FROM PITTACUS TO BYZANTIUM: THE HISTORY
OF A CALLIMACHEAN EPIGRAM

Callimachus, *ep.* 1 Pfeiffer (= LIV Gow-Page = *AP* 7.89) relates an anecdote about Pittacus: when consulted by a stranger from Atarneus who was wondering whether to marry a woman of his own social class or one of a higher status, he suggests the question is answered by the cries of the children playing with tops, τὴν κατὰ cαυτὸν ἔλα. The chequered history of the transmission and interpretation of the poem is beset by a number of unfavourable or patronizing judgements which, I hope to show, have their origin in a series of misunderstandings. The poem seems to lack the sharp point characteristic of epigrams, and indeed Gow-Page go so far as to pronounce that it 'has no claim to be called an epigram at all'.[1] We now have a number of valuable parallels for the unusual length of the piece,[2] but grave doubts continue to be expressed about the Callimachean authorship of the poem. While Diogenes Laertius (henceforth referred to as 'D.L.'), who quotes the poem in his life of Pittacus (1.79ff.), explicitly attributes it to Καλλίμαχοc ἐν τοῖc 'Επιγράμμαcιν, in P and Pl there is no ascription at all: there our epigram has been mistakenly consigned to the 'Επιτύμβια simply because *AP* 7.81 (= Antipater XXXIV Gow-Page), on the Seven Sages, is followed by some fifty epigrams on them and other philosophers, all (save three) derived from D.L. In the Palatine ms. there survive traces of the questions raised by this poem, though—surprisingly—both Pfeiffer and Gow-Page fail to report them. The hand which Stadtmüller called L,[3] now generally accepted as identical with J (convincingly identified by Cameron as that of Constantine the Rhodian),[4] adds the note τοῦτο Διογένηc ὁ Λαερτίου λέγει ἐν τοῖc τῶν φιλοcόφων βίοιc ὡc ἴδιον. This puzzling and contradictory assertion may be explained in three different ways: (i) by accepting Schneider's improbable suggestion[5] that after ὡc the words Καλλιμάχου, οὐχ ὡc have dropped out by reason of homoeoteleuton; (ii) by regarding the note as a lapse of memory, or an invention; or (iii) by positing that in a copy of D.L., not known to us, used by J or his exemplar, the introductory formula τὸν δ' οὖν coφὸν (sc. Pittacum) λέγεταί ποτε νεανίcκῳ cυμβουλευομένῳ περὶ γάμου ταῦτα εἰπεῖν, ἅ φηcι Καλλίμαχοc ἐν τοῖc ἐπιγράμμαcι had lost its last clause, and the epigram came immediately after εἰπεῖν.

The suspicion that the poem might have been written by D.L. himself was also voiced by the *corrector* C, who adds 'recentiore charactere et nigriore atramento' the words πλὴν πάντα Διογένουc εἰcὶ τοῦ τῶν φιλοcόφων βίουc ἀναγραψαμένου. This

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[1] A. S. F. Gow–D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* (Cambridge, 1965), ii.205; their verdict is rightly contested by G. Luck, 'Witz und Sentiment im griechischen Epigramm', in *Entretiens Hardt* XIV, *L'Épigramme grecque* (Geneva, 1967), 392, who however goes no further than recognize in the poem 'eine gute Geschichte mit einer Pointe so einfach wie möglich zu erzählen und dabei das Wunder zu wirken, dass sie sich in reine Dichtung verwandelt'. Cf. *id.*, *GGA* (1967), 30–1. The same simplistic view is taken by L. Coco, *Callimaco: Epigrammi* (Manduria, Bari, Rome, 1988), 66.

[2] Alan Cameron, *The Greek Anthology from Meleager to Planudes* (Oxford, 1993), 13 cites an unpublished Vienna papyrus containing the opening lines of two epigrams of twenty lines, one of twenty-one, one of forty, and even one of fifty-two. If the '*Seal*' of Posidippus was an epigram, it contained at least twenty-eight lines: cf. *SH* 705.

[3] The accuracy of Stadtmüller's apparatus to *AP* 7.89 (Leipzig, 1899, 2.1, pp. 62–3) can be confirmed by checking it against the facsimile of C. Preisendanz (Leiden, 1911).

[4] Op. cit. [n. 2], 298–328.   [5] O. Schneider, *Callimachea* i (Leipzig, 1870), 404.

note, even more than the earlier one of J, seems to be of the same order as the speculative ascription proposed by J in the upper margin of p. 221, at line 10: Ἀλκαῖος ἐποίησεν εἰς Πιττακὸν τὸν Μυτιληναῖον. Here Pittacus' city of origin has prompted Constantine the Rhodian's outright invention of Alcaeus' authorship (as so often, the epigrammatist Alcaeus has been confused with his namesake the lyric poet of Mytilene, who was known to have been a contemporary of Pittacus);[6] Constantine Cephalas seems to have had a special interest in Alcaeus the epigrammatist: cf. the note of J at *AP* 7.429.5 (= Alcaeus XVI Gow-Page) τοῦτο τὸ ἐπίγραμμα ὁ Κεφαλᾶς προεβάλετο ἐν τῇ Cχολῇ τῆς νέας ἐκκλησίας ἐπὶ τοῦ μακαρίου Γρηγορίου τοῦ μαγίστορος.[7]

Until now J's note at the level of line 13 has either been totally ignored or regarded as misguided; it reads ὅτι Πιττακὸς εὐμήχανος ἦν στρατιώτης· διὸ καὶ πρός τινα Ἀθηναῖον ἐμονομάχησεν. No-one has seen that this echoes a supposedly historical detail from the life of Pittacus: cf. *Suda* Π 1659 (iv p. 137.3ff. Adler) Φρύνωνα στρατηγὸν Ἀθηναίων πολεμοῦντα ὑπὲρ τοῦ Cιγείου μονομαχῶν ἀπέκτανε, δικτύῳ περιβαλὼν αὐτόν, an anecdote derived from D.L. 1.74. The full significance of the note emerges when it is recognized as an explanation of line 7, where the gloss cleverly elucidates the pointed reference of ὁ δὲ σκίπωνα, γεροντικὸν ὅπλον, ἀείρας, which all modern commentators have missed. Pittacus, who in his youth had been a doughty fighter, and had fought a famous duel with the Athenian Phrynon, in advanced old age had to content himself with a pathetic 'weapon', his stick, which Callimachus refers to in ironically grandiloquent diction.[8] If J, copying this note, inserted it at the wrong place, and indeed on the wrong page (line 7, where it belongs, is on page 220, whereas line 13 is on p. 221), this shows that he was simply transcribing something he found in his copy-text, probably in Cephalas' exemplar.

All these doubts which troubled Byzantine scholars are of course dispelled if we accept the specific attribution by D.L., but they continue to exercise a baleful influence on the understanding and appreciation of the epigram, as is clearly shown by the verdict of Gow-Page: 'it must be said that if the ascription were absent nobody would suppose an anecdote so flat and straightforward to be Callimachus'.' Such an outright condemnation is based on an implausible assumption about the poem as a whole, namely that Callimachus introduces the Pittacus story merely to illustrate the relevance of a proverbial saying to his addressee Dion, who, it is presumed, is facing a similar dilemma to that which the unnamed ξεῖνος Ἀταρνείτης consulted his friend Pittacus about.[9] But if in fact Dion too was about to marry, and was prevaricating

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[6] The evidence is collected by Gow-Page, *HE* ii.6–7. The note by the *corrector* C seems in keeping with his observation on *AP* 7.1: οὗτος ὁ Ἀλκαῖος οὐκ ἦν ὁ Μυτιληναῖος ὃς ἦν ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις Πιττακοῦ.

[7] On this interesting episode of παιδεία in the first Byzantine Renaissance (the 'New Church' was built for the palace in 880, and the school attached to it dates at the latest from the reign of Leo VI, 886–912) see Cameron [n. 2], 110–11, who goes on to suggest 'that Cephalas was Gregory's junior'.

[8] Far from being the *nugae* which Jacobs (1817², iii p. 238) scornfully rejected. The neat implication is that Callimachus was perfectly well aware of the military exploit of Pittacus' youth; Pittacus, and the Seven Sages in general attracted Callimachus' attention: see the *diegesis* to *Iamb* 1, p. 165 Pf., and esp. p. 163.15. For another spirited use of the σκίπων cf. *fr.* 191.69. With his usual finesse B. Snell seems to have divined that the play on words implicit in τὴν κατὰ cαυτὸν ἔλα was part of Callimachus' stock-in-trade: see *Leben und Meinungen der Sieben Weisen* (Munich, 1938), 121.

[9] Thus Gow-Page, *HE* ii.206, who add the qualification 'though not in the same connexion as to the children or even to Pittacus' friend' to the pedestrian interpretation of F. Bum, *Die Epigramme des Kallimachos* (Diss. Vienna, 1940), 18, E. Howald-E. Staiger, *Kallimachos: Dichtungen* (Zurich, 1955), 172, T. B. L. Webster, *Hellenistic Poetry and Art* (London, 1964), 60;

between two prospective brides, the whole epigram would be bound to end, quite predictably, in a resounding flop. D.L. seems to have realized this, and sought to salvage what he presumed to be the point of the epigram by dredging up the tittle-tattle explanation that Pittacus' advice was based on his own experience, because his high-born wife ϲφόδρα κατεϲοβαρεύετο αὐτοῦ (1.81). A less naive dodge was contrived by whoever replaced the original Δίων in the last line with ϲύ γ' ἰών; this is the reading of P and Pl, and gives the whole poem a general application. It met with the approval of Coppola, who argued that τὴν implies ὁδόν, and ἐλαύνειν involves a programmatic reference to the *Prologue to the Telchines* (fr. 1.26ff. Pf.) ἑτέρων ἴχνια μὴ καθ' ὁμά / δίφρον ἐλ]ᾶν μηδ' οἷμον ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθουϲ / ἀτρίπτο]υϲ, εἰ καὶ ϲτεινοτέρην ἐλάϲειϲ. Though he was right to adduce this passage, one must reply with McKay,[10] 'But the inadequacy of ϲύ γε to express the *sympathetic* reader is then extremely glaring. If ϲύ γε is addressed to every reader, the poem would reach those who would need to be told τὴν κατ' ἐμαυτὸν ἔλα.' Yet McKay's own solution, that the children mean 'keep to your own track' (he compares Schol. Aesch. *PV* 887 [p. 214.9–10 Herington] ἠκροάϲατο τῶν παίδων λεγόντων πρὸϲ τὴν οἰκείαν ϲτρόμβαν), and that Dion is being 'advised to stick to philosophy and not meddle in literary matters', rests on hazardous *a priori* assumptions which are incapable of proof, and takes no account of the way in which the anecdote confers on children's play the paradigmatic significance of an oracular response. Justice was done to this question by the Polish scholar Sinko,[11] who interprets the epigram as a kind of poetic epistle to Dion, who is planning to marry, and sees its point in the modification of the familiar Delphic-sounding saying τὴν κατὰ ϲαυτὸν ἄγε to ἔλα. Callimachus, he claims, made this change 'ut illud cum more Aegyptio ab Apide consilium petendi coniungeret; qua in re Apidis partes secundum antiquam memoriam Pittaco tribuit, dictum autem ipsum αἰτίᾳ exposita illustravit, qua verbo ἐλᾶν sensus pristinus redderetur' (p. 12).

In any case it seems opportune to take as our starting point the central importance of the game the children are playing: we need to know more about the game itself and its symbolic meaning. While it is true that the top is certainly apposite in the context of love (cf. the ἴυγξ of Pindar, *Pyth.* 4.21–4, Theocr. *Id.* 2.17), Callimachus' motive

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cf. K. J. McKay, 'Callimachea', *SO* 45 (1970), 41–3. G. Capovilla, *Callimaco* (Rome, 1967), ii.513–14 (where he oddly speaks of 'bambini giocanti con le *palline*') actually maintains that Δίων in the last line is to be identified with the ξεῖνοϲ 'Αταρνείτηϲ of line 1; such is the force of the assumption that Dion must be tormented by the same problem as the unnamed man from Atarneus.

[10] Op. cit. (n. 9) 42. To his credit, McKay has spotted the *double entendre* of the second ἔλα, comparable with ὑπ' ἄροτρον in *ep.* 45.3. For ἐλαύνω = βινέω cf. Aristoph. *Eccl.* 39 τὴν νύχθ' ὅλην ἤλαυνέ μ' ἐν ϲτρώμαϲιν; 109; 1082 ποτέραϲ προτέραϲ οὖν κατελάϲαϲ ἀπαλλαγῶ; *Peace* 711 τῆϲ 'Οπώραϲ κατελάϲαϲ, Plat. Com. fr. 3.4 K-A ἣ μὲν ἐλαυνομένη λαθρίοιϲ ἐρετμοῖϲ, ὁ δ' ἐλαύνων; for the nautical origin of the metaphor see J. Taillardat, *Les Images d'Aristophane* (Paris, 1965), 101 §180; *contra* J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse* (New York and Oxford, 1991), 162 §§260–1. There is of course no reason to think, with Sinko (v. next note), that Callimachus was suggesting by means of this *double entendre* that Dion was an adulterer, hankering after other men's wives.

[11] T. Sinko, 'Ad Callimachi Epigramma I (de uxore eligenda)', *Eos* 20 (1914), 5–12, who compares Apul. *Apol.* 42, 43 (see A. Abt, 'Die Apologie des Apuleius von Madaura und die antike Zauberei', *RVV* 4.2 (1908), 158–85), LXX *Ps.* 8.3 ἐκ ϲτόματοϲ νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίϲω αἶνον (cf. Mt. 21.15), Aristid. *Serm. s.* 4.572, Cic. *de Div.* 1.46 (with Pease 287), Plut. *de Is. et Os.* 14 (with Gwyn Griffiths 315), Dio Chrys. *or.* 32.13, Pliny *NH* 8.185, Ael. *NA* 11.10, Xen. Eph. 5.4, etc. Cf. also *Corp. Herm.* 10.15 (= i p. 120 Nock-Festugière) for the direct link between children and the World Soul. For the priestly functions of children, cf. Call. fr. 194.28–31 Pf., Clem. Al. *Strom.* 5.8.48.4–5, Iambl. *Vit. Pyth.* 10.52.

in choosing this game may also have been his wish, as so often, to make a learned allusion to Homeric scholarship. Among all the various references to children's games in Homer (cf. especially the striking similes *Il.* 11.558–62, 15.361–6) one stands out, the comparison of Hector, gravely wounded by his enemy, to a top in *Il.* 14.413 ϲτρόμβον δ' ὡϲ ἔϲϲευε βαλών, περὶ δ' ἔδραμε πάντῃ. This striking simile gave rise to a great variety of would-be explanations; scholia bT (iii p. 663–4.31–6 Erbse) offer a sample: τινὲϲ τὸν ἄτρακτον ἀπὸ τοῦ περιϲτρέφεϲθαι, οἱ δὲ τὸν βέμβικα, οἱ δὲ τὸν ῥόμβον, οἱ δὲ ϲτρογγύλον λίθον. ὑπεροχὴ δὲ ῥώμηϲ ἄνδρα τηλικοῦτον ἔνοπλον οὕτω δεδινῆϲθαι, τινὲϲ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ λίθου ἀκούουϲι· πῶϲ γὰρ ἂν ὑπὸ χερμαδίου οὕτω περιεϲτράφη; πῶϲ "ἐπ' αὐτῷ δ' ἀϲπὶϲ ἐάφθη" (Ξ 419); πῶϲ δὲ δρυΐ εἰκάζεται (Ξ 414–5), ἢ πεϲοῦϲα αὐτοῦ μένει; This is a complex *crux interpretationis*, on which see now Janko's commentary, p. 214. Callimachus' view of the solution to this Homeric problem is shown by the wording of his epigram, which has no fewer than three verbal elements in common with the scholion D ad loc. (ii p. 55 Dindorf), ὡϲ ῥόμβον περιφερῆ· λέγει δὲ τὸν καλούμενον βέμβικα. δίκην οὖν ϲτρόμβου ἐποίηϲεν αὐτὸν ϲτρέφεϲθαι, ϲφοδρῶϲ πλήξαϲ.[12]

But what are the *Realien* of the game Callimachus alludes to? The interpretation of the mysterious cry shouted by the children is inextricably bound up with this question. If τὴν = βέμβικα, it would mean 'whip your own top'; if on the other hand τὴν = ὁδόν (a frequent ellipsis), it must be understood as 'direct it in your track' or 'keep to your own track'. The ambiguity is heightened by the fact that we do not know whether the children are addressing their playmates, as is usually supposed, or, alternatively, they are apostrophizing the top—'go your own way'. The latter is the interpretation prompted by the related paraphrase in the scholion to Aesch. *PV* 887–93: ἠκροάϲατο τῶν παίδων λεγόντων πρὸϲ τὴν οἰκείαν ϲτρόμβαν (McKay also cites Alciphron 1.12.2 ἔχε ἀτρέμα καὶ ⟨τὴν⟩ κατὰ ϲεαυτὴν ῥάπιζε, τὸ κακὸν ἐξωθοῦϲα τῆϲ διανοίαϲ) and the original references to Pittacus' interlocutor, whom a literal application of the children's 'oracle' transforms into a top whipped by Τύχη.

Given our ignorance of the game, which we cannot satisfactorily reconstruct either from literary sources or from pictorial representations,[13] one may postulate only two ways in which it could have worked: either each child competed against all the others, and the winner was the one who whipped his own top so as to keep it spinning for the longest time, or the children formed two teams, each of which tried to keep their own top, or tops, going as long as possible. Rather than taking the cry as a piece of advice shouted to team-mates 'de faire marcher celle qui est le plus près d'eux' (Desrousseaux) or as a warning to the other side who had whipped their opponents' top (Beckby),[14] I feel we should interpret the phrase as a kind of magical or ritual

[12] H. Erbse, 'Homerscholien und Hellenistische Glossare bei Apollonios Rhodios', *Hermes* 81 (1953), 163–96, remains fundamental for the influence of the D scholia on the Alexandrians' *imitatio Homerica*.

[13] The classic treatment is L. Grasberger, *Erziehung und Unterricht im klassischen Altertum* (Würzburg, 1864), i.77; see also the evidence collected by Daremberg-Saglio s.v. *turbo* (v.541–2), and add the red-figure lekythos reproduced in B. Schröder, *Der Sport im Altertum* (Berlin, 1927), 83 and Taf. 37a, C. Watzinger, *Vasen in Tübingen* 78, Taf. 25, and the vase of Hegesibulus in *RE* 7 col. 2608.29. It is difficult to attribute a non-religious significance to the statue at Olympia of a boy with a top, opposite the statue of a victor, Paus. 6.1.7. For the influence of this epigram on Virgil, *Aen.* 7.378ff. see now A. Salvatore, 'La similitudine della trottola in Callimaco e Virgilio', *Studi G. Monaco* ii (Palermo, 1991), 395–400.

[14] See Desrousseaux on *AP* 7.89 (p. 94), Beckby p. 574. Even if we do not accept Sinko's hypothesis, that the original phrase was τὴν κατὰ ϲαυτὸν ἄγε, which has been adapted to give a message about marriage (cf. Aesch. *PV* 887–93 ἢ ϲοφόϲ, ἢ ϲοφόϲ ἦν ὃϲ/ πρῶτοϲ ἐν γνώμᾳ τόδ' ἐβάϲταϲε καὶ γλώϲ-/ϲᾳ διεμυθολόγηϲεν,/ ὡϲ τὸ κηδεῦϲαι καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀριϲτεύει μακρῷ, / καὶ

refrain, a standard ingredient in children's play, addressed to the top, to make it follow its proper course and to win. Only with this interpretation does the formula seem appropriate, in a transferred sense, to the marital concerns of the ξεῖνος 'Αταρνείτης. That this and this only is the rightful interpretation seems to be confirmed by a number of arguments:

(i) The proverb, according to the paroemiographer Macarius (ii 217 Leutsch-Schneidewin), is applied ἐπὶ τὸν μείζονα ἢ κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν δύναμιν αἱρουμένων πράγματα.[15]

(ii) The import of the expression tallies with a wise observation which may well go back to Pittacus himself;[16] it is to be seen in Hdt. 1.84, where Gyges says to Candaules πάλαι δὲ τὰ καλὰ ἀνθρώποισι ἐξεύρηται ἐκ τῶν μανθάνειν δεῖ· ἐν τοῖσι ἓν τόδε ἐστί, σκοπέειν τὰ ἑωυτοῦ; cf. Pind. P. 2.33–6 (Ixion addresses Hera) χρὴ δὲ κατ' αὐτὸν παντὸς ὁρᾶν μέτρον· εὐναὶ δὲ παράτροποι ἐς κακότητα ἀθρόαν ἔβαλον; Plato, Phaedr. 232d τὸ σεαυτοῦ σκοπεῖν, Tim. 72a, Gorg. 526c, Pol. 433a–b, Critias 88 DK fr.41a.

(iii) There is a clear reference to the Sybaritic story told by Philocleon to the prosecutor in Aristoph. Wasps 1427–32 (cited by McKay 48):

> ἀνὴρ Συβαρίτης ἐξέπεσεν ἐξ ἅρματος,
> καί πως κατεάγη τῆς κεφαλῆς μέγα σφόδρα·
> ἐτύγχανεν γὰρ οὐ τρίβων ὢν ἱππικῆς.
> κἄπειτ' ἐπιστὰς εἶπ' ἀνὴρ αὐτῷ φίλος·
> 'ἔρδοι τις ἣν ἕκαστος εἰδείη τέχνην.'
> οὕτω δὲ καὶ σὺ παράτρεχ' εἰς τὰ Πιττάλου.

There the advice 'run along to the doctor's' means in effect 'it's no good complaining about your misfortune when you've brought it on yourself'. The saying ἣν ἔλαχες Σπάρτην κόσμει (Ps.-Diog. 8.46), which Prittwitz-Gaffron adduces,[17] has a very similar ring; and it is along these lines that we should interpret the choliamb of Cercidas of Megalopolis (fr. 58 Livrea)[18]

> ἦν καλλιπύγων ζεῦγος ἐν Συρακούσαις.

μήτε τῶν πλούτῳ διαθρυπτομένων / μήτε τῶν γέννᾳ μεγαλυνομένων / ὄντα χερνήταν ἐραστεῦσαι γάμων), it seems clear that Callimachus is alluding to a proverbial saying which counselled against overstepping the limits laid down for humankind, in accordance with the teaching of Delphi: see G. Zanetto, P. Ferrari, Callimaco: Epigrammi (Milan, 1992), 93–4. Cf. also Phot. Lex. 2. p 212 Naber, τὴν κατὰ σαυτὸν ἔλα· τοῦτο οἱ μὲν Πυθικὸν εἶναι φασὶν ἀπόφθεγμα, οἱ δὲ Σόλωνος (test. 214, Martina, q.v., p. 112–13), ἔνιοι δὲ αὐτὸ Χείλωνα εἰπεῖν συμβουλευομένῳ τινί, εἰ πλούσιον ἔλοιτο γάμον ~ Cleobulus of Lindos, cited by Demetrius of Phalerum in his Τῶν ἑπτὰ σοφῶν ἀποφθέγματα (D.L. 1.92 = p. 96.19 Snell) γαμεῖν ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων· ἐὰν γὰρ ἐκ τῶν κρειττόνων λάβῃς, φησί, δεσπότας κτήσῃ τοὺς συγγενέας, Plut. de lib. educ. 13f.

[15] See Leutsch-Schneidewin on Apostol. 16.5 (ii 674–5), Diogen. 8.4.6 (i 314).

[16] For the moral outlook exemplified by σωφροσύνη ἐστὶν τὸ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν, see A. E. Raubitschek, 'Ein neues Pittakeion', WS 71 (1958), 170–1.

[17] E. von Prittwitz-Gaffron, Das Sprichwort im griechischen Epigramm, (Giessen, 1912), 23–4 neatly renders this as 'lebe nicht über deine Verhältnisse', 'im Stil des βουλευτικόν'.

[18] Cercidas must have related, in keeping with the Cynic principle of παραχαράττειν τὸ νόμισμα, the story of the two successful καλλίπυγοι from Syracuse who were far from content with their own station in life, cf. Athen. 12.554c–e. The connection with the injunction τὴν κατὰ σαυτὸν ἔλα was explored by Gerhard, Phoinix von Colophon (Leipzig, Berlin, 1909), with his usual acumen; he mentions the treatment of the same theme by one 'Αρχέλαος ἐν τοῖς 'Ιάμβοις (= SH 131, p. 46), on whom see Fraser, Ptol. Alex. i 778–9, ii 1086–9. Perhaps one might suggest that here Callimachus is investing Pittacus with Cynic features; though again Pittacus also recalls Heraclitus, who preferred playing with children in the temple of Artemis to politicking with his fellow citizens. I suspect this provocative stance on Heraclitus' part could lead us to the correct understanding of the hitherto unexplained of 22 DK 52 (= fr. 93 Marcovich): αἰὼν

This is a typically Cynic reversal of the traditional maxim which recommended the choice of a marriage partner from one's own socio-economic class.

(iv) Quasi-magical refrains accompany other games in which some omen about the future is sought: cf. ἔξεχε φίλ' ἤλιε (*carm. pop.* 876b Page),[19] where, if the invocation of the sun was followed by its appearance, this constituted a good omen; and cf. above all the χελιχελώνη game recorded in Pollux 9.94.118 Bethe: ἡ δὲ χελιχελώνη παρθένων ἐστὶν ἡ παιδιά, παρόμοιόν τι ἔχουσα τῇ χύτρᾳ. ἡ μὲν γὰρ κάθηται, καὶ καλεῖται χελώνη, αἱ δὲ περιτρέχουσι ἀνερωτῶσαι·

> χελιχελώνη, τί ποίεις ἐν τῷ μέσῳ;
> ἡ δὲ ἀποκρίνεται·
> > ἔρια μαρύομαι καὶ κρόκην Μιλησίαν.
> εἶτ' ἐκεῖναι πάλιν ἐκβοῶσιν·
> > ὁ δ' ἔκγονός σου τί ποίων ἀπώλετο;
> ἡ δέ φησι·
> > λευκᾶν ἀφ' ἵππων εἰς θάλασσαν ἅλατο.

(= *carm. pop.* 30, fr. 876c Page). Despite the disagreements of interpreters on almost every detail,[20] it would be difficult to question the initiatory nature of the χελώνη, which symbolizes οἰκουρία, and within the game brings about the rite of passage from girlhood to full motherhood; the 'leap of Leucas' denotes, with its funerary imagery, the eternal renewal of the alternation of life and death. The girl caught by the χελώνη as she runs around her was surely the next one fated to undergo the transition from girlish innocence to the travails of motherhood, as a series of indications in the *Distaff* of Erinna seems to confirm.[21]

However, all this wealth of fascinating associations revealed in Callimachus' epigram[22] still does not serve to explain the final point, the profoundly significant message which the playing children unwittingly convey. The only way we can avoid foisting on Callimachus a banal platitude which is quite unworthy of him is

παῖς ἐστι παίζων, πεσσεύων· παιδὸς ἡ βασιληίη. For the part played by children in Heraclitus, see R. Kassel, *Quomodo quibus locis apud veteres scriptores Graecos infantes atque parvuli pueri inducantur describantur commemorentur* (Würzburg, 1954), 33; H. Herter, 'Das Kind im Zeitalter des Hellenismus', *BJ* 132 (1927), 256ff., 'Das Leben ein Kinderspiel', *BJ* 161 (1967), 73–84 (= *Kleine Schriften* 584–97), 'Das unschuldige Kind', *JAC* 4 (1961), 146–62 (= *K. Schr.* 598–619).)

[19] Cf. Athen. 14.619b ἡ δὲ εἰς Ἀπόλλωνα ᾠδὴ φιληλιάς, ὡς Τελέσιλλα παρίστησι (fr. 718 Page). That a top was kept in English parishes down to the time of Shakespeare (*Twelfth Night* 1.3.39–40 'turn o' th' toe like a parish-top') may lend force to the possibility that 'originally it was a sacred object analogous to the wheels which were used in ceremonies to represent the chariot of the Sun' (*Less. univ. Ital.* 23, p. 455); see the texts collected by Kern on *Orph.* fr. 43, p. 110–11. If this is so, the oracular function of the top may not be Callimachus' fanciful invention after all.

[20] I hope to treat this subject more fully elsewhere; cf. for the present R. Drew Griffith, G. D'Ambrogio Griffith, 'Il gioco della "chelichelone"', *Maia* 43 (1991), 83–7, who are unfortunately unaware of E. Livrea, *Studi cercidei* (Bonn, 1986), 90–3, on the marriage symbolism of the tortoise. Here I wish simply to stress that in each of the four iambic trimeters there is a strong flavour of the popular refrain, together with riddling questions and the secret lore of a mystical wisdom which finds its expression through the purity of children and the changeless and unselfconscious ritual of the game. The same factors seem to be present in the τὴν κατὰ σαυτὸν ἔλα of Callimachus.

[21] See the reference to the χέλυννα in *SH* 401.16, and cf. S. Pomeroy, 'Supplementary Notes on Erinna', *ZPE* 32 (1978), 17–22.

[22] As well as Pittacus' assigning of the oracular response to the children (see n. 18 above) one might mention at least: (i) κληδών (line 14) used as a technical term for the oracular response, cf. Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 14.356e κληδόσι παιζόντων ἐν ἱεροῖς. (ii) the τρίοδος of line 10: this is no gratuitous detail, but indicates *the* site *par excellence* for significant encounters, see Livrea on Nonnus, *Par.* 18.98, pp. 157–8.

to include this text among the other well-known passages where he declares his wish to defend his own literary principles.[23] Perhaps Dion was a fellow-poet (rather than a philosopher hankering after poetry, as McKay would have it), wondering whether to compose according to the precepts of Callimachean poetics, which he personally found to his liking, and Callimachus accordingly exhorts him—adapting the verse associated with familiar advice on marriage—to avoid μέγα ψοφέουϲαν ἀοιδήν and to be true to his own natural inclination towards λεπτότηϲ, as in the parallel cases of his friends Heraclitus (*ep.* 2 Pf.) and Theaetetus (*ep.* 7 Pf.), not to mention Aratus (*ep.* 27 Pf.). This train of thought, similar to those of Theoc. *Id.* 7.40–48, 22.218ff., is formulated in terms which closely recall the *Prologue to the Telchines* (fr. 1 Pf.): cf. δοιόϲ 3 ~ 1.11, ϲυνθέμενοϲ 14 ~ 1.29 τῷ πιθόμη]ν of the mock-oracular response of Apollo; ὀλίγην 15 ~ 1.9 [ὀλ]ιγόϲτιχοϲ; 10 παῖδεϲ ~ 1.6 παῖϲ ἅτε, 37 παῖδαϲ; ἔλα 12, 16 ~ 1.26–7 δίφρον ἐλ]ᾶν, ... ἐλάϲειϲ. Moreover, the obscure reference in the *Prologue* to the asses of Arcadia[24] gains a coherent sense in the light of the literary-critical interpretation of τὴν κατὰ ϲαυτὸν ἔλα I have proposed: just as the asses of Arcadia, traditionally regarded as the best kind, cannot be forced to accept strange food because they prefer to flee to their poverty-stricken homeland, in the same way, Callimachus asserts, he cannot desert his own nature and will not chase after popular favour by accepting literary principles which are alien to his own outlook; his ideal is symbolized by the pure water, which is craved also by the Arcadian asses. This conception is mirrored exactly in a fragment of *P. Ant.* 113 (= *SH* 239.6), which A. Harder assigns to the *Aitia* epilogue,[25] but without evoking the programmatic implications of τὴν κατὰ ϲαυτὸν ἔλα:

> ὄφρα μ]ὲν οὖν ἔτι μοι τι δόμοιϲ θο[ίνημα παρῆεν,
>   τόφρα δ' ἐ]μοῖϲ αἰδὼϲ ἵζεν ἐπὶ βλεφ[άφοιϲ,
> οὐδ' ἅδε]ιν ἐθέλεϲκον ἃ μὴ μάθον εν[.].[

Seen from this perspective, Callimachus *ep.* 1, far from being a humdrum piece of narrative, has every right to be included among the most important texts in which Callimachus proclaims his conscious awareness of the originality of his art. From now on, we might speak of the poetics of τὴν κατὰ ϲαυτὸν ἔλα, to indicate the same complex of ideas and images which are expressed so magisterially in the *Prologue* to the *Aitia* and elsewhere. We may pass over as unimportant the question of the identity of the mysterious Δίων, to whom Callimachus addresses this lofty poetic manifesto; indeed, the variant ϲύ γ' ἰών, if it were acceptable, would actually allow us to invest the poem with all the weighty significance of an address by the poet to himself.

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[23] This was intuitively perceived by G. Serrao, *Problemi di poesia alessandrina. I: Studi su Teocrito* (Rome, 1971), 53–5; he acutely observed the connection between τὴν κατὰ ϲαυτὸν ἔλα and Theoc. *Id.* 22.222–3 οἵ' αὐταὶ παρέχουϲι καὶ ὡϲ ἐμὸϲ οἶκοϲ ὑπάρχει/ τοῖα φέρω, cf. also *Id.* 7.40–8. To the two possible ellipses (βέμβικα or νύμφην) Callimachus elegantly and allusively adds a third, ὁδόν, as Coppola had already postulated (cited in n. 10 above; Serrao misses this), referring to the *Prologue to the Telchines*. At the close of our epigram ὁδόϲ must be taken as 'style, literary-critical stance'. On the road metaphor in Callimachus, see the classic excursus by W. Wimmel, *Kallimachos in Rom* (Wiesbaden, 1960), 103ff., and add now A. Harder, 'Untrodden Paths: where do they lead?', *HSCP* 93 (1990), 287–304.

[24] This has of course survived only in the *scholia Londiniensia*, correctly interpreted by M. Pohlenz, 'Kallimachos' Aitia', *Hermes* 68 (1933), 322–3; see E. Livrea, 'Callimaco fr. 114 Pf., il Somnium, ed il Prologo degli Aitia', *Hermes* 123 (1995), 47–62 and 'Callimaco e gli asini', *ZPE* forthcoming, for the complex of problems raised by the image of the asses in the *Prologue to the Telchines*.

[25] A. Harder, 'Some Thoughts about Callimachus, *SH* 239 and 253', *ZPE* 67 (1989), 26.