

Structural Symmetry and Parallelism in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

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For dad

THE STRUCTURE of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*¹ has been for some scholars an issue of debate especially because of Demeter's unmotivated visit to Eleusis.² The goddess withdraws from Olympus as soon as she discovers from Helios the culprit of her daughter's abduction, namely Zeus, who allowed Hades to capture Persephone. A furious Demeter visits Eleusis, where she disguises herself as an old woman and is hired at Celeus' palace as a nurse for the prince Demophoon. After her attempt to immortalize Demophoon is interrupted, Demeter reveals her identity and orders that a temple be built for her. In exchange for the temple, she establishes rituals in honor of Demophoon, as well as the Eleusinian Mysteries. This *quid pro quo* exchange between Demeter and the Eleusinians ends the episode.

This unprompted scene, the so-called Demophoon episode, which precedes the episode with the famine and the return of Persephone, delays apparently the recovery of Persephone. To this end, it contrasts with other, later versions of the myth, according to which Demeter visits Eleusis in order to gather information about her daughter's whereabouts.³ In these versions, the Eleusinians' information that Hades abducted Persephone is rewarded with the institution of the Eleusinian Mysteries and the introduction of agriculture. In addition, the Demophoon episode in the *Hymn* is only loosely connected with the subsequent scene, in which a distressed Demeter, isolated in her temple, turns the land infertile and imposes famine. These and other narrative inconsistencies in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* have even raised questions about the

¹ For a post-Homeric date of the *Hymn*, see RICHARDSON 1974, 5-12; JANKO 1982, 200.

² For a general overview of this scene, see RICHARDSON 1974, 174 *ad* 75ff, 178-179; RICHARDSON 2011, 55-57.

³ On other versions of Persephone's abduction, see RICHARDSON 1974, 74-86; FOLEY 1994, 97-103.

poem's authorship and composition.⁴ Suter argues, for example, that in the *Hymn* we can find traces of an earlier poem, which had nothing to do with Olympus and had the mother-daughter relationship as its central focus, "the core story". According to Suter, the *Hymn* in its current state offers an Olympianized version of the original myth in order to place emphasis on Zeus.⁵

My approach to the structure of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* aims to showcase the logical principle behind the narrative organization of the *Hymn*. By identifying structural symmetries and parallelisms I show that the transition from strife to reconciliation, which corresponds to the narrative progression from negative reciprocity ("taking without giving") to reconciliatory, balanced exchange of the *quid pro quo* type, permeates the sequence of events on the level of individual scenes and on the level of the general structure of the *Hymn*. Moreover, the episodes on reciprocity, which are also organized through ring composition, parallel each other in the realms of men and gods and show the interconnection of the two through the venue of reciprocity. I explain such prevalence of the theme of reciprocity by noting the function of hymns as offerings, which please and appease the divine. The *Hymn* itself partakes in the establishment of a reciprocal relationship between the hymnist and the goddesses, Demeter and Persephone. Therefore, the Eleusis episode is integrated structurally and thematically according to the generic features of the *Hymn*. As Richardson observes, "the poet has chosen to tell the story in a particular sequence and it is only fair to assume that he has his own reasons for doing so."⁶

1. The Demophon Episode: A Misfit?

Scholars attribute the narrative's presumed lack of an organizing principle to the *Hymn's* aetiological nature. According to Parker, for example, "in a 'theogonic' and aetiological poem, the reader can indeed make sense of the narrative, but in terms less of motives than of results and "Demeter would cease to be Demeter if she had to explain herself to

⁴ For narrative inconsistencies see RICHARDSON 1974, 259-260; STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 205-206, 225-226.

⁵ SUTER 2002, 24-25. SUTER 2005 also proposes a female author for the *Hymn*. See especially 22-24.

⁶ RICHARDSON 2011, 56.

Wilamowitz.⁷⁷ Chappell, agreeing with Parker, argues that the structure is shaped by the hymn's focus on how particular functions of the god were acquired, rather than by rational and psychological motives.⁸ In this light, the Demophoon episode provides an explanation for and is linked with the institution of the Eleusinian Mysteries. Since the immortalization of Demophoon failed, a new way to face the limitations of mortality must be found, and this is feasible only through the Eleusinian Mysteries and the blessedness they provide to the initiates after death.⁹

Recently, Currie has shown that narrative inconsistencies indicate the poet's difficulty to incorporate a new version into the traditional one; a problem best reflected when the Berlin Papyrus version (fr. 49 Kern/fr. 386-397 Bernabé) is taken into account. According to the version in the Berlin Papyrus, which contains some verses from the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and a paraphrase of the plot, it is in Eleusis, just as in other versions, that Demeter receives the decisive information for the retrieval of Persephone.¹⁰ In the *Hymn*, however, neither Helios' information nor the Eleusis visit advances Demeter's quest for her daughter. These are presumably the poet's innovations, since he provides an aetiology for the Eleusinian Mysteries, which is not well integrated into the traditional plot.

On the other hand, there have been many attempts to trace a rational, well-developed structure in the *Hymn's* narrative, despite these narrative peculiarities, on the basis of common formulas and repetition,¹¹ thematic polarities (e.g. division between gods and humans),¹² or even trinities.¹³ The theme, which I trace, of conflict and reconciliation through reciprocity shapes as well the structure of the *Hymn*, even of individual

⁷ PARKER 1991, 11. On the aetiological nature of the *Hymn*, see also FOLEY 1994, 84.

⁸ CHAPPELL 2006, 336.

⁹ See e.g. PARKER 1991, 9-10; FOLEY 1994, 103 and 138-139. SUTER 2002, 69 claims that Demeter's abandoning of her fantasy to immortalize Demophoon is a sign of her emotional maturity in a psychological progress, after facing the trauma of Persephone's coming of age, which is typical in a woman's middle years.

¹⁰ Isocrat. *Paneg.* 28; Paus. 1.14.13. See CURRIE 2012, 198-203; CURRIE 2016, 91-93.

¹¹ SEGAL 1981, 131-159, identifies various recurrent themes linked by word repetitions (e.g. withdrawal, reception, immortality-mortality, sexuality, honor and folly) that bring coherence to the *Hymn*.

¹² SCARPI 1976, 5-7, 9ff. argues for the polarities mortals-immortals, nature-culture, and view-hear/speak system as structural divisions.

¹³ SZEPES 1975, 32. On a formalistic approach to the structure of the *Homeric Hymns*, composed by the sections Introduction-Middle Section-Conclusion see JANKO 1981.

scenes.¹⁴ This theme is related to the story pattern “wrath, withdrawal and return,” the use of which, according to Mary Lord and Roberto Nickel, frames the organization of the narrative.¹⁵ Nickel argues that the poet suppresses other versions of the myth of Persephone’s abduction and consciously uses this pattern, which “always serves to glorify its principal character,” as it is appropriate for the *Hymn* that focuses on the god’s *timai*.¹⁶ Nevertheless, as Nickel also acknowledges,¹⁷ the poet incorporates two withdrawals, one from Olympus to Eleusis, and a second from Celeos’ palace to Demeter’s temple breaking therefore the linear narrative development of this theme.¹⁸ Moreover, the Demophoon episode that starts and ends with a withdrawal, does not follow the pattern very well, since it does not lead directly to the character’s return. As I argue, the double withdrawal points to the poet’s intention to interweave the Demophoon episode with the rest of the narrative through thematic contrasts and parallels. To this end, the narrative transition from strife to reconciliation and from one type of reciprocity to another unlike the pattern “wrath, withdrawal and return” allows for framing greater narrative interconnections between the Demophoon episode and the rest of the *Hymn* in a non-linear sequence of events.¹⁹

2. The Theme of Reciprocity as a Structural Element

By the term reciprocity I designate a mutually contingent exchange of objects or services between two parties.²⁰ In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* there are different types of reciprocity in which gods and hu-

¹⁴ The theme of conflict and reconciliation has already been identified as a structural element by ALDERINK 1982, 4, who proposes that the myth develops around two distinct spheres, those of gods and humans, within which there is another division: for the divine events the myth moves from conflict to resolution and for the divine-human events there is the duality of disguise/revelation. SZEPES 1975, 33 as well marks revenge and reconciliation as one of the five parts of the *Hymn*. These parts are: 1) Rape (initial situation), 2) Wandering (complication), 3) Hiding in Eleusis (climax), 4) Revenge (catastrophe) and reconciliation, and 5) Bestowing of happiness on men.

¹⁵ NICKEL 2003, 59. LORD 1967. See also SOWA 1984, ch. 4.

¹⁶ NICKEL 2003, 62.

¹⁷ NICKEL 2003, 77-78.

¹⁸ NICKEL 2003, 67; See elements of the theme in SOWA 1984, 95-96.

¹⁹ This narrative transition is found in the other major *Homeric Hymns* as well, but for the purposes of this paper I focus only on the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.

²⁰ GOULDNER 1960, 164. For a survey of various definitions and categorizations of reciprocity, see VAN WEES 1998, 15-24.

mans engage, and these fall under the rubric of negative and balanced reciprocity. According to Marshal Sahlins, “negative reciprocity” is defined as an “attempt to get something for nothing with impunity, the several forms of appropriation, transactions opened and conducted toward net utilitarian advantage.”²¹ Also, negative reciprocity “ranges through various degrees of cunning, guile, stealth, and violence to the finesse of a well-conducted horse raid.”²² Marriage by abduction and cattle raids are examples of such unilateral exchanges, a breakage of a balanced reciprocity. The term “balanced reciprocity” signifies “transactions which stipulate returns of commensurate worth or utility within a finite and narrow period.”²³ Balanced reciprocity is equivalent to mutual exchanges of the *quid pro quo* type. In the mythical narrative, such exchanges do not always have to take place simultaneously, and this is particularly the case for the reciprocal relationships between gods and mortals, where there may be a time lapse between an offering (e.g. a sacrifice) and a counter-offering (e.g. the granting of a request).

The episodes in the *Homeric Hymn* are organized so as to follow a progression from strife to resolution, which corresponds to an extent to the progression from negative to balanced reciprocity.²⁴ Negative reciprocity (Persephone’s abduction) takes place at the beginning of the narrative as an indicator of a crisis, while balanced reciprocity (the return of Persephone in exchange for the return of Demeter and the restoration of the land’s fertility), which restores order and leads to reconciliation, concludes the narrative. Such a progression from strife to resolution is common in aetiological myths, which display the progression from disorder to cult,²⁵ and to this end is appropriate for the aetiological nature of the *Hymn*, which emphasizes the foundation of the Eleusinian Mysteries and the goddesses’ acquisition of honors.²⁶ Moreover, the progress from strife to resolution is a common theme in epic poetry as well.²⁷ For example, the transition from strife/negative reciprocity (e.g.

²¹ SAHLINS 1972, 195. On a modified version of Sahlins’ typology see COOK 2016.

²² SAHLINS 1972, 195.

²³ SAHLINS 1972, 194-195. I do not discuss his third type of reciprocity, the generalized, which refers to acts of altruism, friendship and hospitality.

²⁴ See SEAFORD 1994, ch. 2, and 71-73 on the “crisis of reciprocity” in the Homeric epics and its resolution through rituals that restore reciprocity.

²⁵ SEAFORD 1995, 212-214; SEAFORD 2012, 24-25, 39-40.

²⁶ On *timai* as the focus of all major *Homeric Hymns*, see STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 15 and *passim*.

²⁷ For examples of Sahlins’ typology of reciprocities in Homer, see DONLAN 1982; COOK 2016.

the abduction of Chryseis, Briseis) to resolution/balanced reciprocity (e.g. the ransom for Hector's body) organizes the narrative of the *Iliad*.²⁸ However, balanced reciprocity fails almost throughout the *Iliad* with the exception of the successful balanced reciprocity between Achilles and Priam,²⁹ which takes place as well at the end of the poem.³⁰ In the *Hymn*, the effectiveness of balanced reciprocity is highlighted not only in the concluding reciprocity that results in the appeasement of Demeter and the return of her daughter but also in the Eleusis episode, where reciprocity works again as reconciliatory procedure.

Thus the overall transition from negative to balanced reciprocity serves as a tool for bringing coherence to the *Hymn*, and it is reflected even in the episodes in the middle section, where Demeter reciprocates with humans. This type of structure has been defined as “structural parallelism,” which Porter discusses in the case of Greek tragedies. Structural parallelism is framed “between their [i.e. tragedies’] overall movement and the movement of their component parts.”³¹ An example of this thematic movement is the transition from a hero's good fortune to his fall, which is traced at the beginning and at the end of a tragedy but also in its constituent segments.³² This parallelism between different rhythms of a play, larger and smaller, showcases a particular interest in building a unified structure.³³ A similar unified structure can be discerned in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*.

The smaller rhythms of negative and balanced reciprocity in the *Homeric Hymn* contrast or complement each other through structural symmetry, according to which “elements of content, either analogous or contrasting, stand over against each other and seem to counter balance one another, often forming concentric patterns.”³⁴ Such a structure is found, for example, in the *Odyssey*, where narrative components cor-

²⁸ See on this topic most recently LYONS 2012, 57-63.

²⁹ LYONS 2012, 62.

³⁰ Similarities in structure with the *Iliad* may be supported by the function of the *Homeric Hymns* as proems to the recitation of epic poetry. On bibliography and discussion of the proem theory first supported by WOLF 1795 see STRAUSS CLAY 2011, 237-240.

³¹ PORTER 1971, 465. For parallelism as symmetry that includes ring composition see DOUGLAS 2007, 5-6.

³² PORTER 1971, 465.

³³ PORTER 1971, 465.

³⁴ BERTMAN 1966, 15. See also SEGAL 1974, on a structuralistic approach to the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*. For structural polarities and repetition in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, see LORD 1967; SEGAL 1981, 131; SCARPI 1976, 5; ALDERINK 1982, 4.

provide a detailed enumeration of parallels between the sequence of events in the Demophoon episode and the events related to Persephone, but also between the roles of the two mothers, which form two “composite syntagms.”³⁹ In these syntagms there is an act of separation of a child/victim (Demophoon and Persephone) from its mother/protector and eventually obstructor of the separation (Metaneira and Demeter); a separation, which is instigated by an outsider (Demeter and Hades).⁴⁰ These similarities along with some differences that Felson-Rubin and Deal notice extend to the abduction and the recovery of the lost child, but no emphasis is given to the reconciliation procedure. As I will show in the next section, the parallelism of the theme of reciprocity allows tracing symmetries that extend from the beginning to the end of the *Hymn* and from the beginning to the end of the Eleusis episode. It is the manner of resolving the crisis and returning the child through reciprocity that forms a parallel, central to our understanding of Demeter and the *Hymn*’s efficacy as a medium of reciprocity.

Moreover, I hope to show a more complex structure of the *Hymn* than the tripartite structure.⁴¹ Foley, for example, who suggests that ellipses in the narrative progression may have been explained by the secrecy of the Eleusinian Mysteries, presents the structure of the *Hymn* in terms of interwoven frames.⁴² The structure of the poem is based upon the dominant divine story (at the beginning and the end of the *Hymn*), the intersection between divine and mortal experience in the central episode, and the consequence of this intersection in the establishment of the Mysteries, the foundation of which is motivated by the Demophoon episode.⁴³ Richardson, following Strauss Clay, notices that

³⁹ FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 8-10.

⁴⁰ FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 8.

⁴¹ Cf. NÜNLIST 2004, 38, who notices that the main element (Persephone’s abduction, her recovery and Demeter’s reconciliation) frames the second one (Demeter’s visit at Eleusis and foundation of the Eleusinian rites).

⁴² FOLEY 1994, 101-102. Cf. PARKER 1991, 13 on the two main stages of initiation (*myesis* and *epopteia*) that are reflected in Demeter’s initial reference to *orgia* and their final institution. For links between themes in the *Hymn* and the Eleusinian Mysteries see WALTON 1952; RICHARDSON 1974, 12-30; FOLEY 1994, 95-97, 137-142, 172-174; COSMOPOULOS 2015, ch. 2. Cf. CLINTON 1986, 43-49, who argues that the *Hymn* does not reflect the official cult legend of the Eleusinian Mysteries.

⁴³ FOLEY 1994, 83, 114. She also suggests (84) that the entire *Hymn* is structured to prepare for the establishment of the Mysteries. Also STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 207 on the *Hymn* operating on the level of gods and mortals and their interdependence.

the *Hymn*'s composition "seems clear and simple" and consists of three sections.⁴⁴ In the first section, Demeter witnesses Persephone's abduction and learns the identity of the true culprit. In the second section, Demeter visits Eleusis and orders the Eleusinians to build her a temple, and, in the third, Demeter creates a famine that motivates the return of Persephone. The first and the third parts, focusing on rape and return, are counterbalanced, while the middle section anticipates the last one, since Demeter's failed immortalization of Demophoon foreshadows her provision of a better lot after death to the initiates of the Eleusinian Mysteries at the end of the *Hymn*.⁴⁵ The following analysis will show that the counterbalanced scenes emerge around the theme of reciprocity and allow us to read the Demophoon's episode not only as a failed plan of Demeter, but as a successful employment of the tool of reciprocity, an *exemplum*, which is applied in the subsequent scene.⁴⁶

3. Structural Symmetry and Parallelism in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

3.1 Symmetry/Parallelism between Olympus and Eleusis: From Negative to Balanced Reciprocity

In the *Hymn to Demeter*, there is a narrative transition from negative reciprocity, which takes place at the beginning of the *Hymn* with the abduction of Persephone (ἤρπαξεν 'snatched' 3), to balanced reciprocity at the end of the poem with the reconciliation between Zeus and Demeter (460-471).⁴⁷ The negative reciprocity at the onset of the *Hymn* is masterminded by Zeus, who plans the deception (δόλον 'trickery' 8) of narcissus with the aid of Gaia (ὄν φῦσε δόλον καλυκώπιδι κούρη / Γαῖα Διὸς βουλῆσι χαριζομένη πολυδέκτη 8-9) and who permits the abduction of his daughter (δῶκεν 'gave' 3). At the same time, it is executed by Hades, who abducts Persephone (ἤρπαξεν 3), while she plucks the flow-

⁴⁴ According to NÜNLIST 2004, 39 in the *Homeric Hymns*' narrative "one event 'automatically' motivates the next," following a "steady flow."

⁴⁵ STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 244; RICHARDSON 2015, 23. Also FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 18; PARKER 1991, 9-10; FOLEY 1994, 91. Cf. SUTER 2002, 146 who sees the Demophoon episode as an aetiology for Thesmophoria. RICHARDSON 1974, 259-260 sees the *Hymn* as a mixed composition of a myth about Demeter's trip to Eleusis and the establishment of the mysteries/agriculture, and a myth about famine in the absence of the god. According to SOWA 1984, 66 the Demophoon episode may provide an aetiology for a child inoculation ritual involving fire.

⁴⁶ Greek text from the edition of CÀSSOLA 1975.

⁴⁷ Cf. ARTHUR 1994, 218-219.

er (15-18). The negative reciprocity causes tension between Demeter and Zeus, the main culprit according to Helios who exonerates Hades and blames Zeus alone; this is the importance of the Helios scene. The strife between Demeter and Zeus is encapsulated in Demeter's withdrawal to Eleusis (νοσοφισθεΐσα 92) due to her anger (χωσαμένη δῆπειτα κελαινεφεΐ Κρονίῳνι 91) *and* in her imposition of a famine that leads to the suspension of sacrifices to the gods (305-313) but affects humans as well (310-311). These two elements, withdrawal and anger, that relate to negative reciprocity, are reintroduced in the Demophoon episode.

There are many attempts at achieving reconciliation before the final balanced reciprocity, which mitigates the consequences of negative reciprocity. First, Zeus via Iris orders Demeter to go back to Olympus (321-323), an order she simply rejects (324). Then all gods sent by Zeus offer her gifts and honors, in order to convince her to return to Olympus; offerings, which are also refused by Demeter who retains her anger (330).⁴⁸ Finally, for the first time a balanced reciprocity is proposed by the goddess herself, as the goddess also did in Eleusis framing a deal with the Eleusinians. Demeter promises to return to Olympus on condition that Persephone return as well. Demeter pointedly equates her return with the land's rejuvenation (331-333):

οὐ μὲν γάρ ποτ' ἔφασκε θυώδεος Οὐλύμποιο
πρὶν γ' ἐπιβήσεσθαι, οὐ πρὶν γῆς καρπὸν ἀνήσειν,
πρὶν ἴδοι ὄφθαλμοῖσιν ἔην εὐώπιδα κόυρην.

for she vowed that she would never set foot on fragrant Olympus
nor let fruit spring out of the ground, until she beheld with her
eyes her own fair-faced daughter.⁴⁹

Zeus accepts Demeter's proposition and sends Hermes to fetch Persephone. However, when mother and daughter meet, Demeter realizes that she needs to modify her proposition, because Persephone had eaten the pomegranate seed. Demeter is willing to assent to a modified reciprocity and accept Persephone's partial stay with her (h. *Dem.* 395-400):

⁴⁸ Similarly in Eleusis Demeter rejects the offering of a seat and of wine before she accepts better offers, a more humble seat and the drink *kykeon*, which she requests (h. *Dem.* 206-212).

⁴⁹ Translations by EVELYN-WHITE 1914.

ὥς μὲν γάρ κε νέουσα π[αρά στυγεροῦ Ἄϊδαο]
καὶ παρ' ἐμοὶ καὶ πατρὶ κελαινεφεΐ Κρονίωνι
ναιετάοις πάντεσσι τετιμένη ἀθανάτοισιν.
εἰ δ' ἐπάσσω, πάλιν <αὔτις> ἰοῦσ' ὑπὸ κεύθεσι γαίης
οἰκήσεις ὥρέων τρίτατον μέρ[ος] εἰς ἐνιαυτόν,
τὰς δὲ δύο παρ' ἐμοί τε καὶ ἄλλοις ἀθανάτοισιν. 400

For if you have not, you shall come back from loathly Hades and live with me and your father, the dark-clouded Son of Cronos and be honored by all the deathless gods; but if you have tasted food, you must go back again beneath the secret places of the earth, there to dwell a third part of the seasons every year, yet for the two parts you shall be with me and the other deathless gods.

The final, balanced reciprocity, which marks the end of the narrative and the ultimate reconciliation, is presented to Demeter by Rhea (460-465), and constitutes Zeus' words (441-447), which echo the words of Demeter, with one shared line even verbatim (400 and 447) that prescribes the time that Persephone will spend with her mother.⁵⁰ It is Demeter's deal essentially that Zeus employs.

δεῦρο τέκος, καλέει σε βαρύκτυπος εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
ἐλθέμεναι μετὰ φῦλα θεῶν, ὑπέδεκτο δὲ τιμὰς
δωσέμεν, ἄς κ' ἐθέλησθα μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι·
νεῦσε δὲ σοὶ κούρην ἔτεος περιτελλομένοιο
τὴν τριτάτην μὲν μοῖραν ὑπὸ ζόφῳ ἠερόεντι,
[τὰς δὲ δύο παρὰ σοί τε καὶ ἄλλοις] ἀθανάτοισιν. 465

Come, my daughter; for far-seeing Zeus the loud-thunderer calls you to join the families of the gods, and has promised to give you what rights you please among the deathless gods, and has agreed that for a third part of the circling year your daughter shall go down to darkness and gloom, but for the two parts shall be with you and the other deathless gods.

Demeter obeys (470) and right away the fertility of the land is restored (471-473)—presumably the sacrifices will also be resumed—,

⁵⁰ On the peculiarities of the transmission of this passage see THOMAS 2015, 468-469.

and the Eleusinian Mysteries are shown to the Eleusinians (473-479), a promise she had made earlier in Eleusis and is now fulfilled. In the end, both goddesses return united to Olympus (483-486).

The contrast and complementarity of these two types of reciprocity, negative and balanced, and the strife or reconciliation they relate to is evident during the Demophoon episode, even though the dynamics of the relationships change in this case, since the goddess reciprocates with mortals, and not with a superior, male god. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the episode we have an event of negative reciprocity, which is remedied by a balanced reciprocity at the end of the episode.

In Eleusis, Demeter, disguised as an old woman, Doso, is hired as a nurse by Metaneira. She attempts to immortalize Demophoon by immersing him into fire, and eventually to dissociate him from his mortal family.⁵¹ Demophoon would be the foster child in place of Persephone.⁵² This act can be framed as negative reciprocity, since it is an attempt to remove the child from the ordinary human world. Apparently by becoming immortal Demophoon could not stay on earth, as other myths of immortalized mortals indicate (e.g. Ganymede). As already mentioned, Felson-Rubin and Deal have shown that the abduction of Persephone is similar to (but also different from) Demeter's attempt to separate the child from his mother and that the return of the one child echoes the return of the other.⁵³

Not only Demeter's attempt to separate Demophoon from his mother, but also the secret and seemingly dangerous immortalization of Demophoon falls also under the rubric of negative reciprocity, since deception and trickery are also facets of this practice. Deception also played a role in Persephone's abduction, where narcissus is called δόλος (trickery). By treating Demeter's action as negative reciprocity, we may understand better the structure of the *Hymn*. Not only because her act is similar to the act of Hades in a way, but also because it forms a type of reciprocity that calls for a reconciliatory exchange to undo its negative consequences. To this end, a balanced reciprocity must be performed, even though

⁵¹ SOWA 1984, 48-49 notices that the provision of immortality to Demophoon echoes myths about the marriage of a goddess who turns her mortal consort immortal.

⁵² RUDHARDT 1978; Cf. FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 20; STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 225-226; FOLEY 1994, 114.

⁵³ For similarities between Demeter and Metaneira see FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 9-10, 11-13; for differences see 17-18.

the goddess reciprocates with humans, and this is why the negotiation process is not as long and complex as the one with Zeus.

Therefore, negative reciprocity in both cases causes strife between the mother and the abductor, the intruder according to Felson-Rubin and Deal's scheme, especially because in the case of Demophoon the attempt at immortalization appears as a murder attempt. Just as Demeter could not perceive the benefit for Persephone in wedding an appropriate groom as Helios claimed (83-87),⁵⁴ Metaneira cannot understand the positive outcome of Demeter's action. Both Metaneira and Demeter react with grief (Metaneira 245-247, cf. Demeter 40-44; γόον 249, cf. 82), after they witness their children's turmoil (i.e. Demeter hears of the abduction of her daughter, and Metaneira views the burning of her son).

At the same time, the poet parallels Demeter's wrath at Metaneira,⁵⁵ who obstructs the goddess' plan for a renewed motherhood, with Demeter's wrath at Zeus (χολωσαμένη 251, cf. 83, 339, 350, 354, 409), who interrupts her own motherhood.⁵⁶ In Eleusis Demeter performs negative reciprocity, like Zeus, but she also experiences a second negative reciprocity in a way, since Metaneira tries to seize Demeter's new child and reclaim him. It is in her double capacity as an agent and a victim of negative reciprocity, that Demeter understands the value of balanced reciprocity, which she will employ in the case of Persephone as well. In the end, Demeter returns the child to his mother, as Zeus will, but also as a *quasi* mother of Demophoon she will reserve a personal reward and a benefit for the child through balanced reciprocity.

Therefore, Demeter proposes a balanced exchange, which will mitigate the consequences of negative reciprocity (256-274), just as she does with Zeus.⁵⁷

νήϊδες ἄνθρωποι, ἀφράδιμονες οὔτ' ἀγαθοῖο
αἴσαν ἐπερχομένου προγνώμεναι οὔτε κακοῖο·

⁵⁴ On the representation of the abduction as rape by female characters and as marriage by male characters see DE BLOOIS 1997.

⁵⁵ Cf. Apollo's wrath at Cretan priests at *h. Ap.* 532-543.

⁵⁶ Cf. PASSMAN 1993, 75 n.45: "Maternity denied is fertility denied".

⁵⁷ Demeter's address is similar to that of Apollo in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (νήπιος ἄνθρωποι, δυστήμονες, οἱ μελεδῶνας / βούλεσθ' ἀργαλέους τε πόνους καὶ στείνα θυμῷ 532-533). Demeter, like Apollo, does not punish the foolish mortals but instead proposes a deal. Apollo similarly promises eternal substance from the sacrificial meat in exchange for priesthood. See STROLOGA 2011, 545-546.

καὶ σὺ γὰρ ἀφραδίησι τεῆς νήκεστον ἀάσθης.
 ἴστω γὰρ θεῶν ὄρκος, ἀμείλικτον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ,
 ἀθάνατόν κέν τοι καὶ ἀγήραον ἤματα πάντα 260
 παῖδα φίλον ποίησα καὶ ἄφθιτον ὦπασα τιμὴν·
 νῦν δ' οὐκ ἔσθ' ὥς κεν θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξαι·
 τιμὴ δ' ἄφθιτος αἰὲν ἐπέσσεται οὔνεκα γούνων
 ἡμετέρων ἐπέβη καὶ ἐν ἀγκοίνησιν ἴαυσεν·
 ὠρησιν δ' ἄρα τῶ γε περιπλομένων ἐνιαυτῶν 265
 παῖδες Ἐλευσινίων πόλεμον καὶ φύλοπιν αἰνῆν
 αἰὲν ἐν ἀλλήλοισιν συνάξουσ' ἤματα πάντα.
 εἰμὶ δὲ Δημήτηρ τιμάοχος, ἣ τε μέγιστον
 ἀθανάτοις θνητοῖς τ' ὄνεαρ καὶ χάρμα τέτυκται.
 ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι νηὸν τε μέγαν καὶ βωμόν ὑπ' αὐτῶ 270
 τευχόντων πᾶς δῆμος ὑπαὶ πόλιν αἰπύ τε τεῖχος
 Καλλιχόρου καθύπερθεν ἐπὶ προὔχοντι κολωνῶ.
 ὄργια δ' αὐτῆ ἐγὼν ὑποθήσομαι, ὥς ἂν ἔπειτα
 εὐαγέως ἔρδοντες ἐμὸν νόον ἰλάσκοισθε.

Witless are you mortals and dull to foresee your lot, whether of good or evil, that comes upon you. For now in your heedlessness you have wrought folly past healing; for —be witness the oath of the gods, the relentless water of Styx— I would have made your dear son deathless and unaging all his days and would have bestowed on him everlasting honor, but now he can in no way escape death and the fates. Yet shall unfailing honor always rest upon him, because he lay upon my knees and slept in my arms. But, as the years move round and when he is in his prime, the sons of the Eleusinians shall ever wage war and dread strife with one another continually. Lo! I am that Demeter who has share of honor and is the greatest help and cause of joy to the undying gods and mortal men. But now, let all the people build me a great temple and an altar below it and beneath the city and its sheer wall upon a rising hillock above Callichorus. And I myself will teach my rites, that hereafter you may reverently perform them and so win the favour of my heart.

Demeter states the intention of her original plan, the immortalization of Demophoon, and presents the new offer that constitutes a compromise. Demophoon instead of immortality will receive imperishable honor both through his contact with the goddess and also by means of

ritual battles, which Demeter establishes for the Eleusinians to perform. In exchange for her offer to Demophoon, the Eleusinians will build her a temple. The balanced reciprocity is framed by the combination of an offering, which is here described in the future tense, and a request expressed by the imperative in direct speech (τιμὴ δ' ἄφθιτος ἐπέσσειται 263; συνάξουσ' 267; νηὸν τε μέγαν καὶ βωμὸν ὑπ' αὐτῶι / τευχόντων πᾶς δῆμος).⁵⁸ Demeter makes a second offer, again phrased in the future tense, as she promises the establishment of her own rituals (ἄργια δ' αὐτῆ ἐγὼν ὑποθήσομαι 270-273),⁵⁹ which will take place at the end of the *Hymn*, in response to the construction of the temple. Another balanced reciprocity is implied, since, as long as the rites are performed properly, mortals will propitiate her and earn her favor in return (274). It is after this balanced reciprocity is announced that Demophoon reunites with his sisters and presumably with his mother (285-286).⁶⁰

Therefore, the Demophoon episode starts with negative reciprocity (and tension) and is concluded with balanced reciprocity (compromise and appeasement of wrath), just as the *Hymn* starts with negative reciprocity and ends with balanced reciprocity. The balanced exchange between Demeter and the Eleusinians reconciles the two parties and restores the natural order of things, since Demophoon reclaims his mortality like Persephone who reclaims her divinity and her abode on Olympus, albeit partially. Her status, however, is raised by her new role as the queen in Hades. Demophoon too has an elevated role as a recipient of a hero cult.

The reconciliation between Demeter and the Eleusinians and the enforcement of her commands by Celeus conclude her stay at the palace and lead into the next scene in Eleusis, which initiates a new cycle of strife, withdrawals, and balanced exchanges: Demeter withdraws to her temple, she renders the land infertile, and with Zeus' intervention she

⁵⁸ On the preference of direct speech by female characters see FAULKNER 2015, 34-35. FAULKNER notices (36) the lack of conflict in direct speech between men and women. Demeter's harsh words to Metaneira in direct speech but Demeter's indirect speech to Celeus (293-295) verify such a divide of gender.

⁵⁹ The epiphany of the god is commonly related to the institution of honors for him. See RICHARDSON 1974, 248 *ad* 268ff. The *orgia* are the Eleusinian Mysteries, although they are described in more detail at the end of the *Hymn*.

⁶⁰ Notice that the balanced reciprocity precedes Demeter's full epiphany, which causes fear and awe in Metaneira and her daughters, who perform a *pannychis*, another type of offering, in order to please the goddess (h. *Dem.* 275-293).

manages to achieve the return of her daughter and to reach a compromise through the final balanced exchange.

3.2 Parallelism of Negative Reciprocities

As we already saw, Demeter's negative reciprocity parallels that of Hades, since both gods attempt to take the child away from the mother.⁶¹ Other events of negative reciprocity parallel each other as well. Demeter, by placing Demophoon in fire, appears to his mortal mother as if she is trying to kill him,⁶² just as Hades, by transferring Persephone to Hades, overrides her immortality by retaining her in the underworld, as if she were dead. The failed immortalization of Demophoon corresponds to Persephone's failed "death" (i.e. there is no permanent separation from her mother). Persephone as the abducted victim parallels also Demeter disguised as Doso, who, according to the abduction story she narrates to Metaneira's daughters, was abducted (ἀπήγαγον 125) by pirates. The repetition of verbs of abduction and resistance (Persephone: ἀέκουσαν 19, ἀεκαζομένην 30, ἀέκουσαν ἀνάγκη 72; Demeter: οὐκ ἐθέλουσα, βίη δ' ἀέκουσαν ἀνάγκη 124) creates associations between the fake persona of Demeter (Doso) and Persephone, who are both victims of negative reciprocity. Such links invite the audience to compare the later events with the previous ones and to understand that the narrative action develops around the theme of reciprocity, especially in terms of loss and recovery.

The negative reciprocities are signified not only by the vocabulary of abduction and wrath, but also by the repetition of νόσφιν and its cognates, which mark withdrawals and strife. Demeter, after her first withdrawal from Olympus to Eleusis (cf. νοσφισθεῖσα θεῶν ἀγορήν 92)⁶³ and her stay at Celeos' palace, retires to her temple in isolation (ἔνθα καθεζομένη μακάρων ἀπονόσφιν ἀπάντων 303), matching the initial withdrawal of Zeus to his temple after Persephone's abduction (ὁ δὲ νόσφιν / ἦστο θεῶν ἀπάνευθε 27-28), as well as Persephone's abduction

⁶¹ See FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 8-9 for a comparison of Demeter with Hades.

⁶² Cf. NAGY 1981, 198: the *Hymn* shows that "giving can be a form of taking; and that destruction or theft can paradoxically be a means of benefiting those seemingly affected." Demophoon's burning would have the positive result of becoming immortal, and Persephone's abduction led to a positive outcome as well, since she became the queen of the Underworld.

⁶³ Cf. δῶκεν δὲ βαρύκτυπος εὐρύοπα Ζεύς / νόσφιν Δῆμητρος χρυσαόρου, ἀγλαοκάρπου (3-4).

(νόσφιν⁶⁴ Δήμητρος 4).⁶⁵ The first withdrawal marks the abandonment of her divine appearance, and her second withdrawal marks Demeter's abandonment of her divine sphere of power, which results in the land's infertility and a famine.⁶⁶

The scene with the famine, which is problematic structurally as well, because of its late timing in the narrative, also shares elements with other episodes of negative reciprocity. While according to Currie's conjecture the famine in other versions could have started right after Demeter goes to Hades to retrieve her daughter and it is thus caused due to the goddess' absence,⁶⁷ the famine in the *Hymn* is related to her emotional state (304) and it is delayed, assuming an independent role in the narrative.⁶⁸ It is linked to the Demophoon's episode in a unique way, since the episode explains how Demeter's temple was built, in which the goddess withdraws, but not why the famine is imposed.

Demeter's attempted negative reciprocity with Demophoon anticipates structurally and echoes verbally the negative reciprocity of the concealment of the seed, which, unlike the Demophoon episode, precipitates the return of Persephone. Demeter's immersion of Demophoon in fire is described as an act of hiding (κρύπτεσκε πυρὸς 239, ξείνη σε πυρὶ ἔνι πολλῶ / κρύπτει 248-249).⁶⁹ Similarly, the goddess hides the seed (οὐδέ τι γαῖα / σπέρμ' ἀνίει, κρύπτεν γὰρ ἑυστέφανος Δημήτηρ 306-307, σπέρμ' ὑπὸ γῆς κρύπτουσα 353) reproducing verbally the negative reciprocity involved in Hades' internment of Persephone under the earth (χάνε δὲ χθῶν εὐρυάγνια 16, ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα 80, ὑπὸ κεῦθεα γαίης 340, βῆ δὲ φέρων ὑπὸ γαίαν ἐν ἄρμασι χρυσείοισι 431). The restriction of Persephone under earth corresponds to that of the seed. And Hades' abduction of Persephone parallels metaphorically Demeter's removal of the gods' honors due to the suspension of sacrifices. In fact, Hades' detainment of Persephone equates the "theft" of Demeter's personal τιμή.⁷⁰

Demeter's negative reciprocity in the suspension of the land's fertility is presented as a well-devised plan. Hermes says as much when he

⁶⁴ Here the word can mean "away from" or "without the knowledge of."

⁶⁵ Cf. νόσφιν λευκωλένου Ἥρης (h. *Ap.* 95). On a comparison between the two withdrawals of Demeter, see SOWA 1984, 111-114.

⁶⁶ Cf. NICKEL 2003, 78-79 on both withdrawals being involved in the theme "anger-withdrawal-return" and focusing on the deprivation of gods' τιμή.

⁶⁷ CURRIE 2016, 91-92. No famine is attested in the Orphic version.

⁶⁸ STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 247.

⁶⁹ On this particular scene see RICHARDSON 1974, 231-236.

⁷⁰ PASSMAN 1993, 62.

carries to Hades Zeus' command to return Persephone, for he justifies this order by ascribing to Demeter a stratagem (ἐπεὶ μέγα μήδεταί ἔργον 351; cf. 345 μητίσσετο βουλήν). Such a master plan is a reciprocal response to Zeus' original plan to set forth narcissus to draw Persephone into a trap (Διὸς βουλήσι). As negative reciprocity, the hiding of the seed and its negative consequences cause an anomaly, which in turn must be corrected by balanced reciprocity. The paradox of the almost burned and almost killed Demophoon (to the eyes of mortals) echoes the abnormality of the destroyed land and the almost killed mortals (305-313).⁷¹ Demeter causes the famine in order to create an irregularity that must be restored and lures Zeus into performing balanced reciprocity. Demeter retains the seed, which translates into abundance of flocks and sacrifices, in order to be able to exchange it for Persephone, just like she exchanged Demophoon for a temple.

3.3 Parallelism of Balanced Reciprocities

I have shown so far that negative reciprocities correspond to each other by means of verbal echoes and a similar role in the narrative as instigators of strife and markers of violation of order. The balanced reciprocities in the *Hymn* parallel each other as well, and they are framed by a sentiment of agreement and compliance. For example, when Demeter's commands are communicated to Celeus, he orders the Eleusinians to fulfill the goddess' wishes. Their compliance is strongly emphasized in the text through verbal repetition (ὡς ἐπέτελλε θεά 295; ὡς ἐπέτελλ' 300). The submission of mortals to the commands of the goddess contrasts with Demeter's rejection of Zeus' initial order (τῆ δ' οὐκ ἐπεπέιθετο θυμός 324) and gods' offerings (στερεῶς δ' ἠναίνετο μύθους 330), but it corresponds to Demeter's compliance (οὐδ' ἀπίθησεν 470) to Zeus' final proposition (460-469).

Also the theme "the return of the child" coincides with and partakes in the employment of balanced reciprocity.⁷² Demeter's balanced ex-

⁷¹ Notice the similar grammatical constructions—both contain past, contrary-to-fact conditionals, with an aorist indicative verb with *κε* in the apodosis: ἀθάνατόν κέν τοι καὶ ἀγήραον ἤματα πάντα / παῖδα φίλον ποίησα καὶ ἀφθιτον ὅπασα τιμήν 260-261; καὶ νύ κε πάμπαν ὄλεσσε γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων / λιμοῦ ὑπ' ἀργαλέης 310-311). See MARAVELA 2015, 167 on unrealized immortality expressed by curtailed conditionals in the *Hymns to Demeter* and *Aphrodite*.

⁷² For more parallels as well as discrepancies between Demophoon and Persephone, see

change with the Eleusinians is tied to Demophoon's return to his mortal family and his reclaiming of mortal status, which is symbolized by his removal from the fire and his placement on the ground (253).⁷³ His restoration to safety (according to mortal standards) on the premise of a pact foreshadows the goddess' agreement with Zeus at the end of the *Hymn*, which marks the return of Persephone. However, Demophoon contrasts with Persephone, since his return to his mortal caretakers is not accompanied by the same feelings of joy that attend Persephone's return. On the contrary, he is inconsolable since his nurses are inferior to the goddess (290-291). Metaneira as well is fearful despite her reunion with her son, since she realizes her misdeed against Demeter. These peculiarities relate to the fact that a goddess reciprocates with mortals.

According to the balanced exchange practices in the *Hymn*, honors are granted to the abducted upon his/her return as recompense. Demophoon receives eternal honors (τιμὴ δ' ἄφθιτος αἰὲν ἐπέσσειται 263) as compensation for the unsuccessful immortalization and in exchange for Demeter's temple. Similarly, Persephone is a recipient of new *timai* from Hades (τιμὰς δὲ σχήσησθα μετ' ἀθανάτοισι μεγίστας 366, 364-369) as compensation for her partial stay with him in her role as the queen of the Underworld (373-374).⁷⁴ To this end, both balanced reciprocities entail some compromise. Similarly, the initiates of the Eleusinian Mysteries receive a blessed lot after death in compensation for the unavoidable end of mortal life and in exchange for being secretive about the rituals (478-482).⁷⁵ Finally, Demeter receives honors as a reward for her own return and a seat next to Zeus (461, 485-486).

The provision of honors to Persephone and Demophoon is associated with the performance of rituals, which encapsulate the balanced reciprocity *par excellence* between gods and humans. Hades, in his farewell to Persephone and his description of their balanced exchange, promises honors in exchange for her return to Demeter—a combination of imperative with future tense—, but he also explains that if mortals perform rituals well Persephone will be pleased (οἷ κεν μὴ θυσηῖσι

FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 15-17.

⁷³ STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 240: "Her gesture means that he will forever be an earthling."

⁷⁴ NAGY 1981, 197.

⁷⁵ On the connection between the Demophoon's episode and the initiates see FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 18 and 20; PARKER 1991, 9-10 (contra CLINTON 1992, 30 n.79); FOLEY 1994, 113-114; JAILLARD 2005, 56. JANSSENS (1962, 54) also connects the rejuvenation of the land with that of the initiates.

τὸν μένος ἰλάσκονται / εὐαγέως ἔρδοντες 368-369). Demeter used the same vocabulary of pleasure for her own *orgia* (εὐαγέως ἔρδοντες ἐμὸν νόον ἰλάσκοισθε 274; cf. line 205 ἦ δὴ οἱ καὶ ἔπειτα μεθύστερον εὐαδεν ὀργαῖς). Demophoon's own honor is framed by the performance of the ritual battles. Moreover, the Mysteries that are shown to Eleusinians in the end of the *Hymn* and coincide with the return of Persephone are also echoed by the *orgia*, which are promised in an exchange process.⁷⁶

Another parallel element among these balanced reciprocities is the role of Demeter as the agent of reciprocity both with humans and Zeus. Demeter frames her demands and their reciprocation in accordance with her proposed deal. Such is the case with her confrontation of Metaneira. She explains what she would have offered if Metaneira had allowed her (260-261) (i.e. eternal life, youth, and honor), what she can offer under the new circumstances (i.e. eternal honor alone), and she explains what must be offered now in return (i.e. a temple).⁷⁷ Similarly, when Persephone is reunited with Demeter but before she admits she ate a pomegranate seed (411-413), Demeter presents the original plan (i.e. Persephone would stay with her parents forever 395-397) and the new offer (i.e. partial stay with her) in the case she had eaten in the Underworld. She admits that she will accept the sharing of her daughter with Hades (398-403), with Persephone staying longer with her (399-400), and she modifies her original request to Zeus. In either case, the exchange value of Persephone is determined by Demeter herself, who, unlike Achilles, sets her own deal and declares under what conditions she will return.⁷⁸

Nevertheless, both Metaneira and Demeter receive an offer worse than the original one: Metaneira has an eternally honored son but not an immortal as Demeter originally planned, and Demeter keeps her

⁷⁶ Cf. STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 242-243 on the fact that the Mysteries are established only after Demeter's reconciliation with gods and mortals. I do not agree with PASSMAN 1993, 66 that in the *Hymn* Demeter is shown dangerous in order to be tamed and that "it must be made clear that only when she is controlled by Zeus does she become beneficent to humanity." Her initial interaction with the Eleusinians before the famine is also beneficial.

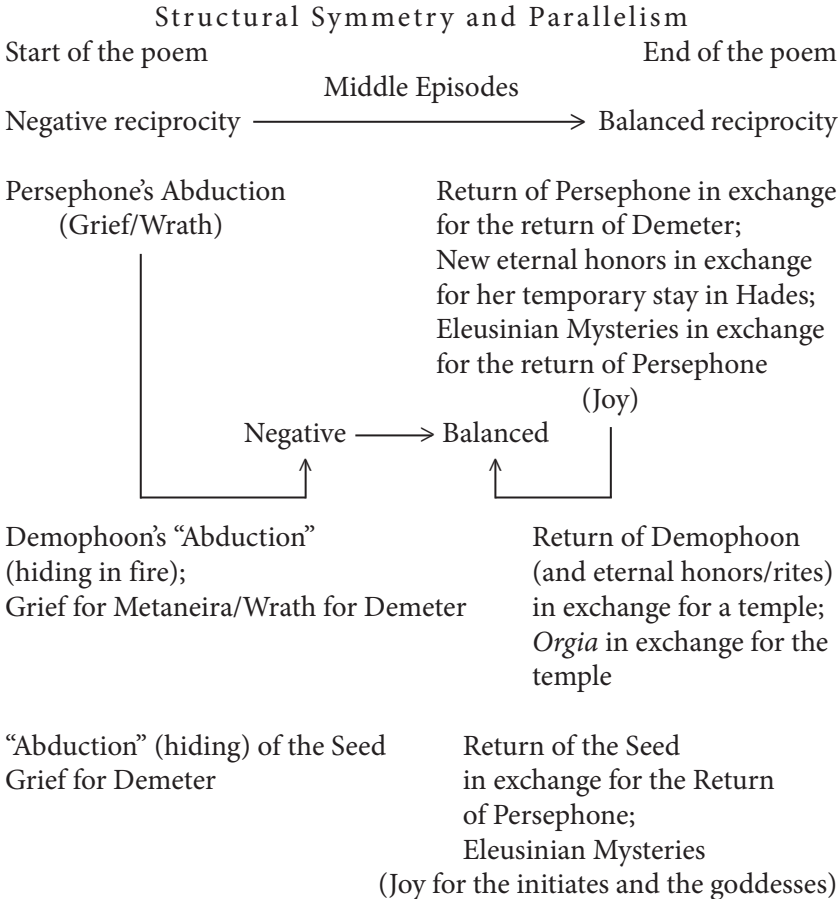
⁷⁷ This example along with the one on possible consequences of the famine showcase a narratological practice, the "if not situations." On this see NÜNLIST 2004, 37-38.

⁷⁸ Cf. LORD 1967, 247-248 on two reconciliations of Achilles, one when he finally accepts Agamemnon's gifts and Briseis, and another when he accepts Priam's gifts, and two of Demeter, one reconciliation with the Eleusinians and the other with Zeus. See also MUELLNER 1996, 23-25.

daughter only for a partial time, not for ever, as Demeter originally requested. Just like Demeter compromises with Persephone's partial stay on Olympus, Metaneira compromises with the partial immortality of her son (i.e. eternal honor alone). Overall, an attempt at "abduction" of the mortal child by the goddess is resolved with the return of the child to his mortal family and subsequent balanced reciprocities that appease the anger of Demeter in the same manner that Zeus through reciprocity, framed nevertheless by Demeter, calms the goddess via the (partial) return of the divine child.

3.4 Structural Symmetry and Ring Composition

The structural parallelism in the *Hymn* develops as follows:



The episodes of reciprocity are organized not only by structural parallelism but also by ring composition:

- A Abduction/Hiding of Persephone = Negative Reciprocity
- B Withdrawal of Demeter from Olympus to Eleusis
- A “Abduction”/Hiding of Demophoon = Negative Reciprocity
- C Reconciliation (Balanced Exchange): Return of the Child
- B Withdrawal of Demeter from the palace to her temple
- A Hiding of the Seed = Negative Reciprocity
- C Reconciliation (Balanced Exchange): Return of the Child
(Return of Demeter and Return of the Seed)

4. Structural Parallelism and the Function of the *Hymn*

My approach shows that Demeter employs with Zeus the same technique that she employed with humans. This narrative pattern allows the poet to establish the interconnection of the two realms. To this end the two withdrawals and the two events of appropriation (those of the child and the seed/gods’ honors) are two interwoven stories that parallel each other, without always following a cause-effect logic. The Demophoon episode is a nucleus with a beginning, middle and end, and is connected to the previous and the following events by structural parallels. It is a reconciliation tale in miniature, one that is incorporated into a larger divine story of resolution and compromise.

The failure of Demophoon’s immortalization is not a mere narrative device that motivates another attempt at humiliating the gods through the suspension of sacrifices or justifies the institution of the Eleusinian Mysteries, which after all do not provide immortality.⁷⁹ The Demophoon episode constitutes an *exemplum* of a successful balanced reciprocity that overcomes strife and restores normality. To this end, the episode is a small-scale version of what it anticipates, the final balanced exchange. The Demophoon scene is integral to the poem not only because in it Demeter comes to understand the limits of her power through her inability to immortalize Demophoon and to obstruct Zeus’ plan,⁸⁰ but also

⁷⁹ Cf. STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 262-263. According to Strauss Clay, Demeter with her failed immortalization of a human, which would have blurred the division between gods and mortals, is unable to obstruct Zeus’ plan to unite his realm with that of Hades. Thus a second successful plan is necessary, which reveals the difficulties of the interdependence between gods and mortals. Also NICKEL 2003, 77-78.

⁸⁰ FELSON-RUBIN and DEAL 1980, 19-21. See also their view on a change in Demeter’s

because she learns how to employ successfully reciprocity to restore to normality her relationship with mortals and to receive some personal benefits. She will, at the end of the poem, apply the same practice, when she deals with Zeus.

Whether the Demophoon episode is a local story, an Eleusinian and a non-epic version as Parker suggests,⁸¹ or even an innovation by the poet as Currie argues, an episode with many aetiological features (e.g. the drink of *kykeon* that Demeter requests), the poet had to find a way to incorporate his version in such a way so as not only narrative coherence is established but also a consistent view of Demeter is framed as an agent of reciprocity. This is also true in the case that the hymn brings together the two cults: Thesmophoria, whose aetiology is reflected in the Eleusis episode, and the Eleusinian Mysteries.⁸² Overall, the structural parallelism indicates a conscious attempt to incorporate an episode into the narrative of Persephone's abduction, which does not directly advance the plot but it provides an aetiological narrative for the foundation of the temple, the Eleusinian Mysteries and/or Thesmophoria, and even some ritual practices (e.g. the drinking of *kykeon*).

The poet creates narrative parallelism between the strife/resolution on Olympus and the strife/resolution on earth. The balance between the human and the divine sectors, between reciprocities involving humans and reciprocities involving gods, builds a connection between the two realms through the venue of reciprocity, which is encapsulated in the Mysteries. To this end, the connection between earth and Olympus extends even to Hades. The institution of the Eleusinian Mysteries is therefore a marker of Demeter's reconciliation with both the Eleusinians upon the return of Demophoon (*orgia* 273) and Zeus upon the return of Persephone (*orgia* 476). The Demophoon episode sets a precedent for reciprocities between gods and humans in the case of the foundation of a cult, and it showcases the power of negotiation and reconciliation

character and her understanding of her own divine power.

⁸¹ PARKER 1991, 9. Cf. STRAUSS CLAY 1989, 207 on the *Hymn*'s distinctive structure and new message that transcends local traditions and reflects Panhellenic thought.

⁸² According to CLINTON 1992, 32-37; 1993, 113-116 the Eleusis episode is an *aition* for the Thesmophoria, and the story about the Eleusinian Mysteries is added later by the poet to honor the newer cult. See also ALLEN, HALLIDAY and SIKES 1936, 118-123; SUTER 2002, 19-20. See also SUTER 2002, 135-136, 145-147 for a discussion of the argument that the Demophoon episode is a remnant of another myth, which was adapted in order to be incorporated in the agrarian version, which survives in the orphic version.

through a balanced reciprocity that is to the mutual benefit of humans and gods alike.

Reciprocity thus emerges as a central theme of this major *Homeric Hymn*, and this corresponds to the hymns' general function as offerings, which are to be reciprocated (the hymnist hopes) positively by the divine.⁸³ The balanced reciprocity through the medium of a hymn is echoed at the conclusion of several *Homeric Hymns*, specifically where the god is asked to rejoice (χαίρει) and the poet promises another song (αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ καὶ σεῖο καὶ ἄλλης μνήσομ' αἰοιδῆς).⁸⁴ In the *Hymn to Demeter*, the reciprocal relationship is even more explicit than this, for the hymnist requests pleasant livelihood in exchange for the current song (ἀντ' ᾧδῆς 494 = *H.h.* 30.18).⁸⁵ Moreover, since, according to some scholars, the hymns' goal is to evoke an epiphany,⁸⁶ the presence of the god could as well be interpreted as the desired reciprocal response to a successful celebratory hymn.⁸⁷

Thus, the external reciprocity, where the *Hymn* works as a gift to the divine, is reflected within the narrative as internal reciprocity, where reciprocal relationships play an important role in the definition of the goddess and her powers and reveal a benevolent divine.⁸⁸ Demeter, for example, refrains from punishing Metaneira for interrupting the immortalization process and instead employs reciprocity, providing *quasi*-immortality to Metaneira's son.⁸⁹ As she institutes the practice of her

⁸³ On hymns as poetic offerings and dedications, see BREMER 1981; PULLEYN 1997, 49-51; DEPEW 2000, 63-64; FURLEY and BREMER 2001, 3-4, 61-63; DAY 2010, 146-147, 246-254; CALAME 2011; PETROVIC 2012, 173-176. On hymns as means of thanking the gods see BREMER 1998.

⁸⁴ *H. Ap.* 545-546; *h. Herm.* 579-580. See the variations of this formula in *h. Dem.* 494-495 and *h. Aphr.* 292-293. On *charis* in the *Homeric Hymns*, see DAY 2010, 246-254. According to DAY 2010, 248 the imperative *chaire* is dedicatory in epilogues of the *Homeric Hymns* asking the god to enjoy the performance.

⁸⁵ Requests related to poetic composition or victory presumably in a contest are found in *h. Aphr.* 6.19-20, *h. Aphr.* 10.5, *h. Muses and Apollo* 25.6. Cf. *h. Hest.* 24.5 χάριν δ' ἄμ' ὄπασσον αἰοιδῆ. Other requests are also found in the shorter *Homeric Hymns*: 8.15-16, 11.5, 15.9, 20.8, 26.12-13, 31.17. On the pleasing effect of the hymn on the celebrated god see FURLEY 1995, 33, 45.

⁸⁶ See GARCÍA 2002, 12: "All hymn...in early Greece was *kletic*."

⁸⁷ See DEPEW 2000, 74-75.

⁸⁸ Similarly, GARCÍA 2002, 12 establishes a connection between the theme of the recognition of the god by mortals before his/her epiphany and the *kletic* function of the *Hymns*, which provoke an epiphany.

⁸⁹ In fr. 49.100 Kern and *Apoll. Bibl.* 1.5.1 the child dies.

rituals, *orgia*, Demeter establishes an ongoing relationship of reciprocal offerings with her worshippers, which will lead to the perpetual pleasure of the divine.

The poet even assumes the role of a worshiper. After he first presents all the benefits that humans can enjoy (486-489) as long as the goddesses are favorable to them (μέγ' ὄλβιος ὄν τιν' ἐκεῖναι / προφρονέως φίλωνται ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων 486-487), he then pointedly asks that they have a positive disposition towards him and grant a prosperous livelihood in exchange for the *Hymn* (πρόφρονες ἀντ' ὠδῆς βίσιον θυμήρε' ὄπαζε 494).⁹⁰ He concludes with the stock phrase in which he promises that he will offer another hymn, which presumably will be the return offering by the poet if his wish is granted.⁹¹ This is yet one more parallel, since just as Demeter was πρόφρων with the Eleusinians (138, 140, 226) and such a kind disposition is promised to mortals (487), the hymnist aspires to partake in a similar reciprocal relationship.⁹²

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⁹⁰ On the poet as an initiate see FOLEY 1994, 174.

⁹¹ On this line, see RICHARDSON 1974, 324-325. I agree with CALAME 2005, 28, who aptly notices that the current hymn represents an offering, a counter-gift in gratitude for the fulfillment of the poet's request.

⁹² Cf. FURLEY 1995, 46, "the telling of a tale...may seek to make things happen."

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Δομική Συμμετρία και Παραλληλισμοί
στον Ομηρικό Ύμνο στη Δήμητρα

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Περίληψη

Η ΔΟΜΗ του Ομηρικού Ύμνου στη Δήμητρα είναι προβληματική, σύμφωνα με μελετητές, κυρίως λόγω της απρόκλητης επίσκεψης της Δήμητρας στην Ελευσίνα, η οποία δεν συμβάλλει στην εύρεση της κόρης της, καθώς εν αντιθέσει με άλλες εκδοχές του μύθου η Δήμητρα δεν συλλέγει εκεί πληροφορίες για την απαγωγή της Περσεφόνης αλλά προσπαθεί ανεπιτυχώς να κάνει τον Δημοφώντα αθάνατο. Εφαρμόζοντας τις αρχές της δομικής συμμετρίας και του παραλληλισμού δείχνω ότι η σκηνή με τον Δημοφώντα αποτελεί τμήμα της αφηγηματικής εξέλιξης από σκηνές σύγκρουσης σε σκηνές συμφιλίωσης, που ανταποκρίνονται στη μετάβαση από σκηνές αρνητικής ανταπόδοσης (δηλ. αρπαγή χωρίς ανταλλαγή) σε σκηνές εξισορροπημένης ανταπόδοσης (δηλ. συναλλαγή τύπου *quid pro quo*). Αυτή η αφηγηματική εξέλιξη διέπει την αλληλουχία των σκηνών και παρατηρείται σε αυτόνομα επεισόδια αλλά και στη γενικότερη δομή του Ύμνου. Το θέμα της ανταλλαγής είναι ιδιαίτερα προσφιλές, καθώς και ο Ύμνος αποτελεί προσφορά του υμνωδού που αναμένει θετική ανταπόδοση από τη Δήμητρα και την Περσεφώνη.

