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The Palaikastro Hymn and the modern myth of the Cretan Zeus

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Abstract: The Palaikastro Hymn—better known as the Hymn of the Kouretes—does not celebrate a god of pre-Hellenic pedigree, who is Zeus in name only, as scholars have believed with virtual unanimity. Rather, an understanding of the conventions of Greek hymnic performance in its ritual context goes far to elucidating many of the ostensibly peculiar features of the Hymn. Moving out from Palaikastro, in eastern Crete, to survey the island as a whole, I show that the Cretan iconographic and epigraphic records contradict the widely accepted theory of a special, Minoan “Cretan Zeus.”

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## The Palaikastro Hymn and the modern myth of the Cretan Zeus

The religious history of ancient Crete has traditionally been written as a story of continuity from the Bronze Age to the classical period. Some recent work on post-Minoan Crete has challenged the prominent position usually given to continuity, in favor of an approach that stresses the active role taken by later Cretan communities in defining and redefining their relationship to the Bronze Age past.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the new material from the growing number of excavations of classical Cretan sanctuaries should provide an impetus for studying Greek religion in Crete on its own terms, rather than as an adjunct to Minoan religion.<sup>2</sup> Yet it is nevertheless the case that the appeal of continuity remains very strong in Cretan studies, and in this respect there has been little change in how we study Cretan religion. This paper contributes to what I hope will be a growing trend against the traditional, continuity-based model of Cretan religion, which has exaggerated the influence that Minoan religion had on the cults of the classical Cretan city-states.

No inscription has been more valuable testimony for the persistence of Minoan religion in Crete than the Hymn to Dictaeon Zeus from Palaikastro.<sup>3</sup> Over the last century the Hymn has been accepted by archaeologists and philologists alike, virtually without exception,<sup>4</sup> as evidence for the continuity of cult at the site of Palaikastro from the Bronze Age down to the Roman period. Against this overwhelming consensus, however, I will show that the Hymn is not a witness for religious continuity at Palaikastro or for the Minoan pedigree of the cult of Dictaeon Zeus in East Crete. More specifically, I will prove that the Hymn's description of Zeus cannot be reconciled with the iconography of his supposed Minoan predecessor, the so-called Youthful God. After offering an alternative reading of the Hymn, I will briefly reconsider the evidence for the widely

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<sup>1</sup> Alcock 2002 and Sjögren 2001. Sporn (2002) is much more skeptical about continuity at Cretan sanctuaries than most scholars, but she does not entirely exclude the possibility.

<sup>2</sup> The best survey of post-Minoan sanctuaries is Sporn 2002; see also Prent 2005.

<sup>3</sup> *Inscriptiones Creticae* III.2.2. *Editio princeps*: Bosanquet 1910, Murray 1910; cf. Harrison 1910. For a current bibliography on the Hymn, see Furley and Bremer 2001: vol. 2, 1; add Fontenrose 1966, Bowra 1970.

<sup>4</sup> Fontenrose 1966, Verbruggen 1981.

accepted theory of a special Cretan Zeus of Minoan origin. The Cretan Zeus has long been a mainstay of the continuity model of Cretan religion, but the cults of Zeus in Crete in fact provide no evidence of a Minoan pedigree.

At the end of May in 1904 a fragmentary inscription bearing a Hymn to Zeus was discovered at Palaikastro in East Crete, during the excavation of the sanctuary of Dictaeon Zeus, on top of the ruins of a Minoan harbor town:

ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε  
παγκρατῆς γάνους βέβακες δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος  
Δίκταν εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν ἔρπε καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶ,

τάν τοι κρέκομεν πακτίσι μείξαντες ἄμ' αὐλοῖσιν,  
καὶ στάντες ἀείδομεν τεὸν ἀμφὶ βωμὸν εὐερκῆ.

ἰὼ μέγιστε] κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε  
παγκρα[τῆς γάνους βέβακες δ]αιμόνων ἀγώμενος  
Δίκταν εἰς ἐν[αυτὸν ἔρπ]ε καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶ.

ἐνθα γὰρ σέ παῖδ' ἄμ<β>ρ<ο>τον ἀσπιδ[ηφόροι τροφῆες]  
πᾶρ ῥέας λαβόντες πό<δ>α κ[ρούοντες ἀπέκρυψαν]

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[ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε]  
[παγκρατῆς γάνους βέβακες δαιμόνων ἀγώμενος]  
[Δίκταν εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν ἔρπε καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶ.]

[--υυυ --υυυ --υυυ --υυυ]  
[--υυυ --υυυ --υ τ]ᾶς καλᾶς ἀῶς.

[ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κ]ρόνειε  
παγκρατῆς γάν[ους βέβακες δαιμόνω]ν ἀγώμενος  
Δίκταν εἰς ἐν[αυτὸν ἔρπε κα]ὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶ.

[ῥωραι δὲ β]ρύον κατῆτος καὶ βροτὸς Δίκα κατῆχε  
[καὶ πάντα δι]ῆπε <ζ>ώ<ι>' ἀ φίλολβος Εἰρή<ν>α.

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[ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε]  
παγκρατῆς γάν[ους βέβακες δαιμόνων ἀγώ]μενος  
Δίκταν εἰς ἐ[νιαυτὸν ἔρπε καὶ γέ]γαθι μολπᾶ.

ἀ[λλ' ἄναξ θόρ' ἐς στα]μνία καὶ θόρ' εὐποκ' ἐ[ς πώεα]  
[κῆς λάι]α καρπῶν θόρε κῆς τελεσφ[όρος οἶκος]

ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρ[όνειε]

παγκρατῆς γάνους βέβακες [δαιμό]νων ἀγώμενος  
Δίκταν εἰς ἐνι[αυτὸν] ἔρπε καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶ.

[θόρε κές] πόληας ἀμῶν θόρε κές ποντο(π)όρος νᾶας  
θόρε κές ν[εὸς πο]λείτ(α)ς θόρε κές Θέμιν κα[λάν.]

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[ἰὼ μέγιστε] κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε  
παγκρατῆς γάνους βέβακ[ες δαιμόνων ἀγ]ώμενος  
Δίκταν εἰς ἐνι[αυτὸν] ἔρπε καὶ γέγαθι] μολπᾶ.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

We weave it for you with lyres, having blended it with pipes, and we sing having taken our places around your well-walled altar.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

For on this very spot, your shield-bearing guardians received you, an immortal child, from Rhea and beating their foot, kept you hidden.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

[two verses missing]...of the beautiful dawn.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

The Seasons teemed year by year and Justice held mortals in her power, and Peace, who loves prosperity, governed all creatures.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

But, lord, leap to our wine jars, and leap to our fleecy flocks, and to our fields of fruit leap, and to our homes made thereby productive.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

And leap to our cities and leap to our seafaring ships, and leap to our new citizens and leap to fair Themis.

O supreme son of Kronos, salutations! All-powerful over refreshment, you stand at the head of the gods. Come to Dicte at the turn of the year and take pleasure in our song.

Zeus is invoked with the unprecedented title *κοῦρος*, the myth of his Cretan birth is recounted, the benefits of his presence are described, and his favors are prayed for—albeit in spheres that we do not usually associate with Zeus. The inscription dates to ca. 200 AD,<sup>5</sup> but the Hymn has always been considered a much older composition, typically dated to ca. 300 BC, and occasionally earlier.<sup>6</sup> Even older still is the theology of the Hymn, according to prevailing opinion: the Hymn honors a god that is Zeus in name only; he is in fact an indigenous, pre-Greek fertility god, the so-called Young God depicted in Minoan art.<sup>7</sup> Despite the gap of at least 300 years between the end of the Bronze Age occupation at Palaikastro and the earliest cult activity at the Zeus sanctuary there,<sup>8</sup> for many scholars the recent discovery of a Minoan gold-and-ivory statuette of a youthful god at Palaikastro has clinched the theory of the Hymn's Minoan pedigree once and for all.<sup>9</sup>

This specific case at Palaikastro, moreover, has been subsumed within the island-wide phenomenon of the Cretan Zeus. In order to explain why the ancient testimonia about Zeus in Crete are dominated by the god's birth and burial,<sup>10</sup> Welcker posited a

<sup>5</sup> For a good paleographic parallel, see *ICret* 1.18.11 (Lytos), p. 190.

<sup>6</sup> Proponents of a fifth-century date include Wilamowitz and Bowra (for the refrain only). Jebb thought the Hymn might be archaic.

<sup>7</sup> On the iconography of the Minoan Young God, see Marinatos 1993: 166–174.

<sup>8</sup> Prent 2005: 544. Prent, however, is optimistic about the ability of local memory to bridge the centuries of abandonment at Palaikastro (Prent 2003).

<sup>9</sup> MacGillivray et al. 2000. The best account of the *interpretatio Minoica* of Dictaeon Zeus is Thorne 2000.

<sup>10</sup> The tradition of a tomb of Zeus in Crete will not be discussed here, since it has no bearing on the Palaikastro Hymn and Dictaeon Zeus, *pace* West and others. Nonnus alone places the tomb at Dicte; this is probably his own innovation (*Dionysiaca* 8.114–117, 178–179). The mention of both the tomb tradition (ll. 8–9) and Dictaeon Zeus (l. 4)

special Cretan Zeus, indigenous to the island and distinct from the familiar Olympian or Homeric version. Welcker's Cretan Zeus was of the "dying god" type found in other Mediterranean and Near Eastern religions—a youthful, chthonic god of vegetation, who annually dies and is reborn, and who is subordinate to a Great Mother.<sup>11</sup> Adonis, Thammuz, Attis and Osiris are the gods most often classified under this category of divinity. The discovery of the Minoan civilization provided a specific, identifiable antecedent for Welcker's Cretan Zeus: a young god in Minoan art who appears to be the subordinate consort or son of the—or, at least, a—Minoan earth or mother goddess. The Palaikastro Hymn was effortlessly fit into the Cretan Zeus theory, since Zeus is explicitly identified as a *κοῦρος* in the Hymn's refrain and he is associated with fertility in its final stanzas.

But the Dictaeon Zeus's status as an icon of the continuity of cult does not stand on as firm a footing as so many have believed. Continuity requires the persistence of some salient feature. In the case of the Hymn, it is Zeus's alleged youth, his peculiar status as a *κοῦρος*, as he is described in the Hymn's refrain, that has always provided the link to Crete's pre-Greek past. I will show, however, that the meaning of *κοῦρος* in the Hymn has been misunderstood and that it does not mean "youth." We know nothing else about the Minoan god with any certainty other than his youthfulness.<sup>12</sup> Only this youthfulness, therefore, can provide the link between him and Dictaeon Zeus. If Zeus was not worshipped as a youth at Palaikastro, there are no grounds on which to base an identification of Dictaeon Zeus with the indigenous, pre-Greek god.<sup>13</sup> Any claim of

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within relative proximity at the beginning of Callimachus's *Hymn to Zeus* does not imply a connection. And see below, n. 12.

<sup>11</sup> Welcker 1857–63: 2, 218–220; cf. West 1965: 154–159. A strict distinction must be maintained between the cult title Zeus Kretagenes ("Zeus born in Crete") and the modern construct the "Cretan Zeus"; the existence of the former is in no way evidence of the later. Furthermore, Zeus Kretagenes always appears as a mature adult, never a youth.

<sup>12</sup> There is no evidence, for example, that the Minoan Young God was a "dying god," the corollary being that there is no evidence that the tomb of Zeus tradition is of Minoan origin.

<sup>13</sup> Dictaeon Zeus, of course, does appear once in the Linear B tablets from Knossos, as a recipient of oil (Fp 1: di-ka-ta-jo di-we), so we know his cult on the island dates back to the Bronze Age, as do the cults of several other Greek gods. Although the Mycenaeans

continuity must begin with the basic fact of comparing like with like, apples with apples. We are in this case, it turns out, dealing with apples and oranges.

The key to the continuity question is the first line of the Hymn's refrain: ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε. The sense of the line is ambiguous and has been construed in two different ways, which yield very differently conceptions of the god being addressed. Historically, the preferred reading has been to take μέγιστε κοῦρε as a unit, translated as "greatest of youths," or "youth *par excellence*." This was the opinion of the excavators and the original editors of the inscription, and it was canonized by Jane Harrison, who wrote the first study of the Hymn.<sup>14</sup> As Harrison explained it, Zeus is a youth because the god's age should reflect the age of those who worship him and perform the Hymn; they are the Kouretes, the young Cretan armed dancers, "*kourêtes*" being just a specialized form of "*kouroi*." The god is the *Greatest* Kouros because he is the divine embodiment of this youthful *thiasos* as a whole and their leader. The Hymn's Megistos Kouros is, according to Harrison, a survival of a primitive and universal type of god, whose function is to preside over male initiation rituals, such as the occasion of the Palaikastro Hymn's performance. But what Harrison saw as a universal phenomenon of primitive religion was quickly identified by others as specifically Cretan, a survival from the island's distinct Minoan past. The Megistos Kouros was confirmation of Welcker's theory that the Cretan Zeus was an indigenous, youthful dying god. This remains the dominant opinion today.

The major weakness of this reading of the first line is that it is not consistent with the uses of μέγιστος elsewhere as an epithet for Zeus. μέγιστος is one of Zeus's most common epithets and it does not require a qualifying noun like κοῦρος. Zeus is simply, and absolutely, μέγιστος. Even when μέγιστος appears with other titles, it stands apart syntactically. In a dedication to Zeus from Pergamon, for example, Zeus has two epithets,

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gave Zeus a local, non-Greek topographical epithet, that does not in and of itself signify that the god has taken on non-Greek attributes.

<sup>14</sup> The phrase μέγιστε κοῦρε first appears in print in *ABSA* 10 (1904): 246, in the report from the annual meeting of subscribers (Oct. 27, 1904). Jane Harrison first uses the phrase in a letter dated September 25, 1904 (Jane Harrison papers, Newnham College archives, Cambridge; folder 1/4/4).

Megistos and Soter, but he is not being called “greatest of saviors.”<sup>15</sup> Or when Herakles establishes a grove at Olympia for his πατήρ μέγιστος in Pindar, Zeus is not being called “greatest of fathers”—his preeminence is independent of his fatherhood.<sup>16</sup> In the Hymn the κοῦρος is μέγιστος because he is Zeus, pure and simple. We can rule out rather easily what has been the most popular reading of the line. There is no philological justification for taking μέγιστος with κοῦρος, and there is strong evidence against it. There is no μέγιστος κοῦρος in the Palaikastro Hymn.

Harrison’s close friend A. B. Cook was the first to propose an alternative rendering of the opening line, taking κοῦρε with Κρόνιε, rather than with μέγιστε, and this version was also preferred by Wilamowitz and Diehl, and more recently by Fontenrose.<sup>17</sup> Κοῦρος with a genitive or possessive adjective, like παῖς, means “son of [X]”, as in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, where Apollo is addressed as “splendid son of Zeus” (490: ...Διὸς ἀγλαὲ κοῦρε). In other words, κοῦρος Κρόνιος is a periphrasis for Κρονίων or the patronymic Κρονίδης, “son of Kronos,” without any specification of Zeus’s age; compare similar periphrases with παῖς in *Prometheus Bound* (577: ὦ Κρόνιε παῖ, “O son of Kronos”) and Pindar (*Olympian* 2, 12: ὦ Κρόνιε παῖ Ῥέας, “O son of Kronos and Rhea”). The short *Homeric Hymn to Zeus* (no. 23) provides the best parallel for μέγιστε κοῦρε ...Κρόνιε in the Palaikastro Hymn: Κρονίδα κύνιστε μέγιστε (4: “...son of Kronos, supreme and most glorious”). Cook’s reading of the opening line is fatal to Harrison’s interpretation of the Hymn—and to any other that requires a youthful Zeus—, and Harrison acknowledged as much in a letter to Murray: “This would be

<sup>15</sup> *Altertümer von Pergamon* vol. 8.2, no. 327: Διὶ μεγίστῳ σωτήρι.

<sup>16</sup> Pindar, *Olympian* 10.44–45: Διὸς ἄλκιμος υἱὸς σταθμᾶτο ζάθεον ἄλσος πατρὶ μεγίστῳ (“...the brave son of Zeus measured out a sacred grove for his supreme father”). This is also true of the compound μεγιστοπάτωρ (“supreme father”), used for Zeus by Bacchylides (5.199).

<sup>17</sup> Cook, as reported by Jane Harrison in a letter to Gilbert Murray: “[Cook] is not happy about the comma after χαῖρέ μοι he thinks κοῦρος Κρόνιος may go together, son of Kronos” (September 12, 1910; Harrison papers, Newnham College archives, folder 1/1/21). Wilamowitz: “It is not a Κοῦρος that is addressed, but κοῦρε Κρόνιε, i.e., Κρονίων” (1921: 501, Angeredet ist nicht ein Κοῦρος, sondern κοῦρε Κρόνιε, Κρονίων); Diehl 1925: 279; Fontenrose 1966: 31–2.

horrid.”<sup>18</sup> Murray subsequently argued on Harrison’s behalf that the intervening χαῖρέ μοι is “conclusive against” taking κοῦρε with Κρόνειε, but this claim is demonstrably false. Euripides provides a precise parallel for an adjective-noun pair interrupted by χαῖρέ μοι: ἀλλ’, ὦ ποτ’ εὐτυχοῦσα, χαῖρέ μοι, πόλις (*Trojan Women* 45: “But, O once fortunate city, farewell!”).<sup>19</sup>

While I support the reading of κοῦρε with Κρόνειε, rather than with μέγιστε, I am not arguing for a wholly typical, run-of-the-mill Zeus in the Palaikastro Hymn. Guarducci rightly points out that the position of κοῦρε—just before the caesura—gives it special emphasis. The prominent position of κοῦρε coupled with the unique use of this periphrasis, κοῦρε Κρόνειε, lead me to believe that κοῦρε was purposefully chosen here to mark Zeus’s age in addition to noting his filial relationship to Kronos.<sup>20</sup>

But, crucially, a Zeus that is a κοῦρος would not be a youth. Zeus is described as a κοῦρος four times in Greek literature and another three times with the cognate participle κουρίζων, in Apollonius’s *Argonautica*, Aratus’s *Phaenomena*, Callimachus’s *Hymn to Zeus* and Nonnus’s *Dionysiaca*. Despite their obvious relevance, this set of passages has never been brought to bear on the interpretation of the Hymn. In six instances (a-f), the context indicates that Zeus is not a youth, but unambiguously, if unexpectedly, an infant.<sup>21</sup>

- a. Apollonius R., *Argonautica* 1.508-509 (Orpheus’s cosmogonic song)  
οἱ δὲ τέως μακάρεσσι θεοῖς Τιτῆσιν ἄνασσον,  
ὄφρα Ζεὺς ἔτι κοῦρος, ἔτι φρεσὶ νήπια εἰδώς,  
Δικταῖον ναίεσκεν ὑπὸ σπέος· οἱ δὲ μιν οὔπω

<sup>18</sup> September 12, 1910 (Harrison papers, Newnham College archives, folder 1/1/21).

<sup>19</sup> Murray: Harrison 1912: 9 n. 3. A comparable placement of χαῖρε between a noun-adjective pair appears in a recently published Imperial elegiac dedication: σῶτερ ἀλιτρύτων, χαῖρε, Μόνοικε, νεῶν (Kajava 1997). Incidentally, this dedication, despite its Italian provenance, is a good paleographic parallel for the Hymn.

<sup>20</sup> This seems to be the position A. B. Cook ultimately supported; he accepts κοῦρε Κρόνειε as parallel to ὦ Κρόνειε παῖ, e.g. (Cook 1914–1940: 1, 15 n. 5), but he also cites the opening line of the Hymn as evidence for the youthfulness of the Cretan Zeus (Cook 1914–1940: 1, 645).

<sup>21</sup> For another use of κοῦρος for a baby in a ritual utterance, compare the Eleusinian cry, ἱερὸν ἔτεκε πότνια κοῦρον Βριμῶ Βριμόν (*PMG* 862: “Our Lady has given birth to a holy babe, Brimo [has given birth to] Brimos”).

γηγενέες Κύκλωπες ἐκαρτύνατο κεραυνῶ  
βροντῇ τε στεροπῇ τε·

“And [Kronos and Rhea] then ruled over the blessed gods, the Titans, while Zeus, **still a baby**, still knowing childish things in his thoughts, was living within the Dictaeon cave; and the earthborn Cyclopes had not yet strengthened him with the thunderbolt, thunder and lightning...”

b. Apollonius R., *Argonautica* 3.132–134 (Aphrodite speaking to Eros)

καί κέν τοι ὀπάσαιμι Διὸς περικαλλές ἄθυρμα  
κεῖνο τό οἱ ποίησε φίλη τροφὸς Ἀδρήστεια  
ἄντρῳ ἐν Ἰδαίῳ ἔτι νήπια **κουρίζοντι**,

“And, if you should do what I ask, I would give you Zeus’s very beautiful toy, that thing which his dear nurse Adrasteia made for him, when he was **still a baby**, behaving childishly, in the Idaean cave.”

c. Aratus, *Phaenomena* 30–35 (on the constellations, the Bears)

...εἰ ἐτεὸν δῆ,  
Κρήτηθεν κείναι γε Διὸς μεγάλου ἰότητι  
οὐρανὸν εἰσανέβησαν, ὃ μιν **τότε κουρίζοντα**  
Λύκτῳ ἐν εὐώδει, ὄρεος σχεδὸν Ἰδαίοιο,  
ἄντρῳ ἐγκατέθεντο καὶ ἔτρεφον εἰς ἐνιαυτόν,  
Δικταῖοι Κούρητες ὅτε Κρόνον ἐψεύδοντο.

“If the tale is true, those Bears ascended to the sky from Crete by the will of great Zeus, because they put him, **a baby at the time**, in a cave in fragrant Lyktos, near Mount Ida and they nursed him for a year, while the Dictaeon Kouretes were deceiving Kronos.”

d. Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus* 52–4

οὔλα δὲ Κούρητές σε περὶ πρύλιν ὠρχήσαντο  
τεύχεα πεπλήγοντες, ἵνα Κρόνος οὔασιν ἠχὴν  
ἀσπίδος εἰσαῖοι καὶ μὴ **σεο κουρίζοντος**.

“And the Kouretes vigorously (?) danced the weapon-dance around you, clashing their armor, so that Kronos would hear in his ears the sound of the shield and not **you uttering your infant cries**.<sup>22</sup>”

e. Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 46: 14, 16–17, 15 (Pentheus to Dionysus)

εἶρεο Δικταίης κορυθαιόλον ἄντρον ἐρίπνης,  
εἶρεο καὶ Κορύβαντες, ὅπη **ποτὲ κοῦρος** ἀθύρων  
μαζὸν Ἀμαλθείης **κουροτρόφον** αἰγὸς ἀμέλγων  
Ζεὺς δέμας ἠέξησε, καὶ οὐ γλάγος ἔσπασε Ῥείης.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Ovid *Fasti* 4.207–8: “Already for a long time steep Ida echoed with clanging, in order that the **boy** [Zeus] cry with his infant voice in safety” (*ardua iam dudum resonat tinnitibus Ide tutus ut infanti vagiat ore puer*). Callimachus seems to be Ovid’s model here, but *infanti* might allude to Apollonius’s two uses of νήπια.

“Ask the flashing-helmeted cave of the Dictaeon cliff, ask also the Corybantes where the **baby** Zeus used to play, when he sucked the nursing breast of the goat Amaltheia and grew in power, and did not drink Rhea’s milk.”<sup>23</sup>

f. Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 41.77–80 (on the antiquity of the city Beroë)  
 Ζεὺς τότε κοῦρος ἔην, ἔτι που βρέφος· οὐ ποτε πυκνῶ  
 θερμὸν ἀνασχίζουσα νέφος βητάρμονι παλμῶ  
 ἀστεροπὴ σελάγιζε, καὶ οὐ Τιτηνίδι χάρμη  
 Ζηνὸς ἀοσητῆρες ὀιστεύοντο κεραυνοί·

“Zeus was **then a child**—still a baby, I think; not yet did the lightning shine, splitting the hot cloud with a rapid dancing leap, and not yet were the thunderbolts, Zeus’s helpers, shot in the war of the Titans.”

g. Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 18.217–221 (Staphylus exhorts Dionysus)  
 μάρναό μοι, Διόνυσε, καὶ ἄξια ῥέζει τοκῆος·  
 δεῖξον, ὅτι Κρονίδαο φέρεις γένος· ἀρτιθαλῆς γὰρ  
 Γηγενέας Τιτῆνας ἀπεστυφέλιξεν Ὀλύμπου  
 σὸς γενέτης ἔτι κοῦρος· ἐπείγεο καὶ σὺ κυδοιμῶ  
 Γηγενέων ὑπέροπλον ἀιστῶσαι γένος Ἴνδῶν.

“Fight, Dionysus, and accomplish things worthy of your father. Show that you carry the blood of the son of Kronos. For in his first bloom your father, **still a youth**, drove the earthborn Titans from Olympus. Hurry and annihilate the insolent race of earthborn Indians in battle.”

Five of these passages (a-e) refer explicitly to the Cretan upbringing of the baby Zeus, the very myth featured in the Palaikastro Hymn. Some interpreters of the Hymn have acknowledged that κοῦρος does mean “baby” elsewhere, but they have all dismissed that definition in the Hymn, on dubious grounds when grounds are given, and, again, without showing any awareness of these seven examples of Zeus as a κοῦρος.<sup>24</sup> If the passages cited above explain the strange periphrasis in the Hymn, as I think they do, then κοῦρε in the Hymn alludes to Zeus’s famous infancy and not to his utterly obscure youth.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> In another passage where Nonnus describes the protection of the “just-born baby” Zeus by the Corybantes—here equated with the Idaean Dactyls—, Zeus’s infancy is called his *kourosyne* (14.27–32; κουροσύνην Κρονίωνος 32). And when the Corybantes hide the baby Dionysus, as they did his father, his infancy is also called his *kourosyne* (Nonnus 9.162–166).

<sup>24</sup> Harrison 1912: 11; Nilsson 1927: 476; Guarducci in *ICret* 3, p. 15; Fontenrose 1966: 31–32.

<sup>25</sup> Zeus’s youth is absent from the mythological record. In Apollodorus, for example, Zeus is a “baby” (βρέφος 1.1.7) and then “mature” (τέλειος 1.2.1), without any

If the κοῦρος in the Hymn is not a youth but an infant, then he is not a successor to the Minoan Young God. Some may want to deny that there is a significant difference between a youth and an infant, that one sub-adult is as good as another,<sup>26</sup> or that the intervening centuries might account for the change in the god's age. I do not think it is splitting hairs to insist on a distinction between a baby and a youth on the cusp of manhood. There has been of late greater appreciation of the importance of age and age-grade systems in both Minoan and Greek society.<sup>27</sup> If age-grade systems did play an important role, we can expect that the Greeks and Minoans themselves would have distinguished between infancy and youth, conceptually and iconographically; an easy slippage between infancy and youth would have been unlikely, within each culture and during any interaction between them. Therefore, it is not likely that behind a Greek infant lies a Minoan youth.

Are we left, then, with a hymn to a baby Zeus? I do not think that Zeus was worshipped as a baby in the sanctuary at Palaikastro. I do think, however, that the address κοῦρε Κρόνειε was carefully chosen to remind the god of his first arrival to Dicte as a baby and his upbringing there. A ritual hymn is essentially an argument for why the god should, quite literally, grace the worshippers with his presence.<sup>28</sup> One convention of hymnic persuasion is to demonstrate a pre-existing connection between the god and the location and/or the worshippers. Accordingly, in the second stanza the Palaikastro Hymn zeroes in on the first time Zeus came to Dicte—here, on this very spot, the Kouretes protected the baby Zeus from being eaten by his father Kronos and oversaw his early upbringing, his *kourotrophia*. That event justifies Zeus's return.<sup>29</sup> The third and fourth

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reference to the intervening years. The remarkable speed with which Zeus reached maturity, thereby bypassing his youth, is mentioned by Hesiod (*Theogony* 492–3), Callimachus (*Hymn to Zeus* 55–57) and Aratus (*Phaenomena* 34).

<sup>26</sup> Nilsson, for example, conflates infant and youth in his analysis of the Cretan god (1927: 461–513). Nilsson emphasizes the god's status as the "child" of the divine Mother rather than the god's precise age.

<sup>27</sup> Minoan: Koehl 1986, 2000; Marinatos 1993. Greek: Winkler 1990, Kennell 1995, 1999.

<sup>28</sup> Race 1982, Furley 1995.

<sup>29</sup> The refrain's emphasis on Zeus being Kronos's son—even to the exclusion of addressing him by his own name—also draws attention, if somewhat ironically, to the reason for Zeus's first visit to Dicte.

stanzas then probably describe the benefits resulting from Zeus’s birth (and rule?), although the text is too fragmentary here to be certain. Stanzas five and six anticipate the renewal of these same benefits—natural growth, material success, social order—when Zeus comes again to Dicte to witness the present performance of the Hymn. The use of κοῦρε in the periphrasis κοῦρε Κρόνειε contributes to this rhetorical strategy of collapsing the distinction between Zeus’s first visit to Dicta as a baby, or κοῦρος, and his imminent arrival now, as an adult κοῦρος Κρόνειος.

The repeated θόρ’ ἐς and θόρε κές of stanzas five and six also fit into this strategy of equating Zeus’s first arrival with his present visit. Whatever the phrase’s primary meaning here—“jump into”<sup>30</sup> or “come rushing to”<sup>31</sup>—, θόρε also alludes to Zeus’s birth.<sup>32</sup> Apollo,<sup>33</sup> Hermes,<sup>34</sup> Athena,<sup>35</sup> and Dionysus<sup>36</sup> all “leap” out of the womb—or in Athena’s case, from Zeus’s head—when they are born, and in one case Dionysus is even called a κοῦρος during his birth-leap.<sup>37</sup> This meaning of θρώσκω is especially resonant in the Dictaeian context of the Hymn, since Zeus was entrusted to the Kouretes at Dicte immediately after his birth. θόρε also connotes a certain suddenness of motion that appropriately describes both the god’s emergence from the womb and his anticipated epiphany at Dicte.<sup>38</sup> Summoning Zeus with the imperative θόρε, like the use of κοῦρε in

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<sup>30</sup> This translation is the most consistent with the traditional interpretation of Zeus in the Hymn as a fertility god, since θρώσκω when used transitively can mean “impregnate”; cf. Bowra 1970: 193–5.

<sup>31</sup> Fontenrose’s translation (1966: 66). Furley and Bremer: “Here the imperative θόρε evidently functions as an intensification of the appeal we find in other cletic hymns: ἐλθέ, δεῦρο, ...” (2001: II, 17); cf. the scholia on Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes* 454: ἐσθορεῖν· ὀρμαῖν. I have adopted this definition in my translation of the Hymn, above.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. West 1965: 157–8.

<sup>33</sup> *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 119; Callimachus, *Hymn to Delos* 255; the hymn to Apollo cited by Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 3.14.4–5, ll. 3, 10.

<sup>34</sup> *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 20

<sup>35</sup> Apollonius 4.1310; Apollodorus 1.3.6; Callimachus, *Aetia* fr. 37 (Book 1); Nonnus 36.24.

<sup>36</sup> Philostratus, *Imagines* 1.14.2; Nonnus 8.397, 9.2.

<sup>37</sup> *Palatine Anthology* 9.331.1. The verb here is ἄλλομαι, a synonym of θρώσκω.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Lanzara 1990: 154.

the refrain, collapses the time gap between his birth and the present occasion, and forms part of the argument to get Zeus to return to Dicte by recalling his original visit there.

Finally, the chorus itself probably impersonated the Kouretes in a pyrrhic dance, to add a visual complement to the Hymn's rhetorical strategy. Just as the original Kouretes danced around the baby Zeus, these mortal youths dance around the altar.<sup>39</sup> On this occasion the purpose of the performance is not to protect Zeus but to please him (γέγαθι μολπᾶ [3]; χαῖρέ μοι [1]), the promise of pleasure being a classic strategy of persuasion in the hymnic genre.<sup>40</sup> A not dissimilar scenario for Zeus's periodic return to Dicte happens to be described in Calpurnius Siculus's fifth eclogue (ll. 93–96):

Iuppiter.../...posito paulisper fulmine saepe  
Cresia rura petit viridique reclinis in antro  
carmina Dictaeis audit Curetica silvis.

“Jupiter...with his thunderbolt put aside for a little while, often seeks the Cretan countryside and reclining in the verdant cave listens to the songs of the Curetes in the Dictaeon wood.”

Zeus does not have to be a pre-Hellenic youthful dying god in order for us to explain his annual trip to Dicte, and the philological evidence contradicts such an identification.

When we consider the ritual context of the Hymn's performance and the generic conventions of Greek hymns, we are able to decipher some of the surprising or, to use Jane Harrison's words, “instantly arresting” features of the Hymn's diction without resorting to claims of religious continuity with the island's Minoan past.

Furthermore, if our κοῦρος were worshipped as a youth at Palaikastro, we should expect to find iconographic evidence in support of that fact. The finds from the sanctuary itself and from the cities that we know worshipped Dictaeon Zeus—Praisos, Itanos and Hierapytna—provide none. The coins of Hierapytna and Praisos depict a normal adult Zeus, although one series of Praisian coins of the 4th century BC might depict an infant

<sup>39</sup> Lonsdale 1993: 163. The chorus of the Hymn surely danced. The participle στάντες (5) refers to the taking up of positions *in anticipation of* dancing; compare Lucian *de saltatione* 17: ἐκεῖνοι πρὸς τὴν ἀνατολὴν στάντες ὀρχήσει τὸν Ἥλιον ἀσπάζονται (“[The Indians], having arrayed themselves facing eastward, welcome the Sun with dancing”).

<sup>40</sup> Bundy 1972, Race 1982, Day 1994, Furley 1995.

Zeus being nursed by a cow;<sup>41</sup> and there are no Zeuses at all on Itanian coins. Bosanquet conjectured that a terracotta bust of a beardless youth found on Altar Hill in Praisos represented a young Dictaeon Zeus, but it is probably not even a god.<sup>42</sup>

There is, however, one testimonium that has long buttressed the traditional interpretation of κοῦρε in the Hymn since it mentions a statue of a beardless, that is, youthful, Zeus at Dicte; it is the entry for Dicte in the *Etymologicum Magnum*:

Δίκτη· Ὀρος τῆς Κρήτης, καὶ ἄκρα κειμένη κατὰ τὸ Λιβυκὸν πέλαγος. Καλεῖται δὲ καὶ οὐδετέρως. Ἄρατος,  
 Δίκτω ἐν εὐώδει ὄρειος σχεδὸν Ἰδαίῳ.  
 Ἄπο τοῦ τὸ Δίκτον. Εἴρηται παρὰ τὸ τέκω τίκτω, τίκτα τις οὔσα, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐκεῖ τεχθῆναι τὸν Δία. Ἀγαθοκλῆς δὲ θηλυκὸν ὄνομα εἶναι τὸ Δίκταιον ὄρος. Οἱ δὲ νῆσον φασὶν εἶναι τὴν Δικτὴν· καὶ ὄνομα ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλιευτικῶν δικτύων· ἐνταῦθα δὲ Διὸς ἄγαλμα ἀγένειον ἴστατο. Λέγεται καὶ Δίκταιον.

“Dicte: a mountain in Crete, and a cape lying down into the Libyan Sea. And it is also named in the neuter. Aratus:

“...in fragrant Dicton near the Idaian mountain...” [= *Phaen.* 33]

From that, the name Dicton. The name comes from τέκω and τίκτω, it being [called (?)] τίκτα, from the fact that Zeus was born there. Agathocles [says] that the Dictaeon mountain is feminine. Some say that Dicte is an island.<sup>43</sup> And the name comes from fishing nets. **In that place a beardless statue of Zeus was set up.** [Dicte] is also called Dictaion.”<sup>44</sup>

The Hymn names the location of its performance as Dicte, and the Palaikastro sanctuary is known as a sanctuary of Dictaeon Zeus in the epigraphic record. The entry for Dicte in the *Etymologicum Magnum*, therefore, has been understood to describe the cult statue of

<sup>41</sup> Svoronos 1890: 286 no. 2; plate 27, 2.

<sup>42</sup> Hutchinson 1943: 41–2. Bosanquet’s identification was influenced by his belief that Altar Hill was the location of the Praisian sanctuary of Dictaeon Zeus. There is no evidence that Zeus was the god worshipped at the sanctuary on Altar Hill; a fragmentary inscription (*ICret* 3.6.27) might place Zeus’s sanctuary on the First Acropolis, if the restoration ZHN[Ι] is correct. On the cult sites at Praisos, see Sporn 2002: 41–45, Prent 2005: 302–308.

<sup>43</sup> This statement might mean that Crete could be called Dicte, a reasonable misunderstanding deriving from the use of the adjective “Dictaeon” to mean “Cretan” in both Greek and Latin. No island called Dicte is otherwise attested.

<sup>44</sup> The same information, with minor variations, appears in the entry for Dicte in Pseudo-Zonaras

Zeus at the Palaikastro sanctuary and to establish a beardless youth as the iconographic type of the Dictaeon Zeus. The *Etymologicum Magnum* seems to confirm that the κοῦρος in the Hymn is a youth. When the entry is cited in full—and it rarely is—it becomes quite apparent that the passage is badly muddled and unreliable; where Dicte is—possibly on the south coast of Crete—, and even what Dicte is—a mountain, a cape or an island—is uncertain. It is not at all clear where this beardless statue was set up. When weighed against the philological evidence supporting an infant Zeus κοῦρος in the Hymn and the total lack of any iconographic evidence for a beardless Zeus in connection with the sanctuary at Palaikastro, the *Etymologicum Magnum* fails to sustain the long-standing view that a youthful Zeus was worshipped at Palaikastro.

Finally, ever since Jane Harrison the youthfulness of the god has been closely connected to the Hymn's performance context. The occasion seems to be the admission of the year's crop of young men into the ranks of the citizenry as they graduate from the *agela*, the education system common in Cretan cities.<sup>45</sup> The “new citizens” (ὑ[ε]ὸς πο]λείτης 30) are usually understood to be the choristers themselves, impersonating the “Youths,” the Kouretes, in their performance. Since a youthful god would be particularly appropriate for presiding over the transition of young men into adulthood, the Hymn's initiatory performance context has reinforced the belief that Dictaeon Zeus should be a youth. However attractive that idea might be, it is by no means necessarily the case and it should not be assumed to be true without supporting evidence, which, as we have seen, is lacking for Zeus at Palaikastro. In Malla, another eastern Cretan city, Zeus oversaw the entrance of young men into the citizen body, but the city's coins, our only iconographic evidence for Zeus from Malla, depict a bearded adult Zeus, not a beardless youth.<sup>46</sup> It is probably Zeus's typical civic roles, as guardian of civic order and protector of the city's welfare, that provide the rationale for his divine supervision of the annual renewal of the citizen ranks. Ironically, then, it is one of Zeus's most characteristic—we might say, one

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<sup>45</sup> Perlman 1995.

<sup>46</sup> *IC* 1.19.1: two festivals of Zeus at Malla, the Monnitia and the Hyperboia, seem to have been part of the process by which young men were admitted into the Mallian citizenry; Chaniotis 1996: 66–68, 124–126, 208–213; Sporn 2002: 61. For the coins of Malla, see Svoronos 1890: 240–1; plate 22, 18–19.

of his most quintessentially Hellenic—functions that explains his involvement with the initiation of young citizens at both Palaikastro and Malla.

The greatest obstacle to the Palaikastro Hymn being read on its own terms is still Welcker’s theory of a Cretan Zeus and the assumption that all Zeus cults throughout the island are manifestations of the Cretan Zeus phenomenon.<sup>47</sup> If the preceding analysis is correct, we must reject the notion of a youthful Zeus, at Palaikastro at the very least. At Malla, too, where Zeus fulfills a similar initiatory role to Dictaeon Zeus at Palaikastro, there is nothing non-Greek, let alone Minoan, about the god. A survey of the entire Cretan iconographic record yields only one secure example of a beardless Zeus, an Orientalizing pithos lid from the Fortetsa cemetery near Knossos, on which a beardless Zeus holds a thunderbolt and a bird and stands in front of a tripod.<sup>48</sup> And if the *Etymologicum Magnum* entry for Dicte is not completely faulty, it should refer to a beardless statue of Zeus somewhere in Crete, but not at the Palaikastro sanctuary. These two instances of a beardless Zeus in Crete are hardly sufficient to warrant a theory of island-wide Minoan continuity in the cults of Zeus, especially given the numerous Cretan representations of a canonical, adult Zeus.<sup>49</sup>

The identification of Zeus with the beardless Cretan god Welchanos has been one of the strongest arguments in favor of the Cretan Zeus theory. Welchanos, who probably was an indigenous god, appears as a youth sitting in a tree on the coins of Phaistos, and he was identified by Hesychius as “Zeus among the Cretans.”<sup>50</sup> A new 3rd-century BC

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<sup>47</sup> Crete has long been subject to a two-fold stereotype, which characterizes the island as not only temporally but also spatially homogeneous. On local variation in Crete, see Perlman 1992.

<sup>48</sup> *LIMC*, “Zeus” no. 12; Brock 1957: 122–123, plate 207; cf. Levi 1945: 29–30, plate 28. At the same time, there are beardless Zeuses elsewhere in the Greek world that are not of Minoan or pre-Greek origin; see Appendix, below.

<sup>49</sup> Images of the infant Zeus in Crete also far outnumber the youthful representations; see especially the Imperial coinage (Svoronos 1890: 116 nos. 137–138, 119 no. 154, 123 no. 4, 346 no. 74, 348 nos. 85–86). The imagery of Zeus’s Cretan infancy was featured on several Imperial medallion issues, as well (Cook 1914–40: 1, 713–714, figs. 528, 530, 531).

<sup>50</sup> Hesychius: Γελχάνος· ὁ Ζεὺς παρὰ Κρησίων. Welchanos is attested epigraphically at Ayia Triada (*ICret* 1.23.5), Gortyn (*ICret* 4.3, 4.184 [month]), Knossos (*ICret* 1.16.3 [month]), and Lyttos (*ICret* 1.18.11 [festival]). Welchanios, a theophoric name or the month, appears in a Cypriot inscription (*SGDI* 86: va-la-ka-ni-o).

inscription from Eleutherna, however, proves that Zeus was in fact not identified with Welchanos.<sup>51</sup> The inscription, a treaty between Eleutherna and Rhaukos, gives the following list of gods by whom the two parties swore their oath:

[ ...καὶ] Ζῆνα φιδάταν καὶ Ζῆνα Θεγ[ά]-  
 [ταν ...τὰν Ἡραν καὶ τὸν Ποτειδᾶ καὶ τὰ[ν]  
 [ ...]καὶ Ἄρια καὶ Ἀφροδίταν καὶ Ἀθην[αι]-  
 [αν ...]αν καὶ Ἀπέλλωνα τὸν Δελ[φίνι]-  
 [ον ...]καὶ Ἄρτεμιν καὶ τὸν φελχᾶ[νον]  
 [ ...κ]αὶ Λύμφας καὶ θιόνς πάντ[α][νς]

“By...and Idaean **Zeus** and **Zeus** Thenatas...and Hera and Poseidon and...and Ares and Aphrodite and Athena...and Apollo Delphinios...and Artemis and **Welchanos**...and the Lymphai and all the gods...”

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this list is that Zeus and Welchanos were distinct and separate gods, as much as Poseidon and Apollo or Hera and Artemis. Hesychius’s testimony is to be rejected. Welchanos tells us nothing about the worship of Zeus in Crete.

As Welchanos was the most widely documented candidate for an explicitly youthful Zeus in Crete, the Eleutherna inscription strikes a severe blow against the Cretan Zeus theory. Similarly, the new interpretation of the Palaikastro Hymn presented here shows conclusively that Dictaeon Zeus, whose cult has been asserted to be a Minoan survival with more confidence than perhaps any other, was not worshipped as a youth. If a youthful Zeus is a prerequisite for continuity with the young Minoan god—and I think it must be—, it is time to admit that the Cretan Zeus is a modern myth that no longer merits belief.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Stampolides 2004: 156.

<sup>52</sup> A shorter version of this paper was given at a colloquium in memory of Michael Jameson at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens on June 16, 2005. The organizers of the colloquium, Angelos Matthaiou and Irene Polinskaya, have generously undertaken the publication of the papers from the colloquium, and this paper will be appearing in that volume (title and date of publication to be determined).

### Appendix: beardless Zeuses outside Crete

In contrast to the mythological evidence, there are several beardless Zeuses in the iconographic record. Their geographical range is particularly noteworthy. None of these young Zeuses has any apparent Cretan connection, and we do not have enough information about the pertinent local cults to assess their religious significance. Their number and variety should make us think twice before assuming that there is something inherently non-Greek about a young Zeus, despite his absence from Greek mythology. The list is not intended to be exhaustive.<sup>53</sup>

1. “Melian” amphora. Rheneia. 650–640 BC. *LIMC* “Zeus” no. 13.<sup>54</sup>

On the neck is a beardless winged figure, presumably Zeus, holding a thunderbolt in each hand.

2. Pediment of the temple of Artemis. Corfu. Early 6th century BC. *LIMC* “Gorgo” no. 289.

On the right side a beardless Zeus, wielding a thunderbolt, fights a Titan. Zeus’s beardlessness probably highlights the fact that the Titanomachy was the first event of his adulthood, as it is in Apollodorus (1.2.1). This would also explain why Zeus is a youth (**κοῦρος**), “in his first bloom” (**ἀρτιθαλής**), during the Titanomachy in Nonnus (18.217–221, cited above as passage [g.]).<sup>55</sup> The use of beardlessness to mark the first event of a god or hero’s career is found in at least two other cases. First, in the metopes of the temple of Zeus at Olympia it is only in the first labor, subduing the Nemean Lion, that Herakles is beardless. Second, the scenes on two red-figure vases, which show a beardless Dionysus at a time (ca. 470 BC) when Dionysus is still always represented as

<sup>53</sup> I have not included the well-known relief pithos from Tinos (675–650 BC), which depicts the birth of Athena from Zeus’s head (= *LIMC* “Athena” no. 360), since Simantoni-Bournia has recently made a convincing case that this Zeus is bearded (E. Σημαντώνη-Μπουρνιά, “Ξώμπουργο Τήνου: ο ανάγλυφος πιθαμοφόρος της Γεννήσεως. έκδοση δευτέρη, βελτιωμένη.” In Αλεξανδρή, Α. and Ι. Λεβέντη (eds.) 2001. *Καλλίστευμα. μελέτες προς τιμήν της Όλγας Τζάκου-Αλεξανδρή*. Athens: 69–84.

<sup>54</sup> P. Zaphiropoulou, *Προβλήματα της μηλιακής αγγειογραφίας* (1985) fig. 59.

<sup>55</sup> The Titanomachy is also the event that signals Zeus’s entrance into adulthood in Nonnus 41.77–80 (passage f, above).

bearded, have been identified by Carpenter as depicting Dionysus's punishment of the Thracian king Lycurgus.<sup>56</sup> According to Apollodorus, Lycurgus was “the first” in a series of unbelievers who attempted to turn Dionysus away as he made his first journey through Greece (3.5.1).

### 3. Two Zeuses at Aigion. *LIMC* “Zeus” no. 439.

According to Pausanias, there is a bronze statue at Aigion of Zeus as “a boy in age” (ἠλικίαν παῖς), the work of Ageladas of Argos (7.24.4). The priesthood of this Zeus used to be held by a boy, the victor in a beauty contest, until he began to grow a beard and was then replaced; that practice was no longer current in Pausanias's day. Pausanias mentions another statue, of Zeus Soter, that is “beardless” (τὸ δὲ οὐκ ἔχον πω γένεια 7.23.9). From the third quarter of the 1st century BC onwards the bronze coins of Aigion depict a statue of a beardless Zeus with long hair, fulminating, and holding an eagle; it is uncertain which of the two statues mentioned by Pausanias is represented.<sup>57</sup> In the 2nd century AD, the label ZEYC ΠΑΙC ΑΙΓΙΕΩΝ or ΠΑΙC ΑΙΓΙΕΩΝ begins to appear with the statue on the coins.

### 4. Zeus Hellanios. Syracuse. First quarter of the 3rd century BC.<sup>58</sup>

Bronze coins with a beardless head of Zeus are struck at Syracuse early in the 3rd century, possibly when Hicetas was tyrant (288–279). Around the beardless head runs the inscription, “of Zeus Hellanios” (ΔΙΟΣ ΕΛΛΑΝΙΟΥ). Langher thinks that this youthful Zeus iconography is influenced by indigenous Sicilian religion, but cannot point to a specific cult as a possible antecedent.<sup>59</sup>

### 5. Three young Zeus statues dedicated at Olympia (Pausanias 5.22.1, 5.24.6).

Pausanias sees two beardless statues (5.24.6) and one statue of a boy Zeus (5.22.1) at Olympia. One beardless Zeus (οὐκ ἔχων πω γένεια) was a private dedication by

<sup>56</sup> T. H. Carpenter, “The beardless Dionysus.” In Carpenter, T. H. and C. A. Faraone (eds.) 1993. *Masks of Dionysus*. Ithaca: 185–206.

<sup>57</sup> On the coins of Aigion, see J. H. Kroll, “Hemiobols to Assaria: the bronze coinage of Roman Aigion.” *The numismatic chronicle* 156 (1996) 49–78. On the identification of the statue on the coin, see p. 64 n. 39.

<sup>58</sup> P. Gardner. 1883. *The types of Greek coins*. Cambridge: 185, plate 11, 25; R. Calciati. 1983–1987. *Corpus nummorum Siculorum*. Milan: vol. 2, 299–317.

<sup>59</sup> S. C. Langher. 1964. *Contributo alla storia della antica moneta bronzea in Sicilia*. Milan: 335, where she summarizes the scholarship on chronology and iconography.

Mithycus of Rhegium (cf. 5.26.1–5), whose many dedications at Olympia are also mentioned by Herodotus (7.170). The other beardless statue (οὐκ ἔχον γένεια) is a public dedication, by Elaea in Aeolis. Cleolas of Phlious dedicated the statue of a child Zeus (ἡλικίαν παῖς ἔτι). These dedications could reflect local variations in the Zeus cults of the home cities of the dedicators, but we know too little about them to say.

6. Juppitur Anxurus. Rome. 48 BC. *LIMC* “Zeus/Juppiter” no. 301.

The image of a beardless, enthroned Juppiter appears on a Roman coin, with the inscription IOVIS AXVR. Juppiter Anxurus (“of Anxur”) also appears in Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.799–800.

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