

ΕΠΕΝΙΚΤΟΣ

The text of the lead tablet of the fourth century before Christ from Phalasarna in western Crete (No. 9355, National Museum, Athens)¹ is for the most part nonsensical. Different kinds of nonsense appear, chiefly the following four.

- 1) The Ἐφέσια γράμματα, lines 6 ff.: ασκικατασκι,² etc.
- 2) Other barbaric groups of letters, line 3: πυξντναυαγαλις; lines 3 and 9: τετραγος, etc.
- 3) Greek words and phrases in no intelligible context, line 3: αιαι ἐγὼ δ' ἔλκει; line 8: μακάρων κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν αὐδάν, etc.
- 4) Greek words more or less corrupt, line 5: δαντων for βάντων or δράντων; line 7: κταδεσ[.]α εδαθη καταλμαξιτον for κατάδεσμα ἐδόθη (or δοθή) κατ' ἀμαξιτόν, etc.

To Group 4 belongs the last line (11), except its end (οὔτε πατῶ γῆι σίντορα πάντων α[---]), which belongs to Group 3. By altering three letters we obtain a good hexameter and the beginning of another:

οὔ με καταχρί[στω]ι δηλήσεται οὔτ' ἐπενίκτωι
οὔτε ποτῶι

οὔ με *scripsi*: ομε *tab.* (this is no alteration; cf. line 5 αυτο = αὐτοῦ, line 6 κηπο = κήπον). καταχρίστωι *suppl.* Ziebarth. δηλήσεται *cj.* S. Eitrem, *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Filologi*, 1922, p. 115: δηλησεται (hardly Arcadian) *tab.* ἐπενίκτωι *scripsi*: επηικτωι *tab.* ποτῶι *scripsi*: πατωι *tab.*

The last two emendations are supported by a parallel sentence in a Cnidian lead tablet of the second century before Christ:³

εἴ τι ἢ ἐμοὶ πεποίκει (!) φάρμ[ακον] ἢ ποτὸν ἢ κατάχριστον ἢ ἐπακτὸν [ἢ τιμι] ἡμῶν---.

As Ziebarth saw, *κατάχριστος* occurs only in these two texts.

Ἐπενικός is a legitimate, if unattested, verbal adjective from ἐν(ε)ικ-, the substitute for φέρω in some tenses; cf. *προσευεκτέον* Aristotle, *Magna moralia*, 1199 b 29;

¹ Edited by E. Ziebarth, *Gött. Nachrichten*, 1899, p. 129; R. Wünsch, *Rh. Mus.*, LV, 1900, p. 73; D. Levi, *Stud. Ital.*, II, 1922, p. 394; Chester C. McCown, *T.A.P.A.*, LIV, 1923, p. 132; M. Guarducci, *Inscr. Cret.*, II (1939), p. 223 (known to me from information kindly given by Mr. P. A. Clement; no copy seems to be available in England). For the epigraphical evidence one still depends on the inadequate reproduction in the first edition.

² For ασκικατασκι cf. *P. Mag.*, 7, 45; *P. Mich.*, III, 154, 12; for λιξ τετραξ cf. McCown, *loc. cit.*, p. 137.

³ *Griech. Dialekt-Inschriften*, III, i, 3545; *I.G.*, III, Part iii, Appendix (*Defixionum Tabellae*, ed. Wünsch), p. xii; Audollent, *Defix. Tab.*, no. 8.

συμπεριενεκτέον Socrates in Stobaeus, IV, xxv, 42 (Hense). Φερτός (σύμφερτος) is equally rare.

Cretan ἐπένικτος and Cnidian ἐπακτός are probably synonymous, characterizing a remedy as administered to the skin by being *applied* (as opposed to being *rubbed in*); cf. Theocritus, XI, lines 1 f., φάρμακον . . . οὐτ' ἐγχριστον . . . οὐτ' ἐπίπαστον; Hippocrates, *Hum.*, 5 (5, 484 L.), χρίμασιν ἐγχρίσμασιν ἐπιπλάστοισιν ἐπιπάστοισιν ἐπιδέτοισιν ἐπιθέτοισιν. But since neither ἐπιφέρω nor ἐπάγω is quoted from other pharmaceutical texts, it will be difficult to give a more precise explanation.⁴

The whole sentence is closely related to lines 227 f. of the Homeric hymn to Demeter, one of the few magical passages in early epic poetry:

θρέψω κοῦ μιν, ἔολπα, κακοφραδίησι τιθήνης
οὐτ' ἄρ' ἐπηλυσίη δηλήσεται οὐθ' ὑποτάμνον.

The inscription may depend on the hymn; more probably both depend on a hexametric charm similar to those of the Philinna Papyrus which I have just reconstructed in vol. LXII of the *Journal of Hellenic Studies*.

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⁴ The magical sense of ἐπάγω, ἐπαγωγή, etc., where daemons are the object, does not fit a pharmaceutical context. I agree, however, with H. J. Stukeley, *Class. Phil.*, XXXII, 1937, p. 35, note 18 that ἐπακτός in *Lex sacra Cyren.*, B 5, line 30 might be a spirit; cf. my *Epidaurische Hymnen* (1933), p. 139 and *Orph. H.*, 36 (37), 7 f. But I cannot explain *ικέσιος* in this connection.