THEOCRITUS' IDYLL 13: LOVE AND THE HERO

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Theocritus' *Idyll* 13, "Hylas,"[1] a narration of the rape of Hylas and the subsequent grief of Heracles, has usually been read either as veiled love-advice to a friend or as a disguised literary polemic;[2] the poem is,

[1] An earlier version of this study appears in *La Parola del Passato*, 23 (1968) 5–18. I would like to express here my gratitude to Prof. Gilbert Lawall for his persevering encouragement.

The text used in the analysis is that of A. S. F. Gow, *Bucolici Graeci* (OCT 1952), except for the punctuation of verse 74 (cf. below, note 33). The first half of line 15 is of doubtful meaning and possibly corrupt, but probably means "through his association with Heracles." Line 61 (spurious) is ignored.

The following bibliographical abbreviations are used: **Gow** = A. S. F. Gow, *Theocritus* (Cambridge 1950); **Knaack** = G. Knaack, "Zu den Aitien des Kallimachos," *Hermes* 23 (1888) 131–41; **Köhnken** = A. Köhnken, *Apollonios Rhodios und Theokrit* = *Hypomnemata* 12 (Göttingen 1965); **Legrand** = Ph.-E. Legrand, *Étude sur Théocrite* (Paris 1898); **Otis, *Virgil*** = Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford 1964); **Perrotta** = G. Perrotta, "Studi di poesia ellenistica," *SIFC* n.s. 4 (1925) esp. 85–102; **Serrao** = G. Serrao, "Problemi di poesia alessandrina," *Helikon* 5 (1965) 541–65; **Tränkle** = H. Tränkle, "Das Graslager der Argonauten bei Theokrit und Apollonios," *Hermes* 91 (1963) 503–5; **Wilamowitz, *Textg.*** = U. v. Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, *Die Textgeschichte der griechischen Bukoliker* (Berlin 1906).

[2] Critics have suggested two intentions which may have prompted the writing of this poem. One viewpoint, deriving from Wilamowitz, *Textg.* 177, and *Bucolici Graeci* (OCT 1905) 161, understands the poem as love-advice to Nicias; cf. Gow 2.208 and 245. T. B. L. Webster, *Hellenistic Poetry and Art* (London 1964) 81–82 and 85–86, elaborates this idea and considers the poem a consolation-piece for Nicias; but his interpretation both presupposes information about Nicias and leaves much of the poem unexplained (cf. below, note 11). (The first objection was also made to Wilamowitz' theory by Perrotta 91.)

The second theory originates from Wilamowitz' lectures and is stated by Knaack 131–41, and very briefly by W. himself in his *Bucolici Graeci* 161; followed by Perrotta, 85–102, and by Gow, "The Thirteenth Idyll of Theocritus," *CQ* 32 (1938) 10–17 (essentially repeated in Gow 2.231–32); also found in Otis, *Virgil* 398–405, and in Webster, "Chronological Problems in early Hellenistic poetry," *WS* 76 (1963) 68–78 and more briefly in *Hellenistic Poetry and Art* 66. This theory holds that the poem is a "correction" of Apollonius Rhodius (1.1207–72) and a contribution on the side of Callimachus to the literary quarrel reputed to have existed between C. and A. This

however, more complex than either reading would suggest. On the explicit level, Theocritus is here widening the scope of his presentation of love from the human level to the immortals of legend as well. Implicitly, and more important, he is exploring the relationship between the heroic and the pederastic. In the beginning, the incongruities of the Heracles-Hylas liaison come out almost by themselves. In the course of the poem, however, the poet expands his attention and strains for strong effects of irony in juxtaposing things epic-heroic, on the one hand, with a complex of alternatives on the other, including realism, the rustic and erotic worlds, and pastoralism. The hero cannot remain heroic in love, and at the end the poet seems even to taunt his love-

view assumes the the Hylas and Amycus stories of A.'s *Argonautica* were written before *Idylls* 13 and 22 of T. The arguments used by critics have often been subjective and many are based on unsatisfactory readings of one or both poets. Gow 2.231 speaks of the "inferiority" of A.'s account as the determining factor—a highly debatable, subjective judgment. Webster, *WS* 76, states that the parallels of words and similes are indecisive in determining temporal priority and sees the main argument for A.'s priority in the fact "that he and not Theokritos had a reason to give the story a new setting." This is a dubious assertion (cf. below, note 21), and we have no assurance whatever that either A. or T. is responsible for placing the Hylas story in the Argonaut-cycle. (Σ *Argonautica* 1.1289 proves nothing about its inclusion or non-inclusion in previous mythic tradition.)

For bibliography of other proponents of A.'s priority, of those who think T.'s poems earlier, and of those who think the question indeterminate, see Köhnken 26–31. Köhnken, in a very thorough study of the chronological question, argues for the priority of T. and the poetic superiority of A.'s treatment. In his partiality for A. he sometimes faults T. unjustly (cf. below, notes 6, 16, 20, 26, and 33). To my knowledge, two relevant articles have appeared subsequent to Köhnken's study. Tränkle, 503–5, has good remarks on the poets' different treatments, but his conclusion that T. wrote first does not necessarily follow from the evidence presented. Serrao, 541–65, argues that T. followed A., shifted the emphasis "solo ad Eracle e al suo tormento d'amore" (p. 564), and thus introduced certain anomalies which Serrao discusses as "incoerenze nel racconto teocriteo" (pp. 545 ff.). Like others, he does not take into account the whole poem in his concentration upon the question of priority. I myself find none of the arguments for A.'s priority convincing, nor are those for T.'s priority satisfying to me. This paper, however, does not depend upon or attempt to support the priority of either poet, but is intended to discuss *Idyll* 13 more fully than has been done.

In general literature on T., Legrand makes a few helpful observations *passim*, but uncritically lumps important details of the poem under a discussion of *l'ornement superflu* (pp. 361–62); Ettore Bignone, *Teocrito: studio critico* (Bari 1934), in a profuse appreciation, notes contrasts between epic and pastoral, but states no thematic function (pp. 176–77). (Mixture of epic and bucolic details is noticed earlier by Wilamowitz, *Textg.* 175, and Perrotta, 92–93, but neither looks for thematic significance.) The brief treatment in M. Marjorie Crump, *The Epyllion from Theocritus to Ovid* (Oxford 1931) 51–54, also points to realism and pastoralism at various points, not entirely accurately in my opinion.

humbled character. The *Idyll* may thus be read as a typically Hellenistic reassessment of a time-honored hero who is here measured against a contemporary poetic sensibility.

In creating this tension, Theocritus shows that success and fulfillment in the real or in the pastoral world are attainable only by characters who fit in with their environment, while frustration awaits the epic-heroic character who tries to function in a world foreign to his nature. Thus, the heroic band of Argonauts, whose epic mission is first described, are subsequently placed by the poet in a rustic setting. Since their actions no longer remain heroic, the Argonauts exist there successfully only as men, not as heroes. On one side of a further contrast, nymphs in a quiet woodland scene, beings of idyllic fantasy devoted to dancing and susceptible to flighty emotions, are overcome by love, but attain their desire. Likewise, Hylas, the passive boy whose beauty fits in with the idyllic setting, is pulled into the water, becomes immortal, and will (by implication) graduate to the active role of male lover of females. Heracles, on the other hand, placed in the same pastoral surroundings, dons his warlike appurtenances and is driven crazed through the woods. With his strength and violence he does not fit in, but only hurts himself on the brambles. He is frustrated as a lover and humiliated, temporarily, as a hero. Ultimately, one may say that Theocritus is claiming love for the pastoral and the real worlds and is banishing the *ideal* of a hero, of necessity and by definition, to a totally separate plane, apart from either rustic and erotic realism or pastoral idealism. When read in this manner, the poem becomes an important exploration of the relevance of the epic hero in a post-heroic era—a central problem both for Hellenistic writers and later for Latin authors of the Republican and Augustan periods.

Explicitly *Idyll* 13, with its address to Nicias, is a didactic epistle on the subject of love. This theme is stated in the introductory lines 1–4, which, with their carefully balanced structure, Doric forms, and bucolic diaereses, are especially reminiscent of the pastoral idylls both in form and in subject. Before this, Theocritus tells Nicias, love and appreciation of ideal beauty (*τὰ καλά*, 3) seemed, in a very personal way, to be for us alone (cf. *ἁμῖν . . . μόνοις*, 1; *ἁμῖν . . . πράτοις*, 3). Eros used to be considered (*ὡς ἐδοκεῦμες*, 1) to affect only men, but now

the poet sees and will prove that the "cruel, tormenting" god (*χαλεπὸς θεός*, 71) strikes immortals too.

The poet's proposition is actually proved twice in the course of the poem. First, three nymphs are overwhelmed by love for the "Argive lad" Hylas: both the adjective *πασάων* ("all three") and the strong verb *ἐξεφόβησεν* ("frightened utterly," "fluttered") in 48 emphasize the powerful pervasiveness of love. The major proof, however, is that the hero Heracles was once in love. His wild search for the missing Hylas evokes the poet's general statement in 66: "Wretched are lovers!" *σχέτλιοι οἱ φιλέοντες*. With the final mention of Eros rending the hero's liver (71), Theocritus concludes his demonstration of the idyll's explicit theme.

Interpretation of the poem as only a didactic piece on love, however, misses the significance of many details which create their own special effects. From the beginning of the poem proper (5), the poet juxtaposes epic-heroic characters and words with realistic, rustic, and pastoral details. Verse 5 and the first half of 6 raise the poem from the pastoral tone of 1–4 to a grand level: with the genealogy (*Ἀμφιτρύωνος . . . υἱός*), the epic epithet "bronze-hearted" (*χαλκεοκάρδιος*), and the allusion to Heracles' triumph over *the* lion (i.e. of Nemea). But following *ἄγριον* ("fierce") in 6 comes *ἤρατο παιδός* ("was in love with a boy"), reducing the hero to a lover of a sexually immature lad. Hylas is then described in a carefully structured verse (7, containing balanced repetition of the article and internal rhyming of *-εντος . . . -εῦντος*) reminiscent of the pastoral genre. In addition, the boy's erotic charm (*χαρίεντος*) and almost feminine prettiness (*πλοκαμῖς*, usually a woman's curling hair[3]) are emphasized and suggest the incongruity of the pretty lad with a hero *χαλκεοκάρδιος*.

Heracles "teaches him everything" (8) and never leaves Hylas'

[3] *πλοκαμῖς* occurs rarely, but seems to have connotations of femininity or immature youth (cf. *AP* 6.279). Gow 2.233 (more thorough than *LSJ*) says that the word "is commonly used of women's hair (*Σ* Ar. *Thesm.* 574 [misprint for 567])." It may be added that *Σ Ach.* 848 shows that hair-style may indicate effeminacy or profligacy. The more basic and frequent form *πλόκαμος* is properly used of women's hair (*Il.* 14.176; Hdt. 4.34); a similar form appears in *ἐϋπλοκαμῖδες Ἀχαιαί*, *Od.* 2.119, 19.542 (again of women). The diminutive form in *-ῖς* (cf. E. Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik* 1.465) may here reinforce the "femininity" of the word. Wilamowitz idealizes the pederasty into heroic education and misses even the sensuousness of *πλοκαμῖς*; of the word he says, *Textg.* 175, note 1, "ich kenne die Beziehung nicht."

presence, so that the boy will learn heroic ways. This sense of Heracles' benefit to Hylas, however, is simultaneously undercut both by the incongruous idea of turning the pretty lad of verse 7 into a hero of Heraclean proportions and by the fact that Heracles' attention is by no means disinterested—it is the lover's jealous enjoyment of the company of his beloved. Throughout his exposition, then, Theocritus has, in apparently neutral fashion, set the heroic in juxtaposition with the pederastic and allowed the inevitable incongruities to appear.

When the poet returns again to Heracles after his narration of the voyage of the Argo and of the actual rape of Hylas, he has changed his tone from the basically objective one of 5–15 to a taunting one in 55–71. Heracles reappears in the poem in 55 with the impressive penthemimeral patronymic and a five-syllable participle: *Ἀμφιτρυωνιάδας δὲ ταρασσόμενος* ("but the son of Amphitryon was troubled"). Deliberately juxtaposed with these two large and awesome words is the tiny phrase *περὶ παιδί* ("about the boy"), where *παῖς* is again used with erotic connotations of youth and tenderness to undercut the effect of otherwise epic surroundings.[4] Heracles' response to the situation is warlike. *Μαιωτιστί* ("in Scythian fashion," 56) implies fierceness, and the club which is always in his hand contrasts sharply with the idea of Hylas as his constant companion (10–13). But more important than these contrasts or the verbal ones that follow in 58–60[5] is the simile (62–65) of the fawn and the lion, which is deliberate in its incongruity. On first reading, the comparison appears to indicate that Heracles responded to Hylas' faint cry (*ἀραιὰ δ' ἵκετο φωνά*, 59) just as a lion would respond to the cry of a fawn in the distance (*φθεγξαμένας*, 62). On further consideration, however, the fawn clearly corresponds to Hylas not only through its cry and the cry's effect, but also through its natural connotations of weakness and tenderness. Furthermore, the lion is hostilely opposed to the fawn both by verbal position in 62 and by the epithet "flesh-eating" (*ὠμοφάγος*) and the statement that "he hastens after the very ready meal" (*ἔσπευσεν ἑτοιμοτάταν ἐπὶ δαῖτα*, 63). The relation is that of fierce beast to

[4] *παῖς* is used in a similar manner in lines 6, 14 (where the labor implied in the long word *πεπονημένος* is next to it), 59, and 65.

[5] E.g. the contrast between Heracles' shout ("as loudly as his deep throat roared," *ὅσον βαθὺς ἤρυγε λαιμός*, 58) and Hylas' faint reply (*ἀραιὰ . . . φωνά*, 59) and between being (*παρεὼν*) and seeming (*εἴδετο*) in 60.

weak victim. Thus, a simile which appears at first to describe vividly the wild rushing of the hero in love ultimately manifests a functional ambiguity and incongruity.[6] By ranking Heracles, quite intentionally, beside "the flesh-eating lion," Theocritus conveys an unsympathetic judgment of the relationship between the hero of brute strength and the delicate boy:[7] it is not merely an incongruous liaison, but one unworthy of the hero, whom the poet mocks in this simile.

The irony continues as the poet concludes his case against Heracles in love. The word σχέτλιοι in 66 is to be referred to Heracles in particular as well as to lovers in general. But σχέτλιος, which may be translated here as "wretched," is an ambiguous word. It is used predominantly in epic and tragedy of "headstrong," "merciless" persons (frequently heroes), and even when meaning "wretched," it is often not sympathetic, but rather critical ("miserably foolish").[8] Furthermore, the hero's toil (ironically expressed in epic terms, ὅσσ' ἐμόγησεν, 66) is partially the labor of love,[9] caused by the cruel "god";

[6] Köhnken 71–74 notices the incongruity of the simile in a very literal way and concludes that it is a blemish (p. 81). But T. was fully aware of the implications of the simile and wrote it with incongruity in mind. On the other hand, Perrotta 100, all too certain that T.'s version is far superior to A.'s, ignores the underlying inconsistency and misses an essential point of the poem.

[7] Hylas' tender youth and beauty are emphasized earlier in 7 and in 36 (ξανθός; cf. below, note 9), and in the image of 53–54. Possibly the poet makes νεβρός feminine here (in 62—the word is usually masculine acc. to *LSJ*) to suggest further Hylas' delicate, almost feminine nature (cf. on πλοκαμῖς, note 3 above).

[8] For epic usage, cf. *Index Homericus*. A survey of usage in tragedy reveals that the word is never sympathetic in Sophocles, sympathetic in about one-fourth of many occurrences in Euripides, sympathetic in the one Aeschylean use (*Pr.* 644). Thus the word expresses here some sympathy for lovers in general, but at the same time condemnation of Heracles. Gow 2.243 suggests tentatively that T. is "laying on Heracles the blame he escapes in Apollonius," but says nothing of the ambiguity here. Though perhaps Heracles receives no "blame" in A., he is frustrated there as here; cf. below, note 38 and accompanying text.

[9] ὅσσ' ἐμόγησεν is one of several adaptations of epic formulae in the poem. Cf. *Index Homericus* under aorist forms of μογέω. There is irony in T.'s transfer of the phrase from the epic sufferings of the Trojans or of Odysseus to this situation, where it may take on a sense of the labor of love. Other cases of humerous or ironic epic echoes: (i) On ταλαεργός (19) see below, note 24. (ii) δειναὶ θεαί (44) recalls the Homeric δεινὴ θεός, which appears 9 of 11 times in the same metrical position as here (6 times followed by a spondaic ending as here), and is used of powerful goddesses like Athene, Circe, and Calypso: cf. *Index Homericus*. There is a contrast between such goddesses and the nymphs (cf. below, note 29). Gow 2.240 refers tentatively (and too specifically) to recall of *Od.* 10.136 (δεινὴ θεὸς αὐδήεσσα). (iii) ὁ ξανθός (36)

but, somewhat ridiculously and surely mockingly, it is also the physical pain of stepping on "untrodden brambles" (*ἀτρίπτοισιν ἀκάνθαις*, 64). This detail may ultimately symbolize the fact that Heracles is foreign to the rustic world in which he is placed, that he does not belong in the way that Hylas *does* belong in the pastoral world which eventually takes him in. Finally, Theocritus states explicitly his indictment of the hero in an erotic situation: heroism is completely forgotten, "Jason's affairs all took second place" (*τὰ δ' Ἰάσονος ὕστερα πάντ' ἦς*, 67). The other heroes are ready to depart, but Heracles ranges wildly "where his feet lead," "crazed," because he is eaten by love (70–71). Theocritus is questioning, even denying the possibility that the epic character may remain heroic when he is in love. The situation in general may be compared with that of Polyphemus in *Idyll* 11, where the epic monster is transformed into a love-sick herdsman-poet. In particular, the statement that a love-interest overrides all other occupations is common to line 67 here and to *Idyll* 11.11, "he considered all else of secondary importance" (*ἀγεῖτο δὲ πάντα πάρεργα*).[10]

The dichotomy between the heroic and the erotic is only one part of Theocritus' theme. Other details of the poem extend the contrast to include realism (especially rusticism) and pastoral imagery on the side of the erotic, with the heroic reinforced by other epic characteristics. This broadening of theme is, in fact, the justification for details of the poem which have been called unnecessary or inappropriate.[11] Three

recalls the epic epithet used of the hair of heroes (particularly Menelaus): cf. *Index Homericus*. As Gow notes elsewhere (2.342), "golden hair is appropriate to a hero." But here it is part of Hylas' beauty and recalls the sensuous image of *πλοκαμῖς* (cf. above, note 3), and its emphatic syntax (with the article) makes it almost a title. The epic sense is ironically altered. (iv) The idiom *χειρὶ ἐμφῦναι* (47) is transferred from a formula (cf. *Od.* 2.302, etc.) in which it is part of a conventional mode of address (Eustathius 1148.63 on *Il.* 18.384: *φιλικὸν δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐμφῦναι χειρί, ὅ ἐστι δεξιώσασθαι . . .*). The phrase is here shifted to a forceful seizure. (Eust. 1424.38 gives the clinging of an octopus as one of several associations of *ἐμφῦναι*; such a connotation might add a sinister note here.) (v) Gow 2.242 notes that the simile of 50–52 "is perhaps suggested by *Il.* 4.75" (Athene descends from Olympus like a shooting-star which is a sign for men). It would agree well with the pattern set up by these examples if this recall is intended and Hylas is humorously substituted for Athene and the shooting-star.

[10] Serrao 564 notes the same correspondence and adds to it the less immediate parallels of *Idylls* 2.83–84 and 10.14.

[11] By Legrand 361–62 and others (cf. notes 6, 16, 21, 26).

clusters of images in particular set before the reader the desired contrasts. First, in 10–13, Theocritus describes three times of day in allusive fashion. He begins with a celestial image characteristic of epic: "when mid-day rose up" (*εἰ μέσον ἆμαρ ὄροιτο*, 10). There follows a variation on an epic formula: "when Dawn driving her white horses races up to the home of Zeus" (*ὁπόχ' ἁ λεύκιππος ἀνατρέχοι ἐς Διὸς Ἀώς*, 11).[12] But the third image of the series is sharply realistic by contrast, a homely rustic scene of evening, in which "chirping chicks look toward the nest as their mother upon a soot-stained perch shakes her wings" (12–13):

> *οὔθ' ὁπόκ' ὀρτάλιχοι μινυροὶ ποτὶ κοῖτον ὁρῷεν,*
> *σεισαμένας πτερὰ ματρὸς ἐπ' αἰθαλόεντι πετεύρῳ.*

The realism and nostalgic mood—the very sound of *ὀρτάλιχοι μινυροί*—counter the epic-celestial images and so reinforce the effect of erotic undercutting heroic in the Heracles-Hylas story.[13] Similarly, in a second series of temporal phrases in 25–26, an epic-celestial sign appears first in "when the Pleiades rose" (*Ἅμος δ' ἀντέλλοντι Πελειάδες*, 25).[14] But this is followed by a contrasting pastoral image in "the farthest fields feed the young lamb" (*ἐσχατιαὶ δὲ / ἄρνα νέον βόσκοντι*, 25–26) and then by a simple statement that spring is just over (*τετραμμένου εἴαρος ἤδη*, 26). A third time, in an intentionally strained, but still functional simile, Hylas is grandly likened to a falling star as he tumbles into the spring-water.[15] After this epic flight of imagination, the poet shifts abruptly back to reality with the sailor's startlingly

[12] On the use of *ὄρνυμι* and *λεύκιππος*, see Gow 2.234. Noteworthy throughout the poem is T.'s striving to use words which suggest epic tradition but are original with him or with other Hellenistic poets: so *χαλκεοκάρδιος* (5), *καθιδρυθέντες* (28), etc. (cf. Gow's commentary and *CQ* 32 [1938] 15–16).

[13] Gow 2.234 recognizes the incongruity of the barnyard scene, but he does not mention its function.

[14] Cf. Hesiod, *Op.* 383, *Πληϊάδων . . . ἐπιτελλομενάων*; 566–67, *Ἀρκτοῦρος . . . ἐπιτέλλεται*.

[15] In addition to the obvious verbal parallels of the simile (*κατήριπε, ἤριπεν; ἐς μέλαν ὕδωρ, ἐν πόντῳ; ἀθρόος, ἀθρόος*), there may be a hint in *πυρσός* that Hylas' hair, his only explicit physical attribute in the poem, described as *ξανθός* in 36 (a color close to *πυρρός* acc. to *LSJ* and Gow 2.172), may correspond to a falling star in the dark. For another mock-epic feature, cf. above, note 9.

practical utterance: "Make snug the tackle, boys; there's a favorable breeze" (52).[16]

These three complexes of images,[17] then, are not at all superfluous, but add up to a questioning of the relative value of the epic as opposed to realism, homely rusticism, and pastoral idealism. The taste for realistic detail, in general, increased in ancient literature as adherence to the old epic tradition waned. Euripides is a frequently-cited example of the trend because of his habit of "humanizing," to a greater extent than ever done before, the central characters of tragic drama. In the third century Callimachus especially favors this tendency, which had already been reinforced by Aristotle, Theophrastus, and New Comedy. In the *Hecale*, the epic hero Theseus is removed from his traditional setting: his heroic feat appears to be almost entirely suppressed, while the poet emphasizes the homely realism of the old woman's hospitality. In Latin literature, to take one example out of many, Ovid follows this newer tradition and apparently imitates this same Callimachean work[18] in his story of Philemon and Baucis (*Met.* 8.620–720). Other sections of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as Brooks Otis has recently shown,[19] build upon an ironic juxtaposition of epic grandeur and undercutting realism. In the first two books the dignity of the gods (and especially of Jupiter) is first built up in the Creation and in the Flood and the restoration of mankind; then, however, their grandeur is shattered by their behavior in erotic situations (e.g. Apollo and Daphne, Jupiter and Io). Ovid here takes advantage of the same tension between epic and erotic that is found in *Idyll* 13.

To set off the unheroic character of Heracles in love, Theocritus makes explicit the ideal of the hero-figure. This ideal is alluded to early in the poem, first in "bronze-hearted" (5) and the feat of slaying the Nemean lion (6), then again in the pair of adjectives "brave and

[16] Gow 2.242 says the simile "despite its intrinsic merit, does not seem very appropriate," and Köhnken, p. 81, ranks 50–52 along with 62–65 as unsatisfactory. But the incongruity is intended and has a thematic purpose.

[17] Such a grouping of imagery is partly anticipated by Tränkle 505, who points to chicks (12), lamb (25 f.), cattle (30 f.), and plants (40 ff.) as evidence of "[die] Bemühung ... das menschliche Geschehen mit einer erquickenden Natur wohlig zu umgeben." The details have greater significance for this poem in other respects.

[18] C. A. Trypanis, *Callimachus: Aetia, Iambi, etc.* (London: Loeb Classical Library 1958) 177; Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (Cambridge 1966) 203.

[19] Otis (above, note 18) 91–127.

famed in song" (*ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἀοίδιμος*, 9) and the phrase "turn out a true man of valor" (*ἐς ἀλαθινὸν ἄνδρ' ἀποβαίη*, 15).[20] Diction and style emphasize the epic tenor of the Argo's voyage in lines 16–21:

> *ἀλλ' ὅτε τὸ χρύσειον ἔπλει μετὰ κῶας Ἰάσων*
> *Αἰσονίδας, οἱ δ' αὐτῷ ἀριστῆες συνέποντο*
> *πασᾶν ἐκ πολίων προλελεγμένοι ὧν ὄφελός τι,*
> *ἵκετο χὠ ταλαεργὸς ἀνὴρ ἐς ἀφνειὸν Ἰωλκόν,*
> *Ἀλκμήνας υἱὸς Μιδεάτιδος ἡρωίνας,*
> *σὺν δ' αὐτῷ κατέβαινεν Ὕλας εὖεδρον ἐς Ἀργώ.*

The heroic tone of the mustering and voyage ironically faces the rusticism, pastoralism, and eroticism of the following scenes and defines the standard against which Heracles' actions are to be judged. The story of the Argo is essential[21] in that it defines the truly heroic: the heroes are not only *ἀριστῆες* (17) and of noble lineage (note the epic genealogies and patronymic in 17 and 20) but have some special worth by which they benefit mankind (*ὧν ὄφελός τι*, 18).[22] In fact, the ship Argo is itself an ideal hero (21–24):

[20] Köhnken 44–45 makes note of the ideal presented here; but, in his partiality for Apollonius, he does not credit T. with using the details for a meaningful purpose.

[21] Many critics have missed the significance of the inclusion of the Argonauts and the Argo: Legrand 408–10; Webster (above, note 2) *WS* 76 and *Hellenistic Poetry* 66 ("The fact that Theokritos quite unnecessarily sets the Hylas story in the Argonaut story . . ."); Otis, *Virgil* 403 ("the others, Argonauts . . . , count for nothing in the narrative proper. The spotlight falls on Heracles and Hylas alone"). Wilamowitz, *Textg.* 178, finds the whole section superfluous and resorts to a trite evasion by attributing it to Alexandrian erudition: "Die parenthetische Erwähnung des Wunders würden wir gern preisgeben; aber diese kleinen Gelehrsamkeiten erlaubt sich jeder Alexandriner; das *Μιδεάτιδος ἡρωίνης* unmittelbar vorher ist nicht notwendiger."

[22] Neither Gow's translation of verse 18 nor his citations in the commentary (2.235) make clear the true sense of *ὧν ὄφελός τι*. *ὧν* has the subject as antecedent: "men chosen from all the cities, men who had some worth (or usefulness)." The reference in *LSJ* under *ὄφελος* and in Gow to Xen. *Hell.* 5.3.6 (*ἀπέκτειναν ἀνθρώπους καὶ ὅ τι περ ὄφελος ἦν τοῦ στρατεύματος*) is not apposite, nor is the citation of Ar. *Eccl.* 53. The other passages, Hdt. 5.92*η*, Plato, *Rep.* 505E, and Aratus 463, are closer to T.'s usage; Hdt. 8.68*γ* is closest in that it refers to the *ὄφελος* of people: *κακοὶ δοῦλοι εἰσὶ . . . Αἰγύπτιοί τε καὶ Κύπριοι καὶ Κίλικες καὶ Πάμφυλοι, τῶν ὄφελός ἐστι οὐδέν.* The most significant parallel is neglected by Gow: Plato, *Ap.* 28B, *ἄνδρα ὅτου τι καὶ σμικρὸν ὄφελός ἐστιν*, "any man who has even some slight worth." In *LSJ* under *ὄφελος*, "Theoc. 13.18" belongs under heading 2, not 3.

The idea of worth, *ὄφελος*, is an essential part of heroism, as is suggested in *Ap.* 28B–D and again in 36C by Socrates, himself a hero-figure: cf. Bernard M. W. Knox, *The*

. . . εὖεδρον ἐς Ἀργώ,
ἅτις κυανέαν οὐχ ἅψατο συνδρομάδων ναῦς
ἀλλὰ διεξάιξε βαθὺν δ' εἰσέδραμε Φᾶσιν,
αἰετὸς ὥς, μέγα λαῖτμα, ἀφ' οὗ τότε χοιράδες ἔσταν.

It performs a feat by passing through the clashing rocks *and* benefits mankind by making future navigation safer. The entire section, with its narrative tone (ἔπλει μετὰ κῶας [16], is similar to Hdt. 7.193, ἐπὶ τὸ κῶας ἔπλεον), its pairings of epithet and noun (ἀφνειὸν Ἰωλκόν, 19; εὖεδρον ἐς Ἀργώ, 21), its patronymic forms (Αἰσονίδας, 17; Μιδεάτιδος, 20), and the eagle-simile, is quite epic in vocabulary and imagery.[23] The only intimation of bias against the hero is veiled in the ambiguous epithet "toil-enduring" (ταλαεργός, 19): although it praises Heracles' brute strength and stubborn endurance, it simultaneously tends to belittle his intelligence, for the adjective is used by Homer only of mules.[24]

When the Argonauts, "the more-than-human flower of heroes" (θεῖος ἄωτος/ἡρώων, 27–28), land in Cios, they are suddenly in

Heroic Temper: Studies in Sophoclean Tragedy (Berkeley 1964) 58. The same connection between worth and heroism is implied in the poem.

[23] Gow 2.236 takes the simile with the second verb of line 23 only, but the whole voyage is so compressed into three lines that the eagle-simile is probably to be taken with διεξάιξε as well. The otherwise unexampled version of unscathed passage through the rocks may be yet another attempt by T. to be as original as possible (cf. Gow on the original vocabulary here). Or οὐχ ἅψατο may be hyperbolical, like the simile, in which the eagle is chosen for its epic connotations, and may recall the dove of the traditional version (used by Apollonius, 2.571–73). In any event, the point to be emphasized is the relevance of the epic feat to the poem's theme.

[24] Forms of the formulaic phrase ἡμίονοι ταλαεργοί occur in Homer (*Il.* 23.654, 662, 666; *Od.* 4.636, 21.23), in Hesiod (*Op.* 46), who also has an alternate formula οὐρῆας ταλαεργούς (*Op.* 791, 796), and in the Homeric hymns (*H. Merc.* 568). This association of the word with toiling animals was never lost: the word appears in Moschus, *Fr.* 4 (8).3 (Gow, *Bucolici Graeci*, p. 152) modifying αὐχένα ταύρων; in the Christian era in *Oracula Sibyllina* 2.10 (with Hesiod's οὐρῆας), in Oppian, *Halieutica* 5.20 (5.50 in *LSJ* is a misprint) with οὐρήων . . . πόνον, and in Nonnus, *Paraphrasis Ioannis*, chap. 12, 14 (line 64: ὄνον ταλαεργὸν ὁδίτην). Nonnus also transfers the adjective to people by a natural extension of the epic sense: *Paraph. Ioan.* chap. 19, 42 (line 220: ταλαεργὸς Ἰωσήφ, Joseph of Arimathaea carrying Christ's body on his shoulders); *Dionysiaca* 2.64 (with ἀροτρεύς). The only other instances of the word, outside of the lexicons and Eustathius, seem to be here, where it is applied to the hero with ironic force because of the mule-connotations (cf. note 9 above and note 33 below), and in Apollonius 4.1062, where it is employed with pathetic force to describe a widow (not "a slave-woman," as Gow states, 2.235).

thoroughly rustic, workaday, non-heroic surroundings. Theocritus identifies their landing place in georgic terms as "where the cattle of the Ciani make wide their furrows, wearing smooth the plow-shares" (30–31). The Argonauts disembark in the evening and "prepare their meal, and the many spread themselves one resting-place" (32–33). They are in a grassy meadow, full of rushes and galingale (34–35). In fact, this imagery, which recalls conventions of the pastoral,[25] transforms the Argonauts, as it were, into simple herdsmen in a Theocritean idyll,[26] eating and resting in the fields. In contrast with their epic grandeur in the preceding section and in 27, the Argonauts are no longer presented as heroic, but appear here as ordinary men. To enhance this tension between the heroic and the non-heroic further, Hylas now walks into an idyllic locale, as remote, artificial, and imaginary as any in the pastoral poems (39–42). It is comprised of "a spring in a low-lying place," with "many rushes, and blue-green celandine and pale-green maiden-hair and abundant wild celery and creeping marsh grass," and, finally, nymphs.

Effectively situated between the rustic (30–35) and the idyllic (39–42) descriptions is the startling epic pair of heroes, "Heracles himself and

[25] The words used recall pastoral descriptions: χαμεύναν (33), χαμευνίσιν (*Idyll* 7.133); λειμών (34), λειμωνόθε (7.80); στιβάδεσσιν (34), στιβάς (7.67 and 5.34—it is important that this word can mean either a soldier's or a shepherd's mattress); κύπειρον (35), κύπειρος (1.106 and 5.45); and στορέσαντο (33), στορεσεῖν (6.33).

Tränkle 505 uses several of these details to exemplify the constant appearance of nature in T.'s descriptions, what he terms "eine der auffallendsten Eigenheiten von Theokrits Dichtung überhaupt" (cf. above, note 17).

[26] Gow, not realizing the thematic function of the scene of spreading a pallet and taking a meal in herdsmen's fashion, concludes that the elaborate preparations can only mean that the Argonauts intend to stay the night (*CQ* 32 [1938] 16) and accuses T. of not thinking out "the implications of his scene" (cf. 2.244) when in 68–69 the Argonauts are seen ready to sail later the same evening. T. speaks only of a meal in 32 ff., and it is not necessary to assume any more and create an illogicality. Köhnken 81 points to this as a major blemish of T.'s version, but it is not so. Serrao too, 553, believes that the detail of the bed is not functional in T. and mistakenly speaks of it as one of T.'s *incoerenze* (p. 547). All three fall into the erroneous assumption by treating the poem as if it had to be compared with Apollonius. Köhnken, p. 33 note 6 and p. 81, also faults these lines for the verbal antitheses (πολλοὶ... μίαν, 33; μίαν ἄμφω, 38) which he thinks merely formal and not meaningful. Such contrasts, however, may be understood as a reflection on the verbal level of the tensions present in the poem's themes.

A more satisfactory reading of the lines is found in Tränkle 505: "Aus seiner Hirtenpoesie also hat Theokrit diesen freundlichen Zug in die heroische Welt übertragen."

unflinching Telamon, comrades who both always ate at one table" (37–38):

αὐτῷ θ' Ἡρακλῆι καὶ ἀστεμφεῖ Τελαμῶνι,
οἳ μίαν ἄμφω ἑταῖροι ἀεὶ δαίνυντο τράπεζαν.

The two names fill an entire line in an intentional balance, and the epithet ἀστεμφεῖ adds to the epic gravity of the picture. The pair of heroes, however, is incongruous with the imagery that surrounds the couplet 37–38, and purposefully so. Telamon, a strong man, is Heracles' companion in the epic world, whereas Hylas has been identified with tender beauty and an idyllic world. The tension between the two "comrades" is intentional.[27]

Back in the pastoral fantasy-world which Hylas has entered, the poet now depicts a scene which corresponds to that of the Argo's feat in the epic world.[28] The scene at the spring initially appears charming and harmless, and this impression is maintained in the Nymphs' carefree dancing, the lovely sounds of their names (Εὐνίκα καὶ Μαλὶς ἔαρ θ' ὁρόωσα Νύχεια, 45),[29] and the very image of "with

[27] Three persons or things are said to be *always* with Heracles: Hylas (χωρὶς δ' οὐδέποκ', 10), Telamon (ἑταῖροι and ἀεὶ, 38), and the club (αἰὲν, 57). There is a tension between the heroic (Telamon and the club) and the pederastic (Hylas).

[28] The poem's structure reflects the opposition. If we disregard the concluding verses 72–75 (as a sort of epilogue), then 1–4 (didactic proposition) balance 66–71 (proposition proved), 5–15 and 55–65 both deal with the incongruity of Heracles and Hylas, and the central narrative section splits into three parts, 16–24, 25–35, 36–54, where the epic scene of the Argo in the first balances the idyllic scene at the spring in the third.

[29] It is natural to ask how significant the Nymphs' names may be. The beauty of the sounds in 45 is a commonplace: Knaack 137 ("mit anmuthig klingenden . . . Namen"); Wilamowitz, *Textg.* 175 ("die Nymphen erhalten klangvolle Namen"); Ph.-E. Legrand, *Bucoliques Grecs* (Paris: Budé 1946) 1.87 ("les noms des trois jolies nymphes sont de simples noms de fantaisie, jolis comme elles"); Gow 2.240 (chosen "partly for the pleasure of the ear"). Εὐνίκα is now accepted as the correct reading here (cf. Gow's apparatus here and at *Idyll* 20.1 and M. L. West's apparatus at Hesiod, *Theog.* 246). The name apparently means *facilem habens victoriam* (De-Vit, *Totius Latinitatis Onomasticon* [Prato 1868] 2.792); G. Turk's derivation *ea de qua multum certatur* in *Breslauer Philologische Abh.* 7 (1895) 4.27 note 1, results from the false reading Εὐνείκα, as does the preposterous connection with ἐνεικ- (φέρω) in *Etymologicum Magnum*; and the alternate suggestion in De-Vit connecting it with εὐνή (with ending -ῐκος) is equally erroneous. The sense of "with easy victory" is probably significant in *Idyll* 20 (where a city-girl named Eunice spurns a rustic) and could here be significant of the Nymphs' easy victory over Hylas. Gow notes that Εὐνίκα is listed as a Nereid in *Theog.* 246 and Apollodorus 1.2.7. Μαλὶς may be derived from any of three roots in μᾱλ-(μηλ-): "white," "apple," or "sheep" (the last is dubious because of the ᾱ; cf. Gow 1.lxxvi

spring in her eyes." "Spring" here and in 25–26 (with the lamb-image) gains special significance since it connotes fresh life (the lamb too is a symbol of new growth), love-making, perhaps even a slight wantonness. Indeed, given the associations of springtime, the dancing, and the flighty emotions of the Nymphs (*ἀπαλὰς φρένας*, 48), it seems totally in character for them to be fluttered (*ἐξεφόβησεν*) by Hylas' beauty and to grab the lad for themselves, without incurring serious blame. Yet, with the Nymphs as with so much else in the poem, the poet is deliberately ambiguous and ironic. Verses 42–44, leading up to the names in 45, are three consecutive spondaic lines, an unusual poetic device[30] which imparts a special slowness and solemnity

and *LSJ* under *μῆλον* [A]). The name has two possible associations with Heracles: Gow notes that she "is one of Omphale's slaves in Steph. Byz. *s.v.* *Ἀκέλης*" (she is mother of Aceles by Heracles); and Mt. Oeta, site of Heracles' death, is in Malis (Gow refers to *Μηλίδα λίμναν* in Soph. *Tr.* 636). *Νύχεια* means "she of the night" and the name may refer in the poem to the Nymphs' nocturnal dance and, if pressed, might be interpreted as ironically sinister. *Νύχεια* is found elsewhere as a spring which provides bath-water for nymphs (in *AP* 9.684, cited by Gow). In summary, the names are primarily lovely and secondarily have some special significance in their context (i.e. of victory and night). Theocritus is not usually intentionally obscure and overly erudite; it seems likely that he did not have the more remote references in mind.

[30] Gow 2.239 lists twelve other instances of three consecutive spondaic lines (and two of four such lines). In some cases it is difficult to determine what special effect, if any, the poet sought through this slowing of the rhythm: e.g. in *Il.* 2.717, 11.49; in [Theocritus], *Idyll* 25.29; and in citations of Aratus and Oppian given by Gow. Spondaic lines were especially popular among the Alexandrians; it is clear, however, that skillful poets contemporary with T. use the metrical device with a purpose. Callimachus in *Hymni* 3.221–24 reinforces the grim irony of his statement about Atalanta's prowess as an archer:

> *οὐδὲ μὲν Ὑλαῖόν τε καὶ ἄφρονα Ῥοῖκον ἔολπα*
> *οὐδέ περ ἐχθαίροντας ἐν Ἄιδι μωμήσασθαι*
> *τοξότιν· οὐ γάρ σφιν λαγόνες συνεπιψεύσονται,*
> *τάων Μαιναλίη νᾶεν φόνῳ ἀκρώρεια.*

Apollonius Rhodius in 4.1190–95 expresses the speechless wonder of those who see the handsome heroes and pauses over the richness of the scene:

> *. . . ἀλλοίην ἐπὶ τοῖσιν*
> *ἀγλαΐην, οἵην τε νεόζυγες ἐντύνονται.*
> *θάμβευν δ' εἰσορόωσαι ἀριπρεπέων ἡρώων*
> *εἶδεα καὶ μορφάς, ἐν δέ σφισιν Οἰάγροιο*
> *υἱὸν ὑπαὶ φόρμιγγος ἐϋκρέκτου καὶ ἀοιδῆς*
> *ταρφέα σιγαλόεντι πέδον κροτέοντα πεδίλῳ.*

So in T. here the spondaic rhythm adds a mock solemnity which reinforces the use of *δειναὶ θεαί*.

to the Nymphs' first appearance. The same effect is sought through the many spondees in the frozen scene of 42–45, which contrast with the quick-flowing dactyls of 46–54, where actual motion is represented. "Sleepless" (*ἀκοίμητοι*, 44) in part refers to the Nymphs' immortality and suggests a carefree existence, but may have a sinister level of meaning in that their sleeplessness makes them dangerous to innocent humans who chance upon them by night. Likewise, "fearful goddesses to the country-folk" (*δειναὶ θεαὶ ἀγροιώταις*, 44) conveys a touch of rustic superstition and an intimation of dread which foreshadows the actual rape. At the same time, the adaptation of the epic formula *δεινὴ θεός* (properly used of truly awesome goddesses like Athene, Circe, Calypso) to the love-struck Nymphs creates another point of irony.[31] The Nymphs are indeed ambiguous; portrayed with a mock-solemnity, they attain a degree of dreadfulness. Yet, just as the danger of *δεινὴ θεός* in 44 is almost forgotten in the beautiful sounds of 45, so our final view of the Nymphs leaves them justified (because overcome by Eros, the *χαλεπὸς . . . θεός*) and touchingly attentive to the crying lad (53–54):

> *Νύμφαι μὲν σφετέροις ἐπὶ γούνασι κοῦρον ἔχοισαι*
> *δακρυόεντ' ἀγανοῖσι παρεψύχοντ' ἐπέεσσιν.*

The pretty boy is finally in the pastoral world where he belongs.

Although Theocritus has repeatedly countered everything epic with realism, rusticism, or pastoralism, although he has taunted the hero in love and deprived him of his lovely boy (a character of the unheroic world), he does not wish ultimately to destroy the hero-concept or the hero Heracles. The ideal of the heroic deed is fully present in the brief Argo scene, and Heracles himself is restored in the end to his former state. Theocritus does not allow the Argonauts' reproach of "ship-deserter" (*λιποναύταν*, 73) to remain, nor that of the ironically punning *ἠρώησε* (74, "quit," "desert").[32] After a last mocking reference in "on foot" (*πεζᾷ*, 75), recalling the "untrodden brambles,"

[31] On epic echo, cf. note 9 above. Gow 2.239–40 is somewhat troubled by the use of *δειναί* to describe the Nymphs; he is properly noncommittal in his mention of nympholepsy (suggested by a scholiast), probably an unnecessary explanation here. The phrase contributes to the poet's richly and ambiguously emotive treatment of the Nymphs.

[32] The contrast between "heroes" and "desert" is plainly another case of verbal tension between the ideal of the hero and the unheroic hero in love.

the poet has him rejoin the Argonauts at the Phasis[33]—a final epic feat, and Heracles is again ταλαεργὸς ἀνήρ.

Theocritus' *Idyll* 13, which would more suitably be entitled "Heracles and Hylas," questions the value of the traditional conception of the epic and the heroic in contemporary literature. In this poetic exploration, Theocritus shows that the *ideal* hero[34] does not fit into an erotic situation without losing his heroism. He demonstrates the incongruity of the epic-heroic with homely rusticism especially, and from there the tension develops into an opposition between the old epic and a newer poetic sensibility, that of the pastoral, which shares with the real world the possibility of the harmonious existence of a love-situation.

It is well known that dissatisfaction with traditional epic in imitation of Homer was a crucial factor in Hellenistic literature. *Idyll* 13 may be understood as an important statement by a major poet on some aspects of this problem. It suggests that the old *ideal* of the hero is out of place both in the realism which was especially in vogue in the

[33] Gow punctuates verse 74 with a comma, making Heracles' journey to Phasis on foot (in 75) a part of the Argonauts' reproach. He gives arguments in *CQ* 32 (1938) 16–17 (and again in his edition, 2.244–45) which I find unconvincing. His statement (p. 16) that without the comma, "so far as his narrative is concerned, the Argonauts are left kicking their heels in Bithynia," has no force, especially when Gow himself admits that verse 23 tells of the arrival of the Argo at Phasis. In fact, Φᾶσιν at the close of the poem in 75 is meant to point back to Φᾶσιν at the end of verse 23 (as Wilamowitz, *Textg.* 178, recognizes) and thereby to reassociate Heracles with the epic-heroic world of the Argo.

The deciding argument should derive from sense. My reasons for punctuating with a colon (along with most editors and translators other than Gow) are (1) the necessity of restoring Heracles to his epic-heroic stature after the mocking tone of earlier sections and the abuse of 73–74 (the Argo-section demonstrates that the poet does respect the heroic ideal in its proper place); (2) the fact that the Argonauts, strong heroes of the old ideal, would not mock Heracles for his feat of endurance in reaching the Phasis on foot. They, indeed, would think this feat praiseworthy, whereas it is the Hellenistic poet who sees the irony and the humor of the action, which gives a final proof of the ambiguity of ταλαεργός (very strong, but not very clever).

Here and in other places the poem has suffered from overly literal-minded reading. One other place where T. may be defended is in the "anomaly" of a description of five types of plants around the spring when it is too dark to see them, criticized by Köhnken, 46 and 81. Such picayune reading may seem out of place here in a fantasy scene. Serrao 548 is more receptive to the detail as a mark of T.'s sensibilities, but discusses it as one of the *incoerenze*.

[34] E.g. the ideal characterized in the tragedies of Sophocles; cf. Knox (above, note 22) 1–61.

third century B.C. and in the pastoralism which some of Theocritus' own work introduced. Furthermore, although love spoils the ideal epic world, it is a harmonious element of both the real and the pastoral worlds. This opposition between the hero (or epic character) and love is reflected elsewhere in Theocritus: in *Idyll* 11, where the Homeric monster Polyphemus is represented in a non-epic love situation, and (in a somewhat altered form) in *Idyll* 1, where Daphnis, a "pastoral" hero-figure,[35] dies through his stubborn resistance to Eros.

The problem of love and the hero, in fact, is just one aspect of the larger question of the nature and relevance of epic in such post-heroic eras as the Hellenistic period of Greek literature and the Republican and Augustan ages of Latin literature. With the passage of time, the central figures in literary works shift from the strong heroes of Sophoclean tragedy[36] to more human characters in Euripides and finally to an "anti-hero" in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius:[37] Jason, an unheroic figure, succeeds in his quest only by using methods which traditional heroes scorn, while the old-fashioned heroes themselves are frustrated because their response of brute force or stubborn nobility is insufficient, in the Hellenistic poet's view, to meet every crisis. Apollonius' characterization of the frustrated heroes Heracles, Telamon, Peleus, and Idas in critical situations may be compared with Theocritus' use of the hero frustrated by love.[38] In connection with this question of hero *vs.* anti-hero, moreover, still another manifestation of the dissatisfaction with the old epic tradition may be found in the

[35] That Daphnis in *Idyll* 1 has certain similarities with the hero-figure is indicated by his reponse to the crisis over whether or not to submit to Eros; see Gilbert Lawall, *Theocritus' Coan Pastorals* (Washington 1967) 19–26. As a hero, however, Daphnis should be distinguished from the warrior-type represented by Heracles. The mythical neatherd is noted for his harmonious relationship with nature (cf. the mourning of beasts, 1.71 ff., the upsetting of nature at his death, 1.132 ff.) and for his intellectual skill of singing ("dear to the muses," 1.141), rather than for feats of strength which benefit mankind. T.'s pastoral hero is never ridiculed (as Heracles, a less intellectual hero, is), but retains his heroism up to and in death. This difference of attitudes toward the epic and pastoral heroes, in fact, seems to indicate that T. is more comfortable with the pastoral than with the epic-heroic ideal.

[36] Cf. Knox (above, note 22) 1–61.

[37] On this point see Gilbert Lawall, "Apollonius' *Argonautica*: Jason as Anti-Hero," *YCS* 19 (1966) 121–69.

[38] This point—a basic similarity of attitudes toward the old hero in Theocritus and Apollonius—has often been obscured in the past in the midst of the controversy over the alleged hostility between the two poets.

famous controversy over long epic *vs.* short or disjointed poetry. This was an important issue from Callimachus down to Catullus and the *poetae novi* and later Roman poets. The very problem of the "obsolescence of epic" in a civilized society,[39] which Vergil had to face in writing the *Aeneid* and Ovid, in a different way, in the *Metamorphoses*, is related. Interpreted in this line of development, Theocritus' *Idyll* 13 is not only a charming and masterful piece, but a significant contribution to ancient literary thought, the response made by one poet to an important literary and philosophical dilemma.

[39] Otis, *Virgil* 5–40.