Uncharted Territory:
Receptions of Philosophy in Apollonius Rhodius’ *Argonautica*

Dissertation

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By
Laura Ann Marshall, B.A.

Graduate Program in Greek and Latin

The Ohio State University

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Dissertation Committee:
Benjamin Acosta-Hughes, Advisor
Thomas Hawkins
Anthony Kaldellis
Abstract

The *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius is often studied in terms of how the author uses previous literary poets such as Homer. This project asks whether Apollonius Rhodius also uses philosophical authors in his *Argonautica* and looks particularly at Empedocles, Parmenides, Xenophanes, and Plato. In addition to building on references by earlier scholars such as Malcolm Campbell, I use plagiarism-tracking software (WCopyFind) to identify places of potential connection and then evaluate the passages in question to see whether these connections are significant. I conclude that Apollonius does use the works of Empedocles and Parmenides and perhaps Xenophanes, and he uses Parmenides’ and Empedocles’ works in ways that indicate he is interested in their ideas as well as vivid images and rare words. I conclude that although there are good reasons for considering Plato’s works as a source of interest for Apollonius, Apollonius does not use Plato’s work in the same significant ways that he uses Empedocles’ and Parmenides’ works. Instead, Apollonius’ project as a poet-scholar contradicts many of the views on poetry, inspiration and skill that Plato’s Socrates develops in the *Ion*. The works of Empedocles and Parmenides provide an alternative model of poetry that involves thoughtful mixing of elements from previous poets.
Dedicated to my mother, Mary Ellen Day Marshall,
who parented with skill, determination, and great love.
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Vita

2003.................................................Redeemer Academy

2009.............................................B.A. Literature, Patrick Henry College

2009 to present ...............................Graduate Teaching Associate, Department of Classics, The Ohio State University

Publications


Fields of Study

Major Field: Greek and Latin
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Chapter 1: Questions and Methodology

The general understanding of philosophy under the early Ptolemies is that it was sparse and derivative, especially compared to the intellectual achievements in other fields: “after the great achievements of the Alexandrian scholars and scientists, Alexandrian philosophy in the Ptolemaic period cuts a poor figure, for it is a feature of intellectual life which only took root in the city at the very end of the Ptolemaic period, and then in an uncreative, though influential form.”¹ This is not necessarily because the early Ptolemies were uninterested in philosophy. Ptolemy I (Soter) invited Stilpo the Megarian² to Alexandria, and Stilpo wrote a dialogue (διάλογος) titled Ptolemy (D.L. 2.115, 120).³


² The Megarians are a loosely-connected group of the disciples of Euclides, a student of Socrates. They are named after Euclides’ hometown of Megara (D.L. 1.17, 2.106). In some scholarship they are called the “Megarics” (see, e.g., David Sedley’s *Standford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on “Diodorus Cronus”). The group may have also included Diodorus Cronus (discussed further below), but Diodorus is often associated with the Dialecticians, and Sedley and Döring disagree on whether or not the Megarians and Dialecticians refer to the same group. See David Sedley, “Diodorus Cronus and Hellenistic Philosophy,” *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, 23 (1977): 74-130, and Klaus Döring, “Gab es eine Dialektische Schule?” *Phronesis* 34 (1989): 293-310.

³ D.L. 2.115 indicates that Stilpo did not accept Soter’s invitation, but D.L. 2.111 records a conversation between Stilpo and Diodorus Cronus in the presence of Soter. This indicates that Stilpo eventually accepted the king’s request or the conversation happened.
Diogenes Laertius records a dialectical discussion between Stilpo and another philosopher, Diodorus Cronus, which Soter participated in, indicating that Soter was present and part of the conversation (2.111). The Peripatetic Demetrius of Phaleron advised Soter on succession issues and wrote a book titled *Ptolemy* (D.L. 5.78, 81). Ptolemy II (Philadelphus) was tutored by Straton, who later succeeded Theophrastus as head of the Peripatetic school at Athens (D.L. 5.58). Either Ptolemy II or III (Euergetes) was the recipient of a letter from Colotes, an Epicurean philosopher, and Ptolemy IV (Philopater) came up with object lessons to refute the views of the Stoic Sphaerus (D.L. 7.177).

while Soter was visiting Megara in 308 BC. Either way, D.L. 2.111 indicates Soter’s participation in philosophical conversations.

4 Diodorus Cronus also features in an epigram by Callimachus (*Ep.* 393 Pf.), discussed further below.

5 Acosta-Hughes and Stephens point out that the decision to have Ptolemy II tutored by a philosopher may be based on “the model of Alexander, who had been tutored by Aristotle.” *Callimachus in Context: From Plato to the Augustan Poets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 12-13.

6 Fraser gives the title of this letter as “On the Impossibility of living by any other philosophy than that of Epicurus.” Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:481. The major source for this letter is Plutarch, who wrote a refutation of Colotes’ views, *Against Colotes*. Plutarch states that the letter was written to Ptolemy but does not specify which one. Fraser states that the letter was written to Ptolemy II (Philadelphus), but qualifies this in his notes (2:695). Kechegia argues that this is most likely Ptolemy II but could be Ptolemy I or III. Eleni Kechegia, *Plutarch Against Colotes: A Lesson in History of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 89-91.

7 Sphaerus’ dating is difficult. Although Diogenes Laertius (7.177) mentions that he went to the court of Philopater (Ptolemy IV), Brad Inwood states that he was active at the court of Ptolemy II based on D.L. 7.185. Brad Inwood, “Sphaerus,” in *Brill’s New Pauly*, ed. Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e1119050. Long mentions Sphaerus in association
Nevertheless, in comparison to other contemporary courts, Alexandria was lackluster when it came to attracting, keeping, and cultivating philosophers:

In the early days of Stoicism Antigonus Gonatas, himself an earnest student of philosophy, attracted to his court at Pella both Stoics and Cynics, and in the second century the school Epicurus found a second home for itself at the Seleucid court at Antioch and in the Syrian cities under Seleucid rule. The kings of Pergamum also showed considerable interest in philosophy, particularly Stoicism, and lavishly supported the Athenian establishments of the Academy and the Lyceum … To these great philosophical movements Alexandria contributed very little, at least in the third and second centuries.\(^8\)

There are a few exceptions, notably Demetrius of Phaleron (student of Theophrastus), but he came to Alexandria only after being exiled from Athens and trying Thebes first, and his time in Alexandria was cut short when he backed the wrong successor to Ptolemy I.

Fraser attempts to explain why Alexandria struggled to attract and maintain philosophers in this period, but the history of philosophers in Alexandria does not provide a complete history of philosophy in early Alexandria. There is a growing awareness in modern scholarship that some of the major poets and scholars of the early Ptolemaic period reference and respond to philosophical authors in their scholarship and poetry. This is most clear in Callimachus, who references Plato by name in one epigram and responds to other aspects of Plato’s dialogues in his *Epigrams* and *Aetia*.\(^9\) Callimachus is also familiar with Aristotle’s works and incorporates references to them in his poetry; his

\(^8\) Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 1:480.

description of the nautilus in Epigram 5 (Pf.), for example, shows evidence of Aristotle’s *Historia Animalium.* Callimachus was also interested in the early philosopher Democritus among Callimachus’ scholarly works the *Suda* lists a *pinax* of the words and compositions of Democritus (*Πίναξ τῶν Δημοκράτους γλώσσων καὶ συνταγμάτων*). As Blum points out, Callimachus may have been introduced to Democritus through the peripatetics Demetrius of Phaleron and Straton of Lampsakos.

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11 As André Laks and Helmut Hühn point out, the term “Presocratic” is problematic because it refers to a large group of thinkers with diverse views, not all them lived before Socrates (some were his contemporaries), and the term did not come into use until the 19th century. In general, I have used the term “early philosopher” or “early philosophy” in this project instead. Where I have used the term “Presocratic”, it is in reference to another scholar’s ideas or in a direct quote from another scholar. The only exception to this is the title of a document with the collected fragments of the authors commonly collected under this term, which I used for textual analysis (figures 2-4). André Laks, “Presocratics,” in *Brill’s New Pauly,* ed. Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, consulted online on 21 July 2017 <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e1220800>; Helmut Hühn, “Presocratics,” in *Brill’s New Pauly,* ed. Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, consulted online on 21 July 2017 <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e15309810>.

12 This is generally understood to be Democritus of Abdera, the early atomist, and not the orator.

13 “But it should be pointed out that the Peripatetics, who were remarkably well represented at the court of the Ptolemies by Demetrios of Phaleron and Straton of Lampsakos, had dealt extensively with the works of the Abderite. Aristotle and Theophrastos, as well as Herakleides Pontikos and apparently also Straton had published works on or against Demokritos, from which the glossographer Kallimachos could certainly have learned many things. Demetrios and Straton probably aroused the Alexandrians' interest in Demokritos …” Rudolf Blum, *Kallimachos: the Alexandrian*
Nor was Callimachus’ philosophical interest confined to dead philosophers. His epigram about Diodorus Cronus mentions the man’s nickname and references some of his well-known arguments on immortality and classification of propositions (393 Pf.). It is possible that Callimachus engaged with other philosophers as well in works that are no longer extant, but this small survey shows his interest in philosophers from different groups and times (Plato, Aristotle, early philosophy, contemporary philosophy) and his ability to incorporate their ideas into his own poetry and scholarship. Later authors, such as Diogenes Laertius, reference Callimachus’ work as a source of information on philosophers from Thales to Diodorus Cronus.

The question of how Callimachus viewed the relationship between philosophy and poetry and the categorization of authors as “philosophers” or “poets” is more difficult to answer. For many reasons, the categories of philosophy and poetry seem distinct to

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*Library and the origins of bibliography*, trans. Hans Wellisch (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 143-144. Blum argues that this *pinax* was probably a list of Democritus’ works, combined with a glossography of unusual terms in the author, and that this hybrid form merited a separate mention in the *Suda* (distinct from the regular *pinakes* of Callimachus). West argues that the Suda entry should be γνωμῶν instead of γλωσσῶν, and that this was probably a collection of Democritus’ sayings. M. L. West, “The Sayings of Democritus,” *The Classical Review* 19, no. 2 (1969): 142. Regardless of whether Blum or West is correct, the testimony about this work indicates that Callimachus was familiar with Democritus’ work.

14 As I will argue later, this is not the full extent of Callimachus’ interest in philosophy. His epigram on Cleombrotus (*Ep.* 23 Pf.), which specifically mentions Plato, may also be a reference to the contemporary philosopher Hegesias of Cyrene, who was banned from teaching in Alexandria because his works promoted suicide.

15 D.L. 1.23, 28, 29 on Thales; 1.25 on Euphorbus the Phrygian; 2.111 on Diodorus Cronus; 8.86 on Eudoxus of Cnidus and Philistion the Sicilian; 9.23 on the authenticity of a poem attributed to Pythagoras.
modern readers, but this was not necessarily the case for Alexandrian poets and scholars such as Callimachus. It is clear that Callimachus organized his pinakes by genres such as “rhetoric” and “philosophy,” but it is not clear that the “philosophy” category included only prose works. Where did Callimachus put the works of authors such as Empedocles and Parmenides who expressed their views in verse? Based on fragment 442 (Pf.), it appears that philosophers such as Pythagoras were included in the pinakes, but the remaining fragments of the whole project are slight, and arguments for how these works were classified are largely conjecture. Blum argues that Callimachus’ pinographical work was based on work by Aristotle, who considered the content (rather than the meter) most important for dividing a poet (ποιητής) from a φυσιολόγος (Poetics 1447b). This too is conjecture, and it is possible that even if Aristotle provided the inspiration for the pinakes project, Callimachus disagreed with Aristotle’s method of dividing poets and those who inquired into nature.

Apart from questions of bibliographic categorization, the larger and more interesting question is how Callimachus and other Alexandrian poets understood the

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17 Blum argues that the list of Greek tragedies (didaskalioi) was the starting point for Callimachus’ list of tragic authors, and that this list of tragic authors must have preceded the larger pinakes. Blum, Kallimachos, 141-142.
relationship between philosophy and their own poetry, especially in light of the views on poetry that Plato set forth. As Acosta-Hughes and Stephens argue, Plato is a foil and model for Callimachus and “a central and significant intertext within Callimachus’ poetic heritage.” Cozzoli argues that Callimachus is also responding to Aristotle and creating a new space for poetry in light of the challenges set forth by Plato and Aristotle:

But in the Hellenistic cultural environment there was little room for either the model of poetry condemned by Plato or the one rescued by Aristotle’s extensive surgery. The new style of poetry practiced by the poet-philologists of the third century did not correspond in either its form or its content to the poetry produced by the oral culture of the fifth century. (Nor was it intended to.) The ποιητὴς και ἄμα κριτικός was now in a position to move into fields of inquiry that had previously been reserved by the Platonists for philosophy alone. The task that Callimachus gave himself was, in effect, to save poetry without giving up its uniqueness as a form of expression. His task was to raise poetry to the rank of ἐπιστήμη by demonstrating that it could admit of as much accuracy and precision as science when moved out of the realm of opinion and into that of truth. The new style of poetry tended to characterize itself as in essence a τέχνη—one that could, however, apply the instruments of scientific analysis to its own style and subject matter, even if it also wanted to continue to value inspiration and originality almost above all else.

In Cozzoli’s analysis, the central challenge Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy poses for poetry is about truth and forms of knowledge—an epistemological challenge that is particularly pertinent to the scholar-poets of Alexandria because their scholarly projects involve many questions about truth and knowledge. According to Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, “Callimachus’ Prologue [to the Aetia] is not a banal affirmation of the value of technē so much as a reclamation project that seeks to reestablish an older relationship of

18 Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, Callimachus in Context, 82.

technē and inspiration to sophia, or a poetry that seeks to reclaim its former position in society.” In this analysis, Callimachus’ project in the *Aetia* is a thoughtful response to Plato’s critiques of poetry.

The study of Callimachus’ relationship to philosophy and philosophers has received some attention, but Apollonius’ work has received little focus from the perspective of philosophy. This may be due to comparisons of Callimachus’ and Apollonius’ poetry in which Callimachus comes out the winner, or the old question of the quarrel between the two authors, but some of the same factors that make Callimachus’ approach to philosophy fascinating also apply to Apollonius: he is also a scholar-poet who, as a close associate of Callimachus, was probably aware of many of the same sources Callimachus used, and as head of the Library he would have had access to many of the same works. The fact that philosophy has not played a large role in Apollonian scholarship may be due in part to reader bias: in studying the works of Alexandrian authors such as Callimachus and Apollonius, modern scholars are limited by the works presently available but also by the scholars’ familiarity with those works and the categories they generally place those works in. Homer’s epics are familiar to most Classicists and well established as an object of study for Apollonius. It is therefore easy to find places in the *Argonautica* where Apollonius may be using Homeric images and words.

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The early philosophers are often categorized as philosophers rather than poets, even though authors such as Empedocles and Parmenides expressed their views in verse. Their works are more commonly studied for their relationship to other philosophical thinkers and their views on metaphysics and the natural world, rather than their literary abilities. But many literary scholars are less familiar with sources that are often viewed as philosophical, and it can be difficult to recognize places where Alexandrian authors are using early philosophers such as Parmenides, for example. The segregation of philosophy and poetry may be the inheritance of Plato (whose critiques of poetry echo into the present) and Aristotle (who argued that Empedocles’ hexameter poetry was nothing like Homer’s) or individual readers’ tastes, but this distinction between philosophy and poetry can lead to blind spots in scholarship that the Alexandrian scholar-poets may not have shared.

The goal of this dissertation is to look at some test cases of philosophical influence on Apollonius Rhodius’ *Argonautica*, particularly in terms of the works of the early philosophers Parmenides, Empedocles, and Xenophanes, and to consider why those philosophical authors matter for understanding Apollonius’ larger poetic project. The question of philosophical influence in the *Argonautica* is important for understanding Apollonius as a reader and scholar, but it also touches on larger questions of philosophy in Alexandria and how Alexandrian poet-scholars understood their relationship to

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philosophy. If, like Callimachus, Apollonius is aware of Plato’s views on poetry, how did he respond to them?

**Background on Apollonius as Scholar and Reader**

Before looking at the philosophical authors in question, it is important to ask how Apollonius approaches intertextuality. Reception can work on a variety of levels, including narrative structure, scenes, character depictions, or word choices, and it is helpful to see how Apollonius works with a well-established author such as Homer before approaching the less familiar philosophical sources.

Apollonius wrote “the first scholarly monograph of the Hellenistic period on Homer, a book titled Πρὸς Ζηνόδοτον and directed against Zenodotus’ edition of the two Homeric epics.”[^23] Although we do not know the content of *Against Zenodotus*, we do know that Zenodotus wrote on two aspects of Homeric scholarship: the Glossai was a lexicon of Homeric words in alphabetical order and the διορθώσεις, or editions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that argued for the authenticity of certain lines and the rejection of others. This type of scholarship usually depends on discussion of individual word choices within a line, and in all likelihood, Apollonius’ own Homeric scholarship focused on minutiae of Homeric vocabulary and word usage. Apollonius is, in other words, a scholar’s scholar when it comes to Homer.

[^23]: Rengakos, “Apollonius Rhodius as a Homeric Scholar,” 244.
That hypothesis is borne out by the way that Apollonius uses Homer’s work in the *Argonautica*. As Rengakos points out, “compared with any other contemporary poem, his epic, the *Argonautica*, shows a far higher number of imitations of Homeric phrases, verses, motifs or scenes and reproduces lexical, morphological, syntactical and metrical peculiarities of the old epic to such an extent that it can be used as a veritable treasury for its poet’s exegetical and critical engagement with Homer.” According Kyriakou, Apollonius paid particularly close attention to Homeric hapax legomena in a way that shows he is interested in the meaning of the original passage as well as the rarity of the word. Apollonius uses Homeric hapaxes frequently, often employing a single Homeric hapax multiple times in the *Argonautica*, and at times he uses a hapax in a way that indicates he is probably aware of a scholarly debate about the word and is taking part in the discussion over the meaning. For example, the word ἄβρομος appears at *Iliad* 13.41 to describe the Trojans as they charge:

\[ \text{Tρῶες δὲ φλογῇ ἱσοὶ ἄολλες ἢ ἢθελλη} \\
\text{Ἔκτορι Πριαμιδὴ ἄμοτον μεμαδῳτες ἐποντο} \\
\text{ἄβρομοι αὐναχοι} \]

The Trojans, as one, like a flame or a storm, with unrelenting rage, they followed Hector son of Priam, ἄβρομοι and noisily/noiselessly.\(^{24}\)

The word ἄβρομος appears nowhere else in Homer or extant Greek literature until the *Argonautica*. The word is based on βρόμος (a loud noise, roar), and Aristarchus and others understood the alpha prefix to be intensive and argued that the word meant

\(^{24}\) The synonym used here, αὐναχοι, has a similar problem and, according to the LSJ, can mean either “loud-shouting, noisy” (α copulative) or “noiseless, silent” (alpha privative). Cunliffe’s entry decides on the former: “with united shout” and cites this line.
“shouting,” while Apion understood the prefix to be an alpha-privative, making the word mean “noiselessly.”

Apollonius appears to take a position in this disagreement in his use of the word at 4.153:

αὐτὰρ ὅγι ἡδη
οἴμη θελγόμενος δολιχὴν ἀνελύετ’ ἀκανθαν
γηγενέος σπείρης, μήκον δὲ μυρία κύκλα,
οίον ὅτε βληροῖσι κυλινδόμενον πελάγεσσιν
κύμα μέλαν κωφὸν τε καὶ ἄβρομον:

But the snake, already charmed by [Medea’s] song, relaxed the long spine of its earth-born spiral and lengthened its countless coils, as when a dark wave, silent and ἄβρομον, rolls on a gentle sea …

The use of the synonym κωφὸν (mute, noiseless) as parallel with ἄβρομον makes it clear that Apollonius understands the alpha as a privative rather than intensive prefix.

Although the surviving testimony about this debate is from a period later than Apollonius (Aristarchus of Samothrace flourished c. 216–144 BC while Apion flourished 1st c AD), it is likely that the debate predates those sources, particularly given the avid Alexandrian

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26 Unless otherwise noted, translations of the *Argonautica* are from Race’s Loeb edition, and translations of Empedocles’ work and the works of other early philosophers are from Daniel Graham’s *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy: The Complete Fragments and Selected Testimonies of the Major Presocratics*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
discussion of Homer. Apollonius collects and uses rare Homeric words but does so in a way that shows his awareness of the original Homeric context and makes a scholarly point about that context. It is also important to note that these two passages would not necessarily draw the reader’s eye based on content alone: the charge of an army and the pacification of a snake bear no obvious similarities. Instead, the verbal similarity may prompt the reader to consider literary questions such as whether Jason’s heroism in stealing the fleece is similar to or different from Hector’s heroism.

In this way Apollonius’ use of rare Homeric words serves not only to show off his erudition but also to prompt thoughtful questions about the text. Homeric hapaxes prove an interesting site for discussion of literary allusion because an Apollonian use of a Homeric hapax can, by definition, have only one referent in the Homeric text. As Kyriakou points out, “the hll do offer an advantage because their singularity precludes several different or even contradictory Homeric contexts that might have contributed to the shaping of Apollonius’ text.”27 Kyriakou admits that her interpretations of some of some hapaxes is subjective, but she makes a strong case for many of them, and it does seem clear that Apollonius often uses rare Homeric words in a way that shows awareness of the context the word is taken from and an incorporation of that context into the new Argonautic context. For example, in Arg. 4.1240-1241, Apollonius uses three hapax legomena from the Odyssey in his description of the shore of Libya, where the Argonauts are forced to land:

27 Kyriakou, Homeric Hapax Legomena in the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius, 11.
… οὐδὲ τι ἔστι

ἐρπετόν οὐδὲ ποτητόν ἀείρεται. ἐνθ’ ἄρα τούσῃ
πλημμυρίς (καὶ γάρ τ’ ἀναχάζεται ἤπειροιο
ἡ θαμά δὴ τόδε χεῦμα, καὶ ἂν ἐπερεύγεται ἀκτάς
λάβρον ἐποχόμενον) μυχάτη ἐνέωσε τάχιστα
ἡμών, τρόπιος δὲ μάλ’ ὕδασι παῦρον ἐλεύπτο.

Not a single land animal exists there, nor does a bird take flight there. And there
the flood tide swiftly thrust them high onto the shore, and very little of their keel
was left in the water (for this tide frequently draws away from the shore and then
boisterously discharges itself back on the shore).

As Kyriakou points out, ἐρπετόν is a Homeric hapax found in Od. 4.1240 to describe the
sort of thing that Proteus can become (πάντα δὲ γινόμενος πειρήσεται, δόσσ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν /
ἐρπετῶ γίνονται, καὶ ὕδωρ καὶ θεσπίδας πῦρ). This is part of Menelaus’ story of his
stay in Africa (Egypt) because of adverse winds—a situation that is similar to the
Argonauts’. At this point in the Argonautica, the Argonauts’ plight is more desperate
than Menelaus’, since Menelaus is receiving instructions from Εἰδοθή (the daughter of
the Old Man of the Sea) and the Argonauts are just entering their difficulty. Nevertheless,
the two passages have some striking similarities: both groups are trapped in Africa by
adverse sailing conditions with no provisions and will soon to be rescued by female
guidance.

While ἐρπετόν appears in other literature between Homer and Apollonius,28 the
next hapax ποτητόν does not; it is only attested in the extant literature in the Odyssey

28 Sappho, Herodotus, Aristophanes, and Heraclitus, among others.
(12.62) and this passage of the Argonautica. The Homeric passage for this hapax is strikingly similar and mentions the Argo:

Πλαγκτάς δὴ τοι τάς γε θεοὶ μάκαρες καλέουσι. τῇ μὲν τ’ οὐδὲ ποτητά παρέρχεται οὐδὲ πέλειαι τρήρωνες,…

… τῇ δ’ οὖ πὼ τις νηῆς φύγεν ἀνδρῶν, ἢ τις ἱκητα, ἄλλα θ’ ὁμοί πινακάς τε νεών καὶ σώματα φωτῶν κύμαθ’ ἀλὸς φορέουσι πυρός τ’ ὀλοῖο θύελλαι. οἳ δὴ κείνη γε παρέπλευ ποντοπόρος νηῆς Ἀργῷ πᾶσι μέλουσα, παρ’ Αἰήταο πλέουσα

The blessed gods call [the wandering rocks] the Planktai. Neither birds nor trembling doves can make it past there … and no ship manned by men has escaped when it reaches that point, but the waves of the sea and storms of destructive fire bear away boards and bodies with no distinction. Only one sea-going ship made it through, the Argo, well-known to all, sailing from Aeetes.

In both these passages the narrator describes a place that is inhospitable to humans and animals and an obstacle for sailing, so there is a similarity in the lines themselves. But there are also larger connections between the passages: the Planktai also appear in the Argonautica, not long before the passage in question (4.932, 939). The Planktai represent the path-not-taken in the Odyssey (Odysseus chooses to face Scylla and Charybdis instead), and by using Homeric vocabulary in this passage, Apollonius reminds the reader that he is working within the same tradition in a way that is sensitive

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29 A significant limitation in Kyriakou’s project and this project on the Argonautica is the fact that any word labeled a hapax by modern scholars cannot account for the literary and non-literary sources that are lost. There is, for example, no extant ancient Greek word for “thumb” until quite late, but that does not mean that classical and archaic Greek authors had no word for this finger. (I am indebted to Tom Hawkins for this observation.)

30 The rocks are also mentioned at 4.786 and 4.860.
to the original context of the vocabulary but is not obvious to the casual observer. It would take a scholar’s knowledge of the *Odyssey* to remember a) where the original word was from b) what the surrounding context was in the *Odyssey* and that it mentions the Argonauts.

The final Homeric hapax in *Arg.* 4.1241 is πλημυρίς, the word used to describe the swell of the sea after Polyphemus throws a rock at Odysseus’ ship:

\[
\text{ἐκλύσθη δὲ θάλασσα κατερχομένης ύπὸ πέτρης· τὴν δ’ ἄγ ἤπειρόνδε παλιρρόθινον φέρε κύμα, πλημυρίς ἐκ πόντοιο, θέμωσε δὲ χέρσον ἰκέσθαι.}
\]

The sea was dashed up by the rock as it came down; and the back-rushing wave, a flood-tide from the sea, carried the ship backward, toward the shore, and drove it onto the dry land.

This passage is also similar to the *Argonautica* passage: while there is no Cyclops and no rock, the *Argo* is also pushed to shore by a similar wave. And, as Kyriakou points out, “it also harks back to the Clashing Rocks adventure, since Apollonius also employed it there (*Arg.* 2.576): the πλημυρίς hurled Argo towards the Clashing Rocks as it pushed Odysseus’ ship back to the shore of the Cyclops. The message is clear: Libya is as dangerous as all the previous adventures and far worse because, for the time, no help or escape is forthcoming.”

What Kyriakou misses, though, is the stark contrast between Odysseus’ response to a πλημυρίς and Jason’s response: while Odysseus immediately

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31 The word does appear in the works of other authors between Homer and Apollonius, including Aeschylus, Euripides, Herodotus, Bacchylides, Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Lycophron.

grabs a pole and pushes the boat away from shore (Od. 9.487-488), Jason and the Argonauts look at the Libyan sky and ask rhetorical questions of each other about their plight (4.1245-1258).

Although this particular passage of the Argonautica is unusually full of Homeric hapaxes, it shows several principles of interpreting the Argonautica in relationship to the works of other authors:

1. Apollonius pays close attention to rare words.

2. Apollonius uses rare words in a way that shows awareness of their original context but is not necessarily obvious from the original contexts. The similar words may help draw the audience’s attention to the connections between the two passages before the context does.

3. Apollonius can reference more than one passage in another work in a single line of the Argonautica, so finding one reference for a line does not necessarily rule out other references.

With these interpretive points in mind, it makes sense to ask whether Apollonius uses authors besides Homer in this way. And, given the renewed interest in Callimachus and Plato, philosophical authors are an interesting place to look for other rare words or word forms that Apollonius may use.

A New Tool: WCopyFind
Usually scholarship on direct allusions between authors depends on a) a direct quotation of the author (such as when Callimachus cites Plato or Plato cites Homer) or b) the reader’s memory for similarities. For modern scholars, the second is a difficult skill to develop and requires years of familiarity with Greek literature and a highly accurate memory or extensive scholarship (such as the scholarship on Homeric hapax legomena). This method is also limited by the reader’s interests: a scholar whose primary interest is poetry will not necessarily catch references to prose authors, and a reader interested in one type of poetry (such as epic) may not catch a reference to another type (such as lyric). Apollonius’ reputation as a literary snob who wrote an inferior epic full of rare Homeric words has not done much to attract readers with wide interests who might see intertexts in philosophical sources.

While I aspire to be the type of reader who can catch those allusions, my memory is imperfect, and I suspect most scholars are hindered in their recognition of allusion by the purely visual way in which most of us experience Greek poetry. At the beginning of this project, I tried looking at passages with thematic similarities (such as passages about eros or erotic effects) and then attempted to find verbal echoes between the two passages. But these searches continually turned up nothing particularly interesting or helpful, and I began to suspect that this was not the only way that Apollonius was using and referencing other authors. I began looking for a software program that would allow me to compare two documents to find similarities of a word or more to help me identify passages that I should focus on. There are many programs that will help an author find differences between two documents (these are helpful when an author has two versions of a
document and needs to see what has changed), but few that highlight *similarities*. In the end, I discovered WCopyfind, “an open source windows-based program that compares documents and reports similarities in their words and phrases.” This program was developed by Lou Bloomfield, a professor of physics at UVA, and it was originally designed to help locate plagiarism. However, the program is particularly suitable for analyzing Greek texts for the following reasons:

1) Language: the program can read Greek and recognize the difference between various diacritical marks. For example, it can recognize the difference between 

\[ \ddot{\alpha}ll\alpha \] and \[ \alpha\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha} \] (where different letters are accented), and it can also recognize the difference between \[ \dddot{\alpha}ll\acute{\alpha} \] and \[ \dddot{\alpha}ll\acute{\alpha} \] (where different types of accents appear on the same letter).

2) Length of similarity: the program can be set to find similarities of a single word. Unlike other plagiarism-tracking software that looks for phrases of a set length (five or six words, for example), this program can find individual words that are the same in two documents. This feature is particularly helpful in dealing with an author such as Apollonius, who shows a marked interest in rare words and rare forms but does not necessarily use the rare word in a familiar clause or phrase.

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33 http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/wordpress/software/wcopyfind/.
3) Side-by-side view: the program usually allows the researcher to view the similar passages side-by-side. Each similarity is hyperlinked, so when you click on a highlighted word or phrase in the Argonautica in the left window, the program will bring up the appropriate Parmenidean passage on the right side. This allows the scholar to check for similar context and look for additional similarities in the surrounding passage that the program cannot catch.

4) Open source and public license: the program is free to use and licensed under the Gnu Public License “which basically means that you can do whatever you like with it except to try to sell it to someone else.” It is also an executable file, meaning you do not have to download anything to use it. “Open source” means that the original source code is made available to view and modify, so this program could theoretically be further adapted to fits the needs of Classical scholarship.

This program has already proved useful outside the bounds of this dissertation project. Benjamin Acosta-Hughes, who is currently working on Callimachus and Apollonius, asked me to run a similar analysis on select passages of Callimachus and Apollonius, and we discovered several significant words and one line that was repeated between the two documents.

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34 Occasionally the program seems overwhelmed by very large files (such as all of Plato’s works) and cannot produce a side-by-side view. This may also be due to the age of the computer I used for this analysis, but the program was still able to produce a list of words that appear in both documents.

35 http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/wordpress/software/wcopyfind-instructions/
authors (figure 1):

Figure 1: WCopyFind result page (side-by-side view) with portions of Callimachus’ Aetia on the left and Apollonius’ Argonautica on the right. The fifth line in each window is Aetia fr. 12.6 and Arg. 1.1319, respectively. The two lines are identical except for the accenting of ως. This line is mentioned in commentaries, but WCopyFind easily brings these connections to the surface without skimming thousands of pages of commentary on both authors. (Because commentaries on Callimachus often cite Apollonius, the index to a commentary—if included—might not be especially helpful for finding such similarities.)
It also allows scholars to discover connections that commentators may not yet have seen and to see the context surrounding passages with similarities.

Although many of the features of WCopyFind can be explored by using the website and explanations by the programmer, I am using the tool for a type of analysis the program was not initially designed for, and I learned about problems and potential pitfalls in the program in the process. Because this is a new approach to analyzing these texts and this tool may be useful to others studying the relationships between authors, here are the steps I used, along with potential issues and how to avoid them.

Step 1: prepare the texts

Preparing documents for analysis by WCopyfind requires getting all the Greek text into Word documents and removing typographical features that could confuse the analysis. For the purposes of this project, I compiled one Word document with all of the *Argonautica*, one with the works of early philosophical authors (often called Presocratics), one with all of Plato’s works (including those now considered spurious). The texts of the *Argonautica* and Plato’s dialogues were taken from the Perseus project because this site allows the viewer to see large chunks of text at one time, and this made

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36 http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/wordpress/software/wcopyfind-instructions/

37 Works that are now considered spurious were often considered legitimate by ancient readers and I wanted to deal with cases individually, so I included the entire Platonic corpus, including the Letters.
it easy to cut and past the works into a Word document. (All of the texts from the Perseus site are hyperlinked, so it was necessary to cut and paste into a text document first to remove the hyperlinks.) The texts of early philosophy were taken from the TLG by cutting and pasting twenty to thirty lines at a time into a separate document.\(^{38}\) I converted all the type fonts into New Athena Unicode for the sake of uniformity and did not encounter any issues with the program recognizing the letters, but it is possible that other fonts would also work.

After the document contained the desired works and the hyperlinks were removed, I ran a search/replace function to remove any symbols that can indicate an editor’s conjecture such as `<, >, (, ), [, and ] because I was unsure whether the program would recognize γίνονται and γίγονται as the same word. I later discovered that selecting the “ignore all punctuation” option solves this problem and eliminates the need for this step. Many texts from the TLG also include the “@” sign, which I removed because I was unsure whether the program would count it as a letter or punctuation.\(^{39}\) When running analysis for pieces with textual issues, I also had to remove the sublinear dots below words that indicate a weak text or editor’s suggestion since the program

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\(^{38}\) If the program I describe here proves helpful, it might be possible to incorporate some version of it into the TLG site or see whether the TLG would make some texts available as larger documents for analysis. Getting the electronic texts as a single document can be a huge barrier for this type of analysis.

\(^{39}\) This symbol marks end of page in a source text regardless of whether page is part of the citation system. Any large chunk of text taken from the TLG will include this symbol.
recognizes καὶ and καί as different words. Although these symbols are important for later analysis, I wanted the program to catch as many similarities as possible at the beginning before looking closely at individual passages. In early tests, I sometimes removed numbers, but later found it was not necessary to remove other forms of punctuation (commas, periods, etc.) or numbers (line numbers, section numbers, etc.) since the program can be set to ignore them.

It is important to note that the Word documents must be the same type for the analysis to work. For example, if one document is saved as .doc (Microsoft Word 97 - 2003 Document) and the second document is saved as .docx (Word 2007 and later for Windows, Word 2008 and later for OS X), the program will show no results.

Step 2: run the analysis

I then ran the entire text of the Argonautica document through the program alongside whatever text I wanted to compare. WCopyfind allows a user to set various parameters for the comparison such as how long the string of similarities should be (from one word on). In most cases, I ran the searches looking for similarities of one word or more in order to catch identical (rare) forms that were not necessarily part of an identical phrase. This is

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40 I have not discovered an efficient way to remove these dots using the search/replace function. Because they are similar to diacritical marks, they required removing each dot individually since search recognizes each letter as distinct (i.e., the dot under κ is different from the dot under γ).
what the program looks like before the analysis and an explanation of the settings as they relate to conducting Greek text analysis:

![WCopyFind page with settings.](image)

Figure 2: WCopyFind page with settings.

1. **Shortest Phrase To Match**: this program was originally designed to catch plagiarism, so the WCopyFind instructions recommend 6 for this option. This means that phrases of matching words that include five words or fewer will not be highlighted. However, I wanted to catch identical words even if they did not appear in the same phrase, so I set this to 1.

2. **Fewest Matches To Report**: this parameter is designed to weed out papers that are less likely to be plagiarized, and I did not find it particularly helpful in analyzing
Greek texts. But because the instructions on this parameter on the website were not particularly clear, here is how it works. Imagine that you compare document A with twenty-six words and document B with twenty-six words, and you know (prior to running the analysis) that the documents have two words in common. If “Fewest Matches To Report” is set at two, the analysis will run and you can see a side-by-side comparison of the two documents with these two words in red in both documents. If this parameter is set to three, the result screen will state that the program “found no matching pairs of documents” because only two matches were found. For the purposes of Greek analysis, I wanted the program to catch all similarities so I set this parameter to “1”.

3 Most Imperfections To Allow: this allows the user to find similar phrases that may be different by a word or two. For example, in running an analysis comparing texts by Callimachus and Apollonius, the program found the strikingly similar lines καὶ τὰ μὲν ὡς ἡμέλλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέσθαι in Apollonius (1.1319) and καὶ τὰ μὲν ὡς ἡμέλλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέσθαι (Aetia fr. 12.6 Pf.). Allowing for one imperfection would match these two lines, even though one has ὡς while the other has ὡς, which the program recognizes as distinct words. When doing this type of analysis, the “imperfections” will show up in green, rather than red, font color. In figure 1 (above), I ran the analysis without imperfections, so the analysis highlights the entire line in Callimachus but leaves out the ὡς in the Argonautica because ὡς does not appear anywhere in the selection from Callimachus (ὁς is highlighted in the Argonautica passage because that form does appear in the
selection from Callimachus, though not in this line). In other words, the program recognizes the first half of this line (καὶ τὰ μὲν) and the second half (ἡμελλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέσσομαι) as separate matches, but the side-by-side view allowed me to see that the lines were nearly identical. For the purposes of this project, I chose to include zero imperfections for these searches because I was interested in similarities of one word.

4 Minimum % of Matching Words: “This number is the minimum percentage of perfect matches that a phrase can contain and be considered a match. Setting this value at 100 limits WCopyfind to finding only perfect matches.”

I was originally unsure what this parameter did and changed it in various searches without any effect because I had already set the “shortest phrase to match” to one and “most imperfections to allow” to zero. In other words, when using this program to look for identical words (rather than phrases), this parameter does not make a difference, but setting it at 100% will guarantee absolute matches when dealing with phrases.

5 Ignore All Punctuation vs. Ignore Outer Punctuation: outer punctuation includes such things as a comma after a word or a period at the end of a sentence. “All punctuation” includes punctuation marks within a word such as γίνονται. When “ignore all punctuation” is checked the program will recognize γίνονται and γίγονται as the same word. For simplicity’s sake, I selected both “ignore all

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41 http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/wordpress/software/wcopyfind-instructions/
punctuation” and “ignore outer punctuation” but selecting “ignore all punctuation” should be sufficient. I selected these options because I wanted the program to match phrases that might be split by punctuation in one author and not another (an editorial choice) and places where an editor made a textual choice but the passage deserved consideration as similar anyway.

6

Ignore Numbers: I wanted the program to catch phrases that might continue across a line break, even if that line break included a line number, so I selected this option.

7

Ignore Letter Case: Letter case can be an editorial choice, and I wanted the program to catch these instances. For example, this option allows the program to recognize Νυκτός and νυκτός as identical in situations where the personification of Night is an editorial choice.

8

Skip Non-Words: because I was unsure the program would recognize all ancient Greek words, I did not select this option.

9

Skip Words Longer Than __ Characters: although Greek does hold the record for the single longest word in literature at 171 characters,42 100 characters seemed a safe upper limit for most searches. The default is set at 20.

10

Basic Characters Only (In DOC files): I originally wondered if this would allow WCopyFind to compare two Greek documents without considering diacritical

42 λοπαδοτεμαχοσελαχογαλεοκρανιολειψανονδριμποτριμματοσιλφιτουρομελιτοκαταχωμε νοκηλεπικοσυφοφατατεπερεπελεκτρονπτεκεφαλλικογκλοπεκελεολαγοσυραιοβαφη τραγανοπτερυγών found at Aristophanes’ Assemblywomen, 1169-1175.
marks, which could be helpful in some cases. It does not. Instead, this option
limits the comparison process to the set of basic characters used in .doc files
(Word 98-2003). It is recommended for documents “that have relatively few non-
English characters in them,” which does not apply to Greek.

11 **Language:** I selected Greek for all of these searches and did not encounter any
problems.

12 **Brief Report:** selecting this box will change the way the results are presented.
Instead of viewing the documents side-by-side, the results will be delivered as a
list of words that are contained in both documents. This can be useful for dealing
with larger chunks of text, such as the entire Platonic corpus. You can choose to
view the results by the order they appear in either document, but either one should
present a complete list. The list will contain duplicates if duplicates are possible
(i.e., each instance of καί will show up separately).

13 **Make vocab:** selecting this box should create a text document of vocabulary
words that appear in both documents and the number of times each word appears
in the documents. For example, in comparing two identical documents with the
text of Lewis Carroll’s “Jaberwocky,” the text file produced by marking this box
will show “4 outgrabe” because “outgrabe” appears four times over the course of
the two documents. However, this function does not seem to work well with
Greek characters and produces a text document full of question marks.
After setting these parameters and choosing a location to save the results, the program runs the analysis and opens a web page in the default browser. This page includes some misleading statistics and several options for viewing the results (figure 3).

![File Comparison Report](image)

Figure 3: first result page with options for viewing.

The statistics in the first two columns can be misleadingly high. As the WCopyFind FAQ page explains,

the first column shows the “total match” — the number of words that match when any imperfections in the matching are overlooked. That word count is then followed by the percentage of File 1 that this word count represents and by the percentage of File 2 that this word count represents. For example, if File 1 is 1000 words long and File 2 is 2000 words long and they contain 100 matching words, this column will read: 100 [10%, 5%] because 100 words is 10% of 1000 words and 5% of 2000 words. The second column shows the “basic match” — the
number of words that match when no imperfections in the matching are allowed. The 3 entries are otherwise like those in the first column.\footnote{http://plagiarism.bloomfieldmedia.com/wordpress/software/faq/}

In this case, the file containing the \textit{Argonautica} (L) is smaller than the file containing the Presocratic texts (R), so the percentage match looks larger for the \textit{Argonautica}. Because this search was done for one-word matches with no imperfections allowed, the percentages are the same in both columns. The fact that the percentage is above 20\% for both documents should not lead to premature optimism about the significance of the similarities between the two texts since many of these similarities are due to analyzing a large amount of text by two authors who share the same language. Articles and other common words make up a large part of these results, just as words such as “the” and forms of “to be” would show up in comparisons of two English authors. This is not, in other words, an attempt to bring computer analysis to Apollonius in a way that it has been applied to authors such as Shakespeare, for example.\footnote{One of the most recent examples of this type of analysis is a project by Alejandro Ribeiro, Santiago Segarra, Mark Eisen, and Gabriel Egan, forthcoming in \textit{Shakespeare Quarterly}. The authors argue that the three \textit{Henry VI} plays were written using language from other authors, particularly Philip Marlowe. Their stylistic analysis depends largely on the creation of “stylistic fingerprints” for these authors, based on the proximity of “functional words” such as “the” “and” and “or.” See Evan Lerner and Amanda Mott, “Penn Engineers’ Network Analysis Uncovers New Evidence of Collaboration in Shakespeare’s Plays,” published online October 25, 2016. \url{https://news.upenn.edu/news/penn-engineers-network-analysis-uncovers-new-evidence-collaboration-shakespeare-s-plays}} The value of the program is the next stage, which draws the scholar’s attention to individual passages in the side-by-side view where the scholar can make decisions about possible allusions based on a careful reading of the context and the scholar’s experience with the language.
The results of the analysis can be viewed three ways: side-by-side, *Argonautica* only or Presocratic texts only. I found the side-by-side view most helpful because clicking on any red word on one side brought me to the corresponding word/phrase on the other document (figure 4).

![Figure 4: a side-by-side view of the analysis with Presocratic texts on the left and the *Argonautica* on the right. In this example, I scrolled through the texts of the Presocratics on the left and clicked on the word πύλαι, which brought up the corresponding line in the *Argonautica* on the right. Both lines also contain the word Νυκτός.](image)

Red phrases or words appear in both texts (although each may appear individually rather in a repeated phrase). By clicking on a red phrase in one text, the program will bring up
the corresponding passage in the other text. In figure 4, for example, I selected the word πύλαι in the middle of the left-side document (part of Parmenides’ work) and the corresponding word came up on the top line of the right-hand (*Argonautica*) document. At that point I could see that both lines also include the word Νυκτός.

Two factors complicate this view. First, the underlined phrases can be deceptive; on the Presocratic side of the screen “θεὰ πρόφρων” is underlined together, but although “θεὰ” and “πρόφρων” both appear in Apollonius, they do not appear contiguously. Clicking on one word on the left will bring up the corresponding passage on the right, so this is easy to check. Second, if a word appears more than once in a document, there is not a good way to show *all* the instances of that word in the side-by-side view. For example, ἔλεν on the left side of this example (the Presocratic side) will bring up one instance of ἔλεν on the right side (*Argonautica*), but ἔλεν appears eleven times in the *Argonautica*. This makes the third part of this process (using the TLG) important for checking results, but the side-by-side view is helpful for quickly determining which passages and words deserve further analysis (a common word alone may not merit a TLG search, but a common word in a longer phrase would).

The side-by-side view worked well for the Presocratic texts, but the document containing all of Plato’s dialogues proved difficult for the program (or an ancient computer) to handle, and I was unable to see a side-by-side comparison of those texts. Instead, I was able to produce a list of words that appears in both texts using the “brief report” option (figure 5). Here, Plato’s complete works are on the left and Apollonius is on the right. που is the first word in the Platonic corpus that appears in both sets and
ἀρχόμενος is the first word in Apollonius that appears in both sets. The lists include the same elements but are organized in two different orders.

Figure 5: Brief report results. Both sides of the page include the same words but in different order. On the left, the words appear in the order they appear in Plato’s dialogues. On the right side, the results appear in the order they appear in the Argonautica.

I copied this list into a Microsoft Excel page (each word appears as a different cell) and used several steps to create an alphabetical list of similarities: first, I removed all punctuation from the results (unfortunately, even when the program is set to “ignore punctuation” a list of results like this will include separate results for “αἵματος,” with a comma and “αἵματος” without a comma). Then I asked Excel to sort the cells alphabetically and remove duplicates. For Plato, this left me with a list of 2,349 words that appear in both authors and gave the list to me in alphabetical order. It is possible that
the “create vocabulary” option should produce something similar, but I found that that option did not work well with Greek words.

Step 3: use the TLG to determine word rarity and significance

While WCopypfind shows similarities between texts, it cannot tell how rare a word or phrase is in the context all Greek literature as a whole. For example, ἔνθα shows up in Empedocles’ work and in the Argonautica, but it is not a rare word in Greek. If it shows up in results and clicking on it shows that it is not part of the same phrase in both works, then it is not of particular interest. Many results can be weeded out by basic familiarity with Greek, but others required further analysis with the TLG. In doing these searches, I set my TLG preferences to sort results chronologically, with the earliest results first. This allowed me to see at a glance whether a word showed up in Homer’s epics or not and how many other authors used the word or form prior to Apollonius. Many results were too common to show a connection between texts, but occasionally a word or word form was rare enough that it required further investigation. (At times, a word was not rare but the form, such as a dual, was.) The most interesting results were those that showed up only in the Argonautica and the second author’s work. Given Apollonius’ penchant for rare forms and words, these unique forms were ripe for analysis and further inspection of the surrounding passage. This program is not sophisticated enough to catch passages where a similar phrase has been separated in one passage and not the other; in the example above, the program knew that πύλαι and Νυκτός appeared in both works, but
had no way to tell that these words (which are side-by-side in Parmenides) were separated by only two words in Apollonius (while other results might be separated by thousands of lines). This part of the analysis requires a close reading of the passage to find other identical words (such as Νυκτός) or similar words that might not even appear in the results list because of different endings. The program only points out similarities but cannot determine how significant those similarities are.

Step 4: Campbell’s work as a test case

Malcolm Campbell has pointed out a number of similarities between Apollonius and Empedocles.45 While other scholars have also noted the presence of Empedocles in the Argonautica, Campbell’s references are the most extensive (although he often does not go into detail about why Apollonius might reference Empedocles’ work in a particular passage). These references provided good test material to see how WCopyFind compared to other methods of finding allusions: by comparing the results of WCopyFind and the TLG with Campbell’s work, I was able to see some of the limitations and benefits of using this program. I found that WCopyFind was able to catch some of the references Campbell caught but not all. It was especially limited in cases where the form of a word

was different, for example νείκεος (genitive) and νεῖκος (nominative). On the other hand, this method of checking word rarity with the TLG showed that Campbell had sometimes cited Empedocles’ work too soon. For example, Campbell points out the identical phrase οἳ τ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν at the end line of Empedocles 173.3 (B111.3, F119) and Arg. 3.892. But a similar phrase occurs at Il. 14.85 (οἳ τ’ ἐπὶ γαῖης) and Hesiod Op. 505 (ἀἱ τ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν). Although it is possible that this is an allusion to Empedocles, it could also be a reference to Homer or Hesiod. Comparing my results with Campbell’s, I found that this new method could be a useful addition to a traditional approach to finding intertextual references, but one that has its own weaknesses and drawbacks. I have provided a table at the end of this chapter (Table 1) that compares WCopyFind’s results with other scholars’ work. This comparison shows that WCopyFind helped me discover 35 similarities between Empedocles’ work and the Argonautica, while other scholars found 27. This table shows that WCopyFind failed to help identify some significant passages (most importantly, Circe’s creatures in book 4), but the program also caught many passages that other scholars caught and helped identify more potential similarities than previous scholars had noticed. This comparison provides a context in which to understand the analysis of the works of Parmenides, Xenophanes, and Plato in the following chapters.

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46 In the passages in question, the word appears in the genitive in the Argonautica (1.498) and the nominative in Empedocles’ work (G41, B17). Although WCopyFind did not mark these words, it did mark other similarities in the passage, which led me to look at it and see the similarity.

The scholars at Alexandria developed new tools to understand the literature they studied, including alphabetization by author, the first library metadata (pinakes), and systems of marking texts for incorrect lines. The value of these tools depended not only on how they were applied by their first user, but in the possibility for others to use them and apply them in new ways. Similarly, WCopyFind is not a magic tool that can automatically give a percentage of use of one author by another, but it can help guide readers to new possibilities for allusions. The connection between Callimachus’ work and Apollonius’ shows that this program can be valuable even for scholars who have years of experience with two authors’ works and the scholarship on them, and it will be particularly helpful when an author is acknowledged to have a scholarly bent and an eye for rare forms or words (as Apollonius and some of his contemporaries do).

**Limitations**

There are some technical limitations to the WCopyFind program, the most glaring of which is that the program is Windows-based and does not work on iOS (Mac) platforms. The program also seems to struggle with large files such as the entire Platonic corpus, but (as discussed above) there are ways to work around this limitation. The program also cannot catch various forms of the same word. For example, it sees ἄνθρωπος and ἄνθροποις as distinct words. It is also misled by unusual accenting caused by enclitics, so it identifies νεῖκός τ’ and νεῖκος as different words because of the way the enclitic changes the accenting on the former. It is possible that future collaboration with the TLG
programmers could develop solutions to these problems by finding a way to incorporate lemma searches,
but the current version also has some distinct advantages in catching unusual word forms. For example, the program caught the unusually accented verb κύρει in Arg. 2.363 and Parmenidean fr. 17.49 (discussed in chapter 3).

Furthermore, while this method catches some similar passages, it does not account for textual variants in the Argonautica or the other authors’ works. This is a shortcoming that could, theoretically, be overcome if a scholar were able enter every textual variant in the Argonautica and the works of other authors into the original document before running the analysis, but that seemed impractical for the scope of this project. I have, however, tried to note textual variants that appear in the passages I focus on when they could affect the analysis.

Apart from the technical limitations of the program, there are also limitations in this methodology. First of all, while the TLG is complete for the works that survive, there is a large body of written work that has not survived. It is inaccurate to claim that because a word or word form appears only in the Argonautica and the works of author B, Apollonius must necessarily have gotten the word from author B. It is possible that Apollonius is using an author or work that does not survive or that he came up with the word/word form on his own. This limitation can be mediated (if not overcome completely) by the weight of multiple pieces of evidence. When Apollonius uses several rare words from the same author’s work or uses a rare word that in a way that shows

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48 One way to work around this problem with the current program is to use proximity searches on the TLG with a word lemma rather than a specific form.
cognizance of the context in author B’s work, it is more likely that he is referencing that previous author’s work.

Finally, this method could lead a reader to believe that Apollonius is not a creative writer in his own right. Shakespeare and Aristophanes invented new words all the time; who is to say that Apollonius was not equally capable of coming up with some of these rare forms based on the patterns of Greek word formation and his own creativity? While this could be true in one or two cases, it does not seem as likely when Apollonius uses multiple rare words from the same author. It also seems out of character for an author who constantly references rare words from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (presumably to show his own familiarity with an earlier poet). Apollonius is not, in this analogy, Shakespeare but closer to T.S. Eliot, whose constant references to earlier literature are not usually marked by quotation or citation but require an ear as good as Eliot’s and reading as broad as Eliot’s to catch.

Eliot is, however, still hailed as one of the giants of English literature, and his references to earlier poetry do not necessarily lessen his creative reputation. Eliot’s own statement about the poet’s relationship with the past is, perhaps, the one that best fits Apollonius’ own as we can recover it from the *Argonautica*, and one that I will argue he derives, in part, from the early philosophical poets:

No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead. I mean this as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism. The necessity that he shall conform, that he shall cohere, is not one-sided; what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it. The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of
the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the whole existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new.49

It may seem anachronous to use Eliot’s view of poetry to describe Apollonius’ poetics, but I will argue in the conclusion that this view is close to the one that we can piece together from Apollonius’ use of previous poets: his own work sets the works of these poets in new relationships to each other and forces the reader to reconsider some fundamental questions about poetry, particularly the relationship between technical skill and inspiration.

Scholars have long considered the relationship of Apollonius’ Argonautica to the Homeric monuments of the Iliad and the Odyssey: by setting his epic in the generation prior to the Iliad and Odyssey, Apollonius asks that the reader consider those works and Homer’s characters in a new light. By using rare Homeric words, Apollonius signals his mastery of Homeric poetry and invites the reader to consider him in the same category as Homer. This project extends Apollonius’ relationship to other epic poets by asking how Apollonius is using early philosophical authors as well (Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles, who all wrote in hexameter). Because Apollonius’ contemporary Callimachus also uses Plato’s works, this project asks whether Plato’s dialogues are also part of Apollonius’ project, and if not, why not. These questions are valuable not only for studies of the Argonautica but also for studies of Alexandrian literary habits and

scholarship because it indicates that at least one Alexandrian author of this period was familiar with these authors. This could have ramifications for understanding which works were available at this time and how they were being read, and it could lead to further research into Callimachus’ and Theocritus’ use of early philosophical poets and other philosophical texts.

This project also re-evaluates the divide between “literary” and “philosophical” authors that has its roots in the works of Plato and Aristotle. Although Plato’s Socrates argues that there is an “ancient quarrel” between poets and philosophers (Republic, 607b), and Aristotle argues that Empedocles has nothing in common with Homer except the meter (Poetics 1447b), it is not clear that Apollonius saw these categories the same way. Scholars such as Most and Wright have done significant work in evaluating the poetics of early philosophical poets, and it is time to evaluate how a later hexameter poet (Apollonius) understood their poetics. Part of Plato’s project, which Aristotle continues, is creating a new literary space and authority for philosophy. As I will argue in the conclusion, Apollonius responds, perhaps obliquely, to those challenges and uses the poetry of Empedocles and Parmenides as a model for scholarly epic poetry that incorporates earlier models.

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Number of “yes” 27 35
Chapter 2: Empedocles


Empedocles continually stands on this boundary line [between science and magic], however, and in almost all matters Empedocles is such a boundary-line figure. He hovers between poet and rhetorician, between god and man, between scientific man and artist, between statesman and priest, and between Pythagoras and Democritus. He is the motliest figure of older philosophy, he demarcates the age of myth, tragedy, and orgiastics, yet at the same time there appears in him the new Greek, as democratic statesman, orator, enlightenment figure, allegorist, and scientific human being. In him the two time periods wrestle with each other; he is a man of competition through and through.51

As Nietzsche’s essay points out, Empedocles is a liminal figure. His philosophical ideas are expressed in verse rather than prose, he presents himself as a god as well as a poet, and his forces of Love and Strife are somewhere between cosmic forces and deities.

Most larger commentaries on the Argonautica at least mention Empedocles’ work as a source for the Argonautica, particularly in discussions of the song of Orpheus in book 1 and Circe’s creatures in book 4, but few except Nelis have done much analysis of

how those references are used or why Apollonius may have chosen Empedocles’ work as a source. Campbell goes beyond these two significant passages and points out approximately twenty places where Apollonius seems to reference Empedocles. Although many of these references are convincing, most of Campbell’s work amounts to a list of references with little analysis, and there are several that should be removed because there are closer parallels elsewhere or more recent scholarship has removed the relevant fragment from the Empedoclean canon. While Campbell’s work is helpful in establishing that Apollonius is using Empedocles’ work, it lacks analysis of these passages to consider how Apollonius uses these Empedoclean references or what his overall interest in Empedocles’ work might have been.

In this chapter, I will look at the passages Campbell and others point out (and those WCopyFind pointed to) in order 1) to analyze which parallels are convincing (based on TLG searches and more recent research on Empedocles’ work) to show which references come from Empedocles’ work rather than another hexameter poet’s or through the work of another author such as Callimachus; 2) to show that Apollonius is reading Empedocles’ work not only to mine for interesting words and phrases but also to interact thoughtfully with the themes and concepts in Empedocles’ philosophy; and 3) to offer some thoughts on how Apollonius’ overall poetic project may rely on Empedocles’ dichotomy between Strife and Love. Finally, I will consider some ways in which Apollonius’ response to Empedocles’ work fits with his project as a Homeric scholar and

52 See sections 24 and 25 of this chapter for parallels that are less convincing or refer to fragments that may not be from Empedocles’ work.
consider why he might have read and used the works of several epic poets—Homer, Hesiod, and Empedocles—in tandem.

Because this project focuses not only on word-level echoes but also ideas, I have chosen to quote larger portions of the *Argonautica* passages and the related Empedoclean fragments (where possible) to show not only verbal echoes but also thematic similarities. In light of this goal, I have chosen to use Daniel Graham’s excellent *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy* and his numbering of Empedocles’ fragments because the organization is clearer than earlier collections such as Dielz-Kranz or Kirk, Raven and Schofield, and because his work also includes more recent discoveries of early philosophical texts, such as the Strasbourg Papyrus. I have also included Diels-Kranz numbers in the subtitle of each section to aid readers using a different numbering system. G = Graham’s numbers, B or A = Diels-Kranz numbers.53

There is no perfect way to organize this information. If it is organized by Empedoclean fragments, the order of these fragments is uncertain and their ordering is outside the scope of this project. If it is organized by passages of the *Argonautica* that use Empedoclean words and phrases, the reader may lose the sense of the Empedoclean fragment as a whole and the larger ideas contained in it, which is important for understanding how Apollonius relates his work to Empedocles’ project. I have chosen the

53 In the Diels-Kranz system, “A” indicates a testimony regarding an author, while “B” indicates an author’s own words, usually found in a quotation by a later author. Because this project focuses on precise verbal echoes, the “B” fragments appear most often. The Diels-Kranz system also assigns each author a number (Empedocles, for example is author 31). Because it is generally clear from context which author is under discussion, I have omitted these author numbers unless they are part of a direct quotation by another scholar.
former method because it reveals two important aspects of Apollonius’ reading practices: which passages of Empedocles’ work seem to attract the most attention from Apollonius and the way that Apollonius divides an allusion across his work. For example, parts of fragment G41 (B17) are used at 1.773, 3.1157, 3.530, 2.685, and 2.389. For the most part, this network runs one way: one fragment of Empedocles’ work shows up in many different passages of the *Argonautica*, but one passage of the *Argonautica* does not as often incorporate several different Empedoclean fragments. Using Empedocles’ work as an organizing principle (rather than the *Argonautica*) still has the problem of ordering the fragments, especially since scholars do not agree on whether Empedocles wrote two works (*the Purifications* and *On Nature*) or one work known by both names. I have decided to order the discussion according to Graham’s numbers because Graham’s work is based on more recent work than Diels-Kranz (and includes more recent discoveries) and because Graham often groups thematically similar fragments. For example, G21 and G23 both deal with the relationship between the poet and the Muse, but in Diels-Kranz these are fragments B3 and B131, separated by 128 fragments. Thus using Graham’s order often brings thematically similar discussions of Apollonius and Empedocles closer together. I will include analysis of larger ideas about Empedocles’ and Apollonius’ reading practices at the end.

1. Empedocles G20 (B2) and *Arg. 1.1291, 4.656, 4.140*
Near the beginning of their voyage the Argonauts mistakenly leave Heracles in the Cianian land while he looks for Hylas. The Argonaut Telamon blames Jason for leaving Heracles intentionally out of jealousy for Heracles:

‘Ἡσ’ αὐτῶς εὐκήλος, ἑπεί νῦ τοι ἀρμένον ἦν
Ἡρακλῆα λειπεῖν· σὲ δ’ ἔκτοθι μῆτις ὄρωρεν,
δόρα τὸ κείνου κύδος ἃν’ Ἐλλάδα μή σε καλύψῃ,
ἀ’ κε θεοὶ δόωσιν ὑπότροπον οἰκάδε νόστον.
ἀλλὰ τι μύθων Ἡδὸς; ἑπεὶ καὶ νόσφιν ἔταρχον
εἰμὶ τεδὸν οἱ τόνδε δόλον συνετεκτήναντο.

Sit there calmly like that, since it was to your advantage to leave Heracles. It was from you that this plan originated, so that his glory throughout Hellas would not put you in the shade, if the gods grant our return trip home. But what pleasure is there in words? For I will go back, even without the aid of those comrades of yours who helped contrive this treachery.

As Campbell points out, the end of line 1291 is identical to Empedoclean fragment G20 (B2).54

στεινωποὶ μὲν γὰρ παλάμαι κατὰ γυὴα κέρυνται·
πολλὰ δὲ δείλ’ ἐμπαία, τὰ τ’ ἀμβλύνουσι μέριμνας.
παῦρον δ’ ἐν ζῷήσι βιοῦ μέρος ἄθρήσαντες
ὡκύμοροι καπνὸπ δίκην ἀρθέντες ἀπέπταν
αὐτὸ μόνων πεισθέντες, δτοὶ προσεκυρσμένοι ἐκαστὸς
πάντος’ ἐλαυνόμενοι, τὸ δ’ ὅλον <πᾶς> εὐχετᾶι εὐρεῖν·
οὕτως οὐτ’ ἐπιδερκτὰ τῶδ’ ἀνδράσιν οὐτ’ ἐπακουστά
οὕτε νόωι περιληπτά. σὺ δ’ οὖν, ἑπεὶ δδ’ ἐλάσθης,
πεύσεαι οὐ πλέον ἦ βροτεῖ ἡ μῆτις ὄρωρεν.

For narrow fingers are spread through the limbs,
And many wretched things bursting through blunt the thoughts;
and having beheld but a small part of life in their experience,
taking off they fly like smoke, shortlived.
Each believing only that which he happened to confront,
as they are driven everywhere <every one> claims to have found the whole.
Thus these things are neither beheld by men, nor heard,

54 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity both WCopyFind and Campbell identified.
nor comprehended by mind. <But> you, since you have turned aside here, shall understand as far as mortal **thought can reach.**

The conjunction of these two words (μὴς and ὅρνυμι) does not appear elsewhere in extant Greek literature prior to the *Argonautica,* and the identical forms and placement at the same point in the line make this a close parallel.

In the Empedoclean fragment, the narrator cautions the audience about the limitations of sense perception, in part because human experience is limited. In contrast to this limited perspective, the narrator of Empedocles’ work presents himself as one of the *daimones* who are constantly reborn (G25, B115), and this ability to experience more than one lifetime may be part of what gives the narrator an authority that other men lack.55 Yet the narrator of these fragments is also the recipient of divine instruction (cf. G21/B3 and G23/B131), and he describes a cooperative relationship between himself and the muse Calliope: εὐχόμενοι νῦν αὖτε παρίστασο, Καλλιόπεια, / ἧμφι θεών μακάρων ἄγαθὸν λόγον ἐμφαίνοντι (“stand by me now again, Calliope, as I pray / and display a good speech about the blessed gods” G23.3-4). It is the narrator who displays the speech, rather than repeating the exact words of the Muse. Thus the narrator of these fragments presents his ideas as having both extensive experience and divine revelation to support them, and G20 (B2) presents true knowledge as something that depends not only on sense

55 This interpretation is consistent with Empedocles’ self-presentation described in the *Suda* and by Diogenes Laertius. Both describe how Empedocles cultivated the persona of a god through his dress and threw himself in Mt. Aetna at the end of his life so that he would be thought a god when no body was found (D.L. 8.69, *Suda s.v.* Empedocles). The interpretation of a divine narrator would also fit well with the cycle of purification that Empedocles’ narrator sets out for such a daimon, from earth to fire (G25, B115).
perception but also on the time, experience, and memory necessary to analyze perceptions accurately.

In the Argonautica passage, Telamon suggests one interpretation for the fact that the crew has left without Heracles: Jason planned it this way and deceived him (and anyone else on the crew who was not in on the plan). Telamon claims that he sees past the ruse and will force the Argo’s pilot, Tiphys, to turn the boat around so that he can find Heracles (1.1296-1299). Even though there is no precise verbal echo in the verbs, the idea of turning aside from the normal path and an attitude of moral or intellectual superiority are inherent in both passages: Empedocles’ narrator tells the audience that since he has “turned aside” from the normal path men take, he will understand more than other mortals. Telamon wants to turn the boat back from the Argonaut’s planned route because of his superior loyalty to his comrade and because he has seen through Jason’s deception, which sets him on the intellectual and moral high ground.

But from the perspective of the narrator of the Argonautica, Telamon’s interpretation of the facts is incorrect. Tiphys was the one who urged the crew to board and set out, and the narrator says that it is after they set out that they realized they left Heracles in ignorance (ἀιδρείῃσιν). Like the men Empedocles describes at the beginning of fragment 20, Telamon’s interpretation of what he sees is incorrect because of limited knowledge. But, like the Empedoclean narrator, the narrator of the Argonautica can see more from his omniscient view and can give the reader the full story. This omniscient view of the narrator is emphasized in the following paragraph, where he shows the future consequences for Boreas’ sons, who hold Telamon back: Heracles will later take
vengeance on them by killing them and setting up two pillars on top of their grave, one of which still whistles in the wind (1.1296-1305). “And in this way, these things were to be accomplished in time” (καὶ τὰ μὲν ὃς ἡμέλλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέσθαι, 1.1305). Like Empedocles’ narrator, the narrator of the Argonautica emphasizes his ability to see the whole picture, past and future, more accurately than other men, and in this way Apollonius’ use of Empedocles’ work shows his awareness of the underlying epistemological questions that Empedocles raises.

There are two other passages where Apollonius uses fragment G20 (B2), which Campbell does not catch: κατ- … κέχυνται at 4.656 and καπνοῦ at 4.140. In the first, the narrator of the Argonautica describes how the Argonauts scraped sweat with pebbles and left the pebbles, similar to skin in color, scattered along the beach (χροῖνδὲ κατ’ αἰγιαλοῖ κέχυνται / εἴκελοι 4.656-7). This is similar to line 2 of the Empedoclean fragment: κατὰ γυῖα κέχυνται. It is difficult to see a strong relationship between these two fragments, unless Apollonius is making a point about sense perception by comparing the stones to skin (but εἴκελοι has textual problems). The second is more interesting: the genitive form καπνοῦ does not appear in Homer, but it does occur in Empedoclean fragment G20.4 and Arg. 4.140, and both passages are similes about smoke. In the Empedoclean passage, the comparison seems to be that humans do not live long and leave, like smoke, without seeing, hearing, or understanding correctly. In the Argonautica, the coils of the snake guarding the golden fleece are compared to coils of smoke right before Medea charms the snake to sleep, thus preventing it from using its senses to stop the theft. It is possible that Apollonius is not using Empedocles’ work here
and is instead using a Homeric manuscript where καπνοῦ had been replaced by καπνοῖο (a common genitive singular ending). Smoke similes in the Iliad are common (Il. 18.110, 207, 21.522, 23.100), but those passages use the nominative form of the noun (καπνός) rather than a genitive form. More importantly, καπνοῖο (−−−) is not metrically identical to καπνοῦ (−−), so any replacements would require a change somewhere else in the line. Based on the phrase μήτις δρωρεν, this is a passage of Empedocles’ work that Apollonius was familiar with, so it is possible that Apollonius is using both Empedocles and Homer here.

2. Empedocles G22 (B110) and Arg. 2.1275, 3.765

Fragment G22 describes how the listener should receive the narrator’s instructions. It has two words that show up in the Argonautica, which Campbell does not catch:

εἰ γὰρ κέν σφ’ ἀδινὴσιν ὑπὸ πραπίδεσσιν ἐρείσας εὐμενέως καθαρῆσιν ἐποπτεύσης μελέτησιν, ταῦτα τέ σοι μάλα πάντα δι’ αἰώνος παρέσονται, ἄλλα τε πόλλα’ ἀπὸ τῶνδ’ ἐκτήσεια.

For if putting [these ideas] into your crowded wits you behold them kindly with pure thoughts, they will all surely accompany you through life, and you will gain many other thoughts from them.

As Race points out, the πραπίδεσσιν is an “obsolete” term, and one that Apollonius uses nowhere except 3.765, in a description of Medea’s anguish over whether or not to help

\[\text{56 It is possible that Empedocles’ imagery is a development of } \text{Il. 23.100, where Patroclus’ spirit goes away like smoke.}\]
The second important word, εὐµενέως, is an adverb meaning “kindly,” and it occurs only in this Empedoclean fragment, Arg. 2.1275 (in the same metrical position), and an epigram ascribed to Theocritus (in a different metrical position).\(^{58}\)

The first of these references is more interesting. The word πράπιδες also occurs in Homer, Hesiod, and a number of other Archaic authors, so it is not necessarily a reference to Empedocles’ work. However, in the Argonautica, this word occurs in a description of how pain (ὀδύνη) burns through Medea’s skin, along her delicate sinews (ἀμφί τ’ ἀραιάς / ἴνας) and to the lowest part of her occipital bone (which Race translates as “the nape of the neck”). Although this passage bears some obvious similarities to Sappho 31, it may also owe something to Empedocles’ fragment G20 (B2, discussed above) in the way it describes pain traveling through Medea, similar to the way Empedocles describes sensations pouring through the limbs (στειωνοποι μὲν γὰρ παλάμαι κατὰ γοῖα κέχυνται).

3. Empedocles G25 (B115) and Arg. 1.647-8, 4.1744-5, 4.587, 1.773

The next passage that shows clear Empedoclean influence is 1.647-8,\(^{59}\) in the description of the herald Aethalides, who is sent to Hypsipyle as the Argonauts arrive at the island of Lemnos:


Τείως δ’ αὐτ’ ἐκ νηός ἀριστῆς προέηκαν  
Αἰθαλίδης κήρυκα θοῦν, τοπέρ τε μέλεσθαι  
ἀγγέλιας καὶ σκῆπτρον ἐπέτραπον Ἐρμείαο  
σφαίτερων τοκῆς, ὅ ὀι μνήστιν πόρε πάντων  
ἀριστῆς. οὐδ’ ἐπὶ νῦν περ ἀποιχομένου Ἀχέροντος  
δίνας ἄρρεπτάς ψυχήν ἐπιδέδομε λήθη·  
ἀλλ’ ἣν ἐμπεδον αἰὲν ἀμειβομένῃ μεμόρησα,  
ἄλλοθ’ ὑποθνοιός ἐναρίθμησι, ἄλλοτ’ ἐς αὐγάς  
ἡμέλιον ζωοῖσι μετ’ ἀνδράσιν – ἄλλα τ’ ἀμοῦς  
Αἰθαλίδεω χρειῶ με διηνεκέως ἀγορεύειν;

But in the meantime, the heroes had sent Aethalides forth from the ship, the swift herald to whose care they entrusted their messages and the scepter of Hermes, his father, who had granted him an imperishable remembrance of all things. And not even now, after his departure to the unspeakable eddies of the Acheron, has forgetfulness come over his soul, but it is destined to change abodes endlessly, sometimes being numbered among those beneath the earth, at other times in the sunlight among living men. But what need have I to tell at length of the stories about Aethalides?

This passage seems to reference Pythagorean ideas of reincarnation, but it also parallels Empedoclean fragment G25 (B115)

ἐστιν Ἀνάγκης χρήμα, θεὸν ψήφισμα παλαιόν,  
ἀίδιον, πλατέας κατασφυγησμένον ὅρκος·  
ἐντε τις ἀμπλακίσι πόνοι φίλα γυία μιήνης,  
<νείκεϊ θ’> ὃς κ’ (ε) ἐπίρκον ἀμαρτήσας ἐπομόσση,  
δαίμονες οὕτε μακραίων λελάχασι βίοι,  
τρίς μὴν μιρίας όρας ἀπὸ μακάρων ἀλλάθαι,  
φυομένους παντοία διὰ χρόνου εἶδεα θνητῶν  
ἀργαλέας βίωτοιο μεταλλάσσοντα κελεύθους.  
αἰθέριον ἄραν γὰρ σφε μένος πόντον ἄδουκει,  
πόντος δ’ ἐς χθονὸς σύναδα ἀπέπτυσε, γαία δ’ ἐς αὐγάς  
ἡμέλιον φαέθοντος, ὃ δ’ αἰθέρος ἐμβαλε δίναις·  
ἄλλος δ’ ἐς ἄλλου δέχεται, στυγέως δὲ χαττες.  
τὸν καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν εἰμι, φυγάς θεόθεν καὶ ἀλήτης,  
νείκεὶ μανιμένωι πίσυνος.  

There is an oracle of necessity, an ancient decree of the gods, everlasting, sealed by broad oaths:

59 Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica*, 129. This is a similarity both WCopyFind and Campbell identified.
when one in his crimes stains his own limbs with innocent blood
or wrongfully forsweares himself,
one of those deities who have gained long life,
thrice ten thousand seasons he is exiled from the blessed gods,
through time growing to be all kinds of creatures,
going from one grievous path of life to another.
For mighty aether drives him into the sea,
sea spews him onto the surface of the earth, and earth to the rays
of shining sun, who casts him into the whirls of aether.
One takes him from another, but all abhor him.
Of these I too am now one, a fugitive and a wanderer from the gods,
a devotee of raving strife.

A similar phrase appears in Euripides’ *Orestes* 822 (ξίφος ἅνυγαξ ἄελίοιο δεῖξαι: “to exhibit the sword to the rays of the sun”), and the context of the *Orestes* passage is
similar to the Empedoclean fragment: here the chorus discusses how the good (killing Clytemnestra) was also not good because it brought the wrath of the furies for spilling the blood of a family member. According to Graham, the Empedoclean fragment explains how “by a crime of bloodshed or forswearing the long-lived daimones fall from their blissful existence and are condemned to thrice 10,000 seasons (presumably 10,000 years of three seasons each) of exile.” Since the *Orestes* was first performed in 408 and Empedocles’ death date is usually placed around 435, it is likely that Empedocles work influenced Euripides’ work rather than the other way around (if any influence at all can be postulated). But the *Argonautica* passage seems more closely related to the Empedoclean fragment than the *Orestes*: not only is the phrase in the same metrical position in both passages (the fifth and sixth feet of the first hexameter line and the first foot and a half of the second line: … ἃνυγαξ / ἣελιον …), but the context is similar as

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60 Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy*, 423.
well: both involve a cosmic cycle of change and both end with a connection to the speaker and his role in mediating the content for the audience.

This passage stands out because of the question in lines 648-9: “But what need have I to tell at length of the stories about Aethalides?” (ἀλλὰ τί μύθους Αἰθαλίδεω χρειόμεν δηνεκέως ἀγορεύειν). Why does Apollonius draw attention to Aethalides’ mnemonic abilities here by asking a question in the first person? In contrast to messenger scenes in Homer (where the audience usually hears the messenger give the same message he has been given) and other messenger scenes in the Argonautica (such as the closely-following scene featuring Iphinoe in 1.700-716), the audience does not hear what message the Argonauts give Aethalides or what he does, in fact, say to the Lemnian women, so his ability to remember and convey messages is not the issue. His lineage is relevant here since it is appropriate for a son of Hermes, the messenger god, to carry messages, but his memory and the state of his soul after death are not particularly relevant. His role as a messenger does not explain the first person question at the end of the passage (648-9).

Aethalides is known outside of the Argonautica, and that tradition helps to explain his significance in this passage. Mooney notes in particular Hyginus’ Fabulae 14,
Aulus Gellius 4.11, and Diogenes Laertius 8.1.4. Hyginus merely mentions Aethalides as one of the Argonauts and gives his parentage and home city, but Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius mention Aethalides in their accounts of Pythagoras and his claims about the transmigration of souls. In both accounts, the soul that was in Aethalides later ended up in Pythagoras via Euphorbus, but only Diogenes Laertius mentions that the soul remembered its past lives due to Hermes’ gift of memory. The combination of these two elements make Diogenes’ version the clearest parallel to Apollonius’, and Diogenes himself cites Heraclides of Pontus as his source for the story:

This is what Heraclides of Pontus tells us he [Pythagoras] used to say about himself: that he had once been Aethalides and was accounted to be Hermes’ son, and Hermes told him he might choose any gift he liked except immortality; so he asked to retain through life and through death a memory of his experiences. Hence in life he could recall everything, and when he died he still kept the same memories. Afterwards in course of time his soul entered into Euphorbus and he

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was wounded by Menelaus. Now Euphorbus used to say that he had once been Aethalides and obtained this gift from Hermes, and then he told of the wanderings of his soul, how it migrated hither and thither, into how many plants and animals it had come, and all that it underwent in Hades, and all that the other souls there have to endure. [5] When Euphorbus died, his soul passed into Hermotimus, and he also, wishing to authenticate the story, went up to the temple of Apollo at Branchidae, where he identified the shield which Menelaus, on his voyage home from Troy, had dedicated to Apollo, so he said; the shield being now so rotten through and through that the ivory facing only was left. When Hermotimus died, he became Pyrrhus, a fisherman of Delos, and again he remembered everything, how he was first Aethalides, then Euphorbus, then Hermotimus, and then Pyrrhus. But when Pyrrhus died, he became Pythagoras, and still remembered all the facts mentioned. (trans. R.D. Hicks)

Heraclides’ testimony mentions several key elements that are not all included in other accounts: 1) that Aethalides’ soul had imperishable memory, 2) that this memory was a gift from Hermes, 3) that the memory persisted after death, and 4) that the soul spent some time among the dead and some among the living. For Heraclides, this gift explains Pythagoras’ understanding of the transmigration of souls based on a unique experience and a privileged place of knowledge (because of the gift of memory) rather than a general theory Pythagoras reasoned out and which someone else might have discovered too. Thus Pythagoras’ knowledge is experiential rather than theoretical. It also explains why so few generations exist between Aethalides and Pythagoras: the transmigration of the soul to another human is not immediate, but includes time in Hades and time in other creatures in between, since there is a gap of time between Euphorbus and Hermotimus. 63

63 Heraclides seems to be working on a different time scale for the generations between the Argonauts and the Trojan war (or Heraclides presents Pythagoras as doing so) since Euphorbus discusses how much his soul has suffered and the places it has been, presumably since being in Aethalides (who belonged to the Argo generation). It is also possible that Pythagoras presents Hermes’ gift as including memory of the places Aethalides’ soul went before it entered Aethalides.
If Diogenes Laertius’ quotation is correct, the *Argonautica* passage seems clearly to echo the account of Heraclides of Pontus, who was a student at Plato’s Academy under Speusippus, or else it possibly echoes another Pythagorean source that is no longer available. As it appears that the only surviving source on Aethalides’ unfailing memory comes from the philosophical tradition, Apollonius’ description of Aethalides’ memory takes on meaning beyond an extended mythological reference, especially in light of connections with Callimachus’ *Iambus* 1, which also features early philosophical thinkers and the character of Pythagoras-Euphorbus.

*Iambus* 1 and this passage from the *Argonautica* share structural and thematic similarities that merit a close comparison. Structurally, *Iambus* 1 and the *Argonautica* share a similar cyclical form: *Iambus* 1 tells story of Bathycles’ cup, which begins and ends with Thales. Similarly, the journey of the Argo begins and ends at Pegasae. The *Argonautica* begins with Apollo and closes with the rites dedicated to him, and the diegesis to *Iambus* 1 states that the story of Bathycles’ cup ended with the dedication of the cup to Apollo. In both works the journey is undertaken in order to place an important object in the proper owner’s possession (the golden fleece in the *Argonautica*, the cup of Bathycles in *Iambus* 1).

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64 Aulus Gellius 4.11 mentions Cleanthes and Dicaearchus as sources for the story that Pythagoras’ soul was previously in Pyrrhus Pyranthius, then Aethalides, and then the courtesan Alco, but Aulus Gellius does not mention the gift of memory or Hermes in this passage. Nevertheless, in this light it may be relevant that Dicaearchus wrote a life of Plato and his fragments include criticism of the *Phaedrus*.
Thematically, both *Iambus* 1 and the *Argonautica* use the character of Aethalides-Euphorbus. In *Iambus* 1 this is clearest in lines 56-63, where Callimachus mentions “Phrygian Euphorbus”:

εὗρεν δ’ ὁ Προυσέληνος αἰσίω σίτη
eν τὸν Διδύμεος τὸν γέροντα κωνήῳ
ξόντα τὴν γῆν και γράφοντα τὸ σχήμα,
tοῦξεῦρ’ ο Φρύξ Εὐφόρβης, ὡς ὁ στίς ἄνθρωπων
καὶ κύκλον ἐπ[...] κηδίδαξε νηστεύειν
tὸν ἐμπνέον ντον ὁ [δ’ ἀρ’ οὐχ ὑπήκουσαν,

And the Arcadian by happy chance found the old man [Thales] in the shrine of Apollo at Didyma scratching the ground with a staff, and drawing the figure that the Phrygian Euphorbus discovered who first of men drew unequal triangles and the circle and who taught men to abstain from living creatures. The Italians obeyed him, not all, but those whom the other spirit constrained.

Here Pythagoras is not mentioned by name, but his presence is implied by the reference to the tradition of his rebirth that includes Euphorbus. According to Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius, this reincarnation included Aethalides as well, so the connection between the three characters in the context of the transmigration of souls is clear. This formulation of the story also introduces Pythagoras as part of the Homeric tradition (*Il. 16.786-857, 17.9-109*), and therefore unites the world of early philosophical thought and heroic narrative within a poem that that tells the story of the Seven Sages in the iambic voice of Hipponax. Both *Iambus* 1 and the *Argonautica* passage on Aethalides mention

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65 The connections between the Seven Sages of this passage and later philosophical traditions is further problematized by the diegesis of *Iambus* 1, which calls the seven sages of the poem “φιλολόγοις.” In the Milan papyrus, this reading is corrected.
the Acheron and bring an older voice back to life. *Iambus* 1 begins with the voice of Hipponax, speaking from beyond the grave to Callimachus’ audience:

> Ἀκούσαθ᾽ ἵππωνακτος· [ο] ὑ γὰρ ἄλλῳ ἂκω 1 ἐκ τὸν ὅκου βοῦν κολλύ [βου π] ἱπρήσκουσιν,

... 

κωπὴ γενέσθω | καὶ γρ|άφεσθε τὴν ῥήμιν.
ἀνὴρ Βαθυκλῆ|ς Αρκ|άς — οὐ μακρὴν ἄξω, ὡς λοῦτε μή εἰμαι|νε, καὶ γὰρ οὐδ’ αὐτὸς μέγα σχολὰς[ω ’] | ὲ[ε]ἴ | με γὰρ μέεον δινεῖν
ϕεῦ φ]εῦ Ἀχέρο[ντ]ο ... 35

Listen to Hipponax. For indeed I have come from the place where they sell an ox for a penny,
...
Let there be silence and write down my tale.
Bathycles, a man of Arcadia—I will not draw on at length, good man, do not turn up your nose, for truly even I have not much time. For alas, alas, I must whirl in the midst of Acheron ... (trans. Acosta-Hughes)

Both of these poems mention the whirl and the Acheron, although in *Iambus* 1, it is the speaker who must whirl in the midst of the Acheron (μέεον δινεῖν / ... Ἀχέρο[ντ]ο) while in the *Argonautica*, the character of Aethalides has already crossed the whirl (ἀποιχομένου Ἀχέρωντος / δίνας, 644-645). The re-birth and resurrection of tradition in new contexts is a consistent theme of *Iambus* 1, and the character of Pythagoras-Euphorbus-(Aethalides) is well suited to it.

Both *Iambus* 1 and Apollonius’ description of Aethalides also feature a contrast between the past and present. In *Iambus* 1, Hipponax addresses the “men of the present

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day” (ὦ νδρες οἱ νῦ, line 6) in contrast to Hipponax, who has already passed beyond the grave. The poem then proceeds back to the past, in the story of Bathycles and the transmission of an object through various sages. Apollonius briefly breaks the historical narrative of the Argo to draw the audience’s attention to the present as well: “And not even now, after his departure to the unspeakable eddies of Acheron, has forgetfulness come over his soul” (οὐδ’ ἢτι νῦν περ ἀποιχομένου Ἀχέροντος / δίνας ἀπροφάτους ψυχὴν ἐπιδέδρομε λήθη: 644-645). At this moment in the narrative, when Aethalides is sent to Hypsipyle, he is obviously alive (and indeed, his death does not occur within the narrative of the *Argonautica*), so this comment calls the audience to a time outside the narrative of the *Argonautica*. This movement outside the narrative and toward the audience is extended by the reference to the author himself at line 649: “But what need have I to tell at length stories about Aethalides?” This address to the audience breaks the illusion of the invisible narrator and draws the reader’s attention to the poet and his relationship to the work. As Acosta-Hughes points out in his commentary on *Iambus* 1, the character of Hipponax becomes a way for Callimachus to present his project to a contemporary audience and situate it in a tradition that stretches back to the archaic iambic poet. “… [Callimachus] does not assume the persona of a typical character of iambic poetry, but one of its composers, only then to further mystify his audience through the refashioning of this adopted persona.” Thus the Aethalides lines and *Iambus* 1 both concern the author’s relationship to his work and draw attention to the distance between

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the characters of the past (Aethalides/Argonauts, Hipponax/Bathycles) and the audience of the present, and the poet who is the mediator between the two.

Acosta-Hughes and Stephens point out that the image of reincarnation (literary and physical) is a significant one in *Iambus* 1: “Thales imitating Euphorbos (who has returned from the dead as Pythagoras) bears a certain resemblance to Callimachus imitating Hipponax in that both recall and transmit the past. Hipponax, though, makes no claims to reincarnation: he may have come back from the dead, but he cannot stay. His is a textual rather than a literal rebirth. But if the latter is possible, why not the former?”67 Just as Hipponax is an important figure for understanding Callimachus’ project in the *Iambi*, Aethalides is a significant figure for understanding Apollonius’ literary project in the *Argonautica*. He represents the ability to pass on memories from one generation to another, and as such, his identity as a messenger with persuasive abilities is pertinent. Apollonius uses and refashions previous literary traditions in his own work, but that literary aesthetic depends heavily on memory. In Apollonius’ case, it often depends on recall of individual words used once or twice in the works of Homer, Empedocles, and other authors, and reworked in a new context. This poetic aesthetic requires “imperishable memory of all things” (μνῆστιν … πάντων / ἀφθιτον) in the highest degree. But rather than a previous literary poet (such as Callimachus’ Hipponax), Apollonius uses a figure who is simultaneously part of the early philosophical tradition (through Pythagoras and Empedocles) and Homer and the heroic narrative tradition (through the association with Euphorbus). Thus the character of Aethalides allows

Apollonius to situate himself as the heir and memory-keeper of a larger category of epic that includes both early philosophy and heroic narrative. This interpretation may help explain why Aethalides’ exact words to the Lemnian women are not recorded (as Iphinoe’s instructions and message are in a closely-following passage): he does not merely repeat the words given to him, but produces an effect on an audience (1.650-651). Aethalides’ time among the living and the dead would be significant for a poet such as Apollonius, who uses the character to reference a tradition found in the works of dead authors (such as Homer and Empedocles) and one that continued to influence Apollonius’ contemporaries (including Callimachus).

The emphasis on memory in this passage and its connection to Empedocles’ work is reinforced by the repetition of the same pattern at Arg. 4.1744-5. Here the Argonaut Euphemus tells Jason about a disturbing dream in which he slept with his daughter, but the dream is actually about the a clod of earth that Triton gave to him, which will later become the island Calliste (modern Santorini). In his dream the clod addresses Euphemus:

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... εἴμι δ’ ἐς αὖγάς
ἡμῖν μετόπισθε τεοὶς νεφόδεσσιν ἐτοίμῃ.
Τὸν ἄρ’ ἐπὶ μνήστιν κραδὴ βάλεν, ἐκ τ’ ὀνόμην
Αἰσινίδη· ὦ δ’ ἐπειτα, θεοπροπίας Ἐκάτοιο
θυμῷ πεμπάξων, ἀνενείκατο φόνησέν τε·
"Ὡ ρέπον, ἥ μέγα δή σε καὶ άγλαον ἐμιορε κύδος.
βώλακα γὰρ τεῦξουσι θεοὶ πόντονδε βαλόντι
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68 Oddly, this is a similarity that Campbell does not mention, although he catches the same phrase at 1.647-8. Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129.
“... I shall later emerge into the sunlight, on hand for your descendants.” He [Euphemus] had stored the memory of these things in his heart, and recounted them to Jason. Then, after poring over the prophecies of the Far-Shooter in his spirit, Jason lifted his voice and said: “Truly my dear friend, great and glorious fame has been allotted to you, for after you cast the clod into the sea, the gods will turn it into an island, where later generations of your children will dwell, because Triton gave you this piece of the Libyan mainland as a guest-gift. It was he and no other of the immortals, who met us and gave it to you.” Euphemus did not render invalid Jason’s response, but in joy at his prophecies threw the clod into the depths. From it arose the island of Calliste, divine nurse of Euphemos’ descendants, who in former times lived on Sintian Lemnos, but, driven from Lemnos by Tyrrhenians, went as residents to Sparta. When they left Sparta, Theras, the noble son of Autesion, led them to the island of Calliste, and he changed the name to Thera after his own name. But these things happened long after Euphemos.

Apart from the similar phrase ἐς αὐγάς / ἥλιον, this passage has structural and thematic similarities with Empedocles’ fragment G25 (B115). Empedocles’ narrator details the journey of a deity from sea to earth after breaking divine laws. Similarly, Euphemus fears committing the sin of sleeping with his own daughter. Both passages involve a metamorphosis: the fallen divinity becomes various creatures, while the clod becomes first a virgin and then an island. Just as the Empedoclean divinity will be driven from aether to sea to earth to sun (the four elements), so Euphemus’ descendants will be driven from Sintian Lemnos to Sparta to Calliste, which will become Thera (four physical or nominal changes). The clod itself will move from the depths of the sea (where Euphemus
throws it) to become a piece of earth under the rays of the sun, mirroring the path Empedocles’ fallen divinity takes from sea to earth to sun.

Furthermore, this passage in the Argonautica includes many of the same elements as the previous passage from book 1 about Aethalides: both passages involve a change from living below the earth to living above it, both involve Hermes, and, most importantly, both involve memory. Just as Hermes gave Aethalides the ability to remember (μνῆστιν), so Euphemus remembers the dream out of reverence for Hermes, Maia’s son, (μνήσατ’, 1732-3) and this memory is passed on to another. The repetition of the Empedoclean line in two similar contexts reinforces the value of memory and its transmission, and it shows that Apollonius’ use of Empedocles’ work is not haphazard. The reader who can see the connection between the Apollonian line and the Empedoclean line will gain more from both and see connections across the Argonautica as a whole.

Apart from the discussion of Aethalides and the speaking clod (both of which contain the phrase ἐς αὐγὰς / ἥλιον), there are two other passages of the Argonautica that may use fragment G25 (B115). First, both 1.773 and 4.587 use the adjective ἀργαλέας.69 In Arg. 1.773, Jason decides not to take Atalanta with him because he fears bitter strife on account of love (δείσε γὰρ ἀργαλέας ἐριδάς φιλότητος ἐκηπτι). Although this is an adjective that also occurs frequently in Homer, this passage includes themes of Love and Strife, which are hallmarks of Empedocles’ theories, and this passage will turn up again in the discussion of G41 (B17). Arg. 4.587 has an even stronger connection to fragment G25 (B115) because it uses ἀργαλέας to describe the journeys and storms that

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69 These are similarities that WCopyFind identified and Campbell did not.
await the Argonauts if they are not cleansed for the murder of Apsyrtus: “[the beam of the Argo] said that they would not escape the paths of the vast sea nor troublesome storms unless Circe cleansed them for the ruthless murder of Apsyrtus (οὐ γὰρ ἀλύξειν / ἔννεπεν οὕτε πόρους δολιχῆς ἀλὸς οὕτε θυέλλας / ἀργαλέας, οὕτε μὴ Κίρκη φόνον Ἀψύρτοιο / νηλέα νίψειεν·). Fragment G25 describes a daimon whose purification for murder requires him to go from one grievous path to another (ἀργαλέας … κελεύθους), and he is driven from sea to earth to sun as each element rejects him. Similarly, the Argonauts are faced with paths on the sea (πόρους δολιχῆς ἀλὸς) for the murder of Apsyrtus, and their purification involves going to Circe, who is the daughter of Helios and thus associated with the sun (4.682-4). Both passages deal with purification and feature a similar path, and this similarity is emphasized by the repetition of the adjective ἀργαλέας.

4. Empedocles G36 (B12) and Arg. 4.1307-8

In fragment G36 (B12), Empedocles’ narrator describes the impossibility of generation from nothing and the passing away of existence:

ἐκ τε γὰρ οὐδάμ’ ἐόντος ἀμήχανόν ἐστι γενέσθαι καὶ τ’ ἐόν ἐξαπολέσθαι ἀνήνωστον καὶ ἀπυστον· αἰεὶ γὰρ τῇ γ’ ἔσται, ὅπερ κε τις αἰέν.

For from what in no way is, it is impossible to come to be, and for what-is to perish cannot be fulfilled or known, for it will always be there wherever one puts it at any time.
This is similar to the passage where the narrator of the *Argonautica* describes the potential death of the Argonauts and the end of their mission:  

And so in that place all the best of the heroes would have departed from life, leaving no names and no traces for humans to know of them, with their mission unfulfilled, but as they languished in helplessness, heroines took pity on them, the guardians of Libya, who once upon a time met Athena, after she leapt gleaming from her father’s head, by lake Triton’s waters and bathed her.

There is nothing in these particular words (ἀνήνυστος, ἀμηχανία/ἀμήχανος) that requires a discussion of existence, but both passages deal with passing away and returning. Both passages also touches on the question that puzzled the early philosophers, which Clay points out:

… the paradigm of genealogy and genealogical affiliation to explain similarity and difference as well as change gives way to a typology based on mixis and separation, compounding and disaggregation … this paradigm shift has been understood as a movement from mythos to logos, from a notion of anthropomorphic divinities to physical properties of the universe, from telling stories to giving rational accounts. But I would point out that this shift may have its basis in what was, at least for the Greeks, a fundamental problem and flaw in the genealogical model: how can what has been born and come into being be eternal? This existential puzzle seems to have engaged all the Pre-Socratics, but Hesiod may also have recognized the issue as he recounts the birth of the gods and simultaneously calls them aiæν eontes.  

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70 This is a similarity that I caught while looking at other parts of this passage. It was not identified by WCopyFind (since the endings of the words are different in the two passages) or by Campbell or other scholars.

71 Jenny Strauss Clay, “Commencing Cosmogony and the Rhetoric of Poetic Authority,” in *Cosmologies et Cosmogonies dans la littérature antique: huit exposés*.
The narrator of the *Argonautica* uses Empedoclean language to describe the possible death of the Argonauts and immediately follows this with an anecdote about the birth of a goddess (Athena), which brings to mind the same questions that Empedocles’ work discusses. In this way, Apollonius continues in the same tradition that Clay sees Empedocles and Parmenides participating in: “by their choice of using the hexameter form and epic diction, they declare both their emulation of their precursors as well as their engagement with the philosophic questions they pose.”

Apollonius’ awareness of Empedocles’ work and this issue in early philosophy may have led him to avoid the description Clay points to as problematic in Hesiod when describing the gods: *aien eontes*, always existing. In the *Argonautica* the gods are often described as *ἀθάνατοι* (undying), but never as *αιὲν ἄντες* (always existing), though that description appears multiple times in Homer and Hesiod.

Both of these passages also deal with the possibility of knowledge. Empedocles argues that the idea of existence passing away is *ἄπυστον* (unheard of). The Argonauts face the possibility of passing away and thus becoming unknown (*νώνυμοι καὶ ἄφαντοι ἐπιθυμοίσιι δαήναι*). This makes their continued existence dependent partly on the Libyan guardians, but also on the narrator of the *Argonautica*, who continues to tell their names and make them known to others. In this way Apollonius acknowledges the themes of this passage as well as individual words.

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72 Ibid.
5. Empedocles G44 (B20) and Arg. 4.1291

In fragment G44 (B20), Empedocles’ narrator describes the cycle of love and strife, where love brings things together and strife pulls them apart:

τοῦτο μὲν ἄν βροτέων μελέων ἀριδείκετον ὄγκον· ἄλλοτε μὲν Φιλότητι συνερχόμεν’ εἰς ἐν ἅπαντα γυῖα, τὰ σῶμα λέλογε, βίου θαλέθοντος ἐν ἀκμῆ· ἄλλοτε δ’ αὐτὴ κακήσαι διατηθέντ’ Ἐρίδεσσι πλάζεται ἄνδιχ’ ἐκαστα περίρρημιν βίοιο.

This is manifest in the mass of mortal limbs:
At one time our limbs all come together to be one in love,
And get a body, at the peak of blooming life;
and another time divided by evil strifes
they wander each apart along the shoreline of life.

As Campbell points out, a similar phrase occurs at Arg. 4.1291:

..... ἐπήλυθε δ’ αὐτίκ’ ἐρεμνή ἐσπερος· οι δ’ ἐλεεινα χεροῖν σφέας ἀμφιβαλόντες δικρυόειν ἀγάπαζον, ἵν’ ἄνδιχα δήθεν ἐκαστος θυμόν ἀπουθίζειαν ἐνὶ ψαμάθοισι πεσόντες.

βὰν δ’ ἰμεν ἄλλοις ἄλλος, ἐκαστέρω αὐλιν ἐλέσθαι· ἐν δὲ κάρῃ πέπλοισι καλυψαμενοι σφετέρουσιν, ἄκμηνοι καὶ ἀπαστοι ἐκεῖατο νύκτ’ ἐπὶ πάσαν καὶ φάος, οἰκτίστω θανάτῳ ἐπι. ...

Soon the evening darkness came on, and they piteously wrapped their arms around one another and said tearful farewells, so that each could then, apart from the rest, collapse on the sand and perish. They went off here and there, one further than the next, to choose a resting place, and, covering their heads with their cloaks, lay down without food or nourishment the entire night and next morning, in anticipation of an agonizing death.

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73 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity that WCOpCopyFind did not identify since the word endings are different in the two passages.
The close conjunction of these two words does not occur elsewhere in extant Greek literature. Furthermore, the contexts are similar: Empedocles describes a cycle of coming together in life (under the influence of love) and dividing in death (under the influence of strife). Similarly, the heroes come together to embrace in love (ἀγάπαζον) before separating to die separately. The situations are similar: Empedocles describes characters on the shoreline of life, the transition between life and death (περιρρηγματί βίοι, 5) and the Argonauts are also wandering the shore of Libya, where they expect to die (ἀριστής δολιχὸς πρόπαρ αἰγιαλοῖο / ἥλιουν ἐρπύζοντες, 4.1288-89). Apollonius has translated Empedocles’ vivid philosophical language into a narrative and turned the metaphorical shore into an actual one, but one that still keeps its significance as a division between life and death.

6. Empedocles G45 (B21) and Arg. 4.31, 4.1737

In fragment G45 (B21), Empedocles’ narrator describes how the combination and separation of elements (under the power of love and strife respectively) cause all the things in the visible world:

ἐν δὲ Κότωι διάμορφα καὶ ἀνδίχα πάντα πέλονται,
σὺν δ’ ἔβη ἐν Φιλότητι καὶ ἀλλήλοισι ποθέται.
ἐκ τούτων γὰρ πάνθ’ ὅσα τ’ ἦν ὅσα τ’ ἔστι καὶ ἔσται,

74 The only other passage where forms of this word occur within 15 words of each other is Arg. 2.793-4 (τόσσ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἤσπε οὔρεζ ἔθεν ἀνδίχα βάλλων· / τετράδος εἰς ἐκατὸν δευτοῖκα νέν, εἰ τις ἐκαστα). The words are further apart here and not part of the same grammatical clause.
In Rancour they are all divided **and separate**, but they come together **in Love** and are attractive to each other. From them all things that were, that are, and that will be [sprang]

In other passages of Empedocles’ work, strife is identified as νεῖκος (G41, B17) or ἔρις (G44, B20 + Strasbourg papyrus).

The phrase **καὶ ἄνδιχα** occurs only here and in *Arg.* 4.31, in the speech Medea makes as she leaves a lock of hair for her mother and leaves her family home under the influence of love for Jason (μὴτερ ἐμῇ, χαίροις δὲ καὶ ἄνδιχα πολλὸν ιούσῃ). The phrase **ἐν Φιλότητι** occurs often in Homer and Hesiod’s works but also in *Arg.* 4.1737, where Euphemus dreams that he made love to his daughter.⁷⁵ The dream is actually about the clod of earth he received from Triton, and this clod becomes a new island. As discussed above (section 3), the story of Euphemus’ clod shows how materials can undergo change to become new things, and in Euphemus’ dream, this happens under the influence of love (**ἐν Φιλότητι**) — a very Empedoclean change.

This dream also presents an interesting model for reading and interpretation in the *Argonautica*. In the dream, Euphemus watches the clod become a virgin. The virgin speaks to him and explains or interprets the change: she is actually Triton’s child and he should return her to the daughters of Nereus. When he wakes up and tells the story to Jason, Jason interprets the story about a woman and other humans to be a discussion of physical elements: it is a dream about a clod that will later become an island. (This is not necessarily a rejection of supernatural influence; Jason still maintains that the clod is a

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⁷⁵ The similarities in this section (**καὶ ἄνδιχα** and **ἐν Φιλότητι**) were identified by WCopyFind and not by Campbell.
gift from the god Triton.) Just as Empedocles anthropomorphizes elements and cosmic forces and gives them divine names, so the material clod becomes a divine woman.\textsuperscript{76} And just as Empedocles’ narrator has to explain the relationship of these forces/divinities to other humans, so Jason has to explain the dream’s meaning to Euphemus: he must throw the clod into the sea. In both authors, the categories of “material object” and “divine personality” are semi-permeable, and this may be part of what draws Apollonius’ attention to Empedocles’ work.

7. Empedocles G46 (B22), G41 (B17), the Strasbourg Papyrus and Arg. 1.496-8

One of the more obvious and well-known passages where Apollonius references Empedocles is the song of Orpheus in book 1.\textsuperscript{77} In this passage, the Argonauts almost begin fighting each other, but their argument stops when Orpheus sings a song about the origin of the world and the early gods. Because this passage incorporates aspects of two Empedoclean fragments and is one of the most well-known passages where Apollonius uses Empedocles’ work, I have chosen to treat it separately from other Argonautica passages that also borrow from G46 (B22) and G41 (B17). This passage shows significant interaction with Empedocles’ cosmological ideas, and the scholia on the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} Apart from the force of Love (sometimes called Aphrodite), Empedocles gives character names to the four roots or elements: Zeus is fire, Her is earth, Hades is air, Nestis is water. See fragments G26 (B6), G27 (A33), G28 (A28), G29 (A28).
\item \textsuperscript{77} Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. Both WCopyFind and Campbell identified similarities between these passages.
\end{itemize}
passage show that ancient readers also saw a connection between Empedocles’ ideas and this passage of the *Argonautica*.

Although our understanding of Empedoclean cosmogony is limited by the fragmentary nature of his work, it is clear from several of his fragments that Empedocles believed that the world was once a unity but was subsequently separated into four fundamental elements (earth, sky, water, and fire). The opposing forces of Love and Strife periodically combine and separate the elements, and this combination-separation cycle allows for the creation of new composite forms. This doctrine is especially clear in fragment 41.78

\begin{verbatim}
δίπλ' ἐρέω· τοτὲ μὲν γὰρ ἐν ἡμέρῃ μόνον εἶναι
ἐκ πλεόνων, τοτὲ δὲ αὐτὶ διέφυ πλέον ἐξ ἔνδος εἶναι,
πῦρ καὶ ὀδόρ καὶ γαία καὶ ἥρως ἀπλετὸν ὕψος,
Νεῖκός τ' οὐλόμενον δίχα τὸν, ἀτάλαντον ἀπάντημι,
καὶ Φιλότης ἐν τοῖσιν, ἵση μῆκός τε πλάτος τε· 20 (30)
\end{verbatim}

I shall speak a double tale: at one time they grew to be one alone from many, at another time it grew apart to be many from one: fire, water, earth, and the lofty expanse of air, destructive Strife apart from them, balanced in every direction and Love among them, equal in height and width.

Here the fundamental elements of Empedoclean cosmology are evident, including the four elements of fire, water, earth, and air, and the two principles that govern their combinations, namely Strife (Νεῖκός), and Love (Φιλότης). Despite the similarity of the

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78 In Graham’s edition fragment G41 (B17) is augmented by the Strasbourg Papyrus, which was identified as Empedoclean in 1994 and thus post-dates the Diels-Kranz numbering system. (The papyrus itself was discovered in 1904.) The original fragment (B17) is from Simplicius’ *Physics* 158.1-159.4. I have used Graham’s line numbers here, with the DK line numbers in parentheses. A helpful summary of the papyrus’ history can be found in N. van der Ben’s “The Strasbourg Papyrus of Empedocles: Some Preliminary Remarks,” *Mnemosyne* 52 no. 5 (1999), 525-544.
words φιλότης and φιλία (friendship, affection), the word φιλότης usually means something closer to erotic love, especially since Empedocles himself also calls it Aphrodite (line 24).

The poet lists the fundamental elements in a different order in fragment 46 (B22):

ἀρθμια μὲν γὰρ ταῦτα ἐαυτῷ πάντα μέρεσιν, ἥλεκτωρ τε χθὼν τε καὶ οὐρανὸς ἕδε θάλασσα, ὅσα φιν ἐν θνητοῖσιν ἀποπλαχθέντα πέρυκεν. ὥς δ’ αὐτῶς ὡς κρῆσιν ἐπαρκέα μᾶλλον ἔσαν, ἄλλῳς ἔστερκται ὁμοιοθέντ’ Ἀφροδίτῃ. ἐχθρὰ <δ’ ἀ> πλείστον ἀπ’ ἄλληλων διέχουσι μάλιστα γέννησι τε κρῆσει τε καὶ εἴδειν ἐκμάκτοις, πάντης συγγίνεσθαι ἀήθεα καὶ μάλα λυγρά Νεῖκεος ἐννεσίησιν, ὃτι σφίσι γένναν ἐοργεν.

All these are united with their own parts, beaming sun, earth, heaven, and sea, which by nature wander off among mortal things. In this way those that are more fit for blending are attracted to each other, being assimilated by Aphrodite, <but those that> are especially hostile keep most apart from each other in birth, blending, and modeled forms, in every way unaccustomed to associate and very sullen, being generated in strife, because they were born in wrath.

These fragments express similar ideas: the four elements combine and separate under the influence of Love and Strife. In book 1 of the Argonautica, Orpheus’ song begins with a similar idea and makes use of line 2 from fragment G46 and strife from line 19 of the fragment quoted before (G41). In Orpheus’ song, Strife is similarly described as destructive, but its overall effect is creative, based on how it separates the other elements. The theme of strife is also relevant to the immediate context surrounding Orpheus’ song:

79 Homer and Hesiod use the same word to refer to erotic love, although this is not the only way it is used. See, for example, Il. 6.25, 3.445, Od. 8.313, Th. 374.
after the Argonaut Idas challenges Jason regarding his plan for the trip, another Argonaut (Idmon) rebukes him and the encounter threatens to become violent until Orpheus steps in and sings this song:

Χώετ’ ἐνπτάζων· προτέρω δὲ κε νεῖκος ἔτυχθη,
εἰ μὴ δηριώντας ὀμοκλήσαντες ἐταῖροι
αὐτὸς τ’ Ἀισονίδης κατερήτυνεν· ἀν δὲ καὶ Ὄρφεὺς
λαῖῃ ἀνασχόμενος κῖθαριν πείραζεν ἄοιδῆς.

ὥστε γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἢδὲ θάλασσα,
tὸ πρὶν ἐπ’ ἀλλήλοις μὴ συναρηρότα μορφῇ,

neίκος δὲ Όλοοι διέκριθεν ἀμφὶς ἔκαστα:

ὁ ἡ δὲ Ῥέη, ἔπεσον δ’ ἐνί κύμαισιν Ὄλυμποι:

Thus he reviled him in his anger, and the strife would have gone further, had not their comrades and Jason himself rebuked the antagonists and restrained them. Then too Orpheus lifted up his lyre with his left hand and tried out a song. He sang of how the earth, sky, and sea, at one time combined in a single form, through deadly strife became separated each from the other; and of how the stars and moon and paths of the sun always keep their fixed place in the sky; and how the mountains arose; and how the echoing rivers with their nymphs and all the land animals came to be. He sang of how, in the beginning, Ophion and Ocean’s daughter Eurynome held sway over snowy Olympus, and how, through force of hand, he ceded rule to Cronus and she to Rhea, and they fell into the waves of the Ocean. These two in the meantime ruled over the blessed Titan gods, while Zeus, still a child and still thinking childish thoughts, dwelt in the Dictaean cave, and the earth-born Cyclopes had not yet armed him with the thunder-bolt, thunder, and lightning, for these give Zeus his glory.
Orpheus’ song thus contains an Empedoclean cosmogony: once all things were one, but Strife separated them. Three of the four elements are identifiable in Orpheus’ song (γαῖα = earth, οὐρανός = sky, θάλασσα = water, line 496). Fire is missing, but its absence may be explained by the stars, moon, and sun, which are listed next.

The phrase καὶ οὐρανὸς ἡ ἄδεθάλασσα also occurs in Hesiod’s *Theogony* 847, but there the context is the battle against Typhoeus, while the Empedoclean fragment and *Argonautica* passage share the context of a cosmogony. But the major point of contact between Apollonius’ poem and Empedocles’ cosmogony is strife (νεῖκος, 492). In Orpheus’ version, the noun is in the genitive (νείκεος ἐξ οὐλοῦ, “through deadly strife,” 498), while in the Empedoclean fragment it is in the nominative (Νεῖκος τ’ οὐλόμενον, 29, “cursed strife” in Race’s translation), but both are described with forms of ὄλλυμι or a related adjective. Within the *Argonautica*, this strife between Idas and Idmon is the starting point for Orpheus’ song, so the creative force of destructive strife works on a narrative level as well as a cosmogonic one in the *Argonautica*: the strife among the crew prompts Orpheus to sing, so their interpersonal strife is the impetus for a creative act. The song also addresses the central issue between Idas and Idmon: their different attitudes toward Zeus and the gods. Idmon has stated that his spear is a more effective help than Zeus (466-71). Idas responds by arguing that this type of talk brings retribution from the gods (476-84). After Orpheus sings, the crew is spellbound and then turns to complete

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80 οὐρανὸς ἡ ἄδεθάλασσα (without the initial καὶ) also appears at *Od.* 12.404 (Odysseus and his crew leave the island of Thrinacia) and *Od.* 14.302. (Odysseus tells Eumaeus a tale of sailing from Crete). Both contextually and verbally, the Empedoclean passage is closer to the *Argonautica* passage.
libations for Zeus, which the narrator describes in 517 as ἰδίας (fitting or proper). By returning the crew to civilized behavior and proper conduct toward Zeus and the gods, Orpheus and his music perform the unifying role of φιλότης for the small cosmos of the Argonauts, and this fits with Clauss’s theory about Orpheus’ role in the “skill” section of the catalogue.

Many modern scholars, including Wilamowitz and Mooney, have noticed that there is a connection between Empedocles’ work and the song of Orpheus. But ancient readers, such as an anonymous scholiast, also recognized the connection between Orpheus’ song and Empedoclean cosmogony:

νείκεος ἐξ ὀλοσθή: Ἐμπεδοκλῆς φησιν, ὅτι συγκεχυμένων ἀπάντων τὸ πρότερον νεῖκος καὶ φιλία παραπεμθέντα τὴν διάκρισιν ἐποίησαντο, χωρὶς δὲ τούτων οὐδὲν δύναται γενέσθαι: ὃ ἑπεται, ὡς εἰκός, καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος, ὃ δὲ Θαλῆς ἄρχην ὑπεστήσατο πάντων <τὸ> ώδορ, λαβών παρὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ λέγοντος· ‘Ἀλλ’ ὑμεῖς πάντες ώδορ καὶ γαῖα γένοισθε’. καὶ Ζῆνος δὲ τὸ παρ’ Ἡσίοδο ἁόρος ώδορ εἶναί φήσιν, οὐ συνιζάνοντος ἕλιν γίνεσθαι, ἢς πηγνυμένης ἢ γῆ στερεμισσώμεθα· τρίτον δὲ ἔρωτα γεγονέναι καθ’ Ἡσίοδον ἴνα τὸ πῦρ παραστήσῃ· πυρωδέστερον γὰρ πάθος ὁ ἐρως. Ἀναξαγόρας δὲ μῦδρον εἶναι τὸν ἥλιον φήσιν, ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα γίνεσθαι. διὸ καὶ Εὐρυπίδης γνώριμος αὐτῶ γεγονός φησί τις ἔσοδον βιόλον τὸν ἥλιον εἶναι. τὴν δὲ σελήνην ὁ αὐτὸς Ἀναξαγόρας χώραν πλατεῖαν ἀποφαίνει, ἐξ ἢς δοκεῖ ὁ Νεμέας λέων πεπτωκέναι.

“From destructive strife”: Empedocles says that when all things had been mixed, then strife and love first made sure that distinction was propagated, and apart from these two, nothing can come into existence; it is likely that Apollonius is following Empedocles here. Thales posited water as the first principle of all things, drawing on Homer, who says “but may you all become water and earth” (Il. 7.99). And Zeno says that Hesiod’s “chaos” (Theog. 116ff.) is water, and it becomes mud when mixed, and the mud hardens to earth when it becomes solid. And third, according to Hesiod, eros came into existence, in order that it might produce fire. And Anaxagoras says that the sun is a lump of molten metal, from

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which all things come to be. Therefore, Euripides, when he became familiar with Anaxagoras, said that the sun was a golden lump (Or. 983). And the same Anaxagoras says that the moon is a broad land from which the Nemean lion appears to have fallen.

The scholiast argues that Apollonius is using Empedocles’ work here because that is the closest cosmogony among all those of which he knows, but he surveys other tangentially related cosmogonies, probably to show why Empedocles’ ideas are the closest. This summary of other philosophical sources shows that the scholiast sees an interesting interplay here between philosophy and poetry. On the one hand, philosophers respond to the poets: Thales begins with Homer’s work, and Zeno situates his own work with respect to Hesiod’s. But poets also respond to and use philosophers: Euripides uses Anaxagoras’ ideas in the Orestes. In light of this, the scholiast situates Apollonius, drawing on Empedocles’ work, in a long tradition of mutual influence between poets and philosophers. In contrast to the Aristotelian view in the Poetics, philosophical and poetic authors do not belong to different spheres. Apollonius’ imitation of previous authors not only includes individual words and concepts but the methodology of mixing philosophical and poetic sources.

This does not explain why Apollonius chooses to use a clearly Empedoclean reference at this point in the Argonautica. As Nelis points out, there are some good reasons to understand Apollonius’ poetic project in relation to both Homer’s and Empedocles’ works. In relation to Homer’s work, Nelis points out that Demodocus’ song in book 8 of the Odyssey occurs before the embarkation of the Phaeacian ship, just as Orpheus’ song occurs before the Argo’s embarkation. Just as Odysseus sits apart from the others at the Phaeacian court, so Jason sits apart from the other Argonauts after the feast,
and just as Odysseus is insulted by Euryalus, so Jason is insulted by Idmon. These similarities set the reader up to see similarities between the song of Orpheus and Demodocus’ song about Ares and Aphrodite (a parallel that might not be immediately obvious based on the content of the two songs). But Nelis points out that the allegorical interpretation of Homer may also bring these two passages together in the minds of ancient readers:

... one way of explaining away the problem [of the scandalous Ares/Aphrodite song] was to show that this passage should be read allegorically and that beneath the surface of the love story Homer was really dealing with much more serious and edifying themes. The best surviving source for this approach to Demodocus' song is the Homeric Allegories by one Heraclitus, a text probably to be dated to the first century A.D. This work, however, stands in a long tradition of allegorical exegesis of Homer going back to the sixth century B.C. The infamous nature of the story of Ares and Aphrodite suggests that an allegorical reading was applied to it at a relatively early date and this approach to the passage certainly pre-dates Apollonius Rhodius since Plato is clearly aware of the practice of finding deeper significance beneath apparently frivolous passages of Homer. ... Ares and Aphrodite were thus seen to represent the Empedoclean forces of Strife and Love. The song of Orpheus begins with the separation of earth, sky, and sea through the actions of cosmic Strife, νείκεος ἐξ ὀλοοῖο (Argon. 1, 498). Both an ancient scholiast and modern commentators note that Apollonius is here drawing on Empedocles, as he also does elsewhere in the Argonautica. In doing so, he imitates the song of Demodocus by removing the allegorical figures of Ares and Aphrodite and revealing the true significance of the Phaeacian bard's words.82

In this way Nelis argues that contemporary allegorical interpretations might encourage Apollonius and other ancient readers to think of Demodocus’ song and Empedocles’ theory of Love and Strife together. Under this theory, Apollonius has stripped away the mythical aspects of physical theory that were present in Homer (and also, to an extent, in

Empedocles\textsuperscript{83} and has Orpheus give the audience the straight story, with figurative language removed.

This theory is problematic for several reasons. First of all, it does not explain why Orpheus’ song moves to a succession myth about the gods. If Apollonius is attempting a non-allegorical version of physical theory, why include them? But more importantly, this interpretation misses an essential aspect of Demodocus’ song because it does not account for the way that Homeric art serves a function within the narrative. In \textit{Odyssey} 8, where Demodocus sings of Aphrodite and Ares after Euryalus insults Odysseus, the song accomplishes several things: first, it shows that Demodocus understands and agrees with the dichotomy Odysseus has just drawn between those who are physically beautiful and those who are skilled (8.152-198). Odysseus states that Euryalus is beautiful but crippled in mind, and Demodocus’ song portrays two similar characters: Ares is beautiful, but Hephaestus is smart. When Hephaestus tricks Ares and leaves him open to ridicule, Demodocus shows agreement with the categories Odysseus has set up and with Odysseus’ implied conclusion that brains can trump brawn. Secondly, the story hints that an outside actor is needed to intervene in order to resolve the current strife. Just as Poseidon intervenes with Hephaestus to get Ares out of his predicament, so someone needs to intervene to reconcile Odysseus and Euryalus. Alcinous is a receptive listener and understands the point of the story; he soon tells Euryalus to make amends for his insult, which Euryalus does. Demodocus’ song uses the divine sphere as a moral example.

\textsuperscript{83} Apart from the force of Love (sometimes called Aphrodite), Empedocles gives names to the four roots or elements: Zeus is fire, Her is earth, Hades is air, Nestis is water. See fragments G26 (B6), G27 (A33), G28 (A28), G29 (A28).
for humans, and Poseidon is an apt analogue for King Alcinous, given the Phaeacians’ close ties to Poseidon. The song is not so much about sex and adultery as it is about the politics of reconciliation.

In a similar way, Orpheus’ song in book 1 of the *Argonautica* can be read as a strife-ending lesson about brute force versus divine aid, which is the subject of the disagreement between Idas and Idmon. When Idas confronts Jason about his plans for the expedition, Idas presents his military prowess as the reason why he is most fit to help Jason. This is a second attempt to put the mission back on the footing of rule by the strongest after the crew originally picked Heracles as its leader (and only selected Jason after Heracles insisted on it). Idas states that his power will be sufficient to get Jason through the task, even if they face divine opposition. Idmon suggests a flaw in the reasoning: Idas may be strong, but he is not as strong or powerful as a god. Idmon knows this because Otus and Ephialtes were much stronger than Idas (they piled one mountain on top of another, after all), yet they were killed by Apollo for similar boasts. The problem is Idas’ might is not mighty enough when faced with divine opposition, and this places Idmon (a seer) in a particularly important position: as the one who knows what the gods want, his help is more important than that of any warrior. Idas responds in a way that is similar to Agamemnon’s response to Calchas in book 1 of the *Iliad*: he suggests that the prophetic arts are not being used legitimately and threatens Idmon’s life. (Ironically, Idmon has already prophesied his own death, and so by killing him, Idas would prove the prophecy right.)
Like the quarrel between Odysseus and Euryalus in *Odyssey* 8, the strife in *Argonautica* 1 is halted by a work of art, and the narrator draws explicit attention to the connection between the strife in the narrative and Orpheus’ song (and, like Demodocus’ song, Orpheus’ song is self-contained and closer to lyric than epic in some ways):

\[\ldots\ \text{προτέρω δὲ κε νείκος ἑτύχη,}
\]
\[\text{εἰ μὴ δηριώντας ὠμοκλῆσαντες ἔταιροι}
\]
\[\text{αὐτός τ’ Αἰσονίδης κατερίτυεν· †ἀν δὲ καὶ † Ὀρφεύς,}
\]
\[\text{λαῃ ἀνασχόμενος κιθαρίν, πείραζεν ἀοιδῆς.}
\]

… and the strife would have gone further, had not their comrades and Jason himself rebuked the antagonists and restrained them. Then too Orpheus lifted up his lyre with his left hand and tried out a song.

Orpheus’ song, which permanently ends the strife, is similar to the song of Demodocus in the way that it is a story by a poet within the narrative and puts an end to a quarrel between two characters who rely on might and cleverness, respectively (Idas/Euryalus, Idmon/Odysseus). As such, we should look for ways in which the song interacts with the narrative around it and speaks to similar themes. At first, Orpheus’ song reaffirms the idea that might can do what it wants: Ophion and Eurynome originally held Olympus, but they were forced out by Cronus and Rhea. Orpheus’ audience knows that Zeus will take their place, in turn, but Orpheus puts a different emphasis on Zeus’ rise to power: it is not might or brute force alone that will give him the eventual ability to do this, but the craft of the Cyclopes: … οἱ δὲ μν οὖπω / ἡγεσεῖς Κύκλωπες ἐκαρτύναντο κεραυνῷ, / βροντῇ τε στεροπῇ τε: τὰ γὰρ Δί τοι κόδος ὀπάξει (“… the earth-born Cyclopes had not yet strengthened him [Zeus] with the lightning bolt, the thunder, and the flash of lightening:
for these give Zeus his glory” 5.510-11).\textsuperscript{84} Orpheus’ song points out that the divine order has not always been set; it has involved turnover and instability from the beginning, but the song also points out that Zeus’ current power is due to the craftsmanship of others. In essence, it is acts of art, skill, and craftsmanship—not acts of force—that can vanquish strife. Similarly, in the narrative world outside the song, it is Orpheus’ art that calms the strife, and at the conclusion of the song the Argonauts (including Idas and Idmon) are left speechless and without conflict, and the libations the crew pours to Zeus directly afterward indicate a new attitude toward the gods as well as their fellow Argonauts (1.516-517).

In this way, Apollonius appropriates the Homeric idea of a story-within-a-story to solve strife, but that story also uses Empedoclean concepts and phrases. Those Empedoclean phrases are not trivial references but instead show that Apollonius understands the larger context of the Empedoclean passages and uses them in a way that seamlessly integrates Homeric and Empedoclean ways of reading and fits with Apollonius’ larger project of showing the contrast between force and art. These passages also show Apollonius reading Empedocles’ work alongside Homer’s and using Empedocles’ reading of Homer (especially the contrast between Love and Strife) to augment and develop his own use of Homer’s work. In this way, Empedocles is not only

\textsuperscript{84} This line appears to be a reference to Iliad 8.141, where Nestor tells Diomedes that Zeus is no longer on his side, but has given the glory to Hector (νῦν μὲν γὰρ τούτῳ Κρονίδης Ζεὺς κύδως ὁπὺξ). Nestor’s point in this passage (that Zeus is the deciding factor in any human conflict) fits well with Idmon’s point that the gods are stronger than humans.
interesting to Apollonius as a primary source but a secondary source on Homer's works and an example of adapting an epic source for a new context.

8. Empedocles G41 (B17) and Arg. 1.773, 2.685, 2.389

Fragment G41 (B17) is a longer fragment that explains the cosmic cycle and the changes that occur under the influence of Love and Strife. As discussed in section 7, this view of the world influences Orpheus’ song in book one of the Argonautica, but other phrases from this fragment also show up throughout the work. The narrator develops the connection between love and strife when he says that Jason refuses to take Atalanta with him because he fears the bitter strifes provoked by love (ἦριδας φιλότητος, 1.773). This is a passage that uses other Empedoclean vocabulary as well (ἀργαλέας, section 3 above).

In the middle of this fragment, Empedocles’ narrator tells the audience to listen to something he has said before, when he announced the end of stories (πιφαύσκων … μύθων, 15) and tells the audience to look at Love with their mind (νόωι) rather than being dazzled with their eyes (δημασίν … τεθηπώς, 21). When Apollo appears to the Argonauts in Arg. 2, wonder (θάμβος, from the same root as τεθηπώς) seizes them and they are unable to stare directly into the beautiful eyes of the god (τοῦς δ’ ἔλε θάμβος ἱδόντας ἀμήχανον, οὐδὲ τις ἔτελη / ἀντίον αὐγάσσασθαι ἐς δηματα καλὰ θεοῖο, 2.681-2). Orpheus then speaks to the heroes (μῦθον … πιφαύσκων) and tells them to set up an altar to

85 This is a similarity that Campbell does not point out, but Kyriakou does in “Empedoclean Echoes in Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica,” 315. WCpyFind also helped identify this similarity.
Apollo. In this way, the *Argonautica* passage reverses the elements in the Empedoclean passage (Empedocles: πιφαύσκων ... μόθων, eyes, wonder; *Arg.*: wonder, eyes, μῦθον ... πιφαύσκων). Both passages involve an encounter with a god (Love/Apollo) and a wise figure (narrator/Orpheus) who explains the correct way to interact with the god.  

This passage of Empedocles’ work also contains the phrase τε φιλα φρονέ-, describing how Love allows humans to think kindly thoughts (τῆ τε φιλα φρονέουσι, 23). A similar phrase appears at *Arg.* 2.389, where Phineus explains that his intentions are good when he tells the Argonauts to stop at the island of Ares, though he cannot tell them why (τῶ καὶ τε φιλα φρονέων ἀγορεύω, 389). The last half of this phrase (φιλα φρονέ-) also occurs in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* several times, so the parallel is not as striking as πιφαύσκων ... μόθων, but because this is a fragment Apollonius is apparently familiar with, he may be using it in Phineus’ speech in addition to Homer.

9. Empedocles G47 (B23) and *Arg.* 1.52, 4.933, 2.27

In fragment G47 (B23), Empedocles’ narrator uses the analogy of painting to explain how the combination of simple elements can create a complex and varied world.

ός δ’ ὅπόταν γραφεῖς ἀναθήματα ποικύλλωσιν

86 These are similarities that WCopyFind identified and Campbell did not.

87 This is a similarity WCopyFind identified but Campbell did not.

88 *Il.* 4.219, 5.116; *Od.* 1.307, 6.313, 7.15, 42, 75, 16.17. In the Homeric passages, the phrase is not preceded by τε (as it is in the Empedoclean fragment and the *Argonautica*).
As when painters decorate offerings,
**men well trained** by wisdom in their craft,
who when they grasp colorful chemicals with their hand,
mixing them in combination, some more, some less,
from them provide forms like to all things,
creating trees, men, women,
beasts, fowls, water-nourished fish,
and longlived gods foremost in honors.
So do not let deception overtake your wits and convince you that from somewhere else is the source
of mortal things, all the untold many things that have been manifested,
but know these things clearly, having heard the tale from a god.\(^{89}\)

This fragment describes how the visible and tangible world is made of mixed elements,
just as painters mix a simple set of pigments to create visual representations of the vast variety of things contained in the world. In this way, the physical world is deceptively diverse, insofar as it is made from only four “roots” or elements, just as painters use four basic colors and mixed them to create others.\(^{90}\) This interpretation fits well with other

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\(^{89}\) This translation is adapted from Graham’s because his translation was confusing (particularly for lines 11-12).

Empedoclean fragments that indicate an early understanding of elements mixing to create a complex and varied world.\textsuperscript{91}

This passage is the basis for one of the earliest and most convincing Empedoclean echoes in the \textit{Argonautica}, in a description of the two sons of Hermes in the catalogue of heroes:\textsuperscript{92}

\begin{quote}
o\'o\deltai\ Άλότη μίμων πολυλήμιον Ἐρμείαον
υίςες εὖ δεδαώτε δόλους, Ἐρυτος καὶ Ἐχίων
\end{quote}

Nor did Hermes’ two sons, Erytus and Echion, possessors of many grain fields and well skilled in trickery, remain in Alope.

The rare dual form δεδαώτε modified by the adverb εὖ is identical to Empedocles’ description of the two painters. A TLG search indicates that this verb, δάω, is used throughout Homeric epic and other authors prior to Apollonius but never in this dual form and never immediately modified by the adverb εὖ apart from the Empedoclean fragment.\textsuperscript{93} The dual form may have caught Apollonius’ eye because of its rarity, and he uses it in a context (two brothers) that makes clear that he understands the form. This shows a close reading of the Empedoclean passage.\textsuperscript{94}

\begin{enumerate}
\item[91] Cf. fragment G32 (B8) and especially fragment G41 (B17 and the Strasbourg Papyrus a(i) and a(ii)).
\item[92] Campbell, \textit{Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica}, 129. This is a similarity both WCopyFind and Campbell identified.
\item[93] There is a fragment of Tyrtaeus where δάω is modified by εὖ, but the parallel is not as close: εὖ δ’ ὀργήν ἔδάητ’ ἀργαλέου πολέμου (fragment 11.8).
\item[94] Apollonius uses the verb δάω again with εὖ at 1.76, again in the context of three brothers, but here referring only to one of the brothers: ... σὺν καὶ τρίτος ῥεῖν Ὀιλεύς, ἔξεχος ἤνωρεν καὶ ἐπαξίζω μετόπισθεν / εὖ δεδαὼς ἠδοιος, ὃτε κλίνειε φάλαγγα. “And with them came Oïleus, peerless in courage and well skilled at rushing
Warren argues that this dual form in Empedocles’ work could be a reference to the two opposing forces of Love and Strife in Empedocles’ cosmogony: as these two forces govern the mixing of the elements that create the visible world, so the two painters govern the mixing of pigments that create a representation of the visible world.\textsuperscript{95} Warren’s argument depends on the fact that we no longer have the context for this fragment, and Empedocles could have made this connection clear outside of the quote that survives. Although this argument may seem stretched, it explains why Empedocles would use a dual form here rather than plural form, and it completes the analogy:

\begin{center}
two painters : pigments : process of painting : pictures \\
Love and Strife : elements : mixing : visible world
\end{center}

Clauss points out that there are dual aspects of the catalogue of Argonauts, too, where this passage appears:

The first half begins and ends with stories involving heroes who achieved their respective feats through their communicative skills; the second half is framed with accounts of heroes who attained the objects of their quest through their physical prowess. The Catalogue thus unfolds in such a way that the reader is invited to see the two halves as representative of two types of hero, the man of skill and the man of strength.\textsuperscript{96}


\textsuperscript{96} James J. Clauss, \textit{The Best of the Argonauts: the Redefinition of the Epic Hero in Book One of Apollonius’ Argonautica} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 32.
Clauss’ observation is persuasive and it provides an organizing principle that may help the reader understand why Apollonius would be drawn to Empedocles as a source and why he would reference him here. The distinction between skill/communication and strength/physical prowess is not dissimilar to the opposing forces of Love/Strife that are the guiding forces of Empedocles’ cosmogony (although this is not a connection Clauss himself draws). In general, it is characters from the second (strength) half of the catalogue who incite or continue strife among the Argonauts, while it is those from the first half of the catalogue who draw the crew back into harmony and cohesion through their skills in communication. For example, the first disagreement the Argonauts experience is incited by Idas (from the strength part of the catalogue), who begins a strife (νεῖκος, 1.492) that would have continued but for the intervention of Orpheus (from the skill part of the catalogue). Orpheus calms the strife with a song, which also includes Empedoclean echoes (1.496-511, discussed above). If the heroes from the second half of the catalogue cause strife, the heroes from the first half bring the crew back to unity, and the interplay between the two provides narrative and creative tension, similar to the creative role that Strife and Love play in Empedocles’ theory.

In referencing Empedocles’ work in this particular passage regarding the sons of Hermes, Erytos and Echion, Apollonius has selected an Empedoclean passage that involves a skill (painting) that can deceive the eyes in the way that it represents physical reality. Apollonius has then applied this passage to a description of two characters who are part of the catalogue of skilled men and who are, furthermore, skilled in δόλους (deception, craft, cunning). There is not only a clear verbal link between the two passages
(especially the unusual dual form of δάω), but also thematic links between two passages about skill and deception.

Finally, this fragment from Empedocles’ work concludes with the poet’s statement of authority: he is a god, stating the truth about the world, and the audience should learn from him the true origin of things. Similarly, the Argonautica passage about Erytros and Echion is part of the catalogue of Argonauts, which begins with the poet calling on the muses to be the ὑποφήτορες of his song (1.22) as he tells where the heroes came from (he includes both their lineages and their geographic origins in the catalogue). Both passages serve a programmatic purpose, establish the poet’s authority, and deal with origins (albeit of different types).

Apollonius also uses the beginning of this fragment at 4.933, in a simile comparing the Nereids circling the ship to dolphins.97

And as when dolphins in calm weather leap up from the sea and circle a ship in schools as it speeds along, sometimes showing up in front, sometimes behind, sometimes alongside, and joy comes to the sailors—thus the Nereids darted up in ranks before them and circled the Argo, while Thetis steered the course.

This conjunction of words (ὁς δ’ ὑπόταν) does not occur elsewhere in extant Greek literature prior to this, including the Iliad and Odyssey. Hunter points out parallels to the

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97 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity both WCopyFind and Campbell identified.
dolphin simile given at Il. 21.22-24 (comparing the Trojans to fish and Achilles to a ravenous dolphin) and the Shield of Heracles 209-212, but he points out that the simile owes little to extant archaic models. However, “Nereids and dolphins regularly appear together in art.” This might provide a reason for Apollonius to connect a passage from Empedocles’ work about art with a simile that is drawn from artistic representations. But it is also possible that Apollonius is drawing from another literary source, one that describes the artistic depiction of Nereids and dolphins in religious art. Although Hunter does not mention it, Plato connects the two in the Critias (116e), in the description of the temple at Atlantis: Νηρήδας δὲ ἐπὶ δελφίνων ἐκατόν κύκλῳ — τοσαύτας γὰρ ἐνόμιζον αὐτὰς οἱ τότε εἶναι—πολλὰ δ’ ἐντὸς ἄλλα ἀγάλματα ἰδιωτῶν ἀναθήματα ἐνῆν (“and in a circle [around the statue of Poseidon] were a hundred Nereids on dolphins – for that is how many Nereids men of that time thought there were – and there were many other images, the votive offerings of individuals”). This is not the only place where dolphins and Nereids are described together: the chorus of Euripides’ Electra describes dolphins and Nereids accompanying the ship that brought Thetis’ son Achilles to Troy (434-6) and a one-line fragment of Menander mentions the two together (fr. 17). The passage from


99 Hunter does mention that παρβολάδην is probably taken from Aratus’ Phain. 318 “where it appears in the description of the constellation of the dolphin.” It is likely that Apollonius is using multiple sources here, as he does elsewhere. Hunter, Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book IV, 211.

100 Both the Empedoclean fragment G47 (B23) and this passage of Plato’s Critias mention art as votive offering (ἀγάλματα).
Euripides’ *Electra* is particularly fitting here since Thetis appears by name in both passages, but the *Critias* passage provides a link between the artistic representation in the Empedoclean fragment and the subject matter of the *Argonautica* passage, and it is possible that Apollonius is using more than one source for this passage. Furthermore, Apollonius is evidently interested in verbal descriptions of art (such as Jason’s cloak, 1.721-67), so the *Critias* passage might be particularly appealing.\(^{101}\)

Finally, the phrase ἀνέρες ἀμφι- in line 2 of fragment G47 (B23) also shows up in *Arg.* 2.27, where the narrator uses a simile to describe the way that Amycus glares at Polydeuces before their fight:\(^{102}\)

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\text{ὡς φάτ᾽ ἀπηλεγέως:} \quad \text{ὁ δὲ ἑσέδρακεν ὃμμαθ᾽} \quad \text{ἐλίξας,} \\
\text{ὡστε λέων ὑπ᾽} \quad \text{ἀκοντί τετυμένος,} \quad \text{ὅν τ᾽} \quad \text{ἐν ὑρεσιν} \\
\text{ἀνέρες ἀμφιπένονται:}
\]

Thus he [Polydeuces] spoke bluntly; but [Amycus] rolled his eyes and looked at him, like a lion that has been struck by a missile, which men busy themselves about in the mountains.

This combination does not occur elsewhere in extant Greek literature, and here it occurs in the same metrical position as in does in Empedocles’ simile about the painters. This is a line of Empedocles’ work that Apollonius is familiar with, given his use of ἐδὲ δεδαῶτε at the end of the same line. The simile in the *Argonautica* obviously owes a debt to Homer as well: lion similes are particularly common in the *Iliad*, and the verb ἀμφιπένομαι occurs only in Homer and Apollonius. So in this passage of the

\(^{101}\) I am indebted to Benjamin Acosta-Hughes for this final observation about Apollonius’ interest in verbal depictions of visual art and the *Critias* passage.

\(^{102}\) This is a similarity that WCopyFind identified and Campbell and other scholars did not.
Argonautica, just like the painters who mixes one thing (pigments) and uses skill to create the image of another (pictures of men and wild beasts), Apollonius skillfully mixes elements from the works of Homer and Empedocles to tell the story of Amycus and Polydeuces, using images of men and beasts. Empedocles uses the metaphor of artistic representation to explain his physical theories, but the image also works for Empedocles’ use of Homer and Apollonius’ use of Homer and Empedocles: just as painters mix pigments to create new images, so these epic authors use the work of previous poets to create new narratives.

10. Empedocles G51 (B35) and Arg. 2.656, 3.177, 4.646, 3.759

In fragment G51 (B35), Empedocles’ narrator describes the change that occurs when Love begins to take over from Strife:

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ παλίνορσος ἐλεύσομαι ἐς πόρον ὤμων,
tὸν πρότερον κατέλεξα, λόγου λόγον ἠξιοθεύων,
κεῖνον· ἐπεὶ Νείκος μὲν ἐνέρτατον ἱκετο βένθος
dίνης, ἐν δὲ μέση Φιλότης στροφώλιγγι γένηται,
ἐν τῷ δὲ τάδε πάντα συνέρχεται ἐν μόνον εἶναι,
οὐκ ἄφαρ, ἄλλα θελημὰ συνιστάμεν’ ἄλλοθεν ἄλλα.
tὸν δὲ τε μισγομένον χεῖτ’ ἐθνεα μυρία θητῶν:
...
tὸν δὲ τε μισγομένον χεῖτ’ ἐθνεα μυρία θητῶν,
pαντοίᾳς ἱδέησιν ἄρηρότα, θαύμα ἰδέσθαι.

But I shall return back to the passageway of hymns which I recounted before, channeling this speech from that. When strife reached the innermost depth of the vortex, and Love comes to be in the middle of the vortex, there [or: under her] all these things combine to be one thing alone, not suddenly, but joining together willingly each from its own place. When these things are mingled the myriad races of mortal things flow out,
When these things are mingled the myriad races of mortal things flowed out, fitted with all sorts of shapes, a marvel to behold.

Campbell points out a distant echo between line six of this fragment (ἀλλὰ θελημὰ) and the description of Dipsacus in book 2 (especially with the textual variant ἀλλ᾽ ἐθελημὰ in Empedocles’ work):¹⁰³

τίκτε δέ μιν νύμφη λειμωνιάς· οὐδὲ οἱ ὄβρις
ἥνδανεν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐθελημὸς ἐφ᾽ ὕδασι πατρός ἐσφὸ
μητέρι συνναίσκεν, ἐπάκτια πόεα φέρβων.

A meadow nymph bore Dipsacus, who had no fondness for violence, but was content to live with his mother by the waters of his father, pasturing his flocks on the shore.

A TLG search for ἀλλὰ next to either form of the word (θελημός or ἐθελημός) shows that the combination does not occur in Homer’s work or the work of any other author prior to Empedocles and Apollonius, so with or without the textual variant, the allusion seems secure. The words are also in the same place in the line in both passages (the second and third feet in the hexameter: -˘˘ / -˘˘/˘ ).

Nothing is known of Dipsacus (Διψακός, accented on the ultima) beyond this passage,¹⁰⁴ but it is possible that his name is based on the word δίψα (thirst), a word that

¹⁰³ Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity that WCopyFind did not identify.

¹⁰⁴ These lines and the scholiast’s notes on them are the only references to the character in extant Greek literature. Other instances of the word (accented on the ultima) look to be wrongly accented references to the plant (Dipsacus fullonum, a type of teasel) or the disease, probably diabetes, characterized by excessive thirst (Gal. 8.394).

Regarding the character Dipsacus, the scholiast gives little more information than what is contained in the passage: he notes that the “Phyllis is a river in Bythinia” and “Dipsacus is the son of Phyllis and a local nymph; he hosted Phrixus, the son of Athamas, when he was fleeing death on the ram and was about to sacrifice [the ram]. The story goes that the
is used as far back as the *Iliad* (19.166). The word δίψακος (accented on the antepenult) is later used to describe a disease, probably diabetes, characterized by excessive thirst (Gal. 8.394, Alex.Trall. 11.6). It is possible that Apollonius is punning on the association with the disease by having the character Dipsacus live willingly by a river (where thirst could easily be quenched). Within the passage, Dipsacus is described as one with no desire for violence (ὑβρίς), a term that describes what is originally lacking from the Argonauts during their initial symposiastic dinner before departing (1.459), and the same word later appears in descriptions of Heracles (4.1436) and the Amazons (2.989).\(^{105}\) Within the *Argonautica*, ὑβρίς is the opposite of voluntary association and hospitality: it describes forced encounters with others such as that between Heracles and the Hesperides, where Heracles kills the guardian serpent and takes the apples of the Hesperides by force. This is immediately followed by his search for water, which positions Heracles as the opposite of Dipsacus. While Dipsacus voluntarily hosts Phrixus and the golden ram beside a native stream, Heracles violently takes golden objects from potential hosts and creates his own source of water by kicking a rock (4.1444-1449). Once again, the Empedoclean reference reinforces the divide between Love and Strife in

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\(^{105}\) In addition to these passages, see 1.459, 2.989, 3.583, 4.1436.
the *Argonautica*: voluntary association and hospitality are tied to Dipsacus, who is
described using Empedoclean language tied to Love, while Heracles. Dipsacus’ opposite,
continues to be described using the language of Strife.

Campbell also notes the similarities between the first line of this fragment (*αὐτὰρ
ἐγὼ παλίνορσος ἐλεύσομαι…*) and *Arg*. 3.177 (*αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἐς δῶματ’ ἐλεύσομαι
Αἰήταιο), but this is a formula that also appears in *Od*. 1.88 (*αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν Ἡθάκηνδε
ἐλεύσομαι, ὅφρα οἱ νιὼν) and 17.52 (*αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἀγορήνδε ἐλεύσομαι, ὅφρα καλέσσω*).
Because the line appears in Homer, it is not certain that the reference in 3.177 is an
allusion to Empedocles’ work, but the fact that the same fragment is referenced here, at
2.656, indicates that Apollonius was familiar with the Empedoclean passage, so it could
be.106

The second important Empedoclean phrase in fragment G51 (B35) is ἔθνεα
μυρία ——τῶν. This phrase is repeated at lines 7 and 16 of this fragment and also appears
in *Arg*. 4.646 in a description of Hera protecting the Argonauts from the Celts and
Ligyans107:

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δὴναιοὶ δ’ ἀκτὰς ἀλιμυρέας εἰσαφίκοντο, Ἡρης ἔννεσίρησι δι’ ἔθνεα μυρία Κελτῶν
καὶ Δηγύων περόντων ἀδήσιον, ἀμφὶ γὰρ αἰνήν ἥρα χεῦθε θεᾶ πάντ’ ἡματα νισσομένοισιν.

106 Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica*, 129. This is a similarity WCpyCopyFind did not identify.

107 Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica*, 129. This is a similarity both WCpyCopyFind and Campbell identified.
After a long time, they came to the shores washed by the sea, passing unassailed by Hera’s devising through the countless tribes of Celts and Ligyans, for the goddess shed a dense mist around them all the days they traveled.

Hunter notes that this line could be influenced by *Od. 11.632* in a description of what Odysseus saw in the underworld: ἀλλὰ πρὶν ἐπὶ ἔθνει ἀγείρετο μυρία νεκρῶν. But the parallel to Empedocles’ work is closer because ἔθνεα is not elided, the words appear together (instead of separated by another word, as they are in the *Od.*) passage, and the final genitive plural in Empedocles ends with –τῶν rather than just –ων, as the *Argonautica* passage does. There is another close parallel in the little-known Simylus, whose poem on Tarpeia is recorded in Plutarch’s biography of Romulus:

Τὴν δ’ οὖτ’ ἄρ’ Βόιοι τε καὶ ἔθνεα μυρία Κέλτων
χηράμενοι ἰεύθρων ἐντὸς ἔθεντο Πάδου,
ὅπλα δ’ ἐπιπροβαλόντες ἀρείμανέων ὀπὸ χείρῶν
κούρη ἐπὶ στυγερῇ κόσμον ἔθεντο φόνου.

Simylus presents an interesting problem because his dating is insecure. But because the poem is a revision of the traditional story about Tarpeia, it most likely post-dates Empedocles and Apollonius.

*Arg. 4.645* occurs at a key point in the narrative, right after the Argonauts almost enter a branch of the Eridanus River that flows into Ocean, and this route would prevent their safe return. Hera turns the Argonauts back, and this can be seen in some ways as the extreme point of their travels and the place where they almost pass a geographical barrier from which there can be no return. Similarly, this fragment from Empedocles’ work describes the world as it returns from peak Strife and moves toward Love. As I will argue in chapter 3, this passage also contains aspects of Parmenides’ work, so this turning point in the narrative is particularly full of references to early philosophy.
Finally, this fragment also includes the word στροφάλιγγι (from στροφάλιγξ, whirl, eddy), to describe where Love comes to be (ἐν δὲ μέσηι Φιλότης στροφάλιγγι γένηται). At Arg. 3.759, this is the same word used in a simile to describe Medea’s trembling heart in her chest because of love for Jason:

πυκνά δὲ οἱ κραδίη στηθέων ἐντοσθεν ἔθυμεν, ἠέλιου ὡς τις τε δόμοις ἐνὶ πάλλεται αἷλη, ὄδατος ἐξανιοῦσα τὸ δὴ νέον ἢ λέβητι ἢ ποῦ ἐν γαυλῷ κέχυται, ἢ δ’ ἐνθα καὶ ἐνθα ὑκείη στροφάλιγγι τινάσσεται ἀίσσουσα: ὡς δὲ καὶ ἐν στήθεσι κέαρ ἐλελίζετο κοῦρης.

Over and over the heart within her breast fluttered wildly, as when a ray of sunlight bounds inside a house as it leaps from water freshly poured into a cauldron or perhaps into a bucket, and quivers and darts here and there from the rapid swirling—thus did the girl’s heart tremble in her breast.

Here the flutter of Medea’s heart (caused by her love for Jason) is compared to a sunbeam bouncing off the swirling of water in a bucket. Just as Love comes to be in the middle of the vortex in Empedocles, so Medea’s heart flutter (caused by love for Jason) occurs in a similar vortex. The simile captures the instability of Medea’s feelings, and the associations with the chaotic world of Strife in Empedocles’ work are fitting. This passage is also five lines before another Empedoclean word (πραπίδεσσιν in line 765, discussed in section 2 above), and the descriptions of Medea’s psychology under the rule of Eros seem particularly influenced by Empedocles’ language.

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108 This is a similarity that WCopypFind identified and Campbell and other scholars did not.
In book 3, where Aphrodite tells Eros to shoot Medea and inflict the girl with love for Jason, Aphrodite offers Eros a ball (σφαῖρα) if he completes the job.

Come, be kind to me and do the task I tell you and I will give you Zeus' gorgeous plaything, that one his dear nurse Adresteiā made him when he was still a babbling infant in the Idaean cave--a perfectly round ball; no better toy will you get from the hands of Hephaestus. Its segments are made of gold and around each of them wind two circular bands; the seams are hidden, for a dark blue spiral runs over them. And if you toss it in your hands, it throws off a flaming trail through the air like a star. I will give it to you, but you must shoot Aeetes' daughter and enchant her with love for Jason. Let there be no delay, for then my gratitude would be less.”

The adjective περιηγέες (from περιηγής, “lying in a circle”) appears two or three times before Apollonius’ time: first, in a line attributed to Hesiod, then in two Empedoclean

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109 The adjective is also used in the Hippocratic work De Anatome 1.2. Because of the uncertainty involved in dating this Hippocratic work and the fact that the context is dissimilar, I have not included it in the discussion here.
fragments which repeat the same line. The fragment attributed to Hesiod is considered spurious and is generally understood to be part of Empedocles’ work. In the Empedoclean lines, the adjective refers to the sphere, which is Empedocles’ version of the world when Eros rules it:

οὕτως Ἀρμονίης πυκνώθη κρύφωι ἑστηρίκται
Σφαῖρος κυκλοτερῆς μονίης περιηγέї γαίων.

Thus it was set in place with the tight covering of harmony, a rounded Sphere rejoicing in circular solitude.

ἀλλ’ ὁ γε πάντωθεν ἰσος <δοί> καὶ πάμπαν ἀπείρων
Σφαῖρος κυκλοτερῆς μονίης περιηγέι γαίων.

But he is equal <to himself> in every direction and completely boundless, a rounded Sphere rejoicing in circular solitude.

The adjective also appears three times in Callimachus’ work (Hec. fr. 342.2, Ap. 59, Del. 198). In the two hymns, this is a reference to geographical features, and in the Hecale, it is used to describe neighbors (κωμήται ... περιηγέες). The adjective is also used in Aratus’ Phaenomena to describe the circuit of the stars (δινωτοὶ κύκλῳ περιηγέες εἰλίσσονται, 1.401).

It is possible, of course, to argue that Apollonius took the word from Callimachus or Aratus, but of all of these, the closest parallel seems to be Empedocles’ work because his fragment includes both περιηγής and the sphere. Although Apollonius uses the more

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110 The line appears in the commentary to Aratus (97.25 in Maass, fragment 392 in Merkelbach and West): “στρέφεται δὲ τὸ πᾶν αὐτὸ περὶ αὐτὸ ὀς εἰμέραι καὶ ὁρᾶει, καθὸ καὶ ὁ Ἀκραίαδος φησι· εφαῖρος κυκλοτερῆς μονίης περιηγεῖ θαίρων”. The attribution to the Ascrian (Hesiod’s hometown, on Mt. Helicon) seems to be an error by the commentator.
common poetic form σφαίρα (which also appears in the *Odyssey*), its conjunction with
the adjective περιηγής indicates a close link between the two passages. Conversely,
although Apollonius uses the adjective περιηγής elsewhere in the *Argonautica* (1.559, 2.994, 3.1032, 1365, 4.950) and one could argue that those passages are also influenced by Empedocles’ work, this seems to be the clearest reference because it also includes a reference to the sphere.

The sphere in book 3 of the *Argonautica* has received some attention because it can be read as a reference to a globe or model of the cosmos. The word is used by other early philosophical writers (or in testimony about them) regarding their idea of the cosmos: Anaximander and Parmenides reference it, and Anaximander is credited with building a spherical model (D.L. 2.2). Some scholars have also connected the sphere with the interest in astronomy and planetary models during Apollonius’ time, which came to a head with Crates of Malea in the second century. As Mary Louis Pedergast points out, the σφαίρος of *Argonautica* 3 has clear parallels with Aratus’ conception of the solid globe or an armillary sphere that depicts planetary motion (or some combination of the

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111 *Od*. 6.100, 115 (Nausicaa’s ball), 8.372, 377 (the ball used in the dance at the Phaeacian court).

112 This is a similarity that Kyriakou catches. Kyriakou, “Empedoclean Echoes in Apollonius Rhodius’ *Argonautica*,” 315-6. Campbell mentions that περιηγής, -ες first appears in Empedocles’ work, but in an earlier comment on the passage he states that “I would not place undue stress on the Empedoclean divine sphere, ordered by Love.” Campbell, *A Commentary on Apollonius Rhodius Argonautica III I-471*, 128, 123.

113 Anaximander G1 (A1), G4 (A2), G19 (A10), G28 (A18); Parmenides: G17.43 (B8.43).
two). This also fits with the description of the sphere which Aphrodite gives in the passage, where she states that Eros could not get something better from Hephaestus himself. Given that Hephaestus’ most famous piece of work is the shield of Achilles, which is also a model of the world, it possible to read Apollonius’ sphere as a model of the cosmos.

Reading the sphere as a cosmic model drastically changes the reader’s understanding of the scene and what Aphrodite offers to Eros:

When we realize that the marvelous toy, once Zeus's and now Eros', represents a model of the cosmos, we can feel only shock at the far-reaching implication of the scene: the universe is but a bauble used to bribe a spoiled child. Now, Apollonius did not create the figure of Eros with a ball, but he did give it an almost unprecedented significance. When Anacreon pictures him as a ballplayer (Fr. 302 Page) or a dicer (Fr. 325 Page - the game at which he is cheating Ganymede in Argon. 3) he plays with the lives of individual men: he is ruthless, perhaps but not of universal relevance.115

Pendergast notes that Eros does have a cosmological function in Orphic rites and that “these traditions imply a belief in the creative power of Eros, of love as a guiding force in the world, a notion reminiscent of Empedocles’ or Lucretius’ Venus. They portray, in short, the force of attraction, of fertility and life, ruling the cosmos.”116 This understanding of the sphere as an image of the cosmos fits well with the way Aphrodite describes it in the Argonautica passage: it was Zeus’ plaything before he came to power, and the transfer to Eros indicates Eros’ growing power. The description of the world as


115 Ibid., 101.

116 Ibid.
Eros descends from Olympus to Aeetes’ court develops this idea of global domination (3.160-66).

All of this makes a compelling case for understanding the sphere in book 3 as a model of the cosmos. And this makes sense if the passage is read in the light of Empedocles’ work: it is only when Eros (as opposed to Strife) rules the cosmos that the world becomes a sphere. Apollonius’ use of this passage indicates a thoughtful appropriation of Empedoclean imagery and a synthesis of Homeric, lyric, and early philosophical ideas. Eros and Aphrodite are not abstract forces but characters who cheat, bribe, and beg for toys, but Eros’ intervention in the story will lead to his influence (through Medea) covering the globe on the return trip of the Argo. In this sense, Eros will have the sphere of the globe as his plaything.

12. Empedocles G57 (B29) and Arg. 1.1264-1270, 4.779

After Heracles discovers that Hylas has been abducted, Apollonius gives an extended description of Heracles’ anger and compares him to a bull stung by a gadfly. This description and the accompanying simile are similar to Empedoclean fragment 57, which describes the sphere (a description of the homogenous world under the influence of Love).

WORDS OF THE DAY: 105

WORDS OF THE DAY: 105
Thus he [Polyphemus] spoke. When Heracles heard this, sweat poured forth in abundance down from his temples and the dark blood seethed deep in his gut. In anger he threw the pine tree to the ground, and ran down any path on which his feet carried him headlong. As when, stung by a gadfly, a bull charges forth, leaving the meadows and marshlands, and pays no attention to the herdsmen or the herd, but at times makes his way without stopping, while at other times he stands still and raises his broad neck and lets out a bellow, having been stung by a vicious fly—thus in his frenzy he sometimes moved his swift knees without a break, then sometimes ceased from his labor and shouted piercingly into the distance with a mighty cry.

This parallels fragment G57 (B29) from Empedocles, in a description of the sphere:

οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ νότοιο δύο κλάδοι ἀίσσονται,
οὐ πόδες, οὐ θοὺ γούν(α), οὐ μῆδεα γεννήεντα,

for two branching wings did not sprout from its back, no feet, no swift knees, no generative organs [does he have].

This is a similarity that both Campbell and WCopyFind both identified. Campbell notes the similarity in θοὰ γοὖν- but not the fact that the surrounding Apollonian passage also includes πόδες and a present form of ἀίσσω. The same combination (θὸα γοὖν-) does not occur anywhere else in extant Greek literature prior to the Argonautica.

Why, then, might Apollonius describe Heracles using language that Empedocles had used to describe what the sphere is not? Empedocles’ idea of the sphere obviously owes a debt to Parmenides’ idea of what is (which is eternal, ungenerated, one, and spherical), but Empedocles’ sphere is generally understood as part of his cosmic view of change: “on the more traditional account there are four stages: (1) increasing Love which
tends to combine and compound unlike things; (2) the Sphere in which Love reigns supreme and all differences are submerged; (3) increasing Strife which tears the Sphere asunder and produces different stuffs; and (4) a completely stratified (or alternately, fragmented) state in which the four elements [of earth, water, air and fire] do not mix with each other and there are no compounds.”

There is continued debate over whether all of these stages should be included, but there is general agreement on the idea that the sphere represents the state of the world when Love (the force of attraction) rules as a mixing and homogenizing influence, and this means that the rule of Strife is characterized by differentiation and movement. This is interpretation is reinforced by fragment G59 (B30)

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ μέγα Νείκος ἐνὶμελέσσισιν ἐθρέφθη
ἐς τιμᾶς τ’ ἀνόρουσε τελειομένου χρόνοιο,
δς σφιν ἀμοιβαῖος πλατέος παρ’ ἐλήλαται ὄρκου

But when great Strife was nourished in his limbs,
he leapt up to lay hold of his office as the time was fulfilled,
Which had been fixed for them by a broad oath of mutual succession.

Throughout the *Argonautica*, Apollonius separates Heracles from the influence of erotic love (homoerotic or otherwise), and instead portrays him as a characterized by strength and physical prowess (the second half of the catalogue, using Clauss’ dichotomy).

Readers might be tempted to see a veiled reference to an erotic relationship between Hylas and Heracles, based on the version Theocritus gives *Id*. 13:

οὐχ ἀμὴν τὸν Ἐρωτα μόνοις ἔτεχ’, ὡς ἐδοκεῖμες,
Νικία, ὧν τινος θεῶν ποκα τέκνον ἔγεντο.
οὐχ ἀμὴν τὰ καλὰ πράτοις καλὰ φαίνεται εἶμεν,

It was not for our sake alone, Nikias, (as we think) that Eros was born
(nevermind which one of the gods gave birth to him),
nor do the things which are beautiful appear beautiful to us first,
we who are mortal, who do not see the morning,
but the bronze-hearted son of Amphitryon,
who stood firm against the wild lion, also loved a boy,
the charming Hylas, who had curly hair.

But although Theocritus depicts the connection between Heracles and Hylas as one ruled
by eros, Apollonius instead emphasizes the strife that led to Heracles’ possession of the
boy (1.1211-1219):

δὴ γὰρ μιν τοίοσιν ἐν ἡθεσιν αὐτὸς ἔφερβε,
νηπιάχον τὰ πρώτα δόμων ἐκ πατρὸς ἀπούρας,
δὴν Θειόδαμαντος, ὃν ἐν Δρῦσπεσιν ἑπεφνεν
ηλειη, βοὸς ἀμφὶ γεωμόρου ἀντίωντα.
ἤητο ο μὲν νειοι γῶς τέμνεεσκεν ἄρτρω
Θειόδαμας ἀνὴ βεβολημένος· αὐτὰρ ὃ τὸνγε
βοῦν ἄρτην ἔνωγεν παρασχέμεν, οὐκ ἐθέλοντα
ἰετο γὰρ πρὸφασιν πολέμου Δρυόπεσι βαλέσθαι
λευγαλέην, ἐπεὶ οὔ τι δίκης ἀλέγοντες ἔναιον.
ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν τηλὼ κεν ἀποπλάγξειν ἄσιδῆς:

For in such habits [of preparing the evening meal] had Heracles himself raised
him, ever since he took him as an infant from the palace of his father, noble
Theodamas, whom he ruthlessly killed among the Dryopians for opposing him
over a plowing ox. Now Theodamas, stricken with pain, was cleaving his fallow
fields with a plow, when Heracles ordered him to hand over the plowing ox
against his will. For he was eager to create a dire pretext for war against the
Dryopians, because they lived there with no concern for justice. But these things
would divert me far from my song.

This passage continues the depiction of Heracles as the man of strength/strife in contrast
to the man of skill/love. The poet draws attention to the contrast between the two
categories by casting himself as the second half of the dichotomy (the singer, like
Orpheus) and drawing the audience’s attention to the role of the poet at the end of the
passage: ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν τηλοῦ κεν ἀποπλάγγειν ἄοιδης (“But these things would divert me
far from my song”). Not only does Apollonius emphasize the violence involved in
Heracles’ acquisition and loss of Hylas (rather than homoerotic elements), but Heracles is
also separated from heterosexual attraction in the rest of the work, since he is the sole
Argonaut who does not entertain a Lemnian woman and calls the others back to the
voyage after they are captured by erotic distraction (1.865-874).

In sum, Clauss’ categories of strength/skill fit well with the Empedoclean
dichotomy between Strife/Love. Heracles is a poster child for strength/Strife, and within
this context, it makes sense that Apollonius might describe Heracles with language that
Empedocles uses to describe what the Eros-ruled cosmos is not. While the Eros-ruled
cosmos is characterized by simplicity and a lack of appendages that would allow for
movement, the narrator emphasizes Heracles’ limbs and sharp movements at this
moment, similar to the way Empedocles’ describes the Strife-ruled cosmos. It is worth
noting that Heracles’ rapid motion and search for Hylas leads to additional strife among
the Argonauts, in a passage which contains another Empedoclean reference (μῆτις
ὁροβεν, section 1 above).

This same phrase is used to describe the goddess Iris when she rests from taking
Hera’s messages to Thetis, Hephaestus, and Aeolus: ὀφρα δὲ καὶ τῷ ἀγγελίην φαμένη
θοὰ γούνατα παῦεν ὄδω, (And while she [Iris] conveyed her message to him [Aeolus]
as well and rested her swift knees from the journey …” 4.778-9). Here Iris plays an essential role in moving the narrative from strife (the murder of Apsyrtus, the conflict with Aeetes) to love (the marriage of Jason and Medea at the court of the Phaeacians). While Heracles’ swift knees are described in rapid motion, Iris is characterized ceasing from this motion (παῦεν). This move toward harmony in the narrative is emphasized by the conversation that takes place between Hera and Thetis immediately after this: while those two characters are described in conflict in the Iliad, in Argonautica 4 they cooperate to bring Jason safely home. Here Apollonius repeats a phrase from Empedocles’ work (θοὰ γούνατα) in a way that encourages the reader to juxtapose two parts of the narrative (the description of Heracles in book 1 and the description of Iris in book 4). In chapter 3 it becomes clear that Apollonius uses a similar technique by repeating the Parmenidean phrase ἐστι κέλευθος at two points in the narrative.

13. Empedocles G76 (B48) and Arg. 3.1021 and 4.1170

Empedoclean fragment G76 (B48) is a one-line fragment that appears to be part of Empedocles’ theory of astronomy. He states that “Earth produces night by obstructing the light [of the sun]” (νύκτα δὲ γαῖα τίθησιν ύφισταμένη φαέεσσι). Both Campbell and WCopyFind pointed out the similarity of φαέεσσι in this fragment and in Arg. 3.1021

118 Although Campbell notes θοὰ γούνατα at 1.1270, he does not note it here at 4.779. Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity WCopyFind identified.
119 This parallel is clearer if we recognize that all of these lines contain the pattern –σιν … -μενη φαέεσσι(ν) at the end of a line. While φαέεσσι(ν) is not unique (it appears in two fragments of Hesiod and in Callimachus’ Hymn to Artemis 211), the position at the end of the line with this pattern immediately preceding is unique and quite similar.

Of these two parallels, 3.1021 seems to show more of a auditory echo than an awareness of Empedocles’ ideas on astronomy. It describes how Medea melts like the dew melts on roses when sunlight hits them (… οἷόν τε περὶ ροδέμεν τέρη / τήκεια ἤφοιαν ἰανομένη φαέεσσίν). The image is striking, and there is a possible Empedoclean echo a few lines earlier at 1015-6 (see section 24 below). Arg. 4.1170 is closer to fragment G76 (B48): Ἡῶς δ’ ἀμβροσίοις ἀνερχομένη φαέεσσιν / λῦε κελανήν νύκτα δι’ ἠέρος (“Rising Dawn was scattering dark night through the sky with her divine beams”). Here, in addition to the verbal similarity, both passages describe the removal of night. Apollonius has replaced earth (γαῖα) with dawn (Ἥώς), but the line from the Argonautica shows an awareness of the context it was drawn from.

14. Empedocles G79 (B43) and Arg. 4.1604

In fragment G79 (B43), Empedocles describes a ray hitting the moon: ὡς αὐγὴ τῦψαςα σεληναῖς κύκλον εὑρόν (in this way the ray, having struck the broad circle of the

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119 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity that both WCopyFind and Campbell identified.
moon). Elsewhere, Empedocles argues that the moon gets its light from the sun (G81, B45), so this fragment is probably a description of the sun’s ray hitting the moon.

A similar phrase occurs in Apollonius’ description of Triton. The way Triton moves the ship is compared to the way that a man guides a race horse: \( \text{ὡς δ’ ὅτ’ ἄνηρ θοὸν ἱππον ἐς εὐρέα κύκλον ἀγῶνος} \) (And as when a man conducts a swift horse into the wide circle of a racecourse …). This is soon followed by a description of Triton’s spines, which are curved like the horns of the moon (μήνης ὥς κεράεσσιν ἐειδόμεναι, 4.1616). In both passages, the broad circle and the moon are juxtaposed. As Feeney points out (and as I will argue later in the discussion of Xenophanes), this passage about Triton brings up some of the problems involved in describing a god since Triton meets the Argonauts first as a young man (4.1551) and later enters the water and returns in his true form (4.1603). The fact that his true form includes circle imagery (the moon, the race course) may be an acknowledgement of early philosophers’ ideas on the divine sphere.

15. Empedocles G93 (B52) and Arg. 4.535-6

In Proclus’ commentary on Plato’s Timaeus (in a discussion of sight, light, and fire), he records a fragment of Empedocles: \( \text{πολλὰ δ’ ἕνερθ(ε) οὐδέρος πυρὰ καὶεται} \) (Many fires lie beneath the ground). This appears to be part of Empedocles’ geological theory:

\[^{120}\text{Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity that Campbell identified and WCopyfind did not.}\]

according to Seneca, Empedocles believed that underground fire heats water that passes through underground passages, similar to the way that water may be heated in a bronze pipe passing through fire (Nat. Quest. 3.24.1-3).

A similar set of words appears at Arg. 4.535-6 in a description of the tripod that Jason gives the Hylleans.\(^{122}\) The tripod protects the land where it lies from enemy invasions, so the Hylleans bury the tripod:

\[
\text{τούνεκεν εἰσέπι νῦν κείνη ὅδε κεῦθεται αἴη}
\text{ἀμφὶ πόλιν Ἀγανήν Ὑλληίδα, πολλὸν ἔνερθεν}
\text{οὐδέσως, ὅς κεν ἄφαντος ἀεὶ μερόπεσσι πέλοιτο}
\]

Therefore, still today this tripod lies hidden in that land near the friendly city of Hyllus, deep underground, so that it might always remain unseen by mortal.

The conjunction of the three words does not occur elsewhere in extant Greek literature. The word οὖδας does appear in Homer and the tragedians with various prepositions, but never with ἔνερθε.

The Argonautica passage does not seem to be a reference to Empedocles’ geological theories, but rather a statement about the poet’s authority. If the tripod is hidden underground even now (νῦν) in a way that makes it invisible to humans, how does the narrator know about it? Just as Empedocles claims to know about fires that are hidden under the earth (terra opertos tegit, in Seneca’s summary), so Apollonius knows about other objects hidden under the earth. And just as Empedocles claims a divine role for himself and presents his knowledge as that of someone with superior sources of information, so Apollonius’ narrator also introduces information that only someone who

\(^{122}\) Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity that WCopyFind and Campbell both identified.
is divine or has a divine source of information could know. Although Morrison argues that the narrator of the *Argonautica* loses confidence in the third and fourth books, this is one of the passages that contradicts that theory and continues to present the narrator as a confident source of true information.\(^{123}\)

16. Empedocles G115 (B98) and *Arg.* 2.980

In one of his more perceptive observations, Campbell points out that Empedoclean fragment 115 parallels *Arg.* 2.980 (a description of the Thermodon river)\(^{124}\):

\[\text{ἡ δὲ χθών τούτοις ἵση συνέκυρες μάλιστα,} \]
\[\text{Ἡφαίστος τ’ ὀμβρωὶ τε καὶ αἰθέρι παμφανώντι,} \]
\[\text{Κύπριος ὀρμωθείσα τελείος ἐν ἱμένεσιν,} \]
\[\text{εἰτ’ ὀλίγον μεῖζων εἶτε πλεόνεσσιν ἀλάσσων·} \]
\[\text{ἐκ τὸν αἱμά τε γέντο καὶ ἄλλης εἴδεια σαρκός.}\]

Earth *met* with these in *most* equal measure, with Hephaestus, rain, and blazing aether, dropping anchor in the perfect harbors of Cypris, either a little greater or less among more parts, and from them came blood and other kinds of flesh.

This parallels *Arg.* 2.980:

\[\ldots \text{μία δ’ οἳ ἐπήτυμως ἐπέλει πηγή·} \]
\[\text{ἡ μὲν τ’ ἐξ ὀρέων κατανίσσεται ἥμπειρόνδε} \]
\[\text{ὑψηλῶν, ᾧ τε φασιν Ἀμαζόνια κλείσθαι,} \]
\[\text{ἔνθεν δ’ αἰπυτέρην ἐπικίδναται ἐνδόθη γαῖαν} \]
\[\text{ἀντικρύ· τῶ καὶ οἱ ἐπίστροφοι εἰσὶ κέλευθοι,}\]

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\(^{124}\) Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica*, 129. This is a similarity Campbell identified and WCopyFind did not.
But only one true source [of the Thermodon river] exists, and this flows down to the plain from high mountains, which, they say, are called the Amazonian mountains. From there it spreads straight into higher ground, and that is why its courses are meandering: one constantly winds this way, another that way, wherever each most readily finds low-lying land—one far away, another close by. Many of the branches have no names where they are drained off, but the river, joined by a few streams, empties in full view into the Inhospitable sea beneath the curved headland.

Both passages use a form of κυρέω (to hit, light upon) with μάλιστα. Although the verb moods are different (indicative vs. optative) and Empedocles uses a compound form, both are aorist third singular active forms, and the parallels are both found in the final three feet of the hexameter line. The closest parallel in other surviving literature is a line of Euripides’ Hippolytus (1421): οἷς ἐν μάλιστα φίλτατος κυρή βροτῶν / τόξοις ἀφύκτοις τοῖσδε τιμωρήσομαι (whichever mortal happens to be most dear to her, I will take vengeance on with my inescapable arrows). Here the elements are reversed (μάλιστα … κυρή), and μάλιστα modifies φίλτατος rather than the form of κυρέω, and the meter is not dactylic hexameter. Apart from these considerations, the Empedoclean fragment is a closer match because of the concluding eta before the form of κυρέω in both passages.

More importantly, both the Empedoclean passage and the Argonautica passage have to do with geographical or elemental mixing. The former refers to the four elements (earth, Hephaestus/fire, rain/water, and aether) mixing under the influence of Cypris (Love), and the narrator uses a nautical analogy of dropping anchor in a perfect harbor (ὁρμηθεῖσα τελείως ἐν ἁμένεσσιν) to describe this process. In the Argonautica passage, the
Argonauts have just passed the harbor of the Amazons (γνάµψαν Ἀµαζονίδων ἔκαθεν λιµενήφοχον ἕκρην, 965). In the Empedoclean lines, this mixing of elements leads to blood (αῖµα), while in the Argonautica passage, the Argonauts avoid bloodshed with the Amazons (ἀναµωτί, 986). Furthermore, the immediate context of the Argonautica line is the way the many streams of the Thermodon meet with earth, but go back to a single source; similarly, the Empedoclean passage attempts to understand the source of all matter from one principle of mixing. Both passages share a project of searching out the simpler source of seemingly-complex things, and both passages present the poet as the guide who can show the simplicity underlying apparent complexity.\textsuperscript{125}

17. Empedocles G125 (B62) and Arg. 3.1-3, 4.672, 1423

In a particularly striking reference, Empedocles’ address to the reader in fragment 125 parallels the invocation of Erato at the beginning of Argonautica book 3:\textsuperscript{126}

\begin{quote}
vὸν δ’ ἄγ’, δπος ἀνδρόν τε πολυκλαύτων τε γυναικῶν ἐννυχίους δραπτικὰς ἄνήγαγε κρινόµενον πῦρ, τῶνδε κλῆ’· οὐ γάρ µῦθος ἀπόσκοπος οὐδ’ ἀδαήµων. οὐλοφυεῖς µὲν πρῶτα τύποι χθονὸς ἕξανέτελλον, ἀµιστέρων ὑδατός τε καὶ εἶδεος αἰσαν ἐχοντες· τούς µὲν πῦρ ἀνέπεµπε θέλον πρὸς ὦµοιον ἰκέσθαι,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{125} Although this Empedoclean fragment does not draw specific attention to the poet, Empedocles clearly presents this knowledge of mixing elements as the special purview of the poet (and this fragment is a short one, so it is possible the original context contained additional references to the poet).

\textsuperscript{126} Campbell, A Commentary on Apollonius Rhodius Argonautica III 1-471, 5. These are similarities that Campbell identified and WCopyFind did not.
οὔτε τί πω μελέων ἐρατόν δέμας ἐμφαίνοντας
οὔτ’ ἐνοπην οἵον τ’ ἐπιχώριοι ἀνδράσι γυῖον.

Come, now, how of men and of much-lamenting women
distinguishing fire brought up shoots at night,
learn from these words, for it is not a pointless or unenlightening tale:
whole-natured kinds first rose up from earth,
having a portion of both water and heat;
fire sent them up in its desire to reach its like,
forms which did not yet manifest any pleasant figure of limbs,
nor voice, nor organ of speech native to men.

This parallels Apollonius’ proem to book 3, which addresses Erato as the Muse
responsible for this section of the work:

Εἰ δ’ ἄγε νῦν Ἐρατώ, παρ’ ἐμ’ ἱστασο καὶ μοι ἑνισπε
ἐνθεν δόπος ἐς ᾽Ιολκόν ἀνήγαγε κῶς Ἰῆσον
Μηδείης ύπ’ ἐρωτήσ’ σὺ γὰρ καὶ Κύπριδος αῖσαν
ἐμπορεῖς, ἀδμήτας δὲ τεοῖς μελεδήμασι θέλγεις
παρθενικάς’ τό καὶ τοι ἐπήρατον οὐνομί’ ἀνήπται.

Come now, Erato, stand by my side and tell me how from here Jason brought the
fleece back to Iolcus with the aid of Medea’s love, for you have a share also of
Cypris’ power and enchant unwed girls with your anxieties; and that is why your
lovely name has been attached to you.

Campbell does not note that ἄγε νῦν appears elsewhere in Greek literature127 and the line
opening ei δ’ ἄγε νῦν ... is found verbatim in Il. 16.667, 19.108, and Od. 1.271. These
parallels are closer than the passage Campbell cites because the fragment from
Empedocles reverses the elements (νῦν δ’ ἄγγ’). The form ἀνήγαγε also appears in
Homeric epic in the third and fourth feet (as it does in the Argonautica passage) at Od.
4.434. However, Campbell is right to point out that the combination of these elements

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(νῦν, ἄγε, ἀνήγαγε) in two lines does not occur elsewhere in extant Greek literature, and thus the comparison with Empedocles may be warranted, especially given the close repetition of ἀίσαν in lines 5 (Empedocles) and 3 (Apollonius) and the programmatic nature of the two passages. The similarities between line 4 of this fragment (… θονὼς ἔξαντελλον) and Arg. 4.1423 (… θονὼς ἔξαντειλαν, discussed below) further heighten the likelihood that Apollonius is familiar with and using this particular fragment.

As Campbell points out, “Empedocles … almost certainly, played a part in the wider formulation of this proem … his On Nature may have opened with a hymn to Aphrodite.” This view is, of course, influenced by the opening to Lucretius’ De Rerum Natura, which begin with the invocation of Venus and a description of her generative effect on earth, water, and living creatures. If it is correct that Empedocles’ work On Nature began with an invocation of Aphrodite, there is additional strength in the association between Empedocles’ work and the opening to this book. There is a nice contrast between Empedocles’ injunction to the audience to listen to him (κλύ’, line 3) and Apollonius’ injunction to Erato to speak (ἔνισπε, line 1).

But the association between book 3 and philosophical sources is furthered by Campell’s observation that “Erato’s association with ἔρως is first attested in Plato, Phdr. 259c: ‘the cicadas report back to Erato the names of those who honour her ἐν τοῖς ἔρωτικοῖς’.” This passage is a significant for understanding ancient views on genre.

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128 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 3. Prior to Plato, Erato is only mentioned twice in extant Greek literature (Hesiod’s Theogony 78 in a list of the Muses and line 246 in the catalogue of Nymphs). Neither of these passages has an association between the word and Eros. Between Plato and
since Plato’s Socrates indicates that the cicadas report to distinct muses for different types of literature:

The story goes that these locusts were once men, before the birth of the Muses, and when the Muses were born and song appeared, some of the men were so overcome with delight that they sang and sang, forgetting food and drink, until at last unconsciously they died. From them the locust tribe afterwards arose, and they have this gift from the Muses, that from the time of their birth they need no sustenance, but sing continually, without food or drink, until they die, when they go to the Muses and report who honors each of them on earth. They tell Terpsichore of those who have honored her in dances, and make them dearer to her; they gain the favor of Erato for the poets of love, and that of the other Muses for their votaries, according to their various ways of honoring them; and to Calliope, the eldest of the Muses, and to Urania who is next to her, they make report of those who pass their lives in philosophy and who worship these Muses who are most concerned with heaven and with thought divine and human and whose music is the sweetest. So for many reasons we ought to talk and not sleep in the noontime.129

Apollonius, Erato is only mentioned in a fragment of Callimachus (fr. 238.8 Pf. “...........’Ερατό δ’ ἀνταπάμειπτο τά[δε:]’”).

Here Socrates sets up a hierarchy of different types of discourse, with Calliope at the pinnacle and Ourania next to her. Although Calliope is generally identified with epic poetry, Socrates here identifies her with philosophy (φιλοσοφία) and places her above other types of poetry, such as erotic poetry (ἔρωτικοῖς). When Apollonius invokes Erato, he is using a reference to a philosophical epic poet who specifically invokes Calliope (Empedocles) in an address to the Muse of erotic poetry (Erato), and in this way he resists the distinctions between epic poetry, erotic poetry, and philosophy (poetic or prose) and mixes the genres, similar to the way that Empedocles describes the world as made up of mixed fundamental elements.

This fragment from Empedocles’ work concerns the inclusion of male and female elements in plants, and this should remind the audience that the role of Eros involves the mixing of men and women (μίγνωμι, in Greek, has fundamentally sexual connotations). Furthermore, plants are the basis of Medea’s pharmacological powers, as Argus tells the Argonauts (3.523-533). These plants are produced from the land and water (ἥπειρός τε φύει καὶ νήματον ὑδώρ, 3.530), but rather than undergoing the distinguishing power of fire (κρινόμενον πῦρ), Medea uses her plants to control fire, water, and even the courses of the heavenly bodies. The Empedoclean reference helps the reader see connections between several passages of the Argonautica, but it also heightens

\[\text{130} \] G23 (B131).

131 According to the testimony of the author of On Plants [Ps. Aristotle], Empedocles thought plants had both sexes in them and that plants came to be when the world was incomplete; animals came about after it was perfected. (815a, 817b.)
the audience’s appreciation of Medea’s abilities: she can use plants to control the very elements that make plants, and she will do so in the service of Eros.\footnote{132}

This fragment (G125, B62) is also the fragment many authors cite for the connection between Empedocles’ theory of human development and Circe’s creatures. Apart from the song of Orpheus in book 1, this is the second major passage that scholars such as Hunter point to as a reference to Empedocles’ work. Wilamowitz was one of the first to recognize that the creatures depicted at Circe’s home in book 4 are similar to the creatures described by Empedocles.\footnote{133} Wilamowitz does not, however, point out any verbal parallels or a specific fragment he thinks Apollonius is using in this passage. Campbell points out the precise verbal similarities between the description of the creatures in 4.677-679 and Empedoclean fragment G125 (B62):\footnote{134}

\begin{quote}
θῆρες δ’, οὐ θῆρεσσιν ἐοικότες ὁμιστῇσιν
οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδ’ ἀνδρεσσὶν ὁμὸν δέμας, ἄλλο δ’ ἄπ’ ἄλλων
συμμιγήσεις γενέον, κίον ἄθροοι, ἥπτε μῆλα
ἐκ σταθμῶν ἄλλας εἰσίν ὑπηδοῦντα νομή.

τοῖους καὶ προτέρους ἠξ ὠδος ἐβλάστησεν

χθὸν αὐτῇ μικτοῖσιν ἄρημεμένους μελέωσιν,
\end{quote}

\footnote{132} Schaaf points out that there are similarities between Medea’s use of φάρμακα and the φάρμακα that Empedocles’ narrator discusses in G73 (B111). Ingo Schaaf, \textit{Magie und Ritual bei Apollonios Rhodios: Studien zu ihrer Form und Funktion in den Argonautika}, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 51.

\footnote{133} Wilamowitz, \textit{Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos}, 183.

\footnote{134} This is a similarity that Campbell, Hunter, Mooney, and Kyriakou (1994: 317-8) identified, but WCopyfind did not because the significant words in the \textit{Argonautica} passage are in different forms (χθὸν … μελέωσιν) from the Empedoclean passage (χθονὸς … μελέων). Campbell, \textit{A Commentary on Apollonius Rhodius Argonautica III I-471}, 5. Hunter, \textit{Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book IV}, 177. Mooney, \textit{The Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius}, 341-2. Kyriakou, “Empedoclean Echoes in Apollonius Rhodius’ \textit{Argonautica},” 317-8.
Beasts that resembled neither flesh-eating animals nor yet humans in any consistent form, but having a mixture of limbs from each, came forth in a throng, as when sheep in great numbers leave their pens and follow a shepherd. In the past as well, the earth itself produced from mud such creatures composed of various limbs, when the earth was not yet solidified by the parching air, nor yet receiving sufficient moisture under the rays of the scorching sun. But a long period of time put these forms together and arranged them into species. Thus did those creatures of undefined form follow her.

Mooney correctly points out that the theory of life beginning with the sun’s heat drying out the mud owes something to Anaximander and Xenophanes as well as Empedocles, but the image of mixed limbs is entirely Empedoclean.135

This Empedoclean reference is puzzling because the purification that follows is highly un-Empedoclean. Purification is so central to Empedocles’ understanding of the world that it is the title of one of the two works he is known for writing; Diogenes Laertius credits him with *On Nature* and *Purifications* (8.77).136 Purification is not a


136 Modern scholars disagree over whether Empedocles wrote two works or one work that was known by two names. Previously, this issue was particularly important to resolve because it was assumed that the two works treated different subjects. However, this is no longer the case, and as Andrej and Ivana Petrovic point out, “the current scholarly consensus is that the extant fragments share common features and are, by and large, coherent: passages traditionally associated with both poems express Empedocles’ interest in purity and pollution, and they share the same doctrine of transmigration….it is not vital to resolve whether we are dealing with one book or two, and the exact apportioning of fragments to one poem or the other is irrelevant … it is methodologically sound to treat Purifications and On Nature as intrinsically coherent.” Andrej and Ivana Petrovic, *Inner Purity and Pollution in Greek Religion*, vol. 1: *Early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 79.
tangential aspect of Empedocles’ ideas but a central tenant of his thinking, and as Ivana and Andrej Petrovic point out, Empedocles’ theory of transmigration has the consequence of forbidding blood sacrifices:

… Empedocles presents the killing of both men and animals as the greatest source of pollution (*mysos*) and as the reason for the grievous cycle of reincarnations. Moral concerns are at the core of Empedocles’ conceptualization of purity, which he redefines as the abstinence from killing, including the slaughter and sacrifice of animals. Furthermore, he sees the pursuit of purity in this manner as a way for humans to improve their lot in their next incarnations and to ultimately recover their divine nature.\(^{137}\)

By incorporating the sacrifice of a newly-born pig at Circe’s home, Apollonius firmly rejects Empedocles’ ideas on purification and instead references a version included in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*.\(^{138}\) In this tragedy, Orestes recounts the purifications he has gone through up to this point, which involve sacrifices of swine for the murder of a family member (καθαρµοί χοιρόκτονοι, purification by the sacrifice of swine, 283).\(^{139}\) This is similar to the way that Circe cleanses Medea for the murder of her brother. The way that Apollonius juxtaposes a strongly Empedoclean image (the primordial creatures) with a highly un-Empedoclean view of purification (animal sacrifice) indicates that Apollonius’ interest in Empedocles’ work is not dogmatic, and the *Argonautica* is not intended to be an Empedoclean epic in way that Aratus’ *Phaenomena* is often read as a Stoic epic or Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* is Epicurean.

\(^{137}\) Ibid., 80.


\(^{139}\) The word χοιροκτόνος also appears in a fragment of Aeschylus’ work (fr. 327), also in the context of purification for murder.
The final passage where Apollonius makes use of fragment G125 (B62) is at 4.1423, where he describes how the Hesperides provide water and vegetation for the Argonauts, at Orpheus’ request:140

Ὧς φάτο λισσόμενος ἀδινή ὀπί, ταῖ δ’ ἐλέαιρον ἐγγύθειν ἀχυμένους· καὶ δὴ χθονὸς ἐξανέτειλαν ποίην πάμπροτον, ποίης γε μὲν ύψιθ οὐκ αµαρίο
βλάστειν δρπηκες, μετὰ δ’ ἔρνεα τηλεθάοντα πολλῶν ὑπὲρ γαίης ὀρθοστάδον ἡξόντο·

Thus he [Orpheus] spoke, beseeching them with a fervent voice, and from near at hand they took pity on the suffering men. First of all, they made grass *spring up from the earth*; next, tall *stalks* sprouted from the grass into the air, and then flourishing *saplings* sprang straight up far above the ground.

According to a TLG search, these two words do not appear elsewhere in conjunction in any form prior to this, so it seems likely that Apollonius is using Empedocles’ work here. This is further reinforced by ὀρπηκας (line 2 in the Empedoclean fragment) and ὀρπηκες (Arg. line 1425).141

Both passages deal with the generation of plants. The Empedoclean passage refers to Empedocles’ theory that plants have both sexes in them (both male and female).142 The *Argonautica* passage refers to how the nymphs (who are related to Ocean and water) make plants grow in the arid desert. In both of these passages, a poet figure provides the impetus for creative acts. In the Empedoclean passage, the poet asks the reader to hear

140 Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica*, 129. This is a similarity that Campbell identified and WCopyFind did not.
141 Campbell, *A Commentary on Apollonius Rhodius Argonautica III 1-471*, 5. This is a similarity that WCopyFind did not identify.
142 For more on this theory, see testimony from Aristotle’s *On Plants* (815a20-21) and Aëtius’ *Placita Philosophorum* 5.26.4 (A70).
how plants originally came to be (a second creative act that mirrors the first creative act of plants coming to be); in the *Argonautica* passage, the nymphs only generate the plants after they are addressed and beseeched by Orpheus in the preceding lines. While there is no mention of both male and female elements in the plants, the scene does require cooperation between men and women to generate the plants and save the men (Orpheus asks, the nymphs agree, and they lead the men to a spring created by Heracles). And, while the women in the Empedocles passage are described as πολυκλαύτων (much lamenting or much lamented), the nymphs in the *Argonautica* passage are λίγ’ ἔστενον (shrilly lamenting). Although the verbal echoes are limited to the bolded words above, the passages have strikingly similar ideas.

This passage also reinforces the close association Orpheus seems to have with Empedocles in the *Argonautica*: both here and in the cosmological song of book 1, Orpheus plays a role similar to the one that Empedocles’ narrator plays in his poetry.

18. Empedocles G127 (B100) and *Arg.* 3.1204, 4.871, 1545

In fragment G127 (B100) Empedocles gives an explanation of respiration that involves a clepsydra. This was originally thought to be a water clock, but it is actually a tool used for decanting liquid. This type of clepsydra moves liquid in a way that is similar to the way water can be moved in a straw, using air pressure.\(^{143}\)

\(^{143}\) The straw explanation comes from Graham’s notes on the fragment. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy*, 1:429. Last is one of the first to explain the different types of clepsydra, and his article gives several diagrams of the tool. Hugh Last, 125
ὥσπερ ὃταν παῖς
κλεψύδρη παῖζουσα διειπετέος χαλκοίο—
εὗτε μὲν αὐλοῦ πορθμὸν ἔπε' εὐείδει χερὶ θείσα
εἰς ὑδατὸς βάπτησι τέρεν δέμας ἀργυρέοιο,

just as when a girl
plays with a clepsydra of shining bronze:
when she puts the mouth of the pipe on her shapely hand
and dips it into the smooth body of glittering water.

The phrase “smooth body” (τέρεν δέμας) shows up twice in the Argonautica and does not show up outside of these two authors. At Arg. 3.1204, the narrator describes Jason washing before he invokes Hecate: ἔνθ' ἦτοι πάμπρωτα λοέσσατο μὲν ποταμόῖο / εὐαγέως θείοι τέρεν δέμας. Race understands the phrase τέρεν δέμας to describe Jason’s body: “there first of all he washed his tender body piously in the divine river,” but it is also possible that Apollonious is playing with the ambiguity of the aorist middle verb (λοέσσατο) and the genitive in both passages (“the smooth body of the glittering water” in Empedocles, possibly “the smooth body of the divine river” in the Argonautica).

Even if this is not the case, the phrase shows that Apollonius is interested in a highly technical part of Empedocles’ work, especially since he uses the phrase again at 4.871 in another setting that involves immersion. Here the phrase refers to Achilles’ body, which Thetis anoints with ambrosia to make him immortal and young: ἥματα δ’


144 This is a similarity that WCopyFind helped identify and Campbell and other scholars do not note. A lemma proximity search for these two words did not turn up any other passages with these words together except in Aristotle, quoting Empedocles (De respiratione 437b19).
αὔτε / ἀμβροσίῃ χρίεσκε τέρεν δέμας, ὅφρα πέλοιτο / ἀθάνατος καὶ οἱ στυγερὸν χροὶ γῆρας ἀλάλκοι (and by day she anointed his smooth body with ambrosia to make him immortal and to ward off hateful old age from his body).\footnote{This is a similarity that WCopyFind helped identify and Campbell and other scholars do not note.}

This is a passage that is similar to another Empedoclean fragment (G198, B137, discussed in section 22). The narrator of this passage also describes baby Achilles with the verb σπαίρω (gasping, panting, struggling), a verb that Aristotle uses to describe respiration in fish (Arist. Resp. 471a30). Apollonius’ awareness of respiration in this passage may indicate that he is not only interested in the clepsydra image in Empedocles’ work but also his ideas on how the body works.

This fragment on respiration (G127, B100) has another word, μύχονδε, which also appears in Arg. 4.1545. This adverb is based on the noun μυχός, which means “innermost part or nook” (LSJ). In Empedocles’ description of respiration, it refers the way blood rushes back inward (ἀῖμα … ἀπαίξειε μυχόνδε, 22-23). This form does show up in Homer with the genitive to describe where the suitors’ retreat: μεγάρῳ μυχόνδε (to the innermost part of the hall, Od. 22.270). In the Argonautica, it is part of a simile describing how the Argo, seeking a passage to leave lake Triton, is similar to a snake seeking to escape the heat of the sun (ὅφρα μυχόνδε διὰ ροχμοῖο δύηται).\footnote{The similar use of μύχονδε is one that WCopyFind helped identify and Campbell and other scholars do not note.} Since it is clear from the discussion of τέρεν δέμας that Apollonius’ is familiar with this part of Empedocles’ work and because both passages deal with liquid and πόροι (passages,
G127.17, *Arg. 4.1538), Apollonius may have this part of Empedocles’ work in mind. Again, this shows that Apollonius reads Empedocles’ work closely and uses highly technical parts of his work as well as those parts that deal with poetry and poetic authority.

19. Empedocles G182 (B121), G50 (B26) and *Arg. 3.1275*

There is an end-line formula that occurs twice in Empedocles’ work which also shows up in Apollonius’ description of the Colchians before Jason’s bout with the bulls at 3.1275.

The first instance in Empedocles’ work is in fragment 51, in a description of the cycles of Love and Strife: 147

> ἐν δὲ μέρει κρατέουσι περιπλομένοι κύκλοι, καὶ φθίνει εἰς ἄλληλα καὶ αὐξέται ἐν μέρει αἰσθής. αὐτὰ γὰρ ἔστιν ταῦτα, δι’ ἄλληλων δὲ θέοντα γίνονται(α) ἀνθρώποι τε καὶ ἄλλοι έθνεα θηρῶν ἄλλοτε μὲν Φυλότητι συνερχόμεν’ εἰς ἕνα κόσμον, ἄλλοτε δ’ αὖ διχ’ ἔκοσμα φορούμενα Νείκεος ἔχειν, εἰσόκεν ἐν συμφύνοντα το πᾶν ὑπένερθε γένηται. οὕτως ἢ μὲν ἐν ἕκ πλεόνων μεμάθηκε φύσει ηδὲ πάλιν διαφύλατος ἐνός πλέουν’ ἐκτελέθουσι, τή μὲν γίγνονται τε καὶ οὕς σφισιν ἔμπεδος αἰῶν’ ἢ δὲ τάδ’ ἀλλάσσοντα διαμπερὲς οὐδαμὰ λήγει, ταύτη δ’ αἰὲν ἔασιν ἀκίνητοι κατὰ κύκλον.

They rule in succession as the cycle rolls round, and they dwindle into each other and grow in their appointed turns, for these are the very things that are, which running through each other become men and the races of other beasts, at one time coming together by Love into one order,

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147 Campbell, *Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica*, 129. This is a similarity that WCopyFind and Campbell both identify.
at another time each being borne apart by the enmity of Strife, until growing to be one they are completely subjected. Thus, inasmuch as they are wont to become one from many, and in turn with the one growing apart they produce many, they are born and they do not enjoy a steadfast life; but inasmuch as they never cease continually alternating, they are ever immobile in the cycle.

As Campbell points out, Empedocles uses the end of line 4 again in fragment G182.2 (B121.2):

> ........... ἀτερπέα χῶρον, ἔνθα Φόνος τε Κότος τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνεα Κηρῶν αὐχημαί τε Νόσιοι καὶ Σῆμικες ἔργα τε ῶευστά Ἄτης ἀν λειμῶνα κατὰ σκότος ἡλάσκουσιν.

> ... a joyless place
where Bloodshed, Rancor, and the other tribes of cares
 parched Diseases, Putrefactions, and fluxes
roam the meadow of destruction in darkness.

The second line of this fragment (and the fourth of the previous one) mirror 3.1275 of the Argonautica:

> τόσσον δὲ προτέρω πέλεν ἄστεος ἀντιπέρηθεν, ὀδεσσὸν τ’ ἐκ βαλβίδος ἐπῆβολος ἀρματι νύσσα γίγνεται, ὀππότ’ ἄθελα καταφθιμένου ἄνακτος κηδεμόνες πεζόσι καὶ ἵππεσι τίθενται.
> τέτμον δ’ Αἰήτην τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνεα Κόλχων, τοὺς μὲν Καυκασίοισιν ἐφεσταότας σκοπέλοισιν, τὸν δ’ αὐτοῦ παρὰ χεῖλος ἐλισσομένου ποταμοῖο.

It [the plain of Ares] lay further on, across from the city as far as is the finishing-post to be reached by a chariot from the starting-point, when at a king’s death his kinsmen hold games for runners and horsemen. When they came upon Aeetes and the hosts of the Colchians besides, the latter were seated on the Caucasian heights, while he was there driving back and forth along the edge of the river.

Campbell does not note that there is a similarity between the Arg. passage and several lines from Herodotus: 1.53 (Κροήσσος ὁ Λυδῶν τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνεον βασιλεὺς), 1.58
(Πελασγῶν μάλιστα προσκεχωρηκότων αὐτῷ καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνων βαρβάρων συνήν) and
1.69 (Κροῖσος ὁ Λυδῶν τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνων βασιλεύς). The first and last are part of Croesus’ title and given in formal situations where messengers announce his instructions at Delphi or Sparta. The middle example is from a genitive absolute that takes place in Herodotus’ discussion of the relationship between the Greeks and the Pelasgians.

Although it is clear that Apollonius read and used Herodotus,\[148\] the passages from Empedocles’ work are closer parallels for several reasons: first, these passages include the whole sequence of τε καὶ ἄλλων ἔθνων + genitive plural noun (the parallels from Herodotus’ work miss either the initial τε or the final genitive plural noun); second, the sequence occurs in the same metrical position in Empedocles’ and Apollonius’ works (the third foot through the sixth foot); finally, Empedocles uses the same sequence twice (in two different fragments), while the parallels from Herodotus would require a combination of the three passages. For all of these reasons, the Empedoclean fragments seem to be more closely related, although it is always possible that Apollonius is using more than one author in the passage. (The sequence does not appear elsewhere in extant literature prior to the Argonautica.)

Both the Empedoclean fragments and the Argonautica passage contain images of simultaneous movement and stasis. In G182 (B121), the continual alternation between the rule of Strife and Love is, itself, a sort of stasis: αἰὲν ἅσιν ἀκίνητοι κατὰ κύκλον

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(“they are ever immobile in the cycle”). In the *Argonautica* passage, the Colchian people sit still while, at the same time, their king drives back and forth (ἐλλισσομένου) by the river. Empedocles highlights the roles of Strife and Love, while the passage in the *Argonautica* features a high point of strife between Aeetes and Jason which is partially resolved and yet worsened by the love Medea has for Jason (Jason is able to complete the task, but takes the fleece with Medea’s help, which angers Aeetes). Eros does not so much solve the Strife as it perpetuates it, and yet without the Strife, Eros would not be necessary.

### 20. Empedocles G185 (B124) and Arg. 4.446

Campbell, Hunter, and Kyriakou point out a parallel between Empedoclean fragment 185 (an exclamatory address to mortals) and *Arg. 4.446* (an exclamatory address to Eros):149

> ὡ πόποι, ὡ δειλὸν θνητῶν γένος, ὡ δυσάνολβον,  
> τοίων ἐκ τ’ ἐρίδων ἐκ τε στοναχίον ἐγένεσθε.
>
> Ah, woe! O wretched race of mortals, miserable from what strifes, from what groans were you born!

> Σχέτλι Ἕρως, μέγα πῆμα, μέγα στύγος ἀνθρώποισιν.  
> ἐκ σέθεν οὐλόμεναι τ’ ἐρίδες στοναχί οὐδεὶς τε,  
> ἀλγεά τ’ ἄλλη ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀπείρονα τετρήχασιν.

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Cruel Love, great affliction, great abomination for humans; from you come deadly quarrels and groans and laments, and countless other pains besides these are stirred up.

However, there is another, perhaps closer, parallel between the *Argonautica* passage and a fragment from Timon of Phlius (fr. 784):

\[\text{σχέτλιοι ἄνθρωποι, κάκ’ ἐλέγχεα, γαστέρες οἶν, τοῖων ἐκ τ’ ἐρίδων ἐκ τε στοναχῶν πέπλασθε}\]

As Hunter points out, in the Empedocles’ passage, “it was Strife (νεῖκος) which caused the unhappy human condition, but Ap. transfers this to ἔρως, the equivalent of Empedocles’ φιλία or φιλότης, the alternative to Strife…. The murder of Apsyrtos and its aftermath is thus placed under the sign of Empedocles, for whom φόνος was the ‘archetypal sin.’”

There are two possible ways to take this inversion: first, Apollonius sees a problem with Empedocles’ vision of Eros as a unifying influence. Like Pausanias in Plato’s *Symposium* (181a-182a), he recognizes that the effects of erotic love are not always good, and the wrong type of love can have negative effects. The second way to interpret it is that the *Argonautica* as a whole functions as an image of the Empedoclean cycle, where eros gives way to strife, which again gives way to eros. The one leads naturally to the other, and the story of Medea is a narrative examination of that process, as her union with Jason leads to strife with her family and the eventual death of her

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brother, Apsyrtus, but that murder leads in turn to her closer (sexual and marital) union with Jason at Phaeacia. This interpretation would fit well with the geographically cyclical nature of the work, which begins and ends in the same place. It also fits well with the creative role Empedocles gives these forces: just as the interplay between Love and Strife creates the visible world (through mixture and separation), so love and strife form the narrative tension in the Argonautica that drives the story forward. This is true not only in the story of Medea, but also in smaller episodes such as the story of the Lemnian women, whose husbands were affected by Aphrodite and neglected their wives, which led to strife (the Lemnian women kill their husbands), but Jason’s erotic attractions prevent a second massacre and lead to the Lemnian women’s open hospitality.\(^{151}\) This lasts until Heracles threatens strife, and the Argo (and the Argonautica) moves forward. These themes of love and strife appear in the Odyssey as well, but Apollonius seems more aware of these as abstract concepts, and he uses those concepts to structure the work.

21. Empedocles G197 (B136.2) and Arg. 3.297-8

In a two-line fragment, Empedocles admonishes the reader to avoid bloodshed: οὐ παύσεσθε φόνοι δυσηχέος; οὐκ ἐσορᾶτε / ἀλλήλους δάπτοντες ἀκηδείησι νόοιο; (“Will you not cease from ill-sounding bloodshed? Do you not see / how you are devouring each other with heedless mind?”). Based on the context in Sextus Empiricus

(where this fragment is recorded), this is part of Empedocles’ argument against animal sacrifice. It is immediately followed in Sextus Empiricus by fragment G198 (B137), which describes a father unwittingly sacrificing his own son because he does not understand that human souls enter animal bodies (part of Empedocles’ theory of the transmigration of souls through various elements).152

Apollonius uses the same phrase to describe Medea’s mind after she is struck by Eros’ arrow: τοῖος ὑπὸ κραδίης εἰλικμένος αἰθέτο λάθη / οὖλος ἔρως, ἀπαλάς δὲ μετετρωπᾶτο παρειάς / ἐς χλόον, ἀλλ’ ἔρευθος, ἀυκηδείησι νόοιο. (“such was the destructive love that curled beneath her heart and burned in secret. And her tender cheeks turned now pale, now red, in the distraction of her mind”).153 The conjunction of these two words in any form does not occur elsewhere in extant Greek literature. Ardizzoni recognized the parallel and argued that the main point of the similarity is the stress that it places on the irrationality of love: “Di fronte a tale tumulto del cuore (θυμός, κραδίη, φρένες) la ragione (νόος) non ha la forza di opporsi, ma rimane inattiva e come indifferente in un imnble torpore.”154 The mind is languid while the emotions are in tumult. But the image of rest and torpor is odd, given that the rest of the passage

152 Sextus Empiricus Against the Professors 9.129.


154 Ardizzoni, “Note critiche ed esegetiche sul testo di Apollonio Rodio,” 374-5. The discussion of this particular passage takes places on pages 372-375.
emphasizes the energy, heat, and motion of Medea’s feelings, in terms that are similar to Sappho 31 (particularly in the description of Medea’s paleness and the way love burns internally). This contrast seems to have puzzled an anonymous scholiast as well, who glosses ἀκηδείησι as “ταῖς πολυκηδείαις, τούτεστι ταῖς λύπαις.” The scholiast, then, sees the alpha in this word as intensive rather than privative; Medea’s mind is not care-less but full of cares.

Apart from this Empedoclean fragment, the word ἀκήδεια occurs nowhere in extant literature prior to the Argonautica, and Apollonius uses it three times: 2.219, 3.260, and here at 3.298. In the other two passages it also occurs in the dative (ἀκηδείης at 2.219, ἀκηδείη at 3.260). But in both of those passages, the word appears to mean “careless” rather than “full of cares”: at 2.219 Phineus urges the Argonauts not to abandon him out of ἀκηδείης, and at 3.260 Chalciope welcomes her sons home and is glad they have not abandoned her from ἀκηδείη. It would be odd if Apollonius chose to change the meaning of the word at 3.298 after using it in the normal way twice before.

Thus Ardizzani’s point seems particularly perceptive: ἀκηδείησι νόοι does not refer to anguish (as the LSJ argues) but a lack of rational ability due to Eros’ arrow. This interpretation is supported by the description of “wise thoughts” shifting or leaving Medea a few lines earlier (καὶ οἱ ἄηντο ἐκ πυκιναὶ καμάτῳ φρένες, 3.288-9).

The reference to Empedocles’ work helps confirm the meaning of the word ἀκηδεία in this passage and the other parts of the Argonautica, but it also emphasizes the enormous moral weight of Apsyrtus’ eventual murder, which is the outcome of Medea’s erotic fixation on Jason. Empedocles uses the phrase ἀκηδείησι νόοι to rebuke those
who kill humans (in animal form), but Medea will eventually participate in the murder of her own brother in human form. Although Jason strikes the blow, the narrator credits Medea for the deed because she planned it (4.445-447). The reference to Empedocles’ work here emphasizes just how serious this murder is and how complete the rule of Eros is over Medea’s mental faculties.

22. Empedocles G198 (B137) and Arg. 4.875

Empedocles’ doctrine of reincarnation influences his understanding of sacrifice, and in fragment 198 (B137), he gives a vivid description of the gruesome consequences of not understanding reincarnation as it relates to sacrifice:

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μορφὴν δὲ ἀλλὰζαντα πατήρ φίλον υἱόν ἀείρας
σφάζει ἐπενεχόμενος μέγα νήπιος· οἱ δ’ ἀπορεύνται
λισσόμενον θύοντες· ὁ δ’ αὐτή νήκουστος ὀμοκλέων
σφάζας ἐν μεγάροισι κακὴν ἀλεγύνατο δαίτα.

ὁ δ’ αὐτῶς πατέρ’ υἱός ἐλών καὶ μητέρα παϊδες
θυμὸν ἀπορραίσαντε φίλας κατὰ σάρκας ἔδουσιν
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The father lifting up his own son in a changed form slaughters him with a prayer in his great folly, and they are lost as they sacrifice the suppliant. But he, not heedful of their rebukes, having made slaughter has prepared in his halls a ghastly banquet. Just so the son laying hold of the father and the children of the mother after depriving them of life devour their own kindred flesh.

This phrase, μέγα νήπιος, shows up three times in extant Greek literature prior to the Argonautica: Iliad 16.46, Works and Days 131, and this Empedoclean fragment. In the Iliad, the narrator uses it to describe Patroclus when he asks Achilles to let him wear his armor into battle. Here the phrase reminds the reader that the narrator/poet knows that
Patroclus’ request will end in death, but Patroclus himself does not know that. In the
*Works and Days*, the narrator uses it to describe a child of the Silver Race, who takes one
hundred years to mature before living a short adult life.

In the *Argonautica*, the phrase is used to describe Peleus, who is shocked at the
sight of Thetis dunking their child Achilles in fire to keep him immortal and young:

\[
\text{αὐτὰρ ὁγ’ ἐξ εὐνῆς ἀναπάλμενος εἰσενόησεν}
\]
\[
\text{παιδὰ φίλον σπαίροντα διὰ φλογὸς, ἦκε δ’ ἄντὴν}
\]
\[
\text{σμερδαλέην ἔσιδών, μέγα νήπιος· ἦ δ’ ἁίοσα, (875)}
\]
\[
\text{τὸν μὲν ἄρ’ ἀρπαγόνην χαμάδις βάλε κεκληγῶτα,}
\]
\[
\text{αὐτή δὲ, πνοῇ ἱκέλη δέμας, ἦν’ ὀνειρος,}
\]
\[
\text{βῆ ρ’ ἰμεν ἐκ μεγάρῳθοδός καὶ ἐσήλατο πόντον}
\]
\[
\text{χοσαμένη· μετὰ δ’ οὐ τι παλίσσυτος ἱκετ’ ὀπίσσω.}
\]

But [Peleus] darted up from his bed when he perceived his own son gasping in
the flames, and when he saw this, he let out a great shout, the terrible fool; and
she [Thetis] heard and violently cast the crying child to the ground, and she, like a
breath in form, got up and swiftly went from the hall as a dream, and leapt into
the sea because she was angry; and after this she was not in a rush to come home.

This passage has usually been read as a retelling of the Demophoon passage in the
*Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, and there are many similarities between the two: in each, a
female figure anoints a male child with ambrosia by day and places him in fire by night
in order to make him deathless and ageless, and in both passages the project is interrupted
by someone who does not understand why this is being done.\textsuperscript{155} But there are several
elements in the *Argonautica* passage that are also similar to the fragment of Empedocles:
in both a father makes a mistake of perception that leads to the death of his child. In the
Empedoclean fragment, this mistake is not seeing the animal for the reincarnated son,

while in the *Argonautica*, Peleus does not recognize that Thetis is protecting their son and making him immortal. Both passages also involve a change for the child: in the Empedoclean fragment, the child has been changed to look like an animal, while in the *Argonautica*, the child is in the process of becoming immortal and ageless. Both in sacrifice and in the immortality ritual, the child is placed in the fire. Although there are clear similarities to the Demophoon episode in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, that does not mean it is the only reference here. It is possible that Apollonius draws on the Hymn, the *Iliad* (since that passage also involves Achilles), and Empedocles in this passage. The Argonauts often sacrifice animals or discuss doing so (1.353-6, 402-8, 2.301-3, 689-93, 926-8, 1169-70, 3.1032-4), so Apollonius does not seem as interested in Empedocles’ views on animal sacrifice as he is in the way that humans can be mistaken about the nature of reality.

23. Empedocles’ Elements: G26, G46, G41 (B6, B22, B17) and Arg. 3.207-8, 163-6

Empedocles identifies four roots that make up the physical world. In G46 (B22), these are given physical names (sun, earth, heaven, and sea, ἡλέκτωρ τε χθόν τε καὶ οὐρανὸς ἡδὲ θάλασσα), while in G26 they are given the names of deities (Zeus, φερέσβιος Hera, θάλασσα).

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156 This is a similarity that WCopyFind identified and other scholars did not.

157 It is possible that Empedocles draws on the *Iliad* passage where Patroclus does not understand the full consequences of what he requests from Achilles. Likewise, in the Empedoclean fragment, the father does not understand the full consequences of his sacrifice and prayer.
Aidoneus, and Nestis). In the description of Colchian burial practices (3.207), the narrator states that by placing dead men in the air and dead women in the ground “earth shares an equal portion with the air” (ἡέρι δ’ ἵσην / καὶ χθῶν ἐμιμορέν αἰσαν). Hunter notes that “the burial practice here described … illustrates the fact that each of the four sacred elements – earth, air, fire, water – may receive a corpse and protect the living from the danger posed by it.”\textsuperscript{158} Campbell also recognizes the reference to elements but sees this as a reference to Empedocles’ theory that each element has its own domain (G41.27, B17.7): “For the moment we might think rather in terms of the equality of status enjoyed by cosmological forces … and in particular about the notion entertained by Empedocles that certain elements were equal, each presiding over a different τιμή.”\textsuperscript{159}

Since the song of Orpheus in book one also mentions these four elements, it is safe to say that Apollonius is aware of the theory, but this opens the door to other passages that include elements. In the description of Eros’ descent from Olympus, the narrator states that earth (γαία) and rivers (ποταμῶν) were below him as he traveled through the air (αἰθέρα), and the risen sun (ἡέλιος) is mentioned as part of the path. In this passage, earth is described as φερέσβιος, “life-giving,” the same adjective used in G26 (B6) to describe Hera as one of the elements.\textsuperscript{160} If this passage is read as a list of elements, it adds to the interpretation of the sphere as a model of the cosmos (see section

\textsuperscript{158} Hunter, \textit{Apollonius of Rhodes} Argonautica Book III, 120.

\textsuperscript{159} Campbell, \textit{A Commentary on Apollonius Rhodius} Argonautica \textit{III 1-471}, 185. This is a similarity that WCopyFind did not identify.

\textsuperscript{160} This is a similarity that WCopyFind identified and other scholars do not.
11 above), and Eros’ descent to earth and his affliction of Medea indicate his growing influence in the world.

24. Empedocles G199 (B138) and Arg. 3.1015 (Dubious)

In Aristotle’s Poetics 1457b, there are two brief quotations that are generally attributed to Empedocles:

ἀπ’ εἴδους δὲ ἐπὶ εἴδος οἷον “χαλκῷ ἀπὸ ψυχῆν ἀρύσας” καὶ “τεμών τανακῆι χαλκῷ”: ἐνταῦθα γὰρ τὸ μὲν ἁρύσαι ταμεῖν, τὸ δὲ ταμεῖν ἁρύσαι εἰρήκεν: ἂμφο γὰρ ἀφελεῖν τί ἔστιν.

An example of transference from one species to another is “Drawing off his life with the bronze” and “Severing with the tireless bronze,” where “drawing off” is used for “severing” and “severing” for “drawing off,” both being species of “removing.” (trans. W.H. Fyfe.)

Campbell points out that the first fragment is echoed in Arg. 3.1015,161 where Medea gives Jason the drug he will need to complete Aeetes’ task:

προπρὸ δ´ ἀφειδήσασα θυώδεος ἔξελε μίτρης φαρμάκον: ἀυτὰρ ὅγ´ αἵνα χεροῖν ὑπέδεκτο γεγηθώς.
καὶ νῦ κε οί καὶ πάσαν ἀπὸ στηθέων ἁρύσασα
ψυχὴν ἐγγυάλιζεν ἀγαιοῦν ῥάπτεντι:
τοῖς ἀπὸ ἄχανθοις καρῆσι τούτων Ἀισινίδαο στράπτεν ἐν ὑπέλθειν ἀπὸ φλόγα:

Casting off all restraint, she took the drug from her fragrant sash, and he received it at once into his hands with joy. And then she would even have drawn out her whole soul from her breast and given it to him, exulting in his need for her—such was the love flashing its sweet flame from Jason’s golden head . . .

161 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129. This is a similarity that WCopyFind also identified.
Hunter notes that although the line is reminiscent of the Empedoclean fragment, it is also possible that *Il.* 16.505 (where Patroclus kills Sarpedon) is another influence: τοῦ δ′ ἀμα ψυχήν τε καὶ ἔγχεος ἐξέρυσ' αἰχμήν ("he simultaneously withdrew the man’s life and the point of the spear").

But neither Campbell nor Hunter point out that the passage from Aristotle’s *Poetics* which contains the fragment does not include a clear attribution to Empedocles (*Poetics* 1457b13-14). And, as Jean-Claude Picot has convincingly argued, the original attribution made by J. Vahlen in 1873 is probably spurious, based on an incorrect reading of the manuscript.162

Regardless of the actual poet cited in the *Poetics* passage, it is possible that Apollonius is reading the poet mentioned in the *Poetics* through the lens of Empedoclean ideas. Although the *Argonautica* passage follows closely on Medea’s consideration of suicide (3.766-812), this does not appear to be a reference to that; rather, the verb ἐγγαλίζω indicates entrusting something (physical or abstract) to another; in *Odyssey* 16.66, Eumaeus uses the verb to describe giving Telemachus responsibility for Odysseus the beggar. Medea imagines her ψυχή as something that can be drawn out and entrusted to someone else for safekeeping, similar to the way that she has just withdrawn the drugs from her sash and placed them in Jason’s hands (χερὶν). The similarity of the transfer is emphasized by the prepositional phrase ἀπὸ στῆθέων: “And then she would even have drawn out her whole soul from her breast and given [entrusted] it to him.”

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The presentation of ψυχή as something that could possibly be removed and transferred to another may remind the reader of Aethalides (discussed in section 3 above), whose soul (ψυχή) is not overcome by forgetfulness, even though it sometimes resides above the earth and other times below it (1.645). These two passages indicate some idea of transferability of ψυχή from one physical vessel to another, similar to the way Empedocles’ narrator presents daimones inhabiting other physical bodies and elements until purified for a crime (G25, B115). The Petrovics point out that it is not clear whether Empedocles himself associated the daimon with ψυχή (soul), although later authors made the identification for him. “What seems certain, however, is that according to Empedocles’ doctrine, the identity of a daimon stays the same though the physical form (µορφή) changes; he also postulates that the mortal body is merely a cloak for the daimon.”163 Whether this fragment of poetry from Aristotle’s Poetics is truly Empedoclean or not, Apollonius’ handling of it and reuse of the imagery indicates an Empedoclean understanding of ψυχή as transferrable in some way. The line may also use the Homeric passage (Il. 16.505), which describes removing a spear point and life simultaneously (one concrete thing and one more abstract thing, similar to Medea’s drugs and soul).

25. Empedocles G173.3 (B111.3) and Arg. 3.892 (Unconvincing)

163 Petrovic, Inner Purity and Pollution in Greek Religion, 89.
Finally it is worth noting that Campbell’s analysis is not perfect. He points out the identical phrase οἱ τ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν at the end line of Empedoclean fragment G173.3 (B111.3) and Arg. 3.892, but a similar phrase occurs at Il. 14.85 (οἱ τ’ ἐπὶ γαῖης) and Hesiod Op. 505 (αἱ τ’ ἐπὶ γαῖαν). Although it is possible that this is an allusion to Empedocles, it could also be an adaptation of the Homeric or Hesiodic line.

Conclusions

At the beginning of this project, I wondered if there might be a pattern to the way Apollonius uses Empedocles’ work. Were the references concentrated around particular characters such as Orpheus, for example? Or were the references concentrated in particular places that the Argonauts visit, such as Sicily (where Empedocles lived)? At the end of this survey, none of those patterns seem to fit the data. Instead, Apollonius uses references to Empedocles’ work throughout the Argonautica, in the voices of multiple characters as well as the narrator’s voice. The references are not concentrated in any particular book of the Argonautica either; although there seem to be more references in book 4 than the other books, the references are not isolated to that book. This indicates that Empedocles’ work is a general influence on Apollonius, rather than a discreet interest restricted to a particular geographical place or topic.

The references also do not seem to be focused on any one section of Empedocles’ work. For larger fragments of Empedocles’ work (such as G41, B17), there are more

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164 Campbell, Studies in the Third Book of Apollonius Rhodius’ Argonautica, 129.
references in the *Argonautica*, as one might expect because there is more text to use and analyze. But Apollonius does not, for example, focus on fragments that show Empedocles’ theory of elements and avoid those that explain his theory of respiration. Instead, Apollonius seems to draw from many locations in Empedocles’ work on many different topics.

In looking at the Empedoclean parallels in this chapter, it is also clear that the reading habits Apollonius applies to Homeric epics are not restricted to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but also apply to Empedocles’ work. For example, scholars have noted Apollonius’ penchant for dividing Homeric allusions between several passages: Acosta-Hughes has noted that an allusion to *Odyssey* 6, where Odysseus meets Nausicca and her maids playing with the ball (σφαῖρα, 6.100) has been divided between the scene where Jason meets Nausicca and her maids (3.830-974)165 and the beginning of *Argonautica* 3, where Aphrodite offers the child Eros a ball as a plaything (σφαῖραν, 3.135). Apollonius uses this technique of divided allusion with Empedocles’ work as well: fragment G51 is used in different ways at *Arg.* 2.655-6 and 4.646, while fragment G47 is used at 1.52 and 4.933. At other times, Apollonius uses the same allusion twice, such as ἐς αὐγάς / ἠελίου at both 1.647-8 and 4.1744-5 (from G25). Because these double allusions occur twice rather than many times, this seems to be a literary technique that is different from the repeated end lines that occur in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It is possible that these double

165 Note especially the use of the word μελπομένης at 949; cf. μολῆς at *Od.* 6.101.
allusions encourage the reader to juxtapose two parts of the narrative that are separated in the work, but they also add to the cyclical nature of the poem.

Apollonius uses different types of imitation in his use of Empedocles’ work. Most of the passages discussed in this chapter have included precise verbal echoes, but some have also included alternative words for similar ideas (such as the different terms for the elements in Orpheus’ song). Apollonius seems fascinated with rare and unusual forms, such as the dual form δεδαῶτε in 1.51, which does not appear in Homer’s or Hesiod’s works (or other extant Greek literature apart from Empedocles’ work). And for many of these passages, there are thematic echoes as well as verbal ones.

In reviewing the Empedoclean references in this chapter, it should be clear that Apollonius is familiar with Empedocles’ work on a thematic and verbal level. Campbell has noted more specific verbal connections than any other scholar (many of which are convincing), but offers little analysis. Nelis goes further than other scholars to note the role that Strife and Love play in the work and thus argues that Apollonius is not only aware of Empedocles’ work but uses his work thoughtfully, in a way that interacts with Empedoclean ideas and builds upon them. In many ways, the crew of the Argo embodies the Empedoclean dichotomy between Strife and Love, and the tension between the two forces provides the creative energy for the Argonautica. In arguing for Empedoclean influence on Apollonius, this does not mean a rejection of Homeric influence, but it does mean that Apollonius is reading hexameter poetry in a way that rejects Aristotle’s distinction based on content and moves toward a more inclusive model for epic.
The *Argonautica* is not, however, an “Empedoclean” epic in the way that Aratus’ *Phaenomena* is usually considered to be Stoic, or Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* is Epicurean. Apart from the question of didactic vs. narrative epic, there are places where the *Argonautica* takes a sharp departure from Empedoclean teaching. The most important example is the disjunct between theory of purification that Empedocles puts forth and the way that Jason and Medea are purified for the murder of Apsyrtus. If the *Argonautica* were an Empedoclean epic in the sense that Apollonius used the story to put forth Empedocles’ theories in a narrative form, we might expect Circe to provide an Empedoclean explanation of why sacrificing animals is wrong (G197-8, B142-3) or something similar. Instead, Apollonius seems to use Empedocles’ ideas and images selectively as one part of a much larger set of authors Apollonius works with, but Apollonius does not use Empedocles’ work dogmatically.

Empedocles has a long history as a significant author for artists as well as philosophers. The story of his death, in particular, holds an important place for authors from Horace to Bertold Brecht. For Horace, Empedocles is a figure of artistic freedom who chooses his death in a way that continues his artistic goals. Several scholars have seen Empedocles at the end of Virgil’s second *Georgic*.

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166 *Ars Poetica* 463-467: ... *Siculique poetae / narrabo interitum. deus immortalis haber i / dum cupid Empedocles, ardentem frigidus Aetnam / insiluit. sit ius liceatque perire poetis: / invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti.* (I will tell the tale of the Sicilian poet’s death. Since he wanted to be thought an immortal god, Empedocles coldly leapt into burning Aetna. Let this be the right of poets and let them be allowed to perish. The one who saves an unwilling person is the same as a murderer.)

Giannantoni point out that although Aristotle attempts to define Empedocles as the inventor of rhetoric and primarily a natural historian rather than a poet, perceptions of Empedocles have often contradicted Aristotle’s views. This history of Empedocles as poet begins early: his *Purifications* was performed by the rhapsode Cleomenes at Olympia some time before 285 BC (D.L. 8.63).

Apollonius is an important but generally unrecognized figure in the history of Empedocles’ reception by poets. Unlike many authors who focus on Empedocles’ death as a creative act, Apollonius seems drawn by the opposing forces of Love and Strife and the idea of mixture in creative acts. The Love/Strife aspect of Empedocles’ work in the *Argonautica* has been stressed by Damien Nelis. But Empedocles’ work also might appeal to Apollonius as a source because it combines mythological themes with serious thought about the origins of the physical world. Empedocles explains the origins of the visible world in terms of combinations of primary elements, but those elements combine and separate under the influence of invisible forces, to which he gives mythological names to (Ἕρως/Φιλότης and Νεῖκος). Similarly, Apollonius explains the origins of places, traditions, names, and even land masses using mythological stories about divine

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epiphanies and sentient clods of earth. Empedocles’ combination of myth and physical theory might appeal to Apollonius, who lived in the midst of scientific advances and curiosity about previous myths. Empedocles’ work thus serves as one model for combining mythology and investigations into origins in the form of hexameter poetry. \(^{169}\)

Given the prevalence of Empedocles’ work throughout the *Argonautica*, it is also reasonable to ask whether Apollonius uses other early philosophical authors in his work. Parmenides is a good candidate for investigation because of his ties to Empedocles and the form of his work (hexameter). To him we turn next.

\(^{169}\) It is also possible that Apollonius became interested in Empedocles and his work because of Empedocles’ reputation for rhetoric. Aristotle claims in the *Sophist* (a lost work) that Empedocles was the first to discover rhetoric (D.L. 8.57). *Life B* of Apollonius states that Apollonius lectured on rhetoric at Rhodes (σοφιστεύει ρητορίκους λόγους). However, Cameron argues that this *Life* confuses Apollonius Rhodius with Apollonius from Alabanda, who ran a rhetoric school at Rhodes around 120 BC. Alan Cameron, *Callimachus and His Critics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 214. See also Peter Green, “Introduction,” *The Argonautica* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 2n5.
Chapter 3: Parmenides

Parmenides is the rock star of early philosophy. As Bodnár states in Parmenides’ entry in Brill’s New Pauly, “the influence of P. on the subsequent development of Greek philosophy can hardly be overestimated.” Graham agrees: “Of the Presocratics, Parmenides attracts the lion's share of attention from philosophers.... It seems almost a truism that he is the most important Presocratic.” 170 In the midst of this philosophical popularity, Parmenides’ role as a poet is often lost, and the epic form of his philosophical writing is either explained as a necessary concession to the popular forms of the time or discarded once his logical arguments have been excerpted. This may be a result of criticism by later authors such as Cicero, who evaluated his poetry unfavorably compared to Empedocles’ (minus bonis … versibus, Academica 2.23.74), 171 but this view is still operative to some extent today: while Empedocles receives an extensive entry in Brill’s New Pauly Supplements II - Volume 7: Figures of Antiquity and their Reception in Art, Literature and Music, Parmenides does not even have an entry.

And yet, as Wright points out, the poetic form that Parmenides chose for his work is “a significant departure from previous philosophical writing. It reintroduces a mythical

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170 Graham, The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy, 1:203.

171 Cicero, Academica 2.23.74.
element the Ionians were eager to avoid.”¹⁷² Wright argues that not only the mythical content but the hexameter form was unusual since Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Heraclitus all wrote in prose, and Most agrees that “the problem of why, even after the invention of philosophical prose, these figures returned to the more ancient form of verse, remains a central interpretative difficulty in accounts of early Greek thought.”¹⁷³ Because of the future developments in philosophy toward prose, it is easy to see the poetic form of Parmenides’ work as a ploy to appease a broader audience or an allegory from which his arguments must be extracted. But as Morgan and others point out, Parmenides’ choice of an epic poem to convey his thoughts is significant:

Treatments of Parmenides sometimes imply that the mythological framework of the poem is a veneer that can be stripped away to reveal pure philosophical argument. On the contrary, mythological elements are integrated into the argument, and interpreting their status is one of the crucial philosophical problems in the poem. Separating Parmenides’ mythos from his logos bespeaks the same tendency we saw in the interpretation of Xenophanes’ literary ethics and theology: the desire to tidy up philosophy (separate mythos from logos) so that it conforms to modern perceptions of its subject matter and method. The idea that literary presentation might have philosophical import is ignored. There is, however, no dichotomy between logic on the one hand, and metaphor and myth on the other. This is to argue in terms which would have been foreign to Parmenides. Problems of mythological style and philosophical content are not only parallel, they are expressions of the same difficulty, the relationship between thought and its expression. Here Parmenides follows in the footsteps of his

¹⁷² Graham, The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy, 1:234.

¹⁷³ Wright, “Philosopher Poets: Parmenides and Empedocles,” 2. Most, “The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy,” 335. Osborne disagrees with the view that poetry was a choice and views it as a default position at this time, although still significant for understanding the ideas in the work. Osborne, “Was verse the default form for Presocratic philosophy? Response to M.R. Wright,” 26.
predecessors as he focuses on the problems of myth as a way of symbolising the difficulties inherent in all language.\footnote{174 Kathryn Morgan, \textit{Myth and Philosophy from the pre-Socratics to Plato} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 67.}

The question of what form learned discourse should take is one that might interest Apollonius as both a scholar (author of \textit{Against Zenodotus}) and poet writing in hexameter (the \textit{Argonautica} and several poems on the founding of cities). There is also some evidence that Parmenides was a subject of interest for Callimachus: Diogenes Laertius reports that Callimachus offered an opinion on the authorship of a particular poem that some thought was by Parmenides (9.23). Knox also sees echoes of Parmenides’ proem in the prologue to the \textit{Aetia}: “Here, in an important programmatic passage, the philosophical poet describes his inspiration as a conversation with a goddess when he was a young man and she tells him that he has chosen the right path, one off the beaten track. I think it is likely that Callimachus was inspired by some such confluence of sources when he conceived of his playful account of Apollo's driving instructions delivered to him when he was a young poet.”\footnote{175 Peter Knox “Lucretius on the Narrow Road,” \textit{Harvard Studies in Classical Philology} 99 (1999), 283. See also Markus Asper, \textit{Onomata allotria: zur Genese, Struktur und Funktion poetologischer Metaphern bei Kallimachos} (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1997), 72-78. E. J. Kenney, “Doctus Lucretius,” \textit{Mnemosyne} 23 no. 4 (1970), 370. J. H. Waszink, \textit{Lucretius and Poetry} (Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche uitgevers maatschappij, 1954), 11. Giambattista D’Alessio, “Una via lontana dal cammino degli uomini (Parm. frr. 1+6 D.-K.; Pind. Ol. VI. 22–27; Pae. VIIb 10–2),” \textit{Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica} 13 (1995), 164-74.}

If Callimachus was familiar with Parmenides’ work and Apollonius uses the work of Parmenides’ student, Empedocles, it is reasonable to ask whether Apollonius uses
Parmenides’ work as well as Empedocles’. Little work has been done on this topic outside of noting the Parmenidean reference to the Gates of Night in book 4. In his introduction and commentary to book 4, Hunter notes this passage and states that Apollonius’ use of Parmenides serves to “familiarize” “an extraordinary geography but also—given the context of Parmenides proem—emphasizing the inspired strangeness of the whole.” This is vague at best. Campbell makes several references to Parmenides in his commentary to book 3, but neither Campbell nor Hunter offers a systematic presentation of how Apollonius uses Parmenides’ work or an analysis of why Parmenides’ work might be significant for understanding the Argonautica. Here I will argue that Apollonius not only pays attention to the “House of Night” image that appears in book 4, but also uses phrases from more philosophical sections of Parmenides’ work throughout the Argonautica.

At times, Apollonius uses one fragment of Parmenides’ work in several places. (As I will consider at the end of this chapter, this indicates a close reading of several passages and perhaps less interest in others.) For this reason, I have organized the material around the passages of Parmenides and discussed the relevant Argonautica passages as they arise.

Gates of Night and Daughters of Helios: Parmenides G10 (B1) and Arg. 4.603-630

The clearest and most extended reference to Parmenides is the reference to the Gates of Night in a description of the origin of the Rhone. Parmenides mentions these gates in the
introduction to his poem, where he describes his journey to the House of Night to meet
the goddess who is the guide for the remainder of his philosophical journey.

The mares which bear me as far as my desires might reach were conveying me, when they led me into the many-voiced way of the deity, who leads the knowing mortal straight on through all things. By this way was I borne, for by this way the well-discerning mares bore me as they drew the chariot, and the maidens guided the way. And the axle in the naves would screech like a pipe as it blazed (for it was driven by two whirling wheels, one on each side), when the maiden daughters of the Sun hastened to escort me, having left the House of Night for the light, having pushed back their veils from their faces with their hands There stand the gates of the paths of Night and Day, and a lintel spans them and a stone threshold; and the ethereal gates themselves are filled with grand doors; and much-avenging Justice holds their alternating keys.

Apollonius uses parts of this section in his description of the Argonauts’ passage through the Eridanus river, past the swamp which was made by Phaethon’s fall from Helios’ chariot:
And round about [Phaethon’s swamp], the maiden Heliades, confined in tall poplars, sadly wail a pitiful lament, while they shed forth from their eyes shining drops of amber to the ground. These are dried on the sand by the sun, and whenever the waters of the dark marsh wash over their shores from the blasts of the howling wind, then all of them together are rolled into the Eridanus by the swelling flow. … during the day [the Argonauts] were sickened to exhaustion, oppressed by the nauseous stench, which, unbearable, the tributaries of the Eridanus exhaled from smoldering Phaethon, while at night they heard the piercing lament of the loudly wailing Heliades, and, as they wept, their tears were borne along the waters like drops of oil.

From there they entered the deep stream of the Rhone, which flows into the Eridanus, and in the strait where they meet the churning water roars. Now that river, rising from the end of the earth, where the gates and precincts of Night are located, through one branch disgorges onto the shores of the Ocean, through another pours into the Ionian sea, and through a third pours its streams through seven mouths into the vast gulf of the Sardinian sea.

At first glance, it would be easy to dismiss the reference to the Ἡλιάδες as originating somewhere outside of the Parmenidean fragment: after all, the description in the Argonautica is of the daughters of Helios mourning the death of their brother, Phaethon,
and this story is the subject of Aeschylus’ lost tragedy *Heliades* (or *Daughters of Helios*).

Apollonius clearly uses tragic authors elsewhere, and a lost Aeschylus play would be a good candidate for a source. Yet the fragments of Aeschylus’ *Heliades* that survive bear no close similarities to this passage, and it is possible that Apollonius has both authors in mind. Hunter acknowledges the Gates of Night and the Heliades as a reference to Parmenides’ work in his commentary on this passage:

> Ap. is clearly using Hesiod’s conception of the grim (possibly underground) house and threshold of Night (*Theog.* 736-57 …), but of particular importance is the evocation of the proem of Parmenides’ poem, in which Parmenides, picking up the Hesiodic motifs, imagines himself riding, like (though more successfully than) Phaethon, in a chariot, escorted by Ἡλιάδες κοῦραι (cf. 603-4) προλιποῦσα δόματα Νυκτός, and he describes the place where are the πύλαι Νυκτός. In a passage which is an extraordinary mixture of ‘science’ and poetic myth, Ap. evokes a poem which itself thematizes the distinction between ἀληθεία and ‘the opinions of mortals in which there is no true reliance’ (lines 29-30). Ap. will return to the Presocratic imagination when describing the nightmarish creatures which surround Circe, cf. 672-5n.

Hunter is correct that the image of πύλαι … Νυκτός is generally similar to Hesiod’s description of the houses of Night and Day in *Th.* 744-766, but Hesiod describes a bronze threshold (οὐδὸν … χάλκεον, 749-50) and does not describe the gates. Parmenides describes a stone threshold rather than a bronze one (λάινος οὐδὸς, a phrase that also occurs in *Il.* 9.404, in a description of Apollo’s temple), so although the general geography is the same, the details are distinctly Parmenidean, especially since the Gates of Night appear nowhere else in extant Greek literature.

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176 In a TLG search of any form of the two words within five words of each other, only these two passages appear.

Hunter’s observation about the story of Phaethon as a connection between the two passages is perceptive, and it can be pushed further. Parmenides presents his philosophical journey as a more successful version of Phaethon’s: while Phaethon fails to control the chariot of Helios, Parmenides makes it through the gates of Night in a chariot with a burning axle (ἄξων … αἰθόμενος). Similarly, the Argonauts are more successful travelers than Phaethon since they make it past the point where Phaethon fell (the noxious-smelling swamp). Both Phaethon’s intended journey and the Argonauts’ actual journey cover the known world. Like Parmenides (who is guided by Dikē), the Argonauts are guided by a female deity (Hera), who saves them from ignorance. Near the end of the Parmenidean fragment, Dikē announces her intention to describe two alternatives (truth and opinion) and guides Parmenides through the choices. Similarly, the Argonauts are faced with a decision about which course of the river to follow, and it is Hera’s guidance that keeps them on the correct path. It is through her help that they make their way back and recognize the way home (ἄψ δὲ παλιντροπόωντο θεᾶς ὑπο καὶ ὁ ἐνόησαν / τήνδ’ οἴμον τῇπέρ τε καὶ ἐπλετό νόστος ιῴσι 4.643-4). This is the same verb that the goddess Dikē uses to describe the mental activity in which she will direct for Parmenides: “Come now and I shall tell you, and do you receive through hearing the tale, / which are the only ways of inquiry for thinking” (εἰ δ’ ἀγ’ ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μῶθον ἀκούσας, / αἶπερ ὁδοὶ μοῦνα διζήσις εἰσὶ νόησαι). In both passages, the Heliades accompany the traveler for part of his journey (either physically or through the sound of

178 And, in a more general sense, the Argonauts are guided by Medea’s knowledge.
their wailing and the dripping amber on the water), and they reinforce the Phaethon connection.

This is one of the most striking uses of Parmenides’ work in the Argonautica because it combines a clear and unusual reference to Parmenides’ imagery (the Gates of Night) with a close reading of Parmenides’ work on a thematic level: the extant passage from Parmenides’ work does not include a reference to Phaethon himself, but a reader who knows the background story for the Heliades and recognizes them as the sisters of Phaethon understands that the narrator casts himself as a second, more successful Phaethon.

This is not, however, the only place where Apollonius makes use of Parmenides’ proem. As I will discuss below, the adjective αἰθέριος, which is used to describe the gates in the proem of Parmenides’ work, is also used in Apollonius’ description of the Gates of Olympus at Arg. 3.159-160, but Apollonius also uses the unusual adverb ἐπιφραδέως from the Parmenidean proem.

Skillfully: Parmenides G10.16 (B1.16) and Arg. 1.1021, 1.1336, 2.1134, 3.83

A few lines beyond the reference to the Gates of Night, Parmenides uses the unusual adverb ἐπιφραδέως, which is also used four times in the Argonautica. The word is unusual enough that an anonymous choliast to the Argonautica glosses the word as “διανενοηµένως, συνετῶς” (“circumspectly, wisely”). The adverb is based on the verb ἐπιφράζω, but in extant Greek literature prior to the Argonautica, the adverbial form
appears only in Parmenides’ work. In the Parmenidean passage, it describes the Heliades’ persuasive speech to Dikē:

τὴν δὴ παρφάμεναι κοдраὶ μαλακοίς λόγοισιν.
πείσαν ἐπιφραδέως, ὡς σφιν βαλανωτὸν ὀχήμα
άπτερεώς ὀσειε πυλέων ἀπὸ…

Persuading her with gentle words the maidens skillfully convinced her that she should push away the bolted bars quickly from the gates.

This persuasive act allows Parmenides’ narrator to enter the house of Night and Day and speak with Dikē, who lays out the epistemological problem that is at the heart of Parmenides’ work as a whole: the difference between men’s opinions (βροτῶν δόξας) and truth (Ἀληθείης).

The first occurrence of this unusual adverb in the Argonautica deals with the same issue: the difference between human opinion and truth. The Argonauts have just been carried by a storm back to the island of the Doliones:

οὐδὲ τις αὐτὴν νῆσον ἐπιφραδέως ἐνόησεν
ἔμμεναι. οὐδ’ ὑπὸ νυκτὶ Δολίονες ἄψ ἁνίόντας
ἥρως νημερτές ἐπήτσαν, ἀλλὰ ποὺ ἀνδρὸν
Μακριέων εἰσαντο Πελασγικὸν ἀρεα κέλσαι.

But no one took care to notice that it was the same island, nor, because it was night, did the Doliones clearly recognize that the heroes were returning, but apparently thought a Pelasgian war party of Macrian men had landed …

This mistake leads to a battle between the Doliones and the Argonauts, the accidental death of the Dolionian king (Cyzicus), and the Argonauts’ need to propitiate Rhea for Cyzicus’ death. These consequences proceed from epistemological problems (misidentification of the island by the Argonauts and misidentification of the Argonauts by the Doliones). The word that describes the mental process that is lacking for the
Argonauts, ἐνόησεν, is the same that the goddess Dikē uses to describe to describe the options for thought to Parmenides in G11.2 (B1.2):

εἰ δ’ ἄγ’ ἐγὼν ἔρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μὴθον ἄκουσας, αὔπερ ὁδὸι μοῦνα διζήσιος εἰσι νοῆσαι:
ἡ μὲν ὅπως ἔστιν τε καὶ ὡς σὺκ ἔστι μὴ εἶναι,
Πειθοῦς ἐστὶ κέλευθος (Ἀληθείη γὰρ ὁπηδεῖ).

Come now and I shall tell, and do you receive through hearing the tale, which are the only ways of inquiry for thinking:
the one: that it is and that it is not possible not to be, is the path of Persuasion (for she attends on Truth) …

The Argonauts’ encounter with the Doliones dramatizes the same epistemological problem that Parmenides outlines in his work, and both passages emphasize moral responsibility for lack of knowledge.

This interest in the difference between opinion and truth is continued in the next location where Apollonius uses ἐπιφραδέως at 1.1336. Here, the Argonauts have accidentally left Heracles behind when disembarking from Mysia, and Telamon accused Jason of doing so on purpose, out of jealousy for Heracles’ glory (κῦδος, 1.1292). After Glaucus rises from the sea and explains that this was actually a divine plan rather deception by Jason, Telamon apologizes for the mistaken identification and Jason responds:

Τὸν δ’ αὖτ’ Ἀϊσσονος νιὸς ἐπιφραδέως προσέειπεν·
“Ὤ πέπον, ἤ μάλα δὴ με κακῷ ἐκνυασσαο μυθφο,
φὰς ἐν τοισίδ’ ἄπασιν ἐνηνως ἀνδρός ἀλείτην ἐμευναί.

In turn, Jason answered him [Telamon] with due consideration: “My good friend, you certainly did revile me with a harsh rebuke, claiming in front of them all that I betrayed a man who was kind to me.”
Jason goes on to forgive Telamon because the motivation—loyalty to a friend—was better than greed, and Jason hopes that Telamon would respond the same way in a similar situation if Jason were the abandoned companion. Jason has, in other words, taken a case of false opinion about him and used it as an opportunity for persuasion, attempting to turn Telamon’s loyalty to Heracles into loyalty toward Jason through empathy with the root motivation. This reconciliation allows the Argonauts to continue on their voyage, rather than turning back to retrieve Heracles. In Parmenides’ work, the adverb ἐπιφραδέως is used to modify another act of persuasion, where the Heliades persuade Dikē to open the Gates of Night and allow the narrator’s continued journey.

The third place where Apollonius uses ἐπιφραδέως occurs in an act of proper recognition, where Jason recognizes that the things foretold by Phineus are coming true.

Τὸν δ’ αὖτ’ Αἴσονος υἱὸς ἐπιφραδέως ἐρέεινε,  
μαντοσύνας Φινῆος διοσάμενος τελέσθαι.

In turn, Jason judiciously questioned him [Argus], surmising that Phineus’ prophecies were being fulfilled.

In this passage, Jason recognizes the truth of divine revelations, given through the seer Phineus, similar to the way that Parmenides’ narrator receives the knowledge given to him by Dikē. But in the Argonautica passage, the adverb modifies Jason’s questioning rather than his recognition, and that questioning is part of his overall appeal to Argus and the other sons of Phrixus to help him with his mission. In this passage and the previous passage, the adverb modifies action by Jason and continues a pattern of emphasis on Jason’s mental processes and abilities, rather than his physical strength.
This pattern of using ἐπιφραδέως to modify speech acts is continued in the final passage, where Hera persuades Aphrodite to help Jason succeed in his mission:

Ὄς ἔφαθ’ Ὡῆ δ’ αὕτης ἐπιφραδέως ἀγόρευσεν.
“Ὅτι βίης χατέουσαι ἢκάνομεν οὐδέ τι χειρῶν, ἀλλ’ αὕτως ἀκέουσα τεῦ ἐπικέκλεο παιδί παρθένον Αἴθεω θέλειν πόθῳ Αἰσιονίδαο.
εί γάρ οἱ κείνη συμφράσσεται εὔμενέουσα, ῥηϊδίως μιν ἐλόντα δέρος χρύσειον ὄιω νοστήσειν ἐς Ἰολκόν, ἐπεὶ δολόεσσα τέτυκται.”

Thus [Aphrodite] spoke, and again Hera judiciously replied: “We have not come in need of force or strength of hands. No, just calmly call upon your son to enchant Aeetes’ daughter with desire for Jason, for if she will give him kindly advice, I believe that he will readily seize the golden fleece and return to Iolcus, because she is very cunning.

This passage is in some ways the closest to the Parmenidean passage because it involves one female deity (Hera) using speech to persuade another female deity (Aphrodite) to help a male hero on a journey. Similarly, in the Parmenidean passage, female deities (the Heliades) persuade another female deity (Dikē) to remove an obstacle to a male hero’s journey (Parmenides’ narrator). This similarity is further emphasized by Hera’s emphasis on the role of persuasion rather than physical violence at 3.84-5: Οὕτι βίης χατέουσαι ἢκάνομεν οὐδέ τι χειρῶν (“we have not come in need of force or strength of hands”).

The passages where Apollonius uses ἐπιφραδέως often highlight places where proper recognition and persuasion are issues in the Argonautica, and this fits well with Most’s theory about the poetic form used by Empedocles and Parmenides:

In Parmenides and Empedocles the choice of poetic form seems designed to resolve a crucial philosophical problem: given that all human beings are subject to the delusion of appearance, how can the philosopher know the truth of what he claims to know? For them, only a god could possibly be the source of a set of transcendent truths to which a mere mortal, if left to his own devices, would have
had no access. But in archaic Greece, the language in which gods speak through human voices is in general that of metrical verse.\textsuperscript{179}

In this way, persuasion and correct recognition are linked because invoking a divine source of information is part of engaging the mental faculties of the addressee and convincing them of the truth of the argument. In these four Argonautica passages, Apollonius uses ἐπιφραδέως in places where discerning the truth is at issue (1.1021, 2.1134) or where persuasion is necessary (1.1336, 3.83). This shows some level of interaction with the ideas Parmenides discusses as well as the individual word-level choices.

**There is a Path: Parmenides G11.4 (B2.4), 15.9 (G6.9) and Arg. 2.353, 3.160**

The phrase ἐστὶ κέλευθος shows up twice in Parmenides’ work, both times in fragments that discuss his views on being and non-being, and both passages are considered part of the Aletheia. This phrase appears only in the Argonautica and Parmenides’ work, and it occurs twice in each.\textsuperscript{180} The first Parmenidean passage is part of the goddess Dikē’s welcome to the narrator as he reaches the Gates of Night:

\begin{quote}
εἰ δ’ ἄγ’ ἐγὼν ἐρέω, κόμισαι δὲ σὺ μὴθον ἀκούσας,
ἀπερ ὁδοὶ μοῦναι διζήσις εἰς νοῆσαι·
ἡ μὲν ὅπως ἐστίν τε καὶ ὡς οὐκ ἐστὶ μὴ εἶναι,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{179} Most, “The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy,” 353.

\textsuperscript{180} The closest possible other parallel is a dithyramb by Bacchylides Πάρεστι μυρία κέλευ- / θος ἀμβροσίῳν μελέῳν, / ὅς ἂν παρὰ Πιερίδων. (5 3u-3w) The compound form of ἐστὶ, the division by μυρία and the different meter all make the Parmenides references a much closer parallel.

162
Come now, and I shall tell, and do you receive through hearing the tale,
Which are the only ways of inquiry for thinking:
the one: that it is and that it is not possible not to be,
is the path of Persuasion (for she attends on Truth);
the other: that it is not and that it is right it should not be,
this I declare to you is an utterly inscrutable track,
for neither could you know what is not (for it cannot be accomplished),
nor could you declare it [or: point it out].

The second Parmenidean passage is part of a different fragment but appears to be part of
Justice’s continued instructions to the narrator:

It is right to say and to think that what-is is, for being is [or: it is for being],
and nothing is not. These things I bid you to consider.
From this first way of inquiry <I withhold> you,
but then from this one, which mortals know nothing wander, two-headed. For helplessness in their
breasts directs a wandering mind; and they are borne both deaf and blind, dazed, undiscerning tribes,
by whom to be and not to be are thought to be the same and not the same, and the path of all is backward-turning.

The second fragment (15) has many correlations to passages in the Argonautica
(underlined above) and appears to be one that Apollonius read quite closely. This
fragment also includes the phrase ἐστὶ κέλευθος at the end of a line, just as it is in both
the *Argonautica* passages (2.353, 3.160), so if it is necessary to pick a single passage to cross-reference with Apollonius, this is the better one (although it is possible that Apollonius has both in mind). The two Parmenidean passages do, however, share many similarities: both make a truth claim for the idea that what-is exists and what-is-not does not exist and both mention the possibilities in that order. In each, the contrast is marked by parallel structure (ἡ μὲν … ἡ δ’ and πρώτης … ἀφ’ ὀδὸν … ἀντὶ ἔπειτ’ ἀπὸ τῆς).

More importantly, both are strongly philosophical passages that present Parmenides’ ideas on being and non-being. Apollonius is not merely interested in the mythological trappings of Parmenides’ proem; he is also familiar with and using the more philosophically “meaty” bits of Parmenides’ work.

The two passages in Apollonius that use the same phrase describe both the route to Hades and the route from Olympus. Although the passages are separated by hundreds of lines, they describe similar descending paths. The first instance is found in a description by Phineus about the Argonauts’ future route:

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κεῖθεν δ’ οὖ μᾶλα πουλὶ διέξ ἀλὸς ἀντιπέραιαν
gῆν Μαριανδυνὸν ἐπικέλπετε ἤνοστήσαντες,
ἐνθα μὲν εἰς Αἴδαο καταβάτες ἐστὶ κέλευθος,
ἀκρὴ δὲ προβλῆς Ἀχερουσίας ὑψὸθι τείνει,
δινήεις τ’ Ἀχέρων, αὐτὴν διὰ νεοίτ’ τέμνων
ἀκρὴν, ἐκ μεγάλης προχοὰς ἤσι φάραγγος.
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Proceeding from there [the island of Thynias] a short distance over the sea, you must put in at the land of the Mariandynians on the opposite shore. Here is a path that descends to the abode of Hades, and the jutting Acherusian headland extends high up …

This first reference turns out to be prophetic since the Argonauts Idmon and Tiphys will die at this location. Although Phineus does not mention the deaths (perhaps it is part of
the knowledge Zeus wants him to keep hidden), he hints at future death by pointing out that the path goes to Hades. The second *Argonautica* passage uses the same phrase to describe Eros’ journey from Olympus to earth:

He [Eros] traversed the fruit-filled orchard of mighty Zeus and then passed through the ethereal gates of Olympus. From there a path descended from heaven; and two peaks of lofty mountains uphold the sky, the highest points on earth, where the risen sun grows red with its first rays. And beneath him at times appeared life-sustaining earth and cities of men and divine streams of rivers, and then at other times mountain peaks, while all around was the sea as he traveled through the vast sky.

Apollonius uses the same phrase (*καταβάτις ἐστι κέλευθος*) to describe two paths: the one from earth to Hades, the other from Olympus to earth. This passage also describes the Gates of Olympus with the adjective *αιθερίας*, the same adjective Parmenides uses to describe the Gates of Night and Day in the proem (line 13).\(^{181}\) This adjective does not describe gates anywhere else in extant Greek literature.

Apollonius has chosen a phrase that occurs in two philosophical passages to describe an abstract path (the path of persuasion in fragment 11, the backward-turning path of those with incorrect thoughts on being in fragment 15), and has used that image in

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\(^{181}\) M. C. Bowra points out the similar use of the adjective in “The Proem of Parmenides,” *Classical Philology* 32 no. 2 (April 1937), 102.
two passages that describe mythical geography (the path to Hades in 2.353 and the path from Olympus in 3.160). In the second passage, Apollonius also uses Parmenidean language to describe the heavenly landscape. The fact that both passages use ἐστὶ κέλευθος as part of an end-line phrase (καταβάτις ἐστὶ κέλευθος) indicates that although ἐστὶ is a common word, Apollonius considers this as a distinct phrase.

In some ways, the geographical references in the Argonautica fit well with the geographical setting of Parmenides’ proem: as Graham points out, there is a debate over where the “Gates of Night and Day” are in Parmenides’ work:

Parthenides presupposes the mythological geography of Homer and Hesiod, with the House of Night at the edge of a flat disk-shaped earth (see Hesiod Theogony 736-57). There is a controversy over whether the youth’s journey is up toward the heaven or down towards the underworld. The latter fits the geography better, with the caveat that the House of Night and Day is at the boundary between heaven and earth. There, according to Hesiod, Night and Day alternate in occupying the house: one is always abroad on its shift while the other rests. 182

Apollonius may be engaging in this discussion by using the phrase καταβάτις ἐστὶ κέλευθος to describe both the journey down to the underworld and the journey down from Olympus. There is no evidence for this debate from Apollonius’ time, but there is evidence of other discussions surrounding the geography in epic poetry from a slightly later period: Strabo records Eratosthenes’ analysis of the geography in Homer and Hesiod (1.2.14, 15). Apollonius’ project in the Argonautica also involves mapping geography from myth, so a discussion about the geography of Hesiod and Parmenides is one he might well be interested in, even if any evidence of that discussion is no longer extant.

It is also possible, though, that by using this identical description for two different paths, Apollonius understands the essential ambiguity of the Parmenides’ passage and references the ideas of Heraclitus, who stated that ὁδὸς ἄνω κάτω μία καὶ ώστε (“a road up and down is one and the same” G61, B60).

**Backward-turning: Parmenides G15.9 (B6.9) and Arg. 3.1157, 4.643**

In the second fragment where Parmenides uses the phrase ἐστὶ κέλευθος, it is paired with the adjective παλίντροπος: πάντων δὲ παλίντροπος ἐστὶ κέλευθος (“the path of all is backward-turning” G15.9, B6.9) The main point of this fragment seems to be that most humans wander the earth befuddled and are as good as blind and deaf because they follow their senses rather than reason. Graham understands this as a veiled reference to Heraclitus and his paradoxes: “Parmenides argues that the failures of mortal thinking manifest themselves in contradictory statements and circular reasoning.”

Graham mentions several fragments of Heraclitus’ work that indicate a view contrary to Parmenides, but he does not notice that the adjective παλίντροπος also occurs in fragment G70 (B51) of Heraclitus’ work: οὐ ξυνιᾶσιν ὅκως διαφερόμενον ἐωτῶι

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184 In his note on this fragment, Graham mentions several fragments from Heraclitus’ work: G35 (B107), G84 (B88), G69 (G10) and G61 (B60). These fragments address aspects of sense perception and other philosophical ideas at issue in the Parmenidean fragment, but they do not include this adjective παλίντροπος. Graham, *The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy*, 237.
ὁμολογεῖν· παλιντρόπος ἄρμονίη ὀκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης (“They do not understand how being at variance with itself it agrees: back-turning structure as of a bow or a lyre”). For Heraclitus, this word encompasses much of his thought, in that what is circular or paradoxical can at the same time create ἄρμονίη. I agree with Graham that Parmenides’ use of this word appears to be an oblique attack on Heraclitus, and the use of the adjective strengthens Graham’s argument.185

Parmenides may also be using imagery from Aeschylus’ Agamemnon (performed in 458 BC). Aeschylus’ life is roughly contemporary with Parmenides’, and we do not have dates for Parmenides’ work, so it is impossible to tell who may be using whom. Nevertheless, in the Agamemnon, the chorus describes how Dikē leaves the houses of the wicked with averted eyes (παλιντρόπος ὀμμασί, 777-778). This is the same goddess who speaks in Parmenides’ work and passes judgment on a different group of people, but in Parmenides’ work the adjective applies to the judged people rather than the one judging.

Parmenides may also be using Bacchylides’ work (Ode 11.54) since he uses the same adjective to describe the types of thoughts that Hera puts in the hearts of those she

185 The relative dating of Heraclitus and Parmenides is controversial. Graham argues that Heraclitus must have written before Parmenides: “Since Heraclitus mentions those with whom he strongly disagrees (and later sources like to repeat his criticisms), we may presume that he wrote before Parmenides. He knows Pythagoras, Xenophanes, and Hecataeus, all active in the late sixth and early fifth centuries. We may tentatively date his book to 500-490. Hegel (for dialectical reasons), Reinhardt 1916, and a few others have put Heraclitus after Parmenides, but have never produced convincing historical reasons doing so. That Heraclitus could have known Parmenides' work and not reacted seems impossible.” Graham, The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy, 186. From the perspective of understanding Apollonius’ response to these authors, the debate over their relative dates is less important since Apollonius would have access to the works of both authors.
wants to punish: Ταῖ-/σιν δὲ χολωσαμένα / στήθεσθι παλιντροπον ἔμβαλεν νόημα· (Into their chests she cast backward-turning thoughts because she was angry). Here, for the first time apart from Parmenides’ work, the word refers to thoughts.

Callimachus seems to make use of both Parmenides’ work and Aeschylus’ when he uses the same word in the Hecale to describe what Dikē will do in punishment: εἰ δὲ Δίκη σε / πάρ πόδα μή τιμωρφός ἐτείσατο, δίς τόσον αὐτίς / ἔσσεται, ἐν πλεόνεσσι παλιντροπος (“... and if avenging Dikē has not punished you at once, she will be twice as severe returning among the majority”\(^{186}\) Pf. 358). The personification of Justice/Dikē and the use of παλιντροπος to describe her (or aspects of her, such as her eyes) fits well with Aeschylus’ work, but the idea of the majority (ἐν πλεόνεσσι) and Justice’s rebuke fits well with Parmenides’ depiction of Dikē critiquing the backward-turning path of all (πάντων).

This brings us to Apollonius, who may be interested in Callimachus’ use of the word, while also incorporating aspects of Parmenides’ and Bacchylides’ work in his use of παλιντροπία at 3.1157 and a verb based on this root in 4.643 (a passage discussed above for other Parmenidean references).\(^{187}\)

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\(^{187}\) Apollonius uses the same verb at 4.165, in a passage which does not seem to have any similarity to the Parmenidean fragment or the passages by other authors discussed so far (Aeschylus, Bacchylides, Callimachus): ἢ δ’ ἐμπεδὼν ἐστημιὰ / φαρμάκῳ ἐγιηξεν θηρός καρῆ, εἰσὸκε δὴ μν/ αὐτὸς ἐλῃ ἐπὶ νῆα παλιντροπάσθαι Ἡσθων / ἦνγεν (She stood firm and kept rubbing the beast’s head with the pharmaca until Jason himself ordered her to turn back to their ship).
In 3.1157, Apollonius uses a noun form, παλιντροπία, based on the adjective παλιντροπος: ἡ δὲ παλιντροπίησιν ἀμήχανος ὦτε τι μύθων / ἐκλυεν ὦτ’ αὐδῆσαι ἀνειρομένη λελίητο (and she [Medea] was helpless in her turnings, and she did not hear a single word [from her sister] nor was she eager to speak to the one questioning her). The LSJ defines this as both a physical and mental movement: “turning about: in pl., changes of mind,” but this passage is the only place the word is used until Dorotheus of Sidon (1-2\textsuperscript{nd} century AD). The interpretation of this word in the Argonautica depends entirely on its use in this passage, and an anonymous scholiast glosses it, indicating it was worth noting or potentially confusing: παλιντροπίησιν: ἦτοι ταῖς παρεπιστροφαῖς ἢ διὰ τὸ ἐμπαλιν τετράθωσι αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχήν: ἢ δὲ τῇ ύποστροφῇ ἐν ἀπόρῳ καταστάσα (“surely ‘turns in passing’ or because of the turning back of her soul; she sat down because of the wheeling about in her impossible difficulty”).\(^{188}\)

Based on the use of ἀμήχανος elsewhere in the work to refer to an internal state and the description of Medea as seated in the immediately following lines, I think the best interpretation of παλιντροπίησιν here is to describe turning thoughts, not physical movement or “reversals” (as Hunter interprets it).\(^{189}\) This fits well with Bacchylides’ work, which describes how Hera puts backward-turning thoughts in the hearts of women (Medea’s state of helpless love for Jason is, ultimately, Hera’s fault), but it also fits with

\(^{188}\) The noun form is used only eight times in the TLG: first in the Argonautica, then in the works of six astronomers or astrologers to refer to the movement of heavenly bodies (once in Dorotheus, four times in Hephaestion, and once in Arethas), and finally in the scholia to the Argonautica on this passage.

\(^{189}\) Hunter, Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book III, 224.
Parmenides’ description of those who, in their helplessness, do not see or hear, and their path is backward-turning:

\[
\text{ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν}
\]

\[
\text{στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτὸν νόον· οἱ δὲ φοροῦνται}
\]

\[
\text{kωφοὶ ὀμὸς τυφλοί τε, τεθηπότες, ...}
\]

\[
... \text{πάντων δὲ παλιντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος}
\]

Medea is also ἀμήχανος, which prevents her from hearing or responding to her sister’s question (similar to κωφοὶ in Parmenides’ work). In the immediately following lines, the narrator describes her blank stare, blurred by tears: ύγρὰ δ’ ἐν βλεφάροις ἔχεν ὀμματα (she held her eyes wet in her eyelids). Apollonius adds his own touch here by using a noun form instead of the adjective form found in Bacchylides’ and Parmenides’ work, but he incorporates many of the themes from those two passages. This combination of innovation and tradition is typical of Apollonius’ style.

Apollonius continues innovating in his use of a verb based on the same root in 4.643. This verb appears nowhere else prior to the Argonautica, so unless Apollonius is working from a lost source, it appears that he is working from the adjective seen in the other passages but making it work with a new form. This is immediately following the passage where the Argonauts pass the Heliades and the Gates of Night. They face different options for their journey and Hera directs them to the correct homeward path:

\[
... \text{τὸν οὐ προδαέντες ἔμελλον}
\]

\[
\text{εἰσβαλέειν. τόθεν οὐ κεν ὑπότροποι ἐξεσάωθεν·}
\]

\[
\text{ἄλλ’ Ἡρη σκοπέλοιο καθ’ Ἑρκυνίου ἀικήσεν}
\]

\[
\text{οὐρανύθεν προθοροῦσα, φόβῳ δ’ ἐτίναξθεν ἀντής}
\]

\[
\text{πάντες ὀμὸς, δεινὸν γὰρ ἐπὶ μέγας ἔβραχεν αἰθήρ·}
\]

\[
\text{ἀν δὲ παλιντροπόωντο θεάς ὑπὸ καὶ ρ’ ἐνόησαν}
\]

\[
\text{τὴνδ’ ὀίμον τῇπέρ τε καὶ ἐπέλετο νόστος ιοῦσι.}
\]
They were about to enter that [path] without foreknowledge, from which they would not have come back safe. But Hera leapt from heaven and shouted from the Hercynian headland, and they all alike shook with fear of her, and the air rang violently, and they were turned backward by the goddess and understood right away the path by which their homeward trip lay.

Although this is form of παλιντροπ- is from a verb (not an adjective) many elements are similar to the Parmenidean fragment: here another female goddess (Hera rather than Dikē) tells a traveler the correct path and makes all (πάντες) turn back (παλιντροπώντο). All of this comes immediately after the passage where the Argonauts pass Phaethon’s swamp, the Heliades, and the way toward the Gates of Night (a very clear reference to Parmenides’ work). This passage also involves recognition of the correct path (ἐνόησαν … οἶμον), using the same verb Parmenides uses to describe recognition of the correct mental path (αἱ πρὸ ὁδοὶ μοινα διζήσιος εἰσι νοῆσαι). In both cases, the recognition occurs under the direction of a female goddess (Hera/Dikē).

In Parmenides’ work, παλίντροπος appears to be a negative word, indicating the circular reasoning that most people use (and it may include a critique of Heraclitus’ ideas). Apollonius clearly draws on this Parmenidean passage, but he adds something of his own by using a noun form (παλιντροπία) and verb form (παλιντροπάομαι), which appear nowhere else in extant Greek literature prior to the Argonautica. In this way, he presents himself as working within the philosophical tradition of Parmenides and the lyric tradition of Bacchylides, but also adapting those traditions for his own needs.

Helplessness: Parmenides G15.7 (B6.7) and Arg. 1.638, 286-89, 2.860-863
Given the fact that Apollonius clearly uses Parmenidean fragment G11 (B2), it is worth asking whether the word ἀμηχανίη, which appears in the same fragment and plays a prominent part throughout the Argonautica, has any influence on Apollonius. This word has received considerable attention from scholars attempting to understand the character of Jason, who is often described by the narrator as afflicted by ἀμηχανίη, which is generally translated as “helplessness.”

In Greek literature prior to the Argonautica, the word is used once in Homer and once in Hesiod, but it appears most often in the elegies of Theognis. In Theognis’ work (and Hesiod’s), the word refers to a lack of options generally associated with poverty, and the idea of physical poverty and ἀμηχανία are closely tied to the extent that Poverty is described as the one who gives birth to Helpelessness (ἡ γὰρ καὶ χαλεπὴν τίκτει ἀμηχανίην, 392).¹⁹⁰ For Theognis, helplessness and poverty are not the result of moral choices but the whims of the gods (133-42, 373-400).

Parmenides, on the other hand, returns to the meaning of the word in the Odyssey (9.295), where it refers to a lack of options that are not necessarily associated with poverty. In Parmenides’ work, ἀμηχανία is an internal state that is the result of an epistemological deficit, rather than a material one, and his philosophical ideas provide the knowledge necessary to fix that deficit.

χρὴ τὸ λέγειν τε νοεῖν τ’ ἐδών ἐμμεναι· ἔστι γὰρ εἶναι,
μηδὲν δ’ οὐκ ἔστιν· τά σ’ ἐγὼ φράζεσθαι ἀνωγα.

¹⁹⁰ Poverty and helpelessness are associated in Works and Days 496-7 and Theognis 619-22, 1114b. Theognis describes poverty as the mother of helpelessness (πενίην, / μητέρ’ ἀμηχανίης, 384-5) and the one who gives birth to it (ἡ γὰρ καὶ χαλεπὴν τίκτει ἀμηχανίην, 392).
πρώτης γὰρ σ’ ἀφ’ ὁδοὺ ταύτης διζήσιος <εἰργο>,
αὐτῷ ἔπειτ’ ἀπὸ τῆς, ἢν δὴ βροτοὶ εἰδότες οὐδὲν
πλάττονται, δίκρανοι ἀμηχανία γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν
στίθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτόν νόον· οἱ δὲ φοροῦνται
κοφοὶ ὃμιδες τυφλοὶ τε, τεθητότες, ἀκριτα φύλα,
οἷς τὸ πέλειν τε καὶ οὕκ εἶναι ταύτὸν γενόμεσται
κοῦ ταύτόν, πάντων δὲ παλίντροπός ἐστι κέλευθος.

It is right to say and to think that what-is is, for being is [or: it is for being],
and nothing is not. These things I bid you to consider.
From this first way of inquiry <I withhold> you,
but then from this one, which mortals know nothing
wander, two-headed. For helplessness in their
breasts directs a wandering mind; and they are borne
both deaf and blind, dazed, undiscerning tribes,
by whom to be and not to be are thought to be the same
and not the same, and the path of all is backward-turning

Parmenides’ use of ἀμηχανία returns to Homer’s use of the word in the *Odyssey*, where
ἀμηχανία takes hold of Odysseus and his men when they watch Polyphemus eat their
companions (ἀμηχανίη δ’ ἔχε θυμόν, *Od. 9.295*). In Parmenides’ work and Homer’s,
helplessness is not tied to physical poverty that exists externally but is something that
exists internally (ἐν αὐτῶν / στῆθεσιν) and directs the mind (νόον). 191
Wright points out that both Empedocles and Parmenides adapt *Od. 9.295*, and both substitute νόος for
Homeric θυμός in their adaptations of this quote, “emphasizing the thinking that is
affected.” 192 Although Wright catches the initial adaptation from Homer, she does not
note some of the other ways this passage develops the themes in the *Odyssey* scene:

191 Wright points out the way that Parmenides adapts *Od. 9.295* and notes that
both Empedocles and Parmenides substitute νόος for Homeric θυμός in these quotations,
emphasizing the thinking that is affected. Wright, “Philosopher Poets: Parmenides and
Empedocles,” 12.

Polyphemus is a good example of the mortals Parmenides describes in the way that he is born deformed (single-eyed instead of double-headed) and eventually blinded. Parmenides may also have in mind Odysseus’ identity in this story as someone who does and does not exist when he calls himself Οὐτός (nobody). While Polyphemus thinks of this as Odysseus’ name, the other Cyclopes assume that it means no one is there (9.403-411). Existence and non-existence are important themes in Parmenides’ work, and by adapting this line from the Odyssey Parmenides picks up on some specific Homeric words (particularly ἀμηχανία), but he is also aware of the surrounding imagery and ideas in that passage and adapts them for his own project. Because most mortals lack the philosophical knowledge that Parmenides has, their physical senses might as well not exist for all the good they do these people, and their direction in life is backwards-turning (παλίντροπός), indicating a lack of decision-making. All of this describes an internal mental state rather than a physical state of poverty, and the cure is knowledge.

Similarly, in the Argonautica, the ἀμηχανία and cognates often refer to indecisiveness in a particular situation rather than physical poverty. The Lemnian women are afflicted by ἀμηχανία before they discover that the Argonauts are not Thracians (1.638). After the Argonauts mistakenly leave Heracles behind and strife breaks out between those who want to return to get him and those who want to press on, Jason is described as “stunned with helplessness (ἀμηχανίησιν) … eating his heart out from within” (1.1286-1289). This is an internal state and describes a mental condition similar to what Parmenides describes: it is not that Jason is physically unable return to get Heracles or go on without him, but rather that he is unsure which option to take. When
the steersman Tiphys dies, the crew “collapsed in helplessness (ἀμηχανήσιν) there … their hearts were downcast in distress, since very far from their hopes was a successful return home” (2.860-863). Here again, the word describes an internal state, and the narrator points out that they “took no thought of food or drink” (861-2), implying that even though there are resources available to meet their physical needs, it is their mental distress that is high because of the lack of a steersman, who has essential knowledge about how to return home.

Although ἀμηχανία is most often associated with Jason, Ham and Green point out that “not only do ἀμηχανία and its cognates refer more often to other characters than Jason … but that ‘rather than characterizing any particular individual, Apollonius employs ἀμηχανία as part of a larger discussion of the human condition.’”193 In these situations where humans are plagued by helplessness, the solution does not come in the form of material aid such as money or food, but rather a form of knowledge, often given through divine intervention. For the Lemnian women, they discover that the Argonauts are not Thracians through Aethalides, the semi-divine son of Hermes (1.640-653). For Jason, Glaucus appears and tells the Argonauts the divine will behind Heracles’ departure (1.1310-1325). When the crew loses Tiphys, Hera gives Ancaeus courage to step forward.

193 In his “Introduction” to the Argonautica, Green cites an as-yet unpublished paper “Amechania and Predestination in Apollonius Rhodius” by his former student Greta Ham. Green provides no further details on this paper in his selected bibliography, and although his book was published in 1997, Ham’s paper appears still to be unpublished. Nevertheless, her insight is a corrective to the way the word is usually used in scholarship to describe Jason, and it fits well with the use of ἀμηχανία in the Argonautica. In the citation above, the outside quotes are Green’s and the internal ones must belong to Ham. Green, The Argonautica, 39n127.
as the new steersman (2.865). Similarly, Parmenides’ goddess Dikē offers humans a divinely-revealed truth that can cure ἀμηχανία through a superior philosophical knowledge.

All of this does not necessarily prove that Apollonius is using Parmenides’ work for any particular passage that references ἀμηχανία, but it does show a philosophical take on the concept in that helplessness is not a physical state that is the result of poverty but an internal state that is the result of a lack of knowledge. In many ways, this fits the pattern of the Argonautica, which solves many major narrative crises with knowledge rather than physical force: Jason gets the golden fleece because Medea knows how to get him through the ordeal with the bulls and how to charm the snake; the two are purified from the murder of Apsyrtus because of Circe’s knowledge; and the crew makes it safely to Colchis because of the knowledge Phineus gives them about their upcoming journey.

Meeting Limits: Parmenides G17.49 (B8.49) and Arg. 2.363

In fragment 17 of Parmenides’ work, there is passage on being and non-being that concludes with κύρει, an unusual form of the verb κυρέω (to hit, light upon):

αὕτω̃ ώπε Πειρας πύματον, τετελεσμένον ἐστὶ Πάντοθεν, εὐκύκλων σφαίρης ἐναλίγκιον ὅγκωι, μεσσόθεν ἱσοπαλέος πάντητι τὸ γὰρ οὔτε τι μεῖξον οὔτε τι βαϊότερον πελέναι χρεόν ἐστι τὴν ἢ τὴν. οὔτε γὰρ οὐκ ἐδώ ἔστι, τὸ κεν παῦοι μιν ἱκνείσθαι εἰς ὀμόν, οὐτ’ ἐδώ ἐστιν ὁπως εἶ ἐνε κεν ἐνος τῇ μᾶλλον τῇ δ’ ἴσον, ὅπε Πάν ἐστιν ἱσολον· οἱ γὰρ Πάντοθεν ἱσον, ὅμως ἐν πειρασι κύρει.

Yet since there is a final limit, it is completes
from *every direction*, like to the mass of a well-rounded ball, equally resistant from the center in all directions. For it is not right for it to be any greater nor any smaller here or there. For neither is there what-is-not, which might stop it from reaching its like, nor is there what-is in such a way that there would be of what-is here more and there less, since it is all inviolate. For being equal to itself in every direction, it equally *meets with* limits.

If κύρει is from the epsilon contract verb κυρέω, this must be an unaugmented *imperfect* third singular form (a contraction of κύρεε). The *present* third singular form is κυρεῖ, and this form appears multiple places in the tragedies and once in Bacchylides’ work (neither form appears in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*). The imperfect, however, does not make sense in this context, where the other verbs are present tense and the passage describes existence itself. Furthermore, the imperfect form would not make sense metrically: the upsilon is short in the contract forms of κυρέω (κῠρέω). There is, however, another stem for this verb with a long upsilon and no contraction (κῡρω, not κῠρεω). Here, in the sixth foot, the meter requires a long first syllable, so the verb is unquestionably the present form of κῡρω rather than the imperfect form of κῡρεω.

In book 2 of the *Argonautica*, the same form of the verb is used to describe the height of Mount Carambis:

> ἐστι δὲ τις ἀκρὴ Ἑλίκης κατεναντίον Ἀρκτοῦ, πάντοθεν ἡλίβατος, καὶ μιν καλέουσι Κάραμβιν, τῆς τ’ αἰτεὶ βορέαο πέρι σχίζονται ἀελλαί, όδε μάλ’ ἀμ πέλαγος τετραμμένη αἰθέρι κύρει· τήνδε περιγνάστηκα, Πολύς παρακέκλιται ἡδὴ Αἰγιαλός. Πολέος δ’ ἐπὶ πείρασιν Αἰγιαλόο ἀκτῇ ἐπὶ προβλητί ῥοαί Ἀλυος ποταμοῦ δεινὸν ἔρευγοντα …

There is a headland opposite Helice the Bear that is steep on *all sides*; they call it Carambis, and above it the blasts of the north wind are split in two, so high does it *rise* the upper air as it faces the open sea. As soon as one rounds it, the Long
shore stretches alongside. At the end of the Long shore, beyond a jutting promontory, the waters of the Halys river gush forth with a terrible roar.

Again, the imperfect form would not makes sense contextually in this passage of the Argonautica: the other verbs in the description are present tense, describing a geographic feature that exists in the narrator’s own time as well (ἐστι, καλέουσι, σχίζονται). But the present form is also required by the meter, which demands a long first syllable in the final foot.

Apart from Parmenides’ work, this present form of the unaugmented verb does not appear in the Iliad, Odyssey, or any other extant work prior to the Argonautica, with one exception: Timon of Phlius, who was a slightly older contemporary of Apollonius, uses it. The Parmenidean passage is a closer parallel to the Argonautica than Timon’s work for several reasons: first, it appears in the same end-line place in the same meter (dactylic hexameter). Second, and more importantly, the contexts are similar: both passages measure something through a simile, and both involve the limit of things (πείρας/πείρασιν). The unusual form is a stark departure from other poets, especially the tragedians, who use the short-upsilon form of the present (κυρεῖ) instead.¹⁹⁴

None of the commentators on this passage of the Argonautica discuss the parallel with Parmenides’ work.¹⁹⁵ Mooney and Matteo point out the similarity of this line to

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¹⁹⁴ Aeschylus uses this form four times, Euripides uses it nineteen times (including once in the Medea), Sophocles uses it twelve times, and Bacchylides uses it once (fragment 5b12).

¹⁹⁵ The LSJ does point to the passages from Parmenides’ work and the Argonautica as examples of the present, long-upsilon stem, but only as examples of similar forms, not similar meanings.
Callimachus’ *Hymn to Demeter* 36: ἦς δὲ τις αἰγεῖρος, μέγα δένδρεον αἴθερι κῦρον,
(there was a certain poplar tree, a large one, reaching to the sky). While this line
incorporates long-upsilson form of κῦρω with the dative of αἴθηρ, the dative with κῦρεω
could find a much earlier precedent in *Il.* 23.428 (ἐρματι κύροςας). Furthermore, this is a
present participle, so it is not the same form as the one Apollonius employs.\(^{196}\)

The long-upsilson stem (κῦρω) does appear in Homer’s works in the imperfect and
aorist tenses, but not the present tense. Apollonius uses the long-upsilson stem in an
imperfect form in book 4.945 (κῦρον), so he was familiar with this alternative stem of the
verb.\(^{197}\) But given the other similar words in the passages (ἐστι, πάντοθεν,
πείρας/πείρασιν), the context of two similes, and the metrical placement, the most likely
candidate for this specific present form is Parmenides’ work.\(^{198}\) It is, however, possible
that Apollonius has passages from both Parmenides’ and Homer’s works in mind here
and has combined them. (Such combined mixed allusions are not uncommon in
Apollonius’ work.) Apollonius’ interest in unusual word *forms* (as well as unusual words)
is clear from his use of the dual form from Empedocles’ work (δεδάωτε, G47, B23). If, as
it should be clear by now, Apollonius was familiar with Parmenides’ work, it seems

\(^{196}\) *Argonautica* 4.945 is a much closer parallel for this passage: αἳ θ’ ὀτὲ μὲν
κρημνοῖς ἐναλλίγκαιη ήρη κῦρον. Although this form, κῦρον, is an unaugmented
imperfect indicative verb and κῦρον in Callimachus’ *Hymn to Demeter* is a participle, the
end lines are very similar: ήρη κῦρον and αἴθερι κῦρον.

\(^{197}\) The verb is used four times in the *Argonautica* as a whole: 1.854 (ἐκυρσάν),
2.363 (κῦρει), 2.980 (κῦρσαε), and 4.945 (κῦρον).

\(^{198}\) Unless, of course, it was used in some lost work.
likely that the unusual form κόρει form would catch his attention in this passage, especially given that it is different from the regular form κυρεῖ used throughout tragedy.

There are two objections that could be raised against this argument. First, some editors have given textual variants for both passages. For the fragment of Parmenides’ work, Graham notes two additional options in the notes: κυρεῖ in manuscripts E and F (both 13th century), and κυροῖ in D (12th or 13th century). Stein’s 1867 edition also gives κυρεῖ. However, the standard editions of Parmenides’ work, including Graham, Dielz-Kranz, and Coxon, all print the unusual form κόρει, probably based on the reasons above: the meter requires the long-epsilon stem, and in the context of other present-tense verbs κύρει is the best fit. It is easy to imagine how this might be changed to one of the other forms by a scribe who was not familiar with the alternative (long-epsilon, non-contract) form of κυρέω.

In the Argonautica, Vian notes that κόρει is the consensus of most manuscripts with a few exceptions, and Vian, Fränkel, Mooney, and Race all print κυρεῖ. Again, because this form is rare, it seems more likely that the exceptions noted in the apparatus

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200 Stein’s emendation can be found in “Die fragmente des Parmenides περὶ φύσεως,” Symbola Philologorum Bonnensium in Honorem Friderici Ritschelii Collecta vol. 2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1867), 793. Stein notes the problem of having a short penultimate foot in the meter but does not explain why he still chooses the short-epsilon stem.
criticus are due to an emending copyist giving the more common form out of ignorance of the alternative root.

Second, it is possible to object that Apollonius could not have known about the accenting since the invention of accenting marks is generally attributed to Apollonius’ younger contemporary, Aristophanes of Byzantium. Aristophanes was head of the Library after Eratosthenes (Apollonius’ successor), so it is reasonable to ask whether these marks would have been available, much less included in copies of Parmenides’ work, by the time Apollonius read it. Aristophanes’ project indicates an Alexandrian interest in accenting but also, perhaps, difficulty with accentuation since it was necessary to find a system for noting accents visually. However, just because modern readers cannot recognize different accents without seeing them does not mean that ancient audiences had the same handicap, especially in an environment where poetry was likely experienced more aurally than it is today. More importantly, the long upsilon would be sufficient to tell the difference between the two verb stems even if the accenting was not marked since κῡρεῖ and κῡρεῖ scan differently. Apollonius’ close attention to the different verb stems indicates a scholarly interest in variations that can be caught aurally rather than visually, and it is possible that this scholarly “collecting” of unusual forms could be a precursor to Aristophanes’ work.

This reference is important because it shows close interaction with a fragment of Parmenides’ work that is heavily philosophical. Unlike the proem to Parmenides’ work, which is filled with fiery chariots and mythological geography, this fragment is about what-is and an argument against what-is-not. Apollonius uses aspects of this fragment in
Phineus’ description of the Argonauts’ future journey, which is not a particularly philosophical topic. But it is important to remember that in larger context of Parmenides’ work, he depicts Dikē as describing two ways of philosophical inquiry (what-is and what-is-not, fragment 11), which she describes in terms of paths (όδοι, 11.2). She is essentially giving a preview of two philosophical journeys, and her preview begins with a call to hear (11.1), just as Phineus’ preview of the Argonauts’ future journey does (2.311). In terms of understanding Apollonius as a reader, this indicates that he is interested in the most philosophical parts of Parmenides’ work as well as the parts that are include mythological characters and geography.

**Homer, Parmenides, and Apollonius**

There are, of course, some places where Apollonius, Parmenides, and Homer all use a word or phrase. In these instances, the assumption has often been that if Apollonius has a model, it must be Homer. Based on this chapter’s discussion of how Apollonius also uses Parmenides’ work, the picture may be more complex: Parmenides draws from Homer’s works, and Apollonius may be referring to both authors in crafting his own work. This allows clever readers to enjoy the process of discovering additional authors, while readers who are only familiar with Homer can still enjoy the narrative and some of the allusions.

One good example of this is the form τεθηπότες, which appears in Parmenidean fragment 15.7 and Arg. 3.215. In the *Argonautica*, the participle describes the amazement of the Argonauts as they enter Aeetes’ vestibule (προμολῆσι). In the Parmenidean
fragment, it describes the state of astonishment that affects most humans as they wander blind and deaf through the world. This is a fragment that Apollonius uses throughout the Argonautica: elsewhere he incorporates ἀμηχανίη, παλιντροπός, and ἔστι κέλευθος. The form τεθηπότες occurs between these other words, so it is likely Apollonius was familiar with the word from this part of Parmenides’ work. There is, however, a closer Homeric parallel: in Od. 24.392, τεθηπότες describes the amazement of Dolios and an old Sicilian woman at seeing Odysseus, their former master. The beginning of the Homeric line is strikingly similar to the line in the Argonautica:

\[ \text{ἔσταν ἐνὶ μεγάροις τεθηπότες:} \quad \text{Od. 24.392} \]
\[ \text{ἔσταν δ’ ἐν προμολῆσί, τεθηπότες} \quad \text{Arg. 3.215} \]

While the Odyssey passage is a recognition scene (where the old servants recognize Odysseus), the Argonautica scene takes place after Athena has hidden the Argonauts in mist to get them inside Aeetes’ palace (modeled on Odysseus’ entry into the Phaeacian court in Od. 7). The Argonautica scene thus involves the problems and pitfalls of sense perception (eyesight can be fooled by divine tricks), while the Odyssey passage shows two people recognizing someone through sense perception. In this way, the Argonautica passage is closer to the Parmenidean fragment in terms of epistemology, even though it is obviously modelled on a Homeric line.

Similarly, the phrase φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα shows up five times in the Odyssey, once in Hesiod’s Works and Days, once in Parmenides’ work, and once in the Argonautica (it does not show up anywhere else in extant Greek literature until Maximus of Ephesus in
the fourth century AD). In each case, it shows up at the end of a line where once character asks another to consider something:

- *Od.* 1.269 Athena (in disguise) tells Telemachus to consider how to get rid of the suitors.
- *Od.* 16.312 Telemachus tells Odysseus to consider testing only the female slaves rather than all the slaves (which will take too long).
- *Od.* 17.279 swineherd Eumaeus tells Odysseus (in disguise) to consider how to approach the suitors for the first time and to avoid waiting too long.
- *Od.* 20.43 Odysseus asks Athena where he could escape to if he kills the suitors.
- *Od.* 23.122 Odysseus asks Telemachus to consider what they should do about the possibility of avengers for the suitors.
- *Works and Days* 367 the narrator asks the audience to consider how wanting what is not available brings mental anguish.
- Parmenidean fragment G15.2 (B6): the speaker (probably Dikē) tells the audience to consider that what-is is and nothing is not before describing how most humans know nothing.
- *Argonautica* 1.693 the old nurse Polyxo urges the Lemnian women to consider taking the Argonauts in as a social-security venture.

The use of this phrase in the *Argonautica* may simply be a common line ending when one character asks another to consider something, but the Lemnian women are described as afflicted by ἀμηχανία almost immediately before this passage (1.638), similar to the way that Parmenides’ Dikē describes humans as having ἀμηχανίῃ in their hearts (G15.5).
Polyxo in the *Argonautica* is another female character who tells other characters the correct option to take between two alternatives, just as Dikē does, and she is accompanied by four white-haired women, similar to the way the Dikē is attended by the Heliades. This is a fragment Apollonius use in other ways, so it is not unreasonable to see its influence here too, even though the passage may also owe something to Homer and Hesiod.

As Coxon points out, Parmenides’ language is heavily indebted to Homer: “the 150 surviving lines of Parmenides contain an average of only one non- Homeric word in every three verses; of these 55 words all but five … are directly related to or compounded from words used by Homer.”201 And yet Parmenides’ project is refreshingly new and his own, and the originality of his ideas are often highlighted by the way he develops Homeric words such as ἀμηχανία. This process of using Homeric language and form to create a new epic may be part of what draws Apollonius’ attention to Parmenides’ work, and it is important to remember that Apollonius’ use of a Homeric word does not preclude his use of other authors who use the same word. Just as Callimachus may have more than one person in mind when he uses a proper name, so Apollonius may have more than one epic author in mind when he uses an important word.202 While this chapter


202 See, for example, Acosta-Hughes’ analysis of names from Plato in Callimachus’ *Epigrams*. “… it is also typical of Callimachus’ poetry that any word or phrase may bear more than one allusion.” Acosta-Hughes, “A Little-Studied Dialogue: Responses to Plato in Callimachean Epigram,” in *Dialect, Diction, and Style in Greek Literary and Inscribed Epigram*, ed. Evina Sistakou, Antonios Rengakos (De Gruyter, 2016), 239. See also Acosta-Hughes and Stevens’ analysis of the name Ion in *Callimachus in Context*, 47-57.
has focused on words or forms that do not appear in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in order to make the strongest possible case for Parmenides’ influence, there are other words and phrases that merit closer analysis.

**Conclusions**

Like Apollonius, Parmenides bases his initial authority on a unique relationship with female deities. For Parmenides, the daughters of Helios (Heliades) escort him to the house where Justice (Dikē) explains to him the heart of truth (Ἀληθείης.. ἔτορ, 29). For Apollonius, he asks the Muses to be the ὑποφήτορες (interpreters or expounders) of his song. Although much ink has been spilled over the meaning of ὑποφήτορες, both poets claim some level of authority through contact with a divine female character. In the *Argonautica*, the protagonist and narrator are separate entities, but Jason is also guided by female deities (Hera, Athena) and helped by female characters (Medea, Circe, Arete). The theme of female guides is not only present in Homeric epic (Athena in the *Odyssey*, the Muses in both poems), but also in philosophical works: Empedocles also calls on the Muse near the beginning of his work (G21.3) and Socrates attributes his speech in the *Symposium* to Diotima (201d ff.), whose knowledge of sacrifice delayed the plague at Athens for ten years. In using female deities and characters as guides, Apollonius situates his work not only in the heroic narrative tradition of epic but also a strong tradition in philosophy.
In looking at connections to Empedocles’ work, it is clear that Apollonius has an interest in rare forms (such as dual forms) as well as rare words. This interest continues in Parmenides’ work, with an interest in unusual roots (κόρω with a long upsilon stem instead of κυρέω with a short upsilon stem). This indicates that Apollonius’ interest in rare words and forms extends beyond Homer. This could be considered circular reasoning given that the method used to prove Apollonius’ interest in the early philosophers relies on finding rare forms in both, but another way to think about it is hypothesis and confirmation: we know that Apollonius paid attention to rare words in Homer’s epics, and these chapters set out with the hypothesis that that interest extended beyond Iliad and Odyssey and into the works of early philosophers. These two chapters have confirmed that that interest extends to Empedocles’ and Parmenides’ work.

But Apollonius’ interest in these authors’ works goes beyond word-hunting. I have attempted to show here that Apollonius engages seriously with these authors’ ideas and the themes in the passage that go beyond the individual word. This not only applies to “mythical” passages, such as Parmenides’ description of a chariot journey, but also heavily “philosophical” passages that involve ideas of being and non-being. This indicates that the traditional divide between poetic and philosophical genres may not be the way that Apollonius reads the works of authors such as Parmenides.

The combination of myth and philosophy in Parmenides’ work is a source of contention for scholars of early philosophical thought. Bowra argues that the proem to Parmenides’ work must be an allegory, which slips away once the narrator meets the goddess:
Parmenides is plainly allegorizing. The allegory may of course be based on something akin to a mystical experience, but it is nonetheless an allegory. The transition from night to day is the transition from ignorance to knowledge; the sun-maidens who accompany the poet are the powers in him which strain toward the light; the horses who know the road are his own impulses toward truth; the way on which he travels is the way of inquiry. The allegory is revealed as soon as the goddess begins to speak. For then the way with its three different branches becomes the ways of truth, of not-being, and of opinion. The allegory breaks down when the poet gets to his real task, and we may be fairly certain that Parmenides is not giving the literal record of a spiritual adventure but clothing his search for truth in an allegorical dress.  

Kathryn Morgan, on the other hand, sees the proem as a protreptic tool, used as a paradox to force the reader to consider questions on being and non-being, and she argues that stripping the mythological framework from the poem shows a misunderstanding of Parmenides’ project. Morgan’s critique of “stripping” myth from pure philosophy is perceptive, but her reading of the proem often seems stretched. Graham’s interpretation of this seems the most convincing, insofar as he refutes a straight allegorical interpretation but positions Parmenides’ work in a literary tradition:

… there is no true allegory in early Greek literature. Often modern interpreters understand the light and darkness imagery to symbolize knowledge and ignorance respectively. Yet there is no such equivalence in early Greek poetry (light is often connected with fame and glory, but not knowledge), nor does Sextus in his (late) allegorical interpretation (112-14) invoke this symbolism … rather than allegory, Parmenides seems to be aiming at the moral status of an epic poem, one that claims revelation for the poet and authority for the message. Ultimately, Parmenides will shift the question of authority to the weight of the argument itself, but not until he has made a claim on the reader’s attention by poetic form and the traditional influence of an epic poem.  

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204 Morgan, Myth and Philosophy from the pre-Socratics to Plato, 67.

The difficulties scholars have in understanding how the proem relates to the rest of the work indicates underlying categories of thought that modern readers assume must have existed for Parmenides (and Apollonius): poetry vs. prose, myth vs. philosophy. Whether or not they existed for Parmenides, this project is concerned with how Apollonius reads Parmenides’ work.

In Hunter’s commentary on book 3 of the *Argonautica* (first published in 1989), he argues that Apollonius uses the Presocratics as part of his image of a much older world which is now past: “One result of this layering [of literary and cultural history] is a sense of successive generic stages in an attempt to encompass and describe a now very past world … If early epic and tragedy are two genres which offer models of such imaginative recreation, then Ap. also uses Presocratic scene and speculation as a third.” While it is true that Apollonius sometimes uses language and imagery from early philosophy to describe a much older world (in the song of Orpheus in book one or Circe’s creatures in book four, which resemble primordial humans), it should also be clear at this point that Apollonius uses language from Parmenides’ and Empedocles’ works throughout the *Argonautica*, often in contexts that have no explicit link to the distant past or the origin of the world.

One possibility in reading these passages is that Apollonius is performing a sort of reverse allegorization, taking philosophical ideas and turning them into physical aspects in the story. Nelis argues that the allegorical method of interpreting myth is at least as old as Plato’s *Phaedrus*, where Phaedrus asks Socrates about the various interpretations of
the Boreas and Orithyia myth.\textsuperscript{206} In Hunter’s 2015 commentary on book 4 of the
Argonautica, his understanding of Apollonius’ approach to early philosophical sources
has changed from the thesis of his 1989 commentary on book 3. He argues that the
Alexandrarians saw the Presocratics as “poised between μῦθος and λόγος, between poetic
myth and rational reflection, and this made them very suitable vehicles through which to
express the peculiar nature of the ‘truth’ of poetry.”\textsuperscript{207} In this way, the Presocratic authors
allow Apollonius “to confront extraordinary material which is, nevertheless, sanctioned
by an authority which is beyond the ‘scholarly’ concerns of the Alexandrian library.”\textsuperscript{208}

This is stronger than Hunter’s earlier interpretation, but it is still vague. I would
argue that by using both philosophical and mythical portions of Parmenides’ work (and
making no distinction in the way he uses them), Apollonius is resisting the categories of
“μῦθος and λόγος … poetic myth and rational reflection.” Apollonius is not only
concerned with Parmenides’ work for its mythical parts and vivid images (such as the
Gates of Night), but also his views metaphysics. Apollonius uses these sections
indiscriminately; i.e., he does not use metaphysical passages from Parmenides’ work in a
way that is different from the mythological passages. Yet his use of Parmenides’ work
generally indicates a close reading of the context rather than a hunt-and-peck method of
using rare words or rare word forms. This model of precise verbal echoes with thoughtful

\textsuperscript{206} Nelis, “Demodocus and the Song of Orpheus,” 157. Nelis’ view is
controversial. Many critics (including Graham) argue that allegorical interpretation does

\textsuperscript{207} Hunter, Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book IV, 7.

\textsuperscript{208} Ibid.
interaction is a type of poetics that Parmenides himself uses in the way that he adapts Homer’s language for his own project. Apollonius adapts both Homer’s and Parmenides’ work with awareness of their language and ideas and, at times, an awareness of the way that Parmenides adapts Homer’s work. In following Parmenides, Apollonius presents himself in the tradition of rational inquiry into the origins of things, but that inquiry is divinely informed and expressed in epic form. This positions Apollonius’ work not only between μῦθος and λόγος, as Hunter argues, but between tradition and innovation, and intelligent, rational inquiry and divine inspiration.
Chapter 4: Xenophanes

This project began with Empedocles because there is some scholarly agreement that Apollonius used Empedocles’ work, although there is little thoughtful criticism on how and why Apollonius uses it. Empedocles is also one of the early philosophers for whom we have extended fragments, so using his work is relatively easy compared to dealing with some other early philosophers whose surviving work is more sparse. In spite of the difficulty of fragmentary sources, it appears that Empedocles is only part of Apollonius’ larger pattern of using early philosophers, which has gone largely unnoticed except for Empedocles. Xenophanes is often mentioned with Empedocles and Parmenides because of their geographical connections to Southern Italy and Sicily and because all three expressed their ideas in poetry (rather than prose). Later authors such as Philo mention the three together (On Providence 2.39).

These three authors are also loosely tied by association with the Eleatic school and were familiar with each other’s work. While many contemporary scholars date the beginning of the Eleatic school to Parmenides, it is Xenophanes (Parmenides’ teacher)

\[209\] As mentioned in chapter 1, Mooney, Campbell, and Nelis all point to Empedocles as a source. Nelis is the only one who offers an interpretation of why Empedocles might fit with Apollonius’ larger project. Damien Nelis, Vergil’s Aeneid and the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 2001), 96-112.
who was associated with the founding of the city of Elea, and Plato and Aristotle suggests that the movement is associated with him. Empedocles is not usually listed among the members of the Eleatic school, but Theophrastus states that he was a follower of Parmenides and an imitator of his poetry (ζηλωτήν ... μιμητήν ἐν τοῖς ποιήματι), and Hermippus says Empedocles was a follower of Xenophanes and occupied himself with and imitated Xenophanes’ epic poetry (ζηλωτήν ... συνδιατρῆσαι καὶ μιμήσασθαι τὴν ἔποιοῖαν). The grouping of these authors in terms of their school associations is not as significant to this project as the way that Apollonius reads them, but it is important to note that there is testimony connecting each of the three to the other two and there are some similarities in their thinking (critique of traditional views on the gods, the idea of the sphere, etc.). I have included Xenophanes last of these three because there is less evidence for him than for Empedocles and Parmenides, but it looks like Apollonius read all three in conjunction, and his use of these authors does not seem to follow any particular development through the Argonautica (i.e., Xenophanes in book 1, Parmenides in book 2, etc.). Rather, his use of all three authors seems mixed throughout the work.

Xenophanes’ Life and Legacy

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210 This movement may have begun even earlier. See Plato’s Sophist 242d; cf. Aristotle’s Metaphysics 986b.

211 D.L. 8.55-56. Diogenes Laertius contrasts the account given by Theophrastus (Empedocles as a follower of Parmenides) with that of Hermippus (Empedocles as a follower of Xenophanes), but it is possible that he was influenced by both.
Because Xenophanes is so closely tied to critiques of Homer and traditional epic poetry, it is important to address whether or not it is reasonable to consider him as a source for the *Argonautica*. Xenophanes’ influence in Apollonius’ time is seen in the works of authors such as Timon of Phlius (c. 320–230 BC), who wrote satires (σίλλοι). According to Diogenes Laertius, the second and third books of Timon’s satires were written as a dialogue, and Timon’s dialogue partner in the second book (and possibly the third) was Xenophanes. In these books, Timon questions Xenophanes about previous philosophers as part of a critique of earlier thinkers. Though Timon did not work in Alexandria, this indicates contemporary interest in Xenophanes, expressed in a poetic (metrical) form.

And, as Fantuzzi and Hunter point out, Xenophanes’ role in Timon’s work is probably similar to the role Hesiod plays in Callimachus:

> Very likely, [Timon] placed this conversation [with Xenophanes] during a *katabasis* in Hades, thus allowing him contact with the philosopher who had died some time before, as Callimachus’ sleep allowed him contact with the muses. Here, then, Xenophanes seems to have acted at the same time as a guarantor of the truth of the contents and as a signal identifying the literary genre: he plays substantially the same rôle as the Muses for Hesiod and, in particular, for the ‘Hesiodic’ Callimachus of the first two books of the *Aitia*.

Fantuzzi and Hunter do not argue that Callimachus is using Timon as a model or vice versa, but this does show that Xenophanes could be used as a poetic (as well as prose philosophical) source. Furthermore, some of the longer fragments of Xenophanes’ work describe symposiastic settings with literary recitations (G9, G16) and poetic competitions with prizes (G17). This leads Fantuzzi and Hunter to see links between Xenophanes and...

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Theocritus as well, as in *Id.* 7.63-70: “Lycidas’ song … subsequently resumes the traditional sympotic framework of archaic love poetry and describes it with a skill and a wealth of detail worthy of Xenophanes’ description of the symposium.”

As an acknowledged (though relatively unexplored) source for Theocritus, Xenophanes is not an unreasonable author to investigate as a source for Apollonius.

Xenophanes is, however, known for his anti-Homeric views on the gods: Timon of Phlius called Xenophanes ὀμηραπάτης (one who tramples on Homer). This could make him an unlikely candidate for Apollonian reading since Apollonius models his work so heavily on Homer’s epics. Xenophanes describes god as one and unlike humans in physical appearance (G35, B23); instead, god is spherical and unmoving (G41, A28). These ideas inform Empedocles’ views and are starkly different from Homer’s depiction of the gods as having human forms and moving from place to place (such as from Olympus to earth). Xenophanes not only objects to Homer’s physical depiction of the gods, but also to his moral portrayal of the gods as thieves, adulterers, and liars:

πάντα θεοίσ’ ἀνέθηκαν Ὀμηρός θ’ Ἡσίοδος τε, δόσα παρ’ ἀνθρώποισιν ὀνείδεα καὶ ψόγος ἐστίν, κλέπτειν μοιχείαν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεῦειν. (G29, B11)

Homer and Hesiod have attributed to the gods all things that are blameworthy and disgraceful for men: stealing, committing adultery, deceiving each other.

In this fragment, the argument is that actions that are shameful for humans (stealing, adultery, and deception) are attributed to the gods, indicating a double standard for gods and humans. These lines are recorded in Sextus Empiricus’ *Against the Professors*, and in

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213 Ibid., 137.
a different location in the same work, Sextus Empiricus records similar lines which
critique Homer and Hesiod on the basis of what is ἀθεμίστιος (godless, wicked), possibly
pointing to some absolute standard of moral action for humans and gods. Here Sextus
Empiricus also adds some examples from the Iliad:

'Ὅμηρος δὲ καὶ Ἡσίοδος κατὰ τὸν Κολοφώνιον Ξενο-
φάνη ὤς πλεῖστ’ ἐφθέγξαντο θεῶν ἀθεμίστια ἔργα,
κλέπτειν μοιχεύειν τε καὶ ἀλλήλους ἀπατεῖειν.
Κρόνος μὲν γάρ, ἐφ’ οὗ τὸν εὐδαιμονὶα βίον γεγονέναι
λέγουσι, τὸν πατέρα ἤνδροτόμησε καὶ τὰ τέκνα κατέπιεν,
Zeús τε ὁ τούτων παῖς ἀφελόμενος αὐτὸν τῆς ἠγεμονίας
γαίης νέρθε καθεῖσσε καὶ ἀτρυγέτοιο θαλάσσης,
τῆλε μάλ’ ἤχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστὶ βέρεθρον. (G30, B12)

Homer and Hesiod, according to Xenophon of Colophon,
expressed as many unholy deeds as possible of the gods:
stealing, committing adultery, deceiving each other.
For Cronus, during the time, they say, when life was happy, castrated his father
and swallowed up his children, and Zeus his son overthrew his leadership and
Sent him below earth and the barren sea (Il. 14.204)
very far down, where the deepest pit underground lies. (Il. 8.14)

The instances that Sextus Empiricus cites (Cronus’ castration of Uranus, swallowing of
his children, and Zeus’ overthrow of Cronus) are all mentioned in Apollonius’
Argonautica: Cronus is mentioned as committing adultery at 2.1232 and the castration of
Uranus is mentioned at 4.986, while Zeus’ succession is mentioned in Orpheus’ song
(1.508) and alluded to elsewhere by the narrator (2.1234). With the exception of
Orpheus’ song, these events are described in the narrator’s voice, not a character’s, so
there is no option that this is the (possibly mistaken) view of a character, rather than the
view of the poet. This depiction of the gods is antithetical to the view posed by
Xenophanes on the divine, so at first glance Xenophanes does not seem a likely source for Apollonius.

Yet Xenophanes’ work appears as a source for other authors who depict a view of the gods rooted in the world Homer and Hesiod. Euripides, for example, is cited by Athenaeus as an author who uses Xenophanes’ ideas. Athenaeus points out that Euripides’ evaluation of the value of athletes to the city in the Autolycus is similar to Xenophanes’ evaluation in one of the larger fragments we have (G10, B2): both authors argue that athletic prowess and awards are of limited value to a city compared to wisdom and self-control. Similar thoughts are expressed by other thinkers (including Plato’s Socrates in the Apology 36d), but Graham points out that there is another connection between Xenophanes’ work and Euripides Heracles: Heracles’ description of the gods near the end of the play closely mirrors the Xenophanean fragments above (G20 B11, 214).

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214 This play is extremely fragmentary. It was a satyr play regarding Autolycus, son of Hermes and father of Penelope. According to the Odyssey, Autolycus surpassed all men in thievery and oaths (κλεπτοσόνη θ’ ὠρκω, Od. 19.395-6). This passage of the Autolycus about the value of athletes and athletics is the longest fragment we have from the play, and none of the sources indicate who the speaker is in this passage; instead they attribute the sentiment to Euripides himself (Athenaeus 10.413c; Galen Protrepticus 10.13; D.L. 1.56, Plutarch, De Genio Socratis 581f; P. Oxy. 3699 is badly damaged but may also include Euripides’ name). According to the summary of Autolycus’ story given by John Tzetzes (Chiliades 8.435-53), Autolycus succeeded in theft by convincing his victims that he had returned the item, when in fact he had exchanged it for something far inferior (an ass for a horse, for example). Tzetzes indicates that this is exactly the story Euripides tells: Ἐν Αὐτολύκῳ δράματι σατυρικῷ τὰ πᾶντα / ὁ Εὐριπίδης ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τούτου γράφει (In the Autolycus, a Satyr play, Euripides wrote all things concerning [Autolycus] correctly”). This could fit well with Xenophanes’ general skepticism about knowledge, his belief in the deceptiveness of sense-perception, and his statements about how opinion is inherent to all types of knowledge (G74/B34, G79/A49). It is possible that there are additional connections between Xenophanes and the Autolycus as a whole (as well as in other plays that are lost).
In this part of the Heracles, Heracles is responding to Theseus’ claim that the gods do not regard their own sins as sin, so Heracles should also be able to continue living without a crushing weight of guilt for killing his wife and children. Heracles responds with a different view of the gods:

έγὼ δὲ τοὺς θεοὺς οὔτε λέκτρ’ ἄ μὴ θέμις στέργειν νομίζω δεσμά τ’ ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν οὔτ’ ἥξιοσα πώποτ’ οὔτε πείσομαι οὐδ’ ἄλλον ἄλλου δεσπότην περιφέρει. δεῖται γὰρ ὁ θεός, εἶπερ ἔστ’ ὀρθῶς θεός, οὐδένος- ἀοιδὸν οἶδε δύστηνοι λόγοι.

I don’t think that the gods are fond of love affairs which aren’t proper, nor did I ever think it right nor will I ever believe that they slap bonds on each others’ hands, nor that one is naturally master of another. For the god, if he is truly god, has need of nothing. These are the wretched words of singers.

As Graham indicates, Heracles’ speech picks up on several aspects of Xenophanes’ problems with the mythology of Homer and Hesiod: the illicit love affairs (λέκτρ’ ἄ μὴ θέμις), physical force used by one god against another (δεσμά τ’ ἐξάπτειν χεροῖν) and rule of one god over another (ἄλλον ἄλλου δεσπότην). Heracles’ statement occurs near the end of a play where the gods are depicted in ways that go against Xenophanes’ description: in the Heracles, gods appear in human form (Iris and Madness appear with speaking roles) and move from place to place, unlike Xenophanes’ god who does not move (G38, B26) or look like a human (G31, B14). Furthermore, within the Heracles Hera and Iris are depicted rejecting advice and wisdom (843-860), while Xenophanes’ god is characterized by thought (G36 B24, G37 B25). Clearly the play as a whole does not subscribe to a Xenophanean view of the gods, and Heracles as an individual character accepts the idea that the gods exist (608ff), that they interact in human affairs (1128,
1254), and that that interaction is sometimes unjust (he credits Hera with punishing those who are innocent at 1303-1310). Nevertheless, he argues for a Xenophanean view of the gods’ interactions with each other: no illicit love affairs, no slapping bonds on other immortals, etc. Whether this indicates that Euripides’ saw Xenophanes’ views as inaccurate (and therefore places them in the mouth of a character who is mistaken) is unclear.\textsuperscript{215} It is also possible that the epistemological problems Xenophanes points out and the gaps he sees in human knowledge are the same ones that lead Heracles to a tragic fate: sense perception can be manipulated and incorrect, and Heracles wrongly identifies his wife and children as those of his enemy (940 ff.).\textsuperscript{216} Regardless, the \textit{Heracles} passages show that it is not necessary to have an entire work without gods or with a Xenophanean sphere-god for the work to be influenced by Xenophanes’ ideas. An author may incorporate parts of Xenophanes’ work without taking his theology wholesale.

Euripides’ use of Xenophanes’ work is helpful as an isolated example of an ancient author using Xenophanes’ work without adopting his entire theological framework, but Euripides is also an author who is particularly relevant to Apollonius

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{215} Bond’s commentary on Heracles explores Euripides views in relationship to Xenophon when discussing these lines (1341-6). He notes that Euripides “enjoyed mythological criticism” in other passages as well (\textit{Tro.} 969 ff., \textit{IT} 380 ff., \textit{El.} 737 ff., \textit{IA} 793 ff.) and also notes ancient criticisms about Euripides putting his own thoughts in the mouths of characters (Sophocles’ \textit{Hipp.} 953, Plut. \textit{Mor.} 593b, Sophocles’ \textit{Alc.} 962). Godfrey W. Bond, \textit{Euripides: Heracles} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 400.

\textsuperscript{216} It is also possible that Euripides is using an unusual interpretation of Xenophanes’ god who “shakes all things by the thought of his mind” (ἄλλ’ ἀπάνειθε πόνοι νόου φρεινὶ πάντα κραδαίνει, G37, B25). Hera does not directly intervene by killing Heracles’ children, but rather sends madness (Λύσσα), which makes Heracles himself do the deed.}
since he is an important source for the *Argonautica*, especially in terms of the characters of Medea and Jason. Much has been written on Apollonius’ interaction with Euripides’ *Medea*, but Mooney also points out numerous passages where Apollonius may be using the *Heracles*, the play that shows clear interaction with Xenophanes’ ideas. And, after close consideration, it looks like Apollonius does make use of Xenophanes’ work, although not to the extent that he uses Empedocles’ or Parmenides’ works. This may be due in part to the fact that more fragments of Empedocles’ and Parmenides’ works survive, so other interactions with Xenophanes’ ideas would have been clear to an audience with access to more of Xenophanes’ work. There are, however, at least two passages that indicate a close verbal reading of Xenophanean fragments, two others that are possibilities, and several themes that show Xenophanean influence. The first two show a close attention to Xenophanes’ language and metrics while the thematic passages also show an awareness of Xenophanes’ ideas about the gods.

**Lasting Songs: Xenophanes G17 (B6) and Arg. 1.25**

One of the strongest arguments for Xenophanes’ influence on the *Argonautica* is the rare genitive plural ἀοιδάων, which shows up only in the works of Xenophanes, Callimachus, and Apollonius prior to the fourth century AD. Although the uncontracted -άων ending is used in Homer on other words, it is not used for the genitive plural of ἀοιδή. The form found in Homer is ἀοιδῶν, found only at *Od.* 8.481. This contracted form (ἀοιδῶν) is also

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217 See, for example, notes on lines 1.277, 748, 1325, 4.175, 571, and 1399.
found in other works, including the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (169) and two epigrams by Simonides, but all of these instances can only be the contracted form (based on the meter) and they occur at the end of a line. Apollonius, in contrast, uses the uncontracted *(ἀοιδάων)* form early in a line, in the first through third feet of the hexameter:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{πρώτα νυν Ὄρφης μυησώμεθα, …..} & \quad 23 \\
\text{αὐτάρ τόνγ’ ἐνέπουσιν ἀτειρέας οὐρεσὶ πέτρας} & \\
\text{θέλξαι ἀοιδάων ἐνοπτῇ ποταμών τε ρέεθρα;} & \quad 25 \\
\text{φηγοὶ δ’ ἀγριάδες κείνης ἐτι σήματα μολπῆς} & \\
\text{ἀκτὴ Θηρικὴ Ζώνης ἐπὶ τηλεθώσαι} & \\
\text{ἐξεῖρας στράσσωσιν ἐπήρμου, ὥς ὄγ’ ἐπιρό} & \\
\text{θελγομένας φόρμιμοι κατήγαγε Πιερίθεον.} & \quad 30
\end{align*}
\]

But they say that he [Orpheus] charmed the stubborn rocks on the mountains and the streams of the rivers through the sound of his *song*; and the wild oak trees are still the signs of his song, flourishing on the Thracian headland of Zone, closely woven, marching in orderly rows—oaks which he previously led down from Pieria, charmed by his lyre.

Orpheus is the first Argonaut listed in the catalogue. As Clauss points out, Orpheus heads up the half of the catalogue that lists heroes famous for their communicative skills rather than brute force (Heracles heads up the other half).\textsuperscript{218} Here the “orderly rows” of oak trees could stand for poetic meter and the march-like order that meter imposes on wild prose. That unnatural but artistic order exists up to the present day as a monument to Orpheus’ skill (κείνης ἐτι σήματα μολπῆς). The audience is reminded by the jussive subjunctive (μνησώμεθα) that the narrator has a similar skill, and that Orpheus’ continued fame is not only dependent on the wild oaks but also on Apollonius’ memory of Orpheus and the wild oaks. The kinship between the narrator of the *Argonautica* and Orpheus is emphasized by the fact that the first Argonaut mentioned is a poet, like the narrator. The

\textsuperscript{218} Clauss, *The Best of the Argonauts*, 31-32.
Xenophanean fragment also refers to undying glory gained through poetry, which lives on to the present day:

πέμψας γὰρ κωλὴν ἐρίφου σκέλος ἦραο πίον
ταύρου λαρινοῦ, τίμιον ἀνδρὶ λαχεῖν
τοῦ κλέος Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν ἀφίξεται, οὖδ’ ἀπαλήξει,
ἔστ’ ἂν ᾑοιδάων ἤ γένος Ἑλλαδικόν. (G17, B6)

Having sent forth a thighbone you picked up the rich leg of a fat bull, a worthy gift for a man to obtain whose fame will reach all Greece and won’t stop, while the Greek brand of song shall last.

Although this fragment is short, it also addresses someone skilled in poetic contests to the point that a small outlay brought back much more than could be expected and a fame that will exist as long as Greek poetry exists. It also addresses a fame that spreads geographically (κλέος Ἑλλάδα πᾶσαν ἀφίξεται) similar to the way that Orpheus’ skill moves the oaks from one geographical place (Pieria) to another (Thracian Zone). The word ᾑοιδάων appears in the same metrical position in both authors, beginning at the end of the first foot and reaching into the third foot in a dactylic part of the meter: _ _ _ / _ _/_ (Xenophanes is writing in elegiacs, but the first two feet of the line are the same as a hexameter line and identical to the beginning of the Argonautica line). This is different from the placement of the form in Callimachus:

… Δῆλος δ’ ἐθέλει τὰ πρῶτα φέρεσθαι
ἐκ Μουσέων, ὁτι Φοιβὸν ᾑοιδάων μεδέοντα
λούσε τε καὶ σπείροσε καὶ ὡς θεὸν ἱνεσε πρώτη.

219 The theme of poetic contest and prizes fits well with several Theocritean Idylls, especially 5. Hunter and Fantuzzi discuss the possibility of connecting Xenophanes and Theocritus in Tradition and Innovation in Hellenistic Poetry, 137.
… Delos is willing to win the first prize from the Muses, since she bathed Phoebus, the guardian of songs, swathed him, and first accepted him as a god.

This passage is a different context (praise of Apollo) and the word is at a different point in the line (the 3rd and 4th feet, ˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘). These two considerations (metrics and context) make Xenophanes’ work a closer possibility as a source for Apollonius in this passage.

Unlike the uncontracted epsilon genitive ending (ἀοιδέων), the uncontracted alpha form is not pronounced as one long foot (έων as one sound) but as two long syllables (ά-ων), so it is not possible to replace the uncontracted form with the Homeric ἀοιδῶν without altering other parts of the line. Furthermore, there are no textual variants for the word in the Argonautica passage, Xenophanes’ work, or the Homeric epics. The difference between ἀοιδέων and ἀοιδάων is significant metrically, and by choosing the Xenophanean form (ἀοιδάων) over the Homeric form (ἀοιδῶν) and using it in the same metrical position that Xenophanes uses, Apollonius may be pointing out that Orpheus is a different type of poet, one more like Xenophanes than Homer.

Xenophanes could be a nice model for Orpheus because of his itinerant life as a poet and philosopher. According to Diogenes Laertius, Xenophanes recited his own poetry (ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτός ἐρμαγώιδει τὰ ἐαυτοῦ), and Orpheus also both composes and performs his own songs in the Argonautica. Plutarch lists Orpheus in the company of other philosophical poets, including Xenophanes: πρότερον μὲν ἐν ποιήμασιν ἐξέφερον οἱ φιλόσοφοι τὰ δόγματα καὶ τοὺς λόγους, ὁσπερ Ὀρφεὺς καὶ Ἡσίοδος καὶ Παρμενίδης καὶ Ξενοφάνης καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς καὶ Θαλῆς (“previously, philosophers delivered their teachings and ideas in poetry, just as Orpheus and Hesiod and Parmenides and Xenophanes and Empedocles and Thales did” De Pythiae oraculis 18, 402e9). Within the
Argonautica itself, Orpheus sometimes serves as a guide on religious matters: he tells the younger men how to carry out the rites of Cybele (1.1134), he recognizes a portent at 4.1409, and he advises the crew to dedicate Apollo’s tripod at 4.1547. He is not, however, an official seer like Idmon or Mopsus, and the song he sings at the beginning of the Argonautica is a mix between a natural cosmogony and a theological history.²²⁰ His role, therefore, seems to combine knowledge about the gods with ideas about the natural world, and he expresses those ideas through poetry, just as Xenophanes does.

At the Feet: Xenophanes G52 (B28) and Arg. 1.694, 2.61

The phrase παρὰ ποσσὶν does not occur in Homer. There the preferred phrases are παρά with an accusative form of πούς (Il. 7.190), πὰρ ποσὶν (Il. 13.617, 14.411 both at the beginning of a line) or παραι ποσὶ (Il. 15.280). In the singular, the forms πὰρ πόδ’ and πὰρ πόδα appear (Il. 7.190, 23.866). The form παρὰ ποσσὶν only occurs in Xenophanes’ work and the Argonautica (where it appears twice). In Xenophanes work, it appears in a description of the world:

²²⁰ Cf. “Orpheus: A Poet Among Men” Fritz Graf. “The second theme – this Orpheus enchanting animals, trees and rocks with his song – is attested somewhat earlier. Simonides in a fragment of one of his odes is the first to formulate it for us; then follow Aeschylus and Euripides. Again, it is an image of poetry and music surpassing the boundaries of human existence, this time the boundary between man and the rest of creation. As Greek man defines his status as brotos compared to the ambrotoi, the undying gods, so does he towards animals: full humanity, according to Greek anthropology, was gained by overcoming animal-like condition, therioides bios.” Fritz Graf, “Orpheus: A Poet Among Men,” in Interpretations of Greek Mythology, ed. Jan Bremmer (London: Routledge, 1987), 84.
This upper limit of earth is visible at our feet, Touching the air, but its lower limit is infinite.

In contrast to authors such as Anaximenes, who believes that the earth is flat like a disk and floating in the air (G13, A20), or Thales, who thinks it floats on the water (G18, A14), Xenophanes believes the earth continues infinitely downward (not resting on anything), while air continues infinitely upward. This view leads to difficulty explaining some things like the sun rising every morning (Xenophanes posits different suns in different areas, G66, A41a), but the boundary between infinite earth and infinite air lies at the feet of humans. This view is critiqued by other early philosophers such as Empedocles, and it is not clear that Apollonius subscribes to the Xenophanean cosmology as a whole, but he does borrow the phrase παρὰ ποσσὶν twice in the Argonautica: first at 1.694 and again at 2.61. In the second location, the phrase is in the same metrical position as it is in Xenophanes' work:

"And he [Polydeuces] smiled and immediately picked up these [rawhide thongs] that lay at his feet without speaking.

This phrase also occurs in the fourth and fifth foot of the hexameter, followed by a single verb at the end of the line: ꞌ˘ ꞌ˘˘˘ / ꞌ˘˘˘ / ꞌ˘˘. Furthermore, the context of the Argonautica passage is the boxing match between Polydeuces and Amycus, immediately after Amycus is likened to “the monstrous offspring of deadly Typhoeus or even earth herself (αὐτῆς Γαίης)" (2.38-39) while Polydeuces is likened to “a heavenly star, whose
twinkling is most beautiful when it shines through the evening darkness” (2.40-42). This meeting of the offspring of earth (Amycus) and a heavenly star (Polydeuces) occurs in the rawhide straps used for boxing, which lie at Polydeuces’ feet (παρὰ ποσσίν). Even if the allusion to Xenophanes is not meant to be read in this allegorical way, the phrase does not occur elsewhere in extant literature and Xenophanes’ work seems a likely place for it, especially given the metrical similarities. The other place where this phrase occurs in the Argonautica is 1.694, where Hypsipyle’s old nurse Polyxo is advising the Lemnian women to take in the Argonauts. This passage includes the phrase in a different metrical position (second through third feet, ˘/˘/˘/˘). It is harder to explain this passage as a reference to Xenophanes’ work, in part because the Xenophanean lines have no additional context. This does not necessarily mean that the phrase is not from Xenophanes’ work; it is possible that Apollonius is showing his familiarity with Xenophanes’ work without necessarily making a point about the larger context. Regardless, it shows a careful attention to Xenophanes’ word choice. Homer offers at least three other options for this phrase in four different lines (more if we include singular options), so choosing this form indicates a choice to incorporate Xenophanes’ language instead of Homer’s in these two passages.

Other Possibilities

There are two other passages that show a possible connection between Apollonius’ work and Xenophanes’, but these are less convincing than ἀοιδάων and παρὰ ποσσίν. First, the
description of Aphrodite combing her hair in book 3 of the *Argonautica* shows some similarity to Xenophanes’ description of the Lydians with their golden hair ornaments. In the *Argonautica* passage, Aphrodite is interrupted from arranging her hair with a golden comb by the entrance of Athena and Hera: she was fixing her long hair with a golden tool and about to braid it:

\[
\text{'λευκοίσιν δ' ἐκάτερθε κόμας ἐπιειμένη όμοις} \quad 45 \\
\text{κόσμει χρυσείη διὰ κερκίδι, μέλλε δὲ μακρούς} \\
\text{πλέξασθαι πλοκάμους}
\]

Having thrown her *hair* over her white shoulders, she was *arranging* it with a *golden* tool, about to braid the long locks.

Athenaeus reports Xenophanes’ critique of the Lydians, and his opening remarks include some similar language: “they deck out their *hair* with *gold ornaments*, as Xenophanes says ‘… exulting in their good-looking hair …’” (διησκημένοι τὰς κόμας χρυσί, κόσμωι, ός καὶ Ξενοφάνης φησίν … χαίτησιν ἀγάλμενοι εὑπρεπέσσιν, …).

This passage of the *Argonautica* owes much to *Odyssey* 5, where Hermes visits Calypso and finds her weaving with a golden shuttle (ἰστὸν ἐποιχομένη χρυσείη κερκίδ' ὤφαϊεν Od. 5.62). A weaver’s shuttle is the more common meaning for κερκίς, and in the *Argonautica*, Aphrodite uses the tool on her own hair; she is the work of art rather than an exterior object on the loom. Besides this verbal echo, both of these passages (*Odyssey* 5 and *Argonautica* 3) involve a god/goddess visiting another goddess in order to help a human hero: Hermes visits Calypso to help Odysseus, Athena and Hera visit Aphrodite to help Jason. But passages that use both κόμη and χρύσεος to describe hair
ornaments are relatively rare,\textsuperscript{221} and it is also possible that the *Argonautica* passage also owes something to Xenophanes’ description of the Lydians and their excessive luxury.

The second place for a possible connection between Xenophanes’ work and the *Argonautica* is the mention of Eryx in *Arg.* 4.917. Here the Argonaut Butes leaps from the Argo to swim toward the sirens but is saved by Aphrodite, the guardian goddess of Eryx (θεὰ Ἐρυκος μεδέωσα), who settles him on cape Lilybaeum. As Race points out, Diodorus Siculus describes this spot (Mt. Eryx) as the site of a sanctuary of Aphrodite and Butes.\textsuperscript{222}

Xenophanes’ work is the earliest source for the word according to the TLG, but between Xenophanes and Apollonius the word also appears in the works of Hecataeus, Thucydides, Herodotus, Philistus, Theocritus, Callimachus, and Duris. The genitive form is found in the works of Xenophon, Hecataeus, and Herodotus, so Apollonius need not have gotten the word or the form from Xenophanes’ work. Mt. Eryx also appears in other authors after Apollonius who, like Diogenes Laertius, likely had access to sources that Apollonius had access to but which are no longer available. Of the authors preserved prior to Apollonius, only Thucydides mentions the location in connection with Aphrodite: in 6.56.3, the temple of Aphrodite at Eryx is the one the Egestians use to trick the Athenians. Callimachus and Theocritus also mention the location in connection with

\textsuperscript{221} More often the adjective “golden” refers to the hair itself, not an ornament (Pindar *Isthmian* 7.49, *Paian* fr. 52f line 137) or a golden crown (Euripides’ *Medea* 978, 1160, 1193).

\textsuperscript{222} Race, *Apollonius Rhodius: The Argonautica*, 403n117. This note is part of Race’s commentary on *Arg.* 4.919.
Aphrodite, so all three Alexandrian authors (Apollonius, Callimachus, and Theocritus) seem to be referring to a common tradition that deals with Aphrodite’s association with the location, although none of the extant sources prior to them give the story of Aphrodite’s original connection with the place.

The Xenophanes fragment that mentions the word is severely limited: an anonymous scholiast commenting on *Il.* 7.76 gives a list of paronymous words (words based on the same root); here the scholiast is particularly interested in “forms of the second declension having a nominative which is the same as the genitive of a cognate form belonging to the third declension” such as χρυσάόρος, χρυσαόρου (second declension) and χρυσάωρ χρυσάορος (third declension). The scholiast notes only that the word Ἔρυκος is used in the fifth book of Xenophanes’ *Silloi*, but nothing more, and in this case, even the related second declension word is not listed. This list of paronymous words also has nothing to do with the context of *Il.* 7.76 (the passage the scholiast is commenting on), so the passage itself provides no clues. In essence, we know only that the word appears in Xenophanes’ work in the genitive, but there are no clues as to what context it occurred in, and we know next to nothing about the content of the individual books of the *silloi*.

This means that it is possible that whatever Xenophanes discussed about Eryx in the fifth book of the satires, it could have been a source for Apollonius’ version in book

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223 For a full discussion of Ox. 1087, see *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, Part 8, edited by Bernard Pyne Grenfell and Arthur Surridge Hunt, (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1911), 100-101. The text that includes this fragment of Xenophanes is column ii, line 41 on page 105.
4, but there is insufficient information. Like Apollonius, who wrote several works on the founding of cities (Caunus, Cnidus, Alexandria, Naucratis, Rhodes, and Lesbos), we know that Xenophanes wrote works on geographical areas and cities (*The Colonization of Elea in Italy* and *The Founding of Colophon*), and it is possible that those works detailed local features such as temples and the legends associated with them. His famous fragment about the gods of the Ethiopians and Thracians (G33, B16) shows an interest in the depiction of gods in various places, so even if he would not have used the story of Butes and Aphrodite in the way Apollonius uses it, it is possible that he recorded the story associated with the place.

These associations are tenuous but indicate that there could be more connections between Xenophanes’ work and Apollonius’ if we had more of Xenophanes’. Much of what we have regarding Xenophanes is testimonia or summaries of his thoughts, and although I will argue that there are some connections between Xenophanes’ larger ideas and Apollonius’ view of the gods in the *Argonautica*, it is clear that Apollonius is a close reader and interested in unusual forms, and for that type of analysis we need more direct quotes from Xenophanes’ work rather than summaries of his ideas.

**The Form of the God(s)**

Xenophanes is famous for his critique of the way poets and other humans anthropomorphize the gods. Fragment G31 (B14) critiques the way that humans think of gods as having human clothing, voice, and body (τὴν σφετέρην ὤς θητὴν ἔχειν φωνήν τε
δέμας τε), while fragment 32 (B15) argues that if horses or cattle could draw gods, the
gods would look like horses or cattle, respectively. While Apollonius does describe the
gods in human terms, he also problematizes their appearance and human perceptions of
divine appearance in a way that shows some awareness of the problem.

As Dennis Feeney points out, Apollonius’ most extended play on the nature of the
gods is also the last to appear in the work: the appearance of Triton at the Tritonian lake
in Libya.\textsuperscript{224}

… the sea-god Triton meets the company, looking like a sturdy man (αἰζηνο
ἐναλίγκιος, 4 1551). The phrase has Homeric (and Pindaric) associations;
Homer, likewise, are the god’s assumption of a human name (4. 1561), his swift
subsequent disappearance back into his divinity (1590-1), and the humans’
recognition of the fact that they have seen a disguised god (1591-2). Having done
the normal thing, Apollonius reintroduces Triton ten lines later, and this time
Triton is ‘exactly as he really was to look at’ (τοῖος ἤν ὁ ὁς περ ἐπίτυμος Ἦν
ἰδέσθαι, 1603). What is that like? A simile immediately follows, comparing
Triton to … a man: ‘as when a man …’ (ὡς δ’ ὅτ᾽ ἄνηρ …, 1604). ‘His body’, then
says Apollonius, ‘from the top of his head, around his back and waist down to his
stomach, was exactly like the immortals in its outstanding nature’ (δέμας δέ οἱ ἔς
ὑπάτοιο / κράατος ἁμφί τε νότα καὶ ιξύις ἔστ᾽ ἐπὶ νηδύν / ἀντικρυ μακάρεσσι
φυὴν ἔκπαγλον ἕκτο, 1610-12; he goes on to describe the sea-monster that he
was in the lower parts). The last line is a tissue of epic phrases, used to compare a
human being to a god, or to compare something divine to a human being. But to
say that something divine looks like something else divine, when you have
compared it to a man and spent a line detailing its anthropomorphism, is to
introduce a remarkable confusion of categories. Small wonder, then, that
Apollonius reflects on his creation as an ‘extraordinary portent’ (τέρας αἰὼν,
1619).

Feeney is correct to draw attention to the confusion of categories here, but he is incorrect
in his analysis of the passage in at least two ways: first, Triton himself is not compared to
a man. Instead, the simile compares his action of moving the boat into the sea to a man

\textsuperscript{224} Feeney, \textit{The Gods in Epic}, 79.
leading a racehorse into the arena. As Hunter points out in his commentary on the passage, “Ships are the horses of the sea” (Penelope’s words, *Od*. 4.708-9). Thus while the horse in the simile is like the *Argo* and rider in the simile is like Triton, it is the action of leading the horse into the arena that is highlighted, not Triton as a man.

When Triton moves the ship, his physicality is not emphasized or described in the way that Athena’s is in 2.593 when she pushes the *Argo* through the clashing rocks with her right hand while her left hand pushes against one of the rocks. While Triton’s physicality is emphasized before his transformation (he stretches out his hand to give Euphemus the clod), after his transformation his upper body is not described in human terms but is instead “completely like the marvelous form of the blessed ones (ἀντικρό μακάρεσσι φυὴν ἐκπαγλον ἕικτο, 4.1612). While the gods may appear in mortal form to humans, their true form is unlike anything except the gods. Apollonius’ description of Triton is not Xenophanean in a literal way (i.e., Triton is not described as a circle moving things with his mind), but it does draw attention to the problem of describing gods that Xenophanes also draws attention to.

Theology and Progress

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225 The description of Triton does, however, include circular imagery. In the simile describing how Triton accompanies the ship, he is compared to a man guiding a horse into “the wide circle of a racecourse” (ἐς εὐρέα κύκλον ἀγόνος, 4.1604), and the spines on the lower half of his body are described as divided into curved points “like the horns of the moon” (μὴνης ὡς κεράεσσιν 4.1616).
The early philosophers are often described as an innovative rationalizing influence in the otherwise superstitious Greek world. Their explanations of phenomena as caused by natural means instead of the direct influence of the gods is hailed as the beginning of a new scientific advancement. Because of these ideas, it can be difficult to see them in conjunction with an epic writer like Apollonius who describes divine interventions through much of his work. And indeed, much of the Argonautica directly contradicts Xenophanes’ statements: while Xenophanes describes god as a sphere without human form (a precursor to Empedocles’ sphere), the gods are described with physical features such as hair and limbs in the Argonautica. And, as mentioned above, Apollonius brings up the very aspects of the Olympian narrative that Xenophanes dislikes (cheating spouses, using force against other divinities, the castration of Uranus, etc.). While Xenophanes explains Iris/the rainbow as a type of cloud (G72, B32), Apollonius presents her as a character who speaks and makes decisions (2.286-298, 432; 4.753-779). None of that, however, precludes Apollonius from reading Xenophanes’ work and using certain phrases or images that he found interesting, and this is particularly possible when the image or phrase does not appear in Homer or other extant literature before Apollonius, as in the examples I have shown above. Euripides also includes Iris as a character (not a cloud) in the Heracles, the same play that includes a theological statement strikingly similar to Xenophanes’. Using phrases, images, and select ideas from Xenophanes does not require buying his views wholesale.

But there is also a sense in which Apollonius’ presentation of the gods responds to Xenophanes’ criticisms. While Apollonius alludes to divine misdeeds in the past, the
gods that appear in the *Argonautica* are toned down and sanitized in many ways, especially compared to the *Iliad* and *Theogony*. Although Hera alludes to Zeus’ interest in other women (4.793), we do not witness firsthand the marital discord of Zeus and Hera that we see in the *Iliad*. Nowhere in the *Argonautica* does Zeus intervene against Hera’s plan to help Jason, and at times the narrator indicates that Zeus’ and Hera’s plans are in concord or at least work together in a complementary way (1.1315, 2.154, 275, 993, 4.577). Divine adultery is largely limited to Cronos and the generation of the Titans (2.1234), and in the main narrative, Aphrodite is prominently featured at the home of her husband Hephaestus, not with her paramour Ares. The three goddesses who quarrel in the *Iliad* (Hera, Athena, Aphrodite) work together to help Jason, and Athena and Hera show deference to Aphrodite and use persuasion rather than deceit (3.25-110). The gods of the *Argonautica* seem to have evolved past the Homeric ones in their divine manners, even though the story is set in the generation prior to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Although strife between gods is alluded to, it is always in the past, and the Olympus of the *Argonautica* is on the whole more harmonious than that found in the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*.

The narrator of the *Argonautica* also seems to show reluctance to repeat the tales of older, less civilized gods when he mentions Cronus castrating his father Uranus:

\[\text{ἔστι δὲ τις πορθμοῖο παροιτέρη Ἰονίω} \]

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226 Aphrodite is pictured with Ares shield on Jason’s cloak in book 1. It is significant that this is an artistic representation of the goddess rather than a first-hand depiction of her (like the one found in book 3). Furthermore, even this picture on the cloak is sanitized compared to Demodocus’ tale in book 8 of the *Odyssey*.

227 While the *Odyssey* is, on the whole, more free of divine strife than the *Iliad*, it still includes conflict between Poseidon and Zeus/Athena.
There is a fertile, expansive island [Corcyra] at the entrance of the Ionian strait in
the Ceraunian sea, under which is said to lie the sickle—forgive me, Muses, not
willingly do I repeat my predecessors words—with which Cronus ruthlessly cut
off his father’s genitals. Others, however, say it is the reaping scythe of
indigenous Demeter. For Demeter once lived in that land and taught the Titans
how to harvest the bountiful grain, out of devotion to Macris.

Apollonius’ request for forgiveness for speaking about the castration of Uranus and his
attribution of this view to earlier writers indicates reluctance to speak about this topic.

Furthermore, he adds a second and more extended explanation that lingers in the
audience’s mind in a way that suggests the first may be incorrect. Some of the references
to shady divine actions are distanced by “they say” (ἐνέπουσι) or similar phrases, which
is, in itself, a departure from Homer and Hesiod (Arg. 2.905, 1211). This reluctance to
describe divine misdeeds and the attribution of these deeds to earlier writers shows an
awareness of a problem that is first raised by Xenophanes.

The clearest theological concept Apollonius takes from Xenophanes’ work is the
idea that the gods intentionally hide some knowledge from humans:

The gods did not show everything to mortals from the beginning,
but in time, in the process of seeking, they discover what is better.
Apollonius’ character Phineus gives a similar view when he states that he will not give the Argonauts complete knowledge about the upcoming parts of their journey because Zeus does not want him to.

“Κλῦτε νυν· οὐ μὲν πάντα πέλει θέμις ὡμι δαῆναι ἄτρεκές, ὃσσα δ’ ὅρῳρθε θεοῖς φύλον, οὐκ ἐπικεφάσω. ἀμασάμην καὶ πρόσθε Διὸς νόν ἄφραδίσην χρείων ἐξείης τε καὶ ἐς τέλος, ὅδε γὰρ αὐτὸς βούλεται ἀνθρώποις ἐπιδεενέα θέσφατα φαίνειν μαντοσύνης, ἵνα καὶ τι θεῶν χατέωσι νόοιο.

Listen now: it’s not correct for you to learn all things accurately, but as many things as are pleasing to the gods, those things I won’t hide from you. Previously I acted foolishly and thoughtlessly by prophesying the mind of Zeus in order and to the end. For in this way Zeus himself wants to show incomplete oracles of divination to humans, in order that they may still lack something of the mind of the gods.

In other respects, Phineus is portrayed as an accurate and reliable guide, and his preview of the Argonauts’ future journey proves correct. His statement here about Zeus’ reasons for punishing him is corroborated by the narrator’s at 2.179-193, so his statement here is presented as an accurate description rather than an individual character’s opinion. As Mooney points out, Phineus’ description of the future journey is modeled on Circe’s instructions to Odysseus in book 12 of the Odyssey. Yet Circe’s instructions do not contain a similar discussion of “hidden knowledge”: the closest thing is a statement that Odysseus will have to choose for himself between Scylla and Charybdis, but she fully explains both options (12.56-58). Apollonius is adding something here that may be due to the particulars of Phineus’ story, but it includes the Xenophanean idea that the gods intentionally keep some knowledge hidden from humans.
Many scholars interpret this passage from Xenophanes’ work as a statement about the potential for human progress through rational inquiry, contrary to the story of human decline in Hesiod’s tale of the five races. According to Dodds, Hesiod’s version “is a story of increasing though not uninterrupted degeneration, starting from the Lost Paradise ‘under Kronos’ and extending into the present and the future.” In contrast to Hesiod’s views, Xenophanes’ statement is “a genuine affirmation of progress: the writer conceives it as a gradual process which extends into the present and presumptively into the future, and one which is dependent on man’s own efforts, not on the arbitrary gift of any ‘culture-god.’” As Lesher points out, some of Dodd’s accompanying analysis of Xenophanes’ views is problematic: Dodds interprets Xenophanes’ comment about the Lydians being the first to invent coinage as an affirmation of human inventiveness and a sign of human progress, but another fragment (G14, B3) criticizes the citizens of Colophon for their luxuries, which they learned from the Lydians. The invention of coinage may not, in Xenophanes’ opinion, be a sign of progress but “unprofitable luxury”; the fragment on coinage is too sparse to tell, but it seems likely that modern readers see the invention of coinage in the light of modern economic narratives that move from barter to coins to a credit economy. Lesher evaluates the fragment G77 (B18) as a statement about the potential for individual, rather than group, progress, and sees that

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229 Dodds, *The Ancient Concept of Progress*, 4.
progress as the result of a specific method of inquiry rather than an inevitable march forward.

Regardless of the interpretation of the second line, the first line is strikingly similar to Phineus’ statement in book 2 of the *Argonautica*. Phineus does not go as far as Xenophanes does in explaining why Zeus wants to keep some knowledge hidden; according to Phineus, Zeus wants humans to lack something of the gods’ knowledge, but it is not clear whether this is because Zeus wants to emphasize the difference between humans and gods or because he prefers to reveal things gradually or because he wants humans to seek the knowledge for themselves. However, the rest of the *Argonautica* often shows the gods gradually revealing information that is helpful to the heroes but requires interpretation by wise individuals. The revelation itself is not enough; it requires some mental effort or skill from an individual to make the meaning clear. For example, the divine guardians of Libya tell Jason how to escape the Libyan desert, but he does not understand their instructions until Peleus explains the riddle (4.1370-9), and Jason needs the seer Mopsus to explain the halcyon omen (1.1079-1102). This is consistent with Xenophanes’ idea that untangling reality requires both divine revelation and human effort and understanding.

Even if this fragment of Xenophanes’ work should not be read as a statement of inevitable progress, it still indicates the possibility for progress. And there are also signs of progress in the *Argonautica* that depart from the narrative of decline in Homer and Hesiod. In the *Iliad*, the narrator often compares men of the current generation unfavorably to those of the generation in the *Iliad*, but the narrator of the *Argonautica*
never compares the men of any generation unfavorably with those of a prior one. Individual Argonauts such as Heracles may be exceptionally strong, but he is not compared to men of the current age. Instead, the description of Circe’s creatures in book 4 indicates that humans have advanced quite far from their primordial origins as random collections of limbs. On the question of technological, as well as physical, advance, the Argonautica depicts a world where cooperation between gods and humans leads to progress: the success of the Argo is attributed not just to Athena but to the way she taught the shipwright Argo to build the boat (1.723-4, 2.612-4).

Relations between gods and humans in the Argonautica also seem better than those described in the Iliad and Odyssey. In the Iliad, revelations from the gods are not necessarily trustworthy. Although at times humans make mistakes interpreting divine signs, the gods also intentionally mislead humans: in the Iliad, Zeus sends a false dream to Agamemnon with false promises of success and Athena takes on the appearance of Hector’s brother to convince Hector to stay and fight. Furthermore, although humans look to the gods as the guarantors of oaths (Iliad 3), it is a god (Athena) who encourages the breaking of that oath. Unlike the Iliad where signs from the gods may be deceitful, the signs given in the Argonautica are helpful to their intended human recipient. While the gods do not reveal everything all at once and some of their messages require expert interpretation, their goal is never to deceive humans, and the gods’ will can be discovered by asking the right person.

The role of knowledgeable interpreter thus becomes important in the world of the Argonautica, and the poet takes on this role for the reader, explaining how things became
the way they are now and giving explanations for the current state of the world.

Apollonius’ world does not fit neatly with an interpretation of Xenophanes’ work in every respect, but it does prioritize knowledge and knowers: Orpheus, Phineus, and even Medea with her knowledge of magic. The quest for knowledge in the *Argonautica* does not necessarily lead to Xenophanes’ divine sphere, but it does lead to understanding the origins of locations, rites, and names.

**Conclusions**

Based on the evidence presented here, Xenophanes’ work does not seem to have the same degree of influence on the *Argonautica* that the works of Empedocles and Parmenides do, but there is enough evidence to argue that Apollonius was probably familiar with Xenophanes’ work, and it is possible that there would be more evidence if more of Xenophanes’ work survived. As it stands, Xenophanes’ influence can be seen in individual word choices such as ἀοιδάων and παρὰ ποσσὶν but also in Apollonius’ depiction of the gods, which shows some development from Homer’s in the way the gods interact with each other and with humans. Xenophanes may also serve as a model for Orpheus as an itinerant singer who imposes order on the natural world and performs recitations of his own cosmogonic theories, and Xenophanes’ views on knowledge may serve as a model for Phineus’ depiction of divinely hidden knowledge. In this way, Xenophanes is part of a pattern of influence by early philosophical poets on the *Argonautica.*
Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles are often mentioned together as philosophical poets who express their views in verse and thus do not fit into much of the larger narrative of Greek philosophy, which is largely expressed in prose.\textsuperscript{230} These three authors critique the epic tradition of Homer and Hesiod but they also take part in that tradition by expressing their views in verse and often using Homeric language. In light of Plato’s critiques of poetry and the future development of philosophy in prose, this choice to express philosophical ideas in poetic form has caused difficulties for later critics of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles. Because Callimachus uses Plato by name and addresses some of his ideas on poetry, it is worth considering Apollonius’ possible connections to Plato next to see whether and how Plato may play a role in Apollonius’ reception of philosophy and poetry.

\textsuperscript{230} See, for example, Most, “The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy,” 335.
This project began with a hunch that Apollonius might be using and responding to Plato, and that hunch was based on the role that *eros* plays in both authors. Some of the most striking passages in the *Argonautica* are the descriptions of Medea affected by love for Jason (book 3), and some of the most memorable images in Plato also describe eros and its effects (the *Symposium*, the *Phaedrus*).

Beyond this initial observation, there are some good reasons for pursuing possible connections between Plato and Apollonius. First, it has become increasingly apparent that Apollonius’ teacher, Callimachus, referenced Plato’s works and Platonic characters throughout his epigrams and interacted with the ideas in Plato’s dialogues on a sophisticated level. This is particularly clear in *Epigram* 23 (Pf.), where Callimachus mentions Plato by name:

Εἴπας “Ήλε, χαίρε” Κλεόμβροτος Ωμβρακιώτης
ήλιατ’ ἀφ’ ὑψηλοὶ τείχεοι εἰς Αἴδην,
ἀξίων οὐδὲν ἰδὼν θανάτου κακόν, ἀλλὰ Πλάτωνος ἡλίατ’ ἀναλεξάμενος.

After Cleombrotus the Ambraciate said “Goodbye, sun!” he jumped from a high wall down to Hades, not because he had seen an evil worse than death but because he had read one work of Plato’s on the soul.

Acosta-Hughes and Stephens conduct a careful reading of this epigram in *Callimachus in Context* and point out that Cleombrotus is specifically named in the *Phaedo* as one of the
people not present at Socrates’ death, where Socrates gives an explicit argument against suicide. Thus the epigram points out a problem that Socrates discusses in another dialogue, the *Phaedrus*: reading is not a foolproof way to convey ideas, and readers such as Cleombrotus may be misled. This conflict between reading and speaking is emphasized by the participles that open and close the dialogue, Εἰπας (speaking) and ἀναλεξάµενος (reading). In this way, Acosta-Hughes and Stephens see this epigram as a direct reference to Plato’s *Phaedo* and an indirect reference to the *Phaedrus* and its arguments for the superiority of dialogue over writing.  

But it is possible that the epigram also refers to the *Republic*: why else would Cleombrotus say goodbye to the sun, the symbol of the visible world? It would make sense to do so if he thought, based on the arguments in the *Republic*, that he were about to access the world of forms described in book 7. This interpretation is further encouraged by the means of suicide by jumping from a wall (τείχεος), which is part of the cave described in book 7 (τειχίον, the wall behind which the puppeteers hide). Furthermore, Cleombrotus says goodbye to the visible world and its tricks of perception with his own *katabasis*, similar to the downward trip that Socrates takes to the Piraeus to begin the *Republic*. We should not forget that the *Republic* closes with the Myth of Er and a story about the immortality of the soul, and even though much interest in the *Republic* has focused on the society developed in books 2-5, that society is introduced in book 2 as a way to look at the individual soul. This work also ends with individual souls in book 10. The *Republic* could also be the work “on the soul” that Callimachus refers to, and as a work that has significant things to say about

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poetry, it could easily have drawn Callimachus’ attention. It is typical of Callimachus’ style to reference multiple works in a single short poem, and it is also possible that the poem draws on contemporary events: Ptolemy II (Philadelphus) forbid the philosopher Hegesias of Cyrene from teaching in Alexandria because his work encouraged people to commit suicide.232

In sum, Callimachus references up to three significant Platonic works in a four-line epigram in a way that shows he is familiar with obscure characters (Cleombrotus), significant images (the sun and the cave) and larger themes (the immortality of the soul, problems with reading versus speaking, etc.). Acosta-Hughes’ more recent work points out that Callimachus references multiple Platonic characters throughout the Epigrams and Iambi: Theaetetus (Ep. 7 Pf.), Menexenus (Ep. 44 Pf.), Critias (Ep. 12 Pf.; Ep. 55 Pf.),

232 The story is reported by Cicero in the Tusculan Disputations (I.83-84), and Cicero mentions Hegesias in conjunction with the Cleombrotus epigram: a malis igitur mors abducit, non a bonis, verum si quaerimus. Et quidem hoc a Cyrenaico Hegesia sic copiose disputatur, ut is a rege Ptolemaeo prohibitus esse dicatur illa in scholis dicere, quod multi iis auditis mortem sibi ipsi consciscerent. Callimachi quidem epigramma in Ambraciotam Cleombrotum est, quem ait, cum ei nihil accidisset adversi, e muro se in mare abiecisse lecto Platonis libro. Eius autem, quem dixi, Hegesiae liber est, Ἀποκαρτερῶν, in quo a vita quidam per inediam discedens revocatur ab amicis, quibus respondens vitae humanae enumerat incommoda. “Death then withdraws us from evil, not from good, if truth is our object. Indeed this thought is discussed by Hegesias the Cyreniac with such wealth of illustration that the story goes that he was stopped from lecturing on the subject by King Ptolemy, because a number of his listeners afterwards committed suicide. There is an epigram of Callimachus upon Cleombrotus of Ambracia who, he says, without having met with any misfortune, flung himself from the city wall into the sea after reading Plato’s book. Now in the book of Hegesias whom I have mentioned, Ἀποκαρτερῶν, there appears a man who was passing away from life by starvation and is called back by his friends, and in answer to their remonstrances, details the discomforts of human life.” Translated by J. E. King, Tusculan Disputations, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945), 99. In Diogenes Laertius (2.83) and the Suda, Hegesias is called “Πεισιθάνατος”: the one who persuades people to die.
Euthydemus (Iambus 3), and Ion (Iambus 13). Furthermore, Proclus’ commentary on Plato’s Timaeus indicates that Callimachus interacted with Plato as a literary critic as well as a philosopher:

εἴπερ γάρ τις ἄλλος καὶ ποιητῶν ἄριστος κριτής ὁ Πλάτων, ὡς καὶ Λογγίνος συνίστησιν. Ἡρακλείδης γονὸν ὁ Ποντικός φησιν, ὅτι τῶν Χοιρίλου τότε εὐδοκιμούντων Πλάτων τὰ Ἀντιμάχου προὔτιμησε καὶ αὐτὸν ἔπεισε τὸν Ἡρακλείδην εἰς Κολοφώνα ἐλθόντα τὰ ποιήματα συλλέξαι τοῦ ἀνδρός, μάτην οὖν φιληναφρῶς Καλλίμαχος καὶ Δοῦρις ὡς Πλάτωνος οὐκ ὄντος ἕκανεν κρίνειν ποιητάς· (1.90)

If there is a single best critic of poetry, it’s Plato, and Longinus also supports this view. At any rate, Heraclides of Ponticus says that Plato preferred the poetry of Antimachus at a time when the poetry of Choerilus was popular, and Plato persuaded Heraclides, on his way to Colophon, to collect Antimachus’ poetry. Therefore Callimachus and Duris babble in vain when they say that Plato was not up to snuff as a critic of poetry.

Callimachus’ overall response to Plato does not segregate Plato into a philosophical (as opposed to poetic) role. Instead, he engages with Plato as a literary critic and an author whose works can inspire poetic responses. Based on Acosta-Hughes’ and Stephens’ work (and particularly the former’s recent discussion of the Epigrams and Iambi), Callimachus was more than casually interested in Plato’s work, and it seems unlikely that Apollonius would be unaware of that interest.

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233 Acosta-Hughes, “A Little-Studied Dialogue: Responses to Plato in Callimachean Epigram,” 237-251. As Acosta-Hughes points out, a name can have more than one allusion, so it is not necessary to understand these names as references either to characters in Plato’s works or characters contemporary to Callimachus since they can be both.

234 Apollonius is called Callimachus’ µαθητής in several sources (see Green, The Argonautica, 1-8). Whether or not this term means “student” in the sense that is familiar to contemporary readers, it is clear that each was intimately aware of the other’s work.
Nor is Callimachus the only Alexandrian poet to show such interest. Recent work by Hunter and others have argued that Apollonius’ contemporary Theocritus shows an interest in Plato’s descriptions of location, artistic competition, and eros. Hunter sees the beginning of \textit{Idyll 7} as analogous to the beginnings of the \textit{Lysis} and \textit{Republic}, but sees the \textit{Phaedrus} as the most significant influence:

The similarity between Plato and T. may be due in part to a shared debt to the mimes of Sophron (so Weingarth (1967) 77), and T. may even wish to appropriate Plato, who visited Syracuse, as a “Sicilian” writer. It is, however, the \textit{Phaedrus} which seems closest to \textit{Idyll 7}: a walk in the countryside in the heat of the day and an exchange of performances designed to win over a beautiful boy make that dialogue more specifically important for \textit{Idyll 7} than its place in the generic ‘pastoral’ tradition would indicate … The \textit{Phaedrus} is a purely mimetic-dramatic dialogue without narrative frame; its mode is that of \textit{Idylls} 1, 4, 6 and 10. For the rewriting of the \textit{Phaedrus} in \textit{Idyll 7}, however, T. has chosen a different, but equally Platonic mode, namely that of the \textit{Lysis} and the \textit{Republic}; such virtuosity is typical of Hellenistic exploitation of the literary heritage.\textsuperscript{235}

Hunter’s argument here is based on similarities of setting and content rather than precise verbal echoes, and while many may find these similarities convincing, they are rooted in a general recognition rather than specifics (even Hunter’s analysis of the similarities between the beginning of the \textit{Lysis} and \textit{Republic} and \textit{Idyll 7} is done in English). Hunter uses this Platonic starting point to discuss ways in which Theocritus veers from the Platonic tradition.\textsuperscript{236} While there are certainly some striking similarities, this is a rather low bar to reach in order to prove influence, and if we accept Hunter’s observations about


\textsuperscript{236} Hunter, \textit{Theocritus: A Selection}, 145-146 and notes on \textit{Idyll} 11.10-11, 6.34-8.
Plato’s influence on Theocritus, we should consider what the evidentiary criteria is for Plato’s influence on Apollonius.

Furthermore, although the chronology of Apollonius and Theocritus is a subject of much debate, that debate should not keep us from seeing that two out of three major poets from this period use Plato’s work, and it is not unreasonable to ask whether the third did as well. While the case for Plato and Callimachus is stronger than the case for Plato and Theocritus, the relationship between Callimachus and Apollonius is stronger as well.237 Furthermore, there is ample evidence that Callimachus and Apollonius were intimately familiar with each other’s work. We know, for example, that a large part of the Aetia dealt with the story of Jason and the Argonauts, as did Iambus 8 (preserved only in diegesis). Another example, caught by WCopyFind, shows a whole line that is identical in the two authors: καὶ τὰ μὲν ὃς ἡμέλλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέσσαι (Aetia fr. 12.6), καὶ τὰ μὲν ὃς ἡμέλλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέσσαι· (Arg. 1.1309).238 As Harder points out, “An

237 There are two Lives of Apollonius, transmitted with the manuscript of the Argonautica (often included in the scholia to the work). The first describes Apollonius as the μαθητής of Callimachus, while the second states that he was Callimachus’ “pupil” (ὁστός ἐμοθίνεις Καλλιμάχῳ). P. Oxy. 1241, col. ii describes him as a γνώριμος of Callimachus (an acquaintance or familiar). The Suda similarly describes him as a “student” (μαθητής) of Callimachus. Although it is difficult to determine what μαθητής meant in these circumstances, it is significant that, brief as these testimonies are, they all mention Callimachus and situate Apollonius in reference to him. The most accessible review of these lives can be found in Peter Green’s “Introduction” in The Argonautica, 1-8.

238 Although the Aetia line has been restored, it is not a conjecture based solely on the similarity of the lines’ beginnings, as it might at first appear. Instead, the scholiast to the Argonautica states that this is a line that also appears in Callimachus: “Καλλιμάχου ὁ στίχος (fíg 212 Schn.).” Nonnus copies this line three times, with small variations (καὶ τὰ μὲν ὃς ἡμέλλε μετὰ χρόνον ὑπε τελέσσαι, 20.142), and twice with a word substitution to
intertextual relation between Arg. 1,1309 … and our passage [Aetia 12.6] is hard to deny … but it is not certain how this must be interpreted.”

Harder goes on to offer implications for the passages depending on whether Callimachus or Apollonius came first, but the question of priority is not as important here as the question of familiarity, and it seems beyond doubt that Callimachus and Apollonius were intimately familiar with each other’s poetry. This makes it likely that Apollonius was also familiar with many of Callimachus’ sources, especially ones that he specifically names in his work, such as Plato (Ep. 23 Pf).

Apollonius’ interests also align well with several topics that form a significant part of the Platonic corpus: besides the effects of *eros*, Plato’s characters often read poetry quite closely and critique it thoughtfully, which could appeal to Apollonius as a thoughtful critic in his own right. Some scholars have even speculated that Plato’s criticism of Homeric passages led Zenodotus to omit certain lines from his edition of Homer (although Pfeiffer finds this reasoning unlikely). We know that Apollonius critiqued Zenodotus’ work on Homer (*Against Zenodotus*), so it is possible that he would have known of Plato’s interaction with Homer through Zenodotus as well as through *καὶ τὰ μὲν ὃς ἠμελλέ γέρων χρόνος ὄψε τελέσσαι 5.211, 21.162*.

This may indicate that the first half of this line was of particular interest.

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240 Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 113-114 and particularly 114n1. Pfeiffer argues that this is probably a second-hand problem: earlier copyists removed 16.432-58 because of Plato’s criticisms (*Rep. 388cd*), and Zenodotus omitted the lines because they were missing in one or several copies he consulted.
Callimachus. Apart from the significant critiques of Homer found in the *Republic* and *Ion*, we also have examples of Socratic characters reading and using the lyric poet Simonides: Socrates spends some time interpreting and critiquing one of Simonides’ poems in the *Protagoras* (339a-347a), and Simonides is the author of one of the first definitions of justice offered in the *Republic* (first given by Cephalus at 331d and later taken over by Polemarchus). The scholia to the *Argonautica* indicate that Simonides was the author of several poems about the Argonauts, and some of the traditions Apollonius chose to use for his version are the same as those Simonides included.\footnote{See Benjamin Acosta-Hughes, *Arion’s Lyre: Archaic Lyric into Hellenistic Poetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 198-206, and Jason Colavito, *Jason and the Argonauts through the Ages* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2014), 97.} Based on the testimony of Proclus, it is clear that Callimachus did not view Plato solely as a philosopher but also as a literary critic (albeit one he disagreed with). Proclus states that Callimachus’ criticism of Plato as a literary critic is unmerited because Plato admired Antimachus of Colophon and collected his poetry. Antimachus is a poet Apollonius uses in the *Argonautica* and glosses elsewhere.\footnote{See Pfeiffer *History of Classical Scholarship*, 94. For Callimachus’ evaluation of Plato as a literary critic, see Proclus’ commentary on Plato’s *Timaeus* 1.90. For Apollonius’ use of Antimachus of Colophon’s poetry in the *Argonautica*, see B. Wyss, *Antimachi Colophonii Reliquiae* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1936), xlviii. For Apollonius’ gloss on a line of Antimachus’ poetry, see Wyss fragment 158.} Based on this information, it is quite possible that Apollonius would have read Plato as a thoughtful fellow critic of some major sources for the *Argonautica* (Homer, the lyric poets, and Antimachus).

Apollonius is clearly interested in rare words, but there are also times when he uses words in a way that indicates he is making a point about the origin of the word or a
possible etymology. Hunter points to the cognates κερτόμιος and κερτομέω, which the scholiast understands to derive from κέαρ and τέμνειν (scholia to 1.486). Apollonius may be punning on this idea when he uses κερτομέες, νόϊν δὲ κέαρ …” at 3.56. κερτόμιος and κερτομέω also appears in Homer, but not with any form of κῆρ, so the pun may be original to Apollonius. Hunter also points to 3.691-2 (θεὸς … / θείη …), where Apollonius may be using an etymology found in Herodotus 2.52.1 (θεός is derived from τίθημι). The meaning of words is a significant topic in many Platonic dialogues (justice in the Republic, piety in the Euthyphro, etc.), but etymology is also a concern, especially the Cratylus, where more than half the dialogue goes through examples of etymologies.243 Characters in other dialogues also offer etymologies for words, such as Timaeus’ explanation of eudaimonia (Timaeus 90c). If Apollonius is interested in etymologies, it is possible that he uses some of the ones Plato’s characters put forward.

These areas of connection (Eros, other Alexandrian poets, literary criticism, etymology) provide a sufficient reason to pursue Plato’s works as a source for Apollonius’ work, but the results are ultimately not as convincing as they are for Callimachus and Plato. Based on the reasons given above, I pursued five different investigative methods:

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1. Plato and Apollonius as observers of Eros: I closely compared passages from the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* with descriptions of Medea affected by erotic love in book 3 of the *Argonautica* to see whether there were any striking similarities. Although both passages give vivid descriptions of the psychological pain experienced by those in love, they are not the only authors to do so, and the passages do not have any striking verbal similarities that I could discover. This may be due in part to the different vocabulary required by hexameter poetry. It could also be influenced by the different genders involved: the *Argonautica* describes several experiences with heterosexual love (Hypsipyle and Jason, Medea and Jason) but goes out of its way to avoid depictions of homoerotic love of the type described in the *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* (and much of the Platonic corpus). But Hunter sees similarities between Theocritus’ descriptions of heterosexual love and Plato’s descriptions of erotic love, so this is not necessarily a good reason.

Similarly, the descriptions of Eros as a divine figure in the *Argonautica* bear only a passing resemblance to the descriptions in the *Symposium*, and most of those similarities can be accounted for by general tradition that both authors likely had access

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244 Eros in the Argonautica is clearly a divinity, while in Plato it is sometimes a divinity (the *Symposium*) and at other times discussed as a concept (the *Phaedrus*). For the sake of consistency, I have chosen to capitalize it in this section.

245 Sappho 31 is a prime example.

246 Theocritus, for example, portrays Heracles’ relationship with Hylas as a sexual one while Apollonius does not. Regardless of which poem/poet comes first, this indicates that both traditions were available and Apollonius chose the non-sexualized version.


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to. In the *Symposium*, Eros is given two possible parents (Heavenly Aphrodite or Common Aphrodite), and in book 3 of the *Argonautica*, it is not clear who Eros’ father is (Hephaestus is away from home in the scene and Aphrodite is pictured with Ares on Jason’s cloak). But although both authors suggest questions about Eros’ parentage, Apollonius does not mention any of the possible parents put forward in the *Symposium*.248

2. Plato and Apollonius as etymologists: as discussed earlier, Apollonius sometimes uses words in a way that take a position on a scholarly debate on their meaning (ἄβρομος at 4.153) or puns on a possible etymology (θέος from τίθημι at 3.691-2 and κερτομέω from κέαρ and τέμνειν at 3.56249). If Apollonius were paying close attention to some of the etymologies that appear in Plato’s work, he might do so in a way that takes a position on those etymologies (either agreeing or disagreeing with them). For example, Socrates offers an etymology for the name Pelops as “one who sees only what is near at hand (pelas, opsis) … because, according to legend, he didn’t think about or foresee what the long-term consequences of murdering Myrtilus would be for his entire family, or all the misery that would overwhelm them. In his eagerness to win Hippodameia by any available means, he saw only what was ready to hand and on the spot—that is to say, what was nearby (pelas)” (395c-d).250 Although Apollonius

248 In Diotima’s speech (reported by Socrates), she offers Resource (Πόρος) and Poverty (Πενία) as the parents of Eros (Symp. 203b). Pausanius also offers two options for Aphrodite’s parents: Ouranos is the parent of Heavenly Aphrodite, while Zeus and Dione are the parents of Popular Aphrodite in Pausanius’ speech (Symp. 180d).


describes Pelops winning Hippodameia in the chariot race (1.753), he does not use πέλας or ὁ ῥάω or cognates of these words in this description (although he uses both words elsewhere in the Argonautica). TLG searches regarding many of these Platonic etymologies (especially those from the Cratylus) did not show any connections with Apollonius.

3. Plato and Apollonius as literary critics: it is clear that Apollonius read Homer and other poets quite closely, and so does Plato. Therefore, one approach to finding connections between Plato and Apollonius would be to look at places where a word shows up in a poet that both Plato and Apollonius read to see if Apollonius’ use of the word reveals a Platonic reading. A good test case for this is the two fragments of Simonides that Socrates analyzes in the Protagoras (339a-347a):

公元前 γίγνοις μὲ γενέσθαι χαλεπόν, χερσίν τε καὶ ποσὶ καὶ νόῳ τετράγωνον, ἴνευ ψόγου τετυγμένον. (Fr. 37.1-3)

It is difficult for a man to truly become good, perfect as a square in hands and feet and mind, without flaw fashioned.

Socrates argues that this fragment is more correct than the next because becoming (γενέσθαι) good is difficult, while being (ἔµµεναι) good is not:

“οἴδε μοι ἐµµελέως τὸ Πιττάκειον νέµεται, καίτοι σοφοὶ παρὰ φωτὸς εἰρηµένον: χαλεπὸν φάτ’ ἐσθλὸν ἔµµεναι. (Fr. 37.1.11-13)

It doesn’t ring right with me, that saying of Pittacus’ yet it was spoken by a wise man: it’s difficult, he said, to be good.

A comparison of places where Apollonius uses these words (γίγνοις and εἰµί) does not reveal any passages where Apollonius seems to be making the same distinction Socrates
makes in the *Cratylus* (for example, 4.196). Similar checks on Homeric citations yielded similarly disappointing results. In book 2 of the *Republic*, for example, Adeimantus reminds Socrates that the poets depict the gods as being persuaded to overlook injustice through sacrifices and gentle prayers (θυσίας τε και εὐχώλαις ἀγανήσιν, 365e). The adjective form ἀγανήσιν also shows up in the *Argonautica* to describe the sacrifices Alcinous offers when the Argonauts arrive at Phaeacia (οἱ δ ἀγανησίν / Ἀλκίνοος λαοὶ τε θυηπολήσιν 4.994-5). Yet there is nothing in this context that indicates a reading of the *Republic*: Alcinous is not trying to persuade the gods of anything in particular or make up for a particular injustice.

4. Platonic hapax legomena: another potential option for observing connections between Plato and Apollonius would be to look at hapax legomena from the Platonic corpus to see if any of those words showed up in Apollonius. Since Homeric hapaxes seem to be an area of interest for Apollonius and he pays close attention to rare words and rare word forms in Empedocles and other authors, it makes sense to ask whether he pays attention to rare words in Plato. Unfortunately, there has been little published work done on Platonic hapax legomena. In the one article published on the topic, Fossum uses hapaxes in an attempt to prove a theory about the chronology of the Platonic corpus and does not include a list of hapaxes.\(^\text{251}\) The only available record of the hapaxes Fossum used is an illegible handwritten list available online.\(^\text{252}\) Based on the results from the final

\(^{251}\) Andrew Fossum, "Hapax Legomena in Plato," *American Journal of Philology* 52 no. 3 (1931), 205-231.

\(^{252}\) This appears to be the background work for the article published in 1931, but the document itself is dated to 1880. The work is available as a pdf here:
method used (below), I do not expect that searches using Platonic hapaxes would yield much, but without a legible copy to consult, this is work that cannot yet be done.

5. Plato as text: finally, I used WCopyfind, the same plagiarism tracking software used on Empedocles, Parmenides, and Xenophanes, to find all word forms that appear in both Plato and Apollonius and used the TLG to see whether any of these words were particularly rare. This was more difficult than the comparison of Apollonius and early philosophical authors because the files were too large for WCopyFind to produce a side-by-side analysis. Instead, it produced a list of words that appear in both authors, and I used the TLG on most of the ones that looked promising. This produced a few passages that are suggestive, but nothing conclusive.

In pursuing these avenues of interest, I have not been able to discover a passage that seems sufficiently strong to prove that Apollonius is using Plato in any intentional or thoughtful way that would be similar to the way he interacts with Homer, Empedocles, or Parmenides. I will examine these here to show why they may appear significant and why they are not ultimately convincing. In the next chapter, I will look at why Apollonius may intentionally avoid Plato while using the philosophical poetry of Empedocles and Parmenides.

The Plane Tree(s): Phaedrus 230b and Arg. 2.733

https://ia802706.us.archive.org/21/items/hapaxlegomenaofp00foss/hapaxlegomenaofp00foss.pdf

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The Plane Tree (πλάτανος) in the *Phaedrus* has sometimes been seen as an autobiographical reference to Plato, as Michael Marder argues:

To the Hellenic readers of the text it will have been obvious that the plane tree, platanos, is a semantic play on the author's proper name, with both words derived from the Greek platys, meaning “broad.” (Plane trees have remarkably broad leaves, as do all other sycamores...) So, the irony is that Plato has literally overshadowed Socrates and Phaedrus, who linger in the shade of a plane tree. The exaggerated modesty of a mere “reporter” of his teacher's thoughts and great deeds is a rather thin veneer that hides the towering presence of the student over the Socratic legacy.\(^{253}\)

Marder’s ultimate interpretation of the passage (that Plato overshadows Socrates) is suspect insofar as it is unclear clear that the modern idiom transfers to the ancient context. If the connection between “Plato” and “Plane Tree” was clear to ancient readers, it is not one that the scholia to Plato mention, nor any other ancient commentator.

Plato’s name does, however, have more than ordinary significance. Rather than working from name to attribute, the process seems to have worked the other way: Diogenes Laertius assumes that the philosopher’s name was not originally “Plato,” but he was given the name because of a physical or intellectual attribute (because of the broadness of his style or his broad forehead, D.L. 3.1.4). Diogenes draws on Alexander Polyhistor (1\(^{st}\) century BC) and Neanthes of Cyzicus (3\(^{rd}\) century BC) for these versions of the renaming—sources that were not as far removed from Apollonius’ own time as Diogenes. Some attribute (physical or otherwise) of Plato lead to his renaming, and it

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does not appear to be a very common name beyond the philosopher, so use of the name may have been especially significant to an ancient reader because it was closely associated with the author’s characteristics as well as his person.

The form of the tree Plato uses in the *Phaedrus* is πλάτανος, according to the LSJ a newer version of the older πλατάνιστος, which appears in the *Iliad*, Herodotus, and Theocritus. Perhaps in part because of the metrical considerations, Apollonius uses the older form, πλατάνιστος, in describing the plane trees growing near the entrance to the underworld (2.733):

> ἡ μέν τε κρημνοῖσιν ἀνίσχεται ἦλιβάτοισιν,
> εἰς ἅλα δερκομένη Βιθυνίδα· τῇ δ’ ύπο πέτραι
> λισσάδες ἐφρίζονται ἀλήβροχοι, ἄμφοὶ δὲ τῆσιν
> κῦμα κυλινδόμενον μεγάλα βρέμει· αὐτὰρ ὑπερθεν
> ἄμφυλασσες πλατάνιστοι ἐπ’ ἁκροτάτῃ πεφύσιν.
> ἐκ δ’ αὐτῆς εἰσο κατακέκλιται ἡπειρόνδε
> κούλῃ ὑπαιθα νάπη, ἵνα τε σπέος ἐστ’ Ἀίδαο
> ὅλῃ καὶ πέτρησιν ἐπηρεφές, ἐνθὲν ἀντιμὴ
> πηγόλιζ, ὁκρῦόντος ἀναπνείουσα μυχοίο,
> συνεχὲς ἁργινόσσαν ἀεὶ περιτέτροφε πάχνην,
> οὐδὲ μεσημβριώωντος ἰἀνεῖται ἥλιοιο.

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254 We have records of one other ancient person named Plato besides the philosopher: a comic poet slightly older than the philosopher, who won his first City Dionysia around 410 BC.

255 The older form appears roughly ten times up through the time when Apollonius was writing: *Iliad* 2.307, 310; Herodotus’ *Histories* 5.119.9, 7.27.8, 7.31.8; Hippocratic epistle 17.26; Theocritus *Idylls* 18.44, 46, 22.76, 25.20.

256 πλατάνος begins with two short syllables, so it could be used in dactylic hexameter only in grammatical cases where the ending is metrically long (-ο-, -ου, -ων, -οις, -ους, etc.). The alternative form, πλατάνιστος-ος, would work in all situations (since a short ending would form the beginning of a dactyl and a long ending would form the beginning of a spondee).
[the Acherusian headland] rises in steep cliffs, facing the Bithynian sea. At its base, rocks washed smooth by the sea are rooted in place, and around them the waves roll with a mighty roar, but above, spreading plane trees grow on the highest peak. Down from it towards the interior slopes a hollow valley, where the cave of Hades lies, covered over with woods and rocks, from which an ice-cold vapor, blowing up continuously from its chill depth, ever forms a glistening frost which melts in the midday sun.

The word for plane tree here is not convincing by itself since it is not the same form of the word used in Plato, and Apollonius could find a model for πλατάνιστος in Homer or Callimachus. However, the adjective that describes the plane trees, ἀµφιλαφείς (wide-spreading or broad-spreading), is the same adjective Plato uses to describe the plane tree in the Phaedrus (230b-c):

ΣΩ. Νὴ τὴν Ἰρην, καλὴ γε ἢ καταγωγή, ἢ τε γὰρ πλάτανος αὕτη μᾶλ,’ ἀµφιλαφής τε καὶ υψηλή, τοῦ τε ἁγνὸν τὸ ύψος καὶ τὸ σύσκιον πάγκαλως, καὶ ως ἁκμὴν ἔχει τῆς ἀνήσης, ως ἄν εὐνοδέστατον παρέχοι τὸν τόπον· ἢ τε αὐτή πηγή χαριστάτη ύπὸ τῆς πλατάνου ρεί μάλα ψυχροῦ ὕδατος, ὅστε γε τῶ ποδὶ τεκμήριασθαι. Νυμφὸν τὲ τινὸν καὶ Αχελώον ιερὸν ἀπὸ τῶν κορὸν τε καὶ ἀγαλμάτων οἰκεῖεν εἰναι. (c) εἰ δὲ αὐτὸ θεοῦ, τὸ εὐπνοοῦ τοῦ τόπου ὡς ἁγαθότον καὶ σφόδρα ἡδὸν· θερινὸν τε καὶ λιγυρὸν ὑπηχεῖ τῷ τῶν τεττίγων χορῷ. πάντων δὲ κομψότατον τὸ τῆς πόλεως, ὧν ἐν ἡρέμα προσάντει ἰκανὴ πέρυκε κατακλινέντι τὴν κεφαλήν παγκάλως ἔχειν. ὅστε ἀριστά σοι ἐξενάγηται, ὦ φίλε Φαιδρέ.

By Hera, it is a charming resting place. For this plane tree is very spreading and lofty, and the tall and shady willow is very beautiful, and it is in full bloom, so as to make the place most fragrant; then, too, the spring is very pretty as it flows under the plane tree, and its water is very cool, to judge by my foot. And it seems to be a sacred place of some nymphs and of Achelous, judging by the figurines and statues. Then again, if you please, how lovely and perfectly charming the breeziness of the place is! and it resounds with the shrill summer music of the chorus of cicadas. But the most delightful thing of all is the grass, as it grows on the gentle slope, thick enough to be just right when you lay your head on it. So you have guided the stranger most excellently, dear Phaedrus. (trans. Harold N. Fowler)

This adjective, ἀµφιλαφής, -ές, also occurs in Pindar, Aeschylus, Herodotus, Antiphon, Theocritus, and Callimachus, but its conjunction with plane tree (πλάτανος or
The adjective **πλατάνιστος** only occurs in Plato’s *Phaedrus* and this location in Apollonius. Mooney mentions the *Phaedrus* passage to explain the adjective, but does not explain why Apollonius might reference the *Phaedrus* here.²⁵⁷

There are several other similarities between the *Phaedrus* and this passage of the *Argonautica*: Apollonius mentions how the frost is melted by midday sun (µεσημβριώντος … ἥλιοιo, 739). This is the same time of day that the conversation between Phaedrus and Socrates takes place (µεσημβρία in 242a, µεσημβρία and µεσημβριάζοντα in 259a, µεσημβρία in 259d). There is a contrast between cold and heat in both scenes: in the *Phaedrus*, the contrast is between the heat of the day and the coolness of the stream, while in the *Argonautica* it is the frost and the midday sun. In both passages, the sound of sound of the wind is mentioned. Socrates mentions that the place must be sacred to Achelous and the nymphs, and the Achelous river is mentioned twice by Apollonius, but in passages far removed from this one (4.293, 893).²⁵⁸

If Apollonius is using Plato here, it does not mean that this is the only author being used in this passage. For example, **πηγυλίς** (line 737) only occurs here and in Odysseus-the-beggar’s story to Eumaeus (*Od. 14.476*). Apollonius’ ability to split allusions and mix several allusions into one passage is part of his art.²⁵⁹


²⁵⁸ 4.893 does have some interesting similarities. It describes how Terpsichore (one of the Muses) slept with Achelous and bore the Sirens. Socrates describes the Muses’ relationship with the cicadas and mentions the Sirens later in the *Phaedrus* (259a-d).

²⁵⁹ As Acosta-Hughes points out, this is a feature of Callimachus’ work as well: “it is also typical of Callimachus’ poetry that any word or phrase may bear more than one
More problematically, it is difficult to explain why Apollonius would add a Platonic allusion at the mouth of Hades. Although Plato describes the afterworld in the *Republic*, it does not bear any striking resemblance to the location Apollonius describes here. The more likely explanation is that Apollonius refers to the plane tree at Aulis that Odysseus mentions in *Iliad* 2.307-309, where the sparrow and her eight children are eaten by the snake (showing how many years it will take to conquer Troy). Alternatively, it could be a reference to the plane tree grove mentioned in Herodotus (5.119) where many Carians die. This location is geographically closer to the location Apollonius mentions, though far from exact. But both of these references are much closer thematically than the *Phaedrus* passage in their associations with death. Although it is possible this passage shows that Apollonius had read Plato’s *Phaedrus*, this passage of the *Argonautica* does not seem to show significant interest in the ideas in that work.

**Swan Songs: *Phaedo* 84e-85a and *Arg. 4.1301**

In book 4 of the *Argonautica*, the Argonauts are forced to the shore of Libya by adverse winds and face death as their ship cannot escape the shallow shore and they have dwindling supplies of water and food. This situation has some similarities to the *Phaedo*, which also features fear of death and passengers on a ship.

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allusion, a feature of this polymath artist.” Acosta-Hughes, “A Little-Studied Dialogue: Responses to Plato in Callimachean Epigram,” 239.
In the frame narrative for the dialogue, Echecrates asks Phaedo why Socrates’ execution took place so long after his sentencing, and Phaedo answers that this was because the Athenians could not execute anyone while the ship commemorating Theseus’ defeat of the minotaur was away visiting Delos. This frame narrative, with its explanation of the myth and the mention of the fourteen victims Theseus saved, primes the audience to consider Socrates as a second Theseus, saving the fourteen named characters present at the execution from fear of death though philosophical investigation on the immortality of the soul (and this investigation includes a description of labyrinthine afterworlds).  

There are some striking similarities between the situation described in the Phaedo and the situation the Argonauts find themselves in when stuck in Libya. Here the Argonauts, like those gathered at Socrates’ death, are afraid of death (4.1277-1279). In the Phaedo, Phaedo veils himself while weeping (ὅστε ἐγκαλυψάμενος ἀπέκλαον ἐμαυτόν, 117c), and so do the Argonauts who think they are about to die (ἐν δὲ κάρῃ πέπλοισι καλυψάμενοι σφετέροισιν, 4.1294). The women are sent away separately from the men in Socrates’ death scene because they mourn loudly (60a, 116b, 117d). Likewise, the women of the Argo (Medea and the maidservants she received from Arete) mourn apart from the others and are the only ones mentioned crying loudly (1296-1304; the men are described as crying but without reference to noise, 1291). Just as Socrates uncovers his head before he dies (καὶ ἐκκαλυψάμενος—ἐνεκεκάλυπτο γάρ, 118a), so the heroines who save the Argonauts uncover Jason’s face before telling him where to find water.

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260 One of the more recent versions of this interpretation is Dylan Futter’s “The Myth of Theseus in Plato's Phaedo” Akroterion 59 (2014), 89-103. Futter argues that Socrates is both Theseus and the minotaur.
(ἔλον δ’ ἀπό χερσὶ καρῆτος ἱρέμα πέπλον, 1315). The Argonauts face death because a strong wind and subsequent calm has left their boat stranded (ὁλοὴ βορέας θύελλα, 1233; εὔκήλῳ δὲ κατεῖχε τάντα γαλήνη, 1249). Socrates’ death is delayed by the winds that sometimes hinder the sacred ships’ trip to Delos (ὅταν τύχοσιν ἄνεμοι ἀπολαβόντες αὐτοὺς, 58b-c).

The most compelling part of this parallel is the swan song that both Socrates and the narrator of the Argonautica mentions:

And as when, abandoned after falling from a cleft in the rock, unfledged chicks shrilly chirp, or as when, on the banks of the lovely-flowing Pactolus, swans raise their song, and all around them resound the dewy meadow and the river’s lovely streams—thus did they let fall their golden hair in the dust and all night long wailed a piteous lament.

At first glance, this seems a nice parallel for the Phaedo, where Socrates describes how swans are supposed to sing most beautifully right before they die and gives an alternative explanation for why this is:

καὶ, ὡς εἰσκε, τὸν κύκνον δοκῶ φαιλότερος ύμῖν εἶναι τὴν μαντικὴν, οἱ ἐπειδὴν αἰσθάνεται ὅτι δεῖ αὐτοὺς ἀποθανεῖν, ἄδοντες καὶ ἐν [85a] τῷ πρόσθεν χρόνῳ, τότε δὴ πλεῖστα καὶ κάλλιστα ἄδουσι, γεγηθέντες ὅτι μέλλουσι παρά τὸν θεὸν ἀπιέναι οὕτε ἔτι θεράποντες, οἱ δ’ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὸ αὐτῶν δός τοῦ θανάτου καὶ τὸν κύκνον καταψεύδονται, καὶ φασίν αὐτούς ἠρνоῦντας τὸν θάνατον ὑπὸ λύπης ἐξάδειν, καὶ οὐ λογίζονται ὅτι οὐδὲν ὅρνεον ἄδει ὅταν πεινῇ ἢ ρηγῇ ἢ τινὰ ἅλλην λυπήν λυπῆται, οὐδὲ αὐτῇ ἢ τῇ ἁρδών καὶ χελιδών καὶ ὃ ἔποιη, ἢ δὴ φασὶ διὰ λύπην ἠρνοῦντας ἄδειν. ἀλλ’ οὕτε ταῦτα μοι φαίνεται [85b] λυποῖμαι ἄδειν οὐτε οἱ κύκνοι, ἀλλ’ ἄτε οἴμαι τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ὄντες, μαντικοὶ τέ εἰσι καὶ προειδότες τὰ ἐν Αἰδών ἀγαθὰ ἄδουσι καὶ τέρπονται ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν διαφερόντως ἢ ἐν τῷ ἐμπροσθεῖν χρόνῳ. ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἤγοιμαι ὁμόδουλος τε
εἶναι τῶν κύκνων καὶ ἱερὸς τοῦ αὐτοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ οὐ χεῖρον ἐκείνων τὴν μαντικήν ἔχειν παρὰ τοῦ δεσπότου, οὐδὲ δυσθυμότερον αὐτῶν τοῦ βίου ἀπαλλάττεσθαι.

And you [Simias] seem to think I am inferior in prophetic power to the swans who sing at other times also, but when they feel that they are to die, [85a] sing most and best in their joy that they are to go to the god whose servants they are. But men, because of their own fear of death, misrepresent the swans and say that they sing for sorrow, in mourning for their own death. They do not consider that no bird sings when it is hungry or cold or has any other trouble; no, not even the nightingale or the swallow or the hoopoe which are said to sing in lamentation. I do not believe they sing for grief, nor do the swans; [85b] but since they are Apollo's birds, I believe they have prophetic vision, and because they have foreknowledge of the blessings in the other world they sing and rejoice on that day more than ever before. And I think that I am myself a fellow-servant of the swans; and am consecrated to the same God and have received from our master a gift of prophecy no whit inferior to theirs, and that I go out from life with as little sorrow as they.

Socrates uses the story of swans singing before their death before giving an alternative interpretation of their song (that they do not fear death), and in the *Argonautica*, the women lamenting their own death is likened to swans singing. While some of the characters are the same (people afraid of death, swans, swan songs), there are other aspects of this parallel that are not satisfactory. Socrates uses the swan song to show that one should *not* fear death, while the characters in the *Argonautica* are mourning because they *do* fear death. If there is any similarity here, it is only in the story that swans sing beautifully when about to die, but that seems to be general knowledge that Socrates is riffing on in the *Phaedo* (οἱ δ’ ἄνθρωποι … καταψεύδονται, καὶ φασιν …). There are other passages that Apollonius could be using here as a model: the *Iliad*, for example, also features swans in a meadow in two similes (2.460-461 and 15.690-692). There is no clear evidence of direct influence of Plato here, and if Apollonius is writing in awareness of the *Phaedo*, he depicts very un-Socratic Argonauts since all of them (including Jason)
do fear death. And although Jason does receive the information necessary to save the
Argonauts, he claims that he doesn’t understand what the women tell him: “I don’t
understand this very well at all” (οὐδὲ μάλ’ ἄντικρὸνος φάτιν, 4.1334). In the
Argonautica, it is Peleus who correctly interprets the heroines’ story, not Jason (who
received the information).

Although there are many superficial similarities between these two passages,
overall it seems unlikely that the Libya scene is a close reading of the Phaedo. Boats are
often delayed by wind, even Homeric heroes hide their faces when they cry (Od. 8.93)
and the death songs of swans seem to have been general knowledge. More significantly,
Jason is no Socrates here. Although he plays a part in saving his companions from death,
he is just as afraid of death as they are and cannot explain the vision he had.

**Tyrants, Kings, and Leaders**

While the Argonautica is a survey of the Mediterranean world, it is also a survey of
different types of governments and their problems, as the Argonauts visit different cities
and their respective leaders. Jason begins the voyage at the command of the problematic
king (βασιλῆς) Peleias, encounters a king who rules by violence (Amycus), and
eventually appeals to king Aeetes for the golden fleece. While the word τύραννος and
cognates are not found anywhere in the Argonautica, these kings often show some of the

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261 Hunter notes that “I do not at all understand” seems a more appropriate
translation for Jason’s ἀμηχανίη than “I do not completely understand.” Hunter,
Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book IV, 261.
characteristics of tyrants that Plato’s Socrates describes in book 8 of the Republic: the tyrant must “keep a sharp lookout for anyone who is brave, large-minded, knowledgeable, or rich. And so happy is he that he must be the enemy of them all, whether he wants to be or not, and plot against them until he has purged them from the city” (ὁξέως ἄρα δεῖ ὣρᾶν αὐτὸν τίς ἄνδρείος, τίς μεγαλόφρων, τίς φρόνιμος, τίς πλούσιος: καὶ οὕτως ευδαίμων ἔστιν, ὡστε τούτοις ἁπασίν ἀνάγκη αὐτῷ, εἴτε βούλεται εἴτε μή, πολεμίῳ εἶναι καὶ ἐπιθυμεῖν, ἐξὸς ἂν καθήρῃ τὴν πόλιν. 567b-c, trans. Grube).

Argus, whose knowledge is admittedly second-hand (but not contradicted anywhere in the text), describes Pelias’ motivations for sending Jason on the voyage in similar terms: “A certain king, eager to drive this man far away from his homeland and possessions because he surpassed by far all the Aeolidae with his prowess, sends him to voyage here, all helpless” (τόνδε τίς οἱμενὸς πάτρης ἀπάνευθεν ἐλάσσαι / καὶ κτεάνων βασιλεύς, περιώσιον οὕνεκεν ἀλκῆ / σφωτέρῃ πάντεσσι μετέπρεπεν Αἰολίδησιν, / πέμπει δὲ ὅρχαμος νέεσθαι, ἀμήχανον· 3.332-336).

In contrast to these tyrannical kings, Jason fits the description of the philosophical leader in Republic book 6 in several ways. Like the philosopher king, he is in charge of a ship and often appears not to know what he is doing. Yet this comparison fails on many levels as well: there is a distinction in the Argonautica between the expedition’s leader (ὄρχαμος, 1.339) and the helmsman (κυβερνητήρ). The latter more clearly fits with

262 κυβερνητήρ appears to be a set of skills in the Argonautica rather than an official position similar to ὄρχαμος, and there can be several men on a ship who are κυβερνητήρες, while only one is responsible for navigation. When Tiphys is introduced in the catalogue of Argonauts, his position of helmsman is not given a technical name; instead he is described as “excellent” (ἔσθλος) at certain skills such as predicting weather
Socrates’ description of the κυβερνήτης, who understands the seasons, wind, stars, and navigation (488d), and this job description fits the role that Tiphys (the first helmsman, 1.105-108) and Ancaeus fill (2.867-898), rather than Jason. While Jason is sometimes seen as helpless by the crewmates, he is also portrayed as helpless by the narrator (1.460, 3.423, 432). Jason’s helplessness is not, in this case, a misperception by the crew but rather something the narrator presents as factually true.

Furthermore, the crew of the Argo does not fit the description of the crew in Socrates’ ship of state: Socrates describes the citizens/sailors calling the true navigator a “stargazer,” “babbler,” “useless” (µετεωροσκόπον, ἀδολέσχην, ἄχρηστόν, 488d-489a), but none of these epithets are used of Jason or the navigators in the Argonautica. When the crew has to decide on a new helmsman after the death of Tiphys, they choose someone qualified in navigation rather than the most persuasive person (2.894-898).

Although the Argonauts do form a sort of “ship of state” in the sense that they are an autonomous decision-making body and choose a leader among themselves, they do not, in other respects, conform well to Socrates’ ship of state, and neither Jason nor the two navigators fit well with his philosopher-pilots.

This is not to say that the Argonautica has nothing to say about political philosophy. As James Clauss points out, the catalogue of heroes is divided into heroes of strength and skill, and the loss of Heracles in book 1 indicates that this work will be about leadership based on skill, not strength. Furthermore, the tyrannical kings in the work patterns. The term κυβερνητήρ appears in a simile (2.72), a general description of a helmsman (2.174), and a description of several people who could take over after Tiphys dies (2.882, 886).
seem reluctant to wield their power in the most overt form and seem restrained by certain expectations about leadership: Pelias does not get rid of Jason directly but sends him on a voyage, Amycus does not kill his visitors outright but challenges them according to a “law” (θεσμόν, 2.5), and Aeetes gives Jason a task he thinks is impossible rather than denying him outright. Although these rulers fit the role of tyrant in some respects, they also conform to some vague sense of justice or the idea that the appearance of justice must be preserved.

The *Argonautica* does not, however, fit well with the schemes of political philosophy set forth in the *Republic*. In its survey of different instantiations of kingship, it is closer to the Telemachy (*Od. 1-4*), where another young man on a journey observes different forms of kingship and contrasts them with the problems at home, or the *Odyssey* as a whole, which forces the reader to observe the different kingships found at Pylos, Sparta, and Phaeacia and consider what sort of king Odysseus will be on his return.

**Conclusions**

Although it seems likely that Apollonius was aware of Plato as an author, it is difficult to find anything conclusive that shows a Platonic presence in the *Argonautica*. This may be due in part to the fact that Apollonius and Callimachus are quite different as poets. Although it is possible to find many similarities and points of connection between Callimachus and Apollonius, Apollonius is focused more on the mythic past than
Callimachus, and Callimachus is often more self-referential than Apollonius.²⁶³

Apollonius’ omission of Plato may be part of a decision to mark out his own poetic turf in the *Argonautica*.

But for the reasons given at the beginning of this chapter, the absence of Plato should perhaps be considered a conscious decision worth explaining. Rather than asking why Apollonius would use Plato, it is more interesting to ask why Apollonius would use early philosophical sources and *not* Plato. Can we imply any views on poetry and philosophy from the way Apollonius chooses to use (or not use) these authors?

²⁶³ I am indebted to Benjamin Acosta-Hughes for these observations on some of the differences between the two poets.
Chapter 6: Mixing Metaphors: Apollonius, Early Philosophy, and Poetry

An intertextual project like this one should include at least three levels. First, it should show places where the primary author references other authors and make a strong case for the connection using similar words in the passages, relative word rarity, position in metrics, etc. Second, it should explain what that connection means for the individual passage in question: does the memory of the earlier passage add to the reader’s understanding of the new one? The previous chapters have done this for Empedocles and Parmenides and evaluated the evidence for Xenophanes and Plato. The last step is to explain the primary author’s overall pattern of reading and selection. Can we draw conclusions about Apollonius as a reader, scholar, and critic and his approach to philosophy and poetry from the way he uses these early philosophical poets and his apparent rejection of Plato?

Ways of Reading Apollonius

Before proposing any new ideas to explain how Apollonius is reading these authors, it is helpful to survey some possible theories that have been proposed or could be proposed and why they are not sufficient to explain Apollonius’ use of philosophical poets. Most
scholars do not use the terminology given here, but I have found it helpful to divide ways of reading Apollonius into different groups (some of which have overlap) and give them names:

1. the word miner theory
2. the variety theory
3. the esoteric theory
4. the didactic poet theory
5. the realism theory
6. the primordial theory
7. the hexameter theory
8. the cultural continuity theory

Some of these have been proposed for Apollonius’ use of authors not covered in this project, but they could be applied here. Others have been proposed as a way of understanding Apollonius’ incorporation of an individual author but have not been applied to his use of multiple authors. Most of these theories are helpful in explaining some parts of Apollonius’ work, but none of these explanations is sufficient to explain the way Apollonius uses all of the authors discussed in this project.

1. The Word Miner Theory

\[264 \text{ The names for these theories are my own, although at times they borrow from language of critics who use that theory (such as the “esoteric” theory).}\]
One possibility is that Apollonius mined earlier authors for vivid images and words and collected these as specimens interesting in and of themselves, without concern for their original context. Under this theory, Apollonius had no interest in the context of a rare word or phrase in Empedocles, Parmenides, or even Homer; his interest was in the rarity of the word rather than the way the rarity of that word might trigger the reader’s memory of an earlier author. No scholar embraces this theory to the extent that the original contexts of all rare words are considered inconsequential, but some passages are more convincing than others, as Plantinga points out in her review of Kyriakou: “Sometimes the context [of the original passage] does not seem to matter, whereas at other times the use of a hapax legomenon undoubtedly adds an extra nuance to the [Argonautica] passage.”265 When this theory is not stated overtly, some commentaries may give the impression that original context has little importance by listing parallels without adding any analysis.

The importance of original context to a passage of the Argonautica is often not a binary choice between “yes” or “no,” but instead more of a spectrum of convincingness. Some passages are more obviously connected than others, and at times it is difficult to make a strong case for contextual connection, even if the rare word only shows up in the Argonautica and the work of the earlier author. This may be because Apollonius is occasionally more interested in the sound of a word or phrase or its metrics rather than the ideas in the original passage, but it could also be because there is a great deal of

Greek literature that no longer exists. It is possible that the rare word or phrase is not as rare as it appears in TLG searches and that Apollonius is referencing an author or passage that is no longer available, especially when it comes to fragmentary works. There may also be several layers of allusion occurring, as when Apollonius uses a phrase in Parmenides that also has echoes in Callimachus, and Apollonius may be interested in the word in both contexts.\textsuperscript{266}

At least some of the time, however, Apollonius uses rare words with recognition of the original context. Some of the strongest examples include Parmenides’ Gates of Night and Empedocles’ well-skilled duals.\textsuperscript{267} Apollonius’ use of the Gates of Night from Parmenides’ proem shows an awareness of the original myth (Phaethon), the characters involved (the daughters of Helios), and I have argued that Apollonius uses this particular allusion to cast the Argonauts as more successful versions of Phaethon and Parmenides. At other times, although a word or phrase itself is not rare, Apollonius is clearly aware of the way it is used in an earlier author, and this indicates that he is interested in the ideas of the earlier author and not just interesting-sounding phrases. The strongest example of this is the role of strife in Orpheus’ song: while the word “strife” (νεῖκος) is not rare, its use in a cosmogonic context is a clear reference to Empedocles’ work.\textsuperscript{268} Thus while not every reference shows clear evidence of a connection with an earlier context, it is

\textsuperscript{266} See, for example, the discussion of παλιντροπ- in Parmenides’ work and Arg. 3.1157 and a verb based on this root in 4.643 in chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{267} Gates of Night and daughters of Helios: Parmenides G10 (B1) and Arg. 4.603-630. Well-skilled duals: Arg. 1.52 and Empedocles G47 (B23).

\textsuperscript{268} Orpheus’ Song: Arg. 1.496 and Empedocles G46 (B22) and G41 (B17).
impossible to argue that Apollonius is never interested in the earlier context of the words or that he is unaware of the larger ideas contained in these earlier authors.

As Luca Grillo points out, there are two important questions when discussing intertextuality: first, “is it there?” and second “so what?” This project as a whole makes the case that, very often, the earlier context of rare words and phrases does matter for Apollonius in individual passages. And if that is true, it is important to ask how Apollonius responds to or uses the larger ideas and themes in those authors—the second level “so what” question.

2. The Variety Theory

The variety theory argues that the language of science and philosophy is different from that of literary authors, and adding this different type of language creates pleasing diversity. This view is presented by Matthew Dickie, who argues that Apollonius “drew on science and philosophy to give variety, in characteristically Hellenistic fashion, to the texture of his writing.” Dickie finds this ultimately less effective than Apollonius’ use of aitia, but he sees the final result as one that displays Apollonius’ learning. This touches

269 Luca Grillo, “Caesarian Intertextualities”, talk at the Ohio State University, February 10, 2014.

on the esoteric theory (number 3, below), but it is worth separating the two and considering the variety thesis apart from the esoteric thesis. Although Dickie’s comment on variety is based on Apollonius’ use of Democritus (a prose author), Dickie uses a similar description to explain Apollonius’ use of Empedocles in the passage about Circe’s primitive creatures:

More important for the purposes of this discussion is the scientific tone of the simile and the unmistakably philosophical vocabulary in which it is couched. Only in this passage do we have the unabashed exposition of a scientific theory. What mitigates the departure from epic decorum is that the passage is a simile, a form in which Homer also allows himself a degree of freedom; only there does he describe the mundane and the humble.  

Variety requires difference, and if the sole reason for incorporating material from philosophical and scientific authors is variety, then this view requires that we see a fundamental difference between not only between prose and poetry but between heroic narrative on the one side (Homer) and scientific and philosophical content on the other (Parmenides, Empedocles), and we must assume that Apollonius and his audience saw the same divide.

This is not convincing for several reasons: first, Empedocles and Parmenides themselves saw no such necessary divide and chose to expound their views in hexameter verses. As Most points out, there were examples of prose philosophy at this time, so their


272 This is not an argument Dickie makes explicitly, but his argument implies it.
form (hexameter) can be viewed as a legitimate choice rather than a default setting.\textsuperscript{273} Furthermore, while their ideas are different from Homer’s in many ways, they often express their ideas by using and adapting Homeric phrases and vocabulary.\textsuperscript{274} Dickie’s argument that this is a “departure from epic decorum” does not take into account that epic not only includes Homer but also Hesiod (who was thought to have written a work on astronomy), Parmenides and Empedocles.\textsuperscript{275} Although Aristotle states that Empedocles and Homer have nothing in common except meter, this is an argument rather than a statement of fact, it must be read as part of his own project of further defining the discipline of philosophy and his own theories on poetry.

\textsuperscript{273} Most, “The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy,” 350. Wright concurs, “Philosopher Poets: Parmenides and Empedocles,” 2. Catherine Osborne disagrees and argues that poetry was the “default” setting, but her main point is that the ideas Empedocles and Parmenides wish to convey are inseparable from the poetic form they use, so it is incorrect to think of them as having a choice between poetry and prose because their material demanded hexameter. Osborne, “Was verse the default form for Presocratic philosophy?” 26, 28-31. This disagreement is not as relevant for discussing Apollonius since he wrote in prose and poetry and saw both as options.

\textsuperscript{274} See Wright, “Philosopher Poets: Parmenides and Empedocles,” 1-22.

\textsuperscript{275} The fragments of this work can be found in Most’s 2007 Loeb of Hesiod’s fragments (fragments 221-229); these fragments are numbered 288-293 in Merkelbach and West’s \textit{Fragmenta Hesiodea} (MW). Two of the references to this work appear in the scholia to Callimachus’ \textit{Aetia} (228 Loeb, 292 MW) and Aratus’ \textit{Phaenomena} (227a Loeb, 291 MW). The doubtful Platonic dialogue \textit{Epinomis} also includes a reference to this work (990a). Glenn W. Most, \textit{Hesiod: Volume II, The Shield, Catalogue of Women, Other Fragments}, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007). Reinhold Merkelbach and M. L. West, \textit{Fragmenta Hesiodea} (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).
Furthermore, poets from Apollonius’ own time did not necessarily draw the same binary divisions that Dickie seems to, with hexameter poetry for heroic narrative and prose for philosophy and science. Apollonius’ contemporary Aratus wrote his astronomical treatise in hexameter, and this is a work that Callimachus praises as a continuation of the Hesiodic tradition (Ep. 27 Pf. = AP 9.507, Gow-Page 56). There is evidence that Apollonius was also familiar with Aratus. Modern editions of early Greek philosophy or the Presocratics often treat Hesiod as a tangential early figure who is closer to Homer than the early Greek philosophers, but this is not necessarily the case for the ancient reader. In his section on Parmenides, Diogenes Laertius connects Parmenides with Xenophanes, Empedocles, and Hesiod as those who philosophize in

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276 It is not clear that this is a reference to the Works and Days or Theogony. It could also be a reference to Hesiod’s Astronomia, discussed above.

277 Which way the influence went is a matter of debate, but as Fantuzzi and Hunter point out, “Echoes of Aratus' Phaenomena (Phaen.) in the Arg. are very likely (Arg. 1,1201-1203 = Phaen. 422-444 & Arg. 3,138 = Phaen. 401 are the most striking correspondences).” Marco Fantuzzi and Richard Hunter, “Apollonius,” In Brill’s New Pauly, ed. Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider. http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e128340

278 In Kirk, Raven, and Schofield’s, The Presocratic Philosophers, Hesiod’s work is included in a chapter on “The Forerunners of Philosophical Cosmogony” (a chapter that ends with a section titled “Toward Philosophy,”). In Jonathan Barnes’ Early Greek Philosophy, one fragment of Hesiod is included in the chapter on “Precursors” (p. 3-4). Daniel Graham’s The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy begins with Thales and only briefly mentions Hesiod in the introduction (p. 3). Diels and Kranz’ Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker places Hesiod in the Appendix to the Presocratic Texts, in a section titled “Astrologische Dichtung des sechsten Jahrhunderts”, and include only the fragments of the Astronomia, not the Theogony. An exception to this general trend is Richard McKirahan’s Philosophy Before Socrates, which includes a chapter on “Hesiod and the Beginnings of Greek Philosophy and Science.”
poetry (Καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ διὰ ποιημάτων φιλοσοφεῖ, καθάπερ Ἡσίοδός τε καὶ Ξενοφάνης καὶ Ἐμπεδοκλῆς 9.22).

While Apollonius’ work may seem closer to Homer than Hesiod in some ways (the story of an ocean voyage is reminiscent of the *Odyssey*), in other ways it is part of the didactic tradition that begins with Hesiod and continues through Xenophanes, Parmenides, and Empedocles. As Hesiod explains the origin of the cosmos and divine order, Apollonius explains the origins of places and traditions, but the Argonauts’ circular adventure is also a literary mapping and ordering of the known world—a different, more geographical and historical cosmology. In this light, “variety” seems a poor way to characterize what may better be seen as thoughtful borrowing and adaption between Homer, Hesiod, Parmenides, Empedocles, and Apollonius.

The variety thesis also seems simplistic as a full explanation of Apollonius’ use of these authors. “Variety” could explain Apollonius’ use of any author, and it does not explain why these specific authors caught his attention. Dickie’s comment about using variety in a “characteristically Hellenistic fashion” does a disservice to other Hellenistic authors who use philosophical sources. Callimachus, as we have already seen, incorporates Plato into his own work in a way that touches on multiple Platonic texts, but this is not merely for the sake of “variety.” Instead, Callimachus’ Cleombrotus epigram interacts with the themes of the Platonic works he addresses in a thoughtful way: the difference between reading and speaking, the existence of the soul after death, the morality of suicide, and the image of the cave in the *Republic*. “Variety” does not capture
well the use of multiple sources in Callimachus, and it is not satisfying for understanding Apollonius’ use of early philosophical sources either.

3. The Esoteric Theory

Another reason Apollonius might use philosophical sources is the esoteric theory, the argument that Apollonius uses rare words from multiple genres to show off his broad reading and memory. This is a stronger version of the variety theory, adding the idea that the number and type of sources used bring credit to the author as well as pleasure to the reader. Dickie points out that it is difficult to assess “to what extent Apollonius’ use of scientific and philosophical themes reflects a desire to entertain a sophisticated readership with a display of erudition…. it is possible and even likely that he wished to win the admiration of the cognoscenti amongst his readership for the breadth of his knowledge and for his skill in integrating alien material into a heroic epic …”279 Although Dickie ultimately argues for the variety thesis, the idea that Apollonius’ primary motivation was to show erudition should also be considered.

The roots of this theory are likely found in the idea that many of the Alexandrian poets of this period are also scholars, and their scholarship and poetry are connected in complex ways. As Rengakos points out, “... the beginning of philology as a discipline and the new aesthetics informing the poetry of the first half of the 3rd cent. B.C. are bound

intimately together, and the quality of ποιητής ἁμα καὶ κριτικός is characteristic of all Hellenistic poets of this period with very few exceptions.\textsuperscript{280} Morrison points out that there are some distinct ways that the narrator of the \textit{Argonautica} develops this persona:

The \textit{Argonautica} depicts the myth of the Argonauts itself and the events within it as though they are the product of scholarly research. In the Catalogue, for example, we meet several ‘they say’ statements which indicate that the narrator is relying on sources, from which he is building and selection, for the material of his song …two more turns of phrase also contribute to the creation of the scholarly persona of the narrator – the particle που (‘no doubt’, ‘I suppose’, and the similar use of ποθή, in this sense of ‘probably’, ‘I suppose’) and the rider εἰ ἐπεὶ γε πέλει κλέος (‘if indeed the story is true’) at 1.154.\textsuperscript{281}

The question of Apollonius’ dual identity as a scholar and poet is not in question, but it is a mistake to conclude that the poetry of scholar-poets always serves the ego of the scholar. It is a vague sort of intelligence that admits only knowing of a source rather than using the source thoughtfully, in a way that shows cognizance of the original context and the ideas there. While modern readers may be left with a sense of awe at the breadth of Apollonius’ reading and his careful memory of passages, it is a stretch to argue that the impression necessarily indicates intention. That explanation can also keep readers and scholars from looking for more substantial reasons. Instead of focusing on the ego of the author, we should at least consider whether there are other, more convincing reasons.

4. The Didactic Poet Theory

\textsuperscript{280} Rengakos, “Apollonius Rhodius as a Homeric Scholar,” 193.

\textsuperscript{281} Morrison, \textit{The Narrator in Archaic Greek and Hellenistic Poetry}, 274-275.
Another possibility is that Apollonius agrees with the philosophic and scientific views of Parmenides and Empedocles and uses the *Argonautica* to perpetuate their ideas on nature, the gods, etc. As Aratus incorporates Stoic ideas about Zeus into his *Phaenomena*, and Lucretius later expresses Epicurean ideas through his *De Rerum Natura*, perhaps the world Apollonius describes is ordered by the principles of these early philosophers. While Apollonius’ *Argonautica* is not as overtly didactic as Hesiod’s *Works and Days* or Aratus’ *Phaenomena*, it contains elements of didactic epic, particularly in the way the narrator explains the origins of places and customs. This view is complicated by the fact that Apollonius borrows from at least two authors (Empedocles and Parmenides) who disagree with each other on certain topics such as Monism. But perhaps Apollonius selects elements of their thinking that are similar and avoids topics where they disagree, such as static monism (Parmenides) versus eternal change (Empedocles).

There are moments where the poet of the *Argonautica* does seem to present these authors’ cosmological and cosmogonic ideas in a sympathetic light, particularly when it comes to Empedocles’ ideas on the cycle of Love and Strife – a cycle that fits the cyclical nature of the *Argonautica* in some ways and its exploration of erotic love (Medea’s love for Jason) and strife (Medea’s murder of Apsyrtus). Kyriakou and Nelis interpret the experiences of characters being in love or fighting as an exploration of these themes. This is a personification or reverse allegorization of the work, turning the cosmic forces found

in Empedocles into characters (Eros) and concrete parts of the narrative.\textsuperscript{283} While later interpreters such as Heraclitus read Homeric stories as allegories about physical elements, Nelis argues that Apollonius is doing the opposite: reading philosophical sources and turning abstract forces into characters and major parts of the narrative.\textsuperscript{284}

Nelis may be partly correct, but there are also significant moments in the work where characters act in a way that does not fit with the views of the early philosophers in question. Most significantly, Empedocles argues against sacrificing animals because they contain the reincarnated souls of other humans (G198, B137). This is an essential part of Empedocles’ theory since it is a consequence of his view of the elements and a critical part of his ethical teaching. Furthermore, this is a passage of Empedocles’ work that Apollonius is familiar with since he makes use of it at 4.875. But at several points throughout the Argonautica, the Argonauts do offer animal sacrifices or discuss doing so (1.353-6, 402-8, 2.301-3, 689-93, 926-8, 1169-70, 3.1032-4). In contrast to Empedocles’ account of sacrifice, where the victim attempts to prevent the sacrifice, the golden ram

\textsuperscript{283} See especially Nelis, Vergil’s Aeneid and the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius, 105-112. Nelis argues that the song of Orpheus in book 1 of the Argonautica is a de-allegorized version of Demodocus’ song in Odyssey 8 with clear Empedoclean references. Apollonius is reading Homer through the lens of Empedoclean interpretation, and “Orpheus’ song strips away the allegory from the Homeric text” (p. 98). At the same time, Nelis argues that the dichotomy between Love and Strife forms one of the essential axis of the work, and these characteristics help explain conflict and attraction between various characters. Nelis himself does not use the term “reverse allegorization”, but it seems fitting for the way he understands the role of Eros and the narrative importance of Love and Strife.

\textsuperscript{284} “Apollonius’ Eros is simultaneously the winged arrow-shooting youth and a frightening cosmic power.” Nelis, Vergil’s Aeneid and the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius, 289.
that Phrixus rode either asks to be sacrificed (2.1146) or the sacrifice is divinely ordered (4.120-121). In the most extended sacrifice scene, the narrator states that Hera sends Jason and Medea to be purified by Circe for the death of Apsyrtus, and Circe’s purification rite includes slaughtering a piglet (4.704-707). This is not an idea that Jason and Medea came up with on their own, but rather a divine command, and at no point does the narrator cast doubt on the efficacy or correctness of these sacrifices or treat them as a mistake or an act of ignorance. Although the murder of Apsyrtus is treated as a serious offense that requires purification, the death of animals is never a problem. Thus if Apollonius dramatizes some parts of Empedoclean philosophy, he does not take it wholesale, and the primary purpose of the work does not seem to be encouraging a completely Empedoclean or Parmenidean view of the world.

5. The Realism Theory

One reason Apollonius might include scientific or philosophical authors in the Argonautica is to add to the realism and vividness of the things he describes. Zanker explains this theory with respect to authors other than Empedocles and Parmenides, but it could be applied to Apollonius’ use of them as well, particularly in scenes where Apollonius uses their views of physical theory and mixing of elements (such Circe’s creatures):

[The Alexandrian’s] invocation of science is akin to their pictorial realism in both its intention and effects, but whereas pictorial realism seeks to achieve its effects by means of the visual precision with which people, objects and events are described, the appeal to scientific knowledge involves the appeal to other fields of
the audience’s experience which are more indirect, perhaps, but certainly no less engaging, especially given the interest that must have been aroused in Alexandria by contemporary scientific research.285

Dickie argues that this realism is complicated by the sense of wonder or horror that is often involved in these scenes, particularly the description of the Evil Eye at the end of book 4. In his analysis of the Democritean theory used in this scene, Dickie argues that there is an inherent contradiction between a scientific explanation and wonder in Apollonius, particularly in this episode: “… if Apollonius has offered a scientific explanation of the Evil Eye, why should he with his next breath express wonder that such a strange thing should be possible? The scientific explanation should have destroyed any sense of wonder, since wonder arises out of contraventions of the normal order of things.”286 Dickie acknowledges the scientific and philosophical influences in the Argonautica but argues that Apollonius’ use of those sources is motivated by the horror they produce in the reader rather than an impulse toward rationalism or materialism. This theory seems to come down to the idea that because Democritus’ theory (although rationally-based) is just as terrifying as ignorance about how the Evil Eye works, Apollonius has borrowed Democritus’ ideas and description to add to the horror of his own scene. Although Dickie does not draw this comparison, his theory is similar to the way that a modern horror writer might include a scientific explanation of how a virus


works: because readers feel that there is some scientific basis for the disease, their terror increases.

Dickie’s argument confuses “realism” with “rationalism,” and Powers critiques this argument by pointing out that a contrast between wonder and science has more to do with modern views than ancient ones, and wonder and scientific explanation can be complementary:

Such an attitude [wonder vs. science] is essentially anachronistic. It has its roots in the great controversy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries over the epistemological underpinnings of revealed religion. One has, in fact, little reason to conceive of wonders narrowly as violations of the world’s normal order unless one is already worried about how to recognize an act or event to be divine, to bear the stamp of God’s hand. … The line between the wondrous and the natural was drawn quite differently in Apollonius’ day. Behind the Platonic-Aristotelian adage that ‘The beginning of philosophy is wonder’ lies a broader conception of wonders as those things in the world which rouse deep puzzlement in us. And in fact, Hellenistic paradoxography served contemporary scientific inquiry. The task of collecting reports of marvels had originated within the Lyceum as part of Aristotle’s systematic investigation into nature, and one need only browse the *Historia animalium* to gain a sense of how closely the two projects are related. An event counts as a θαμασίον just in case it seems possible but difficult to explain; in an era when natural science was testing its own contours, paradoxography supplied paradigm cases for scientific explananda. With his wondrous δείκηλα, Apollonius marks Medea’s magic as something that lies on the cusp of scientific explanation, a terrible and unusual event which is nevertheless a recognized phenomenon and a legitimate subject of investigation.²⁸⁷

This argument is more satisfying than Dickie’s, and it can help explain the similar pattern of scientific explanation followed by wonder in the description of Circe’s hybrid creatures (4.671-82), which is followed by a description of the amazement that seizes the crew (θάμβος ἀπείρτον, 6.682). Although this scene follows a similar pattern of

scientific language followed by wonder, it does not fit well with Dickie’s argument that the scientific language is designed to help encourage horror. Powers argument is more helpful in explaining both scenes: by using scientific explanations (or scientific-sounding explanations), the poet helps the reader believe in the wonders as realistic, thereby heightening the wonder (or terror) that something similar could happen in the real world as well as the fictional one.

Insofar as this way of understanding the text is correct, the incorporation of science and philosophy into narrative epic does not necessarily need to be seen as a rational endeavor designed to counteract superstitious fears. Instead, it can serve to heighten emotions such as suspense, fear, and wonder and help the reader connect more closely with the characters as the scenario is seen as possible outside of the epic frame.

Powers’ argument that scientific explanations can heighten wonder through realism is perceptive, and it is helpful when applied to the passages discussed above (the Talos episode, Circe’s creatures). It does not, however, explain many other passages where Apollonius uses language from Parmenides and Empedocles. For example, there is no need for a material/rational/scientific explanation of the path to Hades and from Olympus, but Apollonius uses Parmenides’ language in both those passages (2.353, 3.160). Nor is it particularly helpful in explaining the use of Parmenides’ language in the description of the Gates of Night (4.630), which does not include references to wonder. Thus while Powers’ theory is helpful for some passages, it does not provide a full explanation for Apollonius’ use of Empedocles and Parmenides.
Furthermore, if Apollonius’ ultimate goal were a realistic description of the voyage of the Argonauts, stripped of the more fantastic and supernatural elements, he could have crafted his epic along lines similar to the version by Dionysius Skytobrachion (c. third century BC). His work *The Argonauts* is “characterized by an explicit denial of all ‘poetic’ and fabulous elements of the legend, and their reinterpretation in the manner of rationalism,”²⁸⁸ including reinterpreting the bulls as a race of men known as the *tauroi*, the Tauric Chersonese, and a man named Drakon who guarded the golden fleece.²⁸⁹ Although Apollonius and Dionysius were rough contemporaries and the rationalization of myths was already current as a possible interpretive practice,²⁹⁰ this is not the approach that Apollonius takes to the myth. While scientific or philosophical language may add realism to certain scenes (through a rational, rather than supernatural account) and thus add to the wonder or horror in those particular scenes, rational realism does not seem to be Apollonius’ overall goal in the *Argonautica*.


²⁸⁹ An epitome of Dionysius Skytobrachion’s *Argonauts* is preserved in Diodorus Siculus 4.40-55.

²⁹⁰ See, for example, Plato *Phaedrus* 229c-d, where Phaedrus asks Socrates whether he believes the story of Boreas and Oreithyia is true or whether it is a tale made up to explain a girl swept off a cliff by wind. The rationalized version of this story is one that Apollonius’ narrator explicitly rejects at 1.211-218.
6. The Primordial Theory

In his commentary on book 4 of the Argonautica, Hunter argues that references to Empedocles’ poetry in the passage about Circe and references to Empedocles’ and Parmenides’ works throughout the Argonautica are used to remind the audience of a primordial world:

The clear implication is that Circe’s ‘dream-like’ creatures were the result of her bewitching magic: she turned her visitors back to the creatures of a time even before there were ‘creatures’, and this is part of how in book 4 the Argonauts are made to confront the whole of human history … The choice of Empedocles, like that of Parmenides earlier (cf. 629-30n.), suggests that Ap. uses what we call the ‘Presocratics’ to conjure up an earlier world ‘before history’; already in Book 1, Empedoclean cosmology had been used in the song which Orpheus sings to calm disputes in the group (1. 496-511) …

Hunter’s argument seems to be that these ‘Presocratic’ authors often offer descriptions of the origins of the world and humans, and therefore recalling them here and in Orpheus’ song (book 1) reminds the reader of an earlier period of history, which is in keeping with Apollonius’ project of describing a much earlier period of time: “Empedoclean cosmogony is thus another cultural model for imagining the past.” This makes a certain amount of sense in that Apollonius’ epic depicts a world a generation before the Iliad and Odyssey, and Empedocles describes the world at an even earlier stage (a cosmogony). By

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291 Hunter, Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book IV, 176.

292 Ibid., 6.
combining both Homeric and early philosophical sources, Apollonius positions himself between these two periods.

One problem with this theory is the fact that these authors belong to a later period of intellectual history, not the period their cosmogonies describe. As Dickie points out, “Apollonius has carefully avoided blatant anachronism … Only in the Empedoclean simile is a full-blown theory alien to the Heroic Age introduced baldly and unabashedly. This is what might be expected in an author who goes to some lengths—but not all the way—to avoid anachronism in his recreation of the Heroic World. There is for example no reference to writing, or to coinage” (emphasis added).293 By invoking Empedocles and Parmenides, Apollonius gestures to a period of intellectual history much later than the pre-Homeric world he describes, and it is not clear that his readers would have associated these authors with the primordial period they describe.

The other problem with this theory is that this project has shown that Apollonius does not relegate his use of these authors to one part of his work. The references are scattered throughout the Argonautica and are not confined to scenes that invoke the beginning of the world, such as Circe’s primordial creatures or Orpheus’ cosmogonic song. This theory also ignores the fact that Circe’s primordial creatures are not actually primordial but compared to primordial creatures. So while this theory contributes to the understanding of Apollonius’ use of early philosophy in certain (and prominent) passages, it does not fully explain his incorporation of these sources.

7. The Hexameter Theory

It is also possible that Apollonius uses these early philosophical authors because of the hexameter meter employed by Empedocles and Parmenides. His interest is primarily in their language and meter, and he avails himself of all hexameter poetry as sources for his own epic, regardless of any differences in content (philosophy, science, didactic, narrative, etc.). The strongest argument that can be made for this theory includes the evidence that Alexandrian scholars may have organized poetic works by meter rather than content. The prime example here is Sappho, whose collected poems were probably organized into books according to meter rather than subject matter. While Aristotle argues that Homer and Empedocles have nothing in common except meter and should not be considered poets of the same type (Poetics 1447b), the fact that he states this indicates that there were probably contrary views in his own time (and Apollonius’ time as well), where common meter (rather than similar content) of hexameter poems attracted scholars and poets.

The arguments against this theory return to some of the arguments against the “word miner” theory: many times Apollonius seems to pay close attention to the context.

294 The generally accepted scholarly view is that Sappho’s works were collected by meter during this period (see, for example, Emmet Robbins’ entry on “Sappho” in Brill’s New Pauly). For a different view that argues some books were organized by a single meter and others were not, see Joel Lidov, "The Meter and Metrical Style of the New Poem," Classics@ Volume 4: Ellen Greene and Marilyn Skinner, eds. The Center for Hellenic Studies of Harvard University, online edition of March 11, 2011. http://chs.harvard.edu/wa/pageR?tn=ArticleWrapper&bdc=12&mn=3534.
(not just the meter or language) of the sources he uses. Additionally, Apollonius is not merely interested in hexameter or epic poetry; he also uses lyric poets, notably Sappho, Simonides, and Pindar. Nor is he interested solely in poetic sources since he also uses prose authors such as Herodotus, Xenophon, and Democritus. Apollonius is not exclusively interested in poetry, much less exclusively hexameter poetry. Given the breadth of his interests, it is likely that more than the meter attracted him to Empedocles and Parmenides.

8. The Cultural Continuity Theory

Zanker argues that aetiology is part of the Alexandrian appeal to scientific and scholarly knowledge that adds to realistic effect.

… modern critics commonly label Hellenistic aetiology as ‘preciosity’, ‘antiquarianism’ and the like … in fact aetiology was capable of being used as a vehicle for providing a much needed sense of cultural continuity for the Greek intelligentsia resident in the newly founded city of Alexandria in the first half of the third century BC. It will have enabled them to see the cult-practices and traditions of the Greek world as rooted in the mythical past and enriched by


296 For a discussion of Apollonius’ use of Herodotus and Xenophon, see Cusset, “Les Argonautiques d’Apollonios de Rhodes,” 31-52. Dickie and Powers are the best sources for a discussion of Apollonius’ use of Democritus. For evidence that Democritus did not write in meter, see Cicero’s *Orator* 67.
association with it. Simultaneously, the mythical past will have been ‘verified’ by
the evidence of the still observable cults and institutions, which can be traced
back into it: εἰς ἐτί νῦν περὶ, ἐνθὲν and the like are once again the standard phrases;
this too will have helped alleviate the problem of cultural identity experienced by
the early Alexandrian Greeks. Thus a two-way process is set up in which realism,
bridging the gap between past and present by appeal to tangible evidence, plays
an essential role.  

Although Zanker’s argument refers to aetiology and cult practices, a similar argument
could be applied to Apollonius’ use of Empedocles’ and Parmenides’ work: by
incorporating their words and ideas into his own poetry, he stresses the poetic and
intellectual continuity between his own poetry and previous generations of Greek authors.

The problem with this argument is that it is not specific enough. Intellectual
history is a broad category that could include any number of authors. Why does
Apollonius use Parmenides and Empedocles and not, for example, Plato (who at this time
was also thought to write epigrams)? Choosing some Greek authors and not others shows
a selection that is more specific than cultural continuity.

Poetic Techne and Inspiration: A New Possibility

Most of these theories are helpful in explaining one or two passages in the Argonautica,
but they are not as useful in explaining Apollonius’ overall pattern of using these authors
or why he might be attracted to them as sources for the whole of the Argonautica rather
than a few individual passages. Empedocles and Parmenides do not show up in one or

Zanker, Realism in Alexandrian Poetry, 120-121. The point of this summary is
not to evaluate Zanker’s argument with respect to aetiology, but to see if a similar
argument can be applied to Apollonius’ use of Parmenides’ and Empedocles’ work.
two passages but many, and Apollonius does not seem to isolate his use of these authors to particular parts of the *Argonautica*. Instead, he seems to use these authors throughout the work, in a way that is similar to his use of Homer, and there is often evidence that Apollonius is aware of the surrounding context in the original work.

One of the potential stumbling blocks in scholarship for this era is the stark division between philosophy or science and epic poetry. “Epic” is often confused with “literature,” and “literature” is often opposed to the rational and logical discourse found in philosophy and science. Scholars such as Dickie and Powers begin with this stark divide and then try to explain why Apollonius would combine science or philosophy with epic poetry, while critics such as Hunter argue that Apollonius is interested in the poetic or mythical elements in an author like Parmenides and see Apollonius as less interested in the philosophical elements. Instead of beginning with this divide, a better approach may involve understanding how this division originally occurred and how Apollonius may be resisting a stark division between these categories. As Goldhill points out,

> ... the modern categories of ‘science’ and ‘literature’ have all to often been used in an uncontested and distorting way to approach Hellenistic writing. ... Although the institutionalization and demarcation of disciplines is a crucial part of the Hellenistic intellectual enterprise, it is far from clear that *sophia* is usefully to be divided into an opposition of ‘science’ and ‘literature’, at least in terms formulated by a (post-)Romantic discourse. Philosophy may to a large degree have taken over the privileged voice of poetry in archaic society, but the Alexandrian *philologoi* demonstrate an engagement in the complete range of critical writing across modern disciplinary boundaries.\(^{298}\)

The roots of this division between poetry and philosophy include Plato’s *Ion*, where Socrates pushes the rhapsode Ion to see a difference between divinely inspired poetry composition and performance on the one hand and technical skill on the other. Socrates argues that poets do not speak from a place of skill, but instead the god removes their mind (νοῦς) and speaks through them (534b-c).

As Nightingale points out, part of Plato’s larger project in the dialogues is to carve out a new space for philosophy, and he does so by defining the discipline in contrast to other genres, especially epic poetry:

In order to create the specialized discipline of philosophy, Plato had to distinguish what he was doing from all other discursive practices that laid claim to wisdom. It is for this reason that, in dialogue after dialogue, Plato deliberately set out to define and defend a new and quite peculiar mode of living and of thinking. This alone, he claimed, deserved the title of “philosophy.” Indeed, it is precisely by designating certain modes of discourse and spheres of activity as “anti-philosophical” that Plato was able to create a separate identity for “philosophy.”

The *Ion* is one of the clearest sites for this differentiation, and in it, Socrates sets up an argument about poetry that can be put in the following terms:

1. Poets either create through technical skill (τέχνη) or they are divinely inspired (ἐνθουσιασμός).

2. If poetry were a technical skill (rather than divinely inspired), then there would be an overall skill of poetry (like carpentry) and those interested in poetry would be able to interpret and understand all poets rather than just one,

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and poets would be able to write well in a variety of poetic genres (dithyramb, encomia, iambics, etc.).

3. Ion is not able to interpret and understand all poets, but only Homer, and poets are not able to compose well in a variety of genres. (534c)

4. Therefore, there is not a technical skill of poetry. Poetry composition and performance are instead divinely inspired.

The form of this argument is modus tollens: either A or B; if A, then C; not C, therefore not A; therefore B.

As Acosta-Hughes and Stephens point out, Callimachus confronts this argument on several fronts in the Prologue to the Aetia, but especially the idea that poets are faced with a binary choice between inspiration and technical skill:

In the Aetia Prologue Callimachus would appear to address the question of ἐνθουσιασμός versus τέχνη in language that is remarkably similar to Plato’s Ion. At first, he appeals to the Telchines to judge his poetry by its τέχνη, not by a banausic skill or empty critical theory like expectation about length. And he chooses the term sophia for poetry, that is, ‘wisdom’ (to which we might compare Socrates’ διάνοια), which aligns him with poets of an earlier age…. what has for a generation been the scholarly consensus, namely, that Callimachus asserts the priority of technê over inspiration, is in need of some re-evaluation. Callimachus’ Prologue is not a banal affirmation of the value of technê so much as a reclamation project that seeks to reestablish and older relationship of technê and inspiration to sophia, or a poetry that seeks to reclaim its former position in society. Callimachus’ technê is chiefly articulated in Lycian Apollo’s instructions.

As Acosta-Hughes and Stephens point out, Callimachus is confronting Plato’s larger project that carves out social space for philosophy as the true holder of sophia, but by

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300 Acosta-Hughes and Stephens, Callimachus in Context, 43.
placing technical instructions in the mouth of Apollo, Callimachus is also confronting and rejecting the dichotomy between poetic skill and inspiration. This confrontation is most clear in lines 17-18 of the Prologue: αὐθὶ δὲ τέχνῃ / κρίνετε, µὴ σχοίνῳ Περσίδι τὴν σοφίην. (And again judge wisdom by skill, not by the Persian land measure). Here wisdom is not merely the purview of philosophers but also poets, and it is a matter of skill rather than ἐνθουσιασμός. Callimachus does not reject divine help in his project: he describes his critics as those who are ignorant of the Muse and have not become her friend (implying that the poet of the Aetia is the opposite of those things, line 2) and puts his instructions in the mouth of Apollo (22). But the participation of the Muses does not rule out technical skill (37-8). In the larger context of Callimachus’ work as a whole, he also confronts the second part of Socrates’ argument that by composing in a variety of genres, showing that, unlike Ion who is only skilled in portraying Homer, poetic skill is something that can be mastered and applied to a variety of meters and styles.

As I have already argued, Apollonius was likely aware of Plato’s views on poetry, either directly or through Callimachus. This view is strengthened if we consider that Democritus, Socrates’ contemporary, expressed similar views on inspiration and poetry: ποιητὴς δὲ ἄσσα μὲν ἄν γράφῃ μετ’ ἐνθουσιασμοῦ καὶ ἱεροῦ πνεύματος, καλὰ κάρτα ἐστίν (whatever a poet writes with divine inspiration and a divine spirit is very good, G160, B18). Clement of Alexandria (the author who preserved this fragment of Democritus) and Cicero (On the Orator 2.46.194) connect Democritus’ views and Plato’s, and it is likely that Alexandrian scholars connected the two authors as well since Thrasyllus (1st c. AD) organized both Plato’s dialogues and Democritus’ works into
tetralogies (Diogenes Laertius 9.45-48). As Dickie and Powers argue, Apollonius uses Democritus’ theory of visual perception in his description of Medea and the Evil Eye, so it is possible that Apollonius is responding to Democritus as well as Plato. Democritus wrote several books on poetry, including one on Homer, but none of these works are extant, so although it is possible that Apollonius’ views on poetry were formed as much by Democritus as Plato, the majority of this discussion will have to be guided by Plato’s texts.

Compared to Callimachus, Apollonius’ responses to these ideas are less overt, but Apollonius’ poetry addresses some of the same questions about poetic τέχνη versus inspiration and the poet’s ability to compose in a variety of genres. On both of these topics, but particularly the first, Parmenides and Empedocles provide a model for poetry that is different from the one Plato’s Socrates argues for in the Ion. By using these philosopher-poets as models for his own work, Apollonius obliquely confronts Plato’s challenges to poetry using a method that is different from Callimachus but one that reaches similar conclusions.

1. Skill and inspiration

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Although Plato is perhaps most well-known for his conflict with Homer (and to a lesser extent Hesiod), Nightingale points out that his definition of philosophy conflicts with the Presocratic writers as well:

Plato was born into a culture which had no distinct concept of “philosophy,” in spite of the fact that various kinds of abstract and analytic thinking had been and were being developed by the Presocratics, the mathematicians, different kinds of scientists, and the sophists. Previous to Plato, these intellectuals, together with poets, lawgivers, and other men of skill or wisdom, were grouped together under the heading of “sophoi” and “sophistai.” The word φιλοσοφεῖν and its cognates, in fact, rarely if ever occurs until the late fifth century and even then is used to designate intellectual cultivation in the most general sense. Indeed, as a careful analysis of the terminology will attest, φιλοσοφεῖν does not take on a specialized and technical meaning until Plato appropriates the term for his own enterprise.  

Parmenides and Empedocles were rough contemporaries of Socrates, and Plato’s *Parmenides* features a discussion between young Socrates and old Parmenides. Yet these authors do not conform to the depiction of poets and poetry that Socrates argues for in the *Ion*: while their works involve rational discourse about cosmological principles and often rest on logical argument, they also claim divine inspiration for their work (albeit in different ways), thus negating the A or B dichotomy that Socrates sets up in the *Ion*. This is not to say that Empedocles and Parmenides were necessarily responding to Socrates or Plato’s views in the *Ion*, but their views of poetic authority and inspiration do not fit neatly into the categories drawn in the *Ion* between technical skill and rational inquiry on the one side and poetic inspiration on the other.

Parmenides’ proem is similar to the beginning of Hesiod’s *Works and Days* in that Parmenides’ narrator begins with his encounter with the Heliades and the goddess

\[\text{\textsuperscript{302}}\text{ Nightingale, Genres in Dialogue, 10.}\]
Δίκη, who explains to him two metaphysical paths: truth (Ἀληθεία) and opinion (δόξα, G10.29-30, B1.29-30). Hesiod is also met by a group of women who set up a dichotomy between two types of knowledge: ψεύδεα ... ἀληθέα (Theogony 27-28). At this point, however, there is a difference between Hesiod’s poetic journey and Parmenides’. Hesiod describes the Muses as breathing into him a divine voice (ἐνέπνευσαν δέ μοι αὐθήν / θέσπιν, 31-32), a description that could fit with Socrate’s description in the Ion. Parmenides, on the other hand, describes a process listening and understanding that involves mental activity (νοεῖν, G15.1). This is a fragment that Apollonius seems particularly interested in, since he uses parts of it at 2.353, 3.160, 1157, 4.643, among other places. In this fragment, the goddess explains to the narrator that for the majority of humans, helplessness directs a wondering mind (ἀμηχανίῃ ... ἰθύνει πλαγκτον νόον, G15.5-6). Parmenides’ narrator indicates that his divine encounter, expressed in poetry, corrects this, and unlike the majority of men whose minds (νόον) wander and err, his own is engaged and corrected by the god, rather than removed, as Plato’s Socrates suggests in the Ion (ὁ νοῦς μηκέτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνή, 534b). Graham’s commentary on this passage observes a switch between two types of authority (divine revelation and logical argument), but he sees them as disconnected and sees the revelation aspect as a ploy to grab the reader’s attention: “Parmenides seems to be aiming at the moral status of an epic poem, one that claims revelation for the poet and authority for the message. Ultimately, Parmenides will shift the question of authority to the weight of the argument itself (B7.5-6), but not until he has made a claim on the reader’s attention by poetic form and the
traditional influence of an epic poem.”\textsuperscript{303} However, as Most points out, the poetic form (including the narrator’s relationship to the Muses) is not merely a nicely-worded package but an essential part of these early philosophers’ projects:

To ignore this dependence [on poetic texts and forms], to disparage it as unphilosophical, or even just to excuse it as a regrettable form of primitive thought from which the really interesting core, the logical arguments, can be extracted and rescued, is inadvertently to acknowledge allegiance to a very recent and quite provincial notion of what philosophy is and is not, and to retroject that notion unhistorically into a discursive situation of the distant past whose participants would certainly have found such ideas very strange indeed.\textsuperscript{304}

Parmenides’ work provides an example of combining rational inquiry with Muse-like figures, and although Parmenides’ work must predate Plato’s \textit{Ion}, for Apollonius it could present an alternative to Plato’s views, where extensive learning and inquiry into the origins of things can be expressed in epic form. As Morris points out, the narrator of the \textit{Argonautica} presents a scholarly persona that includes relying on sources and selecting from them.\textsuperscript{305} This type of knowledge is different from the omniscience or privileged knowledge that the narrators of the \textit{Iliad} and \textit{Odyssey} have (presumably from the Muses): knowledge of events and facts that the characters could not know about, knowledge of the characters’ minds and intentions, and knowledge of the future.\textsuperscript{306} Apollonius’ narrator has these types of privileged knowledge too, but he also displays knowledge of various

\textsuperscript{303} Graham, \textit{The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy}, 1:235.

\textsuperscript{304} Most, “The Poetics of Early Greek Philosophy,” 336.

\textsuperscript{305} Morrison, \textit{The Narrator in Archaic Greek and Hellenistic Poetry}, 274.

\textsuperscript{306} Ibid. and Scott Douglass Richardson, \textit{The Homeric Narrator} (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1990), 124.
accounts and has the scholarly ability to choose between them. These two types of knowledge (scholarly and divine) might seem incongruous in a Homeric epic, but they are not in a Parmenidean epic, where the narrator is being taught to choose between two accounts (what is and what is not), using logical argument.

Empedocles’ approach to skill versus inspiration is complicated by the fact that he presents himself as the recipient of divine knowledge and a divine figure in his poetry. In G21 (B3) and G23 (B131), he invokes the Muse, who is named as Calliope in G23. The narrator asks the Muse to stand by him or help him (παρίστασο) as he expounds a good speech about the gods (ἄμφι θεῶν μακάρων ἄγαθον λόγον ἐμφαίνοντι, 23.4). In this fragment, the narrator treats the Muse as a helper while the narrator himself is the one creating the poem. This narrator has more independence than Hesiod’s narrator in the Theogony, who indicates that he is speaking what the Muses have taught him (22, 42-43), describes a singer as the servant of the Muses (Μουσάων θεράπων, 100), and asks the Muses to tell him what will become the rest of the poem (107). Similarly, Homer’s poems begin by asking the Muse to sing or tell him the story (Od. 1.1, Il. 1.1). In fragment G21 (B3), Empedocles asks the Muse to send things that are fitting for short-lived humans to hear (ὧν θέμις ἐστὶν ἐφημερίοις ἀκούειν / πέμπε), but this request is followed by telling the Muse not to say more than is holy and what Graham terms “an initial epistemology.”

While the Muse is involved in giving the narrator information, the narrator imposes limits on what types of information are fitting for the Muse to

307 Graham hints at the contrasting types of authority in this situation: “Empedocles invokes the muse, yet at the same time introduces a preliminary epistemology.” Graham, The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy, 1:423.
reveal. Hershbell points out that both Hesiod and Empedocles retain a sense of identity throughout their poems in spite of their invocation of the Muses\textsuperscript{308} (thus confronting Socrates’ theory in the \textit{Ion}), but this independence of the narrator is much stronger in Empedocles’ relationship with the Muse.

Morrison argues that although the narrator of the \textit{Argonautica} begins from a position of scholarship, confidence, and autonomy and asks the Muses to be his interpreters (rather than the other way around), the narrator’s confidence erodes over the course of the work, and by book 3, he must rely on the Muse Erato to help him tell his story. This argument relies on a shaky interpretation of the evidence,\textsuperscript{309} but it also misses the connection between the invocation of Erato (\textit{Argonautica} 3) and Empedocles’ invocation of Calliope. Empedocles’ narrator asks Calliope to stand beside him (... \textit{νῦν αὖτε παρίστασο, Καλλιόπεια, G23, B131}) and Apollonius’ narrator uses similar language in asking for Erato’s help (\textit{ἄγε νῦν, Ἐρατώ, παράθ᾽ ἰστασο ... 3.1}). Although

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\textsuperscript{309} Morrison argues that the scholarly persona Apollonius’ narrator assumes at the beginning of the work gradually gives way to a reliance on the Muses in the second half of the work (books 3-4). His evidence for this includes the invocation of the Muse Erato in book 3 and fewer places where the narrator presents information as the result of research marked by phrases such as “they say” (\textit{ἐνέπουσιν}, 1.26-7) or “they relate” (\textit{κλείουσιν}, 1.59-60). Morrison, \textit{The Narrator in Archaic Greek and Hellenistic Poetry}, 274-5. This theory does not take into account that there are many places where these marks of scholarship appear after the point where Morrison argues that the narrator has moved to reliance on the Muses (3.277, 4.829, 4.987). As de Jong points out in her review of Morrison, an alternative explanation for the phenomena Morrison points out is the idea that Apollonius’ narrator has Herodotean traits, and he often marks aspects of the story as information received second-hand. de Jong, “Review of \textit{The Narrator in Archaic Greek and Hellenistic Poetry} by A.D. Morrison,” \textit{Mnemosyne} 63 no. 4 (2010): 651-654.
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Apollonius’ narrator asks Erato to speak to him (µοι ἔνισπε, 3.1) and Empedocles’ narrator describes himself speaking (ἐµφαίνοντι), the similarities show that Apollonius is not necessarily losing confidence but sees his project as a cooperative effort between himself and the Muse. The phrases that Morrison sees as marking scholarship (such as “they say,” κλείουσιν) continue after this point (3.277, 4.829, 987), indicating that the narrator continues to rely both on his own research and on information from the Muses.

Rather than seeing Apollonius as naïve in the way that he mixes his scholarly research with invocations of the Muses or positing a crisis of confidence in the narrator, it is possible that Apollonius is looking to Parmenides and Empedocles as authors who were renowned for their own intelligence and their thoughts on natural philosophy, but who also presented their work as divine education. While Socrates argues that poetic inspiration is an abdication of understanding, Apollonius’ model uses the Muses as part of a larger project of learning and understanding earlier authors.

2. The poet and other poets

The second part of Socrates’ argument involves the poet’s relationship to other genres and the relationship of the rhapsode (or critic) to multiple poets. Socrates claims that if poetry were a technical skill (rather than divinely inspired), then those interested in poetry would be able to interpret and understand all poets rather than just one, and poets would be able to write well in a variety of poetic genres (dithyramb, encomia, iambs, etc.). Since this is not true, poetry composition and performance must be divinely
inspired rather than technical. Apollonius disproves this through his critical understanding of a variety of genres and his ability to incorporate them into his own poetry. And in his reworking of previous poets (particularly Homer), Parmenides and Empedocles provide a model.

Apollonius is, in many ways, a more successful Ion in his understanding of previous poets. Like Ion, Apollonius situates himself as part of a tradition, telling the “renowned deeds of men born long ago” (παλαιγενέων κλέα φωτῶν, 1.1) and mentioning the story previous singers have sung (οἱ πρῶσθεν ἐτι κλείουσιν ἄοιδοι, 1.18). As Ion’s performance of Homer is also an interpretation of Homer (ἐρημηνέα, 530c-d), so Apollonius’ retelling of an older tale is also a performance of these older poets that he reincorporates into his text.

Socrates claims (and Ion agrees) that a good rhapsode must understand the meaning and not only memorize the words of the poet he performs (τὴν ... διάνοιαν .... τὰ ἔπη, 530b-c). As Kyriakou and Rengakos point out, that is exactly the type of Homeric scholarship that Apollonius often incorporates into the Argonautica: by using ambiguous Homeric words in an unambiguous context, he clarifies Homer’s meaning. In this way, Apollonius is simultaneously performing the work of critic/interpreter and poet—two categories that are separate in Plato’s Ion.

Socrates goes on to argue that if Ion truly understands Homer, he must also understand Hesiod and the other poets, because there must be some overall skill of poetry (τέχνη... ποιητική) that involves knowledge of all the poets, just as knowledge of painting is one skill. But unlike Ion, who claims to know only one poet well (Homer),
Apollonius lays claim to a variety of sources, both prose and metrical: Herodotus, Xenophon, Hesiod, Homer, Empedocles, Parmenides, Simonides, Sappho, and Pindar, among others. It may be worthwhile to consider Apollonius engagement with a number of authors from different genres in light of this claim. It is not merely mixing for variety’s sake but to develop a full repertoire as a practitioner of ποιητική τέχνη in this sense. One way that Callimachus rises to the challenges of Plato’s Ion is by composing in a variety of genres, but it is possible that Apollonius is responding to the same challenge by incorporating a variety of genres and poets into one poem.

Socrates asks Ion about three authors specifically when he asks if Ion is only skilled in interpreting Homer or Hesiod and Archilochus as well (531a). Ion declares he is only skilled in Homer, and this is part of Socrates’ argument that poetic composition and interpretation must be divinely inspired rather than a matter of skill because if they were a matter of skill, Ion should also be able to interpret and perform the works of these other authors. In contrast to this, Apollonius wrote on each of the authors Socrates mentions: Against Zenodotus is a monograph on Homeric scholarship, Athenaeus mentions Apollonius’ work On Archilochus (περὶ Ἀρχιλόχου, 10.74.26), and Apollonius offered opinions on the Hesiodic authenticity of “The Shield of Heracles” and the “Ornithomanteia.” In this way, the Argonautica and Apollonius’ larger body of work as a literary scholar and critic resists the categories drawn in the Ion.

310 The evidence for Hesiodic scholarship comes from the scholia to Hesiod on line 828a. Agostino Pertusi, Scholia vetera in Hesiodi Opera et Dies, (Milan: Società editrice “Vita e pensiero”, 1955). Hesiod, Archilochus, and Homer are also noted in the scholia to the Argonautica several times.
In a similar way, Empedocles includes a variety of earlier genres and responds to earlier authors in his work.

Empedocles … is both a scientist-philosopher and a religious guru, perhaps both a physician and a medicine man. He inherits an interest in cosmology and physical theory from the Ionians, and puts his story about human life in the context of a cosmogony. He is also a conscious heir of Parmenides … Further, he advocates Pythagorean religious doctrine that sees the human soul as undergoing reincarnations. Finally, he adopts the religious trappings of Greek mythology, at least to the extent of invoking names such as Aphrodite, along with the language of epic poetry in which he expresses his ideas. For the first time he attempts in some fashion to synthesize these diverse elements of Greek religious and intellectual tradition …

Empedocles provides a model of poetic synthesis that does not fit well with Socrates’ views, but this synthesis of a variety of genres and technical fields might appeal to Apollonius, who also incorporates cosmology, natural philosophy, geography, history, sailing, and mythology into his work.

Furthermore, both Parmenides and Empedocles rework Homer in ways that are strikingly familiar to those who have observed Apollonius’ work. For example, at Od. 9.295 Odysseus describes the crew’s horror as they watch Polyphemus eat their shipmates: σχέτλια ἔργα· ὀρϑῶντες· ἀμηχανίη δ’ ἔχε θυμόν (as they saw these dreadful deeds, helplessness took hold of their hearts). Wright points out that this is similar to a fragment of Empedocles about not eating meat: σχέτλια ἔργα βορᾶς (dreadful deeds of eating, G201.2, B139.2). Wright argues that Parmenides uses the second half of the Odyssey line (in conjunction with Od. 23.105) in describing how human minds are often

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311 Graham, The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy, 1:327.

wrong: ἀμηχανίη γὰρ ἐν αὐτῶν / στήθεσιν ἰθύνει πλακτὸν νόον· (helplessness in their hearts directs a wandering mind, G15.5-6, B6.5-6).313 Wright points out a number of similar passages where these authors adapt “themes, style, language, and imagery” and argues that “as well as Parmenides and Empedocles deriving style and languages from epic independently of each other, a linear development can be seen from Homer to Parmenides and then to Empedocles as the same phrase is reworked in different contexts.”314 This process of borrowing from earlier poetry for a new project is exactly what Apollonius does with Homer, and by using Parmenides and Empedocles as well, he acknowledges their method of poetic composition and incorporates them into the tradition. Thus Apollonius becomes the most recent link in a different sort of magnetic chain that is powered by the poet’s understanding of previous poetry rather than abdication of understanding described in the Ion.315

For the most part, this project has focused on places where Apollonius uses passages from Parmenides and Empedocles that are not found in Homer or other authors in order to establish that Apollonius is familiar with and using these early philosophers, but this project opens the door for studies like Wright’s, where the intertextual relationship is not two dimensional (Apollonius and Homer or Apollonius and

315 As Nelis points out, Apollonius’ use of Empedocles also interests Vergil, who incorporates both authors into the Aeneid. Nelis, Vergil’s Aeneid and the Argonautica of Apollonius Rhodius, 96-112.
Circe’s Creatures

In light of this, it is not coincidental that much of the discussion about Apollonius’ use of early philosophy centers on two passages: Orpheus’ song in book 1 and Circe’s creatures in book 4. The passage about Circe’s creatures is particularly helpful for understanding Apollonius’ approach to early philosophy and intertextuality. Here Empedocles’ theory of mixed elements is a helpful metaphor for understanding Apollonius’ mixture of previous authors.

The passage about Circe’s creatures has long been recognized as a reference to early philosophical ideas, but there has not been as much explanation of why Apollonius might choose to replace a familiar scene (Circe’s drug-domesticated lions and wolves) with primordial creatures. Most discussions of the passage focuses on identifying the particular theories involved, but within his description of the creatures, Apollonius mixes programmatic poetic language with Empedocles’ theory of elements.

Circe’s creatures are mixtures of limbs (συμμιγέες μελέων, 674), and they are compared to primordial creatures before time brings them into composed stichas: τὰ δ’ ἐπὶ στίχας ἠγαγεν αἰῶν / συγκρίνας, 680-1). στίχας is difficult to explain as part of early philosophical thought. Hunter understands it as an alternative for “what are more
commonly called τάξεις… τάξεις is a standard gloss for Homeric στίχες.”

Hunter cites Erbse’s “Homerscholien und Hellenistische Glossare bei Apollonios Rhodios” for this view, and Erbse cites three pieces of evidence: the use of τάξεις in Plato’s Gorgias 504a and Xenophon’s Cyropaedia 8.7.22, and a Homeric gloss included in Apollonius the Sophist’s Lexicon Homericum. The passages from Plato’s and Xenophon’s works include only τάξεις (not στίχες), so they do not provide good support for this argument. Apollonius the Sophist is writing later (first century AD), and his gloss is for Iliad 16.173. He does not mention Apollonius or the Argonautica.

The word τάξεις does not appear in any form in Homer or Apollonius, but the phrase ἐπὶ στίχας does appear four times in the Iliad, three times to describe troops (2.687, 3.113, 20.353), and once to describe dancers in lines (18.602). This would seem, in spite of Erbse’s argument, to be a deliberate mixing of a Homeric phrase with an early philosophical description of mixed elements (rather than the substitution of a Homeric term for τάξεις or κόσμος). Apollonius is describing the ordering of elements and the development of the cosmos using the same terms that Homer uses to describe the ordered world on the shield of Achilles (18.602). In Pindar’s fourth Pythian Ode, the term is also

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316 Hunter cites Erbse’s “Homerscholien und hellenistische Glossare bei Apollonios Rhodios,” 176.

associated with lines of poetry.\footnote{The metaphorical meaning of “lines of verse” is found at line 57, where , which describes Medea and the journey of the Argonauts. This poem has long been considered one of Apollonius’ sources for the Argonautica, so Apollonius would be familiar with it, and in Pindar the phrase refers to the speech of Medea as she prophesies regarding the founding of an island from a clod of earth (Ἡ ῶθη Μηδείας ἐπέων στίχες, 4.57), a part of the Argonauts voyage that Apollonius also covers in 4.1531-1563, 1731-1764 (albeit with some changes).} This ode has long been considered one of Apollonius’ sources for the Argonautica, so Apollonius would be familiar with the meaning of στίχες/στίχας as lines of poetry as well as the Homeric meaning of lines of troops or dancers.

If στίχας is a term that occurs in Homer and Pindar (never in Empedocles or Parmenides), συγκρίνω never occurs in Homer, but is first attested in Anaximander and later Empedocles. In early philosophy, it refers to mixing or combining elements, while διακρίνω refers to separation into elemental parts. Empedocles argues that it is the mixture of elements that create the visible world, much like painters combine pigments (πολύχρωμα φάρμακα) and arrange them to create art (G47, B23). Apollonius may be drawn to Empedocles’ ideas because this artistic metaphor works for poetry as well: by mixing phrases and words from previous poets (Homer, Pindar, Parmenides, Empedocles, and many others), Apollonius has created his own new work of art. As Green points out, “there is no suggestion of the ‘biform medley of limbs’ (673-74) Ap. describes” in the passage from the Odyssey.\footnote{Green, The Argonautica, 320.} The change from what is expected at Circe’s home and the
unusual use of epic simile draws attention to the mixture of literary elements in the scene.320

This elemental view of poetry helps resolve one of the largest questions about poetic influence and scholarship on Apollonius. As discussed in the Introduction, a discussion of Apollonius’ sources can lead to the impression that Apollonius himself is less creative and less of a poet because he borrows from other authors. This is an issue Bloom touches on in Anx

This project, which does use a computer in the first stage of the analysis, is particularly open to this charge. Yet this investigation leads to a valuable new understanding of Apollonius’ ideas on poetry, and by using Empedocles’ theory of mixed roots as a model for poetry, Apollonius preserves a creative role for the poet who mixes elements from previous authors: just as Love is the guiding force for mixing earth, sea, sky, and sun into all the visible forms, so the poet of the Argonautica is responsible for mixing language and ideas from Homer, Hesiod, Parmenides, and Empedocles and

320 There are several reversals here: the Argonauts encounter Circe on the beach (4.671-2), while in the Odyssey the crew must go inland to find her. In the Odyssey, Odysseus’ men go to Circe’s home first while Odysseus stays behind; in the Argonautica, Jason and Medea go to Circe’s home while Jason tells his men to stay behind (4.688-9). In the Odyssey, the crewmen are turned into pigs, while in the Argonautica, the slaughter of a piglet removes pollution for Apsyrtus’ murder and restores Jason and Medea to humanity (4.699-717).

creating something new. The fact that Parmenides and Empedocles also borrow from Homer’s works and adapt them to their own projects may make them all the more appealing as potential models.

This elemental view of poetry may also explain some of Apollonius’ interest in rare words as well. Powers points out that wonders serve a scientific purpose in Aristotle’s Lyceum and later Hellenistic projects because they point to things that are as yet unexplained. Just as natural marvels serve a scientific purpose in uncovering the nature of the world, so rare words and rare word forms can help poets and scholars discover new ideas and information about language. Apollonius may be interested in Parmenides’ rare form of κύρει in part because it points to something fundamental about the verb (it has two stems), and this opens new possibilities for the poet. Using Parmenides’ version of the verb not only places Apollonius within a tradition of epic, but a tradition of inquiry into the nature of language.

The early philosophers are only some of the many sources Apollonius uses in the Argonautica, but they are significant not only for their discrete contributions to individual passages but also for the model of epic poetry they present for Apollonius. This model incorporates earlier sources in thoughtful and creative ways and privileges the intelligence of the poet while still claiming divine education from the Muses. In this sense, these authors are truly Pre-Socratic, in that they present a model of poetry that does not fit well with the views Socrates expressed in the Ion, but it is a model that fuels the scholarly creativity found in the Argonautica.

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