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CALLIMACHUS, EPIGRAM 9 G.-P. = 44 PF. = ANTH. PAL. 12,139

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## CALLIMACHUS, EPIGRAM 9 G.–P. = 44 PF. = ANTH. PAL. 12,139

ῥῆστι τι ναὶ τὸν Πάνα κεκρυμμένον, ἔστι τι ταύτη  
 ναὶ μὰ Διώνυσον πῦρ ὑπὸ τῆι σποδιῆι.  
 οὐ θαρσέω· μὴ δὴ με περίπλεκε· πολλάκι λήθει  
 4 τοῖχον ὑποτρώγων ἡσύχιος ποταμός.  
 τῶι καὶ νῦν δείδοικα, Μενέξενε, μὴ με παρεισδύς  
 οὗτος ὁ<sup>1</sup> †σειγαρνης† εἰς τὸν ἔρωτα βάλῃ.

In line 6 the scribe (no doubt doing his best to follow the exemplar) was reduced to a meaningless jumble of letters. Bentley sought a remedy in Hesychius σ 579 Schmidt σιγέρπης· λαθροδάκτης, and οὔτος ὁ σιγέρπης has been widely, though not universally,<sup>2</sup> acclaimed. The image would presumably be from a dog which without warning turns and bites. This epigram is rich in imagery; the fire under the ash (2) and the undermining stream (3–4) were admired and imitated by later poets. But there is surely another image present in lines 3–6, that of wrestling, which is suggested by περίπλεκε (3),<sup>3</sup> παρεισδύς (5)<sup>4</sup> and βάλῃ (6).<sup>5</sup> So the treacherous dog (Bentley’s σιγέρπης) seems less welcome in line 6 than a word which would reinforce the idea of wrestling.<sup>6</sup>

Marcovich<sup>7</sup> criticized those who have invented new Greek words for line 6. But perhaps we are justified in looking for something out of the ordinary, and I suggest that the true reading may be found elsewhere in Hesychius: ο 29 Latte ὁ βρισαύχην· ὁ τὴν ἀύχένα βαρῶν ‘the one who presses the neck downwards’, i.e. ‘the Wrestler’. This could act as almost a title of the love-god,<sup>8</sup> somewhat like ‘the Snatcher’ in Parthenius, Suppl. Hell. 624 ἀμφοτέροις ἐπιβόας<sup>9</sup> Ἄρπυς ἐληΐσατο. Although βρισαύχην is not as close to the scribe’s sequence of letters as Bentley’s σιγέρπης, it has the merit of strengthening the wrestling image.

We can very probably (as noted by Latte) point to the origin of Hesychius’ entry ὁ βρισαύχην. I am not arguing for Callimachus (though if restoration of βρισαύχην in the epigram were accepted, that would become a strong possibility), but speak of another poet, Gregory of Nazianzus, who figures

<sup>1</sup> Unlike Gow–Page (and Pfeiffer, who obelizes οὔτος as well) I have not included ὁ within the area of corruption.

<sup>2</sup> See M. Marcovich, *Rh. M.* 119, 1976, 149.

<sup>3</sup> Normally taken to mean ‘embrace’, though one would expect the middle. Gow and Page somewhat prefer ‘entangle’, ‘implicate’. In the latter case one might view Menexenus (5) not as the potential beloved but as a wrestling-trainer (something similar may happen in Strato, *Anth. Pal.* 12,206) who sets the poet to wrestle in the gymnasium of Love. οὐ θαρσέω (3) could express the poet’s lack of confidence in his chances of winning such an uneven contest.

<sup>4</sup> This suggests slipping past and penetrating the opponent’s defence (LSJ παρεισδύνω, ‘slip in, penetrate’, παρείσδυσις, ‘loophole of entrance, chink’). Compare παρεισελθών in the erotic wrestling-lesson of the aptly named Palaestra ([Lucian], *Asinus* 9).

<sup>5</sup> βάλῃ can mean ‘throw to the ground’ (though strictly εἰς τὸν ἔρωτα βάλῃ belongs with phrases like εἰς κακὸν βάλῃ). In Sophocles fr. 941,13 (the earliest surviving example of Love as a wrestler) ἐκβάλλει seems to be used of the decisive throw.

<sup>6</sup> For love as a wrestling contest, see Gow on Theocritus 7,125 and Fedeli on Propertius 1,1,4 ‘et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus’. Examples include Meleager 16 Gow–Page = *Anth. Pal.* 12,48,1 κείμαι· λάξ ἐπίβαινε κατ’ ἀύχενος, ἄγριε δαῖμον, Ovid, *Rem. Am.* 530 ‘saevus Amor sub pede colla premit’. The forcing down of the neck is very often mentioned – for a fall in wrestling to be registered, probably both shoulders had to be on the ground. Artistic representations of Love as a wrestler (mostly from the Roman Imperial age) are catalogued in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* III,1, pp. 984–986. See also J. N. Adams, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*, London 1982, pp. 157–158.

<sup>7</sup> n. 2 above.

<sup>8</sup> It does not seem to me infelicitous that Eros, when called by a different name, should εἰς τὸν ἔρωτα βάλῃ.

<sup>9</sup> The SH editors ad loc. give further examples of this motif (cf. n. 6 above).

prominently in the lexicon of Hesychius and who several times borrowed whole phrases verbatim from Callimachus. Thus Gregory transferred ὅστις ἐμὸν παρὰ σῆμα φέρεις πόδα (Call., Ep. 29,1 Gow–Page) to his own epigram, Anth. Pal. 8,188,1.<sup>10</sup> In Carm. 1,2,14<sup>11</sup> the Saint reflects on the nature of mankind and comes close to despair. I quote from line 95 to show the context:

95 τίπτ' ἀγαθὸν βιότοις; Θεοῦ φάος; ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ τοῦ  
εἶργει με φθονερὴ καὶ στυγερὴ σκοτίη.  
οὐδὲν πλεῖον ἔμοιγε. τί δ' οὐ πλεόν ἐστὶ κακοῖσιν;  
αἴθε γὰρ ἴσον ἔχον, καὶ μάλα περ μογέων.  
κεῖμ' ὀλιγοδρανέων· τάρβος δέ με θεῖον ἔκαμψε·  
100 τέτρυμ' ἡματίαις φροντίσι καὶ νυχίαις.  
οὗτος ὁ βρισαύχην με καὶ ὑπτίον ὡσεν ὀπίσσω,  
λάξ ἐπέβη.

The wrestling image is very clear in 101–102, and has already been prepared by κεῖμ' and ἔκαμψε in 99.<sup>12</sup> But to whom does οὗτος ὁ βρισαύχην refer?<sup>13</sup> To one of the κακοί whose greater success Gregory bewails in 97? Or to a jealous ecclesiastical opponent, implied in line 96? In either case the matter is far from clear, and the poor fit of οὗτος ὁ βρισαύχην to its context makes me suspect that Gregory has borrowed the whole phrase from elsewhere – perhaps indeed from Callimachus, Ep. 9,6 G–P, where the words seem to fit excellently.

Also the fabric of this strange word βρισαύχην<sup>14</sup> suggests to me the Alexandrian Museum rather than Gregory of Nazianzus. The likely model<sup>15</sup> was βρισάρματος, 'weighing down the chariot', first found as an epithet of Ares in [Hesiod], Scutum 441 βρισάρματος οὐλῖος Ἕρης,<sup>16</sup> but the impulse for βρισαύχην may have come from a passage of Pindar's Dithyrambs<sup>17</sup> where a compound in βρισ- and another in -αύχην occur within the space of a dozen lines (II (fr. 70b) Maehler, 13–14 ῥιψαύχηνι . . . σὺν κλόνωι and 26 βρισαρμάτοις . . . Θήβαις).<sup>18</sup> Such exploration of the byways of early epic and lyric would, of course, be highly characteristic of Callimachus.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> From the Hecale he takes τέγος ἀκλήϊστον (fr. 2,2 H.), ἐλαχὺν δόμον (fr. 26) and perhaps καὶ ἄγριον οἶδμα θαλάσσης (fr. 160).

<sup>11</sup> Migne, Patrologia Graeca 37,755–765.

<sup>12</sup> For κεῖμ(αι), of a wrestler on the ground, and λάξ ἐπέβη (102) cf. Meleager, Anth. Pal. 12,48,1 (quoted in n. 6 above); for ὑπτίον ὡσεν (101) cf. [Lucian], Asinus 9 (see n. 4 above) κλῖνον ὑπτίαν.

<sup>13</sup> It was the fear of God which forced Gregory to the ground (ἔκαμψε, 99), but τάρβος is neuter.

<sup>14</sup> otherwise unattested except for the entry in Hesychius which probably refers to Greg. Naz. The βρισ- element comes from βρίθω (future βρίσω, aorist ἔβρισα); βρισαύχην is apparently misunderstood by the Latin translators of PG 37, who offer 'ille . . . superbus' and 'vir quisque superbus'.

<sup>15</sup> Et. Mag. p. 668,55 mentions an epithet βρισόμαχος, which is perhaps (LSJ Revised Supplement, Oxford, 1996, p. 72) to be recognized in P. Oxy. 3876 fr. 3,4 probably Stesichorus).

<sup>16</sup> Also in HH Ares 1, perhaps a much later poem.

<sup>17</sup> One is reminded of Horace on the linguistic audacity of Pindar's Dithyrambs (Odes 4,2,10–11 'seu per audacis nova dithyrambos / verba devolvit').

<sup>18</sup> βρισαύχην and ῥιψαύχην share with each other (and with βρισάρματος) the feature that the first element comes from a transitive verb, the second from a noun which functions as the verb's object. For other compounds in -αύχην see Buck–Petersen, A Reverse Index of Greek Nouns and Adjectives, Chicago, 1944, p. 250.

<sup>19</sup> I am grateful to Dr. Martin West and Mr. Nigel Wilson for comments on a first draft of this paper.