

### Poetic epitaph for Glykarion son of Glykarion, son of Glykarion (KL 439)

In the Lapidarium of the Kerch Museum is fragment of the funerary stele inv no 439. It is limestone stele with dimensions of H 55 cm (including insertion H 17,6 cm); W 51 cm (relief W 42,5 cm, insertion W 30 cm); Th 13,8 cm. It was found in Kerch in spring 1961, during digging for house fundaments at the Kirov Street, in place of ancient necropolis.

Preserved is only lower part of the stele – the upper part with almost whole relief is broken up. From relief remained only foots of representing persons. We may presume that at the relief were represented standing man and his servant. Below the relief are 9 lines of Greek text, of which 8 is in verse. The surface of the palaeographic field is slightly weathered and damaged but most letters are readable. The right edge of the stone is damaged, so the last letters of lines 4-6 disappeared. Boltunova informs about traces of an earlier inscription in lines 2, 3, 7 and 9 but traces in question may be also simple damages.

The letters are of angular shape with serifs in rulers. The *ductus* is careful. The Alpha is with broken bar, Pi with head-stroke beyond minims and shorter right minim, Kappa with shorter oblique strokes, Zeta with middle-bar stroke, Theta with short stroke, Epsilon with middle stroke do not touching the bowl. Oblique strokes in letters Alpha, Sigma and Mu are crossed. Omega has oblique ending of the strokes. The top margin H is 3 cm, grid lines H 3 cm (1st line), 1 cm (further lines), interlinear margins - H 2 cm (between lines 1-2), 1 cm (other margins).

The stele is dated by *editio princeps*<sup>1</sup>, after palaeography (especially Omega shape) for the begin of 1st century AD.

The Greek text is as follows

1. Γλυκαρίων Β' Χαίρε
2. Ἡδιστον ζωῆς χερὶ μοι περὶ τοῦτο κύπελλον
3. σώφρονος ἀμβροσίης γέκταρος ἠδύτερον.
4. εἶχον ἀταρβήτοις φρεσὶ κείμενον ἄμμαχον αὐτῶν
5. εὐφήμου γλώσσης οὐατα θελγόμενος
6. τοιγάρ ὄτ' ἐς φθιμένους γ(ή)ρει δεδαμάσμενον ἦγο[ν]
7. δαίμ(ο)νες ἀλόχου τέκνα λίπον τὰ τέκνον
8. αὐτίκα μοι τόδε σῆμα ἀγέστησαν τὸ ἐς αἰέν
9. ἔγγονα καὶ φήμης καὶ χαρίτων στέφανον

#### Apparatus

L. 4 ἄμμαχον read ἄμαχον *metris causa*, Boltunova | αὐτῶν all earlier editors || L. 5 ΕΥΦΕΜΟΥ stone, Yailenko; εὐφήμ(ω) Boltunova | ΓΛΩΣΗΣΟΥΑΤΑ stone; in Boltunova's opinion at stone was ΓΛΩΣΗΤΟΥΑΤΑ, but the 1<sup>st</sup> Tau was erroneously written as Sigma and corrected by stone-cuter, Yailenko opposes and he do not saw such case and gives rightly: ΓΛΩΣΗΣΟΥΑΤΑ; γλώσση τ(αὐ)τα θελγόμενος Boltunova; γλώσσης οὐατα θελγομενος Yailenko || L. 6 ΤΟΙΓΑΡΟΤΕΣ stone; τοίγαρ

<sup>1</sup> Boltunova, *Metricheskaya epitafia iz pantikapejskogo nekropolja*, VDI no 2 (1968), pp. 130-132; cf. Yailenko, *Nadpisy i yazyki...* (1987), p. 119-120, no 177 (reading, translation) and Boltunova, *KSIA 116* (1969), pp. 49-54 (8 epitaphs found at the same place) as well as Boltunova *Stud.Clas. 15* (1973), p. 125 (metric epitaph found at the same place).

Boltunova, Yailenko | [γ(ή)ρηι Boltunova: stone-cuter erroneously wrote Β and then corrected it for Η | ΗΓΟΝ stone; ΕΠΙΘ stone after Boltunova but Yailenko saw ΗΓΟΝ and in consequence rejects reading of Boltunova: after examination of the stone he said it is trace of ruler and supposed that Boltunova read this inscription after photo not the stone; unfortunately at the present day the surface at this place is so damaged that I could see only 4 minims; {ἐλ}ΟΝ Boltunova || L. 7 ΔΑΙΜΩΝΕΣ stone; δαίμωνες read δαίμονες Boltunova

The epitaph is written in elegiac distich. The text is full of Homeric allusions<sup>2</sup> which allows Boltunova to presume that the author of this poetry was local, Bosporan poet, who most probably professional wrote epitaphs. But she rightly added that his knowledge of the poetry could be secondarily, because we know other epitaphs with similar expressions<sup>3</sup>. Finally she finds that the style and language are however not especially pure and we may not say that the author was master of poetry. In Boltunova's opinion many orthographic and grammatical errors in text and careful *ductus* allows to suppose, that the inscription cut a good, but uneducated craftsman.

The reading of the text and its interpretations by Boltunova and Yailenko dramatically differs. Let examine step by step all differences.

L. 4 ἄμμαχον - *metris causa* to made first alpha longa, needed for construction of dactyl's. It should be understand as "substantived" adjective. Boltunova interprets this with connection to life and understood sentence praising for invincibility of the life. Yailenko rejects this interpretation and instead saw there blessing of his progeny (children and grandchildren), who, after his death has erected (see L. 7-8) this monument.

L. 5 εὐφήμ{φ} γλώση τ{αῦ}τα θελγόμενος - Boltunova saw there erroneously used genitives instead of dative, which was corrected by the stone-cuter, who at the end ΓΛΩΣΗΣ corrected last letter into Tau, but in first word leaved - ΟΥ. There is also inconsequence in metrum. In τ{αῦ}τα the second syllable is short which change dactyl in to spondee, as if second Alpha would *longa*. But Yailenko is rightly contra and explains that Boltunova's changes are redundant and defends text at the stone. Finally Boltunova interprets lack of Sigma in γλώση as an example of reduction of consonants<sup>4</sup> which is known but a little strange in poetic text. Boltunova translate the text as follows: В бесстрашной груди у меня была заложена её непобедимость, я воспевал это благочестивым языком", Yailenko in contrary proposes: "я имел, очарованный, лежащее в бесстрашном сердце необоримое - слух (дословно - уши) к их (детей) благостной речис". He connect αὐτῶν with τέκνων (children).

L. 7 δαίμωνες instead of δαίμονες is rightly in Boltunova's opinion a proof of phonetic similarity between Omicron and Omega and more generally between long and short vocals

<sup>2</sup> ἀμβροσίης νέκταρος ἡδύτερον (cf. Od. 5,93; 9,359 and 5,199 where ambrosia and nectar are refreshments of gods opposed to food of mortals), κύπελλον (Il. 3,248), cf also Od. 1,142); ἀταρβήτοις φρεσὶ κείμενον ἄμμαχον αὐτῶν; Il. 3,63: ἐνὶ στήθεσσι ἀταρβήτος νόος ἐστίν. Δαίμονες should be understand as "gods"; cf. Il. 1,222: Διὸς μετὰ δαίμονας ἄλλας. Γ{ή}ρει δεδαμάσμενον cf. Od. 24,233: γήραϊ τειρόμενον; γήραϊ κυφός; Il. 5,158: τείρετο γήραϊ λυγρῶ.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. cf. CIRB 133; 139,6; 132.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dovatur In CIRB p. 810-811 and Threatte, p. 540.

which appears often in Bosporan text of this period<sup>5</sup>. ἀλόχου τέκνα λίπον τὰ τέκνον is to understand as grandchildren from his regular wife and τέκνα λίπον τὰ τέκνον must be connected with ἀλόχου. The wife probably gone earlier, which is the reason that ἔγγονα (grandchildren) build tomb for him.

Finally Boltunova proposes following translation:

“Этот сладчайший кубок благоразумной жизни в моей руке – сладостнее амброзии и нектара. В бесстрашной груди у меня была заложена её непобедимость, я воспевал это благочестивым языком. И вот когда меня, укрощенного старостью боги взяли к умершим, и я оставил внуков супруги, потомки тотчас же воздвигли мне эту гробницу, венец славы и Харит.”

And there you have Yailenko’s translation of an epitaph’s fragment:

„я имел, очарованный, лежащее в бесстрашном сердце необоримое - слух (дословно - уши) к их (детей) благостной речи; и вот, когда демоны повели одоленное старости (тело), я оставил внуков жене”

In my opinion Yailenko’s remarks are right and there is no need of such changes in text as proposed by Boltunova. In the consequence it changes also our judgment of the poetic skills of the author. He was not an uneducated craftsman but skilled poet. To the remarks of Yailenko I may add also another proposal of interpretation of few verses of the epitaph. But firstly let’s examine text again:

L. 2-3 Χερὶ is typical Homeric form<sup>6</sup>. Περὶ is more complicated in that context. Generally, according Lidell-Scott it is used in the context “of Place, *round about, around* etc” or „of an object *for* or *about* which one struggles” and more used in prose as in poetry. In my opinion we should connect it with ζωῆς in Genitive as anastrophe not with theoretically more obvious κύπελλον. In the last case we may think about *double*-ness which belongs normally to ἀμφί and is also to find in Homer as ἀμφικύπελλον<sup>7</sup> and we would have τοῦτο περικύπελλον instead τοῦτο ἀμφικύπελλον. The problem is that we find such using of περὶ in only one poetic compound περιδέξιος<sup>8</sup> and the words are separated by τοῦτο. We have a little further however οὔτα which may be a kind of wordplay. In that way the sense proposed by Boltunova and silently accepted by Yailenko, so far I understand, is: For my hand (χερὶ μοι) (is) that cup (τοῦτο κύπελλον) concerning prudent life (περὶ σώφρονος ζωῆς) sweeter (ἡδύτερον) from sweetest (ἡδιστον) nectar of ambrosia (ἀμβροσίης νέκταρος) which means more simply “for me that cup of good life is sweeter than (that) of sweetest ambrosia nectar (i.e. immortal life)”. First it is would be anti-consolation, secondly nectar of ambrosia is in Homeric poetry always better than wine made by mortals<sup>9</sup>. I propose an alternative reading: For me (μοι) (over) sweetest cup (ἡδιστον κύπελλον) in hand (χερὶ) during good lifetime (περὶ σώφρονος ζωῆς) sweeter

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Dovatur, CIRB, pp. 800-801 and 811.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Il. 1, 596.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. Il. 1, 584.

<sup>8</sup> Il. 21, 163; AP 12, 247 and in prose. The exact meaning is „with two right-hands” to describe an expert.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. Hom., Od. 9, 357-359: καὶ γὰρ Κυκλώπεσσι φέρει ζειδώρος ἄρουρα οἶνον ἐριστάφυλον, καὶ σφιν Διὸς ὄμβρος ἀέξει· ἀλλὰ τόδ’ ἀμβροσίης καὶ νέκταρός ἐστιν ἀπορρώξ.

(ἡδύτερον) (is) that (τοῦτο) (cup) of ambrosia's nectar (ἀμβροσίης νέκταρος). Glykaron preferred afterlife to life which is typical consolation. By the way we have there an wordplay with deceased name "Sweetie".

L.4-5 εἶχον is imperfect tense introducing an obscure fragment. ἄμμαχον is in that form unique. Boltunova gave only logic answer for this (*metris causa*) and as, in her opinion, "substantived" adjective connects it with εἶχον and ζωή. Yailenko connects it with οὔατα. The problem is that οὔατα are in plural and ἄμμαχον singular. He resolve this problem with dash and interpreting οὔατα as "hearing". But the main question was who are αὐτοί? Boltunova connects it with ἄμμαχον which is grammatically acceptable and Yailenko suggest that there were grandchildren. οὔατα are in that context also very strange. Finally we have there grammatically imperfect (εἶχον), perfect or present (κείμενον) and present (θελγόμενος) tenses. Implication of that fact are very interesting.

Boltunova and Yailenko silently assumed that it should be understand as 1<sup>st</sup> person singular. But εἶχον could be also 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural of imperectum indicativis activi. This may allow an alternative interpretation of the sentence: They (grandchildren) held (εἶχον) in fearless hearts (ἀταρβήτοις φρεσί) of themselves (αὐτῶν) resting me (κείμενον) peacefully (ἄμμαχον) (and being still) charming (θελγόμενος) by (or with the help of) silent speech (εὐφήμου γλώσσης) (your) ears (οὔατα).

ἄμμαχον in that case is a wordplay: it can be understand as "without fight accepting death" (κείμενον ἄμμαχον) but put near ἀταρβήτοις φρεσί, ἄμμαχον automatically recalls Homeric language with meaning "invincible" although from other side it means also disinclined to fight, not contentious<sup>10</sup>. The problem with mysterious αὐτοί we may try to resolve in that case by αὐτῶν as reflexive pronoun of 3<sup>rd</sup> person: "of themselves" and connect it with ἀταρβήτοις φρεσί. Other possibility is lectio αὐτ{ό}ν, as in the case of δαίμ{ο}νες which may give us κείμενον ἄμμαχον αὐτόν. This however is less acceptable possibility. κείμενον should be in that case as masculine accusative of *participium perfecti mid/pass* and understood as "I am lying burned" frequently meet in epitaphs and literature<sup>11</sup> and connected with ἄμμαχον in the meaning: I gone without contest. This peacefulness is in that case not consequence of σώφρων ζωή while alive but of acceptance of death as I pointed out for lines 1-2. Moreover Glykys is charming with his tongue even after death. Εὐφήμος basic meaning is "abstaining from inauspicious words, i.e. *religiously silent*"<sup>12</sup> or simply silent. I would risk presumption that we have another wordplay there: the remembering of wise words during the life are still in hearts of his grandchildren or he still charm (leaving his mark) although his tongue is silent. This is picture of experience grandfather giving, while alive, laconic but wise advices to them grandchildren.

L. 6-7 seems more easy to interpret: therefore when (τοιγάρ ὅτι) I was overcome by old age (γῆρει δεδαμάσμενον) daemons have brought me (ἦγον δαίμονες) to dead (ἐς φθιμένους)<sup>13</sup> (which agrees with Boltunova's translation) I lived of wife's children's

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Liddell-Scott and inscription PH no 325 (Cos, 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, epigram of Kothaina, wife of Python): ἔτη τε συνεβίωσε τετράκις δέκα δεῦν τε ἐπ' αὐτοῖς· ἄμαχος ἄζηλος χρόνος...

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Liddell-Scott with testimonies in literary sources and e.g. ITomis 368 (3<sup>rd</sup> century AD): [κείμε]νον ἐν φθιμένοις εἰ[κασον] ὄν σκυβάλοι[ς].

<sup>12</sup> Liddell-Scott s.v.

<sup>13</sup> Analogy e.g.: Epigrammata sepulcralia 246 (=GVI 1833, Cyprus, 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC): Οὐ κακός ἐστ' Αἴδας· πάριθι, ξένε, χαίρε προσείπας, κοινὸς ἐπεὶ θνατοῖς ὁ πλόος εἰς φθιμένους.

children (ἀλόχου τέκνα λίπον τὰ τέκνον), which agrees Boltunova's interpretation against Yailenko (I lived children to wife). In that way we have an elegant opposition: Glykys left grandchildren after his death but they kept (εἶχον) him in their hearts.

L. 8-9 are not confusing too: now as well this tomb (αὐτίκα καί τόδε σῆμα) have erected for me (ἀνέστησαν μοι) for ever (τὸ ἐς αἰέν) grandchildren (ἔγγονα) as (καί) wreath of Charits saying (φήμης καὶ χαρίτων στέφανον). The last part is evidently: φήμης χαρίτων means charming speech<sup>14</sup>. It differs a little of Boltunova's translation. She understands this line as: the grandchildren gave me wreath as well of fame and Charits. I would first καί connect with σῆμα and second with φήμης χαρίτων. There are two possible interpretations: charming speech is epitaph on the stele itself (I would say αὐτός) or the stele and epitaph is remembering of charming speech of deceased.

Generally we have with following situation to do: in first part we find wordplay with the deceased name whose wisdom helped accept death. There we have possibly also wordplay with cup with two ears. Further he is described as a man, whom grandchildren kept (εἶχον in plural) in their hearts as a man of good language (or this remembrance is still charming although he is silent now: ἔυφήμου γλώσσης οὐατα θελγόμενος) and who died quietly (κείμενον ἄμμαχον) and left grandchildren of his wife at this world. Now they erected as well a material monument (τόδε σῆμα) as immaterial in the form of epitaph.

Therefore I propose following translation:

Glykarion (son) of Glykarion, farewell!  
 For me over sweetest cup of prudent life in hand  
 sweeter (is) that of ambrosia's nectar.  
 They held in fearless hearts of themselves (me, who) rest peacefully  
 (and still) is charming (your) ears with good speech.  
 Therefore when into dead land overpowered as old men lead me  
 Daemons, I left my wife's children's children,  
 Grandchildren now erected for me as well this  
 gravestone for ever as wreath of Charits speech.

Alfred Twardecki

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<sup>14</sup> Liddell-Scott gives at first place *utterance prompted by the gods, significant or prophetic saying* but we have there most probably with simple speech (λόγος) to do.

(text in Russian)

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