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APOLLONIUS AND CALLIMACHUS
ON HERACLES AND THEIODAMAS:
A METAPOETICAL INTERPRETATION*

MARK HEERINK

ABSTRACT

Apollonius of Rhodes' digression on Heracles and Theiodamas (*Arg.* 1, 1211-1220) alludes to Callimachus' version of the story in his *Aetia* (fr. 24-25 Pf.). This article provides a metapoetical interpretation of the intertextual contact. The ways in which both poets deal with Heracles reveal the similar but different reactions of these "Callimachean" poets to the heroic-epic literary tradition.

INTRODUCTION

IN the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes the greatest hero Heracles joins the expedition together with the boy Hylas, as is stated at the beginning of the epic (*Arg.* 1, 131-132): σὺν καὶ οἱ Ἴλας κίεν, ἔσθλοδς ὀπάων / πρωθήβης, ἰῶν τε φορεὺς φύλακός τε βιοῖο. "And with him [*Heracles*] went his noble squire Hylas, in the first bloom of youth, to be the bearer of his arrows and guardian of his bow".¹ Later in the first book Apollonius tells the story of how the two met, before abruptly ending his digression (*Arg.* 1, 1211-1220):

δὴ γάρ μιν τοίοισιν ἐν ἤθεσιν αὐτὸς ἔφερβεν,
νηπίαχον τὰ πρῶτα δόμων ἐκ πατρὸς ἀπούρας,
δίου Θειοδάμαντος, ὃν ἐν Δρυόπεσσιν ἔπεφνεν
νηλειῶς βοδὸς ἀμφὶ γεωμόρου ἀντίωντα.
ἦτοι ὁ μὲν νειοῖο γύας τέμνεσκεν ἀρότρῳ
Θειοδάμας ἀνίη βεβολημένος· αὐτὰρ ὁ τὸν γε
βοῦν ἀρότην ἦνωγε παρασχέμεν οὐκ ἐθέλοντα.
ἴετο γὰρ πρόφασιν πολέμου Δρυόπεσσι βαλέσθαι
λευγαλέην, ἐπεὶ οὐ τι δίκης ἀλέγοντες ἔναιον.
ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν τηλοῦ κεν ἀποπλάγξειεν ἀοιδῆς.

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¹ All translations of passages from Apollonius' *Argonautica* are taken from Race 2008.

For in such habits had Heracles himself raised him [*Hylas*], ever since he took him as an infant from the palace of his father, noble Theiodamas, whom he ruthlessly killed among the Dryopians for opposing him over a plowing ox. Now Theiodamas, stricken with pain, was cleaving his fallow fields with a plow, when Heracles ordered him to hand over the plowing ox against his will. For he was eager to create a dire pretext for war against the Dryopians, because they lived there with no concern for justice. But these things would divert me far from my song.

The story about Heracles Theiodamas was also told by Callimachus in the first book of his *Aetia*, as fragments (fr. 24-25 Pf.) and scholia reveal. Apart from the general similarities between the two versions, there is clear intertextual contact between them, as scholars have pointed out.¹ In this article I will argue that this contact has a metapoetical dimension. Assuming that Apollonius alludes to Callimachus,² I will show how and to what extent Apollonius declares his allegiance to Callimachus and his poetics.

APOLLONIUS' HERACLES

At the end of his Theiodamas digression Apollonius lets his poetical persona intrude the narrative by stating that “these things would divert me far from my song”. Apollonius here uses the verb ἀποπλάζω (“lead away”), which is quite remarkable, as it is the only occurrence of the verb in the active voice. Otherwise, it always occurs as an aorist passive.³ In three of four of these instances in the *Argonautica*, the verb, in the sense “go away from” or “leave behind”, is used in connection with Heracles:⁴ at the end of the *Hylas* episode, in Glaucus' speech (1, 1325: ἀποπλάγχθεντες ἔλειφθεν, “they [*Hera-*

¹ Cf. e.g. ἄνωγα (*Aet.* fr. 24, 9 Pf.) ~ ἦνωγε (*Arg.* 1, 1217). Apollonius also alludes to the preceding episode concerning Heracles at Lindos (γεωμύρου ... γύας τέμνεσεν, *Arg.* 1, 1214 f. ~ τέμνοντα ... ἀλλὰ καὶ γειομόρον, *Aetia*, fr. 22 Pf.), by which he shows that he has seen the close connection between the two episodes. See also Cameron 1995, 250, with n. 81 on this allusion. On the contact between Apollonius' and Callimachus' Theiodamas stories (also including the brief allusion in Callimachus' *H. Art.* 160-161), see e.g. Ardizzoni 1935; Corbato 1955, 7-12; Köhnken 1965, 46-56; Barigazzi 1976; Claus 1993, 189-191; Harder 2012, II, on *Aet.* fr. 24-25d H.

² Incidentally, the direction of allusion could be reversed without implications for the metapoetical dimension of both texts.

³ Ardizzoni 1967, 263 (*ad loc.*): “Solo A., in questo solo luogo, adopera ἀποπλάζω all'attivo. Il verbo, sempre all'aoristo passivo ἀπεπλάγχθη, ricorre in Omero (...), in Empedocle (...), e nello stesso Apollonio (...).”

⁴ Albi 1996, 62. Although the fourth occurrence of the verb, in *Arg.* 1, 315-316, has nothing to do with Heracles, it has a metapoetical dimension similar to the one I propose in this article in that “[t]he form of ἀποπλάζω signals [a] break, showing that the narrative is now moving off in a different direction, that the poet is taking a new path of song” (Albi 1996, 63).

cles, Polyphemus and Hylas] wandered off and were left behind”), at 2, 957, where there is mention of three characters who were separated from Heracles (Ἡρακλῆος ἀποπλαγχθέντες) during his expedition to the Amazons, and at 2, 774-775, where king Lycus, on hearing that the Argonauts have left Heracles behind, reacts thus: ὦ φίλοι, οἷοι φωτὸς ἀποπλαγχθέντες ἀρωγῆς/πείρετ’ ἐς Αἰήτην τόσσον πλόον. “O my friends, what a man it was whose help you have lost as you undertake such a long voyage to Aeetes!”. So Apollonius strongly associates the verb with separation from Heracles. A few lines after the Theiodamas episode Heracles will in fact be left behind by the Argonauts, and the question emerges how the passage relates to that event. I will suggest that the connection is a metapoetical one.

Apollonius depicts Heracles as rather brutal in his behaviour against Theiodamas, and he refuses to digress on his “civilizing” war against the Dryopians that follows,¹ an action that can also be seen more negatively, as a mere excuse.² This characterization is consistent with the way Heracles is depicted in the entire *Argonautica*. As scholars have pointed out, the archetypal hero³ is portrayed as an uncivilized,⁴ “archaic hero”, belonging to a different age.⁵ This brutality of Heracles gets a metapoetical dimension

¹ Cf. Harder 2012, II, on fr. 24-5d H.: “(...) 1213-17 create an unfavourable impression of Heracles: the excuse of Hyllus’ hunger is lacking and 1214 νηλειῶς is quite emphatic. This impression is subsequently corrected by the explanation in 1218f., which shows Heracles as a champion of civilization, but then the reader is left in the dark about the outcome of the war, because the narrator refuses to digress about it”.

² See Clauss 1993, 190: “Heracles uses his encounter with the wretched Theiodamas – there is no mention of a hungry Hyllus – as a grim pretext (πρόφασιν ... λευγαλέην, 1218-9) for war against the unjust Dryopians. Even granting the low moral status of the Dryopians, Heracles’ instigation of the war nonetheless evinces an equal disregard for justice; for he took it upon himself to begin a war by murdering an innocent plowman over a draft animal that, in fuller accounts of the story, he then ate”.

³ Cf. Hunter 1993, 25: “The greatest hero among the Argonauts is Heracles, the greatest of all Greek heroes”.

⁴ Cf. Beye 1982, 96: “Though he probably knew the more recent fourth-century reinterpretation of the mythological Heracles figure into a Stoic ascetic or a man of moral strength who makes the choice between virtue and vice, Apollonius returns to the classical conception of Heracles, the man of physical strength and impulsive if not wanton action; in short a brute. In the catalogue he introduces him with the old-fashioned phrase ‘strength of Heracles’ (122)”. See, however, Gentili 1977, who shows that according to archaic poets it is precisely by means of his enormous (and divinely sanctioned) strength that Heracles is able to bring civilization in the first place

⁵ Cf. Clauss 1993, 13, who speaks of Heracles as the “quintessential archaic hero”. Hunter 1993, 27 states that Heracles “is generally represented as a violent and successful mortal hero of an earlier generation”. Cf. Galinsky 1972, 9-21 (Ch. 1: “The Archaic Hero”), who shows that Heracles is “a relic of archaic, pre-Homeric times, as the poet does not fail to point out (...)”; Feeney 1986, 64: “He is, certainly, a relic from an earlier generation, both of heroes and poetry”.

when the hero increasingly does not seem to fit the epic. When Heracles boards the Argo at the beginning of the *Argonautica*, for instance, he appears to be too heavy for the vessel (*Arg.* 1, 531-533):

μέσσω δ' Ἀγκαῖος μέγα τε σθένος Ἡρακλῆος
ἴζανον, ἄγχι δέ οἱ ῥόπαλον θέτο· καί οἱ ἔνερθεν
ποσσὶν ὑπεκλύσθη νηὸς τρόπις. (...)

In the middle sat Ancaeus and mighty Heracles; he placed his club next to him, and beneath his feet the ship's keel sank deep.

This passage triggers the symbolic identification between the Argo and Apollonius' *Argonautica*, which pervades the entire epic, as scholars have observed: "The Argo symbolizes the poem when it sinks under Heracles' feet or when it slips through the Symplegades likened to a book-roll".¹ As a consequence, Heracles not only literally but also metapoetically overburdens the Argo: he is too "heavy", so too traditionally heroic, for the *Argonautica*.² When Heracles is left behind by the Argonauts in the Hylas episode at the end of book 1, he is thus also written out of Apollonius' epic, in which there is no place for this hero and what he stands for: outdated heroic-epic poetry. Now Apollonius' *Argonautica* can be said to be "Callimachean" for several reasons, for instance in its extensive use of aetiologies,³ but the un-heroic character of the poem – and of its protagonist Jason in particular – is the most obvious way in which the epic expresses its allegiance to Callimachean poetics.⁴ It seems that Heracles, who does not fit the epic, also plays an

¹ DeForest 1994, 99. See also Beye 1982, 16, Goldhill 1991, 49, and most extensively Albis 1996, 43-66 (Ch. 3: 'The Poet's Voyage') for the correlation between the voyage of the Argo and the poem's narrative through the metaphor of travelling, and sailing in particular, for poetry. On this metaphor see also e.g. Lieberg 1969, Harrison 2007 (both mainly on Latin poetry).

² Cf. Latin *gravis*, which can metapoetically refer to "the weightiness of the higher genres, especially epic" (Feeney 1991, 319 n. 21, who also provides examples). See also Feeney 1986, 54, who links the idea that Heracles is too heavy with the ancient scholarly tradition, which "was virtually unanimous in saying that Heracles did not actually go on the expedition, since Argo spoke, saying that she could not carry his weight".

³ For aetiologies in the *Argonautica*, see Fusillo 1985, 116 ff.; Paskiewicz 1988, 57-61; Valverde Sánchez 1989; Harder 1994, 21-27. On the Callimachean agenda of Apollonius see, apart from the most extensive study of DeForest 1994, e.g. Clauss 1993, 14-22 (on the prologue of the *Arg.*); Albis 1995 and 1996, 121-132 (on Apollo in the *Arg.* and Call. *H. Ap.* and *Aet.* 1); Kouremenos 1996 (on the programmatic dimension of Apollonius' similes); Kofler 2003, 40-41 (on Jason). For several points of contact between the *Argonautica* and Callimachus' *Aetia*, see Harder 2012, I 4-6, 14, 25, 32-33, 37, with n. 102 for extensive bibliography.

⁴ That this is the most important way is also reflected by the scholarly focus on the heroics of the epic in relation to Homer since the start of the revival of Apollonian studies, in the middle of the twentieth century. See e.g. Fränkel 1959; Lawall 1966; Beye 1969; 1982, 77-99 (Ch. 3: 'The Heroes'); Hunter 1988; 1993, 8-45 (Ch. 2: 'Modes of Heroism'); DeForest 1994, esp. 47-69.

important role in expressing the Callimachean poetics of the *Argonautica*. To see what this role amounts to in the *Argonautica* and in the Theiodamas digression in particular, I will first have to digress myself on the poetics of Callimachus.

CALLIMACHUS' POETICS

Callimachus is the most famous and explicit representative of a new, poetic avant-garde, whose poetics I will label "Callimachean", although Callimachus himself is not necessarily the first to have expressed them.¹ At the end of his *Hymn to Apollo*, Callimachus reveals that the poetics promoted by him are opposed to neo-"Homeric" poetry (*H. Ap.* 105-112):²

ὁ Φθόνος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐπ' οὐατα λάθριος εἶπεν·
 "οὐκ ἄγαμαι τὸν ἀοιδὸν ὃς οὐδ' ὅσα πόντος ἀείδῃ".
 τὸν Φθόνον ὠπλόγων ποδί τ' ἤλασεν ὧδε τ' εἶπε·
 "Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ
 λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἔλκει.
 Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι,
 ἀλλ' ἤτις καθαρὴ τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει
 πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον".

Envy whispered into Apollo's ear: "I don't like a poet who doesn't sing like the sea". Apollo kicked Envy aside and said: "The Assyrian river rolls a massive stream, but it's mainly silt and garbage that it sweeps along. The bees bring water to Deo not from every source but where it bubbles up pure and undefiled from a holy spring, its very essence".³

Exploiting the ancient metaphor of Homer as Ὠκεανός, the source of all waters/poetry, Callimachus' patron deity Apollo states that in copying

¹ In my opinion Callimachus' poetics are shared by his contemporaries Apollonius and Theocritus. These ideas may very well go back to Philitas of Cos, the poet, scholar and tutor of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who flourished a generation before Apollonius, Callimachus and Theocritus. This is suggested by the allusions (in very programmatic contexts) of Callimachus (*Aet.* fr. 1, 9-10; *H. Dem.*, on which see e.g. Müller 1987) and Theocritus (*Id.* 7, 39-41) to his poetical ideas, as well as the ancient references to and puns on the poet's "thinness" (e.g. T. 23a L: λεπτότερος δ' ἦν καὶ Φιλίτας ὁ Κῶος ποιητής. "The poet Philitas of Cos was also rather thin" tr. Lightfoot 1999), which are very suggestive in the light of the importance of λεπτότης ("refinement") for Callimachus' poetical program (see *Aet.* fr. 1, 21-24: Μουσᾶν ... λεπταλέην, "slender Muse", and *Ep.* 27, 3-4 Pf.: χαίρετε λεπταὶ/ρήσιες, "hail, subtle words"). See esp. Asper 1997, 156-189 for Callimachus' use of this poetological metaphor. For the connection between Philitas' and Callimachus' thinness, see also Cameron 1991.

² Hopkinson's term (1988, 86).

³ Translation: Nisetich 2001.

Homer (πόντος) post-Homeric epic poetry (as symbolized by the Assyrian river) reproduces only the quantity of Homeric epic, not its quality.¹

A similar attitude towards heroic-epic is expressed in *Ep.* 28, 1-4 Pf., where Callimachus declares his dislike of the “cyclic poem”, τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικόν:

Ἐχθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικόν, οὐδὲ κελεύθῳ
 χαίρω τίς πολλοὺς ὧδε καὶ ὧδε φέρει,
 μισέω καὶ περίφοιτον ἐρώμενον, οὐδ' ἀπὸ κρήνης
 πίνω· σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια.
 (...)

I hate recycled poetry, and get no pleasure/ from a road crowded with travellers
 this way and that./ I can't stand a boy who sleeps around, don't drink| at public
 fountains, and loathe everything vulgar./ (...)²

Κυκλικόν reveals that Callimachus is here aiming at epic poetry, for the word refers to the post-Homeric Epic Cycle, in the strict sense the series of poems about Troy, such as the *Cypria* and the *Little Iliad*, which were written to complete Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.³ At the same time, in this context, the line also contains a pun on κυκλικός, which means “circular”, and thus metaphorically “commonplace” and, more pejoratively, “hackneyed”.⁴ In the following lines of the epigram, Callimachus elaborates on this theme by using some metaphors (the well, the road), which also occur at the end of the *Hymn to Apollo* and the prologue to the *Aetia* (27-28), and which are

¹ I here follow the interpretation of the passage by Williams 1978, 89. Cf. Koster 1970, 119: “Zudem erhellt hieraus, daß Kallimachos genau wie Aristoteles auch zwischen Homers person und seinen Nachahmern, folglich den ‘Homerischen’ dichtenden, hellenistischen Zeitgenossen unterscheidet. Das wird eindeutig durch den Schluß des Apollonhymnos gestützt, v. 105ff., wo er zwischen πόντος (= Homer, v.106), μεγὰς ῥόος ποτάμιοιο (= epigonale Versuche der Großepiker, v. 108) und der ὀλίγη λιβάς (= kallimacheische Dichtung, v. 112) unterscheidet”.

² Translation: Nisetich 2001.

³ Alexandrian scholars regarded this as the *Epic Cycle* (Davies 1989, 1-2), which, according to the scholia on Clement of Alexandria (2nd/3rd cent. AD), included the epics *Cypria*, *Aethiopsis*, *Ilias parva*, *Iliupersis*, *Nostoi* and *Telegoneia*. On the date, Davies notes: “(...) [T]he lack of unity of these epics as a whole (...), and their status as attempts to fill in the gaps left by Homer's poems, make me very reluctant to date most of them before the second half of the sixth century”. The grammarian Proclus (5th cent. AD) also included the *Titanomachia* and the Theban series (*Oedipodea*, *Thebais*, *Epigoni*). This larger cycle is nowadays referred to as the Epic Cycle. On the Cycle in general, see Davies 1989, 1-12 and the introduction of West 2003.

⁴ Asper 1997, 56 n. 140: “κυκλικός changiert wahrscheinlich bewußt zwischen den Bedeutungen ‘kurrent = abgegriffen’ und ‘zum epischen Kyklos gehörig’”. Cf. Blumenthal 1978, 127 (“trite cyclic poem”) and Hopkinson 1988, 87 (“well worn themes of cyclic epic”), who also reads the passage as playing with the two meanings of κυκλικός.

clearly metapoetical there.¹ So Callimachus in this epigram rejects hackneyed poetry from the Epic Cycle, which keeps “recycling” traditional epic material, an attitude that complements Callimachus’ programmatic statement at the end of the *Hymn to Apollo*.²

Callimachus’ rejection of the Epic Cycle resembles the position of Aristotle, who in his *Poetics* criticized the two Cyclic epics mentioned (*Cypria*, *Little Iliad*; *Poet.* 23, 1459a 16 ff.), as well as other post-Homeric epics about one hero – *Heracleids* and *Theseids* (*Poet.* 8, 1451a 16 ff.) – for their lack of unity of plot in comparison to Homer. That Callimachus declares his allegiance to Aristotle is reinforced by another important programmatic passage, the prologue to the *Aetia*. The poet tells us that the Telchines reproach him for not having written one continuous poem about kings and heroes in many thousands of lines (ἐν ἄεισμα διηγεκῆς ἢ βασιλ[η] /]ας ἐν πολλαῖς ἡνυσα χιλιάσιν / ἦ.....]. ους ἥρωας, *Aet.* fr. 1, 3-5 Pf.). Whether the kind of poem the Telchines suggest is an epic or not,³ the term διηγεκῆς (“continuous”) at any rate recalls the already mentioned passages in the *Poetics*, where Aristotle rejects epic poems from the *Epic Cycle* and epics about individuals such as Heracles for their lack of unity. For διηγεκῆς implies “telling a story completely, from beginning to end”,⁴ and comparable to what Aristotle says in the *Poetics* (8, 1451a 24-25: Ὀδύσειαν γὰρ ποιῶν οὐκ ἐποίησεν ἅπαντα ὅσα αὐτῷ συνέβη. “For though composing an *Odyssey*, he [Homer] did not include every feature of the hero’s life”), the word connotes completeness, continuity and chronological order in a narrative context, and is already in Homer evaluated negatively (e.g. *Od.* 4, 836; 7, 241 f.).⁵ So the ἄεισμα

¹ The metapoetical dimension of *Ep.* 28 is fiercely opposed by Cameron 1995, 388-402, who thinks that the poem is only about love. The first line, however, is explicitly a metapoetical statement, as a result of which the reader is invited to read the subsequent metaphors in a metapoetical way. That the metaphors, at the end of the poem (lines 5-6, not printed), appear retrospectively to be erotic as well, as Cameron shows, does not affect the metapoetical reading. Cf. Asper 1997, 56-58, who thinks that the poem functions on both a metapoetical and an erotic level.

² Cf. Pfeiffer 1968, 227-230 on the way Aristarchus uses κυκλικώτερον and κυκλικῶς, in contrast to Ὀμηρικώτερον (“genuinely Homeric”) and synonymous with οὐχ Ὀμηρικῶς (“un-Homeric”), to reflect “the distinction first drawn by Aristotle between the great poet of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and the makers of the other early epics, the κυκλικοί” (230), thus revealing a attitude similar to Callimachus’ in Hellenistic scholarship.

³ See e.g. the discussion of Harder 2012, 11 9-10, who shows that Callimachus deals with a variety of genres in fr. 1 (e.g. Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, tragedy), and explicitly only with elegy, as is fitting for the prologue to an elegiac poem. The claim of Cameron 1995, 263 ff. (part of his iconoclastic argument against the until then widespread view that Callimachus is attacking epic) that the prologue deals solely with elegy is thus also too limited.

⁴ Harder 2012, 11, on *Aet.* fr. 1, 3: διηγεκῆς.

⁵ *Ibid.* On the adjective see e.g. also van Tress 2006, who argues that Callimachus (following Apollonius) plays with the word’s connotations “Homeric” / “heroic” as well as

διηγεκέες that the Telchines want Callimachus to write recalls the kind of bad, post-Homeric, heroic epic (including the *Epic Cycle* as well as *Heracleids* and *Theseids*) rejected by Aristotle in his *Poetics* and by Callimachus in *Epigram* 28.¹ Aristotle's ideas about epic thus seem to be an incorporated part of Callimachus' poetical program.

HERACLES REJECTED

As I argued above, Heracles symbolizes the kind of outdated epic poetry rejected by Apollonius in his "Callimachean" *Argonautica*. If we assume that Apollonius adheres to Callimachus' Aristotelian renouncement of the Epic Cycle and epics on individual heroes,² it is exactly this kind of epic that Apollonius' Hercules seems to symbolize. This impression is reinforced in the Cyzicus episode in book 1, where Heracles' misfit in the epic is emphasized. While Jason is received by Cyzicus, the eponymous king of the Doliones, Heracles is left behind again (λέλειπτο, 992) with some Argonauts. The hero then deals with an attack of the Earthborn giants on his own (989-997), until the other Argonauts arrive to deal with the leftovers. Heracles is thus a great hero, but he is also a loner, pursuing glory on his own.³ Again, there is a metapoetical dimension to Heracles' misfit. As Apollonius suggests, the Earthborn giants have been sent by Hera (*Arg.* 1, 996-997):

δὴ γὰρ που κάκεϊνα θεὰ τρέφεν αἰνὰ πέλωρα
 "Ἥρη, Ζητὸς ἄκοιτις, ἀέθλιον Ἑρακλῆι.

For no doubt the goddess Hera, Zeus' wife, had been nourishing those terrible monsters too as a labor for Heracles.

its negative connotations (even in Homer) "full" / "detailed", which would create an ironic effect: "If some criticized his work because it was not long, continuous, Homeric, heroic, or detailed, then it would seem that the critics themselves do not know what the master himself, Homer, recommended".

¹ See also Koster 1970, 120-122 for a defence of the influence of Aristotle on Callimachus against Pfeiffer 1968, 137. Cf. also Harder 2012, 11, on *Aet.* fr. 1, 3: ἔν, and on *Aet.* fr. 1, 3: διηγεκέες, for a discussion of possible influences of Aristotle's *Poetics* on the *Aetia* prologue. I assume here that Aristotle's *Poetics* was available in Alexandria. On this debate see Schmakeit 2003, 17 ff.

² Cf. Hunter 1993, 195, who thinks that the *Argonautica* is "utterly unlike the rejected 'cyclic' epics", although he also claims that "the *Argonautica* is radically at odds with the precepts of the *Poetics*". Incidentally, Hunter later regarded the *Argonautica* as an epic that is both cyclic and Callimachean at the same time (Hunter 2001, 5): "It is not too much, I think, to view Apollonius' epic as a cyclic poem done in the 'modern' (? Callimachean) style". This view is also taken by Rengakos 2004, 301: ("[...] die *Argonautika* ein kykliches und zugleich ein kallimacheisches Epos").

³ Cf. Feeney 1986, 64: "(...) he is so much 'himself' that he moves eventually into total isolation".

Heracles' feat is clearly associated with the traditional labours of the hero, which belong in another, but also in another kind of epic: a *Heracleid*, dealing solely with the heroic feats of Heracles,¹ in other words the kind of poem on one hero criticized by Aristotle in his *Poetics* for its lacking unity of plot in comparison to the epics of Homer. Later on, as we saw, Aristotle also criticized the Cyclic epics *Cypria* and the *Little Iliad* for the same fault. Interestingly, Apollonius also seems to associate Heracleids and Cyclic epics with each other in the Cyzicus episode. As D. Feeney notes, line 992, describing Heracles "left behind with the younger men" (ἀλλὰ γὰρ αὖθι λέλειπτο σὺν ἀνδράσιν ὀπλοτέροισιν) alludes to the opening line of the Cyclic epic *Epigoni*: νῦν αὖθ' ὀπλοτέρων ἀνδρῶν ἀρχώμεθα, Μοῦσαι. "But now, Muses, let us begin on the younger men".² On the assumption that Apollonius wrote his *Argonautica* in accordance with both Callimachean and Aristotelian ideas about epic, thus rejecting Heracleids and Cyclic epics, Heracles' staying behind in Cyzicus, which symbolizes his misfit among the crew and in this epic, is associated with this rejected kind of poetry, in which Heracles actually belongs.

This metapoetical interpretation is reinforced at the end of book 1. After Heracles has once more (but this time for good) been left behind by the Argonauts in Mysia, the sea-god Glaucus appears to the arguing Argonauts and reassures them that it is not Heracles' fate to continue the expedition (*Arg.* 1, 1317-1320):

Ἄργεῖ οἱ μοῖρ' ἐστὶν ἀτασθάλῳ Εὐρυσθεῖ
ἐκπλῆσαι μογέοντα δωδέκα πάντας ἀέθλους,
ναίειν δ' ἀθανάτοισι συνέστιον, εἴ κ' ἔτι παύρους
ἐξάνυση. τῷ μὴ τι ποθὴ κείνιοι πελέσθω.

At Argos it is his [*Heracles*'] destiny to toil for arrogant Eurystheus and accomplish twelve labours in all, and to dwell in the home of the immortals if he completes a few more. Therefore, let there be no remorse at all for him.

So at the end of the first book Heracles is reunited with his own poetic world, that of his heroic labours, the subject of a *Heracleid*. A few lines later Glaucus uses the verb ἀποπλάζω ("lead away", "leave behind") to describe

¹ The scholia on Apollonius (on *Arg.* 1, 1355-1357c and 1, 1165) attribute a *Heracleid* to Cinaethon (8th cent. BC), but see Huxley 1969, 86 for the possibility that the mythographer Conon (1st c. BC/AD) is meant. Pisander of Camirus (7th or 6th cent. BC) wrote a *Heracleid* in two books, apparently following a certain Pisinus of Lindus (thus Clem. Al. *Strom.* 6, 2, 25). There also existed a *Heracleia* (or *Heracleias*) by Panyassis (5th cent. BC) in 14 books. See e.g. Huxley 1969, 99-112 for more information about these epics about Heracles.

² Feeney 1986, 81 n. 18. Translation: West 2003.

what has just happened to Heracles and his companions: ἀποπλαγχθέντες ἔλειφθεν, “they wandered off and were left behind” (*Arg.* 1, 1325).

When Apollonius uses the same verb to let his poetic persona intrude and cut short his story of Heracles and Theiodamas, one gets the impression that the poet presents us with a direct metapoetical statement, at a crucial juncture in the poem. Just as the Argonauts are leaving Heracles behind, the poet writes Heracles out of his epic by cutting short a story that befits a poem recounting the hero’s entire life. It is this kind of poem, a *Heracleid*, with which Heracles is associated in the first book, that the Callimachean poet Apollonius does not want to write, as he states by removing Heracles and abruptly stopping a digression about him at a programmatic position at the end of book 1.

APOLLONIUS AND CALLIMACHUS

The intertextual contact with Callimachus’ Theiodamas episode not only reinforces the metapoetical force of Apollonius’ parallel passage, it also sheds interpretative light on Callimachus’ fragmentary text, which also seems to have a metapoetical dimension.

The fragmentary state of Callimachus’ version prevents us from drawing any firm conclusions, but it is likely that the story of Heracles and Theiodamas was told because of its similarity to the preceding one, concerning the origin of the sacrifice to Heracles at Lindus (fr. 22-23 Pf.). This story also dealt with Heracles killing the bull of a farmer because of his appetite, and it was in fact often confused with the story of Heracles and Theiodamas.¹ The scholia make the connection between the two episodes very clear (*Schol. Flor. on Aet.* fr. 22-25 Pf., 50-53, Pfeiffer 1949-53, I 31):

]ασθαι Λίνδιοι κ(αί) τοῦτο[
 α]ὔτοϊς. π(α)ράτίθεται δ(ὲ) κ(αί) ἄλλ[ον μῦθον τῷ προειρημένῳ
 ὅ]μοιον, ἡνίκα ἀπ’ Αἰ[τωλίας φεύγων ὁ Ἡρακλῆς
]π(ε)ρίέτυχεν Θειοδά[μαντι

51 suppl. N.-V.; 52 suppl. Pf.; 53 suppl. Pf.

... Lindians and that ... and an[other tale] similar [to the one just told] is set beside it, how [Heracles fleeing] from Ai[tolia] fell in with Theiodamas ...²

As we saw, Heracles is depicted rather negatively as a brute by Apollonius in his Theiodamas episode. Callimachus’ fragments, on the other hand, suggest that the hero is acting in a more civilized manner in the parallel passage. There, for instance, Heracles is not acting egoistically, as in Apollonius,

¹ See Fraser 1972, I 722-723; Harder 2012, II, on *Aet.* fr. 22-23c H.

² Translation: Nisetich 2001, except for the first line.

but on behalf of his hungry son Hyllus, and Theiodamas seems to start the war against Heracles, not vice versa.¹ The hero's behaviour in the *Aetia* has thus radically changed, for in the preceding Lindos episode he was still depicted as a brute, killing a farmer to satisfy his own appetite.² As S. Stephens has pointed out, the depiction of Heracles in this earlier episode has a metapoetical dimension, as the hero is contrasted with Callimachean poetics.³ When the Lindian farmer reproaches Heracles for killing his ox, the hero does not listen (*Aet.* fr. 23, 2-7 Pf. / 25, 2-7 M.):

ὦ]ς ὁ μὲν ἔνθ' ἤρᾳτο, σὺ δ' ὡς ἄλῶς ἤχον ἀκούει
 Σ]ελλὸς ἐνὶ Τμαρίοις οὔρῃσιν Ἰκαρίης,
 ἡ]ιθέων ὡς μάχλα φιλήτορος ὦτα πενιχροῦ,
 ὡς ἄδικοι πατέρων υἱέες, ὡς σὺ λύρησ
 – ἔσσι] γὰρ οὐ μάλ' ἐλαφρός, ἀ καὶ Λίνος οὐ σ' ἔχε λέξαι –⁴
 λυ]γγῶν ὡς ἐπέων οὐδὲν [ὀπι]ζόμε[εν]ος ...

So he [*the farmer*] cursed then, but you [*Heracles*] did not listen, as the Selloi on Mt. Tmarus hear the sound of the Icarian sea, as the wanton ears of youth hear needy lovers, as unjust sons their fathers, as you the lyre – for you were not easy and Linus could not tell you anything – respecting not at all the dire words ...⁵

In lines 5-6, Callimachus seems to refer to the “proverbial example of the lack of musicality – an ass listening to the lyre”.⁶ This recalls the prologue of the *Aetia*, where Callimachus associates his own poetry with the “clear sound of the cicada” (λιγὺν ἤχον | τέττιγος, 29-30), which he contrasts to the braying of asses (θόρυβον [...] ὄνων, 30). Heracles is thus associated with the un-Callimachean sound of asses, heroic poetry, which is reinforced by his characterization as οὐ μάλ' ἐλαφρός (6), the opposite of the Callimachean poetical ideal of λεπτότης.⁷ As A. Ambühl has shown, however, “in the first book of the book of the *Aetia*, we witness the gradual transformation of Heracles from a barbarian into a civilized hero. By the beginning of the third

¹ See the scholion on A.R. *Arg.* 1, 1212: ὁ δὲ Θειοδάμας ἐλθὼν εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἐστράτευσε καθ' Ἡρακλέους (“Theiodamas went to the city and made war against Heracles”; tr. Nisetich 2001). As this is not told by Apollonius, the scholiast seems to refer to Callimachus' version of the story, which is apparently known to him, as his last remark on Apollonius' passage shows: τούτων δὲ καὶ ὁ Καλλιμάχος μὲννηται, “Of these things Callimachus too makes mention” (tr. Nisetich 2001).

² See e.g. Harder 2012, II, on fr. 24-25d H.: “As presented by Callimachus this story seems to correct the unfavourable impression of Heracles' behaviour in the story of the Lindian farmer (...)”.

³ Stephens 2002-03.

⁴ Pfeiffer 1949-53 prints the end of line 6 as λι.ος ουσεχλεξ... –, but approves of the restoration of Wilamowitz in his apparatus; Massimilla (1996) prints the text with restoration, as it stands here.

⁵ Translation: Stephens 2002-03, 20.

⁶ Stephens 2002-03, 20.

⁷ *Ibid.* See also p. 47 n. 1 above for Callimachus' poetics of λεπτότης.

book, this poetic process is brought to its logical conclusion. By developing Heracles as a figure of Callimachean narrative, Callimachus is also giving us a narrative of his own poetics".¹ In the Theiodamas episode, immediately following the Lindus episode, Heracles has taken the first step to his transformation into a civilized hero. We cannot see anymore whether Callimachus also started to transform Heracles into a "Callimachean hero" in this episode, but Apollonius' allusions to Callimachus makes this very likely. Apollonius has clearly combined Callimachus' Lindus and Theiodamas episodes,² but whereas Callimachus describes a transformation, Heracles' behaviour in the *Argonautica* is consistently depicted in an unfavourable light, and Apollonius refuses to deal with the possible civilizing and Callimachean aspects of Heracles, leaving that, as it were, to Callimachus. That Apollonius' allusive combination of Callimachus' episodes has a metapoetical dimension involving Callimachean poetics suggests that Callimachus' transformation also had a metapoetical edge to it, to which Apollonius reacts.

Although Apollonius and Callimachus agree on their evaluation of the traditionally heroic Heracles and the type of poetry he represents, their approaches towards the hero thus differ significantly. Whereas Callimachus gradually changes and appropriates the old hero to symbolize his own poetics and his gradually maturing attitude towards the heroic-epic literary tradition, Apollonius' Heracles stays consistently in his traditional and un-Callimachean role as a symbol of outdated heroic-epic poetry, forced to leave the Callimachean epic to re-enter his own poetic world. So although "Callimachus and Apollonius were fighting on the same side in the Battle of the Books",³ they did so in very different ways.⁴

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¹ Ambühl 2004, 43.

² Vian 1974, 46-48; Claus 1993, 190: "(...) Apollonius' version is a *contaminatio* of the two Callimachean accounts; the wicked Theiodamas of the Dryopian tale in the *Argonautica* becomes the innocent plowman of the Lindian. The Apollonian Theiodamas is not a brute but a noble man (δίου, 1213), beset with troubles (ἀνίη βεβολημένος, 1216) and pitilessly killed by Heracles (νηλεῶς, 1214)".

³ Lefkowitz 1981, 135.

⁴ Cf. Harder 2012, I 25 on the different, albeit similar, approaches of Callimachus in his *Aetia* and Apollonius in his *Argonautica*: "In Apollonius' *Argonautica* the journey of the Argonauts results in a wide range of monuments, rituals and other traces along their route. The approach is different from that in the *Aetia* if only because in Apollonius the starting-point is the Argonauts' adventures in the past, which leave traces that 'even now' people can observe, whereas in the *Aetia* the starting-point is the present in which the narrator is confronted by traces from the past which he seeks to explain. In both approaches the notion that past and present are closely related as 'cause' and 'result' is prominent".

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