

In: Hermes, 108 - 1980 , p. 274 -300

5719 pdf
} ROBERTSON, N.
1980

D Robertson, Noel

Do Heracles' "Catabasis"

Hermes
108,3 (3rd Quartal 1980) 274 -30

62 notes
Cercops of Miletus the Pythagorean
pag 279-283

Initiation

weiß das, und er spürt Nähe und Fülle des Überirdischen tagtäglich. Es ist noch eine ungeteilte, vollkommene Welt. Der kühle Rationalismus des modernen Interpreten sollte sie nicht zerstören, indem er versucht, sie seinen eigenen Kategorien zu unterwerfen.

Bonn

HARTMUT ERBSE

HERACLES' 'CATABASIS'

1. The poem and the possibilities

The purpose of this article is to give some further substance, including a title and an author, to the epic poem of Archaic date which told of Heracles' descending to the underworld to capture Cerberus. That such a poem existed is proved by several converging reports or allusions in later literature. Apd. Bibl. 2 [122 – 126] 5, 12 provides a summary of Heracles' tour of the underworld; Aristophanes in the *Frogs* turns to his own purpose a number of the principal stages and events; and Virgil does the same in *Aen.* 6. A single dramatic moment is evoked by Bacchylides in his celebration of Hiero's Olympic victory of 476 (5, 56 – 175); a more compendious reference appears in a new papyrus fragment plausibly attributed to Pindar (fr. dub. 346), which may or may not come from the same poem as two Pindaric fragments previously known: the papyrus remnant of a dithyramb entitled »Heracles' Catabasis or Cerberus« (fr. 70b) and a scholiast's notice of the same episode (fr. 249a). The indebtedness of all these writers to a common source has been convincingly demonstrated by others¹, and I have little to add to the interpretation of the passages already canvassed. At this point it will be useful to recall the narrative content of the common source, so far as it is known.

When ordered to fetch Cerberus Heracles came to Eumolpus at Eleusis to be initiated into the Mysteries; Eumolpus first purified him of blood guilt and then performed the initiation. Hermes conducted him to the underworld. When the Gorgon Medusa loomed up before him, Heracles drew his sword against what was only, as Hermes explained, a harmless wraith. Throngs of spirits came into view, rustling like autumn leaves in the wind; the hero Melea-

¹ Notably by E. NORDEN, *Aeneis* Buch VI³ (Leipzig 1927) *passim*, and by H. LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 206 – 229. Others who have dealt with the matter recently are F. GRAF, *Eleusis und die Orphische Dichtung* Athens, Berlin 1974, 142 – 150, 182 – 185, and J. BOARDMAN, *JHS* 95, 1975, 6 – 10.

ger stood forth, and in conversation with him Heracles made a fateful promise to marry Meleager's sister Deianeira. Near the gates of Hades' palace Heracles found Theseus, Peirithous, and Ascalaphus held in durance; Theseus and Ascalaphus he released but could do nothing for Peirithous. To refresh the spirits with blood he slaughtered one of Hades' cattle and trounced the herdsman Menoetes, but finally let him off at Persephone's request. He asked Pluto for Cerberus, and conformably with Pluto's terms grappled and subdued the beast, and took him to the upper world, where Demeter changed Ascalaphus into an owl. Afterwards, of course, Heracles returned Cerberus to the underworld.

The foregoing account, based mainly on *Apld.*, is by no means free from difficulties, but we may skate over them for the moment, reserving discussion till later (Section 5). It is clear enough that the Archaic poem gave a rather elaborate chart of the underworld, which is at least partly reflected in Aristophanes and perhaps in Virgil too. Several dramatic episodes found favour with later authors. The clearest instances are Heracles' momentary alarm (*cf.* *Bacchyl.* 5, 71–76; *Ar. Ran.* 562–564; *Verg. Aen.* 6, 290–294) and the prospect of innumerable spirits sougning like leaves (*cf.* *Bacch.* 5, 65–67; *Pindar fr. dub.* 246b, 12–14; *Verg. Aen.* 6, 309–310)². The meeting of Heracles and Meleager inspired Bacchylides to some of his finest poetry³, but its effect on Virgil was less happy; for it has not, I think, been hitherto remarked that Meleager supplies the model for Deiphobus, who is likewise the victim of a cruel fate and a malign woman (*Aen.* 6, 494–547). Illustrations of our poem can be recognized on two Athenian vases about a century apart. Fragments of a fine black-figure amphora of c. 540 (Reggio 4001 = ABV 147, 6) show Heracles fetching Cerberus in circumstances which are peculiar to our poem; another scene on the amphora presupposes Heracles' initiation at Eleusis⁴. On a red-

² Since the simile of the autumn leaves immediately precedes the appearance of Meleager in both Bacchylides and Pindar (if it is he), and since Meleager's encounter with a visitor to the underworld was a recurring theme (R. MERKELBACH, *StItal* 24, 1950, 256), it is very likely that the simile too had a wider currency. Accordingly the pedigree of related similes in later poets will be more complicated than either NORDEN or his critics allow (NORDEN, *Aeneis VI*³ 223–224, 465–466; *id.* *SBBerl*, 1934, 36–39; R. J. CLARK, *Phoenix* 24, 1970, 244–255; G. THANIEL, *Phoenix* 25, 1971, 237–245).

³ Bacchylides' handling of the Meleager episode is commended by M. R. LEFKOWITZ, *HSCP* 73, 1969, 64–87, and by G. K. GALINSKY, *The Herakles Theme*, Oxford 1972, 25–28, but in my opinion both ascribe too much originality to Bacchylides. It is certain that in the epic catabasis the meeting of Heracles and Meleager led to mention of Deianeira as a bride for Heracles; and if so, all the pathos and irony which Bacchylides draws from the parallel destinies of the two heroes were already implicit in the earlier poem.

⁴ The two scenes appear on joining fragments of the neck and shoulder respectively of an amphora painted »in the manner of Exekias«, published by G. PROCOPIO, *ArchCl* 4, 1952, 153–161, pls. 30, 1; 31–32; *cf.* H. METZGER, *Recherches sur l'Imagerie Athenienne*, Paris 1965, 8–10, pls. 1, 2; 2, and BOARDMAN, *JHS* 95, 1975, 6, pl. 1a. The direct connexion between these

figure crater of c. 440 (New York 08.258.21 = ARV² 1086, 1) we see Heracles facing Theseus and Peirithous, and Meleager standing apart (*cf.* p. 293 below). Such wide and deep influence goes to prove that the Archaic poem was of very high quality, and its loss is to be keenly regretted.

I have called the lost work an epic poem of Archaic date. That it was an epic rather than a lyric poem can be taken as certain. Stesichorus wrote a poem called Cerberus (fr. 206 PAGE), but the full-scale catabasis which we find in *Apld.* must have exceeded even Stesichorus' notorious amplitude; in any case we should expect *Apld.* to reproduce, here as elsewhere, an epic poem abstracted by Hellenistic mythographers. A catabasis or tour of the underworld was a favourite theme in epic poetry after Homer. Other instances are furnished by the *Minyad* (frs. 1–6 KINKEL), by a Hesiodic poem about Theseus and Peirithous ([Hes.] p. 139 MERKELBACH-WEST), by the *Nosti* (frs. 3–5 KINKEL), and by the *Return of the Atreids* (fr. 10 KINKEL – though this poem may be the same as the *Nosti*, or a part of it); Polygnotus' painting of the underworld at Delphi (Paus. 10, 28–31) drew on other epic accounts besides *Od.* 11; and we now see that some episodes, like Meleager's accosting a visitor, lent themselves to successive variations (*cf.* [Hes.] frs. 280–281 M-W)⁵. As for the date of our poem, current opinion favours the mid sixth century, but the reasons are not convincing⁶; it could be much earlier. Only a lower terminus is at hand, in the amphora of c. 540 already mentioned.

scenes and our poem has not been recognized. The smaller scene on the neck shows Heracles pulling Cerberus along, Athena preceding him, and possibly Hermes following. The scene is entirely typical except for a bearded man in chiton and corselet who stands ahead of the others holding Heracles' club, bow, and arrow-case. Why are Heracles' weapons in the hands of another? Because in our poem Heracles was required by Pluto »to subdue the animal without using the weapons which he carried« (*Apld.* Bibl. 2 [125] 5, 12, 8). The bearded man – certainly not Iolaus, who has no business in the underworld, but probably Theseus, freed by Heracles at an earlier stage – is shown standing still; he will have remained behind with the weapons in the presence of Pluto and Persephone, whereas Heracles is now returning with Cerberus from the gates of the underworld. The larger scene on the shoulder shows Demeter setting forth to bestow the gift of wheat on mankind; she stands in her chariot holding a goad at the ready and therefore in course of departure, not arrival, as METZGER has it; beside the chariot are Triptolemus, Athena, Heracles, Hermes, and »Plutodotas«. Why should Heracles assist at this proceeding, which obviously takes place at Eleusis? The question is asked by GRAF, *Eleusis* (n. 1 above) 143 n. 11, and answered with an *aporia*. I say, because our poem presented him as the archetypal initiate. On fourth-century vases Heracles again appears in Eleusinian scenes, among various peripheral figures who only serve to magnify the central group of Demeter, Persephone, and the divine child Plutus or Triptolemus or both; in these scenes Heracles is always identified as an initiate by a myrtle-staff or a piglet or by the company he keeps, but we must not expect such allusive details in black-figure painting.

⁵ *Od.* 11, 565–627 and 24, 1–204 are other post-Homeric elaborations of the catabasis theme.

⁶ LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 226; N. J. RICHARDSON, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, Oxford 1974, 197; GRAF, *Eleusis* (n. 1 above) 149; BOARDMAN, *JHS* 95, 1975, 9–10. All assume

What then was the poem called, and who wrote it? The questions are not impractical; indeed they demand an answer. A poem so widely current in the fifth century, and so familiar to the Athenians (to judge from Aristophanes' use of it and from the ceramic illustrations), must have survived to be studied and edited in Hellenistic times; Virgil knew it well in some form or other, and even if he used a handbook, the handbook will have been compiled from original accounts in the Hellenistic period. Beyond any reasonable doubt the poem is known to us from philological sources, and only waits to be identified. We want an epic poem about Heracles, for his catabasis was certainly not related at length in a poem about Theseus, still less in a poem about Orpheus.

Of the two general poems about Heracles, by Peisander of Cameirus and Panyassis of Halicarnassus respectively, it is likely enough that the first treated the fetching of Cerberus, and quite certain that the second did so; but neither treatment could be plausibly identified with our catabasis. Peisander seems very remote from Eleusis, especially if there is any truth in the alternative dates given by the *Suda s. v.*, either »older than Hesiod« or Ol. 33, i. e. 648 – 645. To be sure, a third view reported by the *Suda* made him »a contemporary and a minion of the poet Eumolpus«; i. e. Peisander and Eumolpus were credited with similar poems, or variously credited with the same poem or poems. Yet it is not the Heracleia which is here in view, but rather »the rest of the poems« ascribed to Peisander; these the *Suda* brands as »spurious« and »composed by others, including the poet Aristeus«, doubtless meaning Aristeas of Proconnesus⁷. Although Peisander enjoyed a curious renown in late antiquity, he is not heard of at all before Theocritus' epigram (no. 22 = A. P.

that a poem featuring the Eleusinian Mysteries must originate at Athens or in circles favourable to Athens; but since Eumolpus, the exponent of the Mysteries in our poem, afterwards becomes a Thracian ally of Eleusis and enemy of Athens (so Eur. *Erechtheus*), this is not a safe assumption. According to LLOYD-JONES, »the poem cannot have been written before the time at which Theseus as an Athenian national hero was being exalted as a friend and peer of Heracles, nor before doctrines of purification were widely known and the mysteries widely popular«. Not so. Heracles is seen assisting Theseus and Peirithous in Hades on a sixth-century shield-strap found at Olympia (K. SCHEFOLD, *Myth and Legend in Early Greek Art*, London 1966, fig. 24), which almost certainly owes nothing to Athens; Theseus and Peirithous had always ended up in the underworld, and it was natural to say that Heracles met them there. Apart from *Apld.*' summary of our poem, we have no information earlier than the fifth century about the result of Heracles' intervention; but if Archaic poets feigned that he released one or both, they probably meant to glorify Heracles, not Theseus or Athens. As for purification and the Mysteries, the provenance of the black-figure amphora (n. 4 above) suggests that by c. 540 Eleusis was very well known indeed; the vase, dedicated in the sanctuary of Persephone at Italian Locri, was most likely bespoke by the Locrians; in any case it appealed to them.

⁷ On the poems and the ascriptions see JACOBY, *FGrHist* Ia pp. 545, 552 (Nachträge of 1957). A *Theogony* is ascribed both to Aristeas (*Suda s. v.* = *FGrHist* 35 T 1 a [IA Addenda p. *14]) and to Eumolpus (*Phld. De Piet. p.* 31 GOMPERZ = *Vorsokr.* 2 B 12).

9, 598), which points to a revival of interest; it would be astonishing to learn that Peisander was a favourite poet in fifth-century Athens.

About Panyassis we can be a little more definite. He was active in the first half of the fifth century; that he came early enough to inspire Bacchylides in 476 is unlikely but not impossible⁸; if the black-figure amphora illustrates our poem, then of course Panyassis is ruled out. It may still seem unwise to forgo a closer look at his account of Heracles' catabasis. Several incidents appearing in the fragments are relevant – Sisyphus submerged by the River Styx (fr. 30 MATTHEWS), Theseus and Peirithous melded with their rocky seat (fr. 9 MATTHEWS), Pluto wounded by Heracles (frs. 6a – b, 20, 21 MATTHEWS). Do these incidents square with our catabasis? Sisyphus, a stock figure in the underworld, could easily have been mentioned in our catabasis; Theseus and Peirithous certainly were⁹; but Heracles' adversaries did not include Pluto himself. If this detail is truly reported (and we have it on the testimony of at least three, perhaps four, witnesses), Panyassis was not the author of our catabasis. Some may feel a wrench at this conclusion, for Panyassis did have something to say about Eleusis, marking Triptolemus son of the eponym Eleusis (fr. 24a MATTHEWS) and perhaps recounting his mission as an αἴτιον of the Thesmophoria (fr. 24b MATTHEWS). The context in the Heracleia can hardly have been anything but Heracles' initiation; according to Xen. Hell. 6, 3, 6, Triptolemus himself was said to be concerned in the initiation¹⁰. In sum, it is not to be denied that Panyassis' account of the catabasis shows significant similarities with the account which we are seeking. Yet there are differences too; and both these and the black-figure amphora are best explained if our account came first and influenced Panyassis. We should then be free to suppose that the role which Panyassis gave to Triptolemus was a further elaboration of the Eleusinian preliminaries.

⁸ Panyassis' *floruit* was variously given as Ol. 78, i.e. 468–465, or »during the Persian Wars« (Suda s. v.); other evidence suggests that he was cut off in middle life towards 450 B.C. V. J. MATTHEWS, *Panyassis of Halikarnassos*, Leyden 1974, 12–19, reckons his span as 505/0–455/0.

⁹ Whereas Panyassis as reported by Paus. 10, 29, 9 said that Theseus and Peirithous were stuck fast to their seat (so too Apld. Epit. 1, 24, with further mention of serpent-coils), and whereas Paus. distinguishes this version from another which represented them as »fettered«, δεσμώτας, Apld.' summary of our catabasis describes their predicament with a single word, δεθέντα (2 [124] 5, 11, 5). It seems clear that the word has its general sense of »confined«, »held fast« (for Apld. does not even refer to the seat); the summary therefore is not incompatible with Panyassis' account at this point.

¹⁰ R. RAPETTI, *ParPass* 107, 1966, 131–135, reasonably concluded that Panyassis showed Triptolemus initiating Heracles, and that the story summarized by Hyginus (Fab. 147 = Panyassis fr. 24b MATTHEWS) was told in this context. He has been contradicted by GRAF, *Eleusis* (n. 1 above) 143 n. 10, for no good reason, and by MATTHEWS, *Panyassis* (n. 8 above) 115–119, who traces the story of Triptolemus' mission to Panyassis' Ionica, on the grounds that Eleusinian myths were relevant to the Ionian colonization (cf. Hdt. 9, 97). The difficulty here is in believing

Several Archaic poems still read in Hellenistic times dealt with particular episodes of Heracles' career. We know very little about Creophylus' Sack of Oechalia¹¹, and not much more about the Hesiodic Wedding of Ceyx¹², but it would take some ingenuity to argue that these titles and the fragments which got with them are compatible with a catabasis. This rough process of elimination leaves us with the Aegimius, which has always been a mystery to scholars. In fact it qualifies perfectly as the poem about Heracles' catabasis.

2. Cercops of Miletus

That the Aegimius contained a catabasis is strongly suggested by the curious reputation attaching to its supposed author, Cercops of Miletus. In our sources the Aegimius is sometimes ascribed to Hesiod (Plut. Thes. 20, 1–2; Steph. Byz. s. v. Ἀβαντίς), sometimes to Cercops (Apld. Bibl. 2 [6] 1, 3, 3; 2 [23] 1, 5, 10; Ath. 13, 4, 557a), and sometimes is left anonymous (Phld. De Piet. p. 5 GOMPERZ; schol. Eur. Phoen. 1116; schol. Ap. Rhod. Argon. 3, 587; 4, 816); Ath. 11, 109, 503d expressly notes the conflicting claims of Hesiod and Cercops. This evidence does not enable us to reconstruct the dogmas and disputes of Hellenistic scholars¹³. It is possible, for example, that Hesiod and Cercops were endorsed by rival camps, and that the catch-phrase ὁ τὸν Αἰγίμιον ποιήσας was used to burke the controversy by the late compilers Didymus and Theon, the presumed sources of the scholia on Euripides and Apollonius. But one might equally maintain that the best authorities spoke of an unknown author, and that inferior sciolists added the ascriptions to Hesiod and Cercops. So far as the reality is concerned, Hesiod can be safely discounted as the author of the Aegimius, for had the poem come from his hand (or even from his school) such general uncertainty could not have arisen later;

that the Ionica, a poem »in pentameter« known only from the Suda s. v. Πανύασις, was excerpted by a Hellenistic mythographer so as to produce Hyginus' summary; the Heracleia by contrast is ubiquitous in the mythographic tradition (MATTHEWS does his best to counter this objection on pp. 26–31, but he overlooks the very real possibility that the ascription of the Ionica to Panyassis is simply false, like many another ascription in the Suda; cf. M. L. WEST, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus*, Berlin 1974, 179–180).

¹¹ W. BURKERT, *MusHelv* 29, 1972, 74–85.

¹² R. MERKELBACH and M. L. WEST, *RhM* 108, 1965, 300–317.

¹³ A heroic attempt was made by J. SCHWARTZ, *Pseudo-Hesiodica*, Leyden 1960, but his results are unconvincing and sometimes contradictory. He suggests now that Lysimachus the Alexandrian ascribed the Aegimius to Cercops (pp. 130, 188), now that the same critic ascribed the poem to Hesiod (pp. 197, 261 n. 4). The catch-phrase »the author of the Aegimius« is repeatedly said to originate with Theon and Didymus (pp. 71, 197), but is also traced both to Pergamene scholars (p. 153) and to Aristarchus (p. 264). Steph. Byz. s. v. Ἀβαντίς, quoting two and a half lines from »Hesiod in the second book of the Aegimius« (= fr. 296 M-W), derives from Apollodorus on Il. 2, 536, according to SCHWARTZ (pp. 69, 149, 153, 264); on the face of it then the Aegimi-

whereas the ascription would follow naturally from the subject of the poem (however we conceive the details), as with the Wedding of Ceyx¹⁴. The true author may well be Cercops. When a Hesiodic or Homeric poem is also credited to a lesser name, the lesser name must have some good warrant. And Cercops is so obscure that his authorship is likely to be traditional: as we shall see next, this authorship gives rise to the other reports we have of Cercops, rather than *vice versa*.

Cercops is elsewhere described as the »Pythagorean« author of »Orphic« poems (Cic. Nat. D. 1, 107; Clem. Al. Strom. 1, 21, 131; Suda Ὀρφεύς). We can be sure that the same Cercops is in view¹⁵, since the name is very rare and serves to identify the poet without more ado, even in contexts which invite confusion between a Pythagorean and a secular poet: in a passage of Diog. Laert. which lists the emulous detractors of great poets and philosophers, including Pythagoras (2, 46 = Arist. fr. 75 ROSE), Cercops is named tout court as vying with Hesiod¹⁶. What has happened is that certain Orphic poems, originally anonymous (or circulating under a legendary name, as that of Orpheus himself), were attributed by a later critic to the epic poet Cercops on the grounds of apparent similarity with the Aegimius; the process of editing and classifying old texts led to many such attributions during the Hellenistic period, though the present case very likely goes back to the fourth century, when Orphic literature first came under scrutiny. Cercops lent his name to two Orphic books in the Library of Alexandria – a Theogony or Sacred Discourse and a Catabasis of Orpheus. The evidence, which has often been misread, can be set forth briefly.

From Clement's review of Orphic writings (= Orph. test. 183, 222 KERN) we learn that Epigenes in his work 'On the Poetry ascribed to Orpheus' named »Cercops the Pythagorean« as the true author of the Catabasis to Hades and the Sacred Discourse. In this context the Catabasis to Hades can only be the Catabasis of Orpheus known from other traces, and the Sacred Discourse,

us passed as Hesiod's work in the school of Aristarchus. But since it is axiomatic with SCHWARTZ that Aristarchus counted the Aegimius as post-Hesiodic, Hesiod's name was »certainly« added by Stephanus himself, and the notice »thus confirms indirectly that the school of Aristarchus regularly used for the Aegimius the periphrasis without an author's name« (p. 264)!

¹⁴ According to SCHWARTZ, Pseudo-Hesiodica (n. 13 above) 261, it was the prominence of Heracles in the Aegimius and the Wedding of Ceyx that caused these poems to be ascribed to Hesiod, after the example of the Shield; but at p. 263 the reason for the Hesiodic ascription of the Aegimius is said to be certain »points of contact« with the Catalogue, namely the treatment of Theseus, Phrixus, and Io. The first suggestion is better.

¹⁵ The identity of Cercops the Pythagorean and Cercops the author of the Aegimius has sometimes been denied, as by K. ZIEGLER, RE 18. 2, 1942, 1346, 1368.

¹⁶ This off-handedness in mentioning Cercops is the more significant in that most other detractors are closely specified, e. g. »Antiphon the diviner«, »Cylon of Croton« (κύδων καὶ ὀνάτας codd.: MENAGE's correction is nearly certain).

ἱερὸς λόγος, is one of the forerunners of the compendious ἱεροὶ λόγοι in 24 books which passed as gospel among the Neoplatonists of the fourth and fifth centuries; it is this late work that figures in the Suda's entry *s. v.* Ὀρφεύς (= Orph. test. 223 KERN), where the authorship is left open between »Theognetus of Thessaly« and »Cercops the Pythagorean«. Inasmuch as a Theogony such as the Sacred Discourse contained was always the leading specimen of Orphic literature, Cicero's *hoc Orphicum carmen*, which »they say belongs to Cercops the Pythagorean« (= Orph. test. 13 KERN), is rather more likely to be the Sacred Discourse than the Catabasis to Hades. As for the Catabasis, we find it also ascribed to »Prodicus of Samos« in Clement, and to »Herodicus of Perinthus« in the Suda. Since »Prodicus« and »Herodicus« are virtually indistinguishable in Greek uncials (ΠΡΟΔΙΚΟC ~ ΗΡΟΔΙΚΟC), and since Perinthus was a colony of Samos which maintained especially close ties with its mother city¹⁷, there can be no doubt at all that Clement's »Prodicus« is the same as the Suda's »Herodicus«, and very little doubt that Prodicus of Samos/Perinthus is the same as the Prodicus of Phocaea whom Paus. 4, 33, 7 mentions as the reputed author of the epic Minyad¹⁸: the several homelands reported of Prodicus will reflect successive stages of his career¹⁹. Thus two early epic poets, Cercops and Prodicus, were mooted as authors of the Orphic Catabasis to Hades²⁰.

The critic who favoured Prodicus remains unknown. Epigenes, responsible for ascribing both the Catabasis and the Sacred Discourse to Cercops, is otherwise cited for his interpretations both of Orphic poetry and of the works of Ion of Chios, and probably belongs to the early fourth century²¹: since Callimachus regarded him as the true author of Ion's Triagmi (fr. 446 PFEIFFER), he must come soon after Ion and long before Callimachus, and indeed the evidence might be taken to suggest that Epigenes was Ion's literary executor, with a like interest in Orphic and Pythagorean lore. The Sacred Discourse known to Epigenes may well be the Theogony known to Eudemus, who

¹⁷ A. J. GRAHAM, *Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece*, Manchester 1964, 74, 162-163.

¹⁸ The identification of Pausanias' Prodicus and Clement's, originally due to K. O. MÜLLER, is branded as »precarious« by LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 228, who notes that it was accepted by »the forty-year-old WILAMOWITZ«. The eighty-two-year-old Wilamowitz thought the same: *Der Glaube der Hellenen*², Basel 1955, 195 n. 2. To interpret the Minyad as an Orphic poem is of course a further step, which no one nowadays would take.

¹⁹ For example, Prodicus might have fled to Samos or Perinthus after the fall of Phocaea in c. 540.

²⁰ Another method of treating Orphic literature, adopted by Asclepiades of Myrlea, was to distinguish several bearers of the name Orpheus – Orpheus of Bisaltia, Orpheus of Leibethra, Orpheus of Croton, Orpheus of Camarina; and the last of these was also represented as the author of the Catabasis to Hades (Suda *s.* Ὀρφεύς = Orph. test. 225 KERN).

²¹ I. M. LINFORTH, *The Arts of Orpheus*, Berkeley 1941, 114–118; W. BURKERT, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, Cambridge, Mass. 1972, 129 n. 50.

more hospitably ascribed it to Orpheus (fr. 150 WEHRLI = Orph. fr. 28 KERN)²².

Why then did critics like Epigenes attribute Orphic works to the epic poets Prodicus and Cercops? With Prodicus the answer is clear. The Minyad spoke of Hades and its terrors (Paus. 10, 28, 7), and the half-dozen fragments adduced by Pausanias and Philodemus all refer to figures of the underworld – Charon, and sinners meeting their deserts (frs. 1–6 KINKEL). Obviously the Minyad contained a catabasis – whose we cannot say, unless it was Theseus and Peirithous' (fr. 1 KINKEL = Paus. 10, 28, 2); if so, the encounter between these heroes and the dead Meleager which we find related in [Hes.] frs. 280–281 M-W may come from the Minyad. At any rate a catabasis figured very prominently in the poem, and this will be the reason why the author of the Minyad was later credited with the Catabasis of Orpheus: and since the author of the Aegimius disputed the honour, we must infer that the Aegimius too contained a catabasis.

Another line of argument confirms that it was Cercops the epic poet who became widely known as the »Pythagorean« author of the Orphic Catabasis to Hades and Sacred Discourse, and that he acquired this role because the subject of the Aegimius seemed close to Orphic preoccupations. A famous line from Cercops' authentic work was incorporated in the compendious Orphic Theogony of late antiquity. We know from several sources that the Aegimius gave a horrific description of the monster Argus which was unique in literature. A four-line passage about the monster, including the line »glancing here and there with his four eyes«, is quoted from the Aegimius by the scholiast on Eur. Phoen., whence Tzetzes has it (fr. 294 M-W); this part of the Aegimius also stands behind Apld. 2 [6] 1, 3, 3, where Cercops is cited (along with Pherecydes, Asclepiades, and Acusilaus) for the lineage of Argus; he was evidently the first poet to elaborate this aspect of the myth of Io, and his conception of the monster is probably the original, agreeing as it does with the vases which depict a two-headed figure (London B 164 = ABV 148, 2, a black-figure amphora; Genoa 1145 = ARV² 1054, 48, a red-figure crater). At any rate the line about Argus' four eyes is also quoted by Hermeias on Pl. Phdr. 246e – who says that »Orpheus« applied it to the god Phanes, conceived as the Tetrad (Orph. fr. 76 KERN)! Thus Hermeias found the line in the »Rhapsodic« Theogony which he often adduces. It may be that at an earlier stage the same line, still applied to Argus, was inserted in a poem of »Musaeus« – or, less probably, that the Aegimius itself was fathered on Musaeus; for Philodemus, after describing Argus as four-eyed, proceeds to

²² Since the primacy of Night was distinctive of the Orphic Theogony, Aristotle's notices of this doctrine at Metaph. A 6, 1071 b 26 (citing »theologians«) and N 4, 1091 b 4 (citing »early poets«) perhaps refer to the text treated by Eudemus (ZIEGLER, RE 18, 2, 1942, 1347–1349).

cite Musaeus for some strange details of the monster's progeny (De Piet. *p.* 47 GOMPERZ = Vorsokr. 2 B 13 = fr. 13 KINKEL).

3. *King Aegimius*

The Aegimius then seems to have featured a catabasis. And in fact, as we shall see next, a poem dealing with King Aegimius was bound to contain some mention of Heracles' catabasis. True, we cannot assume from the title Aegimius that the hero of this name was at all central to our poem, which ran to at least two books (frs. 296, 300 M-W); ancient titles were sometimes capricious. The surviving fragments are notoriously remote from anything we know or might conjecture about Aegimius' career. So it is possible that Aegimius made only a brief appearance at the beginning or the end of the poem, and that the rest of the narrative followed or led up to his appearance. Yet even on this minimum view of Aegimius' role, the connexion with Heracles' catabasis remains essential.

Our knowledge of Aegimius comes mainly from Ephorus FGrHist 70 F 15; Str. 9, 4, 10, *p.* 427 (likewise reproducing Ephorus); Diod. Sic. 4, 37, 3–4; 58, 6; and Apld. Bibl. 2 [154–155] 7, 7, 2–5; [176] 8, 3, 5. Not all details cohere, but the fundamental pattern is plain. Aegimius like Ceyx is a good king whom Heracles befriends and champions against wicked enemies; in return Aegimius like Ceyx shelters Heracles' children. Aegimius and Ceyx are also alike in that Heracles meets them both in close succession near the end of his life, while mopping up various outlaws round Malis and Thessaly (so Diod. Sic. and Apld.). So much for the pattern; what makes Aegimius unique is the connexion he provides – as son of Dorus, king of the Dorians, and father of the Dorian eponyms Pamphylus and Dymas – between the Heracleian cycle proper and the story of the Heracleidae and the Dorians. Pindar already knew Aegimius as a Dorian ancestor (Pyth. 1, 62–64; 5, 71–72; Isthm. 9, 2–3), and it is commonly held that the whole rigmarole goes back to the epic poem about Aegimius²³. It seems to me much more likely that the poem told of a conventional encounter between Aegimius and Heracles, after the pattern described above, and that the encounter was subsequently used as a handle for the doctrine of the Dorian migration.

Whereas Pamphylus and Dymas are the natural sons of Aegimius (so Ephorus and Apld.), the eponym of the other Dorian tribe, Hyllus, is a son of

²³ C. ROBERT, *Die Griechische Heldensage*, Berlin 1920–1926, 531; A. SEVERYNS, *MusB* 30, 1926, 119–130; *id.*, *Le Cycle Épique dans l'École d'Aristarque*, Paris 1928, 178–179; W. SCHMID, *Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur* 1, 1, Munich 1929, 287; J. DEFRADAS, *Les Thèmes de la Propagande Delphique*, Paris 1954, 142–143; SCHWARTZ, *Pseudo-Hesiodica* (n. 13 above) 262; G. L. HUXLEY, *Greek Epic Poetry from Eumelos to Panyassis*, Cambridge, Mass. 1969, 107–110.

Heracles whom Aegimius adopted out of gratitude (so Ephorus); Pindar's allusions attest the same arrangement. Modern critics have deduced that Aegimius, as a primordial king of the Dorians, originally sired all three eponyms of the Dorian tribes, and that one of the three was subsequently (when the Dorians arrogated Heracles) feigned to be a son of Heracles adopted by Aegimius²⁴. This perverse and anomalous procedure, so unlike the usual style of myth-making, is quite impossible to credit. Moreover, it flouts the early and constant tradition which reckons Hyllus among several sons borne to Heracles by Deianeira ([Hes.] fr. 25, 19 M-W; Diod. Sic. 4, 37, 1; *Apld. Bibl.* 2 [165] 7, 8, 8; cf. Soph. Trach. 54). Now in Diodorus' comprehensive account the birth of these sons is reported just before Heracles comes to Aegimius and receives a third part of the realm, which he sets aside for his posterity (4, 37, 3–4); Heracles' death finds his sons dwelling with Ceyx (4, 57, 1), and it is only somewhat later that they claim their inheritance from Aegimius (4, 58, 6). Here as elsewhere (Hecataeus FGrHist 1 F 30; *Apld. Bibl.* 2 [167] 8, 1, 1) the sons dwelling with Ceyx are left unspecified except for Hyllus; they can only be the sons of Deianeira. It is reasonable to infer from Diod. Sic. that Hellenistic mythographers undertook to reconcile two independent stories, in which the sons of Deianeira were sheltered now by Ceyx, now by Aegimius.

In the tale of the Heracleidae Hyllus goes forth to meet his destiny as eponym of the tribe Hylleis and progenitor of nearly all the Dorian dynasties of the Peloponnesus, while the other sons of Deianeira disappear almost without trace. Yet the four sons, lumped together in a single line of the Hesiodic Catalogue — Ὑλλων καὶ Γλῆνον καὶ [Κτή]σιππον καὶ Ὀνειτήν — must once have been on roughly the same footing. Three of the four have strange unheroic names, and perhaps served as eponyms of some sort in Central Greece²⁵. A new fragment of the Great Eoëae shows the next generation still at home in Central Greece (fr. 251 a M-W): the two daughters of Hyllus marry the two sons of Butes after being reared in the house of Ceyx²⁶. Butes in this context can only be the Attic hero, a brother of Erechtheus, who himself passed as the father of Thespius (Diod. Sic. 4, 29, 2; Paus. 9, 29, 6); it is not surprising that Butes' sons and Thespius' daughters establish a connexion between Heracles and Attica, a region especially devoted to the hero. There is no reason to suppose that the poet's horizon hereabouts extends beyond Malis

²⁴ E. MEYER, *Geschichte des Altertums* 2, Stuttgart 1893, 251–252; ROBERT, *Gr. Heldens.* (n. 23 above) 652; M. P. NILSSON, *Cults, Myths, Oracles and Politics*, Lund 1951, 68–69; E. N. TIGERSTEDT, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* 1, Lund 1965, 35, 328 n. 166.

²⁵ Ὀνιτάδαι are attested as a priestly clan in fifth-century Miletus (Milet 3 no. 133 = SIG³ 57 = LSAM 50, lines 18, 31–32, 37).

²⁶ I restore line 2 as τὰς δ' αὖ Βουτίδαι [ἰέμενοι γαμέειν ἀφίχοντο]/Κήρυκος ποτὶ δῶμα οὐ τὰς δ' αὖ Βουτ(ε)ῖδαι [γαμέειν μεμαῶτες ἔχοντο].

and Attica²⁷; the heroes canvassed next, just before the papyrus breaks off, are native to Tanagra and Eleutherae. Thus in early days Hyllus and the other sons of Heracles and Deianeira had nothing to do with the Dorians; on the usual view they ended up in Malis, the realm of King Ceyx, where Heracles was widely worshipped²⁸; but another version brought them to King Aegimius instead. Subsequently Hyllus' Dorian-sounding name inspired or assisted the myth of the return of the Heracleidae, in which Ceyx, Aegimius, and the authentic Heracleian milieu are quickly left behind as Hyllus advances to centre stage amid the powers and conflicts of historical Greece. But in the new myth King Aegimius, unlike King Ceyx, was himself enrolled as a Dorian and provided with two sons of his own, Pamphylus and Dymas, to complement Hyllus as adoptive son. The reason for the different treatment accorded to Aegimius and Ceyx was doubtless that Aegimius and his realm were sufficiently remote and nebulous to be misrepresented as Dorian, whereas Ceyx was firmly situated in historical Malis.

Aegimius' realm is problematic. At Pind. Pyth. 5, 65–66 the Dorian invaders of Amyclae, descendants of Aegimius, are said to have come »rushing from Pindus«, Πινδόθεν ὀρνύμενοι; to Pindar's Siceliot patrons the name Pindus presumably signified the great mountain range. Diod. Sic. 4, 37, 3 places Aegimius in »Hestiaeotis«, the district of NW Thessaly adjacent to Pindus; here as at Apld. Bibl. 2 [154] 7, 7, 2 his unpleasant neighbours are the Lapiths of NE Thessaly. Yet Ephorus FGrHist 70 F 15 describes Aegimius as »king of the Dorians round Oeta«, i. e. the Dorians of historical Doris; and Str. 9, 4, 10, p. 427, expressly equates the legendary realm with Doris. So Aegimius rules now in NW Thessaly, now in Doris. How could such contradictory views arise? The Aegimius must have provided some bearings. Whatever name it gave to Aegimius' realm was afterwards sought both in NW Thessaly and in Doris. Strabo, drawing on Ephorus, tells us the name: for the very passage which places Aegimius in Doris also contains a disquisition on Pindus – alleged to be a village in Doris! The Aegimius will have situated the king ἐνὶ Πίνδῳ; the first exponents of the Dorian migration therefore brought the Dorians to Pindus (Hdt. 1, 56, 3; 8, 43)²⁹; Ephorus, telescoping the early stages of the migration, transplanted Aegimius to Doris and Pindus with him, making it a notional town in a notional tetrapolis (so Strabo). While living on Pindus, says Herodotus, the Dorian stock was called Μακεδνόν. This is a mythical name deriving from epic poetry; the adjective μακεδνός

²⁷ Paus. 4, 1, 1–2, 2, discoursing of »Polycaon« as the first king of Messenia, expressly says that the Great Eoeae did not connect the like-named son of Butes with Messenia.

²⁸ Y. BÉQUIGNON, *La Vallée du Spercheios des Origines au IV^e Siècle*, Paris 1930, 204–230.

²⁹ Hdt. 8, 43 says of the Peloponnesians ἐόντες οὗτοι πλὴν Ἑρμιονέων Δωρικόν τε καὶ Μακεδνόν ἔθνος, ἐξ Ἑρμιεοῦ τε καὶ Πίνδου καὶ τῆς Δρυοπίδος ὕστατα ὀρμηθέντες; i. e. they were »of Doric and Makednon stock, having come from Erineus and Pindus respectively, most

meaning »tall« or »taper« is used as a poetic epithet of trees (Od. 7, 106, etc.). The Μακεδνοί are therefore »Tall-as-trees-men« or »Taper-folk«, congeners of the Δρύορες or »Tree-men« occurring elsewhere in the Heracleian cycle. A people so named are apt denizens of Pindus and apt subjects of the pastoral king Αἰγίμιος, whose name evokes goatherds.

We have now identified the contribution which the Aegimius is likely to have made to the lore of the Dorian migration. It may be objected that on the view taken here Aegimius becomes a mere doubleganger of Ceyx: what occasion could he offer for an epic poem of at least two books? The similarities are indeed extensive. A good-hearted rustic king who entertains Heracles and adopts his children – such was Ceyx, and such was Aegimius too. It is likely enough that in the epic poem as in later accounts Heracles succoured Aegimius against wicked neighbours; this motif is also attached to Ceyx. Ceyx' neighbours were the Dryopians; according to a famous story told in some epic poem, the source of Bacchyl. fr. 4, Heracles expelled these trouble-makers during a visit to Ceyx³⁰. Aegimius' neighbours were the Lapiths; but whereas the Dryopians, so far as we can see, always belonged to the Heracleian cycle, the Lapiths did not; their connexion with Heracles and Aegimius is plainly secondary³¹. Ceyx and Trachis, moreover, have a central place in the life of Heracles, in marked contrast to Aegimius and his shadowy realm; the stories about Heracles and Ceyx are relatively old. On this showing it would not be far-fetched to conjecture that the poet of the Aegimius created Aegimius and the »Taper-folk« of Pindus, and invested the hero with features largely borrowed from Ceyx, because he could be made to serve a momentary purpose that had more to do with Heracles himself. But this is conjecture only, and nothing depends upon it here. For whether or not Aegimius was really as insubstantial as he appears to our eyes, all the evidence indicates that the most constant and significant fact about him was his adopting the children of Heracles and Deianeira.

When Heracles commended his children to Aegimius, he must have spoken of their mother Deianeira. Now a leading episode in Heracles' cata-basis was his encounter with the dead Meleager, whose misfortune moved Heracles to engage to marry Meleager's sister Deianeira. The encounter and the promise are full of pathos and irony, for it was through Deianeira that Heracles became another Meleager – the greatest hero of his day, cut off in his

recently from Dryopis/Doris« (unless the words καὶ τῆς Δρυοπίδος ὕστατα are a gloss). In treating the town of Erineus as representative of Doris Hdt. agrees with Tyrtaeus fr. 2, 14.

³⁰ W. S. BARRETT, *Hermes* 82, 1954, 421–444; MERKELBACH and WEST, *RhM* 108, 1965, 302–303.

³¹ To represent the Lapiths as difficult neighbours was traditional: they attacked and expelled the Centaurs (Il. 2, 744; Str. 9, 5, 19, pp. 439–440), the Perrhaebians (Str. *l. c.*), and the Aenianians (Str. 9, 5, 22, p. 442; Plut. *Quaest. Gr.* 13, p. 293 F; 26, p. 297 B).

prime by a woman's hand. Here then was the most thrilling moment in Heracles' catabasis (as echoes in later literature amply testify), and it was a moment which Heracles was bound to recall as, no doubt foreseeing death, he gave his children into the care of Aegimius. Thus a poem entitled Aegimius had good reason to refer to Heracles' catabasis. If, as suggested above, the main transaction of this poem was Heracles' entrusting his children to Aegimius, then it becomes very likely that Heracles dwelt at length on his catabasis.

4. *The fragments of the Aegimius*

Thus far we have been guided by external evidence concerning Cercops and Aegimius; now we come to the attested fragments ([Hes.] frs. 294 – 301 M-W). This is the proper order of business, since eight »fragments« excerpted for odd purposes and comprising only eight and a half lines of direct quotation can tell us very little about a poem which ran to at least two books. The fragments are both oddly assorted and remote from Aegimius. Half of them deal with Argive myths – with Hera's sending the monster Argus to guard Io (fr. 294 M-W), with Zeus' naming the island of Euboea after Io's cow-shape (fr. 296 M-W), with the lineage Amyone – Nauplius ~ Hesione (fr. 297 M-W), and with the Graeae (fr. 295 M-W)³², who are spoken of in the fifth century as receiving a visit from Io (Aesch. PV 793 – 797) as well as from Perseus (cf. Cratinus fr. 309 KOCK). Two other Hesiodic fragments referring to Io were formerly lumped with these, but are now more reasonably ascribed to the Catalogue (frs. 124, 126 M-W)³³. It remains likely, however, and is still accepted by critics and editors, that Io's sufferings and posterity form the thread connecting frs. 294 – 297 M-W. No one has yet been able to connect Io with Aegimius³⁴. But if the poem was mainly a first-person account of Heracles' catabasis, Io will be very much in place.

An epic catabasis normally, perhaps invariably, contained a pageant of fair women. Odysseus set the fashion by naming and describing fourteen famous heroines out of a much larger number whom he interviewed beside the pit of blood (Od. 11, 225 – 330; 385 – 386). Polygnotus' huge mural painting

³² Fr. 295 M-W, from Phld. De Piet., depends on SCHÖBER's deciphering and suppletion of the papyrus as [ὁ τὸν Αἰγί]/μιον ποι[ήσας κτλ.

³³ SCHWARTZ, Pseudo-Hesiodica (n. 13 above) 71 – 74; fr. 233 M-W, »Hesiod's« account of Dorian tripartition as cited by Apollonius on Il. 2, 655, has also been detached from the Aegimius.

³⁴ SEVERYNS, MusB 30, 1926, 125, holds that within the Geste mythique the Aegimius provided a »transition« from the Danaids to the Heracleian cycle. This was a long transition; and SEVERYNS does not suggest how it might have been effected by an epic poet deploying the normal resources of his art.

of the underworld showed about as many heroines as heroes, including most of those named by Odysseus, and mostly grouped together on one side (Paus. 10, 28 – 31). It is safe to infer that a similar selection of heroines appeared in the catabasis of the epic *Nosti*, for Pausanias, our witness to this catabasis (10, 28, 7), also says that the *Nosti* spoke of the death of Maera (10, 30, 5), who was placed in the underworld by Polygnotus, and by Homer before him (Od. 11, 326). Virgil's briefer catalogue begins with Homeric names, passes to others presumably of Hellenistic origin, and soon leads to Dido (Aen. 6, 440 – 476). This perfunctory treatment shows that the pageant was a commonplace; so do the passing allusions in Roman elegy and elsewhere. If Heracles' catabasis was true to type, it contained such a pageant. The catabasis known to Aristophanes and his audience seemingly did, since the underworld sights and sounds which Heracles rehearses to Dionysus include »myrtle-groves and happy bands of men and women« (Ar. Ran. 156 – 157); it happens that Virgil's heroines frequent myrtle-groves (Aen. 6, 443). True, the Aristophanic Heracles immediately adds, »and a great clapping of hands«, and after sharing Dionysus' perplexity we hear the surprising news that these are initiates in the Eleusinian Mysteries (Ran. 158), soon to be deployed on the stage; but of course this is Aristophanes' adaptation of the pageant of heroines (and of the muster of heroes as well), for it is inconceivable that real-life *mystae* were any part of an epic catabasis (more of this in Section 5 below).

From Homer to Virgil and beyond the heroines of the underworld, like heroines in general, are remarkable for their love affairs. In the *Odyssey* most of the heroines treated at length were visited by gods – Tyro and Iphimedeia by Poseidon, Antiope and Alcmene by Zeus. Polygnotus kept Tyro and Iphimedeia and added Auge and Callisto, visited by Heracles and Zeus respectively (Paus. 10, 28, 8; 31, 10); like Io, Callisto was transformed by a jealous goddess into her familiar animal, and Polygnotus evoked the transformation by seating Callisto on a bearskin. Homer had set a precedent of sorts in describing how Poseidon turned into the River Enipeus in order to seduce Tyro (Od. 11, 238 – 253). Of course other heroines in the epic underworld had liaisons of a very different kind (e.g. Phaedra, Procris, Eriphyle), and later poets introduced both faithful wives like Alcestis and Laodameia and bizarre cases like Caeneus and Pasiphae; yet it would not be misleading to say that in the Archaic period the most constant figure in the pageant, from Tyro at the beginning of Homer's account down to Callisto in Polygnotus' painting, was the heroine overpowered by a god. Clearly Io is at home in such company. She was moreover the premier heroine of Argos (as Tyro was of Thessaly) and therefore of special interest to Heracles, her descendant (cf. Aesch. PV 871); an encounter between Heracles and Io might be nearly as moving as the encounter between Odysseus and Anticleia which precedes the pageant of heroines in the *Odyssey* (11, 84 – 89; 152 – 225).

It may be objected that if Heracles met Io during his catabasis, later literature ought to contain some allusion to the meeting or at any rate to Io's presence in the underworld. This objection loses its force when we remember that by the mid fifth century Io and Epaphus were generally identified with Isis and Apis³⁵; thereafter Io could not appear in the pageant of heroines³⁶. It is possible that a lost work of Classical sculpture bore witness to her place in the underworld. As we saw, Callisto was conspicuous in Polygnotus' painting. On the Acropolis of Athens Pausanias saw statues of Io and Callisto by Deinomenes, which put him in mind of their parallel misfortunes (1, 25, 1). It is likely, though not expressly stated, that the statues formed a group, and if so, the setting must be the underworld³⁷.

Of the four Aegimius fragments mentioned above, at least one refers to the posterity of Io – to Nauplius son of Amydone. The fragment about the Graeae may refer to Perseus as a descendant of Io if it does not refer to Io herself. Such references are easily accommodated in Heracles' catabasis. If Heracles spoke of meeting Io in the underworld, it seems reasonable that he should also speak of the generations intervening between Io and himself. Any pageant of heroines led into genealogy; Odysseus gave full particulars of the offspring of several heroines, especially of Tyro and Chloris (Od. 11, 255 – 259; 285 – 297), and of Chloris' daughter Pero he related a separate episode. Heracles doubtless saw many heroines besides Io³⁸, and another fragment of the Aegimius may well be a genealogical detail attached to one of them. This is fr. 299 M-W, about Phrixus' arriving safe in Colchis³⁹. Phrixus is a Minyan, the son of Athamas; and to judge from the Odyssey and Polygnotus' painting, the largest and most colourful contingent in the pageant of heroines was al-

³⁵ The equation Epaphus/Apis at Bacchyl. 19, 39 – 44, Aesch. PV 850 – 851 and Hdt. 2, 38, 1; 153; 3, 27, 1; 28, 2, implies the equation Io/Isis, even though Bacchylides and Aeschylus say nothing about it and Herodotus hedges (2, 41, 2).

³⁶ Accordingly we expect no mention of Io in Apld.' version of the catabasis; the very full account of Io elsewhere in Apld. (Bibl. 2 [5 – 9] 1, 3) ends with the statement that Io is called Isis in Egypt.

³⁷ Another mythical subject of Deinomenes was Protesilaus (Pliny, HN 34, 76), likewise a stock figure in the underworld, to judge from Polygnotus' painting (Paus. 10, 30, 3) and from the story of his resurrection, treated and perhaps invented by Euripides (TGF² pp. 563 – 567; Suppl. ad. B. SNELL, Hildesheim 1964, p. 10).

³⁸ One of Polygnotus' heroines, shown next to Iphimedeia, was Auge (Paus. 10, 28, 8), who in the earliest known account of her expatriation was handed over to Nauplius (so Soph. Aleadae; [Hes.] fr. 165 M-W does not show how she reached Mysia). It is thus conceivable that in the Aegimius Nauplius went with Auge, not with Io.

³⁹ Heracles' service with the Argonauts (first attested in the Wedding of Ceyx, [Hes.] frs. 263 – 264 M-W; cf. MERKELBACH and WEST, RhM 108, 1965, 301 – 302) and Heracles' rescue of Athamas (treated in Soph. Athamas) provide stepping stones from Heracles to Phrixus, but not from them to the Aegimius.

ways the Minyan: Tyro, Chloris, Pero, Iphimedeia, and Clymene are all common to both Homer and Polygnotus⁴⁰. The male Minyans named by Homer as kin to the heroines include, if not Phrixus himself, at least his uncles Salmo-neus and Cretheus and a great many cousins. It follows that Phrixus, together with the adventure for which he was solely known, would be very naturally mentioned in an epic catabasis.

Fr. 298 M-W, transmitted by Plutarch and Athenaeus, concerns Theseus' desertion of Ariadne, and might have come at either of two places: Heracles very likely saw Ariadne in the pageant of heroines, and he certainly met and delivered Theseus, confined with Peirithous in the underworld. The fragment puts the desertion in a particularly bad light. Theseus »broke his vows to Ariadne« (so Ath. 13, 4, 557a), »because fierce desire for Aegle of Panopeus oppressed him« (so the hexameter quoted by Plut. Thes. 20, 1 – 2). Both Plutarch and Athenaeus make it seem likely that the notice of the desertion in the Aegimius was no part of an extended account of Theseus, but rather a brief episode: whereas Athenaeus cites »Hesiod« (fr. 147 M-W) for both Hippe and Aegle as sweethearts of Theseus, he cites Cercops for Aegle alone, and specifically for her displacing Ariadne; Plutarch says that Hereas of Megara FGrHist 486 F 1 accused Peisistratus of expunging the verse in question, as if it were the principal source of offence⁴¹. By every indication, then, the notice would suit Heracles' catabasis. Not only was Ariadne a stock figure in the pageant, but the circumstances of the desertion were likely to be canvassed in this context, as we see from Od. 11, 321 – 325 and Paus. 10, 29, 3 – 4. Yet it might perhaps be held that Ariadne is not wanted in Heracles' catabasis precisely because Heracles encountered Theseus and doubtless held converse with him (Apld. Bibl. 2 [124] 5, 12, 5 – 6; cf. Epit. 1, 24). If so, the notice of the desertion would do just as well here; the desertion was not of course the immediate cause of Theseus' punishment in the underworld, but belonged to the pattern of conduct which brought Theseus and Peirithous to grief.

Some of the fragments suit a catabasis only too well, and we can imagine more than one context. This is true, for example, of fr. 297 M-W, concerning Nauplius. As already said, Nauplius might be mentioned during the pageant of heroines, either as a descendant of Io or as the warder of Auge. But he might equally appear in his own right among the heroes of the underworld, for he has a fairly large role in Lucian's account of the Island of the Blest at

⁴⁰ It would be surprising if Minyan heroines were neglected in the catabasis of the Minyad, though none happens to be mentioned in the few surviving fragments.

⁴¹ It is quite possible that Athenian readers preferred their Aegimius without the line about Aegle; the list of Theseus' sweethearts which Athenaeus quotes from Philochorus FGrHist 328 F 10 does not include Aegle (nor yet Hippe). But to detect the hand of Peisistratus was fanciful (cf. JACOBY at FGrHist IIIb Komm. [Noten] 234 n. 10).

Ver. Hist. 2, 29, 31, 32⁴². Moreover, Nauplius' son Palamedes was undoubtedly a stock figure of the underworld, rendered by Polygnotus (Paus. 10, 31, 1–2) and by a vase-painter of c. 440 (New York 08, 258, 21 = ARV² 1086, 1); and the context of the Aegimius fragment (at Apld. Bibl. 2 [23] 1, 5, 13–14) makes it likely that the poem spoke of Palamedes as well as his father. The Graeae of fr. 295 M-W, again, would come in just as well during Heracles' encounter with the Gorgon Medusa; the details of this episode given by Apld. (Bibl. 2 [123] 5, 12, 3–4) – the name Medusa for the Gorgon, and Heracles' delusion that she was »alive« – presuppose and perhaps demand the story of Perseus.

Peleus, Thetis, and Achilles also figured in the Aegimius. Fr. 300 M-W describes how Achilles narrowly escaped death as a child: Thetis pitched her children into a cauldron of water to see if they were mortal, and »many« – probably six – died in the experiment before Peleus intervened to save Achilles⁴³. Now the Aegimius as a poem set in the time of Heracles could have little to say about the mature and doomed Achilles of the Trojan War. On the usual reckoning Heracles and Peleus were contemporary, so that the birth and childhood of Achilles, but not much more, might fall within the purview of the Aegimius. Accordingly we must suspect that when the Aegimius told of Achilles' narrow escape, as if to live a normal span and to succour and succeed his vulnerable father, the tale did not lack irony; for nothing was better known than Achilles' untimely death and Peleus' bereavement and destitution, and yet these things could not be known to Heracles or Aegimius. It may have been Heracles himself who told the tale. Although later mythography does not associate Heracles and Peleus, the fifth century knew them well as comrades in arms against Troy and against the Amazons (Pind. fr. 172; Eur. Andr. 796–801). It is easy to imagine moments in Heracles' catabasis when the tale would serve as a caution or a consolation, tinged with the bitter irony of the poet who contrived the meeting of Heracles and Meleager.

The last fragment of the Aegimius, 301 M-W, is so plainly apt to Heracles' catabasis that little comment is required. Nicander of Thyateira as reported by Ath. 11, 109, 503 c–d, remarked that the substantive ψυκτήρια (from ψύχω »cool«) could denote sacred groves, τοὺς ἁλσώδεις καὶ συσκίους τόπους

⁴² Admittedly Lucian's account is not satisfactory evidence by itself; besides known denizens of the underworld Lucian brings on others who are simply famous figures of the past. Nauplius also appeared in the epic Nosti (fr. 1 KINKEL, cited together with Cercops and »the tragedians« by Apld. Bibl. 2 [23] 1, 5, 14), but although this poem contained a catabasis, there were other opportunities to mention Nauplius (the evidence is doubtful, and opinion divided, as to whether Nauplius the wrecker goes back to the Nosti).

⁴³ According to Lycophr. Alex. 178–179 and later sources (J. FRAZER, Apld., London 1921, 2, 69 n. 4) Achilles as sole survivor was the seventh son; this count very likely derives from the Aegimius.

τοὺς τοῖς θεοῖς ἀνειμένους, and he culled several poetic instances including a line of the Aegimius: ἐνθα ποτ' ἔσται ἐμὸν ψυχτήριον, ὄρχαμε λαῶν. That Heracles here addresses King Aegimius is an obvious conjecture, made long ago. Since the abode of the blest in the underworld very commonly features, along with sunny meadows, cool shady groves (e. g. Pind. frs. 129, 131 a; Ar. Ran. 156; 445; Verg. Aen. 6, 658, 673, 679, 703 – 705), it is tempting to infer that Heracles looks forward to joining his peers in a setting which he visited during the catabasis. Well might he voice this expectation at the moment when he entrusted his children to the care of Aegimius – presumably foreseeing for himself danger or suffering or death.

So much for the eight attested fragments of the Aegimius. It would be wrong to say, by way of summing up, that they point unmistakably to Heracles' catabasis. On the contrary, these miserable scraps (like the scraps of so many epics and tragedies on subjects far better known) point nowhere. The author Cercops and the character Aegimius supply the real clues to the content of the poem, and the clues are not belied by the fragments. This is a very modest result, but nonetheless worthwhile; for in previous discussion of the Aegimius the fragments have proved utterly bewildering. In the context of Heracles' catabasis they are not bewildering at all.

5. *The catabasis theme and Heracles' initiation*

In treating the fragments of the Aegimius I have assumed that the poem about Heracles' catabasis contained at least one conventional feature, a pageant of heroines, which is not directly attested. I shall now try to justify this assumption and to explain what sort of catabasis I attribute to Cercops of Miletus. The outline offered in Section 1 was taken mainly from Apld. Bibl. 2 [122 – 126] 5, 12. How safe a guide is Apld.? Here as in other passages where he reproduces early poems Apld. no doubt relies, directly or indirectly, on a Hellenistic hypothesis or précis of the work in question⁴⁴. Some of Apld.' hypotheses are very full, but this is not, and it is clear that Apld. or an intermediary source has omitted a good deal while adapting the hypothesis to the purposes of a handbook. After mention of Meleager and Medusa we hear about Heracles' wild reaction to Medusa, but his colloquy with Meleager, including

⁴⁴ C. WENDEL, RE 16, 2, 1935, 1353 – 1354, 1365 – 1366, s. Mythographie. M. VAN DER VALK, REG 71, 1958, 100 – 168, argues that the Bibliotheca draws directly on such early writers as Pherecydes, Acusilaus, and Hellanicus; his treatment, very unconvincing in my opinion, bears mainly on parts of the Bibliotheca which others would trace to compendiums rather than hypotheses; but on p. 129 VAN DER VALK ascribes Heracles' catabasis to Pherecydes – for no better reasons than that he has already ascribed the tenth and eleventh labours to Pherecydes, and that Heracles' initiation in the Mysteries looks like »local patriotism« on the part of Pherecydes the Athenian.

the important topic of Deianeira, has been dropped. Apld. gives us only concrete details, and of these only the most outstanding: Heracles cannot have passed through the underworld without meeting and recognizing far more figures than Apld. names. One large omission can still be detected. When Heracles offered blood to the spirits, it was perhaps only as a kindness to these wan creatures, rather than as a precondition of their speaking, for Meleager at least had spoken to him before⁴⁵; but in any case the gesture must have been followed by some result – by spirits jostling to drink the blood, and at the same time greeting Heracles. Apld. however goes on at once to more exciting feats – to the wrestling match with Menoeteus and then to the grappling of Cerberus. The blood-letting is the place for the pageant of heroines, if the poet took account of the Homeric model. As soon as Teiresias and Anticleia have had their say, the heroines all come swarming to the pit of blood, so that Odysseus is obliged to fend them off with his sword (Od. 11, 225 – 234).

A red-figure calyx crater of c. 440 B. C. may be relevant here (New York 08, 258, 21 = ARV² 1086, 1)⁴⁶. The scenes on the crater are disposed in two friezes, of which the lower shows the downfall of Typhon and Tityus. All the figures in the upper frieze, except those above the handles, belong to the underworld (all are named). Side A shows Heracles facing Peirithous and Theseus, seated together on the magic rock which held them fast; on either side are Hades and Hermes; further off is Meleager. This scene is plainly indebted to our poem. Side B shows Elpenor, Ajax, and Palamedes standing before Persephone on her throne. Is our poem again in view? It must be admitted that Palamedes no less than Ajax and Elpenor was certainly known as a denizen of the underworld outside of Heracles' catabasis: Polygnotus depicted Ajax, Palamedes, and Thersites playing dice together, and the lesser Ajax looking on (Paus. 10, 31, 1 – 2); Elpenor was included elsewhere (Paus. 10, 29, 8). Both Polygnotus and the crater may therefore reflect another epic catabasis. But it is just as easy to suppose that Heracles' catabasis likewise featured these three heroes and is the sole inspiration behind the underworld scenes on the crater⁴⁷.

At all events Apld.' narrative omits a good deal, and nothing is likelier to have been omitted than the various heroes and heroines whom Heracles merely saw and addressed, for in such a brief summary why retail a pointless string of names? The incompleteness of Apld.' account raises a different question.

⁴⁵ LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 218, thinks that here as in the *Odyssey* the blood is needed to make the spirits talk, and this will be right if Meleager belongs to a special category or is simply a convenient exception.

⁴⁶ Cf. V. FELTEN, *Attische Unterweltdarstellungen des VI. und V. Jh. v. Chr.*, Munich 1975, pp. 50 – 53, 83 – 84, figs. 27 – 28.

⁴⁷ It is also possible that the Theban heroes of Aen. 6, 479 – 480 were taken from Heracles' catabasis (NORDEN, *Aeneis* VI³ [n. 1 above] 15, 258; LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 222 n. 31).

In Aristophanes' mock catabasis we see the blessed dead singing and dancing to the music of flutes, and so will they do forever, in blossomy groves and flowery meadows under a perpetual sun (Ran. 154–157, 313–459). Elsewhere sinners lie darkling in mud and ordure (145–151, 273–276), and we also hear of torments inflicted by frightful monsters (470–478). As said before, to represent the blessed dead specifically and solely as Eleusinian initiates (with lively memories of contemporary Athens) was very likely Aristophanes' own design; but perhaps his model might have managed things as Virgil does in the *Aeneid*, where a subdivision of the blessed dead sing and dance while »the Thracian priest in his long robe« gives them the tune (6, 644–647). The question, in the most general terms, is whether the underworld visited by Heracles, or a part of it, had a distinctly moral conformation, with the blessed dead enjoying their reward in circumstances which suggested a previous life of purity or devotion.

The prevailing view is that the underworld of Heracles' catabasis was of this kind⁴⁸. The view is founded on Aristophanes and on the undoubted fact of Heracles' initiation by Eumolpus, and it leads to the further conjecture that the poem went under the name of Musaeus, or even of Eumolpus or Orpheus. If we identify the poem with the Aegimius of Cercops, this entails no conclusion about the moral or doctrinal aspect of the poem. It would not do to argue that because the Orphic Catabasis was fathered on Cercops and Prodicus, the Aegimius and the Minyad must have squared with Orphic teaching; the catabasis theme was sufficient common ground for such mechanical classifying. As an Ionian poet concerned with Heracles Cercops of Miletus resembles Creophylus of Samos, and like him prefers an Ionian setting for myths commonly located elsewhere; Euboea was where Creophylus put Eurytus and Oechalia (fr. 2 KINKEL), and also where Cercops placed an important stage, possibly the terminus, of Io's wanderings (fr. 296 M–W). Eleusis had probably been familiar to Milesians since the early Archaic period⁴⁹. So Cercops' authorship is perhaps compatible with any view of the contents of the poem, though our minds might be easier if the underworld of Heracles' catabasis proved broadly similar to the conventional underworld of Ionian epic.

Can we suppose that Apld. or a previous source has omitted from the summary of Heracles' catabasis the blessed dead and also sinners more various and typical than Theseus, Peirithous, and Ascalaphus? These are distinctive and colourful elements; and yet perhaps their omission might be explained

⁴⁸ LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 220–221, 224–225; GRAF, *Eleusis* (n. 1 above) 142–144. NORDEN, however, plainly thought that Heracles visited the conventional epic underworld.

⁴⁹ Herodotus' notice of the shrine of Eleusinian Demeter on Mycale, reputedly coeval with Miletus itself as an Athenian foundation (9, 97), is of doubtful value. It is more to the point to remember that throughout the seventh century Miletus and Megara were partners in Pontic trade and settlement, and that an old processional way led from Megara to Eleusis (Paus. 1, 39, 1).

somehow. The trouble is that the remaining elements, all more or less Homeric, do not accord with a moral dispensation. On entering the underworld Heracles meets an innumerable rustling crowd of spirits, including Meleager; later he gives them blood to drink; meanwhile he meets the great offenders Theseus, Peirithous, and Ascalaphus, who are held in durance but not actively tormented. The blessed dead, if they existed here, must have been distinct from both the spirits in general and from the mighty hero Meleager; and the sinners, if they existed here, must have been placed apart from Theseus, Peirithous, and Ascalaphus. Any such arrangement is very hard to credit. Virgil, who differentiates several classes and regions, accordingly suppresses the vast Homeric multitude of thirsty spirits; in this he did not follow the catabasis of Heracles, as we see from Apld.

If the blessed dead and their opposite numbers were not omitted by Apld., can they have been added by Aristophanes? The answer is yes, for they were added by Polygnotus to his version of the underworld (Paus. 10, 28–31). Most of his figures Polygnotus took from epic accounts, including the great mythical sinners whom he placed on either side of the main concourse of heroes and heroines; but to these he added the folk-tale figure of Indolence plaiting his rope and the lay figures of a father-beater and a temple-robber undergoing punishment, and of several people, old and young, male and female, carrying water in broken pitchers; these last were labelled as the uninitiated. On one side of the painting, near some of these unfortunates, Polygnotus depicted the blessed dead in the persons of Tellis and Cleoboea, a man and maiden who were identified as initiates in the mysteries of Demeter on Thasos; they appeared as passengers in Charon's skiff, doubtless because initiates enjoying a blissful afterlife could not feasibly be juxtaposed with heroes and heroines in the underworld proper. Polygnotus' anonymous sinners and uninitiated did not come from Heracles' catabasis, nor yet Tellis and Cleoboea; and therefore Aristophanes' sinners (who coincide with Polygnotus' in the case of the father-beater at Ran. 149–150, 274) and initiates need not have come from this source.

It has indeed been argued that Eleusinian initiates figured very prominently in the epic poem: Heracles' initiation and the revel of initiates in the underworld would naturally be conjoined, the argument runs, and indeed must have been conjoined in the common source of Aristophanes and Apld., inasmuch as Aristophanes mentions only the revel and Apld. only the initiation; Apld. probably »contaminates« two accounts of Heracles' catabasis, the one conventional, the other promoting Eleusinian doctrine⁵⁰. To reason thus is to in-

⁵⁰ GRAF, *Eleusis* (n. 1 above) 145–146. LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 220, assumes that the epic poem known to Aristophanes showed »the blessed«, but leaves it open whether these were wholly or partly »initiates«.

vite some strange consequences. In the usual tradition Eumolpus (or more exactly Eumolpus III, according to Andron FGrHist 10 F 13) was the founder of the Mysteries, and the new lyric fragment (Pind. fr. dub. 346) makes it practically certain that the epic poem spoke of Eumolpus as instituting the mysteries among the Eleusinians, and of Heracles as the first non-Eleusinian to be initiated. If Heracles on descending to the underworld found a host of initiates already enjoying their reward, Eumolpus' ministry was remarkably fast and opportune.

Eleusinian initiates, then, are not wanted in Heracles' catabasis, after Heracles himself has been presented as the archetypal initiate. And both the summary of Heracles' catabasis in Apld. and the adaptation in Aristophanes are much more easily understood if the original poem showed a conventional epic underworld without separate categories of the blessed dead and their opposite numbers. In the sixth century, and probably much later too, initiation at Eleusis need not be bound up with any special doctrine about the conformation of the underworld; the initiate hoped for a better life hereafter, but better only than the prevailing view, whatever that might be; the Mysteries allow of almost any eschatology but presuppose none.

We still ask why the poet feigned that Heracles was initiated by Eumolpus before descending to the underworld. Apld. and the lyric fragment both attest this sequence of events, and at Eur. HF 613 Heracles says that he succeeded in the task of fetching Cerberus because of his initiation. It has been suggested that the initiation endeared Heracles to Persephone and Pluto and assured him of a kindly reception⁵¹. The suggestion sounds logical, and some later sources do seem to have regarded Heracles' initiation in this light, and also as a moral tonic; but it is not demonstrable or likely that these sources depend on our poem⁵². So far as the poem is concerned, Apld.' summary makes against the suggestion. When Heracles set about releasing Theseus, Peirithous, and Ascalaphus, when he slaughtered one of Pluto's cattle for its blood, when he wrestled and injured the herdsman Menoetes, he was acting like himself, and not like a pious visitor who relied upon the favour of Persephone and Pluto. Persephone interceded for Menoetes, and Pluto laid down the hard conditions for Heracles' contest with Cerberus; these transactions do not imply any

⁵¹ LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 212–213, 220–221, 225.

⁵² At Eur. HF 613 Heracles says that initiation gave him the confidence he needed to overcome Cerberus; but Euripides and his audience could put this construction on the matter without any warrant from the Archaic poem. According to Diod. Sic. 4, 26, 1 Heracles was able to release Theseus »because Core showed him favour«, doubtless in consequence of his initiation; but Diodorus' account has been filtered through Hellenistic mythography. Timaeus, FGrHist 566 F 102, perhaps means to turn the tables on the usual view of Heracles' initiation by asserting that in 415 Heracles helped the Syracusans as worshippers of Core and opposed the Athenians as allies of the Segestans, *alias* the Trojans.

fondness on either side. After showing Cerberus to Eurystheus Heracles took him back again to the underworld, whether it was that he had promised to do so, or that Cerberus looked to be a nuisance; in any case the hell-hound belongs in hell, and Heracles' punctilio is not an act of piety. In short, Apld.' summary does not support the view that in the epic poem Heracles enjoyed a special relationship with Persephone and Pluto⁵³.

It has also been asserted that Eumolpus was Heracles' preceptor in the catabasis, telling him what to expect and what to do, and in this quality formed the model for Virgil's Sibyl⁵⁴. This notion is belied by everything we know of the Archaic poem. Heracles hardly needed Eumolpus' advice, since he was conducted down to the underworld by Hermes, who also allayed his fear of the phantom Medusa at the outset; as Aeneas' guide the Sibyl performs a like service (Aen. 6, 290 – 294), and it has long been recognized that Virgil took Hermes as his model. True, Hermes may have soon withdrawn, leaving Heracles to go forward on his own, for we subsequently see him wilful and rough as ever⁵⁵; but such conduct (very unlike Aeneas') also suggests that he was not bound by any instructions of Eumolpus. No doubt it might be said that Heracles' purification and initiation by Eumolpus correspond in a general way to the preliminaries staged by the Sibyl, but for these Virgil certainly drew on other sources than Eleusinian ritual. His Sibyl has many antecedents, from Homer's Circe to the necromantic priests who were perhaps especially in vogue in Virgil's own day; Eumolpus' contribution was minimal or even nil.

I think that Heracles' initiation is to be explained rather differently. According to Apollodorus Heracles sought out Eumolpus at Eleusis »because he wished to be initiated in the Mysteries«, βουλόμενος μυηθῆναι; Eumolpus first purified him of the murder of the Centaurs, and then conducted the initiation. Elsewhere Eumolpus is described as the founder of the Mysteries; as we have seen, it is very likely that he was so described in the lyric fragment

⁵³ Nor does Virgil's brief reference at Aen. 6, 392 – 397: Charon complains of Heracles' violent intrusion, and puts him on a footing with Theseus and Peirithous. But since these lines may echo the Orphic Catabasis which Virgil had before him, their evidence is doubtful. No conclusion can be drawn from Aristophanes' play, where Heracles is favourably remembered by some underworld denizens, but not by others.

⁵⁴ LLOYD-JONES, *Maia* 19, 1967, 224 – 226. That the Sibyl's role in the underworld reflects the role of the mystagogue in the mysteries was suggested to NORDEN not by WILAMOWITZ, as LLOYD-JONES says, but by RICHARD WÜNSCH (NORDEN, *Aeneis* VI³ [n. 1 above] 154). In truth these roles were sometimes blended in actual practice: prophecy, initiation, and a simulated catabasis went together at the oracle of Clarian Apollo, which flourished under the early Empire.

⁵⁵ The scene on the fragmentary amphora of Reggio which illustrates our poem (n. 4 above) shows Athena striding in front of Heracles and Cerberus, but Athena as patron of Heracles is a mere pictorial element. Hermes is not to hand, unless a foot striding behind Heracles belongs to him; if so, he too was a pictorial element repeated from other renderings of the Cerberus adventure.

which draws on our catabasis (Pind. fr. dub. 346, 3 – 7). Thereafter the fragment says that Eumolpus »gave« something, doubtless the privilege of initiation, »to Heracles first«, but perhaps only as the first outsider, not as the first of all. If we take Apld. at his word, mysteries existed beforehand and drew Heracles to Eleusis. Yet Heracles' requirements might well lead to the establishment of the standard program of initiation that preceded the ultimate secret spectacle. If so, the story of Heracles' initiation was an αἵτιον – the mythical event which was supposedly commemorated ever after in ritual. There could of course be no explicit αἵτιον for the secret spectacle; but all the preliminary steps would naturally be viewed, like any other Greek rite, as the re-enactment of a single great occasion in the past. Such an occasion is evoked in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter; most scholars would agree that some elements of the myth here related, like Demeter's sitting on a fleece-covered stool, can only be understood as a ritual αἵτιον. But Eumolpus' reputation as the founder of the Mysteries is enough to show that the rape of Persephone did not always pass current as a full and sufficient αἵτιον.

Eumolpus purified Heracles before admitting him to the Mysteries. The relationship between purification rites and the program of initiation is a subject of long-standing controversy. Central to the controversy is Heracles' experience at Eleusis, which was represented in a Hellenistic relief sculpture known from a number of Roman copies, above all the Torre Nova ossuary and the Lovatelli urn⁵⁶. These famous works show Heracles caught up in some ritual business which unfolds in three stages: a pig is slaughtered, Heracles is veiled and seated on a fleece-covered stool, and a sacred *cista* or basket is covered and guarded by the Eleusinian deities. In the opinion of many critics the first and second stages refer to a purification rite, perhaps the Lesser Mysteries at Agrae, which was separate from the standard program of initiation⁵⁷. Yet we have it on the best of evidence that the pig-slaughter, the veiling and seating of the candidate, and the sacred *cista* all formed important stages of the standard program⁵⁸. Accordingly I am prepared to believe that the scenes with Heracles represent the standard program, and that this program

⁵⁶ See e. g. G. E. MYLONAS, *Eleusis and the Eleusinian Mysteries*, Princeton 1961, pls. 83 (Lovatelli urn) and 84 (Torre Nova ossuary).

⁵⁷ The Lesser Mysteries at Agrae were linked with the Greater at Eleusis by the beginning of the fifth century (LSCG Suppl. 1 A, lines 6 – 7, 11 – 13), and as we might expect, Heracles in turn was linked with the Lesser Mysteries; we are told that he was purified at Agrae (Diod. Sic. 4, 14, 3), or else that he was initiated there first because he was not an Athenian citizen (schol. Ar. Plut. 845, 1013); a votive relief of the third century B.C. showing Heracles, Hermes, and a priest was found in the bed of the Ilissus (Athens, NM 1778; see J. TRAVLOS, *A Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Athens*, New York 1971, fig. 388). For us the question is whether the Archaic poem took account of the Mysteries at Agrae; that it did seems most unlikely.

⁵⁸ W. BURKERT, *Homo necans*, Berlin 1972, 283 – 302.

was held to commemorate the purification of Heracles on the obvious grounds that pigs and fleeces were commonly used for purification.

It seems clear that the purification which Eumolpus insisted on was a formal step without any real significance for Heracles' well-being. The purification followed the killing of the Centaurs (Apld. Bibl. 2 [122] 5, 12, 1; *cf.* Diod. Sic. 4, 14, 3). This episode, concomitant with the capture of the Erymanthian boar, is told with some variation of detail⁵⁹, but never so as to suggest that Heracles was very culpable. In our poem the killing of the Centaurs would not be described at length, but merely referred to as a recent event. When in Aristophanes' play Heracles is summoned to give directions to the underworld, he complains that the knocking on the door is as violent as the Centaurs (Ran. 38 – 39); this is probably a reminiscence of the connexion in our poem. Otherwise the connexion has left no definite trace in subsequent accounts of Heracles⁶⁰; it went unregarded by Hellenistic mythographers, for they present the capture of the boar, together with the killing of the Centaurs, as the third or fourth labour (Diod. Sic. 4, 12; Hyg. Fab. 30, 4; Apld. Bibl. 2 [83 – 87] 5, 4), but the fetching of Cerberus as the eleventh or twelfth⁶¹. The connexion is peculiar to our poem and served only a momentary purpose, viz to exploit the purification as an αἵτιον of the Mysteries.

Heracles led an active life, and he needed to be purified more than once: his purification is a recurring theme. The theme was in place before the descent to the underworld, and because the Eleusinian Mysteries prepared initiates for the underworld, it was easy to represent Heracles' purification as the αἵτιον of the Mysteries, or at least of the form in which Eumolpus made them available to the world at large. The poet hardly meant to add a moral dimension to the underworld; that came later and from another quarter. Thus the catabasis which I ascribe to Cercops of Miletus was in some respects quite conventional⁶²; it was nonetheless a fine poem.

St. Catharines, Ontario

NOEL ROBERTSON

⁵⁹ ROBERT, Gr. Heldens. (n. 23 above) 499 – 502.

⁶⁰ In Sophocles' brief and selective summary of the labours the killing of the Centaurs and the capture of the boar directly precede the fetching of Cerberus (Trach. 1095 – 1099); this may well be an accident, since there is no particular reason why our poem should be influential here.

⁶¹ In both Diod. Sic. and Apld. the Centaurs who are not killed outright flee in different directions; only Apld. records that »Poseidon received the rest of them at Eleusis and hid them in a mountain«. It is possible that in some retelling of the story Heracles came to Eleusis on the track of the Centaurs.

⁶² To discuss the date and milieu of the poem would take us too far afield. Critics commonly speak of an Athenian, or pro-Athenian, work of the mid sixth century (n. 6 above), but this is not the most reasonable deduction from the Eleusinian aspects of the poem. Among the heroes of Eleusis Athens adopted Triptolemus for her own, and he comes to the fore in vase-painting from

the mid sixth century onward, in literature and in public building (if it is his temple that we see in Athens' Eleusinium) from the early fifth. Our poem features not Triptolemus but Eumolpus, later deemed the enemy of Erechtheus and Athens. The earlier order which he represents is not, I think, an independent Eleusis, such as we see in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, but an Eleusis dominated by Megara. This is the case for an early dating of our poem (before 600); it cannot be argued here, but is worth mentioning, since it suits the conventional epic catabasis envisaged above.

SELF-DELUSION AND THE *VOLTE-FACE* OF IPHIGENIA IN EURIPIDES' 'IPHIGENIA AT AULIS'

Three major questions emerge from the critical literature about the character of Iphigenia in Euripides' 'Iphigenia at Aulis'. Is Iphigenia consistent as a character? What is the reason for her celebrated change of heart? Is her reversal an act of free-will?

Most critics are convinced that Iphigenia is consistent and that Aristotle is wrong in citing Iphigenia as an example of inconsistency in character portrayal. In general, they claim that it is perfectly natural for her to act one way and then shortly after in an opposite way, and they view her as a young girl who, despite her initial fears or doubt, sacrifices herself willingly and heroically for a great Panhellenic expedition¹. Little proof is offered for these statements about consistency and FUNKE², in a most closely reasoned and sensible argument, attacks the proponents of consistency and seems to demonstrate that

¹ HERMANN FUNKE adequately summarizes the various statements made by advocates of a consistent Iphigenia in his article, »Aristoteles zu Euripides' Iphigenia in Aulis«, *Hermes* 92 (1964), pp. 284–285, n. 5: WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, *Euripides Herakles I* (Darmstadt 1959), p. 116: »Und schon bei Aristoteles sehen wir, daß er sich so gröblich versehen kann, die aulische Iphigenie zu tadeln, weil sie nicht entweder lediglich als Schlachtopfer weint oder als Heldengjungfrau mutvolle Reden hält«; W. N. BATES, *Euripides, A Student of Human Nature* (Philadelphia 1930), p. 153; »Aristotle objected to this change in character on the part of Iphigenia from timidity to self-confidence, but it is just what might be expected. The noble character of the young girl stands the test when the crisis comes«; D. F. W. VAN LENNEP, *POIETES SOPHOS* (Amsterdam 1935), p. 195; »Het is een kritiek, die haar oorspoong vindt in de miskenning van het psychologisch realisme van den dichter«; G. NORWOOD, *Essays on Euripidean Drama* (Berkeley 1954), p. 4: »When . . . Aristotle offers as an example of a dramatist's inconsistency the fact that in the *Iphigenia at Aulis* the heroine when a suppliant is 'utterly unlike her later self', he suggests a zoologist who should remonstrate with a rabbit for suddenly sprouting horns.«

² FUNKE (supra n. 1) pp. 284–299.