

Isidorus IV: a literary Mischwesen

A. Connections with literary epigrams

- Isid. 4.18 ὡς οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν γράμμ' ἀναλεξάμενοι, cf. Call. *Epigr.* 23.4 Pf. (56 GP) ἐν τὸ περὶ ψυχῆς γράμμ' ἀναλεξάμενος
- Archimelus, *Supplementum Hellenisticum* 202 (*ap.* Athen. 5.209b–e), eds. H. Lloyd-Jones & P. Parsons (1983); see also Page 1981, 26-29; Olson 2017, 149-151.

τίς τόδε σέλμα πέλωρον ἐπὶ χθονὸς εἴσατο; ποῖος
κοίρανος ἀκαμάτοις πείσμασιν ἠγάγετο;
πῶς δὲ κατὰ δρυόχων ἐπάγη σανίς, ἢ τίνοι γόμφοι
τμηθέντες πελέκει τοῦτ' ἔκαμον τὸ κύτος,
ἢ κορυφαῖς Αἴτνας παρισούμενον ἢ τινι νάσων 5
ἄς Αἰγαῖον ὕδωρ Κυκλάδας ἐνδέδεται,
τοίχοις ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἰσοπλατές; ἢ ῥα Γίγαντες
τοῦτο πρὸς οὐρανίας ἔξεσαν ἀτραπιτούς.
ἄστρον γὰρ ψαύει καρχήσια καὶ τριελίκτους
θώρακας μεγάλων ἐντὸς ἔχει νεφέων. 10
πέισμασι δ' ἀγκύρας ἀπερείδεται οἷσιν Ἀβύδου
Ξέρξης καὶ Σηστοῦ δισσὸν ἔδησε πόρον.
μανύει στιβαρῶς κατ' ἐπωμίδος ἀρτιγάρρακτον
γράφμα. τίς ἐκ χέρσου τάνδ' ἐκύλισε τρόπιν·
φατὶ γὰρ ὡς Ἴέρων Ἰεροκλέος Ἑλλάδι πάσα 15
καὶ νάσοις καρπὸν πίονα δωροφορῶν,
Σικελίας σκαπτοῦχος ὁ Δωρικός. ἀλλά, Πόσειδον
σῶζε διὰ γλαυκῶν σέλμα τόδε ῥοθίων.

Who set (/released?) this immense ship on the earth? Which ruler had it hauled with untiring cables? How were the ribs fixed down the keelson? Or by what axe were the bolts cut that made this hold, as high as the peaks of Aetna or as broad between its two walls on either side as one of the Cycladic islands which the Aegean waters are bound around? Surely the Giants carved it against the background of the heavenly paths. For its masthead touches the stars and the crow's nests, coiled

thrice around it, are in the mighty clouds. It is fastened with anchor-cables like the ones that Xerxes secured the double bridge between Abydos and Sestos with. A newly carved inscription on its solid prow reveals who rolled out this vessel from dry land. It says: “Hieron, son of Hierocles, the Dorian sovereign of Sicily, bearing gifts of rich produce to all Hellas and the islands.” Poseidon, preserve this ship amid the silvergray waves!

Isid. 4

τίς τόδε ἄγνων ἔδειμ' ἱερὸν Ἑρμοῦθι μεγίστη;
ποῖος θεὸς ἐμνήσθη πανιεροῦ μακάρων;
Ἵς αἰπὺν καὶ ἄδυτον ἐσημηώσατ' Ὀλυμπον
Δηοῖ ὑψίστη Ἴσιδι θεσμοφόρῳ
καὶ Ἀγχόηι υἱῷ καὶ δαίμονι ἀγαθῷ Σοκονῶπ[ι] 5
ἀθανάτοις ὄρμον εὖρε δικαιοτάτον.
Αἰγύπτου τινά φασι γενέσθαι θεῖον ἄνακτα,
ὃς πάσης χώρας κύριος ἐξεφάνη
πλούσιον εὐσεβέα δυνάμει πάση τε μεγίστη[ι]
ὃς κλέος καὶ ἀρετὴν ἔσχεν ἰσουράνιον. 10
τούτῳ γὰρ καὶ γαῖα ὑπήκοος ἦν τε θάλασσα
καὶ ποταμῶν πάντων νάματα καλλιρρόων
καὶ πνοιαὶ ἀνέμων καὶ ἥλιος ὃς γλυκὴ φέγγος
ἀντέλλων φαίνει πᾶσιν ἀριπρεπέως.
καὶ πτηνῶν τε γένη ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἔκλυεν αὐτοῦ 15
καὶ τὰς ἐπιστέλλων πάντα ἐπήκοα ἦν.
Δῆλον τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ὅτι ὄρνεα ἔκλυεν αὐτοῦ
ὡς οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν γράμμ' ἀναλεξάμενοι
φάσκουσιν ποτε τοῦτον ἐπιστεῖλαντα κορώνην
σύν τε ἐπιστολίῳ ἦλθε φέρουσα φάσιν· 20
οὐ γὰρ ἔην βροτὸς ἀνὴρ οὐδ' ἐκ βροτοῦ ἦεν ἄνακ[τος]
ἀλλὰ θεοῦ μεγάλου ἔκγονος ἀενάου
Σούχου παγκράτορος μεγάλου μεγάλου τε μεγίστου
δαίμονος τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ υἱὸς ἄναξ ἐφάνη.
Μητροπάτωρ τούτου δ' ἐστὶν ζωῆς ὁ μερ[ιστής] 25
Ἄμμων ὃς καὶ Ζεὺς Ἑλλάδος ἠδ' Ἀσίας.
τοῦνεκα καὶ τῷ πάντα ἐπήκοα ὄσσο' ἐπὶ γαίῃ

έρπετὰ καὶ πτηνῶν οὐρανίων τε γένη.
οὔνομα δ' ἦν ποταπὸν τούτῳ; καὶ τίς τόδ' ἔθηκε
κοίρανος ἢ βασιλεὺς ἢ τίς ἀθανάτων; 30
ὁ θρέψας Σεσοῶσις ὃς οὐρανοῦ ἔσπερ' ἀφείκται
οὔνομ' ἔθηκε καλὸν ἡλίου εὐφεγγέος
Ἑρμηνευσάμενοι δ' Αἰγύπτιοι οὔνομα τούτου
Πορραμάνρη κλήζουσι τὸν μέγαν ἀθάνατον
θαῦμα δὲ καὶ παραδόξον ἐγὼν ἐσάκο[υ]σα παρ' ἄλλων 35
ὥς ἔπλει ἐν ὄρει ἄξοσι καὶ ἰστίῳι.
Ἀσφαλέως δὲ μαθῶν τε παρ' ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἱστορούντων
ταῦτα καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ πάντ' ἀναγραψάμενος
ἠρμήνησ' Ἑλλησι θεοῦ δύναμιν τε ἄνακτος
ὥς βρο[το]τὸς οὐδ' ἕτερος ἔσχεν ἴσην δύναμιν. 40

B. Connections with **paradoxography**

- Ps.Aristoteles, περὶ θαυμασίων ἀκουσμάτων (*On Marvelous Things Heard*)
- Antigonus, ἱστοριῶν παραδόξων συναγωγή (*Collection of Marvelous Investigations*)
- Callimachus, θαυμάτων τῶν εἰς ἅπασαν τὴν γῆν κατὰ τόπους ὄντων συναγωγή (*Collection of Marvels from Every Land Arranged According to Places*) and/or ἐκλογή τῶν παραδόξων (*Selection of Marvels*)

Antigonus, ἱστοριῶν παραδόξων συναγωγή (*Collection of Marvelous Investigations*) 129.1 =
Call. Fr. 407 Pf.

πεποιήται δὲ τινα καὶ ὁ Κυρηναῖος Καλλιμάχος ἐκλογὴν τῶν παραδόξων, ἧς ἀναγράφομεν
ὅσα ποτὲ ἡμῖν ἐφαίνετο εἶναι **ἀκοῆς ἄξια**. φησὶν Εὐδοξὸν **ἱστορεῖν**, ὅτι ἐν τῇ κατὰ Ἱερὸν ὄρος
θαλάττη τῆς Θράκης ἐπιπολάζει κατὰ τινὰς χρόνους ἄσφαλτος, ἡ δὲ κατὰ Χελιδονίας ὅτι ἐπὶ
πολὺν τόπον ἔχει γλυκείας πηγάς.

“Callimachus of Cyrene has also composed a collection of marvels, from which I have copied
as many as I considered to be worthy of hearing. He [sc. Callimachus] says that Eudoxus
reports that in the sea in the region of the Sacred Mountain in Thrace bitumen comes to the
surface at certain times, while the sea below the Chelidoniai [Islands] has springs of sweet
water over a large expanse”

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