107). See Strauss Clay 2003: 95–96, 105, 124–25 for an astute commentary on this theological divide, Northrup 1980 for observations on its philosophical significance and Scapin 2020: 23–24, 227–29 for notes on the differentiation between the infernal and Olympian gods in the *Oresteia*.

<sup>95</sup> Vander Waerdt 1982: 35–37. As the author surmises, “[m]an’s [...] hope for immortality, nourished by Promethean art, threatens to disrupt the order (*harmonia*) of the *kosmos*; Zeus must accordingly restrain this hope and place man in his proper place within the cosmos, if Moira is to permit him to remain in power” (36).

<sup>96</sup> Kucharski 2012: 82n207, building on observations of Fontenrose 1971: 104–7 and Vander Waerdt 1982: 27, determines that the mutual distrust between the Nyktides and the Olympians never prevented them from cooperating in Aeschylus’s *Agamemnon* and *Libation Bearers*, *contra* H. Konishi 1990, who asserted that two groups locked themselves in an inescapable cold war. Consider also Scapin 2020: 84, who comments on Zeus’s special link to infernal powers in the *Oresteia*.

<sup>97</sup> In the *Iliad*, Sleep recalls that he had once lulled Zeus to slumber at Hera’s behest so that the goddess could torment Heracles; enraged Zeus attempted to hurl Sleep from heavens, but

both human mortality (the Moirai's prerogative) and, relevantly to my point, avenging Zeus's unfilial conduct against Kronos (the Erinyes' prerogative): exiled from the divine community, Apollo maneuvers between all factions, his loyalty only to himself and his proteges.

Our knowledge of Apollo's triangular relationship with Zeus and the Moirai/Erinyes remains exasperatingly imprecise, with some insights gleaned from brief allusions in Euripides' *Alcestis* and Aeschylus's *Eumenides* (Eur. *Alc.* 11–14; Aesch. *Eum.* 723–28). Apollo's dispute with the Moirai appears primarily to concern his manipulation of human mortality. In his opening speech in *Alcestis*, Apollo, in his characteristically circumlocutive idiolect, admits he has “tricked” the Moirai to save Admetos.<sup>98</sup> Apollo's wording implies that the infernal goddesses drove a hard bargain and ignored Apollo's pleas. The desperate god eventually plied the spinners of fate with wine and extracted a drunken promise that Admetos would be spared, should another mortal die in his place.<sup>99</sup> Even while inebriated, the Moirai demanded a costly replacement, an enormous personal sacrifice no friend of Admetos was likely to make. Apollo's actions resulted in a chorus of disapproval from other underworld gods, who, acting as a collective,<sup>100</sup> condemned Apollo's actions against the Moirai as cheating (Thanatos in *Alcestis*, 30–34; the Erinyes in *Eumenides*, 723–28).<sup>101</sup> Here we

---

eventually relented, unwilling to incur the terrible wrath of protective Nyx (14.243–61; Bremmer 2010: 202–5).

<sup>98</sup> Μοίρας δολώσας, Eur. *Alc.* 12, Μοίρας δολίῳ | σφῆλαντι τέχνῃ, 33–34. Cf. remarks by Markantonatos 2013: 28, 32 and Vander Waerdt 1982: 36 on Apollo's dealings with the Moirai. Intriguingly, Apollo of the cult received offerings with the Moirai when acting in his oracular capacity (Apollo *Moiragetes*, the Guide of Fate): see Dietrich 1965: 65–66.

<sup>99</sup> Aesch. *Eum.* 727–28: σύ τοι παλαιὰς δαιμονὰς καταφθίσας | οἴνῳ παρηπάτησας ἀρχαῖὰς θεάς (ERINYES TO APOLLO: “You're the one who destroyed the old allotment of power and beguiled those ancient goddesses with wine” [trans. Sommerstein]). Following Markantonatos 2013: 92, I believe that the inebriation motif might have come from Phrynichus's *Alkestis*: “[p]erhaps in Phrynichus' play Apollo's discourteous treatment of the Elder Goddesses was laid out in order to bring into stronger relief the clash between time-honoured divine ordinances and Olympian generosity, as well as putting a Bacchic touch into the disruption of primeval codes regulating the relationships between gods and men”.

<sup>100</sup> In the Hesiodic paradigm, Thanatos and the Moirai both descend from Nyx. In the *Oresteia*, Aeschylus includes the Erinyes among the Nyktides and incessantly emphasizes their shared kinship and common aims (*Eum.* 321–22, 333–35, 391–96, 416, 745, 792, 822, 844–45, 877–78, 1034). So underlines Fontenrose 1971: 102: “[w]hen the Erinyes invoke the Moerae, they call them sisters [by the same mother], *matrokasignetai* (Eu. 962), as well as *timiotatai theon* [most honored among the gods] (967)”. See also Scapin 2020: 23–24.

<sup>101</sup> [Thanatos to Apollo:] ἀδικεῖς αὖ τιμὰς ἐνέρων | ἀφορίζομενος καὶ καταπαύων; | οὐκ ἤρκεσέ σοι μόρον Ἀδμήτου | διακωλῶσαι, Μοίρας δολίῳ | σφῆλαντι τέχνῃ (“Are you engaged in more injustice, curtailing and annulling the prerogatives of the gods below? Was it not enough that you prevented the death of Admetos, tripping up the Fates by cunning trickery?” [trans. Kovacs]). For a commentary on the verbal sparring between Apollo and Thanatos, see Markantonatos 2013: 31–32. The remark in the *Eumenides* is discussed in the following section of this article.

find the expression of familial solidarity, extended across texts and generations: the Erinyes, the Moirai, and Thanatos hold similar offices and support one another in their divine duties as enforcers of the limits of the human (and divine) condition.

In a similar vein, we know little about how the surprising denouement of *Alcestis* affected Apollo's relationship with Zeus and the Nyktides. Foolhardy Apollo does not seem to care that his actions have alienated both his father and the infernal gods and damaged his standing in the divine community.<sup>102</sup> Already on Zeus's sufferance, Apollo insults Thanatos and gloats over his future defeat at the hands of Herakles (*Alc.* 64–71); as we shall soon see, Aeschylus's Apollo also has no qualms about taunting the Erinyes in the *Eumenides* (729–30). In the end, Apollo succeeds, but only barely. The deal with the underground gods fell through when Herakles manhandled Thanatos and wrestled Alkestis from his grasp, but Admetos did not die after all: the reunion of husband and wife marks the moment when the narrative tension of *Alcestis* dissolves and Apollo celebrates his bittersweet victory. Pertinently, Apollo's status in the divine community remains unresolved at the end of the play. Apollo rescued Admetos either out of genuine fondness or, perhaps, to spite Zeus (if one accepts my intertextual reconstruction of their relationship), but it could not have pleased the father of the gods to know that Apollo engaged in the same kind of behavior as Asklepios did. In light of Apollo's quarrel with Zeus, Herakles' intervention in *Alcestis* could signify either Zeus's grudging acceptance of Apollo's offstage machinations or an attempt at appeasing Apollo's increasingly outrageous behavior.<sup>103</sup> For Apollo, to deliver Admetos from imminent death not only symbolically offsets his failure to do so for Asklepios but also signals that, even in exile, Apollo can still stir up trouble for Zeus.

Apollo's innate *atasthalia*, foreshadowed in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, continues across texts and genres within the Greek mythic storyworld, adding to enmity across divine generations. The final section of this paper considers the literary afterlife of this discord as imagined in Aeschylus's *Eumenides*: in the play, the Erinyes exploit the lingering tension between Apollo and Zeus to taunt Apollo about Zeus defeating his father Kronos, with Apollo never quite able to follow in Zeus's footsteps.

<sup>102</sup> Burnett 1965: 242: "Viewed from heaven, this whole affair [of Alkestis] is merely an incident in a series of repayments, transgression for transgression, made between Zeus and Apollo".

<sup>103</sup> Zeus's surprising gentleness towards Apollo may point either to Leto's continuing intercession or to Zeus's awareness that Apollo's distemper, left unchecked, can eventually become Zeus's undoing.



## THE EUMENIDES AND THEIR PARTING INSULT (640–51)

In the Greek mythic storyworld, divine fathers and sons tend to remain locked in the vicious cycle of intergenerational divine violence, their transgressions repeatedly met with retaliation in a manner that breeds further resentment and demands satisfaction. In the previous parts of this article, I have drawn attention to the fact that Zeus's crime against Kronos remains unredressed, I postulated that Apollo could (and was to a degree expected) to play the role of Kronos's avenger, and I read Apollo's behavior against the retributive pattern set out by the Promethean curse of Kronos in *Prometheus Bound*. Appropriately, the final text analyzed in this article, *The Eumenides* by Aeschylus (458 B.C.E.), brings into sharp focus Apollo's standing in Zeus's regime after the younger god's return from his exile among the mortals. The play pits Apollo against the Erinyes in an extended bout of verbal sparring and has the Erinyes cast aspersions on Apollo's character, with one remark of theirs—a loaded barb about Kronos—provoking Apollo into a profane outburst. Linking the Erinyes' goad to the Promethean curse of Kronos (*PV* 907–12), I will consider its intertextual significance and ponder whether the helmswomen of Necessity (*PV* 515), the Moirai and the Erinyes, may have exploited or even engineered Apollo's conflict with Zeus.

The Oresteia trilogy concerns a chain of familial violence: the murder of the king Agamemnon by his wife Klytaimnestra, the retributive murder of Klytaimnestra by her son Orestes (on Apollo's orders), and repercussions faced by Orestes. *The Eumenides*, the trilogy's final play, depicts Orestes, pursued by the Erinyes for matricide, as being put on trial in Athens. Some deities involve themselves in the unfolding proceedings: Apollo defends his protegee Orestes, the Erinyes prosecute him, Athena acts as an adjudicator. In contrast to genial Athena,<sup>104</sup> Apollo displays his characteristic arrogance, openly and repeatedly taunting the Erinyes,<sup>105</sup> with the Erinyes protesting his behavior. The goddesses loudly state their pedigree, honors, and claims (416–17): avengers of murders among blood relatives, the Aeschylean Erinyes descend from Night herself and are known to their infernal kin as Curses (*Arai*, Ἀραί)—a rare and portentous appellation that will resonate in the Promethean curse of Kronos

<sup>104</sup> Granted, the Erinyes do try Athena's patience: the goddess, weary of placating them, eventually insinuates (if only in passing) that she could smite them with thunderbolts, should they curse Athens (827–29). However, as Sommerstein (1989, *ad locum*) and Rynearson (2013: 2–3) both argue, this aggressive approach remains extremely unlikely, since Athena wants to consider all non-violent options first.

<sup>105</sup> Apollo's taunts to the Erinyes: Aesch. *Eum.* 67–73, 193–97, 721–22, 729–30. So Parker 2009: 152: “[Apollo in the play] is made to treat the Erinyes with an unattractive blue-blooded disdain.”

(ἀρὰ Κρόνου).<sup>106</sup> Intriguingly, the Erinyes seem to express a particular (and personal) dislike of Apollo, his unlawful protection of Orestes notwithstanding. Thoroughly familiar with Apollo's past misdeeds (including his plying the Moirai with wine, 723–28), the Erinyes insinuate that, despite Apollo's boasts, his standing with Zeus remains precarious.<sup>107</sup> It is precisely this insecurity that the Erinyes exploit after Apollo begins to defend Orestes by giving precedence to paternal (and not maternal) piety, with Apollo's anger reaching fever pitch in the passage analyzed below (640–51, trans. Sommerstein):

Χορός  
πατὴρς προτιμᾷ Ζεὺς μόρον τῷ σῷ λόγῳ·  
αὐτὸς δ' ἔδῃσε πατέρα πρεσβύτην Κρόνον.  
πῶς ταῦτα τούτοις οὐκ ἐναντίως λέγεις;  
ὕμᾱς δ' ἀκούειν ταῦτ' ἐγὼ μαρτύρομαι.  
Ἀπόλλων  
ὃ παντομισῇ κνώδαλα, στύγη θεῶν,  
πέδας μὲν ἂν λύσειεν, ἔστι τοῦδ' ἄκος  
καὶ κάρτα πολλὴ μηχανὴ λυτήριος·  
ἀνδρὸς δ' ἐπειδὴν αἵμ' ἀνασπάσῃ κόνις  
ἄπαξ θανόντος, οὔτις ἔστ' ἀνάστασις.  
τούτων ἐπὶ δᾶς οὐκ ἐποίησεν πατὴρ  
οὐμός, τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἄνω τε καὶ κάτω  
στρέφῳ τήσιν οὐδὲν ἀσθμαίνων μένει.

CHORUS (ERINYES): On your account, Zeus sets a higher value on the death of a father. Yet he himself imprisoned his old father, Cronus. Isn't your statement in contradiction with that? [To the Judges] I call you to witness that you have heard these words.

APOLLO: You utterly loathsome beasts, hated by the gods! Fetters he can undo: there is a cure for that affliction, and many a device for getting him released. But when once a man has died, and the dust has sucked up his blood, there is no rising again. For that my Father has not created any healing charm, whereas he disposes all other things, turning them this way and that, without any laborious effort, by the sheer power of his will.

<sup>106</sup> Sommerstein 1989 *ad loc.*; Winnington-Ingram 1933: 100. Sommerstein's annotation to his translation (2009) stresses the rarity of this appellation. The Aeschylean genealogy that descends the Erinyes from Nyx opposes the Hesiodic version, which has them spring from drops of ichor Ouranos shed on Gaia (*Theog.* 182–87), but it fittingly underscores the Erinyes' noxious character and includes them into the familial unit they share with the Moirai and Thanatos. For an extended discussion on the Arai and their literary appearances, consult Geisser 2002: 197–252.

<sup>107</sup> Consider the Erinyes' remark to Apollo in line 229: μέγας γὰρ ἔμπας παρ Διὸς θρόνοισι λέγῃ (Sommerstein: "Because you're accounted great anyway, next to the throne of Zeus"). Sommerstein's commentary *ad locum* (1989: 122) notes that the Erinyes' use of λέγῃ "insinuates that Apollo's 'greatness' may be more a matter of reputation rather than reality." Further support comes from Anderson (2010: 143–44), who observes that Apollo tends to evade the Erinyes' questions about Zeus: "Apollo and the Chorus clash, but it is not evident that everything Apollo says is endorsed by Zeus. [...] Apollo, though an Olympian, must not be conflated with Zeus himself."

The passage above directly parallels and contrasts another, found in the preceding play, *Agamemnon* (1019–24, trans. Sommerstein):

τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὼν ἄπαξ θανάσιμον  
 πρόπαρ ἄνδρὸς μέλαν αἷμα τίς ἄν  
 πάλιν ἀγκαλέσταιτ' ἐπαείδων;  
 οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῖ  
 τῶν φθιμένων ἀνάγειν  
 Ζεὺς † αὐτ' ἐπασ' † ἐπ' ἀβλαβεῖα;

But once the black blood of death has fallen on the earth in front of a man, who by any incantation can summon it back again? Not even he [Asklepios] who knew aright how to bring men back from the dead was permitted to do so by Zeus without coming to harm.

This underappreciated exchange between Apollo and the Erinyes (*Eum.* 640–51) constitutes the dramatic climax of their conflict, masterfully twinning myth strands of Apollo's quarrel with the Moirai (over his interference with the limits of human mortality) and, somewhat more subtly, Apollo's quarrel with the Erinyes (over Zeus's unredressed transgression against Kronos). Apollo, unflappable in his smugness, argues that Orestes should not be blamed too harshly for matricide, since Zeus values fatherhood above motherhood.<sup>108</sup> The Erinyes turn the argument around and respond with a loaded barb: Zeus himself transgressed by imprisoning his father in Tartaros, the only divine punishment that almost equals death. Four compact lines effortlessly crack Apollo's composure: the god explodes in outrage and calls the Erinyes “utterly loathsome beasts” (παντομισῇ κνώδαλα, 644), the only dramatic instance of a deity launching such a slur at another deity.<sup>109</sup> His impassioned response touches upon Kronos's ultimate fate: Apollo alleges that being bound in Tartaros cannot be compared to mortal death, with the former reversible and the latter, permanent. Apollo's

<sup>108</sup> In lines 657–66, Apollo construes a teetering physiological analogy to further his argument about paternal primacy: when a child is conceived, the father's seed engenders and shapes the child, whereas the mother solely provides sustenance to the developing fetus. Leitaο 2012: 49–54 and Scapin 2020: 229–30 trace the rationale behind Apollo's argument to Anaxagoras' theories on embryology, *au courant* at the time of the staging. To prop up this sophistry, Apollo brings up Athena's motherless birth, a fantasy of independent male reproduction, suppressing the entire theogonic tradition of parthenogenetic primordial births (Gaia and Nyx—the latter being the mother of Apollo's adversaries, the Erinyes!) and glossing over the existence of the Hesiodic Metis (*cf.* Hes. *Theog.* 886–900; Hes. fr. 294 [Most]; Σ bT in Hom. *Il.* 8.39). Tellingly, Apollo's erasure of motherhood questions his cordial relationship with Leto and shows that, argument-wise, the god is once again at the very end of his rope.

<sup>109</sup> Sommerstein 1989 *ad locum* (204): “The vulgarity of Apollo's reaction is without a parallel in tragedy, and shows that the argument just raised has stung and embarrassed him”. The sheer insolence of Apollo's slur, hurled at his divine interlocutors in a mixed human-divine company, fulfils and substantiates the seemingly harsh prophecy uttered by Delos in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (66–69): Apollo is indeed *atasthalos*, an unruly rabble-rouser.

argument frays under the lightest scrutiny. In context of the parallel passage in the preceding play (Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, 1019–24), it becomes evident that Apollo's own son effortlessly did the single thing that Zeus (in Apollo's words) is unable—or rather, unwilling—to do, either for other mortals or for Asklepios.<sup>110</sup> If the Moirai and the Erinyes are the helmswomen of Necessity, then Apollo is her beleaguered victim. Finding himself in a wrenching predicament, Apollo advances arguments he does not necessarily believe in and accidentally exposes his inner well of bitterness and grief, for Zeus continues to begrudge Asklepios the conjuration of life.

Most relevantly, the Erinyes' ironic utterance masterfully triggers Apollo's anger by alluding to his failure to avenge his grandfather, challenge his father, and protect his son.<sup>111</sup> Zeus's eldest son and his heir apparent, Apollo fathered demigod Asklepios, who illegally raised the dead and was struck by his own grandfather Zeus. In retaliation, Apollo killed the seemingly immortal Kyklopes, was discovered, overpowered by Zeus, almost thrown into Tartaros, and saved only by his mother's intercession. In exile and on sufferance from his fellow gods, Apollo could neither resurrect Asklepios nor save Alkestis without Herakles' help. Reckless and proud, the god had to beg and trick the Moirai, an action met with a chorus of disapproval from infernal deities. Protecting Orestes from the doom he himself brought upon him, the god elevates fathers above mothers, despite Apollo's stormy relationship with Zeus and continuing dependence on Leto's intercession. Entangled in scenarios that incessantly test his limits, exasperated Apollo others himself, prevailing only by going against everything that normally defines him—not unlike when he plied the Moirai with the Dionysian wine, encroaching upon his brother's honors.<sup>112</sup> If Zeus (allegedly) prevails “without any laborious effort, by the sheer power of his will” (*Eum.* 650–51), then Apollo must toil to achieve his ends without a guarantee of success. Despite his grandstanding, Apollo *Atasthalos* lacks significant agency, whereas the Erinyes' cutting remark reminds him that he could have supplanted Zeus and ruled the universe—yet he failed twice.

In light of the Erinyes' mordant dislike of Apollo, it is not impossible that the agents of Necessity, the Moirai and the Erinyes, may have exploited or

<sup>110</sup> Apollo mentions that raising the dead would require ἐπὶ δαί (649), “incantations”, not unlike the *technai* and *doloi* employed by Prometheus and Apollo (see notes 95 and 98). To argue that Zeus cannot do a deed done by a mortal appears absurd, even more so when we consider droves of immortalized heroes known to the Greek myth. Perhaps, I propose, Zeus too fears the fierce retribution of the agents of Necessity. Scapin 2020: 45–50 and 104–7 eloquently connects this depiction of Zeus as an (almost) effortless force of nature to Xenophanes' theology but does not comment on the deliberately ironic undertone of this passage and its intertextual granularity.

<sup>111</sup> The Erinyes as the Curses (*Arai*) are uniquely suited to call out Apollo's failure to supplant his father, even though they would like to embroil Apollo in yet another vicious circle of intergenerational violence and make him fear his sons.

<sup>112</sup> I gratefully acknowledge this input by Ellie Mackin Roberts.

even engineered Apollo's conflict with Zeus, set within the vicious pattern of intergenerational violence expressed by the curse of Kronos. So far, I presented a mass of circumstantial evidence hinting at the Moirai stirring up trouble between Apollo and Zeus. Although I cannot offer incontrovertible proof, I guardedly postulate that Apollo's special relationship with Orestes (and Admetos) points at the oppressive involvement of forces of Necessity in their lives. Relevantly, scholars remain baffled why, among all other gods, it had been Apollo who inexplicably embroiled himself in Orestes' life, since no surviving material satisfactorily accounts for their relationship.<sup>113</sup> Having exhaustively surveyed possible explanations, Robert Parker leaves the matter unresolved yet draws one intriguing parallel I would like to build on: Greek deities tend to champion an unrelated mortal hero or heroine due to functional equivalencies in their mythical biographies, a trend Jenny Strauss Clay defined as "elective affinities—similarity of character or talent".<sup>114</sup> Accordingly, Apollo and Orestes' elective affinity would come from them being hounded by the Erinyes, for, as Cynthia Werner emphasizes, the Erinyes "would punish the man who fails to take vengeance for a slain father",<sup>115</sup> either his own (Orestes) or another's (Apollo). Intriguingly, both Apollo and Orestes had to expiate murders motivated by familial affection. If Apollo slays the Kyklopes to avenge his son and spite his father, then Orestes slays Klytaimnestra to avenge his father. Apollo goes as far as to admit that, having compelled Orestes, he shares his guilt and should be tried with him (*Eum.* 579–80), a recognition of their fundamental affinity. Appropriately, in *Alcestitis* and the *Oresteia* Apollo respectively sympathizes with Admetos and Orestes—men also doomed by mysterious pronouncements of Destiny. Read in that context, Apollo's defense of the rights of a father within the *Oresteia* would constitute a disavowal of the vicious machinations of the feminine forces of Necessity, and symbolic atonement for Apollo's earlier crimes against Zeus, such as those mentioned in *Alcestitis*. Maneuvering between the Nyktides and his father, Apollo of the *Oresteia* finally rejects the course of intergenerational violence, sides with Zeus and duly pays the price. Apollo's fondness of Orestes notwithstanding, to defend Zeus's violence against the Erinyes' genuine accusations must have felt terrible: anger abides and grief endures, fanned by forces Apollo cannot quite comprehend.

What is there to be done to assuage that anger? As Sommerstein elegantly underscores, the *Oresteia*'s plot pivots on justice—done, perverted, evaded. The

<sup>113</sup>The earliest (and very cursory) passage from Stesichorus has Apollo protect Orestes by gifting him a bow against the Erinyes (fr. 181.14–24 [Davies-Finglass] = fr. 217 *PMGF* [Davies 1991]), with no rationale given. Cf. Finglass 2014: 509–510.

<sup>114</sup>Strauss Clay 1997 [1983]: 181; Parker 1996: 138, 141–43, also 139n142, 386–88 (on the development of Orestes' story).

<sup>115</sup>Werner 2012: 164. Werner links this task of the Erinyes to the passage in which Orestes reveals Apollo's oracular command (*Ch.* 269–96).

vicious “chain of vindictive justice” in the house of Atreus must be broken,<sup>116</sup> lest it extend beyond the mortals and into the divine sphere, to destroy the already precarious relationship between the Nyktides and the Olympians. The humans need to sever this chain for their own sake, and so do the gods—Zeus of the *Oresteia*, taught caution by the heavy load of suffering (πάθει μάθος, *Ag.* 173), directs Athena to effect a reconciliation with the Erinyes.<sup>117</sup> Relevantly, Zeus’s self-serving appeasement efforts depicted in the *Oresteia* adumbrate Prometheus’s curse in *Prometheus Bound*, since the Titan pronounces that Zeus, undone by his future challenger, shall eventually learn that his trespasses have long-term consequences, in heaven and on earth (*Aesch. PV* 926–27).<sup>118</sup> Placed side by side, the *Oresteia* and *Prometheus* trilogies demonstrate how Zeus artfully sidesteps the worst of the curse of Kronos. In the lost play of *Prometheus Lyomenos* (*Prometheus Unbound*), Zeus undoes the bonds of the imprisoned Titans (and Kronos!), as foreshadowed by Apollo in *Eum.* 645–46.<sup>119</sup> In *The Eumenides*, the king of the gods promotes a new paradigm of justice that breaks chains of vindictive justice: as the Erinyes fade into the Eumenides, so brash Apollo imperceptibly gives way to appeasing Athena<sup>120</sup> and leaves the stage at an undefined point.<sup>121</sup>

And yet, despite these optimistic denouements and reconciliations, Zeus’s past mistakes still weigh on the play’s outcome. The reconciliation between the agents of Zeus and the forces of infernal Necessity comes through underhanded bribery and not impartial justice: Athena entices the recalcitrant Erinyes with

<sup>116</sup> Sommerstein 1989: 20.

<sup>117</sup> Sommerstein 1989: 22–25 interprets the phrase as referring to mortals and gods alike: both need to obey communal laws of reciprocity and respect so as not to rend the entire cosmos apart. Scholars continue to debate whether the character of Zeus undergoes moral progress within the broader Aeschylean corpus—the so-called “evolutionary” theory—with Sommerstein as its most significant supporter. For a *status questionis* of the debate, see Scapin 2020: 85–89. Scapin rejects Sommerstein’s evolutionary theory in lieu of reading Zeus’s ambiguous behavior in terms of the Heraclitan unity of opposites, with the god interpreted as simultaneously cruel and conciliatory, unjust and fair. I concur with Scapin in that Zeus (as depicted in the corpus of texts analyzed in this paper) undergoes no significant change in his nature and remains “an amoral [...] force” (108): all that changes is Zeus’s attitude towards the ones who can endanger his rule, such as Apollo.

<sup>118</sup> πταισας δὲ τῷδε πρὸς κακῷ μαθήσεται | ὅσον τό τ’ ἄρχειν καὶ τὸ δουλεῦεν δίχα (Sommerstein: “By stumbling into this evil fate, Zeus will learn how far apart are ruler-ship and slavery”).

<sup>119</sup> Vander Waerdt 1982: 29 relays that, “[t]he fragments which remain of *Prometheus Luomenos*, probably the third play of the trilogy, confirm that such a change took place: sometime in the course of thirty thousand seasons Zeus released the Titans—who form the Chorus of *Luomenos* (fr. 322–24 M)—from their captivity; and Zeus the pitiless (240) learns to pity”. For other testimonies on Zeus releasing Kronos, see Hes. *Op.* 173a–c, Pind. *Ol.* 2.76–77, *Pyth.* 4.292.

<sup>120</sup> Sommerstein 1989: 24.

<sup>121</sup> The scholars of the trilogy noted that Apollo apparently vanishes from *The Eumenides*’ plot without announcement: Most 2006 reviews the scholarship on the matter and revives a hypothesis by Taplin—Apollo’s final words, erroneously ascribed to Orestes, come in lines 775–77.



honors (*Eum.* 794–807, 824–36, 848–69, 881–91, 903–915), just like Apollo induced the inflexible Moirai with wine (*Eum.* 727–728). Zeus continues to walk a fine line between appeasement and threat: the Erinyes acquiesce to relent because Athena simultaneously coaxes and coerces them with a warning of thunderbolts should they curse Athens (827–29). In a similar vein, Apollo's outrage at the Erinyes' barb about Kronos and his abrupt withdrawal from the play suggest that not all is well between Zeus and Apollo. The younger god appears to nurse some fundamental grudge against Zeus in spite of the latter's conciliatory gestures—up to and including the resurrection of Asklepios (as postulated by Ovid), which may or may not have happened yet by the timeframe of the *Eumenides*. In my eyes, the avenging hand of Necessity misses Zeus by a thread, since, not unlike pseudo-Aeschylean Prometheus, Zeus is incredibly deft at finding ways out of impossible situations.<sup>122</sup> In spite of that, the resolution of the tragic conflict falls short of satisfaction. Aeschylus's trilogy thrives on sustained ambiguity, leaving its audience with more questions than answers.<sup>123</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS: BREAKING THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

To conclude, I have demonstrated in this paper that the Greek succession myth, the story of the vicious circle of violence between divine fathers and sons, reverberates throughout the Greek mythic storyworld and gets creatively adopted and extended by different authors in different genres to give Zeus yet another worthy challenger. Open-ended and flexible, the succession myth mutates from retelling to retelling to account for narrative tension inherent in the stories about immortal beings who procreate: every king of gods must watch out for rebellious children but cannot stop himself from fathering them. Most relevantly to my argument, the so-called curse of Kronos, openly verbalized in the pseudo-Aeschylean *Prometheus Bound*, articulates an ancient and well-documented tradition foretelling the coming of a violent child of Zeus who will avenge Kronos. Having analyzed a constellation of narratives on Apollo, I concluded that this particular grandson of Kronos had the potential (and was to a degree expected) to play that avenger, incessantly challenging Zeus's sovereignty and interfering with the boundaries between mortals and immortals.

In this paper, I traced the narrative of the conflict between Zeus and Apollo that, set in motion by the events described in the *Theogony* and *Prometheus Bound*, commences in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, has Apollo violently

<sup>122</sup> *PV* 59: δεινὸς γὰρ εὐρεῖν καὶ ἀμηχάνων πόρον.

<sup>123</sup> Porter 2005 eloquently showcases how Aeschylus's use of contrapuntal lines complicates the resolution of his trilogy and imbues it with a sense of moral failure, corrupted justice, and diminished agency.

clash with Zeus in the *Iliad* and *Catalogue of Women*, sends Apollo into exile in *Alcestis* and finally directs him to make amends with his father in *The Eumenides*. Apollo's profane outburst, provoked by the Erinyes hassling Apollo about Zeus defeating Kronos, demonstrates that Aeschylus knew about and alluded to traditions positing Apollo as Kronos's avenger. The play depicts the enforced reconciliation between agents of Zeus and the Erinyes. The goddesses not only refrain from cursing Orestes and Athens but also, I proposed, abandon their efforts to bring Zeus down in retaliation for his vanquishing of Kronos, while Apollo reluctantly comes to terms with his vulnerability to paternal violence. Weaving a tangled intertextual web, the episodes considered in this paper include elements that derive neither from examined plays nor, as far as I can discern, from Hesiod's *Theogony* or *Homeric Hymns*. Indeed, some of the explored parallels may reflect engagement between the divine succession myth and traditions relating to Apollo, the Erinyes, and the Moirai that cannot be pinned down to a single text or that refer to texts and traditions no longer extant. What links them together, I argued, is the motif of retribution for divine unfilial conduct, constituting the backbone of the succession myth and linking divine grandparents to their grandsons.

As a final aside, one issue I have intentionally left undiscussed in this paper concerns Leto's mediating role in the succession myth. Apollo's thread, guided by the Moirai, could have woven its way towards a destiny of overwhelming consequence. Per Porter's reconstruction, Apollo opposed Zeus in the Iliadic coup d'état and would have toppled him if not for Thetis' intervention, whereas another tradition has Zeus almost throw Apollo into Tartaros for slaying the Kyklopes, Zeus's hand stayed only by Leto's intercession. Apollo and Zeus's destinies pivot on Leto's unseen pacification efforts. Notably, Leto and Thetis' choices to side with Zeus effectively redefine the future of the cosmos, allowing Zeus to evade Kronos's retribution, meant to be meted out by Apollo. The *Iliad* ascribes the restorative power to "ward off unseemly destruction" (*loigon amūnai*) (1.398) to Zeus, Apollo, Achilles—and, most saliently, to Achilles' mother Thetis, Zeus's almost-wife, who supports Zeus despite the grief he caused her (Hom. *Il.* 24.91, 104–5).<sup>124</sup> Perhaps we should accord the same apotropaic power to Apollo's mother Leto, whose great pride in her son's strength, expressed in the *Homeric Hymn*, could have led Apollo over very different and unexpected paths.<sup>125</sup> But that is another story and shall be told another time.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Slatkin 2011: 59–62, 77–78.

<sup>125</sup> Consider n. 44. Leto's character, shrewd and proud, is not as mild as one could expect and reverberates in her son's easily aroused anger. When the gods stage a mock theomachy in Book 21 of the *Iliad*, Hermes outrightly refuses to fight Leto.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Editions and commentaries

- Campbell, D. A. 1992. *Greek Lyric, Volume IV: Bacchylides, Corinna, and Others*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Davies, M. 1991. *Poetarum melicorum Graecorum fragmenta*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Davies, M. and Finglass, P. 2014. *Stesichorus: The Poems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Edelstein, E. J. L. and Edelstein, L. 1945. *Asclepius: Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Erbse, H. 1969–1988. *Scholia graeca in Homeri Iliadem (scholia vetera)*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Fowler, R. L. 2013. *Early Greek Mythography. Volume II: Commentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Frazer, J. G. 1921. *The Library, Volume I: Books 1–3.9*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Huxley, G. L. 1969. *Greek Epic Poetry: From Eumelos to Panyassis*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Kirk, G. S.; Raven J. E. and Schofield, M. 1983. *The Presocratic Philosophers: A Critical History with a Selection of Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kovacs, D. 1994. *Cyclops. Alcestitis. Medea*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Matthews, V. J. 1974. *Panyassis of Halikarnassos. Text and Commentary*. Leiden: Brill.
- Most, G. W. 2006. *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2007. *The Shield. Catalogue of Women. Other Fragments*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Oldfather, C. H. 1939. *Library of History, Volume III: Books 4.59–8*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Page, D. L. 1962. *Poetae melici Graeci: Alcmanis, Stesichori, Ibyci, Anacreontis, Simonidis, Corinnae, poetarum minorum reliquias, carmina popularia et convivialia quaeque adesgota feruntur*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ruffell 2012: Ruffell, Ian. *Aeschylus. Prometheus Bound*, London: Bristol Classical Press, 2012.
- Scheer, E. 1881. *Lycophronis Alexandra. Vol. 1: Alexandra cum paraphrasibus ad codicum fidem recensita et emendate, indices subiecti*. Berlin: Weidmann.
- Schwartz, E. 1887–1891. *Scholia in Euripidem*. Berlin: Reimer.
- Snell, B. and Maehler, H. 1987. *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis. Pars I: Epinicia*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis. Pars II: Fragmenta*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Sommerstein, A. H. 1989. *Eumenides*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. *Oresteia: Agamemnon. Libation-Bearers. Eumenides*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2008. *Persians. Seven against Thebes. Suppliants. Prometheus Bound*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- West, M. L. 1966. *Hesiod: Theogony. With Prolegomena and Commentary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. *Greek Epic Fragments from the Seventh to the Fifth Centuries BC*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2003. *Homeric Hymns. Homeric Apocrypha. Lives of Homer*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

## Studies

- Aguirre, Bakker 2020: Aguirre, Mercedes and Buxton, Richard G. A. *Cyclops*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Anderson 2010: Anderson, Sebastian. "Journey into Light and Honors in Darkness in Hesiod and Aeschylus." In: *Light and Darkness in Ancient Greek Myth and Religion*, edited by Menelaos Christopoulos, Efimia D. Karakantza and Olga Levaniouk, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010, 142–52.
- Bakker 2013: Bakker, Egbert J. *The Meaning of Meat and the Structure of the Odyssey*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Bremmer 2010: Bremmer, Jan N. "Hephaistos Sweats or How to Construct an Ambivalent God." In: *Gods of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations*, edited by Robert Bremmer and Andrew Erskine, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 193–208.
- Burnett 1965: Burnett, Anne Pippin. "The Virtues of Admetus." *Classical Philology* 60 (1965): 240–55.
- Burnett 2005: Burnett, Anne Pippin. *Pindar's Songs for Young Athletes of Aigina*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Chappell 2011: Chappell, Mike. "The Homeric Hymn to Apollo: The Question of Unity." In: *The Homeric Hymns. Interpretative Essays*, edited by Andrew Faulkner, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 59–81.
- Chappell 2012: Chappell, Mike. "The Opening of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo." In: *Hymnes de la Grèce antique. Approches littéraires et historiques*, edited by Richard Bouchon, Pascale Brillet-Dubois and Nadine Le Meur-Weissman, Lyon: Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen, 2012, 177–82.
- Currie 2005: Currie, Bruno. *Pindar and the Cult of Heroes*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Davies 1997: Davies, John K. "The Moral Dimension of Pythian Apollo." In: *What is a God? Studies in the Nature of Greek Divinity*, edited by Walter Burkert and Alan B. Lloyd, London: Duckworth, 1997, 43–64.
- Davies 2007: Davies, John K. "The Origins of the Festivals, especially Delphi and the Pythia." In: *Pindar's Poetry, Patrons, and Festivals*, edited by Simon Hornblower and Catherine Morgan, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, 47–71.
- Detienne, Vernant 1991: Detienne, Marcel and Vernant, Jean-Pierre. *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*. Trans. by Janet Lloyd, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- Drerup 1937: Drerup, Engelbert. "Der homerische Apollonhymnos, eine methodologische Studie." *Mnemosyne* 5 (1937): 81–134.
- Faraone 2010: Faraone, Christopher A. "Kronos and the Titans as Powerful Ancestors: A Case Study of the Greek Gods in Later Magical Spells." In: *Gods of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations*, edited by Robert Bremmer and Andrew Erskine, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010, 388–405.
- Felson 2011: Felson, Nancy. "Children of Zeus in the Homeric Hymns." In: *The Homeric Hymns. Interpretative Essays*, edited by Andrew Faulkner, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, 257–83.
- Felson 2012: Felson, Nancy. "Victory and Virility in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo: at Whose Cost?" In: *Hymnes de la Grèce antique. Approches littéraires et historiques*, edited by Richard Bouchon, Pascale Brillet-Dubois and Nadine Le Meur-Weissman, Lyon: Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen, 2012, 269–81.
- Fontenrose 1971: Fontenrose, Joseph. "Gods and Men in the Oresteia." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 102 (1971): 71–109.
- Forderer 1971: Forderer, Manfred. *Anfang und Ende der abendländischen Lyrik: Untersuchungen zum Homerischen Apollonhymnus und zu Anise Koltz*, Amsterdam: Grüner, 1971.

- Förstel 1979: Förstel, Karl. *Untersuchungen zum Homerischen Apollonhymnos*, Bochum: Studieverlag Brockmeyer, 1979.
- Gantz 1996: Gantz, Timothy. *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources. Volume I*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Geisser 2002: Geisser, Franziska. *Götter, Geister und Dämonen. Unheilsmächte bei Aischylos - Zwischen Aberglauben und Theatralik*, München: K. G. Saur, 2002.
- Harrell 1991: Harrell, Sarah E. "Apollo's Fraternal Threats: Language of Succession and Domination in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 32 (1991): 307–29.
- Haubold 2017: Haubold, Johannes. "Conflict, Consensus and Closure in Hesiod's Theogony and Enūma eliš." In: *Conflict and Consensus in Early Greek Hexameter Poetry*, edited by Paola Bassino, Lilah Grace Canevaro and Barbara Graziosi, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, 17–38.
- Hubbard 2013: Hubbard, Thomas K. "The Irreducibility of Myth: Plato's Phaedrus, Apollo, Admetus, and the Problem of Pederastic Hierarchy." *Phoenix* 67 (2013): 81–106.
- Janko 1982: Janko, Richard. *Homer, Hesiod, and the Hymns: Diachronic Development in Epic Diction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Johnston 2015: Johnston, Sarah Iles. "The Greek Mythic Story World." *Arethusa* 48 (2015): 283–311.
- Johnston 2018: Johnston, Sarah Iles. *The Story of Myth*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018.
- Konishi 1990: Konishi, Haruo. *The Plot of Aeschylus' Oresteia: A Literary Commentary*, Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert, 1990.
- Kucharski 2012: Kucharski, Jan. *Pieśń Erynii. Język zemsty i jej figury w attyckich tragediach rodu Atrydów*, Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2012.
- Leitao 2012: Leitao, David D. *The Pregnant Male as Myth and Metaphor in Classical Greek Literature*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Loney 2010: Loney, Alexander C. *Narrative Revenge and the Poetics of Justice in the 'Odyssey': a Study on Tisis*. Doctoral thesis, Durham, NC: Duke University, 2010.
- López-Ruiz 2010: López-Ruiz, Carolina. *When the Gods Were Born: Greek Cosmogonies and the Near East*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.
- López-Ruiz 2014: López-Ruiz, Carolina. "Greek and Canaanite Mythologies: Zeus, Baal, and their Rivals." *Religion Compass* 8 (2014): 1–10.
- Mackin Roberts 2020: Mackin Roberts, Ellie. *Underworld Gods in Ancient Greek Religion: Death and Reciprocity*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2020.
- Manousakis 2020: Manousakis, Nikos. *Prometheus Bound: A Separate Authorial Trace in the Aeschylean Corpus*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020.
- Markantonatos 2013: Markantonatos, Andreas. *Euripides' Alcestis: Narrative, Myth, and Religion*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013.
- Marston 2007: Marston, John M. "Language of Ritual Cursing in the Binding of Prometheus." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 47 (2007): 121–33.
- Miller 1985: Miller, Andrew M. *From Delos to Delphi: A Literary Study of the Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Leiden: Brill, 1985.
- Mondi 1983: Mondi, Robert. "The Homeric Cyclopes: Folktale, Tradition, and Theme." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 113 (1983): 17–38.
- Mondi 1984: Mondi, Robert. "The Ascension of Zeus and the Composition of Hesiod's Theogony." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 25 (1984): 325–44.
- Most 2006: Most, Glenn W. "Apollo's Last Words in Aeschylus' Eumenides." *The Classical Quarterly* 56 (2006): 12–18.
- Most 2013: Most, Glenn W. "Eros in Hesiod." In *Erôs in Ancient Greece*, edited by Ed Sanders et al. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, 163–75.

- Neal 2006: Neal, Tamara. *The Wounded Hero: Non-fatal Injury in Homer's Iliad*, Bern: Lang, 2006.
- Nelson 1998: Nelson, Stephanie A. *God and the Land: The Metaphysics of Farming in Hesiod and Virgil*. With a Translation of Hesiod's *Works and Days* / by David Grene, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Nickel 2003: Nickel, Roberto. "The Wrath of Demeter: Story Pattern in the 'Hymn to Demeter'." *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 73 (2003): 59–82.
- Northrup 1980: Northrup, Mark D. "Hesiodic Personifications in Parmenides A 37." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 110 (1980): 223–32.
- Ogden 2013: Ogden, Daniel. *Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Palmer 1993: Palmer, Donald W. "The Curse of Kronos." *Prudentia* 25 (Supp) (1993): 145–52.
- Paprocki 2020: Paprocki, Maciej. "Mortal Immortals: Deicide of Greek Gods in Apotheon and its Role in the Greek Mythic Storyworld." In: *Classical Antiquity in Video Games: Playing with the Ancient World*, edited by Christian Rollinger, London: Bloomsbury, 2020, 193–204.
- Parker 1996: Parker, Robert. *Miasma. Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Parker 2009: Parker, Robert. "Aeschylus' Gods: Drama, Cult, Theology." In: *Eschyle à l'aube du théâtre occidental: Neuf exposés suivis de discussions*, edited by Jacques Jouanna and Franco Montanari, Genève: Fondation Hardt, 2009, 127–64.
- Porter 2005: Porter, David. "Aeschylus' 'Eumenides': Some Contrapuntal Lines." *The American Journal of Philology* 126 (2005): 301–31.
- Porter 2014: Porter, Andrew E. "Reconstructing Laomedon's Reign in Homer: Olympiomachia, Poseidon's Wall, and the Earlier Trojan War." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 54 (2014): 507–26.
- Ramnoux 1959a: Ramnoux, Clémence. *Mythologie, ou, La famille olympienne*, Brionne: G. Monfort, 1959.
- Ramnoux 1959b: Ramnoux, Clémence. *La Nuit et les enfants de la Nuit dans la tradition grecque*, Paris: Flammarion, 1959.
- Ramnoux 1987: Ramnoux, Clémence. "Les femmes de Zeus: Hesiodé, Theogonie, vers 885 a. 955." In: *Poikilia: Études offertes à Jean-Pierre Vernant*, edited by Marcel Detienne et al., Paris: Éditions de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1987, 155–64.
- Rautenbach 1984: Rautenbach, Susan. "Cyclopes (I)." *Acta Classica* 27 (1984): 41–56.
- Richardson 2010: Richardson, Nicholas J. *Three Homeric Hymns: Apollo, Hermes, and Aphrodite*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Rynearson 2013: Rynearson, Nicholas. "Courting the Erinyes: Persuasion, Sacrifice, and Seduction in Aeschylus's 'Eumenides'." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 143 (2013): 1–22.
- Sale 1965: Sale, William. "The Dual Vision of the 'Theogony'." *Arion* 4 (1965): 668–99.
- Savage 1962: Savage, J. J. H. "The Cyclops, the Sibyl and the Poet." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 93 (1962): 410–42.
- Scapin 2020: Scapin, Nuria. *The Flower of Suffering. Theology, Justice, and the Cosmos in Aeschylus' Oresteia and Presocratic Thought*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020.
- Slatkin 2011: Slatkin, Laura M. *The Power of Thetis and Selected Essays*, Washington: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011.
- Solmsen 1949: Solmsen, Friedrich. *Hesiod and Aeschylus*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949.
- Sommerstein 2010: Sommerstein, Alan H. *The Tangled Ways of Zeus and Other Studies in and around Greek Tragedy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Stoessl 1988: Stoessl, Franz. *Der Prometheus des Aischylos als geistesgeschichtliches und theatergeschichtliches Phänomen*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1988.



- Strauss Clay 1997: Strauss Clay, Jenny. *The Wrath of Athena: Gods and Men in the Odyssey*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997.
- Strauss Clay 2003: Strauss Clay, Jenny. *Hesiod's Cosmos*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Strauss Clay 2006: Strauss Clay, Jenny. *The Politics of Olympus. Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns*, London: Bristol Classical Press, 2006.
- Vander Waerdt 1982: Vander Waerdt, Paul A. "Post-Promethean Man and the Justice of Zeus." *Ramus* 11 (1982): 26–47.
- Vermeule 1979: Vermeule, Emily. *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
- Vos 2023: Vos, Gary P. "Thetis and Callimachus' Hymn to Apollo: Dynasty and Succession." In: *The Staying Power of Thetis: Allusion, Interaction, and Reception from Homer to the 21st Century*, edited by Maciej Paprocki, Gary P. Vos and David J. Wright, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023, 107–46.
- Walcot 1966: Walcot, Peter. *Hesiod and the Near East*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966.
- Walsh 2005: Walsh, Thomas R. *Fighting Words and Feuding Words. Anger and the Homeric Poems*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2005.
- Werner 2012: Werner, Cynthia. *The Erinyes in Aeschylus' Oresteia*. Doctoral thesis, Victoria, NZ: Victoria University of Wellington, 2012.
- West 1990: West, Martin L. *Studies in Aeschylus*, Stuttgart: Teubner, 1990.
- West 1997: West, Martin L. *The East Face of Helicon. West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.
- Willcock 1964: Willcock, Malcolm M. "Mythological Paradeigma in the Iliad." *The Classical Quarterly* 14 (1964): 141–54.
- Willcock 1977: Willcock, Malcolm M. "Ad Hoc Invention in the Iliad." *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 81 (1977): 41–53.
- Winnington-Ingram 1933: Winnington-Ingram, Reginald P. "The Rôle of Apollo in the Oresteia." *The Classical Review* 47 (1933): 97–104.