

EMENDATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS IN EPIGRAMS

Dans cet article nous essayons d'interpréter le vocabulaire de trois épigrammes de la Collection Palatine: A.P. 9.62 d'Euéenos, A.P. 9.387 de l'Empereur Hadrien (selon d'autres de Germanicus) et A.P. 7.723 (anonyme).

In this paper I would like to elucidate several points in epigrams about Greek cities commemorated in the Greek Anthology.

The first epigram that I would like to discuss is A.P. 9.62 by Euenus (=A.S.F. Gow -D.L. Page, *The Garland of Philip*, Cambridge 1968, 2302 f.f.). Here is the text:

Ξεῖνοι, τὴν περίβωτον ἐμὲ πόλιν, Ἴλιον ἱρήν,
τὴν πάρος εὐπύργους τείχεσι κληζομένην,
αἰῶνος τέφρη κατεδήδοκεν· ἀλλ' ἐν Ὀμήρῳ
κεῖμαι χαλκείων ἔρκουσα ἔχουσα πυλῶν,
οὐκέτι με σκάψει Τρωοφθόρα δούρατ' Ἀχαιῶν,
πάντων δ' Ἑλλήνων κείσομαι ἐν στόμασιν.

Although the general sense of the epigram is clear as it is explained by the lemmatist, «εἰς Ἴλιον τὴν πόλιν, ἣν ἐπόρθησαν Ἕλληνες, ὅτι διὰ τὸν Ὅμηρον· ἀείμνηστος μᾶλλον καὶ αἰώνιος γέγονεν», lines 3f. have caused difficulties to interpreters.

According to Gow -Page, *op. cit.*, vol. II p. 291, «αἰῶνος τέφρη κατεδήδοκεν» is «a vile phrase; it is the one attempt at originality, and the worst thing in the epigram. Time may reduce a city to ashes, and Time may devour a city, but to combine these ideas in the phrase 'the ashes of Time have devoured the city is to talk nonsense».

Even worse K. Hartigan¹, p. 71 n. 17, comments as follows on χαλκείων... πυλῶν in line 4: «The phrase is an awkward one. Even if we

¹ K. Hartigan, *The Poets and the Cities: Selections from the Anthology about Greek Cities*, *Beiträge zur Klassischen Philologie*, Heft 87, Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1979.

assume the gates are those of the Underworld (at Il. VIII 15 the gates are iron and the roadway bronze), and as the poet is undying, so his work is eternal, there are better ways of saying this. I would like to see something like a brazen clasp on a volume of Homer; although the codex form would have been used at this period I can find no evidence of a 'brazen' clasp».

In line 3, the phrase «αἰῶνος τέφρη» does not seem to appear elsewhere, and it is a variation of the common topos, on the fire that devoured a city, already adduced by Headlam² p. 33f., and Borthwick³ p. 430f. The noun τέφρη, like its synonym σποδός, followed by a defining genitive of material is a common expression both in poetry and prose, cf. Allen-Halliday-Sikes⁴ p. 316, where the expression is fully analysed. On the pattern of such phrases, Euenus, instead of a genitive of material, uses the genitive αἰῶνος, thus he creates one of the most common types of metaphor whereby a substantive is followed by a genitive⁵; αἰῶνος is genitivus causae (or genitivus auctoris, if we write Αἰῶνος). The sense is «the dust generated by time (or by Time)».

It is well known that the Achaeans after conquering Troy reduced the city to ashes⁶, a common theme from early Epic to Quintus Smyrnaeus. As Skiadas⁷, p. 149, says, the epigrammatists of the Anthology when referring to the Trojan legend are used to giving «ein Grund der Zerstörung». In A.P. 9.77 (Antip. Thess.), Hera, jealous of Zeus' attention to Ganymedes, threatens Troy with destruction; Agathias Scholasticus in A.P. 9.152 maintains that Troy was sacked by the wooden horse, whereas in A.P. 9.154 (*id.*) Athena destroyed Ilion revenging

² W. Headlam, *Herodas, The Mimes and Fragments*, Cambridge 1966 (1922). In the examples cited by Headlam we may add, Call. fr. 195.25 (Pfeiffer) ἀλλ' ἀτρεμίξει κῆπι τὴν τέφρην οἰκλῆεῖ (sc. τὸ πῦρ), and Euph. fr. 50.3 (Powell) ὡς πυρὶ καρφόμενα ψαφαρῆ ἰνδάλλετο τέφρη.

³ E. K. Borthwick, *Emendations and Interpretations in the Greek Anthology*, CQ 21 (1971) 426-436.

⁴ T. W. Allen-W. R. Halliday-E. E. Sikes, *The Homeric Hymns*, Amsterdam 1980 (Oxford 1936).

⁵ On such metaphors used frequently in post-Hellenistic epic poetry, cf. G. Giangrande, *On the Halieutica of Oppian*, *Eranos* 68 (1970), p. 87, n. 29.

⁶ On the noun τέφρη and its synonyms as an emblem of the destruction of Troy, cf. Lyc. =Alex. 969 f. πένθος μέγιστον καὶ δι' αἰῶνος πάτρας / ἔσται πυρὸς ῥιπαῖσιν ἠθαλωμένης, and on the town of Egesta mourning for the fall of Troy, cf. Sen. *Troad*. 21 ater favilla squallet Iliaca dies. On the verb τεφρώω meaning «reduce a town to ashes», cf. Bauer, *Wört. N.T.*, s.v.

⁷ A. Skiadas, *Homer im Griechischen Epigramm*, Athen 1965.

Paris. Euenus, in the epigram under discussion, followed later by Agathias Scholasticus⁸, deviates from such mythological explanations; according to him it is not the real ashes that have devoured Troy but mainly «the ashes of time».

Now in line 4, χαλκείων... πυλῶν, can only refer to Troy, defended «by brazen gates». The use of bronze in architecture is already mentioned in Homer, *θ* 15 χάλκεος οὐδός on the roadway to Hades, *η* 83, 89 of Alcinoous palace, and Hesiod *Theog.* 732 f. θύρας (v.l. πύλας).../χαλκείας; thereafter the adjective is frequently used in this sense, e.g. D.S. 2.9.3., 17.71.6 on the brazen gates of Persepolis.

In literature we have no evidence of brazen gates of Troy, and although this is not unlikely, Euenus certainly employs here the adjective in its metaphorical meaning, «hard», «strong», cf. L.S.J.⁹ s.v. 2, already found in Homer, *E* 387, *P* 425 and κ 4 on which cf. Dindorf, *Sch. Vet.*, *ad. loc.*; the adjective is also interpreted in Suidas, s.v. χάλκεος: ἰσχυρός, στερεός.

Such metaphorical expressions are also common in fourth century rhetoric, e.g. Aeschin. 3.84: «Ναί, ἀλλά χαλκοῖς καὶ ἀδαμαντῖνοις τείχεσιν, ὡς αὐτός φησι (sc. Demosthenes), τὴν χώραν ἡμῶν ἐτείχισε τῇ τῶν Εὐβοέων καὶ Θηβαίων συμμαχίᾳ»⁹.

It was a common topos among post-Hellenistic epic poets and epigrammatists that Troy achieved its fame through the Homeric poems and Euenus fully utilizes this topos here, i.e. the gates of Troy are not real gates, but the Homeric poems which have defended the city not from the Achaeans but from oblivion (=αἰῶνος τέφρη)¹⁰.

Thus Euenus using these two metaphors heightens the force of the epigram by providing a rhetorical contrast (cf. the emphatic use of

⁸ Cf. A. P. 9.153. 5f. πάντα χρονίη τε μόθος χύσις καὶ Μοῖρα κραταυῆ / ἦρπασεν.

⁹ As R. B. Richardson, *Aeschines against Ctesiphon*, New York 1979 (Boston-London 1889), p. 104, observes. Aeschines probably has been influenced here by Demosthenes 18.299, οὐ λίθοις ἐτείχισα τὴν πόλιν οὐδὲ πλίνθοις ἐγώ... ἀλλ' ἐὰν τὸν ἔμῳν τειχισμὸν βούλη δικαίως σκοπεῖν, εὐρήσεις ὄπλα καὶ πόλεις καὶ τόπους καὶ λιμένας καὶ ναῦς καὶ [πολλοὺς] ἵππους καὶ τοὺς ὑπὲρ τούτων ἀμυνομένους; for a similar expression, cf. Demades, 2. On the influence of fourth century rhetoric upon epigrammatists, cf. F. A. Gragg, *A Study of the Greek Epigram before 300 B.C.*, Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, XLVI, 1 (1910), p. 31 f.

¹⁰ The phrase, used metaphorically, is attested again in the Anthology 9.518 (*Alc. Mess.*), χαλκείας... πύλας μακάρων In A. P. 7. 138 (*Acerat.*), Hector is called ἔρκος ἐρμυότατον of the wall of Troy.

ἀλλὰ in line 3) between the decline of Troy and its existence in the Homeric poems¹¹.

The verb σκάπτω in line 5, mainly a prosaic word, is very rarely attested in epic, h. Merc. 90, 207, A.R. 1.371; the word does not mean here «dig», «dig into me» as Gow-Page, *loc. cit.*, render. The verb, when it is transitive and construed with an accusative, usually means «dig up» (translation by Paton, *ad. loc.*) «umgraben», «umhacken», cf. Bauer, *Wört. N.T.*, s.v. 2, and in the line under discussion it has rather the notion «destroy completely», «raze to the ground», a meaning which the verb has in its compound form κατασκάπτω, cf. A. Ag. 525 Τροίαν κατασκάψαντα.../ Διὸς μακέλλῃ, S. Ph. 998 Τροίαν... κατασκάψαι βία.

We shall now explain A.P. 9.387, by the emperor Hadrian or by Germanicus (=D.L. Page, *Further Greek Epigrams*, Cambridge 1981, p. 559f.):

Ἔκτορ, Ἀρήιον αἶμα, κατὰ χθονὸς εἶ που ἀκούεις,
χαῖρε, καὶ ἄμπνευσον βαιὸν ὑπὲρ πατρίδος.
Ἴλιον οἰκεῖται κλεινὴ πόλις, ἄνδρας ἔχουσα
σοῦ μὲν ἀφαιροτέρους, ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἀρηίφιλους·
Μυρμιδόνες δ' ἀπόλοντο. παρίστασο, καὶ λέγ' Ἀχιλλεῖ
Θεσσαλίην κεῖσθαι πᾶσαν ὑπ' Αἰνεάδαις.

The adjective ἀρηίφιλος in line 4 has puzzled K. Hartigan, *op. cit.*, p. 70 n. 13, who writes: «Why Hadrian calls them ἀρηίφιλοι is unclear; perhaps the Trojan youth was good in sports which were often considered akin to war»¹².

It is precisely the fact that the men of Ilion are compared to Hector, who won fame not as an athlete but as a warrior, that makes Hartigan's argument without foundation.

Ἀρηίφιλος is a common Homeric epithet meaning «warloving», «Martis amans»¹³; it is a word typical for bravery, predominantly applied in Homer to Menelaus and to other Achaean heroes but never to

¹¹ Rhetorical word play is often utilized in Hellenistic and late epigrams, cf. D. H. Garrison, *Mild Frenzy*, *Hermes, Zeitschrift für Klassische Philologie*, Heft 41, Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1978, p. 37f.

¹² Moreover Hartigan, *op. cit.*, p. 82 contradicting herself, maintains that Hadrian uses the adjective merely for poetic reasons.

¹³ Germanicus, if he is the author of the latin version of this epigram, cf. D. L. Page, *loc. cit.*, renders ἄνδρας.../ ἀρηίφιλους in «gens.../ Martis amica».

Trojans¹⁴. The adjective as an attribute of the Trojans is used again in A.P. 11. 211 (Lucill.): «Ζωγρεῖτε», κράξας, «Τρῶες ἀρηίφιλοι», in the same metrical sedes.

Apart from ἀρηίφιλος, the poet of this epigram has absorbed and fully utilized Homeric phrasing, as many Hellenistic and late epic poets and epigrammatists for their own literary and aesthetic purposes. Besides the adjective ἀρηίφιλος we may also note in line 1 of the epigram under discussion the use of the epithet ἀρήϊον, a word typical of the Achaeans in Homer¹⁵, cf. Ebeling, *Lex. Hom.*, s.v., p. 130, applied here to Hector while in A.P. 9. 461 (*Anon.*) it is used for Troy.

This does not seem to be accidental or just confined to epigrams; already in archaic lyric poetry Sappho in an attempt at originality, refers to ἐλικῶπις Ἴνδρομάχη fr. 44.5 (Lobel-Page), cf. Harvey¹⁶ p. 209, whereas Homer employs the adjective for the Achaeans. Among post-Hellenistic epic poets, Christodorus in A. P. 2. 189 writes θεοπρόπος Κασσάνδρα, a Homeric epithet applied to Calchas, *N* 70; Tryphiodorus 466, uses the attribute ἐλκεχίτωνες for the Trojan women, whereas Homer, *N* 685 refers to Ἰάονες ἐλκεχίτωνες, cf. Erbse, *Sch. Vet.*, ad loc.; Quintus Smyrnaeus 10.9 uses the adjective ἐχέφρων for Polydamas, an epithet typical of Penelope in Homer, *ν* 406, *π* 130, *ω* 294, etc., and the examples can be multiplied.

To sum up: The use of the adjective ἀρηίφιλοι in the epigram under discussion belongs to the device whereby stock Homeric attributes of Achaean heroes denoting beauty or heroic force, are transferred to Trojans by late epic poets and epigrammatists in a case of *oppositio in imitando* towards Homer¹⁷.

Finally an anonymous epigram, A.P. 7. 723 (=A.S.F. Gow -D.L. Page, *Hellenistic Epigrams*, Cambridge 1965, 3886 ff.):

Ἄ πάρος ἄδητος καὶ ἀνέμβατος, ὦ Λακεδαῖμον,
καπνὸν ἐπ' Εὐρώτῃ δέρκεαι ὠλένιον,
ἄσκιος· οἰωνοὶ δὲ κατὰ χθονὸς οἰκία θέντες
μύρονται· μήλων δ' οὐκ αἴουσι λύκοι.

¹⁴ G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, vol. I, Books 1-4, Cambridge 1985, p. 242.

¹⁵ The only Trojan called ἀρήϊος, in Homer, is Asteropaeus, *M* 102, *P* 352.

¹⁶ A. E. Harvey, *Homeric Epithets in Greek Lyric Poetry*, CQ 7 (1957) 206-223.

¹⁷ For the transference of Homeric epithets within the framework of *imitatio cum variatio*-ne and *oppositio in imitando* in Hellenistic and late epic poetry, cf. H. White, *Theocritus' Idyll XXIV: A Commentary*, Amsterdam 1979, p. 20, with further bibliography.

In line 1 the adjectives ἄδητος καὶ ἀνέμβατος do not seem to apply to a town elsewhere, cf. Gow-Page, *op. cit.*, vol II p. 586, but we may think here of A.P. 9.518 (*Alk.Mess.*), line 1 f. Μακύνου τείχη... πάντα Φιλίππῳ/ ἀμβατά, and line 3f. χθῶν μὲν δὴ καὶ πόντος δέδμηται¹⁸.

The word ὠλένιον in line 2 has caused problems of interpretation; Gow-Page, *loc. cit.*, follow Dübner, *Anthol. Pal.*, vol I p. 508, and comment as follows on the word: «usually explained as= Achaeon, from Olenus, a town in Achaea, which, though somewhat odd, seems right»¹⁹.

The adjective ὠλένιος, related to the town of Olenos, is very rare in Greek²⁰, cf. Pape-Benseler, *Wört. der Griech. Eigennamen*, s.v. 1705, and it seems unknown in the sense «Achaeon»; the town of Olenos although a member of the Achaeon Confederacy, according to ancient historians had never played an active role in the invasions against Sparta (either in 207 BC, or in 218 BC, cf. material in Gow-Page, *op.cit.*, II p. 585) and it would therefore be absurd to use its name to denote Achaea.

I think the problem is capable of a solution; the employment of the adjective ὠλένιον in the epigram under discussion is a typical case of Hellenistic ambiguity, whereby the word at first sight seems to mean «Achaeon», but upon closer examination the adjective reveals itself to have the precise meaning required by the context²¹.

As Boëlte has already noted, R.E. s.v. *Olenos* 2440, the word ὠλένιον in the line of the epigram under discussion does not refer to the Achaeon town, but means, as Hesychius says s.v., δεινόν, κακόν. We know that Hellenistic epic poets and epigrammatists very often utilize

¹⁸ Although the verbal resemblance between the two epigrams is clear, we cannot ascribe the epigram under discussion to Alcaeus of Messene, as Legrand suggested in *Rev. Ét. Anc.* 3 (1901), p. 194f.

¹⁹ Similarly W. R. Paton, *The Greek Anthology*, 5 vols. (Loeb edition), London 1969-1970 (1916-1918), vol. II, p. 385, translates καπνόν... ὠλένιον, «The Oleniam smoke», and he explains it as «Achaeon»; cf. also H. Beckby, *Anthologia Graeca*, 4 vols. München 1957-1958, ad. loc., «olenischer Rauch».

²⁰ Adjectives in -ιος, -ιον, derived from place-names in -νος are rarely used in Greek literature, e.g. Ἐπίδαμνος/-ιος, Κύθνος/-ιος, Λήμνος/-ιος, Ὀρχομενός/-ιος, Πράμνος/-ιος, etc.

²¹ For such an ambiguity concerning the word κολοφῶνα in *Hermesianax* 7.45 (Powell), denoting not the town of Colophon but «success», cf. G. Giangrande, *Textual and Interpretative Problems in Hermesianax*, *EEAth* XXVI (1977-78), p. 109 ff., with further bibliography.

in their poetry glossae which are attested only in Hesychius or in *Etymologicum Magnum*²².

This meaning may be due to the stem *ῶλεν-* of the adjective *ῶλένιον* being taken to be connected here with the aorist of *ῶλλυμι*, *ῶλεσ-*: it would be a case of pareymology, a device often utilized by Hellenistic and late epic poets.

The phrase *καπνὸν... δέρκεαι ῶλένιον* therefore means «you see... the dreadful smoke», and it is most probably modelled on the proverbial phrase referred to Sparta, quoted by Plutarch, *Ages.* 31: «*γυνὴ Λάκαινα καπνὸν οὐχ ἑώρακε πολέμιον*»; the area has obviously been set on fire by the invaders.

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²² It is perhaps worth pointing out that such glossae often coincide with place-names, e.g. *ἀλήσιον/ Ἄλησιον*, *ἀλκίων/ Ἀλκίων*, *ἄνυσσις/ Ἄνυσσις*, *βωτίου/ Βώτιον*, *γάδειρα/ Γάδειρα*, *διάνιον/ Διάνιον*, etc., and often are a subject for word-play, cf. Hesychus, s.v. *Γαληψός*: *παίζει μὲν Εὐπολις, παρὰ τὸ λαμβάνειν. ἔστιν δὲ καὶ πόλις καὶ βοτάνης εἶδος.*