

## TWO COMPLEMENTARY EPIGRAMS OF MELEAGER (A.P. vii 195 AND 196)

vii 195

Ἄκρις, ἐμῶν ἀπάτημα πόθων, παραμύθιον ὕπνου,  
ἀκρίς, ἀρουραῖη Μοῦσα, λιγυπτέρυγε,  
αὐτοφυῆς μίμημα λύρας, κρέκε μοί τι ποθεινόν,  
ἐγκρούουσα φίλοις ποσσὶ λάλους πτέρυγας  
ὡς με πόνων ῥύσαιο παναγρύπνιοιο μερίμνης,  
ἀκρί, μιτωσαμένη φθόγγον ἔρωτοπλάνον  
δῶρα δέ σοι γήτειον ἀειθαλῆς ὀρθρινὰ δώσω  
καὶ δροσεράς στόμασι σχιζομένας ψακάδας.

vii 196

Ἀχήμεναις τέττιξ δροσεραῖς σταγόνεσσι μεθυσθεῖς,  
ἀγρονόμον μέλπεις μοῦσαν ἐρημολάλον·  
ἄκρα δ' ἐφεζόμενος πετάλοις πριονώδεσι κώλοις  
αἰθίοπι κλάζεις χρωτὶ μέλισμα λύρας.  
ἀλλά, φίλος, φθέγγου τι νέον δενδρώδεσι Νύμφαις  
παίγνιον, ἀντῶδὸν Πανὶ κρέκων κέλαδον,  
ὄφρα φυγῶν τὸν Ἔρωτα μεσημβρινὸν ὕπνον ἀγρεύσω,  
ἐνθάδ' ὑπὸ σκιερῆ κεκλιμένος πλατάνῳ.

### A.P. vii 195: The Cicada to the Cricket

O cricket, you who soothe my passions and provide the consolation of sleep; O cricket, shrill-winged rustic Muse;

You natural imitator of the lyre; chirp some poignant song for me as you tap with your charming feet and strum your loquacious wings,

So as to relieve me from toilsome worry that completely derives me of sleep as, o cricket, you spin out a sound that dispatches Eros.

Then I shall give you as gifts, first thing in the morning, an evergreen leek along with dewy droplets that I separate with my mouth.

### A.P. vii 196: The Cricket to the Cicada

O resonant cicada, drunk on dewy droplets, you sing your rustic song that sounds in lonely places. Perched, with your saw-like limbs, high up among the leaves, you shrill forth the lyre's tune with your sun-darkened body.

But, dear friend, sound forth something new as light entertainment for the woodland nymphs, chirping a tune for Pan as the song which you sing in your turn,

So that I, escaping from Eros, can catch some noon-time sleep while reclining there under the shady plane tree.

AMONG the sepulchral epigrams comprising Book 7 of the Palatine Anthology, these two by Meleager occur in a sequence (189–216) having to do with animals, mainly birds or insects, that appears to derive from Meleager's *Garland*.<sup>1</sup> The prose translation above will reveal that the

<sup>1</sup> See A. Wifstrand, *Studien zur griechischen Anthologie* (Lund 1927) 46 and A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, edd., *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic epigrams* ii (Cambridge 1965) 615 who see 'a short but solid *Garland*-sequence, A.P. vii 190–203'. Cf. Gow and Page i, pp. xxi–xxvii citing earlier literature; also, ii 108,

where vii 189 (Aristodicus or Anyte) belongs in the Meleagrian sequence. Waltz in P. Waltz, ed., A. M. Desrousseaux *et al.* trr., *Anthologie grecque* iv (Paris 1960) 23, sees the Meleagrian series running from 194 to 203. vii 191, by Archias, is likely post-Meleagrian.

interpretation to be proposed differs considerably from previous readings of either poem, specifically in that it runs counter to the following common beliefs or assumptions. 1. That the poems, while having many features in common, are to be read as two discrete works with no integral connection between them. 2. That the two epigrams, being non-sepulchral, are included in this part of the *Anthology*, perhaps erroneously and only by reason of their affinities with those insect poems that are sepulchral.<sup>2</sup> 3. That the narrator of each epigram is a human being; the poet himself or some persona such as a 'love-sick swain'.<sup>3</sup> 4. That the addressee of each epigram is a pet, probably kept in a cage as such insects sometimes were,<sup>4</sup> and so the vegetable mentioned in v. 7 of 195 is to be presented, along with the dew drops, by the human master.<sup>5</sup> 5. That the phrase *στόμασι σχιζομένως* in the final verse of 195 is difficult or impossible. (All attempts towards an explanation or emendation of the text are premised on points 2 and 3 above.)<sup>6</sup> 6. That the word *ἀντιφδόν* in v. 5 of 196 indicates a response to a musical performance by Pan.

In general this essay attempts to identify an inter-relatedness between the poems that is much more intricate than their many obvious affinities of theme and phrasing.<sup>7</sup> In this regard they resemble Meleager's pair on Eros and Praxiteles (*A.P.* xii 56 and 57), or those addressed to mosquitoes (*A.P.* v 151 and 152), but here the links will be seen to be so numerous and complex that we have, in effect, a single poetic entity comprised of what are formally two separate poems which inform and complement each other in much the same way that certain pairs of Latin elegies do.<sup>8</sup>

The cicada (*τέττιξ*) and the cricket (*ἀκρίς*)<sup>9</sup> are encountered frequently in Greek literature where, as in nature, musicality is their most conspicuous attribute.<sup>10</sup> The courtship and mating activity of these insects is easily observed to be closely linked with their singing,<sup>11</sup> for which reason, no doubt, they are found in erotic contexts in art and literature.<sup>12</sup> A third relevant

<sup>2</sup> See R. Weisshäupl, *Die Grabgedichte der griechischen Anthologie* (Vienna 1889) 50; G. Herrlinger, *Totenklage um Tiere in der antiken Dichtung* (Stuttgart 1930) 73; Dain in Waltz *et al.* (n. 1) 138 n. 1; F. M. Pontavi, ed. & tr., *Anthologia Palatina* ii (Turin 1979) 512 n. 193. Without reference to these two A. Cameron, *GRBS* ix (1968) 328 cautions against labelling any of Meleager's epigrams in book vii as non-sepulchral. S. L. Tarán, *The art of variation in the Hellenistic epigram* (Leiden 1979) 168 n. 6 implies that the pair belongs among the animal epitaphs.

<sup>3</sup> E. K. Borthwick, *CQ* n.s. xvi (1969) 103.

<sup>4</sup> Theoc. 1.52; Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* i 14. Cf. Borthwick (n. 3) 105.

<sup>5</sup> See Borthwick (n. 3) 105 f.

<sup>6</sup> Gow and Page (n. 1) 615. G. Giangrande, *REG* lxxxii (1968) 47–50 makes a well argued, though I believe unnecessary, proposal for emendation.

<sup>7</sup> See C. Jacobs, *Delectus epigrammatum graecorum* (Gotha and Erford 1826) 404 f.; J. F. Guepin, *Lampas* iii (1971); Giangrande (n. 6) 48 f.; A. Menk, *De Anthologiae Palatinae epigrammatis sepulchralibus*, Diss. (Marburg 1884) 15.

<sup>8</sup> See J. Davis, *Dramatic pairings in the elegies of Propertius and Ovid* (Bern and Stuttgart 1977).

<sup>9</sup> On the difficulty in determining the appropriate translation of *ἀκρίς*, see e.g. M. Davies and J. Kathirithamby, *Greek insects* (London 1986) 136–8 with earlier literature; A. S. F. Gow, *CR* n.s. vi (1956) 92 f. Gow and Page (n. 1) 615, choose 'locust' or 'grasshopper' because v. 4 suggests the locust's sound-production, not the cricket's. As I note below, however, v. 4 admits of other interpretations. For present purposes the *ἀκρίς* need only be a nocturnal singer as are some locusts or grasshoppers and crickets. See Dain in Waltz *et al.* (n. 1) 137 n. 2.

<sup>10</sup> For literary loci of the cicada see Borthwick (n. 3); Steier, 'Tettix', *RE*, 2nd ser., v (1934) 1111–19; T. Smerdel, 'Dva priloga o antickom pjesnistvu. II. Epiteti i onomatopeje o cvrcku', *ZA* v (1955) 289–92; P. Antin, *BAGB*, 4th ser., i (1962) 338–46; Davies and Kathirithamby (n. 9) 113–30. W. F. Otto, *Die Musen und der göttliche Ursprung des Singens und Sagens* (Düsseldorf and Cologne 1955) discusses cicadas 59 ff. D. K. McE. Kevan, *The land of the locusts being some further verses on grigs and cicadas. Part one, before 450 AD*, Lyman Entomological Museum and Research Laboratory Memoir no. vi (Ste.-Anne-de-Bellevue 1978) presents in chronological order many Greek and Latin (also Chinese, Sanskrit, Hebrew, etc.) poems along with modern (mostly English) translations and his own entomological comments. Additional ancient examples are appended to *The land of the locusts. Part three. The sixteenth to eighteenth centuries*, Memoir no. xvi (1985).

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. D. Leston and J. W. Pringle, 'Acoustic behaviour of hemiptera', in R.-G. Busnel, ed., *Acoustic behaviour of animals* (Amsterdam, London, New York 1963) 392–401; R. D. Alexander, 'Sound communication in orthoptera and cicadidae', in W. E. Lanyon and W. N. Tavolga, *Animal sounds and communication* (Washington 1960) 38–92; Alexander on 'Arthropods', in T. E. Sebeok, ed., *Animal communication* (Bloomington 1968) 169–75.

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. C. Segal, *WS* n.s. xi (1977) 62; A. Motte, *Prairies et jardins de la Grèce antique: de la religion à la philosophie* (Brussels 1971) *passim*. See also Lucian *Am.* 18; Jerome *Ep.* xxii 18; Ambrose, *Ep.* xxviii 5. For gems depicting the insects with Eros see K. Zacher, *Hermes* xix (1884) 436; F. Imhoof-Blumer and O. Keller, *Tier- und Pflanzenbilder auf Münzen und Gemmen des klassischen Altertums* (Leipzig 1889) tab. 23, fig. 36 and p. 143;

behavioural feature of the cicada involves the notion commonly expressed in ancient literature that the cicada subsists only on dew, or on dew and air.<sup>13</sup> These poetic and fanciful notions are also based, albeit inaccurately, on observable phenomena, for cicadas do subsist on a liquid which can become a conspicuous feature of their habitat. They puncture holes in plants in order to extract juices, sometimes causing liquid to ooze from host trees, dampening both the trees and anything underlying them.<sup>14</sup> The insect also ingests great quantities of the fluid and then excretes in comparable profusion a substance sometimes known as 'honey-dew'.<sup>15</sup> When numerous cicadas infest a tree this liquid can descend in droplets that observers have described as being like a mist or rain.<sup>16</sup> Liquid extracted by the cicada is also known to be consumed by other insects such as ants, beetles, wasps and bees.<sup>17</sup> Observation of liquid in its surroundings would naturally give rise to the popular and poetic belief about the cicada's consumption of dew.<sup>18</sup> The aetiology for this belief will be one datum used for reinterpreting Meleager's two epigrams.

Before applying such tettiological facts and lore to the epigrams it will be useful to review a few features and conventions of epigrammatic poetry. For one thing the purported speaker of an epigram is sometimes the monument itself, or a figure carved on it, sometimes, indeed, the figure of an animal.<sup>19</sup> The speaker will often be the deceased, and occasionally there will be more than one person speaking the verses written for a single tomb so that one epigram takes the form of a miniature mime or dialogue, or two epigrams complement each other.<sup>20</sup> Sepulchral epigrams often reflect the notion that existence beyond the grave resembles life in this world,<sup>21</sup> as is evident in one of the insect epitaphs from the sequence of the Anthology with which we are concerned. In *A.P.* vii 189 (attributed to Aristodicus or Anyte) the deceased ἀκρίς is flying about the fields and flowers of the underworld. There is a hint of the same sort of conceit in the epitaph of Anyte for the cicada and the cricket (vii 190) where Hades carries off the creatures that had

H. B. Walters, *Catalogue of the engraved gems and cameos Greek, Etruscan and Roman in the British Museum* (London 1926) no. 1472; G. Sena Chiesa, *Gemma del Museo Nazionale di Aquileia* (Aqueileia 1966) nos. 301–3 according to I. Sekal, *Die Biene und die Zikade in der antiken Kunst*, Diss. (Vienna 1980) 153.

<sup>13</sup> The diet of dew occurs first in Hes. *Sc.* 395. Cf. D. Boedeker, *Descent from heaven: images of dew in Greek poetry and religion* (Chico 1984) 81–5 and my 'Λειριόεις κτλ. in Homer and elsewhere', *Glotta* lxiii (1985) 14–24 on connections of dew with cicadas and song.

<sup>14</sup> See T. Robinson, 'Miscellaneous observations made about Rome, Naples and some other countries in the year 1683–84', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* xxix (1714–16) 474; J. H. Fabre, *Souvenirs entomologiques* v (Paris 1924) 235 f.; J. G. Myers, *Insect singers: a natural history of the cicada* (London 1929) 160 ff.; A. Goidanich, 'Cicale' in *Enciclopedia agraria Italiana* ii (Rome 1954) 646; R. A. Donkin, *Manna: an historical geography* (The Hague, Boston, London 1980) 93.

<sup>15</sup> I find the term used in reference to cicadas in the entomological literature (some cited in n. 14) but am cautioned in correspondence from Dr D. K. McE. Kevan of the Lyman Entomological Museum and Research Laboratory, McGill University and Dr T. E. Moore, Curator of Insects, Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, that 'honey-dew' should refer only to the excreta of phloem feeders, while cicadas are mostly xylem feeders. On the imprecision of this and associated terms see also Donkin (n. 14) 1. I am grateful to Drs Kevan and Moore, to Dr A. M. Young of the Milwaukee Public Museum, and to Dr C. Hogue, Curator of Entomology, Los Angeles County Museum

of Natural History, for generous and prompt responses to my entomological queries.

<sup>16</sup> Reported for *Cicada orni* by T. Krumbach, 'Zur Natursgeschichte der Singcicaden im Roten Istrien', *Zoologische Anzeiger* xlviii (1917). See also Steier (n. 10) 1117; Myers (n. 14) 161; W. Linsenmaier, *Insects of the world*, trans. L. E. Chadwick (New York 1972) 89–91; Goidanich (n. 14) 646; H. Weber, *Biologie der Hemipteren* (Berlin 1930) 242 ff.; W. Kloft, 'Die Honigtauerzeuger des Waldes' in W. Kloft et al., *Das Waldhonigbuch* (Munich 1965) 36 and 94. For one description of the phenomenon in another part of the world see W. T. Thiselton-Dyer, 'The rain-Tree of Moyobamba', *Nature* xvii (1878) 349 f.

<sup>17</sup> See Fabre (n. 14) 253 f. and Pl. VII.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Steier (n. 10) 1117. Professor T. E. Moore advises me by letter that he has observed tropical trees exuding moisture through hydathodes in the presence of cicadas but not through their agency. This, I think, although not pertinent to Mediterranean contexts, could also have contributed to the association of cicadas with 'dew'.

<sup>19</sup> Examples of speaking monuments in *A.P.* cited by Waltz (n. 1) 30. Examples of carved figures speaking include *A.P.* vii 153; vii 169; vii 344; W. Peek, ed., *Griechische Vers-Inschriften* i (Berlin 1955) no. 1834 (a carved animal).

<sup>20</sup> See *GVI* 550 ff.; Waltz (n. 1) 31 f.; W. Rasche, *De Anthologiae Graecae epigrammatis quae colloquii formam habent* (Munster 1910).

<sup>21</sup> See e.g. R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin epitaphs* (Urbana 1942) 55 ff. and 87 ff.; Waltz (n. 1) 29 and 31.

been Myro's amusements. Elsewhere in the same sequence are epigrams by 'Meleagrian' poets<sup>22</sup> in which an ἀκρίς (vii 197 and 198) and a cicada (vii 200) utter their own epitaphs. Meleager himself has contributed vii 207, in which the speaker is a deceased hare. We even know of one Greek epigram, although not a funerary one, which consists of a conversation between two animals, a goat and a bull, portrayed on a silver plaque.<sup>23</sup> Since so many of the epigrammatic themes and practices pertinent to human subjects were demonstrably applied to animals as well there is good reason to expect that a poet such as Meleager, so adept at poetic variation, might also apply others to them.

I now propose that Meleager, in the course of compiling the *Garland*, assembled a group of sepulchral poems for insects and bound them together with a couple of epigrams of his own that incorporated a number of their themes, conceits and phrases. This is most readily apparent from the many lexical features that recur in Meleager's own epigrams after having previously occurred in the nine epigrams on dead crickets and cicadas that surround 195 and 196.<sup>24</sup> Leaving out ἀκρίς and τέττιξ and all words except the more colourful or distinctive nouns, adjectives and verbs, we can catalogue the recurrences as follows according to the order of their first appearance in 195 or 196. Note that each of the nine epigrams by Meleager's predecessors is represented by at least one word in 196 while all but one (201) are represented in 195. An asterisk marks those words or parts of compound words that occur only once or twice elsewhere in the corpus of Meleager's own poetry, a double asterisk those which occur nowhere else in his work.<sup>25</sup>

1. ὕπνου (195), (παναγρ)ὑπνοιο (195), ὕπνον (196): ὕπνον (197). 2. ἀρουραῖη\* (195): ἀρουραν (190). 3. Μοῦσα\* (195), μοῦσαν (196): μοῦσαν (197). 4. λιγυ(πτέρυγε)\*\* (195): λίγεια (189), λιγυ(φθόγγοισιν) (192), λιγυράν (197). 5. (λιγυ)πτέρυγε (195), πτέρυγας (195): πτερύγεσσι (192), πτερύγων (192, 197, 200), (μελεσί)πτερον (194). 6. κρέκε\* (195), κρέκων (196): κρέκουσα (192). 7. λάλους (195), (ἐρημο)λάλον (196): λαλαγῶν (198). 8. φθόγγον\*\* (195), φθέγγου (196): (λιγυ)φθόγγοισιν (192), φθεγγόμενα (193), φθόγγον (200). 9. δροσεράς (195): δροσερά (189). 10. στόμασι\* (195): στόματος (193). 11. ἀχῆεις (τέττιξ) (196): ἤχητα (τέττιξ) (201). 12. μέλπεις\*\* (196): μολπᾶς (194), μέλπων (201). 13. ἐφεζόμενος\*\* (πετάλοις) (196): ἐζόμενα (192), ἐζόμενον (πετάλων) (200), ἐφεζόμενος (πετάλοισιν) (201). 14. (ἐφεζόμενος) πετάλοις\* (196): πετάλοις (193), (ἐζόμενον) πετάλων (200), (ἐφεζόμενος) πετάλοισιν (201). 15. μέλισμα (196): μελιζόμενον (189), μελεσί(πτερον) (194), μέλος (195). 16. παίγνιον\* (196): παίγνια (190). 17. κέλαδον\* (196): (εὐ)κελάδου (194). 18. σκιερῆ\*\* (κεκλιμένος) (196): (κεκλιμένον) σκιεράν (192). 19. (σκιερῆ) κεκλιμένος\* (196): κεκλιμένον (σκιερόν) (192).

When these recurrences are considered in the aggregate, 195 and 196 appear as a pastiche of verbal motifs found in the insect epitaphs of Meleager's several predecessors. In repeating so much of the vocabulary from the satellites with which he surrounded his own epigrams Meleager is constantly cuing his reader to think of the content of those other poems, to recall the earlier ones as he reads 195 and 196, and to cast his thoughts back to 195 and 196 as he reads the later ones, thus evincing much of the meaning of 195 and 196 that is only latent when they are read by themselves. In that regard the sixteen verses of the cricket and cicada epigrams are analogous to Meleager's epitaph for Antipater (*A.P.* viii 428), a riddle poem which is only intelligible when read in context with a couple of epigrams by Leonidas and Antipater (*A.P.* vii 422 and 427).<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Viz. Phaennos, Leonidas, and Nicias. See *A.P.* iv 1.15 and 29 f.

<sup>23</sup> See E. Cougny, ed., *Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina cum Planudeis et appendice nova epigrammatum veterum ex libris et marmoribus*, iii (Paris 1890) 452, no. 57. Cf. Rasche (n. 20) 22.

<sup>24</sup> Contrary to some editors I consider *A.P.* vii 193 (Simias) to be an animal epitaph.

<sup>25</sup> I do not mark those compounds which are themselves *hapax legomena* if their constituent elements occur elsewhere in Meleager. C. Radinger, *Meleagros von Gadora: eine literarhistorische Skizze* (Innsbruck 1895) 30 noted some of these verbal correspondences.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Gow and Page (n. 1) 673.

In capping his predecessors Meleager has adopted the general idea of epitaphs for dead insects as well as several more specific features of their work including the convention of the insect as narrator and the association of cricket and cicada in a single poem (vii 190 by Anyte). Blending these ingredients with other features of sepulchral and epigrammatic traditions, he constructs a playful mime consisting of two epigrams that are tantamount to amoebian halves of a single poem with the cicada addressing the cricket in the first octet and the cricket replying in the second one, using natural gender for the nouns and participles that refer to himself.<sup>27</sup> This exchange involves, in addition to numerous items from the epigrammatist's stock-in-trade, several devices of pastoral-erotic poetry such as are found, for instance, in Theocritus 1. Thus, while the two poems by themselves, do not appear to have the funerary content to justify placing them in the context in which we find them, they are in fact creatures of that context. There are, moreover, extraneous considerations that associate both insects with sepulchral contexts: images of cicadas are found in burials from various times and places in the Greek world<sup>28</sup> and we know that at least one poetic voice from an ancient grave called upon cicadas and ἀκρίδες, along with other of nature's singers, to grace his final rest with their song.<sup>29</sup>

Having now elaborated a hypothetical scheme that relies largely on bringing to bear upon the poems evidence that is mainly external to them, we shall now apply the hypothesis to a reading of the epigrams themselves. The cricket, addressee of the first epigram, is a nocturnal singer, a point made in the epigram of Mnasilces (*A.P.* vii 194) which immediately precedes this one and which refers to the insect's πᾶν ἑσπέρων ὕμνον. The cicada, by contrast, sings during the hot, sunny hours. And so it is that the cicada here requests a nocturnal song that will assuage his cares and passions and induce repose by freeing him from the diurnal erotic concerns that, along with his singing, have been his preoccupation.<sup>30</sup> His request occupies the first six verses and is followed in the last distich with the promise of the gifts he will give in return first thing in the morning (ὄρθρινά) when the nocturnal song has been completed and when the cicada, that favourite of the dawn,<sup>31</sup> begins his day's activities. The gifts are to include a leek, or some such alliaceous plant, perhaps because it is supposed to be good for the singer's voice, or simply because it is the sort of thing that crickets might eat, but more likely because such vegetables were sometimes eaten after a night of erotic activity and even for the purpose of discouraging amorous advances.<sup>32</sup> The vegetable in any case is to be accompanied by dew drops. What the poet means by all this is that the cricket, in his natural surroundings (as ἀρουραΐη would indicate), is to be presented with a leek still rooted in the ground and growing, and besprinkled with dew just like the flowers (δροσερά . . . ἄνθεα) of the underworld about which the ἀκρίς of Aristodicus' epigram (*A.P.* vii 189) flew. It is the cicada's special contribution to furnish the dew proverbially associated with him. He is going to separate it into droplets by means of his own mouth. This could mean either that the cicada will 'separate' the fluid from a plant, be it the leek itself or an overhanging tree, and deposit it in droplets on the leek, or that he will form discrete droplets from the amorphous accumulation of 'dew' surrounding his roost. The former would be consistent with the actual behaviour of cicadas, while the latter process might be fancifully derived from the observation of the moisture that sometimes appears in their habitat. Either alternative makes sense of the troublesome στόμασι σχιζομένας, and it might be noted in this connection that the verb σχίζω and its congeners are elsewhere used in reference to the 'separation' of curds and whey; that is to the formation of defined globules from a liquid

<sup>27</sup> Some nouns designating animals have 'common' gender. Here, in the absence of the noun, the speaker might be particularly expected to use natural gender. B. L. Gildersleeve, *Syntax of Classical Greek from Homer to Demosthenes. Part 1* (New York 1900) 55 cites examples of natural gender used for modifiers of nouns with different grammatical gender.

<sup>28</sup> References in Sekal (n. 12) 135 ff.

<sup>29</sup> See *IG* xiv 1934 = *GVI* 2027.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. n. 12 on the cicada's erotic and musical activities.

<sup>31</sup> As in the myth of Tithonus and Eos in Hellanicus, *FGrH* 4 F 140 = schol. *Hom. Il.* iii 151.

<sup>32</sup> For the first explanation see Borthwick (n. 3) 104; for the second Kevan (n. 10, 1978) 493; for the third R. Seager, *Philologus* cxxvii (1983) 139-42.

medium.<sup>33</sup> This raises the further possibility that the poet, in using a word (σχίζω) that has to do elsewhere with the processing of milk products, might be allusively bringing the gift into association with such homely commodities as milk that are known in other poetic contexts as rewards for rustic musicians. In the insect's domain the leek with dew drops would be the appropriate counterpart to the milk and a cup that Theocritus' goatherd first promises (using the word δώσω as does Meleager's speaker in v. 7), and then gives to Thyrsis who has 'sung better than a cicada'.<sup>34</sup> The notion, in any case, of the cicada providing liquid refreshment for another insect is not just poetic fancy but is based on the observable reality that a number of other insects do find nourishment in the fluids extracted from plants by cicadas.<sup>35</sup>

While the cicada's feeding habits, the traditional beliefs about them, and their relationship to the feeding of other insects provide a basis for interpreting the received text of the final verse of 195, there is still another exceptional but generally unnoticed feature of that verse to be considered; namely its phonetic idiosyncrasy. There are no fewer than nine sibilants in the fourteen syllables of the verse. Such a high concentration of sibilants is most unusual and in Meleager's poetry is restricted to contexts involving insects.<sup>36</sup> The poet must choose his words carefully in order to accumulate so many such sounds while simultaneously producing intelligible and metrical Greek. This must be another factor accounting for the use of σχίζω in what appears to be an unusual sense, for the form used here has three sibilants. The same factor would influence his decision to use the plural στόμασι with its two sigmas. The result is a striking piece of *Lautmalerei* that represents one feature of the insect's song, the same natural sound that has, in other times and places, inspired other poets to similar efforts in sibilant mimicry.<sup>37</sup> In Meleager's case the mimesis really has two objects, just as it does in another epigram of his (*A.P.* v. 152.1 f.) where exaggerated sibilance imitates both the mosquito's buzz and the whispering that is the subject of the sentence. In the final verse of his poem addressed to the cricket, where the subject is the droplets of dew, the sounds are also intended as an aural image of drizzle falling. This image is advanced both phonetically and conceptually by the presence of ψακάδας, a word which elsewhere designates drizzle or rain but one which is also apposite here because it can refer to spray from the mouth of a sputterer.<sup>38</sup> This point, if comparative onomatopoeics be of any value, brings to mind yet another possible reason for the somewhat unconventional use of σχιζομένας, for the Greek σχίζω is phonetically close, albeit otherwise unrelated, to Italian *schizzare*, an onomatopoeic word meaning 'spray' or 'sputter'. But perhaps it is more to the point that Greek itself also has the onomatopoeic verb σίζω meaning 'hiss' or 'sizzle'.

The phonetic imagery at the end of 195 is prolonged by the beginning of 196 in which the cricket invites the cicada to provide a responsorial song, an ἀντωδός, to his own.<sup>39</sup> It contains numerous echoes of the first epigram in its content and phrasing. Thus δροσεραῖς σταγόνεσσι of the opening verse answer to δροσερὰς . . . ψακάδας as the second epigram picks up the subject with which the first one has just concluded and thus establishes the continuity between the two. The second reference to dew-drops is also, in a sense, a gloss on the first one where the cicada is not explicitly identified as the speaker. If the reader's mind has not already turned to cicadas at the first reference to dew-drops, the second one with its explicit association of dew-drops and

<sup>33</sup> See Diosc. ii 70. Cf. σχίσις meaning 'curdled milk' at Gal. xvi 728. Borthwick (n. 3) 106 notes that δαίζω, another verb of 'cutting' or 'splitting', is sometimes used for dividing liquid into droplets.

<sup>34</sup> Theoc. 1.25 ff. and 148 ff.

<sup>35</sup> See Fabre (n. 14) 235 f.

<sup>36</sup> Namely this epigram, its companion and *A.P.* v 152.2 addressed to a mosquito. See D. F. Dorsey, *Meleager's epigrammatic technique*, Diss. (Princeton 1967) 220 on sibilance in the mosquito poem.

<sup>37</sup> E.g. Vergil, *Ecl.* 1.12 f.; A. Chénier, *L'Aveugle*, p. 47 in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. G. Walter (Paris 1950); Arthur Dommett in book iii, canto 1 of *Ranolf and*

*Amohia*, quoted by R. B. Sibson, *Prudentia* xi (1979) 106; B. Uxkull as cited by K. Kluncker, *Das geheime Deutschland* (Bonn 1985) 45. I am grateful to Dr G. Divay, University of Manitoba Library, for the last reference. See also L. Michel, *Étude du son "S" en latin et en roman* (Montpellier 1962) 166 ff.

<sup>38</sup> See LSJ s. vv. ψακάζω and ψάκας.

<sup>39</sup> This unconventional interpretation of ἀντωδόν is implicit in my overall reading. A response to another singer can also be a song for Pan without being a response to anything that the god has sung or played himself. Like the speaker of the epigram Pan was supposed to sleep at noon.

cicada will make him retroject the same association into the earlier context. The affinities of thought between the adjacent verses of the two epigrams are reinforced by their phonetic similarities, for the first verse of 196 itself contains no fewer than eight sibilants, or nine counting the geminate sigmas of *σταγόνησσι* separately.<sup>40</sup> Thus the cricket not only begins his response with the same subject matter but also with the same sort of phonetic mimicry that so distinctively marks the conclusion of the cicada's address to him. While the sibilant effect is most marked in the verses where the two poems adjoin, it also extends into the interior of each epigram, for there are twenty-two or twenty-three instances in verses 1–5 of 196,<sup>41</sup> a total almost matched by the twenty-two in the last five verses of 195. This means that when we read the two epigrams together, without pause between them, we notice the cicada sounding a crescendo of sibilance, as it were, culminating in v. 8 of 195 whereupon it is picked up antiphonally by the cricket who sustains the sibilance at its peak for one verse before the decrescendo that leads down to v. 5 of 196.

The poet is redundant in forging the link between the end of one epigram and the beginning of the other, but he also succeeds in making the first couplet of 196 parallel the first couplet of 195. Both contain an invocation of the insect addressee and both include a reference, couched in similar phrases (*ἀρουραῖη Μοῦσα* and *ἀγρόνομαν . . . μοῦσαν*), to the addressee's rustic musical artistry. Proceeding through 196 one frequently encounters further examples of its verbal, conceptual, or phonetic correspondences with 195.<sup>42</sup> Sometimes the parallels are set in the corresponding distichs of the respective epigrams. Thus, for instance, each poem displays an overall arrangement whereby the first three couplets are given to the description of the addressee's actions and the request for his performance, while the final couplet shows a change in grammatical subject from the addressee to the speaker who describes what he will do in reaction to the other's song. But there are also instances where the parallel features are interspersed among different parts of the poems as in the case of references to liberation from erotic concerns (v. 8 of 196 but vv. 1 and 6 of 195) or to sleep (vv. 1 and 5 in 195 but v. 7 in 196).

The second couplet in each epigram likens the addressee to a lyre in phrases (*μίμημα λύρας* and *μέλισμα λύρας*) that correspond phonetically, prosodically and semantically. Each couplet also features a reference to the legs or limbs of the insect concerned. An appreciation of the nature of this particular pairing of motifs depends upon a fresh and closer look at the respective contexts. Commentators have generally assumed that in each case the legs are meant to be instrumental in producing music. In 195 the phrase *ἐγκρούουσα φίλοις ποσσί λάλους πτερυγός* has usually been understood to mean something like 'striking your chattering wings with your dear little feet' as if consistent with the sound production of grasshoppers,<sup>43</sup> but this is not the only way in which the Greek can be sensibly construed. *κρούω* and other verbs of striking, beating, tapping, etc., when used, as here, in musical contexts and with reference to feet, almost always mean 'to dance', 'to strike the ground with one's feet', or something similar.<sup>44</sup> But *κρούω* and its compounds are also used in the sense of striking an instrument so as to produce music, and then, by extension, in the sense of playing an instrument, even one that does not involve striking.<sup>45</sup> Here in Meleager, then, *ἐγκρούουσα* can be taken sylleptically with both *ποσσί* and *πτερύγας* in a concise and pregnant phrase that might be rendered as 'playing on your chattering wings as you beat out time with your charming feet'. The phrase deftly melds traditional musical terminology with a colourful image of the cricket who makes music with his wings. Should the suggested imagery seem somewhat overwrought, we can point to the fact

<sup>40</sup> Claes, *Lampas* ii (1970) 215 counts 7 instances of the 'foneem s' in this verse. H. Outré, *Méléagre de Gadara* (Paris 1894) 283 associated the sibilance in both 195 and 196 with monotonous sounds of hot afternoons.

<sup>41</sup> Unlike Claes (n. 40) 215, I include 3 in my count.

<sup>42</sup> Guepin (n. 7) 220 f. comments on several of them.

<sup>43</sup> See Page in Gow and Page (n. 1) 215; Gow (n. 9)

<sup>44</sup> See LSJ s. vv. *κρούω*, *ἐγκρούω*, *ἐγκατακρούω*; Theoc. 18.7 f. with note *ad loc.* by A. S. F. Gow, ed. and tr., *Theocritus* ii (Cambridge 1950) 350.

<sup>45</sup> As in the verse quoted by schol. Aesch. *Pers.* 940 = Kock, *CAF, Adespota* 415 or Edmonds, *Lyra Graeca* iii fr. 27.

that one of Meleager's near-contemporaries has left us much the same image in a different artistic form, an engraved gem of the first century BC depicting a lyre-playing, foot-tapping insect.<sup>46</sup>

While the second couplet of 195 might have its ambiguities, problems in the corresponding part of 196 seem to arise more from a chronic mis-reading of the Greek than from any ambiguity inherent in the text. The accumulation of datives in the couplet has made it difficult for readers to determine just how all the nouns are related to one another and to the various verbs and participles. But the confusion is increased by the assumption that the poet means to say that the cicada's 'sawlike', that is dentilated,<sup>47</sup> legs have some function in its sound production.<sup>48</sup> But if we take κώλοις with ἐφεζόμενος 'as proximity and rhythm suggest',<sup>49</sup> verse 3 should mean 'perching high among the leaves on your saw-like limbs'.<sup>50</sup> The next verse says that the insect shrills out the music of a lyre by means of his sun-darkened body, or flesh, or skin (χρωτί), which is what a cicada actually does inasmuch as he produces his sound with membranous tymbals on the underside of his thorax.<sup>51</sup> What all of this amounts to is that Meleager, in the second couplet of each epigram, while respecting the distinctive characteristics of the two insects, manages to apply the same metaphor (the lyre) to both, to make parallel yet different references to their limbs (ποσσί, κώλοις) and to mention their respective organs of music production (πτερύγας, χρωτί).<sup>52</sup>

The parallelism of the two epigrams extends to syntactic structures as well. The cicada requests a song by using a combination of vocative, imperative with direct object modified by indefinite adjective, dative of interest, and present participle: κρέκε μοί τι ποθεινὸν ἐγκρούουσα . . . ἄκρί. The cricket responds with virtually the same formula although with a different word order: φίλος, φθέγγου τι νέον δενδρώδεσι Νύμφαις . . . κρέκων. He even repeats the verb κρέκω while reversing its grammatical function in the formula. In each case the insect's injunction involves a purpose clause indicating that the song should bring release from erotic cares.

To all the lexical, syntactic, conceptual, or phonetic echoes of 195 in 196 that have already been pointed out we can add the following: φθέγγου and φθόγγον; φυγῶν τὸν Ἔρωτα and ἔρωτοπλάνον; ὕπνον and τὸν ὕπνου; φίλος and φίλοις; the homometric *hapax legomena* ἔρωτοπλάνον and ἐρημολάλον; ἄκρί/ἄκρίς and ἄκρα. Yet a further phonetic parallel to be noted is that the combination of occlusive + rho, which Claes takes to be imitative of the cicada's song, is particularly frequent in both epigrams.<sup>53</sup> In the presence of all the foregoing examples there would also appear to be a punning reflection of παναγρύπνοιο in Πανὶ . . . ὕπνον ἀγρεύσω. Finally, in the light of our aggregation of parallels, particularly phonetic ones, the word which introduces the second epigram—ἀχήμεναι—must have a significance beyond the fact that it belongs to a set of words commonly used as epithets for the cicada.<sup>54</sup> The irony of having the echoic first line of an echoic epigram begin with a cognate of ἠχώ can only be deliberately effected. The poet reinforces the effect when he refers to the cicada's song as an ἀντῳδός, using a term that itself sometimes appears in context with ἠχώ and with which it is virtually synonymous.<sup>55</sup> Thus ἀχήμεναι is at once a recapitulation, and another example, of the verbal dexterity and aural imagery that marks these epigrams and binds them together.

I alluded earlier to the first *Idyll* of Theocritus to which, despite the differences of genre and proportion, Meleager's pair of epigrams, as now read, bear a number of correspondences. It takes

<sup>46</sup> See Imhoof-Blumer and Keller (n. 14) 143 and table xxiii, no. 44 or E. Zwierlein-Diehl, *Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen. II, Berlin* (Munich 1969) 160 and table 75, no. 423.

<sup>47</sup> See Myers (n. 14) 48.

<sup>48</sup> See e.g. Page in Gow and Page (n. 1) 616.

<sup>49</sup> So Dorsey (n. 36) 138. But he takes κώλοις with κλάζεις as well.

<sup>50</sup> H. Beckby, ed. and tr., *Anthologia Graeca* ii (Munich 1957) 121 and several other translators get this right.

<sup>51</sup> See L. Bodson, *AC* xlv (1976) 75–94.

<sup>52</sup> Contrast Guepin (n. 7) 221.

<sup>53</sup> Eight times in 195 and ten in 196 whereas Meleager's eight-verse epigrams average between four and five according to Claes (n. 40) 214 and 221 n. 31.

<sup>54</sup> See L. Gil Fernandez, *Nombres de insectos en Griego antiguo* (Madrid 1959) 121 f. M. L. West, ed., *Hesiod, Works and Days* (Oxford 1978) 304; A. Bravo Garcia, 'Varia lexicographica Graeca manuscripta. I. de vocabulis animalium', *Habis* ix (1978) 87.

<sup>55</sup> See Claes (n. 40) 210 who cites Ar. *Th.* 1059 and *A.P.* vii 191 (Archias).



the form of a dialogue between two rustic musicians who, with extravagant praise for each other's talents, request a piece of musical entertainment and promise a reward. When asked to play a tune on the pipes the goatherd begs off with the explanation that Pan would object to his doing so at noon. The goatherd does, however, give a *de facto* song in the form of a detailed description of the pictures on the cup which he intends to give to Thyrsis. This description includes a scene involving the construction of a cricket cage (ἀκριδοθήρα, v. 52) and another one featuring two love-sick youths. When the goatherd has finished his description and as the two of them are sitting in the shade of a tree, Thyrsis sings a song in which he addresses the Muses, the nymphs, and Pan and sings of Daphnis who had suffered long and grievously at the hands of Eros. At the conclusion of the song the goatherd compliments Thyrsis by saying that he sings better than a cicada. Were it not for the fact that a good number of the same elements—rustic ambience with shade-tree at noon, the Muses and the Nymphs, a dialogue involving the subject of Eros, cicadas, obeisance to Pan, etc.—occur as well in Plato's *Phaedrus*, one might readily conclude that Meleager had this specific Theocritean poem in mind and that he had his rustic singers present a condensed version of it. While that remains a possibility, another is that the *Phaedrus* inspired Meleager,<sup>56</sup> either directly or through the filter of Theocritus' *Idyll*. Still another is that Plato, Theocritus, and Meleager are all independently using a constellation of motifs drawn from the reservoir of material and devices to which authors of pastoral dialogues traditionally resorted.<sup>57</sup>

Whatever his specific sources and models Meleager has used them to create something that is much more than just another pair of clever epigrams laden with the themes, conceits and vocabulary of the animal epitaph as we know it from the pens of Anyte, Mnasilces and other accomplished poets. Meleager's unique achievement lies in the blending of pastoral-erotic themes into a special re-working of another traditional poetic form. The result is an epigrammatic *tour de force* of sixteen verses elaborated with novel permutations and re-combinations of poetic elements and devices which had nearly all been used previously in the epigram or other genres but which had never all been used together within a single work. The cicada and the cricket, common to both pastoral-erotic and sepulchral poetic traditions, are the binding ingredients in Meleager's unique blend of those traditions.

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. J. Hubaux, *Le réalisme dans les Bucoliques de Virgile* (Paris & Liège) 51, n. 1; A. La Penna, *Maia* v (1952) 110 f. Cf. Borthwick (n. 3) 104; Claes (n. 40) 213.

<sup>57</sup> E. Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* i (Leipzig 1898) 113 only exaggerates the facts when he says that a compilation of all the passages that contain cicadas, a

stream, a plane tree, etc. would exceed the size of the *Phaedrus*. Segal (n. 12) considers the cicada as part of a complex of motifs in several of Theocritus' *Idylls*. On the *Phaedrus* and Theocritus see C. Murley, *TAPA* lxxi (1940) 281–95.