The Prayers of the Corinthian Women
(Simonides, *Ep*. 14 Page, *FGE*)

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σεδ' ὑπὲρ Ἐλλάνων τε καὶ ἀγχεμάχων πολιαταν
ἐστασαν εὐχόμεναι Κύπριδι ΔAIMONIAI·
οὐ γὰρ τοξοφόροισιν ἐβούλετο δὴ Ἀφροδίτα
Μήδοις Ἐλλάνων ἀκρόπολιν δόμειαι.

This short poem seems to derive from a Corinthian inscription commemorating the invocation of Aphrodite's aid against the Persians in 480.¹ We are fortunate in having a number of sources for the poem, but our good fortune brings with it a number of problems concerning the constitution of the text and the historical context.² The various questions surrounding the epigram have recently been discussed in detail by D. L. Page and B. M. Palumbo Stracca.³ In the present paper I propose to discuss only one issue, namely the word that concludes the second line, although consideration of some of the larger questions will prove relevant.

What the Mss. transmit as ΔAIMONIAI has regularly been construed as δαιμονίς, dative singular modifying Κύπριδι.⁴

¹ With one obvious exception, the text is cited from D. L. Page, *Further Greek Epigrams* (Cambridge 1981). As the authors who preserve the epigram (see next note) make clear, this text was composed to accompany some object, either a painting or statue (or statues), set up in the temple of Aphrodite at Corinth.

² Σ Pind. *Ol*. 13.32b (I 364f Drachmann)=Theopompus *FGrHist* 115f.285b; Plut. *Mor*. 871a-b; Ath. 573c=Theopompus *FGrHist* 115f.285a, Timaeus *FGrHist* 566f.10; Chamaeleon fr.31 Wehrli².


Contrary to the opinion of most editors, Page seems right in holding that the use of such an epithet for a deity is unlikely. In its basic sense, δαμώνος denotes some connection with divinity (so LSJ s.v.), and so it is difficult to see how even an extended usage is appropriate to a deity. In this light, Page has followed Bernardakis in emending to δαμώνα, which he construes as the object of εὐχόμενα. The phrase is understood

be taken independently with an adverbial force (i.e., as though it could be synonymous with κατά δαμώνα vel sim.); but this is most unlikely. It is very difficult to separate δαμώνα from Κύριαδι in any natural reading of the line.

5 Page (supra n.1) 211: "... no deity is, or could be, described as δαμώνος."

This is something of an overstatement: e.g. Helen calls Aphrodite δαμώνα at Il. 3.399, but there the usage is heavily sarcastic (cf. G. S. Kirk, The Iliad: A Commentary I [Cambridge 1985] ad loc.); see also Il. 1.561 and U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Der Glaube der Hellenen2 (Basel 1956) I 359. An anonymous referee for this journal has offered another possible explanation of the dative: the goddess might have been called δαμώνα to distinguish Aphrodite οὐρανία from πάνθημος (for the cult-titles, see Farnell Cults II 558ff). If the women were the ιερόδουλοι (see below), it is suggested that they would normally have served the lower aspect of the goddess (for Aphr. πάνθημος and prostitutes, cf. Nicand. FGrHist 271/272f9), but may well have turned their prayers to Aphrodite οὐρανία in a time of crisis. This is an interesting proposal, but ultimately unconvincing. Pindar refers to the goddess in relation to the temple prostitutes at Corinth as ματέρ' ἐρώτων/ οὐρανίαν (fr. 122.4 Maehler), and this indicates that the Corinthian ιερόδουλοι were part of the worship of Aphrodite οὐρανία (the epithet, like temple prostitution, points to the goddess' eastern origin: see W. Burkert, Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche [Stuttgart 1977] 238 [=Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical, tr. J. Raffan (Cambridge, Mass. 1985) 152] and n.25 infra). More important, it is difficult to see how the use of δαμώνος could help define the relevant aspect of the goddess; δαμών and related words are used broadly of divinity.

6 For discussion of the adjective, see E. Brunius-Nilsson, DAIMONIE: an Inquiry into a Mode of Apostrophe in Old Greek Literature (Uppsala 1955) 139ff.

7 It should also be noted that Lobeck and Bergk emended to δαμώσεις, which might recall Aphrodite Πάνθημος. One might also conjecture δαμόσια, describing the ιερόδουλοι (see below), which would find an interesting parallel in Pind. fr.122.15 Maehler, ξυνιζ μυαλιζ (δημόσιοι may be used of prostitution as early as Sappho fr.209 Voigt, but is not found elsewhere in early literature; cf. however δημος, Archil. fr.207 West). But Page dismissed δαμώσεις as "a rough change," and it is very difficult to see how either of these conjectures could have been corrupted to the reading of the paradox. Moreover, in view of the apparent tone of the passages in Sappho and Archilochus, it seems probable that a form of δημόσιοι would carry a pejorative charge inappropriate to the context of the Simonidean epigram. In the past
as representing εὐχόμεναι δαμόνιον εὐχήν. As Page concedes, this is an odd phrase. Its merit, according to Page, is that it reflects Plutarch’s understanding of the epigram: εὐξαντο τὴν καλὴν καὶ δαμόνιον εὐχήν. And yet does this in fact represent a close paraphrase? He is reproaching Herodotus for omitting this remarkable episode from his account of the Persian Wars: τὴν καλὴν καὶ δαμόνιον underlines the extraordinary nature of the prayer with δαμόνιος used in its common later meaning (‘remarkable’, ‘marvellous’); it does not necessarily guarantee Bernardakis’ emendation, which remains an unusual phrase.

An obvious way of interpreting ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑΙ is as nominative plural, δαμόνια, modifying the Corinthian women who are the subject of ἔστασαν (Κύπριοί remains the indirect object of εὐχόμεναι). This text has in fact been printed by L. Pearson in his Loeb edition of Plutarch, but the translation attributes doubtful sense to the word. Page, who makes no mention of Pearson’s text, dismisses the nominative summarily: “Nor could the epithet possibly apply to Corinthian females, whether matrons or courtesans.” It seems likely, however, that the nominative has some ancient authority. Page reports δαμόνια as the Mss. reading of the three ancient sources.

Although century bolder proposals were made: δαμόνια & K. F. Hermann, Philologus 10 (1855) 237; καθεμονὶ Α. Hecker, Philologus 4 (1889) 484; καμμονιαν H. Stadtmüller, PhilWoch 10 (1890) 302 (for the concept, cf. Erbse on Σ. 22.257a); Bergk also records a rather wild rewriting of the line by M. Schmidt, τίν σπάθεν εὐχόμεναι Κύπριι λαλιάμομενι. Although these proposals have rightly been ignored by commentators, they reflect the general disquiet concerning the dative singular commonly printed by editors.

There are, of course, other examples of the ambiguity between the first declension nominative plural and dative singular. Perhaps the most striking instance in early poetry is Alcm. fr.3.61 Calame=1.61 Davies, where both ὁθορία and ὁθορία have been defended: see D. L. Page, Alcman: the Partheneion (Oxford 1951) 76ff; C. Calame, Les choeurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque (Rome 1977) 1120f; M. Puelma, MusHelv 34 (1977) 20 n.40. In this case the dative is the form currently favoured by editors.

He renders the first two lines as follows: “Here stand [reading ἔστασαν] those ladies who to Cypris prayed for Greece and for our stalwart fighting men. The gods were with them.... ” This last phrase is clearly intended to represent δαμόνια, but such a meaning is unparalleled for the adjective, especially in a text from the fifth century.

In his earlier Oxford text, Epigrammata Graeca (1975), however, Page gives δαμόνια as the reading of the paradosis. It is difficult to know what to make of this discrepancy. It is possible that the later edition offers a tacit correction of the OCT, but it is equally possible that the nominative is a slip.
accentuation in manuscripts is hardly probative in every case, this is suggestive. Moreover, the variant εὖχεσθαι for εὖχο-
μεναι, which is transmitted by Athenaeus, seems intended to
explain δαμόναι (i.e., as though the construction could be
analogous to δεναι εὖχεσθαι; see Page ad loc.). If this is correct,
it appears that Athenaeus or his source understood the final
word of the line as an epithet modifying the Corinthian women.
In this light, Page is probably correct in FGE to record
δαμόναι as the reading of the paradosis. Was he right to
dismiss it?

In answering this question much depends on the identity of
the women. The Pindaric scholiast treats them as though they
were the wives of the Corinthian warriors (οἱ Κορίνθιοι .... καὶ
tὰς γυναίκας αὐτῶν), and this seems to be the reference of
Plutarch as well (αἱ Κορίνθιαι γυναίκες). Chamaeleon,
however, informs us that these women are ἔτοιραι, and this
appears to be more plausible, especially if we follow Wila-
mowitz in seeing these ἔτοιραι as the ιερόδουλοι who served
Aphrodite’s temple in Corinth. Chamaeleon treated the
epigram in his work Περὶ Πυθάρου, and it is almost certainly in
the course of his discussion of Pindar fr.122 Maehler, quoted by

_E was a posthumous publication and, as such, contains a large number of
errors, which the author undoubtedly would have corrected: see H. Lloyd-
97f.

11 Wilmotowitz (supra n.3) 4ff–662ff. This raises the difficult issue of sacred
prostitution, which has been studied with reference to earlier literature by B.
C. MacLachlan, “Sacred Prostitution and Aphrodite,” _Studies in Religion/
Sciences religieuses_ (1992, forthcoming), and “Sacred Prostitution in Medi-
terranean Antiquity,” in E. Lacelle, ed., _Femmes, Religions et Prostitution_
(= _Collection Femmes et Religion_ III [Montreal, forthcoming]). Cf. also the
discussion in H. Herter, “Die Soziologie der antiken Prostitution im Lichte
des heidnischen und christlichen Schrifttums,” _JAC_ 3 (1960) 70–111 at 72f; L.
271–85 at 277 n.18); C. Calame, “Entre rapports de parenté et relations
civiques: Aphrodite l’héraite au banquet politique des hetairoi,” _Aux sources
de la puissance: sociabilité et parenté_ (Rouen 1989) 101–11 at 106f. On the
fame of Corinthian prostitutes in general see R. Kassel and C. Austin, _Poetae
Comici Graeci_ III.2 (Berlin 1984) ad Ar. fr. 928; Herter 71 n.8. Wilmotowitz’s
identification of the women is supported by C. Turano, “La prostituzione
sacra a Locri Epizefiri,” _ArchCl_ 4 (1952) 248–52 at 248, and L. Pearson in his
Athenaeus (573f) shortly after our passage, that the Simonidean epigram was adduced (Wehrli in fact prints the whole passage as fr.31 in his edition of Chamaeleon). Of our sources Chamaeleon alone is interested in the identity of the women, since he is discussing Xenophon's extraordinary dedication of a large number of girls, which Pindar celebrates in fr.122; the other sources appear interested in the event, not the identity of the worshippers. It is, however, suggestive to note that Theopompos, one of our sources for the epigram, is quoted by a scholiast on *Ol.* 13 (cf. n.2), the epinician composed in honor of the victory that prompted Xenophon's dedication.

If the women are indeed the ἱερόδουλοι, I suggest that δαιμόνια is the correct text and here refers to the women's status as servants of the goddess, that is to say that δαιμόνια means something like 'the goddess’ women', referring to the important fact that they have been dedicated to Aphrodite.  

δαιμόνια is thus used in a way that is similar to the usage of τέμενος. Pindar's use of the word provides some helpful parallels. Most striking is the opening of the *Second Pythian*:

μεγαλοπόλεις ὧν Συράκουσαι, βαθυπολέμου
témenos Ἀρεος, ἀνδρῶν ὑπ' αυτὸν τε σιδαρχαρ
μάν δαιμόνια τροφοί....

The poet invokes Syracuse in hymnic style, and, as often, the portrait of the city stands on the threshold of personification, especially with the striking use of τροφοί. The city is envisaged as one great τέμενος of the war-god, fostering the martial might of the Syracusans. δαιμόνια describes τροφοί because the τέμενος belongs to the god (cf. the passages in n.13). In the *Sixth Olympian* (8ff) Pindar says of the victor in his present success:

ἲστω γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ πεδι-

λο ρ δαιμόνιον πόδ' ἔχων

Σωστράτου νίός.

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12 Cf. Pind. fr.122.17–20: ὃ Κύπρου δέσποινα, τεῦν δεῦτ' ἐς ἄλος φορβάδων
corán áγελαν ἐκατόγγυριον ξενοφών τελέαις ἐπάγαγ' εὐχωλαίς ἰανθείς.


14 S. L. Radt, *Pindars zweiter und sechster Paian* (Amsterdam 1958) 103, notes that Pindar is the earliest extant poet to treat cities in this way.
δαμόνινον is regularly seen here as possessing a quasi-adverbial force (e.g. by Slater, *Lexicon to Pindar s.v.*, “by divine grace”), suggesting divine support of Hegesias’ victory; but it is noteworthy that the victor seems to be a priest (cf. line 5, βομῷο τε μαντείῳ ταμίας Δίως ἐν Πίσσα, with the scholia *ad loc.* [7c: I 156 Drachmann]); and, consequently, the adjective may refer to his status as a servant of Zeus.\(^{15}\) Another useful passage is *Ol*. 8.25ff:

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\text{τεθμοὺς δὲ τις ἀθανάτων καὶ}
\text{τάνδ’ ἀλειρκέα χῶραν}
\text{παντοδαιμοίαν ὑπέστασε ξένοις}
\text{κίονα δαμονίαν.}
\]

A τεθμοὺς of the gods established Aegina as a pillar for strangers of all kinds, and so the island is described as κιον δαμονία with the adjective underlining its ties with the gods.\(^{16}\) Similarly, that the acropolis of Athens is sacred ground allows Pindar to call it δαμόνιον πτολειθρόν (fr. 76.2; cf. *Od*. 11.323, ἐς γουνόν Ἀθηνᾶων ἱεράων). In these passages δαμόνιον, like the more common use of words such as ἱερός, seems to attest to a connection with divinity; and this appears to be the essential force of the adjective in the fifth century.\(^{17}\)

If we are correct in understanding the Corinthian women as ἱερόδουλοι, it may well be appropriate to ask why they are described as δαμονίαι in relation to the goddess and not ἱεραῖ or some other such term. It is possible that the word was chosen because it stands farther removed from Greek notions of purity and the sacred than ἱεράς. Human sexuality was believed to be polluting; it is likely that sex with a prostitute was regarded as more so, perhaps especially when associated with the τέμενος of a deity.\(^{18}\) The poet may have wished to avoid striking a potentially discordant note by appearing to align

\(^{15}\) In this passage ποὺς is probably synecdoche for the victor, however the imagery of 8ff is understood. For further examples see R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache* (Hannover/Leipzig 1898) I 280.

\(^{16}\) The scholiasts gloss δαμονίαν with θεῖον: cf. Σ *Pind. Ol*. 8.33c-d (I 244 Drachmann).

\(^{17}\) See Brunius-Nilsson (*supra* n.6) 139ff; cf. Braswell's note on Pind. *Pyth*. 4.37(e).

\(^{18}\) See R. Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford 1983) 74ff with n.4 on Sokolowski, *LSAM* 29.7 and *LSCG* 91.18.
sacred prostitutes too closely with what is generally designated as τὰ ἱερὰ. In his poem for Xenophon (fr.122) Pindar’s discomfort is plain, and it is correspondingly difficult to establish the tone of the passage.\textsuperscript{19} However much sacred prostitution was found in cities like Corinth, it is probable that it made many Greeks uneasy: Herodotus calls the Babylonian practice νόμος αἰσχρότεις (1.199.1).

It is also possible that δαιμόνια was a regular title at Corinth, and this may in fact be more likely. Such a view, however, cannot be proved without firmer evidence, but a passage from the end of Hesiod’s \emph{Theogony} is suggestive in this regard. Here the poet describes Phaethon, the son born to Cephalus by Eos (986–91):

\begin{quote}
αὐτᾶρ τοι Κεφάλῳ φιτύσατο φαίδιμον νιόν,
ἱρθημόν Φαέθοντα, θεοὶς ἐπιείκειλον ἄνδρα—
τὸν ἂν νεόν τέρεν ἄνθος ἔχοντ’ ἐρικυδέος ἵβης
παῖδ’ ἄταλα φρονέοντα φιλομειδῆς ‘Ἀφροδίτη
וחד’ ἀνερευμαμένη, καὶ μιν ζαθεοὶς ἐν ἦτοῖς
νησσόπολν μύχιον ποιήσατο, δαίμονα διόν.
\end{quote}

Although not the usual version of the story of Phaethon, this is a myth of a familiar sort: the handsome youth arouses the interest of the goddess, who carries him off.\textsuperscript{20} What is of interest for the present discussion is Phaethon’s fate. West (\textit{ad} 991) argues that implicit in this passage is Phaethon’s condition as ἥρως, suggesting that we have a reminiscence of the practice of burying the priest-king in the temple of his god. This view is certainly possible, and there are instances of the word δαιμόνων used of the powerful dead;\textsuperscript{21} but Hesiod says nothing of Phaethon’s death, and, as Wilamowitz saw, this passage indicates that the πάρεδροι of the gods can be termed δαιμόνες.\textsuperscript{22} In the


\textsuperscript{20} For the myth see West \textit{ad} Hes. \textit{Th.} 991; J. Diggle, \textit{Euripides: Phaethon} (Cambridge 1970) 10–15. This version is attested elsewhere only at Paus. 1.3.1 (conveniently quoted by Diggle 11).

\textsuperscript{21} Of the passages cited by West, Hes. \textit{Erga} 122 and Aesch. \textit{Pers.} 620 are the best examples. The description of Alcestis as μάκαρα δαιμόνων in Euripides’ play (1003) may be germane as well.

\textsuperscript{22} Wilamowitz (\textit{supra} n.5) I 360: “Das [\textit{i.e.} \textit{Th.} 991] setzt voraus, daß πάρεδροι großer Götter als Dämonen bezeichnet werden.”
Hesiodic passage δαίμονα δίον stands in apposition to νησόλον μύχον, and this suggests that the term δαίμον reflects Phaethon’s position as an intimate subordinate of the goddess. That this usage of δαίμον carries some special significance may be suggested by the occurrence of the apparent formula δαίμονα δίον only here in Greek literature; it cannot be viewed as an empty formula (though it is clearly modelled on phrases like "Εκτόρα δίον"). This view finds some support in a passage from the Theognidea (2.1345–48):

παιδοφιλεῖν δε τι τερπνόν, ἐπεὶ ποτε καὶ Γανυμήδους ἦρατο καὶ Κρονίδης ἀθανάτων βασιλεύς,
ἀρπάζει δ’ ἐς Ὀλυμπον ἀνήγαγε καὶ μιν ἔθηκεν δαίμονα, παιδείς ἀνθος ἔχοντ’ ἔρατόν.

As in the case of Phaethon, there is an erotic coloring to the myth. The god abducts the youth and give him a privileged position as his subordinate; this status is reflected in the use of δαίμον.

At some level these myths describe the relationship that obtains between a god and a mortal who in some sense belongs to that deity. It is probable that figures like Phaethon served as paradigms of the rôle of the priest in relation to his god in

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23 Pindar’s description of Cinyras as ἱερέα κτίλων Ἀφροδίτας (Pyth. 2.17) probably has similar implications: see H. Lloyd-Jones, JHS 93 (1973) 119 n.59 (=Academic Papers: Epic, etc. [Oxford 1990] 126 n.59); Woodbury (supra n.11) 285 n.3 (=Collected Writings 271 n.3); E. Dettori, MusCrit 23/24 (1988/89) 95–98.

24 The degree to which the erotic element is central to this myth remains controversial. K. J. Dover, Greek Homosexuality (Cambridge [Mass.] 1978) 196ff, argues that it reflects a secondary re-interpretation; but, pointing to passages like Euphorus FGrHist 70F149, it is possible to argue that Greek homosexuality is a reflection of initiatory ritual, which may have its roots in Indo-European society: see J. Bremmer, Arethusa 13 (1980) 279–98; P. A. Cartledge, PCPS 207 (1981) 17–36; H. Patzer, Die griechische Knabenliebe (Wiesbaden 1982) esp. 99ff; B. Sergent, L’Homosexualité dans la mythologie grecque (Paris 1984) 237ff. In this light myths like that of the abduction of Ganymede would have some basis in social practice. Dover, however, has pointed out the weaknesses of this position in “Greek Homosexuality and Initiation,” The Greeks and their Legacy (Oxford 1988) 115–34; cf. T. Figueira, AJP 107 (1986) 426–32.
certain cults; but it is unlikely that the term δαιμόνια would be applied to ordinary priests. They would probably stand at one remove from the model presented by myth; and so δαιμόνιος, the adjective derived from δαίμων, would be a suitable term. This sort of view well suits the Simonidean epigram. The ἱερόδουλοι, like Phaethon in the Theogony, serve the temple of Aphrodite; they belong to the goddess and so they are δαιμόνια.

The nominative is also supported by structural considerations. The arrangement of εὐχόμεναι ... δαίμόνια gives us a common form of pentameter, in which words in agreement end each of the hemiepe that constitute the line. Moreover, δαίμόνια gives special point to the telling final position of the verse (neither δαίμονια nor δαίμόνιος seems to contribute anything of significance). The vague αίδε in the first line is balanced by δαίμόνια that defines the demonstrative. As it stands in current editions, the epigram is unusual in offering no identifications of the women. On the usual view, we must assume that the reference of αίδε was inferred from the painting or statue(s) upon which the poem was inscribed. But by reading δαίμόνια in the way proposed here the women are in fact

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25 It is clear that the sort of priesthoods that concern us are not typical of most Greek cults, in which the ἱερέως has a more casual association with his god: see Burkert (supra n.5) 95–98, who says that “In Griechenland ist das Priestertum nicht Lebensform, sondern Neben- und Ehrenamt” (97). Those cults in which priests (and other followers) are bound closely to the deity tend to be those cults that reflect oriental elements (Burkert 97). Sacred prostitution was an infamous feature of the worship of Ishtar/Astarte, the eastern prototype of Aphrodite: see Burkert 153 and Die orientalisierende Epoche in der griechischen Religion und Literatur (Heidelberg 1984) 92–95; cf. A. D. Nock, HThR 45 (1952) 244 (=Essays on Religion and the Ancient World [Oxford 1972] II 783f).

26 This is a common pattern (occurring as early as Archil. fr.4.7 West) and requires little illustration; I simply cite some examples from the Simonidean epigrams: 18.2; 48.2; 59.2, 8; 66.8, 10; 68.6; 71.2; 72.2 FGE. For the combination of an adjective and a participle, cf. (e.g.) Anyte 8.4 (695) Gow and Page: ποτιθεγέτα ... φημένα.


28 Cf. Sim. Ep. 65.1ff FGE, in which αἱδε, the first word, comes sharply into focus with μαχαιράμενοι at the end of the pentameter.
identified, possibly by a special term for the ἱερόδουλοι at Corinth.29

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