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FRAMING THE FOX: CALLIMACHUS' SECOND *IAMB* AND ITS PREDECESSORS

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Abstract: This article treats the figure of the fox that appears as one of the members of the embassy sent by the animals to Zeus in Callimachus' second *Iamb.* By exploring previous appearances of the fox in the poetic repertoire, I identify a series of Archaic and early Classical works that Callimachus uses by way of 'intertexts', and argue that the Hellenistic author draws on the animal's place within the interconnected iambic and fable traditions that inform his poem. Already visible in these earlier texts, and anticipating Callimachus, is a concern with literary as well as ethical polemics.

῾Ην κεῖνος οὐνιαυτός, ᾧ τό τε πτηνόν
καὶ τοὐν θαλάσσῃ καὶ τὸ τετράπουν αὖτως
ἐφθέγγεθ᾽ ὡς ὁ πηλὸς ὁ Προμήθειος
. . . . . .
τἀπὶ Κρόνου τε καὶ ἔτι τὰ πρὸ τη[
λ..ουσα και κως [.]υ σ[.]νημεναις. [
δίκαιος ὁ [Ζε]ύς, οὐ δίκαι[α] δ᾽ αἰσυμνέ̣ων
τῶν ἑρπετῶν̣ [μ]ὲν ἐξέκοψε τὸ φθέ̣[γμα,
γένος δὲ τ. υτ.[.]. ρον–ὥσπερ οὐ κάρτ[ος
ἡμέων ἐχόντων χἠτέροις ἀπάρξασθαι–
...]ψ ἐς ἀνδρῶν· καὶ κιυ˛νὸς [μ]ὲ[ν] ˛Εὔ˛δημος,
ὄ˛ινο˛υ δὲ Φίλτων, ψιττακοῦ δ̣ε̣[
οἱ δὲ τραγῳδοὶ τῶν θάλασσαν ο̣ἰ̣[κεύντων
ἔχο[υ]σι φωνήν· οἱ δὲ πάντες [ἄνθρωποι
καὶ πουλύμυθοι καὶ λάλοι πε̣φ[ύκασιν
ἐκεῖθεν, ὠνδρόνικε· ταῦτα δ᾽ Α˛ἴσω˛πος
ὁ Σαρδιηνὸς εἶπεν, ὅντιν᾽ οἱ Δελφοί
ᾄδοντα μῦθον οὐ καλῶς ἐδέξαντο.

It was in that time, when the winged and the one in the sea, and likewise the four-footed used to speak as does the Promethean clay….in the time of Kronos and still before [and [saying] how [] Zeus is just, but not justly ruling, he cut off the voice of things that crawl, but the race [] – as though we did not have enough power to make first fruit offerings to others – [] he turned to [the race] of men. And Eudemus has the voice of a dog, and Philton that of an ass, and of the parrot [and the tragedians have the voice of those who live in the sea. And all men are both wordy and chatterers from that time, Andronicus. These things Aesop of Sardis said, whom the Delphians did not receive well as he sang his tale. (Translation modified from Acosta-Hughes (2002) 155.)

Previous discussions of Callimachus' second *Iamb* (fr. 192 Pf.) have chiefly focused on two issues: first, a reconstruction of and possible sources for its fable contents; second, the identity of the named individuals and collective τραγῳδοί introduced towards the *Iamb*'s end and the

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work's consequent place as a piece of literary polemic.[1] Recent readings also demonstrate the protean character of the poetic voice in the fragment, and its close ties to *Iamb* 1 and to other of Callimachus' compositions within and beyond the *Iambi*.[2] My principal concern is with an element that earlier interpretations have treated only in passing: the fox that, in the Diegesis' account, appears in the embassy sent by the animals to Zeus. In the argument presented here, Callimachus' inclusion of the fox is a considered nod to the interconnected iambic and fable traditions informing the *Iambi* and a characteristically dense 'intertextual' move which allows the author to (dis)engage with several of his poetic predecessors who figure in the larger collection. My reading also makes a more general point: while recent analyses have rightly called attention to the literary debates that Callimachus makes integral to his *Iambi*, and have suggested that in so doing he was following a tradition already visible in Archaic *iambos*,[3] questions of poetics and aesthetics, I suggest, are no less central to earlier deployments of fable, which poets also incorporate as vehicles for a critique that can be both ethical and literary.

I. Contesting the Archilochean fox

The poem begins as a fable situated during Cronus' rule, when animals could still speak. As the Diegesis allows us to reconstruct the events described in the missing lines,[4] a swan and a fox go on an embassy to Zeus, the first petitioning for a release from old age for all the animals, the second complaining of the injustice of divine rule. When the text resumes at lines 4–5, the poet would most plausibly be reporting the fox's speech, which may have contrasted the justice of Cronus' reign with its absence under Zeus.[5] In lines 6–10, the poetic 'I' begins by recapitulating, while also emending, the substance of the fox's complaint,[6] and then reveals the outcome of the embassy: Zeus withdrew the animals' capacity for speech, and gave it to men instead. The divine penalty makes retrospective sense of the speaker's alteration of what the fox had said. Where the animal had faulted the god on the grounds of his injustice (so the Diegesis, 'the fox dared to say that Zeus did not rule justly'), the poetic ego's concern is with the decision to give animal voices to men.[7] This opening includes the motifs central to my argument: a fable frame,[8] the fox (paired with the swan), that animal's charge to Zeus on the grounds of injustice and the emphatic place of *dikê* in these several lines: not only would the fox probably have used the expression in its address, but it appears twice in the restatement of its words in line 6. The poem's second portion adds the further element explored here: Callimachus narrates his *ainos* so as to mock a series of named and generic individuals.

This concatenation of elements, I suggest, has a literary antecedent that would have been familiar to a Hellenistic audience, and one wholly in sync with the iambic genre. The use of (Aesopic) beast fables for polemic and *ad hominem* attacks may not only already have been

[1] See Kapsomenos (1937); Hausrath (1949); Früchtel (1950); Corbato (1979); Clayman (1980) 17–20; van Dijk (1997), 230–57; Kerkhecker (1999) 49–63; Acosta-Hughes (2002) 152–90; Lelli (2004) 35–47. See too the notes in the editions by Trypanis (1978) and d'Alessio (1996). The text of Callimachus' *Iambs* used here is that of Pfeiffer's (1949–1953) edition.

[2] See van Dijk (1997) 230–57; Kerkhecker (1999) 49–63; Acosta-Hughes (2002) 152–90.

[3] The point is most fully explored in Acosta-Hughes (2002) 32–35.

[4] See Pfeiffer's apparatus; following this, Kerkhecker (1999) 50 estimates that no more than 17 lines can be lost.

[5] Kerkhecker (1999) 50 citing Kapsomenos (1937) 29 and West (1997) 314. The lacunose participle at line 5 would probably have been a verb of speech referring to the fox.

[6] Since there is no change of speaker between lines 6 and 15, and the latter is clearly ascribed to the poetic ego, the shift must have occurred between lines 5 – where the fox speaks – and 6. Accosta-Hughes (2002) 182 offers a likely reconstruction of the switch.

[7] Discussions differ in their precise interpretation of Callimachus' remark at 6–7; see, variously, van Dijk (1997) 231; Kerkhecker (1999) 51; Acosta-Hughes (2002) 183.

[8] See van Dijk (1997) 232–33 for Callimachus' use of standard fable elements.

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considered a hallmark of Ionian *iambos*[9] (a feature whose 'iambic' character can be discerned in the inclusion of *ainoi* in Old Comedy),[10] but was also a stratagem more particularly associated with the 'first' iambographer Archilochus, a poet conspicuously absent from the programmatic first *Iamb*, which introduces Hipponax instead.[11] Among the extant fragments of the Parian poet, the two most securely attested appropriations of fable both feature a fox paired with another animal. Most relevant to *Iamb* 2 is the so-called Lykambes Epode, where the poet uses the eagle and the fox fable (Perry 1) against his *echthros.* In fr. 177 W, after the eagle has violated a pact of friendship with the fox and devoured its cubs, the victim calls out to Zeus for retribution:

ὦ Ζεῦ, πάτερ Ζεῦ, σὸν μὲν οὐρανοῦ κράτος,
σὺ δ' ἔργ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων ὁρᾷς
λεωργὰ καὶ θεμιστά, σοὶ δὲ θηρίων
ὕβρις τε καὶ δίκη μέλει.

O Zeus, father Zeus, yours is the power in the heavens and you look upon the deeds of men, wicked and lawful. And both the insolence and justice of animals are your concern.

While we cannot know from the Diegesis' account whether Callimachus' fox used elements of Archilochus' phrasing for its complaint, the Hellenistic poet's borrowings and departures from the earlier model are discernible. First, justice figures prominently in both passages, albeit in different fashions. Archilochus' vixen appeals to Zeus as overseer of *hybris* and *dikê* in the animal world; Callimachus' fox, by contrast, seems to deny that justice is a feature of that god's rule (a charge that implicitly suggests that, under the order of Cronus, justice had been at large among both gods and beasts).[12] In the speaker's reprise of the animal's remark, he too recasts the iambographer's assertion: Archilochus' fox is right insofar as justice *is* a concern of Zeus – he rules justly – but wrong insofar as in this particular instance – giving the animals' voices to men – the god has committed an injustice.[13] Where according to the fable, and Archilochus' deployment of it, the vixen's petition achieved its end when the eagle came belatedly to grief, in Callimachus not only does the fox's appeal go unheeded, but the entire race of animals suffers as a result of the embassy. Far from caring about justice among animals, Zeus punishes them wholesale, inflicting a penalty that consists of denying them the very power, that of speech, whereby the Archilochean and Aesopic fox achieved retribution.[14]

Archilochus frr. 185–87 W cites a second *ainos* with a fox in the starring role. Following its opening declaration, 'I shall tell you a fable (ἐρέω τιν' ὔμιν αἶνον), O Kerykides', the song narrates a tale preserved in the *Aesopica* (Perry 81), where an ape falls victim to a ruse devised by the more wily fox. As in the attack on Lykambes, the Archilochean persona identifies with the animal: where the poet tells his riddling *ainos* so as to deliver a surprise and painful correction to an individual who, his patronymic indicates,[15] (wrongly) considers himself of high standing, the

[9] See van Dijk (1997) 38–50; Zanetto (2001) 67; Kantzios (2005) 35–38.

[10] For this, see Rosen (1988a) 28–35 and Zanetto (2001); Bowie (2002) takes a more sceptical view.

[11] For Callimachus' choice of Hipponax, see Hunter (1997); Kerkhecker (1999) 5–7; Acosta-Hughes (2002) 32–35. Callimachus names Archilochus in two extant fragments (384 and 544 Pf.) but in neither does he appear as composer of specifically iambic poetry.

[12] See Versnel (1987) 125–26 for the association of Cronus' reign with universal justice.

[13] The charge of Zeus' injustice on this particular score may be related to the reference to Prometheus in line 3; the god's punishment of the Titan would be an instance of divine justice in response to an act of *hybris* and attempt to change the *status quo.* This nod to events at Mekone would also explain lines 8–9, with their curious evocation of sacrificial practices; see further n.33. Some discussions treat the presence of Prometheus as indicative of Callimachus' familiarity with an Aesopic fable that exists only in a Byzantine version (Perry 240); for this, see most recently Acosta-Hughes (2002) 177.

[14] In the Aesopic fable, the fox does not appeal to Zeus, but curses the malefactor.

[15] See van Dijk (1997) 180 with bibliography.

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fox uses its superior cunning to set a physical trap for the monkey who deems itself worthy of regal treatment. Further promoting the identification, the fox delivers the psogic *bon mot* ending the confrontation, a piece of verbal mockery equivalent to the poet's more drawn-out attack.

In assuming the role of fox, Archilochus may be appropriating for his iambic ego the integral place that the animal would already have held in the fable tradition. Here it most frequently figures as the one who triumphs over a typically stronger/higher-status beast by virtue of its superior wits, clever and persuasive speech, and capacity to seize the main chance.[16] By Classical times, the fox may even be slated as the teller or source of *ainoi*, or as representative of the story type. On a red-figure cup from *ca.* 440 BC, Aesop sits listening to the instruction of a fox that faces him, its posture and dimensions closely mirroring those of its hearer whom it seemingly instructs;[17] on a second red-figure vase the animal appears as the protagonist in the *ainos* of the fox and grapes (Perry 15).[18]

The broadly positive profile enjoyed by the fox in fable and Archaic *iambos* does not, however, go uncontested. Within the very different socio-generic registers of elegy and lyric, the fox, far from instantiating a laudable cunning, attracts opprobrium, charged as he is with a negatively-valorized, deceitful mode of conduct harmful to both self and others, which principally achieves its ends through verbal means. This characterization first appears in a fragmentary poem in which Alcaeus attacks his enemy Pittacus, styling him a fox who deploys stealth and tricky speech: 'Zeus Father, the Lydians, distressed by their misfortune, have given us two thousand staters if we can go to the holy city... But that one, crafty minded like a fox (ὡς ἀλώπα[ποικ[ι]λόφρων), hoped to escape notice, predicting an easy outcome' (fr. 69 LP).[19] Alcaeus' animal, as several commentators observe, anticipates the fox in the concluding portion of Solon fr. 11 W,[20] where the poet, demonstrably drawing on the fable tradition,[21] takes his (demotic) audience to task for promoting powerful individuals bent on ruining the state and supporting a treacherous speaker who leads them astray (5–8):

ὑμέων δ' εἷς μὲν ἕκαστος ἀλώπεκος ἴχνεσι βαίνει,
σύμπασιν δ' ὑμῖν χαῦνος ἔνεστι νόος·
ἐς γὰρ γλῶσσαν ὁρᾶτε καὶ εἰς ἔπη αἱμύλου ἀνδρός,
εἰς ἔργον δ' οὐδὲν γιγνόμενον βλέπετε.

Each one of you walks in the tracks of the fox, but as a group you are empty-headed; for you look to the tongue and to the words of a cunning man, not at all to what he has done.

For all the marked dichotomy between the domestic and civic spheres in lines 5–6, the second distich suggests an underlying continuity between the demos' conduct in each domain: the trickiness that seems to profit the individual at home proves the cause of his ruin in collective affairs where he falls victim to the duplicitous speech that 'foxiness' so frequently involves (*cf.* Pind. *P.* 2.76–77, discussed below); in good fable fashion, the domestic fox is duped by the wiles that he practised on others. A remark by the chorus of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* demonstrates the coherence between the terms that Solon divides: at 1269–70, the fox is practitioner of the Solonic demagogue's 'wiliness' (τᾶν αἰμυλᾶν ἀλωπέκων).

[16] For detailed discussion, see Detienne and Vernant (1991) 34–43.

[17] See Zanker (1995) 33 for this. Note too Philostr. *Imag.* 1.3 where a fox leads an acting class for the fables.

[18] Beazley (1963) 916.

[19] See Kurke (1999) 112–13 for an illuminating reading of the fragment.

[20] This connection is particularly stressed by those who read Solon's poem as an attack on Peisistratus; for discussion, see Podlecki (1987) and Fantuzzi (2010).

[21] In the attractive readings of Page (1954–1955); Gerber (1970) 136 and Lasserre (1984) 89, Solon here has a specific fable in mind, preserved in Babrius 95. However, as Fantuzzi (2010) notes, this presupposes the currency of that fable in the sixth century.

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The description of the fox in Pindar's *P.* 2.76–78, which similarly spans private and public, and pins the harm that the fox does itself and others on its deceptive or libelous rhetoric, further promotes the likeliness of this account of Solon's lines. Censoring those who practise calumny, the encomiast briefly assumes the blamer's voice:

> ἄμαχον κακὸν ἀμφοτέροις διαβολιᾶν ὑποφάτιες,
> ὀργαῖς ἀτενὲς ἀλωπέκων ἴκελοι.
> κέρδει δὲ τί μάλα τοῦτο κερδαλέον τελέθει;
>
> Announcers of slander are an irremediable evil to both parties, with characters exceedingly like foxes. But what profit is actually achieved through such profiteering?

As Brown has argued, these lines echo the earlier portrayal of Archilochus at 52–56,[22] uniting the human and animal practitioners of slander and abuse in a single complex.[23] The connections between the passages exist at the thematic level too. Just as Archilochus, for all his gluttony, ends up harming himself as well as the targets of his calumny (hence his ἀμαχανία, 'resourcelessness'), so the fox's cunning and slander prove inimical to its own interests. As other discussions also remark, in this animal-filled 'coda', Pindar nods not just towards Archaic *iambos*, but specifically to its use of beast fables.[24]

If *Iamb* 2 preserves the (Archilochean) fox of the iambic-fabular tradition, then its fragmentary state prevents our knowing which of the two earlier accounts of the animal the poet privileged here, the unjustified slanderer or the speaker of truth to power. But the co-presence of the swan may allow us better to discern the fox's role in the composition. Fable precedent would predispose audiences to expect a relationship of opposition between the co-ambassadors, who seem chosen with an eye to their contrasting generic profiles. Just as Archilochus' eagle is a high-status bird,[25] so the Callimachean swan has links to the patron god of poetry, Apollo, and to singers more generally.[26] From Archaic lyric on (for example, Alc. *Parth.* 100–01), the swan's song also stands as the supreme manifestation of musical virtuosity[27] and the bird sets so high a (lyric) standard that none can rival it (so Theoc. *Id.* 5.136).[28] While warning against a simple identification of Callimachus and the 'overdemanding' swan who shares the animals' punishment, Acosta-Hughes observes, 'there may have been here a variation... on the association of the swan's song with the poet/singer's own song'.[29] Reinforcing that link is the identity between the request that the swan makes (in the Diegesis' account), release from old age, and Callimachus' same petition in the *Aetia* prologue, where the poet has just likened himself to the also winged and tuneful cicada (32–35). Contrast with this the social standing of the fox and the registers of discourse in which it typically appears. Excluded from epic, the fox may first manifest itself in a line assigned to the proto-iambic

[22] ἐμὲ δὲ χρεών/ φεύγειν δάκος ἀδινὸν κακαγοριᾶν·/εἶδον γὰρ ἑκὰς ἐὼν τὰ πόλλ' ἐν ἀμαχανίᾳ/ψογερὸν Ἀρχίλοχον βαρυλόγοις ἔχθεσιν/πιαινόμενον· ('But I must flee the persistent bite of slander; for, standing far off, I have seen Archilochus the blamer often in resourcelessness as he grew fat on heavy-worded hatreds').

[23] Brown (2006) 46.

[24] See particularly Most (1985) 126; Steiner (forthcoming).

[25] For details of the Zeus/eagle association, see Thompson (1936) 1–10. Note too the eagle's role in epinician song, for which see Pfeijffer (1994).

[26] Acosta-Hughes (2002) 180–82. See too Thompson (1936) 104–08.

[27] See too Ar. *Av.* 769–84; *Ran.* 207; Eur. *IT* 1104–05.

[28] Note too how in both these and subsequent evocations of the swan (for example, Lucr. 3.6; Verg. *E.* 8.55) the bird stands in an explicitly eristic relationship to another singer.

[29] Acosta-Hughes (2002) 181–82.

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Homeric *Margites* ('the fox knows many things, but the hedgehog one big thing', fr. 5 W),[30] a tag then deployed by Archilochus in fr. 201 W. As already noted, the 'proletariat' fox [31] carries off the victory only when it appears in the more 'populist' genres of fable, *iambos* and comedy, where the social triangle is regularly upended, while elegy and lyric offer an almost wholly negative evaluation.[32]

In the absence of the relevant lines, it also remains impossible to know whether Callimachus figured each animal's appeal to Zeus in ways suggestive of its characteristic mode of speech and the genre in which it was most at home, one the melodious, high-style diva, the other the 'iambic' fault-finder who, as mockers and/or fable-tellers so regularly do, sets itself up against a higher-status antagonist and takes issue with the order of things.[33] If commentators are right in restoring the lacunose participle in line 5 with λέγουσα, the fox would have *spoken* its complaint, deploying the lower, Aesopic register of prose as opposed to sung discourse.[34] Also visible in the poem's trajectory is something akin to the scenario which Solon and Pindar traced out: foxes, and those who emulate them in speech or actions, end up hurting not only their intended targets, but themselves as well. These negative associations of the fault-finding voice of the iambic fox receive affirmation in the poem's second part: there, among four animal species cited in the speaker's attack on his contemporaries' discourse, two at least, the ass and dog, are associated by Callimachus and others with *iambos* and with practitioners of blame.[35]

These stylistic and generic oppositions between the swan and fox (which anticipate the use of different animals to characterize diverse literary practices and practitioners later in the poem),[36] would, in the larger context of the *Iambi*, also play a programmatic role. As co-ambassadors, the animals figure the *polyeideia* so prominent in the *Iambi*, that stylistic heterogeneity to which the jaundiced critic of *Iamb* 13 objects.[37] An analogue for this amalgam exists, and this in a text on which Callimachus frequently draws. In Aristophanes' *Frogs*, Charon styles the contents of the amphibian chorus' song βατράχων κύκνων θαυμαστά (207), an expression that conveys the heterogeneous nature of what the audience will hear, a meld of high lyric expressions with the grotesque, discordant refrain that the frogs include in their (eristic and psogic) song. Even as the animals vaunt their bond with the Muses and Apollo, they are self-described croakers (κεκράξομαι, 264), who apply to their emissions a term that, in fifth-century stylistic vocabulary, refers to all that is unmusical, abusive and base.[38] Where Aristophanes assigned to a single composite species his capacity to run the gamut of 'high' and 'low' literary registers, Callimachus divides his blend between two contrasting animals.

[30] Ogden (1997) 42 suggests that Homer may be delivering some 'Aesopic' type correction to the target of the address.

[31] The expression belongs to Griffiths (1995) 93.

[32] See Pind. *Isth.* 4.47 for an exception; in wrestling, the fox's μῆτις is desirable.

[33] See Rosen (2007) for this element in the iambic/satiric persona, also visible in Callimachus' fable-telling fourth *Iamb.* As Rosen illustrates, it is also typical of the satirist to contrast an earlier, superior time with a degenerate present. The fox's role as upstart 'spoiler', as well as his part in provoking a punishment that falls on all the animals, supplies a fresh link to the figure of Prometheus.

[34] See further below and Kurke (2006) for discussion of the fable-prose association.

[35] For details, see Kerkhecker (1999) 52.

[36] For this, see particularly Lelli (2004) 35–47.

[37] On the debated question of what precisely the 'critic' takes issue with, see Scodel (1987) 208 with further discussion in Hunter (1997) 42–45; Kerkhecker (1999) 253–55; Acosta-Hughes (2002) 84–89. I return to the issue of generic mixing at the discussion's end.

[38] See Steiner (2007) 191–92 and O'Sullivan (1992) 115 for the association of the verb with mockery and abuse. For its use of discordant sounds, see Pfeijffer (1999) 417.

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II. Hesiod

If Archilochus' Lykambes Epode belongs among the 'intertexts' informing *Iamb* 2, then that work may have recommended itself to Callimachus not only for its use of a fable as a mode of attack, but for its relation to another major presence in Callimachus. It is, moreover, a relation that allows the Hellenistic poet, in this first of his several turns to the fable repertoire in the *Iambi*, to acknowledge what may have been viewed as the earliest instance of a beast fable in a work of poetry.[39] As commentators note, Archilochus' phrasing in fr. 177 W seems designed to recall the 'moral' that at *Erg.* 276–80 Hesiod belatedly appends to his earlier narration of the hawk and nightingale *ainos*:

> τόνδε γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι νόμον διέταξε Κρονίων,
> ἰχθύσι μὲν καὶ θηροὶ καὶ οἰωνοῖς πετεηνοῖς
> ἔσθειν ἀλλήλους, ἐπεὶ οὐ δίκη ἐστὶ μετ' αὐτοῖς·
> ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἔδωκε δίκην, ἣ πολλὸν ἀρίστη
> γίνεται·
>
> For the son of Kronos has laid down this law for men, that fishes and beasts and winged birds eat one another, since there is no *dikê* among them, but he gave *dikê* to men, which is by far the best.

In Elizabeth Irwin's persuasive reading, she argues that the iambographer not only draws on Hesiod's lines, but refashions them so as to sharpen his attack.[40] Whereas Hesiod's message is that men should behave better than beasts, who, as the fable showed, eat one another and (the corollary to this) lack *dikê*, Archilochus asserts that justice exists among animals, thereby implying that Lykambes, who fails to practise the virtue, 'is *worse* than a beast' (italics in original). Irwin also proposes a deliberate revisionism on Archilochus' part as he declares his superiority over the earlier fabulist who, it seems, got things wrong.

Callimachus, I suggest, may take this second leaf from Archilochus' pattern book. Just as the iambic poet corrected his Boeotian predecessor in his use of the fable tradition, so Callimachus has revised Archilochus' revision, while also amending Hesiod's account. The lines from the *Erga* should, perhaps, be heard already at the start of *Iamb* 2. While most commentators observe that zoologists and scientific treatises such as Aristotle's *De generatione animalium* inform the 'technical' taxonomy (πτηνόν, τετράπουν) of the *Iamb*'s opening phrase,[41] Hesiod's lines cited above belong among the earliest examples of such classifications and point the audience back to the fable that the poet earlier told. Justice is, of course, the central motif of Hesiod's 'moral' no less than of the Callimachean fox's complaint, and appears both in lines 276–80 and in the more immediate sequel to the hawk-nightingale fable, where Dikê takes on the role earlier given to the bird manhandled by an aggressor.[42]

Reinforcing the link to Hesiod is the larger teleology-cum-agenda that shapes Callimachus' deployment of his fable. Both authors are concerned (at least, in the case of Callimachus, at the outset of his story) with establishing and accounting for the cardinal distinctions between man and beast. Just as the Hesiodic Zeus bestows justice on men even as he denies it to beasts, so Callimachus' god grants to humans the voice that he has not so much withheld as actually withdrawn from animals. The Callimachean innovation, of course, depends chiefly on his substitution of the power of speech (a quality much closer to the composer's current concerns) for the possession of *dikê* and the giving of a 'gift' that, unlike the Hesiodic Zeus' benefaction, is anything but 'the best by far'.

[39] Here questions of chronology are impossible to determine. In the ancient view, Hesiod would have preceded Aesop, and, according to some *testimonia*, would even have acted as his teacher; see van Dijk (1997) 127, n.30 for this.

[40] Irwin (1998) especially 181–82.

[41] Acosta-Hughes (2002) 179; note too Clayman (1980) 17, n.7. Kerkhecker (1999) 49, n.5 observes 'the categories... are widespread', citing Hes. *Erg.* 277 among other parallels.

[42] For treatment of the nightingale-Dikê parallel, see Pucci (1977) 65–66; Bonnafé (1983).

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III. Literary rivalry

As discussions of *Iamb* 2 regularly observe, what begins as a fable ends up, quite unexpectedly, a piece of literary polemic. Callimachus first faults a sequence of named individuals and generic τραγῳδοί for inheriting the voices that earlier belonged to the dog, ass, parrot and 'those who live in the sea', and then extends his critique to 'all men', who are too talkative (10–14). While others have tried to situate these attacks in the contemporary Alexandrian literary milieu,[43] my point concerns the relation between the turn that the fable takes – leaving its aitiological character behind, it becomes a stick with which to beat the current literary competition – and the two chief texts explored above. My suggestion is that here too Callimachus observes precedent, this time by following Hesiod and Archilochus' deployment of *ainoi* as agonistic moves within the battles that those authors waged against real or notional poetic rivals and/or opposing genres.

As I have detailed elsewhere, a literary-aesthetic rivalry already informs Hesiod's hawk and nightingale fable.[44] Depicting the first bird as a speaker who favours Iliadic-type poetics – that work's style, discursive registers, themes and ethics too – Hesiod identifies himself with the smaller but more tuneful *aoidos*, the nightingale, who, in the shape of Dikê, belatedly achieves the (poetic-cum-generic) victory that the hawk denies his victim. The same competitive spirit shapes the Archilochean fox/eagle confrontation. By incorporating the *ainos* into his attack, the iambographer both shows himself superior to the 'first' fable-teller Hesiod and, a recent article suggests, may enact his victory over Lykambes, his current literary competitor.[45] Also relevant here is a third literary *eris*, this one with pronounced links both to Hesiod and to *ainoi*.[46] At *Ol.* 2.86–88, in lines imitated in Hellenistic times,[47] Pindar contrasts the eagle, figure for the encomiastic poet, with crows, importunate and wordy learners whose futile cawing against the divine bird aligns them with other Pindaric and later fifth-century representations of calumnists:

> σοφὸς ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φυᾷ· μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι
> παγγλωσσίᾳ κόρακες ὡς ἄκραντα γαρύετον
>
> Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον·
>
> Wise (a poet) is the one knowing many things by nature,[48] but learners who are blustering and garrulous are like a pair of crows that speak in vain against the divine bird of Zeus.

The same charge of garrulousness appears in the polemic that turns out to underpin Callimachus' use of Aesop's *ainos*: human speakers are πουλύμυθοι and λάλοι (14).

Callimachus, of course, is no stranger to the use of beast fables for just such aesthetic/generic duels: in the *Aetia* prologue he famously makes the Aesopic fable of the donkey and cicada (Perry 184) integral to his promotion of the *genus tenue* and to his attack on those who practise opposing stylistic registers and discourse (fault-finding among them, *viz.* the grumbling Telchines).[49] *Iamb* 2 may include a further pointer towards this larger eristic context that goes together with the use of beast fables. Both in the fourth *Iamb*, and in the Hesiodic and Archilochean precedents cited above, the individual apostrophized by the fable-teller is the target of its critique.[50] If Andronicus is, like the monikers chosen by the Ionian iambographers for their *echthroi*, an alias designed to

[43] For discussion and a review of earlier accounts, see Lelli (2004) 35–47.

[44] Steiner (2007) 178–88.

[45] Hawkins (2008).

[46] See Steiner (2007) 188–94 for detailed analysis.

[47] See Cozzoli (1996).

[48] Is there a riff here on Archil. fr. 201 W cited earlier? Where in the iambic/fabular tradition on which Pindar draws here the fox is the all-knower, Pindar transposes that capacity to the lofty eagle instead.

[49] For detailed treatment, see Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2002) 174; note too Acosta-Hughes and Scodel (2004) 5–7.

[50] See further n.52.

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complement the poet's mockery,[51] then it acquires a derisive flavour.[52] Just as Hipponax's Boupalos, the man of the 'big/bull-dick' (Rosen's apt translation), proves an inept/transgressive sexual partner in several works, so Callimachus' 'Man-Victory' not only supplies an ironic pointer to men's dubious success in gaining what the animals lost,[53] but hints that the one whose name portends victory is, in fact, the loser in the *eris* between the fable-telling poetic ego and its addressee. Andronicus is audience for this fable, as generic convention requires, because he is guilty of the very (literary/rhetorical) faults that the speaker critiques.

Once again, however, Callimachus proves himself anything but a slavish follower of precedent. In a final rejection of traditional practice, and the surprise move reserved for the concluding lines, Callimachus reveals that, like earlier *ainoi*-tellers, he has assumed a mask – but not that of an animal (whom his fable effectively denies the ability to speak, the very premise of earlier *ainoi*) but of Aesop himself, named at line 15 as author of (some of) what has gone before.[54] The relevance of Aesop to the scenario that *Iamb* 2 has described goes beyond the obvious fact that he devised beast fables, many of which criticize human failings, and is a likely source for the story, or story-type, told here.[55] The poet's untimely end, to which Callimachus alludes, neatly repeats what the first portion of the text describes, but, in keeping with the poem's change in direction, transposes events from the animal to the human realm. As van Dijk suggests, Aesop's performance before the Delphians (consisting of fables, the *Vitae* tradition reports) can be seen as equivalent to the 'swan song' that the missing lines would have evoked: their compositions done, both bird and man lose their voice.[56] Read against the earlier *ainos*, the silence imposed on Aesop by virtue of his death makes additional sense. Like the animal ambassadors, the fabulist performed an act of daring that went beyond his mockery of his hosts, and that challenged divine prerogative: by way of riposte to Zeus' cutting off the voice of animals, Aesop returned the gift that had been withdrawn, and in so doing lost life and speech.[57]

But the conclusion to the work is richly ambiguous. As audiences would know, like the Hesiodic nightingale and Archilochean fox, the victimized Aesop is eventually vindicated, and, as in these other instances, through the agency of Zeus.[58] Following this, we can read the *Iamb*'s ending in several ways. Does the mention of the Delphians' negative response anticipate what Callimachus expects from the targets of his *ainos* and subtly warn them against punishing the poet lest Zeus intervene on his behalf?[59] Ascribing to Aesop some portion of what has been said would then be a self-exculpatory move on the speaker's part. Or is Aesop a more complex blend of positive and negative paradigm, as much double for the over-daring fox as for the singing swan, and a figure for the misuse of fable and the dire consequences that result? In this view, he serves as foil for the Callimachean voice, which, at the composition's end, distances itself from its predecessor and rival fabulist. Where Aesop's 'song' was ill received by those whom his *ainoi* took to task, Callimachus' more moderate or skilled persona will garner no hostility with his fable-poem and, as the existence of the remainder of the *Iambi* affirms, is far from performing his 'swan song'. An eristic relationship with Aesop would also explain the larger joke that Zeus' punishment of the animals includes: because animals are henceforth deprived of voice, the whole animal fable repertoire, predicated on their enjoying powers of speech, must effectively end here.

[51] For discussion, see Rosen (1988b); Zanetto (2001); Hawkins (2008) 100–01.

[52] Callimachus' fourth *Iamb* adopts a very similar stratagem, where the immediate target/addressee for the fable is one Simos (Dieg. VII 3). For the 'iambic potential' of the name, see Kerkhecker (1999) 83; Acosta-Hughes (2002) 194.

[53] Van Dijk (1997) 233.

[54] As Kerkhecker (1999) 60 rightly argues, the ταῦτα of 15 seems studiously vague and need not cover everything in the poem up to this point. Note that Aristophanes' fable-teller Philocleon uses precisely this 'mask' at *Vesp.* 1401.

[55] See n.13 for this.

[56] Van Dijk (1997) 234.

[57] The ταῦτα of 15 could even be understood as referring to those elements in the *ainos* where animals actually speak.

[58] The oracle directing the Delphians to propitiate Aesop comes from that god; see further Kurke (2003) for discussion of the various accounts.

[59] Van Dijk (1997) 232.

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The last line of the poem should disorient the audience not just because of its revelation that Aesop is the author of parts of what has come before. Running counter to all other extant ancient accounts, which depict the fabulist as a composer/teller of prose narratives,[60] Callimachus' Aesop not only 'speaks' (εἶπεν) but also 'sings' (ᾄδοντα) his μῦθον.[61] As far as I know, no discussion of the *Iamb* addresses the anomaly or explains why the poet has chosen to fly in the face of tradition and to present Aesop as practitioner of two opposing performance modes. Following Kerkhecker, we could see this glaring *adynaton* as evidence of the self-irony that Callimachus practises in *Iamb* 2, his self-distancing from the narrative voice heard within the song.[62] Or we could read the formulation as a final jab at Aesop, whom the Hellenistic poet trumps. The Delphians punished their guest, in Callimachus' version, not for his fable-telling, but for his hybristic attempt to practise a medium higher than his own, to become as it were, that generic impossibility, the singing fox. A coherent theme turns out to unite the poem's disparate parts: at issue throughout is the misuse of the verbal medium, whether among men or beasts, and the appropriation of speech in its several forms by those who, for reasons of species, ethics, social standing or literary capacities, erroneously mingle its separate registers and/or prove incapable of deploying it correctly. It is left to Callimachus to right these wrongs, to critique the criticizers, to differentiate between the heterogeneous discursive modes and in so doing to achieve with impunity what Aesop could not: a literary hybrid.

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[60] See the detailed account in Kurke (2006).

[61] *Cf.* Ar. *Nubes* 1371 for a comparable anomaly (Euripides 'sings' a *rhêsis*), with discussion in Renehan (1976) 88–92. If a singing Aesop is unprecedented, the versification of his *muthoi* is not. In Plato's *Phaedo* Socrates, also about to die, claims that he has transposed Aesopic fables into song (60c–61b). I would suggest this as a further 'intertext' in Callimachus, for whose use of Plato, see Acosta-Hughes and Stevens (2002).

[62] Kerkhecker (1999) 90, but not in reference to this particular remark.

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