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'DEATH', DOXOGRAPHY, AND THE 'TERMERIAN EVIL' (PHILODEMUS, EPIGR. 27 PAGE = A.P. 11.30)*

The text of this poem, already corrupt in the Palatine, has had a turbulent history over the last two centuries. Here is Page's version, the translation in Gow-Page,1 and my own somewhat expanded apparatus:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{ό πρίν ἐγὼ καὶ πέντε καὶ ἑνεά, νῦν, Αφροδίτη,} \\
\text{ἐν μοῖλις ἐκ πρώτης νυκτὸς ἐς ἥλιον.} \\
\text{οἶμοι καὶ τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ κατὰ βραχύ, πολλακὶ δ’ ἡδη} \\
\text{ἡμιθαλές, θνίσκειν τοὐτὸ τὸ Τερμέριον.} \\
\text{ὡ γῆρας γῆρας, τί ποῦ’ ὅστερον ἃν αφίκη} \\
\text{ποιήσεις, ὅτε νῦν ὃδε μαραννόμεθα;} \\
\end{align*}\]

I who in past time was good for five or nine times, now, Aphrodite, hardly manage once from early night to sunrise. The thing itself, - already only at half-strength, - is gradually dying. That's the last straw. Old age, old age, what will you do later when you come to me, if even now I am as languid as this.


In 1982 D. Sider responded to Gow–Page.2 First, whereas the latter had said of τὸ Τερμέριον [κακόν] in line 4 'proverbially = “a great disaster”, “the last straw”',3 Sider attempted to specify the exact sense, for which the ground had already been laid:4 ‘as Kaibel and others have recognized, Philodemus’ reference is to the Termeros who used to kill people by butting them with his head until he had his head broken by Theseus [in fact it is Heracles] (Plut. Thes. 11) … a Termerion kakon is the punishment that fits the crime, as is certainly the case in Philodemus where that which has done the butting [the phallus] has had its κεφαλή “die”.5 We shall return to this explanation later. Sider’s second line of approach came from his belief (correct, I think) that Page’s ἡμιθαλές ‘cannot be allowed to stand unchallenged’.6 Gow–Page were chiefly troubled by the repetition: ‘ἡμιθανές repeats both the wording and the sense of κατὰ βραχὺ θνίσκει much too closely; substitute the quite different ἡμιθαλές, “at half-strength”’ (cf. Heraclitus 7.465.2 = 1936, ἡμιθαλές P: -θανές P1), and the lines run well’.7 Sider did not agree, keeping ἡμιθανές, but repunctuating the couplet:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{οἶμοι καὶ τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ κατὰ βραχύ, πολλακὶ δ’ ἡδη} \\
\text{ἡμιθαλές θνίσκεις, τοῦτο τὸ Τερμέριον.} \\
\end{align*}\]

* I thank my colleagues, Professors Albert Henrichs, Ian Rutherford, Calvert Watkins, and Mr Alex Sens, and my former colleague, Professor Hayden Pelliccia, for comments on earlier drafts. They are responsible neither for remaining errors nor for adherence to any specific interpretation here espoused.

4 E.g. by Kaibel, quoted by Gow–Page: ‘iam ego ere patior Termerium illud malum’. They did not quote him further, but should have: ‘Nam non quoduis malum est Termerium sed quod quis ea corporis parte patitur qua antea peccauerat’, Philodemi Gadarensis Epigrammata, Index Scholarum in Universitate Litteraria Gryphiswaldensi per semestre aestivali anni 1885 a die 15 mens. April. habendarum (Greifswald, 1885), p. 22.
5 Sider, op. cit. (n. 2), 212–13, and 213 n. 15 for parallels for a play on κεφαλή/φαλλός.
6 Sider, op. cit. (n. 2), 212.
7 Gow–Page, op. cit. (n. 1), p. 399. At A.P. 7.465.2 there is a clear vegetative metaphor at work, which is not the case here.
Now his paraphrase of the first four lines: ‘What he used to do up to nine times before death altogether’;

This seems to me to complicate things even further for at least two reasons: (1) in normal usage κατὰ βραχύ means ‘gradually’, ‘little by little’, even ‘slowly’ – virtually the opposite of ‘a short time’; and this sense ‘gradually’ would in any case already be represented by the words μόλις εκ πρώτης νυκτός ες ἢλιον in line 2, which strongly suggests that ‘the act from start to finish’ now takes all night; (2) πολλάκις does not easily qualify θνησκεῖ from which it is separated by both ἢδη and ἡμιθανεῖς. Put another way, πολλάκις δ’ ἢδη surely goes together most naturally as an adverbial cluster. So far, then, we have two possibilities, neither entirely satisfactory, for the second couplet: a stop after θνησκεῖ with πολλάκις ἡμιθανεῖς parenthetical, or stops after βραχύ and θνησκεῖ.

There is a further problem: what is a Τερμέριοι κακῶν? Is it, as Sider takes it, the same as a Τερμέριος τίσις? ‘Termerian trouble’ seems in fact to refer primarily to trouble not for Termerus, but for the people Termerus butted. Plutarch, Thes. 11 needs to be quoted in its full context. The subject is Theseus:

εν δὲ Ἑλευσίνῃ Κερκύνα τὸν εἰς Ἀρκαδίας καταπαλᾶσαν ἀνείκει καὶ μικρὸν προεδρῶν Δαμαστὴν ἐν Ἑρμῖνων προκρούσθητι, ἀναγκάσας αὐτὸν ἀποσαυνόντος ὅσπερ τοὺς ἦκενοι ἐκέσοι ἐπράττε δὲ ταῦτα μικροῖνος τοῦ Ἡρακλεία, καὶ γὰρ ἦκενοι ως ἐπεβουλεύοντός τρόπος ἰσομοιόνος τοὺς προκρούσθητος, ἐθύκα τὸν θυσίαν καὶ καταπαλᾶσα τὸν Ἀνταίο καὶ τὸν Κάκινον κατευμοναχήσας καὶ τὸν Τέρμερον συνρίζες τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀπέκτεινεν. ἢδ’ ὅν δὲ καὶ τὸ Τερμέριον [sic] κακῶν ὑμοσθῆθηνι λέγουσιν παῖσιν γὰρ, ως ἔσκε, τῇ κεφαλή τοῖς ἐνυγχάνονται οἱ Τέρμερος ἀπάλλουν. οὕτω δὴ καὶ Θηρεῖς καλάξων τοὺς πονηροὺς ἐπεξήλθεν, ως μὲν ἐβιαζόντο τοὺς ἄλλους, ὑπ’ ἦκενοι καταβιαζομένωσιν, εν δὲ τοὺς τρόποις τῆς ἐναντίων ἀδικίας τὰ δίκαια πάσχοντας.

The entire paragraph draws a parallel between Theseus and Heracles, specifically in their common mode of punishing wrongdoers with the same fate those wrongdoers had inflicted on others – a system of punishment elsewhere known as Νεοπτολέμειος τίσις.8

8 Sider, op. cit. (n. 2), 212.

9 Cf. Thuc. 1.64.2; 4.96.4; 7.79.5; Anaxagoras fr. 33 Diels-Kranz; Aristot. H.A. 692b15; at Prot. 329b4, Gorg. 449b8, and elsewhere, Plato uses it to describe the gradual progress of Platonic dialectic. The Ibycus (which produced the above examples) reveals that the phrase, rather rare before the Roman period, becomes very common in the medical writers and is often used to describe the gradual progress of disease, etc.

10 The Ibycus supports this, showing πολλάκις ἢδη frequently in Theognis, Euripides, Thucydides, Plato, Theophrastus, Menander, in the orators, and constantly in later Greek. When the cluster occurs (forming a single unit) with a post-positive particle, that particle always comes between the two adverbs (as here), and is never postponed to follow ἢδη; so πολλάκις μὲν ἢδη at Plato, Gorg. 508d5; Thuc. 3.37.1; Men. Perik. 267; Galen, De sanitate tuenda 6.190; πολλάκις δὲ ἢδη at Theophr. Hist. Plant. 8.10.3; Arrian, Cyn. 16.3.1; Oppian, Halieut. 3.510; πολλάκις γὰρ ἢδη at Gorgias 7.22 (Diels-Kranz); Plato, Gorg. 456b1; Dio Chrys. Orat. 15.12; Galen, de usu partium 3.157, 359, 900 (in each of these categories I have omitted further examples from later Greek).

11 The expression, which does not appear in Plutarch, is explained and defined aetiologically by Pausanias at 4.17.4: it was the fate of Neoptolemus, after killing Priam on the altar of Zeus Herakles at Troy, to be slain himself by the altar of Apollo in Delphi. He concludes: καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦτον τὸ πάθειν ὅπως τις καὶ ἐδράσει Νεοπτολέμειον τίσιν ὑγιαζόμενον. It is hard to say whether ἀπὸ τοῦτον is temporal (‘henceforward’ – so the Loeb), temporal/causal (‘from this occurrence’), or even refers to Neoptolemus himself (‘they name it after him’). In fact, there may be more than one nuance to the words. I am evading the very difficult issue concerning competing versions and details of this myth, within the Pindaric corpus and elsewhere, since it
Is a 'Termereian evil, or trouble' the same as a 'Neoptolemeian punishment'; for that is more or less what it has been taken by critics of Philodemus (who may well have had this latter proverb in mind as they dealt with τοῦτο τὸ Τερμέριον)? I think it is not, and although the inference may proceed from Plut. Thes. 11, it is not the easier one. Let us look at the temporal and logical sequence in Plutarch: Theseus defeated Cercyon and Damastes (Procrustes), in which actions he imitated Heracles, for Heracles had used the methods of wrongdoers against the wrongdoers themselves, sacrificing Busiris, wrestling with Antaeus, fighting Cynus in single combat, and breaking Termur's head. Plutarch proceeds with the aetiology of Termerean trouble, in which Heracles has no part: it is from Termusus (ἀδ' αὖ) that Termerean trouble is named: for (γὰρ) it seems he killed those he met by butting them with his head. Like Heracles, then (οὔτω δὴ καὶ), Theseus went about punishing wrongdoers with the same fate they meted out to others. The aition on Termerus attaches most easily to the account of how Termerus killed people, while the final sentence relating the actions of Heracles to those of Theseus brings the focus back to the latter and concludes the entire chapter. But in Philodemus' epigram, from the words τοῦτο τὸ Τερμέριον, Kaibel and Sider first extract πάσχω τὸ 'Τερμέρειον κακὸν' (whose natural meaning would be 'I suffer a great evil [such as being butted to death]'), and must then supply the sense πάσχω τὴν 'Τερμέρειον τίσιν' (= 'punishment for the "butter"').

If you look up Τερμέριον in LSJ you will find first a sense ostensibly derived from Plutarch, Thes. 11 ('Τερμέρειον or Τερμέριον κακὸν, τό, prov., a misfortune one brings on oneself'), and second the following: 'τὸ τρ., = membrum uirile, dub. in A.P. 11.30 (Phld.).' This second gloss is incomprehensible to a reader of any edition, apparatus, translation or discussion of the epigram from this century – that is from Sider (1982), Page (1975), Aubreton (1972), Gow-Page (1968), Becky (1958), or Paton (1918). But here is the second distich in the 1872 edition of F. Dübner:

οἴμοι καὶ τοῦτ' ἀντὸ καταβραχύ πολλάκις δ' ἡδή
ήμθαιες θνήσκει τοῦτο τὸ τερμέριον.

A third possibility, then: a stop after κατὰ βραχύ, but none after θνήσκει: 'hei mihi! et hunc [sc. coitum] breuem: saepius uero jam | semimortuum prorsus – moritur hoc malum'. In this Dübner was accepting Pauw's Τερμέριον ([sc.] κακόν) and following Jacobs' supplement τὸ<υτ' α>ςτό. And stops are likewise present after κατὰ βραχύ, does not directly affect the status of the proverb. On this subject, see H. Lloyd-Jones, 'Modern Interpretation of Pindar: the Second Pythian and Seventh Nemean Odes', JHS 93 (1973), 109-37; cf. pp. 131–2; and most recently L. Woodbury, 'Neoptolemus at Delphi: Pindar, Nem. 7.30ff.', Phoenix 33 (1979), 95–133; the matter will be treated by I. Rutherford in a forthcoming book on Pindar's Paeans (Oxford University Press).

The Loeb so takes the phrase, and in this is supported by the following γὰρ.

Most other references to Termerus or 'Termarian trouble' (Philippus of Theangela FGrHist 741 F 3 ap. Schol. Eur. Rhes. 509; Jul. Or. 7.210d; Lucian, Lex. 11; Suidas s.v. Τερμέρα κακά; Paroem. Graec. i.162, ii.215) give no explanation, but in those instances which deal with the actual κακά, we are dealing with huge (though generally unspecified) problems or troubles, not punishments. For some other late references, not very relevant to the present discussion, see G. Türk, 'Termeros', RE 5A (1934), 731.

Düben (Epigrammatum Anthologiae Palatinae, ii [Paris, 1872], p. 364) quotes Jacobs for the correction τοῦτ' ἀντὸ and the following explanation: 'referas τοῦτ' ἀντὸ ad ēv: et illud unum momento temporis exiguo. Nam debiles uiri uel non possunt, uel, si forte possunt, rem breui tempore absolvunt, uix percepta et imperita uoluptate'. F. Jacobs made the correction in his Animadversiones in Epigrammata Anthologiae Graecae 3.2 (Leipzig, 1803), p. 471 (in the section 'Addenda et Emendata'). In his edition of 1814 (Anthologia Graeca ad fidem codicis olim Palatini nunc Partisi ex apographo Gothano, ii [Leipzig, 1814], p. 328) he merely obelizes, οἴμοι, καὶ...
but absent after θηνίασκει in the other earlier editions, of Tauchnitz (1829), and Brunck (1772–6). What is astonishing is that this eighteenth- and nineteenth-century consensus is not preserved in the notes or apparatus critici of any subsequent edition or commentary, only in LSJ9, where it is fossilized in the form of a gloss which is incomprehensible without a research library.

In 1885 there appeared Georg Kaibel’s edition and commentary of the epigrams of Philodemus; he printed a second distich which is in essence that inherited by Page:

οίμοι καὶ ποτε τοῦτο κατὰ βραχύ (πολλάκις δὲ ήδη
ημιθανές) θηνίασκει: τοῦτο τὸ τερμέριον.

‘Alas and this one (often already half-dead) is gradually dying. I am suffering the Termerian ill.’ The τοῦτο of line 3 now refers to the penis, rather than the act, while that in line 4 (together with τὸ τερμέριον) is part of a separate exclamation (sc. νῦν πάσχω), and refers to the poet’s actual condition.

Why the change, and what new problems does it create? Kaibel came up with three structural or contextual objections to Jacobs’ and Dübner’s punctuation and restoration: (1) the εὖ of 2 is already qualified by μόλις and further qualification (κατὰ βραχύ) is impossible; (2) κατὰ βραχύ means ‘gradually’ (paullatim), not ‘soon’ or ‘quickly’; (3) the first distich constitutes a separate thought to which nothing further can be added. Each of these points is well-taken, and two have already been shown to work against Sider’s repunctuation, as well as that of Jacobs and Dübner.

In dealing with the end of the couplet, Kaibel proceeded to compare Ovid, Amores 3.7, an amusing expansion of Philodemus’ epigram, which dwells at great length on the poet’s inability to perform. Much of the humour of Ovid’s poem derives from the fact that it takes him 84 lines to tell us that nothing happened, and he does so fairly explicitly, referring more than once to the offender: 13 ‘mea membra’; 65 ‘nostera membra’; 69 ‘quin istic pudibunda iaces, pars pessimia nostri’. But Kaibel was concerned to keep such explicitness to a minimum. In rejecting Brunck’s τοῦτο τὸ τερμόειαν and Dübner’s tentative suggestion τοῦθ’ δτι περ μόριον he notes: ‘non solum breviar [sc. quam Ovidius], ut par est, sed uerecundior etiam longe Philodemus, ut u. 1. 2 docet uerbum omissum. Cauebimus igitur ne spurca uocabula inferamus secundo disticho corrupto et impedito’; and a little later: ‘procul habendi ei sunt qui proprium membris nomen restituebant’. He then distinguishes between Strato, τοῦτο καταβραχυ. And in his edition of 1794 (Anthologia Graeca sive Poetarum Graecorum Lusus ex recensione Brunckii, i [Leipzig, 1794], p. 73), as the title suggests, he had printed the text of Brunck, who accepted Reiske’s φθίνει μοι καὶ τοῦτο.
Martial, and the Priapic poets on the one hand (who do name the penis) and on the other 'omnes elegantioris judicii poetae' such as Philodemus, who must not be charged with actually doing so. He then enlists Pauw: 'has ititur sordes prudenter evitauit, qui priuerbii memor scripsit τοῦτο τὸ τερμέριον'. What Pauw meant, as is clear from the translation of Dübner, and from Kaibel's discussion, is that the Termerian evil (i.e. the 'penis') is 'dying', but as Kaibel noted 'potuit fortasse poeta suam calamitatem Τερμέριον κακόν appellare, non potuit membrum ipsum'. Hence his punctuation after θηνίσκει, which removes any reference to the penis other than the vague τοῦτο in line 3. And his treatment has so convinced other scholars that the earlier punctuation and meaning was expunged from the record.

There are, I think, at least two immediate problems with this reconstruction: (1) The τοῦτο in line 3 and that in line 4 have different referents – as they do in all the other interpretations. This is not an overwhelming obstacle, but it seems rather wanting in an epigrammatist of Philodemus' elegance. (2) More telling, other usage in the Anthology strongly militates against taking τοῦτο τὸ τερμέριον as syntactically independent from what precedes. In poets both before and after Philodemus, when we find τοῦτο τὸ + noun or adjective, beginning at the medial caesura of the pentameter, the phrase always functions as either subject or object of an expressed preceding verb.

In five of these cases we see not only this general syntactical parallelism, but also rhythmical or prosodic parallelism, as the pattern of choriambic clausulae suggests what is a virtually 'formulaic' system: μαρμάρινον / παϊδάριον / λειπόμενον / δαμόμοιον / δωδέκατον. Any critic who approaches Οὐλύκηλ and τοῦτο τὸ τερμέριον unaware of these patterns, and then proceeds to isolate the two from each other, is treading dangerously.

22 For support he refers to various epigrams where there is no actual word for 'penis': A.P. 12.216 (Strato) where it is called ὁδή (with πόσθη or σάθη understood); 12.232 (Scythinus) ὁδήν ἐστιν Αὐτικας, ἰωάννην;

23 No editor or commentator tells where Pauw published his emendation, and I have simply been unable to find the reference.

24 The instances were provided by the Ibycus. In two cases (A.P. 9.618.2, 680.4) we find τοῦτο τὸ λοιπρῶν, also beginning at the medical caesura of the hexameter, as the subject of a following ἔχει.

25 The text is that of Beckby, accepted from the Palatine. The MSS of Theocritus have essentially a different poem, and Gow–Page, The Greek Anthology. Hellenistic Epigrams, i (Cambridge, 1965) print that version, as Gow did at Theocritus. i (Cambridge, 1965), p. 244 = Epigr. 10 (with ἔννεα for ἄνθετο, and θήκε for τοῦτο). It looks as if we could be dealing even with two genuine but slightly different epigrams, and should not choose between the two.

26 The poem is assigned to Plato by Diogenes Laertius (3.33), while the Palatine has the lemma Μοῦσικιῶν, the Planudean Μοῦσικιῶν οἱ ἄν Ἐπίσκοπος. Its relationship to Philodemus is uncertain: cf. R. Reitzenstein, Epigram und Skolion (Giessen, 1893), p. 182 ‘seinem Charakter nach könnte es sehr wohl erst um Beginn der Kaiserzeit oder kurz vorher entstanden sein’; id., ‘Platos Epigramme’, NGG (Berlin, 1921), p. 54.

27 This is parallel in the rhythm it sets up, if not exactly in syntax, since δωδέκατον is in fact a predicate adjective.
Why must we assume, as all editors who print Τερμέριον do, that ἦκατὸν is to be understood with it? Philodemus’ use of the adjective is the first attested, and although the proverb presumably predates Plutarch, it need not follow that every use of the adjective specifically presupposes the actual proverb. Why should we not take τοῦτο τὸ Τερμέριον as meaning (as it does most naturally) ‘this Termerian one’, ‘this thing that exhibits the qualities of Termerus’. What is distinctive about Termerus, at least in the most extensive surviving treatment of the myth in Plut. Thes. 11, is his method of killing, by butting. A ‘Termerian thing’, then, will be a ‘butter’, a penis, which can now be allowed to serve as the subject of θηλύσκει. This is in line with the formulaic parallels quoted above, and also removes the problem regarding the repetition of τοῦτο. Here is a new version, with Beckby’s μου (Gow–Page: ‘deserves consideration’) supplementing line 3:

οἶμοι (<μοί>) καὶ τοῦτο κατὰ βραχύ (πολλάκις δ’ ἡδη ἡμιθανές) θηλύσκει τοῦτο τὸ Τερμέριον.

‘Ah me, and this thing gradually (often already half-dead) is dying on me – this Termerian thing.

The couplet now consists (for the first time in its editorial history) of a single sentence, as do the one preceding and the one following, and (also for the first time) the second τοῦτο merely resumes the first, specifying its meaning as an almost embarrassed postscript. We find a more or less parallel phenomenon at Theoc. A.P. 6.338.1–2: Ὅμων τοῦτο, θεαί, κεκαρμαμένον ἄθετο πάσας | τῶγαλμα Ξενοκλής, τοῦτο τὸ μαρμάρινον, | μουσικός. Although the first τοῦτο here modifies τῶγαλμα, it is similarly resumed (as object) by the τοῦτο τὸ phrase.

We are not quite done with τὸ Τερμέριον. It is, I think, possible to view it not just as a nominal adjective, but rather as an actual diminutive noun – ‘little butter’.28 Such a diminutive of a proper name would in origin be of the hypocoristic type suggesting endearment29 and would be parallel with terms of address such as Γλυκέρα from Γλυκέρα, which are formed on an ad libitum basis where the context calls for them.30 There are six other instances just in Philodemus’ epigrams (8.1 Φιλαίνης, 9.3 Καλλιστών, 14.6 Ξανθήρας [from Ξανθήρ, 14.1], 16.1 Θέρμιν, 16.5 Δημάριον [from Δημίου, 16.1], 26.2 Τρυγοίνων). Indeed, Philodemus may even have gained some notoriety for his use of these diminutives.31 We could also see in τὸ Τερμέριον an appropriate diminutive of the deteriorative type whose real diminutive force

28 For parallel forms in -ερινον, see Kretschmer-Locker, Rückläufiges Wörterbuch der griechischen Sprache2 (Göttingen, 1963), p. 166: διθερινον, κρηθερινον, πατερινον, πτερινον, and θερινον, and the Ibycus adds μυτερινον at Heliod. Aeth. 7.10.3.
30 So Aristoph. Ach. 404–5 Εὐριπιδῆς, Εὐριπίδης, ἦτοκουσον. Philostratus (Epist. Erot. 38) refers to the well-known Glycera of Menander as Γλυκέρα, and at Misog. fr. 280 Kό. Bentley suggested χαῖρ’ ὧ Γλυκέρα where Priscian (18.251) has unmetrical χαῖρ’ χιλεκέρια Meineke and Kötte, however, accept Porson’s χαῖρε, Γλυκέρα. On this type of diminutive, cf. Petersen, op. cit. (n. 29), p. 175. There is clearly flexibility in the formation of these diminutives which, given their intensely colloquial nature, must have been far more numerous than our surviving texts can indicate. Philodemus may even have formed it (without strict linguistic accuracy) after, e.g., Τιμάριον (Meleager, Epigr. 59–62 Page), χιλερίαριον, which occurs at [Plato] A.P. 9.39.4 in the same position, and with τοῦτο τὸ (for the chronological issue, see above, p. 134).
31 That is, if we accept, as many do, the suggestion of G. Friedrich concerning the ‘Socratization’ addressed in Cat. 47 (Catulli Veronensis Liber [Leipzig and Berlin, 1908], p. 228): ‘Wir haben nach dem Wortlaut unseres Gedichtes keinen Grund, uns den Socratization anders vorzustellen als den Philodemus von Gadara, der auch bei Piso in Macedonien war, Graecus facilis et valde vemusus (Cic. in Pis. 70)’. If this is so, then the name will have perhaps been for Catullus and his group a fine coterie nickname: ‘Little Socrates who was fond of nouns in -τον’.
(reflecting the ultimate fate of the mythical Termerus) aptly describes the present condition of the poet.\textsuperscript{32} Now with the possible exception of Τραγώνιος, the identity of Philodemus’ -τον characters is female,\textsuperscript{33} but that is no obstacle: first, that is often the gender of such words (cf. Α.Π. 12.216.1 ὤρη [sc. ἡ νόσοθη, ἡ σάθη]; Lat. mentula,\textsuperscript{34} etc.), and second, such a transformation suits the reduced condition of the ‘butter’: what once was a Termerus is now a Termerion. Here we may invoke a precise parallel from TSchol. II. 2.235, which characterizes Thersites’ taunting of the Greeks (‘Ἀχαῖδες, οὐκέτ’ Ἀχαῖοι’: Ἀχαиде: παρονομασία, οία ὡς Φιλίππος, ἄλλα Φιλίππων κεκράτηκεν δις Ἔλλαδος.’\textsuperscript{35}"

To return to the text of Epigr. 27, what are we to say of the repetition in ἡμιθανὲς θηνίακε to which Page (and others before him) objected? It will become unobjectionable if it does not constitute a real repetition, that is if the type of ‘death’ in ἡμιθανὲς is distinct from that in θηνίακε.\textsuperscript{36} There are two possibilities: (1) the ‘frequent half-death’ refers to the flaccidity which occurs in the course of the one all-night event. This is then succeeded by the actual death of impotence; but better, I think, (2) ἡμιθανὲς belongs to the vigorous stage, for this is the post-coital ‘half-death’ that already used to occur often – five to nine times a night, to be followed by four to eight resurrections. Hence πολλάκις δ’ ἐγνὴ which far from being mere filler now strengthens the contrast between the first and second couplets: the poet’s temporary ‘half-death’ is a very different one from the progressive death of impotence which the poem laments.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{32} Given the nature of Greek society, we will not often find diminutives for ‘penis’; exceptions are found at Aristoph. Thesm. 254, 515 πόσθιων (where the actual diminutive force is also felt), and Clouds 197 πραγματίων (where the diminutive is perhaps more affectionate, ‘my little thing’); on these see J. J. Henderson, The Maculate Muse (New Haven and London, 1975), pp. 109, 116. Those who so wish will add to these two ηγηθείων, for the controversy on which see most recently and conveniently (with further bibliography) J. J. Henderson, ‘Κωδάριον: a Reply’, Mnemosyne 27 (1974), 293–5, and R. J. Penella, ‘Κωδάριον: a Comment’, Mnemosyne 27 (1974), 295–7. We could add ἀρκουτον (in Latin perhaps = ‘particula’, for which see Adams, op. cit. (n. 20), p. 45), which is properly if not effectively a diminutive, and Latin ‘mentula’ is also worth mentioning.

\textsuperscript{33} Trygonion is an interesting name, perhaps related to our subject. It means ‘little dove’ and has erotic associations: Epigr. 26 Page is a difficult poem, but Gow–Page accept Paton’s view (rendered sensible by his emendation of ἄρθῳ γυναιξίων to ἡμιγυναικών [another ἡμι-compound] 95 line 5) that is an epitaph for his Trygonion, an emasculated priest of Cybele (Gallus) when, he was ‘alive’, ‘alone among the effeminates adored the Cyprian’s rites and took to the seductions of a Lais’ (trans. Gow–Page). Are we dealing with a ‘dove’ that has become reduced in the same way as Termerion in Epigr. 27? For columbia = ‘penis’, cf. G. Giangrande \textit{ap. P. Howell, A Commentary on Book One of the Epigrams of Martial} (London, 1980), pp. 122–3; Y. Nadeau, ‘Catullus’ Sparrow, Martial, Juvenal and Ovid’, \textit{Latomus} 43 (1984), p. 862; R. F. Thomas, ‘Sparrows, Hares and Doves: “Source Criticism” and the limits of plurality’ (forthcoming issue of \textit{Helios} on Catullian criticism).

\textsuperscript{34} In the name Mentula in Catullus 94, 105, 114 and 115, we perhaps have an inverted parallel for Termerion.

\textsuperscript{35} Virgil’s reworking of the Homeric lines is tantalizing: Numanus Remulus’ taunt of the Trojans at \textit{Aen.} 9.617 (‘o uere Phrygiae, neque enim Phryges’) is set in the context of reminiscence of Cat. 63 and its treatment of the emasculation of Attis; cf. 617–18 ‘i tene per alta | Dindyma’ etc.

\textsuperscript{36} On the artistic desirability of such distinct repetition, see D. R. Shackleton Bailey on Horace’s ‘rura ... rura’ (\textit{Odes} 4.5.17–18) in \textit{Profile of Horace} (London, 1982), pp. 137–8.

\textsuperscript{37} In other poems treating impotence as the death of the penis, the death has actually occurred: Scytthinus, \textit{Α.Π.} 12.232 (νεκρὸν ἀτεκρῆμασο); Automedon, \textit{Α.Π.} 11.29.3–4 (τὸ πρίν ακαμῆς | ὡσα, νεκρὰ μηνὸν πᾶσα δεδεκεν ἐσώ); here cf. the proximity of the language to that of Philodemus (ὁ πρίν / ἡ πρίν) – and the two epigrams are juxtaposed in the \textit{Anthology} (11.29–30). For these, and for Latin parallels, including Ovid, \textit{Anm.} 3.7.65 ‘praemortua membra’ (above, n. 19), see G. Giangrande, ‘Catullus’ Lyrics on the Passer’, \textit{Mus. Phil. Lond.} 1 (1975),
There is no surviving instance of ἰμβανές with this precise force, but that is not very surprising given the subject. We have already cited Ov. Am. 3.7.65, from a poem acknowledged as influenced by Philodemus 27: ‘nostra tamen iacuere uelut praemortua membra’ (see above, p. 133). This clearly responds to lines 3–4 of the Greek (and ‘praemortua’ refers to premature impotence), but it also looks to a prior Latin tradition, which is conflated with the ultimate Hellenistic model. I have in mind Catullus 50.14–16, where the poet uses erotic language (but not the language of impotence) to describe the effect on him of Calvus’ poetry: ‘at defessa labore membra postquam semimortua lectulo iacebant, hoc, iucunde, tibi poema feci’. ‘Semimortuus’ is first found here and is surprisingly rare.38 Did Catullus coin or use it after Philodemus’ use of ἰμβανές? If so, both could refer to post-coital exhaustion, real for Philodemus, figurative for Catullus.39 Although it cannot be known beyond doubt whether Catullus had access to Philodemus’ poetry, it is assumed by many that Poem 32.7–8 (‘sed domi manaeas paresque nobis nouem continuas fututiones’) may refer to this same Epigram 27 of Philodemus (cf. 1 ἐννέα).40

I conclude by representing the temporal scope of the epigram with reference to past, present and future in the following version, which reflects the epigram’s careful play with time, and its juxtaposing of past vigour (1–2) and present dysfunction (3–4), with the latter anticipating the permanent impotence of old age (5–6):

{o πρ"ιν ἐγὼ καὶ πέντε καὶ ἐννέα, νῦν, Ἀφροδίτη,  
ἐν μάλις ἐκ πρώτης νυκτὸς ἐς ἡλιον.  
οἷοι μοι καὶ τούτο κατὰ βραχὺ (πολλάκις δ’ ἡδη ἰμβανές) γνησιοκε τούτο τὸ Τερμέριον.  
ὡ γῆρας γῆρας, τι ποθ’ ὅστερον ἢ ἀφάκην ποιήσεις, οὗ νῦν ὃδε μαραθώμεθα;

I who in time past was good for five or nine times, now, Aphrodite, hardly manage once from early night to sunrise. Ah me, and this thing gradually (often already half-dead) is dying on me – this little ‘Termerus’. Old age, old age, what will be left for you to do later if you arrive, when already now we are as languid as this?

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p. 140. I have suggested elsewhere (op. cit., n. 33) that in Meleager 65 Page (= A.P. 7.207), where Phanion’s hare uses θηρίσκω = πεθήκα, there may be an obscene level of the same sort. For θηρίσκω in this sense see Gow–Page, op. cit. (n. 1), p. 374, on Leonidas of Tarentum 70.4; also Smyth (Greek Grammar) §1887a.

38 OLD s.v. otherwise has only Sen. Con. 1.7.9; Apul. Met. 6.26, and the Ibycus adds only a second instance from Apuleius, Met. 1.14.6.

39 For Catullus’ clear use of erotic language in Poem 50 (whether metaphorical or otherwise matters not for the present purposes), see most recently D. L. Burgess, ‘Catullus c. 50; the Exchange of Poetry’, AJP 107 (1986), 576–86.

40 Cf. W. Kroll, C. Valerius Catullus (Stuttgart, 1959), p. 60, where the connection to Ovid, Am. 3.7 is also made. I will perhaps be forgiven a sortée into the realm of the biographical fallacy if I note that Epigr. 27 is likely to have a lower terminus of c. 60 b.c. (since Philodemus, born c. 110, presents himself as not yet old; cf. 5–6), while Catullus’ poetic production (even if Lesbia is Clodia Metelli and Poem 83 therefore predates the death of Metellus in 59) is confined to the decade of the 50s. From In Pis. 68–72 it is clear that Philodemus had produced a considerable corpus of epigrams by the year 55.