

§ 1. As last edited by Kassel and Austin (2001, 146; henceforth K.–A. I)¹ the text of the pseudo-Epicharmean fragment 249 runs as follows (4troch.ˆ):

εὐσεβῆς βίος μέγιστον ἐφόδιον θνητοῖς † ἔστι
 ‘a pious life †is† the greatest travelling supply for mortals’

This γνώμη is transmitted only in the Paris manuscript (Par. Gr. 1166 c. 310 v.)² of the florilegium known as Φιλοσόφων λόγοι,³ where it is followed by an admonition-like *interpretamentum* (φρόνει δικαιοσύνην). The content of the maxim is common wisdom.⁴ The paradosis, however, is clearly defective,⁵ for ἔστι is incompatible with the ∪ ∪ sequence required at verse end.⁶ Most editors of the fragment tried to substitute ἔστι with metrically acceptable shorter words, such as ἔνι,⁷ or rather its Sicilian Doric variant ἔνο,⁸ and ἔπι,⁹ but these emendations do not give plausible meaning for the context (‘a pious life is the greatest travelling supply inside mortals’?). Kaibel¹⁰ suggested changing the word-order, writing ἐφόδιον θνητοῖς μέγιστον ἔστιν εὐσεβῆς βίος. This solution presupposes a complete re-writing and an unlikely process of corruption; additionally, it oddly places the metaphorical ἐφόδιον, rather than the key phrase ‘pious life’, at the very beginning of the sentence.¹¹ However, a change in word order is probably the easiest way to emend the line.

§ 2. I would propose the following text:

εὐσεβῆς βίος μέγιστόν ἐστι θνητοῖς ἐφόδιον
 ‘a pious life is the greatest travelling supply for mortals’

At some point during the textual transmission, the noun ἐφόδιον was moved closer to its accompanying adjective μέγιστον, exchanging places with the verb that was located at sentence- and line-end, thus creating a more straightforward syntax (εὐσεβῆς βίος μέγιστόν ἐστι θνητοῖς ἐφόδιον > εὐσεβῆς βίος μέγιστον ἐφόδιον θνητοῖς † ἔστι).¹² The line, as reconstructed above, is a

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¹ No new textual suggestions have been advanced since the publication of K.–A. I. Kerkhof (2001, 103) prints the text of K.–A. without further comments.

² This manuscript is variously dated to the X century AD (Odorico 1986, 38–9) or to the XI–XII centuries AD (Studemund 1887, 24).

³ The text of the florilegium in the Paris manuscript was first edited by Boissonade (1829; the pseudo-Epicharmean fragments is at page 125). The complete edition of this collection of sayings was later published by Schenkl (1888; the pseudo-Epicharmean fragment is number 54a at page 10). I checked the readings of the fragment against a digitalised copy of the Paris manuscript, available at <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b107242707/f324.item.r=1166.zoom> (last consulted in December 2016).

⁴ Compare Men. fr. 261 and 361 K.–A. (but see also [Epich.] fr. 254 and 265 K.–A.).

⁵ Lorenz (1864, 258; Epich. B. Ἀδηλα fr. *9 of his edition) and Olivieri (1946, 120; [Epich.] fr. 234 of his edition) do not apparently consider the metrical fault unacceptable in this type of text.

⁶ Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén (1996, 212; [Epich.] fr. 381 of her edition) prints the *crux* at the beginning of the line in her edition of the text of the fragment, but she correctly places it before the last two syllables of the line in the metrical analysis of the fragment.

⁷ Boissonade (1829, 125). This solution is approved by Polman Kruseman (1834, 98; Epich. *Incertarum fabularum fragmenta* fr. XLVI of his edition).

⁸ K.–A. I (146) after ἔνο in [Epich.] fr. 244,5 K.–A.

⁹ Ahrens (1843, 461; Epich. fr. 152 of his edition).

¹⁰ Kaibel (1899, 140; [Epich.] fr. 261 of his edition). Kaibel’s text is printed as Epich. D.–K. 23 B 18.

¹¹ Compare cases like Men. *Sent.* 472 Jäkel νῆ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν, μακάριόν γ’ ἢ χρηστότης | πρὸς πάντα καὶ θαυμαστὸν ἐφόδιον βίω and Men. *Sent.* 792 Jäkel οὐκ ἔστι τόλμη ἐφόδιον μεῖζον βίου.

¹² For the position of ἔστι between adjective and related substantive as in the text I propose to restore compare for instance Men. *Sent.* 73, 77, 378, 384, 476, and 679 Jäkel.

catalectic trochaic tetrameter with semiseptenarian caesura. Tautosyllabic initial *muta cum liquida* in θνη- occurs in most other pseudo-Epicharmean γνῶμαι, both at word beginning and within a word.¹³ Tribach resolution of the seventh foot is also common.¹⁴ The violation of Porson's bridge in θνητοῖς ἐφόδιον is not problematic: it is also found in two further pseudo-Epicharmean maxims¹⁵ as well as in Epicharmus' genuine fragments¹⁶ (and very often in Attic comedy).

§ 3. Alternatively, one could read:

εὐσεβῆς βίος μέγιστον ἐφόδιον θνητοῖς πέλει¹⁷
 'a pious life is the greatest travelling supply for mortals'

This position of ἐφόδιον (as in the paradosis) is syntactically linear¹⁸ and would give the highly common tribach resolution of the fifth-foot.¹⁹ πέλω is a mainly poetic word, relatively rare in gnomological literature; its substitution with the obvious,²⁰ but metrically impossible, gloss ἐστὶ is not surprising. Its poetic allure would moreover not be out of place in the fragment and generally in a γνώμη. One could compare the contextual use of θνητός (as in [Epich.] fr. 251 K.–A.) and the fact that similar linguistically marked words were probably felt to be appropriate in sentences of moral content (either genuinely gnomologic or not), so that the poetic linguistic level would match the seriousness of the expressed thought.²¹

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¹³ See [Epich.] fr. 248,3 (ἄφρονος), 251 (θνατὰ ἡρή), 252 (ἄλλω κέχρηται), 253 (ἀπιστία δέδρακεν), 261 (πρὸς στάθμη), and 263 (ἀλλὰ ἔπρονοεῖν) K.–A. The only two pseudo-Epicharmean γνῶμαι with heterosyllabic *muta cum liquida* are [Epich.] fr. 264,1 (μὴ ἴπι μικροῖς) and 267,3 (τυφλὸν) K.–A.

¹⁴ Within the pseudo-Epicharmean γνῶμαι consider [Epich.] fr. 256,1, 258, and 262,1 K.–A. See also the examples collected by Kanz (1913, 42: Epich. fr. 41,2, 50,1, 51,1, 58, 73, 80 K.–A. and [Epich.] fr. 276,5–11 K.–A.) to which should be added, to the best of my knowledge, only Epich. fr. 113,247 K.–A. and *[Epich.] fr. 295,3 K.–A.

¹⁵ [Epich.] fr. 256,1 K.–A. ὡς πολὺν ζήσων χρόνον χῶς ὀλίγον, οὕτως διανοοῦ, [Epich.] fr. 264,1 K.–A. μὴ ἴπι μικροῖς αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ὀξυθυμον δεικνυε.

¹⁶ See Kanz (1913, 44–5).

¹⁷ For this position of πέλει in comparable texts, see Men. *Sent.* 667 Jäkel πατὴρ ἀπάντων καὶ τροφὸς θεὸς πέλει, Men. *Sent.* 762 Jäkel τὸ γνῶθι σαυτὸν πᾶσι{ν} χρήσιμον πέλει, Men. *Sent.* 779 Jäkel ὑγεία καὶ νοῦς ἀγαθὰ τῷ βίῳ πέλει.

¹⁸ See above, n. 11.

¹⁹ For its occurrence in other pseudo-Epicharmean γνῶμαι, see [Epich.] fr. 251, 253, 254,2, 255,2, 256, 262,2, 264,3, 265, 266, and 269,5 K.–A.

²⁰ Cf. Hsch. π 1305 Hansen πέλει· ὑπάρχει, ἐστὶ and Phot. π 547 Theodoridis πέλει· γίνεται· ἔστιν, with references.

²¹ Comedy often reproduces tragic γνῶμαι (as for example in the scene of Daos and Smicrines in the third act of Menander's *Aspis*), but also introduces new serious ones: cf. Men. fr. 372,5 K.–A ἡ πρόνοια δ' ἡ θνητή.

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