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STUDIA CLASSICA

ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἰὼν κεν εὐροίς
ἔς Ὑπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυμαστὰν ὁδόν

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THE END OF THE *EPITYMBIA* SECTION IN THE MILAN PAPYRUS AND PAIRING OF EPIGRAMS IN POSIDIPPUS

Since the publication of the *P. Mil. Vogl.* VIII, 309 preserving a book of epigrams that can with a high degree of certainty be attributed to Posidippus, it has been noticed that among both the newly found epigrams and the previously known poems, adjacent pieces sometimes appear as a pair. Two such pairs have been studied by Dirk Obbink. The first is preserved on the Firmin-Didot papyrus (*P. Louvre* 7172) dating from before 161 BCE, discovered and first published in the XIXth century:¹ two epigrams specifically ascribed to Posidippus by the compiler and celebrating two remarkable seaside monuments of Ptolemaic Egypt: the first, *Ep.* 115 Austin–Bastianini = *Ep.* 11 Gow–Page, speaks of the lighthouse constructed by Sostratus of Cnidos, the second, *Ep.* 116 Austin–Bastianini = 12 Gow–Page, of the shrine of Arsinoe-Aphrodite set up by Callicrates of Samos. The epigrams are placed side by side;² they are of equal size (10 lines) and are thematically and compositionally interconnected, so that there is little doubt that their appearance together in the Firmin-Didot papyrus is not a matter of chance but reflects the compiler’s recognition of the connection existing between the two poems that he took over from an earlier collection where they appeared side by side.³ The second pair of epigrams studied

¹ The *editio princeps* of this papyrus appeared in Weil 1879, 28. The more recent editions of Posidippus’ two epigrams include Page 1941, I, 444–449, no. 104 a–b; Gow–Page 1965, I, 169–170, no. 11–12 and II, 489–492; Turner 1971, 82–83, no. 45 (with reproduction of the papyrus); Austin–Bastianini 2002, 142–145, no. 115–116.

² Cf. Obbink 2004a, 22: “Thus I argue that the epigrams are paired, both here on the papyrus in a manner of a mini-anthology, and in composition, as evidenced by the framing references to (i) Greekness and Sostratus at the beginning of AB 115 and (ii) Greekness and Callicrates at the end of AB 116. However, in this case the physical separation of the two monuments precludes that they were ever actually paired in an inscribed monumental context, for the two monuments in question were hundreds of miles apart. Rather, they must have originally been paired in a book”.

³ On the interests, personal motivation and concerns of the compiler of the personal mini-anthology that the Firmin-Didot papyrus preserves, see the detailed discussion by Thompson 1987, 112–116.

by Obbink appears in the Milan Papyrus (*P. Mil. Vogl.* VIII 309) in the section Τρόποι (*Ep.* 102 and 103 Austin–Bastianini): the epigrams contrast two dead men to the passerby’s interest or lack thereof; once again, the juxtaposed epigrams are of equal length (4 lines), and the recognition of their thematic and compositional links adds greatly to the appreciation of both pieces and the appraisal of the two speakers’ voices.⁴

Despite the fact that pairing of epigrams has drawn certain attention, Posidippus’ use of this technique as a literary and compositional device seems to be still understudied, even though the Milan papyrus manifestly offers further examples of this sort (e.g., *Ep.* 6 and 7 Austin–Bastianini, both describing the jewels of a certain Niconoe). Naturally, each such pair will demand careful examination and argumentation in order to prove that the epigrams were indeed intended as a pair. The aim of this article is to analyze epigrams at the end of the Ἐπιτύμβια section⁵ of the Milan papyrus, with special focus on *Ep.* 59 and 60, and to bring out the literary allusions which show that they were meant to be read together. It will be shown that acknowledging the presence of an archaic intertext in these epigrams helps to understand the arrangement of the pieces at the end of the Ἐπιτύμβια section and sheds light on its coherence as a whole.

The Ἐπιτύμβια section in the Milan papyrus is a large one, comprising twenty epigrams (*Ep.* 42–61 Austin–Bastianini) most of which celebrate women, and only three are dedicated to men: the centrally positioned *Ep.* 52 which describes the tombstone of a certain Timon bearing a statue of a maiden with a sundial, and the last two epigrams of the section which will be analyzed below (*Ep.* 60 and 61).⁶ Despite differences in sex, age, social standing, number of children, the motif that recurs through these twenty epigrams and binds them together, is the recognition of the deceased by his community and family.⁷ The first three epigrams of

⁴ Obbink 2004b, 293: “The first [dead man] is unfriendly and unwelcoming; Menoetius of Crete is portrayed through his speech as a misanthrope or δῦσκολος. The second is similarly critical of the passerby for ignoring him, and instead demands attention and sympathy. [...] The second is a more or less symmetrically balanced, perfect reversal of the first, an inverted variation on exactly the same theme”; cf. also Obbink 2005, 113.

⁵ The title of the section that comprises epigrams 42–61 of the Milan papyrus has not been preserved as such, and must therefore be reconstructed. The obvious title Ἐπιτύμβια has been suggested in the first edition of the papyrus (see Bastianini–Galazzi 2001, 157) and has been accepted by scholars and editors ever since (cf. most recently Petrović–Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 184).

⁶ On *Ep.* 52 and its central placement in the Ἐπιτύμβια section, see Gutzwiller 2005, 295–299.

⁷ Cf. Gutzwiller 2005, 294.

Ἐπιτύμβια (*Ep.* 42–44) have been distinguished as a separate group, as the women they celebrate all were initiates of mysteries.⁸ There have been similar, though less conclusive, attempts to discover coherence in the epigrams at the end of the section. As *Ep.* 58–61 are of equal length (6 verses each), it has been surmised that they are meant to be read as a group,⁹ alternatively, the fact that *Ep.* 60 and 61 present epitaphs for men, as opposed to the previous epigrams that had been dedicated to women, has led to view them as a distinct pair.¹⁰

Ep. 59 commemorates an old woman, Menestrate, who died at the age of eighty. Her epitaph is the last in the series of epitaphs for women in the section:¹¹

᾽Ολβια γηράσκουσα Μενεστράτη [- ∪ ∪ - ∪
 ὀγδοάτην ἐτέων εἶδες ὄλην [δεκάδα,
 καὶ δύο σοὶ γενεαὶ παίδων ἐπιτή[δεον ὄρθου
 σηκόν· ἔχεις ὀσίας ἐκ μακάρων χάρι[τας·
 γρηῦ φίλη, μετάδος λιπαροῦ μεγα[λοφρονέουσα
 γήρως τοῖς ἱερὸν σῆμα παρερ[χομένοις.

Blessedly growing old, Menestrate, (?) you saw the full eighth decade of years, and two generations of children have set up for you this appropriate burial-place. Indeed, you have received pious gifts from the blessed ones! Dear old woman, in your generosity share such splendid old age with all those who pass by your sacred tomb.

⁸ Thus, Dignas 2004, 179; cf. Gutzwiller 2005, 295.

⁹ Cf. Gauly 2005, 36: “Den Kern des Abschnittes bilden vor allem Grabepigramme auf junge Frauen und Mädchen, bevor die letzten vier Epigramme wieder die Erwartung thematisieren, nach dem Tod unter den Seligen zu weilen; zudem sprechen sie alle von dem Glück, ein hohes Alter in guter Gesundheit erreicht zu haben”.

¹⁰ Cf. M. di Nino 2010, 46 who notes of the defuncts of *Ep.* 60 and 61, “Mnesistrato e Aristippo sono, infatti, gli unici due individui di sesso maschile ricordati nella sezione, e i loro epitafi hanno tutta l’aria di essere intenzionalmente posti in clausola in una sorta di *climax* di autoreferenzialità”. For the gender-based distinction of the last two epigrams from the rest of the section, see Dignas 2004, 179 and Krevans 2005, 95 who saw a parallel to their being singled out in the arrangement of the Ἀναθηματικά. Gutzwiller 2005, 293 tried to reinforce the gender-based link by noting that both Mnesistratos and Aristippos lived fairly long lives and were survived by children. This is an overstatement: Mnesistratos only lived to sixty years, while Aristippos’ age is not mentioned at all, and as for children, they are mentioned in most epitaphs of the section, except, obviously, ones that commemorate girls who died before wedlock (49–51, 53–55).

¹¹ Cf. Zanetto–Pozzi–Rampichini 2008, 151: “L’epigramma 59 conclude circolarmente la lunga serie di *Epigrammi sepolcrali* dedicati a donne, riproponendo il tema della morte sopraggiunta in età avanzata con cui l’intera sezione si era aperta (cf. gli epigrammi 42 e 43)”.

Although the text of the epigram contains some minor lacunae, the overall structure is sufficiently well preserved for the proposed restitutions to be fairly certain.¹² Mnesistrate's age ὀγδοάτην ἑτέων εἶδες ὄλην [δεκάδα... is indicated in terms close to the wording of the previous epigram (*Ep.* 58), where Posidippus preferred to stress longevity of Protis' marriage rather than state her age, ἀλλ' ἐνιαυτ[ῶν / πέντε]ε φιληθείσας ἀνδρὶ συνῆν δεκά[δας] “but she lived with her husband for five decades of years, filled with love” (*Ep.* 58. 3–4). Despite the similarity in wording and the fact that *Ep.* 58 also bears six verses, epigrams 58 and 59 do not seem to be specifically matched: while the transition from the one to the other is smooth and even though the poems share a number of similar traits, the deceased women having lived to a ripe old age and having been blessed with children and grandchildren, these are points that are common to many of the epitaphs of the section. On the contrary, the relationship of *Ep.* 59 with the following epigram appears to be much more meaningful and complex.

Ep. 60 which ends the section of Ἐπιτύμβια is an epitaph of a jovial man, Mnesistratos, who died at the very onset of old age; the epitaph consists of three distiches, the same length that Menestrate's epitaph had:

Τοῦτ' ἐπαρασάμενος Μνησίστρατ[ος] ἄρτι κέλευθον
 τὴν ἀπὸ πυρκαϊῆς εἰς Ἀΐδεω κατέβη·
 “Μὴ κλαύσητέ με, τέκνα, φίλην δ' ἐπὶ πατρὶ κονίην
 ψ[υχρ]ῶι παππώϊως χῶσατ' ἐπ' ἐσχατιῆς·
 ἔξακον]ταέτης γὰρ ἀπ' ἠέρος οὐ βαρύγηρος
 ἔρχομ' ἐπ' ε]ὑσεβέων ἀλλ' ἔτι κούφος ἀνήρ”.

Having prayed the following prayer, Mnesistratos has only just descended down the road which leads from the pyre to Hades: “Do not weep for me,

¹² Most missing passages of this epigram are easy to fill: χάρι[τας in v. 4 and παρερ]χομένοις in v. 6 are the only possible restitutions of the text; there can be little doubt that the last word of v. 2 was δεκάδα (cf. *Ep.* 58. 4); in v. 3 the adjective ἐπιτήδεος must be reconstructed in the accusative (ἐπιτή[δεον... σηκόν), and the verb ὄρθουν is the natural choice for the end of the line. The participle μεγα[λοφρονέουσα was reconstructed for v. 5 by C. Austin to complement, both in idea and in expression, the imperative μετάδος; alternatively, μέγα πένθος ἔχουσιν was proposed by M. Gronewald. The only lacuna impossible to fill with certainty appears in the last two feet of the first verse. However, the syntactic structure of v. 1–2 and generic conventions of epitaphs suggest that the end of the v. 1 either referred to Menestrate's profession or else indicated her origins: thus, Austin and Bastianini proposed either ἐν συνερίθοις “among fellow-workers, helpmates” (approved by Bär in Petrovic–Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 240; cf. *ibid.* 238) or some form of ethnic, like Ἀδραμυτηνέ “from Adramyttion” that appears in Posidip. *Ep.* 105. 3.

children, but on your father, <already> cold, spread dear dust in our grandfathers' way, on the edge of his tomb; for at the age of sixty I leave this world (*literally*, 'the air') for the dwelling of the pious, a man not weighed down by old age, but still light".

Once again, the text demands minor restitutions: the end of the first verse which, as the next line shows, must have mentioned the road to Hades was reconstructed with support of an epigram by Hegesippus from the *Palatine Anthology*,¹³ more importantly for our argument, the papyrus is mutilated at the point where Mnesistratos' age was indicated (v. 5), but the reconstruction ἐξἄκον]ταέτης, proposed by Bastianini and Galazzi in the *editio princeps* of the Milan papyrus, is certain,¹⁴ as the context makes it clear that the number of years has to be placed at the very beginning of old age, for which sixty was a traditional boundary.¹⁵

It is the way the respective ages of Menestrata and Mnesistratos are indicated in *Ep.* 59 and 60 that, as we will argue, helps to notice that these epigrams as having been intentionally paired by the editor of the epigram collection (whether it was the poet himself or not), the other indicators being the fact that their names are sound-alikes and, obviously, the equal length of the two epitaphs. The indication of Mnesistratos' age as ἐξἄκονταέτης would surely have reminded Posidippus' readers of Mimnermus' wish to die at sixty – the first, and an extremely well-known context, where this adjective appears. The adjective ἐξἄκονταέτης was particularly brought into light by Solon's subsequent modification (Diog. Laert. 1. 60–61 Dorandi):¹⁶

¹³ Τὴν ἐπὶ πυρκαϊῆς ἐνδέξιά φασι κέλευθον / Ἑρμῆν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς εἰς Ῥαδάμανθον ἄγειν, "it is said that Hermes leads the just to Rhadamanthus by the path that lies to the right of the pyre" (*Anth. Pal.* 7. 545. 1–2); Hegesippus' wording is indeed very similar to the remnant parts of Posidippus' distich, and this parallel renders the restitution of κέλευθον in Posidip. *Ep.* 60. 1 fairly secure; there have been several proposals as concerns filling the lacuna before κέλευθον: the most popular options are adverb ἄρτι (thus, Bastianini–Galazzi 2001, 183 who note that ἄρτι is only one among many possibilities; cf. Austin–Bastianini 2002, 82) or the verb ἦλθε (thus, Bär 2013; cf. *idem* in Petrovic–Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 241).

¹⁴ The reconstruction ἐξἄκον]ταέτης is accepted by other editors of the text: cf. Austin–Bastianini 2002, 82; Zanetto–Pozzi–Rampichini 2008, 36 and 152, Bär in Petrovic–Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 241 and 242.

¹⁵ Cf. Strab. 10. 5. 6 (citing Menander fr. 797), Herond. 10. 1; cf. Bär in Petrovic–Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 242. For an overview of Greek theories on the stages of life, see Binder–Saiko 1999, 1210.

¹⁶ We have reproduced the text of the latest edition of Diogenes Laertius by Tiziano Dorandi 2013, 102, even though the text of the poetic fragments (in particular, Solon's) is under discussion: see Noussia–Fantuzzi 2010, 402–404.

Φασὶ δ' αὐτὸν καὶ Μιμνέρμου γράψαντος,
 αἶ γὰρ ἄτερ νόσων τε καὶ ἀργαλέων μελεδωνέων
 ἐξηκονταέτη μοῖρα κίχοι θανάτου,
 ἐπιτιμῶντα αὐτῷ εἰπεῖν·
 ἄλλ' εἴ μοι κἄν νῦν ἔτι πείσειαι, ἔξελε τοῦτο
 (μηδὲ μέγαίρ', ὅτι σέο λῶον ἐπεφρασάμην)
 καὶ μεταποίησον, Λιγυαστάδῃ, ὧδε δ' ἄειδε·
 “ὀγδωκονταέτη μοῖρα κίχοι θανάτου”.

They also say that, in answer to Mimnermus' having written, “Would that, without illness or grievous cares, my fated death would overtake me at the age of sixty” (Mimn. fr. 6 West), [Solon] said, correcting him respectfully: “But, should you trust me even now, remove that – and do not begrudge me having discovered a better thought – and modify, o Ligyastades [literally ‘clear-singing’], and sing thus: may my fated death overtake me at the age of eighty” (Sol. fr. 20 West).

It is worth noting that ἐξακονταέτης in Posidippus (*Ep.* 60. 5) is placed at the beginning of a distich, in the exact position it occupied in Mimnermus' preserved couplet. More subtly, the periphrastic indication of Menestrates' age as “completed eighth decade” would have probably suggested the association with the calculation of the stages of an ordinary human life by ten hebdomads in Solon (fr. 27 West), as well as his suggestion that Mimnermus should modify his verse so as to posit the age of eighty as the right moment to die (Sol. fr. 20. 4 West).

The allusion to Mimnermus' and Solon's poetic debate on the best age to die is, in fact, supported by other associations with the two poets that the two epitaphs contain. Associations with Solon in *Ep.* 59 are more evident (the reason will be discussed below) and thus easier to grasp.¹⁷ Thus, the description of Menestrates' long and happy old age (ὄλβια γηράσκουσα, v. 1) obviously echoes the importance of ὄλβος both for Solon's poetry and thought,¹⁸ as well as his idea of the value of aging well and actively (γηράσκω δ' αἰεὶ πολλὰ διδασκόμενος, Sol. fr. 18 West; cf. Plut. *Sol.* 29. 4). The fact that Menestrates was honored by two generations of children who set up her tomb rhymes with

¹⁷ Cf. Gutzwiller 2005, 295 who sees in epigrams 60 and 61 “a Hellenistic version of Solon's story about the Athenian Tellus (Hdt. 1. 30)”.

¹⁸ For ὄλβος in Solon's poetry, see fr. 13. 3; 23. 1; for ὄλβος in the tradition of Solon the Sage, see Hdt. 1. 30–32, Plut. *Sol.* 27. 4. For the discussion of what ὄλβος meant for Solon, see Noussia-Fantuzzi 2010, 144–145, with references to earlier research; for the presentation of Solon's ideas on ὄλβος in Herodotus' *Histories*, see Shapiro 1996.

the story of the Athenian Tellus as told by Solon to Croesus in Herodotus' *Histories* (Hdt. 1. 30). In *Ep.* 60, on the other hand, the evidence for deliberate association with Mimnermus, other than the highly recognizable ἔξακον]ταέτης, is less direct, or at least less easily recognized (this may in part be due to the fact that Mimnermus' poetry is less well preserved than Solon's). However, Mnesistratos' injunction to his children to shed no tears over him bears strong resemblance to a viewpoint that has been reconstructed for Mimnermus from a summary in Plutarch (*Comp. Sol. et Publ.* 1. 5):

Ἔτι τοίνυν, οἷς πρὸς Μίμνερμον ἀντειπὼν περὶ χρόνου ζωῆς
ἐπιπεφώνηκε,
Μηδέ μοι ἄκλαυστος θάνατος μόλοι, ἀλλὰ φίλοισι
ποιήσαιμι θανῶν ἄλγεα καὶ στοναχάς,
εὐδαίμονα τὸν Ποπλικόλαν ἄνδρα ποιεῖ.

Furthermore, the very words uttered by Solon in his response to Mimnermus on the duration of life, "Nor let my death come without tears, but in my friends let my passing away produce grief and lament" (Sol. fr. 21 West), show that Publicola was a happy man.

Most editors place this quotation right after Solon's answer to Mimnermus on old age,¹⁹ and it has been surmised that Plutarch's wording suggests that Solon's desire to be celebrated by his friends' tears, pain and laments may also have been expressed in opposition to a wish of an easy departure without pain for the loved ones that had been formulated by Mimnermus.²⁰ Returning to Posidippus and the comparison of *Ep.* 59 and 60, the assumption that μὴ κλαύσητέ με, τέκνα might be associated with Mimnermus' views on death, may seem speculative: however, it is worth noting that a contrast of this kind between a death decried by friends and loved ones and a death which leaves the family with good memories, rather than tears, is implied by the reconstruction proposed by Michael Gronewald²¹ for the end of *Ep.* 59. 5 μέγα πένθος ἔχουσιν which would oppose the grief of all grieving for Menestrates to Mnesistratos' express wish to escape lament. Finally, the contrast between

¹⁹ They appear as fr. 20 and 21 in West's edition, as fr. 26 and 27 in the editions of Gentili-Prato and of Noussia-Fantuzzi.

²⁰ On this suggestion, see the clear and succinct summary of the discussion in Allen 1993, 65–66.

²¹ Cf. Gronewald 2003, 66; his reconstruction of the end of the hexameter has recently been defended by Bär in Petrovic-Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 239 and 240.

the physical lightness of a man such as Mnesistratos (οὐ βαρύγηρος... ἀλλ' ἔτι κοῦφος ἄνηρ), who died at the right moment, and the heaviness that normally accompanies an old man, although not directly attested in Mimnermus, would not be out of place in his poetry. If these associations may be difficult to prove, it should be stressed once more that they must be viewed against the indication of Mnesistratos' age as ἐξακονταέτης: thanks to Solon, the adjective was one of those intrinsically connected to Mimnermus; had Posidippus simply wished to state Mnesistratos' age, he had any number of alternative expressions at his use.

It can thus be argued that the epigrams 59 and 60 comprising an equal number of verses and bearing on two defuncts whose age and circumstances of passing away evoke the archaic poetic debate between Solon and Mimnermus actually reflect an intentional pairing by Posidippus (or an editor of the collection of epigrams preserved on the Milan papyrus).²² Given that Mimn. fr. 6 West and Sol. fr. 20 West were transmitted together as parts of a single biographical anecdote, Posidippus' contrasting of death in highly advanced old age and death at the very onset of old age in juxtaposed epigrams *Ep.* 59 and 60 would have been perceived by Posidippus' readers as an allusion at the two elegists' debate on the best age to die, or, to put it differently, as two 'case-studies', illustrating the opposed points of view on aging. In that case the last epigram of the Ἐπιτύμβια section, also comprising six lines, may be read as Posidippus' own take on the subject (*Ep.* 61 Austin-Bastianini):²³

ἴσχε πόδας παρὰ σῆμα, τὸν εὐγηρῶ τε προσεῖπον
 πρέσβυν Ἀρίστιππον – τῆιδε γάρ ἐστι θανάων –
 καὶ τὸν ἀδάκρυτον βλέψον λίθον· οὗτος ἐκεῖναι
 τῶι κατὰ γῆς ὁ λίθος κοῦφον ἔπεστι βάρος·
 τέκνα γὰρ αὐτὸν ἔθαπτε φιλαίτατον ἀνδρὶ γέροντι
 κτῆμ', ὁ δὲ θυγατέρων εἶδε καὶ ἄλλο γένος.

²² The question of whether the epigram collection was arranged by Posidippus himself or by a separate editor is not easy to answer with certainty – cf. Seidensticker–Stähli–Wessels 2015, 15–16. Krevans 2005, especially 81–82, takes the more prudent approach of using the term “editor” while admitting that the editor might have been the poet himself. The question obviously has important implications for the composition of the collection: as Seidensticker, Stähli and Wessels note, “sollte Poseidipp die Sammlung konzipiert haben, könnte er natürlich einzelne Epigramme oder auch ganze Sektionen eigens dafür geschrieben haben” (Seidensticker–Stähli–Wessels 2015, 16 n. 50).

²³ The programmatic value of *Ep.* 60 and 61 has been noted by di Nino 2010, 46.

Check your steps at this tomb, and address the elderly Aristippos in his blooming old age – for this is where he lies dead – and look at the stone that no tears have washed; this stone is a light weight on him who lies underground. For <his own> children buried him – and no possession can be dearer than that to an old man – and he had seen <not only them, but also> a second generation born from his daughters.

This epigram bears unmistakable thematic and lexical links to both preceding pieces (*Ep.* 59 and 60). Just as Menestrates, Aristippos was blessed with children and grandchildren, and their love for him is manifest in their caring for his tomb; and while the adjective εὐγηρως that describes his sense of fulfilment in old age, may be less emphatic than the participial construction that had been used for Menestrates, ὄλβια γηράσκουσα (*Ep.* 59. 1), it seems to carry nevertheless Solonian associations, not only in its general idea, but also in its expression²⁴ – suffice it to think of the sequence of compound epithets with εὐ- and ἀ- in the description of a blessed life in Solon's dialogue with Croesus (*Hdt.* 1. 32. 6–7):

ταῦτα δὲ ἢ εὐτυχίη οἱ ἀπερύκει, ἄπῆρος δὲ ἐστὶ, ἄνουσος, ἀπαθῆς
κακῶν, εὐπαις, εὐειδής· εἰ δὲ πρὸς τούτοισι ἔτι τελευτήσῃ τὸν βίον
εὖ, οὗτος ἐκεῖνος τὸν σὺ ζητέεις, <ὄ> ὄλβιος κεκλησθαι ἄξιός ἐστι...

but good fortune guards [the fortunate man] from these (i.e. calamity and desire), and he lives unmaimed, knowing no sickness or evil, but blessed with children and fair to see; should such a man furthermore end his life well, he is the man that you are searching for, the one who is worthy to be called blessed.

On the other hand, Aristippos' passing away did not leave his family in distress (ἀδάκρυτον... λίθον), so that their reaction echoes Mnesistratos' admonition to his children in *Ep.* 60. 3 (μὴ κλαύσητέ με, τέκνα...); the adjective ἀδάκρυτος is emphasized by its position in the verse, which brings out its paradoxical usage in the most positive sense – Aristippos has children and grandchildren who buried him and care for his tomb, but his death was associated only with sadness and love, not acute grief; at the same time, the importance of Aristippos' having been buried by his own

²⁴ Bär in Petrovic–Seidensticker *et al.* 2015, 245 notes that εὐγηρως recurs regularly in Hellenistic and later epigrams. From the point of view of Posidippus, it is perhaps more important that εὐγηρως is attested in Callimachus (*Ep.* 40. 6 Pfeiffer = *Ep.* 48. 6 Gow–Page), and that the exact meaning of the notion of εὐγηρία had been explained by Aristotle: εὐγηρία δ' ἐστὶ βραδυτῆς γῆρως μετ' ἀλυσίας (*Aristot. Rhet.* 1361 b 26).

children is presented emphatically in the form of a maxim.²⁵ On the lexical level, the lightness of Aristippos' tombstone, described by the oxymoron κοῦφον... βάρος (*Ep.* 61. 4) would obviously remind Posidippus' reader of Mnesistratos' physical and spiritual lightness at the moment of his death (οὐ βαρύγηρος... ἀλλ' ἔτι κοῦφος ἄνηρ, *Ep.* 60. 5–6).

At the same time, there is no mention of Aristippos' age at the moment of his death, which seems to reflect Posidippus' approach to Mimnermus' and Solon's poetic debate on the optimal lifespan. By omitting the number, Posidippus was able to reconcile Mimnermus' and Solon's positions, focusing solely on the points he deemed essential for happiness: at whatever age one's life ends, a good end will include being loved and cared for by one's children and grandchildren and leaving behind good memories rather than tears. We cannot, of course, exclude the possibility that *Ep.* 61 was an actual epitaph, but its placement at the end of the Ἐπιτύμβια section and the allusions connecting it with epigrams 59 and 60, suggest that it was a piece carefully chosen (if not actually written) to present and highlight by contrast Posidippus' idea of what distinguishes a life that can be called happy; viewed in this light, the name of the defunct celebrated by *Ep.* 61, Ἀρίστιππος, may well be a *nomen loquens*. Finally, it should also be noted that the life described in the epitaph for Aristippos was close to Posidippus' own views on aging and happy demise, as a comparison of *Ep.* 61 with the ending of the so-called "Seal of Posidippus" shows.²⁶ In this piece the epigrammatist speaks of the end he would wish for himself (*Ep.* 118. 24–28 Austin–Bastianini):

μηδέ τις οἶν χεῦαι δάκρυον· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ
γῆραί μυστικὸν οἶμον ἐπὶ Ῥαδάμανθυν ἰκοίμη
δήμωι καὶ λαῶι παντὶ ποθεινὸς ἔων,
ἀσκήπων ἐν ποσσὶ καὶ ὀρθοεπῆς ἀν' ὄμιλον
καὶ λείπων τέκνοις δῶμα καὶ ὄλβον ἐμόν.

Thus, let no one shed a <single> tear: but as for me, may I arrive in my old age to Rhadamanthys by the mystic path (*or* by the path of the initiates), longed for by citizens <of my city> and to all men, standing

²⁵ Cf. Gutzwiller 2005, 295: "We can further assert that Aristippos' tombstone with its emphasis on familial relationships, appropriately ends the epitaphic section by enunciating a kind of thematic motto: buried by one's children, it proclaims, is the dearest possession for an old man (φιλαίτατον ἀνδρὶ γέροντι κτῆμ', AB 61. 5–6)".

²⁶ This poem of 28 lines, preserved on two wax tablets from Egypt, was first published by Hermann Diels in 1898. For recent editions, see Lloyd-Jones 1963 (with a list of preceding editions on p. 75); Lloyd-Jones–Parsons 1983, 340–343; Austin–Bastianini 2002, 148–151; Zanetto–Pozzi–Rampichini 2008, 80–81, 215–217.

firmly on my feet, and speaking adroitly before the crowd, and leaving to my children my house and my wealth.

Resemblance in thought and wording is indeed striking.²⁷ The *sphragis* and *Ep.* 61 offer the same combination of elements that warrant a happy end of life: the promise of being accepted among the Blessed in the Underworld;²⁸ absence of tears at the funeral as sign of fond memories, not of oblivion and neglect, given the continuing love from one's fellow citizens; presence of children to whom the poet's house and wealth may be bequeathed. The *sphragis* stresses the poet's wish for good physical and mental state at the moment of passing away,²⁹ combining, as did *Ep.* 61, the best of Solon's and Mimnermus' positions on the right moment to die while avoiding the mention of age altogether.

The epigrams that conclude the Ἐπιτύμβια are thus centered around the motif of the happy life end that recurs through all the epitaphs of the section but, because of the intertextual links to Solon and Mimnermus in *Ep.* 59 and 60, is given a broader, more generalized treatment, expressive of Posidippus' views on life and aging. Of the four six-verse epigrams (*Ep.* 58–61) the epitaph of Protis is a fairly standard representative of the Ἐπιτύμβια section, whose principal role in the arrangement was to provide a smooth transition from the bulk of the section to the last on a woman, Menestrata (*Ep.* 59). The epitaphs 59 and 60 that provide contrasting depictions of a happy passing away, reminiscent of Solon's and Mimnermus' debate on aging on the other hand, seem to be meant to be read together. *Ep.* 59 pictures a life and death that are reminiscent of Solon's view of what a harmonious and happy end should be: Menestrata dies surrounded by numerous children and grandchildren that will see to her tomb and having reached the age of eighty in happiness. *Ep.* 60, on the

²⁷ Unsurprisingly, Posidippus' *sphragis* is regularly evoked in discussion of the Ἐπιτύμβια (especially, of the concluding epigrams): see Dignas 2004, 184–185; Gauly 2005, 35–36; di Nino 2010, 45–46.

²⁸ Writing before the discovery of the Milan papyrus, Lloyd-Jones 1963, 94 had suggested that in speaking of the μυστικός οἶμος ἐπὶ Ῥαδάμανθυν Posidippus may have been positioning himself as an initiate of the Muses. However, Dignas 2004, 185–186 was right to point out the importance of the Dionysiac mysteries in the Ἐπιτύμβια (especially the opening epigrams of the section), and it is likely that the μυστικός οἶμος may have alluded both to Posidippus' participation in actual mysteries, and to his poetic initiation; her conclusions have been widely accepted (cf. di Nino 2010, 21–27).

²⁹ See ἀσκήπων ἐν ποσσὶ καὶ ὀρθοεπῆς ἀν' ὄμιλον; for the discussion of the two elements of this antithesis, see Lloyd-Jones 1963, 94–95.

other hand, presents a lifeline that follows Mimnermus' view of a happy life that should end before the onset of the hardships of old age, both physical and mental (in Mnesistratos' case, he was granted death at the age of sixty, the lifespan Mimnermus coveted for himself). Because of the deliberate pairing of epigrams 59 and 60, they serve as a pivotal point in this group of epigrams that conclude the section comprising for the most part women's epitaphs: the Ἐπιτύμβια ends with a second epigram on a man, Aristippos, that "answers" both *Ep.* 59 and 60. Without specifying Aristippos' age at the moment of his death, Posidippus presents his end as happy, since he was granted a combination of the best points among those that had been required by Mimnermus and Solon; a comparison with *Ep.* 118. 24–25 shows that this corresponded to Posidippus' own views. The concluding epigrams of the Ἐπιτύμβια section (*Ep.* 59–61) thus engage with the famous poetic debate between two archaic elegists, and at the same time allow Posidippus to formulate his own position on the issue of εὐγηρία.

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The article analyses the concluding epigrams of the Ἐπιτύμβια section of the Milan papyrus (*P. Mil. Vogl.* VIII, 309) containing a collection of poems attributed to Posidippus of Pella. It is argued that *Ep.* 59 and 60 were intentionally paired by the poet and meant to be read together. The circumstances evoked in the epitaph of Menestrata (*Ep.* 59) show an old woman who lived a life close to Solon's ideal (Sol. fr. 27 and fr. 20 West), while the details of the epitaph of Mnesistratos (*Ep.* 60) present a jovial man who died at the age of sixty, at the very onset of old age, a fate that Mimnermus had coveted for himself (Mimn. fr. 6 West). *Ep.* 59 and 60 would seem then to illustrate the opposed positions on the best moment to die that were associated with Solon's debate with Mimnermus; once this intertextual link is recognized, the last epigram of the Ἐπιτύμβια section, epitaph of Aristippos (*Ep.* 61) can be read as Posidippus' own take on the question of what can be considered a happy old age (εὐγηρία).

Статья посвящена заключительным эпитафиям секции Ἐπιτύμβια Миланского папируса (*P. Mil. Vogl.* VIII, 309), сохранившего сборник эпитаграмм, принадлежащих с высокой степенью вероятности Посидиппу из Пеллы. В ней доказывается, что поэт намеренно представил *Ep.* 59 и 60 (Austin–Bastianini) как парные эпитаграммы, с расчетом, что они будут читаться вместе. Эпитафия Менестраты (*Ep.* 59) рисует портрет женщины, прожившей долгую и счастливую жизнь и дожившей до восьмидесяти лет в соответствии с пожеланием Солона Мимнерму (Sol. fr. 20 West). Напротив, эпитафия Мнесистрата (*Ep.* 60) представляет человека, ушедшего из жизни в шестьдесят лет, в самом начале старости и полном расцвете сил – судьба, о которой мечтал для себя Мимнерм (Mimn. fr. 6 West). Ввиду соседства этих эпитаграмм и литературной игры, которую они обнаруживают, представляется, что *Ep.* 59 и 60 призваны проиллюстрировать два подхода к вопросу о том, какой возраст лучший для ухода из жизни, соответствующие позициям Солона и Мимнерма. Признание данного интертекста в эпитаграммах *Ep.* 59 и 60 позволяет прочесть последнюю эпитафию секции, *Ep.* 61, как ответ Посидиппа своим предшественникам: оставляя в стороне вопрос о возрасте как несущественный, Посидипп выделяет те детали, которые делают старость и смерть Аристиппа действительно счастливыми. Предположение о том, что судьба Аристиппа близко соответствовала представлениям самого Посидиппа о наилучшем конце жизни, может быть подкреплено сравнением с заключительными стихами сфрагиды Посидиппа (*Ep.* 118, 24–28).