

Magnus Ulrich Ferber and Philipp Knüppfer

Letters as Comment on Commentary

The Annotationes in *Hymnos Callimachi*

by Nicodemus Frischlin (1577) and Bonaventura Vulcanius (1584)

1) Introduction

Non pauci è vobis sunt, qui suis me calamis tanquam stimulis et calcaribus quibusdam eò conantur impellere, ut ad Hymnorum Callimachi versionem iam olim in Gallia editam et nuper à quodam *plagiario* mihi furtim ablatam, tum etiam ad quinque Comoedias Aristophanis priores, quas ante quinquennium verti, sex reliquas adiiciam.¹

With these lines forming part of a letter from December 1, 1584, Tübingen humanist Nicodemus Frischlin (1547 – 1590) tried to convince a number of unspecified recipients in Germany, Italy, France, Denmark, Poland, and Hungary to help him raise funds in order to promote the publication of a series of poetic and philological works he had ready for printing. Frischlin, who had gained considerable prestige as a playwright and author of a wide range of humanist writings, felt the urgency to launch this appeal since he was attempting to reestablish himself at the University of Tübingen after a two-year intermezzo as headmaster of the Latin school in the Slovene town of Ljubljana. In his letter, Frischlin presents a list of approximately twenty works which he promised to complete within two years' time if only he had the funds necessary.

¹ Frischlin to his friends in Germany, Italy, France, Denmark, Poland and Hungary, Strasbourg, December 1, 1584, printed after the edition of his play *Dido*, in: Nicodemus Frischlin, *Operum poeticorum Pars scenica*, Strasbourg 1595, fol. C2v. (Translation: Many of you have tried to convince me, using their pens as a spur or goad, to translate the remaining six comedies of Aristophanes in addition to the first five comedies translated by me five years ago, and my translation of Callimachus' hymns, which have been published earlier in France and recently stolen from me in secret by some plagiarist.)

In our article, special emphasis is placed on one of the works referred to in the opening quote, namely Frischlin's translation of Callimachus' *Hymns*. In 1577, one of the most renowned humanist printers of the time, especially for his edition of Plato, Geneva-based Henri Estienne, also known by his Latin alias, Henricus Stephanus, published his *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni et Epigrammata*² containing Frischlin's translation of both hymns and epigrams into Latin as well as *Annotationes in Hymnos*, a commentary on the hymns.

In his letter from 1584, Frischlin mentions a ›plagiarius‹ who, so he claims, had stolen his translation. Apparently, he is referring to a fellow humanist author, Flemish professor of Latin and Greek at Leiden University, Bonaventura Vulcanius (1538 – 1614).³ Earlier that year, Vulcanius had published his own edition of Callimachus' texts at the famous Plantin Press in Antwerp and Leiden using a nearly identical title, *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni, Epigrammata et Fragmenta*.⁴ This edition also consisted of a proper translation in verse and, what is more, a commentary of his own.

In this paper, we intend (1) to characterize Frischlin's commentary on Callimachus as genuinely humanistic, (2) to discuss the quarrel that arose between the competing editor-commentators, and (3) to show in this case how the surviving correspondences of the three protagonists can serve as comment on the commentary to Callimachus. Lastly, we present two commented letters by Frischlin as a sample of our current edition of his correspondence.

2) Frischlin as Commentator of Callimachus

Nicodemus Frischlin⁵ was born in 1547 as the son of a Lutheran pastor in the Württemberg town of Balingen. He had undergone the typical humanist training

2 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni (cum suis Scholiis Graecis) et Epigrammata. eiusdem Poematium de Coma Berenices a Catullo versum. Nicodemi Frischlini Balingensis Interpretationes duae Hymnorum, una Oratione soluta, altera Carmine. Eiusdem Interpretatio Epigrammatum et Annotaciones in Hymnos. Henrici Stephani Emendationes partim Annotaciones in quosdam Hymnorum Locos. Eiusdem duplex Interpretatio Hymni primi, Carmine utraque, quarum una strictae, altera liberae et paraphrasticae Interpretationis Exemplum esse possit*, Geneva 1577.

3 Cf. Hélène Cazes (ed.), *Bonaventura Vulcanius, Works and Networks. Bruges 1538 – Leiden 1614*, Leiden, Boston 2010 (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History 194).

4 Bonaventura Vulcanius, *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni, Epigrammata et Fragmenta, quae extant, et separatim Moschi Syracusii et Bionos Smyrnaei Idyllia Bonaventura Vulcanio Brugensi Interprete cum Annotationibus eiusdem et Indice copioso*, Antwerp 1584. On this edition cf. Thomas M. Conley, »Vulcanius as Editor: The Greek Texts«, in: Cazes (as note 3), pp. 337–350; here p. 338.

5 On his biography still cf. David Friedrich Strauß, *Leben und Schriften des Dichters und Philologen Nicodemus Frischlin. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Culturgeschichte in der zweiten Hälfte des 16.*

when he entered the University of Tübingen, which at that time was a centre for Orthodox Lutheran studies in Germany, at the age of fifteen. In 1567, he became an associate professor and began lecturing on Virgil, Caesar, Horace, Sallust, Cicero's letters, and the like. At about the same time, Frischlin published his first Latin comedy, *Rebecca*⁶, a biblical stage play imitating Plautus and Terence with regard to their characters and style. During his life, he composed seven more Latin comedies and two Latin tragedies in addition to a German play, making him one of the most widely read authors of this genre up to the 17th century in the German-speaking countries. His most famous plays are the university comedy *Priscianus vapulans*⁷, premiered during the centenary celebration of the University of Tübingen, the patriotic comedy *Iulius redivivus*⁸ and the confessional drama *Phasma*⁹.

This distinguished poet had turned his attention to Callimachus of Cyrene, a popular Greek poet in ancient times affiliated with the famous library of Alexandria in the 3rd century BC, as a possible stylistic role model for composing verse. His vast poetic oeuvre has survived partially in fragments, but it has been extensively supplemented by new papyrus findings in the last two centuries.¹⁰

As early as the Renaissance period, Callimachus' six hymns to the Olympian gods were known. They were published in 1496 for the first time.¹¹ During the 16th century, numerous new editions appeared, including the one that Henricus Stephanus enclosed in his *Poetae Graeci Principes Heroici Carminis*¹² in 1566. Eight years later, an expanded edition was published in Paris in the printing house of Joannes Benenatus, offering not only the ancient Greek commentary on Callimachus, but also a metrical translation into Latin by Nicolaus Gulonius from Chartres.¹³

Jahrhunderts, Frankfurt a. M. 1856. For an extensive overview on his work and secondary literature until the year 2005 cf. Thomas Wilhelmi and Friedrich Seck, *Nikodemus Frischlin (1547 – 1590). Bibliographie*, Leinfelden, Echterdingen 2004 (Tübinger Bausteine zur Landesgeschichte 4).

6 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Rebecca. Comoedia nova et sacra*, Frankfurt a. M. 1576.

7 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Priscianus vapulans. Comedia lepida, faceta et utilis, in qua demonstrantur Soloecismi et Barbarismi, qui superioribus Seculis omnia Artium et Doctrinarum Studia, quasi quodam Diluvio inundarunt: Scripta in Laudem huius Seculi*, Strasbourg 1580.

8 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Iulius redivivus. Comoedia in Laudem Germaniae et Germanorum scripta*, Strasbourg 1585.

9 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Phasma. Hoc est Comoedia posthuma, nova et Sacra de variis Haeresibus et Haesiarchis*, Strasbourg 1592.

10 Cf. Luigi Lehnus, »Kallimachos aus Kyrene«, in: *Der Neue Pauly* VI, col. 188-194.

11 Ioannes Laskaris (ed.), *Καλλιμάχου Κυρηναίου Ὕμνοι*, Florence 1496.

12 Henricus Stephanus (ed.), *Poetae Graeci principes Heroici Carminis et alii nonnulli*, Geneva 1566, part III, pp. 153-181.

13 Nicolaus Gulonius, *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni cum Scholiis*, Paris 1574.

This edition perhaps forced Stephanus to present an improved one. For this project, he was able to fall back on the work of Frischlin, whose edition offers some reader's aids to the hymns. Thus, the ancient commentary encloses the verses of Callimachus typographically in the style of medieval glosses explaining words and names. At the bottom of each page Frischlin presents a Latin translation in prose.¹⁴

In a second, separate part, Frischlin offers his own commentary on Callimachus¹⁵ which happens to be the first modern commentary on this poet and thereby stands in a typical humanistic tradition. Furthermore, commentaries on ancient classics can be considered the one genre that most clearly expresses the humanistic claim that new knowledge can only be acquired through a recourse to antiquity. Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that »[b]etween 1400 and 1700, more commentaries were written than during any other period of ›Western‹ history«, as Karl Enenkel assesses.¹⁶ The commentary is followed by a metric translation of the hymns into Latin by Frischlin¹⁷ and the first publication of 31 epigrams attributed to Callimachus, accompanied by Latin translations from Frischlin.¹⁸ The book ends with a biography of Callimachus in Greek by Frischlin.¹⁹

Frischlin's commentary meets the philological standards established over decades by his humanistic forerunners. Thus, he uses lemmas to explain individual words, such as the epithets of the gods, and often combines them with references to etymology or proverbs usually cited after the *Adagia* of Erasmus²⁰, to indicate parallel passages in ancient literature and to explain proper names of places and rhetorical figures, such as comparisons²¹, amplifications²², apostrophes²³, metonymies²⁴, periphrases²⁵, or hypotyposes²⁶ he considers especially elaborate.

14 Frischlin (as note 2), part I, pp. 1-52.

15 Ibid., part II, pp. 1-71.

16 Cf. Karl Enenkel, »The Neo-Latin Commentary«, in: *Brill's Encyclopedia of the Neo-Latin World. Macropedia*, Leiden, Boston 2014, pp. 207-216, here 207. In the following, Enenkel argues that compared to the time before 1400 a change took place both in quantity and quality of texts that were commented upon. Now even texts from outside the literary cannon were regarded as worthy of commentary as they helped to assemble as much information about antiquity as possible.

17 Frischlin (as note 2), part II, pp. 73-84.

18 Ibid., part I, pp. 60-70.

19 Ibid., part II, pp. 85 f.

20 Cf. Frischlin (as note 2), p. 14 concerning Hymn II,45 and pp. 23 f. concerning Hymn III,38.

21 Cf. ibid., p. 20 concerning Hymn II,108 and p. 49 concerning Hymn IV,228.

22 Cf. ibid., p. 25 concerning Hymn III,91 and p. 45 concerning Hymn IV,137.

23 Cf. ibid., p. 49 concerning Hymn IV,21 and p. 70 concerning Hymn VI,277.

24 Cf. ibid., p. 51 concerning Hymn IV,277.

25 Cf. ibid., p. 56 concerning Hymn V,24 and 26.

26 Cf. ibid., p. 24 concerning Hymn III,59.

Proceeding this way did not only imply a better understanding of the source text, but it also allowed the commentator to use the classical text as a point of departure to deploy his own knowledge about any field of science.

Frischlin emphasized this practice in a letter to his Tübingen colleague Georg Burckhard dated March 25, 1575.²⁷ Starting from Poliziano's dictum »Qui poetarum interpretationem suscipit, eum non solum ad Aristophanis lucernam, sed etiam ad Cleanthis oportet lucubrasse«²⁸, and referring to a commentary on the *Aeneid*, which he had in mind²⁹, Frischlin named all the subject areas which, in his opinion, were relevant for a comprehensive commentary on an ancient poet: history, mythology, ethics, economics, politics, physics, medicine, geography, astronomy, grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics. In order to obtain a better understanding of Virgil, one would consequently have to consult nearly 150 authors, all of which Frischlin listed by name. His list included Callimachus whom he sees as one of the possible role models for the Roman poet. In his commentary on Callimachus, Frischlin therefore mentions four passages in the hymns that Virgil had relied on, supposedly.³⁰

In his commentary, Frischlin actually practices the aforementioned all-encompassing method discussing physical³¹, astronomical³², and medical³³ phenomena as well. Nevertheless, geographical comments on ancient places of worship mentioned in the hymns are much more numerous. Sometimes Frischlin quotes ancient *loci classici* referring to these places. Even historical remarks mainly refer to the history of ancient cults – once even with a comparison to ritual practices of the Celts, of which Caesar reports.³⁴

The majority of the factual commentary, however, consists of explanations on mythology. At this point, Frischlin surprisingly acts quite defensively, as if he

27 Printed in: Melchior Goldast, *Philologicarum Epistolarum Centuria*, Leipzig 1674, pp. 279-290.

28 Angelo Poliziano, *Miscellaneorum Centuria Prima*, Florence 1489, fol. ci^v, thus referring to a famous passage by Varro, *De lingua Latina*, V,9,1. (Translation: Attempting an interpretation of the poets, one needs to work not only by the light [i. e. following the model] of Aristophanes but also by the one of Cleanthes [a stoic who lived around 331-232 BC and was said to have studied only by night]).

29 Only the commentary on the first two books of the *Aeneid* has been handed down in Nicodemus Frischlin, *P. Virgilii Maronis Aeneidos Libri duo priores ex Livio, Caesare et Cicerone luculenta ac perspicua Paraphrasi expositi*, Frankfurt a. M. 1602.

30 Frischlin (as note 2), part II, p. 11 concerning Hymn II,1; p. 24 concerning Hymn III,49; p. 45 concerning Hymn IV,141 and p. 67 concerning Hymn VI,57.

31 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 39 concerning Hymn IV,31 has a note about the theory of lightning by Aristotle.

32 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 40 concerning Hymn IV,38 has a note about shooting stars.

33 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 13 concerning Hymn II,40 has a note about the effect of the moon carrot according to Pliny the Elder.

34 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 11 concerning Hymn II,2 discussing Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, VI,16.

as a philologist at an Orthodox Lutheran university in the confessional age was under strong pressure to justify and explain why he dealt with Greek mythology. His solution for this problem is a recourse to the medieval practice of allegorical interpretation³⁵: Frischlin uses classical literature as a treasure trove filled with metaphors representing Christian contents.

In his commentary on the giants, for example, Frischlin not only points to the literary treatment of the motif of the *Battle of Giants* by Hesiod, Ovid, and Claudian as well as to references to this myth in Virgil, Horace, Homer, and Cicero, but he also applies a Christian interpretive perspective when comparing the *Battle of Giants* to the expulsion from paradise or to the construction of the Tower of Babel as a metaphor for turning away from God.³⁶ He found

35 About this way of interpreting classical texts, cf. Lothar Mundt, »Einleitung«, in: Georg Sabinus, *Fabularum Ovidii interpretatio – Auslegung der Metamorphosen des Ovid*, ed. and trs. Lothar Mundt, Berlin, Boston 2019 (Frühe Neuzeit 226), pp. IX-XXXVIII, here pp. XXIV-XXIX, with numerous further literature notes.

36 Frischlin (as note 2), part II, p. 1 concerning Hymn I,3: »De pugna verò Gigantum lege Hesiodum in Theogonia, Ovidium lib. 1. Metam. et Fastorum lib. 5. Item Claudianum in Gigantomachia. Eiusdem meminit Virgil. in 6., Horat. lib. 3. Carm. ode 4., Homerus in Batrachomyomachia. Quanvis autem ea, quae de Gigantibus coelo arma inferre ausis poetae fabulantur, etiam Cicerone teste, dicantur et credantur stultissimè et plena sint futilitatis summaeque levitatis: nihilominus tamen, si dextrè ac sobriè intelligantur paulòque altius expendantur, aliquam veritatem earum rerum, quas diabolus huiusmodi figmentorum nebulis tegere et obscurare voluit, sub ista fabula latere, apertè constabit. Quis enim è sacris literis non didicit primos humani generis propagatores, πηλογόνους, hoc est è limo terrae formatos, posteaquam Satanae fraudibus et technis elusi fuissent Dei mandato neglecto et spreto honores divinos affectasse, sed è paradiso miserrimè eiectos et expulsos esse? Quis nescit posteros Noè excelsissimam turrim quasi coacervatis montibus erigere conatos, cuius culmen summum coeli verticem attingeret, sed ab opere incepto divina vi prohibitos fuisse? Quis ignorat ipsum Satanam cum omni coetu cacodaemonum in Tartarum abiectum esse? Quid denique Gigantes aliud (Macrobio teste) fuisse credendum est, quàm impiam quondam gentem deos negantem et ideò existimatam Deum pellere de coelesti sede voluisse? Berosus lib. 1. Antiquit. Babyloneos Gigantes vocat, qui temporibus Noe diluvio absorpti sunt.« (Translation: About the *Battle of Giants* you should read Hesiod's *Theogony*, the first book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and book five of his *Fasti*, then Claudian's *Gigantomachy*. The same thing is commemorated in book six of Virgil's *Aeneis*, as in book three, ode four of the *Carmina* by Horace and in Homer's *Batrachomyomachia*. Even though everything the poets tell about the giants daring to bring arms into Heaven, as also Cicero mentioned, are only foolish stories and beliefs, futile and unreliable, it is nevertheless crystal clear that in these stories, if understood properly and prudently and pondered a little bit more deeply, there is hidden a certain truth about the things the devil wants to cover and obscure with this kind of clouds of inventions. Is there anyone who did not learn from the Holy Script that the first procreators of humankind, the πηλογόνους, that means made by earthen clay, were affected by divine honors, but relentlessly were expelled and chased from Paradise after being deluded by the frauds and tricks of Satan, ignoring and disdaining the mandate of God? Is there anyone who does not know that the progeny of Noah tried to erect an enormously high tower – as if they were

the epithet Πηλόγονοι³⁷ (varisen from loam) that Callimachus uses for the Giants especially appealing since it was a suitable reference to the first generation of humankind described in Genesis. In this respect, it is understandable that Frischlin celebrates Callimachus both as a moral and poetic role model in his dedication letter from 1 July, 1571.³⁸

3) Vulcanius, a Plagiarist?

When Frischlin claims to have been robbed of his Callimachus in 1584, he is most certainly referring to the edition presented by Vulcanius, professor for philology in Leiden, in the same year. This book offers an edition of the hymns of Callimachus and their metric translations by Vulcanius himself³⁹, then translations by other authors⁴⁰, including two renderings by Henricus Stephanus, Frischlin's publisher. The translations of the Tübingen poet are missing, however. The book also contains the epigrams of Callimachus with a Latin metric translation written by Vulcanius⁴¹ and the ancient Greek commentary on the hymns mentioned above⁴², followed by Vulcanius' own commentary about the hymns and epigrams of Callimachus⁴³.

Vulcanius' commentary remains very close to the text. Concerning the passage on the giants mentioned above, he explains for example only the epithet Πηλόγονοι based on the *Lexicon* of Hesychios of Alexandria first printed in 1514⁴⁴, which he consults for numerous explanations of words. Vulcanius uses other Greek authors to compare the meanings of a word, but does not attempt to classify the hymns of Callimachus in literary terms. The Dutchman keeps further

heaping up mountains –, the peak of which was meant to touch the highest point of Heaven, but that they were prevented from doing so by divine force when they had just started? Who does not know that Satan himself was thrown down into Tartarus together with all his evil demons? Should one believe that the giants were anything else than an impious people that once upon a time neglected the gods and therefore were believed to have tried to expel God from his heavenly throne, as Macrobius assesses? Berossus in the first book of his *Babylonian Antiquities* calls giants those people who drowned in the flood in Noah's time.)

37 On the controversial reading of this term, cf. Adolf Köhnken, »Πηλογόνων ἐλατήρ. Kallimachos, Zeusmythos V. 3«, in: *Hermes* 112 (1984), pp. 438-445.

38 Frischlin (as note 2), fol. iir-iiir. Cf. Irene Polke, *Selbstreflexion im Spiegel des Anderen. Eine wirkungsgeschichtliche Studie zum Hellenismusbild Heynes und Herders*, Würzburg 1999 (Epistemata 257), pp. 64-86.

39 Vulcanius (as note 4), pp. 1-89.

40 Ibid., pp. 90-112.

41 Ibid., pp. 113-133.

42 Ibid., pp. 139-168.

43 Ibid., pp. 177-244.

44 Ibid., p. 177.

associations to himself, place names are rarely commented on, and historical or rhetorical explanations are completely absent. The dimensions of his commentary are thus considerably smaller than the ones of Frischlin's.

In his translation as well as in his commentary, Vulcanius strikes us as an independent scholar and his book could hardly be regarded as plagiarism. Nevertheless, Frischlin's anger over this publication is quite understandable: It basically offers the same approach as his own work on Callimachus at almost the same time, while avoiding any reference to it.⁴⁵ Apparently, the Callimachus published in Antwerp was meant to replace the one from Geneva, allowing the latter to sink into oblivion.

4) Letters as Comment on Commentary

The reasons for Vulcanius' action cannot be found in the commentaries themselves or in the paratexts of the two versions of Callimachus. Therefore, to find comment on the commentaries, it is worthwhile to examine the correspondences of both parties involved. As for Vulcanius, an edition of his letters was published in 1923.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, it only covers the period from 1573 to 1577, but it nonetheless gives an impression of how Vulcanius reacted to Frischlin's edition.

Vulcanius himself had served as an editor for Stephanus in Geneva in 1575, with whom he published his edition of Arrianus in the same year. He then moved on to Basel and in October 1576, he learned through a letter from the Genevan humanist Simon Goulart about Stephanus' plans of producing a new edition of Callimachus.⁴⁷ It was in this context that he heard of Frischlin for the first time.

Vulcanius responded immediately: he wrote a letter to Stephanus, referring to the rumour that the latter was planning a new edition of Callimachus with additional texts by an unknown author. At the place where Frischlin's name should have appeared in this letter, Vulcanius simply left a blank. Together with this letter, he sent his own translation of the first hymn of Callimachus, which he had already prepared in 1555. He sarcastically stated that Stephanus should examine whether this student work could actually be outdone by a »veteran«,

45 Frischlin's name can be found in this issue only in the commentary on Hymn IV,246, where Vulcanius refers to Frischlin's translation for a better understanding of the text (Vulcanius [as note 4], p. 222).

46 Herman de Vries de Heekelingen (ed.), *Correspondance de Bonaventura Vulcanius pendant son séjour à Cologne, Genève et Bâle (1573 – 1577). Précédée de quelques lettres écrites avant cette époque*, The Hague 1923.

47 Simon Goulart to Vulcanius, October 17, 1576 (ibid., p. 387): »Nunc excudit [scil. Stephanus] Callimachum Frischlini et editionem Platoniam unico prelo«. (Translation: Now Stephanus is printing Frischlin's Callimachus and the edition of Plato at the same printing press.)

thus referring to Nicodemus Frischlin, seven years his junior.⁴⁸ The chosen wording proves that at that time Vulcanius knew exactly who Frischlin was. His formulation *lauream petente* alludes to Frischlin's recent elevation to Poet Laureate during the Regensburg Diet. After this intervention, Stephanus added Vulcanius' translation alongside his own two translations of Callimachus' hymns to Frischlin's rendering.⁴⁹ The Callimachus edition of 1577 thus documents a veritable battle of translations.

This impression is reinforced after reading the letters by and to Nicodemus Frischlin, which we are currently editing in a historical-critical edition funded by the German Research Foundation.⁵⁰ The extant correspondence that has been identified by now consists of 445 letters, of which almost 80 %, 352 in total, were written by Frischlin, whereas the remaining 20 % (93) were addressed to Frischlin by various authors. This imbalance is due to the fact that, given his untimely death in 1590 as a prisoner of his former patron, Duke Ludwig of Württemberg, no literary estate has come down on us. Both Duke Ludwig's court in Stuttgart and the University of Tübingen had a deep interest in preserving, systematically ordering, and filing the correspondence with this unruly poet in order to document the proceeding of the conflicts with his colleagues⁵¹ and the aristocracy of

48 Vulcanius to Stephanus, November 1, 1576 (ibid., p. 197): »Ex Goulartii literis intelligo te parare editionem Callimachi ex versione ... Quo in genere studii cum aliquando, cum adolescens anno aetatis XVI, quum una cum Utenhoviis fratribus Gandavi Graecis literis operam navarem, versatus, hymnum Callimachi tum temporis a me versum ad te mitto, ut si dignum iudicaveris qui aliis adiciatur, integrum tibi sit. Neque erit, quod doleam, si me tyronem a veterano iam non rudem sed lauream petente superatum intellexero«. (Translation: From Goulart's letter I learned that you are preparing an edition of Callimachus [from ...]'s version. I am sending you my translation of a hymn by Callimachus that I made when I was engaged in this kind of studies as a young man at age 16 and dedicated myself to Greek literature together with the Utenhove brothers in Ghent. In case you judge it worthy, I would be pleased if you add it to other translations. I will not be in pain should I learn that I, as a recruit, have been outdone by a veteran who is not inexperienced any more but already reaching out for the laurel wreath.)

49 Frischlin (as note 2), part II, pp. 109-119.

50 On this project, cf. Philipp Knüpfper, »Aus der Werkstatt eines Auftragsübersetzers. Die ›Acta Oecumenici Consilii‹ von Jakob Schropp im Briefwechsel des Tübinger Späthumanisten Nicodemus Frischlin (1547 – 1590)«, in: Wolfgang Mährle (ed.), *Spätrenaissance in Schwaben: Wissen – Literatur – Kunst*, Stuttgart 2019 (Geschichte Württembergs. Impulse der Forschung 2), pp. 181-208, here pp. 190-193. We would like to thank our colleagues Robert Seidel (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a. M.), Thomas Wilhelmi (Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften) and Lothar Mundt (Freie Universität Berlin) for their valuable advice.

51 On the conflict between Frischlin and his Tübingen teacher Martin Crusius that contemporaries dubbed a ›Grammar War‹ cf., for example, Hubert Cancik, »Crusius contra Frischlinum«. Geschichte einer Feindschaft«, in: Sabine Holtz and Dieter Mertens (eds.), *Nicodemus Frischlin (1547 – 1590). Poetische und prosaische Praxis unter den Bedingungen des konfessionellen Zeitalters*, Stuttgart, Bad Cannstatt 1999 (Arbeiten und Editionen zur Mittleren Deutschen

the Empire⁵² that accompanied his entire career and beyond. In comparison, only a small number of letters to non-resident scholars is known to exist, in some cases because of the scarce transmission of letters, and in others because contact was abruptly ended after a controversy between correspondents. Frischlin only exchanged a small number of letters with pre-eminent representatives of the Late Renaissance like the Leiden philologist Justus Lipsius⁵³, the printer Aldus Manutius in Venice⁵⁴ or, indeed, Henricus Stephanus and Bonaventura Vulcanius.

The first thing we learn from Frischlin's correspondence concerning Callimachus is that his manuscript of the edition had already been completed in 1572 because in that year he had asked in vain the Leipzig philologist Joachim Camerarius the Elder to proofread the manuscript.⁵⁵ So his commentary on Callimachus is the first important work of the young professor for poetics and history in Tübingen. Obviously, he wanted to gain a good reputation in the Republic of Letters by a basic work about a well-known author who had only been received by a few scholars.

In a letter from 1577 precisely to Vulcanius, Frischlin also remarks that his manuscript was sent to Stephanus for examination as early as in 1573⁵⁶, and from a letter to the Basel lawyer Basilius Amerbach, who subsequently transmitted the letters of Frischlin, Vulcanius, and Stephanus between Tübingen and Geneva, we know that Frischlin met Stephanus during the Frankfurt fair.⁵⁷ However, this work was first published four years later.

We first hear about preparations of the publication in a letter from Frischlin to Stephanus from November 12, 1576.⁵⁸ There, the commentator expressed his ambiguity regarding the layout of the proof sheets. On the one hand, he gave the

Literatur. Neue Folge 1), pp. 261-295. In addition, Frischlin fell into dispute with many other members of the Tübingen faculty of arts. Cf. Magnus Ulrich Ferber, »Colluctatio Fröschlini et Onocrusii. Die absichtlich missglückte Kommunikationsstruktur im Vorfeld des Tübinger Grammatik-Streits«, in: Karl Enenkel and Christian Peters (eds.), *Humanisten über ihre Kollegen. Eulogien, Klatsch und Rufmord*, Berlin 2018 (Scientia Universalis I. Studien zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Vormoderne 3), pp. 145-176, here p. 147.

52 Frischlin's quarrel with the German nobility was ignited by the publication of his *Oratio de Vita Rustica* in 1580. Cf. Siegfried Wollgast, »Frischlin als junger Müntzer? Zu einer Polemik«, in: Holtz, Mertens (as note 51), pp. 445-470.

53 Cf. Magnus Ulrich Ferber, »Patriotismus und Konfessionalisierung bei schwäbischen Späthumanisten. Die Korrespondenzen von Nicodemus Frischlin und Marx Welser im Vergleich«, in: Mährle (as note 50), pp. 209-228, here pp. 219-221.

54 Biblioteca Ambrosiana Milan E 35 inf., fol. 89 and E 37 inf., fol. 132.

55 Frischlin to Joachim Camerarius the Elder, September 7, 1572 (Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach, B: Frischlin, Nicodemus, Nr. 1802).

56 Frischlin to Vulcanius, July 26, 1577 (University Library Leiden, VUL. 105, III).

57 Frischlin to Basilius Amerbach, October 1, 1575 (University Library Basel, G II 17, fol. 69).

58 State and University Library Bremen, MS. A. VIII, fol. 420.

publisher a free hand in arranging the individual parts; on the other, he emphasized the fact that he had spent more time and effort on the metric translation and the commentary than on the more recent prose translation.

After the publication of Frischlin's *Callimachus*, the Tübingen poet appeared to be quite disappointed with the outcome as one can discern from his letter to Stephanus from April 13, 1577.⁵⁹ This letter can be found as a supplement to this paper.⁶⁰ It may as well serve as a sample of our edition, which in turn provides a comment and thus covers the affair with another layer of commentary. We also use lemmas to explain individual words, to indicate parallel passages in ancient literature, and to explain places and figures. In the case at hand, this implies that we not only had to take account of Frischlin's knowledge of *Callimachus*, but we also had to consult modern readings of this author. Unlike our humanistic forerunners, we also offer a critical apparatus which refers to textual variants in case of various text versions, to document deletions and later improvements, which provides information on material aspects of the letters and, as appropriate, even intervenes in the text if the original contains an obvious error.⁶¹

According to today's standards, Frischlin would have been well advised to make use of a critical apparatus, too, because he emends the *Callimachus* text as presented by Stephanus in 1566, now and then even tacitly.⁶² However, this corresponded with humanistic practice of the 16th century which allowed a talented scholar to improve a surviving text wherever he deemed necessary without informing the readers. After all, Frischlin's letter to Stephanus gives some information about his emendations⁶³, but it does not replace the apparatus.

Vulcanius also emends the text of the hymns of *Callimachus* and compares in his commentary the text editions available to him, including that of 1577, which he calls »editio Henricostephaniana«. ⁶⁴ Although he praises Stephanus in detail in his commentary at one point⁶⁵, Vulcanius rejects many changes made in the edition by Frischlin.⁶⁶

In the letter mentioned, Frischlin accused his publisher of having humiliated him before the scholarly world by publishing his hastily written prose translation

⁵⁹ University Library Leiden, VUL. 36, fol. 99.

⁶⁰ Supplement I.

⁶¹ For example, cf. Supplement I, line 64.

⁶² An exception is the change made to Hymn VI,120 that is explicitly mentioned in the commentary (Frischlin [as note 2], part II, p. 70).

⁶³ Cf. Supplement I, lines 49-51 and 70-76.

⁶⁴ Vulcanius (as note 4), p. 212.

⁶⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 201.

⁶⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 195 concerning Hymn II,88 f.; p. 200 concerning Hymn III, 18; p. 212 concerning Hymn III,248; pp. 223 f. concerning Hymn IV, 323; pp. 228-230 concerning Hymn V, 94, 136 and 138; p. 233 concerning Hymn VI,88 and p. 240 concerning epigram XIII.

without any corrections.⁶⁷ Interestingly, this letter to Stephanus has been handed down to us only in a copy from the hand of Vulcanius. Through whom and when he received insight into the letter, however, remains uncertain.

The contact between Frischlin and Stephanus ends with this reproach. Although the Tübingen professor offered the Genevan printer his translations of Aristophanes⁶⁸ mentioned in the opening quotation via Amerbach for publication in 1578⁶⁹, Stephanus ignored this offer. The abrupt end of his correspondence with the scholars of his time is a common pattern in Frischlin's correspondence, which was highly detrimental to his career.

Even in his only known letter to Vulcanius himself dating from July 26, 1577, Frischlin repeats his allegations against Stephanus.⁷⁰ The beginning of the letter »Rectè ominatus es per Deum immortalem, mi Vulcani«⁷¹ does not just indicate that the two scholars had previously had contact, but that Vulcanius had warned Frischlin against Stephanus. In fact, Vulcanius had come to know beforehand that Frischlin was angry with his publisher. In a letter to Joachim Camerarius the Younger from May 1577, he complained that Stephanus was troubling his authors by bungling their works, as one could tell from Frischlin's experience. By referring to this example, he explained his decision not to work with Stephanus any more.⁷²

From then on, there is no trace of contact between Vulcanius and Frischlin. Both scholars strove to present their research on Callimachus in the proper light without the help of Stephanus, Vulcanius by bringing out his edition of 1584, in which he disregards Frischlin, and Frischlin by pursuing a new edition of his book. His attempt to have it printed by Aldo Manuzio in Venice in 1583 failed⁷³, but

67 Cf. Supplement I, line 32-59.

68 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Aristophanes Veteris Comoediae Princeps, Poeta Longe Facetissimus et eloquentissimus Repurgatus a Mendis et Imitatione Plauti atque Terentii Interpretatus*, Frankfurt a. M. 1586. Cf. on this work Patrick Lucky Hadley, *Athens in Rome, Rome in Germany. Nicodemus Frischlin and the Rehabilitation of Aristophanes in the 16th Century*, Tübingen 2015.

69 Frischlin to Basilius Amerbach, June 15, 1578 (University Library Basel, G II 17, fol. 73).

70 University Library Leiden, VUL. 105, III, printed as Supplement II at the end of this paper.

71 Translation: By God, you predicted correctly, my dear Vulcanius.

72 Vulcanius to Joachim Camerarius the Younger, May 1577 (Vries de Heekelingen (as note 46), pp. 256 f.): »Henrici Stephani opera uti non libet. Neque enim mihi placet religiosa illius hominis, quam tantopere ipse iactitat, diligentia, aut potius supervacanea in alienis laboribus curiositas, qua et Serranum, cuius Platonem graeco-latinum excudit et Frischlinum, cuius Callimachum nuper edidit, infensissimos sibi habet«. (Translation: One should not rely on the help of Henricus Stephanus. Neither do I like the strict diligence of that guy, that he is constantly bragging about, and even less do I like his needless curiosity concerning the work of others by which he antagonized Serranus, whose Plato graeco-latinus he printed, and Frischlin, whose Callimachus he has published recently.)

73 Cf. Frischlin to Johann Christoph Gailing, September 1, 1583 (Württembergische Landesbibliothek Stuttgart, Cod. poet. et phil. 4° 15, fol. 54v): »Nam in procinctu sum Venetias versus, ut ibi praelis committam Aristophanem, Callimachum, Persium, Horatium, novam Gram-

eventually a second edition appeared in Basel in 1589⁷⁴. In this edition, in turn, there is no indication of Vulcanius' share in the work whatsoever. That Frischlin was well aware of Vulcanius' work is clear only from the passage quoted at the very beginning of this paper. Apparently, both scholars wanted to present themselves as the single expert on Callimachus by simply denying each other's existence.

All mentioned books on Callimachus strive for completeness as all of them include an edition of the Greek text with a Latin translation and a commentary layer. Obviously, this was the only means for these works to succeed on the book market.

While the books themselves do not reflect the competitive situation between the scholars involved, their respective correspondences expose aims and actions or, as one could argue, comment on them. Their correspondences reveal the role that individual vanity played during the process of preparing the commentaries on Callimachus. Evidently, Vulcanius was offended because Stephanus had not commissioned him to produce this book. He tricked Frischlin into becoming infuriated with Stephanus and then replaced his work himself. Due to his pugnacious disposition that repeatedly threw him past the limit of conventional social interaction, Frischlin tactlessly sought quarrels with Stephanus and Vulcanius, even when it went against his own interests.

In the end, posterity did not care about the controversies between Stephanus, Vulcanius, and Frischlin, and used both commentaries on Callimachus for understanding the Greek poet. So another commentary on Callimachus published in Utrecht in 1697⁷⁵ simply includes all previous commentaries, among others the ones of Vulcanius and Frischlin, without attributing one scholar more authority than the other.

maticen et Strigilem Grammaticorum cum aliis multis operibus«. (Translation: For I am just preparing to get back to Venice in order to submit my editions of Aristophanes, Callimachus, Persius, Horace, my new Grammar and my Strigilis *Grammatica* together with many more works to the printing press.)

74 Nicodemus Frischlin, *Callimachi Cyrenaei Hymni et Epigrammata Quae Extant cum Duplici Interpretatione et Commentariis*, Basel 1589.

75 Johann Georg Graevius, *Callimachi Hymni, Epigrammata et Fragmenta ex Recensione Theodori J. G. F. Graevii cum eiusdem Animadversionibus. Accedunt N. Frischlini, H. Stephani, B. Vulcanii, P. Voetii, A. T. F. Daceriae, R. Bentleii Commentarius et Annotationes Viri Illustrissimi Ezechielis Spanhemii*, Utrecht 1697.