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HELIKAON (SOPHOKLES, FR. 10E, 8; FR. 210, 47–53)

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## HELIKAON (SOPHOKLES, FR. 10E, 8; FR. 210, 47-53)

In the *Eurypylos* of Sophocles, the Messenger describes to Astyoche, sister of Priam and widow of Telephos, the death of her son Eurypylos at the hands of Neoptolemos. Two bodies, he says, lay close to each other:

- 'ΑC. ἦ καὶ βεβᾶσι τὸν [ν]εκρὸν πρὸς τῷ κα[κ]ῶι  
 γέλωτ' ἔχογτες α[.]ὸν Ἀργεῖοι βίαι;
- 'ΑΓ. οὐκ ἐξ τοσοῦτον ἦλθον ὥστ' ἐπεγχαν[ε]ῖν,  
 ἐπεὶ πάλαισμα κοιν[ὸ]ν ἠγωνι[σ]μέν[ο]ι  
 ἔκειν[τ]ο νεκροὶ τυ[τ]θὸν ἀλλήλων ἄπο,  
 ὁ μὲν δ[.]κητός, ὁ δὲ [τὸ] πᾶν [.].....ο.  
 [.]ύμην Ἀχαι[.]οση[.....]γος. 50

The passage I am concerned with presents a number of textual problems, and though they are of no importance in relation to my present topic, I ought to say a word about them. 47: βεβᾶσι τον [ν]εκρον Π Pearson conjectured κάμβεβᾶσι (*Cl.Rev.* 26, 1912, 212 and in his edition of the fragments of 1917 (I 156); he was followed by Richard Carden, *The Papyrus Fragments of Sophocles* (1974), p. 22. W.Luppe (ap. Radt, *TrGF* iv, p. 202) observed that if Pearson's conjecture was adopted, τῷ [ν]εκρῶι would be expected. 48 Pearson conjectured ἀ[δρ]ὸν, Radt ἄ[λλ]ον (he intended the 'irrational' sense, described by him at *Mnem.* 4, (1973), 117). I should prefer α[ῖν]ὸν; the laughter of the Greeks will have been a dire laughter, like Αἰάντειος γέλωσ or Καρδόνιος γέλωσ. γέλωτ' ἔχειν is an unusual expression; but since one finds this verb governing ἀθυμίαν (*Ant.* 237), πανουργίας (*Ant.* 300), χόλον (*Tr.* 269), πένθος (*Tr.* 1113), στοναχάσ (*Aj.* 203), and ὕβριν (*El.* 523), one can hardly rule it out; if we did, we should have to consider Wilamowitz' α[ὐτ]ὸν. 52: Hunt supplemented δ[ο]κητός, which he thought 'may perhaps mean that death appeared more of a semblance than a reality'; this is surely impossible. Pearson (first *ap.* Hunt, and again later) suggested δ[ά]κη τόσ', taking τόσα in the idiomatic sense of 'just a few'. He took it to be 'a fair inference from A., *Sept.* 399 λόφοι δὲ κώδων τ' οὐ δάκνουσ' ἄνευ δορός and *Cho.* 842 φόνωι τῷ πρόσθεν ἐλκαίνοντι καὶ δεδηγμένωι that δάκος could be used for a spear-thrust'. The former of these two passages might be thought to possess some evidential value, but one must agree with Carden (p. 25) that the suggestion is unconvincing. One notes the adjective λακιτός (*Tr. Adesp.* 291); in some very late texts (see LSJ, s.v.) one finds a word λάκημα, equivalent in sense to λάκισμα. It seems possible that λακητός is what Sophocles wrote. ἐ]φ[θαρμέν]οσ Rossbach; ἀ]σ[χημόν]ωσ Pearson 53 λ]ύμην Hunt: ο]ύ μὴν Carden. λ]ύμην Ἀχαι[ὼν δις τ]όση[ν ἠικισμέ]νοσ Pearson.

But for my present purpose all that matters is that there were two bodies, lying a little distance from each other. One was obviously that of Eurypylos; but whose was the other? Clearly not that of Neoptolemos, who had just killed Eurypylos (thus Koerte, *APF* 5 (1913), 564). Hunt (*P.Oxy.* IX (1912), p.120), thought of Nireus or Machaon, who are both said to have been killed by Eurypylos; but surely the words *πάλαιμα κοινὸν ἠγωνισμένοι* show that the second body was not that of a Greek, but of a Trojan or an ally of Troy. Zielinski (*JMIR*, n.s. 44 (1913), 178f.) suggested that it was that of Paris, but the story that Paris was killed by Philoctetes is well established, and it is hard to see how it can have been fitted into this battle.

A different candidate is suggested by two hydrias of the Antimenes Painter, dated about 510 B.C.; both are illustrated at *LIMC* 4,2, p. 55 (see 4, 1, p. 110 for an account of them), and lately described by Sir John Boardman in *EYMOYΣΙΑ: Ceramic and Iconographic Studies in Honour of Alexander Cambitoglou* (Sydney, 1990), 57-62 (see in particular pp. 59-60, where a full bibliography is given); see also J.Burow, *Der Antimenesmaler* (Forschungen zur antiken Keramik, II. Reihe, Kerameus, 7, 1989, p. 62, with plate 131). One hydria, which is in Basle, shows 'first Athena with the chariot of Neoptolemos; then the dead Eurypylos; then Neoptolemos killing the driver of a chariot before him; then another dead man, Helikaon; then Apollo stopping Neoptolemos' further slaughter' (Boardman, 59-60). The second hydria, which is in Würzburg, gives a related briefer version of the same event. Instead of two dead men, it has, in Boardman's words, 'one moribund warrior, not named, crawling between Neoptolemos and the doomed charioteer'. Boardman, Burow and H.A.Shapiro, *Antike Kunst* 33, Heft 2, 1990, 89 all think this is Eurypylos, who as Boardman says, 'was the Greek's prime quarry, and he must be shown in armour (not naked, as in Basle) because he is not yet dead'. Beazley, on the other hand, thought it was Helikaon on the analogy of the other vase.

As Boardman remarks, Helikaon is generally thought to have survived the siege of Troy. Burow is confident that the Antimenes Painter was following the *Ilias Mikra*, and Shapiro, *op.cit.*, 89 thinks that from this vase 'we learn more about this section of the *Little Iliad* than was previously known'. But Lesches in the *Ilias Mikra* (fr. 6 Bethe = fr. 13 Davies) said that Helikaon was wounded in the night-battle, but was saved by Odysseus, the guest-friend of his father Antenor. Servius on *Aen.* 1,242 (see the scholion ad loc. in Thilo-Hagen and R.G.Austin, *P.Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Primus* (1971), p. 91f.) says that he came to the territory of the Veneti with his father Antenor and his brother Polydamas; and for Martial (10, 93 and 14, 152) he and not his father is the founder of Patavium. As Neoptolemos kills the charioteer, Apollo comes forward to block his further advance. Did Apollo rescue Helikaon? I think not, for Helikaon looks to be stone dead. We must reckon with the possibility that there was another version of the story, in which Helikaon was killed. Sophocles may well have followed that version; perhaps he had a predecessor, conceivably Stesichorus. The discovery of the Lille Stesichorus has reminded us of how little we know

about this poet, who in his Ἰλίου Πέρσις (fr. 204 = 27 PMG) mentioned Helikaon's wife, Laodike.

In *P.Oxy.* 3151 (= fr. 10 e Radt), 1.8, a speaker's name appears as ]καω. M.W.Haslam, who published this papyrus (*P.Oxy.* XLIV, 1976, i f.) interpreted this, doubtless correctly, as Ελ]ικαω(v). Since this papyrus contains some fragments which undoubtedly belong to the *Ajax Locrus*, it has been assumed that Helikaon was a speaking character in that play; and since we know that according to the usual story he was still alive at the end of the siege, it is perfectly possible that this is right. The *Ajax Locrus* contained a mention of the leopard-skin which Antenor hung in front of his house in order that the Greeks might spare it (fr.11), and Zielinski, *Eos* 28 (1925) 40 pointed out that Antenor's wife Theano was the priestess of Athena, in whose temple the sacrilege of Ajax happened. On the other hand, as Haslam points out, we cannot be sure that the *Ajax Locrus* is the only play fragments of which are found in this papyrus, so it is possible that the play in which Helikaon was a speaking character was in fact the *Eurypylos*.

We cannot, I think, exclude the possibility that Sophocles had Helikaon killed in the *Eurypylos*, but represented him as still alive in the *Ajax Locrus*. In any case, he seems to me a stronger candidate for the position of the second dead man in the *Eurypylos* than any other who has been proposed, not that the identification can be thought to be anything like certain. Many were killed by Neoptolemos; Pausanias in his account of the Sack of Troy by Polygnotos mentions Elastos, Astynoos, and Eioneus (*Ilias Mikra* frs. 14-16 Davies); Quintus of Smyrna mentions others, including Agenor, sometimes said to be a son of Antenor. Another victim of Neoptolemos was Cassandra's suitor Koroibos, mentioned in *POxy.* 3151 (fr. 10g, 43, 11 Radt; cf. fr. 10g, 37, 2; see Haslam, *op.cit.*, p. 22). Pausanias 10, 27, 1 says that the *Ilias Mikra*, which had Koroibos killed by Diomedes (fr. 16 Davies), differed from the usual story that he was killed by Neoptolemos. Was Koroibos a character in the *Ajax Locrus*? Or was he a character in the *Eurypylos*?

There is one other piece of evidence which might conceivably indicate a link between Helikaon and Neoptolemos. Phainias in his work on the Sicilian tyrants (fr. 11 Wehrli *ap.* Athenaeus 232 C) reports that Helikaon's dagger was dedicated at Delphi, and quotes the dedicatory epigram (= Preger, *IGM* no. 89, p. 77 = Page, *FGE* anon. cxvii, p. 423):

Θάηκαί μ'· ἔτεδὸν γὰρ ἐν Ἰλίου εὐρέι πύργῳ  
 ἦν, ὅτε καλλικόμῳ μάρναμεθ' ἄμφ' Ἑλένηι·  
 καί μ' Ἀντηνορίδης ἐφόρει κρείων Ἑλικάων·  
 νῦν δὲ με Λητοίδου θεῖον ἔχει δάπεδον.

It is a pity that the epigram does not tell us who was supposed to have dedicated the dagger; as Preger, *op.cit.*, 77 puts it, 'Epigramma a sacerdotibus Delphicis sancta fraude effictum et aut pugioni ipsi aut eius basi inscriptum est: sed temere omiserunt donatorem quoque ementiri, qui in genuinis epigrammatis dedicatoriis deesse non solet'. Can we guess whom they would have named, if we could have asked them? Helikaon himself, in company

with his rescuer Odysseus, or on a journey from Patavium or Cyrene, where the Antenorids founded a colony (see I.Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece* (1987), pp. 153-4, 210, 212)? Perhaps; but one might expect a weapon to be dedicated by the man who had captured it in battle; and if Helikaon was killed by Neoptolemos, then Neoptolemos, a personage well known to have visited Delphi, might well be believed to have dedicated his dagger.\*

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