

Some Neologisms in the Epigrams of Palladas

Kevin W. Wilkinson

PALLADAS OF ALEXANDRIA can lay claim to being the last major writer of Greek scoptic epigram.¹ This is a sub-genre that enjoyed its heyday during the reign of Nero, exerted an influence on Martial, and apparently fell out of fashion later in the second century. Unless we have been seriously misled by the vicissitudes of survival, this literary form then lay dormant until Palladas briefly resurrected it in late antiquity, at a time when the trend in Greek poetry was towards a highly technical style of epic verse.² In comparison with the latter, scoptic epigram was less rigid in its meter, less elevated in its themes, and less ostentatiously literary in its language. While extremely artful at its best, it gives the impression of being casual, nearly “prosaic” or “non-literary.”³ It is this style that

¹ G. Agosti, “Late Antique Iambics and *Iambikè Idéa*,” in A. Cavarzere, A. Aloni, and A. Barchiesi (eds.), *Iambic Ideas: Essays on a Poetic Tradition from Archaic Greece to the Late Roman Empire* (Lanham 2001) 219–255, at 234–237.

² Associated especially with Nonnus of Panopolis, but developing already in the third century with the two Oppians, Quintus of Smyrna, and Triphiodorus; see L. M. Caverio, *Poems in Context: Greek Poetry in the Egyptian Thebaid, 200–600 AD* (Berlin 2008) 106–107.

³ V. Longo, *L’epigramma scoptico greco* (Genoa 1967) 16–17; G. Nisbet, *Greek Epigram in the Roman Empire: Martial’s Forgotten Rivals* (Oxford 2003) 16 and *passim*. On Palladas see I. G. G. Calderini, “L’epigramma greco tardo-antico: tradizione e innovazione,” *Vichiana* N.S. 16 (1987) 103–134, at 124–125: “Uomo di profonda cultura, ma costantemente rivolto alla realtà quotidiana, egli adotta uno stile promiscuo, nel quale toni schietti ed immediati, ottenuti mediante un linguaggio disadorno, non alieno da elementi popolareschi, convivono con modi ricercati ed eruditi.”

dominates in Palladas' poetry, even in the epigrams that are not truly scopic. And this is nowhere more evident than in his vocabulary, which can be strikingly non-poetic.

Of particular interest, Palladas sometimes, and quite self-consciously, employed terms that were new and colloquial—words that had gained currency on the streets of a Greek city in late antiquity but that catch the eye in a literary context.⁴ This is a feature of his style that has not received due attention, perhaps because commentators have been laboring under a misapprehension of the poet's dates. Traditionally located in the second half of the fourth century and first half of the fifth, Palladas was in fact active during the sole reign of Constantine I (324–337).⁵ Indeed, he was probably rather advanced in years by that period.⁶ The revised dates for this poet provide a new vantage point from which to consider some of his lexical choices, especially a group of words that are attested for the first time during the opening quarter of the fourth century.

One source of new colloquialisms in Palladas' poetry is Latin vocabulary that had recently entered Greek parlance.⁷ There is

⁴ These are to be distinguished from words that were invented by later Greek poets according to established literary practice and in order to demonstrate their virtuosity. On this technique in Hellenistic epigram see E. Magnelli, "Meter and Diction: From Refinement to Mannerism," in P. Bing and J. S. Bruss (eds.), *Brill's Companion to Hellenistic Epigram* (Leiden 2007) 165–183, at 171–177. On Homeric-sounding neologisms in Nonnus and other late antique poets see Cavero, *Poems in Context* 154–161. In scopic verse, it is not unusual to encounter made-up words that contain a joke. Palladas himself produced a number of these, e.g. ἀντιοχεύμενος (*Anth.Pal.* 11.284.2).

⁵ K. W. Wilkinson, "Palladas and the Age of Constantine," *JRS* 99 (2009) 36–60.

⁶ Wilkinson, *JRS* 99 (2009) 49–51, where his birth is placed ca. 259 (plus or minus several years of course).

⁷ As opposed to transliterated Latin, which is a technique that Palladas employs in *Anth.Pal.* 10.44 (δόμινε φράτερ, with a play on Latin *domine* and Greek δόμεναι). For a nearly complete list of Latin names and vocabulary in Palladas' epigrams see A. Franke, *De Pallada epigrammatographo* (diss. Leipzig 1899) 83.

some precedent for this in earlier scoptic verse. Nicarchus, for example, uses the newly coined ξέστης (cf. Lat. *sextarius*) in *Anth. Pal.* 11.73.6. It is a word, as Gideon Nisbet notes, that is “alien to any literary register, but immediately familiar from a large number of documents on papyrus.”⁸ And it begins to show up in the papyrological record precisely in the middle of the first century—that is, during Nicarchus’ lifetime. This may be compared with Palladas’ facetious linguistic commentary on κονδίτον (cf. Lat. *conditum*), a kind of spiced wine sometimes used for medicinal purposes (*Anth. Pal.* 9.502):⁹

κονδίτου μοι δελ. τὸ δὲ κονδίτον πόθεν ἔσχειν
 τοῦνομα; τῆς φωνῆς ἔστι γὰρ ἀλλότριον
 τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων εἰ Ῥωμαϊκῶς δὲ καλεῖται,
 αὐτὸς ἂν εἰδείης Ῥωμαϊκώτατος ὦν.
 σκεύασον οὖν μοι τοῦτο· τὸ γὰρ κατέχον με νόσημα
 τοῦ στομάχου χρήζει τοῦδε, λέγουσι, ποτοῦ.

I need *konditon*. But where did the word *konditon* come from? For it is foreign to the Greek language. If it derives from Latin, you would know, since you are the Latin expert. Prepare it for me, then, because people tell me that my stomach ailment requires this drink.

The poet’s mock surprise at the word and his feigned ignorance of its derivation (he gives himself away in line 5 with *σκεύασον* = *condito*) suggest that this was a new entry in vernacular Greek at the time of the epigram’s composition. And indeed, the first occurrence in Greek documentary papyri dates to A.D. 317–323 (*P.Ryl.* IV 629.367). Palladas’ poem can hardly be more than two or three decades removed from this date, and it supplies what is very likely the first literary occurrence.¹⁰

⁸ Nisbet, *Greek Epigram* 89 n.21.

⁹ All quotations of the *Anthology* (except for one divergence, identified below) are taken from H. Beckby (ed.), *Anthologia Graeca*² I–IV (1965–1968). All translations are my own.

¹⁰ Followed later in the fourth century by Orib. *Coll.med.* 5.33.8–9; cf. *Cyranides* 3.3 (probably fourth century).

For both Nicarchus and Palladas, the occasional use of new and colloquial loanwords was a technique that helped to establish the casual style that was a hallmark of scoptic verse. Practitioners of this genre, however sophisticated, used the language and subject-matter of everyday life to craft a highly self-conscious literary persona—that of the trifler. But the fact that these words were borrowed from Latin may also be a nod to the cultural and political situation of Hellenes under Roman rule. This seems especially likely for Palladas' epigram, in which the Ῥωμαϊκῶς and Ῥωμαϊκώτατος of consecutive lines are dripping with disdain. (Is it even the Latinism itself that has turned his stomach?)¹¹ In the first half of the fourth century, *κονδύτον* entered colloquial Greek and so became useful to Palladas for its linguistic register, but it also supplied the opportunity for an indirect commentary on the superiority of Hellenic culture and the unwelcome influence—indeed intrusion—of all things Latin.

A second example in Palladas' oeuvre of a recently coined Latin loanword is *φόλλις* (cf. Lat. *follis*) in *Anth.Pal.* 9.528:

Χριστιανοὶ γεγαῶτες Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
ἐνθάδε ναιετάουσιν ἀπήμονες· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτοὺς
χώνη φόλλιν ἄγουσα φερέσβιον ἐν πυρὶ θήσει.

Having become Christian, the owners of Olympian palaces
dwell here unharmed; for the melting-pot that produces the
life-giving *follis* will not put them in the fire.

I have argued elsewhere that these lines are best read against the historical backdrop of Constantine's spoliation of the pagan temples ca. 330.¹² According to our sources, most of the cult

¹¹ For Greek attitudes towards the Latin language see B. Rochette, *Le latin dans le monde grec: Recherches sur la diffusion de la langue et des lettres latines dans les provinces hellénophones de l'Empire romain* (Brussels 1997), esp. 69–83.

¹² *JRS* 99 (2009) 54–56. For Constantine's spoliation of the temples see Euseb. *VC* 3.54, *LC* 8.2–4; Jer. *Chron.* a. 330; Julian *Or.* 7.22 (Bidez); Anon. *De rebus bellicis* 2.2; Lib. *Or.* 30.6, 37 (Förster); Socr. *HE* 1.16; Soz. *HE* 2.5; Zos. 5.24.6.

statues seized by the government during this period were converted into coins, but some of the best bronzes were “rescued” from the fire and installed in the public spaces of Constantinople, the emperor’s new Christian capital in the East.¹³ *Anth. Pal.* 9.528 seems to pick up on these two possible fates: some brazen gods avoided the melting-pot by abandoning their cult and aligning themselves with the religion of the first Christian emperor.

Here, however, I merely want to consider the significance of *φόλλιν* in the third line. Like *κονδύτων*, this loanword entered the Greek language during Palladas’ lifetime. It is attested in papyri from the beginning of the fourth century,¹⁴ and *Anth. Pal.* 9.528 supplies one of the very first occurrences in literature.¹⁵ But setting that fact to one side, can we be certain of the word’s meaning in this case? Almost always in Greek, it designates a sum of money, which appears to fit the context here very well: the Olympian statues avoided, not merely being melted down, but being melted down by the government for coins. Whether we think that *φόλλιν* here designates a trifling amount or a larger sum is irrelevant for our comprehension of the epigram.¹⁶ The only other attested use of *φόλλις* in Greek is to

¹³ In general, on the display of former cult statues and other pagan artifacts in Constantinople, see S. Bassett, “The Antiquities in the Hippodrome of Constantinople,” *DOP* 45 (1991) 87–96, and *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople* (Cambridge 2004).

¹⁴ The earliest occurrences are in *P. Panop. Beatty* 2.302 (A.D. 300) and *P. Cair. Isid.* 126.8 (308/9). See R. S. Bagnall, *Currency and Inflation in Fourth Century Egypt* (Chico 1985) 17–18.

¹⁵ Perhaps preceded only by Euseb. *HE* 10.6.1.

¹⁶ The word has frequently been taken here to mean a single bronze coin of little value. Alan Cameron, “The Follis in Fourth-Century Egypt,” *NC* VII.4 (1964) 135–138, argued that this was the first such use of *follis* in an Egyptian source. More recently, others have been critical of this interpretation: M. Salamon, “Coinage and Money in the Epigrams of Palladas: A Few Remarks,” in S. Stabryla (ed.), *Everyday Life and Literature in Antiquity* (*Classica Cracoviensia* 1 [1995]) 91–101, at 93–95; H. White, “Notes on Palladas,” *Myrtia* 13 (1998) 225–230, at 229–230; A. Pontani, “Ancora su

refer to a tax (the *collatio glebalis*) that was introduced during the reign of Constantine I.¹⁷ This should probably not receive serious consideration as the primary referent of *φόλλιν* in Palladas' epigram, but it is certainly possible that it lurks in the background. The timing is suggestive, at any rate, and Constantine's new taxes (like his confiscation of temple property) were seen by his detractors to be indicative of imperial greed and interference.¹⁸

An altogether different reading of the word has been proposed by some who suggest that the context might support the translation "bellows"—a definition of *follis* that is common in Latin but otherwise unattested in Greek.¹⁹ While the first association to be formed by any fourth-century reader encountering this word in a Greek context would surely be "money," and perhaps secondarily the Constantinian tax, it is plausible that a reference to fire later in the line might have caused a bilingual reader to think additionally of bellows fanning the flames. The adjective *φερέσβιον* seems to support this layered reading of the noun. Heather White has suggested two ways in which this word might be taken with reference to a pair of bellows—as breathing life both into the statues and into the fire—but she is

Pallada, AP IX 528, ovvero il bilinguismo alla prova," *Incontri triestini di filologia classica* 6 (2006/7) 175–210, esp. 194–197. Salamon's judgment seems right to me: evidence for the value of the *follis* in the fourth century is scant and contradictory, and Palladas' epigram does not provide any additional information, but this is no reason to think that he is not talking about money.

¹⁷ O. Seeck, *RE* 4 (1900) 365–367; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1964) I 110, 431, III 106–108.

¹⁸ The classic critique is Zos. 2.38 (drawn from Eunapius). On fourth-century criticism of Constantine's fiscal policies see H.-U. Wiemer, "Libanius on Constantine," *CQ.N.S.* 44 (1994) 511–524, at 519–520.

¹⁹ White, *Myrtia* 13 (1998) 229–230; Pontani, *Incontri triestini* 6 (2006/7) 187–196. This is the meaning suggested also in LSJ from the seventh edition (1883) on, evidently under the influence of E. A. Sophocles' *Glossary of Later and Byzantine Greek*. For a full account see Pontani 187 ff.

not justified in rejecting its applicability to coinage.²⁰ This adjective is most typically used of the earth, which produces life and sustains it, but it would be a characteristically Palladan twist to imply that it is rather money that allows for the possibility of βίος—that is, both “life” itself and “livelihood.”²¹ It seems quite likely (to this reader at any rate) that Palladas consciously built a measure of ambiguity into the line that would allow for multiple resonances of φόλλις/*folliis* to be entertained simultaneously.

It is possible, in fact, that the interference from Latin may go even further than this. On any assessment of the noun’s meaning, the participle ἄγουσα should strike the reader as an odd choice.²² This verb does not really mean to “produce,” which is what the epigram seems to require if φόλλιν is a reference to coins. And it is a curious image, too, if we prefer to think of taxes or of bellows. The sense is somewhat strained on any interpretation. But is it possible that this dearth of meaning—and especially in combination with a noun that is Latin in origin—would have caused an ancient reader to expand the frame of reference from ἄγω to include *ago*? The Latin cognate has a broader semantic range, including to “produce.” The layers of meaning seem to proliferate (and in interesting ways) if one reads the entire phrase bilingually.

The general drift of lines 2–3 is clear enough without appeal to Latin: the “converted” statues have avoided the fate of being

²⁰ White, *Myrtia* 13 (1998) 230.

²¹ Cf. *Anth.Pal.* 10.63.4, in which a rich man’s death is the end of his βίος (both “life” and “livelihood”), discussed by Salamon, *Classica Cracoviensia* 1 (1995) 95; *Anth.Pal.* 10.82.4 (τοῦ βίου τεθνηκότος), in which the noun may possess a dual sense, discussed by Alan Cameron, “Palladas and Christian Polemic,” *JRS* 55 (1965) 17–30, at 27; *Anth.Pal.* 9.175, in which Palladas complains of a loss of salary and worries that his βίος will end in poverty.

²² Cf. J. Reiske (ed.), *Anthologiae Graecae a Constantino Cephala conditae libri tres* (Leipzig 1754) 227 (of the notes): recognizing the difficulty, which he attributes to the poet’s lack of skill, Reiske suggests that ἀνεῖσα would have been a better choice.

melted down. It is much more difficult, however, to decide on any one reading of *χώνη φόλλιν ἄγουσα φερέσβιον*, and that may be precisely the point. The intrusion of Latin into Greek both muddies the waters and generates a richer complexity of potential associations.

In addition to Latin loanwords, Palladas' other source of newly minted vocabulary was Greek and Christian. Unlike most pagan men of letters, who either ignored Christianity altogether or at least tended to avoid Christian jargon, Palladas takes up the topic with some relish.²³ This is evident already in *Anth.Pal.* 9.528, on the converted Olympians, which begins with the bold choice of *Χριστιανοί*. While it was no longer novel in the early fourth century, this word is certainly non-classical and undeniably surprising from the hand of a pagan poet. It looks especially peculiar alongside the epic *Ἰόλυμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες*. The hoary gods of myth—representatives of traditional Hellenic culture—have adopted a name and an identity that could not have been imagined by Homer. And they have done so in order to avoid conversion into the equally non-classical (indeed quite novel) *φόλλιν* of line 3.²⁴ Palladas seems here to present Christianity and the Roman state as twin threats to the Hellenes' way of life. And under Constantine, of course, this pair of destructive forces had become merely two sides of the same coin.

On two other occasions, Palladas uses Christian words that were new in the early fourth century. One of these is *μοναχός*,

²³ On the lengths to which authors (both pagan and Christian) might go to avoid Christian terminology, see Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Late Empire," *CQ* N.S. 14 (1964) 316–328.

²⁴ This technique of placing an epic phrase alongside colloquial language, in order to point up something absurd, is not uncommon in scoptic verse. Cf. esp. Lucilius' epigram on a playwright who sold some statues of the gods to support himself (*Anth.Pal.* 11.189.5–6): *οἱ δὲ θεοὶ παρ Ζηνὶ καθήμενοι ἐξεδύθησαν / εἰς βραχὺ σιταρίου κέρμα καὶ οἴναριον* ("And the gods that sit with Zeus were stripped to produce a little coin for a hunk of bread and a swig of wine").

which appears in *Anth.Pal.* 11.384. This was not exactly a neologism in late antiquity. It appears rarely in Greek literature from the time of Plato, almost exclusively in philosophical texts and more often than not in adverbial forms.²⁵ In the papyri the adjective is used in a couple of technical senses: of contracts and the like, “executed in a single copy” or sometimes “top copy”; and of clothing, “made with a single cloth” or perhaps “single-layered.”²⁶ In late antiquity, however, *μοναχός* came to be used widely as a substantive meaning “monk.”²⁷ It is in this last, novel, and colloquial sense that Palladas employs the word (*Anth.Pal.* 11.384):

εἰ μοναχοί, τί τοσοῖδε; τοσοῖδε δέ, πῶς πάλι μούνοι;
ὦ πληθὺς μοναχῶν ψευσαμένη μονάδα.

If solitaries [sc. monks], why so many? And if so many, how again alone? O crowd of solitaries that has given the lie to solitude!

Long ago, on historical grounds, Johannes Reiske declared that this epigram could not predate the age of Theodosius I.²⁸ His claim is simply false, especially in light of the fact that Palladas was a native of Egypt. The origins of Egyptian monasticism are shadowy but certainly belong in the third

²⁵ A. Adam, “Grundbegriffe des Mönchtums in sprachlicher Sicht,” *ZKG* 65 (1953) 209–239, at 209–214; F. Morard, “Monachos, moine: histoire du terme grec jusqu’au 4^e siècle,” *FZPhTh* 20 (1973) 332–411, at 336–340.

²⁶ LSJ s.v. I.3 and Suppl.; Morard, *FZPhTh* 20 (1973) 341–346.

²⁷ Some have posited a pre-history of this usage in a handful of obscure Jewish and Christian passages (from the biblical translations of Aquila and Symmachus and from two of the Nag Hammadi titles); e.g., Morard, *FZPhTh* 20 (1973) 347–354, 362–377, and “Encore quelques réflexions sur Monachos,” *VigChr* 34 (1980) 395–401. But cf. E. A. Judge, “The Earliest Use of Monachos for ‘Monk’ (P. Coll. Youtie 77) and the Origins of Monasticism,” *JbAC* 20 (1977) 72–89, at 75–77; M. Choat, “The Development and Usage of Terms for ‘Monk’ in Late Antique Egypt,” *JbAC* 45 (2002) 5–23, at 8.

²⁸ Reiske, *Anthologiae Graecae* 254.

century.²⁹ Even before Constantine assumed control of the East (A.D. 324), there were already several monastic houses in Upper Egypt. And there is solid evidence that by the 330s the phenomenon had pervaded the whole of the Nile valley as well as the Delta.³⁰ I do not know how many monks Palladas must have heard about for him to call them a *πληθὺς* (though two already seem enough for the joke), and in any event we have no way of determining their numbers. On purely historical grounds, however, there is no objection to placing *Anth.Pal.* 11.384 in the first half of the fourth century.

But what of the word *μοναχός*, which is the truly interesting feature of this poem? It may have been a popular term for a monk (or any type of Christian ascetic) in Egypt already during the earliest years of the fourth century.³¹ At any rate, the first extant occurrence of the word with the appropriate sense can be dated precisely to 6 June 324 (*P.Col.* VII 171.15). This is, curiously enough, in a legal petition composed by the non-Christian Aurelius Isidorus, who claims that Antoninus the deacon and Isaac the monk (*μοναχός*) rescued him from a beating. Evidently, by this date, the word was in common use in Egypt and fully intelligible outside of Christian circles. And it remained the most frequent title for monks in papyri of the fourth century.³² As for literature, the first occurrence may be in Eusebius' *Commentary on the Psalms*, written in the 330s.³³ This passage is not without ambiguity, and there is a lack of con-

²⁹ For a summary of monasticism's early growth in Egypt see D. J. Chitty, *The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism under the Christian Empire* (Oxford 1966) 1–45.

³⁰ See, for example, the evidence for this period in Ath. *V.Anton.*; *V.Pachom. Gr.*; Pall. *H.Laus.*; H. I. Bell, *Jews and Christians in Egypt* (London 1924) 38–99 = *P.Lond.* VI 1913–1922.

³¹ The most current and judicious treatment is Choat, *JbAC* 45 (2002) 5–23.

³² See the useful table compiled by Choat, *JbAC* 45 (2002) 9–10, and 8 n.23 correcting earlier opinions on the frequency of occurrence.

³³ *PG* 23, 689B; for discussion see Judge, *JbAC* 20 (1977) 74–76.

temporary Christian literature with which to compare it, but it is at least indisputable that the word shows up frequently with the relevant sense in the oeuvre of Athanasius (ca. 335–373). Palladas' epigram must be on the leading edge of this linguistic development. The date of composition is perhaps unlikely to be much earlier than 324 (the date of *P.Col.* 171), and it cannot be much later than 350, when Palladas (if still alive) would have probably been in his nineties. This epigram, therefore, contains one of the very first literary references to Christian *μοναχοί*. Given what we now know about Palladas' habit of taking up new terms, we should not be surprised at this fact. Indeed, as with *Anth.Pal.* 9.502 on *κονδῖτον*, this epigram is primarily about *μοναχός* as a linguistic innovation and only secondarily about the monks themselves. In both cases, the observations are sharper the closer they are in date to the introduction of these two words into vernacular Greek.

Anth.Pal. 11.384 appears to be another instance in which Palladas deploys a newly minted word to point up a destructive influence on Hellenic culture. This time, however, the culprit is not Latin and everything else associated with the Roman state, but rather Christianity with its muddled jargon and disregard for the social norms of the Greek *polis*. Even so, the epigram is not especially hostile.³⁴ While it serves up a joke at the monks' expense, it has little in common with the vituperations of men like Libanius and Eunapius.³⁵ In response to some notorious outrages perpetrated by Christian monks on pagan sites in the last quarter of the fourth century, these *fin-de-siècle* Hellenes were shrill in their denunciations of the black-clad mob of gluttons and vandals. But for the equally conservative Palladas, several decades earlier, the monks seem to be merely one more

³⁴ A fourth-century Christian monk could write virtually the same thing. Jer. *Ep.* 14.6 (ca. A.D. 376) *interpretare vocabulum monachi, hoc est nomen tuum: quid facis in turba qui solus es?* and 58.5 (A.D. 395) *si cupis esse quod diceris, monachus, id est solus, quid facis in urbibus, quae utique non sunt solorum habitacula, sed multorum?*

³⁵ Lib. *Or.* 30.8; Eunap. *VS* 472.

absurdity in an already absurd world, and perhaps one more symbol of a culture in decline.

Palladas' second use of a newly coined Christian word is the compound adjective *φιλόχριστος*, which appears in *Anth.Plan.* 282:

Νίκαι πάρεσμεν, αἱ γελῶσαι παρθένοι,
νίκας φέρουσαι τῇ φιλοχρίστῳ πόλει.
ἔγραψαν ἡμᾶς οἱ φιλοῦντες τὴν πόλιν
πρέποντα νίκαις ἐντυποῦντες σχήματα.

Here we are, the Victories, the laughing maidens, bearing victories to the Christ-loving city. Those who love the city fashioned us, stamping figures appropriate to the victories.

There is some debate about the authenticity of *φιλοχρίστῳ* in the second line. This is the reading of the *Anthologia Planudea*, our only manuscript witness to the epigram. Editors, however, have been shy about printing this adjective, most preferring *φιλοχρήστῳ* in its place.³⁶ It is possible that this reading derives from an alternate manuscript tradition, of which there is now no trace, but this is very doubtful. The most thorough attempts to sort through the evidence have been undertaken in defense of Planudes' testimony.³⁷ These have dispelled some prevalent misconceptions about the word *φιλόχριστος*, which was in regular use in the fourth century and exceedingly more common than the alternative *φιλόχρηστος*.³⁸ There is no good reason to

³⁶ *φιλοχρήστῳ* appears in the error-riddled early editions of *Anth.Plan.*, first in J. Lascaris (Florence 1494). It has been retained in all of the standard modern editions: F. Jacobs (Leipzig 1814); F. Dübner (Paris 1872); H. Beckby (Munich 1968), from whose text I diverge in this one instance; R. Aubreton (Paris 1980).

³⁷ See esp. J. Irmscher, "Ἡ φιλόχριστος πόλις (zu Anthologia Graeca XVI 282)," *TU* 77 (1961) 323–330; Alan Cameron, "Palladas and the Nikai," *JHS* 84 (1964) 54–62, at 54–56. See also P. Waltz, "Sur quelques épigrammes 'protreptiques' de l'Anthologie (livre X): notes critiques et exégétiques," *REG* 59–60 (1946/7) 176–209, at 203.

³⁸ As Alan Cameron (*JHS* 84 [1964] 55) remarks, LSJ s.v. *φιλόχριστος*, which cites only two late inscriptions, is misleading.

doubt, therefore, that Palladas composed an epigram about a “Christ-loving” city, which has been identified by commentators as either Constantinople or Alexandria.³⁹ But more to the point for the present argument, the first indisputable occurrence is in a letter written by the bishops Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea in 327.⁴⁰ This is also the precise period for the first occurrence of *κονδῆτον* (317–323) and *μοναχός* in the sense of “monk” (324). Palladas is once again using a freshly minted neologism, and once again it is Christian in origin.

Unlike the three other epigrams that we have considered, there is no clear indication that *Anth. Plan.* 282 was intended to convey disdain. One can read it sarcastically if so inclined, and some commentators have.⁴¹ It is telling, however, that others have read it straight-forwardly and considered it proof of Palladas’ Christianity or at least of his nominal conversion.⁴² In

³⁹ Constantinople: Reiske, *Anthologiae Graecae* 254; L. A. Stella, *Cinque poeti dell’ Antologia Palatina* (Bologna 1949) 381; T. A. Bonanno, “Pallada,” *Orpheus* 5 (1958) 119–150, at 122; Waltz, *REG* 59–60 (1946/7) 203; Irscher, *TU* 77 (1961) 330. For a full treatment of the epigram, with an argument for Constantinople, see my forthcoming article in *JRS* 100 (2010). Alexandria: Franke, *De Pallada* 16–17; W. Zerwes, *Palladas von Alexandrien: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der griechischen Epigrammdichtung* (diss. Tübingen 1956) 325; Alan Cameron, *JHS* 84 (1964) 56–59; J. Irscher, “Alexandria: die christusliebende Stadt,” *BSACopt* 19 (1970) 115–122; R. Aubreton (ed.), *Anthologie Grecque XIII* (Paris 1980) 299.

⁴⁰ H.-G. Opitz (ed.), *Athanasius Werke III.1 Urkunden zur Geschichte des Arianischen Streites* (Berlin 1934) 66, no. 31.5. A search of TLG reveals that the adjective appears several times in the longer recension of the epistles of Ignatius of Antioch, which contains many fourth-century interpolations, and once in a similarly spurious work attributed to the early-third-century Hippolytus. Eusebius of Caesarea never uses the word, but the fourth-century editor of his *Vita Constantini* uses it once in the title to Book 1 chapter 17: τοῦ αὐτοῦ [sc. Κωνσταντίνου] περὶ τῆς φιλοχρίστου προαιρέσεως.

⁴¹ Irscher, *TU* 77 (1961) 329–330; Alan Cameron, *JHS* 84 (1964) 59–62.

⁴² Waltz, *REG* 59–60 (1946/7) 200–203; R. Keydell, “Palladas und das Christentum,” *BZ* 50 (1957) 1–3, at 3.

the absence of any hint that it should be read against the grain, one can only guess at what the poet might have thought (always a dangerous endeavor) about the potentially surprising fact that pagan Victories were celebrating in a “Christ-loving” city. I would imagine that he thought it absurd and is here simply playing his cards rather close to the vest, but this is only a guess. In any event, whatever Palladas’ private thoughts, his use of the novel *φιλόχριστος* befits the novelty of the scene described.

It is no accident that these neologisms are attested for the first time during the opening decades of the fourth century. Palladas had a grammarian’s ear for linguistic innovation and a scopic poet’s license to experiment with the lower registers of the Greek language. He used these words pointedly, precisely because they were new and strange, and the epigrams in which they appear rely for their effect in part on the novelty of the terms employed.⁴³

February, 2010

Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library
Yale University
121 Wall Street
New Haven, CT 06511
kevin.wilkinson@yale.edu

⁴³ I would like to thank the editor of this journal and the anonymous reader for their comments on an earlier draft. I also gratefully acknowledge the support of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University and the library’s director Frank Turner.