
The author offers her own reading of _oútoς ὁ σιγαρνής_ (‘this silent sprout’) for the so discussed text _τότος σοιεγαρνής_ ( _AP_ 12.139 = Cali. _Epigr._ 44 Pf.). The _hapax σιγαρνής_ (<ὁ σιγα-ερνής) is a quite good Greek apppellative for a person, who seems gentle and friendly, but appears to be dangerous like “still water” or “tranquil stream, quiet river” (cf. _AP_ 12.139.4: ἡσύχιος ποταμός). The proposal _oútoς ὃς εἰ γ’ ἀρνής_, given by Heather White and Giuseppe Giangrande in _Habis_ 27 (1996) 41-43 and 28 (1997) 27-28, is unnecessary and not motivated.

The text of Callimachus' epigram 44 Pf. runs as follows:

> Ἔστι τι πρὸ τοῦ Πᾶνα κεκρυμμένοι, ἔστι τι ταύτη ναὶ μὰ Διώνυσον πῦρ ὑπὸ τῇ σποδῇ.
> οὔ θαρσέως μή δῇ με περίπλεκε: πολλάκις λήθει
toίχου ὑποτρύγων ἡσύχιος ποταμός.
> Τῷ καὶ νῦν δειδοκα, Μενεξενε, μή με παρεισδύς
> ούτος ὁ σειεγαρνής τεὶς τῶν ἔρωτα βάλη.

_6 οὐτοσοσειεγαρνήν_ codex Palatinus : _oútoς o σο’εὶ γ’ ἀρνής_ Saumaise, Anna Fabri : _oútoς ὁ σιγάρης_ Bentley : _oútoς ὁ σιγάρης_ (=ο σίγα ἐργαζόμενος)

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In an earlier issue of *Habis* Heather White and Giuseppe Giangrande suggest the following restoration of the original text (lines 5-6):  

Тώ кαι νῦν δείδοικα, Μενέξενε, μή με παρεισδύς
οὕτος ὦς εἶ γ’ ἀρνήσο— εἰς τὸν ἐρωτά βάλῃ.

("So now I fear, Menexenus, lest this person that indeed (γε) is you—do you deny it?—might slip in and make me fall in love").

The suggested verbal form ἀρνήσο is an intrusive element, which is explained by the same authors in a separate paper, published also in *Habis* 28, as a dubitative subjunctive ("Do you perhaps deny it?"). This interpretation explains nothing and the traditional conjecture ὦτος ὀ σιγέρτης, proposed many decades ago by Richard Bentley, still appears to be ingenious. It refers to the Hesychian gloss σιγέρτης—λαθροδάκτης (liter. “biting secretly”) and it fits in well enough with the sense. This is why Bentley’s emendation has been accepted by many editors, commentators and translators of the poetry by Callimachus.

W. R. Paton gives the following English translation of the Callimachean epigram in question:

“There is, I swear it by Pan, yea, by Dionysus, there is some fire hidden here under the embers. I mistrust me. Embrace me not, I entreat thee. Often a tranquil stream secretly eats away a wall at its base. Therefore now too I fear, Menexenus, lest this silent crawler find his way into me and cast me into love”.

According to Miroslav Marcovich, the Callimachean epigram illustrates the following situation. Menexenus, a friend, comes to introduce a quiet, innocent

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2 J. Ferguson, “The Epigrams of Callimachus”, *G&R* 17 (1970) 64-80, translates “this Alsatian” and adds the following explanation (p. 72): “σιγέρτης is Bentley’s suggestion: it means a hound which cannot be trusted. Here we have three principal images: the fire beneath the ashes, the river eating at the wall, the treacherous hound”. Also F. Bredau, *De Callimaco verborum inventore* (Vratislaviae 1892) 37, follows Bentley: “Hesychius vocem αλυγέρτης commemorat, quam explicat verbo λαθροδάκτης de ipsis canibus adhibet, qui clam subrepentes mordent (ληθαργός κόως, ὁ προστατῶς μὲν, λάθρα δὲ δάκων)”.
CALLIMACHEAN Ο ΣΙΓΑΡΨΗΣ

young boy to Callimachus. The boy embraces the poet while greeting him. But Callimachus, apparently overwhelmed by the beauty of the boy, reacts in a strange way: “Embrace me not, since I have no confidence in myself”. Then he explains his behaviour to the present friend Menexenus, by adducing the example of the proverbial and therefore dangerous river, and by applying it to the present situation (τῷ καί νῦν). The Alexandrian poet concludes: “So now too I fear, Menexenus, lest this dangerous person (Gk. οὖτος ὁ ἔστειλα διαφθοράς) slip in and whelm me into love”. Thus it is obvious that the Greek term ἔστειλα διαφθοράς denotes such a dangerous person, who is called agua mansa in Spanish (cf. the well known proverbs del agua mansa me libre Dios and guárdate del agua mansa) and cicha woda (lit. ‘silent water’) in Polish.

In my opinion, no emendation is necessary and the reading of the codex Palatinus οὐτοσ ἔστειλα διαφθοράς (or better οὖτος ὁ σιγαρητής) should be preserved. The word σιγαρητής is, in fact, a hapax legomenon which derives probably from the adverb σίγα “silently, quietly, secretly” and the well known noun ἐφόνος (n.) “young sprout, shoot”, thus it refers to “a plant which grows silently”, cf. εὐ-ἐρήμης adj. “sprouting well, flourishing”, δυσ-ἐρήμης “sprouting badly”. Callimachus used the term σιγαρητής evidently in reference to the person, who appears to be as dangerous as ἕσθικας ποταμός (= Sp. agua mansa, It. l’acqua cheta). In my earlier paper (written in Polish) I discussed the origin of the Polish proverb Cicha woda brzegi rwie (= E. Still waters run deep, G. Stille Wasser sind tief, Sp. más hondo el rio, hace menos ruido) and its numerous European variants (e.g. Italian l’acqua cheta rovina i ponti, Serbo-Croatian tihā voda brijeg ronči, French il n’est pire eau que l’eau qui dort, Modern Greek από σιγανό ποτάμι να φοβάσαι and so on), pointing not only to the Mediaeval Latin proverb Qui tacite currit fluvius sua litora solvit, but also to an Ancient Greek proverbial sentence πολλάκις λήθει τόιχον υποτρώγων ἕσθικας ποταμός (‘oft-times a quiet river undermines the wall unmarked’) introduced by Callimachus to the amatory epigram in question. It may be easily demonstrated that the Ancient Greek phrase ἕσθικας ποταμός (lit. ‘a quiet river’) requires personal reference, exactly like Spanish agua mansa, Italian l’acqua cheta, German stilles Wasser, SC. tihā voda, Polish cicha woda, Modern Greek τό σιγανό ποτάμι, etc., and it refers to a living object of love.

5 The Greek sentence πολλάκις λήθει τόιχον υποτρώγων ἕσθικας ποταμός, repeated by Callimachus of Cyrene, is an ancient source for the Spanish proverb agua que corre silenciosamente, agua peligrosa and its numerous European variants, see E. Kaczyńska, “Cicha woda brzegi rwie. Epigramat Kallimachos (44 Pfeiffer = 9 Gow-Page) w swietle nowej interpretacji”, in Miscellanea Graeca et Neo'hellenica, edenda curavit Krzysztof Tomasz Witzczak (Łódź 1999) 7-21. Compare also two different Spanish proverbs: de agua mansa me libre Dios and más hondo el rio, hace menos ruido.


7 E. Kaczyńska, op. cit. 7-21.

8 Note that the English proverb may refer also to a person, cf. A. P. Cowie, R. Mackin and I. R. McCaig, Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms (Oxford 1993) 521: still water run deep - a quiet person can have much knowledge, cunning, strong emotions, etc. E.g.: “She’s never shown any sign of having a mind of her own before”. “Perhaps she’s never needed to. Still waters run deep”.

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The suggested semantics of ὅ σιγαρνής (< ὅ σιγα-ἐρνής ‘he who sprouts silently’) is confirmed by the exact derivational equivalent, which appears in the Polish language: the word ściąchapek ‘a quiet person who can have much knowledge, cunning, strong emotions; a seemingly quiet person who may be able to do an unexpected action or excess’ (liter. ‘he/she who sprouts silently’) derives from the adverb z cicha pek (literally ‘sprouting silently’). It is worth emphasizing that Pol. z cicha ‘silently, quietly’ corresponds securely with Gk. σίγα ‘id.’ and Pol. pąk / pek ‘bud; bunch (of flowers), bundle’ is related somehow or other to Gk. ἔρνης (n.) ‘young sprout, shoot’. In Polish two appellatives cicha woda (= Sp. agua mansa, Gk. ἱφόξιος ποταμός) and ściąchapek (= Gk. σίγαρνής), if they refer to a person, are frequently treated as two full synonyms. We cannot be sure, if the same or an analogous situation appears in Ancient Greek, but it seems highly probable on the basis of the Callimachean evidence, where both expressions ἱφόξιος ποταμός (l. 4) and οὗτος ὁ σιγαρνής (l. 6) correlate each other. Both agents, “a quiet river” (l. 4: ἱφόξιος ποταμός) and “this silent sprout” (l. 6: οὗτος ὁ σιγαρνής), have a similar metaphorical meaning and both produce the same result: a disastrous destruction (l. 4: τοῖχον ὑποτρώγων = l. 6: εἰς τὸν ἔρωτα βάλην).

The difficulties, which editors and commentators find in line 6 of the Callimachean epigram in question, disappear as soon as one realizes that the word σιγαρνής is a Greek compound containing two elements: the adverb σίγα ‘silently, quietly, secretly’ and the noun ἐρνης (n.) ‘young sprout, shoot’ and that it is semantically reflected by the Polish appellative ściąchapek (< z cicha + pąk / pek) ‘a seemingly quiet person who may be able to do an unexpected action or excess’ (literally ‘he who sprouts silently’).

It may be concluded that the reading οὗτος ὁς εἶ γ’ἀρνης, proposed by H. White and G. Giangrande in Habis 28, is hardly acceptable. What is more, the verbal form ἀρνης, explained by the same authors (ibid.), represents a modern invention which—in my opinion—is highly doubtful.

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10 Also a different reading οὗτος ὁ σεῦ γ’Ερμής, proposed by G. Giangrande, “Lesefrüchte”, RhMus. 101 (1958) 50-58, is not convincing.