

APPENDIX VII

George of Pisidia

Pisides' short poems and epigrams have been published by Querci 1777 (Q.) and Sternbach 1891 and 1892a (St.)¹. Querci's edition presents only a small sample of poems, which he culled from various sources. Sternbach's edition is based on Par. Suppl. gr. 690 (s. XII), a manuscript of great value because it contains practically all the epigrams and short poems by Pisides that have come down to us, including those published by Querci. The manuscript also contains a considerable number of other texts by Pisides: see the description in Appendix VI.

Pisides' short poems and epigrams are found in Par. Suppl. gr. 690 in three separate sections, namely:

fols. 45^v–46^r: Q. 7, Q. 1, Q. 6, Q. 2, St. 108, Q. 3–5

fols. 64^v–65^v: St. 5–49

fols. 116^r–117^r: St. 50–59, 59b (=Q. 12), 60–61, 61b and c (=Q. 8–9), 62–78, 78b (=Q. 10), 79–84, 84b (=Q. 11), and 85–106.

The manuscript originally contained more epigrams than the 115 it contains nowadays. A considerable number of epigrams have been lost in a lacuna before fols. 116^r–117^r. And at the end of the first section, fols. 45^v–46^r, some barbarian has cut away a strip of parchment, which contained a text consisting of two verses².

The short poems on fols. 45^v–46^r follow right after the *Hexaemeron* (fols. 32^r–38^v & 40^r–45^v) and an anonymous book epigram praising Pisides for the composition of the *Hexaemeron* (fol. 45^v)³. These poems (minus St. 108) can also found in three other manuscripts, immediately before or after the *Hexaemeron*:

¹ The edition by TARTAGLIA 1998: 468–505 is based on those of Querci and Sternbach. Tartaglia arbitrarily changes the order in which the epigrams and short poems are arranged in Par. Suppl. gr. 690 and other mss.

² In the middle of fol. 46^r, lines 10–14 are missing: line 10 contained the two last verses of Q. 5; line 12 was a zigzagging demarcation line and line 13 the title of Pisides' *In Resurrectionem*; line 14 contained the first two verses of this poem. This leaves us with only one line unaccounted for: line 11 – that is, the space for two unidentified verses.

³ St. 107. Also found in Par. gr. 1302 (s. XIII), fol. 246^v. It is not an *eis heauton* poem by Pisides (as the ms. incorrectly states), but an anonymous book epigram on the *Hexaemeron*: see p. 199.

Vat. gr. 1126 (s. XIV), fol. 55^{v4}, Par. Suppl. gr. 139 (s. XIV), fol. 59^r–59^v, and Bodl. Thom. Roe 18 (a. 1349), fol. 460^{r5}. It is reasonable to assume that Par. Suppl. gr. 690 and the three other manuscripts ultimately go back to an edition of the *Hexaemeron*, in which these eight poems were included. Oxon. Barocc. 50 (s. X in.), fol. 176^v, contains three of these poems: Q. 7, Q. 4 and St. 108⁶. Q. 7 is also quoted in many Byzantine chronicles as a prediction of military success. Pisides is said to have made on the eve of Herakleios' first campaign against the Persians: "The dark-dyed shoe that you put on, you will tint red with Persian blood"⁷. This poem is also found in a number of other manuscripts: Mutinensis 42 (s. XIII), fol. 133^v, Par. Coisl. gr. 131 (s. XIV), fol. 213^v, Laur. V 10 (s. XIV), fol. 192^r and Vat. Ottob. gr. 309 (s. XVI), fol. 171^r.

The second and third groups of epigrams that we find in Par. Suppl. gr. 690 originate from one and the same source, which the scribe excerpted in two sessions, first on fols. 64^v–65^v and then again on fols. 116^r–117^r. The fact that we have two excerpts from one source is indicated by the duplications we find in the manuscript: poems that the scribe excerpted twice because he had evidently forgotten that he had already copied them. There are four doublets in total: St. 5 (after St. 81), St. 29 (after St. 50), St. 30 (after St. 52) and St. 32 (after St. 55). It is worth noting that St. 29, 30 and 32, on either of the two pages where they are copied, form part of a set of epigrams on images depicting the life of Christ: St. 29–34 and St. 50–59. These two groups of epigrams originally belonged together. They are correlated fragments of a cycle of epigrams on the life of Christ. The original order of this epigram cycle can easily be reconstructed: St. 50, 29, 51–52, 30–31, 53–55, 32–33, 56, 34 and 57–59. The cycle begins with the Magi and ends with the scene of the Chairete. The omission of the pictorial scene of the Nativity, which one would expect to find at the beginning, is either due to the lacuna in the manuscript at fol. 116 or to the scribe who did not copy all the epigrams, but just a selection. Whatever the case, it is beyond doubt that Par. Suppl. gr. 690, fols. 64^v–65^v and fols. 116^r–117^r, contains two substantial, partially overlapping fragments of a large collection of Pisides' epigrams.

⁴ This manuscript is the source from which Allatius copied the poems: see Allatius' collection of unedited Byzantine poems, Barb. gr. 74, fol. 40^v. He did not copy Q. 7 because it had already been published in various editions of Byzantine historians (see main text).

⁵ Lond. Add. 10014 (s. XV) is an apograph of Bodl. Thom. Roe 18: see HÖRANDNER 1974: 154. Pisides' short poems are found on fol. 221^r.

⁶ For more information on Oxon. Barocc. 50, see Appendix V, pp. 325–326, esp. n. 6. Oxon. Langb. 9 (s. XVII), fol. 51, contains the same three epigrams. It is a direct apograph of Oxon. Barocc. 50.

⁷ See L. STERNBACH, *De Georgii Pisidae apud Theophanem aliosque historicos reliquii*. Krakow 1900, 47–53, and F. GONNELLI, *Prometheus* 22 (1996) 177–181.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to reconstruct the original collection and estimate the total amount of epigrams it may have contained. There is only one epigram which we know could be found in the collection, although the scribe of Par. Suppl. gr. 690 did not copy it: *AP I*, 121 (=Q. 13). *AP I*, 120 and 121 are two verse inscriptions on the Blachernai church. The epigrams are anonymous in the *Palatine Anthology* because they were copied *in situ*. However, they are doubtless the work of Pisides: Par. Suppl. gr. 690 contains *AP I*, 120 (=St. 59b), and Par. gr. 1630 (s. XIV), fol. 166^r, contains both *AP I*, 120 and 121 in a sequence of epigrams by Pisides.

There are a great number of manuscripts that contain some of the texts found in the collection of Pisides' epigrams, namely: Par. gr. 1630 (s. XIV), fol. 166^r, 192^r and 195^v: *AP I*, 120–121, St. 60, 72 and 84; St. 28, 15, 7–8, 26, 34 and 36; St. 84 and 88, respectively. Par. gr. 2831 (s. XIII), fol. 152^r: St. 61b, 61c, 78b and 84b. Esc. R. III. 17 (s. XIV), fol. 9^v: St. 61b, 61c and 88. Heidelb. Pal. gr. 23 (s. X), p. 63: *AP I*, 120–121. Marc. gr. 572 (s. X), fol. 5^v: St. 34. Ambros. B 25 inf. (s. XI–XII), fol. 170^v: St. 70. Barb. gr. 340 (s. X), fol. 14^r: St. 72. St. 10, 11.1 and 12.1 are found in three interrelated Italian manuscripts of the tenth century containing the *Homilies* of Gregory of Nazianzos: Lond. Add. 18231, fol. 87^v, Laur. Conv. Soppr. 177, fol. 1^v and Vat. gr. 2061, fol. 2⁸. In the *Souda*, s.v. φθόνος, we find St. 28.

In Par. gr. 1630 (s. XIV), fol. 166^r, we find two anonymous poems immediately after some epigrams by Pisides⁹. The first poem is also found in Par. gr. 967 (a. 1377), fol. 299^r. In my forthcoming edition of Pisides' epigrams I shall place these two poems in the section of the *Dubia*.

Let us return once again to the poems and epigrams of Pisides in Par. Suppl. gr. 690. The anthologist gathered the material from two different sources: (i) a small sylloge of poems copied along with the *Hexaemeron* in certain manuscripts: Q. 1–7 and St. 108; (ii) a large collection of epigrams, of which we find two major excerpts in Par. Suppl. gr. 690 and some traces in the rest of the manuscript tradition: St. 5–106 and *AP I*, 121.

The small sylloge contains literary poems on various subjects. The large collection, on the contrary, consists mainly of epigrams written for a practical purpose, either as verse inscriptions on works of art or as book epigrams. The few poems that have no connection with Byzantine art or books, are the following four: St. 28, 48–49 and 106. St. 28 is a gnome on the malicious power of Envy. St. 48 is a laudatory poem which Pisides had once improvised when he was about to declaim one of his panegyrics in the presence of Constantine,

⁸ See SOMERS 1999: 550–552.

⁹ Ed. L. STERNBACH, *De Georgii Pisidae fragmentis a Suida servatis*. Krakow 1899, 87, n. 2.

the son of Herakleios. St. 49 is a fictitious epitaph in honour of a woman who loved her husband so dearly that she could not bear his death and died herself two days later. And St. 106 is a moralizing epitaph on a ruler who once used to wield power over peoples and nations, but now lies all alone and speechless in the grave. As St. 48 and 49 are to be found at the very end of the first excerpt on fols. 64^v–65^r and St. 106 at the very end of the second excerpt on fols. 116^r–117^r, we may infer that the original collection, after dozens of epigrams on works of art and books, concluded with these and similar “literary” poems¹⁰. Thus we observe that the collection differentiated between epigrams composed for a practical purpose, on the one hand, and literary poems on various subjects, on the other. On the implications and significance of this generic differentiation, see chapter 2, p. 66.

¹⁰ As for the presence of St. 28 among the epigrams, see pp. 242–243, where I point out that gnomes belong to the epigrammatic genre.