EPIGRAMMATIC PSOGOS: CENSURE IN THE EPIGRAMS OF PALLADAS OF ALEXANDRIA

William J. Henderson
University of Johannesburg

ABSTRACT

Palladas has long been recognised as an important exponent of the epigram. His particular brand of epigram is characterised by strong personal views and a sharply critical tone that are more to be expected in iambic than in epigrammatic verse. There are clear indications that he deliberately mixed the two genres, thereby extending the themes, language and function of the traditional epigram. This article explores the nature and scope of Palladas’s invective in the epigrams by close analysis of the language.

Introduction

Palladas of Alexandria, whose floruit seems to date to the second half of the 4th century CE, early in the Byzantine era,1 has long been identified as an important figure, even an innovator, in the history of the Greek epigram. Highet praises him as the writer of ‘the last powerful and original poetic epigrams in Greek literature.’ 2 Bowra saw him as ‘an important and independent witness to the last days of Paganism.’ 3 Schmid-Stühlin characterised the epigrams as the best that the declining paganism produced in this genre.4 Peek, while denying Palladas originality or innovation, acknowledges his role

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1 Based solely on the internal evidence of his poems, he appears to have been born around 319 (AP 10.97 was written when he was 72, evidently in 391); cf. Peek 1965: 159-60; Bowra 1959:266-67, who assumes that the poems reflect events and the poet’s life, and offers a ‘biography’; Cameron 1993:90.
3 Bowra 1959:255.
in breathing new life into the epigram after two centuries of neglect. These and similar assessments require two perspectives: Palladas's position in the vast period of time during which the Greek epigram was a literary genre, and the question of his originality and status as an innovator.

In its development, around the beginning of the 4th century BCE, from sepulchral and votive or dedicatory inscription to literary poem in its own right, the epigram became, like its metrical cognate the elegy, the vehicle of a great variety of themes and voices. Initially an inscription of commemoration of and praise for the deceased or dedication of an object, the epigram came to treat themes of love and the banquet, the joys and brevity of life, and to indulge in the mockery or criticism of the follies and foibles of social classes or types of individuals (σκόπυς), or to display dilettante virtuosity in epideictic portraits of people, animals and objets d'art. In this process, the tone of the epigram modulated accordingly from reverent, respectful and serious to merry, sad, witty and satirical.

As for Palladas's 'originality' and innovation, demonstration is difficult and certainty impossible. In practice all the critic can do is make a close study of the poet's use of form and language in comparison with known predecessors, insofar as this can be reconstructed from surviving texts. Naturally, in the employment of the genre over at least 650 years before Palladas (c. 300 BCE to c. 350 CE), there are bound to be some poets who seem to have anticipated Palladas. Thus, for example, Apollonius of Rhodes (3rd century BCE), calls Callimachus 'garbage' (κάθαμα), 'a laughing-stock' (παλύνοιυ) and 'blockhead' (ξύληνος νος, AP 11.275). Closest to Palladas in time, theme and style are Lucilius and Nicarchus (mid-1st to early-2nd century CE), who show witty σκόπυς in their satirical jokes about physically abnormal persons and various professions and practitioners. Writing about 250 years before Palladas, they were influenced by comedy and contemporary mime, and rely heavily on gross exaggeration and occasional coarseness for effect. It is as well, at the outset, to distinguish σκόπυς from iambic ψόγος. There are important differences: while σκόπυς entails 'mockery, scoffing, banter' (LSJ) in witty and amusing exchanges, particularly the kind encountered at symposia, and aimed at causing laughter, ψόγος involves 'blame, censure'

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5 Peek 1965:167.
6 See Beckby 1957-58:1.9-99, who relates epigram closely to elegy as both originated in dirge (12); also Kroll 1964:207; Peek 1965:164-65; Gutzwiller 2007:106-20; Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:283-349.
8 E.g. Nicarchus, AP 11.328; 395.
9 Gutzwiller 1998:172 refers to P. Berol. 270.2, containing an early Hellenistic epigram that prescribes appropriate behaviour for symposiasts, including the
personal invective that is most certainly not pleasant or funny for the recipient. Then the 3rd and half the 4th centuries CE are ‘almost completely mute’, until the appearance of Palladas. In the long history and among scores of exponents of the epigram, there are surprisingly few epigrammatists who used the form for aggressive and personal blame, censure or invective (ψόγος), the essential mode and matter of iambic verse. Poets in other genres consciously shunned it. Theognis (611-14) excludes the use of invective (ψέξαι) from the symposium, ascribing it to base men (δειλός ἰόνδρας, 612; κακοῖ, 613), and in a unique and telling characterisation, Pindar distances himself from ‘censorious’ (ψογερός) Archilochus (P. 2.52-56). Even composing in the same genre, Callimachus modifies Hipponaxean ψόγος in his programmatic Iambi 1.26-31.

injunction ἐς ἄλλοις τε φλυαρεῖν καὶ σκόπτειν τοιαὐθ' οἷα γέλωτα φέρειν (‘to poke fun at each other and to mock, just enough to produce laughter’, 5-6; her translation). The degree of malicious intent and hurtfulness increases when members of other sympotic groups are attacked (as in Alcaeus, Fr. 67, 72, 129), but decreases when types rather than individuals are lampooned.

10 Cf. Xen. 11.2: ὁνείδεα καὶ ψόγος (‘reproach and rebuke’); Pind. N. 7.61: σκοτείνον ἀπέχων ψόγον (‘avoiding dark censure’); Aesch. A. 937: μὴ ὑμῖν τὸν ἀνθρώπηλον αιδεοθῆς ψόγον (‘don’t, then, stand in awe of people’s censure’); Soph. Ant. 759: ἄλλ’ οὐ ... ἐπὶ ψόγους δεινάσεις ἐμέ (‘but not ... with impunity do you revile me with rebukes’); Eur. Ion 630: οὐ φιλό ψόγος κλέειν (‘I do not like to hear rebukes’); Pl. Rep. 3.403c: εἶ δὲ μή, ψόγον ἀμοινίας καὶ ἀπειρακλίας ψέξοντα (‘or if he does not [πν. adhere to rational behaviour in relationships], he is to be considered guilty of coarseness and rudeness’); Lg. 829c: ἐγκώμια τε καὶ ψόγοις ποιεῖν ἄλλοις (‘to produce enkomia and lampoons to one another’). See also LSJ s.v. ἁκοπτεῖν and ἠπέγα.


13 Cf. Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:8-9, who add: ‘In so doing, Callimachus’ Hipponax not only reveals, with a keen sense of history, that he knows that invective poetry was closely linked to the specific context where it was produced (the culture of archaic Ionia), but he also reflects, within the scope of his new poetic programme (and that of Callimachus), a sense of the progressive elimination of personal polemic, which had marked the evolution of comic and satirical literature from iambic poetry to Middle and New Comedy’, and further on (10-11), elements of ‘the true ἱμμαθητὸς character – aggressive, bantering, admonitory – expressed in the Ionic dialect’ and in choliambic and iambic metres maintain the connection with Hipponax in Iambi 1-5 and 13.
About 160 epigrams (four of which are probably not by him) are preserved under Palladas's name in the *Anthologia Palatina* (*AP*) and *Anthologia Planitdea* (*AP*).\(^{14}\) Among the epigrams of this indigent schoolmaster (*grammatikos*) — if his own confessions are to be taken at face value —\(^{15}\) are many that are consciously used for invective and censure. This mixing of genre, as has often been noted, is typical of Hellenistic poetry. Wilhelm Kroll created the phrase ‘die Kreuzung derGattungen’,\(^{16}\) and subsequent studies have shown the phenomenon to be a far more complex and sophisticated creative process than previously thought.\(^{17}\) It is still worth examining in the epigrams of the much later Palladas.\(^{18}\)

In contrast with the Hellenistic epigrammatic poetry, relatively few epigrams of Palladas deal with the pleasures and transience of life (10.59, 75, 77-80, 84, 85; 11.54, 55, 62, 349). Instead, epigrammatic attacks on various groups and individuals pervade his poetry: the Hellenes (pagans, non-Christians: *AP* 10.89), the ancient deities and religion (*AP* 9.180, 183, 441, 773; 10.34, 53, 62, 73, 80; *AP* 16.207), women in general and his wife in particular (*AP* 9.165-68, 175, 400, 773; 10.55, 56, 11.286, 378, 381), government officials (*AP* 9.393; 11.283-85) and the wealthy (*AP* 10.60, 61, 93). *Iambos* is not primarily defined by the iambic metre, but rather by its content and tone and other elements such as language register, narrative and real or virtual autobiography. Scholars have recognised the violence and virulence of his attacks on individuals, some of them prominent in contemporary affairs.\(^{19}\) However, to my knowledge there have been no detailed analyses of the manner in which Palladas has used epigrammatic form and iambic style and tone to revitalise the epigrammatic genre and perhaps forge a new kind of poetry. This article analyses the occurrence of invective against individuals in

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\(^{15}\) *AP* 9.168, 169 (*grammatikos*); poor and hungry (10.97, 99; 11.279, 302-03); 9.171, 175 (sold books to stay alive); 9.174 (lost his position because of his opposition to Christianity). These admissions may be part of a literary pose: Peek 1965:158; Lesky 1966:737-811; Higher 1979.

\(^{16}\) Kroll 1964:2002-03.

\(^{17}\) See especially Cameron 1995:146-54; Gutzwiller 2007:173-78; Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:vii-viii, 17-41, 457-61. Cameron argues that Hellenistic genre-crossing was not a parody of or consciously revolutionary response to older Greek genres, but a creative response to the changed social, political and performative contexts; cf. also Fantuzzi & Hunter 2004:vii-viii.

\(^{18}\) Cf. also Peek 1965:167: ‘tiefer schürfende Untersuchung der Form ist eine lohnende Aufgabe.’

\(^{19}\) Cf. Bowra 1960b:122.
some of Palladas’s epigrammatic poems in order to demonstrate his poetic
technique and use of language in blending the epigrammatic and iambic
genres.

The poet’s credo

Palladas explicitly states his intention to employ epigram for invective in the
programmatic AP 11.341:20

αὐλίζειν μὲν ἄριστον, ὁ δὲ ὕψος ἐχθεὺς ἀρχή,
 ἄλλα κακῶς εἴπειν Ἄττικὸν ἐστὶ μέλι.

To praise is best, and blame is the cause of hatred;
but to bad-mouth someone is Attic honey.

The real nature of epigram, namely to praise, is recognised; and invective
brings hatred; yet it is like honey, not only sweet, but food for him. Signifi­
cantly, this is the only recorded occurrence of ὕψος in an epigram.

The urge to write such epigrams is expressed unambiguously in another
epigram:

ὁμοσα μυριάκις ἐπιγράμματα μηκέτι ποιεῖν,
 πολλοίν γὰρ μωρῶν ἐχθραν ἐπεστασάμην·
 ἄλλ’ ὅποταν κατέδω τοῦ Παφλαγόνος τὸ πρόσωπον
 Πανταγάθου, στέξει τὴν νόσον οὐ δυνάμαι.

I swore a thousand times to write no more epigrams,
for I attracted the enmity of many morons.
But whenever I look upon the face of Paphlagonian
Pantagathos, I can’t fend off the disease.
(AP 11.340)

Despite conscious attempts to stop and while recognising the negative
effects of attacks on individuals, he still regards them as moronic. Merely
seeing Pantagathos (‘Mr Allgood’, a type rather than an actual person) is
enough to re-infect him. Merely seeing someone who exhibits the traits of a
‘Pantagathos’ (like Mr Pecksniff in Charles Dickens’s Martin Chuzzlewit) is
sufficient to raise his ire. Whether it is a particular Pantagathos’s actual face
or his provenance or blustering (παφλάζεω) that upsets him is not clear to us.
The ‘disease’ of ὕψος is started by just the face, but probably develops to
include other facets of the individual. Though such mocking of types rather

20 The edition used is that of Beckby 1967-68.
than individuals was not new, Palladas has personalised the tone (and perhaps even the particular person) of this epigram in the exaggeration of his oaths (ἄμοιρα μυρίδες), in the denigration of his enemies (πολλοῖς γὰρ μωφῶν), and in the reluctant admission of his inability to resist the disease (στέξαι τὴν νόσον οὐ δύναμαι).

In another epigram, Palladas expresses his problem in a powerful analogy:

καὶ μύριμηκα χολὴν καὶ σέρφῳ φασὶν ἐνείναι·
ἐλτα χολὴν μὲν ἐκεῖ ζῶν τὰ φαινότατα,
ἐκκένθαι δ’ ἐμὲ πᾶσι χολὴν μὴ σκότα τελεεῖς,
ἀς μηδὲ φίλοις ῥήμασιν ἀνταδίκεῖν
tοὺς ἐργοὺς ἀδίκους· ἀποφράξαντα δεήσει
λοιπὸν δοσίχωλο τὸ στόμα, μηδὲ πνέειν.

Even in an ant and a gnat there’s bile, they say,
while the lowest forms of life have bile,
but do you bid me to lie down for all, without bile,
so as not with bare words to wrong
those who wrong me with deeds? Hereafter I’ll have
to block my mouth with rush and not breathe.
(AP 10.49)

The poet’s defence of his poetic attacks is reinforced by the antithetical comparison between the behaviour of the insignificant insects and his own (with χολὴν repeated in three consecutive lines) and by another antithesis between his verbal response and the actual, physical attacks on him. For Palladas, writing invective is as natural as biting or irritating is for ants and gnats. The reference to the ant recalls Archilochus, Fr. 23.14-16 West:

ἐπισταμαι τοι τὸν φιλέοντα μὲν φιλεῖν,
τὸν δ’ ἐχθρὸν ἐχθαίρειν τε καὶ κακοφοστομέειν
μὴρῃσθῆ.
15 Lobel

Indeed, I know well how to love whom I love,
but to hate an enemy and [bad-mouth him like an ant

21 One of the referees kindly drew my attention to the occurrence of this topos in oratory of the 4th/3rd century BCE (e.g. Theophrastus, Characterei).
Assuming this reading of Archilochus is correct, Palladas may be associating his epigrammatic verse with the iambic verse of Archilochus.  

This blending of elements of iambic and epigrammatic verse is evident in Palladas’s narrative of an encounter with a belligerent tenant:

Yesterday I let the garret to a seller of barley-gruel, and today I found in it a terrifying boxer. When I said ‘Who’re you? From where’ve you come to my house?’, he raised his hands to box with me.

Phew, I shot out of there, terrified of this savage man, seeing the barley-man suddenly become a boxer.

But, by the boxer Polydeuces and also Castor himself, and Zeus, protector of suppliants, I beg you to beat the boxer off me, my bile; for I cannot box every time the month commences. (AP 11.351)

The epigram is cast in the form of a narrative, with dialogue, elements that have been identified with iambic verse. The language is prosaic, the tone and thought reflecting ordinary life. The tenant comes from the lower ranks of the social order: he is a vendor of barley-gruel (τῷ πτισάνην πωλοῦντι, 1). The word πτισάνη seems to be from everyday speech: it appears several times in Hippocrates (Aent. 6, 7, 10) and in comedy (Ar. Fr. 159; Alex. 142.3). But the poet portrays himself as socially not much better: he rents out miserable accommodation, a cellar. Both κέλλα and its diminutive

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24 Peek 1965:166; LSJ and Steph. s.v. A referee referred me to the use of a related word πτισάνον in an epic context (Nicander, Theriac 590).
are very rare, attested only here and in papyri. When the tenant gets aggressive and threatening, the language register rises: πυγμαχίας (4) has heroic overtones (Hom. Il. 23.653, 665), suggesting the epic nature of the confrontation. However, with ψότα (5; = ψάτα, σάτα) an onomatopoetic sound to indicate the speed of the departure, attested elsewhere only at Eur. Cyc. 49 (where it is uttered by the chorus of satyrs), the diction returns to colloquial speech. The frightened poet flees, unheroically, the verb κατατείνα (5) implying tension, exertion and speed: its basic meaning is to 'stretch' something (a cable, broken bone, marking line), used metaphorically for straining, exertion, running (stretching the legs) and striving. The alliteration on p and t in πινομαγν πόκτην (6) enhances the suddenness (ἐξαιπνησ, 6) of the tenant’s transformation into a wild creature. The epigram closes with a mock-solemn and hyperbolic suppliant’s prayer, in the name of that other 'boxer' Polydeuces, his twin Castor, and Zeus, to some unspecified rescuer, who is begged to beat the boxing tenant off (τον πόκτην ἄπόκρουον, 9), so that the poet can collect the rent safely each month. The tenant is the poet’s bile (ἐμοῦ χόλον), an epic metaphor that momentarily elevates the situation before the down-to-earth collection of the rent.

This dramatic scene is succinctly and skilfully created. The diction conjures up a non-poetic, non-elevated world which is more expected in iambic than in epigrammatic verse. One is reminded of the low-life characters in Hippox. The dramatic situation itself is mock-serious and quotidian, with a touch of the heroic (on the part of the tenant) and devotional (on the part of the poet), and is as much a comic sketch of the poet himself as of his opponent.

Censuring individuals

Psogos is at its most effective when aimed at particular individuals, whether real people or composite types. Compare, for example, the mild censure of Solon directed at the Athenians as a group (cf. Fr. 36 and 37 West) to the aggressive attacks of Archilochus on Lycambes or Hipponax on Bupalus.

25 LSJ; in Patristic texts the words refer to a monk’s cell or storeroom; Lampe 1961-68, s.r.
26 Hesychius glosses ἐπὶ τοῦ ταχέως ἀποδρομεῖν; cf. LSJ and Steph. s.r.
27 LSJ s.r. κατατείνα.
28 Cf. LSJ s.r.
29 Peek 1965:166 noted the mixture of dictio epica and spoken language or prose in Palladas’s work.
Palladas’s ῥογος also exhibits this feature.\textsuperscript{30} His barbs can be aimed at some unnamed person, usually a type, such as a stingy giver of gifts:

\begin{quote}
τὴν λαπάραν, τὴν αὐτὸς ἁποσφιγξάς ἀποπέμπεις,
eὑρεῖν ὅ παις θύσας φύσαν ὑπηρέμουν.
\end{quote}

The stuffed flank that you yourself sewed up and sent off, my slave opened and found to be a bellows of air. (AP 9.486)

The poet attacks the kind of person who is a stingy dispenser of charity, who sends a rolled and stuffed side with almost nothing in it.\textsuperscript{31} Additional bite is added by the poet’s emphasis on the fact that the giver himself prepared the gift. The two long words with initial ἀπο- (ἀποσφιγξάς ἀποπέμπεις) sarcastically evoke the ‘great effort’ he put into the process, only to produce a bellows (φύσαν). The participle ἁποσφιγξάς contains a medical metaphor: ἁποσφιγξύω and its cognates ἁπόσφιγξες and ἁπόσφιγζεσ are used of tying ligatures.\textsuperscript{32} Interestingly enough, λαπάρα and φύσαν also have medical connections, the former meaning ‘side of the chest’, the latter ‘bladder’ or ‘flatulence’.\textsuperscript{33}

A similar censure is tempered with humour:

\begin{quote}
βρώματα μοι χοίρων συκιζομένων προέθηκας,
ξηρῶν, διψαλέων, Κυπρόθεν έρχομένων.
ἀλλ’ ἐμε συκωθέντα μαθῶν ἡ σφάξου ἑτοίμας,
ἡ σφέσου ἐκ διψῆς νάματι τῷ Κυπρίῳ.
\end{quote}

Food of fig-fattened pigs you’ve set before me, dry, thirst-provoking, coming from Cyprus.
But, finding me fig-fattened, either kill me at once, or quench my thirst with the Cyprian fluid. (AP 9.487)

This time, the poet is presented with figs, used to fatten young pigs. But, coming from Cyprus, they are so dry they cause thirst. The sender of the gift is given two options: either he slaughters the fattened poet, or he sends some Cyprian wine to quench the poet’s thirst. The repetition in Κυπρόθεν and

\textsuperscript{30} Albiani 2007:191 speaks of ‘Hipponactian sarcasm’ animating his poetry.
\textsuperscript{31} Or a kind of sausage or haggis: LSJ; Paton 1958-63:3.272 n. 1; Beckby 1967-68:3.301.
\textsuperscript{32} LSJ s.v.
\textsuperscript{33} Side of chest: Hp. Flut. 9; Morb. 2.55; Int. 17; Gal. 18(2).762, 764; bladder: Dsc. 5.94; Ἱππιατρία 33; flatulence: Hp. VM 10, 22; see LSJ s.vv.
Kυπρῖος makes it clear that the cure for the poet’s condition must come from its source. This is a polite and witty way of requesting a gift of Cyprian wine. The language is worth noting: συκοφάντας occur only here;\(^{34}\) and the asyndetic ξηρῶν, διψαλέων, Кυπρόθεν ερχομένων, with their hard consonants, emphasise the unappetising nature of the figs.

Another uncharitable giver, this time named, is lampooned with wit:

\[\text{ιππόν ὑποσχόμενος με 'Ολυμπίος ἤγαγεν οὐράν, ἢς ὀλυγοδρανέων ἰππός ἀπεκρήματο.}\]

Having promised me a horse, Olympios brought a tail, from which a good-for-nothing horse hung down.\(^{(AP 11.293)}\)

The gift-horse is so feeble, that instead of the tail hanging from the horse, the horse hangs from the tail. Added point is given to the anticlimax by the epic colouring of the word ὀλυγοδρανέων.\(^{35}\) It is tempting to see irony in the name of the giver: an ‘Olympian’, either divine or athletic, should have better quality horses.

Another named, grudging host provides inadequate fare for his guests:

\[\text{πάντες ἀπαξ τρώγουσιν ἤταν δὲ τρέφῃ Σαλαμίνος, οἷκαδ’ ἀριστῶμεν δεύτερον ἐρχόμενοι.}\]

Everybody scoffs once, but when Salaminos feeds us, we go home and have breakfast a second time.\(^{(AP 11.387)}\)

The verb τρώγω (‘chew’, ‘gnaw’, ‘munch’) is used of herbivorous animals (like pigs), and when applied to humans, of eating raw vegetables and fruit. Clearly it is associated with both uncouth eating and unsophisticated food.\(^{36}\) Salaminos serves up food fit only for animals or the poor, with the result that the guests have to munch away at it and eat again soon afterwards.

Then there is the host who serves meagre fare on silver platters:

\[\text{μή με κάλει δίσκων ἐπίστορα λιμοφόρων, βρωτῶν μοι φορέων τὴν κολοκυθίαδα.}\]

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\(^{34}\) LSJ and Steph. s.v. συκίζω and συκόμαι.

\(^{35}\) LSJ s.v. ὀλυγοδρανέω.

\(^{36}\) LSJ s.v.; in the NT (but not in the LXX) the word is equivalent to ἔσθω, but Palladas’s paganism would suggest that he used the word in its older meanings. On vegetables and fruit, with no meat, as the diet of the poor, see Wilkins & Hill 2006:51-60, 73-74, 133-38, 142-43.
Don’t invite me: I know your hunger-bearing dishes,  
carrying for me some pumpkin-dish for food.  
We don’t munch the silver stuff you plonk down before us,  
cheating with hunger the poor wooden boards.  
Look for those who fast for your display of silver,  
and then you’ll be admired for your light plate.  

(τὸ παταράκιον, τὰ χειρόμενα, αὐτὸν μαλακέος τοὺς μελέους πίνακας).

The theme already appears in Lucilius (AP 11.313), where starving guests have to be content with staring at the shining silverware on which meagre fare is served. In the above epigram, the elaborate plates bring hunger instead of food, something made out of some cucurbit or marrow. Apicius gives various ways to prepare and serve marrows, all of them rather basic and simple and hardly fine fare. Both λιμοφορήματα and κολοκυθίδαδα are found only here and suggest in this context not the rarity but the strangeness or peculiarity of the food, which is quite inappropriate for the serving-plate. The oxymoron in ἄργυρην ὑλήν enforces this difference: a basic wooden plate would do as well given this food; the silverware is unnecessary and thus only for show. The silver plate, after all, is not for chewing on (τρῶγομεν, on which see AP 11.382 above) and in fact cheats the wooden boards (μελέους πίνακας) out of their true function and living. This witty hyperbole is combined with an idiomatic expression on the dishonesty of Cretans (κρητίζων). The plates are also simply thrown down (παραβάλλεις), a Trimalchio-like gesture that suggests a disregard for their real value. The poet’s advice at the end is for this host to invite guests who hunger for such ostentation itself and who will admire the lightly-filled plate without lamenting the lack of food of equal quality. The use of ἄσημον is ambiguous. In Classical Greek it means ‘uncoined (gold or silver)’, ‘unmarked’, ‘without distinguishing mark or official stamp’, but later simply ‘silver’ (as at LXX/Jb.

37 There is some witty use of language: ἄργυρην λιμή (‘silver hunger’), ἄργυροφορεγέλη (‘silver-gleaming hunger’), πειναλέους ... τοὺς πίνακας (‘starving platters’). Cf. also 11.314 (witty etymologising: πίνακες comes from πείνα).
38 Apicius (ed. Milham) 3.4.1-8 (boiled or fried, served as hors d’œuvres or with chicken); 4.2.10 (vegetable patina); 4.5.3 (stuffed); 6.8.8 (boiled, with chicken); cf. Flower & Rosenbaum 1958:75 nos. 1-7; 77 no. 8; 99 no. 10; 153 no. 8; 121 no. 3.
39 Peek 1965:166 includes κολοκυθίδας among colloquialisms.
40 LSJ and Steph. s.v.
42.11) or ‘silver plate’ as here. It is possible that the older meaning is still resonating in our passage. If so, there is a hint that the silverware is in fact unrefined, thus casting a question-mark over its value.41

Gentle censure is aimed at a woman who wasted her inheritance:

Ψυλλὼ πρεσβυγενής τοῖς κληρονόμοις φθονέσασα
αὐτὴν κληρονόμος τῶν ἱδίων γέγονεν,
ἀλλομένῃ δὲ τάχος κατέβη δόμου εἰς Ἀδήν,
ταῖς δαπάναις τῷ ζνῷ σύμμετρον εὐρομένη.
πάντα φαγοῦσα βλοὶν συμπώλετο ταῖς δαπάναισιν,
ἡλιατὸ δ’ εἰς Ἀδήν, ὡς ἀπεκερμάτισεν.

First-born Psyllo, grudging her heirs,
herself became heir of her own possessions.
Jumping quickly, she went down to Hades’s home,
devising her life to suit her spending-power.
Having eaten all, she ended her life with spending;
then leapt to Hades when she’d frittered it away.

(AP 7.607)

This epigram is grouped under ‘sepulchral epigrams’ (epitumbia), most of which Peek was justified in calling skēptika (mockeries) rather than respectful epitumbia (epitaphs).42 Psyllo, an eldest child, spent her inheritance so as not to leave it to her heirs. She therefore timed the end of her inheritance to coincide with the end of her life. The speed of her spending-spree was such that it actually hastened her demise – an extreme case of shopping till one drops. To the witty thought is added the rare use of πρεσβυγενής in the sense of ‘first-born’ rather than ‘old’,43 and the use of ἀπεκερμάτιζε (‘break into small pieces’; Porph. Sent. 37) in the metaphorical meaning of ‘dissipate one’s substance’, found only here. Repetition (κληρονόμοις, κληρονόμος, with variation of case-ending, and δαπάναις, δαπάναιοι) and variation (ζῆν, βλοῖν and ἀλλομένη ... κατέβη δόμου εἰς Ἀδήν, ἥλιατο δ’ εἰς Ἀδήν) add to the stylistic sophistication.44

Various named individuals are targeted for specific characteristics, traits or behaviour:

41 LSJ s.v...
42 Peek 1965:161.
43 Hom. Il. 11.249; E. Tr. 593; elsewhere ‘ancient’, ‘primeval’ (Cratin. 240: of Cronos), and in the plural ‘elderly’ (Plat. Lyc. 6, 2.789e); LSJ s.v.
44 The authenticity of the last couplet has been questioned on the grounds that it is simply a variation of the foregoing; cf. Waltz 1960:111 n. 3. But such variation is characteristic and the actual variation, with the rare final word ἀπεκερμάτισεν, is not out of place in Palladas’s work.

102
Often, Sexus, have I weighed your friendship and arrogance. And having found your friendship much lighter, and your abuse weighing down, I have severed our friendship, no longer able to bear your most insulting arrogance. (AP 10.99)

The poet’s relationship with Sextus is ended because the latter’s arrogance outweighs his friendship. The metaphor of the balancing scales is sustained in very common, ordinary words (εὐποτήσας, κοινοφότερον und ρέπουσαν), but the increasing weight of Sextus’s overbearing behaviour is graphically depicted in the progression from ἄβριν to λοιδορήτευν to μηκέτι βαστάζων ἄβριν ἄτιμοτάτην, with the climactic superlative at the end of the rising tricolon – a rhetorical device known as the ‘Gesetz der wachsenden Glieder’.

Aorator Maurus is lampooned for his physical appearance:

ἡτορα Μαυρον ἰδῶν ἐτεθητεα, ῥυγχελέφαυτα, 
χεῖλιςι λυτραίος φθόγγον ἕλητα φῶνον.

I was amazed when I saw the rhetor Maurus, elephant-nosed, from half-kilo lips sending forth a voice, murder. (AP 11.204)

Maurus’s pronounced nose is likened to an elephant’s trunk, from which a thunderous sound issues which is painful to hear. Such personal attacks on physical appearance are reminiscent of Hipponax, and appear in Lucillius and Nicarchus. Rare words and syntax add spice to the satire: τέθητα is found only in poetry, Ionian and late prose; ῥυγχελέφαυτα is a hapax logomenon; λυτραίος occurs only here and in Galen (13.415; but λυτραίος in Dion. Halic. 9.27); and the two nouns in the accusative, φθόγγον and φῶνον, must be in apposition. The onomatopoeia in φθόγγον ... φῶνον imitates the

45 The lemma on the epigram identifies the person as an Egyptian, but Bowra 1969a:2 is probably correct to reject this inference.
46 E.g. Lucillius, AP 11.87-111 (tall, short, skinny); 196-97 (ugly); 239-40 (foul breath); Nicarchus, AP 11.110-11, 407 (skinny); 241-42 (foul breath); 406 (hooked nose).
47 See LSJ and Steph. s.v.v. With different accentuation an adjective can be obtained (φονῶς), which is, however, only (dubiously) attested at S. Ant. 1003.
elephantine sound. It may sound cruel to modern sensibilities (assuming, of course, that Maurus was a real person), but it is undeniably effective satire.

A named professional dancer is also singled out for a physical trait, but also for his dancing ability:

Δάφνην καὶ Νιόβην ἄρχησατο Μέμφις ὁ Σίμως,
 ὡς ξύλινος Δάφνην, ὡς λίθωνος Νιόβην.

Memphis the Flatnose danced 'Daphne' and 'Niobe',
   Daphne like wood, Niobe like stone.
(AP 11.255);

The name Memphis suggests that the dancer, real or imagined, is Egyptian, an inference supported by the racial characteristic of a flat nose. Like jokes about physical traits, poking fun at dancers was not new. The main critique (opening the epigram) is directed at the dancer’s performance of a kind of mime: his interpretation of Daphne was ‘wooden’, of Niobe ‘stony’. The play on δάφνη (laurel) and ‘wooden’ is subtle though obvious, but the link between Niobe and ‘stony’ is learned and witty. After the death of her children, the grieving Niobe fled to her father Tantalus’s home in Sipylos, where Zeus out of pity turned her into stone. Such learned referencing was characteristic of Alexandrian poetry.

A surgeon named Gennadius is compared to a judge Hegemon:

βέλτερον Ἑγεμόνος ληπτοκτόνῳ ἐς κρίσιν ἐλθεῖν,
 ἢ τοι χειρουργῷ Γενναδίου παλάμας,
 ὃς μὲν γὰρ φονεῖς ὡς στυγεῖων κατατέμει,
 ὃς δὲ λαβὼν μυθοῦς εἰς Ἀθῆνα κατάγει.

Better to come to trial under Hegemon, the robber-slayer, than into the palms of the surgeon Gennadius.
For the former carves up murderers in sanctioned anger, while the latter takes his fee and sends you to Hades.
(AP 11.280)

48 Also used of Ethiopians (Xen. 16) and Scythians (Hdt. 4.23).
49 Cf. Lucilius, AP 11.253; 254, where a dancer’s performance of ‘Niobe’ is also characterised as ‘stony’ (ὁς λίθως).
50 Cf. Hom. Il.5.599-620; 24.602-17; Hyg. Fab. 9 and 10; Apollod. 3.45ff.; Ovid, Met. 6.146-312; Paus. 5.16.3; 8.2.5; S. El. 150-52. According to Pausanias (1.21.3), the ‘statue’ of Niobe was a natural rock-formation resembling a woman on Mt Sipylos. Cf. Roscher 1965:372, 375-76; Bäbler 2006.
Both Hegemon and Gennadius (the names, meaning ‘Leader’ and ‘Noble One’ respectively, seem fictitious, representing types) are involved in cutting up bodies, the judge being particularly harsh in sentencing thieves and murderers to death, the surgeon on his patients. 51 But the judge at least has the sanction of the law on his side, while the surgeon is more concerned with his fee than the patient’s survival. Again choice words enforce the point: ληστοκτόνου occurs only here, coined to evoke the judge’s severity; παλάμας is found mainly in poetry, where it is used especially in contexts of grasping and violence. 52 To appreciate the full force of this condemnation of Gennadius, one may compare the praise, also in an epigram, of a good physician:

Εἶς Μάγνου ἰατροσοφιστήν
Μάγνος ὁ τῶν Ἀδην κατέβη, τρομεών Ἀδωνεύς
eipen. Ἀναστήσων ἠλυθε καὶ νέκεψας.

On Magnus, professor of medicine

When Magnus went down to Hades, Pluto trembled and said:
‘He’s come to set the dead up on their legs too.’
(AP 11.281) 53

An unnamed philosopher is criticised for becoming a politician:

εἶς τῶν φιλόσοφων γενόμενον ὑπάρχον πόλεως ἐπὶ
Βαλεντινιανός καὶ Βαλεντινὸς
ἀντιγός οὐφανῆς ὑπερήμενος ἐς πόθον ἡμῶς
ἀντιγός ἀργυρέης: ἀλαχὸς ἀπειρέας
ἄρα ποτὲ κρείσσων ἀθῆς δ’ εγένος πολὴ χείρων,
δεβρ’ ἀναβηθὶ κάτω, νῦν γὰρ ἀνω κατέβης.

3 Palatins, Planudes: ἥσθα κάτω κρείσσων, ἀναβᾶς cod. Laur.
Libanius, Declam. 57.22, f. 94

On a certain philosopher becoming Prefect of Constantinople under Valentinian and Valens

51 The bad physician is found already in Nicarchus, AP 11.113-15 (his mere touch means death) and Lucilius, AP 11.257 (just to dream of him is fatal).
52 Grasping: Hom. II 3.338; Od. 1.104; Pind. P. 1.44; violence: Hom. II 3.128; Aesch. Suppl. 863; Soph. Ph. 1206; cf. LSJ.
53 This Magnus has been identified as Magnus of Nisibis, whose reputation is also attested by Eunapius, Vit. Soph. 498; cf. Cameron 1965b:20-21; 1993:67.
Seated above the heavenly wheel, you came to desire
a wheel of silver. A boundless disgrace.
You were once better; but in turn you’ve become much worse.
Come, ascend down, for now you’ve descended up.
(AP 11.292)

This attack on a philosopher is not like the mocking of a type found in Lucilius.\(^{54}\) It has a basis in reality. The addressee is probably Themistius, elected prefect of Constantinople in 384.\(^{55}\) As a philosopher Themistius was elevated in the world of intellectual enquiry, high above the ‘heavenly wheel’ (the vault of heaven), exploring the universe. The metaphor \(\text{ἀντωγὸς οὐρανίς,}\) in the unusual \textit{imatura} found only here and at 9.806 (Anon.), encapsulates the singular achievement. But then he began to desire the ‘silver wheel’ (\(\text{ἀντωγὸς ἀργυρῆς,}\) metonymic for the official carriage of a city prefect.\(^{56}\) The philosopher’s election to political office is seen, not as a rise in status, but as a come-down and inversion of his value-system. His station as a philosopher may have been lowly, but his stature was exalted. The epigram gains impact through wit and skilful use of language. The thought is built upon the antithesis of high-low, up-down (\(\text{οὐρανίς, ὑπερμενευός, κρείσσω, ἀνάβηθα, ἄνω ... ἀργυρῆς, χειρῶν, κάτω, κατέβης,}\) and the whole structure is then subverted by the paradox in the last line: high is low and low high.\(^{57}\) The exclamation \(\text{αἰσχος ἀπειρέσιον and imperative δεῦρ'}\) express (or pretend to express) the urgency, if not the seriousness, of the poet’s reprimand.

The above interpretation depends on the Palatine and Planudian reading of line 3. Cameron rejected this generally-accepted reading in favour of that

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\(^{54}\) E.g. Lucilius, \textit{AP} 11.153-55.

\(^{55}\) The \textit{Palatium} lemma gives an incorrect dating (Valentinian and Valens, 364-375/8, are too early) and does not supply the name of the city. Both person and city are named by Planudes: \(\text{ἐλ ῆ Θεμίστιον γενόμενον ὑπαρξον Κωνσταντιναπόλεως ἐπὶ Βαλεντιανοῦ καὶ Βαλέντου.}\) See Bowra 1960a:2; Cameron 1965a:221, who adds (221-22) the further evidence of Themistius’s speech after his term of office (\textit{Or.} 34.30) which contains echoes of Palladas’s poem; also 1993:90.

\(^{56}\) Cameron 1965a:221 n. 2 notes that Themistius was one of the first to use the silver-plated carriage, introduced the previous year to shocked response from conservative contemporaries; and that Palladas’s ire was aroused by Themistius’s being seduced by such ostentation.

\(^{57}\) The assessment of Paton 1958:63:4.206 n. 2 that ‘The last line is merely a very frigid repetition of the opinion that the philosopher (by some said to be Themistius) demeaned himself by accepting office’, is to my mind too negative.
of the Laurentian manuscript of Libanius’s *Declamationes*.58 This reading translates as ‘you were better when down, but when you rose, you became worse.’ Both readings have the basic meaning of an inversion of earlier lower position but more elevated moral stature to one of higher position but inferior moral stature. The Laurentian reading has several advantages: it is supported by a Latin version (*Ep. Bob. 50*: *sursum peior eras, ascendens sed mage peior*); it is possibly closer in time to Palladas (4th century) than the *Palatinus* (10th century); and ποτε and αὕθις are semantically much weaker (Cameron calls them ‘stopgaps’) than κατὰ and ἄναβες.

Eight epigrams are aimed at a certain Gessius, aspects of whose career and premature death are highlighted for criticism. Two soothsayers promised him the consulsiphip (7.688); he went abroad to increase his chances of promotion, but instead outran Fate to his death, despite being lame (681); seeking high office was for him the be-all and end-all of life and happiness (685); when he failed to obtain office, he realised the false prediction of the oracle of Ammon and that his belief in astrologers and oracles had caused his death (687); over-eagerness had hastened his death (682); when he arrived in Hades, lamer than ever, without a proper funeral and naked, he explained that arrogance (στρῆνος) had caused his death (686); his case is a warning against hubris and pride in high office (684); and, finally, the poet, on surveying a statue of Gessius, asks which one, Gessius or the statue, is of stone (*AP* 16.317). In relating these events, Palladas offers his own comments: it is folly to believe what empty-headed and disgruntled astrologers say (7.687, 688); ironically, he was physically lame, but it was his hurry to gain office that hastened his death (7.681, 686); puffed up by ambition, he was then deflated by his disregard for ordinary happiness (7.684); the only insignia he obtained were those after death (7.685). Cameron has constructed a ‘biography’ of Gessius;59 our focus here is on the manner in which Palladas creates his ψόγος in the most complex and virulent of the lampoons, *AP* 7.683:

Τήθειν ἄγαν’ τῶν ἐπτὰ σοφῶν ὁ σοφῶτατος ἐλευθέρος

ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ πεισθῆς, Γέσσιον, ταύτ’ ἐπεθῆς.

59 Cameron 1964. The main details of his ‘suggested reconstruction’ are that Gessius left his native Antioch, became a moderately successful rhetor in Alexandria, fell victim to some astrologers who told him of oracles predicting the advancement of his political career, began boasting of his future achievements, was unfortunately near the Serapeum during the riots of 391 and was dragged into the sanctuary by pagans sheltering there, was stripped and tortured, had his legs broken and was thrown into a sacrificia1 pit (291-92).
Nothing in excess' said the wisest of the Seven Sages.

But you, Gessius, unconvinced suffered this fate.

Though learned, you incurred reproach for not thinking,
because you set your heart on heavenly ascent.

Thus the horse Pegasus destroyed Bellerophon,
because he wished to learn the astronomical laws.

But he had a horse and the bold strength of youth.

Gessius did not have the well-tuned heart to shit.

This time the accusation against Gessius is excess. While he had believed astrologers, he disregarded a truly wise man, Solon (1-2). Despite being learned, he was guilty of extremely irrational and unthinking behaviour, because he believed he could reach such a high goal (3-4). Bellerophon had perished for similar hubris in his attempt to understand the stars and constellations (5-6). Moreover, in contrast to Bellerophon, Gessius had neither a horse like Pegasus nor youth to assist him (7) – he did not even have the courage to defecate (8).

Some stylistic devices enrich the text. Punning, a noted predilection of Palladas, occurs in σοφῶν ... σοφώτατος (1), with parallel use of the root σοφ- in positive and superlative degrees, and λόγος ... ἀλογώτατοι (3), also in the same degrees, but with antithetical use of the root λόγ- and ἀλογ-.

Then there are two metaphors. Gessius’s desire to reach high political office is seen in terms of aspiring to heaven, a metaphor found in Plato (Rep. 7.517b), where it is applied to the mind’s upward progress. The second metaphor is εὔτονος, taken from music, where it refers to the stretching of a lyre-string. It is used metaphorically of ‘tuning’ men’s bodies by Aristotle (LA 710a31), Hippocrates (Aph. 3.17), Lucian (Anach. 24) and Strato (AP 12.216). Its application here to the heart (ητόρ) seems unique. The simile of Bellerophon works by antithesis, descending from myth to reality, from the elevated reaches of pathless heaven (οὐρανίς ἄνόδου, 4) and the orbits of the constellations (ἀστροβοθέτους κανόνας, 6) to the banal act of defecation.

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60 Peek 1965:167, who connects this trait with the poet-grammarian’s interest in language.
(χέσειν) expressed in the language of comedy. The employment of obscene language is a feature of iambic verse.

These epigrams amount to a considerable and sustained censure of Gessius. Even the ‘epitaph’ to his statue is all but praise. Blame and censure have replaced respectful praise and honouring of the deceased.

Vitriolic attacks are made on another politician, the prefect Damonicus:

Εἰς Δαμόνικον ὑπαρχον

πολλὰ πολλὰ λέγουσιν, ἐμὸς δ' οὐ πάντα δύνανται ἰματὰ ἐξευτελίζειν ἰματα σῶν παθέων. 
ἐν δ' ἐπὶ σοὶ παράδοξον ἑθεμάσαμεν καὶ ἁπιστῶν, δάκρυα πῶς κλέπτων εἰχες ἑτοιμότατα. 
Χαλκίδος ἐκ γαίης ἀπεχάλκισε τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν κλέπτων, καὶ κλέπτων δάκρυα κερδαλέοις. 

On the Prefect Damonicus

Many people say many things, but all the same they cannot express in words all the streams of suffering you inflict.
But one strange and incredible thing in you we marvelled at: how, while stealing, you had tears altogether ready.
From the Bronze Land you stole the bronze of our city, stealing and stealing with your profitable tears.

(AP 11.283)

From among Damonicus’s ‘streams’ (φεύματα) of malpractices, one is singled out for wonderment (ἐθαμάμασεν): his paradoxical (παράδοξον) and incredible (ἀπιστῶν) penchant for shedding tears for his victims while in the act of robbing them. His kleptomania is wittily linked to his home town of Chalcis by the punning on Χαλκίδος and ἀπεχάλκισε and emphasised by the repeated κλέπτων (4, 6 bis). The purpose of his accompanying tears, also emphasised by repetition (δάκρυα, 4; δάκρυα, 6), is revealed at the very end: κερδαλέος means both ‘cunning’ and ‘profitable’, both of which are appropriate here. The tears are shed in an act of deception and, by implication, to express his joy at the profits he is making. The streams of tears therefore join the streams of his other abuses.

LSJ εἰ. χέσω. For the pun on Gessius, cf. Peek 1965:167; Waltz 1960:143 n. 1, who considered the use of χεσείν as a ‘jeu de mots médiocre et grossier, fondé sur l’allitération Γέσσιος – χεσείν.’ Cameron 1964:291 also notes the ‘none too delicate’ pun. The point of the crude pun is exactly to create a grossly satyrical effect.

Noted by Peek 1965:167.

Cf. LSJ.
Another epigram presents a variation on this theme:

\[
\text{θηλυφανές παράδοξον ἑθαυμάσαµεν πάθος ἄλλος
ἐκλαῖεν κλέπτων, κλεπτομένοις ἐλεῶν,
δός κλέπτων ἔγγευε, καὶ ἄγνεών ἄπειολα,
μηδὲν ἔχων καθαρὸν, μηδὲ τὸ σῶµα ῥύπου.}
\]

We marvelled at another effeminate, strange condition:
he wept while stealing, pitying those he stole from;
he stole and observed purity, observed purity and despoiled,
with nothing of him or his body clean of filth.
(AP 11.285)

Some words are repeated (παράδοξον ἑθαυμάσαµεν, πάθος, κλέπτων) and others varied (δάκρυα ... έιξες ἐτοιµὸτατα and δάκρυα become ἐκλαῖεν). However, several new ideas and motifs also appear. The strange affliction (πάθος) of crying while stealing (ἐκλαῖεν κλέπτων) is labelled as effeminate (θηλυφανές, a rare epithet), and explained as being caused by pity for the victims (κλεπτομένοις ἐλεῶν). This differs from the previous epigram, where there is the innuendo that he actually sheds tears of glee at his profits. Here his crime is placed in the wider context of the dichotomy in his nature: he steals and feels sorry, sins and is pious – underscored by the asyndetic balancing in line 3. The notion of purity and religious observance (ἅγνευε, ἄγνεών) is rejected in the last line: nothing of him is clean – again with balancing, this time with variation and cryptic syntax.64

Another epigram, arranged between the above two in the AP, and presumed to refer to the same person,65 is more scurrilous:

\[
\text{ἐκ γῆς Λωτοφάγων μέγας Ὀρχαμός ἦλθε Λυκάοιν}
Χαλκίδος ἐκ γαῖς ἀντιοχεῦμενος.}
\]

From the Lotus-Eaters' land came the great leader Lycaon;
from the land of Chalkis a man buggered differently.
(AP 11.284)

The Lotus-Eaters and Lycaon transport the reader to the world of myth. The Lycaon referred to here is probably the son of the prehistoric Arcadian king Pelasgus. He had a split morality, being at the same time pious and impious. For this he was turned by Zeus into a werewolf (hence his name).66 This

64 One should read: μηδὲν ἔχων καθαρὸν [ὑπὸ], μηδὲ τὸ σῶµα [ἔχων καθαρὸν]
ῥύπου: 'having nothing pure, nor having a body pure of filth.'
65 Paton 1958-63:4.203 titles it 'On the same'.
mythological character, with its cruel and wild nature, is used as an equivalent of Damonicus from Chalkis, who also had this mixture of piety and impiety, of good and evil. The *hapax legomenon* άντιοχεύομενος, at the end of the couplet, means something like ‘humped in a different way’, guilty of deviant sexual behaviour, perhaps in the manner of a wolf. The obscenity adds to the weirdness and depravity of Damonicus’s behaviour.

Censuring gods

The ancient Olympian gods do not escape censure. Two examples will suffice here. The first lampoons Zeus’s perceived favouring of murderers:

\[EL\ TOUS \ \alphaυπολύουσις \ \epsilonυδαίμονας \ \deltaυτας \ \δράμεν, \\
\text{ο} \ \text{πάνιν} \ \text{θαματζων} \ \text{το}υ \ \text{Διος} \ \text{έστι} \ \gammaέρας.} \\
\text{τον} \ \gammaάρ \ \text{γεννήσαντα} \ \text{μεμιστικός} \ \text{και} \ \text{έκεινος} \\
\text{κτείνεν} \ \text{αυ,} \ \text{ε} \ \text{ο} \ \text{Κρόνος} \ \text{θυντε} \ \text{έτιέχεν} \ \text{ώς} \\
\text{άυτι} \ \text{β} \ \text{το} \ \text{κτείναι} \ \text{ο} \ \text{το} \ \text{ς} \ \text{τήτα} \ \text{κολάζει.} \\
\text{δέσινων} \ \text{ώς} \ \lambdaηστήν} \ \text{ε} \ \text{ις} \ \text{το} \ \text{βάραθρον} \ \text{έ} \ \text{ε} \ \text{iς.} \]

If we see killers of men being prosperous, 
I’m not entirely surprised: it’s Zeus’s gift. 
For he hated his father and would, even he, 
have killed him, if Cronus had been mortal. 
Instead of killing him, he confines him with the Titans, 
having cast him bound, like a robber, into the pit. 
(\text{AP} 10.53)

Murderers escape punishment, which is not surprising: Zeus grants them this dispensation, for even he (καὶ έκεῖνος) would have killed his father if he had not been immortal. Instead, he imprisoned Cronus like an ordinary thief. Two couplets are devoted to Zeus’s contemplation of patricide and eventual imprisonment of his father. In this way Zeus’s crime is made more heinous than that of convicted murderers. Also, Zeus’s hatred of his father and his subsequent treatment of him hardly indicate balanced and impartial judgement and just treatment. This is a long way from, for example, the Solonian

\[67 \text{LSJ s.v. 'contrario modo futuo'; Paton 1958-63:4.203: 'contrario in re fututus'. See also LSJ s.v. χέω II 5 and 6: 'effusus in Venerem'.} \]

\[68 \text{Cf. AP 9.441 (on a statue of Heracles); cf. Luck 1958:459-61; Bowra 1959:258-61; 9.773 and AP 16.194 (on Eros transformed into a frying-pan); AP 16.207 (on a statue of Είνας); 9.180-83 (on Tyche); cf. Bowra 1959:258.} \]

\[65 \text{Luck 1958:461 is incorrect in stating that Zeus was ‘actually a murderer’.} \]
view of Dike and Zeus’s administration of justice, where divine punishment is visited even upon the sons of wrong-doers.\textsuperscript{70}

The other example mocks Zeus for not being the lover he is made out to be:

\begin{verbatim}
νῶν καταγγυνώσκω καὶ τοῦ Διὸς ὡς ἀνεράστος,
μὴ μεταβαλλομένου τῆς σοφαρᾶς ἐνεκα.
οὔτε γὰρ Εὐρώπης, οὐ τῆς Δανάης περὶ κάλλος
οὔτ' ἀπαλῆς Αἴδης ἐστ' ἀπολείπομένη.
εἶ μὴ τᾶς πόρνας παραπέμπεται· οἶδα γὰρ αὐτῶν
τῶν βασιλευουσῶν παρθενικῶν φθορέα.
\end{verbatim}

Now I accuse even Zeus as a lousy lover,
for not metamorphosing for this courtesan.
For she is not left behind in beauty by Europa
or Danae or delicate Leda.
But perhaps he dismisses prostitutes, for I know
that he was a corrupter of virgin princesses.
\textit{(AP 5.257)}

Grouped in the Palatine Anthology under ‘amatory epigrams’, this epigram attacks Zeus’s fabled amatory abilities, since he has not targeted the (unnamed) 
\textit{hetaira} mentioned in the poem. Although she is a prostitute, she rivals in beauty some of Zeus’s other conquests (Europa, Danae, Leda). The explanation must be that he prefers royal maidens.

The epigram creates a mini-trial of the supreme deity (νῶν καταγγυνώσκω): Zeus is accused of not altering his shape and making love to this particular girl. The term applied to Zeus, ἀνεράστος, is rare in Classical Greek. The basic meaning is ‘without love’, either in the active sense (‘unloving’) or passive (‘unloved’).\textsuperscript{71} The active meaning seems appropriate in this context, although it is negated by the list of Zeus’s conquests. As part of the criminal offence, the word is used in an extended sense of being a bad or even cruel lover. The word σοφαρᾶς used for the girl is very rare, perhaps an attempt to enhance her qualities.\textsuperscript{72} Next, Zeus’s famous seductions are listed as evidence against him: this girl is not less attractive than Europa, Danae and Leda. The verdict is then given: Zeus rejects prostitutes (this time the more common word πόρνας) and instead deprives virgin princesses of their virginity. The last word, φθορέα, is the final judgement: Zeus is a corrupter of royal

\textsuperscript{70} Solon, Fr. 13.17-32.
\textsuperscript{71} Cf. LSJ \textit{s.v.}
\textsuperscript{72} LSJ \textit{s.v.}
maidens. In former times such an indictment of Zeus would have amounted to serious hubris.\textsuperscript{73}

Conclusions

Along with imitation and variation, innovation was a driving force in Hellenistic poetics. One would expect Palladas, like his distant predecessors, to have followed suit. The above discussion clearly demonstrates that Palladas was no mere \textit{versificator insulsissimus}.\textsuperscript{74} He exhibits a mastery of the epigrammatic form, innovative use of language, and a capacity for what seems to us to be independent and individual thought.\textsuperscript{75} \textit{Psogos} is by his own admission an integral part of his personality and poetry. In the epigrams discussed above, his invective ranges from mild disapproval of being wronged or cheated (\textit{AP} 11.351; 9.486, 487; 11.293, 387, 371; 7.607), to specific criticism (10.99; 11.204, 255, 280, 292), to violent attacks (7.683; 11.283, 285, 284), and even allegations against Zeus (10.53; 5.257). In these epigrams we encounter all the stylistic skills of the accomplished poet: a highly personal voice,\textsuperscript{76} a passionate and yet detached attitude,\textsuperscript{77} unusual and seemingly unique use of language (rare words and \textit{dipaia xegamma}), various registers of language (epic, poetic, prosaic, colloquial), dramatisation (narrative and dialogue), antithesis, analogy (myth, simile and metaphor), irony, wit, humour, punning, oxymoron, idiomatic expressions, paradox, repetition, variation, onomatopoeia and learned reference.\textsuperscript{78} The one-sidedness or negativity of his invective has led some to consider him less of a poet,\textsuperscript{79} but this is a preconceived expectation rather than a valid critical

\textsuperscript{73} Peek 1965:161 doubted the ascription to Palladas.
\textsuperscript{74} Casaubon, quoted by Luck 1958:455.
\textsuperscript{75} Luck 1958:456 acknowledges his literary craftsmanship, competence in handling the epigram, imagination and ‘feeling for felicitous sound values’, even if we find his pessimism shallow and his invective eccentric. Earlier (455) Luck points out that Palladas is ‘one of the least known poets of the Greek Anthology’ and that critics are still not agreed on his stature as a poet.
\textsuperscript{76} Thus also Bowra 1959:255.
\textsuperscript{77} Thus also 1959:256-57.
\textsuperscript{78} Peek 1965:166-67, while noting Palladas’s predilection for punning, idiomatic expression and \textit{gnomai}, regards the occurrence of metaphor, metonymy, paronomasia, anaphora, antithesis and parallelism as the common ‘Gut’ of epigram, rather than characteristic of Palladas, and suggests further research.
\textsuperscript{79} Luck 1958:467 finds his invectives ‘not balanced by a sense of values which recognizes the good and the beautiful next to the corrupt and the ridiculous in human life. We can only agree with his own statement that his satirical temper is a ‘disease’, perhaps we should say, a form of neurosis.’ He goes on to compare
criterion: there is no literary reason why a poet or any other writer should present a 'balanced' morality in his/her work. Many works, and in particular satire or invective, can be cited as exploring only or mainly the less noble side of human nature. In fact, many of his epigrams that are not invective present more positive aspects: contentment with one's lot (AP 9.49, 134, 172; 10.51, 86, 97); the enjoyment of life (AP 10.47, 77; 11.54, 55, 62); a simple diet (AP 9.37) as opposed to over-indulgence (AP 10.54), the value of silence (AP 10.46, 98), especially in mourning (10.47), as well as general truths and practical advice about ordinary living. If judged within the limits of the texts as we have them, he emerges as a very effective satirical poet who has moved the boundaries of the epigram.

Bibliography

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Palladas's satire to the distorting mirrors at carnivals, and concludes: 'his eloquence is, indeed, the eloquence of the manager of a freak show.'


hendersonwjl@iburst.co.za
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