

# Danaus βουγενής: Greco-Egyptian Mythology and Ptolemaic Kingship

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THE THIRD BOOK of Callimachus's *Aetia* opens with an elegy that celebrates the chariot victory of Queen Berenice II in the Nemean games (fr.54–60j).<sup>1</sup> According to the introductory couplet, the *Victoria Berenices*<sup>2</sup> is offered by Callimachus to Zeus and Nemea as a gift on behalf of his patron, Berenice II:

Ζηνί τε καὶ Νεμέηι τι χάρισιον ἔδνον ὀφείλω,  
νύμφα, κα[σιγνή]των ἱερὸν αἶμα θεῶν,  
ἡμ[ε]τερο[.....].εων ἐπινίκιον ἵπω[ν].

To Zeus and Nemea I owe a gift of gratitude,  
nymph, sacred blood of the sibling gods,  
our victory song [...] of horses.

Zeus and Nemea appear as the receivers of Callimachus' gift because of their connection with the Nemean games: the myth of the *Victoria Berenices* narrates the killing of the Nemean lion but memorializes the creation by Heracles of the wreath that Nemean victors received as a prize. The mythic part of the poem concludes with a sacrifice to Zeus performed jointly by Heracles and Molochus (fr.60c.8–10). The frame mirrors, in this regard, the actions of the myth: Heracles offers a sacrifice to his divine father with the assistance of his host, Molochus; Berenice consecrates the elegy to Zeus, the divine progenitor of

<sup>1</sup> I cite the edition of A. Harder, *Callimachus. Aetia I–II* (Oxford 2012); translations are my own.

<sup>2</sup> This is the title given to the first elegy of Book 3 by P. J. Parsons, "Callimachus: *Victoria Berenices*," *ZPE* 25 (1977) 1–51.

her line, with the help of Callimachus. Furthermore, at fr. 54e.10 Heracles declares to Molorcus that his victory over the lion will prove his descent from Zeus, demonstrating his innate excellence. Analogously, the Nemean victory of Berenice exhibits her royal charisma, strengthening her connection with her husband and his family. The same epinician preoccupation with the victor's pedigree is reflected in the court propaganda that Berenice is the daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphos and Arsinoë II (fr.54.2).

This compressed rendition of epinician praise discourse is subsequently contextualized in an elaborate mythological précis of the connections between Egypt and Argos. Against the background that these references provide, the travel of the news of Berenice's victory from Argos to Alexandria is juxtaposed with similar journeys undertaken by mythic personages such as Danaus, Helen, and Proteus (4–7). A short description of the performance of Berenice's chariot at the games follows (8–10), and the proem concludes with references to the ritual wailing of Colchian women for Apis, the divine bull of Memphis (11–18)—a reference to King Sesostris' founding of Colchis. After this point, the text becomes heavily truncated.

ἀρμοῖ γὰρ Δαναοῦ γῆς ἀπὸ βουγενέος  
 εἰς Ἑλένη[ς νησιδ]α καὶ εἰς Παλληνέα μά[ντιν, 5  
 ποιμένα [φωκάων], χρύσειον ἦλθεν ἔπος,  
 Εὐφητηϊάδ[αο παρ'] ἠρίον οὐ[νεκ'] Ὀφέλτου  
 ἔθρεξαν προ[τέρω]ν οὐτινες ἠνιόχων  
 ἄσθματι χλι[...].πιμιδας, ἀλλὰ θελόγτων,  
 ὡς ἀνέμων οὐδεὶς εἶδεν ἀματροχιάς, 10  
 ημεν δη πο[  
 καὶ πάρος Ἀργει[  
 καιρωτους τε[  
 Κολχίδες ἢ Νείλω[ι 15  
 λεπταλέους ἔξυσαν.]  
 εἶδ' υἱαὶ φαλιὸν τε ἀνδρῶν ἠλεμίσαι,  
 For lately from the land of cow-born Danaus  
 to the Isle of Helen and the Pallenean oracle,  
 the shepherd of seals, the word of gold arrived

that near the shrine of Opheltes, the son of Euphetes,  
 no chariot-driver in front of them  
 with their breath ..., but while they ran  
 as the wind no one noticed the track of their wheels.  
 [...]
   
 and before at Argos [?]
   
 woven
   
 Colchian women ... or the Nile [?]
   
 made delicate
   
 skilled in mourning the bull with the white mark.

The destination of the news of Berenice's victory is Alexandria, which is associated with Helen and Proteus. The mention of Helen together with Proteus in the same line alludes to a variant version of the myth, according to which Helen sojourned during the Trojan War in Egypt under the protection of Proteus.<sup>3</sup> "Helen's island" refers to another tradition regarding the *aition* for the naming of Canopus after Menelaus' helmsman.<sup>4</sup> Both references provide an early instance of Hellenic presence on Egyptian soil.<sup>5</sup> By juxtaposing these mythological figures with the *laudanda*, Callimachus represents Ptolemaic sovereignty ensconced in Greek mythic perceptions of the Egyptian past.

On the other hand, Argos, the locale of the games and point of departure of the golden ἔπος of Berenice's victory, is associated with Danaus. Danaus provides a connection between the Ptolemaic dynasty and Argos, which is supported by his genealogical link with Berenice. A descendant of Io, Danaus journeyed with his fifty daughters from Egypt to Argos in order to avoid marrying his daughters to the fifty sons of his brother, Aegyptus.<sup>6</sup> At Argos Danaus replaced the autochthonous monarch Pelasgus and instituted his own dynasty which through his

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. Massimilla, *Callimaco Aitia: libro terzo e quarto* (Pisa 2010) 229.

<sup>4</sup> Hecataeus of Miletus *FGrHist* 1 F 309; Apol. Rh. *Canobus* fr.3 Race.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. B. Acosta-Hughes and S. Stephens, *Callimachus in Context: From Plato to the Augustan Poets* (Cambridge 2012) 163–164.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* (Baltimore 1993) 203–206.

daughter Hypermestra included Heracles and Berenice.<sup>7</sup>

The adjective that Danaus bears, βουγενής, is rare, and it allows further insights into the intercultural background against which Callimachus situates the Ptolemaic dynasty and the victory of Berenice.<sup>8</sup> Previous discussions of this adjective have focused primarily on Danaus' descent from Io.<sup>9</sup> However, βουγενής has a rich literary and cultural background which, as is argued here, informs its use by Callimachus. Examination of these intertextual overtones provides insight into the intercultural imagery and Ptolemaic agenda of the *Victoria Berenices*. Although there is no evidence regarding the application of βουγενής to Danaus before the *Aetia*, the context of Callimachus' use of the adjective would certainly have been colored by its previous appearances in works by Philetas (fr.14 Spanoudakis) and Empedocles (31 B 61 D.-K.) to describe other figures.<sup>10</sup> Outside of literary contexts, βουγενής appears in Argos as the cult epithet of Dionysus in his bovine form, another significant influence on the juxtaposition of Danaus with Apis. Through the use of βουγενής Callimachus represents the ancestor of Berenice II as a Greek foil to the Apis bull. Furthermore,

<sup>7</sup> The genealogy is mapped out in several texts of interest for the discussion of the *Victoria Berenices*: Pind. *Nem.* 10.1–18, claimed as an intertext by Pfeiffer (*Callimachus* I 308 on fr.383.1); the prologue of Euripides' *Archelaos* (*TrGF* V F 228a.8–16), relevant in as much as it connects the Macedonian royal house to Zeus via Heracles. For the connection of the Ptolemies to Zeus through Heracles see esp. Theoc. 17.13–33 and the Adulis Inscription (*OGIS* 54.1–5) of Ptolemy III. Cf. S. Stephens, "Egyptian Callimachus," in F. Montanari and L. Lehnus (eds.), *Callimaque: sept exposés* (Geneva 2002) 235–270, at 248; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, *Callimachus in Context* 168–170.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Massimilla, *Callimaco Aitia: libro terzo e quarto* 228–229.

<sup>9</sup> Parsons, *ZPE* 25 (1977) 8; G. B. D'Alessio, *Callimaco*<sup>4</sup> (Milan 2007) II 448; Massimilla, *Callimaco Aitia: libro terzo e quarto* 228–229; Harder, *Callimachus. Aetia* II 400–401.

<sup>10</sup> To these two attestations one should add the description of Melanippe's sons as βουγενή τέρατα in the ancient hypothesis to Euripides' *Melanippe* (*TrGF* V Hypoth. 1.19).

allusions to Empedocles' epic in the *Victoria Berenices* are important for understanding Callimachus' perception of the mythic past and the connections between Egypt and Argos that he proposes in fr.54.

*Philetas' bees and Callimachus' Argos*

Hesychius of Alexandria associates Callimachus' βουγενής (fr.54.4) with *bugonia*—the mythical production of bees from the carcass of oxen (*Lex.* s.v. βουγενέων). Despite Pfeiffer's suggestions,<sup>11</sup> Callimachus' text cannot refer to the creation of bees, but to Danaus' descent from Io.<sup>12</sup> Hesychius' lemma is, however, quite close to the use Philetas made of βουγενής in a line probably deriving from his elegy *Demeter* (fr.14 Spanoudakis): βουγενέας φθάμενος προσεβήσαο μακρὰ μελίσσας, "with long strides you reached the bees born of oxen."<sup>13</sup> The use of βουγενής by both Philetas and Callimachus is a possible indication of an intertextual connection between the two passages.<sup>14</sup> The disparity in the context of usage should not discourage one from exploring further the possibility of a reference to Philetas in the *Victoria Berenices*. Not only was Philetas the tutor of Ptolemy II Philadelphus,<sup>15</sup> he was also considered a model of poetic artistry after which Hellenistic poets strove. Callimachus acknowledges Philetas' poetic superiority in the *Aetia* prologue by invoking *Demeter*, the same elegy from which he also borrows βουγενής.<sup>16</sup> Referring to Philetas' *Demeter* in the opening elegy

<sup>11</sup> Pfeiffer on fr.383.4 Pf.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. D'Alessio, *Callimaco*<sup>4</sup> II 448; Massimilla, *Callimaco Aitia: libro terzo e quarto* 228–229; Harder, *Callimachus. Aetia* II 400–401.

<sup>13</sup> For discussion of this fragment see K. Spanoudakis, *Philetas of Cos* (Leiden 2002) 181–187, 226, 231.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of Hellenistic Age* (Oxford 1968) 284.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Pfeiffer, *History* 92–93.

<sup>16</sup> Callim. fr.1.9–12. Cf. G. Massimilla, *Callimaco Aitia: libri primo e secondo* (Pisa 1996) 206–213; D'Alessio, *Callimaco* II 370–371 n.8; Harder, *Callimachus. Aetia* II 32–44. A possible reference to Philetas has been identified in Callim. fr.532 Pf., τῷ ἕκτερον τὸ γράμμα τὸ Κώϊον.

of the second half of the *Aetia* intimates the significance of Philetas as a formative influence upon Callimachus' elegiac oeuvre. The presence of forms of the adjective λεπταλέος in both the *Aetia* prologue and the *Victoria Berenices* strengthens the connection between the two proems.<sup>17</sup>

What is of more consequence than this verbal similarity is that Callimachus follows Philetas' daring use of the Empedoclean adjective to offer his audience a fresh take on Greek mythology. As I will argue, the use of βουγενής for Danaus ought to be viewed within a double context: first, that of the intratextual juxtaposition of Danaus and Apis, and second, that of the intertextual connection between Empedocles' beings and Danaus. The combination of the Empedoclean doctrine, as evoked by the use of βουγενής, with Argive myth is an innovation suggested to Callimachus by Philetas. By applying the Empedoclean adjective βουγενής to bees, Philetas conveys to the reader the compatibility of Empedoclean and mythological discourses, perhaps in an effort to explain the problem of their creation.<sup>18</sup> Philetas' use suggests that the creation of bees is a smaller instance of Empedocles' wider cosmic principle. Since all life is made up of the same four elements (fire, air, water, earth), the reconfiguration of them under the influence of love and strife effects the creation of new beings.<sup>19</sup> In Philetas' line, the elements in the dead ox are recombined, thus giving birth to bees. Unlike Philetas, however, Callimachus' version of Empedoclean philosophy enables him to represent Danaus' time as an unstable period, in which the cosmos has not yet reached

<sup>17</sup> Callim. fr.1.24 Μοῦσαν ... λεπταλέην, 54.15 λεπταλέους ἔξυσαν; cf. R. F. Thomas, "Callimachus, the *Victoria Berenices*, and Roman Poetry," *CQ* 33 (1983) 92–113, at 106–107.

<sup>18</sup> The creation of bees seems to have been an object of philosophical speculation since Democritus (68 B 27a D.-K.).

<sup>19</sup> 31 B 8–9 D.-K.; A. Martin and O. Primavesi, *L'Empédocle de Strasbourg (P. Strasb. Gr. Inv. 1665–1666)* (Berlin 1998) 54–58. From this principle Empedocles developed the idea of the universal kinship between men, gods, and animals (B 136–137).

its final stage. Cosmic stability, envisioned as the mixed Greco-Egyptian monarchy, is reached only under the rule of the Ptolemies and with the creation of Alexandria.

On the other hand, the creation of bees from dead oxen was believed to be Egyptian lore later passed on to the Greeks.<sup>20</sup> The possible Egyptian connotations of βουγενής problematize the Greekness of Danaus' image: the Empedoclean allusion implies for Danaus a hybrid form similar to that of Io; the reference to the creation of bees acknowledges the Egyptian origin of apiculture. Furthermore, in view of the role of the bee as a royal symbol in Egypt,<sup>21</sup> the application of βουγενής to Danaus may be an attempt to represent the Argive king in terms of Egyptian titulary. Cultural mixture and biological hybridism match, and Callimachus paints an image of the past that sustains the intercultural discourse of Ptolemaic monarchy. This aspect of Callimachus' proem is carried to another level through the reinterpretation of Argive myth to support the juxtaposition of Danaus and Osiris-Apis in the following lines.

*Danaus βουγενής: between Epaphus and Dionysus*

Fr.54 is structured in ring composition, and, as Susan Stephens notes, "by moving the reader from the Greek cow-born descendant of Io (Danaus) to the Egyptian (Apis), Callimachus occludes the differences and draws the unknown into the comfortable orbit of Greek myth."<sup>22</sup> The intercultural identification of Egyptian and Greek mythological figures has a

<sup>20</sup> Antigonus of Carystus (*Hist.mir.* 19), whom Callimachus certainly knew (cf. fr.407 Pf.), connects βουγονία with Egypt, quoting Philetas' line in support of his claim; cf. Spanoudakis, *Philetas* 183–184.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. S. Stephens, *Seeing Double: Intercultural Poetics in Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Berkeley 2003) 107–108. The Egyptian word for bee (*bjt*) was part of the Two Thrones name (*njšwt-bjt*, "He of the Sedge and the Bee") of the pharaoh and an epithet of Osiris as ancestor of the reigning monarch. This title was also used by Berenice's consort. Cf. E. Otto, "Der Gebrauch des Königstitels *bjtj*," *ZAS* 85 (1960) 143–152.

<sup>22</sup> Stephens, in *Callimaque* 250. Cf. Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, *Callimachus in Context* 186–187.

long history that predates and contextualizes Callimachus' proem. In particular, because Hathor-Isis was both the mother of Apis and the Greek counterpart of Io, Greeks associated the divine bull with Io's son, Epaphus.<sup>23</sup> The application of βουγενής to Danaus is meant to make the connection between Danaus and Io more direct. Generally, βουγενής refers to beings that are born to a cow, not to a later descendant of it.<sup>24</sup> In this sense, βουγενής is more appropriate to describe Epaphus rather than Io's great-great-grandson, Danaus (Aesch. *Suppl.* 315–321). Callimachus suggests Danaus, alongside Epaphus, as another Greek figure that could be associated, potentially even identified, with Apis. The connection that Callimachus proposes could have had wider currency in Hellenistic times than we appreciate nowadays. For example, a late third-century BCE inscription mentions Danaus in connection with Memphis.<sup>25</sup> Although unclear, this connection reflects the legend about the Argive foundation of Memphis, another role typically attributed to Epaphus.<sup>26</sup>

Danaus' migration from Egypt to Argos renders him a more

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Hdt. 2.153; R. L. Vos, "Apis," in K. van der Toorn et al. (eds.), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*<sup>2</sup> (Leiden 1999) 68–72, at 70; I. Rutherford, "Mythology of the Black Land: Greek Myths and Egyptian Origins," in K. Dowden and N. Livingstone (eds.), *A Companion to Greek Mythology* (Chichester 2011) 459–470, at 463. Callimachus acknowledges the genealogical connection between Io and Apis as her offspring; if Lehnus' supplement (φα]λιῶς) at fr.66.1 (ἠρώσσαι [..]ιῶς Ἰασίδος νέπ[ο]δεξ) is correct, Io bears the same adjective as Apis at fr.54.16 (εἰδ\_υῖ\_αι φαλιὸν τ\_α\_ῦ\_ρον ἠλεμίσαι.).

<sup>24</sup> In Euripides' play, Melanippe's sons are presumed to be the offspring of the cow protecting them (*TrGF* V Hypoth. 1). Things are not clear with Dionysus; presumably one of his parents was believed to have bovine form (cf. *PEG* II.1 fr.413.7, ταυρογενής Διόνυσος).

<sup>25</sup> Bernand, *Inscr.métriques* 32.8, ἡ Δαναοῦ δ' ἱερὴ Μέμφις. For the date see Bernand p.161 n.2.

<sup>26</sup> Apollod. 2.10. Cf. Bernand, *Inscr.métriques* pp.163–164. Herodotus (2.91.5) associates Danaus instead with Chemmis; see A. B. Lloyd, *Herodotus, Book II* (Leiden 1976) 367.

attractive foil for the Ptolemies than Epaphus. Unlike Epaphus, who was born in Egypt and ruled there until the end of his days, Danaus was both a king and a foreigner who replaced King Pelasgus, instituting his own dynasty in Argos. Like Danaus, the Ptolemies replaced the indigenous Egyptian kings and could claim a sovereign's right upon Egyptian soil via their ancestor, Danaus. In this regard, Danaus fits in with the mythological narrative of Egyptian colonization that Callimachus presupposes in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices*.<sup>27</sup>

As to Danaus' journey from Egypt to Argos, his ties to his destination are not only sustained by his descent from Io but are further strengthened by the verbal reference to the Argive cult epithet of Dionysus. This information is provided by Plutarch, who quotes as his source the historian Socrates of Argos (third-second century).<sup>28</sup> To judge from the way in which Plutarch unfolds his argument, βουγενής implies that Dionysus was represented at Lerna as either a bull or with bovine body parts.<sup>29</sup> This interpretation agrees with literary references to the bull as one of Dionysus' bestial incarnations.<sup>30</sup> Building on

<sup>27</sup> For myths of Egyptian colonization see Rutherford, in *A Companion to Greek Mythology* 462–464. Callimachus also alludes to the foundation of Colchis by Sesostris at fr.54.14. Both episodes appear in Diodorus (1.28.2–4), who probably follows Hecataeus of Abdera (*FGrHist* 264 F 25).

<sup>28</sup> *FGrHist* 310 F 2; on Socrates see Jacoby's commentary pp.37–39; G. Casadio, *Storia del culto di Dioniso in Argolide* (Rome1994) 229–230 n.10. The adjective appears only in Argos (Jacoby p.41).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. E. R. Dodds, *Euripides Bacchae*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1960) xviii n.5. Dionysus is called βούκερως at Soph. *TrGF* IV F 959; this adjective is predominantly associated with Io: e.g. [Aesch.] *PV* 588, Hdt. 2.41.2. He is called ταυρωπός at *Anth.Gr.* 9.524.20.

<sup>30</sup> Eur. *Bacch.* 100, 618–621, 920–922, 1017–1019. Cf. J. Tondriau, “Dionysos, dieu royal. Du Bacchos taumorphe primitif aux souverains hellénistiques Neoi Dionysoi,” *AIPhO* 12 (1952) 441–466, at 444–448; Jacoby on *FGrHist* 310 F 2 (p.24 nn.39–39a); Dodds, *Euripides Bacchae* xviii; J. G. Griffiths, *Plutarch De Iside et Osiride* (Cardiff 1970) 433; Casadio, *Storia del culto* 232; A. Locchi, *Le Corna di Dioniso e il politeismo greco* (diss. Univ. di Roma “La Sapienza” 2005) 38–54.

these representations of Dionysus, Plutarch identifies Dionysus with Osiris-Apis.<sup>31</sup> The designation of Dionysus as “cow-born” or “bull-begotten” in a chthonian ritual with fertility overtones bears strong affinities with the myths about Osiris. Osiris is represented in Egyptian funerary literature as the “bull of the West,” a designation that underlines his role as king of the underworld.<sup>32</sup>

Notwithstanding Plutarch’s late date, all the cultural pieces of the connection he builds were already in place in third-century BCE Alexandria. The Ptolemies supported the identification of Osiris with Dionysus, as the god of fertility, the underworld, and the monarch. With regard to Dionysus’ identification with Apis, the *dromos* leading to the great temple of Osiris-Apis at Memphis featured representations of Dionysus and his retinue.<sup>33</sup> The Greek decorations date to the third century BCE, though the time cannot be estimated more exactly.<sup>34</sup> Callimachus reflects this historical background: he attributes to Danaus an adjective that is appropriate to bovine Dionysus; by juxtaposing the cow-born Danaus and Apis, Callimachus varies the traditional intercultural equation of Argive Dionysus with Apis.

Callimachus elaborates on details of the two myths that facilitate this connection between Danaus and Dionysus. The adjective he uses in the *Victoria Berenices* pertains to a pre-

<sup>31</sup> *De Is. et Os.* 364D–365A. The identification of Dionysus with Osiris is at least as old as Hecataeus of Miletus (Hdt 2.143–144, cf. 2.42); cf. Jacoby on *FGrHist* 310 F 2 (p.41); P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* I (Oxford 1972) 202, 206; J. E. Stambaugh, *Sarapis under the Early Ptolemies* (Leiden 1972) 36; R. Merkelbach, *Isis regina-Zeus Sarapis: Die griechisch-ägyptische Religion nach den Quellen dargestellt* (Stuttgart 1995) 71–72.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago 1978) 166; E. Winter, *Der Apiskult im alten Ägypten* (Mainz 1983) 6–8.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. J.-P. Lauer and C. Picard, *Les statues ptolémaïques du Sarapieion de Memphis* (Paris 1955) 173–245; Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* I 253, 255; P. Borgeaud and Y. Volokhine, “La formation de la légende de Sarapis: une approche transculturelle,” *ARG* 2 (2000) 37–76, at 72 with n.161; D. J. Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies*<sup>2</sup> (Princeton 2012) 108–109.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Stambaugh, *Sarapis* 55–56, 58; Thompson, *Memphis* 109.

dominantly chthonian cult of Dionysus at Lerna.<sup>35</sup> But Lerna is also the locale where Amydone, Danaus' daughter, found the river that was subsequently named after her.<sup>36</sup> Callimachus refers to this episode in the heavily truncated fr.54a that follows the proem. Lerna also appears in Lycophron's version of the abduction of Io (*Alex.* 1291–1295): Phoenician sailors abducted Io, the “bull-maiden” (ταυροπάρθενος) with “cow eyes” (βοῶπις), from Lerna and carried her to Memphis to become the destined consort of Osiris, the lord of Memphis.<sup>37</sup> This implies that the connections which Callimachus develops in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices* were also the object of speculation of other Ptolemaic poets around the same time as the composition of this elegy. The attribution to an Argive king of Dionysus' Argive cult epithet is meant to fuse Danaus with Dionysus, offering a route through which the analogy between Danaus and Apis can be seen in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices*.

Dionysus was an important Ptolemaic god, figuring prominently in the Grand Procession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus.<sup>38</sup> Nonetheless, unlike Danaus, Dionysus could not provide the Ptolemies with a strong connection to Argos, their ancestral hearth. Thus, his Argive attributes are projected onto Danaus, who has the added benefit of being the descendant of Io, a cow-goddess linked to Egypt. The association of both Danaus and Dionysus with water springs in Lerna provided Callimachus with a starting point from which to merge their identities.<sup>39</sup> Plutarch capitalizes on this aspect of Dionysus' image to

<sup>35</sup> For the Argive ritual see Locchi, *Le Corna* 63–67.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. P. Vasunia, *The Gift of the Nile: Hellenizing Egypt from Aeschylus to Alexander* (Berkeley 2001) 40 n.18.

<sup>37</sup> Io was supposed to have mated with Zeus at Lerna ([Aesch.] *PV* 651–654, 676–677). Lycophron combines this myth with Herodotus' rationalization of it as the abduction of Io by Phoenician pirates (1.1–2).

<sup>38</sup> Callixenus *FGrHist* 627 F 2. For the importance of Dionysus in Ptolemaic times see J. Tondriau, “La dynastie ptolémaïque et la religion dionysiaque,” *ChrEg* 50 (1950) 283–316, and *AIPhO* 12 (1952) 441–466.

<sup>39</sup> In Eur. *Bacch.* 704–705 the Maenads can create springs by hitting the

support his identification with Osiris-Apis. Noting the similarities between Dionysus at Lerna and Apis, Plutarch also compares the Dionysian ritual with the funeral of Apis.<sup>40</sup>

All three figures, Danaus, Dionysus, and Osiris-Apis, are associated with water springs and their preservation. This similarity renders the juxtaposition of Danaus and Apis in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices* more pronounced and underpins the symbolic value of Berenice's victory. Danaus' reign is associated with bringing water to the arid land of Argos.<sup>41</sup> This part of his acculturative activity is alluded to at fr.54e.4, Δαναοῦ φρεΐατι πᾶρ μεγα[λ]-. As Stephens notes,<sup>42</sup> Danaus' discovery of springs in Argos provides an Argive version for the annual rising of the Nile. This Egyptian event was associated in Ptolemaic times with Osiris-Apis<sup>43</sup> and signaled the victory of order (*maat*) over chaos (*isfet*).<sup>44</sup> As βουγενής, Danaus imitates Apis in performing a function central to the Egyptian perception of royalty. In addition, at fr.54.14 Callimachus refers to the Colchian women mourning the Apis bull. The funeral of Apis, of which the mourning was a part, celebrates the victory of divine powers over both death and chaos and, as such, offers a pertinent background for the celebration of the victory of Berenice II.<sup>45</sup> Scholars agree that Callimachus refers in these lines to the

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earth with their rods. Pausanias (4.36.7) reports that Dionysus created a fountain between Pylos and Cyparissia in Messene by hitting the ground with his *thyrsos*-rod.

<sup>40</sup> Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 364E. Plutarch probably refers to the procession to and journey on the Lake of the Kings that took place on the sixty-ninth day of the funeral; cf. R. L. Vos, *The Apis Embalming Ritual: P. Vindob. 3873* (Leuven 1993) 40.

<sup>41</sup> Hes. fr.128 M.-W. Callimachus refers to this line in his *Hymn to Zeus* (18–19); cf. Stephens, *Seeing Double* 99–100. He deals with Argive springs in the third book of the *Aetia* (fr.65–66); cf. Harder, *Callimachus. Aetia* II 529–530.

<sup>42</sup> In *Callimaque* 248.

<sup>43</sup> See D. Bonneau, *La crue du Nil* (Paris 1964) 221–222, 319–322.

<sup>44</sup> Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 364A, 365B, 366C–F; Griffiths, *De Iside et Osiride* 424.

<sup>45</sup> On the funeral of Apis see Vos, *The Apis Embalming Ritual* 40.

funeral of a specific Apis bull that took place in 247 BCE.<sup>46</sup> The spectacle would have attracted Callimachus' attention, encouraging him to match it with the analogous Greek ritual of Dionysus at Argos alluded to through the use of βουγενής. During this Argive ritual, Dionysus was evoked from the Alcyonia Lake at Lerna.<sup>47</sup> Because Dionysus was believed to be dead or imprisoned in Hades,<sup>48</sup> the priest threw a lamb into the lake, offering it to the guardian of the gates of the underworld to set Dionysus free. The rite concluded with the aquatic *anodos* of Dionysus which was connected with the fertility of the earth and the rising of waters after winter.<sup>49</sup> The swelling of the Argive springs parallels and restates in Greek terms the swelling of the Nile. This cultural background can accommodate the reference to a funeral rite in the context of epinician praise for Berenice.<sup>50</sup> Her victory is a symbolic reenactment of the primordial victory of order over chaos.<sup>51</sup> The funeral of Apis and the Dionysian rites at Lerna referred to by Callimachus express this idea that was central to the pharaonic and Ptolemaic conceptions of kingship, offering an appropriate background for the praise of Berenice's athletic victory.

<sup>46</sup> See Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, *Callimachus in Context* 11 n.60, 186.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Jacoby on 310 F 2, p.41 and n.42.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Jacoby on 310 F 2, n.40; Griffiths, *De Iside et Osiride* 433.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Locchi, *Le Corna* 67.

<sup>50</sup> One can also compare the juxtaposition of the apotheosis of Queen Berenice I with the ritual mourning and funeral procession for Adonis in Theoc. 15. The ceremonies described imitate the myth of Osiris and indicate the analogies between the deified queen and Osiris/Adonis; cf. J. D. Reed, "Arsinoe's Adonis and the Poetics of Ptolemaic Imperialism," *TAPA* 130 (2000) 319–351.

<sup>51</sup> For this aspect of royal victories see M. Fantuzzi, "Posidippus at Court: The Contribution of the Ἰππικά of P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309 to the Ideology of Ptolemaic Kingship," in K. Gutzwiller (ed.), *The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book* (Oxford 2005) 249–268, at 263–264, and S. Barbantani, "Hellenistic Epinikion," in P. Agócs et al. (eds.), *Receiving the Komos: Ancient and Modern Receptions of the Victory Ode* (*BICS* Suppl. 112 [2012]) 37–55, at 45–46.

*Danaus and the Ptolemaic cult of Apis*

The reference to the funeral of Apis at fr.54.13–16 emphasizes the significance of the cult of the Apis bull for Ptolemaic kingship. Viewing Apis as the Egyptian counterpart of her ancestor, Argive Danaus, associates Berenice II closely with the cult of the bull of Memphis, reflecting contemporaneous circumstances.

During his lifetime, the Apis bull was identified with Ptah, the patron god of Memphis; when Apis died, he was seen as the soul of Osiris.<sup>52</sup> The cult of Memphis had special interest for Egyptian kings<sup>53</sup> and was supported by the Ptolemies. The sources attest the lavish funerals that Egyptian kings offered to the dead Apis. A hieroglyphic inscription (Apis Stela, Louvre N406) of 547 BCE describes the interest shown by King Amasis II (r. 570–526) in the funeral of the Apis bull; the concern of the pharaoh is said to imitate that of Horus for the funeral of his father, Osiris.<sup>54</sup> The Canopus Decree, composed some years after the *Victoria Berenices* (238 BCE), celebrates Ptolemy III's support of the cult of the sacred bulls, Apis and Mnevis (*OGIS* 56.9–10). In Egyptian religion, the dead king was assimilated upon his death to Osiris and was believed to rule in the underworld as his avatar.<sup>55</sup> His son and successor ruled on earth as Horus. By associating Danaus with Apis, Callimachus throws into relief Danaus' analogous role as the divine ancestor of Berenice II and her consort.<sup>56</sup>

Callimachus' representation of Danaus bears similarities to contemporaneous accounts that provide Osiris-Apis with an Argive background. In particular, the Hellenistic historian

<sup>52</sup> Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 359B, 362D.

<sup>53</sup> See Winter, *Der Apiskult* 11–12; Thompson, *Memphis* 108.

<sup>54</sup> Winter, *Der Apiskult* 28. For Ptolemaic involvement in the burial of the Apis bull see Stambaugh, *Sarapis* 65.

<sup>55</sup> See Frankfort, *Kingship* 110.

<sup>56</sup> The importance of royal ancestors is acknowledged in pharaonic rituals (Frankfort, *Kingship* 89–98) and in the King's oath (cf. D. L. Clayman, *Berenice II and the Golden Age of Ptolemaic Egypt* [Oxford 2014] 162–166).

Aristippus of Argos<sup>57</sup> is reported to have claimed that Memphis was colonized by Apis, the legendary king of Argos, who originally gave his name to the Peloponnese (Apia).<sup>58</sup> The association of the Argive Apis with the sacred bull of Memphis is predicated on the similarity between the names of the Argive king and the sacred bull.<sup>59</sup> According to John Stambaugh, Aristippus considered Osiris-Apis (i.e. Sarapis) identical to the deified Argive founder of Memphis, the old capital of the Egyptian and Ptolemaic kingdoms. The Argive culture hero was thus represented in the guise of the Apis bull in Memphis and of Sarapis in Alexandria.<sup>60</sup> Callimachus provides a structure similar to that of Aristippus but substitutes Danaus for Apis in order to strengthen the association of the Ptolemaic monarch with his cult.

*βουγενής as marker of royalty and divinity*

As has been noted by several scholars, βουγενής throws into relief the descent of Danaus from Io, conceptualized in her cow form. This family link, however, is informed by Io's theriomorphic form and its implications for the intercultural imagery of Callimachus' poem. In the proem of an elegy addressed to an Egyptian queen, the reference to this aspect of Io's myth operates in the background of the traditional identification of Io with the Egyptian goddess Hathor-Isis, also depicted as a

<sup>57</sup> The date of Aristippus is not known with certainty; he is usually dated to the third-second centuries. He is credited with a treatise on Arcadia: see *BNJ* 317.

<sup>58</sup> *BNJ* 317 F 1. On the Argive King Apis see Aesch. *Supp.* 260–270; cf. Rutherford, in *A Companion to Greek Mythology* 463.

<sup>59</sup> Another Hellenistic historian, Aristeas of Argos, probably active at the court of Ptolemy II Philadelphos, identified Apis with the new god Sarapis; cf. J. E. Stambaugh, "Aristeas of Argos in Alexandria," *Aegyptus* 47 (1967) 69–74, and *Sarapis* 60, 68; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, *Callimachus in Context* 186–187. See also Apollod. 2.2.

<sup>60</sup> Stambaugh, *Sarapis* 70–74; for the different aspects and iconography of the cults in Memphis and Alexandria see Stambaugh 66–66, 90–91.

cow or a woman with βούκρανον.<sup>61</sup> Io's hybrid form becomes the vehicle that motivates and occasions her assimilation to Isis-Hathor in Greek colonial discourse. As we have seen, Plutarch employs a similar reasoning with regard to the identification of Dionysus βουγενής and Apis. Furthermore, in both cases, bestial form is seen as a sign of otherness, conveying divinity, royalty even, in Egyptian culture. The application of βουγενής to Danaus suggests that a similar theoretical apparatus is in operation in his case and that it reflects contemporaneous artistic choices in the representation of royal figures.

Empedocles is the first surviving author to use βουγενής, and he explicitly attributes a theriomorphic nature to the beings so described. He posits that animate life is created twice per cosmic cycle, once when love (φιλότης) is the predominant force and once when strife (νεῖκος) is.<sup>62</sup> In both cases, the creation of life proceeds in two phases. When φιλότης is the predominant force, autonomous body parts first appear (B 57), which in the subsequent phase are combined to create various humanoid beings like those described in B 61. In contrast, when νεῖκος dominates, life begins in rudimentary forms with no limbs or sex differentiation, rising from the earth driven by fire; these then evolve into life as we know it (B 62–67); B 61:

πολλὰ μὲν ἀμφιπρόσωπα καὶ ἀμφίστερνα φύεσθαι,  
βουγενῆ ἀνδρόπρωρα, τὰ δ' ἔμπαλιν ἐξανατέλλειν  
ἀνδροφυῆ βούκρανα, μεμειγμένα τῇ μὲν ἀπ' ἀνδρῶν

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Hdt. 1.2, 2.41. For the representation of Hathor see C. J. Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth: Two Key Figures of the Ancient Egyptian Religion* (Leiden 1973) 22, 30–34; Frankfort, *Kingship* 171–172. Isis is also represented with βούκρανον: Griffiths, *De Iside et Osiride* 350–351. Io is depicted as a cow with a human face on a South-Italian red-figure hydria in Boston (ca. 450 BCE; *ARV* I 479, no. 84). According to H. Friis Johansen and E. W. Whittle, *Aeschylus: The Suppliants* II (Copenhagen 1980) 455, this representation could also be suggested by Aeschylus' μειζόμβροτος (*Supp.* 568). For the ordinary depiction of Io as a cow see Friis Johansen and Whittle II 454.

<sup>62</sup> See Martin and Primavesi, *L'Empédocle de Strasbourg* 75–82, and 96 for a diagram charting the cosmic cycle.

τῆ δὲ γυναικοφυῆ σκιεροῖς ἠσκημένα γυίοις.

Many creatures, with double faces and chests, arise,  
bulls with human heads and, conversely,  
men with bull heads, male in some regards  
and female in others, adorned with shadowy limbs.

Among the various bizarre beings Empedocles situates in the second stage of the era of love are creatures with two heads and chests, hermaphrodites, and mixed forms combining body parts of bulls and humans.<sup>63</sup> He envisages two versions of the latter kind, which he clearly differentiates: one has a bovine body but human head or torso, the other a human body and a bull head. The juxtaposition of βουγενῆ ἀνδρόπρωρα with ἀνδροφυῆ βούκρανα clearly indicates that, in Empedocles, βουγενής refers to beings with a bull body and a human head.

Through βουγενής Callimachus associates Danaus with Empedocles' beings and envisions him accordingly in terms reminiscent of both Io and Dionysus. The Dionysian use of the adjective as well as the juxtaposition of Danaus and Apis in fr.54 strengthen the implications of the Empedoclean subtext. However, there is no independent evidence, artistic or literary, to suggest that this was actually the case with Danaus in Hellenistic times. Perhaps the ambiguities surrounding the representation of Epaphus account for the implicit acknowledgement of Danaus' bovine characteristics. According to Aeschylus (*Supp.* 299–301), when Zeus mated with Io he assumed the form of a bull. Aeschylus refers to Epaphus as “Zeus' calf,” which might mean that Epaphus is envisaged as having a bull's body.<sup>64</sup> On the other hand, the ambiguity that permeates Danaus' form parallels the distinct representations of Osiris-Apis as a bull in Memphis and a human in Alexandria.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. M. R. Wright, *Empedocles: The Extant Fragments* (New Haven 1981) 213–215.

<sup>64</sup> *Supp.* 41 Δῖον πρότιν. However, see also Friis Johansen and Whittle, *Aeschylus: The Suppliants* II 39–40: “in 580ff. he definitely seems to be envisaged as anthropomorphous, an idea here connoted by ἴντιν.”

The attribution of animal parts to human beings is a traditional way of conveying both divine and royal status.<sup>65</sup> Ptolemaic monarchs are accordingly depicted with ram horns to imply their connection with Alexander the Great and ultimately Amun-Zeus.<sup>66</sup> On the other hand, pharaohs are typically represented either as mighty bulls or with bull parts such as tails or horns.<sup>67</sup> This tradition is acknowledged by the Greek conquerors of Egypt. Alexander is celebrated in Egyptian titulary as “the strong bull who protects Egypt, the ruler of the Great Green and of what the sun encircles.”<sup>68</sup> The metaphor communicates Alexander’s strength and military prowess. A marble bust of Ptolemy III, probably of Cretan provenance, represents the Ptolemaic monarch with bull horns; this feature is seen as marking the king’s divinity, an allusion to the bovine form of Dionysus.<sup>69</sup> The representation of Danaus as βουγενής refers to this aspect of Ptolemaic tradition: the bull elements that Danaus inherited from Io convey his divinity channeled through Dionysian religion in its Argive version. Although Hellenistic monarchs outside of Egypt are also represented with bull horns,<sup>70</sup> the attribution of them to Ptolemy III may well

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Bleeker, *Hathor and Thoth* 23–24.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. A. Fulińska, “Son of Ammon: Ram Horns of Alexander Reconsidered,” in V. Grieb et al. (eds.), *Alexander the Great and Egypt: History, Art, Tradition* (Wiesbaden 2014) 119–144, at 136–137.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Frankfort, *Kingship* 162, 171–172. Narmer on the Narmer Palette: A. I. Navajas-Jiménez, “The Predynastic *Bos primigenius* as a Royal Image of Territory, Boundaries, and Power in an African Context,” in K. Excell (ed.), *Egypt in its African Context* (Oxford 2011) 30–39, at 35–37. Thutmosis III (18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, r. 1479–1425): M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings* II (Berkeley 1976) 37–38; Navajas-Jiménez 30.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. F. Bosch-Puche, “The Egyptian Royal Titulary of Alexander the Great, I: Horus, Two Ladies, Golden Horus, and Throne Names,” *JEA* 99 (2013) 131–154, at 140–142.

<sup>69</sup> G. Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (London 2001) 96–97; Clayman, *Berenice II* 122–123.

<sup>70</sup> For the bull as a symbol of royal power see Tondriau, *AIPhO* 12 (1952) 449–452; V. Frenkel, “φάνηθι τάρως: Un elemento arcaico nel Dioniso

interact with indigenous Egyptian tradition. The commonalities between Greek and Egyptian discourses facilitated cross-cultural interface. By assuming bull features, the pharaoh symbolically harnessed and exploited the bull's destructive potential<sup>71</sup> for the existence of his beneficent rule. In addition to this traditional image, one should also consider that the bull is associated with the reigning pharaoh as a symbol of fertility.<sup>72</sup> Such an image is also appropriate for Danaus, who fathered fifty daughters.

*Empedoclean echoes and Ptolemaic past*

In Empedocles, βουγενής appears in a very specific cosmogonic context. By representing Danaus as βουγενής, Callimachus invites the reader to take into consideration the Empedoclean conception of creation in relation to Callimachus' construction of the mythic past in the *Victoria Berenices*. In this way, Danaus, as a figure uniting Argos with Egypt, is pushed further into the remotest past. Empedocles' epic describes the creation of the world; it sets out the *aitia* of physical reality. Callimachus' allusion to Empedocles' epic emphasizes that both poems are accounts of origins. This is particularly likely as the Empedoclean adjective is used in the proem of the second half of the *Aetia*, where Callimachus establishes the framework in which the *Aetia* is to be read and understood.<sup>73</sup>

The two periods characterized by the supremacy of either φιλότης or νεῖκος are separated from each other by a rearrangement of the four cosmic elements.<sup>74</sup> Because of this, there can be no continuity between the four phases of the

delle *Baccanti*," *Acme* 31 (1978) 93–105, at 97.

<sup>71</sup> For the association of Seth with bulls see H. te Velde, *Seth God of Confusion: A Study of his Role in Egyptian Mythology and Religion* (Leiden 1977) 86–88.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. J. G. Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth: From Egyptian and Classical Sources* (Liverpool 1960) 49–50, 90–92; Frankfort, *Kingship* 169.

<sup>73</sup> Analogously, the first book of the *Aitia* opens with an allusion to another didactic poet, Hesiod (fr.2–2j).

<sup>74</sup> B 17.3–5; cf. Wright, *Empedocles* 45–48.

creation of animate life. This interpretation is obviously at odds with the unbroken continuity that Callimachus suggests between Danaus and Berenice through Heracles. However, the evidence provided by other Hellenistic poets, especially Apollonius of Rhodes, and the similarities of the *Victoria Berenices* to Callimachus' hymns *To Zeus* and *To Delos* suggest that Callimachus takes a few liberties in his rendition of Empedocles' philosophy. Reading βουγενής against the background of Empedocles' Hellenistic reception allows the formulation of two points which, I argue, are important for understanding βουγενής in the *Victoria Berenices*. First, allusions to Empedocles are, as a rule, perfunctory—that is, Hellenistic poets are interested in employing a specific element of Empedocles' philosophy without worrying about how their use of an element fits in with Empedocles' overall teaching. This, for instance, is the case with the several Empedoclean adjectives that Aratus uses in his *Phaenomena*. He employs these words freely without any intention of a whole-scale engagement with Empedocles' philosophy.<sup>75</sup> Second, and pursuant to this observation, the imitations of Empedocles' philosophy that Hellenistic poets provide do not necessarily agree with Empedocles' system as it was conceived by him. More often than not, poetic renditions thereof are modified so as to accommodate other epic (e.g. Hesiodic) or philosophical (e.g. Orphic, Aristotelian) elements, foreign to Empedocles' original conceptions. Bearing these points in mind, we can re-examine Callimachus' reference to Empedocles in the light of contemporaneous poetic practice.

Hellenistic poets found a kindred spirit in Empedocles. Several salient features of Hellenistic poetry can be paralleled in

<sup>75</sup> Cf. A. Traglia, "Reminiscenze empedoclee nei 'Fenomeni' di Arato," in *Miscellanea di studi alessandrini in memoria di Augusto Rostagni* (Turin 1963) 382–393, at 387–393. Such is also the case with Timon of Phlius' allusion to Empedocles (B 124) in *Suppl.Hell.* 784.2; cf. D. L. Clayman, *Timon of Phlius: Pyrrhonism into Poetry* (Berlin 2009) 95–96.

Empedocles' treatment of the previous epic patrimony.<sup>76</sup> For the needs of my discussion, I focus on his tendency to rationalize myth so as to incorporate it into his philosophical system.<sup>77</sup> For instance, it has been noted that the βουγενῆ ἀνδρόπρωρα beings constitute a rationalization of hybrid mythic creatures such as the Centaurs or river gods (e.g. Acheloös).<sup>78</sup> Callimachus and Apollonius reverse this process—that is, they seek to defamiliarize their readers by portraying familiar mythological beings in Empedoclean terms. In *Arg.* 4.672–681, Circe does not transform strangers into animals as in the *Odyssey* but into beings that defy neat categorizations, so much so that the narrator can only compare them to Empedocles' ancient beings (672–673). In as much as Circe's beings do not conform to the usual distinction between humans and animals, they undermine the current cosmic status quo, which relies upon the tripartite ontological scheme of gods, men, and animals.<sup>79</sup> Circe's world preserves reminiscences of an immemorial, chaotic past when the world was still in the making, potentially even antecedent to Zeus' rule, and as such poses a serious threat to Jason and his comrades. In another passage of *Arg.* Book 4, Empedocles' cosmogony articulates the epiphanic transformations of the Hesperides (1422–1432). Until they acquire human form, the nymphs go through 'evolutionary' stages similar to those of animate life in Empedocles' νεῖκος period.<sup>80</sup> In the case of Apollonius, then, references to Empedocles' beings are localized in far-off, liminal lands, such

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Traglia, in *Miscellanea di studi alessandrini* 384; B. A. van Gronigen, "Empédocle poète," *Mnemosyne* 24 (1971) 169–188, at 172–175.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. P. Kyriakou, "Empedoclean Echoes in Apollonius Rhodius' 'Argonautica,'" *Hermes* 122 (1994) 309–319, at 318 n.36, 319 n.42.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Wright, *Empedocles* 213–214.

<sup>79</sup> For this hierarchical classification and the threat that any disturbance thereof poses to the rule of Zeus, see A. Bergren, "The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite: Tradition and Rhetoric, Praise and Blame," *CLAnt* 8 (1989) 1–41, at 2–8.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Kyriakou, *Hermes* 122 (1994) 318–319.

as Circe's island and the Garden of the Hesperides. The allusion to an immemorial past emphasizes the 'otherness', be it magical or divine, of Circe and the Hesperides and the potential threat they constitute to the Argonauts.

Hellenistic poets incorporate allusions to Empedocles in narratives of historical evolution foreign to Empedocles' system. Orpheus' song in Book 1 of the *Argonautica* is a case in point.<sup>81</sup> Orpheus contextualizes his revised Hesiodic frame of the succession of divine rulers in a cosmogony inspired by Empedocles.<sup>82</sup> Under the influence of νεῖκος, the original sphere dissolves into its constituent elements.<sup>83</sup> Despite the Empedoclean beginnings of his creation, Orpheus concludes the narrative with the permanence of Zeus' rule, disregarding the incessant oscillation between love and strife characteristic of Empedocles' system. However we interpret this difference,<sup>84</sup> the fact remains that Apollonius is not interested in preserving philosophical accuracy, being more interested in the erudite touch itself.<sup>85</sup>

In light of such parallels, the acceptance of a Callimachean allusion to Empedocles' epic in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices* is not only admissible, but also quite likely. Dee Clayman has shown that Callimachus not only knew Greek philosophy

<sup>81</sup> Apol. Rhod. 1.496–511. See also *Supp.Hell.* 938 with the discussion of M. Treu, "Eine neue Kosmogonie (P. Oxy. 2816)," *GrazBeitr* 1 (1973) 221–239.

<sup>82</sup> One should compare Aratus' (108–109) association of the Hesiodic Golden Race with Empedocles' period of φιλότης (B 128); cf. Traglia, in *Miscellanea di studi alessandrini* 385–387; D. A. Kidd, *Aratus Phaenomena: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Cambridge 1997) 220–221.

<sup>83</sup> Apol. Rhod. 1.497; cf. Kyriakou, *Hermes* 122 (1994) 309 n.2.

<sup>84</sup> Orphic: Treu, *GrazBeitr* 1 (1973) 234–239; Aristotelian: Kyriakou, *Hermes* 122 (1994) 309–319.

<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Apol. Rhod. 4.680–681 imply a continuous evolution from the phase of the mixed beings into current species. Such Hellenistic imitations could support the opinion of those scholars who see a linear development in Empedocles' account of the creation of animate life; see however Martin and Primavesi, *L'Empédocle de Strasbourg* 75–82.

but alluded to a variety of philosophical schools in his works, especially his epigrams.<sup>86</sup> Fr.553 Pf., in particular, refers to a Pythagorean precept via a line falsely attributed to Empedocles (B 141).<sup>87</sup> Pfeiffer *ad loc.* raised the possibility that this line could be combined with fr.61 from Book 3 of the *Aetia*. An allusion to Empedocles in the first *aition* of the same book would then not be out of place. As stated above, there are two ways to interpret Callimachus' use of βουγενής. It is first of all an erudite note: Callimachus borrows Empedocles' adjective in order to emphasize the antiquity of Danaus as well as his descent from a theriomorphic woman. However, this reading cannot ignore the palpable imprint that Empedocles' system has left in the first lines of the *Victoria Berenices*. The allusion to Empedocles suggests that Danaus inhabits an unstable universe at the dawn of time. The representation of both Proteus and Danaus invests the journey of Berenice's victory with a temporal dimension. From the instability of Danaus' times the reader moves to the stability of Berenice's kingdom. In particular, the theriomorphic Danaus is replaced by the divine bull of Memphis. Callimachus' reading of Empedocles ignores the unceasing alternation between love and strife in order to praise Berenice's capital. This timeline parallels the cosmogonies in the *Hymn to Delos*, where Empedoclean influence is also felt, and the *Hymn to Zeus* (see below). In both poems, the cosmogonic discourse emphasizes the centrality of Delos and Alexandria respectively. Appreciating the Empedoclean intertext in fr.54 is part of Callimachus' praise discourse to extol Alexandria as Berenice's seat of power.

Empedocles' cosmogony postulates an unending rearrangement of the four elements (fire, air, water, earth) under the influence of two cosmic powers—φιλότης and νείκος. For Empedocles, there is no stability, only constant movement and alteration. It is against this continually shifting existence that

<sup>86</sup> Clayman, *Timon of Phlius* 148–166.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Wright, *Empedocles* 289.

one can approach the representation of Danaus in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices*. Nothing in Callimachus' intercultural perception of the mythic past is static. φιλότης and νεῖκος motivate the dislocation of the mythic characters mentioned: love and hatred are prominent in the myth of Danaus and his daughters; Proteus relocates to avoid the hatred of his own sons towards strangers (cf. Lycoph. *Alex.* 124–125); love is the motivating force behind Helen's actions. The influence of the two cosmic powers is also felt in the case of Berenice's victory, but on a contained level that does not undermine the stability of the cosmos. Strife finds an outlet in the ritualized context of athletic competition; its result, Berenice's victory, balances φιλότης typified in Berenice's relationship to Ptolemy III. Empedocles' system allows Callimachus to connect marital imagery with athletic victory, preparing the reader for the importance that love holds in the *aitia* of Book 3 (e.g. Acontius and Cydippe).

Like Empedocles' four elements, Danaus, Io, Helen, and Proteus are rearranged among places and identities—shifting between Egypt and Greece. In so doing, they blur the barriers between the cultures. In particular, the application of adjectives such as βουγενής and Pallenean to an Argive and Egyptian king respectively undermines the stability and neatness of categorizations. The reader is faced with the illusion of such classifications and left suspended in a state of cognitive *aporia*: Is Danaus wholly human or theriomorphic? Is he Argive or Egyptian? Is Proteus Pallenean or Egyptian? As a result of this, one can approach Callimachus' representation of Danaus in light of what Clayman terms the “aesthetics of skepticism,” whereby “art and literature are deliberately corrosive and intended to destabilize our understanding of the world along with the value generated by that conception.”<sup>88</sup> Along similar lines, I argue that the allusion to Empedoclean philosophy in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices* sustains the skeptic discourse in these lines.

<sup>88</sup> Clayman, *Timon of Phlius* 209–210.

Callimachus' skepticism is a textual subterfuge; he feigns uncertainty with regard to Danaus in order to ground the origins of the Greco-Egyptian character of Ptolemaic monarchy in the mythic past. Against this background, βουγενής *qua* reference to Empedocles' cosmogony gives the journey of the news of Berenice's victory a diachronic dimension that has not been appreciated in previous discussions of these lines. In journeying from Argos to Alexandria, the news travels through time. Danaus recalls Empedocles' primeval and theriomorphic beings. Proteus is represented as a herder of seals, not cattle. This bizarre activity distorts the ordinary human institution of animal husbandry, indicating an anomalous state of affairs antecedent to the present one. In addition, the unclear localization of both kings in the cultural spectrum between Greece and Egypt intimates primordial disorganization. Stability is achieved only with the establishment of Alexandria. Viewing Alexandria against this version of the past further suggests that categorizations such as Greek or Egyptian are proved illusory and inconsistent with the historical make-up of the Ptolemaic capital. Danaus and Proteus ignore such distinctions, which thus carry little value with the Ptolemies as their successors.

This view of the past is occasioned by the status of Alexandria as a newly founded city.<sup>89</sup> Alexandria is created from immigrant populations that come from various places in the extensive Hellenic world. Their coexistence creates the Alexandrian civic body, which bears the imprint of the cultural backgrounds of its constituent ethnic groups.<sup>90</sup> In this sense, the malleability of cosmic matter offers a model for the malleability of cultural material in the *Aetia*. Seen from this vantage point, the circular movements of various characters in the proem of the *Victoria Berenices* are also consistent with Empedocles' sys-

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Stephens, in *Callimaque* 249–251, and “Remapping the Mediterranean: The Argo Adventure in Apollonius and Callimachus,” in D. Obbink and R. Rutherford (eds.), *Culture in Pieces: Essays on Ancient Texts in Honour of Peter Parsons* (Oxford 2011) 188–207.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. D. L. Selden, “Alibis,” *ClAnt* 17 (1998) 289–412, at 289–299.

tem, the more so because the unremitting re-disposition of matter is described by Empedocles himself as a cycle.<sup>91</sup> The arrival of the news of Berenice's victory recreates the arrival of Io and Helen in Egypt; Danaus' migration to Argos prefigures the travel of Berenice's chariot team to the same destination. Analogously, the movements of Proteus, from Egypt to Pallene and back to Egypt, and of Sesostris, from Egypt to Colchis and back to Egypt, chart a full circle. The conceptualization of space is thus associated with the perception of identity.

*Callimachean cosmogonies and the Victoria Berenices*

Several of the elements observed in the opening lines of the *Victoria Berenices* can be effectively contextualized in Callimachus' practice in other Ptolemaic poems such as the *Hymn to Delos* and the *Hymn to Zeus*. The movement of people, the instability of geographic boundaries between Greece and Egypt, the progressive establishment of a secure and stable cosmos after a period of chaotic mixing, as well as the reenactment of primordial journeys, are elements that articulate the discourse of both Callimachean hymns. Since a plausible Ptolemaic background has been argued for both poems,<sup>92</sup> it is understandable that Callimachus reused the same discourse in the epinician for a Ptolemaic queen.

The *Hymn to Delos* contextualizes the wanderings of Leto within those of Delos. Framing and framed narratives are causally linked. Leto's parturition puts an end to both peregrinations: Leto, as the mother of Apollo, is freed, while Delos, as his *kourotrophos*, loses her prior freedom, being permanently rooted to her current position. Delos constitutes an anomaly in Zeus' realm. Both as a woman and an island, Delos spurns the authority of male gods such as Zeus and Poseidon (30–40). The birth of Apollo puts an end to her aberrant ways, both literarily

<sup>91</sup> B 17.12–13, 26.12; see also Martin and Primavesi, *L'Empédocle de Strasbourg* 198, on line a(ii)12.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. S. Stephens, *Callimachus, The Hymns: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Oxford 2015) 51, 162.

and metaphorically, and delineates her position in the established male-dominated universe.

The rooting of Delos concludes the cosmogonic process that the various movements in this poem intimate.<sup>93</sup> Before this, the world was still pliable. The wanderings of Leto unsettle the Greek landscape, causing rivers, nymphs, and mountains to move in order to avoid contact with her. In this regard, “geographical misprisions,” as Stephens calls them,<sup>94</sup> are a sign of a universe still in the process of formation. Callimachus conflates areas bearing the same or similar names: Theban and Peloponnesian Asopus, Mycale in Asia and Mycalessos in Boeotia.<sup>95</sup> Even the boundaries between Egypt and Delos are undermined by the connection between the river Inopos and the Nile (206–208). Seeing the swelling of Inopos as a Delian version of the inundation of the Nile problematizes the validity of distinctions such as Greek and Egyptian. The universal instability that βουγενής communicates in the *Victoria Berenices* similarly contextualizes and motivates the connection between Danaus and Apis.

Cosmic movements and geographical uncertainty stop with the establishment of Delos as a religious center with a secure footing in the Aegean. The primordial wandering of Leto and Delos is reflected in the circular arrangement of the Cyclades around Delos and re-enacted, first, by the *theoriae* of the Hyperboreans, who follow part of Delos’ original route to and from Euboea (288–290, cf. 45–46), and second by the choruses performed during the festivals held there in honor of Apollo (296–299). Dancing becomes the transcendent metaphor of universal stability linking together various cosmic planes. The Cyclades dance around Delos (300–301), swans fly in a circle

<sup>93</sup> Cf. J. Nishimura-Jensen, “Unstable Geographies: the Moving Landscape in Apollonius’ *Argonautica* and Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos*,” *TAPA* 130 (2000) 287–317.

<sup>94</sup> Stephens, *Callimachus, The Hymns* 189 on *Hymn.Del.* 50.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Stephens, *Callimachus, The Hymns* 193 on *Hymn.Del.* 78, 189 on 50; see also *Seeing Double* 84, 92–95.

around the island at Apollo's birth (250–252), mortals dance on Delos around the altar established by Theseus (311–315). Even the dragoness Pytho wreathes Parnassus nine times (92–93). It is not accidental, therefore, that the adjective that Callimachus uses to describe the formation of the Cyclades has impeccable Empedoclean credentials.<sup>96</sup> The application of περιηγής to the Cyclades (198) before they surround Delos casts the insular group in the role of a cosmic formation unsettled by the arrival of Delos. Empedocles uses περιηγής twice to describe the stillness (μονίη) that surrounds the mythic Sphairos during the period of the absolute dominion of love before cosmic movement begins under the influence of strife.<sup>97</sup> Delos performs in this context a role analogous to that of νέϊκος. It unsettles the circular arrangement of the islands, causing geographical uncertainty until a new equilibrium is achieved with Delos in their center. Callimachus plays with both meanings of the word: the Cyclades form a circle before they surround Delos (cf. *Hymn* 2.59); they become circumambient, like μονίη in Empedocles, when they encircle Delos after her position in the Aegean has been fixed. The Empedoclean adjective underpins the representation of Delos as point of attraction for every seafarer crossing the Aegean (316–324). As in the *Victoria Berenices*, Empedoclean cyclical movements link present time with past and bring locations like Delos and Alexandria to the foreground as the center of the cosmogonic discourse used.<sup>98</sup>

Callimachus' *Hymn to Zeus* thematizes a similarly haphazard dislocation from Arcadia to Alexandria via Crete.<sup>99</sup> The opening section of the hymn presents the *aporia* of the poet regarding the location of Zeus' birth (4–11). This skeptic stance translates into the conflation of Arcadia with Crete via Thenae, a name

<sup>96</sup> Cf. A. Traglia, *Studi sulla lingua di Empedocle* (Bari 1952) 126; W. H. Mineur, *Callimachus, Hymn to Delos* (Leiden 1984) 183.

<sup>97</sup> B 27.4, 28.2: Σφαῖρος κυκλοτερῆς μονίη περιηγεί γαίωv, "circular Sphairos rejoicing in the solitude surrounding him."

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Stephens, *Seeing Double* 114–121.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Selden, *ClAnt* 17 (1998) 320–321.

common to both places (42–43).<sup>100</sup> Literary instability reflects geographical unsteadiness. As in the *Hymn to Delos*, this volatile universe is seen as prefatory to the finalization of Zeus' reign. The allusion to Zeus' defeat of the Giants (3) and the division of Olympus among the three sons of Cronus (58–64) communicate the foundation of Zeus' rule. The earthly analogue that is Alexandria follows the description of how Zeus ascended to the kingship of the gods. The mirroring effect produced by this analogy implies that universal order is reflected in the stability of Alexandria, putting Philadelphus' capital in the limelight. Inasmuch as Ptolemy is an earthly surrogate of Zeus (85–90), Alexandria completes the analogy by replacing Crete, where Zeus' umbilical cord is buried, as the center of the Ptolemaic world.

The various parallels between the proem of the *Victoria Berenices* and the hymns *To Zeus* and *To Delos* suggest that the Empedoclean connotations of βουγενής not only communicate the antiquity of Danaus but also put in perspective the progressive stabilization of the universe from the original chaos of theriomorphic beings to Ptolemaic rule. Callimachus thus invests the foundation discourse of these lines with intimations of a cosmogony narrative. The cosmic role performed by Alexandria and the Ptolemies accords well with Egyptian perception of the role of the king as guarantor of order and sheds light on the ideological aspect of Berenice's victory as an expression of royal charisma.

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<sup>100</sup> Cf. Stephens, *Seeing Double* 103–104.