HELENISTIC EPIGRAM

Contexts of Exploration

This book offers scholars and students of Hellenistic and Roman literature an overview of Hellenistic epigram, a field closely related to other Hellenistic poetry and highly influential upon Roman poetry. In fourteen themed chapters it foregrounds the literary, linguistic, historical, epigraphic, social, political, ethnic, cultic, onomastic, topographical and patronage contexts within which Hellenistic epigrams were composed. Many epigrams are analysed in detail and new interpretations of them proposed. Throughout the question is asked whether epigrams are literary jeux d’esprit (as is often assumed without proper discussion) or whether they relate to real people and real events and have a function in the real world. That function may be epigraphic, e.g. an epigram can be the epitombion for inscription at someone’s grave, or the anathematikon for inscription on or beside a dedicated object, or a picture-label – an ekphrasis to accompany a painting or mosaic.

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for Frederick Williams
Contents

Preface page xii
Abbreviations xvi

1. Introductory: Contexts and their Loss 1
   Audience context and circulation context 3
     Philodemus AP 9.412 = 20 GPh.: 8
     Philodemus AP 9.570 = 14 GPh.: 10
   Epigraphic context 15
     Callimachus AP 6.147 = 24 HE: 22
     Callimachus AP 7.522 = 40 HE: 24
     Heraclitus AP 7.465 = 1 HE: 27
   The state of the text 28
     Mnasalces AP 7.212 = 11 HE: 29

2. Afterlives 32
   Optimism 33
     Callimachus AP 7.520 = 33 HE: 33
   Consolation 40
     Carp(h)yllides AP 7.260 = 1 HE: 40
   Pessimism? 45
     Callimachus AP 7.524 = 31 HE: 45
     Molecatcher (GVI no. 350): 50
     Callimachus AP 7.524 (continued): 52
   Shipwrecks 60
     Dioscorides AP 7.76 = 33 HE and AP 9.568 = 34 HE: 60

3. Philosophical Matters 66
   Over-philosophical interpretations (Callimachus, Asclepiades, Posidippus) 66
   Philosophical superficiality (Leonidas) 70
   Meleager and philosophy 72
     Meleager AP 12.101 = 103 HE: 72
     Meleager AP 12.84 = 114 HE and Meleager AP 12.85 = 115 HE: 73
     Meleager AP 12.127 = 79 HE: 80
   Philodemus 86
     Philodemus AP 5.123 = 9 GPh.: 86
     Philodemus AP 11.35 = 22 GPh.: 91
4. Temples and Shrines 95
   
   A shrine of the Great Mother 97
   
   Dioscorides AP 6.220 = 16 HE: 97
   
   Apollo’s deer at Kourion 101
   
   Ἡδυλύς Supplementum Hellenisticum fr.459: 101
   
   Paphian Aphrodite 114
   
   Asclepiades AP 5.209 = 36 HE: 114

5. Literary Polemics 125
   
   Posidippus 128
   
   Ἀναφωτιστός: 128
   
   Posidippus AP 5.134 = 1 HE: 132
   
   Posidippus AP 12.98 = 6 HE: 135
   
   Posidippus 24 HE = 117 A–B: 139
   
   Asclepiades on Lyde 139
   
   AP 9.63 = 32 HE: 139
   
   Further Hellenistic literary programmes 140
   
   Dioscorides AP 11.195 = 36 HE: 140
   
   Crates AP 11.218 = 1 HE: 142
   
   Theodorida AP 7.406 = 14 HE: 144
   
   Antipater of Sidon 145
   
   Antipater of Sidon AP 7.409 = 66 HE: 145
   
   Antipater of Sidon AP 7.34 = 18 HE: 150
   
   Epigrams about Erinna 151
   
   Asclepiades AP 7.11 = 28 HE: 151
   
   Leonidas AP 7.13 = 98 HE: 154
   
   Anon. AP 9.190 = 38 FGE: 154
   
   Anon. AP 7.12 = 39 FGE: 155
   
   Antipater of Sidon AP 7.713 = 58 HE: 156

6. Literary Polemics Continue 160
   
   Telchines and grammarians 161
   
   Antiphanes AP 11.322 = 9 GPh.: 161
   
   Philip AP 11.321 = 60 GPh.: 167
   
   Antipater of Thessalonica AP 11.20 = 20 GPh.: 172
   
   Philip AP 11.347 = 61 GPh.: 176
   
   Other first-century AD literary epigrams: 178
   
   Erucius AP 7.377 = 13 GPh.: 179
   
   Polemic pro/anti epic? 185

7. Poetry, Sex, the Countryside 187
   
   Poetry and sex 187
   
   Callimachus AP 11.362 = 59 HE: 187
   
   Philitas 10 CA: 193
   
   Callimachus AP 12.43 = 2 HE: 196
   
   Country matters 198
   
   Callimachus AP 12.102 = 1 HE: 199
Contents  

Callimachus AP7.518 = 36 HE: 201  
Callimachus AP6.121 = 61 HE: 210  

8. Medical Connections  
Medicine in non-epigrammatic Hellenistic poetry  
Medicine in epigram  
Callimachus AP12.150 = 3 HE: 220  
Callimachus AP9.566 = 58 HE: 224  
Asclepiades AP12.46 = 15 HE: 233  
Asclepiades AP5.162 = 8 HE: 236  
Asclepiades AP5.153 = 3 HE: 238  
Asclepiades AP12.17 = 37 HE: 240  
Asclepiades’ individual voice?: 241

9. Epitaphs: Epigraphic or Epideictic?  
Death caused by wine  
For Asclepiades son of Anaxippus, of Ephesus: 244  
For Gemellus son of Pappus: 246  
Callimachus AP7.725 = 42 HE: 247  
Callimachus AP12.149 = 10 HE: 252  
Anon. 136(a) FGE: 254  
Callimachus AP7.454 = 62 HE: 256  

Deaths while drunk  
[Theocritus] AP7.660 = 12 HE: 257  
Antipater of Thessalonica AP7.398 = 65 GPh.: 257  
Antipater of Thessalonica AP7.625 = 33 GPh.: 259

Deaths of drunken old women  
Dioscorides AP7.456 = 29 HE: 261  
Ariston AP7.457 = 2 HE; and others: 262

Cenotaphic epiptymbia  
Asclepiades AP7.500 = 31 HE: 266  
Callimachus AP7.272 = 38 HE: 267  
Callimachus AP7.271 = 45 HE: 268  
Leonidas AP7.273 = 62 HE: 269  
Leonidas AP7.652 = 15 HE: 270  
Leonidas AP7.654 = 16 HE: 271  
Theaetetus AP7.499 = 4 HE: 272  
Perses AP7.539 = 9 HE: 273

10. Local Interests  
Archaizing language: Anyte and Nicias  
Anyte AP6.123 = 1 HE: 277  
Nicias AP6.122 = 1 HE: 279

Dialects  
Callimachus AP6.347 = 21 HE: 283  
Callimachus AP6.351 = 22 HE: 285  
Posidippus 36 A–B: 289

Local customs: hair dedications  

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Hellenistic Epigram

Theodoridas *AP* 6.156 = 2 *HE*: 295
Euphorion *AP* 6.279 = 1 *HE*: 304

Historical claims: the Thyreatis 306
'Simonides' *AP* 7.431 = 5 *HE* and Nicander *AP* 7.526 = 2 *HE*: 307
Dioscorides *AP* 7.430 = 31 *HE*: 308

11. Speakers, Addressees, Antecedents 314

Geese taken for swans 315
Nestor’s Cup (*CEG* no. 454): 315
Melita (*CEG* no. 571): 316

Speakers and addressees in archaic inscribed epigrams 319
Epitymbic speakers and addressees 321
The ‘io anonimo’: 329
Anathematic Speakers and Addressees: 335
*Ekphrasis* and ‘Signatures’: 338

Unsafe assumptions of originality 339
Over-interpretations of Hellenistic epigrams 341
Moero *AP* 6.119 = 1 *HE*: 341
Anyte *AP* 6.153 = 2 *HE*: 344
Nossis *AP* 6.265 = 3 *HE*: 346

12. The Erotic 351

Novelty in the erotic *komos* 353
Posidippus *AP* 5.213 = 4 *HE*: 354
Some paired *komoi*: 359
The *komos* of the desertus amator: 363
Philodemus *AP* 5.120 = 7 *HE*: 366

Legalism 367
‘Enrichment’ and emotion 368
Callimachus *AP* 12.148 = 7 *HE*: 368
Callimachus *AP* 12.134 = 13 *HE* and *AP* 12.71 = 12 *HE*: 370
Hedylus *AP* 5.199 = 2 *HE*: 373
Dioscorides *AP* 5.55 = 5 *HE*: 375

Cynical attitudes and mercenary motives 379
Callimachus *AP* 12.148 = 7 *HE*: 379
Philodemus *AP* 5.126 = 25 *GPh.*: 380
Philodemus *AP* 5.115 = 6 *GPh.*: 382
Philodemus *AP* 5.46 = 4 *GPh.*: 383

Meleager and mosquitoes 385
*AP* 5.151 = 33 *HE* and *AP* 5.152 = 34 *HE*: 385

13. Generic Innovation 389

Implicit dialogue 389
Explicit dialogue 391
Asclepiades *AP* 5.167 = 14 *HE*: 392
Contents

Meleager AP 12.117 = 19 HE: 394
Anon. AP 12.155 = 7 HE: 396
Meleager AP 7.79 = 121 HE: 398
Philodemus AP 9.412 = 20 GPh.: 399

Initial generic deception 403
Leonidas AP 10.1 = 85 HE: 405
Antiphilus AP 10.17 = 11 GPh.: 406
Antiphilus AP 6.199 = 16 GPh.: 409

Epigraphic genres in amatory epigrams 410
Leonidas AP 6.293 = 54 HE: 410
Meleager AP 12.23 = 99 HE: 412
Meleager AP 5.215 = 54 HE; AP 5.191 = 73 HE; AP 12.74 = 97 HE: 413

Function as context 417
Leonidas AP 6.13 = 46 HE: 417
Anyte AP 7.215 = 12 HE and AP 7.190 = 20 HE: 418
Nicias AP 9.315 = 5 HE: 420

Multiple addresses 422
Philodemus AP 5.4 = 1 GPh.: 422

14. Learning 426
Philological 426
(Near)-synonyms: 426
ἐλάδονατα: 430
tοκοδώνας, ἀλλίκτευον etc.: 432
θημορήτη: 435
ὀλίος: 437
ἐπιβλήτης: 440
ἀπέθηκε: 444
πλέξαιω (and the plaiting of garlands) in Meleager: 445

Technical 451
Metrical 454
Mythography and local culture 456

Bibliography 461
Index Lociorum 499
Index Anthologiae Graecae 508
Index of Personal Names in Epigrams 510
General Index 512
Preface

Hellenistic epigrams first attracted my attention in the 1960s when I perceived how much light they could throw on Roman lyric and elegy. As time went on I became increasingly fascinated by their ability to encapsulate in concentrated form the intellectual and emotional culture of antiquity. The writing of a handful of articles on epigrams in the 1990s suggested the idea of a monograph devoted to Hellenistic epigram, but other projects delayed the start of it until my sabbatical year 2007–2008. At that point a period of research at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich, arranged through the kind offices of Niklas Holzberg and Martin Hose, laid the foundations of this volume, which has been my main commitment over the intervening years.

The work’s objectives and its central concern with epigrammatic contexts are set out in Chapter 1. Here I add only that, whereas chapters have broadly thematic titles, discussions of individual epigrams within them are often holistic (and include detailed scholarly background where this seemed germane), so that they may move beyond a chapter’s designated bounds. This was a deliberate choice since the alternative – to treat different aspects, problems, and features of the same epigrams in different chapters – seemed both impractical and undesirable. Even so, it was not always possible to avoid split discussions.

In the decades between the 1960s and the present interest in Hellenistic epigrams has grown steadily. This would not have happened without the foundational works of A.S.F. Gow and D.L. Page (HE, GPh. and FGE). Although I have often felt obliged to dissent from their views, I trust I have done so with respect. My principal debts to other scholarship will be obvious from my references. I have attempted to avoid excessive bibliographical citations, limiting them to crediting prior discovery, referring to supporting evidence, recording concordant views, and noting important differences of opinion. Since epigrams almost invariably generate disagreements (sometimes radical), annotation of the last category has been sparing, with concentration on matters of general principle and non-trivial specifics. Older works of fundamental importance are cited freely, but in general I cite more recent items which refer
Preface

xiii

to earlier bibliography. Certain conclusions and arguments from my own
prior publications on Hellenistic epigrams have been integrated where
relevant.

No scholar publishing in most areas of Classical Studies can now be
confident of having covered all the relevant bibliography. This is
notoriously the case with Hellenistic epigrams. I have tried to be aware of
material accessible before May 2014, when the penultimate version of
my MS reached completion; later items that came to my attention or
were known to me in pre-publication form were added during the book’s
finalisation. I have, however, surely missed valuable secondary literature,
or have failed to recognise the merits of items which I did consult. For
this I apologise, as for any inadvertent misrepresentations of other
scholars’ views.

Quotations of Greek Anthology and other literary epigrams in this
volume are based on the standard editions – Paton, Waltz et al., Beckby,
HE, GPh. and FGE – and on modern texts of individual epigrammatists.
Orthographic, trivial and generally agreed corrections to the text of P
(and Pl) are accepted silently. A selective apparatus, again based on the
standard editions, is added only where there is need for textual dis-
cussion; in such cases I have followed my own judgement over readings.
The texts of CEG epigrams are printed without their full epigraphic
details, for which readers should refer to CEG.

Greek Anthology epigrams are referred to by their author and AP
(Books 1–15) or APl. (Book 16) numbers, other epigrams by their source
or editor. HE, GPh. and FGE numbers (if any) are added on an epi-
gram’s first appearance in a section. A–B numbers are given only for
Posidippan epigrams not known earlier. CEG epigrams are cited by their
CEG numbers, with CEG’s (first) date appended in brackets. The frag-
ments of Callimachus’ Aetia are cited in the numeration of Harder
(2012), those of his other, non-epigrammatic works in the numeration of
Pfeiffer (1949–1953). Unless otherwise indicated, technical Greek
writings (including medical works) in which textual variations do not
bear on the discussion are quoted from the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae
database, and cited as they appear there. Abbreviations of Greek authors
and works in footnotes aim at clarity rather than conformity to any
standard system; title abbreviations of less well-known works are based
on their TLG titles.

References to the commentary portions of HE and GPh. distinguish
the contributions of A.S.F. Gow (on all authors except Meleager in HE,
on Antipater of Thessalonica in GPh.) and D.L. Page (on Meleager in
HE, and on other authors in GPh.). Likewise, Ch. 7 of Fantuzzi–Hunter (2004), ‘The epigram’, is cited as Fantuzzi (2004); and since Bing (2009) contains many of his earlier papers in revised form (cf. his p.7), they are cited from that volume. Di Marco (2013) is treated similarly. The names of epigrammatists follow the Romanised conventions of HE, GPh, and FGE; and the same usually goes for other Greek proper names. Greek geographical names (e.g. Paphos, Delos, Aenos) appear in their standard forms.

At the request of the press English translations accompany Greek and Latin quotations unless the points being made are purely verbal, or a paraphrase is offered. Those not attributed to others are my own; they make no pretensions to literary quality. Translations of AP epigrams have been influenced by those of Paton and GPh. Where lesser elements of Paton’s versions could not be bettered, I have gratefully incorporated them without specific acknowledgements, but I have acknowledged larger borrowings.

The Interlibrary Loan Department of Florida State University Library has worked over many years to bring me essential items; I thank its staff warmly. I also gratefully acknowledge the grant made by The Loeb Classical Library Foundation to supplement my salary during my sabbatical year 2007–2008, and the support given for my summer research in the United Kingdom in 2007 by a COFRS Summer Award of the Florida State University Council on Research and Creativity and an AHPEG Award from the Florida State University Research Foundation. The Faculty of Classics and University Libraries of the University of Cambridge have over many summers provided me with unrivalled work faculties, for which I tender my sincere thanks.

I also thank those colleagues and friends who read portions of chapters, or responded on particular points, or gave bibliographical advice, or otherwise forwarded my project: among these were Cicek Beeby, Kristoffel Demoen, Matthew Dickie, Marco Fantuzzi, Klaus-Dietrich Fischer, Regina Höschele, Niklas Holzberg, Martin Hose, J. Gordon Howie, Dimitrios Iordanoglou, David Levenson, Tony Long, Alfredo Mario Morelli, Federicomaria Muccioli, Ruard Nauta, Christopher Pfaff, Évelyne Prioux, Joyce M. Reynolds, L.E. Roller, Allen Romano, James Sickinger, Svetla Slaveva-Griffin and John Young. Some portions of the present monograph were first presented at conferences and seminars at Cassino, Nicosia, Gent, Jena, Naples, Oxford, and Sassari; I benefited from audience responses on those occasions.

My greatest debts are to two old and valued friends: Frederick
Preface

Williams, who read the entire penultimate draft, making many useful observations, and who proof-read the volume in its final stage; and Ian Du Quesnay, who laboured through two successive drafts, saved me from many mistakes and improved the treatments of many epigrams with his generous suggestions. I alone remain responsible for all errors and opinions.

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Abbreviations

The following items are referred to in abbreviated or non-standard forms:

A–B  C. Austin and G. Bastianini, *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan 2002

*AP*  *Anthologia Palatina*

*APl*  *Anthologia Planudea*

Austin  C. Austin in A–B


C  Corrector of *P* (q.v.)


Fraser  P.M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, 3 vols, Oxford 1972

*GC*  F. Cairns, *Generic Composition in Greek and Roman Poetry*, Edinburgh 1972


*IC*  *Inscriptiones Creticae opera et consilio Friderici Halbherr collectae*, ed. M. Guarducci, Rome 1935–

*ICUR*  *Inscriptiones Christianae urbis Romae*, Rome 1861–

xvi
Abbreviations xvii

**IG**  *Inscriptiones Graecae*, Berlin 1873–


**LGPN**  *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, edd. P.M. Fraser and E. Matthews, et al., Oxford 1987–, http://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/online/

**LSJ**  H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, revised by H.S. Jones, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th edn, Oxford 1940

**P**  *Codex Palatinus* (Heidelberg Cod. Gr. 23 + Bibliothèque Nationale Cod. Gr. Suppl. 384)


**Pl**  *Anthologia Planudea* (Cod. Ven. Marc. 481)


**RL**  F. Cairns, *Roman Lyric: Collected Papers on Catullus and Horace*, (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 301), Berlin 2012


