*Classical Quarterly* **36** (i) 38–59 (1986) *Printed in Great Britain* 

# THE *SHIELD OF HERACLES* AND THE LEGEND OF CYCNUS

Much has been written on the genesis of the pseudo-hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*[1] – so much, that true progress is difficult to discern among the welter of theories. But some has been made, although the conclusions that have been reached must be regarded as likely hypotheses rather than proven facts. In this article I propose to proceed from some of these conclusions, ensuring that they are as firmly grounded as possible, to an assessment of how this poem's version of the combat of Heracles and Cycnus relates to the likely circumstances and occasion of its original performance. This will involve considering the legend's variants (including one from the Cycle that has not been discussed in relation to the *Aspis*), and a new look at the first half of the *Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo*.

## I. DATE AND ORIGIN

### 1. *The poem's authorship and integrity*

Despite two recent articles,[2] I shall take it as certain that the *Shield* itself (lines 57–480) is not by Hesiod, whether or not the *Ehoiai* as a whole are his.[3] Aristophanes of Byzantium suspected that it was spurious, on the external grounds that lines 1–56 also

[1] The following will be referred to by author's name only:
L. Andersen, 'The *Shield of Heracles* – problems of genesis', *C&M* 30 (1969), 10–26
J. Fontenrose, *Python: a Study of Delphic Myth and its Origins*, Berkeley, 1959
K. Förstel, *Untersuchungen zum homerischen Apollonhymnos*, Bochum, 1979
P. Guillon, *Le Bouclier d'Héraclès et l'histoire de la Grèce centrale dans la période de la première guerre sacrée*, Aix-en-Provence, 1963
R. Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns: diachronic development in epic diction*, Cambridge, 1982
L. H. Jeffery, *Archaic Greece*, London, 1976
A. López Eire, 'Estesícoro, autor de "Palinodias"', *EClás* 18 (1974), 313–46
R. Merkelbach & M. L. West, *Fragmenta Hesiodea*, Oxford, 1968 (M.-W.)
D. L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci*, Oxford, 1962 (*PMG*)
C. F. Russo, *Hesiodi Scutum*, ed. 2, Florence 1965 (the revisions are in pp. 211–26)
J. Schwartz, *Pseudo-Hesiodeia*, Leiden, 1960
A. Severyns, *Le Cycle épique dans l'école d'Aristarque*, Liège/Paris, 1928
H. A. Shapiro, 'Herakles and Kyknos', *AJA* 88 (1984), 523–9
M. H. A. L. H. van der Valk, 'Le Bouclier de Pseudo-Hésiode', *REG* 79 (1966), 450–81 (cited as 'Bouclier')
—— *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad*, I, Leiden, 1963 (cited as *Researches*)
J. Vara Donado, 'Contribución al conocimiento del Escudo de Heracles: Hesíodo, autor del poema', *CFC* 4 (1972), 315–65
F. Vian, 'Le Combat d'Héraklès et de Kyknos', *REA* 47 (1945), 5–32
J. J. G. Vürtheim, *Stesichorus*, Leiden, 1919
U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, Berlin, 1931–2 (cited from ed. 3, repr. Darmstadt, 1959, with altered pagination).

[2] Those of Andersen and Vara Donado. There is certainly enough linguistic evidence to exclude Hesiodic authorship, as G. P. Edwards showed (*The Language of Hesiod in its Traditional Context*, Oxford, 1970, esp. 196f.). Neither Vara Donado's extensive list of Hesiodic and post-Homeric forms in the poem, nor Andersen's quantification of its formulae and formular expressions, can prove Hesiod its author.

[3] See I. M. Cohen, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (Diss. Toronto, 1983), esp. Ch. VII; Janko 85–7, 221ff.; and now M. L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (Oxford, 1985), 125ff.

occurred in Book IV of the *Ehoiai* (which he, like other ancient critics, regarded as genuinely by Hesiod).[4] His observation is now confirmed by two papyri which give part of the *Ehoie* preceding *Aspis* 1–56, plus the first lines of the poem itself (*P. Oxy.* 2355, 2494A [= fr. 195 M.-W.]). It appears that the author of the *Shield* took lines 1–56 from the *Catalogue* to form the first part of his composition. A similar procedure is found in the addition to the *Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo* of the much longer *Pythian Hymn*; this combination was probably made within the sixth century.[5] The main internal argument for the dependence of *Aspis* 57–480 on the *Ehoie* of Alcmena is Heracles' summarisation of the content of that *Ehoie* at *Aspis* 79ff.; this dependence is such that the poet chose to preface his own verses with those from the *Catalogue*, thereby giving first an account of Heracles' divine birth at Thebes on the authority of 'Hesiod' himself, and then a vindication of his divine lineage through his heroic deeds.[6] He does not hesitate to exploit the irony that Heracles is himself unaware of the truth about his birth, in his account of it to Iolaus. This internal evidence is not undisputed, however, and the external argument should also carry weight.

What of the integrity of the *Shield* proper, lines 57–480? Nearly all editors, including Russo and most recently Solmsen,[7] consider the poem heavily interpolated by rhapsodes. There can be absolutely no doubt that in places there are epic doublets incorporated into the text: the case is strongest at (i) 201b–203a = 203b–205a; (ii) 209b–211a = 211b–213a; (iii) 281–2 = 283; (iv) 293–5 = 296–7 + 299–300; (v) 402–4 = 405–11. The alternative versions of these passages have every appearance of oral variants,[8] and are no doubt owed to rhapsodic performances of a text that attained a real popularity in later sixth-century Athens.[9] For example, Russo (*ad loc.*) produces excellent stylistic arguments that 296–7 + 299–300 constitute the original, 293–5 an inferior doublet (line 298 should be expunged entirely[10]):

[οἱ δ' αὖτ' ἐς ταλάρους ἐφόρευν ὑπὸ τρυγητήρων 293
λευκοὺς καὶ μέλανας βότρυας μεγάλων ἀπὸ ὄρχων,
βριθομένων φύλλοισι καὶ ἀργυρέῃς ἑλίκεσσιν.] 295

[4] Hyp. A 1ff. Vara Donado's argument (315f.) that there is a *prima facie* case for authenticity, since nobody else challenged the poem in antiquity, is not cogent: Apollonius Rhodius is also responding to such a challenge (Schwartz 459 with n. 8).

[5] Cf. Förstel 272–84; W. Burkert, 'Kynaithos, Polycrates and the Homeric Hymn to Apollo', in *Arktouros: Hellenic Studies presented to B. M. W. Knox* (Berlin/New York, 1979), 53–62; Janko 109–14 with nn. (both independently dating this event to 523/2 B.C.). On the intercalary verses at the juncture, 55f., cf. B. A. van Groningen, *La Composition littéraire archaïque grecque* (ed. 2, Amsterdam, 1960), 110f., and Förstel 144f. on *Hy. Ap.* 179ff.

[6] So Wilamowitz, *Hermes* 40 (1905), 122; *contra*, E. Bethe, *Homer: Dichtung und Sage* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1914), i. 9n. For further controversy see van Groningen loc. cit. Schwartz 461ff. wishes to exclude 15–46 from the *Ehoie*, on the grounds that they are inconsistent with the continuation, but cf. Guillon 29–38, esp. 36.

[7] Fr. Solmsen, *Hesiodi Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum* (Oxford, 1970).

[8] Cf. P. Mazon, *Hésiode* (Paris, 1928), 121; van Groningen, op. cit. 118; West on Hesiod, *Th.* 590–1; Förstel 123–8; Janko 2ff.

[9] Shapiro has now demonstrated wide knowledge of the poem among the (mainly Attic) vase-painters who portrayed this subject some 120 times between *c.* 565 and 480; on possible political reasons for its popularity, see the same scholar's 'Herakles, Kyknos and Delphi', in *Proceedings of the First International Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery*, Allard Pierson Series, 5 (Amsterdam, forthcoming 1985/6). I am most grateful to the author for a preview of this article.

[10] 298 is found only in two MSS which omit 283; one deletes it anyway. It is a mélange of 282a and 283b, created because of the homoearchon in those lines, then omitted and reinserted in the wrong place. Rzach, Mazon and Russo, but not Solmsen, sweep it into the outer darkness it deserves.

οἱ δ' αὖτ' ἐς ταλάρους ἐφόρευν. παρὰ δέ σφισιν ὄρχος
χρύσεος ἦν, κλυτὰ ἔργα περίφρονος Ἡφαίστοιο, 297
σειόμενος φύλλοισι καὶ ἀργυρέῃσι κάμαξι, 299
βριθόμενος σταφυλῇσι· μελάνθησάν γε μὲν αἴδε. 300

A rhapsode, misremembering 299–300, has conflated them, yielding the absurdity that the vines are heavy with leaves, not grapes; he has bungled the dark grapes of 300 in 294, and moved further away from the Homeric model (18.561ff.). Line 299, however, is not a further doublet, but evokes the colour and motion of the work of art, as elsewhere in the poem:[11] the poet is not averse from adding participles in successive lines to describe the same subject (cf. e.g. 193ff.). But nothing in the duplicate lines, inept as they are, is without parallel in post-Homeric epos. The likelihood of a simultaneous written and oral transmission of the poem during the sixth century should influence editorial practice regarding these doublets.

Apart from passages of this kind, it seems misguided to impugn the integrity of the whole poem, which has been expertly defended by van der Valk.[12] Its overall quality is not high, and so we should be reluctant to assume interpolation too readily, rather than incompetence. The doublets we have seen are not, strictly speaking, interpolations. Moreover the description of the shield itself is certainly the work of the same poet as the rest of 57–480. Leaving aside the poet's style, and his inclinations to the gruesome and grotesque,[13] this is shown by (i) 216ff., where we see the Gorgons pursuing Perseus, who is Heracles' ancestor and thus his mythical *exemplum* as slayer of monsters, and (ii) 191–206, where the shield portrays first Ares (driven by Deimos and Phobos; cf. 463), then Athena, and finally Apollo, the gods concerned in the duel between Heracles and Cycnus; they are portrayed in the order in which they intervene in the action, as I shall show below. The integrity of one other passage vital to the general interpretation of the poem has also been impugned – lines 472–80. Since this question has historical implications, I shall postpone it until later.

## 2. *External evidence for the poem's date*

The first possible *terminus ante quem* is the centaur Melanchaetes on the François vase of the Athenian Clitias (*c.* 570 B.C.). The name may have originated in a misunderstanding or misremembering of *Aspis* 186,

Ἄρκτον τ' Οὔρειόν τε μελαγχαίτην τε Μίμαντα,

where he is not a centaur at all, but only an adjective, μελαγχαίτης, among other centaurs portrayed on the vase.[14] Vase-painting supplies a definite *terminus ante quem*

[11] Cf. Russo 15f. Solmsen follows Wilamowitz, art. cit. 117, in excising the line. On this passage see also Mazon *ad loc.*; M. Gigante, *Athenaeum* 33 (1955), 337–42; Merkelbach, *SIFC* 27–8 (1956), 300f.; van der Valk, 'Bouclier' 462f.

[12] 'Bouclier' *passim*. See Andersen 21f. for a refutation of van Groningen's hesitant exclusion of 237–317.

[13] Cf. Russo 14f.

[14] So Russo 32. If West, ap. *CQ* 55 (1961), 140, is right to conjecture Μίμαν τε at 186, Clitias was correct; but this does not diminish the probability that the poem influenced the vase-painter, since the combat of Heracles and Cycnus begins to appear on vases very soon afterwards. A. Stewart, in 'Stesichorus and the François Vase' in *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography*, ed. W. G. Moon (Wisconsin, 1983), argues from the unparalleled substitution of 'Stesichore' for the Muse Terpsichore that Clitias was influenced by Stesichorus, whose influence on Attic vase-painting from *c.* 550 onward is beyond doubt. But Clitias is often inaccurate with names (cf. J. Neils, *AJA* 88 [1984], 609). Stewart does not mention the *Aspis*. His proposal would be easier with an early dating of Stesichorus, but this is problematic: cf. West, 'Stesichorus', *CQ* 21 (1971), 302–14, who after a thorough survey of the evidence favours a *floruit* of *c.* 570–40. For authorities supporting a date of *c.* 600, cf. Stewart, art. cit. 56nn.

at almost exactly this time: the first representations of Heracles and Cycnus on Attic and Corinthian vases are dated to *c.* 565, and the scene became exceedingly popular at Athens. The dependence on the *Aspis* of many painters, especially Lydus (*c.* 560–40), has been confirmed by the recent investigation of H. A. Shapiro.[15]

The end of the doxography in Hypothesis A to the *Aspis* states that Stesichorus said the poem was Hesiod's (καὶ Στησίχορος δέ φησιν Ἡσιόδου εἶναι τὸ ποίημα). This has aroused far greater controversy. We need to ask the following questions:

(i) Would Stesichorus have discussed the authenticity of a poem?
(ii) If so, how, where and why would he have done so?
(iii) How do we know about his alleged statement?

It is most improbable that the authenticity of the *Aspis* was an issue in the sixth century. J. A. Davison, in a well-known and exceedingly sceptical article on citations of poets by poets in the archaic period, doubts whether Stesichorus mentioned the poem at all.[16] He may have meant the genuine *Ehoie*; in any case there are chronological difficulties. But the *Ehoie* contains only Heracles' birth, not the Cycnus-episode that Stesichorus also treated; and the chronological problem is not serious, provided that the usual dating of Stesichorus to the mid-sixth century is correct, since in a few decades the *Aspis*, with its long 'Hesiodic' preface and Hesiodic tincture, is likely to have acquired an air of real antiquity, especially if its author tried to pass it off as genuine.[17] In fact it seems that Stesichorus, like other choral lyrists,[18] did refer to his predecessors' poetry. *P. Oxy.* 2506 fr. 26 col. i (= *PMG* 193) says that he criticised Homer and Hesiod in the palinodes; this may be the commentator's inference from the content, but it is equally possible that he named the poets, since he did mention Xanthus the melic poet elsewhere (*PMG* 229, quoted below). Thus it may reasonably be supposed that he mentioned Hesiod as author of the *Aspis*; the likeliest context would be his *Cycnus* (*PMG* 207), which related a divergent version of the story.[19] We shall see some grounds for believing that, like Pindar, he mentioned his predecessors' poems in order to criticise their treatments of myths or heroes.[20]

What is the source of this statement? Hypothesis A also reports the opinion of one Megacles the Athenian that the poem is Hesiod's, but that the poet is to be blamed for having Hephaestus make weapons for his mother's enemies, Heracles and Iolaus. Megacles is unknown, but the tone and content of his remark are reminiscent of Megaclides of Athens, who emerges from his fragments as critical of Homer and Hesiod, fond of accusing poets of illogicality and invention, and interested in weapons made by Hephaestus and in Heracles.[21] Note especially Athenaeus 12.512e (= *PMG* 229):

[15] See n. 9.

[16] Cf. J. A. Davison, *Eranos* 53 (1955), 137f.; Schwartz 551f., and R. Ducat, *REG* 77 (1964), 283f., both also sceptical; Guillon 14ff.; van der Valk, 'Bouclier' 450ff.; Andersen 10ff.

[17] For such a pious fraud the addition of the Pythian section to the *Hymn to Delian Apollo*, certainly thought Homeric because of its *sphragis*, provides an obvious parallel: the first part of each poem confers a spurious legitimacy on the second. Cf. above n. 5.

[18] References to earlier poets (but not to the names of their poems) occur in choral lyric more commonly than is recognised: cf. Simonides *PMG* 564.4 (Homer, Stesichorus; Simonides' words are quoted to prove that the Ἄθλα ἐπὶ Πελίᾳ was genuinely by Stesichorus); Pratinas 713 (Olympus, Thales, Xenodamus); Bacch. 5.192 (Hesiod), fr. 48 (Homer); Pindar, *Py.* 4.277, *Nem.* 7.21, *Is.* 4.41, *Pae.* 7b.11, frr. 264f. (Homer), *Is.* 6.67 (Hesiod); Corinna *PMG* 664(a) (Myrtis, Pindar); Timotheus, *Persae* 225 (Terpander).

[19] So Russo 29; Vürtheim 23f.

[20] Cf. Andersen 15; López Eire 329–33 and below.

[21] See Bux, P.-W. *RE* xv. 124f., s.v. Megakleides, where Hyp. A. is unmentioned; and the Scholia to Homer, *Il.* 5.640, 10.274, 16.140, 21.195 (not in Bux), 22. 36, 205, *Od.* 6.206.

διόπερ καὶ Μεγακλείδης ἐπιτιμᾶι τοῖς μεθ' Ὅμηρον καὶ Ἡσίοδον ποιηταῖς ὅσοι περὶ Ἡρακλέους εἰρήκασιν ὡς στρατοπέδων ἡγεῖτο καὶ πόλεις ἥιρει...τοῦτον οὖν, φησίν, οἱ νέοι ποιηταὶ κατασκευάζουσιν ἐν λιστοῦ σχήματι μόνον περιπορευόμενον ξύλον ἔχοντα καὶ λεοντῆν καὶ τόξα· καὶ ταῦτα πλάσαι πρῶτον Στησίχορον τὸν Ἰμεραῖον. καὶ Ξάνθος δ' ὁ μελοποιὸς πρεσβύτερος ὢν Στησιχόρου ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ Στησίχορος μαρτυρεῖ, ὥς φησιν ὁ Μεγακλείδης, οὐ ταύτην αὐτῶι περιτίθησι τὴν στολὴν ἀλλὰ τὴν Ὁμηρικήν. πολλὰ δὲ τῶν Ξάνθου παραπεποίηκεν ὁ Στησίχορος ὥσπερ καὶ τὴν Ὀρέστειαν καλουμένην.

The parallel between this and Hypothesis A is so strong that Schweighäuser was surely right to emend 'Megacles' to 'Megaclides' there.[22] The conjecture of Schwartz (460), that Megaclides is also the source of Stesichorus' citation of 'Hesiod', is strengthened by Russo's[23] observation that Megaclides noted Stesichorus' citation of his predecessor Xanthus. Why was Megaclides so interested in Stesichorus? As a fourth-century Homeromastix, he doubtless exploited passages where the poets themselves criticised each other, as in the palinodes. Megaclides may well be our source, and there is no reason to distrust his report. If so, it seems that Stesichorus did know the poem. His own chronology is problematic, but West is probably right to set his active career between *c.* 570 and 540.[24] Thus two lines of external evidence converge on a *terminus ante quem* for the poem of around 570 B.C.

### 3. *Internal evidence for the poem's date and origin*

It is generally accepted that the *Aspis* imitates not only Homer's shield of Achilles, but also Hesiod's description of high summer at *Erga* 582ff. (cf. *Aspis* 393ff.).[25] Van der Valk,[26] who does not accept that Parry's insights into oral composition apply to Homer, but wishes to apply them to the *Aspis*, rejects this view; yet recent linguistic research has suggested that the poem is at precisely that stage in the evolution of the epic tradition where we can begin to speak with confidence of the imitation of far older fixed texts, at least in terms of diction.[27] We shall see below that the poem also imitates *Iliad* 5. The *Catalogue of Women* provides another clear *terminus post quem*, but we can date neither the work as a whole nor the *Ehoie* of Alcmena in particular, if indeed it is not by the same poet as the bulk of the *Catalogue*. It is usually held that the Cyrene *Ehoie* provides a *terminus post quem* for the *Catalogue* of 630 B.C., but this is questionable;[28] statistical study of its diction favours a date early in the seventh century, contemporary with Hesiod.[29] Such a date would also allow sufficient time to elapse for the *Catalogue* to become venerable enough to be used by the poet of the *Aspis* as his proem.[30]

Statistical study of the diction of the *Aspis* reveals 'false archaism', i.e. the

[22] Page on *PMG* 269 ascribes the emendation to G. F. Schoemann (1869).

[23] 211; so too West, *CQ* 21 (1971), 305. [24] See above, n. 14.

[25] But see J. T. Hooker, *The Language and Text of the Lesbian Poets* (Innsbruck, 1977), 80ff.

[26] 'Bouclier' 466f. [27] See below, and also Janko 225–8.

[28] Cf. ibid. 248 n. 38; for the standard view see now West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women*, 130ff. On this *Ehoie* see further Janko, 'Hesiod's *Catalogue* on the death of Actaeon', *Phoenix* 39 (1985). Additional evidence for the northern Greek provenience of Cyrene, a minor deity even before she became a colony, is that a Cyrene was the mother of Thracian Diomedes by Ares ([Apollod.] 2.5.8.), unless Malten is right to emend the name to Pyrene (*Kyrene*, Berlin, 1911, 65).

[29] Janko 85–7, and for the statistical method on which these conclusions depend, Chs 3–4 in general. Lest I be thought to be relying too much on this author's conclusions, see the review of R. L. Fowler, *Phoenix* 37 (1983), 345ff. [30] Cf. Guillon 21.

excessively frequent use of older forms of the epic language, including observance of digamma, alongside some mainland, post-Hesiodic characteristics, notably the disuse of both n-mobile to make position and the Ionic innovation *Ζηνός, Ζηνί*. This diction is typical of the late seventh and early sixth centuries, and is comparable with that of the *Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo* (*c.* 586 B.C.?).[31] As for the author's place of origin, there are no specifically Boeotian forms,[32] yet, as we shall see, an origin in central Greece seems likely enough on other grounds, and the local speech may have influenced him in his frequent observance of digamma.[33] The parallels between the art of the *Aspis* and archaic art discerned by R. M. Cook,[34] J. B. Myres[35] and C. F. Russo[36] also range from the later seventh to early sixth centuries, and are a decisive argument, along with language, against Hesiod as its author. Some motifs on Heracles' shield are clearly fantastic or archaising, but others do seem to be related to such masterpieces as the Chest of Cypselus or the Amyclaean Throne.

A more precise dating has been drawn from alleged political references in the poem, which has persistently been related to the time and circumstances of the First Sacred War. Several pieces of evidence suggest a pro-Theban bias on the part of the poet,[37] and hint at a dispute between Cycnus and Heracles centering on who is the true upholder of Apollo's worship:

(i) At 68 Cycnus prays to Apollo for success against Heracles, who has just been called 'son of Zeus' (66); but Phoebus refuses to hear the prayer for his brother's destruction, and in fact has himself sent Heracles against Cycnus.

(ii) Heracles stresses the welcome given to Amphitryon at Thebes (84f.).

(iii) Iolaus says that Poseidon regards Heracles and the city of Thebes with special favour (104f.). The god's sanctuary at Onchestus was of prime importance in Boeotia, as the Homeric Hymns confirm.[38] The Scholia on line 105 explain his epithet *ταύρεος* from the sacrifices of bulls there. His explicit protection of Thebes lays emphasis on the city's importance in Boeotia as a whole, a contentious question for many other Boeotians. Heracles is aided by the steed Arion (120), his offspring.

(iv) The 'city at peace' on the shield is specified at 272 as having seven gates. This can evoke only Thebes.

(v) In the *Ehoie* itself Amphitryon of Thebes leads the Boeotians, Locrians and Phocians against those notorious bandits the Taphians and Teleboans (24f.).[39] This alliance may have given the pro-Theban poet of the *Aspis* a *point d'appui*, in that Thebes is allied with Phocis against brigands: likewise at 477ff. we learn that the

[31] See Janko 77ff.

[32] Russo 34 n. 37.

[33] Cf. Janko 76, 78. Another linguistic feature, found only here in the extant epos, is the use of non-Attic-Ionic forms of the nom. plur. of the demonstrative pronoun ὁ in line-initial position throughout the poem, except for a portion containing several doublets. Thus *τοί* and *ταί* occur at 176, 239, 278, 282 = 283 [= 298], 345, *οἱ* and *αἱ* at 280, 291 = 293, 292 = 296, 301, 310 and 405. This is not an accident due to a Renaissance editor, but represents the paradosis, as checking of Paris MSS gr. 2763, 2772, 2773, 2833 and Suppl. 663 revealed. Evidently there is no direct relation to the problem of doublets; we cannot determine whether the fluctuation represents partial normalisation by an early rhapsode or editor (perhaps after insertion of doublets by a bard who used *οἱ/αἱ*), or an effort to be 'correct' by the poet himself, who had initially forgotten to use *οἱ/αἱ*, or a mixture of both processes.

[34] 'The date of the Hesiodic *Shield*', *CQ* 31 (1937), 204–14.

[35] 'Hesiod's "Shield of Herakles": its structure and workmanship', *JHS* 61 (1941), 17–38.

[36] 22–35; cf. Guillon 20f.

[37] Guillon 52; Russo (ed. 2, 212) has retracted his theory (34f.) that the poet was Attic, not Boeotian.

[38] *Hymn to Pythian Apollo* 230ff., *Hymn to Hermes* 186; cf. Schol. b on *Il.* 2.506.

[39] On the historical context of this alliance cf. Jeffery 74f.

adversary of the Theban Heracles, Cycnus, had been robbing those who drove hecatombs to Delphi; Apollo, displeased, made the Anaurus river destroy his tomb in a flood.

The poet's Theban sympathies are clear, but his attitude to Apollo is not, because it is often held that the end of the poem is a later addition: thus Russo (*ad loc.*) thinks first 472–6, and then 477–80, were added to clarify the mention of Apollo's hostility to Cycnus at 68f. Since these lines are crucial to the poem's date and significance, they need further discussion.

### 4. *The end of the* Aspis*: its integrity and historical significance*

As the poem stands, the god Apollo appears thrice: near the beginning (67ff.), near the middle of the poem and the centre of the shield (201ff.), and at the end. As remarked, on the shield Apollo is depicted directly after the two deities intimately involved in the action, Ares and Athena; as the poem stands, he presides over the action, motivating the combat and obliterating the last traces of his enemy. Now the *Hymn to Pythian Apollo* concludes when Apollo threatens his priests at Delphi with punishment if they misbehave (540ff.); the Hymn's own integrity is defended by the similarly abrupt and threatening tone of Aphrodite at the close of the *Hymn to Aphrodite* (285ff.), and the way messages from deities also conclude *Hymns* I and VII to Dionysus. The *Aspis* is no hymn; but here too, albeit in *oratio obliqua*, Apollo finally makes clear his will with striking abruptness. Yet we are amply prepared for this condemnation of Cycnus; the attitude of the gods is gradually revealed as the poem proceeds. Initially, Apollo refuses Cycnus' prayer, with no reason given, except for the implication in the context that he would not wish harm to his brother Heracles (66ff.). At 103ff. Iolaus assures his uncle of the favour of Zeus and Poseidon; then Athena promises him victory from Zeus (328ff.), who thunders and sends bloody raindrops as a sign to his son at 383ff. Only at the end is the cause of the gods' hostility to Cycnus revealed, 'because he used to lie in wait and plunder whoever led famous hecatombs to Pytho'.

Without this passage the movement of the poem is incomplete, and its purpose vague. It is often thought that archaic Greek poems end not with a bang, but with a whimper; yet most of the narrative Homeric Hymns, the only genre of archaic poetry of which intact examples survive in any quantity, conclude with a point very relevant to their original audiences.[40] The *Hymn to Pythian Apollo* supplies an *aition* for the prevailing arrangements at Delphi, including the dependence of the clergy on offerings now that they lack the Sacred Plain (535ff.); the *Hymn to Demeter* institutes the Eleusinian Mysteries and legitimises the priestly authorities there through their ancestors; the long *Hymn to Dionysus* has Zeus endorse biennial Bacchic rites; and in the *Hymn to Hermes* Apollo defines Hermes' privileges at Delphi. The end of the *Aspis* must have some purpose in view, and Russo's assumption, that it was added to explain Apollo's refusal of Cycnus' prayers at 68, only serves as a reminder of how enigmatic that passage would be without this one. The undoubted interference of rhapsodes in the doublets discussed above does not justify rejecting this passage, where there is no evidence of such interference; nor does it lay the burden of proof on those who presume the integrity of the text, until evidence to the contrary has been produced. The text should lead the hypothesis, not the hypothesis the text.

Lines 477ff., far from being a later addition, must be intended to endorse some

[40] Cf. 'The structure of the Homeric Hymns: a study in genre', *Hermes* 109 (1981), 9–24, esp. 14f.

present view or objective – not the foundation of a cult, but the liquidation of Cycnus, an enemy of true religion; it would strike its audience as a real climax, a punch-line that explained with final clarity the gods' attitude towards Heracles' victory. Cycnus, despite his claim to stand for Apollo, implied by his prayers at 68, is in fact an intruder, with his detestable father, into the sacred enclosure at Pagasae, round which the latter 'rages' at 99; worse still, as son-in-law of Ceyx, Heracles' *xenos* (356), he owes his adversary hospitality, not hostility; but worst of all, he is a marauder, preying upon the pilgrims bound for Delphi, and is duly chastised as the god would wish. Why is Cycnus portrayed in this light? Had the intention been simply to vilify him so as to magnify Heracles, we might expect some still more unpleasant characteristics to have been applied to him, such as the temple of skulls he was building from the heads of his victims in Stesichorus' version. There is not even an explicit statement that he killed the pilgrims he robbed. Scholars have discerned that some religious or political purpose – if indeed the two can be distinguished – must lie behind this portrait. Three hypotheses have been advanced to explain Cycnus' peculiar status in the poem as both devotee and victim of Apollo in the combat with Heracles:

(a) E. Meyer[41] suggested that the story symbolises the supplantation by Apollo of a cult of Cycnus at Pagasae. But this can be refuted on internal evidence; if the poem is intended to supply an *aition* for Apollo's control of the sanctuary, it serves its purpose ill. The sanctuary is ascribed to Apollo from the first, Cycnus and Ares never lay claim to it, and there is no *aition* for any cult-observance at Pagasae, nor do we learn anything of rites conducted there. The only conceivable *aition* is for funeral games in Cycnus' honour, which the poet seems deliberately to exclude by having Apollo wash away the villain's grave (477ff.). The crowds at his funeral are there, we are told, to honour Ceyx not, as we would expect, Cycnus himself (476). If there were observances at Pagasae for Cycnus, the poet is concerned only with their obliteration. Pagasae is merely the backdrop for the victory of Theban Heracles in the cause of Pythian Apollo.

(b) Shapiro[42] has recently suggested that the story, intimately linked with Heracles' attempt to seize Apollo's tripod, reflects Athenian relations with Delphi during the Pisistratid tyranny. This will certainly provide a convincing explanation of both the popularity of the scene on Attic vases of that period, and its subsequent decline. It would also explain the honorific mention of Theseus at line 182 (from *Iliad* 1.265). Note that Pisistratus received financial support from Thebes, and promoted the cults of both Apollo and Heracles.[43] This is a likely political context for the composition of the poem, but we shall see that it was more probably intended for performance at Thebes. Nor does this theory fully account for the ending of the poem; and it requires a lower dating for it than is compatible with a mention of it by Stesichorus as Hesiod's.

(c) Most scholars, whether they accept the integrity of the ending or not, believe that the last lines refer to the fall of Crisa. Russo (33 n. 35) thinks that, after the event, a rhapsode could not refrain from drawing the analogy between the utter destruction of Crisa and Cycnus' crime and punishment. Guillon gives a detailed interpretation

[41] Ap. P.-W. *RE* xviii. 2304, s.v. Pagasai (followed by Andersen 15). This is supposed to have happened when the lords of Pherae brought the shrine into prominence and close contact with Delphi after their victorious participation in the First Sacred War: cf. F. Stählin, E. Meyer & A. Heidner, *Pagasai und Demetrias* (Berlin, 1934), 169. L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford, 1907), 272ff., thought Cycnus belonged to a class of warlike priests associated with human sacrifices to Apollo.

[42] 'Herakles, Kyknos and Delphi', sup. cit. (n. 9).

[43] Cf. Hdt. 1.61.3; Shapiro, art. cit. with nn. 29–34. If Thebes was on the side of Crisa in the First Sacred War, we might expect the Thebans to favour the anti-Alcmeonid faction of Pisistratus in his bid for power. Though shadowy, the picture is at least coherent.

which depends on the action of the *Aspis* as a whole, and not only on these lines; so far-reaching is his theory that it deserves more than the abrupt dismissal afforded to it by van der Valk.[44] It depends on the historicity of the First Sacred War, which has been seriously questioned in a recent article by N. Robertson;[45] but his arguments have been refuted by G. A. Lehmann,[46] and cannot be reviewed here. As is usually held,[47] the First Sacred War began when the Anthelan Amphictyony, led by the Thessalians, determined to reduce the city of Crisa, which was accused of levying tolls on the pilgrims to Delphi. Crisa fell in 591 (traditional date), and, after the remaining Phocian recalcitrants had been driven from the mountains, victory games were held in 586 with the spoils, and the Sacred Plain was consecrated to Apollo. In control of Delphi, the Amphictyons instituted the Pythian games in 582. We do not know if anyone aided the Phocians in their resistance; but it is a plausible guess of Guillon's, based on geopolitical grounds, that the Thebans in particular would be reluctant to see the Thessalians so firmly entrenched south of the Spercheius. Now it is beyond doubt that the *Hymn to Pythian Apollo* celebrates the new order at Delphi; indeed, I think it possible that it was composed for the victory games of 586 or first Pythian games of 582, to which special circumstance we owe its survival. Its author goes out of his way to denigrate Thebes, which was not only displeasing to Apollo as the site for his first shrine (so much for Apollo Ismenius!), but was even uninhabited (226) – a description not applied to any other place on Apollo's itinerary. This looks like a deflation of Theban pretensions to Ogygian antiquity.[48] Perhaps the hymnodist had a personal axe to grind, if he was from a lesser Boeotian *polis* with good cause to dislike the Thebans; but Guillon may well be right that Thebes had overtly sympathised with the cause of Crisa in the recent hostilities. His suggestion will at any rate fit perfectly what we see in the *Aspis* – a markedly Theban Heracles, his divine birth manifested by his heroic valour, attacks the brigand who preys upon pilgrims to Delphi, a Thessalian brigand, moreover, who erroneously claims to serve Apollo, and employs the war-god to that end. Heracles thus fights the first war to end war. An apparent riposte to all this, in terms of Amphictyonic propaganda, was the legend of Heracles trying to wrest the Pythian tripod from the hands of its rightful owner Apollo.[49]

Guillon's is a convincing interpretation of the poem; its major difficulty is that there is simply no evidence about the attitude of Thebes at this period, except for the *Aspis* itself and the hostile allusion, probable as it is, in the *Hymn to Pythian Apollo*.[50] Some explanation for these texts is needed, however, and no better one has yet been proposed. But Guillon proceeds to the conclusion that the poem must *antedate* the

[44] *Mnem.* 18 (1965), 414. Guillon's theory is taken seriously by F. Chamoux, *RPh* 39 (1965), 307f.; cf. also R. Ducat, *REG* 77 (1964), 283–90; W. G. Forrest, *JHS* 86 (1966), 173.

[45] 'The myth of the First Sacred War', *CQ* 28 (1978), 38–73.

[46] *Historia* 29 (1980), 242–6. The key evidence is surely the end of the *Hymn to Pythian Apollo*, which has yet to be satisfactorily explained by other means.

[47] Cf. Forrest, *BCH* 80 (1956), 33–52; Jeffery 73ff.

[48] Cf. Janko 128, with nn. 47f. In fact the main story in the first half of the *Hymn* evinces hostility towards Boeotia: see below on Apollo's conduct towards Telphousa, consort of Poseidon Hippios.

[49] Cf. J. Defradas, *Les Thèmes de la propagande delphique* (Paris, 1954), 144; H. W. Parke & J. Boardman, 'The struggle for the Tripod and the First Sacred War', *JHS* 77 (1957), 276–82; M. Sordi, 'Mitologia e propaganda nella Beozia antica', *Atene e Roma* 11 (1966), 15–24, esp. 17. D. J. R. Williams, in *Image et céramique grecque*, ed. F. Lissarrague & F. Thelamon (Rouen, 1983), 136f., refers the myth to Alcmeonid propaganda of the 560s; Shapiro (art. cit., n. 9), noting that the struggle ended in reconciliation, to Pisistratid propaganda during the period of the tyranny. It may have been used variously at different times; these suggestions are not mutually exclusive.

[50] So Forrest, *JHS* 86 (1966), 173.

First Sacred War. Thebes, he suggests, had during the seventh century pretensions to hegemony in the area to the north, including southern Thessaly: it is an act of daring, in a poem which (he supposes) was performed at Pagasae, to have Heracles kill his Thessalian opponent as far north as that. The poem does not know of the 'crime' of Crisa, which was probably invented to counter Theban complaints that Thessaly was seeking to interfere unwarrantably with free access to Delphi; once a charge of brigandage had been attached to Crisa, similar accusations could not be used without evoking the unfortunate city's fate.[51] Lines 478ff., Guillon continues, do not permit the least comparison with the accusation made against Crisa, since the passage concerns only the region of Pagasae, whence access to Delphi was by a quite different route. Therefore such a charge could only have been formulated *before* the outbreak of the Sacred War.

This does not hold. (i) The location of Crisa is unknown; we cannot assume that pilgrims from the north were able to avoid it. (ii) In any case, the key question was surely much like that which faced the Crusaders in a more extreme form – control over operation of the sanctuary, not only access to it. (iii) Once such a charge has been made against Crisa, it makes perfect sense to hurl it back against those who made it. Thus Guillon's *terminus ante quem* is invalid; and it is surely preferable to take the fall of Crisa as the *terminus post quem* because of the analogy between the city's obliteration and that of Cycnus' tomb, which is, as we shall see, a motif apparently invented by the poet. 478ff. must indeed relate to the circumstances of the Sacred War, but the hostility that engendered the war doubtless did not end with the Amphictyons' victory. It is easy to imagine a resentful post-war partisan of Crisa composing a poem that did throw back at the Thessalians the very accusation they had made against the city. In fact the only recorded hostilities between the Boeotians, led by Thebes, and the Thessalians appear to have occurred at precisely this time – the battle of Ceressus, in which the Thessalian cavalry, led by Lattamyas, was repulsed from an invasion of Boeotia; this event is dated by Plutarch (*Cam.* 19.2) to 'more than two hundred years' before Leuctra (371 B.C.).[52] Thus several items in the evidence, both external and internal, suggest that the *Aspis* was composed between 591 and *c.* 570;[53] and internal evidence indicates a Theban or pro-Theban author.

### 5. *The occasion of the poem's performance*

The *Aspis* contains just enough evidence for us to advance a conjecture as to the precise occasion of its premiere. The double vignette specifying the time of the combat as high summer, when the cicada sings, the millet has ears, and the grapes are starting to darken (392–401), has mystified scholars, who have either excised the entire passage without good reason,[54] or criticised it as absurd and irrelevant, since it interrupts the narrative at the crucial moment before battle commences, and violates the usual epic convention of using such vignettes to give either the time of day or the due season

[51] 18f. This is rebutted by Ducat, art. cit. 286.

[52] Cf. P.-W. *RE* xi. 286f. s.v. Keressos (Bölte). Jeffery 76, and R. G. Buck, *A History of Boeotia* (Edmonton, 1979), 107–12, date the battle to not long before 480, also on the evidence of Plutarch (*Mor.* 866f, = *de Hdt. mal.* 33), who unquestionably contradicts himself. But in the latter passage Plutarch has a real axe to grind, and therefore indulges in rhetorical exaggeration; in the other he mentions the battle only in passing. The unreliability of the *de Herodoti malignitate* is only too well established. Cf. Guillon 69 n. 83, and also below n. 62.

[53] This dating is accepted by Russo 34; Solmsen, *Hermes* 93 (1965), 19; Jeffery 74f.

[54] Russo may, however, be right to excise 398–401 as a doublet (*ad loc.*).

for agricultural activities. No other epic duel has such a vignette. Only Wilamowitz[55] has offered an explanation for the lines – that they allude to the time of year of a festival commemorating Cycnus' death. But, as we saw, the poet goes out of his way to undermine the legitimacy of any such festival. Pagasae is not important in the poem (and Trachis even less so), except as a backdrop for the victory of Heracles, *fidei defensor*, and Iolaus his charioteer.

A more probable occasion for the original performance is the Heracleia or Iolaeia at Thebes, which was the city's major sacred and athletic event; no other attained such renown. So essential to it were both heroes that ancient scholars disputed whether it was to be called the Heracleia or Iolaeia.[56] It may be traced back to the third quarter of the sixth century, if the epigram on the tripod-base of one Damotimos of Troezen, recording his victory in the running at Thebes, refers to this festival rather than to that of Apollo Ismenius:[57] we know from Polemo that the prize was a bronze tripod.[58]

There can be no doubt of the honorific references to Thebes in this poem. Heracles' valour proves that this Theban is the son of Zeus himself.[59] The support of Iolaus, patron, with his uncle, of athletes,[60] was vital to the victory. Finally, the description of Heracles' great shield concludes with scenes of boxing and wrestling (301f.), and chariot-racing for the prize of a tripod (305–13), outside the walls of the seven-gated city at peace (cf. 272). The scenes' placing gives them great emphasis. In the fifth century, all these contests formed part of the games of Heracles and Iolaus,[61] and it was outside the walls of seven-gated Thebes that they were held.[62]

## II. THE MYTH OF CYCNUS IN STESICHORUS AND ELSEWHERE

To speak of an original form of a traditional story is misconceived; but, even if the *Aspis* is thought to be our earliest version, this does not prove that its author presented the story as he received it. Rather, as Jeffery (74f.) believes, the myth may be 'an old story now deliberately given a contemporary political twist'. Guillon (41, 48f.) supposes that the poet has innovated in setting the action at Pagasae, and in avoiding a pre-existing version seen in Stesichorus, wherein Heracles is initially routed and Cycnus an avid collector of crania. But opinion is far from united: C. M. Bowra,[63] for example, believes Stesichorus introduced the rout and the temple of skulls to make

[55] *Hermes* 40 (1905), 119, followed by Mazon, op. cit. (n. 8) 124f. Jeffery (74) ascribes the poem to a Boeotian summer festival, Guillon (101) to one at Pagasae.

[56] Schol. Pind. ad *Ol.* 7.153 Dr., 9.148, *Py.* 9.156, *Nem.* 4.32, *Is.* 1.11, 79, equate the two; contrast Didymus ap. Schol. *Nem.* 4.32. Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung* (Leipzig, 1906), 446f.; Wilamowitz, *Pindaros* (Berlin, 1922), 47.

[57] *IG* iv. 801 (= Hansen, *CEG* 138). Jeffery (*The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece*, Oxford, 1961, 176) refers it to the latter festival, Nilsson (loc. cit.) to the former.

[58] Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 7.153 Dr.

[59] So, forcefully, Guillon 47.

[60] Cf. [Archilochus] fr. 324 West.

[61] The events apparently included boxing (Pi. *Ol.* 7.84), wrestling (*Ol.* 9.98f., *Nem.* 4.19ff.), the race in armour (*Py.* 9.87ff.), the chariot-race (*Is.* 1.10f., 55), the horse-race (*Is.* 4.68ff.), and doubtless running (? Bacch. 10.30).

[62] The games for Megara's dead children were held outside the Electran gate; their graves were close to those of Iolaus and Amphitryon before the Proetidian gate (cf. Nilsson loc. cit.). A guess as to the poem's exact occasion occurs to me, which is so hypothetical that I hesitate to record it, though I suspect it is at least partly correct: that the Heracleia were instituted to celebrate the victory of Ceressus, and that the *Aspis* was composed for the inauguration, to which unusual circumstance we owe its preservation.

[63] *Greek Lyric Poetry* (ed. 2, Oxford, 1961), 80f.

the story more exciting and blood-curdling. The controversy requires that we reexamine the myth in all its variants, one of which – probably the earliest attested – has almost entirely escaped notice.

Within the poem there are three lesser stories where one can discern signs of invention by the poet to suit the context:

(i) At 89ff. Heracles tells of Iphicles, Iolaus' father, a tale found nowhere else: Iphicles voluntarily put himself in bondage to Eurystheus, and of course regretted it. This looks like an invention designed to rid Heracles himself of this taint.[64] Moreover the hero transfers the blame for his own hard labours to a god (94), after mentioning Amphitryon's sin against the gods (79f.). This mention is pointless unless Heracles is implying that he suffers as a requital for that sin. The same apologetic motives are evident.

(ii) At 359ff. Heracles boasts to Ares that he wounded him at Pylos. The other sources for this battle name his divine opponents as Hera and Hades (*Iliad* 5.395ff.; cf. Panyassis frr. 6, 20f. Matthews), Poseidon, Hera and Aidoneus (D-Scholium in AD on *Iliad* 11.690), or Poseidon, Apollo and Hades (Pindar, *Ol.* 9.29ff.). In these Ares is unmentioned, much less wounded. The wounding prefigures the outcome of the combat suspiciously closely; it is probably inspired by *Iliad* 5, where Ares is wounded by Diomedes (855ff.) after the wounded Aphrodite has been consoled with tales of Ares' confinement and of Heracles' woundings of gods at Pylos.[65] Manipulation or invention of a mythic *exemplum* to suit the circumstances, especially where one character wishes to influence the actions of another, has been convincingly demonstrated in Homer by M. M. Willcock.[66] Ares should tremble at this particular precedent.

(iii) The destruction, by the river Anaurus, of Cycnus' tomb at Apollo's behest may be another innovation, with parallels in Homer: cf. the story of the Phaeacians' disappearance in *Odyssey* 13, and the obliteration by flood-waters of the Achaean wall; this was the will of Poseidon and Apollo, since the Greeks had failed to offer the proper hecatombs (*Iliad* 12.3–35). Each time the Scholia comment that Homer tells the story to prevent us from asking where the place he had invented actually is; in the latter case this interpretation goes back to Aristotle (fr. 162 Rose).[67] In the *Aspis* the object of this innovation may be political rather than literary, however.

With these instances in mind, let us return to the main myth, remembering always that, as usual in archaic poetry, we so entirely lack knowledge of the poet's sources that certainty is beyond reach.

## 1. *The* Cycnus *of Stesichorus*

The title of Stesichorus' poem is relayed to us by the scholia to Pindar, *Ol.* 10.15 (10.19 Dr.): 'that Heracles fled from Cycnus, son of Ares, but later killed him is related by Stesichorus in the poem entitled *Cycnus*' – ὅτι τὸν Ἄρεος Κύκνον Ἡρακλῆς φυγὼν αὖτις ἀνεῖλε, Στησίχορος ἐν τῷ ἐπιγραφομένῳ Κύκνῳ φησίν. The full narrative is

[64] Cf. van der Valk, 'Bouclier' 451f. Paley (*ad loc.*) noted how odd it is that Heracles spends time at so critical a moment telling his helper such disagreeable facts about the latter's father. The poet's apologetic aims have taken precedence over any desire for consistency here.

[65] Cf. Wilamowitz, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, i. 316n. Russo 30f. has further arguments for the heavy influence on *Iliad* 5 on the poem.

[66] 'Mythological paradeigma in the *Iliad*', *CQ* 14 (1964), 141–54.

[67] Cf. Sch. bT on *Il.* 7.445; Sch. Q on 13.152; Sch. V on *Od.* 13.185; Eust. 1737.12ff.; and N. J. Richardson, 'Recognition scenes in the *Odyssey* and ancient literary criticism', *ARCA* (*Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar*) 4 (1983), 232f. Cf. also R. Scodel, *HSCP* 86 (1982), 33–50.

found in two parallel scholia, each preserving details from a common source. I quote the A scholium on *Ol.* 10.21 Dr. (= *PMG* 207):

*ἐτράπη μὲν ἐν τῆι μάχηι τοῦ Κύκνου ὁ Ἡρακλῆς. ὁ Κύκνος υἱὸς ὢν τοῦ Ἄρεος ἐν τῆι παρόδωι τῆς Θεσσαλίας οἰκῶν τοὺς παριόντας ξένους ἐκαρατόμει, ἐκ τῶν κεφαλῶν ναὸν τῶι Ἀπόλλωνι ποιῆσαι βουλόμενος. παριόντι τοίνυν τῶι Ἡρακλεῖ ἐπεβούλευσε καὶ συστάσης μάχης ἐτράπη εἰς φυγὴν ὁ Ἡρακλῆς συλλαβομένου τοῦ Ἄρεος ὡς παιδὶ τῶι Κύκνωι. ἀλλὰ ὕστερον αὐτὸν μόνον γενόμενον ἐνίκησεν ὁ Ἡρακλῆς.*

The Vatican (BCDEQ) Scholia on *Ol.* 10.19b Dr. add the important details that Heracles fought Cycnus because of his cruelty to strangers (*ὅτι κακόξενος ἦν Κύκνος*), and that he killed him; the BEQ Scholia on *Ol.* 10.20 state, without giving a source, that Heracles was encouraged by Athena after he had been routed – *Ἡρακλέα τραπέντα ἀνέρρωσεν ἡ Ἀθηνᾶ*. This detail must also be from Stesichorus; these scholia make no reference to the *Aspis*.

Two later versions may depend on Stesichorus. Pindar himself (*Ol.* 10.14f.) is the soul of brevity, saying only that Cycnus routed Heracles in battle; but the mention of Ares in the preceding sentence, and of Iolaus in the next, hints at their involvement. Cycnus' savagery to strangers recurs in Euripides, *HF* 389ff.:

*ἄν τε Πηλιάδ' ἀκτὰν*
*Ἀναύρου παρὰ πηγὰς*
*Κύκνον ξεινοδαΐκταν*
*τόξοις ὤλεσεν, Ἀμφαναί-*
*ας οἰκήτορ' ἄμεικτον·*

The reading of L, *Πηλιάδ'*, was emended to *Μηλιάδ'* by Hermann, now followed by Diggle, but a glance at the map will suffice to defend the paradosis.[68] The use of arrows may also come from Stesichorus: cf. Megaclides ap. *PMG* 229, quoted above.

The statements in the Pindaric Scholia, that Stesichorus' Cycnus wished to build a temple of heads for Apollo, have seemed so extraordinary to scholars that Heyne and Boeckh altered *Ἀπόλλωνι* to *Ἄρει*, while R. D. Dawe[69] has proposed *Φόβῳ*. This is superior palaeographically, since *Φόβῳ* could have been corrupted to *Φοίβῳ*, which could then have been glossed *Ἀπόλλωνι*, the reading of both branches of the scholiastic tradition. Also, as Dawe remarks, in the fifth-century victory inscription from Selinus, not so far from Stesichorus' birthplace Himera, the city's success is attributed to a number of deities, including Phobos but not Ares; Phobos must stand in the war-god's place.[70]

Ares or Phobos certainly seems a more natural recipient of so gruesome a building; yet the evidence is in fact insufficient to sustain any emendation. Emendation of some kind is apparently supported by a scholium of Thomas Magister on Pindar, *Ol.* 2.147 Abel,[71] which distinguished Cycnus son of Ares from his homonym thus: *ὁ μὲν Ἄρεος υἱὸς ὁ ἐν Θετταλίᾳ τοὺς παριόντας λοχῶν καὶ ἀποκτείνων καὶ βουλόμενος ταῖς κεφαλαῖς ναὸν ἀνεγεῖραι τῷ πατρί, ὃν Ἡρακλῆς ἀπέκτεινεν.* As Dawe observes,

[68] So G. W. Bond, *Euripides: Heracles* (Oxford, 1981), *ad loc.* Cf. F. Stählin, *Das hellenische Thessalien* (Stuttgart, 1924), 66f.; E. Meyer, P.-W. *RE* xviii. 2304f., s.v. Pagasai.

[69] 'Stesichorus fr. 207 P.', *PCPhS* 18 (1972), 28–30.

[70] W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* (ed. 3, Leipzig, 1915–24), no. 751; cf. W. M. Calder III, *The Inscription from Temple G at Selinus*, *GRBS* Monograph 4, and *GRBS* 5 (1964), 113–19; R. Meiggs & D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Oxford, 1969), no. 38.

[71] E. Abel, *Scholia recentia in Pindari Epinicia*, I (no more published) (Budapest/Berlin, 1891).

Antaeus son of Poseidon also exhibits filial piety when, in Pindar's words, he was roofing κρανίοις ξένων ναὸν Ποσειδάωνος (*Is.* 4.71f.).[72] But this supports emendation to Ares, not to Cycnus' brother Phobos; would one build a temple to a *brother*? In fact Thomas has most probably suffered from a *lapsus memoriae*, by assimilating Cycnus to Antaeus. In a scholium on Oenomaus, also a son of Ares, Thomas lists the suitors of Hippodameia, and concludes ὧν ταῖς κεφαλαῖς ἔμελλε ναὸν ἀνεγερεῖν τῷ Ἄρει (*Ol.* 1.114 Abel). No earlier source extant gives the dedicatee of Oenomaus' temple of skulls; how probable is it that Thomas had access to superior information not merely about one *Schädelgebäude*, but about two? It is simpler to suppose that he deduced the dedicatee in each case from the analogy of Antaeus' dedication to his father. This mistake is easy to make: thus G. W. Bond (on Eur. *HF* 380–8) ascribes the skull-temples of both Thracian Diomedes and Cycnus to Ares, citing as his authority the scholium to Pindar (*Is.* 4.92 Dr.), which says that Pindar 'is alone in saying' (ἰδίως φησί) that Antaeus was roofing a temple with skulls, 'for it is related that Diomedes the Thracian did this, and Bacchylides says that Euenus did it to the suitors of Marpessa, others say Oenomaus did, for example Sophocles'. Similarly Tzetzes on Lycophron 159 (p. 76.3 Scheer) lists Oenomaus, Antaeus, Euenus, Phorbas, the Thracian Diomedes and the Cycnus slain by Heracles as builders of skull-temples; but neither source specifies the recipients. That Ares ever received such a temple remains only hypothesis, and we shall see that Apollo makes excellent sense as dedicatee of Cycnus' temple in Stesichorus.

As Fontenrose (333) remarks, these gory architects have a good deal in common: Euenus, Oenomaus, Diomedes and Cycnus are sons of Ares; Antaeus, Diomedes and Cycnus are slain by Heracles; Phorbas and Cycnus are opponents of Apollo; and all but Cycnus and Diomedes are involved in a contest with either suitors for their daughters' hand, or passers-by. In fact there is evidence that this part of the pattern fits Cycnus also.

## 2. *Cycnus in the Epic Cycle*

Like Euenus and Oenomaus, Cycnus once raced with horses against his victims. *Aspis* 120 mentions in passing Heracles' horse Arion, who is pulling his chariot. In another version of the story Arion was more important. The T-Scholia on *Iliad* 23.347 state that, according to the Epic Cycle, the stallion was the offspring of Poseidon and Erinys; Poseidon gave him to Copreus of Haliartus, and Copreus to Heracles, who killed Cycnus at Pagasae *riding upon him*, and then gave him to Adrastus.[73] The same genealogy, with more detail, is found in the D-Scholium (in ABDGen) on 23.346, which has been inexplicably ignored in scholarship on the *Aspis*:[74]

[72] Wernicke, ap. P.-W. *RE* i. 2340 s.v. Antaios, sees a further parallel in the story that Antaeus' grave was destroyed, like Cycnus', by flood-waters, but relies on a misreading of Pomponius Mela 3.106, who expressly says that the tumulus of Antaeus still exists! W. T. Magrath, *TAPA* 107 (1977), 203–24, has conclusively proved that the Antaeus whose daughter's suitors race for her hand in *Pyr.* 9 is the same figure.

[73] οἱ δὲ νεώτεροι Ποσειδῶνος καὶ Ἀρπυίας αὐτὸν (*sc.* Ἀρίονα) γενεαλογοῦσιν, οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ Κύκλῳ Ποσειδῶνος καὶ Ἐρινύος. καὶ Ποσειδῶν μὲν αὐτὸν Κοπρεῖ τῷ Ἁλιαρτίῳ δίδωσιν, ὁ δὲ Κοπρεὺς Ἡρακλεῖ, ⟨ὃς⟩ καὶ Κύκνον ἀνεῖλεν ἐν Παγασαῖς ἐπ' αὐτοῦ μαχόμενος. ἔπειτα αὐτὸν δίδωσιν Ἀδράστῳ. Eust. 1304.55ff. derives from this.

[74] The text is constituted from the following: Venetus A and B, from the edition of W. Dindorf, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* (Oxford, 1875–7); D, from *Scholia in Homeri Iliadem, quae vocantur Didymi*, ed. J. Lascaris (Rome, 1517, reprinted by F. Asulanus, Venice, 1521); Gen, from J. Nicole, *Les Scholies Genevoises de l'Iliade* (Geneva, 1891); I have also consulted MS Parisinus gr. 2766 (saec. xiv), which is close to D.

*'Αρίονα] Ποσειδῶν ἐρασθεὶς 'Ερινύος, καὶ μεταβαλὼν τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν εἰς ἵππον, ἐμίγη κατὰ Βοιωτίαν παρὰ τῇ Τιλφούσῃ κρήνῃ. ἡ δὲ ἔγκυος γενομένη ἵππον ἐγέννησεν, ὃς διὰ τὸ κρατιστεύειν 'Αρείων ἐκλήθη. Κοπρεὺς δὲ 'Αλιάρτου βασιλεύων [πόλεως Βοιωτίας] ἔλαβε δῶρον αὐτὸν παρὰ Ποσειδῶνος. οὗτος δὲ αὐτὸν 'Ηρακλεῖ ἐχαρίσατο γενομένῳ πρὸς αὐτόν. τούτῳ δὲ διαγωνισάμενος 'Ηρακλῆς πρὸς Κύκνον "Αρεως υἱὸν καθ' ἱπποδρομίαν ἐνίκησεν ἐν τῷ τοῦ Παγασαίου 'Απόλλωνος ἱερῷ, [ὅ ἐστι πρὸς Τροιζῆνι].*[75] *εἶθ' ὕστερον αὖθις 'Ηρακλῆς 'Αδράστῳ τὸν πῶλον παρέσχεν· ὑφ' οὗ μόνος ὁ "Αδραστος ἐκ τοῦ Θηβαϊκοῦ πολέμου διεσώθη, τῶν ἄλλων ἀπολομένων. ἡ ἱστορία παρὰ τοῖς κυκλικοῖς.*

If this is a genuine fragment of the Epic Cycle, it may be our oldest source for the story of Cycnus. But this scholium has not lacked critics. Since the flight of Adrastus on Arion was certainly in the *Thebaid*, as Pausanias attests (8.25.7), this passage was listed under fr. 4 by both Kinkel and Allen, and was accepted as genuine by, among others, E. Bethe.[76] However, van der Valk believes that the scholium has confused the details of the combat in the *Aspis*, where Arion is only mentioned (120), and, worse, 'the story has been attributed to the Kyklos only because Arion and Adrastus' ownership occur in it, which points were mentioned in the Thebais'.[77]

This scholium should not be rejected out of hand. As we saw, the same information is found, albeit in briefer form, and with the statement that Heracles *killed* Cycnus, in the T-Scholium on 23.347. Both versions ascribe to the Cycle the descent of Arion from Poseidon and Erinys. Now Pausanias (loc. cit.), discussing the horse's paternity, quotes in Poseidon's favour the line of the *Thebaid* (fr. 4) that applies his epithet *κυανοχαίτης* to Arion, but he knows of no direct mention of the god's engendering equine offspring. Elsewhere (9.9.1–5) Pausanias summarises the action of the poem, and professes his admiration for it. Van der Valk draws the obvious conclusion that there was no such passage in the *Thebaid*. But:

(i) The subscription is not merely an invention based on the T-Scholium. In the mythographical Scholia, as van der Valk has convincingly demonstrated,[78] bT and D often share a source: bT is frequently more abbreviated, has no subscription, and adds learned material from elsewhere; D often reflects the common source more closely. In this case, as he shows,[79] T has 'corrected' the detail of the chariot-race, replacing it with a reference to the standard killing of Cycnus; it has omitted material irrelevant to the Homeric passage, and added an alternative genealogy for Arion from another authority. Recent research and papyrus-finds have tended to vindicate the

[75] Heinrich's emendation *Τραχῖνι* is followed by van der Valk, *Researches* 330 n. 107, and Fontenrose, 30n. Jacoby (on *FGH* 316F5) deems *Τροιζῆνι* a relic of the Peloponnesian version of the myth (see below n. 88). But van der Valk is surely right to reject the entire clause as a clarificatory supplement by D: cf. *P. Hamburg* 199 col. i 5f., where the equivalent D-Scholia have added an indication (sometimes incorrect) of where Pisa is (B. Kramer & D. Hagedorn, *Griechische Papyri der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg* [III], *Papyrologische Texte und Untersuchungen* 31, Bonn, 1984, 25–34). For the same reason I also bracket *πόλεως Βοιωτίας*.

[76] *Thebanische Heldenlieder* (Leipzig, 1891), 90f. So too Severyns 220f., and W. Burkert, 'Seven against Thebes', in *I Poemi epici rapsodici non omerici e la tradizione orale*, ed. C. Brillante, M. Cantilena & C. O. Pavese (Padua, 1981), 29 n. 4; id., *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley, 1979), 127.

[77] *Researches* 330, 367f.; similarly Vürtheim 25. The scholium was originally impugned by E. Schwartz (*De Scholiis homericis ad Historiam Fabularem pertinentibus, Jahrb. für class. Phil.* Suppl. 12, Leipzig, 1880, 457), on the ground that the subscription is only an inference from the T-scholium. He is followed by J. Panzer, *De Mythographo homerico restituendo* (Diss. Greifswald, 1892), 47f.; and cf. Wilamowitz i. 393n.

[78] So van der Valk, ibid. 318ff., 324.

[79] Ibid. 367.

subscriptions of the 'Mythographus homericus', the immediate source of such D-Scholia.[80] There is no *a priori* reason why we should in this instance assume that the information it gives derives only in part from the Cycle, but there are certainly proven cases of this phenomenon.[81] The theory that the subscriptions that cite the Cycle are especially unreliable, as van der Valk believes, is based to a considerable extent on this scholium anyway.[82] But he concedes that the tryst of Poseidon and the Erinys may well have been found there.[83]

(ii) Severyns (222), pointing to the fact that in 8.25 Pausanias is relying on the priests of Demeter Erinys for his information, remarks that what is presumably an oral tradition among local antiquarians may not be reliable evidence for the content of the *Thebaid*. If Pausanias knew of such a passage, he did not supply it here. But can we be sure he would have remembered it?[84]

(iii) The bizarre genealogy of Arion is typical of the fantastic material with which the Cycle, unlike Homer, was replete, as J. Griffin has demonstrated.[85] In the Cyclic *Titanomachy*, Cronus took the form of a stallion to possess Philyra and beget Chiron (fr. 8 Allen). Of Arion Homer says only that he ἐκ θεόφιν γένος ἦεν (23.347) – a characteristic evasion of the miracle related here.[86]

(iv) As Severyns (221) observed, the scholium looks like a paraphrase of a typical epic digression giving the history of an important object or possession, to build up its importance at a key moment, like the digressions on the sceptre of the Atridae (2.100ff.) or the boars' tusk helmet (10.266ff.). Two such digressions on horses are particularly close: 20.221–9, where Aeneas digresses on Erichthonius' magical mares,

[80] The papyri reveal that originally, in the early Empire, the 'Mythographus homericus' composed a continuous hypomnema, with Homeric lemmata, myths succinctly told, and subscriptions; the order of the *historiae* followed Homer's text. Thus the subscriptions are not a later addition, as has been held. Cf. F. Montanari, 'Gli *Homerica* su papiro: per una distinzione di generi', *Ricerche di Filologia Classica* 2 (1984), 125–38, esp. 129–31; id., 'Revisione di *P. Berol.* 13282. Le *historiae fabulares* omeriche su papiro', *Atti del XVII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia* (Naples, 19–26 May 1983, forthcoming); and now *P. Hamburg* 199 (above n. 75), all with further bibliography and lists of papyri. On the reliability of the subscriptions, cf. P. Lünstedt, *Untersuchungen zu den mythologischen Abschnitten der D-Scholien* (Diss. Hamburg, 1961, unpublished); van der Valk, *Researches* 352ff.; Montanari, *Studi di Filologia omerica antica* (Pisa, 1979), i. 14f., who remarks on 'la sostanziale attendibilità delle sottoscrizioni indicanti la fonte e che attribuiscono le varie ἱστορίαι a molti dei più importanti autori dell'antichità, rivendicando di conseguenza a queste parti degli *Scholia D* una nobile origine nell'ambito della più autorevole ricerca filologica su Omero e quindi in età antica'. For earlier scepticism see the works cited in n. 77.

[81] Cf. Lünstedt, op. cit. 35f.; van der Valk, *Researches* 305, 348ff.

[82] Ibid. 333, 367, on AD 1.5, AD 16.140 (*Cypria*: both correct); AD 3.242, D 5.126, AD 18.486, D 19.331, AD 23.346, 660 (Cycle). The problem is too complex to be dealt with fully here. Schol. 3.242 is ascribed to Hellanicus, on no very firm grounds (ibid. 351f.); it could come from the *Cypria*. 5.126 is ascribed to Pherecydes by bT, but surely the Mythographus could have named two authorities; van der Valk rejects it, on the supposition that the Cycle is cited because the story concerned someone who was mentioned therein (in this case Tydeus) – the Mythographus wanted to give a false appearance of erudition. He rejects 18.486 and 23.346, 660 for the same reason, but largely defends 19.331, although its content is not in Proclus' summary of the Cycle (369ff.). He assumes that the chariot-race in the schol. on 23.346 is an error, and uses this as a prime piece of evidence against the subscription; but we shall see that it is an old detail, not a confusion.

[83] *Researches* 368 n. 226; so too Wilamowitz i. 393.

[84] Van der Valk (ibid. 333 n. 119) thinks Pausanias was trying to appear learned, and had not in fact read the Cycle anyway.

[85] 'The Epic Cycle and the uniqueness of Homer', *JHS* 97 (1977), 39–53, esp. 41.

[86] So also Wilamowitz i. 392.

and especially 5.265–72, where Diomedes stresses the value of Aeneas' horses by quoting their full pedigree:

τῆς γάρ τοι γενεῆς, ἣς Τρωί περ εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
δῶχ' υἱὸς ποινὴν Γανυμήδεος, οὕνεκ' ἄριστοι
ἵππων, ὅσσοι ἔασιν ὑπ' ἠῶ τ' ἠέλιόν τε.
τῆς γενεῆς ἔκλεψεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγχίσης,
λάθρῃ Λαομέδοντος ὑποσχὼν θήλεας ἵππους·
τῶν οἱ ἓξ ἐγένοντο ἐνὶ μεγάροισι γενέθλη.
τοὺς μέν, τέσσαρας, αὐτὸς ἔχων ἀτίταλλ' ἐπὶ φάτνῃ,
τὼ δὲ δύ' Αἰνείᾳ δῶκεν, μήστωρε φόβοιο.

The flight of Adrastus with Arion's supernatural velocity must have provided an ideal context for a similar narration of his steed's glorious past, but is not the only possible context in the Epic Cycle for such a passage.

Several details suggest that this is a very old version, although it is first attested in a mythographer of early Imperial date:

(a) That Cycnus participated in games is paralleled elsewhere: at Hyginus 273.11 he killed †Pilus the son of Diodotus in the fight in armour at Pelias' funeral games; Pausanias (1.27.6) reports that he killed, among others, Lycus the Thracian, when a prize was proposed for the winner of the duel, but was himself slain by Heracles near the river Peneus. In the D-Scholium it is not even clear that Heracles killed his vanquished opponent (the statement to that effect in T is secondary). Did his victory occur at Pelias' funeral games, which were held by the Anaurus, and were narrated in the Cycle?[87]

(b) ἱπποδρομία surely refers to driving a chariot, not riding (the word is ambiguous); either way, horsemanship was not notable among Heracles' talents. Yet there is an old Peloponnesian variant of his possession of Arion, which also has him ride the horse to take Elis.[88] The chariot-driving of the *Aspis* and the D-Scholium is surely prior; Heracles on horseback is, in Wilamowitz' phrase, *gar nicht denkbar*.

(c) A character named Copreus reappears in association with Heracles at 15.639, where he is Eurystheus' messenger.[89]

(d) The trysting-place of Poseidon (in the shape of a horse) and Erinys was 'by the spring Tilphousa' near Haliartus. By-forms of the name Tilphousa are also applied to the Erinys who bore to Ares the dragon Cadmus slew, and to Demeter Erinys (Thelpousa) in Arcadia, who was mounted by Poseidon (again hippomorphic) and bore him Arion.[90] Clearly the spring *was* once the Erinys, in the Boeotian version of

[87] Simonides *PMG* 564, citing Stesichorus and Homer (i.e. the *Thebaid*??). Cycnus is linked with Pelias by marriage at Nic. Damasc. *FGH* 90F54; in Apollod. 2.7.7 the Peliad Pelopia is his mother. On the Chest of Cypselus, Heracles was judge of the games, and Iolaus victor with the chariot, while the daughters of Pelias looked on (Paus. 5.17.9–11); the victory of Iolaus is also attested by Hyginus (273). Cf. P.-W. *RE* xix. 323 (K. Scherling); Malten, *Kyrene* 308.

[88] The successive owners are Oncus or Oncius (cf. Athena Onca of Thebes), Heracles and Adrastus: cf. Paus. 8.25.8–10; Antimachus fr. 33 Wyss; Ariaethus of Tegea, *FGH* 316F5 Jacoby. Wilamowitz i. 394 believes that the Boeotian version was modelled on the Arcadian, by a local historian of Boeotia, since neither Poseidon nor Demeter had any place at Telphousa's spring; the historian observed the similarity between the names of the two regions, and invented Copreus from 15.639. This is echoed by van der Valk (*Researches* 368 n. 226), who concedes however that the Boeotian version must antedate the *Aspis*, since Heracles owns Arion there. Burkert, assigning the Boeotian variant to the *Thebaid*, implies that it appeared before the Arcadian (*Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* 127).

[89] See P.-W. *RE* xi. 1363f. (W. Kroll); van der Valk, ibid.

[90] Schol. vet. Soph. *Ant.* 126; Paus. 8.25.8–10; Callim. fr. 652 with Pfeiffer's n.; P.-W. *RE* viA 1045ff. (Ernst Wüst); W. H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der gr. u. röm. Mythologie*

the myth not less than in the Arcadian. This spring, called Telphousa in the *Hymn to Pythian Apollo* (243f., 376), is the next stage in Apollo's itinerary after he passes Poseidon's shrine at Onchestus, which, with its curious rite for horses newly broken to the chariot, has been described in a digression (230–9) whose purpose is far from evident. Both the collocation and the digression can be accounted for if the poet had in mind precisely this tryst. The association is confirmed when Telphousa advises Apollo to build his temple elsewhere, because the horses and mules, being watered at her spring, will trouble him: 'here men will prefer to see well-made chariots and the noise of swift horses, rather than a great temple with many treasures inside' (261–6). The preference is actually Telphousa's; she is as horsy as her consort. Apollo accepts her objection and heads for Delphi; but when he returns to punish Telphousa for tricking him, he establishes his own worship on the spot, apparently now oblivious to the noise of passing traffic (382ff.).[91] Such treatment of Telphousa would hardly be welcome to Poseidon, whose shrine was central to Boeotian patriotism, as we have seen. Pythian Apollo's treatment of Telphousa is thus of a piece with the poet's depreciation of Thebes at 225f., and matches perfectly the religious and political context argued for above; Guillon (94) had already suggested that Telphousa's overthrow symbolised control of a key pass on the road between Thebes and Delphi, but he did not see the connection with Poseidon Hippios.

Thus I conclude that the story in the D-Scholium is probably a genuine fragment of the Epic Cycle (if not of the *Thebaid* itself), and was in any case current in Boeotia by *c.* 600 B.C.

### 3. *Other literary and iconic versions*

In addition to the variants just mentioned, several other sources, in both mythographers and vase-paintings, reflect early versions of the myth:

(i) In Hyginus (31.3) and Apollodorus 2.5.11, Heracles fights Cycnus, son of Ares and Pyrene; Apollodorus sets the duel by the river Echedorus (in Macedonia). Ares comes to his son's aid; the battle is ended when Zeus parts the combatants with a thunderbolt. Hyginus has Heracles kill Cycnus before Ares comes to the rescue; this is implied, seemingly, by Apollodorus also.[92] This version, where Zeus intervenes after Cycnus is slain, was recognised by Vian (8ff.) in vase-paintings, where Zeus appears, making a gesture of restraint, between Heracles and Ares; this central Zeus occurs in almost half of all the depictions of the legend. Shapiro (526), however, suggests that Zeus derives from a literal-minded interpretation of *Aspis* 336, where Athena tells Heracles that it is not αἴσιμον for him to take Ares' horses or strip his armour: this is not, presumably, the will of Zeus. Shapiro also explains the series of vases in which a thunderbolt appears between the warriors as a reference to Zeus' thunderclap at 383, a sign of approval to his son. But one explanation for both phenomena should suffice;

(Leipzig, 1884–6), i. 475f.; Wilamowitz i. 391ff.; Fontenrose 366ff.; Burkert, op. cit. 127f. with n. 15; id., *Griechische Religion* (Stuttgart, 1977), 218. The horse's name may be a patronymic of Ares, but appears as Erion on coins of Thelpusa in Arcadia (cf. Erinys? Erichthonius, owner of magical horses?). A shrine of the Praxidikai (evidently the Erinyes under another name), near Mount Tilphusius at Haliartus, was still there in Pausanias' time (9.33.3). A new identification of the spring is proposed by Fontenrose (*TAPA* 100 [1969], 119–31); a chapel of St Nicolas, usual successor-saint to Poseidon, now occupies the site (ibid. 129).

[91] The inconsistency was noted by Fontenrose, art. cit. 126; it is hard to explain unless there is a polemical intent.

[92] Thus should we interpret his phrase Ἄρεος τοῦτον ἐκδικοῦντος (Fontenrose 31 n. 3). This Cycnus is the same as the Lycaon, son of Ares and Pyrene, whom Heracles kills on his way to the Hesperides at Eur. *Alc.* 501ff. (cf. Fontenrose 30, and above n. 28).

and if the central Zeus is urging restraint, as Shapiro rightly suggests, then the thunderbolt should symbolise the same kind of intervention. In any case, Vian was probably right to refer to Apollodorus' variant.

(ii) Diodorus (4.37.4) and a second account in Apollodorus (2.7.7) set the combat at or near Itonus in Southern Thessaly; both include it in the cycle of Heracles' exploits around the original homeland of the Dorians, after the wedding of Ceyx and the campaign with Aegimius.[93] Apollodorus then has him slay Laogoras, who was banqueting in a precinct of Apollo; 'and as he passed by Itonus he was challenged to single combat by Cycnus, son of Ares and Pelopia; and closing with him Heracles slew him also. But when he came to Ormenium, Amyntor the king took arms and forbade him to pass through; and, being hindered on his way, Heracles slew him also.' The themes of a precinct of Apollo and of obstructing the route occur together in the *Aspis*. Diodorus, omitting Laogoras, has Heracles return to Trachis, 'and, upon being challenged by Cycnus, son of Ares, he slew him; and as he was leaving the territory of Itonus...' Neither writer reveals whether Cycnus had made a habit of such challenges. Both treat the episode as a single combat, with no divine intervention on either side; it now appears that such a monomachy is found among the earliest representations in vase-painting, and is not (as Vian thought) a later simplification of the original iconography.[94]

(iii) There is also the Cycnus killed near the Peneus by Heracles after he had killed others duelling (see above), and Cycnus the son of Poseidon, whom Achilles killed when prevented from landing at Troy (Ar. *Rhet.* 2.22.1396b16, Ovid, *Met.* 12.70ff.). This Cycnus also competed at Paris' funeral games (Hygin. 273.12). The association with Achilles, a Thessalian hero, accords with the usual location of our Cycnus; the Cycni were originally one and the same.[95]

(iv) The vase-paintings suggest further variations on the theme. None of them show Heracles routed by Ares, or the temple of skulls. The oenochoe in East Berlin made by Colchus and painted by Lydus is indubitably based on the *Aspis*; Heracles fights with a spear, as in the poem, and the onlookers are Apollo, Poseidon, Dionysus and the Old Man of the Sea. Apollo and Poseidon, both important in the poem as Shapiro remarks (525), have attracted the other two figures. More usually Heracles fights with a sword, bow or club, as presumably in Stesichorus. Seven vases also have an unidentified female onlooker on the side of Cycnus.[96] Vian (28f.) suggested that there was originally a version wherein the struggle was over a woman (cf. the parallel between the Cyclic variant and the stories of Euenus and Oenomaus). Several vases have a pair of female figures flanking the combat: these are mysterious. One possible explanation is that they are borrowed from the scene where Achilles and Memnon are anxiously watched by their respective divine mothers.[97]

There is a unity underlying this farrago of myth. Cycnus' avian name recalls a whole series of Heracles' opponents in Central Greece.[98] He permits his victims to compete with him in a contest of some kind; like other sons of Ares, he seems to be a hypostasis of the god of death, and Heracles' defeat of him recalls his wrestling with Thanatos to save Alcestis, or his battle at Pylos, the gate of death, with Hades.

[93] Both were the subject of lost Hesiodic poems: cf. R. Merkelbach & M. L. West, *RhM* 108 (1965), 300–17; G. L. Huxley, *Greek Epic Poetry* (London, 1969), 106ff. The *Aspis* draws on this Hesiodic 'Cycle' for its setting. [94] Cf. Shapiro 524 with nn. 8–11.

[95] Cf. C. Robert, *Die griechische Heldensage* (ed. 4, Berlin, 1924), 81f.; Wilamowitz i. 316n.

[96] Shapiro 527 n. 55. [97] See ibid. 529 with nn. 75–7 for this and other proposals.

[98] See Fontenrose 40 n. 19. The Peloponnesian equivalent is the labour of the Stymphalian birds. It is surely no coincidence that Ceyx is also a bird (Wilamowitz, loc. cit.).

4. *Conclusions: the myth of Cycnus in the* Aspis

Any conclusions are bound to be tentative; although the Cyclic version is likely to be the oldest we possess (especially if it is from the *Thebaid*, which was mentioned by Callinus[99]), the others may contain elements of equal antiquity, which may have influenced the *Aspis*.

(a) *The setting*. The shrine of Apollo at Pagasae is attested in the Cycle and *Aspis* as the location for the story. Since Euripides placed Cycnus at Amphanaea near the Anaurus, Stesichorus probably took over the location virtually unchanged. In the *Aspis* the shrine is only a grove and altar (70), with no mention of a temple, like many other archaic sanctuaries. One of the earliest vase-paintings, a Corinthian fragment in Amsterdam, shows a temple in the background.[100] Both this and the temple under construction in Stesichorus are probably innovations. Without a temple, Apollo lacked the proper honours; so, as a grim joke, his enemy began to construct one for him – out of the skulls of his pilgrims! Why this change? Bowra[101] considered that Stesichorus wanted to make the story more comical, grotesque and blood-curdling; Cycnus must insult Apollo. López Eire (329) has proposed a deeper motive, which does not of course exclude the others: a partly religious desire to make plainer than in the *Aspis* the reason for Apollo's hatred, and to render Cycnus more worthy of his demise. The altar of horns at Delos, the primeval temples of various materials at Delphi, and travellers' tales of the barbarous north[102] may have suggested the motif to Stesichorus. Even if this is not the first skull-temple in Greek tradition, it is certainly a gruesome adornment to the tale, to be set alongside the grisly end of Geryon.[103] Given the taste for the macabre displayed by the author of the *Aspis*, and his evident desire to give Cycnus neither honour nor pity, we can be certain that he would have mentioned a temple of skulls had he heard of one.

(b) *Heracles' journey: its motive and direction*. The *Aspis*, and also Diodorus–Apollodorus (2.7.7), link the exploit to Trachis, whence Diodorus makes Heracles journey northward. In Apollodorus 2.5.11 he is travelling north to fetch the apples of the Hesperides.[104] The Pindaric scholiast's phrase ἐν τῇ παρόδῳ τῆς Θεσσαλίας is compatible with a northward direction in Stesichorus too; had Heracles been leaving Thessaly for Trachis, ἐν τῇ ἐξόδῳ might have been more apt.[105] Only in the *Aspis* are we told that he was heading for Trachis, i.e. southwards (353ff.). Is this an innovation to make Heracles the prototype of the pilgrims to Delphi? Russo (*ad loc.*) remarks that he is following the route of the later *via sacra* from Tempe thence.

(c) *The nature of the combat*. The Cycle shows Cycnus involved in a chariot-race with Heracles; traces of this tradition are also found in the *Aspis*, unless its author introduced chariots to make the combat more heroic. In fact this is unlikely, since

[99] Ap. Paus. 9.9.5 (by an obvious emendation of *ΚΑΛΑΙΝΟΣ*); J. A. Davison, *Eranos* 53 (1955), 126, 136, is unnecessarily sceptical.

[100] Shapiro 523 n. 5.

[101] *Greek Lyric Poetry* 81; cf. Vürtheim 25.

[102] E.g. the *Arimaspea*; cf. J. D. P. Bolton, *Aristeas of Proconnesus* (Oxford, 1962), 78, 180f., and Pearson on Soph. fr. 473 (= fr. 432N.). For further parallels see R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought* (Cambridge, 1951), 100ff.; E. R. Dodds on Eur. *Ba.* 1214.

[103] Cf. Page, *JHS* 93 (1973), 152.

[104] The journey was set in the north, near the Eridanus, by Pherecydes of Athens (*FGH* 3 F 16 Jacoby, with comm.); he is one of Apollodorus' main sources here (van der Valk, 'On *Apollodori Bibliotheca*', *REG* 71 [1958], 123f.). In some representations Iolaus went too (Robert, *Die griechische Heldensage* 492).

[105] πάροδος can mean 'narrow entrance or approach', e.g. Thermopylae (LSJ s.v., II), but also 'way past' (ibid. I). Thus this point cannot be pressed.

neither the arrows Heracles carries (129ff.; he has no bow!), nor his charger Arion, play any part in the fighting; this shows that they are inherited from earlier traditions. The chariots on vase-paintings can be ascribed to the influence of the *Aspis*.[106] Stesichorus doubtless armed him with bow, club and lionskin (*cf. PMG* 229, supra), as is corroborated by Euripides' statement that he used arrows. Whether the *Aspis* did not know of the lionskin, or chose to ignore it so as to present a Heracles *à la mode homérique*, is unknown.[107]

Now in other sources the battle is assimilated to another sport, the fight in armour, dangerous at the best of times (cf. *Iliad* 23.798ff., the duel of Ajax and Diomedes). Hyginus' story (273.11) that Cycnus killed his opponent in this contest at Pelias' funeral games shows that he could be seen in the same light as Oenomaus – the evil king who kills all comers until he is defeated by the hero. The various types of combat in the legend of Cycnus clearly suggest as a common source neither a combat purely on foot, nor a sporting contest with chariots, but a ceremonial (but no less deadly) duel or tournament involving war-chariots, such as we know to have been in use during the Mycenaean period.[108] The parallel myth of Oenomaus, in the figures of Myrtilus and Pelops, seems to contain a reminiscence of Bronze-Age Anatolian expertise in chariotry.[109] These stories look like a piece of evidence for an otherwise undocumented use of chariots at that period, as well as further evidence for 'the Mycenaean origin of Greek mythology'.

(d) *The reason for the combat.* The version known to the Cycle (also set at Pelias' funeral games?) must have had a challenge, like the later μονομαχίαι; only in the *Aspis*, Stesichorus and Euripides is this unclear. The *Aspis* has only an unspoken challenge by Cycnus, and Heracles' demand that he make way for him, implying that he is blocking the road (352f.). Cycnus gives Heracles time to arm; only at the end of the poem do we hear of him as a brigand, lying in ambush to rob the (presumably unsuspecting) pilgrims of their hecatombs. This is unique in the wider context of the myth's variants, and is as certainly an innovation as is Heracles' championship of Pagasaean Apollo;[110] both are explicable in the religious and political background outlined above. Stesichorus, followed by Euripides, made Cycnus still more devilish – a monster whom Heracles, destroyer of monsters, must destroy. Thus Cycnus returns to the ranks of Heracles' other sub-human opponents, amongst which, as 'Swan', he originated.

(e) *The course of the combat.* Athena's presence is completely ignored by Ares in the *Aspis*, and may therefore be an innovation; she regularly supports Heracles

[106] Cf. Shapiro 525 with n. 28.

[107] On the date of the introduction of the lionskin see now P. Brize, *Die Geryoneis des Stesichoros und die frühe griechische Kunst* (Würzburg, 1980), 25f.

[108] Recently a consensus has emerged that the Mycenaeans used chariots as seen in Homer, i.e. for transporting infantry to and from the fighting: see M. A. Littauer, *AJA* 76 (1972), 145–57; Å. Åkeström, *Opuscula Atheniensia* 12 (1978), 37; J. H. Crouwel, *Chariots and Other Means of Land Transport in Bronze Age Greece* (Amsterdam, 1981), 119–51. Yet Nestor's proposal that chariots be used for mass fighting, as by the men of old (*Il.* 4.301–9), may, as G. S. Kirk says *ad loc.*, suggest dim memories of a technique closer to that used both in the Near East, and in S.W. Anatolia by Attariššiyas the 'man of Aḫḫiya' around 1400 B.C. (on whether he was an Achaean see now H. C. Güterbock, *AJA* 87 [1983], 134). For evidence for Mycenaean chariot-racing, see Crouwel, op. cit. 142.

[109] Myrtilus is possibly a name of W. Anatolian origin (cf. Hittite *Muršiliš*) – the same area from which Pelops is supposed to have come; the importance of charioteers in diplomatic contacts between the Hittites and the Aḫḫiyawa has lately been reemphasised (M. J. Mellink, *AJA* 87 [1983], 140).

[110] So Wilamowitz i. 316n.

elsewhere. Even Ares' intervention may not be traditional, but based on *Iliad* 5.[111] He does nothing to save his son, but attacks only after Cycnus' death, as in Hyginus and Apollodorus 2.5.11. At least this suggests that the initial rout of Heracles by Ares and son is indeed a (pious) innovation of Stesichorus, rather than a motif patriotically suppressed in the *Aspis*, as Russo and van der Valk suppose.[112] The rout involves the illogicality that Ares cannot intervene twice, which replaces the illogicality that he cannot save his son on the first occasion – an illogicality with good Homeric precedents. López Eire (331f.) is surely right to suggest that Stesichorus wished to purify Heracles' actions and motives, just as Pindar does at *Ol.* 9.29ff. ('how could Heracles have fought against gods at Pylos?' ἀπό μοι λόγον τοῦτον, στόμα, ῥῖψον). A mortal should not stand up to a god in battle, much less wound him. The version in which Zeus halts the battle with a thunderbolt, just as he halts that between Heracles and Apollo over the Delphic tripod in Apollodorus (2.6.2), is a similar pious invention, and was current by the third quarter of the sixth century.[113] It is conceivable that Zeus' intervention was already known to the *Aspis*, however, but has been displaced to another context: in the line lost after 367 someone intervened to prevent Heracles from stripping Ares' armour after he had felled him at Pylos; the agent is best supplied as Zeus.[114]

We saw that Ares' wounding at Pylos is almost certainly an *ad hoc* invention in the *Aspis*. Willcock has shown that such invented *exempla* in Homer may be used to justify novel twists to the main plot.[115] Thus Russo (30f.) was surely right in his conjecture that the poet's major innovation in this story was the wounding of Ares by Heracles at Pagasae. This victory magnifies Heracles' glory, and verifies his divine birth at Thebes as told in the Hesiodic *Ehoie*; it also associates the Thessalian Cycnus with a very unpleasant deity. We shed no tears over Cycnus, and our impression of him is powerfully confirmed by the last lines of the poem, where Apollo himself, in another radical change, destroys his grave. The well-attended funeral may be transferred from that of Pelias.

Although we can achieve only probable conclusions at best, it is at least clear that we should no longer take it for granted that the *Aspis* presents a 'canonical' version of the story, retelling it precisely as it was traditionally told. Even the poem's great popularity in the sixth century did not obliterate the other variants; and Stesichorus reacted strongly against it, apparently making Cycnus still more ungentlemanly and Heracles still more pious. López Eire (loc. cit.) was right to argue that the *Cycnus* was a 'palinode' in the same sense as Stesichorus' other 'palinodes': it criticised and corrected the portrayal of the legend in earlier poetry. It is in just such a context that Stesichorus might refer to this poem of 'Hesiod'.[116]

*Columbia University* R. JANKO

[111] So Wilamowitz, loc. cit.

[112] Russo 30f.; 'Bouclier' 452.

[113] Shapiro 524 n. 11.

[114] See the app. crit. of Solmsen's ed. Van der Valk, *Mnem.* 22 (1969), 432f., thinks there is no lacuna, but an aposiopesis; nor does Mazon posit a lacuna, but takes λιπών as a suppressed protasis of an unfulfilled conditional sentence, translating 's'il avait laissé...'. The latter may be right; if so, it is still implied that someone intervened.

[115] Art. cit. (n. 66), esp. 145f.

[116] I am most grateful to the Columbia University Council for Research in the Humanities for a travel grant which enabled me to work on this article in the libraries of Cambridge University and at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. I must also thank a seminar audience at Columbia, an anonymous reader, and the editors, for valuable and constructive criticism; Prof. Shapiro for an advance view of his forthcoming article; and Prof. J. S. Rusten for invaluable help with bibliography on the D-Scholia.