NOTES ON HELLENISTIC TEXTS

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Summary: The present work consists of several notes on Hellenistic texts, particularly on Ap. VI 269; VII 44; V 55; VII 489; VII 556; IX 21; IX 330; IX 398; XIII 26 y Theoc. Id 18.

1

A dedication to Artemis.

A.P. VI 269:

ποίδες, δήμως λαύσα ποτενίτω αὐτὶς ἱερα·

φωνᾶν ἀκομάτως καθημένα πρὸ τῶν·

Ἄθραία με κίνοι Λυτῶς ἀσθένει' Ἀσίστα,

† Ερµοκλειοῦσα τὰς Σουραίδας,

οὐ πρόπλεος, δέσποτα γαυακῶν· ἃ δέν κυρεύσα

πρόφοιμον ἐστιν τούτου εὐκλείον γενέας.

Translation by Paton (The Greek Anthology, Loeb edition vol. 1, p. 443):

Children, though I am a dumb stone, if any ask, then I


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answer clearly, having set down at my feet the words I am never weary of speaking: "Arista, daughter of Hermoclides the son of Sauneus, dedicated me to Artemis Aethopia. Thy ministrant is she, sovereign lady of women; rejoice in this her gift of herself, and be willing to glorify our race."

In this epigram a woman called Arista makes a dedication to Artemis. Page noted that the dedication is "presumably of a statue or portrait". He then added, however, that scholars have been unable to decide whom the dedication represents. According to Düchner, the dedication represents Artemis. Paton, on the other hand, thought that it was an image of Arista. Finally, Jacobs argued that the dedication represents the image of a chid of Arista.

I would like to suggest a fourth possibility. The dedication is a statue or portrait of Echo. Thus it states that it is "voiceless" (δεφωνος), but can speak if it is spoken to. Moreover, in line 2, it says that it has an "untiring" (ανεκμετατηρος) voice. Echo fits this description: for the nature of Echo cf. Ovid, Met. III, lines 357 ff. Cf. also Theocritus' Syrinx, line 18, where Echo is described as a "dumb girl" (ελλατε κοιψε). For the Echo-motif in Greek epigrams cf. G. Giangrande, Sic. Gymn. 1992, p. 24 and Page, op. cit., p. 507.

In line 1 there is a reference to νοικες (i.e. "girls"). This suits the fact that the dedication has been made to Artemis: for the connection of Artemis with girls cf. Callimachus, Hymn 3, line 236. For statues of Echo in the Greek Anthology cf. A.PL. 153-156. Such statues are imagined to repeat the words (or sounds) uttered by passers-by, etc. (cf. A.PL. 153, 2; 154, 4): here, the statue of Echo is imagined to repeat the words uttered by the passer-by who reads the inscription placed at the foot (περι πολεως) of the statue.

II
An epitaph for Euripides.

2 Aloud, of course, as the ancients usually did.

Though a teet’ful fate befel thee, O Euripides, devoured by wolf-hounds, thou, the honey-voiced nightingale of the stage, the ornament of Athens, who didst mingle the grace of the Muses with wisdom, yet thou wast laid in the tomb at Pella, that the servant of the Pierian Muses should dwell near the home of his mistresses.

In his discussion of this epigram, Page noted that Euripides’ "place of burial was generally held to be Arethusa, a Macedonian town between the bay of Strymon and Lake Bolbe (a long way from Pella)."

The fact that Euripides was buried at Arethusa is mentioned at A.P. VII 51:

Neither dogs slew thee, Euripides, nor the rage of women, thou enemy of the secrets of Cypris, but Death and old age, and under Macedonian Arethusa thou liest, honoured by the house of his mistresses.


Neither dogs slew thee, Euripides, nor the rage of women, thou enemy of the secrets of Cypris, but Death and old age, and under Macedonian Arethusa thou liest, honoured by the
friendship of Archelaus. Yet it is not this that I account thy
tomb, but the altar of Bacchus and the buckler-trodden stage.

I would like to point out that A.P. VII 51 does not in fact
contradict what is stated about the place of Euripides’ burial at A.P. VII 44.
Page has failed to understand that Πέλλαοις means here ‘Macedonian’. Cf.
Thes. Gr. Ling., s.v. Πέλλαος: φοίνικας καὶ Μακεδόνας, Hesych. Cf. also
Lewis and Short, A Latin Dictionary, s.v. Pelasges, B: “Transf. (1) Macedonian”.
Thus Euripides is said to have gone to a Macedonian tomb
(μολὸς Πέλλαον ἐπ’ θίασον). This tomb was at Arethusa. That Πέλλαοις
means “Macedonian” at A.P. VII 44, 5, was already noted in Pape-Bensieler,
Wörterbuch, s.v. Πέλλαος.

III
An obscene epigram by Dioscorides.

A.P. V 55:

Δωρίδα τὴν βοδίκην ὕπηρ λεχίον διατίνιας
ϑέσιον εἰς χλοερὰς ἀθάνατες γένης,
ἡ γὰρ εὐτροφίας μέσον διαδάσα με ποιοῖν,
δύσους ὀλιγίως τὸν Κύρνος ἄλλοιον.

ὁμοίως κυνή γλείπνου τα ὀδοὺ πεντών φύλλα,

Αμαύρωσαμενής, ἔτρεμε πορφυρὰ,
μέχρις ἀπεκτεινθή λέοντο μένος ἄμφοτέρων,
καὶ δωρίς πατίδως ἔξεσθαι μέλινον.

This epigram describes Doris making love. Previous critics
have been puzzled by the meaning of lines 4 ff.3. I would like to point out
that the words φύλλα ... πορφυρὰ ("purple petals") contain an obscene
double meaning and refer to the petals of real roses and to the metaphorical
petals of Doris’ "pudenda muliebria". Dioscorides is alluding to the fact
that the noun βόδος ("rose") was used for the "pudenda muliebria". For the
purple rose, cf. A.P. V 35, 6: πορφυρὸς βόδον and A.P. V 84.

"Oh, would I were a pink rose, that thy hand might pluck me to give to thy snowy breasts".

For the petals of the rose, cf. LSJ s.v. φύλλον, 2: "of flowers, petal"; Herodotus 8.138 (βόδον ἔχει εξέκοιτα φύλλα ("a rose having sixty petals")

It will be noted that in lines 3-4 Doris is said to "bestride" (διαβαίνει) the poet with her magnificent legs. For πόδις meaning "leg with the foot", cf. LSJ s.v. For the meaning of the verb διαβαίνει, cf. LSJ s.v. διαβάειν II, 3. Dübner explained that the poet is referring here to the mode of intercourse in which the woman bestrides the man1.

IV
An epitaph for Timas.

A. P. VII 489:

Τιμάδος δέκ κόινς, τὰν δὴ πρὸ γάμου θανάσαις
δέξαμεν θερμόσυνον κόρες βαλαμέος,
ἂς γάμο άετοναμόις πόλεως υπεθκήν αυλήν
ἄλλως ἱμέρται κρατώς θέκτην πέμακα.


This is the dust of Timas, whom, dead before her marriage, the dark chamber of Persephone received. When she died, all her girl companions with newly sharpened steel shore their lovely locks.

The text of lines 3-4 has puzzled the critics. I would like to suggest that these lines should be printed as follows:

"And, when she was dead, all her companions cut (ετὸς ... Ἦρεν) the lovely hair from their heads". Note that the verb ἄποθέασα has been used in tmesis. Cf. LSJ s.v. ἄποθέασα II: "στ. κόμας cut it off, in mourning, E., Hel. 367 (ὑρ., τμ.)". Cf. also A.P. VII 181:

οὐχί η δύνατον ἔμοι ἠλέες εἰς Ἀχέρωνος.
ἀνακοίμησεν φίλος, ματία λασῖνα νόσῳ
οὐ δέ, ὅθεν φθεῖνας, πολός ποιήσῃ σιδήρω
κύριοις γηραῖοι ἐξ κεφαλῆς θλικῶμοι.


Sore pitied, dear Democrateia, didst thou go to the dark house of Acheron, leaving thy mother to lament. And she, when thou wast dead, shave the grey hairs from her old head with the newly-sharpened steel.

V
An epitaph for a soldier.

A.P. VII 656:

τὴν ἀλεγές βλυχο καὶ τοῦτ’ ἀλυάμοι, ὄμηρ,
σήμα τούτ’ ἀλέξανοι πλάθεις, ’Αλκαμείνας,
εἰ καὶ τὸν κράτους ἦν’ ἀλέξες πολλοίμοις
καὶ θέτον, ἐν τοὺτ’ ἐγὼ δήσω: ’Αλκαμείνας.

Line 4 δήσα Μειν. οὐ ΠΠ


Salute, Sir, this little mound and modest monument of hapless Alcimenes, though it be all overgrown by the sharp buckthorn and brambles on which I, Alcimenes, once wag ed war.

The reader will note that in line 4 Paton accepted Meineke’s alteration δόσιον. Textual alteration is, however, not warranted since the transmitted text makes perfect sense. The lemma states that Alcimenes was a soldier: εἰς Ἀλκιμήνου μορφή. Accordingly, Alcimenes states that if his grave is overgrown with brambles, that is because he was aggressive when he was alive. The words ἤ τοι ἐγώ δόσιον Ἀλκιμήνος mean “I was once hostile Alcimenes”. Note that the plants growing on a grave are appropriate to the character of its occupant. Thus Timon, the misanthrope, has thorns on his grave, cf. A.P. VII 315:


Dry earth, grow a prickly thorn to twine all round me, or the wild branches of a twisting bramble, that not even a bird in spring may rest its light foot on me, but that I may repose in peace and solitude. For I, the misanthrope, Timon, who was not even beloved by my countrymen, am no genuine dead man even in Hades.

Similarly, the notoriously aggressive Hipponax has brambles growing on his grave: cf. A.P. VII 536. It remains to be added that εἶ κοι,

in line 3, is not concessive, but assertive\textsuperscript{11}, the sense being "and, if it is true that my tomb is covered with brambles, this is due to the fact that I was once war-like (δῆμος) Alcimenes".

VI

An Olympian victory.

\textit{A. P. IX} 21:

\begin{quote}
\textit{οαὶ, ποτὶ Θεσσαλὶ πωλοτρόφη, κέμψιν ἀνάκτην Πήγασος, ως ἄδειαν τέρματος ἄρτισαν· ός Ποτάκα, κὺρ ἱσθιαὶ ἱώματα, ὁπίς Νέμεων Ζώησι, κοι Ἀρκαδὸς ἄληθον ἀκριβώς: τὸν δὲ θάνατος πτέρυς Νομαρχὸς Φυκίδην ἔλαυο, λεπτών δορὸς κορίτιν ὕπ' ἀντοχῶν.}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{5}


\begin{quote}
I, Pegasus, attach blame to thee, my country Thessaly, breeder of horses, for this unmerited end of my days. I, who was led in procession at Pytho and Isthmus; I, who went to the festival of Nemean Zeus and to Olympia to win the Arcadian olive-twigs, now drag the heavy weight of the round Nisyrian mill-stone, grinding fine from the ears the fruit of Demeter.
\end{quote}

In this epigram a champion race-horse complains that it is forced in old age to turn a millstone. Page noted that the critics have been puzzled by the words \textit{Απεκαυτοῦ... τυπήματος}, in line 412. He pointed out that it is clear from \textit{A. P. IX} 19 and 20 that the text requires a reference to victories at Olympia. However, he was unable to explain why \textit{Ἀρκαδόν... ἀκριβῶς} is written instead of \textit{Ηλέως}. I would like to suggest that the poet is alluding to the fact that Aristaeus was, according to some ancient sources, the "inventor" of olive oil. Thus at \textit{Georgics} IV 283 Vergil refers to the "inventions of the Arcadian master" (\textit{Arcadii ... inventa magistri}).


\textsuperscript{12} Cf. D. L. PAGE, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 366.
Conington stated in his note ad loc. that Aristaeus was said to have been the first to produce oil from the olive. In other words, the olive is described as "Arcadian" because Aristaeus was an Arcadian. For the fact that the wild-olive (κάρατος) was the prize at the Olympic games, cf. A.P. IX 357:

τέσσαρις είσον αγώνες ἀνεί Ελλάδες, τέσσαρες λαοί,
οἱ δοὺς μὲν θυγατέρι, οἱ δοὺς τοι θησαύρων
Ζησός, Λατάθαν, Πολιάμος, Ἀλκημόρων.


There are four games in Greece, two sacred to mortals and two to immortals: to Zeus, Apollo, Palaemon, and Archemorus, and their prizes are wild-olive, apples, celery, and pine-branches.

VII

An epigram by Nicarchus.

A.P. IX 330:

α. κράτων εὖδόμαι παρὰ κύριω κολλυός καὶ τοιῷ Νύμφος.

β. τε βὰ χάριν, α. λέξα τοι, δασον σθενεῖς ἀπό κράτας

γ. καὶ τε καλλαν καλὲ νὰ ἔλαθ ἔγονος,

δ. ποιεῖ δὲ μη ποτὶ ἐπεραμένεις ἐκρατάτοις Νυμφῶν

ε. δέδωκα τὸ ἱδρυμανταῖς ἣματα δεκακόμων.

ζ. υ. ομοῖοι, α. ἀλλὰ λέξεις ἐτέρων λόγοι, ἀλλὰ παρασκέτες

η. πνεύματα στόμα τοῦ Πᾶν νυμφῶν.

Upon the reed draw, but do not drink of the crystal waters.


A. "I am goat-footed Pan, whom Simo put up by the clear waters of the spring.

B. "And why?"

A. "I will tell thee. From the fountain drink as much as thou wilt, and take this hollow pitcher, too, and draw. But offer not the crystalline..."
gifts of the Nymphs to thy feet to bathe them. Seest thou not my menacing form?". B. "Revered god—". A. "Thou shalt not speak another word, but shalt let me take my will of thee. Such is the custom of Pan. But if thou dost it on purpose, having an inclination for the penalty, I know another trick. I will break thy head with my club".

The reader will note that in line 9 Paton printed Reiske's alteration τοις. There is, however, no need for us to alter the mss. reading τοῖς.11

In lines 5 ff. Pan states that men may drink the water from the fountain but they must not wash their feet in it. If they do so, Pan threatens to punish them by sexual penetration. Pan then adds that if you purposely drink from the fountain because you are a pathicus (ἐχών τάδες) and thus are attracted by his ithyphallic nature, then he will punish you by hitting you on the head with his club. There is an obscene double meaning here. The word ῥυτόλυθεν means both "club" and "membrum virile": cf. LSJ s.v.14

VIII
An epigram for a raven.

A. P. IX 339:
ἐν τοῖς παρμαίστιν μέλαν πτερόν ὁμώς 
σκορπίον ἐκ γαίης ἔλθε φόρμαν κόραξ,
οὐ μάρτυς ὁράσει, οὐ 'πόλεμος ἐκ' ὀδος,
οὐ δὲ δώρας εἰνάρασιν πέναν ἑτοίμα βέλει,
καὶ ἔνθα μὲν ἐμὲρων. ιον ὅ ὀν ἐνεκέρ ἐν' ὀλλοὶ
ἐκ κείσου τῆλειν αὐτὸς ἔδεχτο μόρον.

line 1 μέλαν πτερόν Bruck: μαλλίστας P, μαλλίστας Π


13For the scholia of πώς, cf. LSJ s.v. πώς, quoting A.P. XI 19 κείσω, ὧν αὕτος.

14For similar obscene puns in Greek epigrams, cf. H. WHITE, Studies in Theocritus and other Hellenistic Poets, Amsterdam, 1979, p. 54. For the fact that pathici were often mocked in antiquity, cf. H. WHITE, New Studies in Greek Poetry, Amsterdam, 1989, p. 77.
Once upon a time, plying his black wings in the shining sky, a raven saw a scorpion dart up from underground. He swooped to catch it, but as he rushed down to earth it was quick to strike his foot with pointed dart; and so it robbed him of life. See how the doom he was making for another, from that other the poor creature himself received.

The reader will note that in line 1 Gow-Page printed Brunck's alteration μίλαν πτερών. Textual alteration is, however, not warranted. The correct reading has been preserved for us by Planudes10. The poet states that a "very black raven" was "watching" (ναμάω) in the sky and saw a scorpion. Cf. LSJ S. v. ναιμάω (4): "observe". Note the employment of the comparative instead of the superlative11. For the literary topos of the black raven, cf. Callimachus, frag. 260, lines 56 ff.

IX
An epitaph for Xanthippe.

A. P. XIII 26:

µησασµῶν οί γάρ ὕλες ἀνώνυµον ἐνθεί' Ἀρχεναύτων
περίτεχαν θεωρών ὁγιαῖν διώρκετα,
Ξανθίππης Περιανδρός ἀτέγογον, ἢς τοῦ µυθώργου
σήµαινε λοις τέρων ἔχων Κορίνθου.


I will tell of her; for it is not meet that she should lie here without a name, the noble wife of Archensuates, Xanthippe, granddaughter of Periander, him who once ruled over the people, holding the lordship of high-towered Corinth.

10For the fact that Planudes often preserved the correct text, cf. my New Essays in Hellenistic Poetry, Amsterdam, 1985, p. 29.
11Cf. H. WHITE, Studies in Late Greek Epic Poetry, Amsterdam, 1987, p. 44.
In his discussion of this epigram, Page noted\(^{17}\) that the critics have been puzzled by the subject of the verb μθομαι, in line 1. According to Wilamowitz, the speaker is the figure of a Siren or Sphinx on the tomb. Page, on the other hand, argued that "the speaker is the Stele on which the verses are inscribed, as in Peek 52". Page's hypothesis is untenable because in Peek 52 the speaking stele is mentioned (στήλα). Wilamowitz's hypothesis is equally unconvincing on account of the reasons already mentioned by Page himself.

The solution to the problem is that the speaker is Xanthippe herself. She first speaks in the first person singular (μθομαι), and then proceeds to talk about herself in the third person singular. G. Giangrande has recently (cf. Sic. Gymn. 47, 1994, p. 414) underlined that gods and important personages often allude to themselves in the third person singular\(^{18}\). Xanthippe says that it is not fitting for the wife of Archenautes to be "unnamed" (ἀγνώστος), since she is descended from Periander.

X
A textual problem in Theocritus' Idyll 18.

Gow noted\(^{19}\) that lines 43-48 of this Idyll "account aetologically for a cult of Helen at Sparta in which she is associated or identified with a plane-tree":

\[\text{πρέπει το σήφανον λυτά φυλαθέων πλάτανον \text{πλάτανον}}\]

45

λαμψάνων σταυρίσμαι \text{τοίχοι σωμάτων} γραφόμαι δ' \text{έν φλώρ γεγραφέται}, \text{σαρκός τῆς}\n
\[\text{σωμάτων} \text{Δωμοτι: 'ένεξο μ' 'Ελένης φούτο ειμ'}.\]

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\(^{17}\) Cf. D.L. PAGE, op. cit., p. 251.


We first for thee will twine a wreath of the low-growing trefoil
and set it on a shady plane; we first will draw from the silver
flask and let drip smooth oil beneath that shady plane. And
on its bark shall be inscribed, that passers-by may read in
Dorian wise, "Adore me; I am Helen's tree".

The critics have been puzzled by the meaning of Δωριτη in
line 48. Thus Meineke proposed that it should be altered into Δωριτης. Textual
alteration is, however, not warranted. I would like to point out that the text
makes perfect sense if we punctuate line 48 as follows: ένείμα: "Δωριτη
σέδου μου. Ἐλεήσεις φιλόν εἰμι".

The passer-by is asked to honour the tree in the Dorian way
(i.e. with gifts), since it is Helen's tree. Cf. LSJ s.v. Δωριτη II: "in Ar. Eq.
989 (lyr.) with a play on δώρον". Cf. also Thes. Gr. Ling., s.v. "δωρον: dicens pro δωρονκεπ".

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