

Fantasy and Metaphor in Meleager

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MELEAGER OF GADARA IS ONE OF THOSE INCREASINGLY RARE GREEK AUTHORS whose works are somewhat known to many classicists but whose influence on ancient and later literature remains underappreciated. Meleager's anthology of Greek epigrams called the *Garland* produced Latin imitations shortly after its creation in the early first century B.C.E., and allusions to Meleager's own, mostly erotic poems are found in prominent programmatic passages of Latin poetry. Examples include the first three poems and the last poem of the Catullan *liber*, the opening of Propertius's *Monobiblos*, the first speech in Vergil's *Eclogue* 1, and the opening lines of Tibullus 1.2.¹ I would assert that as a model for Latin erotic poetry Meleager rivals Callimachus in both direct allusions and as a source of *topoi* and imagery. Alessandro Barchiesi has spoken of the *Garland* as a model for elegant poetry books because of its careful arrangements,² but what was it about Meleager's own poetry that appealed to Roman poets? Pointing toward an answer to that question, I here examine

¹ Catull. 1 and 116, the beginning and end of the *liber* as we have it, contain a complicated and interrelated series of allusions to the proem and concluding epigram of Meleager's *Garland* (*Anth. Pal.* 4.1, 12.257). The paired sparrow poems (Catull. 2–3) owe much to Meleager's paired insect epigrams (*Anth. Pal.* 7.195–96), while Verg. *Ecl.* 1.1–2 supplements its allusions to Theocritean pastoral with clear imitations of Mel. *Anth. Pal.* 7.196.2, 8. For these Catullan and Vergilian allusions, see Gutzwiller 2012: 90–99. Prop. 1 is famously indebted to Mel. *Anth. Pal.* 12.101; see Schulz-Vanheyden 1969: 114–26. Tib. 1.2.1–4 closely imitates *Anth. Pal.* 12.49, which was apparently the first epigram by Meleager in the *erotica* section of the *Garland*; see Maltby 1995; 2002 on *Anth. Pal.* 12.49; 2011: 89–91.

² Barchiesi 2005: 322–23.

some unique features of Meleager's poetry involving his use of fantasy and metaphor, which distinguish him from the epigrammatists he anthologized.

When poets of the third century B.C.E. adapted verse inscriptions to book epigrams, the most paradoxical new type of epigram was the erotic, because there was no tradition of lover's speech versified for inscription. To cite a motif shared by Meleager and Catullus, a lover's words are written not on stone, but on wind and water (*Anth. Pal.* 5.8; Catull. 70).³ In the erotic section of the *Garland* Meleager worked variation after variation on the tropes of Asclepiades, Callimachus, and other epigrammatists; by grouping these poems in short sequences on related themes, he gave his own compositions an intertextual context through juxtaposition with his models. But despite persistent, acknowledged borrowing, Meleager's epigrams have a different texture and effect. He takes his amatory mode to a place far from inscription, to a place of interiority where image and fantasy interact to convey the felt experience of desire. Like other emotions, desire cannot be seen directly, but may be intuited by those with similar experience. Callimachus explains in one epigram that he can spot the hidden heartache of a fellow symposiast just as a thief recognizes a thief (*Anth. Pal.* 12.134). For Meleager it is not enough to know it when you see it. He is rather concerned to convey directly to the reader's senses, through words and imagery, what it is like to be a desiring self, someone who cannot escape the cycle of desire and longing for some delicate youth or some charming woman. His method of doing so is to concretize in image, and even to site in the body, *eros* itself in the form of god and feeling and beloved, all together. For Meleager, the truth of the soul's experience of desire can only be told through metaphor, dream, and fantasy.

A long sequence of epigrams by anthologized poets from the *erotica* section of the *Garland* is preserved in the Greek Anthology. As I showed some years ago, it begins with an epigram cluster thematizing a symposium setting with wine, garlands, love, and song.⁴ There we find a pair of poems on Meleager's beloved Heliadora (*Anth. Pal.* 5.136):

ἔγχει καὶ πάλιν εἰπέ, πάλιν πάλιν, Ἥλιοδώρας·
εἰπέ, σὺν ἀκρήτῳ τὸ γλυκὺ μίσγ' ὄνομα.
καὶ μοι τὸν βρεχθέντα μύροις καὶ χθιζὸν ἔόντα,
μναμόσυνον κείνας, ἀμφιτίθει στέφανον.

³ Although Planudes attributes *Anth. Pal.* 5.8 to Philodemus, the attribution to Meleager in the Palatine Anthology is undoubtedly correct, since the thematic sequence of *Anth. Pal.* 5.6–8 was almost certainly extracted from the *Garland*.

⁴ Gutzwiller 1997; see also Höschele 2009: 104–21; 2010: 197–215.

δακρῦει φιλέραστον, ἰδοῦ, ῥόδον, οὔνεκα κείναν
 ἄλλοθι κοῦ κόλποις ἡμετέροις ἔσορᾶ.⁵

Pour and say again, again and again, “for Heliodora.”
 Say it, mingling her sweet name with pure wine.
 And crown me with that garland soaked in scent, the one
 from yesterday, in remembrance of her.
 Look, a rose, the friend of lovers, weeps because it sees
 her not in my arms, but elsewhere.⁶

The companion epigram is as follows (*Anth. Pal.* 5.137):

ἔγχει τᾶς Πειθοῦς καὶ Κύπριδος Ἥλιοδώρας
 καὶ πάλι τᾶς αὐτᾶς ἀδυλόγου Χάριτος·
 αὐτὰ γὰρ μί’ ἐμοὶ γράφεται θεός, ἅς τὸ ποθεινόν
 οὔνομ’ ἐν ἀκρήτῳ συγκεράσας πίομαι.

Pour a cup for Persuasion and Cypris Heliodora,
 and again for the same sweet-speaking Grace,
 since for me she is written as one goddess. Her much-longed-for
 name I will drink down, mixed with pure wine.

The call for the slave to pour wine, an old poetic motif, signals the symposium setting. Yet the dramatized speech act is not quite what it seems, but unstable, filled with symbols and duality. The symposium, a place where erotic epigrams were likely recited, may be read here as an image of the amatory collection itself, which presumably filled a whole bookroll of epigrams. The neat wine mixed not with water but with Heliodora’s name evokes the custom of toasting the beloved, but what matters here is the sound of the name, the synaesthesia of the word Heliodora, sweet as wine. The symposium act of putting on the garland points to the anthologizer taking up his own place as poet within his *Garland*—yet with a wreath that is faded, soaked with scent, resonant of yesterday—that is, a trope of love’s loss. Meleager thus begins his *erotica* with the beloved absent, untrue, as Propertius begins his *Monobiblos* with the year-long torments of loving Cynthia (1.1). Drifting into fantasy, Meleager’s lover conceives the perfume dripping from a flower in the garland as sympathetic tears, shed because the rose—a Sapphic image⁷—has the capacity to visual-

⁵The text of Meleager printed throughout is based on that of Gow–Page 1965; deviations, apart from the retention of manuscript readings and differences in punctuation, are discussed in the notes.

⁶All translations are my own.

⁷E.g., Sappho fr. 55.2–3; cf. Philostr. *Epist.* 51, ἡ Σαπφῶ τοῦ ῥόδου ἐρᾶ (“Sappho loves the rose”). For allusions to Sappho in Meleager, see Citti 1978–1979.

ize Heliadora in the arms of another. In the second epigram, she is toasted as a Muse-like goddess, synonymous with persuasion, sexiness, and “sweet-speaking” charm, the χάρις that elsewhere characterizes Meleager’s style.⁸ As a written goddess, the precursor of Propertius’s *scripta puella*, Heliadora in her absence provides the “longed-for” (ποθεινόν) name that the poet/lover will take into his body, mixed in wine. At the beginning of the *erotica*, in this symposium elevated to the imaginary, Meleager internalizes what is permanent about Heliadora, that is, the vocalic flow of her name that will dwell within him as the matrix of qualities informing his verse.

Versions of fantasy return again and again in Meleager’s erotic epigrams, as in a poem that continues the leitmotif of longing for Heliadora (*Anth. Pal.* 5.166):

ὦ Νύξ, ὦ φιλάγρυπνος ἔμοι πόθος Ἥλιοδώρας
καὶ σκολιῶν ὄρκων⁹ κνίσματα δακρυχαρῆ,
ἄρα μένει στοργῆς ἐμὰ λείψανα, κᾶτι¹⁰ φίλημα
μνημόσυνον ψυχρᾶ θάλπετ’ ἐν εἰκασίᾳ;¹¹
ἄρά γ’ ἔχει σύγκοιτα τὰ δάκρυα, κάμῶν ὄνειρον
ψυχαπάτην στέρνοις ἀμφιβαλοῦσα φιλεῖ;
ἦ νέος ἄλλος ἔρωσ, νέα παίγνια; μήποτε, λύχνε,
ταῦτ’ ἐσίδησ, εἴης δ’ ἦς παρέδωκα φύλαξ.

O Night, O longing for Heliadora that adores sleeplessness,
and you torments that joy in my tears over her false oaths,
are there still remnants of her devotion to me, and is a kiss
as a remembrance still warmed in her cold fancy?

Does she have tears as a bedpartner? Does she pull to her breast
and kiss a soul-deceiving dream image of me?

Or is there some new love, a new dalliance? Don’t gaze, lamp,
upon that, but guard the girl I entrusted to you.

Meleager apostrophizes Night as our only clue to the setting and objectifies his own longing and mental torments as if they were internal demons that

⁸ As evident from his self-epitaphs: *Anth. Pal.* 7.416, 7.417.3–4, 7.419.3–4, 7.421.13–14.

⁹ The reading ὄρκων is my own conjecture; the Palatine manuscript had ὀρθῶν before correction and has ὀρθῶν after correction. For the theme of betrayal by false swearing in Meleager, see *Anth. Pal.* 5.8, 5.175 (κενὸς ὄρκος, 1), 5.184 (ἐπίορκε, 3).

¹⁰ κᾶτι is an emendation by Purgold 1802: 289 for a corrupt text in the Palatine Codex; καὶ τι, printed by Gow-Page, descends from a 17th c. apographon *Parisinus gr.* 2742.

¹¹ I print the conjecture ἐν εἰκασίᾳ made by Graefe 1811: no. 103, with discussion 123–24.

rejoice in torturing him. Revealing the fantasies that constitute these torments, he wonders whether Heliadora's love remains, whether she too is wakeful, dreaming of his kiss, weeping.¹² Imagining Heliadora longing as he longs, the poet creates a fancy of a fancy, which restores the two lovers to emotional oneness despite their separation. Then suddenly the possibility of a new lover dawns, and in panicked reaction, he commands the lamp to cease its watch, not only suggesting the usual presence of the lit lamp in sexual intimacy but also activating his own mental darkness—and so the end of the epigram.¹³ The role of the lamp, given sentience like the rose, and impossibly existing both here and there, illustrates how Meleager's erotic poetry transforms the material objects of his lived world into objective correlatives, symbolic sympathizers for his feelings and experiences.

In other examples, the fantasy of sympathy from nature's creatures takes a humorous turn, as in an epigram where the poet engages in role-playing with a mosquito (*Anth. Pal.* 5.152):

παίης μοι, κώνωψ, ταχύς ἄγγελος, οὔασι δ' ἄκροις
 Ζηνοφίλας ψαύσας προσψιθύριζε τάδε·
 “ἄγρυπνος μίμνει σε· σὺ δ', ὦ λήθαργε φιλοῦντων,
 εὔδεις.” εἶα, πέτευ· ναί, φιλόμουσε, πέτευ·
 ἦσυχά δὲ φθέγγξαι, μὴ καὶ σύγκοιτον ἐγείρας
 κινήσης ἐπ' ἐμοὶ ζηλοτύπους ὀδύνας.
 ἦν δ' ἀγάγης τὴν παιῖδα, δορᾶ στέψω σε λέοντος,
 κώνωψ, καὶ δώσω χειρὶ φέρειν ῥόπαλον.

Fly for me, mosquito, swift messenger, and just grazing the tip
 of Zenophila's ears, whisper this,
 “Awake, he waits for you. But you, forgetful of your lovers,
 just sleep.” Come now, friend of the Muse, fly, fly.
 But do speak softly, so that you don't wake her companion
 and provoke painful blows of jealousy against me.
 If you manage to bring the girl, I'll crown you, mosquito,
 with a lion skin and give you a club for your hand.

The poet, alone, imagining a rival in bed with Zenophila, seeks help from a stray mosquito, who is sent off as a ταχύς ἄγγελος (“swift messenger”), a formula applied by Homer to Zeus's eagle (*Il.* 24.292, 310) and Apollo's hawk

¹²On dreams and images as fantasies in the Anthology, see Plastira-Valkanou 1999: 276–77; on dreams in Meleager, see Susanetti 1999, esp. 50–51.

¹³For the motif of the extinction of the lamp as a presumed hindrance to lovemaking, see Asclepiades *Anth. Pal.* 5.7, with the discussion of Sens 2011: 57–59, 62.

(*Od.* 15.526). The epic parallel sets up the mock-heroic parody that informs the poem. Meleager is fond of role-playing, by himself and others, as another method of giving real-world concreteness to emotion-driven fantasies. Here the mosquito mimics not just divinely favored birds but also magic messengers known from erotic incantations.¹⁴ In these, a demon or often Eros himself is dispatched by a lover to lead a woman from her home to his bed; the technical term for such an incantation was ἀγωγή, suggested by the verb ἀγάγη (“you bring”) in the last couplet.¹⁵ In the poet’s dream of nature’s sympathy, the mosquito is also addressed as φιλόμουσε (“friend of the Muse”). That expression typically designates lovers of music and poetry, often patrons of the arts,¹⁶ and the poetic quality of the insect’s whispered buzz in Zenophila’s ear is made clear in the sibilant sounds of the opening couplet (πταίης . . . , κώνωψ, ταχὺς ἄγγελος, οὔασι δ’ ἄκροις | Ζηνοφίλας ψαύσας προσψιθύριξε). In Meleager’s vivid imagination the mosquito as messenger becomes a supporter and devotee of his poetry. The concluding promise to crown the little insect with the garb of Heracles reinforces the mock-heroic mode with yet more complex associations. The figure who takes away Heracles’ accoutrements in Hellenistic art is Eros, a small winged creature like the mosquito.¹⁷ This intertwining of associations so that the mosquito plays the role of poet, hero, god, and demonic messenger all at once showcases Meleager’s love of patterned meaning, all in the interests of staging the mad fantasies of a desperate lover.

In the recent awakening of interest in epigram as a genre, one of the most fruitful concepts has been Peter Bing’s discussion of what is called “Ergänzungsspiel,” meaning literally “play with completion.”¹⁸ Many epigrams of the

¹⁴ Gutzwiller 2010a: 137–38; Andreassi 2011.

¹⁵ See Winkler 1990: 85–98; Faraone 1999: 25–26, 55–95, 133–46.

¹⁶ E.g., Arist. [*Ath. Pol.*] 18.1 of Hipparchus; Theoc. *Id.* 14.62 of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

¹⁷ In two ecphrastic epigrams of the first century C.E. (Tullius Geminus, *Anth. Plan.* 103 and Philip, *Anth. Plan.* 104), a viewer of a Lysippan statue of a weary Heracles without his usual attributes (cf. the Farnese type, *LICM* “Herakles” nos. 681–737) asks the hero where his equipment has gone, only to be told or to realize that Eros has taken it away. Figures of Eros with Heraclean attributes descend from the late-classical or Hellenistic periods, e.g., an Eros sitting on a lion skin and holding a club on a later fourth-century B.C.E. Attic vase (*LIMC* “Eros” no. 950 = Louvre, CA 627; cf. nos. 951–54) and a sleeping Eros lying on a lion skin and with a club (*LIMC* “Eros” no. 781). Roman examples with Cupid or multiple Cupids (*LIMC* “Eros/Amor, Cupido” nos. 613–20; “Herakles” nos. 3419–49) are reflected in imperial epigrams (Secundus, *Anth. Plan.* 214; Philip, *Anth. Plan.* 215).

¹⁸ Bing 1995/2009.

Hellenistic period advance the literary character of their new book contexts by encouraging the reader to visualize an inscriptional site or to imagine speech or thought in a specific time and place; such a process of filling in the gaps is widely recognized as a feature of reading with literary purpose.¹⁹ In Meleager's epigrams, however, what matters tends to be the speaker's state of mind, presented in the form of a "dramatized fantasy." In the persona of himself as lover, Meleager often conveys the intensity of his feelings by entering an imaginary world of irreality.

In a poem with surrealistic aspects, Meleager dramatizes a voyager's arrival on shore, melding it with sea-of-love imagery to convey the onset of desire (*Anth. Pal.* 12.84):

ἄνθρωποι, βωθεῖτε· τὸν ἐκ πελάγους ἐπὶ γαῖαν
 ἄρτι με πρωτόπλουον ἵχνος ἐρειδόμενον
 ἔλκει τῆδ' ὁ βίαιος Ἔρωσ· φλόγα δ' οἷα προφαίνων
 παιδὸς ἀπαστράπτει κάλλος ἐραστὸν ἰδεῖν.
 βαίνω δ' ἵχνος ἐπ' ἵχνος, ἐν ἀέρι δ' ἠδὺ τυπωθέν
 εἶδος ἀφαρπάζων χεῖλεσιν ἠδὺ φιλῶ.
 ἄρά γε τὴν πικρὰν προφυγῶν ἄλα πουλύ τι κείνης
 πικρότερον χέρσῳ κύμα περῶ Κύπριδος;

Help me, men! Just as I've reached land from my sea
 voyage and steadied my foot on the ground,
 Eros now drags me by force. As if shining forth a torch,
 he flashes a boy's beauty, desirable to see.
 I match my step to his, and seizing his image sweetly molded
 in the air, I sweetly kiss it with my lips.
 Have I then escaped the bitter sea to traverse on dry land
 the much more bitter wave of Cyprus?

To evoke a setting, the poem begins with the vivid immediacy of a cry for help. A scene of disembarkation, the transition from sea to solid earth, normally signifies safety. Here, though, danger awaits as the traveler is forcibly dragged away, not by brigands, but by Eros. Destabilizing the dramatic reality, the word Ἔρωσ (3) reveals that the danger is only emotional, the kidnapping being, again, just imagistic role-playing. The likening of Eros to someone "shining forth a torch" (3) confounds the figure of a torch-bearing Eros with the everyday occurrence of a torchbearer meeting a night-arriving passenger. Eros's torch morphs into the flashing face of a beautiful boy, whom the speaker follows,

¹⁹ E.g., Iser 1978: 165–70.

seizing his image in the air and kissing it sweetly. Is there here a boy, or the boy-god, or a fantasy of both melded as desire personified?

The surrealistic aspects of the epigram suggest that Meleager presents himself as the victim of a magical ἀγωγή, a spell to entice another person for sexual purposes. Some of these spells preserved in magic books specify that a little image of Eros holding a torch is to be made and sent as a messenger to burn the victim's soul and bring the victim to the lover.²⁰ In our epigram Meleager represents, from the point of view of the person succumbing to such a spell, the seductive confusion of torch-bearing Eros and seductive boy. The spell may include a dream vision in which the victim has erotic fantasies, just as here Meleager grasps for some insubstantial image of the boy in the air. The intended effect of the spell is often a violent one, involving "dragging" by the hair or vital organs, and this crucial action appears in the same words in this epigram and a companion piece (ἔλκει τῆδ' ὁ βίαιος Ἔρωσ, *Anth. Pal.* 12.84.3, 12.85.4). In the companion epigram, which is a continuation of the story of the speaker's arrival, Meleager admits that he is "against his will swiftly (ταχύς) transported by uncontrollable feet" (*Anth. Pal.* 12.85.6). The practitioner of a magic spell is generally in a hurry, wanting his victim to visit him ταχὺ ταχύ.²¹ The unusual aspect of Meleager's fantasy of being a victim to magic is the reversal of the normal roles, since the spells found in the magic papyri are usually directed by men at women or, more rarely at boys.²² Casting the boy/Eros as the instigator of the magic only increases the unreality of the event. In the end, it all serves to communicate in yet another form the poet's persistent state of pathetic longing.

While other erotic epigrammatists were generally content with commonplace images of Eros's torch and arrows, Meleager was particularly creative in his imagery for the physical effects of the god—his wounding of the body and shaping of the soul. One epigram concerns the wounds to his heart from the scratch (κνίσμα) of Heliodora's fingernail (*Anth. Pal.* 5.157):

τρηχὺς ὄνουξ, ὕπ' Ἔρωτος ἀνέτραφες, Ἡλιοδώρας·
ταύτας γὰρ δύνει κνίσμα καὶ ἐς κραδίην.

It was Eros who nourished you, jagged nail of Heliodora.
For her scratch plunges even to the heart.

²⁰ E.g., *PGM* 4.1728–32, 12.14–19.

²¹ *PGM* 4.1592–93, 7.409–10, 7.471–73, 12.490–92; cf. 4.2908–12, ἄξον τὴν δεῖνα ... ὕπ' ἀνάγκη, σήμερον, ἄρτι, ταχύ ("bring whoever ... with compulsion, today, right now, quickly").

²² See Winkler 1990: 90 who points out the disjunction between the actual use of the spells and literary depictions where women are more often the practitioners (e.g., Simaetha in *Theoc. Id.* 2).

The association of the verb κνίζω, *scratch* or *scrape*, with erotic irritation, a sexual itch, is found as early as the fifth century.²³ In Meleager the scratch is more concrete, since it comes from a woman's nail that is apostrophized as a sentient being, trained by Eros to harm. Though the reader may imagine an actual scratch that happened during sexual play, the plunge to the heart remains entirely metaphorical.²⁴ In a related couplet, the heart as the seat of the soul is physically molded by Eros, that is, by the poet's desire for Heliodora (*Anth. Pal.* 5.155):

ἐντὸς ἐμῆς κραδίης τὴν εὐλαλον Ἥλιοδώραν
 ψυχὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἔπλασεν αὐτὸς Ἔρωσ.

Within my heart Eros himself molded Heliodora,
 the sweet-speaking one, as soul of my soul.

The epithet “sweet-speaking” suggests that it is the *sound* of Heliodora's voice that has possessed the lover. But since the phrase εὐλαλον Ἥλιοδώραν here represents what Eros has molded in Meleager's heart, in some sense it is Heliodora's name that has become the soul within his soul, poised to come forth as her poetic equivalent.²⁵

Another poem plays on the name of another beloved, Phanion, which as a common noun meant *little torch* or in Meleager's day *lamp* (*Anth. Pal.* 12.83)²⁶:

οὐ μ' ἔτρωσεν Ἔρωσ τόξοις, οὐ λαμπάδ' ἀνάψας
 ὡς πάρος αἰθομέναν θῆκεν ὑπὸ κραδίᾳ·
 σύγκωμον δὲ Πόθοισι φέρων Κύπριδος μυροφεγγές
 φανίον, ἄκρον ἐμοῖς ὄμμασι πῦρ ἔβαλεν·
 ἐκ δέ με φέγγος ἔτηξε, τὸ δὲ βραχὺ φανίον ὤφθη
 πῦρ ψυχῆς τῆ' μὴ καιόμενον κραδίᾳ.

Not did Eros wound me with his arrows, nor kindling a torch
 as before hold it aflame under my heart.

But he brought Cyprus's little lamp shining with fragrant oil as a fellow-reveler
 for the spirits of longing, and he cast a ray of its fire into my eyes.
 The light from it dissolved me, and that little lamp became visible
 as my soul's fire blazing in my heart.

²³ Pind. *Pyth.* 10.60; Bacchyl. 17.8–10 Maehler; Hdt. 6.62.1, Ἀρίστωνα ἐκνίζε ... ἔρωσ; Eur. *Med.* 568; Men. *Sam.* 330–31; Theoc. *Id.* 4.59, 6.25.

²⁴ Elsewhere in Meleager (*Anth. Pal.* 5.178.3–4, 12.126.2) it is Eros who scratches with his nail to induce passion. Höschle 2009: 121, 2010: 215, reading the Heliodora epigrams as a poetic biography, points out that in the *Garland's* erotic section this epigram is the first to mention any painful aspects of their relationship.

²⁵ Similarly, Männlein-Robert 2007: 247–48.

²⁶ *UPZ* 5.18, 6.15, where the meaning *lamp* for φανός is guaranteed by the demotic paraphrase.

The purpose of the wordplay, also appearing in *Anth. Pal.* 12.82, is to blend the one who is desired with the force of desire. Eros has wounded Meleager unconventionally, not with arrows or burning with a torch, but by casting the tip of the fire from Aphrodite's *phanion* into the lover's eyes. The meaning *lamp* is guaranteed here because this *phanion* is *not* Eros's usual torch but an object that gleams with fragrant oil (μυροφεγγές, 3). Since the lamp is also the girl, the setting becomes completely metaphorical, except that the entrance of desire through the eyes suggests an actual glance at Phanion as the origin of the poet's love. The light from the lamp has now possessed him, so that the lover becomes the type of lantern that holds a lamp (*phanion*) within, as the fire of his soul, discernible in his heart. The internalization of Phanion as visible fire, like Heliadora within his heart in *Anth. Pal.* 5.155, suggests that such physical modifications of the poet's body manifest themselves through the language of the poem itself.

Despite the uniqueness of Meleager's imagery for the physical effects of Eros, there is good reason to think that he was motivated by Hellenistic philosophical ideas about the interrelationship of body, soul, and emotion. The soul was generally conceived as breath (πνεῦμα), the component extending throughout the body that processes sensation as emotion and also engages in rational thought. In an amusing poem that illustrates this concept (*Anth. Pal.* 12.117), Meleager presents an argument between two parts of his soul, as his spirit or θυμός, impaired by wine and driven by desire to go on a *komos*, resists the urgings of his λογισμός or reason. In Hellenistic thought passions like erotic desire were believed to attack specific bodily organs—the heart or other internal parts; the soul in turn was affected by “impressions” called φαντασία made from these physical encounters. The Stoics defined such a physical impression as a τύπωσις ἐν ψυχῇ,²⁷ a “stamp on the soul,” and the Epicureans spoke in terms of τύποι, or *simulacra*, images of solid bodies that impact the senses. By supplementing the conventional imagery of erotic verse with images of wounding, burning, scratching, and molding (for which there are parallels in the visual arts of the day), Meleager produces a poeticized psychology of love that is in conformity with contemporary theories of human emotion.²⁸

The interrelationship between visual and poetic representations of the soul in love is explored by Meleager in an epigram on the sculptor Praxiteles, who

²⁷ E.g., Diog. Laert. 7.45, 50; Plut. *Mor.* 1084F.

²⁸ For the artistic parallels to Meleager's imagery, see Gutzwiller 2010b. For discussion of φαντασία in relation to Hellenistic epigram, see Goldhill 1994: 208–10. On φαντασία more generally, see Watson 1988, Imbert 1980, and Rispoli 1985.

gave shape to lifeless stone, and a living boy named Praxiteles, who shaped Eros in his own heart (*Anth. Pal.* 12.57):

Πραξιτέλης ὁ πάλαι ζωογλύφος ἀβρὸν ἀγαλμα
 ἄψυχον μορφᾶς κωφὸν ἔτευξε τύπον,
 πέτρον ἐνειδοφορῶν· ὁ δὲ νῦν ἔμψυχα μαγεύων
 τὸν τριπανοῦργον Ἔρωτ' ἔπλασεν ἐν κραδίᾳ.
 ἢ τάχα τοῦνομ' ἔχει ταῦτὸν μόνον, ἔργα δὲ κρέσσω,
 οὐ λίθον ἀλλὰ φρενῶν πνεῦμα μεταρρυθμίσας.
 ἴλαος πλάσσοι τὸν ἐμὸν τρόπον ὄφρα τυπώσας
 ἐντὸς ἐμῆν ψυχὴν ναὸν Ἔρωτος ἔχη.

Praxiteles, the sculptor of old, fashioned a delicate statue,
 lifeless, a dumb image of form, by bringing shape
 to stone. But today's Praxiteles, by bewitching the living,
 has molded that ultimate rogue Eros in my heart.
 The name is perhaps the same but his accomplishments greater,
 since he has shaped not stone but mind's breath.
 Kindly may he mold my character so that now that he's shaped
 my soul within, he may possess a temple of Eros.

Meleager is here working with the anecdotal tradition about Praxiteles who was famous for his ability to give his statues the appearance of human emotion. Praxiteles' statue of Eros at Thespieae was considered such an accurate representation of that erotic deity that it produced desire in its viewers.²⁹ Praxiteles had reportedly managed to sculpt such an image by using as his model his own passion for his mistress Phryne. This story suggests the concept of *phantasia*, conceived as an impression in the soul that might then become manifest as artistic or poetic expression.³⁰ An epigram of uncertain authorship makes just this interpretation (*Anth. Plan.* 204.1–2)³¹:

Πραξιτέλης ὃν ἔπασχε διηκριβῶσεν ἔρωτα,
 ἐξ ἰδίης ἔλκων ἀρχέτυπον κραδίης.

Praxiteles imaged altogether accurately the passion he felt,
 drawing the model for it from his own heart.

²⁹ Antipater of Sidon, *Anth. Plan.* 167.3–4; Tullius Geminus, *Anth. Plan.* 205. See Gutzwiller 2004: 399–403 and Männlein-Robert 2007: 107–12, who discusses Eros as sculptor here and in other epigrams.

³⁰ For the manifestation of *phantasia* as language, see Diog. Laert. 7.49 (on the Stoic theory of perception) and [Longinus] *Subl.* 15.1.

³¹ It is attributed to Simonides (impossibly) in Planudes and to Praxiteles (improbably) in Athenaeus (13.591a). See too Tullius Geminus, *Anth. Pal.* 6.260.5–6; Leonidas [of Alexandria?], *Anth. Plan.* 206; Julianus 203.

What Meleager does in *his* epigram is to remodel the role played by his sculpting Praxiteles to illustrate not the making of a physical image of desire—a statue—but the effect of an Eros-like boy on the material of his soul. The boy Praxiteles has given new shape to the lover’s “mind’s breath” (φρενῶν πνεῦμα, 6). The epigram, like the others describing erotic desires, can be read as a reflection of this breath, the πνεῦμα that runs throughout his body and can issue forth as λόγος, a rationalized form of emotion in speech.

As Meleager’s erotic encounters multiply, the mild discomfort of Eros’s scratch or the fire of a small lamp is replaced by images of painful suffering, as Meleager blames his own soul or bodily components for their inability to resist the force of desire. In a particularly complex poem he explores the long-standing idea that the eyes are the entry point through which desire flows into the soul (*Anth. Pal.* 12.92)³²:

ὧ προδόται ψυχῆς, παίδων κύνες, αἰὲν ἐτ’ ἰξῶ³³
 Κύπριδος ὀφθαλμοὶ βλέμματα χριόμενοι,
 ἥρπασατ’ ἄλλον Ἔρωτ’, ἄρνες λύκον, οἷα κορώνη
 σκορπίον, ὡς τέφρη πῦρ ὑποθαλπόμενον.
 δρᾶθ’ ὅ τι καὶ βούλεσθε· τί μοι νενοτισμένα χεῖτε
 δάκρυα, πρὸς δὲ δίκην αὐτομολεῖτε τάχος;³⁴
 ὀπτᾶσθ’ ἐν κάλλει, τύφεσθ’ ὑποκαόμενοι νῦν,
 ἄκρος ἐπεὶ ψυχῆς ἐστί μαγειρος Ἔρωσ.

Betrayers of the soul, dogs of boys, eyes whose glances
 are always smeared with the Cyprian’s birdlime,
 you’ve caught another Eros, a sheep taking a wolf, like a crow

³² This notion appears already in Soph. *Oenomaus TrGF* 474; cf. Asclepiades, *Anth. Pal.* 12.161.2–3 with Sens 2011: 136–37; Fountoulakis 2013.

³³ The reading αἰὲν ἐτ’ ἰξῶ is my correction of the unmetrical αἰὲν ἰξῶ in the Palatine Anthology, our only manuscript source for this poem. Previous editors have accepted the supplement ἐν, which apparently descends from Saumaise. The construction is then ἐν ἰξῶ | ... χριόμενοι *in tmesis*, a complicated construction involving βλέμματα as an internal accusative; the tmesis is surprising in Meleager.

³⁴ I write δὲ δίκην for P’s δίκητην. The reading δ’ ἰκέτην has been accepted by most recent editors, though it is entirely unclear who the suppliant is, Eros or the lover. Gow-Page mark the lines as corrupt. With my emendation, the eyes are being told that they are now paying for their uncontrolled gaze, an idea paralleled in *Anth. Pal.* 12.132.11–14, quoted below. For the “code of δίκη,” which usually involves vengeance upon one who betrays a lover, see Falivene 1981.

a scorpion, like ash seizing the fire kindled beneath.
 Do whatever you like. Why, I ask, do you shed storms of tears,
 and then straightway go off for punishment?
 Be roasted in beauty, be smoked now from the fire beneath,
 since Eros is a consummate cook of the soul.

Meleager chastises his own eyes as betrayers of his soul because they doggedly seek out beautiful boys. The initial image of the eyes as dogs or as objects smeared with birdlime—hunting companions or tools that have gone rogue—gives way in the second couplet to the consequences of their betrayal. A series of appositional similes explain how the desiring eyes become prey to each “Eros” caught, like lambs catching a wolf, a crow a scorpion, or, with a different sort of metaphor to anticipate the final image, ash seizing fire. Since love is always painful, the eyes now weep in regret even as they willingly engage in behavior that will be punished. The eyes above will be roasted in boys’ beauty, smoked from the fire below, as Eros cooks the soul within the body. As often, the soul suffers because it fails to control the appetites of its bodily organs, particularly the eyes that scan for objects of beauty. The poet who speaks in the voice of the whole self complains bitterly, piling up images, because his innermost self is tortured as the eyes repeatedly allow desire to enter. Meleager’s concluding image of Eros as an expert chef of the soul, not found earlier, is yet another version of metaphorical role-playing, here bringing all the imagery of the poem into a coherent whole by explaining how desire bedevils the inveterate *erastes*.

The longest of Meleager’s erotic poems, a signature composition, is a litany of complaints about the soul’s lack of resistance to desire. Though forewarned, she has again been caught by Eros’s snare and endures torment (*Anth. Pal.* 12.132):

οὐ σοι ταῦτ’ ἐβόων, ψυχῆ, “ναὶ Κύπριν ἀλώσει,
 ὦ δύσερωσ, ἰξῶ πυκνὰ προσιπταμένη”;
 οὐκ ἐβόων; εἶλέν σε πάγη· τί μάτην ἐνὶ δεσμοῖς
 σπαίρεις; αὐτὸς Ἔρωσ τὰ πτερά σου δέδεκεν,
 καὶ σ’ ἐπὶ πῦρ ἔστησε, μύροις δ’ ἔρρανε λιπόπνου,
 δῶκε δὲ διψῶση δάκρυα θερμὰ πιεῖν.
 ἄ ψυχῆ βαρύμοχθε, σὺ δ’ ἄρτι μὲν ἐκ πυρὸς αἶθη,
 ἄρτι δ’ ἀναψύχεις, πνεῦμ’ ἀναλεξαμένη.
 τί κλαίεις; τὸν ἄτεγκτον ὄτ’ ἐν κόλποισιν Ἔρωτα
 ἔτρεφες, οὐκ ἦδεις ὡς ἐπὶ σοὶ τρέφετο;
 οὐκ ἦδεις; νῦν γνῶθι καλῶν ἀλλαγμα τροφείων,
 πῦρ ἅμα καὶ ψυχρὰν δεξαμένη χιόνα.
 αὐτῇ ταῦθ’ εἴλου· φέρε τὸν πόνον· ἄξια πάσχεις
 ὧν ἔδρας, ὀπτῶ καιομένη μέλιτι.

Didn't I shout to you, soul, "You'll be caught, love's sufferer,
 if by Cypris you keep flying to the birdlime"?
 Didn't I shout it? The snare's got you. Why do you bother to pant,
 uselessly, in your bonds? Eros himself bound your wings,
 held you to the fire, sprinkled perfume when you fainted,
 and gave your thirst warm tears to drink.
 O suffering soul, now you burn with fire and now
 find rest, your breath recovered.
 Why weep? When you nursed cruel Eros in your breast,
 didn't you know he was nursed for you?
 Didn't you know? Understand now that fire and icy snow
 are the payment you got for good nursing.
 You chose this. Endure the pain. You've got what you deserve
 for your deeds, to burn in roasted honey.

A division of the poem into two sections (1–6, 7–14) became the consensus among twentieth-century scholars, but seems to me entirely unnecessary. The length, though beyond the norm, is not unprecedented either in the epigrams of earlier Hellenistic poets or among Meleager's own epigrams.³⁵ The first three couplets detail the speaker's previous warnings to his soul, which have now come true through Eros's various torments. The apostrophe to the soul in the fourth couplet is not a new beginning but a marker of the speaker's summary of the cycle of torture and rest that the god affords his *psyche*. The last three couplets explain that his soul deserves this treatment because she nurtured Eros on her lap when she should have known his nature and the pain he would bring. Meleager berates his soul elsewhere as well (*Anth. Pal.* 12.80, 12.125.7–8), but the greater length here is a sign that the poem played a summary role of some sort in the *Garland* sequence.

The poem's imagery may seem excessive and even distancing, and nineteenth-century scholars associated Meleager's tendency to excess with his Syrian heritage.³⁶ But far from being aberrant, his poetry preserves cultural

³⁵ Meleager's corpus includes a proem of 58 lines (*Anth. Pal.* 4.1) and poems of twelve (*Anth. Pal.* 12.256, *Anth. Plan.* 134), fourteen (*Anth. Pal.* 7.421), and twenty (*Anth. Pal.* 7.428) lines. Among earlier long epigrams are Posidippus 19, 74, 78 AB, all fourteen lines (from the Milan Papyrus), 118 AB of twenty-eight lines, and 142 AB of twelve lines; Callimachus 14 Gow-Page, twelve lines, and *Anth. Pal.* 7.89, sixteen lines; Leonidas of Tarentum *Anth. Pal.* 7.472, sixteen lines; Antipater of Sidon *Anth. Pal.* 7.427, fourteen lines, and 6.219, twenty-four lines. On long epigrams, see Cairns 2008.

³⁶ E.g., Ouvré 1894: 39–42. Nisbet 2013 discusses at length the orientalizing view of Meleager through the lens of nineteenth-century political and sexual views (see Index s.v. "Meleager, as Easterner").

commonplaces concerning erotic life that existed in the late Hellenistic and imperial periods. For instance, as scholars have pointed out, a faded painting from Pompeii depicts just the same actions as in the epigram³⁷: one Cupid thrusts a burning torch into the chest of a bound Psyche figure, while another revives her with a liquid poured from above. Other images in Meleager's poem also find parallels in artistic representations of Eros. Eros as fowler catching the soul in the form of an insect appears incised on a gemstone,³⁸ Eros burning the butterfly Psyche is a common image,³⁹ and a personified Psyche with a baby Eros on her lap occurs on a grand cornelian of the Augustan age.⁴⁰ By the late Hellenistic period such visual images were worn on rings, painted on walls, and sculpted as miniature statues. The Latin poets who imitated Meleager would surely have made the connection between his imagery and the visual vocabulary of the minor arts that were visible everywhere in their world.

Finally, I draw attention to metaphorical use of sleep in two poems that apparently occurred in the closing sequence of Meleager's *erotica*. In the first, the poet declares that his insomnia, caused by repeated bouts of desire, has become a permanent condition (*Anth. Pal.* 5.212):

αἰεὶ μοι δύνει μὲν ἐν οὐασιν ἦχος Ἔρωτος,
 ὄμμα δὲ σίγα Πόθους τὸ γλυκύδακρυ φέρει.⁴¹
 οὐδ' ἢ νύξ, οὐ φέγγος ἐκοίμισεν, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ φίλτρων
 ἤδη που κραδίᾳ γνωστὸς ἔνεστι τύπος.
 ὦ πτανοί, μὴ καὶ ποτ' ἐφίπτασθαι μὲν, Ἔρωτες,
 οἶδατ', ἀποπτῆναι δ' οὐδ' ὅσον ἰσχύετε.

³⁷VI 4,4 = LIMC "Psyche" 102, now in Oxford. The connection to Meleager is mentioned by Jahn 1847: 181n239; cf. Beckby 1965–1968: 4.518; see too Gutzwiller 2010b: 88–90.

³⁸*Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen: Berlin, Braunschweig, Göttingen, Hamburg, Hannover, Kassel, München* (1968–) II, 453.

³⁹A list can be found in LIMC "Eros/Amor, Cupido" nos. 98–105.

⁴⁰*Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen* IV, 853 = LIMC "Psyche" no. 162; similar figures appear in a Hellenistic statue group found at Baiae and now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale at Naples (LIMC "Psyche" no. 163).

⁴¹I conjecture Πόθους for the Πόθοις of the manuscripts and print γλυκύδακρυ, the reading in the Palatine, rather than Planudes' γλυκὸ δάκρυ, which is accepted by other editors. When Πόθοις is read as an indirect object of φέρει with δάκρυ as direct object, an ambiguous meaning results, usually explained as a libation of tears ("caloribus libat," Manso 1789: 120 on 55.2). But the idea of enduring desire is more typical of Meleager; cf. οἶδά σε [sc. Eros], ναὶ μὰ θεούς, καὶ βαρὺν ὄντα φέρειν, *Anth. Pal.* 12.48.2. For the importance of the concept of sweet tears in Meleager, see Konstan 2009: 322–33, who points out that Meleager coins the adjective γλυκύδακρυς as an epithet of Eros; it appears in *Anth. Pal.* 5.177.3, 7.419.3, and 12.167.2.

Always the sound of Eros enters my ears, and in silence
 my eye endures, with sweet tears, bouts of longing.
 Neither night nor day brings me sleep, but from love's charm
 there perhaps already resides in my heart a known image.
 Winged Erotes, surely it's not that you ever know how to light
 but lack any strength to fly away.

The physical effects of desire are now relentless. What is meant by the “sound of Eros” that forever penetrates his ears is perhaps deliberately unsaid, for generalizing effect, but the phrase also recalls an epigram from the opening sequence of the *erotica* where the poet wishes to hear Heliodora's voice by his ear more than the sound of Apollo's lyre (θέλω τὸ παρ' οὔασιν Ἡλιοδώρας | φθέγμα κλύειν ἢ τὰς Λατοῖδεω κιθάρας, *Anth. Pal.* 5.141).⁴² This whispering of the Muse-like Heliodora near the beginning of his erotic book as a substitution for the god of poetry, is here, in the final sequence, replaced with the cacophony of never-ending desire, as the lover's eyes endure multiple bouts of longing (Πόθοι) with sweet tears. These bodily effects are quelled neither night nor day, since love's magic spell has placed in his heart a known image (γνωστός ... τύπος, 4), a familiar stamp. The lack of a named beloved suggests that this impression is either that of Eros himself or—what is basically the same thing—made by repeated passions for serial beloveds. Justifiably, the poet suspects, and fears, that multiple Erotes alight one after the other and never leave, so that the weight of passion deepens the shaped image in his heart.

The final epigram in the long sequence of Meleager's *erotica*, and so likely the concluding poem in that *Garland* section,⁴³ continues the emphasis on the image of sleep, or lack thereof. In an epigram that was likely the first poem by Meleager in the *Garland's* erotic section (*Anth. Pal.* 12.49), the poet asks Bacchus, as the god who can “put to sleep” (κοιμάσει, 2) the flame of boy-love, to strike hateful care from his heart. This call for a temporary release from love's pain at the beginning of the collection is picked up at the end as Meleager prays for a permanent solution for his wakeful longing for Heliodora (*Anth. Pal.* 5.215):

⁴² Cf. Cox 1988: 50–51. In 1.12.6 Propertius echoes Meleager's Heliodora couplet, with reversal, to signal his estrangement from Cynthia: *nec nostra dulcis in aure sonat*; see Fedeli 1980: 292.

⁴³ Gutzwiller 1997: 195–97, 1998: 299; Männlein-Robert 2007: 182; Höschle 2009: 129–31, 2010: 223–25.

λίσοιμ', Ἔρωσ, τὸν ἄγρυπνον ἔμοι πόθον Ἥλιοδώρας
 κοίμισσον αἰδεσθεῖς Μοῦσαν ἑμὴν ἰκέτιν.
 ναὶ γὰρ δὴ τὰ σὰ τόξα, τὰ μὴ δεδιδαγμένα βάλλειν
 ἄλλον, αἰεὶ δ' ἐπ' ἔμοι πτανὰ χέοντα βέλη,
 εἰ καὶ με κτείναις, λείψω φωνὴν προϊέντα⁴⁴
 γράμματ'. "Ἔρωτος ὄρα, ξεῖνε, μαιφονίαν."

I beg you, Eros, put to sleep my sleepless passion for Heliodora,
 and show respect for my suppliant Muse.
 Or else, by your bow that has learned to strike no other,
 that always casts its winged barbs against me,
 even if you should kill me, I'll leave behind writings that project
 my voice: "Observe, stranger, the murderous act of Eros."

Wakefulness, or ἀγρυπνία, was presented earlier by Callimachus as a punning symbol of the erudition acquired by Aratus in order to describe the night skies in verse (*Anth. Pal.* 9.507). By thematizing the lover's insomnia at the very end of his *erotica*, Meleager marks the conjunction of wakefulness caused by erotic longing with the creative wakefulness of the poet. Through Eros's persistent wounding, the raw material for this poetry has penetrated and reshaped his emotional core. Putting to sleep his longing for Heliodora, the beloved mentioned first and now last in the *erotica*, signals the end both of passion and of the poetry it inspires, as if Meleager or his Muse will now pass on to other subjects. But the poem projects an alternative ending as well, that is, that Eros will continue to torment the poet to the point of death, an end to love-longing but not to the verse it inspired. In the last couplet of the last erotic poem, Meleager adopts conventional epitaphic form as he quotes the inscription to be placed on his tombstone, identifying Eros as his murderer. Having begun as a prayer, this poem ends with a tomb inscription that is more threat than epitaph. In a final fantasy Meleager imagines that in death he will triumph over the god who tortured him, through the lasting projection of his own voice from stone. If that is but a fancy, the survival of the poem through successive anthologies is yet a pleasing reality.

⁴⁴ With most editors (though not Gow-Page), I accept the reading φωνὴν προϊέντα found in the epigram's first appearance in the Palatine and in Planudes (where the poem is wrongly ascribed to Posidippus), as opposed to φωνεῦντ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ (undoubtedly originating as a gloss) found in its second appearance in the Palatine (after *Anth. Pal.* 12.19).

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