it only later began to be added in the margins of Statius' text.' In any case, in this complex process, we can suppose that at some point Lactantius Placidus' commentary circulated as a conglomerate of glosses, some of which were interlinear (the shorter ones), in a smaller size, just as in the case of the gloss *sine humore siluarum* in MS E; others, instead, were in the margin of the copy (the longer ones), in a larger size. The confusion between *sine (h)umore siluarum* and *sine honore siluarum*, therefore, could have arisen precisely from a transcription error caused by the reduced size of the writing of this gloss in an interlinear position,[13] or perhaps as an attempt by a scribe to adjust it to the subsequent explanation.[14]

I would conclude adding that, regardless of whether we accept *sine (h)umore siluarum* or *sine honore siluarum*, a further problem may arise. If we accept the scholium in the present state, the gloss would first explain the adjective *nudo* (*sine honore/(h)umore siluarum*), then Haemus (*Haemus est autem mons Thraciae*), and then again the adjective (*et bene nudo* ...), which is a rather contorted reasoning. All this, together with what has been said above, namely that in MS E this part of the scholium is in an interlinear position and not together with the rest of the explanation which is in the margin, and that not all manuscripts read it, leads one to think that it is likely an interpolation and that it should be excluded from the text.

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NEW LIGHT IN CHRISTODORUS: AN ACROSTIC AT *ANTH. PAL.* 2.72–6*

ABSTRACT

This note identifies a new acrostic in Christodorus' sixth century C.E. Ekphrasis of the Baths of Zeuxippus *(*Anth. Pal. *2) and explains its significance.*

Keywords: Christodorus; acrostic; ekphrasis; Apollo; sun; baths

Φοῖβος δ' εἰστήκει τριποδηλάλος· ἦν δ' ἄρα χαίτης
εἰς ὀπίσω σφίγξας ἄδετον πλόκον· ἀλλ' ἐνὶ χαλκῷ
γυμνὸς ἔην, ὅτι πᾶσιν ἀνειρομένοισιν Ἀπόλλων

[13] The same confusion between *honos* and *humor* in an interlinear gloss occurs in the gloss on *Theb.* 5.526 *pronus*, where R*gloss.* reads *inclinatus ut aliquem humorem exciperet*, while the gloss of Zurich, Zentralbibliothek C. 62 (282), saec. xi ex., which has the corrupt reading *protinus* instead of *pronus*, reads *ut aliquem honorem exciperet*.

[14] This can be helped by the fact that perhaps this part of the scholium circulated in an autonomous manner, as evidenced by the fact that not all manuscripts have it. See nn. 6 and 8 above.

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γυμνῶσαι δεδάηκεν ἀληθέα δήνεα Μοίρης
ἢ ὅτι πᾶσιν ὁμῶς ἀναφαίνεται· ἠέλιος γὰρ
Φοῖβος ἄναξ, καθαρὴν δὲ φέρει τηλέσκοπον αἴγλην.[1]

There stood Phoebus of the speaking tripod. He had bound the locks of his hair in the back without a knot. In the bronze he was bare, either because Apollo knows how to bare to all who inquire the true decrees of Fate, or because he appears to all alike; for lord Phoebus is the sun, and his pure radiance is seen from afar.[2]

So read verses 72–7 of Christodorus' *Ekphrasis of the Baths of Zeuxippus* (*Anth. Pal.* 2.72–7), written in the early sixth century C.E.[3] This passage describes a statue of Apollo and the initial letters of verses 72–6 spell out ΦΕΓΓΗ. I take this to be the plural of φέγγος 'light' or 'splendour', and thus meaning 'lights'. Is it a purposeful acrostic? There are three criteria for supporting a claim of an intentional acrostic, two based on the text and one based on wider context: a verbal association between the acrostic and the words in the horizontal text; a comment in the text that may be (re)read as suggesting that there is an acrostic to be discovered; and an engagement with the tradition of acrostics and especially the tradition stemming from Aratus.[4] I take each in turn, before considering the wider implications of the acrostic.

The benchmark for Greek acrostics is Aratus' ΛΕΠΤΗ which stretches across *Phaenomena* 783–7 and is confirmed by the presence of λεπτή in the horizontal text at the beginning of verse 783.[5] This forms the so-called gamma acrostic.[6] There are several post-Aratean examples of this gamma acrostic type.[7] More usually, the same word or a related term appears within the horizontal text.[8] In the current case, there is no presence of φέγγος in the passage, though Christodorus uses the term elsewhere (cf. 7, 338). However, since the adjective φοῖβος, employed as an epithet for Apollo, means 'pure', 'bright' or 'radiant' (LSJ s.v. A.1), this is almost a gamma acrostic. The equivalence of φοῖβος and φέγγος is further supported by the claim in the horizontal text that Apollo and the Sun are the same divinity.[9] From

[1] The Greek follows F. Tissoni, *Cristodoro: un'introduzione e un commento* (Alessandria, 2000), 121–2.

[2] The translation follows M.A. Tueller, *The Greek Anthology. Books 1–5* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 99.

[3] For the dating, see Tissoni (n. 1), 15–23.

[4] This is to distil a deeper methodological reflection by M. Robinson, 'Arms and a mouse: approaching acrostics in Ovid and Vergil', *MD* 82 (2019), 23–73.

[5] Rediscovered by J.-M. Jacques, 'Sur un acrostiche d'Aratos (*Phén*., 783–787)', *REA* 62 (1960), 48–61, but evidently observed by Callimachus (*Anth. Pal.* 9.507 = 56 *HE*), Leonidas (*Anth. Pal.* 9.25 = 101 *HE*), and 'King Ptolemy' (*Vita Arati* I page 10, lines 4–7 Martin = 712 *FGE*). Cf. M. Hanses, 'The pun and the moon in the sky: Aratus' ΛΕΠΤΗ acrostic', *CQ* 64 (2014), 609–14, who sees further λεπτή strands threaded through the passage.

[6] As set out by G. Morgan, '*Nullam, Vare* … Chance or choice in *Odes* 1.18?', *Philologus* 137 (1993), 142–5.

[7] Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 1.18.11–15 (DISCE) with Morgan (n. 6), 144. See already *Phaen.* 802–6.

[8] Cf. 'Leptines', *Skill of Eudoxus* (ΤΕΧΝΗ ΕΥΔΟΧΟΥ) in F. Blass, *Eudoxi Ars Astronomica Qualis in Charta Aegyptiaca Superest* (Kiel, 1887), 3–25 = *ZPE* 115 (1997), 79–101. See also Ap. Rhod. *Argon*. 1.179–84 (ΤΕΚΟΙ), 2.241–4 (ΘΕΑ), 4.148–92 (ΛΥΚΕ) with J. Danielewicz, 'Further Hellenistic acrostics: Aratus and others', *Mnemosyne* 58 (2005), 321–34, at 330–2, and *Aen.* 7.601–4 (MARS) with D.P. Fowler, 'An acrostic in Vergil (*Aeneid* 7. 601–4)?', *CQ* 33 (1983), 298.

[9] Apollo was associated with the sun already in the Archaic and Classical periods; cf. *Hymn Hom. Ap.* 399–413 and Eur. *Alc.* 244–7, with W. Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (Oxford, 1985), 120 and 149, and more recently T. Bilić, 'Early identifications of Apollo with the physical Sun in Ancient Greece: tradition and interpretation', *Mnemosyne* 74 (2021), 709–36. There appears to be a

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the *phi* of verse 72 there emanates Phoebus Apollo and the light of the Sun, one and the same.[10] This is further emphasized by the repetition of Φοῖβος at the beginning of line 77: Apollo frames the acrostic.

Does the passage hint that it contains an acrostic? There are three ekphrases of Apollo in Christodorus' poem (cf. 266–70, 283–7). The focus in this passage is on Apollo in his guise as a god of prophecy (cf. τριποδηλάλος, 72), a characterization repeated in the third ekphrasis of Apollo (283). His nakedness is also highlighted by the repetition of terms for nudity at the verse opening of 74–5, a point which goes unmentioned in the other two ekphrases. His nakedness is first interpreted as associated with this oracular function: he 'reveals all' through prophecy (75). Oracles are characterized by enigmatic forms of expression which require interpretation to be fully understood. In Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.411–14, Jason's recollection of Apollo's oracle regarding their expedition provides the context for the acrostic ΑΚΤΙΑ ('of the shore', 1.415–19), which Stewart connects to the fact that the Argonauts both set off from, and return to, the Pegasaean shore and possibly to the cult site of Apollo Actius.[11] Apollonius' acrostic is preceded in the horizontal text by the notably Aratean term σημαίνειν 'to give signs'. The oracular discourse of giving signs is mobilized to indicate the presence of an acrostic which must be discovered in the text. A related call to interpret can be identified in Aratus' ΛΕΠΤΗ acrostic which appears in the context of how observers can predict weather patterns from the moon's shape, colour and distinctness (783–7). Line 778 commands the reader 'observe!' (σκέπτεο) and line 779 notes that evening 'inscribes' a new light on the moon (ἐπιγράφει), clueing in the reader to the graphic signs inscribed in the following verses.[12] The Hellenistic examples show that a mention of divining the future, whether by means of planetary phenomena or oracular utterances, was a prime location at which to place an acrostic. Although it is by no means as blatantly meta-textual, Christodorus' specification that Apollo reveals all 'to all those enquiring' (πᾶσιν ἀνειρομένοισιν, 74) can likewise be understood in this vein. It may prime a reader to have in mind a typically cryptic oracular response that requires decipherment, which is to be found here in the cryptic signs of the acrostic.

Christodorus' second interpretation of Apollo's nakedness (76–7) requires a certain double-thinking. Apollo's nakedness means that he appears to everyone in the same way since he is also in fact the sun; he is not simply or not just an anthropomorphic god represented here in bronze. That is, he possesses different guises. Christodorus' poem toys with this idea since it contains two further ekphrases of Apollo which are described in similar terms, but which are not self-evidently from the same sculptural type. Whereas with this first representation Apollo has held his hair back in some manner

resurgence of this motif in Late Antiquity; see W. Fauth, *Helios megistos: zur synkretistischen Theologie der Spätantike* (Leiden, 1995), and for some poetic examples, Tissoni (n. 1), 122.

[10] The αἴγλη which characterizes Apollo offers a further association with φέγγος, which often describes the light or splendour of the sun: for φέγγος ἡλίου: cf. Aesch. *Pers*. 377; Soph. *El*. 380–1, *Ant*. 809, *Trach*. 606; Eur. *Hec*. 248, *El.* 729, *IA* 1282; Ap. Rhod. *Argon*. 3.1230; Dorotheus V.21, page 397, line 16 Pingree. Likewise, αἴγλη is also associated with the gleam of the sun: for αἴγλη ἡλίου, cf. Hom. *Od*. 4.45 and 7.84; Alexander of Ephesus, *Phaenomena SH* 21.18; Nonnus, *Dion*. 38.154.

[11] S. Stewart, ''Apollo of the shore': Apollonius of Rhodes and the acrostic phenomenon', *CQ* 60 (2010), 401–5, at 403–4.

[12] See P. Bing, 'Aratus and his audiences', *MD* 31 (1993), 99–109, at 102–3, and Hanses (n. 5), 610–11. On Virgil's signature and re-use of the language of signs cf. M. Haslam, 'Hidden signs: Aratus *Diosemeiai* 46ff., Vergil *Georgics* 1.424ff.', *HSPh* 94 (1992), 199–204, at 202–3.

without being tied (εἰς ὀπίσω σφίγξας ἄδετον πλόκον, 73), in the other statues his hair is furnished 'with unrestrained blooms' (ἀδμήτοισι … ἄνθεσι χαίτην, 267) and 'his locks run in curls over both shoulders' (πλόκαμος γὰρ ἕλιξ ἐπιδέδρομεν ὤμοις | ἀμφοτέροις, 284–5). The presence of the ΦΕΓΓΗ acrostic heightens this play of Apolline representations: this light of the Sun is a further guise in which Apollo 'appears clearly' (ἀναφαίνεται, 76) in the poem. Once one has observed the acrostic, the entirety of line 77 can be read meta-textually as an extended hint: Φοῖβος (initiating the acrostic) φέρει ('brings', 'bears', 'contains') τηλέσκοπον ('conspicuous': LSJ s.v. II) αἴγλην (= φέγγη = acrostic).

The 'lights' that shine down the poem's left-hand border also forge a connection with Aratus' foundational acrostic. Aratus' interest at *Phaen.* 783–7 is the phases of the moon and how its waxing and waning can be used to predict the weather. The reader is being asked to track the quality of its light, which may be 'faint' (λεπτή, 783), 'very red' (εὖ μάλ' ἐρευθής, 784) or 'thickish' (παχίων, 785). It has long been known that the ΛΕΠΤΗ acrostic looks back to the accidental ΛΕΥΚΗ acrostic of Hom. *Il.* 24.1–5.[13] Kronenberg has argued that Aratus not only draws acrostic inspiration from the Homeric passage, but also its aesthetics of light, since Homer describes the appearance of the dawn (24.11–13), which he applies to the moon.[14] She then traces this aspect of Aratus' (and indeed Homer's) passage across Hellenistic and Roman poetry, from Apollonius to Lucretius and beyond.[15] A constant in the background of these passages is the role of the sun, whether as a parallel heavenly body to the moon or the ultimate source of the moon's light. The 'pure radiance' of Christodorus' sun, emphasized by the homeoteleuton καθαρὴν … αἴγλην (77), responds to the 'faint and pure' moon (λεπτὴ μὲν καθαρή τε, *Phaen*. 783) which inaugurates Aratus' acrostic. This background also helps to explain the use of the neuter plural φέγγη: it provides another five-letter word associated with light that ends with an *eta*. For Christodorus to compose an acrostic that shines forth the light of the sun is to fashion a response to the Aratean acrostic tradition and its moon-gazing. Moreover, as Kronenberg has suggested, the reception of Homer's and Aratus' acrostic in Apollonius (*Argon.* 1.415–19: ΑΚΤΙΑ) involves a conflation of Actian Apollo and Apollo Leucadius.[16] If a politics of representing Apollo was attached to the early reception of Aratus' acrostic, then Christodorus intervenes in this tradition by emphasizing more clearly Apollo's connection with light and the sun.

There is an aesthetic and programmatic pay-off to this acrostic. As well as referring to the faintness of the moon, Aratus' ΛΕΠΤΗ acrostic advertises the prized Hellenistic aesthetic of λεπτότης ('refinement', 'slenderness').[17] Callimachus in the *Aetia* prologue

[13] Jacques (n. 5), 48–50; W. Levitan, 'Plexed artistry: Aratean acrostics', *Glyph* 5 (1979), 55–68, at 57; and M. Korenjak, 'ΛΕΥΚΗ: was bedeutet das erste "Akrostichon"?', *RhM* 152 (2009), 392–6.

[14] L. Kronenberg, 'Seeing the light, part I: Aratus's interpretation of Homer's *LEUKĒ* acrostic', *Dictynna* 15 (2018).

[15] L. Kronenberg, 'Seeing the light, part II: The reception of Aratus's *LEPTĒ* acrostic in Greek and Latin literature', *Dictynna* 15 (2018); L. Kronenberg, 'The light side of the moon: a Lucretian acrostic (*LUCE*, 5.712–15) and its relationship to acrostics in Homer (*LEUKĒ*, *Il*. 24.1–5) and Aratus (*LEPTĒ*, *Phaen*. 783–87)', *CPh* 114 (2019), 278–92.

[16] Kronenberg (n. 14), §3; Stewart (n. 11), 403–5.

[17] There has been debate about the extent to which λεπτότης was a more Callimachean or Aratean aesthetic, if either: A. Cameron, *Callimachus and His Critics* (Princeton, 1995), ch. 11, especially 321–8; K. Volk, 'Aratus', in J.J. Clauss and M. Cuypers (edd.), *A Companion to Hellenistic Literature* (Oxford, 2010), 197–210, at 205–8; and J.I. Porter, 'Against λεπτότης: rethinking Hellenistic aesthetics', in A. Erskine and L. Llewellyn-Jones (edd.), *Creating a Hellenistic World* (Swansea, 2010), 271–312. The debate does not impact my overall argument.

reports that Apollo had exhorted him to 'cultivate a slender muse' (τὴ]ν Μοῦσαν δ' ὠγαθὲ λεπταλέην, *Aet.* fr. 1.24 Harder) and he identifies the same refinement in Aratus' *Phaenomena*: 'hail, subtle discourses, the token of Aratus' sleeplessness' (χαίρετε λεπταί | ῥήσιες Ἀρήτου σύμβολον ἀγρυπνίης, *Anth. Pal.* 9.507.3–4 = 56.3–4 *HE*). Whereas slenderness is valued in the Hellenistic poems, Christodorus' Apollo—as a solar deity, as a bronze statue *and* as a god of poetry—is all about the shine. Christodorus observes and characterizes the gleam of many of the bronze statues in the baths of Zeuxippus, mobilizing an ekphrastic trope of identifying how an object interacts with light.[18] The speaker in Lucian's *Hippias* persistently extols the baths built by Hippias that 'observe the logic of lighting' (τὸν τῶν φώτων λόγον φυλάττοντα, 4), which possessed 'brightly lit retreats' (φωτὶ πολλῷ καταλαμπόμεναι ὑποχωρήσεις, 5) and in which 'everywhere there was copious illuminating and much indoor light' (καὶ ταῦτα πάντα ὑπὸ φωτὶ μεγάλῳ καὶ πολλῇ τῇ ἔνδον ἡμέρᾳ, 7).[19] Seneca the Younger, too, confirms that in contrast to the good old Romans such as Scipio, contemporary Romans do not appreciate baths unless their 'walls are resplendent with large and costly mirrors' (*parietes magnis et pretiosis orbibus refulserunt*, *Ep*. 86.6) and set up 'so as to receive the entire sun the whole day through the widest windows' (*ut totius diei solem fenestris amplissimis recipient*, *Ep*. 86.8). 'Good lighting' (τὸ εὐφεγγές, *Hipp.* 8) makes for the best Roman baths. The aesthetics of light and splendour thus permeate Christodorus' text precisely because it is a visualization of the typically radiant space of the Roman baths. The ΦΕΓΓΗ acrostic demonstrates that this aesthetic quality penetrates much deeper into the fabric of the poem than has been previously observed. In true ekphrastic fashion, the passage operates as a written object which simulates the statues' radiance and shines its φέγγη onto those who behold it.

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[18] Cf. Tissoni (n. 1), 123; Tueller (n. 2), 84; R. Höschele, 'Cataloguing statues: Christodoros' *Ekphrasis of the Baths of Zeuxippos*', in R. Laemmle, C. Scheidegger Laemmle and K. Wesselmann (edd.), *Lists and Catalogues in Ancient Literature and Beyond* (Berlin 2021), 401–19, at 402–3.

[19] The tone of the *Hippias* is debated. The range of interpretations is set out in P. Thonemann, 'Lucian's *Hippias*', *CQ* 73 (2023), 362–7. He emphasizes that the humour of the *Hippias* derives from its hyperbolic praise of what is in fact a typical Roman bath-house. The joke relies on the brightness of Roman baths being a standard quality.