

## FORGETFULNESS IN THE GOLDEN TABLETS OF MEMORY

With the publication in 1974 of an inscribed 'Orphic' gold leaf from Hipponium (Vibo Valentia) in Southern Italy,<sup>1</sup> and that in 1977 of another, now at Malibu, California,<sup>2</sup> we have a relatively extensive series of gold leaves from graves bearing brief instructions concerning the afterlife. Whether these are Orphic, Pythagorean or whatever, will not be in question here; but the relation between the different texts constitutes a problem interesting in itself, whose dispassionate exploration may also contribute to the eventual understanding of the religious background.

The new finds have served further to reinforce the distinction drawn by Zuntz<sup>3</sup> between the tablets from the elaborate tumuli at Thurii, which he calls Group A of the texts, and the remainder, which are found more widely (in Magna Graecia, Thessaly and Crete so far) and range in date from the end of the fifth to the third century B.C.<sup>4</sup> Zuntz calls these Group B: both the new finds firmly belong to this group. In what follows I shall leave Group A aside, in view of its great divergences from Group B, and concentrate on the internal relations of the latter.

There are now ten tablets in Group B: I shall refer to them by the sigla in the left-hand column, which are now standard:

H	Hipponium: c. 400	16 lines
P	Petelia: mid 4th cent.	14 lines
Ph	Pharsalus: c. 330	10 lines
M	Malibu, from Thessaly: c. 330	5 lines
K 1–6	Eleutherna, Crete: early/mid 3rd cent.	4 lines

The six tablets from Crete form a relatively homogeneous group, and M. L. West<sup>5</sup> has shown by ordinary methods of textual criticism how they relate to each other. Until the publication of M, the gap between them and the longer texts was considerable, but, as we shall see, this is narrowed in view of M's date, wording and extra material. Before M was known, some scholars, notably Merkelbach and Lloyd-Jones,<sup>6</sup> postulated that the long texts all derive from a single archetype, and

<sup>1</sup> See G. Foti and G. Pugliese Carratelli, 'Un Sepolcro di Hipponion e un nuovo testo orfico', *La Parola del Passato* 29 (1974), 91–126, who provide an enlarged photograph and reprint all the texts with which we are concerned, M excepted. There has been extensive discussion of the text: see M. Guarducci, *Epigraphica* 37 (1975), 19–24; M. Gigante, *PP* 30 (1975), 223–5; H. Lloyd-Jones, *ibid.* 225–6; Carratelli, *ibid.* 226–31; R. Merkelbach, *ZPE* 17 (1975), 8 f.; M. L. West, *ZPE* 18 (1975), 229–36; M. Marcovich, *ZPE* 23 (1976), 221–4; G. Zuntz, *Wiener Studien* 10 (1976), 129–51; Carratelli, *PP* 31 (1976), 458–66; G. Namia, *Vichiana* vi (1977), 288 f.; Guarducci, *Epigrafia Greca* iv (Rome, 1978), 258–70; J. Gil, *Cuadernos de Fil. Clás.* 14 (1978), 83 ff. (not seen); W. Luppe, *ZPE* 30 (1978), 23–6; C. Gallavotti, *Museum Criticum* 13–14 (1978–9), 337–59. For wider commentary on the religious background see S. G. Cole, *GRBS* 21 (1980), 223–38; her n. 1 gives further bibliography on this. Citations by name only refer to the articles mentioned above.

<sup>2</sup> Published by J. Breslin, Pasadena; cf. R. Merkelbach, *ZPE* 25 (1977), 276.

<sup>3</sup> *Persephone* (Oxford, 1971), 277 ff., where both series are discussed in detail with transcriptions and photographs.

<sup>4</sup> On the dating see Guarducci, *Epigrafia Greca* 258, 266 n. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Art. cit. 235 f.

<sup>6</sup> Art. cit. (n. 1).

West<sup>7</sup> went so far as to attempt to reconstruct it: for this he has been taken to task by Zuntz, Marcovich and Gallavotti, while Carratelli criticised the approach of West's predecessors.

While West himself gave no explanation of why such a reconstruction is necessary or desirable, his critics supply various reasons for rejecting the attempt. Carratelli<sup>8</sup> thinks that the prescriptions of the cult may have varied at different times and places, and that we should therefore respect the autonomy of divergent versions. Zuntz,<sup>9</sup> on the other hand, believes that the shortest versions are original, while the longer ones contain expansions by incompetent versifiers and interpolators. He finds the archetype in the youngest and briefest witnesses. I shall argue in detail, on more than *a priori* grounds, that this hypothesis is incorrect.

Scholars have also disagreed as to how corrupt the individual texts are. Whereas most do not hesitate to postulate corruption to account for some very odd wording and scansion, Gallavotti in particular defends the metrical schema of H and the end of Ph as studied and correct, where others have wished to restore ordinary hexameters. Is West justified in postulating a hexameter archetype? There is also the question of divergences in literary dialect between the several versions. The other long versions (P and Ph) are in Homeric diction, but H is in a mixture of this with Doric, the local dialect perhaps, with some horrible hybrid forms, e.g. κρένα (H 2). I shall assume, in view of the substantial traces of Ionic even in H, that West was right to postulate Ionic as the underlying dialect, and, in view of the fact that nearly all the lines in the long versions are, or very nearly are, hexameters, I shall also assume that West was right to make the metre accord with the epic diction; this will emerge in detail as we proceed. These assumptions, however, do not apply to the short texts.

In fact three separate questions must be asked:

- (a) Was there an archetype or archetypes?
- (b) If so, is there sufficient evidence to permit reconstruction?
- (c) What kind of archetype and transmission is involved?

It is this third question which has been overlooked, and only Carratelli<sup>10</sup> has indicated the possibility which I wish to explore: namely, that we may be dealing with memorised or oral texts, not written ones. In the Thurii lamellae (Group A in Zuntz) there are some pellucid examples of graphic corruption, caused by confusion of the forms of Greek capital letters: when the graver of A 3. 2 wrote ΔΜΟΝΕΣ ΑΜΟ for δαίμονες ἄλλοι he cannot have had the faintest understanding of what he was copying. This must result from the transcription of either a written master-text or another, equally diminutive, gold leaf. Although corruptions abound in Group B, there are none of this kind, except in the K texts. Instead, there are errors caused by anticipation of what is to follow, repetition of similar matter that has preceded, reproduction of the sounds without the sense, and the replacement of formulaic phrases by others of like meaning. The errors due to the process of writing the texts down are only such as might be expected in the execution of so delicate a scribal enterprise – mainly cases of simple haplography and dittography.

To explain the divergences we must also consider the contents of the various versions. The briefest of them, the K group, give two essential facts: that the deceased is thirsty and needs water from the spring on the right, by the cypress; and, in reply to questions about his origin, that he is the child of Earth and starry Heaven. M adds

<sup>7</sup> Art. cit. The attempt is approved by Guarducci, *Epigraphica* 37 cit. 20 n.

<sup>8</sup> *PP* 30 (1975), 228 f.

<sup>9</sup> *Persephone* 376–83, *WSt* cit. *passim*.

<sup>10</sup> Loc. cit. (n. 7).

only that the cypress is 'white' or 'shining',<sup>11</sup> and, at the end, that the deceased's race is of heaven. The earlier versions give *two* springs, of which that by the cypress is to be avoided, while the other is the pool of Memory (clearly one of the sets of initiates has been misdirected). The deceased is questioned by the guardians of the pool. He replies that he is the child of Earth and starry Heaven, and asks for water. Here Ph ends, but we must assume a happy outcome. H and P go on to assure him that the guardians will give him water, and he is promised blessing in the afterlife. We have to decide whether, with Zuntz, all this extra detail is interpolation, or whether it represents the original scope of the instructions, which is reduced in successive versions to the barest minimum possible. Carratelli<sup>12</sup> suggests that the scribes may have inserted various magical formulae and phrases, like those in the Thuri lamellae, which could come in any order and thus preclude the reconstruction of any archetype; but the additional lines are not magical but poetic formulae, and the text of the long versions is not a jumble of spells but a continuous narrative of the dead man's progress. Until M and K, the shortening of the text does not appreciably change its import; in the latter not only is there but one spring, but the request for water comes first, before the reply to the question about identity, which guarantees a favourable response. Even this is recognisably a transformation of the same scene. The two facts given by KM are surely the vital ones to enable the dead to carry out this same transaction, and it is easier to envisage progressive abbreviation of the text than any contrary process. Though it may seem too material a consideration, the gold on which it was inscribed was a precious metal, such as to encourage brevity.<sup>13</sup> Evidently the ideal was to put each hexameter on a separate line, but only H and P (for the first five lines) felt able to afford the resulting empty margins: the Hipponium leaf, c. 55 × 32 mm, represents a considerable investment. These are the arguments we can add to the *a priori* unlikelihood that the archetype is to be found in the youngest witnesses.

I must now go through the versions of the B texts, comparing them line by line, to show how the metre and diction, with peculiar mock-epic forms, Homeric epithets misused, repetitions and inconcinnities, is the product of memorisation, neither word for word nor excessively free, repaired and 'improved' from time to time, showing a half-educated grasp of the epic style, but with an underlying archetype. I base the texts of the separate lamellae given here not on any single authority but on a careful collation of the epigraphers' transcriptions with the published photographs. The analysis of these texts, and the attempt to establish the archetype, rests on three assumptions, as follows:

(a) We are dealing with a process of successive abbreviation. All lines in the different versions are to be included or accounted for if possible.

(b) The archetype of the long texts (HPPh) was in Homeric hexameters and scanned.

(c) The archetype of HPPh was in standard epic diction and made sense.

1 H1 Μναμοσύνας τόδε εριον, ἔπει ἄμ μέλλῃσι θανεῖσθαι

P12 [Μνημοσύ]νης τόδε [ ] θανείσθ[αι]

Carratelli gave θανεῖσθαι in the *editio princeps* of H, but Gallavotti points out that the final letter is clearly nu: this is visible on Carratelli's photograph. Gallavotti

<sup>11</sup> cf. Marcovich n. 1. Below I have translated 'ghostly', with both aspects in mind.

<sup>12</sup> Loc. cit. (n. 7).

<sup>13</sup> cf. Zuntz, art. cit. 130.

suggests that we have double  $\alpha\nu$ , but surely the nu can be by dittography of  $\alpha\nu$  within the same word.

P can probably be supplied from H. But the third word is highly problematic: the initial letter in H is certainly epsilon or sigma, but the damaged character in P looks like eta or nu.<sup>14</sup> Carratelli proposed  $\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$  'tomb', with a harsh synizesis, Luppe and Gallavotti  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho\iota\omicron\nu$  'wool', which is open to the same and other objections; J. Ebert ap. Luppe suggests  $\epsilon\rho\gamma\omicron\nu$ ; Marcovich (after West's  $\theta\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ ) suggests  $\sigma\rho\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ , which would be Laconian for 'leaf' (the graph would be bizarre and isolated in this text). There is a curious parallel, the only one between the two series, in a late outlier of the Group A texts, A5 = R line 3 (Rome, 3rd century A.D.):

*Μνημοσύνης τόδε δῶρον, αἰοίδιμον ἀνθρώποισιν.*

It is at least clear that the word was for some reason difficult and subject to replacement. Whatever it was, we can divine the line's function, and why it is present in only two versions: this, and the two lines following it in P, give instructions about what to do with the text, or state what the text itself is, or both. Their placing confirms their ancillary rôle in relation to the main text. While this line begins H, where its syntactical connexion with the next line is to say the least dubious, P has these lines at the end of the text, after the promise of water from the spring and rule amongst the heroes. West, by analogy with other magical texts, supplies the sense of the second line of P's rubric, *exempli gratia* but admirably:

2 P13 [ $\epsilon\nu$  πίνακι χρυσέῳ] τόδε γρα[ψάτω ἡδὲ φορεῖτω]

The last line in P runs up the right margin for lack of space, and contains a further reference to the fact of death:

3 P14 [  $\text{ἸΤΟΓΛΩΣΕΙΠΛΑ}$  σκότος ἀμφικαλύψας.

In all versions the main texts, in the second person, address the deceased, who is already in the underworld. These lines in the third person<sup>15</sup> must be preliminary instructions of lesser importance, which have been abbreviated in H, postponed in P, and omitted elsewhere.

4 H2  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  Ἀἰδαο δόμῳς εὐῆρέας· ἔστ' ἐπὶ δ<ε>ξιά κρένα  
 P1  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\rho\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  δ' Ἀἰδαο δόμῳν ἐπ' ἀριστερά κρήνην  
 Ph1  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\rho\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  Ἀἰδαο δόμοις ἐνδέξια κρήνην

Efforts to interpret  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  as a verb 'you will go' or as a preposition have been rather unconvincing, although either may be what the writer of H intended. Now the epithet  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\eta\rho\eta\varsigma$ , perfectly good in itself, is used only of oars in Homer, and nowhere of houses; but in sound it is close to  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\rho\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , and West and Lloyd-Jones both suggested that it might derive from the latter. In the absence of  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\rho\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  H has no main verb, and supplies  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota$ , making the line hypermetric; a further displeasing consequence is that the spring, and the cypress standing by it in the next line, all have to be put into the nominative, thereby wrecking the metre as we shall see. Marcovich rescues  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  as a preposition by supposing that a verb of motion is lost after the first half of the line, and  $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\rho\eta\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  before the second half of it, i.e. that H2 is conflated from two lines. This

<sup>14</sup> So Zuntz, *ibid.* 135 f., from personal reinspection.

<sup>15</sup> That this, and  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$  in H2, are not verbs in the second person, is affirmed by Zuntz, *ibid.* 135, 136; as far as the Ionic archetype is concerned, he must be right. But the Doric writer of H may have understood them thus; cf. Carratelli, *PP* 29 (1974), 112.

drastic remedy still requires the suppression of ἔστι. In fact the other two versions are quite satisfactory in this respect, and εἰς . . . εὐερέας is a misremembering (sound, but not sense) of εὐρήσεις. Zuntz remarks that the recollection that the halls of Hades might have the epithets ἡερόεις and εὐρώεις may also have influenced the formation.

The introduction of εἰς produced the accusative δόμους governed by it. The version of Ph has changed the case for a different reason. H and P indicate where the spring is by using ἐπί, but Ph misuses ἐνδέξια, properly ‘from left to right’, as if it meant ‘inside and to the right’, and has written δόμοις accordingly.

Clearly the deceased must not mistake the spring in the underworld. Zuntz puts the original spring to be avoided on the left, the ill-omened side, as in P, which has a correct epic form, in contrast to Ph. This accords with M and K, which only mention the spring on the right, by the cypress. But H now provides an equally correct epic form ἐπὶ δεξιά, and one can see why right should be changed to left, to put the ill-omened spring on that side, but not why left should be changed to right. It is distinctly odd that the water of Lethe should be on the right, but an observation of West suggests why this is so: there was originally only one spring, and it was on the right, as other parallels confirm.<sup>16</sup> The long texts added the second spring when they wished to discriminate between initiates and the ordinary dead. But it does not follow, as Zuntz argued, that the short texts (KM) themselves preserve the original arrangement, especially since M has confirmed the links of this group with the long texts. Just as P, confronted with the oddity, ‘remedied’ it by shifting the spring and cypress to the left of the stage (so West), so too KM may have ‘corrected’ it in an opposite fashion, by making the spring on the right by the cypress beneficial and abolishing the other.

- 5 H3 πὰρ δ’ αὐτὰν ἔστακυ(ῖ)α λευκὰ κυπάρισ(σ)ος  
 P2 πὰρ δ’ αὐτῇ λευκὴν ἑστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον  
 Ph2 πὰρ δ’ αὐτῇ λευκὴν ἑστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον

In H the omission of εὐρήσεις has led to the recasting of the line into the nominative, and this in turn to a reordering of the words to avoid a displeasing hiatus; but this has itself damaged the metre, since, if the final alpha of ἑστηκυῖα is indeed lengthened before the liquid of λευκή, as Gallavotti supposes, this is still likely to be a metrical solecism, since the lengthening is never found with this root in early epic. Moreover, to avoid another hiatus, αὐτῇ is altered to the accusative. The misrendering of εὐρήσεις has had drastic results, and the makeshift repairs do not conceal the damage.

There was clearly a tendency to make the spring and cypress nominative, as the setting, like a bizarre *locus amoenus*, for the life-or-death encounter to follow. This tendency also operated in the short texts, where the two lines are combined unmetrically thus:

- M2 κράνας αἰειρόω ἐπὶ δεξιά λευκὴ κυπάρισσος.  
 K1, 2, 4, 5.2 κράνας αἰειρόω ἐπὶ δεξιά, τῇ κυφάριζος.  
 K3, 6.2 κράνας αἰενάω ἐπὶ δεξιά, τῇ κυφάριζος.

K is more advanced than M, where the obscure syntax leaves in doubt whether ἐπὶ δεξιά goes with the spring or the cypress. K’s τῇ tidies this up, and was no doubt inspired by the last syllable of λευκή; even so the line barely scans as a hexameter. Whence derives αἰειρόω is unknown (conflation with line 9 of the archetype?); the variant in two copies of K, αἰενάω, is an ‘improvement’ to make the line scan.

<sup>16</sup> West, art. cit. 229n.

6 H4 ἔνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχὰι νεκῶν ψύχονται.

This line, in H only, is liable to omission on the grounds that the deceased need know only which spring to avoid, not why to avoid it (as is indicated by the old pun, compared by commentators to Aesch. *Prom.* 693 with schol.: its coolness brings the chill of death).<sup>17</sup> The verse is old and good, and was duly dropped.

7 H5 ταύτας τὰς κρίνας μεδὲ σχεδὸν ἐνγύθεν ἔλθεις.

P3 ταύτης τῆς κρίνης μηδὲ σχεδὸν ἐμπελάσειας.

Ph3 ταύτης τῆς κρίνης μηδὲ σχεδόθεν πελάσησθα.

The version of H, as Zuntz remarks, is pleonastic and unsatisfactory; the others must correspond more closely to the archetype (West postulates *σχεδὸν ἐμπελάσησθα*). H none the less tends to preserve the sounds, while substituting more common words.

8 H6 πρόσθεν δ' εὐρέσεις τὰς Μνημοσύνας ἀπὸ λίμνας

P4 εὐρήσεις δ' ἑτέραν, τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης

Ph4 πρόσσω δ' εὐρήσεις τὸ Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης

9 H7 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δ' ἐπύπερθεν ἔασι.

P5 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δ' ἐπίπροσθεν ἔασιν.

Ph5 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προ<ρέον>· φύλακες δ' ἐπύπερθεν ἔασιν.

The variants in P are highly suggestive of memorisation. It places *εὐρήσεις* first, perhaps by misplaced recollection of three lines above; but *ἑτέραν* is introduced to avoid the implication that this spring too is on the left. The innovation is betrayed by the nastiness of *ἑτέραν* juxtaposed with *ὕδωρ*, as West noted, but also by the presence in this word of the sole Atticism (or Dorism) in this text. But the scribe could not suppress the original *πρόσθεν*: it reappears in the next line, *ἐπίπροσθεν*, for the psilotic *ἐπύπερθεν* of the others. Ph5 reads *ΠΡΟΦΥΛΑΚΕΣΙΔ*; in Ph4 *τὸ* is a concession to prose usage. Here it is H which seems to conserve the archetype.

10 H8 [h]οι δέ σε εἰρέσσονται ἐν<ι> φρασὶ πενκαλίμαισι

11 H9 ὅτ<τ>ι δὲ ἐξερέεις Ἀΐδος σκότος †ὄλορέντος.

12 Ph6 οἱ δέ σ<ε> εἰρήσσονται ὅτι χρέος εἰσαφικάνεις.

At the start of H8 *τοὶ* is also possible (Luppe): good Doric, but not good epic usage. Ph6 may be a conflation or doublet of H8–9, and it is possible that we have insufficient information to reconstruct an archetype of the guardians' question beyond the first half-line. This is the one place where Ph is fuller than P, which omits the question entirely, as it can be inferred without difficulty. KM replace it with the following:

M3 τίς δ' ἐσί; πῶ δ' ἐσί;

K3 τίς δ' ἐζί; πῶ δ' ἐζί;

Although the zeta is consistently used for *σσ* in K, we have no right to restore *ἐσσί* twice in M, which normally writes double letters.

The second hemistich of H8 has seemed difficult. Luppe proposed *εἰρήσσοντ'* – *αἶεν φρασὶ* . . ., but this does not carry conviction; Marcovich suggested more plausibly that the line results from a blend of epic formulae. While the expression may be inept, the thought is eminently appropriate. As Ph says below, the guardians must be told the truth. Why? Because they are wise and not to be deceived. Their sagacity is to the point here.

<sup>17</sup> Hence my translation of the line, below.

ὀλοέεντος in H9 is 'abscheulich' (West). If correctly read, it is presumably meant to be a poetic form ultimately derived from ὀλοός. Lloyd-Jones suggests that the word has come in from the next line, which ends in ἀστερόεντος; he suggests that it has ousted εἰσαφικάνεις. Ebert ap. Luppe suggested another possibility, ὀρφνήεντος. On the photograph the first upright must be *Λ* or *P*; the second is rounded, therefore *O* or *Φ*; there is no room for a third. We would have to suppose the omission of nu – ὀρφ<ν>έεντος. Good Homeric style would have put εὐρώεντος. If Lloyd-Jones is right, Ph has conflated two lines, abbreviating as usual. We expect abbreviation here: it is the answer that matters.

13 Ph7 τοῖς δὲ σὺ εὖ μάλα πᾶσαν ἀληθείη<ν> καταλέξαι.

The lamella reads ἀληθειηκαταλεξαιι. Another obvious place for abbreviation, as the next line begins εἶπον or εἰπεῖν.

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|-------------|--|
| 14 H10      | εἶπον· υἱὸς βαρέας <τε> καὶ ὄρανὸ ἀστερόεντος.   |
| P6          | εἰπεῖν· Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.   |
| Ph8         | εἰπεῖν· Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστ<ερόεντος>. |
| M4          | Γᾶς υἱὸς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.           |
| K1–3, 5–6.4 | Γᾶς υἱὸς ἡμι καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.              |
| K4.4        | γᾶς ἡμι ΓΥΗΤΗΡ καὶ Ὠρανῶ ἀστερόεντος.            |

Luppe supplied τε in H. K and M leave the verb of speaking to be inferred.

The persistence of this line indicates its importance. βαρέας, 'the heavy one', for Earth is peculiar and Zuntz thought he read Γαίας, but there is too much space on the photograph, and the traces do not match; none of the other possible combinations suggested by the remaining versions fits the traces either, and Carratelli's reading must be right. I am reluctant to believe that the archetype scanned υἱὸς as an iamb, but it remains possible that the version of P and Ph is an 'improvement' to suit both sexes of recipient. Ph, running short of space, lapses into prose from this point. Just as K and M are closer to H in making the spring and cypress nominative, so now they use υἱὸς not παῖς (K4 must intend θυγάτηρ, *pace* Gallavotti).

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| 15 P7 | αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τόδε δ' ἔσσε καὶ αὐτοί. |
| Ph9   | Ἀστέριος ὄνομα.                                    |
| M5    | αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον.                         |

Zuntz<sup>18</sup> holds that P7 is 'quite incompatible with the preceding; an addition made when it was felt that descent from Heaven was the essential qualification for bliss in the other world. The verse stands condemned also in view of its lame second half: empty verbiage serving to fill the verse'. The absence of this verse from H, and its presence in M, neither prove nor disprove these remarks. But the verse need not be incompatible with the preceding. αὐτὰρ must be either progressive or strongly adversative;<sup>19</sup> here this depends on the sense, which must be extracted by *a priori* reasoning not mythological speculation. If being a child of Earth and Heaven suffices to show that one is worthy to drink from the spring, it seems odd and otiose to add another line referring to the same qualification, but only to one half of the parentage. So the use must be adversative. Guthrie<sup>20</sup> explains the antithesis with his rendering 'I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven; but my race is of heaven (alone)'. This makes sense if the writers of these versions considered that all mortals were descended

<sup>18</sup> *Persephone* 366.

<sup>19</sup> J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* 55.

<sup>20</sup> *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (1952), 173.

from Earth and Heaven (i.e. via the Titans?), but that in initiates the heavenly side predominated. K and M simplify the two springs to one, and it is no surprise to find that K omits this subtle distinction also. In view of the abbreviation current even in H, the absence of this line therein is not evidence either way as to whether this belief was known earlier. But only some such belief will explain the antithesis.

τὸ δέ τ' ἴστε or τὸ δέ ἴστε would be better (West). This hemistich is not empty verbiage. We have already seen references to the wisdom of the guardians; to what means of proof of his identity can the dead man possibly appeal, if not the knowledge of these guardians themselves? If this is such a reference, each of the long versions contains one.

Ph has different wording, but to the same effect, and is here very heavily abbreviated; in the next line it is almost prose.

- 16 H11 δῖψα δ' εἴμ' αὔος καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλ(λ)ὰ δότ' ὄϊκα  
 P8 δῖψη δ' εἴμι αὔη καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ δότ' αἶψα  
 Ph9 δῖψη δ' εἴμ' αὔος· ἀλλὰ δότε μοι | πιέν. . .  
 K4.1 δῖψα δ' ἡμ' αὔος καὶ ἀπόλομαι· ἀλ(λ)ὰ πιέν μοι  
 K3, 6.1 δῖψα δ' αὔος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέμ μου  
 M1 δῖψα αὔος ἐγὼ κἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέ(μ) μου  
 K1, 2, 5.1 δῖψα αὔος ἐγὼ καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέμ μοι

H11 is restored by Carratelli: West suggests δότω τις, Gallavotti δότω μοι. The elision of εἴμι is avoided in most later versions, some of which also expunge δ' now that this line begins the text (the same happened in Ph1, line 4 of the archetype, when this was placed first). The rearrangement of the text in KM also entailed the transfer of πιέν from below.

- 17 H12 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ π[ρο]ρέον τῆς Μνῆμοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμ[νῆς].  
 P9 ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης.

Gallavotti reads π[ροσ]τῆναι in H, but neither the photograph nor the sense seems to support this.

- 18 H13 καὶ δέ τοί <σ'> ἐλεούσιν †ι ὑποχθονιοι βασιλεῖ

This line is not clarified by parallels; suggestions are numerous. The iota might be a miswriting of *h*: Lloyd-Jones suggested ὑποχθόνιοι βασιλεῖ<ς>, with the prose form presumably ousting βασιλῆες. Burkert tried ἐλεοῦσ' <ο>ι ὑπὸ χθονίῳ βασιλῆϊ. Others have been more radical, e.g. West's <τ>ελέουσί <σ'> ὑποχθονίῳ βασιλεῖ<α>. But a reference to the guardians' mercy is appropriate here, and admission to the underworld kingdom will follow later. Merkelbach read ὑποχθονίῳ βασιλῆϊ, believing that the deceased is now explicitly identified with the rulers in the underworld (cf. P11), but again this seems premature and the verb takes the accusative, as Zuntz and Gallavotti note. We need an object, and I therefore supply σ', which also obviates a hiatus. The present tense of the verb is not an obstacle, but is guaranteed again in H15 ἔρχεται. It serves as a *praesens propheticum*. While Lloyd-Jones' interpretation is exposed to West's objection that the guards are not likely to be kings, nor the kings so casually introduced, no superior alternative is apparent at present.

- 19 H14 καὶ δέ τοι δόσοσι πιέν τᾶς Μναμοσύνας ἀπ[ὸ] λίμνας  
 P10 καὶ τ[οι] <οι> δώσουσι πιέν θείης ἀπ[ὸ] κρήνης  
 Ph10 (δότε μοι) | πιέν ἀπὸ τῆς κρήνης.

- M1-2 (πιέ<μ> μου) | κράνας αἰειρώω  
 K1, 2, 4, 5.2 (πιέμ μοι) | κράνας αἰειρώω  
 K3, 6.2 (πιέμ μου) | κράνας αἰενάω

H repeats the latter part of H12, because the sense is similar; the epithet for the spring was forgettable at this stage, and Ph omitted it. In H the repetition leads to another hypermetric line. P's version has no flaw; that [κρή]νης not [λίμ]νης should be supplied is shown by KMPH. Zuntz supplied σοι, presumably lost by haplography of οι.

20 H15 καὶ δὲ καὶ σὺ πιδὼν ὁδὸν ἔρχεα<ι>, ἄν τε καὶ ἄλλοι

21 H16 μύσται καὶ βάχχοι ἱερὰν στεῖχῳσι κλε<ε>ινοί.

σὺ πιδὼν is a brilliant reading which solves all the difficulties of H15. Previous editors had read ΣΥΧΝΟΝ or emendations thereof: σὺ πιδὼν was reached independently by Luppe, Gil and Gallavotti, and confirmed by Gigante and Carratelli from inspection of the original.<sup>21</sup> In H16 Gallavotti defends κλεινοί as a spondaic ending, but the diaeresis at the end of the fifth foot is most displeasing; West, after mentioning κ<έ>λε[υθον], which would have been redundant, was right to prefer κλε<ε>ινοί.

The granting of the request was what mattered: the deceased did not need the happy consequences of that eventuality spelt out for him at his considerable expense. Thus the other versions, unhappily for the history of religion, omit his blessedness. The sole exception is P:

22 P11 καὶ τότε ἔπειτ' ἄ[λλοισι μεθ'] ἠρώεσσιν ἀνάξει[s].

West believes that this is an alternative to H15-16, and that, whereas P provides a wholly satisfactory conclusion, H is less clear and badly expressed. But the improved reading of H obviates the only major problem, and there is no reason why the two versions cannot stand alongside each other as successive stages in the progress of the deceased towards happiness. The dead man is to travel a holy road with the other initiates, and then, i.e. at his journey's end, he will rule among the other heroes. This will be his final state: he will hardly find bliss journeying for ever.

If this is the case, and the happy ending was originally described in three verses, there emerges a clear difference, not only of theology, but of tone, between the A and B series of lamellae: in the former the initiate is explicitly promised the status of a god, e.g. A1.8 θεὸς δ' ἔσῃ ἀντὶ βροτοῖο, A4.4 θεὸς ἐγένου ἐξ ἀνθρώπου. The promise of heroic status in P is more modest than this, the mention (in both H and P) of others who share in the bliss is more generous, and suggestive of a less exclusive cult.

Before setting out my conclusions I wish to draw attention to the perceptive remarks of Carratelli in 1975.<sup>22</sup> In rejecting the attempt to find an archetype, he rightly points out that the relations between magical texts are not assimilable to those in a MS tradition. But he goes on to say that the initiates must have undergone a certain doctrinal preparation, which, if it did not prevent alterations in their sacred texts, did preserve them from incomprehensible deformations (that this is so is clear from the extant versions). The redactors of the *ἱερὸς λόγος*, writing down versions from time to time upon the burial of an initiate, might reassemble its formulae as each knew or could, perhaps even from memory. I have tried to show how valuable these observations are, and Carratelli is right to conclude from them that particular texts,

<sup>21</sup> Gallavotti, 349 n. 17.

<sup>22</sup> PP 30 (1975), 228 f.

which may reflect variations current at different times and localities, should be respected. I would compare the procedure to be adopted in relation to different oral poems: there must be no assumption that a given redactor would have written otherwise and that we should therefore emend his poem for him.<sup>23</sup> H doubtless rejoiced in *εὐερέας* and *ὀλοέεντος*. But it does not follow that we cannot compare the versions to see how they developed, and, when alteration and abbreviation have evidently occurred, explore the likely form of the text when it scanned and made sense, or indeed the form of the longest text. Moreover, if a written text is subjected to oral transmission – and there is no reason why the original *λόγος* should not have been composed in writing – there must exist, historically speaking, an archetype, which may be partially recoverable. We must not of course accord to such an archetype any excessively exalted status: diachronically, its status is that of the oldest knowable text, but synchronically each later version is of no less importance in its own time and place, unless of course we believe that the earliest text was given by divine revelation. If it seems incredible that so important a text should be partially or wholly committed to, and propagated by, memory, we must consider the likely circumstances. A secret so precious would have to be carefully guarded, and was, judging by the absence of any literary transmission. We know too of the great part played by memory in the education of classical times.

There were two main stages in the evolution of the text, as far as the present evidence permits us to see. Only five years ago one could see a great deal less far; it may well be that future discoveries will alter the picture just as much again. With this proviso, I shall give tentative reconstructions of these two stages – the long text of H, P and Ph, current by the late fifth century and undergoing abbreviation in the fourth, when it vanishes (only to have part of its first line reappear in text R, in the Rome of the third century A.D.); and the short text of M and K, in which the entries are substantially reordered as well as abbreviated.

### A. The long archetype, Ω.

Of this P and Ph form a distinct family, as they are far closer to each other than to H; but they are independent, as each has material lost or altered in the other. The archetype has 22 lines, of which the first three are preliminary instructions; I have marked a possible doublet with the antisigma. The metre is the hexameter, the dialect standard epic;<sup>24</sup> the Doric colouring in H is superficial. The following attempt is to be viewed as but one of the many possibilities.

<sup>23</sup> There are rather few parallel cases in antiquity, but it is worth comparing the relation of *Homeric Hymn* 18 to Hermes with the opening lines of *Hymn* 4 to the same deity. The versions are largely identical, but with minor variations, and cases of the poet anticipating himself. Cf. Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns* (Cambridge, 1982) 3 with n.

<sup>24</sup> Or at any rate sub-Homeric, as seen in Hesiod and the *Homeric Hymns*. In defence of *ἐπέειπεν* (1) see *Il.* Z 412, Zuntz, art. cit. 135 n. 15; the psilosis in *ἐπύπερθεν* is the proper Ionic form, and in some papyri it evades the superficial Atticism of our epic texts (e.g. *POxy* 2510. 18, [κα]τύπερθεν). I have written *φρεσὶ πευκαλίμησι* (10), but *φρασί* is an archaism more widely current than is usually thought, e.g. in Attic and Halicarnassian inscriptions (Carratelli, *PP* 29 (1974), 112); it is not necessarily a Doric form introduced by the scribe of H. The same is true of the dative in *-αῖσι*, an ending rarely found in post-Homeric hexameters, but not necessarily to be emended to *-ησι* (cf. *Cypria* fr. 5. 3, *Hy. Dem.* 368). I take *τοῖ* in 18 as the pronominal definite article, with *ὑποχθόνιοι βασιλῆες*, e.g. *Il.* B 402; cf. P. Chantraine, *Gramm. Hom.* II 161.

The style is simple and pleasing; the most complex touch is the postponement of *ιερήν* in 21, but the pattern of enjambement remains unpretentious throughout.

Μνημοσύνης τόδε (?)θρίον· ἐπεὶ ἂν μέλλῃσι θανείσθαι

] τόδε γρα[ψάτω

]ΤΟΓΛΩΞΕΙΠΑ σκοτός ἀμφικαλύψας.

εὐρήσεις δ' Ἀῖδαο δόμων ἐπὶ δεξιὰ κρήνην,

πάρ δ' αὐτῇ λευκὴν ἐστηκυῖαν κυπάρισσον,

5

ἐνθα κατερχόμεναι ψυχὰι νεκύων ψύχονται.

ταύτης τῆς κρήνης μηδὲ σχεδὸν ἐμπελάσθηθα.

πρόσθεν δ' εὐρήσεις τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης

ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον· φύλακες δ' ἐπύπερθεν ἔασιν.

· οἳ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ἐνὶ φρεσὶ πευκαλίμηνιν

10

· ὅττι δὴ ἐξερέεις Ἀῖδος σκοτός τοῦλοέντος.

· οἳ δέ σε εἰρήσονται ὅτι χρέος εἰσαφικάνεις.

τοῖς δὲ σὺ εὖ μάλα πᾶσαν ἀληθείην καταλέξαι·

εἰπεῖν· “Γῆς παῖς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος,

15

αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον· τὸ δὲ ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί.

δίψῃ δ' εἰμ' αὖδος καὶ ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ δότ' ὦκα

ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ προρέον τῆς Μνημοσύνης ἀπὸ λίμνης.”

καὶ δὴ τοί σ' ἐλεοῦσιν ὑποχθόνιοι βασιλῆες,

καὐτοὶ σοι δώσουσι πιεῖν θείης ἀπὸ κρήνης,

20

καὶ δὴ καὶ σὺ πῶν ὁδὸν ἔρχεαι, ἦν τε καὶ ἄλλοι

μύσται καὶ βάκχοι ἱερὴν στείχουσι κλεινοί.

καὶ τότε ἔπειτ' ἄλλοισι μεθ' ἡρώεσσιν ἀνάξεις.

The line by line discussion will serve as a commentary on this, but it may assist if a translation is appended:

‘This is the (?)tablet of Memory. When he is about to die, let (the initiate) write this(?)...(lacuna)...darkness having covered (him). – (To the initiate:) You will find on the right in Hades’ halls a spring, and by it stands a ghostly cypress-tree, where the dead souls descending wash away their lives. Do not even draw nigh this spring. Further on you will find chill water flowing from the pool of Memory: over this stand guardians. They will ask you with keen mind what is your quest in the gloom of (?)deadly Hades. They will ask you for what reason you have come. Tell them the whole truth straight out. Say: “I am the child of Earth and starry Heaven, but of Heaven is my birth: this you know yourselves. I am parched with thirst and perishing: give me quickly chill water flowing from the pool of Memory.” Assuredly the kings of the underworld take pity on you, and will themselves give you water from the spring divine; then you, when you have drunk, traverse the holy path which other initiates and bacchants tread in glory. After that you will rule amongst the other heroes.’

## B. The short archetype, ω.

The above version was radically altered by omission and reordering to that seen in the K series and M. M is especially interesting, because it reveals a stage after the reordering but before the loss of further detail and expulsion of the last trace of Ionic diction. The rearranged version was evidently known by the late fourth century. It has closer affinities with H than with PPh, despite the alleged Thessalian provenance of M. This is shown by its dialect, its use of nominatives for the spring and cypress, and especially its use of *υἱός* not *παῖς*: note that if line 4 of the short version is a hexameter remnant, *υἱός* must be scanned as *ύός*, just as in H10, to make the line metrical. But the presence of *Γᾶς* and of *αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον* (assuming that this is original) shows that it does not derive directly from the line of H, which has *βαρέας* and lacks the latter line.

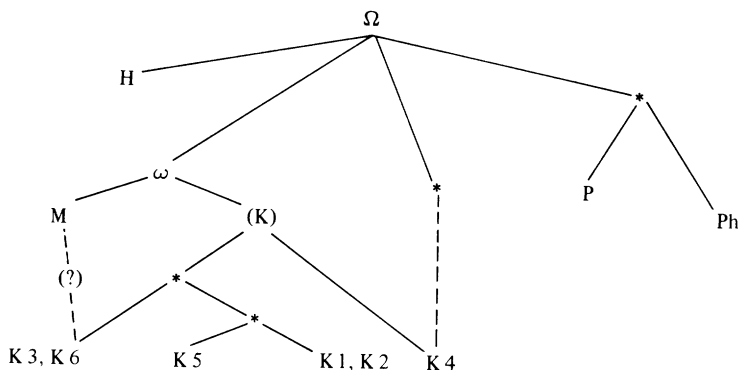
M is not the sole ancestor of the Cretan series. These all come from an intermediary without *αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον*, which has also changed *λευκή* into *τῇ*, and introduced the spellings *κυφάριζος*, *ὠρανῶ*, *ἡμι* and *ἐζί*. But K4 is not derived solely from this intermediary: instead of M's *αὔος ἐγώ* it has *ἡμ' αὔος* with HPPH, *πιέν* (cf. HPh) not *πιέμ*, and *τῇ κυπάριζος*. Thus the Cretan tradition is not pure. K3 and K6, as well as K4, read *δίψα δ'* with HPPH against *δίψα* in M and K1, 2 and 5. However, K3 and K6 also have the metrical improvement *αἰενάω* for *αἰειρόω*, so in these cases *δ'* may be a restoration to obviate hiatus: K3.1 also has *πιέμ μου*, and, in view of its other agreements with K3, K6.1 must surely be restored *π<ι>έμ μο<υ>*: cf. M1 *πιέ<μ> μου*.

The text of M is close to this archetype, except that the latter may have had *δ'* and *μοι* in 1 and *ἑσσί* in 4:

*δίψα αὔος ἐγὼ κ<αἰ> ἀπόλλυμαι· ἀλλὰ πιέ<μ> μου  
κράνας αἰειρόω· ἐπὶ δεξιὰ λευκὴ κυπάρισσος.  
τίς δ' ἐσί; πῶ δ' ἐσί;  
Γᾶς υἱὸς εἰμι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος·  
αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γένος οὐράνιον.*

(Say:) 'I am parched with thirst and perishing: let me drink from the ever-flowing spring: on the right there is a ghostly cypress.' (The guardians:) 'Who are you? Where are you from?' (Reply:) 'I am the son of Earth and starry Heaven, but my race is of Heaven.'

A stemma for these, in the present state of knowledge, would look like this (the interrelations of the K series are as determined by West):



I hope to be forgiven for having excluded discussion of Orphics, Pythagoreans, Dionysus, the Book of the Dead, Pindar, Plato or any other possible ramifications of the content of these texts: instead, I have attempted to survey without cultic preconceptions the interrelations of the various versions, and hope that the attempt will be of service to others interested in the theological debate.<sup>25</sup>

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