The traditional rendering of γέος in Cleanthes ‘Hymn on Zeus’ (see H. von Arnim, Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, Stuttgart 1964, I, 537, p. 121–123) verse 4, p. 123 SVF is ‘privilege’, from Wilamowitz onwards (Vorrecht), Festugière (privilège), Neustadt (Ehrenrecht), Meerwaldt/Verbeke (Voorrecht) down to the most recent commentator Dirkzwager (Gabe) with the exception of Pohlenz (‘kein höheres Amt ward Götern und Menschen verliehen’). The datives βοστοίς/θεοῖς were taken for granted by most commentators as pure and simple dativi commodi.

But a doubt may arise if we take the hardly recognized fact into account that γέος even when it means ‘privilege’ (which is not its most frequent meaning) entails a connotation of merit or dignity in the recipient as a ground for endowment with a privilege. It is to Gods and Kings, i.e. to superiors, that γέος is offered. In Homer γέος means a gift of honour in terms of a piece of meat or slaves (Od. 4,66; 11,543), a demonstration of honour for the dead with their special status (11. 16,457; 23,9; Od. 4,197), a special task (which explains Pohlenz’ ‘höheres Amt’) or privilege (II. 16,457; 23,9).

So it was Nestor’s γέρας in the Trojan War to offer advice because of his venerable age. H. E. Ebeling’s lemma on γέρας in his Lexicon Homericum, Leipzig 1885, no. 3, deserves special mention in connection with the Hymn: honor praecipuus dis oblatus (cf. II.4,49; 24,47: τὸ γάρ λάχομεν γέρας ἡμεῖς).

We thus find γέρας with the above mentioned implications in Herodotus, e.g. II.168 where we are told that the warriors in Egypt were endowed with γέρας (land), because of their profession, which was regarded with deference. In IV,143 we read that Megabyzos recieved γέρας in terms of a charming compliment from Dareios, because Dareios considered him to be a man of particular merit and he wanted as many subjects like him as there are seeds in a pomegranate. So we find the word in Aeschylus, Prometheus 82 (see also 107, 231, 439). We do not want to go so far as to declare that the connotations of merit or dignity are always implied, although it is in the majority of occurrences, nor that γέρας always means a gift of honour (in the case of Megabyzos it was a compliment).

Since we have to be sensitive to the connotations and overtones of merit or dignity as to the recipient in γέρας, we are curious to know what merit of dignity on the usual interpretation man is supposed to be provided with in order that he is worthy of the greatest gift or privilege to be bestowed on him: the ability of striking up a hymn. I do not know of any particular merit or dignity of the kind according to Stoic thought, which makes it appropriate to offer a special gift to mankind. Therefore it seems justified to assume that a different explanation for Cleanthes’ usage of γέρας is required.

In verse 2, p. 123 SVF we are told that man has received from the godhead a special honour (τιμηθέντες). Τιμή does not imply a notion of dignity or merit in the recipient, although it may do. What exactly the contents of this honour are, is hidden in the hotly debated verse 37 on p. 121 – and presumably will remain hidden. In this verse we find the hardly understandable words ἵχου μίμημα λαχόντες, which I regard as an almost insoluble problem (ἐκ σοῦ γάρ γένος ἐσμὲν ἤχου μίμημα λαχόντες). How this formula is to be understood, I do not propose to discuss, although a suggestion may be found in a note2), but I shall concentrate on

2) This notoriously difficult phrase has been discussed over and over again, without there being a convincing and widely accepted solution; cf. above all G. Zuntz, Zum Kleanthes-Hymnus, Harv.Stud. of Cl. Phil.63 (1958) 392–394; G.
the fact that this formula is echoed by τιμηθέντες in v. 2, p. 123. What we are fairly entitled to conclude is that the meaning of the controversial words has something to do with the Logos, i.e. the faculty of articulated, sensible speech and singing. For in v. 36, p. 121 SVF it is man’s duty (θέμις) to raise his voice in order to speak

Verbeke, Kleaethes, 240–242 and A. W. James, The Zeus Hymns of Cleanthes and Aratus, Antichthon 6 (1972) 30/31. The reading of ms F is incorrect because of its metrical impossibility: ἔσομαι ἦσου – – –. There are two types of solution. Either one changes ἔσομαι into ἐσώ (von Arnim, SVF) or one alters the odd ἦσου which has to mean in the context ‘articulated speech’ for which it is not suitable, because it means: ‘unarticulated noise or sound’, see Liddell and Scott s.v. I would suggest we retain ἐς σοῦ γὰρ γένος in view of the parallel with Cleanthes’ contemporary Aratus, who has in his hymn on Zeus: τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος εἰμὲν. Meineke’s proposal to read ἐς σοῦ γὰρ γενόμεσθ᾽ does not seem to be too drastic an operation on the original text, but results in a not quite acceptable concept. For man is not born from Zeus; we only originate from him where our γένος is concerned. So we do find that the solution has to be found in changing ἦσου. This has to be replaced by a word – because of the metre – beginning with a short vowel (unless we accept von Arnim’s beautiful conjecture εἰσ’). Lots and lots of proposals have been brought forward. In my view the fact that the word has to express the reason for our use of our voice (προσαυδᾶν, cf. Pohlenz, Kleaethes’ Zeushymnus, Hermes 75 (1940) 118) is decisive for the choice. We must bear in mind what has been forgotten by so many interpreters, the word x has to distinguish man from the other animals. These considerations rule out ὄλου (Bergk and Wilamowitz, approval of James), ὑσου (Scaliger), μόνου or ἐς σοῦ (Gedicke), ίσου (M. Marcovich, Hermes 94 (1966) 245–250), and also the most recent proposals of Zuntz (Vers 4 des Kleaethes-Hymnus, Rhein.Mus. 122 (1979) 97/98) and of Dirkzwager (Abbild, 359/360) who independently suggest: σ’ε’θεν μῆμα λαχόντες. The above mentioned considerations admit λόγου (Meineke) and ὀπός (Meerwaldt). For the case of Meerwaldt (ὀπός) I see no cogent reasons. For Meineke’s λόγου μήμα considerable support is to be derived from Epictet, Diatrise I, 16,20. Epictet there stresses the λόγος as a feature distinguishing man from animals like the swan or the nightingale, who both sing. Observe the parallel with Kleaethes, who also views man in contrast to animals, SVF p. 122, 1. According to Epictet the possession of Logos invites us to sing: Νῦν δὲ λογικὸς εἰμί: γινεῖν μὲ δέ τοῦ θέου.

There is a text to testify to the community of Gods and man both sharing the Logos, SVF II, 528, p. 169, 29: κοινώνιαν δ’ ὑπάρχειν πρὸς ἀλλήλους διὰ τὸ λόγου μετέχειν which can be quoted as support for Meineke.

Zuntz, however, discussing Meineke’s solution (Zum Kleaethes-Hymnus, 293) quotes von Wilamowitz who rightly observes that we have no ‘Nachbildung des Logos’ but the Logos itself. Therefore it makes sense to accept Wachsmuth’s τίμια which can mean honour, Aeschylus, Choeph. 511. Τίμια may be aptly defended by τιμηθέντες and τιμή of line 2 of p. 123 SVF, which according to the ringshaped composition of the Hymn, must refer to v. 37 on p. 121, λόγου (?). ……… This can make an excellent basis for τίμια. But we have to bear in mind that strong objections can be raised to λόγου. For later on in the Hymn we come across the κοινὸς λόγος, which permeates everything. A possible answer could be to consider the λόγος in λόγου τίμια as the λόγος προφορικός the faculty of speech, a special type of Logos. Be this as it may, each interpreter-

3 Rhein. Mus. f. Philol. 129/1
(sing) to Zeus. In view of the ringshaped composition of the poem and the correspondence of 28, p. 122 – 5, p. 123 to the opening 34, p. 121 – 4, p. 122 we may expect v. 2, p. 123 to mirror the situation of the beginning (ἡχοῦ μήμμα λαχόντες). As I said earlier, v. 2, p. 123 says that we are honoured (τιμηθέντες) and also that we are under the obligation of returning (ἀμειβόμεσθα τιμῇ) honour to our benefactor. I do not agree with Festugière’s explanation3) of the τιμῇ in τιμηθέντες as γνώμη. For we are already in the possession of this τιμή and it is precisely γνώμη that Cleanthes prays for. The τιμῇ involved refers to ἡχοῦ μήμμα λαχόντες. We should observe the correspondence ἁμειβόμεσθα/λαχόντες. So what we got, was a basis for the faculty of singing a hymn. The only way to express our gratitude (ἀμειβόμεσθα) is to sing a hymn. What else can we return? For the faculty of speech and singing – our specific part of the Logos, which distinguishes us from the other animals – is no merit of our own: it is only the activity of this faculty that may be considered something in our power. Interpreted along these lines the implications and overtones of γέρας get their due. Γέρας is our gift of honour to the God, who was our benefactor, worthy of veneration. So γέρας is not to be looked upon as a gift or privilege given to us as the traditional interpretation has it.

Our explanation is not merely in line with the common Greek notion of γέρας, but it is also clearly confirmed by Stoic thought about τιμή and γέρας. In Chrysippus – and there is no need whatsoever to deny that Cleanthes would agree4) – the following circumscription of both words and their interrelation is found (SVF III, 563, p. 149,25/26): τὴν γάρ τιμήν εἶναι γέρας ἀξίωσάν, τὸ δὲ γέρας ἄθλον ἄρετὴς εὐεργετικῆς. Honour is to be worth (ἀξίωσάν) a γέρας and in its turn γέρας is the reward (ἄθλον) of beneficial virtue. Notice the word ἄθλον meaning the prize you get in a game as a reward for your merits as a sportman. Transposed to the religious domain ἄθλον implies: God treated us well (τιμηθέντες) by giving us a special share in the Logos. What is more natural and convenient than rewarding (ἄθλον) him for his boon (ἀρετὴ εὐεργετικὴ) in terms of the greatest gift (γέρας) we are conjecturist can have his own reading provided that it is in line with the condition that the word x must be the basis for our προσκυνᾶν, as we mentioned above.

3) A. J. Festugière, La Révélation, 324.
4) Cleanthes himself wrote about the subject (SVF I, 481, p. 107, 21 περὶ τιμῆς).
able to offer, singing a hymn of praise and veneration of Zeus' superb administration of this world?

We may now return to the question of typology of the datives βροτοῖς/θεοῖς. They may be considered as rather loose examples of the possessivus-type: 'the greatest gift Gods and men possess to offer'.

I shall conclude my contribution by pointing to the striking end of the Hymn, an ending which could not be more appropriate: ὑμεῖς as the last word, which sounds like an invitation to join in. It was precisely to this that Epictet in his treatment of ὑμεῖς (Diatribe I,16,21) invites his readers: καὶ ὑμᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ταύτην φῶτην παρακαλῶ.

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