GYLIPPUS IN VIRGIL, *AENEID* 12 AND LITERARY LACONIANS*

ABSTRACT

This note examines the significance of Gylippus at Aen. *12.271–83 and argues that Virgil's narrative is an epitaphic gesture alluding to Nicander of Colophon,* Anth. Pal. *7.435 and other epigrams from* Anth. Pal. *7. Virgil's bilingual reader would participate in the Hellenistic* Ergänzungsspiel *and supplement further meaning to this otherwise generic scene.*

Keywords: Virgil; Nicander; epigram; *Aeneid* Book 12; Sparta; Gylippus; Peloponnesian School; *Garland* of Meleager

In this note, I argue that Virgil's use of the name Gylippus in *Aeneid* 12 (270–83) is a learned reference to an epigram attributed to Nicander of Colophon (*c.* 150 B.C.E.) in the *Garland* of Meleager (*Anth. Pal.* 7.435).[1] In addition to the shared name Gylippus, both Nicander's epigram and Virgil's composition employ equine language which suggests Virgil was expanding on Nicander's wordplay. Finally, Virgil's passage evokes a particular distillation of Spartan traditionalism seen in Nicander's epigram and other compositions in the *Garland* of Meleager on Laconizing topoi. Taken together, this analysis suggests Virgil is employing a concise epitaphic obituary for a minor hero. As Dinter has shown, Virgil often seeks to access the 'generic and thematic versatility of epigram' in order to 'insinuate telling metapoetical comments,' creating, in Dinter's analysis, a particular 'epitaphic gesture'.[2] I propose another epitaphic gesture outside of Dinter's analysis: the death of an anonymous son of Gylippus, Gylippus himself, and his

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[1] Regarding the two Nicanders, Nicander of Colophon, son of Anaxagoras, and the younger Nicander, son of Damaeus, I follow A.S. Hollis, 'Nicander and Lucretius', *PLLS* 10 (1998), 169–84, at 169 n. 1, who refers to a single Nicander since, 'by the first century BC, the literary world had forgotten there were two poets called Nicander of Colophon … [and] the tradition has conflated two separate persons'. Repeated references will be made in this article to the following: M. Dinter, 'Epic and epigram: minor heroes in Virgil's *Aeneid*', *CQ* 55 (2005), 153–69; R. Tarrant, *Virgil: Aeneid Book XII* (Cambridge, 2012); A.S.F. Gow and D.L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* (Cambridge, 1965); M. Paschalis, *Virgil's Aeneid: Semantic Relations and Proper Names* (Oxford, 1997); and J. O'Hara, *True Names: Vergil and the Alexandrian Tradition of Etymological Wordplay* (Ann Arbor, 2017[2]). I use the following texts: R.A.B. Mynors (ed.), *P. Vergili Maronis: Opera* (Oxford, 1969); H. Beckby, *Anthologia Graeca. Griechisch-Deutsch*, 4 vols. (Munich, 1965–67[2]); M.L. West, *Iambi et Elegi Graeci* (Oxford, 1992[2]). All translations are mine.

[2] Dinter (n. 1), 153; see J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford, 1980), 103–43 and R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs* (Urbana, 1962[2]), 237–40 for Homeric epitaphs of minor characters; see also on Hellenistic funerary epigrams, L. Rossi, *The Epigrams Ascribed to Theocritus: A Method of Approach* (Leuven, 2001), 9–13, and G.B. Walsh, 'Callimachean passages: the rhetoric of epitaph in epigram', *Arethusa* 24 (1991), 77–105.

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anonymous Tyrrhenian wife. This allusion is an effective engagement in the *Ergänzungsspiel*.[3] Such a literary nod adds further layers of referential meaning in Virgil's own composition in what otherwise would be generic battle narrative. This literary game between Hellenistic epigram and Virgilian epic points to Virgil's bilingual reader in Rome. Beyond the epitaphic aesthetic, Virgil transposes an idealized image of Sparta and transfers this martial image onto his mythical proto-Romans. This allusion may also allow Virgil to monumentalize his poetic and intellectual debt to Nicander.[4]

In Book 12 of the *Aeneid*, following his misguided speech, Tolumnius the augur launches his spear at the enemy Trojans and their allies.[5] Virgil expands and slows the narrative, and presents his reader with the following passage (270–83):

> hasta uolans, ut forte nouem pulcherrima fratrum
> corpora constiterant contra, quos fida crearat
> una tot Arcadio coniunx Tyrrhena Gylippo,
> horum unum ad medium, teritur qua sutilis aluo
> balteus et laterum iuncturas fibula mordet,
> egregium forma iuuenem et fulgentibus armis,
> transadigit costas fuluaque effundit harena.
> at fratres, animosa phalanx accensaque luctu,
> pars gladios stringunt manibus, pars missile ferrum
> corripiunt caecique ruunt. quos agmina contra
> procurrunt Laurentum, hinc densi rursus inundant
> Troes Agyllinique et pictis Arcades armis:
> sic omnis amor unus habet decernere ferro.

> The spear was flying; as it happened, nine brothers with beautiful
> bodies stood in opposition, whom so great a number a faithful woman birthed,
> one Tyrrhenian wife of Arcadian Gylippus.
> Near the middle of one of them, where the stitched belt is rubbed
> by the belly and the pin bites down on the fastenings of the sides,
> a young man with outstanding form and with brilliant armour,
> the spear pierces his ribs and he bleeds out on the yellow sands.
> But the brothers, as one courageous phalanx, burning with grief,
> some draw their swords with their hands, others snatch their iron spears,
> blind they run headlong. Against them the Laurentine battle line
> runs forward, back from this side dense lines pour in,
> Trojans, Agyllines, and Arcadians with ornate weapons:
> Thus, the same desire holds all, to decide by the sword.

The focus on the flight of the spear (*hasta uolans*) is followed first by a description of the nine brothers (*nouem … fratrum*), and then their reaction on the mythical field of battle when one of their kinsmen is struck (*at fratres, animosa phalanx accensaque luctu*).[6] The spear kills one of the nine anonymous sons of the Arcadian Gylippus

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[3] For a concise definition of *Ergänzungsspiel*, see P. Bing, 'Ergänzungsspiel in the epigrams of Callimachus', *A&A* 41 (1995), 115–31, at 116 and n. 3. Bing writes that 'Hellenistic epigram was often *deliberately* severed from its object or monument, and set in the as yet uncharted landscape of the book. Here, poets came to exploit, and play with, this process of supplementation in a deliberate and artful way. Indeed, it became a favored and self-conscious device'.

[4] As discussed by R. Armstrong, 'Virgil's cucumber: *Georgics* 4.121–2', *CQ* 58 (2008), 366–8.

[5] On the fetial priests see e.g. Livy 1.32.12–14 and R.M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy: Books 1–5* (Oxford, 1965), 127–30 and 135–6, both cited in Tarrant (n. 1), 156–7.

[6] Tarrant (n. 1), 158 adduces some parallels: *Aen.* 9.432 and 10.698–9; a possible model of Glaucus from *Il.* 7.14–16. Cf. A. Rossi, *Contexts of War. Manipulation of Genre in Virgilian Battle Narrative* (Ann Arbor, 2004), 142–5, on the slowing of time in this scene.

and his unnamed Tyrrhenian wife (*horum unum ad medium*). Tarrant notes that this Gylippus is not otherwise mentioned in the poem, before analyzing the rest of the passage, particularly the status of the *fida ... una ... coniunx Tyrrhena* in the context of Augustan Rome.[7] The name and context is significant, and while Gylippus is not central to Virgil's plot *per se*, he is employed to allude to *Anth. Pal.* 7.435 and contribute further intergeneric meaning through epitaphic gesture.[8]

 Anth. Pal. 7.435 evokes the topos of six deceased Spartan brothers buried by their surviving seventh brother, also named Gylippus. An epitaph for the sons of Iphicratides and Alexippa, it reads as follows:

> Εὐπυλίδας, Ἐράτων, Χαῖρις, Λύκος, Ἆγις, Ἀλέξων,
> ἐξ Ἰφικρατίδα παῖδες, ἀπωλόμεθα
> Μεσσάνας ὑπὸ τεῖχος· ὁ δ᾽ ἕβδομος ἄμμε Γύλιππος
> ἐν πυρὶ θεὶς μεγάλαν ἦλθε φέρων σποδιάν,
> Σπάρτᾳ μὲν μέγα κῦδος, Ἀλεξίππᾳ δὲ μέγ᾽ ἄχθος
> ματρί· τὸ δ᾽ ἐν πάντων καὶ καλὸν ἐντάφιον.

> Eupylidas, Eraton, Chaeris, Lycus, Agis and Alexon,
> six sons of Iphicratides, we were destroyed
> under the wall of Messene; but our seventh Gylippus
> having placed us on a pyre came bearing a great heap of ashes,
> a great glory for Sparta, but for Alexippa a great grief
> to our mother. One beautiful shroud for all of us.

Gow and Page locate this poem in a Meleagrian context.[9] It is likely that Nicander is alluding to the Hellenistic conflict between Sparta and the new Messene with its massive circuit walls (Μεσσάνας ὑπὸ τεῖχος) rather than the archaic conquest of Messene (Tyrt. frr. 5–7 W.²).[10] This epigram is not unique in the idealization of Spartan martial valour through the theme of sibling trauma. *Anth. Pal.* 7.434, the poem just before Nicander's in the Meleagrian sequence and attributed to Dioscorides, similarly reflects a Spartan wife Demaeneta as she inters eight anonymous sons under a single stone marker:

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 [7] Tarrant (n. 1), 158. See S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage:* Iusti Coniuges *from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford, 1991), 223 for a discussion of *uniuira*.
 [8] Gylippus is absent from studies of names and ethnography in the *Aeneid*; e.g. B. Rehm, *Das geographische Bild des alten Italien in Vergils Aeneis* (Leipzig, 1932), 12; cf. L.A. Holland, 'Place names and heroes in the Aeneid', *AJPh* 56 (1935), 202–15, and C. Saunders, 'Sources of the names of Trojans and Latins in Vergil's *Aeneid*', *TAPhA* 71 (1940), 537–55. See also O'Hara (n. 1), 234. For the significance of names, M.N. Wilcock, 'Battle scenes in the Aeneid', *PCPhS* 29 (1983), 87–99, at 98–9 n. 20 quotes N. Horsfall, who remarked 'that we should never forget the erudition of Virgil; we may simply be failing through ignorance to pick up allusions. Any or all of the minor names may have carried some sort of learned resonance, which the educated reader of the time would comprehend'. Paschalis (n. 1), 386 and 417 treats Gylippus not in reference to Nicander but rather to internal Virgilian wordplay discussed below. On minor names, see also T. Power, 'Vergil's citharodes: Cretheus and Iopas reconsidered', *Vergilius* 63 (2017), 98–9.
 [9] Gow and Page (n. 1), 423–4. For the historical Gylippus, see P. Poralla, A.S. Bradford, *A Prosopography of the Lacedaemonians from the Earliest Times to the Death of Alexander the Great* (Chicago, 1985²), 38–9, s.v. Γύλιππος 196.
 [10] See Gow and Page (n. 1), at 423–4. See also *Anth. Pal.* 7.526, Nicander's other composition on Thyrea and the Spartan Othryadas, which is a historicizing epitaph for the famous Spartan from the Battle of the Champions (Hdt. 1.82). For further analysis of the Thyreatis topos, see F. Cairns, *Hellenistic Epigram. Contexts of Exploration* (Cambridge, 2016), 306–13. For the walls of Messene, see N. Luraghi, *The Ancient Messenians* (Cambridge, 2008), 210–19; also N. Bakker, 'A Hellenistic glimpse at a 'Homeric' Messenia', in M.A. Harder, R.F. Regtuit and G.C. Wakker (edd.), *Past and Present in Hellenistic Poetry* (Leuven, 2017), 45–58.

εἰς δηΐων πέμψασα λόχους Δημαινέτη ὀκτὼ
   παῖδας, ὑπὸ στήλη πάντας ἔθαπτε μιᾷ.
δάκρυα δ᾽ οὐκ ἔρρηξ᾽ ἐπὶ πένθεσιν· ἀλλὰ τόδ᾽ εἶπεν
   μοῦνον· 'Ἰώ, Σπάρτα, σοὶ τέκνα ταῦτ᾽ ἔτεκον.'

Into the regiment of enemies, Demaeneta sent eight
   sons, she buried them all beneath one stele.
She did not let loose tears at her misfortune, but said this
   alone: 'Ió! Sparta, for you I birthed these children.'

Both of these epigrams have been discussed by historians in attempts to recover the *realia* of Laconian burial.[11] Hodkinson articulates the *communis opinio*, arguing that these poems are of a 'fictitious, pseudo-historical nature', though they show knowledge of the Spartan literary tradition.[12] For instance, λόχος in the Dioscorides poem may allude to Spartan military arrangements, and the καλὸν ἐντάφιον in Nicander's composition may be a reference to Spartan military cloaks. Nevertheless, these poems represent the free movement of sepulchral epigrams, now decoupled from their monuments, creating a literary representation of an idealized ahistorical Sparta. Regarding verse inscriptions specifically, Page remarks that 'verse epitaph is strange to Sparta at all times', suggesting that these compositions are firmly a part of the Spartan mirage.[13] The topos of mass burial or the *polyandria* tomb of siblings was a particularly strong evocation of idealized Sparta developed by poets in the Hellenistic period. Both *Anth. Pal.* 7.434 and 7.435 represent an image of a Spartan wife in the extreme, a literary absurdity since six or eight military age sons from a single mother is statistically a near impossibility in antiquity. The mass tomb for the deceased is a form of literary monumentalizing.[14]

    For the sceptical reader, the only aspect that links these two passages is the strange name Gylippus.[15] In Virgil's poetry, he is the Arcadian father, but in Nicander's epigram, he figures as the seventh surviving son. As scholars have noted, Virgil and other Roman poets including to Lucretius and Catullus were especially indebted to

[11] See M. Nafissi, *La nascita del kosmos: studi sulla storia e la società di Sparta* (Naples, 1991), 296–300; W.K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War. Part IV* (Berkeley, 1985), 243 n. 427 (and 94–7 with n. 1, which remains one of the most savage footnotes in the discipline); S. Hodkinson, *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta* (London, 2000), 243–59.
[12] Hodkinson (n. 11), 254.
[13] D.L. Page, *Further Greek Epigrams* (Oxford, 1981), 440. See also Gow and Page (n. 1), 263 on this particular epigram of Dioscorides. On Spartan graves, see P. Low, 'Commemorating the Spartan war-dead', in S. Hodkinson and A. Powell (edd.), *Sparta & War* (London, 2006), 85–110.
[14] See P. Bing, 'Homer in the σωρός', in Y. Durbeck and F. Trajber (edd.), *Traditions épiques et poésie épigrammatique* (Leuven, 2017), 99–113, at 100–2 and 111 on the σωρός as a form of literary monumentalizing. Cf. Tarrant (n. 1), 157–8, who links the *animosa phalanx* with the *stipata cohors* of seven brothers at *Aen.* 10.328.
[15] In Virgil's poems, a name is never just a name (n. 7); see also J. Foster, 'Some interactive instances of the hero's name in the *Aeneid*', *PVS* 22 (1996), 101–5 and S. Casali, 'The messenger Idmon and Turnus' foreknowledge of his death: a note on the poetics of names in the *Aeneid*', *Vergilius* 46 (2000), 114–24. S.J. Harrison, *Vergil: Aeneid 10* (Oxford, 1991), xxxii–iii writes: 'The significant name, usually through a learned Greek etymology, gives additional information about the bearer in the shortest of space, punning sometimes on characteristics, sometimes on the manner or fact of death … the bilingual etymologies of Vergil seem to be an innovation in epic aimed at maintaining the interest of his equally bilingual readers'. See further O'Hara (n. 1), 88–95, and his bibliography on onomastics.

Nicander's poetry.[16] This name in Virgil's passage is enough to evoke *Anth. Pal.* 7.435 as a subtle allusion or literary nod to Nicander's poetic corpus.

For the connection to be convincing, more must be made of the name Gylippus. Paschalis sees word play in the etymology, a Latinization of the Greek Γύλιππος from γυάλον ('cavity') and ἵππος ('horse'), with *Tyrrhena* as an etymological refiguring of τύρσις (tower).[17] For Paschalis, when taken alongside *aluus*, these words present a semantic environment that evokes the Laocoon–Horse sequence.[18] The son of Gylippus ('hollow horse') is struck down with his belly pierced by a spear, evoking the hollow Trojan horse in *Aeneid* 2, whose belly the priest Laocoon pierces with a spear (2.40–56). A number of motifs in this way seem to be directly transposed onto the scene in Book 12: a priest, hollow horse, the type of wound, and a father and his sons.

Our passage in Book 12 also seems to have further name parallels with *Anth. Pal.* 7.435, suggesting that Virgil structured his text to encourage internal rereading back to Book 2 and epitaphic gesture to these external epigrams. Nicander's poem suggests a rather equine family: Iphicratides ('son of one who is powerful from strength', perhaps conflated for a Latin reader as 'son of strong horse' ἵππος for ἶφι) and Alexippa ('defending from a horse') have a son Gylippus ('hollow horse'). Note the first son listed as Eupylidas ('son of good gate') at the beginning of the epigram as well. In my view, Nicander's epigram was not so much about commemorating Spartan war dead than *recherché* onomastics and ambiguous word games.[19] Virgil's mention of the name Gylippus invites his reader to continue playing the game and think of the Trojan horse. Virgil's *Tyrrhena* for τύρσις ('tower') may be modelled on Eupylidas in Nicander's epigram. Such equine names, along with puns on the urban landscape seen in *Eupylidas* and *Tyrrhena* further link *Anth. Pal.* 7.435 to Virgil's passage.

I have argued that, in addition to the primary reference to the Trojan horse sequence identified by Paschalis, the equine semantic signaling employed around Gylippus and his sons point to Nicander's own horsey composition. The use of *aluus* may further strengthen the epigrammatic gesture with respect to Spartan mothers and sons, alluding to the parallel between combat wounds and childbirth which is seen in the Laconian epigrams and the *apothegms*.[20] It might be tempting to imagine, in a satirizing sense, that Virgil is commenting on both this Tyrrhenian woman and her Spartan counterparts, Alexippa and Demaeneta, as bearing as many martial children as the Trojan horse itself. In this reading, Virgil is humorously pointing to the absurdity of Nicander and Dioscorides' epitaphs in his own iteration of the topos. A more somber note is likely. Virgil's use of *aluus* should be understood simultaneously to evoke the horrific pain of a gut wound and the pain of childbirth for the Tyrrhenian wife (*Aen.* 12.271 *fida crearat*), which is amplified by the death of her own son.

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[16] Hollis (n. 1).

[17] Paschalis (n. 1), 386.

[18] *aluus* is used of the Trojan horse: *Aen.* 2.51, 2.401, 6.516, 9.152. *Aen.* 10.211 is the only other usage for the belly of a ship.

[19] See discussion at nn. 8, 15; cf. O'Hara (n. 1), 21–42 for onomastic games; also 66–9 for a discussion on etymologizing and 92–5 for Virgil alluding to earlier poetic etymologizing.

[20] See T. Figueira, 'Gynecocracy: how women policed masculine behavior in Archaic and Classical Sparta', in S. Hodkinson and A. Powell (edd.), *Sparta: The Body Politic* (Swansea, 2010), 265–96, at 285–6. Figueira catalogues the sayings of the Spartan women (as received in Plutarch) and provides their textual sources, including poems from the *Greek Anthology*.

The theme of trauma on the battlefield and in childbirth is well-established and can be seen in other Laconizing epigrams, particularly *Anth. Pal.* 7.230 (Erycius of Cyzicus), 7.433 (Tymnes) and 7.531 (Antipater of Thessalonica, Virgil's near contemporary: perhaps another example of an Augustan poet reworking epigrams from the *Garland* of Meleager). These epigrams respectively illustrate the tension between the battlefield and childbirth as well as the idealization of Laconian social attitudes. These compositions invert the trope of heroic conduct with the mother killing her own cowardly son in an act of filicide.[21] Implicit in these texts is the pain of enduring childbirth and, like Medea, killing one's offspring. While I read *aluus* alone as an adequate evocation of the womb, neatly employed to liken the anonymous son's wound to the mother's birthing pains, Virgil's phrase *transadigit costas* also imitates verbal parallels in Erycius' epigram (*Anth. Pal.* 7.230.4 διὰ πλατέων ὠσαμένα λαγόνων).[22]

In the *Greek Anthology*, many of these Laconian poems are in Book 7 with the other sepulchral epigrams from the *Garland* of Meleager and near Nicander's epigram (particularly the sequence from *Anth. Pal.* 7.430–7). This suggests a cluster of Laconian topoi in the *Garland* of Meleager. Virgil probably read and used these poems in a similar sequence as we have them preserved today and drew on their themes in a collective way.[23] The use of anonymity in Virgil's passage suggests that he is also drawing from the composition of Dioscorides in *Anth. Pal.* 7.434. When these two epigrams are read alongside this passage in the *Aeneid*, it appears that Virgil is creating a broader evocation of epitaphic gestures. As Dinter has argued, the *Aeneid* absorbs Hellenistic sepulchral epigram and allows for the composition of embedded epitaphs within the narrative of the poem.[24] Gylippus here, and his eight surviving sons, provide not just a fitting memorial for their lost brother, but possibly an epitaph for Nicander as well, in the vein of Hellenistic literary culture and the commemoration of literary history.

Beyond aesthetics, Virgil seems to be conflating Arcadian and Laconian Greek regional identity. That Virgil's Gylippus is Arcadian may be a subtler nod to the broader

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[21] See S.D. Smith, *Greek Epigram and Byzantine Culture* (Cambridge, 2019), 182–4, who analyses these epigrams on Spartan childbirth and battle, and their reception among Late Antique poets in the Agathian cycle.

[22] Paschalis (n. 1), 386 takes *costae* as yet another semantic reference to the Trojan horse; but *transadigit costas* at *Aeneid* 12.508 in the exact same position as at 12.277 suggests there is nothing equine about the phrase.

[23] Dinter (n. 1), 156 identifies a similar sequence of Meleager's self-epitaphs which Virgil seems to draw upon. There are other scenes in the *Aeneid* that draw on Laconizing epigrams from the Hellenistic period, e.g. *Aen.* 1.314–17, where Venus appears as an armed maiden of Sparta. Whether Aphrodite's cult statue was armed at Sparta was a literary debate in Hellenistic epigram, as seen in Leonidas of Tarentum *Anth. Pal.* 9.320 and Antipater of Sidon *Anth. Plan.* 176. Virgil may be picking a side. The scene between Aeneas and Venus has been remarked upon by E.L. Harrison, 'Why did Venus wear boots? – some reflections on *Aeneid* 1.314f.', *PVS* 12 (1972–3), 10–25; K. Reckford, 'Recognizing Venus (I): Aeneas meets his mother', *Arion* 3.2/3 (1996), 1–42; M.A. Brucia, 'The double Harpalyce, Harpies, and wordplay at *Aeneid* 1.314–17', *CQ* 51 (2001), 305–8; P. Hardie, 'Virgil's Ptolemaic relations', *JRS* 96 (2006), 25–41; and S.D. Olson, 'Immortal encounters: *Aeneid* 1 and the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*', *Vergilius* 57 (2011), 55–61, all looking at other Hellenistic and Homeric intertexts.

[24] Dinter (n. 1), 156, following R. Thomas, 'Melodious tears, sepulchral epigram, and generic mobility', in M.A. Harder, R.F. Regtuit, G.C. Wakker (edd.), *Genre in Hellenistic Poetry* (Groningen, 1998), 205–23, at 214–16. For a comparable epitaph, see especially *Aeneid* 12.542–7 and the death of Aeolus, which Tarrant (n. 1), 229 describes as Virgil's 'most elaborate obituary notice'.

'Peloponnesian School' in epigram.[25] While we need not take this school as a literary circle, the designation reflects the preoccupation among certain Hellenistic poets with Greek bucolic landscapes, Arcadian and more broadly Peloponnesian rustic life, and nostalgia for Hellenic glory. Some of these poems also engage with Laconizing ideological tendencies.[26] These compositions allow Virgil to imbricate the image of Spartan traditionalism in his *exemplum* of a woman who is seemingly *uniuira*, unnamed, and represents an extreme idealization of motherhood. The poet thus grafts the idealized Spartan mother's ethos of fertility and civic duty alongside the martial virtue of her sons, and repurposes these images for the needs of the Augustan regime.[27] Virgil's inversion of the topos, with eight surviving sons and only one deceased, in contrast to the Spartan mass burial, may reflect a broader claim to the martial superiority of ascendant Rome outdoing prior Hellenic visions of greatness.

In the name Gylippus and the gesture to Nicander's composition in the *Garland* of Meleager, Virgil in his own passage evokes epitaphic epigrams in the *Garland* of Meleager: nostalgic poets recalling images of Greek traditionalism in a Hellenistic context. In analyzing both Nicander's epigram and Virgil's composition, I have argued that the name Gylippus is significant, not merely as a character for the internal plot of the *Aeneid*, but for Virgil's learned reader in Rome who was bilingual and knew Greek epigrams well. Virgil's epitaphic evocation would recall the sequence of epigrams on Sparta and images of Laconian traditionalism, now applied to Virgil's proto-Romans.

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[25] The Peloponnesian School as a literary circle was first posited by R. Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Alexandrinischen Dichtung* (Giessen, 1893), 121–3; see now, critically, K.J. Gutzwiller, *Poetic Garlands: Hellenistic Epigrams in Context* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1998), 53 n. 21, and Gow and Page (n. 1), 91, 223–4, who are equally sceptical. Beckby (n. 1), 1.20–5 has a good discussion, as does E. Degani, 'L'epigramma', in G. Cambiano, L. Canfora and D. Lanza (edd.), *Lo spazio letterario della Grecia antica* (Rome, 1993), 197–233, at 207–12. For Virgil's ethnography, the Golden Age in the *Aeneid*, and primitive utopianism, see R.F. Thomas, *Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition* (Cambridge, 1982), 93–107.

[26] See A. Sens, *Hellenistic Epigrams: A Selection* (Cambridge, 2020), 209–10, with a brief discussion of Laconizing topoi.

[27] For Augustan interest in Sparta, see the discussion in A.J.S. Spawforth, *Greece and the Augustan Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, 2012), 86–100. In Augustan literature, see e.g. Hor. *Carm.* 3.2.13 and the recasting of Tyrt. fr. 10.1–2 W.^{2}. See also R.G.M. Nisbet and N. Rudd, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes, Book III* (Oxford, 2004), 26–7. There may be Tyrtaean echoes with Gylippus and his sons: *egregium forma iuuenem et fulgentibus armis* (*Aen.* 12.275) is much like Tyrtaeus' description of a young man falling in battle: καλὸς δ᾽ ἐν προμάχοισι πεσών (fr. 10.30 W.^{2}). The anonymous youth bleeds out in the sand (*Aen.* 12.276 *fuluaque effundit harena*), and here we may see a parallel to the old man who dies in the dust in Tyrt. fr. 10.24 W.^{2} θυμὸν ἀποπνείοντ᾽ ἄλκιμον ἐν κονίῃ.