NOTES ON PALLADAS

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1 A.P. 9, 395:

"ὡς αὐτῷ γλύκον ἂς πατρίδος," εἶπεν Ὄδυσσεύς:
ἐν γὰρ τοῖς Κύκνος ἔκρυτον ὡς φρονήσει,
οὗ μόνον εἰ καὶ κόσμον ἀποθάνασιν' ἐδύνομη, εἶπεν ἐν σωματίν καὶ δέκα Πενελόπως.


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

The phrase ὡς αὐτῷ γλύκον ἂς πατρίδος is uttered by Odysseus at Od. 9, 34, and Grotius, followed by all editors, changed the ms. reading Ὅμηρος, in line 1, into Ὅδυσσεύς, in order to make line 1 congruent with the mention of Circe (line 2) and Penelope (line 4). However,

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 "โอमναος, in line 1, is sound, and constitutes the pointe of the poem. To begin with, the statement "ὡς οἰκόν γλώσσα ἥς πεφύλαξεν" was put into the mouth of Odysseus by Homer, who was of course the author of the line. εἰς, 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 εἰς is normally used with reference to statements made by Homer. The epigram, therefore, concerns what was said by Homer, not what was said by Odysseus.

Palladas is alluding to the fact that Homer was connected with cunnilingus. Cf. A.P. IX 218: Χαίρομαις "Ἀντιμαχον πολύ λείτεσθι ἄλλ' ἐν τοίνυν, ἐνάπου ἐίπεν Ἐφεσισμὸν ἐχθρόν ἔχει διὰ στόματος, καὶ καταφύλασσι' ἐκείνῳ τῷ πομψάκλει, καὶ τῷ φιλατρῷ ἰάτρεικός φθείρ. καὶ γὰρ ὅμηρος ὠμηραῖος ἐστιν. Translation by Paton:

 Choiroclus is inferior to Antimachus, but on all occasions Euphorion would ever talk of Choiroclus 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." 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.

1 Cf. for example, A.P. IX 636, λιθος 'ओμηρος (same sedes as in Palladas' line).
3 On ἱατρός meaning "practising cunnilingus, as Homer did", and ἰατρός meaning "practise cunnilingus, as Homer did", cf. Thes., s.v. ἱατρός.
Moreover, the noun κάπνιος ("smoke") was also used in obscene contexts.

The ancient reader would know that Homer was said to be in love with Penelope (cf. Hermesianax, frag. VII, lines 29-30),1 and that Circe was said to be a prostitute, cf. A.P. X 50:

τὴν Κλεοκότην ὁ θηρίον, καθώς ὦσαρε "Ομήρος,
ἐνερὲς ἀκρωτίων πικρῶν ὅπου φίλοις
ταῖς αὐτής προσόμοντας· ἔτερα δὲ ἄστα παραίρογος,
τοῖς δεκαεξάκοντοις πτωχοτοιού τοιοῦτοι·
τῶν δ' άνθρωπων ἀποκλιθῶνας λογομαχίας
ἐνερ' ἀπ' τῶν ιδίων μηδὲν ἐργονος ἐπὶ
ἐτροφέων ἔνοχος ἄξονας ζωὴν αὐλογίσεων.
ἐμφαινεν δ' ἦν ὡρείνης, τὴν κοίτητος φυγάριαν,
σὺς Ἐρμος, φύσεως δ' ιδίας ἐμφάνια λογομαχίαν
ἐλευ γαστέρες φορμάκων ἀντιπότοιον.

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, implanting 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.

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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:

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\begin{align*}
\text{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.}
\end{align*}
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In a discussion of these two epigrams, Alan Cameron 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

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\begin{align*}
\text{Translation by Paton:}
\end{align*}
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Greek anthologies9. Cameron has, moreover, failed to understand that in A. P. 6, 61 Palladas describes the razor which cut Parnphilion’s hair as οὐράνιον (“heavenly”) because he is alluding to the fact that Aphrodite was known as Οὐρανίας: cf. LSI s.v. II. It should also be noted that Palladas is alluding in lines 5-6 to Ilid 18, 382 Χάρις λευκοροζήδημος. Thus A. P. 6, 61 does not parody10 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 Οὐρανίας11 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 τραίσας by mentioning dedications of golden offerings. For this literary topos, cf. MPIL 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 “unterdriickt”, cf. G. Giangrande12.

III

A. P. 9, 528:

(εἰς τὸν Μαυρίαν) χρυστέραν γέγαστε 'Ολυμπία κίοματ' ἐχοντες ἐνθάδε ποιήσασαν ἐπάρσον τις δῶρον σφήνος γὰρ ὁ ὄρος γὰρ πλέον γράφειν εἴρης ἐξαγαγέται εν τοῖς θηρίοις.


(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.


10 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.

11 For an obscene pun involving the noun οὐράνιον, cf. A. P. 5, 105, line 4 and A. P. 11, 328, line 9.

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 φόλλις 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, is impossible, because the epithet ϕείαπηθυος cannot possibly mean, in Greek, that the coin was used "in purchases and transactions of everyday life" (so Cameron); the epithet ϕείαπηθυος, in Greek, means "life-giving" (examples in The Gr. Ling., s.v. and in Peek, Lexikon zu den Dionysiaka des Nonnos).

That φόλλις here means "bellow", as indicated in LSJ, is proved by the fact that the melting pot (χαλα) and the bellows are always mentioned together (cf. Iliad 18, 468 ff., Apollonius Rhodius, Arg. 3, 1299 and Nonnos, Dion. 43, 405). Moreover, ϕείαπηθυος is connected with breathing (διαπηθυο in Tryphiod. 483, κεφηθυο in Orphic Lith. 300); the διαπηθυο of the bellows is mentioned explicitly by Nonnos (loc. cit.).

Palladas has here achieved a neat pointe: the φόλλις is normally ϕείαπηθυος because it produces "living" or "life-like" works of art (i.e. bronze statues: cf. A.P. 16, 87, line 1: τέκνης πυρος ἱκτοσα ϕείαπηθυος). Here, the φόλλις that normally produces works of art will not destroy such works of art, i.e. the bronze statues of the gods, which will be kept. One could, of course, explain ϕείαπηθυος in the sense "giving life (scl. to the fire)"; cf. A.P. 6, 101, 2 where the bellows are called πυροτρόφις.

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