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AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA TO THE SARDIANS

ROBERT J. PENELLA

LETTERS of Apollonius of Tyana, the first-century Pythagorean sage and wonder-worker, have been preserved in Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii* and in the *Anthology* of John of Stobi. In addition, seventy-seven letters have been transmitted independently, of which seven (*Epp. Apol.* 38–41, 56, 75, 76) are addressed to the people of Sardis.¹ In these seven letters Apollonius upbraids the Sardians for the civil strife and discord that they have brought upon themselves. Their factionalism has reached such an extreme that Apollonius has abandoned the idea of visiting Sardis in despair of being able to help the community.

Apollonius' involvement with Sardis receives no mention in our chief source of information (and legend) about the first-century sage, Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii*; however, Apollonius does frequently appear in Philostratus' biography as a political conciliator or adviser in other cities of Asia Minor.² Dissension there, both between cities and within cities, was common enough toward the end of the first century, and troubles specifically at Sardis are attested by Plutarch as well as in the letters of Apollonius.³

My thanks to Professors Glen W. Bowersock, George M. A. Hanfmann, and C. P. Jones for their suggestions and criticisms, and to the Reverend Joseph Paramelle, S.J., of the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, for leading me to Codex Matritensis 4637.

¹ Editions: C. L. Kayser, ed., *Flavii Philostrati quae supersunt*² (Zürich 1853), in which a critical edition of the letters appears as a supplement to Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii* (Kayser's *editio minor*, *Flavii Philostrati opera* [Leipzig 1870–71] I 345ff, is more easily obtainable); R. Hercher, *Epistolographi graeci* (Paris 1873) 110ff; F. C. Conybeare, *Philostratus: The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass./London 1912) II 408ff. In all of these editions *Epp. Apol.* 78–97 are from John of Stobi. Hercher included the letters from Philostratus' *Vita* as *Epp. Apol.* 98–117.

² E.g., *Vita Apol.* 1.15 (Aspendus and other cities of Pamphylia and Cilicia), 4.8–9 (Smyrna), 6.38 (Antioch).

³ See David Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton 1950) I 599–600; C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome* (Oxford 1971) 117.

An eighth letter to Sardis may now be added to the seven in our collection. The new letter, unknown to modern editors, appears in four manuscripts: Codex Leidensis B.P.G. 73D, folio 198v; Codex Medicus Laurentianus 12, pluteus 57, folio 114; Codex Matritensis 4637 (= Codex Graecus Regiae Bibliothecae Matritensis N 116), f. 10; and Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1353, f. 91.⁴

Codex Leidensis offers a collection of sixty-three letters of Apollonius following after Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii*.⁵ Both the *Vita* and the letters were probably transcribed in the first half of the fourteenth century. This codex is unusual among manuscripts of the letters on two counts: it presents the sixty-three letters in irregular company — letters of Apollonius are found elsewhere in epistolographical anthologies, not with Philostratus' *Vita* — and it arranges the letters in what appears to be a unique order (see DeMeyier's catalogue). The unpublished letter is the first of seven Sardinian letters found grouped together in this collection; *Epp. Apol.* 40 is not included. It is peculiar that C. L. Kayser, the nineteenth-century editor of the letters, upon whose work later editors heavily relied, did not spot the unpublished letter in Leidensis, since he was well acquainted with this manuscript and regularly reports its variants in his apparatus.⁶

Codex Medicus Laurentianus and Codex Matritensis are both primarily epistolographical anthologies of the fifteenth century. In each manuscript the new letter appears as the second in a cluster of four letters of Apollonius. The first letter of this cluster is merely an excerpt from *Epp. Apol.* 55, ἐστιαίω: ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐνὶ τρεῖς γηγόμενα, ἡμῶν δὲ τρισὼν οὕτε εἶς; the third and fourth letters are *Epp. Apol.* 47 and 49. This is the shortest recurring cluster of letters of Apollonius that I have encountered; but compare the brief cluster *Epp. Apol.* 1, 58, 55, 50, 44, 35 found in Codex Parisinus Suppl. Gr. 205, Codex Palatinus Gr. 134, and Codex Mutinensis 54.

⁴ The following descriptions of the manuscripts are partly based on these catalogues: Angelo M. Bandini, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Laurentianae* (Florence 1764–70) II 350–354; J. Iriarte, *Regiae bibliothecae Matritensis codices graeci manuscripti* (Madrid 1769) I 466–475; K. A. DeMeyier, *Codices bibliothecae publicae graeci* (Leiden 1965) 130–131. I am working with microfilms of Medicus Laurentianus, Matritensis, and Vaticanus Graecus, and with a photostatic copy of Leidensis.

⁵ DeMeyier's catalogue incorrectly lists 64 letters; delete *Epp. Apol.* 48 from his list.

⁶ See his *Flavii Philostrati quae supersunt*² (Zürich 1853), preface of the *Vita Apollonii* xi–xii, xvi, and apparatus of the *Epistulae*; cf. his *Flavii Philostrati opera* (Leipzig 1870–71) I xxv. Kayser refers to the manuscript as Lugdunensis 73.

The texts of the cluster of four letters in Mediceus Laurentianus and in Matritensis share a very close stemmatic relationship, as their following distinctive variants indicate: in the excerpt from *Epp. Apol.* 55, ἡμῖν δὲ τρισὶν οὕτε for τρισὶ δ' ἡμῖν οὐδέ; in *Epp. Apol.* 47, τυανέων ἄρχουσι for τυανέων τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ, om. προστάττουσιν, τῇ πόλει for πόλει, om. εἶη, μεταπέμποντο for μεταπέμποιτο, ποιῶν for περιποιῶν, om. καὶ ὄνομα; in *Epp. Apol.* 49, ἦσθην καὶ πάνν τοῖς πεμφθεῖσιν ὑπὸ σοῦ γράμμασι for πάνν τοῖς πεμφθεῖσιν ὑπὸ σοῦ γράμμασιν ἦσθην. The two manuscripts also offer a slightly expanded text of *Epp. Apol.* 49: at the end of the sentence that closes with the words ὅτι τάχιστα, both manuscripts have καὶ ταύτη που καὶ θεοῦ παραινούντος. In the text of the new letter the only difference between the two manuscripts is Matritensis' μόνον for Mediceus Laurentianus' μόνων (see below).

Leidensis has all four letters of the cluster found in Mediceus Laurentianus and in Matritensis (though not grouped together) and shares a number of the distinctive variants of Mediceus Laurentianus and Matritensis. It has the excerpt from *Epp. Apol.* 55 on folio 198 with the distinctive phraseology ὑμῖν [sic] δὲ τρισὶ οὕτε εἰς (the complete *Epp. Apol.* 55 does not appear in this collection); Leidensis' *Epp. Apol.* 47 on folio 200 has τῇ πόλει and omits προστάττουσιν, εἶη and καὶ ὄνομα; and Leidensis' *Epp. Apol.* 49 on folio 200v has the phraseology ἦσθην καὶ πάνν κτλ., though it lacks the expanded text of Mediceus Laurentianus and Matritensis. Furthermore, the remaining fifty-nine letters of Leidensis display many variants and omissions (see Kayser's apparatus) that are not shared by other manuscripts of the letters that I have collated (some fifteen). Although a complete stemma of the manuscripts will have to wait for future research, it appears that the three witnesses under discussion will belong to a distinct and not well represented branch of the tradition; this branch is the carrier of the new letter, which at some point in the tradition failed to be transmitted to the better-represented branch(es).

My collation of Codex Vaticanus Graecus shows that it cannot be grouped with the three witnesses discussed above, but rather will belong to the better-represented branch(es). It has a full collection of ninety-one letters of Apollonius in the commonly found order.⁷ *Epp. Apol.* 47, 49, and 55 (full text) in this collection have none of the distinctive variants found in Mediceus Laurentianus, Matritensis, and Leidensis, and the peculiar variants and omissions in Leidensis' remaining letters are not shared by Vaticanus Graecus. This does not

⁷Namely, *Epp. Apol.* 1-42, 98-105 Hercher, 43-77, 106-109 Hercher, 111-112 Hercher.

mean that we have found a manuscript from the better-represented branch(es) that carries the unpublished Sardian letter: the new Sardian letter in this manuscript is not a part of the original text, but rather appears as a marginal addition on folio 91, to the right of *Epp. Apol.* 76. The hand of both the main text and of the marginal addition is that of Constantine Lascaris, who also transcribed *Matritensis*.⁸ The texts of the unpublished Sardian letter in *Matritensis* and *Vaticanus Graecus* are identical except for an editorial adjustment that Lascaris made in the heading of the letter in *Vaticanus Graecus* (see my apparatus below). In both occurrences of the Sardian letter Lascaris has emended (incorrectly) an inherited *καρπόν* to *καρπός*; in *Matritensis* the original nu may still be read under the sigma. Undoubtedly the Sardian letter in the margin of *Vaticanus Graecus* derives directly from *Matritensis*: at some point Lascaris compared his two epistolographical collections and noted that *Vaticanus Graecus* lacked the Sardian letter of *Matritensis*. He added the Sardian letter. He also added *Matritensis*' one-sentence excerpt from *Epp. Apol.* 55 (thinking it to be a new item) to *Vaticanus Graecus* on folio 90v, to the left of *Epp. Apol.* 73.

There follows a text of the new letter with translation and comments:

N = Leidensis B.P.G. 73D

L = Mediceus Laurentianus 12, plut. 57

M = *Matritensis* 4637

V = *Vaticanus Gr.* 1353

τοῖς ἐν Σάρδ(εσιν)· αἰτίαν ἔχετε τὴν πάτριον θεᾶν σέβειν τε καὶ τιμᾶν.
ἢ δὴ μήτηρ ὀνομάζεται παρ' οἷς μὲν θεῶν, παρ' οἷς δὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπων,
παρὰ πᾶσι δὲ καὶ καρπῶν· ἢ δὲ μία κοινή τε καὶ πάντων. εἶτα πῶς μόνων
ὑμῶν ἔχθρὰ τὰ γένη νόμῳ καὶ φύσει καὶ ἔθει, τῶν Δήμητρος ἰδίῳν;

Σάρδ(εσιν)] explevi: Σάρδοι N: τοῖς αὐτοῖς (sc. τοῖς ἐν Σάρδεσιν) V || τὴν πάτριον]
πατρικὴν N || δὴ μήτηρ scripsi: δημήτηρ NLMV || interpunctum habent LMV
post ὀνομάζεται || καρπῶν N: καρπόν L: καρπός MV (corr. ex καρπόν M) || μόνων
L: μόνον NMV

To the Sardians: You are well known for your worship and veneration of your ancestral goddess. Her title is “mother of the gods” according to some, “mother of mankind” according to others, and — by general consent — “mother of the earth’s produce”; but in fact she is the one common mother of all. So why is it that you alone, the special wards of

⁸ Lascaris identifies himself as the transcriber in both manuscripts. Cf. Iriarte (above, n. 4) 466 (table of contents), 470 (fol. 60); M. Vogel and V. Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (Leipzig 1909) 242ff. s.v. *Κωνσταντῖνος ὁ Λάσκαρις*.

Demeter, have clans that are at odds with law, nature, and established custom?

τοῖς ἐν Σάρδ(εσσ): N's Σάρδοι is an incorrect supplement of an inherited Σάρδ (found in L and M); cf. the equally incorrect scribal variant Σάρδοις found next to Σάρδεσσιν in the margins of the Sardian letters of Codex Mediceus Laurentianus 45, plut. 57. The periphrastic τοῖς ἐν Σάρδεσσιν, which perhaps originated from the text of *Epp. Apol.* 38(q.v.), appears as the heading of *Epp. Apol.* 38 and 75 in the standard collection.

πάτριον: N's πατρικῆν appears to be a morphological trivialization.

ἡ δὴ μήτηρ κτλ.: None of the manuscripts preserves what must be the correct division, δὴ μήτηρ. However, N is correctly void of the semicolon after *ὀνομάζεται*, a punctuation that gives nonsense in the other three manuscripts. Again, N alone displays a needed genitive, *καρπῶν*, at the end of the sentence. The corruption of an original *καρπῶν* to *καρπὸν* would have been phonologically easy.⁹ I do not see what sense Lascaris thought that he was making here with his emendation *καρπός*. For *παρά* and the dative after the passive verb here instead of *ὑπό* and the genitive, cf. R. Kühner and B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*³ (1898) II, 1, 511.

ἡ δὲ μία . . . πάντων: Apollonius rejects each of the three titles as too narrow; the maternity of the Sardian goddess is not restricted to gods or to mankind or to the earth's fruits, but embraces all of these.

ἐχθρὰ τὰ γένη νόμῳ καὶ φύσει καὶ ἔθει: Cf. *Epp. Apol.* 56, ἐχθροὶ γεγόνατε, and *Epp. Apol.* 76, in which Apollonius despairs of being able to make Sardis *μίαν* . . . ἦθει καὶ φύσει καὶ νόμῳ καὶ θεῶ. Though often confused with *ἦθος*, *ἔθος* should be retained in the new letter with the sense "custom," i.e., "unwritten νόμος"; cf. *Epp. Apol.* 71, ἔθη καὶ νόμοι. *Epp. Apol.* 56 and 75 further comment on the civil strife alluded to here: dissension has affected friendships, families and clans, the young and the old, women as well as men. Several enigmatic factions or associations (*τάγματα*) with obscene names have been largely responsible for the civil strife (*Epp. Apol.* 39–41).

τῶν Δήμητρος ἰδίῳν: This is now the second reference in the Sardian letters to Demeter as a major — apparently *the* major — goddess of Sardis. The other reference to her is in *Epp. Apol.* 75; after commenting on the civil strife at Sardis, the letter concludes: Ἐρινύων νομίσει ἄν τις τὴν πόλιν εἶναι, καὶ οὐχὶ Δήμητρος. ἡ δὲ θεὰ φιλόανθρωπος· ὑμῖν δὲ τίς οὗτος

⁹ It is worth considering the possibility that the *vera lectio* was *καρποῦ*, which could have easily given rise to the corrupt *καρπὸν* on palaeographical grounds. If so, N's *καρπῶν* would be a scribal emendation of an inherited *καρπὸν*.

ὁ χόλος;¹⁰ Demeter does appear on Sardian coins of the empire standing, thrusting a torch into the entrance of the underworld, in a chariot with torch, and before the cult-effigy of Kore (= Persephone?); representations of Hades in a chariot bearing off Persephone also allude implicitly to Demeter.¹¹ The Demeter of the letters may be identical to the Demeter of the coins; however, since there is to my knowledge no evidence of a cult of Demeter at Sardis as prominent as the letters imply, we may ask whether another Sardian goddess lies hidden behind the name Demeter in the letters. Two possible candidates come to mind, the Sardian Kore and Cybele.

The Sardian Kore was probably originally a native Anatolian vegetation goddess. She was not obliterated by Artemis or Cybele, the major Sardian goddesses;¹² in fact, there seems to have been a revival of interest in her cult at Sardis in the second and third centuries A.D., when she probably served as the tutelary deity of the city.¹³ The equation of this goddess with Persephone, as suggested by several of the coins referred to above and by customary Greek practice, may not have been universal. The cult-effigy of Kore appears by itself on many Sardian coins (most notably on alliance coins),¹⁴ and the Sardian Kore

¹⁰ In his notes on the letters of Apollonius, Wilamowitz commented, "Wieso Sardes der Demeter gehört, sehe ich nicht"; "Lese-früchte CXCVIII," *Hermes* 60 (1925) 310 n. 2 = *Kleine Schriften* (Berlin 1935-) IV 398 n. 1.

¹¹ Standing: B. V. Head, *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Lydia* (London 1901), Sardis nos. 60, 61, 130, 73, 147, 154, 173, 193 (Demeter or Kore on the last five); *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum: Danish National Museum* (Copenhagen 1947) Lydia nos. 503, 506, 507. Thrusting: Head, Sardis no. 138; *SNG Copenhagen*, Lydia no. 527. Chariot: Head, Sardis nos. 125(?), 206. Kore: Head, Sardis nos. 187, 207; *SNG Deutschland* (Berlin 1963) Lydia no. 3164. Hades: Head, Sardis nos. 89, 131; *SNG Copenhagen*, Lydia no. 525.

¹² Artemis and Cybele at Sardis must now be regarded as two distinct alternatives and not one conflated goddess. Cf. G. M. A. Hanfmann, "Excavations at Sardis, 1958," *BASOR* 154 (1959) 32 n. 69; G. M. A. Hanfmann and Jane C. Waldbaum, "Kybele and Artemis: Two Anatolian Goddesses at Sardis," *Archaeology* 22 (1969), especially pp. 265-267; J. and L. Robert, "Bulletin Épigraphique," *REG* 84 (1971) 520.

¹³ On this goddess see G. M. A. Hanfmann and M. S. Balmuth, "The Image of an Anatolian Goddess at Sardis," *Anadolu Araştırmaları = Jahrbuch für kleinasiatische Forschung* 2 (1965) 261-269. A recently found Severan inscription at Sardis mentions three divinities, Koros, Eupo(sia), and a third female whose name is lost, as the "children of Kore"; see G. M. A. Hanfmann in M. J. Mellink, "Archaeology in Asia Minor," *AJA* 77 (1973) 186.

¹⁴ Head (above, n. 11), Sardis nos. 90-93, 145, 148, 149, 170, 200, 208, 209; *SNG Copenhagen*, Lydia nos. 513, 529, 532, 543, 544; *SNG Deutschland*, Lydia nos. 3141, 3165. Alliance coins: Head, Sardis nos. 215, 216, 218; also see Hanfmann and Balmuth (above, n. 13) 264.

may have been regarded as a vegetation goddess in her own right, not merely as an adjunct to Demeter. If so, an identification of the Sardian Kore with Demeter may be entertained, at least at certain times or in certain circles. The Demeter of our letters may be this Kore.

Alternatively, Cybele may be considered. Cybele was commonly identified with the Olympian Demeter (as well as with other Greek goddesses),¹⁵ and the writer of our Sardian letters may have wished to avoid the Phrygian appellation on puristic grounds. One point in the new letter especially speaks for an identification with Cybele: the insistence both explicitly and through the word-play *δὴ μήτηρ* on the title "mother." Cybele, of course, is the Anatolian "mother" par excellence. Thus, if identification of our Demeter with another Sardian goddess is the correct course, I would incline more toward Cybele than toward Kore.

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¹⁵ See *RE* 11:2 (1922) 2270, 2279–80.