TWO EPIGRAMMATIC PAIRS: CALLIMACHUS’ EPISTAPHS, PLATO’S APPLES

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I. Archilochus and the Epitaphs of Callimachus (21, 35 Pf; 29, 30 GOW-PAGE)

Callimachus 29 presents itself as an epitaph for the poet’s father – a peculiar epitaph, since it neither says anything about the deceased himself nor gives his name (the first oddity seeming to mark it as literary, the second as a functional inscription, since on a stone the name could appear elsewhere):

"Ὅστις ἐμὸν παρὰ σήμα φέρεις πόθα, Καλλιμάχου με ἰσθι Κυρηναίου παΐδα τε καὶ γενέτην.
εἰδείς δ’ ἀμφο κεν’ ὡ μὲν κοτε πατρίδος ὅπλων
ηρέξαν, ὡ δ’ ἤμεσσον κρέσσονα βασκανίης.
οὐ νέμεσις: Μοῦσαι γὰρ ὅσους ἰδον ὀμματί παίδας
οὐ λοξώ, πολλώς οὐκ ἐπέθεντο φίλους.

Apart from the reading in the last line, and the authenticity of the final couplet, the chief topic of interpretive discussion concerning this poem has been its relation to its companion, the epitaph for Callimachus himself:

Βαττιάδεω παρὰ σήμα φέρεις πόθας ε’ν μὲν ᾠδήν
εἰδότος, ε’ν δ’ οἴνῳ καίρια συγγελάσα.

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1 The transmitted reading is

οὐ νέμεσις: μοῦσαι γὰρ ὅσους ἰδον ὀμματί παίδας
ἐχρι βιοῦ πολλώς οὐκ ἐπέθεντο φίλους.

Mή λοξῶ is based on the scholiast to Hes. Theog. 81. C. FARAONE, Callimachus’ epigram 29.5-6 (GOW-PAGE), ZPE 63, 1986, 53-56, suggests reading ἐχρι βιοῦ instead of οὐ νέμεσις. This is attractive, but would Callimachus make such a claim about himself in his own lifetime?


Interpreters generally agree that the real point of 29 G-P lies in its characterization of Callimachus’ poetry. If we assume as a working hypothesis that the poems, though not necessarily composed as a pair, would have functioned as companion pieces within an epigram-book, it is worth considering looking at them separately and together from a slightly different angle. Why, other than a clever pun on the poet’s name, does 29 mention his grandfather? Why, indeed, have the dead father deliver the praise of Callimachus’ achievement?

Both Callimachus’ poems are structured around a μέν/δε: one contrasts the poet with his grandfather, the other “song” with appropriate participation in symposiastic enjoyment. While it is quite possible that such pleasure could include the performance of his lighter verse, the contrast is surely not between genres of poetry, for καρδια συγχειλόσαι is too broad an expression: while some epigrams are poetic representations of symposiastic teasing, nothing confines the phrase to such poems rather than the social practice they stylize 4. It is therefore worth noting that both these poems distinguish strands that could have been united. A contrast between military leadership and poetry defines one, while the contrast between poetry and symposiastic pleasure, both characteristic of Callimachus, defines the other.

When the poems are read together, the shared structure emphasizes what qualities Callimachus himself does and does not have. Whereas in Callimachus’ family, the father of the speaker of 29 was his city’s strategos, his son a poet, at least one canonical Greek poet, Archilochus, famously defined himself as both warrior and poet:

εἰμὶ δ’ ἐγὼ θεράπων μὲν Ἑυαλίοιο ἄνακτος
καὶ Μονσέων ἐρατὸν δόρον ἐπιστάμενος.

Similarly, Callimachus claims to have two distinct gifts, one for song, the other for appropriate merriment. Archilochus, in contrast, proclaims that he sings drunk:

ως Διανύσου ἄνακτος καλὸν ἐξάρξαι μέλος
οἶδα διθύραμβον οἴνων συγκεραυνωθεῖς φρένας.

Ath. 10.428–29 lists Alcaeus, Aeschylus, and Aristophanes as composing drunk, but Callimachus certainly characterizes Archilochus thus: τοῦ ἰ μεθυκηλής θρόμφων Ἀρχιλόχου (544). Callimachus favors moderate drinking in the conversation with the man from Icus (Aetia 178.15–20). In describing himself as one who sings, and is also pleasant to drink with, he differentiates himself from those poets for whom singing and drinking are closely allied (as a matter also of style: συγκεραυνωθεῖς sharply differentiates Archilochus from the poet who insists that βροντῶν belongs to Zeus, “Aet.” 1.20).

4 A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, Hellenistic Epigrams, 188, following R. Reizenstein, Epigramm und Skolion, Hildesheim 1970 (rpt. of Giessen 1893), 87, take the second pentameter of 30 as referring to the composition of light poetry (epigram).
In this context, though, the contrast with the grandfather may also be significant. Antipater of Thessalonica opposes Callimachus as a water-drinker to Homer and Archilochus:

\[
\text{Φεύγεθ', ὅσοι λόκκας ἢ λοφιάς ἢ καμασῆνας ἢδέεν, ποιητὰς φύλων ἱκανοθλόγων, ὦ τ' ἐπέων κόσμον ἕλευσισμένον ἀσκήσαντες κρήνης ἐξ ἵππῃς πίνετε λιτῶν θύρω. σήμερον Ἀρχιλόχοιο καὶ ἄρσενος ἡμα}
\[
\text{οῖο ὅπορο}
\]

(A.P. 9.26,19 GOW-PAGE)

ἄρσενος: Archilochus and Homer are probably together here not just as bibulous poets (Homer as in Hor. Ep.1.19.6), but as poets of the quintessentially male activity, war (Heraclitus paired them as insufficiently devoted to eris, surely because they were the most martial: τὸν τε Ὄμηρον ἐφασκεν ἄξιον εκ τῶν ἅγιων εἰκάθλεσθαι καὶ ῥαπίζεται καὶ Ἀρχιλόχου ὁμίοιο, 42 D-K). Even as a poet, Archilochus is not among Callimachus’ explicit poetic ancestors. Callimachus appears critical of Archilochus’ excessive harshness:

\[
\text{εἴλκωσε δὲ} ὅμιμον} τε} χόλον κυνός οὔτ' τε κέντρο
\]

Callimachus is no Archilochus, nor does he wish to be.

There may be a further twist in the use of Βαττιώδης in place of the poet’s own name in 30. Since 29 plays with the etymology of Callimachus’ name, there may be significance in Battus’ also. Whether or not Callimachus’ father was named Battus (the joke may lie in the impossibility of the reader’s being certain), the name evokes the founder of Cyrene, whose name has two etymologies. Battus was “king” in Libyan according to Herodotus (4.155.2), “stutterer” in Greek, and his legendary biography links the two. Going to the Delphic oracle for advice on a cure for his speech impediment, he was commanded to found a colony in Libya instead, in the Cyrenean account (Herod. 4.155.3, Pindar P.4.63). Callimachus appears to deny the tradition of the stammer at Hymn 2.76, where his ancestor is οὖλος Ἀριστοτέλες, presumably "entire". His greatness as poet thus confirms the alternate tradition, or compensates for the ancient deficiency. Of military/political glory the Battids already had an abundance, but Callimachus has given them a famous voice. At the same time, the epitaph’s division of Callimachus’

3 Callimachus does, of course, use Archilochus, both metrically and more broadly; see W. Bührer, Archilochus und Kallimachus, in Archiloque, Entretiens Hardt 10 (Geneva 1964) 225-47.

6 That does not mean, however, that the later polemics of wine and water need be read back into Callimachus, for whom water is not important in itself; see P. Knox, Wine, Water, and Callimachean Polemics, HSCP 89, 1985, 107-119.

7 On the name, see B. K. Braswell, A Commentary on the Fourth Pythian Ode of Pindar, Berlin 1988, 149-50.

8 See F. Williams, Callimachus: Hymn to Apollo, Oxford 1978, on 76 (p. 69-70).
abilities into song and conviviality surely marks the absence of the military/political realm. This is particularly clever because the claim that the Muses loved Callimachus from childhood echoes Hesiod, Theog. 81ff. There, however, the recipients of the Muses’ favor are kings:

ή γὰρ καὶ βασιλεύσιν ὀμοίοιοις ὑπηδεῖ.
όντινα τιμήσουσι Δίος κούρασε μεγάλοιο
γεινόμενον τε ἱδοσὶ διοτρεφέον βασιλῆυν,
τὸ μὲν ἐπὶ γλῶσσῃ γλυκερὴν χείουσιν ἐέρησην,
τοῦ δὲ ἐπε’ ἐκ στόματος ἐτύλιξα...

Battus did not have this gift of the Muses, but his descendant did.

The father claims that his son’s poetry was more powerful than envy, and then defends his making such an assertion by claiming it as a general truth that the Muses are faithful to those they have looked up favorably as children⁹. The claim requires both moral defense and substantive support not just because it is (indirect) self-praise, but because it is inherently suspect to make a claim about the overall achievement of anyone who is still alive. In his own voice in the “Aetia”-preface, Callimachus depicts himself as still struggling against baskanivh in his old age (32-36), and the love of the Muses from childhood does not guarantee the end of that struggle¹⁰.

There is, though, no actual initiation by the Muses in Callimachus’ childhood. Although Apollo first speaks to Callimachus when he picks up a writing tablet ("Aetia" 1.21) – that is, when he first drafted a poem/went to school – the Schol. Flor. says that when he had his dream-meeting with the Muses he was ἀρτιγέγειος – young, but not a child – and that he questioned them about aetiologies, hardly a childish interest. The father states the continuity of the Muses’ love as a general truth. It is, indeed, an obvious inference that the father is guessing at his son’s achievement; he must refer to the Muses’ love for his son as a child, because he has not witnessed Callimachus’ old age. There is thus a gentle pathos in his boast. At the same time, the reader is aware that although the speaker of the poem is dead, the implied author is not.

There are surprisingly few passages in ancient literature where biographers place poets, or poets place themselves, in a direct connection with the Muse as children. The obvious parallels for the epitaph are the passage of Hesiod quoted above, and the imitation in Horace Car. 4.3. The relationship with Hesiod may be as important for what Callimachus excludes as for what he includes. It is signifi-

⁹ E. Livrea, L’Epitaphio Callimacheo per Batto, argues that the individual favored by the Muses is the father (Battus) himself, who as a child enjoyed his father’s fame, as an old man his son’s: but οὐ νέμεσις must defend a potentially shocking assertion, which can only be that Callimachus’ poetry was more powerful than βοσκανή.

¹⁰ οὐ νέμεσις, if it is the right supplement at “Aetia” 1.38, defends the potentially impious wish to escape old age through divine intervention.
cant that Callimachus does not speak of the Muses’ favor from his birth, nor does anything in 29 negotiate the change from the Hesiodic gift of political eloquence to that of song. Furthermore, having the father as speaker complicates the claim. Callimachus has direct knowledge of his lifelong intimacy with the Muses, so he can easily speak of his friendship with Muses from childhood in his own voice. What is the father’s proof that the Muses loved his son from childhood?

Horace uses the Callimachean expression for the choice of lives:

*Quem tu, Melpomene, semel
nascentem placido lumine videris
illum non labor Isthmius…* (4.3.1-3)

The man favored by the Muse does not become the types he names as foils, the successful athlete and the triumphant general, but, clearly, Horace:

*sed quae Tibur aquae fertile praefluent
et spissae nemorum comae
fingent Aeolio carmine nobilem.* (10-13)

If Horace has successfully imported Greek lyric into an Italian landscape – as the reception of the first three books of “Carmina”, and the favor of Augustus, demonstrate that he has – the favor of the Muses from his birth can be inferred. While this favor is the conclusion in logic, in the narrative it is the beginning. Horace’s poetry, like Callimachus’ has been victorious over envy (et iam dente minus mordeo invido, 16). He can speak of this success as a biographical fact, since he speaks in his own person – and he does not say that envy has completely vanished.

Callimachus’ poem, like Horace’s, seems to infer the story of the Muses’ favor from the outcome, but the dead father lacks the authority of a witness. The poem thus evokes a ghost of a story, a biographical fact that would have told the father that the Muses favored his son (like the one Horace offers at Carm. 3.4.9-20). It is hard to imagine that Callimachus ever narrated a specific miracle-story about his own childhood, but the tradition of such stories surely lies behind the father’s assertion. Yet few of the miracle-stories about ancient poets actually include the Muses as actors. Horace has doves (C.3.4), Pindar a bee (Vita fr. 1. 6-9). Euripides’ father has an oracle that he will win crowns (Vita 2, Aulus Gellius xv.20). The poet’s story that brings together the father and the Muses, though, is that of Archilochus on the Mnesiepes inscription (T 4, E 1 col. II 23-55 TARDITI). The young Archilochus, sent to fetch a cow for sale, meets and mocks a group of women; they respond with amusement (μετὰ παιδίας καὶ γέλατος), and offer him a good price for his cow, whereupon they and the cow disappear, leaving a lyre. Archilochus tells his father what happened, and the Delphic oracle promises the father that whichever son first greets him when he returns to Paros will be famous:

*Ἄβανατός σοι πάτις καὶ οιδίμος, ὁ Τελεσίκλεις,
ἐστιν ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, ὡς ἂμ πρῶτος σε προσείπει
νήμος ἀποθρώσκοντα φίλην εἰς πατρίδα γαῖν.*
The absence of such a story is conspicuous. In its place, the poem offers Callimachian style: the epitaph invites its reader to consider the corpus of Callimachian poetry in order to decide whether the boast is justified. (If there is an allusion to the "Aetia", it supports this invitation, but there is no basis for deciding which poem is earlier). The Muses, we may suspect, love Callimachus in part because he refuses to give himself a myth.

II. Writing on Apples: AP 5.80 and 5.79

AP 5.80 ("Plato" V FGE) is one of the Hellenistic erotic epigrams attributed to Plato by Diogenes Laertius (3.32) and the AP11:

Μήλον ἐγὼ βάλλει με φιλόν σέ τις, ἀλλ’ ἐπίνευσον,
Ξανθίππη’ κάγω καὶ σὺ μαρανόμεθα.

The epigram is evidently dependent on the immediately preceding poem, AP 5.79 (IV FGE):

Τῷ μήλῳ βάλλω σὲ’ σὺ δ’ εἰ μὲν ἐκοῦσα φιλέτις με,
δεξιμένη τῆς σῆς παρθενίς μετάδος,
εἰ δ’ ἄρ’, ὅ μη γίγνοιτο, νοείς, τούτ’ αὐτό λαβούσα
σκέψαι τὴν ὀρθὴν ὡς ὀλιγοχόρονος.

A careful reading of these texts can give a new twist to the revived discussion of the old question of the relation between inscribed and fictive epigram. Recent scholarship has shown how Callimachus especially plays with the conventions of inscription and invites attention to the process of reading13. The question in AP 5.80 is not “Aufschrift oder nicht?” in any literal sense; nobody would think that the poem transcribes a real inscription. However, readers have assumed that the

11 W. LUDWIG, Plato’s Love epigrams, GRBS 4, 1963, 59-82, demonstrated that these are Hellenistic epigrams. There was a collection of epigrams under Plato’s name c. 250 BCE; see D. L. PAGE, Further Greek Epigrams, Cambridge 1981, 125-26. It is uncertain whether these poems belonged in that collection, however; although Meleager accepted it as Plato’s, he does not seem to have taken amatory epigrams from it.

12 νοείς is probably corrupt (ὁ μὴ γίγνοιτο would have to be the object of νοείς, which does not give a satisfactory sense). Of the possible corrections, οὐκεις seems best.

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fiction of the poem is that it is an inscription. PAGE remarks that the first epigram is spoken by the lover who throws the apple, while the second “pretends to be an inscription on the apple itself”14.

Since inscribed apples are so familiar a motif in Greek, it is indeed easy, at first glance, to see 5.80 as a pseudo-inscription. Yet on a closer reading it quickly becomes clear that there is actually no fiction of inscriptionality here. If we consider the opening in the light of the principle that real inscriptions do not provide unnecessary description of the monument, the baldness of the Überinformation that opens 5.80 is truly astonishing. This is a case where the description of the “monument” is completely otiose. Some kinds of “unnecessary” information, to be sure, appear in real inscriptions, either to simplify the expression or to evoke pathos, as in the archaic Argive epitaph for a young man that refers to his burial near the hippodrome because he was ἀνθρωπόφορος (CEG 136).

An apple, however, does not need to tell the recipient that it is, indeed, an apple. No Greek inscription says μηνήμα εἶμι without a genitive15. As an inscription, this would be truly silly. It would not have been difficult to convey the information that the message is written on an apple in a form that would make the gap between the poem and a possible inscription less obvious and crude. The reader should immediately suspect a parody of epigraphic form. The following sentence is not much better. Throwing an apple is a characteristic behavior in Greek erotic literature16. If Xanthippe needs an inscription before recognizing a tossed apple as a love-token, she is not a likely heroine for romance.

Not only does the little poem contain too much information of a completely unnecessary kind, it contains no information of value. Any girl can see that the apple means she has an admirer; but this apple does not have his name on it. Indeed, by referring to the thrower as τῷ it makes a point of lacking the name; it does not come from an ἐγώ she would know, or at least recognize as the thrower if she looked in the right direction. Instead it has her name, which she presumably knows already. To be sure, letters normally include the name of the addressee, and letters in Greek literature often go astray, so that her name has practical value. Still, the presence of her name makes the absence of his, for which there is no excuse if the reader imagines an inscription on the apple, especially salient. Furthermore, there would hardly be room for the following argument on a piece of fruit. So it becomes clear that although the style of poem evokes inscription, the poem obviously does not work as an imagined inscription. Rather the reader must reconsider what is being conveyed: since the poem is not even pretending to pretend to be an inscription, what is it doing?

14 PAGE, Further Greek Epigrams 163. This is the general assumption in discussions of the poem.
16 A. R. LITTLEWOOD, The Symbolism of the Apple in Greek and Roman Literature, HSCP 72 (1967) 147-182; cf. Gow on Theocritus 5.88 and Longus 1.24.3 and 3.34.
5.79 is similarly odd if it is read too literally. A man who throws an apple does not simultaneously announce that he is performing precisely this action. If we imagine the situation, the speech is as superfluous in the relation to the action as the writing would be. On the other hand, the rest of the imagined speech is not superfluous, but does not fit the situation: he offers a “carpe diem” argument that is surely at odds with the throwing of the apple, which supposes that the man is at some distance from the girl and not in a position to attempt a verbal seduction.

It is likely that the two epigrams are not variants on the same theme placed next to one another by an anthologist, but a pair set side by side that comment on and complete each other, an implicit narrative (Fortsetzungsepigramme)\(^\text{17}\). Another famous pair of poems, on the beloved as a star (AP 7.669, 670, “Plato” I and II FGE), are found in the group attributed to Plato. Here, too, the two read together are richer than either alone; in the first the lover watches the beloved “star” as the beloved gazes at the night sky. It is clearly deep night, with a sky full of stars. In the second poem, though, the beloved is reconceived as having belonged to the morning twilight in life, and to the evening twilight in death, and the beloved is now in a sky in which other stars are faint, if they are visible at all. The lover’s change of vision creates an implicit narrative in which the pathos of the second poem shadows the first. In the apple poems, too, there is a narrative: the man’s throw is successful; the apple reaches the girl and is read; she fully understands the message. The story stops without telling the reader its outcome. In such an interpretation, though, it is even clearer that 5.79 is imitating thought rather than speech, since otherwise the lover first writes his message, then says it\(^\text{18}\).

The reader thus needs to realize that the first poem is not an imitation of real speech, nor is the second an imitation of an inscription. An apple does not announce that it is an apple, nor does it need to explain that it is a love-token, because the recipient understands them immediately. 5.80 makes perfect sense, however, if we understand it as a stylized verbalization of the process of “reading” the apple, which is not inscribed: the girl sees first that the apple is an apple, and then interprets what it means that an apple has been thrown to her. She does not immediately know who has thrown it, so that the lover can only be τις. Since such

\(^{17}\) There has been considerable interest recently in such “paired” epigrams (the most famous being Callimachus 21, 35=29, 30 HE), for discussion and references, see Kirstein, Companion Pieces in the Hellenistic Epigram. For the pairing with and without the name as Hellenistic technique, see O. Weinreich, Zwei Epigramme: Dioskorides V 138 und Krinagoras IX 429, WS 59, 1941, 73. It is notable that the Catullan instances he cites are all separated in the extant collection (69/71; 70/72; 85/87; 107/109).

\(^{18}\) Ludwig 80 points out also that all these four epigrams are stylistically similar; they are likely to be by the same author. S. Mariotti, Da Platone agli Epigrammi Bobbiesi, Studi Urbinati 41 NS B 1-2, 1967, 1073-77, argues that 5.80 is a variation of 5.79, with the author demonstrating his skill by transforming 5.79 into one distich. If they are not by the same author, it still seems to me likely that the later was composed as a complement, to create a narrative, not as an emulative variant.
non-verbal understanding can only be represented through the existing conventions, and since the apple functions as a message, the poem presents the apple’s message, as the girl interprets it, as if it were a first-person statement, either the speech of the apple-as-messenger or writing on it. However, this is neither speech nor writing, but the girl’s understanding of the meaning of the blank apple. It is not surprising that she puts her own name into the apple’s voice; she feels herself addressed. In “reading,” she provides her apprehension of meaning with the attributes of a verbal message.

In retrospect, then, the first poem also becomes clear as the representation not of speech but of the mental activity that accompanies the throwing of the apple. It articulates what the thrower means to convey to the girl, whose name he does not use, with the possible implication that he does not know it. As the gesture indicates, he can see the girl but not speak to her; equally, in 5.80 she can enter visual but not verbal contact with him (ἐπίνευσον). Remarkably, sender and recipient interpret the message exactly the same way, comparing the short period of ripeness of the fruit to that of the girl. The first poem explains the meaning of the apple as a love-token to the one who offers it, and the second shows that a recipient who, whether she will be convinced or not, understands this meaning precisely. So the two epigrams appear to be not parallel developments of the topic, but a narrative pair. The two together present a story of a message successfully conveyed.

The omission of the lover’s name and of the outcome opens one possibility for filling the narrative gap. If the name “Xanthippe” led to the poem’s attribution to Plato, although in the original context the name was random or referred to a real, contemporary Xanthippe, the poems would not have pointed to any particular way of supplementing their information. However, Diogenes Laertius (3.29-32) cites in sequence I and II (the “star” poems, AP 7.669, 670), the erotic epitaph for Dion (X, AP 7.99), the epigram on Alexis that refers to the loss of Phaedrus (VI, AP 7.100), the poem on Archeanassa (IX, a version of Asclepiades XLI GOW-PAGE, AP 7.217), the epigram on Agathon (III, AP 5.77), and the apple-poems. He refers for the stories behind the first three to a book περὶ παλαιᾶς τρυφῆς by one “Aristippus,” a collection of scandalous anecdotes about famous men of the past, but to other sources for his love for Phaedrus:

Αριστίππας δ’ ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ Περὶ παλαιᾶς τρυφῆς φησίν αὐτὸν Ἀστέρος μειρακίου τινὸς ἀστρολογεῖν συνασκομένου ἔρισθήναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ Δίονος τοῦ προειρημένου ἔννοι καὶ Φαίδρου φασί δηλοῦν δὲ τὸν ἔρωτα αὐτοῦ τάδε τὰ ἐπιγράμματα, ἢ καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν γενέσθαι εἰς αὐτοὺς ... 

19 Philodemus has a Xanthippe (XI Page, AP 5.131; XVII Page, AP 11.41), but he has little in common with the author of these epigrams (his speakers do not share the sentiment of Philodemus XVII, that thirty-seven is an age at which it is time to end the erotic/symposiastic life).
Too many of these contain recognizably "Socratic" names for it to seem likely that "Aristippus" simply happened to find miscellaneous erotic epigrams that included names useful for his biographical fantasies. On the other hand, in the case of the star poems, Aristippus or his sources evidently took erotic poems already attributed to Plato and interpreted them for biographical purposes. Diogenes' reference to others who attest Plato's love for Phaedrus makes it very likely that the poems had an existence independent of Aristippus. The pairings of I and II, IV and V, are a strong indication that these were book-epigrams. The sequence would thus seem to be that a Hellenistic sylloge included poems deliberately evoking the Socratic circle, as well as other erotic poems that did not. This was probably not the Platonic sylloge known to Meleager, but since Plato was a known epigrammatist, it was not surprisingly attributed to Plato. The biographical tradition then assumed that Plato was not only the author, but the speaker of all the epigrams, and constructed biographical fictions accordingly\textsuperscript{20}.

Once the apple-poems are placed in the context of such a collection, Ergänzungspiel comes into play. In the interpretation of these and the other epigrams attributed to Plato, the question of authenticity has unfortunately muddled all other questions, so that scholars have tended to make the same assumptions as the ancient biographers. Yet there is no need to assume that a collection of erotic poems that played with characters from the Socratic circle, circulating under Plato's name, would have to consist entirely of poems in Plato's voice.

In epigram, identifying the speaker can be part of the process of reading and interpretation. For example, some of the epitaphs for Timon, AP 7.313, 314 (Ptolemaeus II FGE), 316, and 318 (Callimachus 3 Pfeiffer, LI GOW-PAGE) make a point of the deceased's refusal to provide his name. The fun lies partly in figuring it out (AP's lemma ruin the wit of these poems). If 7.318 is indeed by Callimachus, it too is one of a pair in which 7.317 (4 Pfeiffer, LI GOW-PAGE) has the name that the companion-piece omits.\textsuperscript{21} 7.349, a parody of the famous epigram on Timocreon of Rhodes, attributed to Simonides (7.348, "Simonides" xxxvii FGE), could well be Timon, too:

\begin{quote}
Βαία φοράνοι καὶ βαία πιάν καὶ πολλὰ νοσήσας

\&

διέ μὲν, ἀλλ' ἐθνον. ἔρρετε πάντες όμοι.
\end{quote}

Callimachus 29 GOW-PAGE=21 Pfeiffer, discussed above, does not give the name of the deceased, but identifies his father and his son\textsuperscript{22}.

\textsuperscript{20} The Archaeanassa-poem presents special problems; see A. S. F. Gow and D. L. Page, Hellenistic Epigrams, Cambridge 1965, ii. 145; Gutzwiller, Poetic Garlands, 254.

\textsuperscript{21} On its authenticity, see Gow and Page, Hellenistic Epigrams, ii. 203 (on ii). On the two epigrams, see Gutzwiller, Poetic Garlands 197-98. I would not, however, assume that poets always placed companion poems next to each other.

\textsuperscript{22} I do not think that Callimachus' father was named "Battus," but that Callimachus' epitaph for himself (35 Pfeiffer, 30 HE) extends the joke, both by refusing to name Callimachus himself, and by offering a pseudo-patronymic.
AP 5.77=III Page is bizarre if the speaker is Plato, twenty years younger than Agathon, but nothing demands that the speaker not be Socrates, or Agathon’s lover Pausanias. The speaker of AP 7.99 is surely Plato; the opening reference to Hecuba and the Trojan women probably relies on the well-known tradition (DL 3.5) that Plato composed tragedies as a young man. VI is problematic if we assume, as Diogenes apparently did, that Alexis is the comic poet. Certainly Plato could not have been a lover of Phaedrus. If, however, the Alexis is someone else — perhaps the trierarch of that name mentioned in Lysias 32.24 — again Socrates would be a possible speaker. Or the author could intend Plato as the speaker and be careless about chronology.

In the context of a “Platonic” collection, the first apple-epigram is a complete puzzle. However, once it is connected with its companion, the obvious candidate for Xanthippe’s lover, if we choose to imagine who he is, must be Socrates, the self-proclaimed authority on matters erotic. On such a reading of the apple-poems, the second epigram becomes a rather cruel joke with the revelation of the name of Socrates’ notoriously discontented wife. This love story does not have a happy ending, and the speaker of the first, who one at first assumes is a young man, turns out to be middle-aged.

Whether or not this suggestion is convincing, the two epigrams clearly participate in two significant tendencies within Hellenistic epigram. First, the poems’ depiction of an act of interpretation as it takes place has parallels in Callimachus. In other instances, the development takes place within a single poem, but the process is similar, and likewise plays with reading. Walsh points to 15, where the reader is depicted in the act of realizing that a tomb-inscription commemorates someone known to him, and to 30, where the poet interprets the sorry condition of an acquaintance.

Callimachus 18 is most like the “Plato” poems in its transformation of reader’s interpretation into apparent inscription. It offers the kind of information a genuine inscription would — name, ethnic, manner of death — but concludes with a shift to the first person:

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Naxios ouk epi gei ethanein Lupoj, alle eni pinto
naiw aima kai psychi eidein apollamven,
epikoros Agignon othe pleue eho en vphri
nekros, ego de allros oinomia timboi eche
kharisqo paraletises epi tode: feughe thalasse
summigei Eriothen, nautile, doumenein.
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The shift to direct speech divides the informative section from the moral, which is surely drawn by the reader as he contemplates the facts, rather than imagined as

23 C. M. BOWRA, Problems in Greek Poetry, Oxford 1953, 128 made this suggestion, but in the context of defending Plato’s authorship.
inscribed\textsuperscript{25}. The viewer interprets the object, but in framing the message gives it back to the speaking object. As in 5.80, the reader recognizes that the epigram narrates interpretation rather than transcribing an inscription at precisely the moment the object speaks. Even if this poem actually stood somewhere on stone – unlikely, but not perhaps impossible – as a book-text it evokes a more “normal” ghost-inscription\textsuperscript{26}.

At the same time, the apple-epigrams are exegetical, unlike the Callimachean parallels. They explain why lovers throw apples, as AP 16.275 (Posidippus 19 Gow-P\textsc{age}) explains the iconography of Lysippus’ statue, or AP 7.421-429 speculate on the meaning of various imagined sepulchral decorations. For moderns, the connection between the fruit and the brevity of beauty is obvious. In Greek poetry, those past their bloom may be overripe, as Neoboule is πέπειρα (Archil. 196a.26 \textsc{West}) and Theocritus’ Philinus is ἀπό τοιο πεπείρησ (7.120). However, there appears to be no other text from antiquity that makes this association in a context of seduction, even though the use of apples as love-tokens is frequent, and Asclepiades uses a similar carpe diem argument in AP 5.85. Indeed, the apples of erotic poetry are not infrequently golden, and not at all perishable. In Argentarius (AP 5.118, XI \textsc{Page}) Rufinus (AP 5.74, XXVIII \textsc{Page}), a garland replaces the apple. So the treatment of the apple as symbolizing the brevity of youth is actually an original interpretation. The epigrams present it with special intensity because both lover and beloved understand it in the same way independently, and with extraordinary subtlety, since it is transferred to the characters and not presented as a problem in need of solution.

\textsuperscript{25} The only parallel in the category “Sonstige an den Wanderer gerichtete Rede: Zuspruch, Belehrung, Warnungen, Wünsche, Verwünschungen” (\textsc{Peek 1359-1383}) is AP 7.660 (which is equally unlikely ever to have been inscribed).

\textsuperscript{26} The bronze cock who speaks 56 does not himself know why he was dedicated, but he trusts the dedicator – yet the obvious source of his knowledge of what Evaenetus claims would be the “real” inscription this epigram replaces.