

## NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

### AN EPIGRAM FROM TROEZEN (IG 4. 800)

Πραξιτέλει τόδε μῆμα Φίσον ποίησε θανό[ντι],  
[τ]οῦτο δ' ἑταῖροι | σᾶμα χέαν βαρέα στενάχοντες  
φέργον ἀντ' ἀγ[α]θὸν κέπāμερον | ἐξετέλεσα[ν].<sup>1</sup>

#### I

Two interpretations of the last clause of this epigram have been given in the last eighty years. M. Fraenkel thought that ἐπāμερον was predicative with σᾶμα of line 2, and he explained the sense of it as “neque id quidem (ut humana omnia) diuturnum confectum esse credi potest.”<sup>2</sup> In 1905, A. Wilhelm argued that ἐπāμερον should be taken adverbially in the sense of αὐθημερόν, supposing that the σᾶμα had to be built within one day to conform to a funerary law which allowed only one day to be devoted to the building of the tumulus. Wilhelm then quoted Cicero’s *De legibus* 2. 66, referring to an Athenian law which only allowed a tomb that could be built by ten men working for three days.<sup>3</sup>

All editors of this epigram since Wilhelm’s discussion have interpreted ἐπāμερον as αὐθημερόν; and, with one exception, all have accepted his idea that there was a funeral law in archaic Troezen which enjoined the completion of a tumulus on the day it was begun.<sup>4</sup> Wilhelm’s interpretation of the epigram can, however, be shown to be improbable.

It is hardly likely that an archaic epigram written in Homeric hexameters would allude obliquely to a funeral law, especially since there is no evidence that there ever existed in archaic Greece any such law as Wilhelm supposes.<sup>5</sup> Even

1. The text cited is from P. A. Hansen, *Carmina epigraphica Graeca saeculorum viii–v a. Chr. n.* (New York and Berlin, 1983), no. 139. Hansen dates the epigram to ca. 500, as does L. Jeffery, *Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* (Oxford, 1961), p. 406 and pl. 32, no. 3.

2. IG 4. 800.

3. “Zu griechischen Epigrammen,” *BCH* 29 (1905): 416.

4. E. Schwyzler, *Dialectorum Graecarum exempla epigraphica potiora* (Leipzig, 1923), in index, ἐπāμερον = *eodem die*; P. Friedländer, *Epigrammata: Greek Inscriptions in Verse, from the Beginnings to the Persian Wars*, with the collaboration of H. B. Hoffleit (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1948), no. 29; W. Peek, *Griechische Grabgedichte* (Berlin, 1960), p. 8, agrees with Wilhelm’s interpretation, but he does not think there was a funeral law; O. Reverdin, *La religion de la cité platonicienne* (Paris, 1945), p. 112, actually cites this supposed law of Troezen in a list of Greek funerary laws; D. Kurtz and J. Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (Cornell, 1971), p. 240, mistakenly think it is the μῆμα which was erected in one day. Most recently, Wilhelm’s interpretation has been accepted by S. C. Humphreys, “Family Tombs and Tomb Cult in Ancient Athens: Tradition or Traditionalism?” *JHS* 100 (1980): 102.

5. Wilhelm wrongly attributes to Solon the law quoted from Cicero *Leg.* 2. 66. The text says rather that the law arose some time after Solon (*post aliquanto*). The exact date of the law is impossible to determine, but the reference in the passage to public funeral orations would seem to suggest a *terminus post quem* of 480 B.C., since public funeral orations did not occur at Athens before this date; cf.

more improbable is the supposition that ἐπάμερον can be synonymous with αὐθημερόν and can therefore signify that the σᾶμα was built within one day. There is no evidence that ἐπάμερον could have this sense; at best, the word, acting as an adverb, could mean “extending over one day.”<sup>6</sup> If ἐπάμερον here denotes something changeable or short-lived, as it usually does, then it is possible to interpret the epigram in a new way and on its own terms.

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## II

I agree that this inscription cannot refer to a funerary law. Friedländer-Hoffleit, who are among those who entertain such a possibility, cite Plato *Laws* 958E: χῶμα δὲ μὴ χοῦν ὑψηλότερον πέντε ἀνδρῶν ἔργον ἐν πέντε ἡμέραις ἀποτελούμενον. In fact, it is not unreasonable to accept this as evidence for the reality of such funerary laws in Greece, and there could have been such a law at Troezen when *IG* 4. 800 was written; in the absence of new evidence we will never know. No matter: it is irrelevant to the issue at hand. What man in his senses would include in an honorific verse epitaph a statement to the effect that he has duly complied with the local funerary law? Take not my word for it—take Plato’s, who in the sentence immediately following the injunction just quoted proceeds with a further injunction: λίθινα δὲ ἐπιστήματα μὴ μείζω ποιεῖν ἢ ὅσα δέχεσθαι τῶν τοῦ τετελευτηκότος ἐγκῶμα βίου μὴ πλείω τεττάρων ἡρωικῶν στίχων. “Let us now praise famous men,” not “We have duly observed the limits of time and space as specified by the law,” is the proper theme for an epitaph.

Κηπάμερον ἐξετέλεσαν is a difficult phrase, but perhaps it can be persuaded to yield up its meaning. The language of this inscription is a combination of the local dialect and epic tags;<sup>7</sup> the latter provide the necessary clues. With ἐπάμερον supply φέρων from the preceding φέρων ἀντ’ ἀγαθῶν; compare *Od.* 3. 99 ἢ ἔπος ἢ τι ἔργον . . . ἐξετέλεσσε; 3. 275 ἐκτέλεσας μέγα ἔργον.<sup>8</sup> The work in question is the heaping up of the tumulus, and ἐπάμερος here connotes that which is ephemeral and transitory; a too-literal meaning should not be pressed: “and they accomplished their fleeting task.”<sup>9</sup>

W. Kierdorf, *Erlebnis und Darstellung der Perserkriege*, Hypomnemata Heft 16 (Göttingen, 1966), pp. 83–95. Although a number of funerary laws date from the archaic period in Greece, none places restrictions on the size of the monument or the type of monument. Such laws occur only later and only at Athens.

6. H. Fränkel, “Man’s ‘Ephemeros’ Nature according to Pindar and Others,” *TAPA* 77 (1946): 144, cites only three uses of ἐπάμερον = “within one day,” but they are all much later and occur in technical contexts—e.g., of a poison that works within one day (Theophr. *Hist. Pl.* 9. 16. 6).

7. E.g., the crasis κηπάμερον (to say nothing of the form ἐπάμερος) is not normal epic usage, where correction would have been employed, as, for instance, in the stock verse αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσις καὶ ἔδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο (*Od.* 1. 150, al.).

8. Note also that in *Il.* 18. 78–79 the sequence βαρὺ στενάχων . . . ἐξετέλεσσαν parallels the sequence found in vv. 2–3 of the inscription.

9. N.B.: the reference is to the *act* of making the σᾶμα, not to the σᾶμα itself. It is important to make this distinction, since both μνάμα and σᾶμα (on these terms, see F. Eichler in *AM* 39 [1914]: 138–43) serve to perpetuate the memory of the deceased; the aorist ἐξετέλεσσαν, quite to the contrary, refers here to a completed act (ἐκτελής) done once and for all, namely the χῶσις τοῦ σάματος.

At the end of the *Iliad*, in the description of Hector's burial, the phrase  $\delta\epsilon\ \sigma\eta\mu\alpha\ \chi\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\nu$  occurs; compare  $\sigma\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\ \chi\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\nu$  in the second verse of the inscription.<sup>10</sup> The anonymous poet, by introducing an adjective often associated specifically with the brevity and uncertainty of human life— $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ <sup>11</sup>—, transforms what would otherwise have been a simple statement of fact into a poignant ending. The general sense of *IG* 4. 800 is thus:

For Praxiteles dead this memorial Wison made,  
And the comrades with heavy groans heaped up this tumulus  
In honor of his noble works, and their fleeting work they completed.

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10. *Il.* 24. 799, where editors print  $\sigma\eta\mu\prime\ \acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\alpha\nu$ . *IG* 4. 800, our oldest witness, argues for the un-augmented form in this epic phrase.  $\chi\epsilon\upsilon\prime\ \acute{\Lambda}\gamma\alpha\mu\acute{\epsilon}\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\iota\ \tau\acute{\upsilon}\mu\beta\omicron\nu$  occurs in verse-initial position at *Od.* 4. 584, where the omission of the augment is guaranteed.

11. Most famous is Pindar's  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\rho\omicron\iota\ \tau\acute{\iota}\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \tau\iota\varsigma\ \tau\acute{\iota}\ \delta\prime\ \omicron\upsilon\ \tau\iota\varsigma\ \sigma\kappa\iota\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \delta\nu\alpha\rho\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  (*Pyth.* 8. 95–96).

#### OBSERVATIONS ON THE DATE OF STRATON OF SARDIS

Of the many collections of Greek epigrams attributed to individual classical poets in the Palatine and Planudean Anthologies, Straton of Sardis'  $\Pi\alpha\iota\delta\iota\kappa\eta\ \text{Μοϋ}\sigma\alpha$ , totaling 458 verses, is one of the largest.<sup>1</sup> This alone is enough to establish Straton's value; the epigram represents a genre so standardized in style and subject matter that only in the case of a substantial corpus can an individual author's handling of it be described with real confidence. But there is another reason why Straton's collection is important. This author is assumed by most scholars to have lived under Hadrian. If he did, then his collection is among the very few that survive from the second and third centuries A.D., the last two centuries of classical antiquity; indeed, in that case, it would be by far the largest of those few.<sup>2</sup> Significant internal evidence, however, suggests strongly that

1. Only six collections are larger: those of Leonidas of Tarentum (early third century B.C.: 580 vv.), Antipater of Sidon (died ca. 125 B.C.: 464 vv.), Meleager of Gadara (ca. 140–ca. 70 B.C.: 824 vv.), Antipater of Thessalonica (fl. ca. 20 B.C.–ca. A.D. 20: 650 vv.), Philip of Thessalonica (fl. ca. A.D. 40: 532 vv.), and Lucilius (fl. ca. A.D. 55–85: 523 vv.). Poems attributed to Straton include *Anth. Pal.* 11. 19, 21–22, 117, 225; 12. 1–11, 13, 15–16, 21, 175–229, 231, 234–55, 258. On the doubtful authorship of 11. 21–22 and 11. 117, see W. Clarke, "The Manuscript of Straton's *Musa Puerilis*," *GRBS* 4 (1976): 382–84, and below. *Anth. Pal.* 16. 213 is ascribed to "Meleager or Straton" in the Planudean Anthology; I accept the opinion of A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1965), p. 679, that the poem is likelier to be Meleager's.

2. Cf. A. Lesky, *A History of Greek Literature*<sup>2</sup>, trans. J. Willis and C. de Heer (New York, 1966), p. 811: "The Indian summer of Greek literature under Hadrian also produced the collection of epigrams of Straton of Sardis. . . ." Scholars have long recognized that the epigram flourished in the hands of the Alexandrians and their successors, but was largely abandoned after the first century A.D. until its revival by Christian and other writers in the fourth. Why scholars have not devoted more attention to what most of them regard as de facto the last large classical effort in an important genre is itself an interesting question, perhaps answered by K. J. Dover in the preface to his *Greek Homosexuality* (London, 1978), pp. vii–viii.