

THE PLEASURE OF IMAGES

Epigrams and Objects 100 BC–AD 100

A glass of water that stands in front of someone speaking is a sign that marks this person as a lecturer, but as an object it also has the prosaic function of quenching thirst. With this example, Roland Barthes describes how objects can function as signs.¹ Stern water glasses are naturally of little interest for this chapter; or, as a Greek epigrammatist says: ‘our mixing bowl does not welcome water-drinkers’ (*AP* 11.20 = Antipater of Thessalonica 20 *GP*). Yet, Barthes’ thoughts on objects as signs are worth pursuing: how do we read objects and when does an object become a sign? And, more specifically, how is the *carpe diem* motif expressed through objects and signs? So perhaps it is possible to stay with Barthes’ sober image for a little longer before it is time for a stronger mixture. Barthes assigns two different qualities to objects. The first is their function as an object: quenching thirst, in the case of the water glass. The second quality is their function as sign: the sign of the lecturer, in the case of the water glass. In his discussion, Barthes takes the first quality for granted and is primarily interested in this second quality, the object as a sign. The drawback of this approach is that the materiality of the sign goes unappreciated. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht sees this clearly: ‘the purely material signifier ceases to be an object of attention as soon as its underlying meaning has been identified’.² In this chapter, my interest lies in both qualities of objects, that is, their materiality as well as their function as signs. I will also analyse how these two qualities interact with each other.

Too theoretical and sober? Time to serve some stronger stuff, then: cups of wine are signs that signify the banquet in the Greco-Roman

¹ Barthes (1988) [1966] 183. ² Gumbrecht (2004) 81–2.

world. But what difference does it make if the sign that signifies the banquet is the cup itself, or a song that mentions a cup, or an image that shows a cup, or a book that writes about a cup? In tackling such questions, I will combine two different views. On the one hand, I am interested in the sign and in the curious ways in which cups can oscillate between being objects, texts, and images. We thus hear of someone who is proud to have a famous cup from literature in his collection of physical drinking vessels. Or we read of descriptions of cups so vivid that we seem to see the object cup in front of our eyes. Throughout different media, the cup signifies the banquet. On the other hand, I wish to stress the materiality of the cup and what makes the cup an object. Naturally, presence is an important aspect to this: holding a cup in one's hand, touching it, smelling the wine, tasting the wine – this is different from reading about a cup. This gap is where the *carpe diem* poem is situated as it attempts to evoke the presence of the cup. I have already looked at such a feeling of loss and the attempt to compensate for it in other chapters. In the present chapter, I will show how *carpe diem* poems evoke the presence of objects and how this is crucial for evoking present enjoyment.

The chapter falls into three sections. Cups have already made their presence felt in the preceding two paragraphs, and cups and the banquet will indeed be the focus of the first section. The second section will turn to gems and luxury. The third section will consider a combination of two objects: dining halls and tombs. In terms of texts, most Greek epigrams discussed here are taken from the *Garland of Philip*, while the Latin material comes from Petronius, Pliny, and Martial. The focus of my discussion will thus lie on material between 100 BC and AD 100. From this period a high number of Greek and Latin epitaphs survive that feature the *carpe diem* motif.³ It is also in particular in this period that artworks express the *carpe diem* motif through the prominent depiction of skulls and skeletons, as Katherine Dunbabin has

³ Galletier (1922) 82 says that the *carpe diem* motif begins to appear on Latin epitaphs in this period. While most surviving *carpe diem* epitaphs were written under the Roman Empire, Bernhardt (2009) 23 cautions us that this is in line with the general epitaphic corpus. On epitaphs and *carpe diem*, see Ameling (1985), and the fuller bibliography provided on page 59 n.66 in Chapter 1.

shown in a seminal study.⁴ Finally, we know of some elaborate parties in this period which are wholly centred on *carpe diem*. For instance, we are told that Emperor Domitian hosted a meal in which every single detail could remind his guests of death and funerals: place cards in the form of gravestones bearing the guests' names, black dishes, beautiful slave boys who looked like phantoms, and many more such details. After the dinner, the guests received dishes and other items, perhaps as a form of memento. Domitian's meal juxtaposes death and dining, which is often done as a reminder to enjoy life. Yet, Domitian brings the theme to its limits, and his guests have to envisage their death as a very real possibility, as Catharine Edwards has shown.⁵ Trimalchio's *Cena* from Petronius' *Satyrice* is another banquet from this time that is hardly less elaborate in its staging of the *carpe diem* motif, and I will consider aspects of this banquet later in this chapter. What to make of this seeming prevalence of *carpe diem* in this period? It, arguably, would go too far if one were to conclude that people's minds turned to death in the unstable period following the fall of the Republic.⁶ Rather, the first centuries BC and AD seem to show a particular interest in elaborate, luxurious ways of staging *carpe diem*. We know of numerous ornate objects which express the motif, such as cups, tables, and figurines.⁷

As this chapter analyses the relation between objects and texts, it is only natural that epigrams, which are literally texts 'written onto' objects, become the focus of attention. The relation between objects, art, and epigram has long been recognised as significant, and ekphrasis has consequently been a major theme in discussions of epigrams.⁸ More recently, this field of study has received stimuli from three sides. First, a growing interest in 'material culture' throughout the

⁴ Dunbabin (1986; also 2003: 32–40).

⁵ Edwards (2007) 161–78, analysing Domitian's party at Cassius Dio 67.9.1–4 in some detail, as well as other juxtapositions of death and dining, which she considers a Roman attitude to death at that time. Cf. Erasmio (2008) 19–23.

⁶ This is the claim of Döpp (1991) 144–7. Rostovtzeff (1957) i.56 thinks that the *carpe diem* attitude is the result of Augustan peace and prosperity after the civil wars.

⁷ One more caveat is that findings from Pompeii, which are naturally part of this period, can distort the evidence.

⁸ Epigram and art were already treated in the influential study of P. Friedländer (1912) 55–60. The bibliography for viewing, text, and ekphrasis in Greco-Roman literature is vast. See, in particular, D. P. Fowler (1991), Goldhill (1994), Gutzwiller (2002), Zanker (2003; 2004), Elsner (2007), Tueller (2008) 141–65, Zeitlin (2013), and more sources at Elsner (2014b) 153 n.11. For Greek influence on Roman ekphrasis, see Dufallo (2013).

humanities made scholars consider more carefully the seemingly mundane objects that are thematised in epigrams. Second, both art historians and literary scholars found interest in forms of collections, whether they be collections of artefacts or of literature. Third, an important papyrus find opened up new avenues to understanding the relations between epigrams and objects.⁹ Nonetheless, many texts discussed in the present chapter have received little attention, and scholarship is, for example, virtually silent on the epigrams of authors such as Apollonides, Zonas, or Marcus Argentarius that are discussed here. Careful attention to these texts can elucidate how one can read *carpe diem* through objects.¹⁰

The time investigated here, the Roman Republic and early Empire, means that Greek and Roman evidence must be treated collectively. One Greek writer evidently describes a Roman gem, which he might have encountered while he mixed with the Augustan court. Another Greek epigrammatist describes a Roman *conuiuium* rather than a Greek symposium in one of his poems.¹¹ A Greek cutter of a gem discussed here may have worked in Rome. In short, any division of this chapter's material along the lines Greek or Roman would be artificial and curtail the exploration of Greco-Roman objects and texts.

4.1 Cups

Cups are fundamental to the symposium. In the ancient world, Athenaeus and Macrobius recognised their significance and wrote learned accounts on various types of cups and their appearances in

⁹ Material culture: Canevaro (2019) offers a review of material studies and Classics, and Petrovic (2019) offers an introduction. Collecting: Elsner and Cardinal (1994), Pearce (1995). Epigram collections: Gutzwiller (1998). The important papyrus find is the New Posidippus, *P.Mil.Vogl.* VIII 309, edited by Austin and Bastianini (2002). The stimulus of one or more of these three strands can be felt in a number of fascinating studies: Kuttner (2005), Prioux (2007; 2008; 2014; 2015), Männlein-Robert (2007), Squire (2009; 2014), Höschele (2010), Elsner (2014a), along with other articles collected in Gahtan and Pegazzano (2014), and Vout (2018) esp. 39–42.

¹⁰ The motif of *carpe diem* in epigrams has been discussed by Giangrande (1968), and more recently by Sens (2016). Giangrande does away with three epigrams, which I discuss in this chapter, with a sentence about each on page 171 (*AP* 11.25 = Apollonides 27 *GP*, *AP* 11.28 = Argentarius 30 *GP*, *AP* 11.38 = Polemon 2 *GP*).

¹¹ Höschele (2019) now offers an introduction to Greek epigram in Rome in the first century BC.

literature (Ath. Book 11, Macr. 5.21). Renaud Gagné has recently joined the party of these learned banqueters, and he has discussed in some detail the cup in Greek literature. For Gagné the cup is the ‘degree-zero symbol of the symposium’.¹² With this term from Roland Barthes, Gagné underlines the strong semantic role of the cup: any cup anywhere can point to the symposium.¹³ The symposium is the natural space for enjoyment, the space that *carpe diem* poems evoke. In sympotic epigrams, published in books and thus separated from the sympotic space, cups are an important sign that can conjure up the symposium. Yet, already early lyric conjured up the presence of cups. A common formula on sixth-century-BC cups is the following call to drinks: χαῖρε καὶ πῖε τὲνδε (‘be happy [or: greetings] and drink this’).¹⁴ It has been frequently noted that this expression finds a virtually verbatim parallel in one of Alcaeus’ sympotic songs (*fr.* 401a and b):¹⁵ (a) χαῖρε καὶ πῶ τάνδε (b) δεῦρο σύμπρωθι ((a) ‘be happy [or: greetings] and drink this’ (b) ‘come here and join in the drinking’). Inscriptions as well as Alcaeus’ poem refer to a cup with a deictic pronoun: the cup is present. It is tempting to see in Alcaeus’ song the song of a momentary now at the symposium: while Alcaeus tells his audience to drink *this* cup, they may indeed hold *this* cup in their hand and look at letters which mirror Alcaeus’ song.¹⁶ This, however, is an idealised image. Although cups which mirrored Alcaeus’ song in inscriptions might have been common, not every single symposiast would have held such a cup with exactly this writing in his hand for every reperformance to come. Alcaeus already produces

¹² Gagné (2016) 208 with further literature.

¹³ For degree zero, see Barthes (1968) [1964] 77. The definition here is more helpful than Barthes (1967) [1953], *Writing Degree Zero*, despite the title of the latter work. The zero sign, or Ø, is of course originally a linguistic term, as in zero-morph.

¹⁴ For such cups, see the catalogue of Wachter (2004) 155–9.

¹⁵ See the apparatus of Voigt (1971), Rösler (1980) 265 n.359, Liberman (1999) ii.251, Catoni (2010) 198, Cazzato and Prodi (2016) 6.

¹⁶ Gagné (2016) 221–4 considers cups as words and objects, and makes important points on deixis, presence, and performance. Rösler (1983), in his pragmatic reading of Alcaeus, stressed the function of the deictics, which locate Alcaeus’ poetry in the now of the symposium (*demonstratio ad oculos*). For a short critical assessment of deictics and pragmatics in lyric, see D’Alessio (2009) 114–20 with further references. Mundt (2018) 89–115 compares the symposium in Greek lyric (Anacreon), Horace, and the *Anacreontea* through a semiotic lens.

Cups

effects of presence rather than simply presence.¹⁷ Epigrammatists would follow this technique.

As we turn our attention to the first centuries BC and AD, we will do well to begin our discussion with actual cups. Among the most spectacular cups from the ancient world are two that are part of the Boscoreale treasure (Figures 4.1–4.2), unearthed in the bay of Naples in 1895 and now in the Louvre (Louvre Bj 1923, 1924).¹⁸



Figure 4.1(a, b, c) Silver cup with skeletons (Cup A)
Cup A from the Boscoreale treasure, Paris, Louvre Bj 1923

¹⁷ I follow the important analysis of materiality and reperformance in Alcaeus of Fearn (2018). Cf. the first chapter of Hobden (2013), Clay (2016).

¹⁸ For a description and interpretation of the cups, see, above all, Dumbabin (1986) 224–30 with further references.



Figure 4.2(a, b, c) Silver cup with skeletons (Cup B)
Cup B from the Boscoreale treasure, Paris, Louvre Bj 1924

Dated to the Augustan-Tiberian era, the two silver cups urge viewers to *carpe diem* qua the depiction of skeletons. Garlands that are embossed below the rims of the cup set a sympotic scene throughout, and several skeletons engage in sympotic activity: on Cup A, one skeleton is playing a lyre; another puts a garland on his head; yet another looks at a skull. Other activities on the two cups are not sympotic, though they also stress the *carpe diem* message, and we will encounter them again in this chapter. Thus, one skeleton holds a butterfly in his hand, which is labelled $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\omicron\nu$ ('little soul'), and a purse labelled $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu\omicron\iota$ ('envy') in the other hand. Yet another skeleton pours a libation over an unburied mangled skeleton that lies on the ground on Cup B. Beside the skeletons that are anonymous

revellers, other skeletons are identified by inscriptions as philosophers and poets. This includes, on Cup A, Sophocles, Moschion, Zeno, and Epicurus, and, on Cup B, Menander, Archilochus, and Monimus. The cups combine several concepts of ‘the thought and art of Graeco-Roman society of the first centuries B.C. to A.D.’, as Katherine Dunbabin has shown,¹⁹ for in this period skeletons and skulls widely express the *carpe diem* motif in the form of figurines and on cups, gems, mosaics, tombs, and earthenware. The depiction of dramatists as skeletons reflects the idea of life as a stage, and the skeleton-philosophers point to sentiments about the universality of death, which even philosophers, for all their wisdom, cannot avoid.

One skeleton whose role has not been sufficiently explained is the one of Archilochus playing the lyre on Cup B (Figure 4.2(b)). Of course, this could just be an extension of the theme ‘everyone dies, even famous philosophers and poets’, as Dunbabin suggests.²⁰ But there may be more to it; as the cups are sympotic objects, which depict sympotic scenes, Archilochus might have been shown here as a sympotic poet. As a poet who famously drinks reclining on his spear (*fr.* 2) and who is characterised as ‘wine-stricken’ by Callimachus, he is an appropriate subject for a cup (*fr.* 544 Pfeiffer: μεθυπλήγος). Moreover, some fragments of Archilochus have been interpreted as *carpe diem* pieces.²¹ On Cup A, there is a corresponding skeleton playing a lyre (Figure 4.1(b)). While it is anonymous, Dunbabin has convincingly proposed that the parallel between the two cups suggests that this was also meant to be a well-known poet.²² Above this skeleton’s lyre is written τέρπε ζῶν σεα[υ]τόν (‘while you are alive, enjoy yourself’). The position of these words, placed directly over the lyre, suggests that they represent a song that arises from the instrument.²³ Perhaps this line of song would have indicated the identity of the poet to an ancient viewer. At least given the attention to detail that the cups display, this seems

¹⁹ Dunbabin (1986) 228. Cf. Gigante (1979) 103–12, 114–22.

²⁰ Dunbabin (1986) 230. ²¹ Archil. *fr.* 2, 4, 11, 13 with Davis (2010b) 109–11.

²² Dunbabin (1986) 228 n.156.

²³ For any discussion of sympotic imagery and depictions of songs on cups, Lissarrague (1990) [1987] is fundamental, though he deals with a very different period, archaic and classical Greece.

a more likely deduction than to simply assume with Dunbabin that the artist had forgotten to include the poet's name.²⁴

The Boscoreale cups include more phrases which represent sympotic song. Thus, on Cup B, the following words are placed above two smaller skeletons representing slaves, of which one plays pipes and the other one a lyre (visible on Figures 4.2(a) and 4.2(b)): εὐφραίνου ὄν ζῆς χρόνον ('enjoy the time that you are alive').²⁵ Finally, Cup A shows a third exhortation: ζῶν μετάλαβε· τὸ γὰρ αὔριον ἄδηλον ἐστί ('take a share in life; for tomorrow is uncertain'). This sentence is written below a Hamlet-like skeleton who looks at a skull (Figure 4.1(a)). Indeed, at first one may entertain the possibility that these sentences should be attributed to our Hamlet skeleton. The exhortation, however, makes little sense when spoken to a skull; it should be addressed to the living (or the quasi-living skeletons). Yet, it is equally difficult to imagine that the skull voices this sentence. It is thus most natural to assume that this exhortation, too, represents song and should be attributed to the small skeleton clapping his hands below the letters. The parallel between the two cups supports this interpretation: Cup B shows a song in corresponding position above two small skeletons. Consistency also seems to demand this conclusion: all three exhortations on the cups are represented as song.

That the Boscoreale cups are signs of the banquet is clear enough, but the complexity in their use of motifs and media is striking, and perhaps most so in their evocation of song. In addition to the inscribed songs, the structure of the cups also helps to evoke music: the garlands at the upper rim and the small dancing skeletons at the lower end of the cup give a rhythmic sympotic feeling to the whole scene. As the cups evoke music, they can

²⁴ Dunbabin (1986) 228 n.156. Somewhat similar is the expression σὴν αὐτοῦ φρένα τέρπε at Mimm. fr. 7.1 = Thgn. 795 = AP 9.50.1, but the parallel is arguably too loose and the wording too conventional to make much of it (cf. *Il.* 1.474, 9.186 and page 129 n.63 in Chapter 3).

²⁵ The words are similar to the song of Seikilos, which I discussed in the Introduction, as Marx (1906) 146 noted: ὄσον ζῆς, φαίνου. Another parallel can be found in a funerary poem for a performer of Homeric songs, which urges to *carpe diem* (SGO 10/05/04.1–2): χήροις ὦ παροδεῖτ', ὄσον δ' ἐσορᾶς φάος ἠοῦς, | εὐφραίνων' ἐν θαλίαισιν ἐὴν φρένα, τέρπε σεαυτὸν. It is tempting to assume that similar, metrical expressions are lurking behind the prose of the Boscoreale cups.

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reinforce the musical enjoyment at the banquet and truly create present enjoyment: touching the cups, feeling the skeletons and the silver material, and tasting wine from them creates enjoyment. And yet, these cups also express a sentiment of loss and nostalgia for a lost ideal of early lyric song: Archilochus plays the lyre and urges banqueters to live it up, but Archilochus has already been dead for centuries and he as well as his fellow banqueters are skeletons. Song is not so present after all. The cups thus raise a key question that will concern us in this chapter: how do we read objects instead of listen to songs, in the context of *carpe diem*?²⁶

As we turn to texts, let us begin with an epigram that stresses the materiality of the cup – though clay instead of the silver of the Boscoreale cups. The epigram, included in the *Garland of Philip*, is attributed to Zonas, an epigrammatist of whom little is known unless he is to be identified with Diodorus Zonas, an influential orator around the time of the Mithridatic Wars in the first century BC.²⁷ In the epigram, a speaker talks of a clay cup (*AP* 11.43 = Zonas 9 *GP*):

δός μοι τοῦκ γαίης πεπονημένον ἄδῦ κύπελλον,
ἄς γενόμην καὶ ὑφ' ἧ κείσοι' ἀποφθίμενος.

Give me the sweet cup made from earthenware, earth from where I came
and under which I will lie again when I am dead.

The epigram seems to have eluded critical attention. It falls into two parts. In the hexameter, a symposiast asks someone for a sweet cup. This is the sympotic gesture par excellence, the call for drinks.²⁸ The command in this line thus evokes a scene at the banquet, and a reader places both the speaker and his addressee at the symposium. The hexameter, then, lets us listen to the chatter of sympotic dialogue, and we can find a parallel for such a piece of casual dialogue in the words of a thirsty slave in comedy (Ar. *Eq.*

²⁶ Another well-known cup, which conveys a *carpe diem* message, is the *kto chro* cup, which shows a skeleton, objects of the symposium, two dancers, and the inscription κτῶ χρῶ, 'acquire and use'. See Zahn (1923), Dumbabin (1986) 199–203 with further parallels. For the formula κτῶ χρῶ, see Robert (1936) 136–7.

²⁷ For a discussion of the identity of Zonas, see Reitzenstein at *RE* v.1. col. 660–1 s.v. 'Diodorus' no. 35, Gow and Page (1968) 263–4.

²⁸ See Cazzato and Prodi (2016) 6–10, Gagné (2016) 226–7. For commands of this kind, see Hutchinson (2016) 269, no. 123. Ath. 11.482e–483a discusses κύπελλον cups.

120, and similar again in 123): δός μοι, δός τὸ ποτήριον ταχύ ('give me, quickly give me the cup').²⁹

The pentameter evokes a different image. Two relative clauses offer more information on the cup's material, earthenware. The speaker says that like the cup he comes from the earth and will lie again under the earth when he is dead.³⁰ The language in the pentameter is evocative of epitaphs. In particular the first-person verb κείσομαι points to funerary epigrams, in which κείμαι is an extremely common, formulaic expression.³¹ The epitaphic heritage of the genre is inscribed into the DNA of the Zonas' epigram. Exhortation to present enjoyment and insight into human mortality are expressed through a line of sympotic dialogue that clashes with a line evocative of funerary epigram.³² The implicit lesson of the epigram is *carpe diem* – drink from earthenware now before the same material will surround you in death. The sweet cup acts as a sign for the pleasures of the symposium, but the cup shares its material with the earth that will entomb us. Within a single elegiac couplet, we listen to pleasant sympotic chatter and read of death. The poem evokes both the tactile presence of an earthenware cup at the banquet and the letters on an epitaph; in doing so, it oscillates between presence and meaning. It is precisely in this interaction of materiality and reading, of object and sign, of sympotic dialogue and funerary epigram, where we find the *carpe diem* motif. As we seem to touch the cup's earthenware material, taste its sweetness, and as we interpret the cup as a sympotic sign and discern the letters of the epigram evocative of inscriptions, we read *carpe diem*.

An epigram of Apollonides raises further questions on how one can read cups. Apollonides was a Greek poet who wrote in the first

²⁹ Another command of this kind appears in a comedic fragment of Anaxandrides (*fr.* 33): δός δὴ τὸν χοῦν | αὐτῷ σύ, Κῶμιε, καὶ τὸ κυμβίον φέρων.

³⁰ The poem also plays with the common identification of cups as humans, which can be found in the form of anthropomorphic cups as well. On such cups, see Gagné (2016) 215 with bibliography at 215 n.56 and n.57.

³¹ For κείμαι as a convention and marker of sepulchral epigram, see, for example, Tueller (2008) 46–8, 95–6. Also cf. forms of κείμαι below in this chapter at *AP* 11.28 = Argentarius 30 *GP*, *AP* 9.439 = Crinagoras 47 *GP*. Zonas is far from being the only epigrammatist who played with the generic conventions of κείμαι. See, for example, *AP* 5.85.4 = Asclepiades 2.4 *HE* with Sens (2011) *ad loc.*

³² Cf. *AP* 7.452 = Leonidas 67 *HE* for a similar technique, discussed on pages 16–17 in the Introduction. For Zonas' general debt to Leonidas, see Gow and Page (1968) 413.

century AD in the Roman Empire and may have lived in Asia, as two of his epigrams possibly mention pro-consuls of Asia.³³ In the following epigram, Apollonides describes how someone is asleep at the symposium and his cup calls him back to action (*AP* 11.25 = 27 *GP*):³⁴

ὕπνώεις, ὦ ταῖρε, τὸ δὲ σκύφος αὐτὸ βοᾷ σε· (1)
 ἔγρεο, μὴ τέρπου μοιριδίῃ μελέτῃ.
 μὴ φείσῃ, Διόδωρε, λάβρος δ' εἰς Βάκχον ὀλισθῶν
 ἄχρῖς ἐπὶ σφαλεροῦ ζωροπότῃ γόνατος.
 ἔσσεθ' ὅτ' οὐ πτόμεσθα πολὺς πολὺς· ἀλλ' ἄγ' ἐπέιγού· (5)
 ἡ συνετὴ κροτάφων ἀπτεται ἡμετέρων.

You are sleeping, my friend, but the cup itself is shouting for you: wake up and don't enjoy practising for death. Don't be sparing, Diodorus, but rather slip greedily into Bacchus' wine and drink it neat until the legs give way. There will be a time – a long, long time – when we will not be drinking. But come get up. Sober old age is already touching our temples.

Although this poem is praised by Gow and Page as 'perhaps the best'³⁵ of Apollonides' epigrams, it has like many of the epigrams from the *Garland of Philip* received no critical attention. This is a pity, for the poem elegantly combines features of inscribed epigram and Hellenistic literature with the fashion of the early Empire.

The first line sets the scene: someone addressed in the second person is asleep at the symposium and his cup 'is shouting' (βοᾷ) at him. The following line is set in quotation marks by Gow and Page as the content of the cup's speech:³⁶ ἔγρεο, μὴ τέρπου μοιριδίῃ μελέτῃ ('wake up and don't enjoy practising for death'). The cup admonishes the sleepy symposiast to wake up and not to enjoy his sleep, here wittily called a 'practice for death' (μοιριδίῃ μελέτῃ). It is

³³ Gow and Page (1968) ii.147–8 and Reitzenstein at *RE* ii.1 col. 119 s.v. 'Apollonides' no. 26.

³⁴ The word ἔγρεο appears at the beginning of the first pentameter of an epigram with a *carpe diem* theme here as well as at *AP* 5.118.2 = *Argentarius* 11.2 *GP*. Also cf. the expression σφάλλομαι ἀκρήτῳ μεμεθυσμένος at *AP* 11.26.1 = *Argentarius* 27.1 *GP* with line 4 of the Apollonides' epigram here. The intertextual relation between Apollonides and *Argentarius* deserves further exploration.

³⁵ Gow and Page (1968) ii.148. In general, though, Apollonides is described as a 'competent but undistinguished composer'. *Aliter* Reitzenstein at *RE* ii.1 col. 119 s.v. 'Apollonides' no. 26.

³⁶ Gow and Page (1968). The same punctuation is used at Beckby (1957–8) iii.556 and in the translation (though not the text) of the Loeb edition of Paton (1916–18). Jacobs (1794–1814) ii.132 does not use any quotation marks.

interesting if the admonition comes from the cup. To be sure, we can also find a talkative wine vessel in a charming epigram by Apollonides' contemporary Marcus Argentarius, who calls a flagon (λάγυρος) 'sweet-talking, soft laughing, large lipped, long-throated', clearly punning on the shape of the vessel and its function at the symposium (*AP* 9.229 = 24 *GP*). Furthermore, a cup that was passed around at a symposium and indicated who was singing was itself called ᾠδός ('singer').³⁷ Thus, wine-vessels as symbols of the symposium can act like symposiasts, chatting and singing. The case of the cup in Apollonides' epigram, however, is arguably different. For the shout of the cup might be best understood as a reference to an inscription on a cup, as the epigram plays with the heritage of the epigrammatic genre in inscriptions. Words of verbal action are regularly used for inscriptions on epigrams and blur the lines between speaking and writing,³⁸ but perhaps more specifically relevant is a cup in a satyr play which is said to 'call' (καλεῖ) someone 'by showing its inscription'.³⁹ This neatly shows how an inscription on a cup can simultaneously function as an inscription and as a verbal action. Irmgard Männlein-Robert says about epigrams of similar form that the voice of the epigram only becomes articulate once the reader lends his own voice to the epigram as he reads the text aloud.⁴⁰ Indeed, in our present case we can see such a reception in action, as the speaker of the epigram reads out the inscription of the cup to the sleeping Diodorus, thus giving a voice to the epigram.

If the 'shout' of the cup is understood as an inscription on a cup, the question arises whether this speech or inscription is really just limited to one line, as most editions mark it. The exhortation in the following line suggests otherwise: μὴ φείσῃ, Διόδωρε ('don't be sparing, Diodorus'). This negated imperative closely follows μὴ τέρπου ('don't enjoy'), and it is most natural to assume that both

³⁷ See Antiphanes *fr.* 85 with Liberman (2016) 43 and Gagné (2016) 220 and 220 n.79.

³⁸ See, for example, Männlein-Robert (2007) 157–67 with several examples for what she calls a 'Mediendifferenz'. The idea of epigrams as the voice of the object is as old as epigrams themselves (*SGO* 01/12/05 = *CEG* 429): αὐδὴ τεχνήσεσσι λίθοι.

³⁹ Achaeus *Omphale TrGF* 33 *apud* Ath. 11.466e–f: ὁ δὲ σκύφος με τοῦ θεοῦ καλεῖ πάλαι τὸ γράμμα φείνων. The inscription is then spelled out, as the individual letters are mentioned, thus highlighting the written nature. On the fragment, see Lämmle (2013) 111–12, Gagné (2016) 212.

⁴⁰ Männlein-Robert (2007) 158: 'die Stimme, i.e. das Epigramm, muss durch die Stimme des Lesers beim lauten Lesen konkret zum Klingen gebracht werden'.

imperatives are said by the same speaker, the cup. Furthermore, this exhortation displays the most typical features of inscriptions on cups: an indication of the owner and an exhortation to drink. I thus suggest that lines 2–4 should be placed into quotation marks as being spoken by the cup.⁴¹ The device of the speaking cup is noteworthy, and the verb βόῳ ('the cup is shouting to you'), which introduces the speech of the cup, encapsulates issues of presence and absence. The loudly shouted imperatives evoke presence and the exuberant space of the banquet. And yet, this shout turns out to be an inscription on a cup, something read rather than sung.

Apollonides' epigram stages the act of reading *carpe diem*. The epigram displays self-consciousness about its status as a text and about the role of the reader. It may therefore be unsurprising that the epigram also includes a sophisticated philological note. One of what I take to be the cup's exhortations is the imperative ζωροπότηι ('drink neat wine!'). Gow and Page do not comment on this word, though this rare compound-word might be the most marked one in the epigram. In Chapter 3 on Horace's choice of words, it was already possible to take a sip from this neat wine of words; now it is time to down it properly. The verb ζωροποτέω derives from the adjective ζωρός, a Homeric *hapax legomenon*, which appears at *Iliad* 9.203. There, Odysseus, Ajax, and Phoenix visit Achilles in his tent, who tells Patroclus to bring a larger mixing bowl and to mix something ζωρότερον. The meaning of this word was subject to much debate in the ancient world: some considered it to refer to old wine, others took it to mean 'quicker', yet others thought it to signify 'hot' or 'boiling' wine, but most accepted the meaning 'neat' or 'unmixed'. Such philological debates were themselves regularly set at symposia and suited the self-referential sympotic space: at the literary symposia of Plutarch and Athenaeus the question about the meaning of ζωρότερον is a sympotic question in more than one sense (Plu. *Moralia* 677c–678b, Ath. 10.423d–424a).⁴²

⁴¹ Lines 5–6 should again be assigned to the speaker of the epigram. For both the first-person-plural verb οὐ πιόμεσθα and the first-person-plural possessive pronoun ἡμετέρων can hardly be assigned to the cup.

⁴² Sens (2011) 107 mentions other discussions concerning the meaning of ζωρός, among which Arist. *Po.* 25 1461a 14 and Hdt. 6.84.3 are perhaps particularly worth mentioning. For further uses of the term, see Magnelli (1997) 456.

It is in particular Callimachus' use of ζωροποτέω in the *Aetia*, quoted in Chapter 3, which strongly influenced later literature (*fr.* 178.12 Harder, page 136 in this book).⁴³ Indeed, Paul Maas had already suggested that Apollonides took ζωροποτεῖν from Callimachus.⁴⁴ Callimachus notably rejects the fashion of drinking neat wine, but many poets would write polemic allusions to this passage. This is, in particular, the case with *carpe diem* poems, as we have seen in Horace's case (*C.* 1.36.13–14, pages 135–8 in Chapter 3). In epigrams it becomes difficult to tell if poets are more intoxicated from the neat wine they describe or from the philological fascination that this term entails. Thus, Hedylyus begins an epigram with the resounding noun ζωροπότοι ('drinkers of neat wine'), which helps him to characterise his poetic programme in contrast to Callimachus, as Sens has analysed in detail (4 *HE apud* Ath. 11.497d).⁴⁵ Even much later, in sixth-century-AD Byzantium, Callimachus' passage still invited allusive games among epigrammatists. Thus, Macedonius begins a poem with the *hapax legomenon* χανδοπότοι (*AP* 11.59), perhaps modelled on Hedylyus' *incipit*, but almost certainly alluding to Callimachus' striking expression χανδὸν ἄμυστιν ζωροποτεῖν ('drinking neat wine with the mouth wide open in large draughts').⁴⁶ Terms around ζωρο- would also act as a tool for cross-referencing and editing when Meleager compiled his collection of epigrams. For as he found ζωρός in a *carpe diem* poem of Asclepiades (*AP* 12.50 = 16 *HE*), Meleager placed a poem of his own before this, which he introduced with the verb ζωροπότει (*AP* 12.49 = 113 *HE*).⁴⁷

⁴³ Although the papyrus *P.Oxy.* 1362 supports the reading οἰνοποτεῖν from Ath. 10.442f, 11.781d for Callimachus *fr.* 178.12 Harder, I agree with Merkelbach (1967), Massimilla (1996) 408, Hollis (1972), and Harder (2012) 971 (further literature there) that ζωροποτεῖν from Ath. 11.477c and Macrob. 5.21.12 is the correct reading. For Callimachus' poetic programme in this passage, see Hunter (1996a), reprinted with revisions at Fantuzzi and Hunter (2004) 76–83.

⁴⁴ At Pfeiffer (1949–53) i.504.

⁴⁵ Sens (2015), esp. 501. Gow and Page (1965) at Hedylyus 4.1 did perhaps not choose their words wisely when saying that 'there is no special point in ζωρο-'. Nor does Giangrande (1968) 131 n.2 give full justice to the word by calling it a 'jocular "Schimpfwort"'. Cf. page 136 n.88 for a likely form of ζωρός in a corrupt line of Hedylyus 3 *HE apud* Ath. 11.486a.

⁴⁶ Another sixth-century-AD allusion: οὔτε ζωροτέρω μείζονι κισσυβίω at *AP* 5.289.4 (Agathias) with Hollis (1972).

⁴⁷ Gutzwiller (1997) 172–5 analyses how Meleager's editing might have shaped the sequence here. The connection between the two epigrams was recognised by Wifstrand (1926) 20.

Cups

Cross-referencing is perhaps not something that many people associate with hard drinking. Yet this peculiar double nature of the word ζωρός goes some way towards explaining the dynamics of reading *carpe diem*. The one side in Apollonides' epigram is the emphatic imperative ζωροπόττει; this is much stronger stuff than would have commonly been drunk (mixing measurements are exhaustively discussed at Ath. 10.426b–427d). Such a call for drinks attempts to mirror and even surpass an exuberantly drinking lyric poet like Alcaeus: really living it up *now*. Then again, the Homeric hapax and all the philological baggage that comes with it underlines the written medium of the poem: this is emphatically a poem of reading and writing rather than singing symposiasts.

Apollonides was not the only one who made much of the word ζωρός in the first centuries BC and AD. His contemporary Marcus Argentarius exhorts in a *carpe diem* poem to taking a 'neat cup of wine' (Βάκχου ζωρόν δέπας). Set in a decidedly Roman setting, in which a wife can take part in a banquet, the epigram gives us a literary version of the sentiment of the Boscoreale cups. Let us enjoy ourselves; all philosophy amounts to nothing as even famous philosophers die (*AP* 11.28 = 30 *GP*):

- πέντε θανῶν κείση κατέχων πόδας, οὐδὲ τὰ τερπνὰ (1)
ζωῆς οὐδ' αὐγάς ὄψεαι ἡελίου·
ὥστε λαβῶν Βάκχου ζωρόν δέπας ἔλκε γεγηθῶς,
Κίγκιε, καλλίστην ἀγκάς ἔχων ἄλοχον.
εἰ δέ σοι ἀθανάτος σοφίης νόος, ἴσθι Κλεάνθης (5)
καὶ Ζήνων Ἄϊδην τὸν βαθὺν ὡς ἔμολον.

When you lie dead you'll have five feet of land, and you will not see the pleasures of life or the rays of the sun. Therefore, grab a neat cup of Bacchus' wine, down it, and be happy, Cincius, with your beautiful wife in your arms. But if you think that the mind of wisdom is immortal (?), keep in mind that Cleanthes and Zeno went down to deep Hades.

Marcus Argentarius alludes to a *carpe diem* epigram of Asclepiades, as he substitutes Asclepiades' Βάκχου ζωρόν πόμα for Βάκχου ζωρόν δέπας in the same metrical *sedes* ('neat drink [or "cup" in the other case] of Bacchus' wine').⁴⁸ Argentarius also

⁴⁸ Noted by Small (1951) 141 pointing to *AP* 12.50.5 = Asclepiades 16.5 *HE*. Apollonides uses the adjective ζωρός in describing the sacrifice of a cup of neat wine at *AP* 6.105.3 = 1.3 *GP*.

follows Asclepiades' lead in making an etymological pun on the Homeric ζωρός. In his epigram, the exhortation to drink Βάκχου ζωρόν δέπας is a direct result (ὥστε) of the insight that after death one is unable to see the 'pleasures of life' anymore (τὰ τερπνὰ ζωῆς). The 'neat wine' (ζωρός) thus equates to 'life' (ζωή) and, by suggesting this equation, Argentarius follows Homeric scholia, which define ζωρότερον in *Iliad* 9 as ἀκρατότερον, παρὰ τὸ ζῆν ('unmixed, deriving from living').⁴⁹ Argentarius takes this witty etymological play from Asclepiades, where Richard Hunter has already identified the same learned allusion to Homeric scholarship (*AP* 12.50.4–5 = 16.4–5 *HE*):⁵⁰ τί ζῶν ἐν σποδιῇ τίθεσαι; | πίνωμεν Βάκχου ζωρόν πόμα ('why are you lying in ash, although you are *alive*? Let's drink the *neat* drink of Bacchus' wine'). Perhaps Asclepiades and Argentarius still wish to live it up and drink like Homer's feasting hero, but this manner of drinking now needs glossing. The etymology of a Homeric crux makes ζωρός a crucial term for *carpe diem*. For if the study of Homer shows that unmixed wine is related to life, then we can truly say with Trimalchio, *uinum uita est* (Petron. 34.7), and indulge in the idea of *carpe diem*.

The etymology of ζωρότερον was still known to Martial. In one of his epigrams, a Roman snob boasts that his collection of old drinking vessels contains, among other items, also the cup of Nestor and the very cup of Achilles from *Iliad* 9 (8.6.11–12): *hic scyphus est in quo misceri iussit amicis | largius Aeacides uiuidiusque merum* ('this is the cup in which Aeacus' grandson Achilles told his friends to mix a more generous and neater mixture, a veritable eau de vie'). In Martial, *largius* translates Homer's μείζονα, while *merum* translates ζωρότερον. As has been recognised, Martial, too, like the Greek epigrammatists, glosses the supposed etymology of ζωρότερον from ζῆν by associating 'unmixed wine' (*merum*) with a 'livelier' mixture (*uiuidius*).⁵¹ Achilles' drinking vessel becomes,

⁴⁹ The scholion can be consulted at Erbse (1971) ii.441.

⁵⁰ Hunter (2010) 287 and 287 n.58. Asclepiades' epigram in turn rewrites Alcaeus, *fr.* 346 (Hunter 2010) 284–8, Sens (2011) 102–4 in detail with further literature). O'Hara (2017) 21–42 offers a summary of Alexandrian etymological thinking with numerous examples and references.

⁵¹ Scriverius (1619) *ad loc.* recognised the allusion to the *Iliad*, which helped him to defend the correct manuscript reading *uiuidiusque merum* (previously printed in the

at least in the imagination of Martial's snob, a physical object that is present at the banquet.⁵² Though the collection of Martial's snob is absurd, it seems that there existed people in the ancient world who imagined that they owned physical drinking vessels of Homeric heroes. Thus, the learned Athenaeus tells us that the people of Capua in Campania believed that they had the genuine cup of Homer's Nestor in their city – a cup that Martial's collector of course owns as well (Mart. 8.6.9–10).⁵³ In his treatment of Achilles' cup, Martial's collector shows some interest in Homeric scholarship, but he does little to live up to the Homeric ideal: instead of Achilles' strong mixture, he serves some unimpressive young wine in his precious cups. This is most emphatically not the idea of *carpe diem*. Martial points to some dissonance between the object as an object and as a sign: while Achilles' cup is suggestive of a splendid symposium from the past, it has become a dusty object in a collection. It works as a signifier but has lost its function as an object.

While Martial's snob claims that his collection also includes a krater that was damaged in the battle of Lapiths and centaurs (8.6.7–8), Pliny the Elder tells us of a different and particularly fascinating broken cup in a collection of precious vessels (*Nat.* 37.19). In a section on Myrrhine vessels, Pliny notes their exceptional value, saying that one single cup of this material was valued at 70,000 sesterces.⁵⁴ An ex-consul was particularly fond of these vessels, and after Nero had confiscated the collection of cups from this man's children he displayed them in a private theatre in the

Aldine edition) against *bibit usque* (v.l. *ipse*) of the *recentiores*. I find the alternative suggestion of P. A. Watson (1998) 38, according to which the owner of the cups confuses the right reading ζωρότερον with ζώτερον, ingenious but less likely. P. A. Watson (1998) 37 and Watson and Watson (2003) 207 seem wrong in claiming that *merum* is simply a poetic synonym of *uinum*. It surely means 'unmixed wine' here, being a neat translation of the Homeric ζωρότερον.

⁵² P. A. Watson (1998) 37 suggests that Martial's snob is misremembering Homer, as Achilles asks for a 'mixing bowl' (κρητήρα), while Martial mentions a 'cup' (*skyphus*). Perhaps so, but Martial conflates the two types of vessels by saying that wine was mixed in the cup.

⁵³ Athenaeus mentions the cup in Capua at 11.489b, and discusses the cup of Nestor in detail at 11.487f–494b, on which subject, see Gaunt (2017) 102–7.

⁵⁴ Most discussions focus on the nature of the material, which Romans called 'myrrhine'. While this material may have been fluor-spar or agate, its nature is not relevant to the present discussion. Stein-Hölkeskamp (2005) 156–8 discusses cups made from this material.

horti Neronis. There Nero would sing in front of a large audience when he was rehearsing his performances, which were designated for an even larger audience at the theatre of Pompey. Pliny says that he himself saw that even the pieces of a broken cup were added to the collection and presented like a corpse, so that it might show the ‘sorrows of the age and the ill-will of Fortune’ (*Nat.* 37.19):⁵⁵

uidi tunc adnumerari unius scyphi fracti membra, quae in dolorem, credo, saeculi inuidiamque Fortunae tamquam Alexandri Magni corpus in conditorio seruari, ut ostentarentur, placebat.

At this time, I saw the pieces of a single broken cup added to the exhibition. I believe it was decided to keep these pieces for display in a coffin – just like the body of Alexander the Great – as signs of the sorrows of the age and the ill-will of Fortune.

It seems that Pliny was among the spectators of one of Nero’s performances, as he presents the story as an eye-witness account of himself.⁵⁶ Pliny tells us not only what he sees, but he also informs us of the motifs behind the display of the odd object. It is difficult to ascertain to what extent this actually represents Nero’s motivation or merely Pliny’s imaginative interpretation. The qualification *credo* may hint at some guesswork of Pliny. Yet, whether we can discern Nero’s staging of cups or Pliny’s reception, either way we gain valuable insights into first-century views on cups.

Ida Gilda Mastrorosa thinks that Pliny wishes to underline Nero’s decadence and the extravagant form of his collection.⁵⁷ The object is indeed most unusual and makes for a unique collection: why would one want to display shards of a cup? Yet, what

⁵⁵ I follow Eichholz’s translation of *adnumerari* as ‘added’ (*sc.* to the exhibition). In contrast, R. König (1994) translates *adnumerari* with ‘man zählte’, following *OLD* s. v. *adnumero* 2 and *TLL* s.v., where this passage is listed as an example for the meaning ‘to enumerate, run through, count’. I struggle to make sense of this; surely the point cannot be that someone counted the pieces of the cup and found out whether they were ten or a hundred, but rather that even the pieces of a cup were ‘added’ (*OLD* s.v. 3) to the spectacular collection of cups in Nero’s theatre. I therefore agree with Eichholz’s ‘included in the exhibition’ as well as with the translation in the Budé edition of Saint-Denis (1972), ‘mis au nombre des objets exposés’.

⁵⁶ For Nero as performer, see Leigh (2017). Pliny criticises the *carpe diem* attitude at *Nat.* 14.142.

⁵⁷ Mastrorosa (2010) 106. Bounia (2004) 198 here sees a ‘fetishisation of the artefact’.

Nero does here (or what Pliny ascribes to him) is rather witty and only understandable through the practice of displaying skeleton figurines at the symposium, as Trimalchio does in the *Satyrica* (Petron. 34.8).⁵⁸ The coffin also belongs to this motif, but instead of a human skeleton we find a broken cup inside. As a sign for enjoyment and drinking, its likening to a human being is a strong reminder to enjoy life while one can. Such an object is well placed in a performative space, in which Nero played the lyre. All this makes for rather exciting evidence: at least if we can trust Pliny, Nero, like Domitian, was another ruler of the first century AD who staged *carpe diem* (see the next section of this chapter for a *carpe diem* epigram of the Roman client king Polemon).

Though the broken cup of Nero's collection is unique, there is at least one piece that comes close to it and offers further support for seeing a *carpe diem* motif in this cup. For in Petronius' *Satyrica* we can also find a broken wine vessel in a funerary context. When Trimalchio describes his future tomb, he wishes it to feature sealed amphorae containing wine, and a carving of one of them broken, with a crying boy weeping over it (Petron. 71.11: *amphoras copiosas gypsatas, ne effluent uinum. et unam licet fractam sculpas, et super eam puerum plorantem*).⁵⁹ While Pliny describes a broken wine cup in a coffin, Trimalchio wants to have a carving of a broken amphora in his tomb. The message is arguably the same in Trimalchio's case – one should drink wine while one can (that is, while one is alive or as long as the amphora is intact). Thus, Trimalchio's lesson from the extended description of his last will and tomb is to live it up (Petron. 72.2): *ergo [...] cum sciamus nos morituros esse, quare non uiuamus?* ('so, as we know that we will die, why shouldn't we live it up?').⁶⁰

⁵⁸ For material evidence and further references on skeleton figurines, see Dunbabin (1986) 185–212. García Baracco (2020) offers an introduction of Dunbabin's theme to the general reader, and one may profit from the rich illustrations of skeletons (at 53–65) as well as from the inclusion of a recent find of a mosaic with a skeleton that was naturally not known to Dunbabin (49 and her figure 20 at 50; the find caused a media sensation and was first published by Pamir and Sezgin (2016)).

⁵⁹ The paradosis *unam* is preferable to Jacob Gronovius' *urnam*. The conjecture tells us more about Gronovius's time than about the text. Thus, in the generation before Gronovius, Fortunio Liceti, interpreting a gem, misidentified an amphora placed next to a skeleton as a funerary urn (Liceti (1653) 158–9: 'urna rogam').

⁶⁰ Cf. *CIL* xii 4548: *amici dum uiuimus uiuamus*. I do not wish to go into a discussion of Trimalchio as a Nero figure. The parallel underlines the fashion of the age rather than any individual traits. According to Plin. *Nat.* 37.20, Titus Petronius, who may be the

Perhaps Nero's shattered cup best exemplifies Barthes' 'seman-tization of the object',⁶¹ for the shattered cup has no practical function anymore and is still framed as a sign for the banquet (this is similar to the sign system of musical notes on the Seikilos epitaph discussed in the Introduction). Even without function the cup evokes luxury, revelry, and pleasure. The functionless cup is a proper zero-degree symbol; if within the semantics of cups a cup's morpheme is that one can drink from it, then Nero's zero-degree cup has lost its morpheme, but still creates meaning as part of a system of signs. At the same time, Pliny's account puts a strong emphasis on the cup's material: though the cup has lost its form, its precious material still evokes luxury.

4.2 Gems

Nero's broken cup from the last section is included in a book on gems and stones in Pliny's *Natural History*, since it was made from myrrhine. There is an interesting overlap between gems and cups. For example, epigrams on gemmed cups are also included in the section λιθικά ('stones') in a collection of Posidippus' epigrams (2, 3 Austin and Bastianini). Indeed, the papyrus discovery of the New Posidippus and its epigrams about stones also changes how we interpret other epigrams on gems. Notably, Évelyne Prioux has fruitfully interpreted Posidippus' λιθικά as a precious collection of epigrams, which mirrors real gem collections that Ptolemaic rulers may have possessed, and Prioux has applied some of the lessons from the New Posidippus to epigrams of other authors.⁶² The following section will look at gems and epigrams from the late Hellenistic period and the Roman Principate which include the *carpe diem* motif. Taking into account the importance of epigrams about stones, which we learned from the New Posidippus, I will analyse how epigrams respond to artworks on gems and how the

author of the *Satyrice*, broke a particularly precious myrrhine vessel before his death in order that Nero might not have it.

⁶¹ Barthes (1988) [1966] 182.

⁶² Prioux (2008; 2014; 2015). Also see Kuttner (2005), Höschele (2010) 148–70, Elsner (2014b), and, on the λιθικά and the New Posidippus in general, see the articles collected in Acosta-Hughes, Kosmetatou, and Baumbach (2004), Gutzwiller (2005).

carpe diem motif becomes treated as a luxury and simultaneously a justification for luxury in these media.⁶³

Crinagoras, whose epigrams are included in *The Garland of Philip*, was an influential citizen from Mytilene, who served as an envoy to Rome on at least three occasions.⁶⁴ Two of these embassies approached Julius Caesar, the third one Augustus in Spain in 25 bc. It seems that Crinagoras spent substantial time in Rome after his third embassy and was an intimate friend of the family of the Princeps, as attested to by epigrams for Antonia (*AP* 9.239 = 7 *GP*, *AP* 6.244 = 12 *GP*) and Marcellus (*AP* 6.161 = 10 *GP*, *AP* 9.545 = 11 *GP*). Crinagoras' epigrams thus offer a fascinating Greek voice from the circle around the Princeps, which is too often ignored when scholarship focusses on the likes of Horace and Vergil.

The following epigram of Crinagoras leads from a description of a skull on the wayside to a *carpe diem* exhortation (*AP* 9.439 = Crinagoras 47 *GP*):⁶⁵

- βρέγμα πάλαι λαχναῖον ἔρημαῖόν τε κέλυφος (1)
 ὄμματος ἀγλώσσου θ' ἄρμονή στόματος,
 ψυχῆς ἀσθενῆς ἔρκος, ἀτυμβεύτου θανάτοιο
 λείψανον, εἰνόδιον δάκρυ παρερχομένων,
 κεῖσο κατὰ πρέμνοιο παρ' ἀτραπῶν, ὄφρα <μάθη τις> (5)
 ἀθρήσας, τί πλέον φειδομένῳ βίότου.

⁶³ For the *realia* of gems and other stones, see Plin. *Nat.* 36–7, Rossbach at *RE* vii col. 1052–1115 s.v. 'Gemmen', Zwierlein-Diehl (2007), and Casagrande-Kim (2018) for gem collections in Rome. Gems and other luxurious objects are curiously absent from Horace's *carpe diem* poems. The reason may be found in Horace's general avoidance of extended descriptions and luxury in his lyric work, as analysed by Hardie (1993) 121–4, pointing to Hor. *Epist.* 1.6.17–18, 2.2.180–2, where Horace rejects gems and other luxury.

⁶⁴ For Crinagoras' life, see the commentary of Ypsilanti (2018) 1–14. Crinagoras' embassies are known from inscriptions (*IG* xii² 35), which record a decree, letter, and treaty from the embassies and were published by Cichorius (1888), who analyses the implications for Crinagoras at 47–61.

⁶⁵ See Gow and Page (1968) ii.257–8, Ypsilanti (2018) 466–7 for arguments why the attribution to Crinagoras is most likely correct and the attribution to Antiphilus in *Pl* an error. Rubensohn (1888) 32, 58 argues for the opposing view, largely on metrical grounds. As Gow and Page (1968) note *ad loc.*, either πέλαις or κατὰ from the paradosis should be deleted, and the deletion of πέλαις might be preferable. Jacobs's supplementation of the line ending *exempli gratia* seems close to the truth. Although Gow and Page strongly argue in favour of these readings, they do not put them into their text. I accept them here, and provide a more generous apparatus, which also includes Griffiths' recent supplementation for the penultimate line.

5 κείσο κατά Sternbach : κείσο πέλας κατά PPI παρ' ἀτραπὸν P :
 παρὰ πρόπον Pl μάθη τις suppl. Jacobs : τις εἴπη suppl. Griffiths

Skull that was hairy long ago, deserted shell of the eye, frame of a mouth without a tongue, weak fence of the soul, remains of an unburied dead, cause for tears of passers-by at the wayside, lie there under the tree stump beside the path that <one> may look at you and <learn> what gain there is for someone who is sparing of his means.

There is not a single finite verb in the first four lines; instead, there is a list of nouns that describe the skull. Crinagoras employs some recondite words and metaphors, but he essentially draws an anatomy of a skull, consisting of cranium (without hair), eye sockets (without eyes), joint of the jaws (without tongue), and teeth (without soul). Constantly, this anatomy underlines what the skull is not: a living human. The descriptive nature of the epigram is further underlined by the participle ἀθρήσας ('looking on') in line 6: the sight of the skull is focalised through someone who looks at it. The descriptive style of the epigram, which draws the scene featuring skull, tree-stump, path, and passer-by who looks at the skull and cries, seems to ask for parallels in art. Indeed, Nikolaus Himmelmann has pointed to the parallels between this epigram and a number of second- and first-century-BC Roman-Etruscan gems which show shepherds looking at a skull on the wayside in an exhortation to *carpe diem*.⁶⁶ As Himmelmann has shown in detail, these gems may have inspired the imagery of Guercino's famous painting *Et in Arcadia ego*, and for this intriguing insight alone the article surely deserves more readership.⁶⁷ While Crinagoras' epigram describes a lifeless skull, this image is contrasted with the material that we are arguably invited to imagine: a gem that may be gleaming with inner life.⁶⁸ Image and material constitute an antithesis, then, of death and life, poverty and luxury.

⁶⁶ Himmelmann (1980) 95–6 with table 37c, and in more detail Himmelmann-Wildschütz (1973) with further references. Cf. Dunbabin (1986) 212. Himmelmann's work is apparently not known to the Crinagoras commentary of Ypsilanti (2018) 464–72, which shows neither awareness of gems nor of the ekphrastic nature of the epigram.

⁶⁷ Himmelmann-Wildschütz (1973). *Et in Arcadia ego* has been an important subject in art history, treated in a well-known article by Panofsky (1963).

⁶⁸ Philip Hardie pointed out to me that gems were often ascribed life in the ancient world. Plin. *Nat.* 37.66 offers an example for gems that evoke life.



Figure 4.3 Berlin Gem with shepherd and skull
AGD ii Berlin 138, no. 349, table 64 (= Berlin, Antikensammlung, Inv. FG 417)

Crinagoras' epigram describes numerous features which can be found on gems (Figures 4.3–4.5): naturally, the skull itself and the chance wanderer who looks at it. But even the details are paralleled on gems; thus, gems regularly show the skull below a tree-trunk (Figures 4.4 and 4.5(a) and (b)),⁶⁹ and one gem shows a shepherd raising his head, which Himmelmann interprets as gesture that shows shock and sadness (Figure 4.3).⁷⁰ In the

⁶⁹ See *AGD* i.2 Munich 33, no. 729, table 84 (= Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung, Inv. A 1700); Copenhagen, Thorvaldsen Museum, Inv. 1204.

⁷⁰ Himmelmann-Wildschütz (1973) 230, pointing to *AGD* ii Berlin 138, no. 349, table 64 (= Berlin, Antikensammlung, Inv. FG 417).



Figure 4.4 Munich Gem with shepherd and skull
AGD i.2 Munich 33, no. 729, table 84 (= Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung, Inv. A 1700). Photo taken from imprint

epigram, such a reaction is implied in the description of the skull as a ‘cause for tears of passers-by at the wayside’. Finally, gems sometimes depict a bee, fly, or butterfly over the skull, which represents the soul (Figures 4.5(a) and (b)).⁷¹ The epigram describes the skull, or perhaps more specifically its mouth and teeth, as ‘weak fence of the soul’ (ψυχῆς ἀσθενὲς ἔρκος). The word ψυχή can mean butterfly or moth as well as soul.⁷² Thus the idea of a weak fence of the soul may also evoke the image of a butterfly which easily escapes from the skull, as can be seen on some gems. It should be clear by now that the epigram is indeed a description of a gem, or more specifically of an Italian gem, which Crinagoras probably saw during one of his

⁷¹ Copenhagen, Thorvaldsen Museum, Inv. 1204; Wien, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Inv. IX no. 237.

⁷² *LSJ* s.v. III and VI. The word ἔρκος for teeth is, of course, Homeric, and Gow and Page (1968) *ad loc.* point to *Il.* 9.408, where the soul leaves the ἔρκος ὀδόντων.



Figure 4.5(a) Copenhagen Gem with shepherd and skull
Copenhagen, Thorvaldsen Museum, inv. no. I1204.

embassies in Rome.⁷³ Indeed, we know from Pliny that Marcellus, with whom Crinagoras conversed in Rome, owned a gem collection, which he dedicated to the temple of Apollo on the Palatine (*Nat.* 37.11).⁷⁴

Several epigrams of Crinagoras are literary accompaniments of little luxurious gifts, similar in fashion to the *Apophoreta* of Martial (see Crinagoras 3–7 *GP*). These epigrams on objects such as a silver pen, an Indian bronze oil flask, or book editions of Anacreon and Callimachus can give us an impression of fashionable luxury objects at the Augustan court. This is also true for the epigram on the wayside skull. The circle around Augustus would have recognised a description of a gem in this epigram, and Marcellus perhaps even possessed

⁷³ Apart from Crinagoras' epigram, the motif seems to be largely confined to art. Perhaps the closest literary parallel is the *carpe diem* skolion *P.Oxy.* 1795.25–6 (at *CA* 199–200), which imagines the possibility of a passer-by stumbling upon a corpse: νεκρὸν ἕν ποθ' ἴδης καὶ μνήματα κωφᾶ παράγης, | κοινὸν ἔσοπτρον ὄρεξ' ὁ θανῶν οὕτως προσεδόκα. At *Theoc.* 23.29–40, a *carpe diem* message is juxtaposed with the image of someone stumbling on the corpse of a shepherd. But the juxtaposition is arguably too loose to make much of. Other epigrams on wayside skulls mentioned in the commentaries, such as *AP* 7.472 = Leonidas 77 *HE*, show some similarities but have nothing to do with *carpe diem*.

⁷⁴ On the gem collections of Marcellus and other Romans, see Micheli (2016) 82–4, Casagrande-Kim (2018). On Crinagoras and Marcellus, see Höschele (2019) 475–83.



Figure 4.5(b) Copenhagen Gem with shepherd and skull (imprint)
Copenhagen, Thorvaldsen Museum, inv. no. I1204. Photo taken from imprint

such a gem. In the last line, the epigram asks what good it is to be thrifty: τί πλέον φειδομένω βιότου. The sentence is strikingly similar to the first words of a *carpe diem* poem of Asclepiades, as Maria Ypsilanti notes (*AP* 5.85 = 2 *HE*):⁷⁵ φείδη παρθενίης. καὶ τί πλέον; ('you are saving your virginity. But what is there to gain?'). The allusion strengthens the *carpe diem* motif in Crinagoras' epigram. Indeed, the word φείδομαι ('to spare') is common in *carpe diem* poems, which tell their addressees not to be sparing with their money, their wine, their sexual favours, and so on.⁷⁶ These different

⁷⁵ Ypsilanti (2018) *ad loc.*, following Guichard (2004) in his Asclepiades commentary *ad loc.*

⁷⁶ On pages 99–100 in Chapter 2, I analysed the Latin equivalent *parco* at Hor. *C.* 3.28.7. The Greek φείδομαι is also used in the *carpe diem* songs *PMG* 913 and *P.Oxy.* 1795.3 (at *CA* 199–200, if restored correctly).

categories are easily conflated, and Crinagoras' epigram seems to warn against both attaching too much importance to one's life and being too thrifty with one's means.⁷⁷ If we consider again that this epigram represents a luxurious gem, the question also reinforces a message that the purposed material already gives – anyone who owns such a precious piece knows very well how not to be thrifty but spend money on precious objects.

Another epigram, attributed to Polemon II, a Roman client king of Pontus, makes the ekphrastic connection between a gem and an epigram explicit, by describing a gem that shows a loaf and flagon, a garland, a skull, and an inscribed *carpe diem* message (*AP* 11.38 = Polemon 2 *GP*):

ἡ πτωχῶν χαρίεσσα πανοπλίη ἀρτολάγυος (1)
 αὕτη καὶ δροσερῶν ἐκ πετάλων στέφανος
 καὶ τοῦτο φθιμένοιο προάστιον ἱερὸν ὄστεῦν
 ἐγκεφάλου, ψυχῆς φρούριον ἀκρότατον.
 ‘πῖνε’, λέγει τὸ γλύμμα, ‘καὶ ἔσθιε καὶ περικέισο (5)
 ἄνθεα· τοιοῦτοι γινόμεθ’ ἐξαπίνης’.

Here is the welcome equipment of beggars, their bread and flagon, and here is a garland of dewy leaves, and here is a sacred bone, the suburb of the dead brain, the highest citadel of the soul. ‘Drink’, the engraving says, ‘and eat and garland yourself with flowers; suddenly we will be like this’.

Like Crinagoras' epigram on the wayside skull, the first four lines of this epigram also consist of a list of nouns without any finite verb, describing an artwork, before again the third couplet provides a *carpe diem* message as an interpretation of the artwork. The first four lines are described by Gow and Page as ‘pompous and insipid’.⁷⁸ But what exactly do these lines describe? Évelyne Prioux says that this epigram is ‘the description of a sardonyx engraved with the typical belongings of a beggar’.⁷⁹ Yet, neither garlands nor skulls can be considered typical possessions of beggars. Rather, the epigram describes three different sets of items, and presents them as thesis,

⁷⁷ Being too frugal with both one's ‘life’ and one's ‘means of living’ (*LSJ* s.v. βίωτος I and II). For the first meaning, see Gow and Page (1968) *ad loc.*: ‘what is gained by one who takes too much care of himself’. For the second meaning, see Beckby (1957–8) ii.275, who translates ‘was ihm Geizen im Leben erbringt’ (cf. Jacobs (1794–1814) viii.408). Note that a *carpe diem* epitaph set below a relief with a skull urges readers to make use of their means (*SGO* 05/01/62.3 = *GV* 1364.3): βίωτῳ χρῆσαι.

⁷⁸ Gow and Page (1968) ii.400. ⁷⁹ Prioux (2015) 69.

antithesis, and synthesis. The word ἀρτολάγυρος – whether this is a ‘bag with bread and bottle’ (so *LSJ*) or ‘equipment comprising loaf and flagon’ (so Gow and Page) – basically describes a beggar’s banquet, and ἡ πτωχῶν χαρίεσσα πανοπλίη only refers to this item.⁸⁰ The next item, the ‘garland of dewy leaves’, stands for a contrasting type of banquet, a luxurious symposium. The third item, the skull, shows that, either way, one will be dead, whether one lives sparingly or in luxury. A well-known magnificent mosaic, set in a table at a Pompeian *triclinium*, makes very much the same statement.⁸¹ It shows a skull, which sits on a wheel of fortune and over which two sets of items are balanced. One consists of a king’s sceptre, diadem, and purple, the other one of a beggar’s staff, pouch, and ragged cloth. Nonetheless, Polemon is not associating himself with beggars or foregrounding ‘the Cynic motif of the beggar’, as Prioux wants it.⁸² Rather, Polemon makes very clear which of the two dinners – beggar’s banquet or garlanded symposium – one should choose by exhorting the reader to go for garlands (περίκεισο ἄνθεα).

The last couplet can also be found on a now-lost gem, illustrated by Antonio Gori (Figure 4.6), which shows a skull above the epigram and a table below it (*CIG* 7298 = Kaibel I 129).⁸³ Prioux argued that the gem might be a modern forgery inspired by Polemon’s epigram, as the gem was not known before the seventeenth century and as its loss makes it impossible to determine its authenticity with certainty.⁸⁴ But if a forger was inspired by the *Greek Anthology*, would he not rather have chosen to depict the items mentioned in the epigram (bread, bottle, garland, skull), instead of a table? Following Robert Zahn and Katherine Dunbabin,⁸⁵ I think it is more likely that the gem is authentic. Indeed, the authentic Leiden gem, discussed below,

⁸⁰ The mention of beggars is thus necessary and Gow and Page (1968) are not wise in saying *ad loc.* that ‘it is hard to see the point of saying so’.

⁸¹ Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, Inv. no. 78289, also adduced by Prioux (2015) 70. See the seminal paper on the mosaic by Brendel (1934) as well as Dunbabin (1986) 213–14. This equalising force of death can also be found in *carpe diem* poems of Horace, such as *S.* 2.6.95, *C.* 1.4.13–14, 2.3.21–4, 2.14.9–12 with the discussion of Davis (1991) 163–7.

⁸² Prioux (2015) 70. To be sure, a number of Cynic epigrams begin with lists of beggars’ possessions (*AP* 7.65–8, Ausonius *Epigrams* 55 Green), but Polemon’s epigram does not extol Cynic philosophy (on the relation between *carpe diem* and cynic imagery, see Brendel (1934) 170–3).

⁸³ Gori (1726–43) iii, appendix 21, no. 25. ⁸⁴ Prioux (2015) 69–70.

⁸⁵ Zahn (1923) 11 and 11 n.44, Dunbabin (1986) 215 n.118.

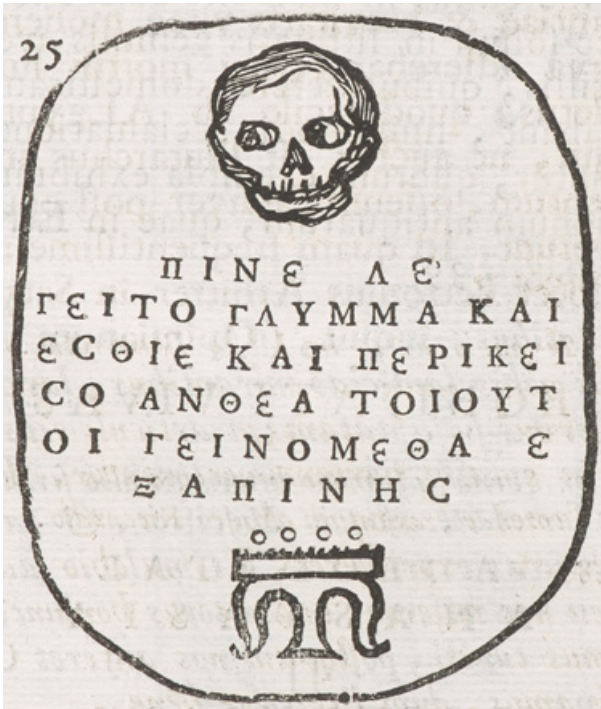


Figure 4.6 Lost gem with skull, table, and inscription
 Gori (1726–43) iii, appendix 21, no. 25; *CIG* 7298 = Kaibel 1129

offers a parallel for a similar phrase that is put on a gem along with an image. There are several other gems that show similar motifs to the ones described in Polemon's epigram.⁸⁶ One gem, which depicts a skeleton, a butterfly, a jug, and a loaf or a patera, also features the inscription $\kappa\tau\omega\ \chi\rho\omega$ ('acquire and use').⁸⁷ Such simple, inscribed gems may have been the source for the more elaborate epigrams discussed in this chapter. The same idea is also expressed on a very

⁸⁶ See *AGD* i.2 Munich 230, no. 2168 (= Munich, Staatliche Münzsammlung, Inv. A. 2805) and a gem formerly in the Odam collection at Furtwängler (1900) i table 46, no. 24, description at ii.222, no. 24, with Dunbabin (1986) 214–15.

⁸⁷ The gem itself is lost, but an eighteenth-century engraving survives; see Zahn (1923) 10–11 and his plate 1, Robert (1943) 182, and, in particular, Dunbabin (1986) 204 for more parallels and literature.



Figure 4.7 Lost gem with skeleton
Venuti and Boriani (1736) table 80

curious gem that is now lost, though there exists an etching by Antonio Boriani with a commentary by Rodolphino Venuti (Figure 4.7).⁸⁸ Venuti claims that the gem included an inscription of a

⁸⁸ Venuti and Boriani (1736) table 80 and 56–8. Their heading 'Mortis symbola' is wrong and part of the common misconception of identifying skeletons in ancient art with Mors or Thanatos, on which see Dunbabin (1986) 186–8.

proverbial saying from Cicero, in which Cicero says that the best soothsayer is the one whose guesswork is best (*De Div.* 2.12; same saying in Greek at E. *TrGF* 973). If the gem actually included this inscription (presumably on its back), it would make for exciting evidence: Epicurus' distrust in divination was well known (*frr.* 15, 212 Arrighetti), and it is easy to see how such a sentiment could appeal to the idea of *carpe diem* in popular Epicureanism. Indeed, we can see similar statements in Horace's *carpe diem* poems (C. 1.11.1–2, 3.29.29–32; also *AP* 11.23.1–2 = Antipater of Thessalonica 38.1–2 *GP*). Yet, it is also easily conceivable that a proverbial quotation of perhaps the most canonical author of antiquity might be a modern addition, and as the gem is lost it is not possible to examine the inscription itself.⁸⁹

In Polemon's epigram, the last couplet is the inscription proper and marked as such (λέγει τὸ γλύμμα; 'the engraving says'),⁹⁰ whereas the two previous couplets offer a description of the gem's visual features. These two couplets are redundant on the gem of Gori, where images are present and need no description. This may help to explain the 'marked contrast between the bombast of the first four lines and the forceful simplicity of the last two', which Gow and Page notice.⁹¹ The simplicity of the last lines points to its heritage in inscribed epigrams on *carpe diem*. The first two couplets, however, do not reflect the language of inscribed epigrams, but with their affected bombast perhaps attempt to mirror the luxury and value of the artwork with rare words. As the epigram represents both images and inscription by words, it chooses a jewelled style for the representation of the gem's visual features. It thus contrasts the descriptive nouns that lack verbs in the first four lines with the urgent sequence of three verbs in the

⁸⁹ Brendel (1934) 175 n.1 is perhaps rightly sceptical about the inscription, which was a well-known proverb in the Renaissance, included by Erasmus in his *Adagia* at ii.iii.78. Brendel (1934) 174–8 and Dunbabin (1986) 224 n.150 can, however, explain some puzzling features of the gem's imagery and thus make a strong case for the authenticity at least of the image.

⁹⁰ Cf. *API* 89.4 = Gallus 2.4 *FGE*, 'πίνε', λέγει τὸ τόρευμα, noted by Gow and Page (1968) *ad loc.* (v.l. τὸ γλύμμα printed at *FGE*, though I do not see from where Page takes the reading γλύμμα. It is neither mentioned by Jacobs nor Beckby). Page (1981) 62 excludes too quickly the possibility that λέγει signifies an inscription in Gallus' epigram (*aliter* Jacobs (1794–1814) ii.106).

⁹¹ Gow and Page (1968) 402.

imperative in the fifth line: πῖνε [. . .] καὶ ἔσθιτε καὶ περιέκεισο ἄνθεα ('drink [. . .] and eat and garland yourself with flowers').⁹²

The epigrams of Crinagoras and Polemon and the gems that depict the same subjects thematise luxury. To be sure, not all ancient gems are equally luxurious. Some ancient gems were glass pastes. Yet, the gem Polemon describes is most naturally imagined to belong to his royal gem collection and be highly valuable. Gori's lost gem that includes part of Polemo's epigram is a sard. Among the first-century-BC Roman gems that inspired Crinagoras' epigram we also find sard or carneol, the most common gem in antiquity.⁹³ In the next paragraph, we will encounter an agate, a stone that used to be of great value, but was apparently not anymore in Pliny's time (*Nat.* 37.139). Though the precise value of individual gems may vary, then, texts and gems in this chapter all argue in favour of spending while one is alive and take gems as a sign for luxury.⁹⁴ In the first centuries BC and AD, *carpe diem* was a motif fashionable enough to be treated through luxurious objects, such as gems, cups, and dinner tables, and epigrams interact with these objects. *Carpe diem* even becomes the justification for the existence of such objects; the gems are minute pieces with maximum price tags, zero-degree signs of luxury, so to say, but this extreme form of spending is justified by the admonitions that there is no use in thriftiness after death. Life is short, so spend and don't be greedy! When gems proclaim this, the exhortation's success is almost guaranteed. The reader, most likely the owner of the gem, did in fact spent a fortune on a little stone and holds this very stone in his hand as he reads the inscription. Epigrams, in describing such gems, aim to evoke luxury of this kind by means of ekphrasis.

The final example in this section will again combine several media: it is an extant gem, which features both an image and a text

⁹² For this triad of merriment, see pages 8–9 in the Introduction and Chapter 1 *passim* on the Sardanapallus epitaph.

⁹³ See Zwierlein-Diehl (2007) 307–8.

⁹⁴ For Polemon's epigram and its relation to royal gem collections, see Prioux (2015) 69–70. Micheli (2016) argues for gem collections as symbols of luxury. For the luxury of gems, real ones as well as epigrammatic ones, see Kuttner (2005) 159–61 and *passim*. Posidippus 16 Austin and Bastianini plays with the idea that some gems are undervalued, though they look luxurious. Gems naturally take pride of place in a list of luxurious objects at Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.180: *gemmas, marmor, ebur* [. . .].

(Figure 4.8). The late Hellenistic gem, plausibly dated to the first century BC and now in Leiden, shows both an engraving that exhorts to *carpe diem* and an image that underlines this message. The Leiden gem, an agate, has the following inscription in its upper part (Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Inv. GS-01 172 = CIG 7299):⁹⁵

Πάρδαλα, πεῑνε, τρύφα, περιλά|μβανε. θανεῖν σε | δεῖ. ὁ γὰρ χρόνος | ὀλίγος.

Leopard, drink, live in luxury, hug! You must die; for time is short.

The lower part of the gem shows two men having intercourse on a couch, and below this image the text reads:

Ἀχαιέ, ζήσαις.

Greek man, may you live it up!

In a fascinating analysis of the gem, John Clarke observed that the penis of the penetrated man is large and erect, which finds no parallel in artistic representations of intercourse between two men.⁹⁶ Clarke goes on to show that the perspective of the image is even designed to highlight this unique detail, and he assumes that this gem is a custom-made piece, which allows us a rare look into the love life of an individual couple from the ancient world: it shows love and tenderness between two men of similar age rather than Hellenistic cultural constructions of roles in man-to-man intercourse.

Compared to the unique image, the text of the *carpe diem* exhortations first seems commonplace. Several parallels can be found in literary epigrams, more in inscribed epitaphs.⁹⁷ One inscription offers the same sequence of imperatives (*SGO* 02/09/32.5):⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Cf. Maaskant-Kleibrink (1978) i.186–7, no. 1172, ii.372. On grounds of artistic technique, Maaskant-Kleibrink (1978) ii.372 argues for a second- to first-century-BC date and regards the later time as more likely. She thinks the artist might have been from Asia Minor and worked either there or in/around Rome.

⁹⁶ Clarke (1998) 38–42.

⁹⁷ See the epitaphs in Ameling (1985) and further sources cited on page 59 n.66 in Chapter 1.

⁹⁸ Maaskant-Kleibrink (1978) ii.372 notes that a parallel to the inscription of the Leiden gem was known to Henri Seyrig but that she was unable to find it. *SGO* 02/09/32 might be the inscription in question. The following epigram is also very close (*SGO* 18/01/19.9–10): πεῑνε, τρύφα, τέρπτου δώροις χρυση̄ς Ἀφροδείτης. The underlined exhortation offers a gloss



Figure 4.8 Gem with image of lovers and inscription
Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Inv. GS-01172 (= CIG 7299)

ὡς ζῆς εὐφραίνου, ἔσθιε, πέινε, τρύφα, περιλάμβανε.

While you live, enjoy yourself, eat, *drink, live in luxury, hug!*

on περιλάμβανε on the Leiden gem, which also refers to sexual activity. Similarly: πίε, φάγε, τρύφσον, ἀφροδισιάσον (IK Kios 138–9, no. 78). The note at CIG 7299 is wrong, as has been seen by Robert (1965) 188–9. The imperative περιλάμβανε is an exhortation to intercourse and has nothing to do with grasping garlands, as Fritz says *ad loc.* ('ad uerbum περιλάμβανε intellegi τὸν στέφανον').

Furthermore, the sentence $\theta\alpha\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\ \sigma\epsilon\ \delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ on the Leiden gem finds a parallel in an epitaph (*GV* 1016.5),⁹⁹ and the observation that time is short can be found very similarly expressed in a fragment of Amphis (*fr.* 8: $\delta\lambda\acute{\iota}\gamma\omicron\varsigma\ \omicron\acute{\upsilon}\pi\iota\ \gamma\eta\ \chi\rho\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma$; ‘time on earth is short’), all in the context of *carpe diem*. But rather than the text itself, which is conventional, the engagement between text, image, and material on the Leiden gem is fascinating. Thus, Ann Kuttner has ingeniously suggested that the ‘oval, banded agate glosses the nickname “Leopard” by resembling the animal’s spots’.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, it can be added to Kuttner’s suggestion that Pliny tells us of certain agates that are said to resemble lions’ skin (Plin. *Nat.* 37.142). Two of the three imperatives on the Leiden gem also relate to material and image. For the exhortation to live in luxury ($\tau\rho\acute{\upsilon}\phi\alpha$) points to the luxury of the gem, and the admonition to hug ($\pi\epsilon\rho\iota\lambda\acute{\alpha}\mu\beta\alpha\nu\epsilon$) refers to the activity on the image.

Clarke prints the inscription as a continuous text. But perhaps more attention should be paid to the arrangement of text and image on the gem, which, in fact, presents the text above and below the image. This arrangement makes an old suggestion of D’Ansse de Villoison from 1801 attractive, who understood the text as a dialogue between two lovers, respectively addressed as $\Pi\acute{\alpha}\rho\delta\alpha\lambda\alpha$ and Ἀχαιέ .¹⁰¹ The change of addressee within three sentences makes it unlikely that they are all spoken by the same person and addressed to a single addressee. Indeed, the two vocatives which stand at the beginning of each text section highlight the change of addressee. Therefore, the upper part of the text is most naturally assumed to be spoken by the man who is lying on top of the other one. Then the man lying below answers him, and his answer is written below him. The arrangement of above and below does not only apply to the text and the lovers’ bodies but also to the very material of the gem: a lighter stripe of the agate separates two darker

⁹⁹ Cf. *Anacreont.* 45.5: $\theta\alpha\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\ \mu\epsilon\ \delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}$.

¹⁰⁰ Kuttner (2005) 161 n.87. For stones with such an illustrating function in the *lithika* of Posidippus, see Gutzwiller (1995) 386 and M. Smith (2004). On agates, see Zwierlein-Diehl (2007) 308.

¹⁰¹ D’Ansse de Villoison (1801) 463 (462–8 offer several inscriptional and literary parallels for the *carpe diem* motif). The dialogic nature is accepted at *CIG* 7299.

parts above and below.¹⁰² The gem supplies one more hint that supports the interpretation of this as a dialogue. Clarke stresses that the mutual gaze of the two male lovers during intercourse is rather exceptional in art.¹⁰³ This striking gesture also becomes better understandable if we see the two lovers speaking to each other.

To some extent, the Leiden gem allows us a glance at the sort of artwork the epigrams of Crinagoras and Polemon are mimicking. Here, the imperative *τρύφα* ('live in luxury') is written on a luxurious gem as part of a *carpe diem* exhortation, and whoever owned and read the gem could perceive the presence of luxury whenever he read the exhortation.¹⁰⁴ But the implications of the gem go further still. For the gem also shows us how texts can give a closer rendition of present enjoyment when they interact with visual art. Together, text and image show a dialogue of two lovers in the very act of utmost enjoyment. It can be assumed that the owner of the gem felt aroused whenever he looked at it. Materiality, imagery, and text of the gem reinforce one another: as the gem exhorts to present enjoyment it evokes the presence of an ecstatic moment. Image and material help a rather hackneyed text to bridge the gap to present enjoyment.

4.3 Dining Halls and Tombs

In the past two sections, I have looked at individual objects, cups and gems respectively, and I have considered their quality as signs. In the section that follows, I will look at combinations of objects. Roland Barthes notes that the syntax of objects, their syntagma, is comparatively simple; it consists of the parataxis of objects, that is, some objects are juxtaposed.¹⁰⁵ The two objects that interest me here are dining halls and tombs. I will analyse what happens when we find these two objects in close spatial proximity, either in the city space or on the page of a book. I will analyse how the parataxis of objects can evoke the *carpe diem* motif.

¹⁰² Philip Hardie pointed this out to me. ¹⁰³ Clarke (1998) 41.

¹⁰⁴ On *τρύφη* in Greek epitaphs on *carpe diem*, see Kajanto (1969) 361.

¹⁰⁵ Barthes (1988) [1966] 186–7.

Dining Halls and Tombs

The following epigram of Martial purports to be an inscription of a dining hall. The sight of Augustus' mausoleum from the dining hall leads to an exhortation of *carpe diem* (2.59).¹⁰⁶

Mica uocor: quid sim cernis, cenatio parva:
ex me Caesareum prospicis ecce tholum.
frange toros, pete uina, rosas cape, tinguere nardo:
ipse iubet mortis te meminisse deus.

I am called 'the Crumb'. You can see what I am: a small dining hall. Look! From me you look out on the dome of the Caesars' mausoleum. Throw yourself upon the cushions of the couches, ask for wine, get roses, soak in nard. The god himself asks you to remember death.

By now the structure of such epigrams looks rather familiar; again, a description (here consisting of one couplet) is followed by an exhortation and a lesson in the next and final couplet.¹⁰⁷ As in Crinagoras' and Polemon's epigrams, the first couplet marks Martial's epigram as literary. For the description, *quid sim cernis, cenatio parua* ('you can see what I am: a small dining hall'), would have been superfluous in an inscribed epigram. In this description, Martial conjures up the sight of the two objects: he wants us to 'see' (*cernis*) the dining hall, and he wants us – 'look!' (*ecce*) – to 'look out' (*prospicis*) on the mausoleum of Augustus; the two objects materialise before our eyes. The third line, in contrast, constitutes the inscription proper of the epigram; inscribed parallels can easily be found, and one could indeed imagine such a line inscribed on the wall of a dining hall (which is, of course, not the same as assuming that the epigram was in fact inscribed). This type of inscription would be equally appropriate for tombs and dining halls, two vastly different places, which are juxtaposed in Martial's epigram.

¹⁰⁶ See Heilmann (1998) and Rimell (2008) 51–93 on the juxtaposition of living and dying in Martial. Blake (2008) analyses Martial's *Xenia* and *Aphoreta* from the perspective of material culture.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. C. A. Williams (2004) 199 on the structure. The similarity of this epigram to Greek epigrams has been analysed by Prinz (1911) 14–15. For Martial and Greek epigram in general, Mindt (2013) 502 n.3 offers further references.

Juxtaposition was identified as an important element of Martial's epigram books by William Fitzgerald.¹⁰⁸ Adducing nineteenth-century developments such as the newspaper or the figure of the flâneur, Fitzgerald sees Martial's technique of authorial juxtaposition as a mirror of a varied urban landscape.¹⁰⁹ Though Fitzgerald himself admits that juxtaposition as an authorial decision is a concept as difficult to prove as it is to disprove, there is much to say in favour of this theory. Indeed, if it can be shown that Martial also juxtaposes contrasting topographical features of the city within the same epigram, this might add further weight to Fitzgerald's argument. Or, in other words, are there epigrams of Martial which describe the city-space as a combination of differences, similar to the arcades or department stores of nineteenth-century Paris, which consisted of a combination of different shops or objects?¹¹⁰ One category of juxtaposition in Martial, which Fitzgerald highlights, is the juxtaposition of social orders.¹¹¹ An example where this juxtaposition of social orders is mirrored by a juxtaposition of places is *Epigrams* 2.57. This is a biting social commentary, which first presents a parvenu strolling through the Saepta Julia, a 'favourite strolling ground and social showcase',¹¹² but in the end shows him in a pawnshop, at Cladus' counter (*Cladi mensam*).¹¹³ Fashionable strolling grounds and pawnshops are spaces that are closely juxtaposed in Rome, and as Martial shows the parvenu first in one place and then in the other, we move through different social orders, as we move through the city.¹¹⁴

The concept of topographical juxtaposition also applies to Martial 2.59 on the *mica*; it tells of two places, a mausoleum and a dining hall. Their proximity in the urban landscape and their contrast in function brings about the message in the second couplet. A flâneur could pass the two sights in quick succession and

¹⁰⁸ Fitzgerald (2007) 106–38.

¹⁰⁹ Fitzgerald (2007) 4–13, building on the interpretation of Charles Baudelaire's poetry by Walter Benjamin (1973) [1969], in particular chapter 2.

¹¹⁰ Benjamin (1973) [1969] chapter 2. ¹¹¹ Fitzgerald (2007) 121–38.

¹¹² C. A. Williams (2004) *ad loc.*

¹¹³ The paradoxis *claudi* is unmetrical; Salmasius' *Cladi* seems right.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Rimell (2008) 7–8: Martial's 'poetry is Rome, both the city itself (a mass of streets, buildings, monuments and people) and Rome as concept and dream'. The concept of the 'city as text' is explored at Rimell (2008) 19–50. Textual approaches to the city of Rome are also the focus of Edwards (1996).

develop thoughts similar to Martial's, or he could save himself the bodily exercise and actually see the mausoleum already from the dining hall. When the cityscape offers juxtapositions of tombs and dining halls, of death and booming life, and when such sights also feature epigrams, then the city itself already constitutes a text of juxtaposed epigrams, and all Martial has to do is *transcribe* Rome, as it is already *inscribed*.¹¹⁵

Scholars have long seen the similarity to another epigram of Martial, in which the mausoleum of Augustus again invites thoughts of *carpe diem* (5.64):

Sextantes, Calliste, duos infunde Falerni,
 tu super aestiuas, Alcime, solue niues,
 pinguescat nimio madidus mihi crinis amomo
 lassenturque rosis tempora sutilibus.
 tam uicina iubent nos uiuere Mausolea,
 cum doceant ipsos posse perire deos. (5)

Callistus, fill two large cups with Falernian wine. Alcimus, melt summer snow over the cups. My hair should become oily and wet with too much perfume, and my temples should become exhausted with the weight of stitched roses. The mausoleum, which is very close, tells us to live it up, as it teaches that even the gods themselves can die.

Though here only one topographical marker is explicitly mentioned, namely the mausoleum, the presence of the dining hall is implied in the setting of the first four lines. Indeed, Fitzgerald has alerted us to the significance of the word *uicinus* in Martial's epigrams,¹¹⁶ which here once more highlights a juxtaposition: 'the mausoleum, which is *very close*, tells us to *live* it up, as it teaches that even the gods themselves can *die*'. Life and death are neatly juxtaposed in one neighbourhood.

It is significant that Martial makes the *carpe diem* argument through a combination of objects, namely of a dining hall and a tomb. This combination can be described as juxtaposition in Fitzgerald's term or as parataxis and syntagma, in the terms of

¹¹⁵ The epigram caused topographical trouble, though: which is the *cenatio* in question? L. Friedländer (1886) *ad loc.* confidently identifies it with *mica aurea* of Domitian, whereas C. A. Williams (2004) *ad loc.* says that this structure did not offer any views of Augustus' mausoleum. See also Rodríguez Almeida (2014) 493–4.

¹¹⁶ Fitzgerald (2007) 5, and 5 n.9 referring to Pailler (1981) 87 n.30.

Barthes. Juxtaposition here creates spatial closeness between semantically contrasting objects. Or, simply put, the juxtaposition says: ‘A dining hall is not a tomb.’ This might seem obvious, but it shows how objects act as signs. Both signs have different meanings, and the simple combination of two signs or objects with contrasting meaning creates the *carpe diem* motif: because dining halls are not tombs, we have to enjoy the present moment.

Sometimes the juxtaposition of dining halls and tombs expresses identity between the two objects, resulting in a sentence that stresses the opposite: ‘a tomb is a dining hall’. This is, for example, the case with the tomb of Cornelius Vibrius Saturnius, found in Pompeii. His tomb features an impressive funerary triclinium, which along with similar monuments points to beliefs that the dead could still drink – a belief that was commonly expressed through the *Totenmahl* motif in the ancient world.¹¹⁷ Not only did Cornelius Vibrius Saturnius find the thought of a tomb as a dining hall appealing, but Petronius’ Trimalchio, too, envisages a tomb for himself that will feature dining halls (*triclinia*). Indeed, the *Cena Trimalchionis* offers a particularly detailed juxtaposition of tomb and dining hall. This juxtaposition begins long before Trimalchio’s ekphrasis of his tomb. For already before the dinner starts, a wall painting in Trimalchio’s house has the appearance of the type of wall painting one would find in a tomb (Petron. 29).¹¹⁸ But, just as Trimalchio’s house already looks much like a tomb (Herzog: ‘Totenhaus’), the detailed ekphrasis of the tomb that Trimalchio planned for himself makes the tomb look much like a dining hall. In this ekphrasis, Trimalchio describes features of his tomb, including his own statue, several other statues, the tomb’s size,

¹¹⁷ For this and similar monuments, see Dunbabin (2003) 126–9, and see her chapter 4 on the *Totenmahl* motif in general (with further references). For epitaphs engaging with this motif, see Brelich (1937) 51–3. Cf. Jensen (2008), and several articles in Draycott and Stamatopoulou (2016). Murray (1988) argues that an equation of rather than a contrast between death and dining is not known in the Greek archaic and classical period, but may appear in other limited periods and areas, on which see also Dunbabin (2003) 137–9.

¹¹⁸ This has been observed by Herzog (1989) 125–6. Also see Döpp (1991), who notes that the architecture of Trimalchio’s house resembles the structure of the underworld in Book 6 of Vergil’s *Aeneid*. Whitehead (1993) analyses Trimalchio’s tomb in some detail.

the surrounding orchard and vineyard, a relief that shows a dining scene, a sundial, and two inscriptions (Petron. 71.5–12). In this passage, the juxtaposition of dining hall and tomb becomes most marked. Trimalchio asks, for example, that his tomb may also depict dining halls (71.10):¹¹⁹ *faciantur, si tibi uidetur, et triclinia. facias et totum populum sibi suaviter facientem* ('and also make some dining halls (if that seems good to you). And show all the people having a great time').¹²⁰

As soon as Trimalchio had finished his speech, he, his wife, Habinnas, and his household 'filled the dining hall with lamentation, as if invited to a funeral' (Petron. 72.1): *haec ut dixit Trimalchio, flere coepit ubertim. flebat et Fortunata, flebat et Habinnas, tota denique familia, tamquam in funus rogata, lamentatione triclinium impleuit*. As the dining hall (*triclinium*) becomes a funeral space, and as the tomb features a dining space (*triclinia*), the architecture of the two spaces is thoroughly confused:¹²¹ the dining hall becomes tomb and vice versa. What needs stressing is how the ekphrasis recreates the materiality of the tomb: as Trimalchio quotes the epigrams that will be written on his tomb, and as he describes numerous architectural features, the words that describe his tomb become an object. And though Trimalchio's ekphrases elsewhere might be considered notorious rather than impressive (Petron. 52.1), in the present case he might very well succeed in creating an object through words, as the dinner participants already have such an object before their eyes: sitting in Trimalchio's *Totenhaus* makes it easy to see a tomb in front of you. Through the ekphrasis and the setting of the dinner, Trimalchio thus also shows us a combination of two objects: dining hall and tomb. And while he certainly underlines the similarity and, indeed, interchangeability of the two objects and thus seems to pronounce that a 'dining hall is a tomb', Trimalchio ultimately wants to have it both ways; for, in the end, the careful

¹¹⁹ Cf. Dunbabin (2003) 88–9.

¹²⁰ The plural *triclinia* is difficult: it has been variously taken to mean 'dining halls' or 'dining tables' (Donahue (1999) 73). Either way, reference is made to the dining space, the *triclinium*, so that the difference does not, I believe, affect the present discussion.

¹²¹ Panayotakis (1995) 104–5 notes that other features of the tomb, such as dogs, garlands, perfumes, and so on, have antecedents at the *Cena*. Rimell (2002) 38–9 argues that as Trimalchio composes his own memorial he becomes an author figure for the *Cena*.

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staging of objects leads to an exhortation of *carpe diem*, which implies that a tomb in the end is not quite like a dining hall after all (Petron. 72.2): *ergo [...] cum sciamus nos morituros esse, quare non uiuamus?* ('so, as we know that we will die, why shouldn't we live it up?').