

LUCIA FLORIDI

Speaking Names, Variant Readings, and Textual Revision
in Greek Epigrams*

Puns on proper names are common in Greek and Roman literature, and the Greek epigram, with its multiple subgenres, is no exception. The (par)etymology of names – be they real or fictitious – is exploited for a variety of purposes and in a variety of ways. The aim of this paper is to contribute to the discussion on the broad topic of proper names in Greek epigrams by offering some reflections on a thorny problem: textual variants involving proper names as evidence of the (authorial?) revision and reuse of texts. A new survey and critical discussion of the (scanty) existing evidence will be provided. Particular attention will be paid to the etymology of proper names, which, in some cases, might suggest a substitution for the purpose of increasing the efficacy of the poetic message.

Comunissimi, in letteratura greco-latina, i giochi di parole onomastici, e l'epigramma greco, nei suoi vari sottogeneri, non fa eccezione. La (par)etimologia dei nomi – reali o fittizi che siano – è sfruttata per i più diversi obiettivi e nei più diversi modi. Scopo dell'articolo è contribuire al tema della funzione e dell'uso dei nomi propri nell'epigramma greco discutendo un problema spinoso: le varianti testuali negli antroponimi, come possibili spie della revisione (autorale?) di un carme e del suo riuso in un contesto diverso da quello per cui era stato originariamente composto. Si procederà al riesame dei (pochi) epigrammi con varianti di questo tipo, concentrandosi in particolare sull'etimologia dei nomi, che può talora indurre a ipotizzare una sostituzione finalizzata ad accrescere l'efficacia del messaggio poetico.

Introduction

Puns on proper names are common in Greek and Roman literature. *Redende Namen* are regularly exploited in iambic poetry and comedy to create puns¹. Nor are 'serious' genres, such as epic or tragedy, indifferent to the destiny inscribed in a character's name: Homer certainly had the etymology of Protesilaus in mind when he chose to represent him as νηὸς ἀποθρόσκοντα πολὺ πρῶτιστον Ἀχαιῶν (*Il.* II 702), or that of Demodocos, when he defined him as Δημόδοκος, λαοῖσι τετιμμένος (*Od.* XIII 28) – not to mention the fact that Odysseus managed to escape from the Cyclops through a pun on Οὗτις/οὐ τις (*Od.* XI 366-411). In tragedy, one of the most famous examples is provided by the folk etymology of Helen discussed by the chorus in Aesch. Ag. 681ff., where the name of the woman who was deemed responsible

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¹ The bibliography on the subject is large: on iambic *nomina ficta*, see e.g. Bonanno 1980; on speaking names in comedy, see e.g. Steiger 1888, Fröhde 1898, and Marzullo 1953. Among more general contributions on the vast topic of speaking names, see Calame 1988, 178-189.

for the Trojan War was connected to the radical ἐλ- in the famous tricolon ἐλένας, ἔλανδρος, ἐλέ-/πτολις (v. 689-690); but examples abound, especially in Euripides².

Ancient theorists were well aware of the potential of proper names: Plato's *Cratylus* – a dialogue on the 'correctness of names' (περὶ ὀνομάτων ὀρθότητος, 384a) – offers etymological discussions on the names of Olympian gods, such as Rhea, which is connected to ῥέω (402b), or Hades, for which a folk etymology from 'his knowledge (εἰδέναι) of all noble things' is argued (404b); Aristotle, in *Rhet.* II 23,28 (1400b), mentions puns on speaking names such as Thrasybulus, Thrasymachus, Polos, Drakon, Aphrodite and Pentheus, while in *Poet.* IX 3 (51b) he explains how proper names are differently used in comedy and tragedy. In Rome, the relationship between a name and its bearer is discussed by Cic. *De or.* II 257³. Quintilian VI 3,53ff. defines the practice of punning with proper names as 'frigid', and Cicero himself, in *De or.* II 247, had highlighted the dangers of jibes of this kind, criticising, for example, a pun on the name of Aulus Sempronius Musca, mocked as a 'buzzer' – *musca* being the name of an insect – because it was made just to get a laugh (*risum quaesivit*)⁴.

The etymology of a proper name might be re-activated, or (par)etymologically re-interpreted for the sake of a given context, or specifically chosen for a character in order to focus the audience's attention on his/her narrative function or role⁵.

Epigrammatic poetry, with its multiple subgenres, is obviously no exception: funerary poems may exploit the name of a deceased person to praise his/her qualities (e.g. Sim. *AP* VII 508 = 117 Sider, where Pausanias is defined as ἡτρὸν ἐπώνυμον, because he 'pauses' pain⁶, or Antip. *Thess.* *AP* IX 517,2-3 = *GPh* 94-95 Γλάφυρε / οὔνομα καὶ τέχνης καὶ σώματος, for a piper; cf. *IG* XIV 400,5 οὔνομα μοι Γλάφυρος καὶ φρενὸς εἴκελον ἦν), or to lament his/her fate (*Crinag.* *AP* V

² A list of Euripidean passages involving etymological puns with proper names is provided by McCartney 1919, 348 (which is worth referring to, in general, for the richness of the collected material).

³ For a discussion of names as indicators of characters in Rome, Corbeill 1996, 74-78.

⁴ For a discussion of this passage, see e.g. Beard 2014, 120. On proper names in Latin literature, see e.g. Colburn 1912; Booth - Maltby 2006.

⁵ While many names, in literature, are purposely chosen because of their meaning, in Antiquity as much as today (some examples in Petrone 1988, 34-36), a speaking name does not necessarily imply a *nomen fictum*, and this is true for praise as well as for satirical poetry: on this point, see Floridi 2014, 29.

⁶ See Plat. *Symp.* 185c Πανσανίου πανσαμένου. In real life, Pausanias is well attested as a 'professional' name for doctors: see Samama 2003, 16ff. For ἐπώνυμος in the sense of 'true to his/her name', see already *Il.* V 962 (Alcyone); *Od.* VII 54 (Ἀρήτη = ἀρετή), XIX 409 (Ὀδυσσεύς = ὀδυσσάμενος).

108,5-6 = *GPh* 1845-1846 = 14,5-6 Υψιλαντι Πρώτη σοι ὄνομ' ἔσκειν ἐτήτυμον ἦν γὰρ ἅπαντα / δεύτερ' ἀμιμήτων τῶν ἐπὶ σοὶ χαρίτων)⁷. In a similar vein, erotic or scoptic epigrams can exploit the name of a character for a variety of purposes and in a variety of ways⁸: names may be either appropriate (e.g. Melissa is a true μέλισσα, 'bee': she drops honey from her lips, but she also has a sting⁹; Potamon is a 'torrential' poet¹⁰, while Callistratos 'wages war' with his hexameters¹¹) or inappropriate (e.g. Parmenis, 'Constance', is not true to her name)¹². They can suggest paronomasias (Mel. *AP* V 154,2 = *HE* 4315 ἄ Τρυφέρα τρυφερά) or etymological puns (Rufin. *AP* V 47,1-2 = 18,1-2 Page Θάλεια, / ... θαλερῆ), especially as far as sex is concerned (see e.g. Strat. *AP* XI 22 = 100 Floridi, who plays on the equivalence δράκων = ὄφις, to be taken as a slang for πέος¹³, to express a pseudo-rationalistic doubt: how can a young man called Dracon let another 'snake' enter into his 'nest?')¹⁴. They can present the audience with a kind of riddle, when the very meaning of a poem is based on the interpretation of speaking names (among the best examples are Rufin. or Pall. *AP* V 71, where four proper names variously related to war are used to describe how poor Zeno can free himself from his wife, a true Andromache, 'man-fighter'¹⁵, or Fronto *AP* XII 174, which revolves around pareymological puns involving Persian names)¹⁶. Poets may play with their own

⁷ Further examples of the exploitation of the correspondence between a person's name and his/her qualities in funerary epigrams in e.g. Ypsilanti 2018, 164-165.

⁸ For the exploitation of speaking names in scoptic epigrams, see Conca 2004-2005; Floridi 2014, 27-30.

⁹ Marc. Arg. *AP* V 32 = *GPh* 1307ff.

¹⁰ Lucill. *AP* XI 131 = 40 Fl.

¹¹ Lucill. *AP* XI 136 = 45 Fl.

¹² Maced. *AP* V 247,1 = 13,1 Madden Παρμενίς οὐκ ἔργω.

¹³ See Ar. *Eccl.* 909-910 κατὰ τῆς κλίνης ὄφιν προσελκύσαι / βουλομένη φιλήσαι; Henderson 1991², 127; Adams 1982, 30-31.

¹⁴ Other examples include puns on the names of mythological characters, such as the Homeric hero Meriones, pareymologically related to μηροί, 'thighs', and thus to homoeroticism (Floridi 2007, 382-383), in Antip. Sid. *AP* XII 97 = *HE* 632ff. and Strat. *AP* XII 247 = 89 Fl. (see also Rufin. *AP* V 36 = 12 Page, in a heterosexual context), or Astyanax/Astyages (privative α + στύω) in, respectively, Strat. *AP* XII 11 = 11 Fl. and Fronto *AP* XII 174, to mean impotence. For the pun on Meriones, cf. Livrea 1979; Steinbichler 1995; on Astyanax/Astyages, Floridi 2007, 153-154.

¹⁵ Πρωτομάχου πατρός και Νικομάχης γεγαμηκώς / θυγατέρα, Ζήνων, ἔνδον ἔχεις πόλεμον. / ζῆτει Λυσίμαχον μοιχὸν φίλον, ὅς σ' ἐλεήσας / ἐκ τῆς Πρωτομάχου λύσεται Ἄνδρομάχης.

¹⁶ Μέχρι τίνος πολεμεῖς μ', ὦ φίλτατε Κῦρε; τί ποιεῖς; / τὸν σὸν Καμβύσην οὐκ ἐλεεῖς; λέγε μοι. / μὴ γίνου Μῆδος· Σάκας γὰρ ἔση μετὰ μικρόν, / καὶ σε ποιήσουσιν αἱ τρίχεις

names to ‘sign’ their poems, and to offer their audiences (ironic) self-presentations: Meleager owes his name to the fact that he loves boys both black, μέλας, and white, ἀργός (*AP* XII 165 = *HE* 4520ff.); Philodemos is so named because he sleeps with many Demos (*AP* V 115 = *GPh* 3196ff. = 10 Sider). In other cases too we seem to be dealing with puns on the name of a poem’s author: the speaker in *Strat. AP* XII 11 = 11 Fl., for instance, sleeps for a whole night with a boy named Philostratos – and it is obviously tempting to take this as ‘lover of Strato’¹⁷.

A particular type of paretymological pun, to which little or no attention has been paid so far, concerns bilingual wordplays: I have suggested, for instance, that *Strat. AP* XII 196 = 37 Fl. – a poem entirely based on the theme of the brightness of the beloved’s eyes – exploits the Latin etymology of *Lucinus*, Λυκῖνος being the name of the boy whose eyes are ‘rays that shoot forth fire’¹⁸. While the Greek Λυκῖνος derives, properly, from λύκος (Chantraine, *DELG*, s.v., 633), Latin *Lucinus* is connected to *lux* (Ernout – Meillet, *DELL*, s.v., 372), and it is difficult to avoid the impression that the poet is here exploiting the Latin etymology for the sake of a pun (we can certainly presume that an audience of the imperial Greco-Roman world was able to catch such bilingual wordplays)¹⁹. A similar, yet reverse, example is provided by *Maec. AP* V 117 = *GPh* 2480ff. Θερμαίνει μ’ ὁ καλὸς Κορνῆλιος· ἀλλὰ φοβοῦμαι / τοῦτο τὸ φῶς, ἤδη πῦρ μέγα γινόμενον, where the Latin name of the beloved suddenly becomes appropriate for the theme of the poem, if one takes -ῆλιος as the Greek word for ‘sun’.

The topic is vast, and much has been written – although a comprehensive study, aimed at distinguishing and classifying the different ways in which Greek epigrammatists play with proper names, is still missing (to the best of my knowledge).

In this paper I will contribute to the discussion on proper names in Greek epigrams by offering some reflections on a thorny problem: textual variants involving proper names as evidence of the (authorial?) revision and reuse of texts.

Ἄστυάην. Κύρος probably involves a pun on κύριος, ‘lord’ (cf. Numenius *AP* XII 28); Καμβύσης is paretymologically linked to κάμνω; Μῆδος to μὴ δούς (cf. Marc. Arg. *AP* V 63 = *GPh* 1311ff., discussed below); Σάκας to σάκ(κ)ος, ‘beard’; as for Ἄστυάης, see above, n. 14.

¹⁷ Obermayer 1998, 299 n. 225; Floridi 2007, 152.

¹⁸ Ὀφθαλμοὺς σπινθήρας ἔχεις, θεόμορφε Λυκῖνε, / μάλλον δ’ ἀκτῖνας, δέσποτα, πυρσοβόλους. / ἀντὺ τὸ βλέψαι βαιὸν χρόνον οὐ δύναμαί σοι, / οὕτως ἀστράπτει ὄμμασιν ἀμφοτέροις. See Floridi 2007, 239.

¹⁹ In Latin literature, the etymology of Greek proper names is regularly exploited: see e.g. Vallat 2006 (on Martial). On Greco-Roman bilingualism, see at least Adams - Janse - Swain 2002 and Adams 2003.

1. *Textual variants involving proper names in Greek epigrams*

The substitution of a proper name with another, when there is no phonetic or graphical similarity, has often been taken as evidence of the reworking of a text for a different occasion and/or a different audience²⁰. A case in point is Martial: in his epigrams there are variants involving proper names, and some scholars think that at least some of them may be due to the author himself – although the question is much debated and no consensus has been reached²¹.

As regards Greek epigrams, we only have variant versions of the same poem in a few cases, either because a text appears twice in the *Greek Anthology*, in two (slightly) different versions, or because it is transmitted by both medieval manuscripts and papyri. A list of poems of this sort was provided by Peter Parsons²², who noted, in passing: «Of a special interest is a tradition [...] of replacing a proper name with another of the same metrical value. Various explanations have been canvassed: one proposes that the author adapted his poem to new topicalities between one circulation and another – or from a topical name to a speaking name for the general reader's convenience». In what follows, a new survey and critical discussion of the (scanty) existing evidence will be provided; particular attention will be paid to the etymology of proper names, which, in some cases, may suggest a substitution for the purpose of increasing the efficacy of the poetic message.

²⁰ As shown by Tarán 1979, 166ff., in the Hellenistic art of variation proper names are among the textual elements most frequently changed when an epigrammatist imitates another. The same is obviously true of inscriptional epitaphs: when a famous model is imitated, an obligatory change is determined by the insertion of the name of the deceased. A clear example is provided by the funerary inscriptions that readapt the famous epitaph for Homer, adesp. *AP* VII 3, discussed by Garulli 2012, 206ff. (see, in particular, *IGIN* II 91, second half of the 2nd cent. A.D., where Homer's name is replaced with that of the deceased, Alcibiades, ignoring all metrical rules).

²¹ The first to propose that some of the variants in Martial's text might be explained as authorial variants was Schneidewin 1842, VII; the most enthusiastic supporter of this theory was Lindsay 1903a and 1903b (whose excesses were already criticised by Pasquali 1952², 419). Lists of proper names involving textual variants are provided, for instance, by Giarratano 1951², VI; Kay 1985, 4, n. 12 (who, however, explains the discrepancies in the manuscripts by positing the substitution of a common name for a rarer one - an explanation that can work in some cases, but not all). Considerable scepticism with regard to this theory is expressed, for example, by Citroni 1975, XLIII, LXXI-LXXII; Howell 1980, 14, 129-130; Fusi 2006, 75-76. In general, on the problem of authorial variants in Classical texts, see, after Pasquali 1952², XIX, 395-465, at least Mariotti 1985; Timpanaro 1997; De Nonno 1998; Dorandi 2007, 123-139; Losacco 2016.

²² Parsons 2002, 106-107 (and n. 45).

1.1. 'Doublets' in the Greek Anthology

1. Strato AP XI 21 = 83 Fl. and XII 242 = 84 Fl.

Πρώην τὴν σαύραν Ἀγάθων ῥοδοδάκτυλον εἶχεν·
νῦν δ' αὐτὴν ἤδη καὶ ῥοδόπηχυν ἔχει.

Πρώην τὴν σαύραν ῥοδοδάκτυλον, Ἄλκιμ²³, ἔδειξας·
νῦν αὐτὴν ἤδη καὶ ῥοδόπηχυν ἔχεις.

This joke on the Homeric epithet ῥοδοδάκτυλος, which here takes on an obscene meaning²⁴, appears in both book XI and book XII with an attribution to Strato of Sardis²⁵. The couplet is basically the same, the only differences being the shift from the third (εἶχεν/ἔχει) to the second person (ἔδειξας/ἔχεις) and the name of the character (Ἀγάθων/ Ἄλκιμ²⁶). Both Ἀγάθων and Ἄλκιμος are common names in real life²⁷, and neither of them occurs elsewhere in Strato's poems. The name may have been simply changed to address a different real person, and the two versions may be explained as the reuse of the same joke on two different occasions. But one should also note that while Ἀγάθων generically suggests the idea of excellence (and possibly of sophistication, and even effeminacy, if one thinks of the tragic poet ridiculed by Aristophanes in his *Thesmophoriazousai*²⁸), Ἄλκιμος better fits

²³ Salmasius; the manuscript reads ανιμ'.

²⁴ It plays on both δάκτυλος and ῥόδον as euphemisms for - respectively - the *membrum virile* (Henderson 1991², 114-115) and the boy's anus (in pederastic contexts, the opposition ῥόδον/βάτος is common as a metaphor for two different moments of life: see Floridi 2007, 231-232). As I have suggested elsewhere (Floridi 2007, 372), an epithet used for Dawn, who 'rises' in the morning, may suggest the idea of the 'rising' of the 'lizard', i.e. the boy's *penis* (for σαύρα = πέος, see Adams 1982, 30). On the two epigrams, see also Giannuzzi 2007, 404-405 and 463.

²⁵ Theoretically, the possibility that one of the two versions of the poem may be due to interpolation cannot be ruled out, but this seems unlikely. Among Strato's epigrams, we find another pair where the poet experiments with different ways of expressing exactly the same idea: AP XI 225 = 51 Fl. and AP XII 210 = 52 Fl. (a *ménage à trois*). As in the case we are commenting, these two poems occur in two different books of the *Greek Anthology*, and this seems to suggest a different mode of circulation already in Antiquity: see Floridi 2007, 54.

²⁶ One should also note the omission, in the second version, of δ' at v. 2: is this a variant version or a scribal error? Given the textual evanescence of particles, the latter is certainly more probable.

²⁷ See LGPN, I-V, s.v.

²⁸ On such a characterization, see Pretagostini 1997; Austin - Olson 2004, 61-63, 119.

the context for three reasons: (1) it is a proper name that occurs both in the *Iliad* (XIX 392, XXIV 474 and 574), where, together with Automedon, he is Achilles' favourite companion after Patroclus's death, and in the *Odyssey* (XXII 235), where he is Mentor's father; so the name is particularly apt in the context of Homeric parody (especially if one thinks of the common post-Homeric homoerotic interpretation of the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus in Greek literature: see Strat. *AP* XII 217,5-6 = 60,5-6 Fl. ὦ μακαριστὸς ἐκεῖνος, ὅτις ποτέ, καινὸς Ἀχιλλεὺς / τοίῳ ἐνὶ κλισίῃ τερπόμενος Πατρόκλῳ, with my n. *ad l.*); (2) ἄλκιμος is also a Homeric adjective (e.g. *Il.* XI 483), whose meaning is 'stout, brave' (*LSJ*, s.v., I); (3) a proper name connected to ἀλκή, 'strength', suggests the idea of virility, on which the joke is based (through the opposition ῥοδοδάκτυλον/ῥοδοπῆχυν, where the second part of the two compounds can also be taken as a measure of length, the couplet offers a description of the 'growth' of the character's penis).

It is thus possible that Strato changed the name to make it more suitable to the content of the epigram, when revising an old couplet for a new book – a new *libellus*, or a 'definitive' collection of his own poems²⁹. A generic name, Ἀγάθων – be it real or fictitious – is replaced with a speaking name, Ἄλκιμος, which makes the joke more effective.

2. Diosc. *AP* V 53 = *HE* 1475ff. = 5 Galán Vioque and *AP* V 193 = *HE* 1479ff. = 6 Galán Vioque

Ἥπιθανὴ μ' ἔτρωσεν Ἀριστονόη, φίλ' Ἄδωνι,
κοψαμένη τῇ σῆ στήθεα πὰρ καλύβη.
εἰ δώσει ταύτην καὶ ἐμοὶ χάριν, ἦν ἀποπνεύσω,
μὴ προφάσεις, σύμπλουν σὺν με λαβῶν ἀπάγου.

Ἥτρυφερὴ μ' ἤγγρευσε Κλεῶ τὰ γαλάκτιν', Ἄδωνι,
τῇ σῆ κοψαμένη στήθεα παννυχίδι.
εἰ δώσει κάμοι ταύτην χάριν, ἦν ἀποπνεύσω,
μὴ προφάσεις, σύμπλουν σὺν με λαβῶν ἀγέτω.

Both poems – which are almost identical in terms of wording, the most evident change being the name of the woman – are included in book V; *AP* V 53 = *HE* 1475ff. is attributed to Dioscorides by the lemma τοῦ αὐτοῦ, *AP* V 193 = *HE* 1479ff. by the lemma Διοσκορίδου, added by C, the 'Corrector' of P. The question

²⁹ Several elements suggest that Strato published more than one book: see Floridi 2007, 54-55.

whether C's ascription is reliable has been much discussed³⁰: Stadtmüller 1894 thought the two poems could not be by the same author, and that one was an imitation of the other³¹. Waltz 1929, 88 explained *AP* V 193 as a *ridicula imitatio* of *AP* V 53, where «la pointe galante qui terminait l'épigramme de Dioscoride (si elle se montre nue à moi aussi, je consens à mourir ensuite) est remplacée par une 'charge': je veux bien mourir, mais à condition qu'elle m'enrôle d'abord dans son équipage (sur ce genre de métaphore, cf. V, 44, etc.)». This explanation, however, is hardly convincing: the slight variant in the last verse does not really change the tone of the poem, which is concluded, in both versions, by a nautical image common in erotic contexts³². And parody is usually more effective in hitting its targets: the couple Asclepiades *AP* VII 145 = *HE* 946ff. = 29 Sens/Mnasalces *HE* 2667ff., which leaves no doubts as to who is imitating whom, offers a telling parallel for how a 'serious' poem may be parodied so as to completely change its meaning and tone. Mnasalces humorously converts Asclepiades to a Stoic context, leaving the poem almost identical but for the names of – respectively – Ajax and Apatē, which are replaced by Hedone and Terpsis³³. While in Asclepiades Virtue sits in mourning by Ajax's tomb, in Mnasalces she sits by Hedone's side³⁴. Even less convincing is the suggestion by Giangrande 1967, who reads *AP* V 193 as a parody of V 53 directed toward a *pathicus*, whose real name would be Κλέων (cf. the play on Μηνοφιλα / Μηνόφιλος in Marc. Arg. *AP* V 116,5-6 = *GPh* 1349-1350 and the mock grave epigram for Trygonion, a castrated Gallos, offered by Philod. *AP* VII 222 = *GPh* 3320ff. = 33 Sider)³⁵.

The best explanation for the relationship between the two poems is thus the one provided by Reitzenstein 1905, 1128 (and accepted by Gow – Page 1965, II,

³⁰ C is generally accurate when introducing additions and corrections (drawn from a copy of Cephalas's anthology produced by Michael ó χαρτοφύλαξ; see Cameron 1993, 103-120), but he is not exempt from errors: see Gow 1958, 35ff.

³¹ *Alterutrum aut imitatoris est aut Asclepiadis*, «meaning presumably that we had either Asclepiades and an imitation by D., or D. and an imitation by an unknown» (Gow – Page 1965, II, 238).

³² For nautical imagery in erotic literature, see Adams 1982, 167; Henderson 1991², 49, 161-164; Murgatroyd 1995.

³³ Here are the texts of the two poems: Asclepiades: Ἄδ' ἐγὼ ἅ τλάμων Ἄρετὰ παρὰ τῷδε κάθημαι / Ἀϊαντος τύμβῳ κειρομένα πλοκάμους, / θυμὸν ἄχει μεγάλῳ / βεβολημένα, εἰ παρ' Ἀχαιοῖς / ἅ δολόφρων Ἀπάτα κρέσσον ἐμεῦ δύναται; Mnasalces: Ἄδ' ἐγὼ ἅ τλάμων Ἄρετὰ παρὰ τῇδε κάθημαι / Ἡδονῆ, αἰσχίστως κειραμένα πλοκάμους, / θυμὸν ἄχει μεγάλῳ βεβολημένα, εἴπερ ἅπασιν / ἅ κακόφρων Τέρπιδ κρείσσον ἐμοῦ κέκριται.

³⁴ Cf. Gow – Page 1965, II, 412; Sens 2011, 197.

³⁵ For a rejection of Giangrande's hypothesis, see Sider 1997, 179-180; Galán Vioque 2001, 155.

238; see also Galán Vioque 2001, 155): *AP* V 53 and 193 must be two alternative versions of a same quatrain by the same poet.

Both Aristonoe and Cle(i)o are attested as proper names in real life: we know, for instance, of a famous priestess of Nemesis bearing the name Aristonoe (*IG* II², 3462, 3rd cent. B.C.), whose statue is now at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens; more generally, feminine names in -νόη would appear to have been common in Hellenistic poetry (cf. e.g. Νικονόη in *Hedyl.* *AP* VI 292,3 = *HE* 1827 = 1,3 Floridi, or Πραξινόα and Εὐνόα in *Theocr.* 15). Cle(i)o was a notoriously bibulous woman in Alexandria (mentioned by both Phalaecus *HE* 2936 and Aelian *VH* II 41; the woman is probably to be identified with the gluttonous Cleio of *Hedylus* *HE* 1871 = 9,1 Fl.: see my n. *ad l.*, also for the spelling)³⁶. The two names may thus refer to real persons, or at least may have been chosen for their topicality – although Aristonoe, ‘fair mind’, may have been a more promising name, in the speaker’s view, than Cle(i)o for a girl one wishes to sleep with (cf. Ἀριστοδίκη, ‘best justice’, in *Nicarch.* *AP* XI 328,2, with a clear allusion to the woman’s ‘fairness’ in sharing her charms with three different partners: see *infra*). We must admit, however, that here a specific connection between the women’s names and the theme of the poems is difficult to find. A scribal error, by the way, can be ruled out, given the textual distance between Ἀριστονόη and Κλεώ and other differences between the two versions, such as v. 1 and the explicit of v. 2 (while it might account for other textual details, such as the inversions κοψαμένη τῆ σῆ/τῆ σῆ κοψαμένη at v. 2, ταύτην καὶ ἐμοί/κάμοι ταύτην at v. 3, or the variant σύμ/σύν at v. 4). The couple thus seems to offer another example of how a poet could reuse his own verses and adapt them to different circumstances (and, in this case, to a different beloved), so as to produce two different versions of the same poem.

I will not discuss here *Mel.* *AP* V 215 = *HE* 4272ff. = *Posidipp.* *HE* 3190ff., an epigram on Heliodora which is repeated in book XII, after *adesp.* *AP* XII 19, with the variant Ἡλιωδόρου instead of Ἡλιωδόρας and an attribution to Μελεάτου (*sic*) or Ποσειδίππου: most probably, it is an interpolation caused by the need to adapt a heterosexual poem – after it was displaced – to the pederastic book³⁷.

³⁶ The name Κλεώ also appears in *CPR* XXXIII, col. V 19, but it is unclear whether it is used for a girl or for the Muse: see Parsons - Maehler - Maltomini 2015, 72.

³⁷ See Gow - Page 1965, II, 636-637. Gender misclassifications in books V and XII are notoriously common, and they are probably due to Cephala: Gow - Page 1965, I, XIX-XX; Cameron 1993, 31. Another example of corrections aimed at resolving a similar problem is provided by *Asclep.* *AP* V 145 = *HE* 860ff. = 12 *Sens*, where C writes αὐτήν instead of αὐτόν (*contra metrum*) at v. 4 and κόρη instead of κόμη at v. 6. Parsons 2002, 106, n. 45 includes in his list *Antip. Thess.* *AP* IX 149 = *GPh* 441ff. and *AP* IX 150 = *GPh* 447ff., whose v. 3-6 coincide – except for a word – with *Philip.* *AP* IX 255 = *GPh* 2939ff.,

2. *Texts transmitted via the Greek Anthology and papyri*1. Nicarch. *AP* XI 328 = P.Oxy. 4502,18-29

Τὴν μίαν Ἑρμογένης κάγώ ποτε καὶ Κλεόβουλος
 ἤγομεν εἰς κοινήν Κύπριν Ἀριστοδίκην·
 ἧς ἔλαχον μὲν ἐγὼ πολὴν ἄλα ναιέμεν αὐτός·
 εἷς γὰρ ἔν, οὐ πάντες πάντα, διειλόμεθα.
 Ἑρμογένης δ' ἔλαχε στυγερόν δόμον εὐρώοντα, 5
 ὕστατον, εἰς ἀφανῆ χώρον ὑπερχόμενος,
 ἔνθ' ἀκταὶ νεκύων καὶ ἐρινεοὶ ἠνεμόεντες
 δινεῦνται πνοιῇ δυσκελάδων ἀνέμων.
 Ζῆνα δὲ θεὸς Κλεόβουλον, ὃς οὐρανὸν εἰσαναβαίνειν,
 τὸ ψολόεν κατέχων ἐν χερὶ πῦρ, ἔλαχεν. 10
 γῆ δ' ἔμενε ξυνή πάντων· ψίαθον γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ
 στρώσαντες τὴν γραῦν ὧδε διειλόμεθα.

The poem, an obscene parody of the tripartite division of the cosmos between Zeus, Hades and Poseidon (*Iliad* XV 189-193), included in book XI of the *Anthology*, is also transmitted by P.Oxy. 4502,18-29 (1st/2nd cent. A.D.)³⁸. The papyrus offers some variant readings: (1) Διδύμαρχος instead of Κλεόβουλος, at v. 1 and 9; (2) πνοιαῖς instead of πνοιῇ at v. 8; (3) possibly πηδάλ<ι>ον (R.A. Coles *apud* Parsons) instead of πῦρ ἔλαχεν at v. 10.

(3) is most probably a scribal corruption – the reading of the papyrus is very uncertain, but if Coles is right in suggesting πηδάλιον³⁹, one should note, with Parsons 1999, that «Zeus does not normally wield a rudder, and we miss the catch-word ἔλαχεν» (see ἔλαχον, v. 3, and ἔλαχε, v. 5). As regards (2), a passage from the plural to the singular (or vice versa) is an easy change and may have occurred at any stage of the transmission of the text (for a similar case, see Mel. *AP* XII 78, 1 = *HE* 4442 = *BKT* V 1,76, discussed below)⁴⁰. Where the papyrus certainly offers a better reading, as unanimously recognised by scholars, is in the case of (1): the proper name Διδύμαρχος instead of Κλεόβουλος. As remarked by Parsons 1999, 53, the name (attested in real life: cf. *LGPN*, I-V, s.v.) alludes to δίδυμοι, a slang term for ‘testicles’ (cf. e.g. Marc. Arg. *AP* V 105,3-4 = *GPh* 1331-1332; Philod. *AP* V 126,4 = *GPh* 3337 = 31,4

but the case is different (see Gow - Page 1968, II, 72-73) and, in any case, proper names are not involved.

³⁸ Parsons 1999, 46-49, 52-53.

³⁹ The word can have an obscene meaning: see Henderson 1991², 123, n. 63.

⁴⁰ Magnelli 2005, 162 argues in favour of πνοιαῖς, on the basis of *Il.* XVII 55-56 τὸ δέ τε πνοιαὶ δονέουσι / παντοίων ἀνέμων.

Sider, with his n. *ad l.* for further parallels), and this is obviously appropriate in an obscene epigram. In addition, the second component, -αρχος, hints at the equation of the character with Zeus⁴¹. Didymarchos is thus preferable to Cleoboulos, a name not particularly appropriate to the context⁴², where all the characters bear significant names. Hermogenes, who gets the (metaphorical) Underworld (*i.e.* the old woman's πρωκτός), has a name whose meaning is 'son of Hermes' the psychopomp⁴³, while Aristodike suggests the 'fair' division between the three participants in the *ménage*⁴⁴.

The phonetic and graphical difference between the two names rules out the possibility of textual corruption. A plausible explanation is that Κλεόβουλος was used to allude to a real person, in an *ad hoc* performance where Nicarchus's text was readapted to the needs of the moment⁴⁵; and it is at least equally possible (see the case of Strato, and possibly Dioscorides, discussed above) that the poet himself used the name in a (first?) version of the poem addressed to a specific character, while Διδύμαρχος was a *nomen loquens* chosen to create a stronger connection between the role of the man in the epigram and his name for the benefit of a larger audience⁴⁶.

⁴¹ Condello *apud* Magnelli 2005, 159, n. 36; Vergados 2010, 407, n. 2.

⁴² A tentative explanation for the name has been proposed by Parsons 1999, 53: «Here one could argue that Kleoboulos puts the sage in an undignified condition» (see also Schatzmann 2012, 329-331). However, this would introduce quite a different joke in a poem where the other names are all speaking names.

⁴³ Rea *apud* Parsons. In addition, Magnelli 2005, 160 suggests the possibility of taking Hermogenes, 'son of Hermes', as a reference to Pan, a god often associated with sex.

⁴⁴ Schulte 1999, 69; Magnelli 2005, 159, n. 34; Schatzmann 2012, 331. A pun on ἀριστο- (or Ἀριστο-) and Ἀριστοδίκην possibly also occurred in the incipit preserved by CPR XXXIII, col. III 24 (see Parsons - Maehler - Maltomini 2015, 54).

⁴⁵ For the symposium as a setting for scoptic epigrams, see Floridi 2014, 25-27, with further bibliography. The papyrus seems to reflect an artistic design in the arrangement of the texts (Morelli 2015), but oral performances and books are not mutually exclusive (on this point, see *e.g.* Gutzwiller 2005; Magnelli 2005, 161-164; Floridi 2010, 34-37).

⁴⁶ Among the variant readings involving proper names in Martial, it is worth mentioning the (obviously accidental) parallel provided by *Gemellus/Venustus* in I 10,1 (as pointed out by Parsons 1999, 53), which is among the cases most often mentioned in support of the theory of authorial variants. According to Pasquali 1952², 425, «*Venustus* sarà la lezione migliorata, perché contrappone il bel marito alla brutta moglie» (the poem being on a man who marries a rich but ugly woman for her inheritance). On the contrary, Lindsay 1903b, 21 - the first to recognise the potential of *Venustus* as a speaking name in the context - argued for the recency of *Gemellus*, although he could not offer any explanation for the substitution: «there may quite possibly have been some reason, unknowable to us, which induced the poet to substitute *Gemellus* for the name which he had at first selected». A bilingual joke, based on the equivalence *Gemellus* = δίδυμος, is supposed by Vallat 2006,

2. Mel. AP XII 78 (= HE 442ff.) = BKT V 1,76⁴⁷

Εἰ χλαμύδ' εἶχεν Ἔρωσ καὶ μὴ πτερὰ μηδ' ἐπὶ νώτων
 τόξα τε καὶ φαρέτραν, ἀλλ' ἐφόρει πέτασον,
 ναίχι τὸν ἀβρὸν ἔφηβον ἐπόμνυμαι, Ἀντίοχος μὲν
 ἦν ἂν Ἔρωσ, ὁ δ' Ἔρωσ τᾶμπαλιν Ἀντιόχος.

The epigram is both transmitted in book XII and in BKT V 1,76 (1st cent. A.D.)⁴⁸. Small details apart (e.g. ἐπὶ νώτῳ at the end of v. 1 instead of ἐπὶ νώτων), the text of the papyrus differs from that of AP in the proper name only: Ἀντιγένης instead of Ἀντίοχος (v. 3-4).

The case is somewhat different from the others analysed so far, since there is an evident palaeographical affinity between the two names, and a scribal error based on homoeoarcton is a plausible explanation for the confusion. All the editors print the manuscript's readings, although in the *editio princeps* the choice between the two names is considered impossible, and Gow – Page 1965, II, 653 state that «the variants in the Berlin Papyrus [...] may be original».

One element apparently in favour of Ἀντίοχος is the fact that the name appears in two other epigrams by Meleager, AP XII 54 = HE 4438ff. (on a similar theme: Kypris herself would deny that Eros is her son, should she see Antiochos) and AP XII 133 = HE 4446ff. (where an implicit parallel between the boy and another mythical character, Ganymedes, Zeus's beloved, occurs)⁴⁹, whereas the only erotic epigram in which Ἀντιγένης appears is Asclep. AP XII 162 = HE 912ff. = 23 Sens, a somewhat puzzling poem where the role of the character is not totally clear⁵⁰.

Ἀντιγένης, however, is not to be dismissed, not only for the principle of the *lectio difficilior*, or for the antiquity of the testimony that preserves it (which is

136. An alternative explanation, however, has been proposed: according to Tandoi *apud* Citroni 1975, 50, *Venustus* was influenced by *bellus* in the preceding epigram; further arguments in support of this view in Fusi 2013, 96-7, n. 88. On the whole question, see now Russotti 2020.

⁴⁷ This epigram is not included in Parsons's list (see above, n. 22).

⁴⁸ BKT V 1,75-76 + V 2,146 - all fragments from the same roll - preserve an erotic excerpt from Meleager's *Garland*; the papyrus has shown that in Meleager there was no distinction between homosexual and heterosexual epigrams: see Wifstrand 1926, 10-13; Cameron 1993, 11.

⁴⁹ And in Polystratos, AP XII 91; other instances of the name in the *Anthology* are Lucill. AP XI 315 = 119 Fl. and adesp. AP XIV 137.

⁵⁰ The 'spells of Philocrates' lisped by Eros probably aim to fill Antigeneis with love for the speaker (see Sens 2011 *ad l.*). The name in the *Anthology* also appears in Antip. Thess. AP IX 96; Philod. AP IX 412; Bacch. or Sim. AP XIII 28.

obviously, *per se*, no guarantee of a more reliable text), but also in the light of the context: the poem is concluded by the idea of an ‘exchange of identities’ between the human beloved and Eros, that is, by a change in nature. Ἀντι-γένης may be taken to mean the one who ‘swaps’ (ἀντί) his birth (-γένης), who ‘takes the place’ of somebody else. As a parallel, we may consider the play on Ἀντιγόνη exploited by Marcus Argentarius in *AP* V 63 = *GPh* 1311-1312⁵¹: Ἀντιγόνη, Σικελὴ πάρος ἦσθά μοι ὡς δ’ ἐγενήθης / Αἰτωλὴ, κὰγὼ Μῆδος ἰδοῦ γέγονα. The theme of a change of nationality on the part of the woman, in a poem entirely based on paretymological puns⁵², certainly also involves a play on the name Ἀντιγόνη, who is here, literally, ‘the one who changes (ἀντί) her birth (-γόνη)’ (from Sicilian to Aetolian, *i.e.* from a silent and consenting girl to a partner who asks for money)⁵³.

If the variant Ἀντιγένης is thus to be considered, how are we to explain the fluctuation Ἀντιγένης/Ἀντίοχος? Various scenarios are possible. (1) Ἀντιγένης is the original reading, and Ἀντίοχος intruded into the text either because of its similarity to the original reading, or under the influence of Meleager’s epigrams on Ἀντίοχος, or both; (2) (partially overlapping with [1]) Ἀντιγένης is the original reading, Ἀντίοχος intruded into the text because of its similarity to the original reading, and the name should be looked at with suspicion also in the other epigrams by Meleager where the character is mentioned (their thematic similarities suggest that they may have been conceived as a series for the same boy); (3) Ἀντιγένης and

⁵¹ Thanks are due to Federico Condello for drawing my attention to this example.

⁵² While the meaning of Αἰτωλὴ and Μῆδος is clear (they come, respectively, from αἰτέω and μὴ δούς; cf. *Front. AP* XII 174, quoted above, n. 16), Σικελὴ has been variously explained. Gow - Page 1968, II, 168 takes it as factual, but this is improbable, as it would be the only ethnic name in the poem which does not hint at a secondary meaning. Keydell 1952, 497 suggests a bilingual pun on the Latin *sic* (she was Σικελή, *i.e.* she always said yes), but this is far-fetched when compared to the immediacy of the plays on Αἰτωλὴ and Μῆδος; Daniel 1988 argues for a pun on σίγλος, ‘shekel’ - the courtesan was cheap and then became pricey; but the fact that she has become Αἰτωλὴ implies that she did not ask for money before. Hughes - Notopoulos 1946 suggest the pun Σικελή-σιγηλή, and this is, to my mind, the most persuasive explanation so far.

⁵³ The name is paretymologically exploited by Marcus Argentarius, although in a very different way, also in *AP* XI 320 = *GPh* 1491ff. Ἀντιγόνην ἔστεργε Φιλόστρατος· ἦν δὲ παλαισταῖς / ὁ τλήμων Ἴρου πέντε πενιχρότερος. / εὔρε δ’ ὑπὸ κρυμοῦ γλυκὸν φάρμακον· ἀντία γὰρ σχῶν / γούνατ’ ἐκομήθη, ξεῖνε, μετ’ Ἀντιγόνης (the pun here is based on the assonance γούνατ’/-γόνης, and the substitute for Antigone is masturbation; see Hendry 1991). Antigone also appears in Marc. Arg. *AP* V 128 = *GPh* 1361ff. Another interesting pun on a proper name in Argentarius appears in *AP* V 105 = *GPh* 1329ff.: Menophila, ‘lover of the Moon (μήνη)’, is a girl whose heaven (= mouth) keeps both *Canis* (both ‘dog-star’ and ἀνδρείον μόριον) and *Gemini* (both the constellation and ὄρχεις) hidden.

Ἀντίοχος are authorial variants; Ἀντιγένης creates a stronger relationship between the character's name and the context, and this would suggest an authorial revision aimed at improving the text. Since the papyrus preserves an extract from the *Garland*, this would imply that the anthology circulated in (slightly) different versions (or, possibly, that there were copies provided with marginal *variae lectiones*)⁵⁴.

Hypothesis (3) is admittedly the least probable, given the similarity between the two names, although it cannot be totally ruled out (in the process of revision of a text, an author may be inspired by the phonetic or graphical affinity between his first choice and a later improvement)⁵⁵.

3. Hegesippus AP VI 266 (= HE 1905ff.) = P.Köln V 204

Τάνδε παρὰ τριόδοις τὰν Ἄρτεμιν Ἀγελόχεια,
 ἔτ' ἐν πατρὸς μένουσα παρθένος δόμοις,
 ἔσσατο, Δαμαρέτου θυγάτηρ· ἐφάνη γάρ οἱ αὐτὰ
 ἰστοῦ παρὰ κρόκαισιν ὡς αὐγὰ πυρός.

This poem by Hegesippus is also transmitted by P.Köln V 204, a fragmentary papyrus dated, on palaeographical grounds, to the middle of the 2nd century, and which preserves, under the heading M[v]ασάλκου, (the remains of) 6 epigrams (one of which, AP VII 488 = HE 2635ff., is transmitted, in the *Anthology*, under Mnasalces's name)⁵⁶. Little of the poem survives, but at v. 3 of this epigram, instead of Δαμαρέτου, the papyrus reads Νικαρέτ[.

Gronewald 1985, 30 put forward two possible explanations for the discrepancies between P and the text of the papyrus: (1) AP VI 266 is wrongly ascribed to Hegesippus in AP, and the poem is by Mnasalces; (2) this is a different poem, as Mnasalces HE 2667ff. (mentioned above) is different from Asclep. AP VII 145 = HE 946ff. = 29 Sens, from which it differs only as far as proper names are concerned.

⁵⁴ See, for two alternative readings involving proper names, the textual fluctuation *Caecilianus/Maecilianus* in three epigrams by Martial (I 73, IV 15, IX 70). Editors usually dismiss *Maecilianus* as a scribal error, but the possibility that it is to be maintained as a *lectio difficilior* cannot be ruled out: see Russotti 2020, 23-26.

⁵⁵ On this point, see Mariotti 1985, 105: «So bene che soprattutto scrittori particolarmente sensibili ai valori fonici possono trovare nella parola presente sulla loro pagina o nella loro mente il suggerimento per una variante simile per il suono e del tutto nuova per il senso». Among the modern examples he was able to provide, we find the replacement of «percotea» with «percorrea» in Leopardi's autograph of *A Silvia* (v. 22), a passage from Pavese's *Mestiere di vivere*, where «sfoghi» is an overwritten variant of «svaghi», and the substitution of «virgo» for «ergo» in Sannazaro's *De partu virginis* (II 45).

⁵⁶ On the arrangement of the texts in the papyrus, see Gutzwiller 1998, 31.

In the couple Mnasalces/Asclepiades, as we have seen, Mnasalces clearly offers a parody of Asclepiades's poem, and the differences he introduces, although minimal, are sufficient to completely change the tone and the meaning of the epigram. Here, on the contrary, the reasons for the replacement of Δαμαρέτου with Νικαρέτ[are difficult to account for: the papyrus only preserves the very beginning of each verse⁵⁷, so the possibility that the epigram developed in a different way cannot be ruled out⁵⁸. The two forms of the name, however, are too similar not to think of a scribal error (and the etymologies, as far as we can judge, do not suggest any particular reason why one of the two names should be more appropriate to the context than the other). Therefore, it is at least a fair guess that the poem is the same as that transmitted in *AP*, and not a variation by a different author⁵⁹; the variant reading concerning the name can most probably be explained, here, as a banal mistake.

Some final remarks

The number of cases available to us is too scanty to allow any general conclusion, but some considerations can be made. Poets could re-use an epigram and adapt it to different circumstances, by way of very slight changes, the most notable being the modification of the proper name of a character, either because a speaking name, more fitting in the context, is introduced, or because a different, real person is meant. This is shown by Strato, and possibly Dioscorides (if the two epigrams, as is likely, are both by him).

⁵⁷ As far as our poem is concerned, this is what the papyrus offers:

[..]νδε παρὰ τ[
 ἔτ' ἐν πατ[
 [...]ατο Νικαρέτ[
 ἰστοῦ πα[

⁵⁸ As rightly observed by Gronewald 1985, 30, «Man könnte aber auch erwägen, daß das Epigramm des Mnasalkes auch in dem verlorenen Teil noch weitere Varianten aufgewiesen hat».

⁵⁹ It does not matter, for our purpose, to establish the poem's authorship. The attribution to Hegesippus may be wrong, as is often the case in our manuscript tradition, or a poem by a different author may have been introduced into a sequence by Mnasalces. The traces of letters written in a smaller script above the epigram are interpreted by Cameron 1993, 4 as traces of a different authorial lemma, possibly [Ηγησί]ππου written in abbreviated form. «This exceptional interlinear lemma explained in some way the presence of a poem written by or adapted from another poet in an edition of Mnasalces».

If poets could slightly revise a poem, there is nothing strange in the idea that a papyrus might preserve a different, authorial version of an epigram transmitted by the medieval tradition in a slightly different form. Nicarchus' epigram, where one of the two names clearly improves the joke, is telling. Among the three cases we have considered, Nicarchus is the only one where the variant reading concerning a proper name cannot be explained on purely palaeographical grounds, and, as a consequence, where the hypothesis of a conscious reworking (possibly, on the part of the author himself) in view of a joke can be put forward with a certain degree of confidence. This, however, does not invalidate the general principle that poets revised and reused their own verses, and that some of their changes may have survived down to us (the pair Ἀντιγένης – Ἀντίοχος might offer another example).

Like many other genres of Greek poetry, the epigram, for much of its history, was a 'text in motion', owing to the performative contexts in which it was delivered and to the different editions in which it circulated – single-author collections or multi-author anthologies of some sort. This has certainly left some traces in the poems, although the specificity of the textual tradition of the *Greek Anthology*, which can be described as a series of progressive *reductiones ad unum* (from the *Garland* of Meleager to the anthology of Cephalas, every stage in the history of this genre has found its collector)⁶⁰, has determined a degree of textual standardization that has somewhat obscured and simplified a much more varied reality (of which we still catch a glimpse from time to time).

Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna
lucia.floridi2@unibo.it

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⁶⁰ Cameron 1993.

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