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NOTES ON PALLADAS

HEATHER WHITE

Classics Research Centre, Londres<sup>1</sup>

I

A.P. 9, 395:

"ὡς οὐδὲν γλύκιον ἤς πατρίδος," εἶπεν Ὀδυσσεύς·  
ἐν γὰρ τοῖς Κίρκης ἔκχυτον οὐκ ἔφαγεν,  
οὐ μόνον εἰ καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρώσκοντ' ἐνόησεν,  
εἶπεν ἂν οἰμώζειν καὶ δέκα Πηνελόπαις.

line 1 Ὀδυσσεύς Grotius : "Ὀμηρος mss.

Translation by Paton (*The Greek Anthology*, Loeb edition, vol. 3, p. 219):

*Odysseus said "nothing is sweeter than a man's fatherland", for in Circe's isle he never ate cheesecake. If he had seen even the smoke curling up from that, he would have sent ten Penelopes to the deuce.*

The phrase ὡς οὐδὲν γλύκιον ἤς πατρίδος is uttered by Odysseus at *Od.* 9, 34, and Grotius, followed by all editors, changed the ms. reading "Ὀμηρος, in line 1, into Ὀδυσσεύς, in order to make line 1 congruent with the mention of Circe (line 2) and Penelope (line 4). However,

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<sup>1</sup> Dirección para correspondencia: H. White. 30 C, Bethune Road, London N 16 58D (England). Copyright 1999: Secretariado de Publicaciones. Universidad de Murcia (España). ISSN: 0213-76-74.

Grotius' alteration creates a difficulty which scholars have not been able to solve. Why on earth should Odysseus be seduced by a cake to the point of forgetting his wife Penelope?

In reality, the epigram is very witty: the reading "Ὀμηρος, in line 1, is sound, and constitutes the *pointe* of the poem. To begin with, the statement "ὡς οὐδὲν γλύκιον ἤς πατρίδος" was put into the mouth of Odysseus by Homer, who was of course the author of the line: εἶπεν, in line 1, refers to the fact that the statement was pronounced by Homer himself, not by the character into whose mouth Homer put it. The verb εἶπεν is normally used with reference to statements made by Homer<sup>2</sup>. The epigram, therefore, concerns what was said by Homer, not what was said by Odysseus<sup>3</sup>.

Palladas is alluding to the fact that Homer was connected with *cunnilingus*. Cf. *A.P.* XI 218:

Χοίριλος Ἀντιμάχου πολὺ λείπεται· ἄλλ' ἐπὶ πᾶσιν  
 Χοίριλον Εὐφορίων εἶχε διὰ στόματος,  
 καὶ κατὰ γλωσσ' ἐπόει τὰ ποιήματα, καὶ τὰ Φιλητᾶ  
 ἀτρεκέως ᾗδει· καὶ γὰρ Ὀμηρικὸς ἦν.

Translation by Paton:

*Choerilus is far inferior to Antimachus, but on all occasions Euphorion would ever talk of Choerilus and made his poems full of glosses, and knew those of Philetas well, for he was indeed a follower of Homer.*

Paton explained that Euphorion is said to be a "real thigh-man" because "he always and everywhere had a woman's sow in his mouth."<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, Palladas means that if Homer had practised *cunnilingus* with Circe, he would not have cared at all for Penelope. It should also be noted that "cake" was often used as a euphemism for "*pudenda*

<sup>2</sup>Cf. for example, *A.P.* IX 636, 1 εἶπεν "Ὀμηρος (same *sedes* as in Palladas' line).

<sup>3</sup>Cf. A.D. SKIADAS, *Homer im griech. Epigramm*, Athens, 1965, p. 153 ff., for Palladas.

<sup>4</sup>On ὀμηρικὸς meaning "practising *cunnilingus*, as Homer did", and ὀμηρίζω meaning "practise *cunnilingus*, as Homer did", cf. *Thes.*, s.v. ὀμηρίζω.

*muliebria*<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, the noun *καπνός* ("smoke") was also used in obscene contexts<sup>6</sup>.

The ancient reader would know that Homer was said to be in love with Penelope (*cf.* *Hermesianax, frag. VII, lines 29-30*)<sup>7</sup>, and that Circe was said to be a prostitute, *cf. A.P. X 50*:

τὴν Κίρκην οὐ φημι, καθὼς εἶρηκεν Ὀμηρος,  
 ἀντ' ἀνδρῶν ποιεῖν ἢ σύας ἢ ἐλύκουσ  
 τοὺς αὐτῇ προσιόντας· ἐταίρα δ' οὐσα πανούργου,  
 τοὺς δελεασθέντας πτωχοτάτους ἐποίει·  
 τῶν δ' ἀνθρωπέων ἀποσυλήσασα λογισμῶν, 5  
 εἴτ' ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίω μῆδὲν ἔχοντας ἔτι  
 ἔτρεφεν ἔνδον ἔχουσα δίκην ζῴων ἀλογίστων.  
 ἔμφρων δ' ὦν Ὀδυσσεύς, τὴν νεότητα φυγῶν,  
 οὐχ Ἑρμοῦ, φύσεως δ' ἰδίας ἐμφύντα λογισμὸν  
 εἶχε γοητείας φάρμακον ἀντίπαλον. 10

Translation by Paton (*op. cit.*, vol. 4, p. 29):

*I deny that Circe, as Homer says, changed those who visited her from men into pigs or wolves. No! she was a cunning courtesan, and made them who took her bait poorest of the poor. Stripping them of their human sense, she now, when they could gain nothing for themselves, reared them in her house like senseless animals. But Ulysses, having his wits about him and avoiding the folly of youth, possessed a counter-charm to enchantment, his own nature, not Hermes, emplanting reason in him.*

Note that Palladas is the author of the epigram which states that Circe was a prostitute. Conclusion: *A.P. 9, 395* is a beautiful example of epigrammatic obscenity.

<sup>5</sup>*Cf.* J. HENDERSON, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*, New Haven-London, 1975, p. 144.

<sup>6</sup>*Cf.* J. HENDERSON, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

<sup>7</sup>*Cf.* G. GIANGRANDE, *Scripta Minora Alexandrina*, II, Amsterdam, 1981, p. 403 and IV, 1985, p. 521. For Ithaca being the *πατρίς* of Homer *cf. A.P. XIV 102, 2* and A.D. SKIADAS, *op. cit.*, p. 24

## II

A.P. 6, 60:

ἀντὶ βοός χρυσεύου τ' ἀναθήματος Ἴσιδι τούσδε  
 θήκατο τοὺς λιπαροὺς Παμφίλιον πλοκάμους·  
 ἢ δὲ θεὸς τούτοις γάνυται πλέον, ἢ περ' Ἀπόλλων  
 χρυσῶ, ὃν ἐκ Λυδῶν Κροῖσος ἔπεμψε θεῶ.

Translation by Paton (*The Greek Anthology*, Loeb edition, vol.

I, p. 331):

*Pamphile, in place of an ox and a golden offering, dedicated to Isis these glossy locks; and the goddess takes more pleasure in them than Apollo in the gold that Croesus sent him from Lydia.*

This epigram concerns a dedication that was made by a *hetaera* named Pamphilion to the goddess Isis. Palladas composed A.P. 6, 61 on the same theme:

ὦ ξυρὸν οὐράνιον, ξυρὸν ὄλβιον, ᾧ πλοκαμίδας  
 κειραμένη πλεκτὰς ἄνθετο Παμφίλιον,  
 οὐ σέ τις ἀνθρώπων χαλκεύσατο· πᾶρ δὲ καμίνῳ  
 Ἡφαίστου, χρυσέην σφῦραν ἀειραμένη  
 ἢ λιπαροκρήδεμνος, ἴν' εἴπωμεν καθ' Ὀμηρον, 5  
 χερσὶ σε ταῖς ἰδίαις ἐξεπόνησε Χάρις.

Translation by Paton:

*O heavenly razor, happy razor with which Pamphile shone her plaited tresses to dedicate them. It was no human smith that wrought thee, but beside the forge of Hephaestus the bright-snooded Grace (to use Homer's words) took up the golden hammer and fashioned thee with her own hands.*

In a discussion of these two epigrams, Alan Cameron<sup>8</sup> stated that he was puzzled by the language which the poet used in A.P. 6, 61. He argued that A.P. 6, 61 seems to be a parody of A.P. 6, 60. I would like to point out that epigrams on the same theme were often placed together in

<sup>8</sup>"Notes on Palladas", *CQ* 1965, pp. 215-225 (p. 216 f.).

Greek anthologies<sup>9</sup>. Cameron has, moreover, failed to understand that in *A.P.* 6, 61 Palladas describes the razor which cut Pamphilion's hair as *οὐράνιον* ("heavenly") because he is alluding to the fact that Aphrodite was known as *Οὐρανία*: cf. LSJ s.v. II. It should also be noted that Palladas is alluding in lines 5-6 to *Iliad* 18, 382 *Χάρις λιπαροκρήδεμνος*. Thus *A.P.* 6, 61 does not parody<sup>10</sup> *A.P.* 6, 60. Both epigrams deal with the theme of a dedication to Isis by a *hetaera*. However, *A.P.* 6, 61 treats the theme more extensively, by alluding to Aphrodite *Οὐρανία*<sup>11</sup> and to a passage from Homer. In *A.P.* 6, 60, on the other hand, Palladas alludes to the *topos* of the mercenary nature of Aphrodite *εταίρα* by mentioning dedications of golden offerings. For this literary *topos*, cf. *MPhL* 4, p. 192 ff. I need hardly add that the adjective *οὐράνιον*, in *A.P.* 6, 61, line 1, is used in *enallage*: for such types of *enallage*, where the noun to which the epithet refers is "unterdrückt", cf. G. Giangrande<sup>12</sup>.

### III

*A.P.* 9, 528:

(εἰς τὸν οἶκον Μαρίνης)  
 χριστιανοὶ γεγαῶτες Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες  
 ἐνθάδε ναιετάουσιν ἀπήμονες· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτοῦς  
 χώνη φόλλιν ἄγουσα φερέσβιον ἐν πυρὶ θήσει.

Translation by Paton (*The Greek Anthology*, Loeb edition, vol. 3, p. 295):

(On the House of Marina)  
*The inhabitants of Olympus, having become Christians, live here undisturbed; for here they shall not be put on the fire in the melting-pot that produces necessary small change.*

<sup>9</sup>Cf. G. GIANGRANDE, "Two Epigrams on Papyrus", *MPhL* 2, 1977, p. 147 ff.

<sup>10</sup>Cameron also argued (*op. cit.*, p. 217) that Palladas wrote *A.P.* 6, 85 as a parody of *A.P.* 6, 86. Once again Cameron is mistaken. It is clear from the *lemma* that Eutolmius Scholasticus wrote *A.P.* 6, 86 as a parody of Palladas' poem.

<sup>11</sup>For an obscene pun involving the noun *οὐρανός*, cf. *A.P.* 5, 105, line 4 and *A.P.* 11, 328, line 9.

<sup>12</sup>"Studi sul testo e sulla lingua di Corippo", *SicGymn* 43, 1990, p. 145.

This epigram concerns statues of heathen gods which are not going to be melted down by Christians. Instead they are going to be kept. Most commentators, as e.g. Paton, take *φόλλιν* to be a small coin: cf. e.g. Waltz and Soury in their Budé edition (*Anthologie Grecque*, Paris 1974). However, this interpretation, lately followed by Cameron<sup>13</sup>, is impossible, because the epithet *φερέσβιον* cannot possibly mean, in Greek, that the coin was used "in purchases and transactions of everyday life" (so Cameron): the epithet *φερέσβιον*, in Greek, means "life-giving" (examples in Thes. Gr. Ling., s.v. and in Peek, *Lexikon zu den Dionysiaka des Nonnos*).

That *φόλλις* here means "bellows", as indicated in LSJ<sup>14</sup>, is proved by the fact that the melting pot (*χώνη*) and the bellows are always mentioned together (cf. *Iliad* 18, 468 ff., Apollonius Rhodius, *Arg.* 3, 1299 and Nonnus, *Dion.* 43, 405). Moreover, *φερέσβιος* is connected with breathing (*ἄσθμα* in Tryphiod. 483, *πνεῦμα* in *Orphic Lith.* 300); the *ἄσθμα* of the bellows is mentioned explicitly by Nonnus (*loc. cit.*).

Palladas has here achieved a neat *pointe*: the *φόλλις* is normally *φερέσβιος* because it produces "living" or "life-like" works of art (i.e. bronze statues: cf. *A.P.* 16, 87, line 1: *τέχνης*<sup>15</sup> *πυρσὸν ὄπασσα φερέσβιον*). Here, the *φόλλις* that normally produces works of art will not (*οὐδέ*) destroy such works of art, i.e. the bronze statues of the gods, which will be kept. One could, of course, explain *φερέσβιον* in the sense "giving life (*scil.* to the fire)": cf. *A.P.* 6, 101, 2 where the bellows are called *πυριτρόφους*.

**Heather White**

<sup>13</sup>Cf. *CQ* 15, 1965, p. 223, note 2.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. also Sophocles, *Lex. Byz.*, s.v., who quotes Jacobs, *Animadv.* vol. XIII, p. 661.

<sup>15</sup>The word *τέχνη* denotes, of course, the art of the worker in bronze statues; for the *χώνη* producing "life-like" statues with the help of the fire. cf. G. GIANGRANDE, "The Interpretation of Greek Epigrams", *Παρουασσός* 33, 1991, p. 383 ff.