

In the face of Cameron's (1995, 38) claim that there is "no trace" of acrostics in Callimachus, Danielewicz (2005, 329-330) has recently found six plausible examples in the poet's surviving collection of hymns. This paper introduces four more previously unrecognized acrostics in the collection, each notably marking a passage that features a "great" (μέγας) river. By highlighting the rivers in this way, Callimachus, notably author also of a *Περὶ ποταμῶν* (fr. 457 Pfeiffer), calls special attention to instances where large rivers are passed over for smaller sources of water that yet have merit.

In *Hymn 1* an acrostic pair spans the lines that introduce Arcadia's lack of a river in which Rhea might bathe her infant Zeus. Here the first syllable of the river Ladon (18), read forward (λα) and then backward (αλ), cooperates with lines that precede and follow to produce a pair of acrostics (α-λ-λα ~ αλ-λ-α, 16-20), a symmetrical pattern that highlights the passage's central line (18), which itself contains the very adversative (ἀλλά) repeated by the acrostics. But this line is notably also framed by rivers, each described in terms that suggest their suitability for Zeus' bath: the Ladon is large (μέγας) and the Erymanthus is particularly pure (λευκότετος ποταμῶν, 19). A second, so-called "gamma-acrostic" (Morgan 1993, 143), wherein εἰ-π-ε (30-32) reproduces εἶπε at the start of line 30, highlights the passage in which Rhea resolves her predicament by bringing water from the earth herself. This stream, while neither as large as the Ladon nor as clear as the Erymanthus, seems to possess something of each quality, for Callimachus calls the Neda "great" (μέγα, 32) – likely not for its size, but for its role – and it proves pure enough to provide the Arcadians with drink at the climactic close of the episode (37-41).

In *Hymn 4* the identical gamma-acrostic, εἰ-π-ε (133-135) reproducing εἶπε (133), marks a passage that responds directly to (indeed inverts) the events depicted in the corresponding acrostic passage at *Hymn 1.30-32*. Whereas there Rhea successfully brought a "great stream" (μέγα χεῦμα, 1.32, cf. ῥόον, 1.16) from a mountain (ῥορος, 31) of Gaea's (Γαῖα, 1.29), here Ares bars the pregnant Leto from the river Peneius by threatening to bury that "great stream" (μέγαν ῥόον, 4.133; cf. μέγα χεῦμα, 4.110) under the peaks of the mountain *Pangaeum* (Παγγαίου, 4.134). Similar to *Hymn 1*, however, where Zeus is bathed in the smaller Neda, Apollo will likewise be born by the Inopus, a smaller stream than the Peneius by far, but one that flows deeply with gold on the god's birth (263).

These acrostic passages call for the serious consideration of a fourth acrostic, in the famous polemical epilogue of Callimachus' second hymn, where Apollo rejects magnitude as a sufficient measure of song by contrasting the "great" (μέγας) but muddy Assyrian river (108-109) with the pure and tiny droplets that bees carry to Demeter (110-112). Here a brief acrostic of a two-line, two-syllable sort (cf. Haslam 1992, 201) bridges this opposition of magnitude and purity. Originating in the phrase λύματα γῆς, the acrostic (λυ-δη, 109-110) names the *Lyde* of Antimachus, a poem Callimachus criticizes elsewhere as "fat and unclear" (fr. 398 Pfeiffer). The second syllable of the acrostic comes from the word Δῆοι (110), a reference perhaps to Philitas' *Demeter* (Spanoudakis 2002, 12), which Callimachus praises in his *Aetia* prologue (fr. 1.10 Pfeiffer) in contrast to an unidentified "long" poem, possibly even the *Lyde* itself (Spanoudakis 2001, 434-441).

A reader might suspect these acrostics individually as products of mere chance, but together they are mutually corroborating. Moreover, Callimachus appears to use the device to extend his metaphor of water for poetry, celebrating the circumstances of Zeus' bath and Apollo's birth as reflections of his own poetic principle: an insistence on the purity of a song (as of water), even at the expense of its magnitude.