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CALLIMACHUS' *EPIGRAM* 46 AND PLATO: THE LITERARY PERSONA OF THE DOCTOR*

At the beginning of his eleventh *Idyll*, which narrates the love of the grotesque Polyphemus for the sea nymph Galatea, Theocritus addresses Nicias of Miletus, presumably a close acquaintance of the poet. Nicias is mentioned by Theocritus also in *Idylls* 13 and 28 (in the latter along with his wife Theugnis), as well as in *Epigram* 8. On three of these occasions, Theocritus makes a special point of Nicias' profession of doctor, and the scholia report that Nicias was associated with the famous physician Erasistratus of Ceos.[1] In *Idyll* 28 and *Epigram* 8, Nicias is straightforwardly praised for his skill as a doctor. In *Idyll* 11, however, Theocritus engages Nicias and his profession in a spirit of playful antagonism, a fact which has been the topic of much scholarly discussion.[2] At the outset of the poem, Theocritus claims that there is no *φάρμακον* for love except for the Muses, setting the power of poetry against that of medicine:

> *οὐδὲν ποττὸν ἔρωτα πεφύκει φάρμακον ἄλλο,*
> *Νικία, οὔτ' ἔγχριστον, ἐμὶν δοκεῖ, οὔτ' ἐπίπαστον,*
> *ἢ ταὶ Πιερίδες· κοὐφον δέ τι τοὔτο καὶ ἁδύ*
> *γίνετ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις, εὑρεῖν δ' οὐ ῥᾴδιόν ἐστι.*
> *γινώσκειν δ' οἶμαί τυ καλῶς ἰατρὸν ἐόντα*
> *καὶ ταῖς ἐννέα δὴ πεφιλημένον ἔξοχα Μοίσαις.* (Theoc. *Id.* 11.1–6)

The final two lines of the poem poke fun at the high cost of medical services, claiming that Polyphemus relieved his suffering more effectively with song than if he had paid a doctor's fees.[3]

Theocritus draws the motif of Polyphemus treating his love with song from a lost dithyramb of Philoxenus.[4] The assertion that poetry and song can alleviate the suffering of lovers was not universally accepted in antiquity; Longus later explicitly rejects the idea, in stating that there is no cure for love except for kissing, embracing and lying together with naked bodies,[5] and subsequent Greek and Latin authors

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[1] *Σ προσδιαλέγεται δὲ ὁ Θεόκριτος ἰατρῷ Νικίᾳ Μιλησίῳ τὸ γένος, ὃς συμφοιτητὴς γέγονεν Ἐρασιστράτου ἰατροῦ ὄντος καὶ αὐτοῦ.* Cf. Gow (1950), 2.208, *RE* 6.333–4. The *Hypothesis* to *Idyll* 11 cites Dionysius of Ephesus as a source for their interaction; see Hunter (1999), 215.

[2] See e.g. Erbse (1965), Goldhill (1991), 249–61, Köhnken (1996), Hunter (1999), 220, Hordern (2006), 289.

[3] Theoc. *Id.* 11.79–80 *Οὕτω τοι Πολύφαμος ἐποίμαινεν τὸν ἔρωτα | μουσίσδων, ῥᾷον δὲ διᾶγ' ἢ εἰ χρυσὸν ἔδωκεν.*

[4] *PMG* 822 *Μούσαις εὐφώνοις ἰωμένη τὸν ἔρωτα* (Plut. *Mor*. 762F; cf. 622C); see Hordern (2006), 288–9.

[5] Long. 2.7.7 *ἔρωτος γὰρ οὐδὲν φάρμακον, οὐ πινόμενον, οὐκ ἐσθιόμενον, οὐκ ἐν ᾠδαῖς λεγόμενον, ὅτι μὴ φίλημα καὶ περιβολὴ καὶ συγκατακλιθῆναι γυμνοῖς σώμασι*; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 759B.

frequently give voice to the idea that there is no drug or medical art which can relieve the symptoms of love.[6] But Theocritus' contention should be understood in the broader context of the Greek association of song and music with healing and the soothing of emotions, a tradition which reaches back at least to Hesiod:[7] a relationship indeed expressed in the fact that both music and medicine are the concerns of Apollo.

Beyond, however, this general relationship between song and healing, the keen contrast drawn in *Idyll* 11 between poetry as a metaphorical *φάρμακον* and the material *φάρμακα* of doctors betrays a particular concern with medical detail, technical terminology and the relationship that poetry has with such specialized knowledge. The opposition of the medical arts and poetry is underlined in the opening lines of the poem by Theocritus' choice of vocabulary, structure and addressee: the description of a *φάρμακον* as *ἔγχριστον* or *ἐπίπαστον* (to be rubbed or sprinkled) makes use of medical terminology,[8] after which the Muses are introduced as an alternative in emphatic enjambment at the beginning of the third line.[9] Then in lines 5–6 the ironic poignancy of the contrast is fully revealed: Nicias is both a doctor and a poet. That he is a poet is also alluded to in *Idyll* 28.7 and he is very probably to be identified as the Nicias to whom eight epigrams of the *Anthology* are ascribed.[10] The scholia to *Idyll* 11 record two hexameter verses which are said to be the beginning of a rejoinder by Nicias to Theocritus' poem:

> *ἦν ἄρ' ἀληθὲς τοῦτο, Θεόκριτε· οἱ γὰρ Ἔρωτες*
> *ποιητὰς πολλοὺς ἐδίδαξαν τοὺς πρὶν ἀμούσους.* (*SH* 566)

This response, in which Nicias agrees with Theocritus that love has turned many men into poets who did not previously know the Muses, reveals the profundity of Nicias' own knowledge of poetry. Although his verse has not always met with the enthusiastic approval of modern scholars (Gow writes that his epigrams 'are of reasonable competence rather than of distinction'),[11] Nicias engages meaningfully with literary tradition in his response to Theocritus by echoing a line from Euripides' *Sthenoboea*, which states that Eros teaches one to be a poet even if one was not previously.[12] If he is primarily a doctor by profession, Nicias is also a poet of some learning. Hunter speculates whether Nicias' response is intended to tease Theocritus about his poetic awakening or to acknowledge that Nicias' own poetic skill was helped by love, suggesting ultimately that 'the most obvious reference is to the Cyclops, the *ἄμουσος par excellence* … perhaps, then, "many" deliberately includes both T. and his creation.'[13] I agree that the Cyclops is the central referent,

[6] Cf. Ov. *Her.* 5.149, *Met.* 1.523 (even for Apollo!), Prop. 1.5.27–8, 2.4.7, Heliod. *Aeth.* 4.7.4.

[7] See Meillier (1982) and Hunter (1999), 224.

[8] Both adjectives, although rarely attested before Theocritus, appear frequently in later medical texts. Cf. Mazur (2003), 5.

[9] On the enjambment cf. Hunter (1999), 225.

[10] Cf. Gow (1950), 2.208.

[11] Gow–Page (1965), 2.429.

[12] Fr. 663 *ποιητὴν δ' ἄρα | Ἔρως διδάσκει, κἂν ἄμουσος ᾖ τὸ πρίν*. On Nicias' imitation of the poetry of Anyte, see Gutzwiller (1998), 71. Gow–Page (1965) 2.429 suggest that this is 'not a very skilful paraphrase' of Euripides, but Hunter (1999), 221 points out that the allusion may be more complex: 'it is noteworthy that Plutarch also brings this quotation into juxtaposition with the Cyclops of Philoxenus "healing his love" (*Mor.* 622C, cf. *PMG* 822) and it may be that Nikias is "capping" T.'s poem by reflecting an allusion to Euripides in Philoxenus.' On Philoxenus, see above n. 3.

[13] Hunter (1999), 221.

but would suggest that the 'many' most naturally alludes not just to Theocritus, but also self-referentially to Nicias, who along with Theocritus is depicted in love at the opening of *Idyll* 13. For, if the Cyclops is the central referent, he is in *Idyll* 11 identified with both poet and addressee, a humorous identification certainly, given his monstrous nature.

The singing of Polyphemus (line 13 *ὃ δὲ τὰν Γαλάτειαν ἀείδων*), whose very name can mean 'of many voices',[14] *prima facie* suggests the link to the poetic voice, and the statement in line 7 that the Cyclops is 'one of us [Sicilians]' (*ὁ παρ' ἁμῖν*) connects him to Theocritus.[15] But it is the style of Polyphemus' speech later in the poem which makes the complexity of the relationship fully visible. In a description of his suffering, Polyphemus uses the words *λεπτύνειν* ('to grow thin', line 69) and *σφύσδειν* ('to throb', line 71), two terms commonly found in medical texts but rarely attested in verse.[16] This use of technical terminology serves to blend the voices of poet and doctor in the unusual figure of Polyphemus, just as they are blended in Nicias' dual nature. At the heart of the poem is not an antagonistic confrontation between medicine and poetry, but an exploration of the blurring of linguistic registers and intellectual boundaries. Also at stake, beyond Theocritus' engagement with technical medical knowledge, is the ability of his audience to engage him on both this and the poetic level. For if Nicias is a friend of Theocritus, he also represents the educated Hellenistic audience to whom his poem is more broadly addressed.[17]

In what follows, I will consider how Callimachus treats the intersection of poetry and medicine in *Epigram* 46, a poem which, as others have shown, very probably responds to Theocritus' eleventh *Idyll*. I hope to show how Callimachus, more than just responding to Theocritus, is working within the frame of a broader literary tradition, in which intellectual pursuits, medicine and healing have a complex relationship. In particular, I hope to show how Callimachus' use of vocabulary and themes recalls the adoption of a medical persona in Plato's dialogues. Hellenistic poetry at times expects a highly educated and alert audience to discern very subtle references to technical medical knowledge, more so than in earlier poetry. But there is precedent for explicitly blending the authorial voice with that of the doctor.

At one extreme, allusions to recent medical knowledge can be found buried within Hellenistic poetry, which on the surface appears purely literary. Callimachus, who very probably interacted with Herophilus and other physicians at the court of the Ptolemies, alludes to recent medical discoveries and techniques more than once in his poetry: in his *Hymn to Artemis*, he compares the eye of the Cyclops to a 'a four-layered oxhide shield' (line 53 *σάκει ἴσα τετραβοείῳ*); this contrasts with the traditional poetic formula 'a seven-layered oxhide shield' (*σάκος ἑπταβόειον*) and may allude to Herophilus' understanding of the eye to have four layers.[18] Similarly, the description of Leto giving birth to Apollo in Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* 209–11 may owe something to Herophilus' study in the field of gynaecology pertaining to difficult births.[19] In these instances, the recherché information could only have been picked out by an attentive eye and one wonders to what extent these allusions were missed by even very learned audiences.

[14] Cf. Goldhill (1991), 256.
[15] See Hunter (1999), 219.
[16] See Gow (1950), 2.219, Hunter (1999), 240 and Mazur (2003), 5–6.
[17] Cf. Goldhill (1991), 258–9.
[18] Callim. *Hymn* 4. 209–11; see H. Oppermann (1925) and Fraser (1972), 356.
[19] See Most (1981).

References to medicine in Callimachus' poetry are not always so oblique.[20] In *Epigram* 46, Callimachus seems to respond to Theocritus' eleventh *Idyll* discussed above:[21]

> ὡς ἀγαθὰν Πολύφαμος ἀνεύρατο τὰν ἐπαοιδάν
> τὠραμένῳ· ναὶ Γᾶν, οὐκ ἀμαθὴς ὁ Κύκλωψ·
> αἱ Μοῖσαι τὸν ἔρωτα κατισχναίνοντι, Φίλιππε·
> ἦ πανακὲς πάντων φάρμακον ἁ σοφία.
> τοῦτο, δοκέω, χἀ λιμὸς ἔχει μόνον ἐς τὰ πονηρά
> τὠγαθόν· ἐκκόπτει τὰν φιλόπαιδα νόσον.
> ἔσθ' ἁμῖν †χ'ακασταs† ἀφειδέα ποττὸν Ἔρωτα
> τοῦτ' εἶπαι· κείρευ τὰ πτερά, παιδάριον,
> οὐδ' ὅσον ἀττάραγόν τυ δεδοίκαμες· αἱ γὰρ ἐπῳδαί
> οἵκοι τῶ χαλεπῶ τραύματος ἀμφότεραι. (Callim. *Epigr*. 46)

Not only does the poem echo the motif of Polyphemus alleviating his love pains with song (which, as we saw above, derives originally from Philoxenus), but it also makes persistent use of words related to healing; apart from the general terms *πανακές*, *φάρμακον*, *νόσον* and *τραύματος*, *κατισχναίνοντι* (used of reducing swelling) strikes a technical note.[22] As in Theocritus' poem, *Epigram* 46 also has an inscribed addressee, a certain Philip. It has been suggested that this Philip is the Alexandrian doctor named in a papyrus dating to 240 B.C.[23] The identification is not certain,[24] but the use of medical language suggesting a response to Theocritus' poem makes it attractive to suppose Philip, like Nicias, a doctor; at least as the implied addressee. The use of medical language in the epigram again blurs the voice of poet and doctor. Callimachus' particular choice of vocabulary, however, perhaps through reminiscence of earlier philosophical texts, probes the relationship between poetry and medicine in an even more complex manner.

The final three lines of *Epigram* 46 represent in direct speech Callimachus' own hypothetical rebuke to Eros (line 8 *τοῦτ' εἶπαι*),[25] in which he explains that he has the two cures for the serious wound of love; poetry and poverty. In the final two lines of the poem the two cures are referred to collectively as *ἐπῳδαί*, while the wound of love is called a *τραῦμα*. The latter term, *τραῦμα*, speaks of love as an open, physical wound, similar to Theocritus' description of the Cyclops as suffering from an *ἔχθιστον ὑποκάρδιον ἕλκος* (line 15). The former term, *ἐπῳδαί*, used in its epic form also in the first line of the poem (*ὡς ἀγαθὰν Πολύφαμος ἀνεύρατο τὰν ἐπαοιδάν*), means 'song', 'incantation' or 'charm'. One might think first of the traditional relationship between magic and medicine in healing. The sons of Autolycus treat Odysseus' wound with an *ἐπαοιδή* in *Odyssey* 19.457–8, while in Pindar, *Pythian* 3.50–3 *ἐπῳδαί* are one of Asclepius' various medical techniques,

[20] See also Fantuzzi–Hunter (2004), 62–3 on Callimachus' careful use of poetic voice in a medical 'aetiology' of the origins of epilepsy in *Aetia* fr. 75.

[21] The chronology of the two poems is not certain, but the Doric dialect of Callimachus' epigram is suggestive of a response to Theocritus; cf. Hunter (1999), 223, Hordern (2006), 290.

[22] See Hutchinson (1988), 197 and Gow–Page (1965), 2.157.

[23] See Gow–Page (1965), 2.157 on this proposed identification by C.C. Edgar (on *P Mich*. Zen. 55.19). Also, Klooster (2009), 62–3.

[24] Cf. Hutchinson (1988), 197; Hordern (2006), 290.

[25] MSS AP transmit *τουτιπαι*, corrected by Kaibel. In any case, an imagined rebuke to Eros follows.

which include also *φάρμακα* and surgery.[26] Plato too in *Republic* 426b lists *ἐπῳδαί* as one of the typical techniques of doctors, although elsewhere in Plato the term is connected negatively to magic.[27] Hippocratic medicine strove to separate scientific therapy from magical cures and connects the term *ἐπαοιδή* with those practising magic.[28] In the Hellenistic world, physicians and magicians alike could claim to cure love.[29] In Theocritus *Idyll* 2. 90–1 the love-sick Simaetha, a witch herself who practices love-magic, says that she visited to no avail the houses of many who claimed to cure love-sickness through incantations (*ἅτις ἐπᾷδεν*). Hordern points out that the term *φάρμακον* in *Idyll* 11 can mean both medical remedy or magical charms,[30] and magic seems also to have been a theme of Philoxenus' poem about the Cyclops; the account of the story by the fifth-century bishop Synesius, whose source was most probably Philoxenus' poem, has Odysseus present himself to the Cyclops as a sorcerer (*γόης*), knowledgeable in incantations (*ἐπῳδαί*).[31]

On the other hand, the term *ἐπῳδαί* has a more nuanced meaning in discussions of healing in philosophical texts. In Plato's *Charmides*, Socrates is introduced to the young boy of the title, who is renowned for his beauty, under the false pretence that he is a doctor who can provide a cure (*φάρμακον*, 155b) for the boy's headache. When Charmides comes close, Socrates is overcome by his beauty, but composes himself to speak of a cure for the headache. He first says that a leaf combined with an incantation (*ἐπῳδή*, 155e) will provide a cure (the leaf is said to be ineffective on its own).[32] But Socrates quickly moves on to a more searching discussion of the nature of healing; it is claimed that, before the body can be treated, it is necessary first to heal the soul, just as a doctor must treat the head if he is properly to cure an ailment of the eyes. Socrates then goes on to say that he learned from a Thracian doctor of Zalmoxis that the soul is cured with certain incantations (*ἐπῳδαί*), which are words of good quality (*καλοὶ λόγοι*) that impart *σωφροσύνη*.[33] Now, Callimachus' epigram shares a number of important motifs with this dialogue: first, in his use of medical language Callimachus as poet, like Plato as philosopher, disingenuously adopts the voice of a doctor;[34] love is also at issue in both, for Socrates is strongly affected physically by a glimpse inside Charmides' cloak (155d–e); but above all, *ἐπῳδαί* are at the heart of the discussion of healing in both cases. The *ἐπῳδαί* of the *καλοὶ λόγοι* in the *Charmides*, which

[26] Cf., however, Soph. *Aj.* 581–2, where *ἐπῳδαί* and surgery are sharply contrasted: Ajax ends one of his speeches by claiming that a wise doctor does not utter incantations (*ἐπῳδάς*) over a wound that requires the knife (*οὐ πρὸς ἰατροῦ σοφοῦ | θρηνεῖν ἐπῳδὰς πρὸς τομῶντι πήματι*).

[27] Pl. *Resp.* 426b … *οὔτε φάρμακα οὔτε καύσεις οὔτε τομαὶ οὐδ' αὖ ἐπῳδαὶ αὐτὸν οὐδὲ περίαπτα οὐδὲ ἄλλο τῶν τοιούτων οὐδὲν ὀνήσει*; for a complete survey of the word in Plato, see Lain-Entralgo (1958).

[28] See Furley (1993), 81–2 on the *περὶ ἱερῆς νούσου*.

[29] On Hellenistic physicians' treatment of lovesickness see Hunter (1999, 224).

[30] Hordern (2006), 289.

[31] Synesius *Epist.* 121 (*PMG* 818) *γόης γάρ εἰμι καὶ εἰς καιρὸν ἄν σοι παρείην οὐκ εὐτυχοῦντι τὰ εἰς τὸν θαλάττιον ἔρωτα· ἀλλ' ἐγώ τοι καὶ ἐπῳδὰς οἶδα καὶ καταδέσμους καὶ ἐρωτικὰς κατανάγκας*. See Hordern (2006), 285–8 and Fantuzzi (2004), 223.

[32] Cf. Furley (1993), 90.

[33] 157a *θεραπεύεσθαι δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν ἔφη, ὦ μακάριε, ἐπῳδαῖς τισιν, τὰς δ' ἐπῳδὰς ταύτας τοὺς λόγους εἶναι τοὺς καλούς· ἐκ δὲ τῶν τοιούτων λόγων ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς σωφροσύνην ἐγγίγνεσθαι*. On the disputed interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* in the dialogue, see Vorwerk (2001) with further bibliography.

[34] Plato at times himself employs medical vocabulary; see Dodds (1959), 229 on *Gorgias* 465a.

heal the soul and impart *σωφροσύνη*, have been rightly identified with Socrates' ensuing dialectic;[35] dialectic which also brings Socrates to his senses after he has been struck physically by love. In Callimachus' case, the *καλοὶ λόγοι* of his poetry form one of the two possible *ἐπῳδαί* for love. Other words in the epigram also recall Plato's view of the sickness of the soul; in the *Timaeus*, there are said to be two types of sickness of the soul, *μανία* and *ἀμαθία*.[36] At *Epigram* 46.2 the Cyclops is said specifically to be *οὐκ ἀμαθής*,[37] and the word used for poetry as a cure-all just two lines below is *σοφία*, whose opposite, according to Plato, is *ἀμαθία*.[38] It has been demonstrated that Theocritean bucolic draws upon Plato's *Phaedrus* and other dialogues,[39] and it would not be surprising if Callimachus were framing his treatment of poetry's relationship to healing also in Platonic terms.

As for the second of the two *ἐπῳδαί* in the poem, hunger (*λιμός*) as a cure for love is a literary topos,[40] but there could be a further point. Callimachus elsewhere speaks of his poverty as a poet (*Iambi* fr. 193), itself a common motif in Hellenistic and later Latin poetry.[41] In a fragment of the *Aetia* (*P Ant.* 113 fr. 1 b = *SH* 239; cf. *SH* 253), which seems also to treat the relationship between hunger and Callimachus' profession of poet, a food bin is said to have sung a 'different song' (line 9, *ἤει]σεν δ' ἄλλο μέλος σιπύ[η]*); Bulloch insightfully wonders why the poet's hunger should 'not have been due especially to his taste for a particular kind of Muse, the unfashionable *λεπταλέην*'.[42] Given that hunger and poetry are paired as *ἐπῳδαί* in *Epigram* 46, it is tempting to see there too a particular point about the qualities of Callimachus' poetry in the efficacious combination of poetry and a slimming dietary regime. In light of the medical frame of *Epigram* 46, it is also worth noting that dietetics had in the fourth century come to hold an important place in medical therapy.[43] A passage from Plato is perhaps again instructive: in the *Gorgias* 521d–522a, Socrates compares himself as a rhetorician, who aims not to please the Athenian public but to speak what is best, to a doctor who, among other treatments, enforces hunger and thirst (*πεινῆν καὶ διψῆν*) on his patients for their benefit; we are told that neither Socrates' rhetoric nor the enforced privations of the doctor would find favour with a jury of children, who look only to their immediate pleasure, although their prescriptions are ultimately more beneficial.[44] The application of a similar motif earlier in the *Gorgias* (464c–e) pits a doctor against a cook; if children and foolish men were to judge which of the two can better distinguish between good and bad foods, the doctor would starve to death for lack of business (*λιμῷ ἂν ἀποθανεῖν τὸν ἰατρόν*).[45] However, it is ultimately

[35] See Erler (1987), 210–11, Vorwerk (2001), 32 n.12.

[36] 86b *νόσον μὲν δὴ ψυχῆς ἄνοιαν συγχωρητέον, δύο δ' ἀνοίας γένη, τὸ μὲν μανίαν, τὸ δὲ ἀμαθίαν.*

[37] Hunter (1999), 223 suggests that this could allude to Nicias' reply to Theocritus; cf. Hordern (2006), 290.

[38] *Prot.* 360d *οὐκοῦν ἡ τῶν δεινῶν καὶ μὴ δεινῶν σοφία ἐναντία τῇ τούτων ἀμαθίᾳ ἐστίν.* See Gow–Page (1965), 2.157 on *σοφία* used of poetry.

[39] See Murley (1940), Hunter (1999), 145–6, Fantuzzi–Hunter (2004), 143–52.

[40] Gow–Page (1965), 2.157 note the motif at Crates fr. 363 (*SH*), Eur. fr. 895 (*TrGF*).

[41] See Kerkhecker (1999), 70 n. 41 for an extensive list of parallels and bibliography.

[42] Bulloch (1970), 274–6. On this implication in Call. *Ep*. 46, cf. Klooster (2009), 64.

[43] See Nutton (2004), 125–6.

[44] On ancient distrust of doctors and resistance to treatment out of ignorance, see Dodds (1959), 210–11. Cf. *Phdr*. 260c–e, where a comparison is drawn between Hippocratic medicine and rhetoric.

[45] Pl. *Grg*. 464 c–e *ὑπὸ μὲν οὖν τὴν ἰατρικὴν ἡ ὀψοποιικὴ ὑποδέδυκεν, καὶ προσποιεῖται τὰ βέλτιστα σιτία τῷ σώματι εἰδέναι, ὥστ' εἰ δέοι ἐν παισὶ διαγωνίζεσθαι ὀψοποιόν τε καὶ*

the rhetorician who persuades an unwilling patient, not a physician (*Grg.* 456).[46] If Callimachus were thinking in such terms, his hunger as poet would fittingly align his poetry with a good doctor's therapy and Socrates' controlled rhetoric; if not always popular, it is most valuable.

In the cases then of Theocritus, *Idyll* 11 and Callimachus, *Epigram* 46 we see an intricate relationship formed between medicine and the intellectual pursuit of poetry, inherited in part from the preceding literary tradition but exploited to new ends. These poems presuppose an audience capable of understanding the complicated interplay at work, which included figures such as Nicias, who was both doctor and poet. The first poem in the group of Posidippus' epigrams (95 A–B) entitled ἰαματικά provides an example of an elite Hellenistic doctor patronizing poetry, although not a poet himself. The poem celebrates the dedication of a statue by Medeus of Olynthus, son of Lampon.[47] Peter Bing has identified this doctor as a high-ranking official of the Ptolemaic court, the eponymous priest of Alexander and the *Theoi Adelphoi*, who was possibly also in charge of the Ptolemaic medical tax.[48] Technical medical detail, however, would certainly have been attractive and comprehensible to learned Hellenistic audiences beyond those who were doctors. Influence of prose texts of various types (geographical, astronomical, medical) on Hellenistic poets has been shown in recent years,[49] and one must understand an interest in medical knowledge within this broader literary context.

I have suggested above that Callimachus makes use of language in *Epigram* 46 that is reminiscent of the discussion of healing of body and soul in the dialogues of Plato, who depicts Socrates assuming the persona of a physician. If understood in the context of these earlier philosophical texts, Callimachus' use of the word ἐπῳδαί, in particular, takes on a more nuanced set of meanings. The importance of the term in the epigram is signalled by its repeated use at the end of the first line of the opening and closing couplets. Callimachus improves upon the Cyclops' cure for love by having two ἐπῳδαί, both poetry and hunger, an addition that further explores the complex relationship between physical and spiritual healing. Poetry is a universal cure, but when combined with a physical, slimming dietary regime it is even more effective. Ultimately, the epigram may be a reflection on the qualities of Callimachus' poetry κατὰ λεπτόν, for which the term ἐπῳδαί is perhaps especially representative. Apart from the Platonic resonances of the word, the recorded magical ἐπῳδαί which have been preserved are short and concise.[50]

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ἰατρόν, ἢ ἐν ἀνδράσιν οὕτως ἀνοήτοις ὥσπερ οἱ παῖδες, πότερος ἐπαΐει περὶ τῶν χρηστῶν σιτίων καὶ πονηρῶν, ὁ ἰατρὸς ἢ ὁ ὀψοποιός, λιμῷ ἂν ἀποθανεῖν τὸν ἰατρόν.

[46] See Furley (1993), 85–7 on the analogy of λόγος and φάρμακον in Gorgias' *Helen*.

[47] Austin–Bastianini 95.

[48] Bing (2002).

[49] On Posidippus see Sider (2005).

[50] The incantations preserved in the Greek magical papyri are rarely more than five or ten lines. See Furley (1993), 91–2, who suggests that longer incantations may well have been transmitted orally, but that the confined space of apotropaic items on which incantations were inscribed would have required compact versions. Rosati (2006), 148–51 has suggested that magical texts may have served as a model also for Ovid in the *Remedia Amoris,* in which the poet also adopts the persona of a doctor.

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