

# Impossible Voices: Archaic Poetics and Archaic Epigram

CHS Fellows Symposium  
April 30, 2011  
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1. *CEG* 344  
(ca. 600-550? BCE base for two vessels, near Delphi)

τάσδε γ' Ἀθαναία δραφεὸς Φαφ' ἐάριστος ἔθεκε  
ἡέραι τε, ἡος καὶ κ|ἔνος ἔχοι κλέφρος ἄπιθτον αἰφεί.

Phaw(?e)aristos placed these vessels for Athena and Hera, so  
that he too might have unquenchable *kleos* always. (Trans., Day)

2. *CEG* 286, ca. 490-480? BCE  
(plinth for statuette of ?Athena, Acropolis, Athens)

πᾶσιν ἴσ' ἀνθρώποι | ς ἠυποκ | ρίνομαι ἡόστις ἐ[ρ | ο]τᾶι |  
ἡός μ' ἀνέθεκ' ἀνδ | ρῶν· Ἀντι | φάνες δεκάτεν.'

I perform an identical answer to all people, whoever asks who of  
men set me up: 'Antiphanes (did) as a tithe.' (Trans. Day)

3. *CEG* 13, ca. 575-550? BCE  
(base of a stele, Athens)

[εἴτε ἀστό]ς τις ἀνερ εἴτε χσένος | ἄλοθεν ἐλθὼν :  
Τέτιχον οἰκτίρα | ς ἀνδρ' ἀγαθὸν παρίτο, :  
ἐν πολέμοι | φθίμενον, νεαρὰν ἡέβεν ὀλέσαν | τα. :  
ταῦτ' ἀποδυράμενοι νέσθε ἐπ' | ἰ πρᾶγμ' ἀγαθόν.

Let each man, whether a citizen or foreigner coming from  
elsewhere, pass on only after pitying Tettichos, a good man, who  
perished in war and lost his fresh youthfulness. Once you have  
lamented this, move on to a good deed. (Trans. Day)

4. *CEG* 28, ca. 540-530? BCE  
(base of a stele, Athens)

ἄνθρωπε ἡόστειχε[ι]ς : καθ' ὁδὸ | ν : φρασίν : ἄλα μενοιῶν, :  
στῆθι | καὶ οἴκτιρον : σῆμα Θράσσονος : ἰδὼν

You there, who move along the road with mind intent on other  
matters, halt and pity, having looked on the marker of Thrason.  
(Trans. Day)

5.a *CEG* 143, ca. 625-600? BCE  
(large, circular stone monument, Corcyra)

ἠυιοῦ Τλασίαφο Μενεκράτεος τόδε σᾶμα :  
Οἰανθέος γενεάν, τόδε δ' αὐτοῖ δᾶμος ἐποίηι. :  
ἔς γὰρ πρόξενφος δάμου φίλος· ἀλλ' ἐνὶ πόντοι :  
ἔλετο, δαμόσιον δὲ καφὸν ῥο[(-) - - -]. :  
Πραξιμένες δ' αὐτοῖ γ[αία]ς ἀπο πατριδος ἐνθὼν :  
σὺν δάμ[ο]ι τόδε σᾶμα κασιγνέτοιο πονέθε. :

Of the son of Tlasias, Menecrates, this is the marker, /  
Oeanthian by race, and this the *demos* made for him. / For he  
was the representative of the *demos*, dear to them: but at sea /  
he perished, and the disaster for the *demos* [...]. / And  
Praximenes coming for him from their native land / with the  
*demos* fashioned this marker of his brother. (Trans. Bowie)

5.b *CEG* 145, ca. 600? BCE  
(stele, Corcyra)

σᾶμα τόδε Ἀρνιαδά· χαροπὸς τόνδ' ὄλε | σεν Ἄρες  
βαρνάμενον παρὰ ναυσ | ἰν ἐπ' Ἀραθθοιο ρηοφαῖσι,  
πολλὸ | ν ἀριστεύ<φ>οντα κατὰ στονόμεσαν ἀφυτάν.

This is the marker of Arniadas. This man fierce-eyed Arēs  
destroyed / battling by the ships beside the streams of the  
Aratthos / achieving great excellence amid the battle-roar that  
brings mourning. (Trans. Bowie)

5c. *CEG* 146, ca. 575-550? BCE  
(capital, Corcyra)

στάλα Ξενφάρεος τοῦ Μηείξιός εἰμ' ἐπὶ τύ | μοι.

I am the *stele* of Xenvares, son of Meixis, on his tomb.

6. Homer, *Il.* 2.484-493

ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι:  
ἡμεῖς γὰρ θεαί ἐστε πάρεστέ τε ἴστέ τε πάντα, 485  
ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν·  
οἵ τινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ κοίρανοι ἦσαν·  
πληθὺν δ' οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ὀνομήνω,  
οὐδ' εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ' εἶεν,  
φωνή δ' ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δὲ μοι ἦτορ ἐνείη, 490  
εἰ μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο  
θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ' ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον·  
ἀρχοὺς αὐτῶν νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας.

Tell me now, ye Muses that have dwellings on Olympus— [485]  
for ye are goddesses and are at hand and know all things,  
whereas we hear but a rumour and know not anything— who  
were the captains of the Danaans and their lords. But the  
common folk I could not tell nor name, nay, not though ten  
tongues were mine and ten mouths [490] and a voice  
unwearying, and though the heart within me were of bronze, did  
not the Muses of Olympus, daughters of Zeus that beareth the  
aegis, call to my mind all them that came beneath Ilios. Now will  
I tell the captains of the ships and the ships in their order. (Text  
and trans. from Perseus)