

X.—Apollonius Rhodius as a Narrator in *Argonautica* 2.1–140 *

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The first thing to strike a reader of Apollonius is the artificiality of his diction; we are kept on our toes hunting for the meaning of his words. In so doing, we soon discover that his language, however abstruse, is by no means vague, and we surmise that he has very definite things to say. What manner of things they are can only be ascertained by a close interpretation of a connected piece of text. The present paper paraphrases and explains a short specimen passage in order to determine what precisely the poet intended to convey, and especially in order to bring out certain subtle points that easily escape the casual reader.¹ In conclusion of our study, we shall briefly discuss, in a more systematic fashion, some few characteristics of Apollonius' narrative style.

The first lines of the second book tell us that the Argonauts landed near the dwelling of Amycus, king of the Bebrycians. Amycus met them, but in his arrogance he did not do them the courtesy of inquiring about their names and the business that had brought them there. Instead, he announced that he had made it a rule for visiting foreigners to pay for their intrusion by having one of their number box with him (8–18).² (The poet has informed us beforehand [7] that the usual outcome was the death of the king's opponent.³) On behalf of the indignant Argonauts, Poly-

* From a manuscript presented to Professor Max Pohlenz on his eightieth birthday, July 30, 1952.

¹ The footnotes will also deal with problems of textual criticism (for the MS tradition see *Gött. Nachr.* 1929, 164–93, and the summary in *AJP* 71 [1950] p. 114 n. 2). Not all the difficulties, however, of either text or explanation will be discussed.

² Note the rather pedantic correspondence between what is said of Amycus' customary behaviour and of the way in which he acted this time (*καὶ δὲ τότε*, 8). The word *ὑπεροπλήστarton* (4) is echoed in *ὑπερβασίῃσιν* (9), and there is much repetition from lines 5–7a in 12–16. This was probably meant as a refinement on the Homeric verbatim iteration of entire lines. In the *Argon.*, such iteration is extremely rare (e.g., 1.705–07/714–16).

³ The reader is thus prepared to look on Amycus' eventual death by the hands of Polydeuces as a fitting retribution. In the version of Theocritus' *Id.* 22 the outcome is very different; in fact, genre, style and aims are so dissimilar in the two works that it is hardly possible to weigh the merits and defects of the one against those of the other.

deuces declared that he was quite ready to obey the rule and take up the challenge (19–25). Amycus now fixed his gaze on him, as when a lion, pursued by hunters, is wounded by a spear, and the beast no longer minds the crowd that has him at bay, but looks only on the one man who has wounded him (25–29). The comparison has a familiar ring, and every reader is reminded of the numerous lion similes in Homeric battle scenes (e.g. *Il.* 5.136 ff., 20.164 ff.). In our passage no battle is going on, but the simile is eminently fitting just the same. No physical wound has been inflicted on the king, but a psychological one, and the simile illustrates a frame of mind and the workings of an obsession. Tragedy intervened between Homer and Apollonius,⁴ with its many self-centered, cantankerous tyrants. The simile in the *Argonautica* shows, first (“hunters tracking down a lion”), that to Amycus the mere presence on his soil of a number of strangers was tantamount to a deliberate attack on his person;⁵ second (“the lion hit by a spear”), that he looked on Polydeuces’ acceptance of his demand as an insult;⁶ and third, that his aversion to all outsiders and all the Argonauts was now concentrated on Polydeuces alone.⁷ Many

⁴ Franz Stoessl, in his *Apollonios Rhodios: Interpretationen zur Erzählungskunst und Quellenverwertung* (Bern-Leipzig, 1941), was right to insist on the influence which tragedy exercised on Apollonius’ handling of his material.

⁵ Aeetes will react in a similar manner later (3.375 f., 589–93). The difference is that Aeetes disbelieves what he is told and imagines a complex plot against his person, while Amycus is too stupid to care what excuse the foreigners might offer for their intrusion.

⁶ He did not expect any one to dare fight him and looked forward to “coercing one or the other of them, in a manner which he will not like, into compliance” (18), in other words, he hoped to pick his own victim and box him to death. This paraphrase is based on reading *κρατερῇ . . . ἀνάγκῃ* in the dative with SG, rather than the nomin. with LAPE. Arthur Platt (*JP* 35 [1919] 75) has seen that “ἀνάγκῃ ἐπέπεραι τινι is not Greek”; *ἐπιέψεται* parallels *ὑπείξομεν* (23) and means “will comply.” For the threatening *τις* cf. *Od.* 3.224 (imitated below, 150) and for *στυγερῶς* cf. *Od.* 23.23, *Il.* 16.723. The paraphrase in the sch. says: *πείσεσθε (-σθαι?) ἄν, οἶμαι, οὐχὶ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἀνάγκην*. Here the last three words have to be emended into *τῇ -ση -κη*, because *πείσεσθε* as a rendering of (*τις*) *ἐπιέψεται* must originally have been the fut. of *πείθομαι*, not of *πάσχω*, and because the addition of *οἶμαι* makes no sense with “You will be subjected to extraordinary coercion,” but it does with “the extraordinary coercion which I shall apply will (I surmise) prove persuasive.” The scholiast, then, also read *ἀνάγκῃ* in the dative.

⁷ We may further add, fourth, that the behaviour as here described was supposed to be typical of the lion, see Aristot., *Hist. Anim.* 9.44 (629b 23 ff.). Either Apollonius read some biological work, or both he and Aristotle used a poetic source in which the lion was so pictured. See also n. 23, below.

similes in Apollonius may at first seem conventional, but on closer inspection they are novel and piquant.

When both fighters stripped for action, Polydeuces took off a fine garment that held sentimental memories for him,⁸ while Amycus slipped out of a heavy cloak without bothering to open the clasps, <so eager was he for the fight⁹> (30–34). Now that the contestants are naked, Apollonius claims to contrast their “build and stature” (δέμῃς and φνῆ, cf. *Il.* 1.115), but what follows next is not a description but a comparison. Of Amycus <whose actual parents were Poseidon and a tree nymph> the poet says that he appeared like a huge child of murderous Typhoeus, or like one of those monsters whom Earth bore when she was angry with Zeus, while Polydeuces looked like a heavenly star (37–42). According to legend, Typhoeus was a son of Gaea and Tartarus, and wrathful Gaea gave birth to the Giants when Zeus had imprisoned her elder children, the Titans (cf. sch. 2.40 and Apollod., *Bibl.* 1.6.2); thus the comparisons imply that Amycus seemed an embodiment of the brute and fiendish powers of Earth and the Nether World, and the reader is prepared to see the coming boxing match and the general battle in the light of the victory of Zeus over Typhoeus and of the Olympians over the Giants.¹⁰ As to the heavenly and starlike nature of Polydeuces, the Dioscuri were already by the time of Euripides (cf. *Hel.* 140) identified with the constellation Gemini, but Apollonius indicates that he has rather Hesperus in mind, the star whose name once more suggests, as the garment had just done, the charms of tender love (cf. 1.774–81). Polydeuces is then (43 f.) pictured as a young man whose eyes were still radiant, and who was still sprouting the first down on his cheeks; <here the reader will mentally insert a familiar Homeric quotation, “as when the youth of men is comeliest” (*Il.* 24.348)>. “And yet (so the narrative goes on) courage and spirit were waxing in him as in a lion” (44 f.); we are thus given to understand that a civilized and handsome youth is not necessarily a weakling. The Argonauts

⁸ For details see below, pp. 152 f.

⁹ The passage was explained by Onno Damsté, *Advers. ad A-i Rh-i Argon.*, Rotterdam 1922, pp. 7 f. — Brackets < > will be used to indicate that our paraphrase has been amplified to bring out what the author wanted to be understood.

¹⁰ The monuments set up by the Attalids in Pergamon and Athens were evidently meant to suggest a parallel between their own victory over the savage Galatians and that of the Olympians over the Giants.

in general are represented as no older than Alexander was when he conquered the nations of the East.¹¹

Polydeuces began shadow-boxing to warm up for the bout <which was the customary practice> and to see whether his arms had not grown stiff with rowing. Amycus did nothing of the sort, but just stared <at the apparent antics> in silence, impatient to knock the life out of his opponent (45–50). Then a servant of Amycus laid four thongs on the ground between the adversaries, and Amycus boasted how unusually well the dry hard leather was cut by him, fit to draw blood from cheeks (51–59). The background for this remark is to be found in the history of boxing. During the earlier period the cesti were soft, because their only function was to protect the hands of the wearer, while from about 400 B.C. they were so made as to cut the skin of the opponent.¹² Apollonius has thus the savage Amycus anticipate the supposed improvement in the technique of the art.¹³ Polydeuces, when invited to pick whichever thongs¹⁴ he preferred, only smiled and took up those that were next to him; he did not want to “quarrel” over the distribution (60–62).

¹¹ (a) Apollonius uses the term *νέοι* as synonymous with *οἱ Ἀργοναῦται* in 1.341, 382, 458, 1134, 3.194 (= *ἥρωες* 167), 555 (= *πᾶσιν* 544, contrast *μοῖνος* 556), 4.184 (= *δμιλον* 183), 503. (b) The four grandsons of Aeetes recommend themselves to the Argonauts as *δμήλικες* in 2.1130. (c) When we read in 1.972 that Cyzicus “too” (*καὶ κείνῳ*) had only recently (read *νεῖδον* with Ruhnken: *ἰσόν* libri) sprouted a down on his cheeks, the reference must be to the Argonauts at large (Jason has not been mentioned since 910 nor will he be before 1032), and *Argon. Orph.* took the words in this sense (510: *φιλάτο*, scil. Cyzicus, *δ' αὖ παρέντας δμηλικῆς ἔνεκα σφῆς*). (d) In Pindar, *P.* 4.187, the Argonauts are called *ἄλικες*, which can only mean that they were all young; Jason himself was twenty years old according to line 104.

¹² For details see E. Norman Gardiner, *Athletics in the Ancient World* (Oxford, 1930), pp. 197 ff.

¹³ Plato (*Leges* 7.796A) ascribes to “Epeus (cf. *Il.* 23.664 ff.) and Amycus” certain unspecified innovations in the technique of boxing. A scholium to this passage says (p. 328 Greene): “*Ἀμυκος Ποσειδῶνος καὶ Νύμφης Βιθυνίδος ἢ Μελίης* (Me- Hercher, ad Apollod., *Bibl.* 1.9.20: Πε- libri), *ὃς καὶ ἐξεῦρεν ἱμάντας πικτικούς*. The words *Βιθυνίδος ἢ Μελίης* identify an annotated edition of the *Argonautica* as the scholiast’s source, see 2.2–4 with the sch.: *Βιθυνίς Μελίη: ἀδελφὸν πρότερόν ἐστι τὸ κύριον*. It seems that the Plato scholiast (or his source) carelessly read into *Arg.* 2.58 f. a meaning which the lines cannot have. “I excel in . . .” is a far cry from “I invented,” and lines 62–64 would not run as they do if Polydeuces’ seconds had never before seen thongs used in a boxing match. Clem. Alex. (*Strom.* 1.16.76) repeats the assertion that Amycus invented the cesti.

¹⁴ The MSS have in line 55 the impossible sing. *ὄν* and in line 57 *χειρί*, but the paraphrase in sch. 55 has *οὖς*, and plurals are used in the text of 52 and 61–63. Write in 55 *ὦ*, and in 57 either *χείρε* (cf. *Il.* 8.25, *Od.* 18.67) or, with the more common dative (e.g. 1.1020, *Od.* 10.261), *χερσὶ*.

The match as Apollonius tells it developed in three phases, marked by three similes which serve to weight and point the rather cursory narrative. At first Amycus rushed upon his opponent <with elemental vehemence>. As when a rough wave puts on a crest and dashes against a swift ship, but the intelligent pilot manages to escape the billow just as it is eager to break over the gunwale:¹⁵ even so <towering> Amycus kept pursuing his <shorter> adversary <and, like the wave that wants to jump the gunwale, tried to climb over his guard with high blows>, but Polydeuces dodged cleverly and was never hit (70–76).

It did not take Polydeuces long to size up the king's crude style and to understand its strong and weak points. Soon he stood his ground, and they both exchanged blows (76–78). The simile which illustrates this second phase combines elements from three fields in which Apollonius was especially interested: nautical lore, mechanics, and psychology.¹⁶ The noise of the boxing is likened to that to be heard in a shipyard; and the hints which the text gives for a more precise interpretation are inconspicuous but adequate:

- ὥς δ' ὅτε νῆια δοῦρα, θοοῖς ἀντίξοα γόμοις,
 80 ἀνέρες ὑλουργοὶ ἐπιβλήδην ἐλάοντες
 θείνωσι σφύρησιν, ἐπ' ἄλλω δ' ἄλλος ἄηται (?)
 δοῦπος ἄδην — ὥς τοῖσι παρήια ἀμφοτέρωθεν
 καὶ γένυες κτύπεον, βρυχή δ' ὑπετέλλετ' ὀδόντων
 84 ἄσπετος, οὐδ' ἔλληξαν ἐπισταδὸν οὐτάζοντες.

The pieces of which the curving ribs consist are being fitted together in the yard, and the two edges which are to be joined have dowels stuck into them <similar to teeth projecting from a jaw>.

¹⁵ Write in 73 *ἰέμενον* and *κλύδωνα* (:-*μένου* and -*νος* MSS). A gen. absol. is intolerable when a direct object is required; five genitive forms in two lines are ridiculous and so confusing that all the P scholiast's attempts at unraveling them proved abortive; and the corresponding phrase in 75 f. is *ἀίσσοντ' ἀλέεινεν* (if, with the consensus of the editors, we adopt Pierson's emendation, cl. 92 f., for the *ἀίσσων* of the MSS and sch.). As to the genesis of the corruption, the participle was first assimilated to the preceding gen. *κυβερνητῆρος*, and then *κλύδ.* followed suit. The personification implied in *ἰέμενον* seems unexampled in Homeric similes, although of course not in the Homeric narrative (Il. 11.574, *sim.*).

¹⁶ All three play a part again in the simile of 2.660–68. The plodding endurance is the same with rowers and oxen; and the propelling lever action of oars dipped into the sea is analogous to that of the legs which with each step are planted deep into the soggy ground (662) for a firm grip and then pulled out again (668). Two of the fields are also represented in the simile of 1.1198–1205. The interest in mechanics of the Hellenistic age is well known.

As hammers rhythmically pound the lumber from without, the dowels within are forced into the edge of the other piece¹⁷ with a screeching sound: even so did the blows of the boxers rhythmically thud on cheeks and chins outside, and on the inside their teeth crunched. The mechanics involved are indeed very much alike in both cases, and the sympathetic reader will also appreciate the excruciating pain of the boxers as their teeth were smashed in.¹⁸

After a breather (86 f.) the fight was resumed <and by now no longer in order to wear down the opponent but to finish him off and win the victory>. This stage is indicated by a comparison with two bulls in raging rivalry for a heifer (88 f.). Amycus, <taking advantage of his superior height and weight,> aimed a blow from above on Polydeuces' head, like a man slaying an ox with a pole ax; but the Greek slipped out of the way of the clumsy blow and followed up with a punch of his own, smashing Amycus' temple and killing him (90–97).

Now the king's henchmen attacked with their weapons the unarmed Dioscurus to avenge their leader, and Polydeuces' comrades hastened to protect him (98–102). As Apollonius describes in detail the mêlée, two Greeks disposed of three Bebrycians, and

¹⁷ Another technological simile, 1.1003–05, describes the treatment given to lumber in order to prevent it from splitting when dowels will be forced into the edge. The scholium on that passage uses for the insertion of dowels the phrase *τοὺς σφήνας ἐπιβάλλοντες*, and this fortunate accident provides us with a clue for the precise technical meaning of the hapax *ἐπιβλήδην* in 2.80; cf. also the Homeric noun *ἐπιβλήης* (*Il.* 24.453), for a "bolt or bar fitting into a socket" (*LSJ*), lit. 'inserter,' 'fitter.' The verb *ἐλάω*, at the end of the line, suits both sides of the comparison because it can be used both for the 'driving' action of a hammer (cf., e.g., *Od.* 14.11) and for the impact of fist blows (cf., e.g., *Od.* 18.91, 95, 96 and, from Nonnus' imitation of our passage, *Dion.* 37.519).

¹⁸ There is nothing in the text to warrant a sympathetic approach, yet it seems unnatural not to think of what the characters went through, and the phrasing of another simile, 2.278–83, gives definite evidence that it was not conceived in the spirit of a mere onlooker. The point is here that the pursuers are neither slower nor faster than their intended victims (read in 274 *ἐπ' ἴσῳ* for the *ὁπίσω* of the mss, which in the paraphrase is rendered with *παραπλησίως*), and the simile depicts the protracted but ever futile attempt at reaching and killing them. From an objective point of view, one would expect to see the simile hinged to the narrative, not through a parallel between "the fore part of the dogs' jaws" (281) and "the foremost part of the Boreads' arms" (283), but rather in terms of *ἄκροι ὀδόντες* and *ἀκρότατα φάσγανα*, since it is the fangs and swords that are to perform the actual strike and, moreover, since the sword points are much more *ἄκρα* toward the Harpies than the *ἀκρόταται χεῖρες*. Evidently the poet put the simile as he did because he was representing the situation from the point of view of the frustrated pursuers. Teeth and swords are unfeeling, and it is their jaws and hands, respectively, that itch to dig into their prey.

two other Bebrycians attacked three further Argonauts;¹⁹ this matter of 2 — 3, 3 — 2, was probably the poet's idea of a properly balanced narrative. The same meticulous balance is observed with respect to the weapons that are shown in action (102–17).²⁰

In the second stage of the general battle, four prominent Argonauts broke into the midst²¹ of the Bebrycian crowd (118–22). As wolves enter an unguarded sheep pen and pick their victims at will: so did they terrify the arrogant <but now leaderless and sheeplike> Bebrycians (123–29).²² Another simile follows at once to illustrate the swift approach of the climax. The comparison is

¹⁹ The names of the Bebrycians who figure in the fight were probably invented by Apollonius, as were those of the Doliones in the first book (see sch. 1.1040–41) and that of Lycoreus in 2.51 (see sch.). One of the names, Mimas (103), calls forth appropriate associations because it is identical with that of a Giant (cf. our remark, above, with n. 10) and of a cape in Asia (cf. *Od.* 3.172 with sch.). Another name (110) seems to have been Oreites (so the Etym., with a discussion of the formation and a reference to the reading *-δης* in "some" MSS) rather than Oreides (so our MSS, but a Greek patronymic is less probable), and it would remind the contemporary reader of the Asiatic Oreitae who were as truculent as the Bebrycians (129) and yet like them broke into headlong flight when attacked by disciplined occidental soldiers (Arrian 6.21.3–22.2). One name, however, is missing from the roster. As Johann Pierson has seen (*Veris.*, 1752, pp. 205 f.), it is incredible that out of the ten warriors mentioned, the first alone should have gone anonymous, and thus Pierson wrote in 102 γὰρ Μελάνορα for γὰρ μὲν ἄνδρα. But this violates the caesura laws (which γὰρ μὲν does not do); and the Homeric formula (*Il.* 4.457, 8.256, 11.738) is πρῶτος . . . ἔλεν ἄνδρα, followed by the name of the victim and a description of the killing. We conclude that after 102 a line has dropped out, and I have no doubt that the name was Ornytus. Apollonius, with his customary attention to pragmatic minutiae, was aware that on each side the men who had tied the cesti for their champions (62–66), the seconds as it were in the duel, must have been among those who first took up arms to revenge their king here and rushed to the defense of Polydeuces there, but actually only three of the four names appear in the text (102, 111, 114), with the name of Ornytus (65) missing. I suggest therefore, e.g., πρῶτος δ' ἔλεν ἄνδρα Κάστωρ, <γνωτῶ (cf. αὐτός 105) ἀμυνόμενος, μέγαν Ὀρνυτον, ὃν ῥ' ὄγε χαλκῶ>. I changed the asyndetic and meaningless γὰρ μὲν to δ' ἔλεν because this is the *Iliad* formula, and because it is easy to see that after the loss of the next line δ' ἔλεν must have seemed a corruption for which the obvious emendation was γὰρ μὲν.

²⁰ The poet's formula is: either the one weapon is to be used twice, or the two weapons are to be used once each. (a) The Greeks had only their swords, and twice we see a sword in action (102–04, 116 f.). (b) Polydeuces, who was unarmed, took care of one enemy with his fist and of another with his foot (105–09). (c) The Bebrycians were armed with special lances and clubs (99), and each of the two weapons is once recorded as functioning (110–13, 114–16). The lack of a simile in this section can be explained by the detailed nature of the narrative itself.

²¹ Read μέσσοις at the end of line 120; the μέσσω of the MSS is ungrammatical. Cf. 3.1368, 2.595.

²² Some more special idea may be hidden in the simile, but I am not sure what precisely is meant in lines 126–28.

with bees smoked out, and it is evidently meant to show how quickly the Bebrycians reached the limit of their endurance.²³ So much smoke, and the bees remain together within their own hive; more and more smoke, and they take fright and escape: even so did the Bebrycians make only a short stand, and then fled and scattered into the interior of the country (130–36). It seems worth noting that the Stoics used likewise the smoke simile to impress the idea of the limit of endurance: “There is smoke in my room; if it is moderate, I stay where I am; if there is too much of it, I leave; this is what you ought to remember and to hold on to: the door is not locked.”²⁴ That means: if pain and misery rise beyond your power of preserving your human dignity, <and the limit varies from one person to another,> you may end your own life and release your soul from the confines of your body, allowing it to escape into the open cosmos. It is not unlikely, since there is another analogous case,²⁵ that Apollonius borrowed his simile from an early Stoic writer.

We have yet to complete the sentence which we began to paraphrase. The text goes on thus: “(the Bebrycians fled and scattered into the interior), prepared to report the death of Amycus — fools, for they saw not that another affliction was at hand. Their vineyards and steadings were being devastated by the hostile sword of Lycus and the warriors of the Mariandyni . . .” (135–40). It is certainly ironic that the men, in their flight inland, were running toward another enemy invading the country from the opposite direction. Characteristically, Apollonius presents the coincidence in psychological rather than factual terms. He uses the Homeric phrase “fools, for they saw not . . .”²⁶ to indicate the shock in store for the would-be carriers of a tale of woe (ἀγγελέοντες, 136) when, instead, they were to become receivers of bad news. And

²³ The scholium (more fully preserved in P) explains why bees are especially sensitive to smoke. Apollonius may have intended a parallel between the physiological weakness of the bees and the psychological weakness of the Bebrycians (cf. above, n. 7).

²⁴ Epict. 1.25.18 (the concept of the limit is also stressed in §§ 7 ff. and 14 ff.). Cf. also 4.10.27, Marc. Anton. 5.29, and see Gerhard Breithaupt, *De M. Aur-i Ant-i comment. quaest. selectae* (Göttingen 1913), pp. 54 f.

²⁵ See *AJP* 71 (1950) p. 127 n. 29, on 3.755 ff. and Epict. 3.3.20–22.

²⁶ This phrase, and similar ones, occur frequently in Homer to mark a blunder and vain hope going before disaster, but nowhere in Homer does the frustration come about by a freak of coincidence. The most tragically ironic example is *Il.* 22.445.

as to the coincidence itself, it will later in the epic be interpreted by Lycus as a punishment planned by the watchful gods.²⁷ The story of the *Argonautica* contains more examples of god-ordained coincidence. Apollonius, who was to all appearances a devout believer²⁸ and was a Hellenistic man at that, did not fail to have Tyche, as an instrument of divine will, play an important part.²⁹

The short passage which we have examined exhibits only a fraction of those traits, good or bad, characteristic of Apollonius' narrative art. But even so the discussion has given us, I hope, a clearer idea of his aims and devices.

In one respect our selection does not seem specifically representative. A sustained and continuous elaboration of one and the same motif is comparatively rare in the *Argonautica*, but here we have an example of it in the contrast between the two protagonists: a brute earthy giant, and a smiling heavenly youth; raw elemental force, and intelligent skill; savage fierceness, and aristocratic nonchalance; sinister rage, and steadfast courage. The contrast³⁰ seems rather overdrawn in its monotonous black-and-white technique, but one relieving touch of individualization is added. The dark heavy mantle of the one, thrown off with its clasps still shut, is set against the other's cloak of fine fabric, which was the souvenir gift of Poly-

²⁷ 2.796-98 (Lycus speaking): οὐδέ ἔ (=ἐμαντόν) φημι ἡματι τῷδ' ἀέκητι θεῶν ἐπελάσσαι ἄρρα, Τυνδαρίδῃ (-ίδην libri: paraphr. ὦ Πολύδευκες sch.), Βέβρυξιν, ὅτ' ἀνέρα κείνον (=Amycus) ἔπεφνες (-νες LA par.: -νεν SGPE); see *Hermes* 60 (1925) 491 f.

²⁸ It is impossible to tell how far the piety which Apollonius displays throughout the epic is based on actual conviction, and how much of it is no more than the affectation of an antiquarian and romanticist who pretends to share the naive faith of the heroic age. Apollonius himself would hardly have been able to draw the line. But he does play the part, if it is a part, rather well and without any touch of studied Callimachean irony.

²⁹ Cf. 1.1315 ff., 3.250, 3.327 f. Nevertheless Apollonius never uses the noun τύχη or, in that sense, the verb τυγχάνειν, perhaps because Homer does not have them.

³⁰ A similar contrast is intended in the bronze statues of the so-called "Boxer" and "Hellenistic Ruler" (Museo Nazionale, Rome) which, as Phyllis L. Williams has seen (*AJA* 49 [1945] 330 ff.), are probably from a group representing Amycus between the Dioscuri; the figure of Polydeuces is lost, but in type at least it cannot have been different from that of Castor. It does not follow however that both Dioscuri were represented in an identical frame of mind; on the contrary, some variation is more probable. The posture of Castor is tense, and his features are stern and full of disgust; this may be explained as due to indignation against Amycus and apprehension for his brother's safety. It is thus still possible that, just as in Apollonius, Polydeuces was shown as confident enough to be relaxed and serene.

deuces' Lemnian lover: it seems that she gave him, to wear it as a cloak, the blanket under which they had slept together (30–33).³¹

Another feature, in turn, of our piece is very typical. The line on which the events follow upon one another is drawn with great clarity, and the coherence is perfect.³² The story is moreover neatly divided into sections and subsections, and in one case a special link has been inserted to mark the progress of the boxing match from the last preparations to close-in fighting. Two verse endings conspicuously correspond, by means of a rhymelike assonance followed by a spondaic fifth foot: *διασταδὸν ἡρτύναντο* (67) and *ἐπισταδὸν οὐτάζοντες* (84).³³ This may lead us to the matter of continuity and unity in general.

³¹ Cf. 3.1204–06. I am indebted to my colleague Philip W. Harsh for the identification of garment and blanket. (a) In heroic times, the garment called *πέπλος* or *φᾶρος* must have been indistinguishable in shape and size from a blanket. (b) Both terms, *πέπλος* (as worn by women and 4.1294 by men) and *φᾶρος* (as worn by men and 3.863 by women), are also used for blankets by Apollonius (4.431, 187), Homer, and others. (c) It would have been impractical to use the same word for different objects, and it would be a strange coincidence if both were liable to the same ambiguity. (d) For *χλαῖνα* it is recognized (see *LSJ* s.v.) that it is not a term with various meanings, "garment" and "blanket," but refers to an object put to various uses (e.g. *Od.* 3.348–51, *Il.* 24.646). (e) If the terms had been ambiguous, e.g. in 4.423 the reader would easily think of a garment, and not until he has reached line 431 would he learn that he was mistaken; cf. also Aesch. *Agam.* 1116, with Eduard Fraenkel's notes on 1116 and 1382. — The identity gives point to 3.1206: Jason put on a *φᾶρος* which Hypsipyle had given him as *ἄδωνῆς μνημήμιον εὐνῆς*, i.e. they had slept together under that *φᾶρος*. In our passage (2.31 f.), the MSS and Et. have *ἔὼν ξεινήμιον εἶναι ὥπασε*. Here *ἔὼν* is gratuitous and unusual; *εἶναι* is also unnecessary but so occurs twice in the *Iliad* (*δῶκε ξεινήμιον εἶναι*, 10.269, 11.20). I am inclined to change the text of 2.31 to read *ἔο* (or *ἐῆς*) *ξεινήμιον εὐνῆς* (many line endings in the *Argon.* are corrupted into banal epic phrases, see *AJP* 71 [1950] p. 130). The genit. may seem unconventional, if forceful, but in 4.1753 the genit. can perhaps be taken with *ξεινήμιον* as well as with *τῆνδε* (scil. *βῶλον*); Seaton, in his translation, takes it entirely so; cf. also the construction in Pindar, *Py.* 4.34 f.

³² See for this passage Friedrich Mehmel, *Valerius Flaccus* (Diss., Hamburg 1934) pp. 43–54, and for Ap.'s acute consciousness of the continuous flow of time, Mehmel's equally excellent book *Virgil und A. poll. Rh.: Untersuchungen zur Zeitvorstellung in der antiken epischen Erzählung*, Hamburg 1940.

³³ Line 84 also corresponds in sound with its counterpart in the simile, *ἐπιβλήδην ἐλάοντες* (80). Assonances, sometimes massed, are frequent in the *Argon.* Here are some examples (most of them cited according to the actual syllabic division).

(a) From the description of a rite and dance, 1.1133–39: *αισο — αιθο — σκαιρον — καισα, ἐνόπλιον — ἐπέκτυπον — ἀνέστενον, σσανωγή — κενιω — νετιλαοι — θενεσαιει, εἰλίσσοντο — ἰλάσκονται* (read in 1135, with Ruhnken, not the aor. *ὠρχήσαντο* of the MSS but the ipf. *εἰλίσσοντο* of the Etym.).

In the archaic period of Greek literature, the narrative (or discussion) moves along a single narrow path, not straight but winding in elaborate patterns, sometimes actually doubling back upon itself but with never a break; in its twisting course the road comes in sight of numerous different objects, but the reader traveling along this road has his attention firmly called to one thing at a time. In the classical period, on the other hand, one travels on a wider and straighter road; there may be breaks in the progress, since the journey is divided into distinct stages; the landscape remains fairly homogeneous, but the reader is able to take in a larger field of vision at once, and clarity of presentation is an all-important consideration. The Hellenistic age was tired of classical regularity, of the obvious and the explicit. It felt that surprise and wilfulness were more attractive and personal, and indulged in subtleties and hidden implications. Hellenistic poets allowed themselves a great variety of subject-matter, often presented in an erratic fashion; indeed there is in some of their works nothing but the author's personal charm to give them unity. Not so the *Argonautica*: it combines variety with a pedantic discipline in organizing its material. The narrative of the epic moves slowly but it sticks to its subject, skipping no stage in the plodding progress of the Argonauts through seas and lands, with their strange adventures. But the writer is also ready at any time for a shorter or longer digression, from which he will return to his precise point of departure. In addition to the digressions proper, there are fleeting side-glances into various recesses of history, learning or life. The voyage which led the Argonauts all around the disc of the earth gives them and their poet a chance for any number of observations *en passant*. And it is not merely matters of geography and ethnography, of history and legend that Apollonius views in such a fashion: he also brings in at random details of natural science, of technology and nautical lore and, last not least, curious things about the workings of the human mind and heart.

(b) From a sentimental passage, 1.1223-39: *καλλε — βαλλε* (1230/32), *ληναιη — μηχανη* (1232/33), *μελεγαρ — μελπεσ* (1223/25), *τὸν δὲ σχεδὸν εἰσενόησεν — τῆς δὲ φρένας ἐπτοίησεν* (1229/32), *ενικαλ — ενικαβ* (1234/39), *ετο — σχεδο — θερο* (1228/29/31), *πετο — μενο — χενο* (1235/36/37).

(c) In the preceding examples, syllables in identical position were linked by assonance. In the first three lines of the epic, however, the second half of each verse rhymes with the first half: 1 *σεοφοι — κλεαφω*, 2 *σομα* (the *ι* was pronounced as part of the next syllable) — *στομα*, 3 *σιληο — λιαο*.

These stray bits of this and that prove sometimes more entertaining than the story which they are supposed to subserve. Yet they are often not placed in full view but partly concealed under the stately and somewhat stiff phrasing of the narrative,³⁴ waiting to be looked for, thought over, and appreciated. Of course every poet counts on the active collaboration of his audience, but as a rule, he incites and guides the intended response, while Apollonius frequently does no more than provide the stuff, expecting the others to puzzle it out by dint of their own imagination and erudition.

Apollonius is not what one would call an inspired poet, and much of his epic is downright tedious. The text as we have it is more corrupt than the editors have been willing to admit. But if we do spend the time and effort to find out what the author meant to convey, there are some rewards in store for the patient reader.

³⁴ The style of the *Argonautica* shows that the author has labored overmuch to perfect his text, and there is also external evidence for ample revision and change. The reworking is likely to have reduced the vivacity and immediate appeal of the presentation.