

The *Homeric Hymns to Demeter, Apollo and Hermes*, like many shorter *Homeric Hymns* are concluded by the formula αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' ἀοιδῆς, which follows the farewell χαῖρε to the addressed god or in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* the imperative infinitive ὀπάζειν. The poet's promise to remember the god and another song has been an issue of debate. Scholars suggest that the ἄλλης ἀοιδῆς refers to another hymn, which will be performed in the future to the same god (Moran 1975:197–98, Clay 1997:493) or an epic poem, which will be recited after the *Hymn* (Bakker 2002:72). Calame (2005:28) aptly notes that the current hymn represents an offering, while the future song is a counter gift in gratitude for the fulfillment of the poet's request. This view can be further supported, if the formula is interpreted in connection with the narrative of the major *Homeric Hymns*.

In this paper I argue that the formula's juxtaposition of an imperative with a verb in future tense is found in other examples of reciprocity within the narrative components of the major *Homeric Hymns*. The pattern *da et dabo*, is used by Apollo, and Demeter in their interaction with mortals (h.*Ap.*482-490; h.*Dem.* 270-274) but also by Apollo in his speech to Hermes (h.*Her.*456-462). The lapse of time between gift and counter gift reinstates the reciprocal relationship as conditional, since only if the request expressed by the imperative is fulfilled, it will be reciprocated. The promise of future reward, thus, functions as incentive for the realization of the request. The hymnists replicate this relationship in their address to the god, where it is stated that as long as the god rejoices, presumably with the present hymn, or fulfill the poet's request, he/she will be reciprocated by another song. Moreover, a common feature of hymns and prayers, the *hypomnesis*, that is a reminder of an occasion where devotion was expressed by one party and/or assistance was rendered by the other (Miller 1986:2), is missing from the major *Homeric Hymns*. The poet instead of referring to previous services provided to or offered by gods in order to secure a present request, he uses the pattern *da et dabo* so that he will extend his relationship with the god to the future and continually renew this exchange by every performance of the hymn. Therefore a different type of *hypomnesis* is established since the poet reminds the god of his own capacity to praise him/her again. This is a capacity that he has demonstrated by performing the present hymn. At the same time the major *Hymns* establish the belief that as long as the worshippers gratify the god by performing rituals (e.g. the initiates of the Eleusinian Mysteries), participating in festivals (e.g. the Delians) or serving as priests (e.g. Cretans), the pleased god will reciprocate positively (e.g. the abundance of sacrificial meat for the Cretan priests). The poet hopes to establish a similar relationship with the divine by performing a hymn. Finally, the verb of remembering in the closing formula alludes to dedicatory epigrams where the offering is referred to as μνήμα. Since for oral compositions recollection is the synonym of signing (Moran 1975:198; Richardson 1974:325) and remembrance relates to dedications, we should come to the conclusion that the poets in the closure of the *Homeric Hymns* promise another offering, a dedication of another hymn to the god.

