Poetry as window and mirror: Hellenistic poets on predecessors, contemporaries and themselves

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Acknowledgements

My first introduction to Hellenistic poetry was through the *Idylls of Theocritus*, in a seminar taught by Marietje van Erp Taalman Kip. I immediately fell under the spell of this delicately ironic bucolicist and soon afterwards gladly discovered his contemporaries: fascinating, complex Apollonius, witty, learned Callimachus and the epigrammatists with their tantalizing vignettes. Reading these poets made me wish to write a PhD-thesis in classics, if only to learn more about them.

There was indeed a lot to learn in the process of writing a thesis, more than I had imagined—and certainly not only concerning Hellenistic poetry. The greatest lesson learned may be that I have only begun to understand how much more there is yet to learn. One of the pleasant things I also found, however, is that though the writing of a thesis may be a solitary and absurdly difficult business at times, it is not something you do all by yourself. Many people have helped me in many ways and it is with pleasure that I acknowledge their support and assistance here. My first and greatest thanks go to my supervisors, Marietje van Erp Taalman Kip and Irene de Jong.

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