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HARPOCRATION, THE ARGIVE PHILOSOPHER, AND THE OVERALL PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT IN CLASSICAL AND ROMAN ARGOS

ABSTRACT: In this paper I focus on philosophy in classical and roman Argos, looking forward to contribute to the promotion of an undervalued aspect of the intellectual history of the city. The Argive Harpocraton was a philosopher and commentator from the second century A.D. He was a disciple of the philosopher Atticus who belonged to the Middle Platonists. Harpocraton was a partner and friend of a certain Caesar. Harpocraton wrote detailed comments on almost all the texts of Plato. In the few passages that have survived from Harpocraton's work, we observe a version of Platonic thought clearly influenced by the current of Gnosticism and Pythagoreanism. Harpocraton's influence on both his contemporaries and his successors remains sufficiently obscure, although Proclus included Harpocraton among the top Platonists. Nevertheless, this is not the only known philosophical activity in the city of Argos. This is confirmed by the existence of many philosophers from Argos in classical antiquity who, to some extent like Harpocraton much later, adhered to the current of Pythagoreanism.

KEYWORDS: Philosophy, Harpocraton, Argos, Atticus, Middle Platonism, Pythagoreanism, Neo-Platonism.

The city of Argos boasts a rich history and cultural contribution that stretched over the centuries, from early prehistory to modern times. However, though esteemed researchers spilled tons of ink for many centuries, the past of Argos has not yet been sufficiently elucidated. There are still many fields of studies and topics that have not been systematically studied, patiently waiting research to shed light on them. In this paper I aim to spell some out looking forward to contribute to the

promotion of an undervalued, but highly interesting, aspect of the intellectual history of Argos, namely philosophy.

The Argive Hapocraton was a philosopher and commentator from the second century A.D. His origin is not disputed by any source. However, there is still a potential possibility that he might have descended from a different Argos: namely that which is in Amfilochia, Orestiko or that in Cyprus. Yet, the absence of any additional geographical designation in his name in ancient sources is likely to disprove such claims. Simply mentioning 'Argos' can only indicate the most notable of the cities with this name, namely the Argive Argos. As will be revealed later in this paper, the close relationship between Hapocraton with the Atticus family may well support his Argive origin.¹

HARPOCRATION'S EARLY STUDIES

Harpocraton was a disciple of the philosopher Atticus who belonged to the Middle Platonists.² Platonism between the period of Antiochus of Ascalon (130–68 B.C.) and Plotinus (204–270 A.D.) – the founder of Neo-Platonism, is called Middle Platonism. The main characteristic of Middle Platonism is the return to the old Platonic tradition through the study of all Platonic texts. Representatives of Middle Platonism are distinguished by their intense eclecticism. They sought it as a response to philosophical problems that concerned them. Middle Platonic eclecticism was some form of agreement among all earlier eminent philosophers, led by Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato, of course. This eclecticism is perhaps explained by the inability of these scholars to produce original philosophical thought. Instead, they simply reviewed already formulated opinions. Their interest focused on doctrinal terms of metaphysical principles and on the exploration of ethical principles which were particularly expressed in Stoicism and Peripatetic Philosophy.³

We know little about the life of the Middle Platonist Atticus, as is the case with many philosophers of his time. Eusebius confirms that he lived around 176 A.D., which coincides with the end of the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161–180 A.D.), the emperor – philosopher, who was a pupil of Herod Atticus.⁴ The name 'Atticus', exceptionally rare back then, possibly indicates some association with the family of Herod Atticus against other less plausible suggested interpretations.⁵ Moreover, placing Atti-

¹ Steiris, 2006: 257–268.

² Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I.305.6.

³ Georgoulis, 2004: 475–485; Merlan, 1967: 53–83; Zeller – Nestle, 2004: 365–371.

⁴ Dillon, 1996: 248; Des Places, 1977: 7.

⁵ Karamanolis, 2006: 150; Oliver, 1981: 223.

cus at this point in chronology is also intriguing. It could be interpreted as to enhance his connection to Herod Atticus; indeed, in 176 A.D. Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius established a chair for Platonic philosophy in Athens. It is very probable that this chair was assigned to Atticus explaining the choice of this particular time period. For this more plausible claim, the opinion of Herod Atticus would have been of significant meaning; it is reasonable to assume that Marcus Aurelius could select someone from his milieu and satisfy his former teacher Herod Atticus. In addition ancient sources suggested that Herod Atticus had a significant role in the appointment of the chairs of philosophy.⁶

Unfortunately L. Benakis confused Atticus with Herod Atticus, who was not a philosopher, leading to misunderstanding.⁷ More confusion arises from this point; Herod Atticus was a student of the Platonic philosopher Taurus from Tyr. According to the sources, the latter lived around 145 A.D. and was in turn a disciple and friend of Plutarch. This testimony reaches us through another student of Taurus, Aulus Gellius.⁸ Taurus was a skeptical philosopher and director of the New Academy in Athens, though the existence of this institution has itself been questioned.⁹ Nonetheless, the philosopher Atticus was the successor of Taurus as an advocate of Platonism and the preservation of true faith, even though this did not prevent him from disagreeing with him philosophically.

Atticus was an opponent of eclecticism. Atticus remained essentially the most mainstream Platonic, despite targeting with his position other philosophers like Amonius.¹⁰ Of course, while he basically maintained the Platonic forms he presented them as ideas or thoughts of the divine. Moreover, he opposed the attempt to harmonize Plato's teachings with those of Aristotle, which Albinus had begun, remaining thus a loyal Platonist. He did not hesitate to proclaim that Aristotle's philosophical positions conflicted with those of Plato. He maintained that Aristotle's positions have no value whatsoever, since Plato had already completely and thoroughly dealt with all areas of knowledge.¹¹ Furthermore, his office as head of the Platonic Academy possibly entailed a war on Aristotle.¹² Conflicting views between proponents of different philosophical schools were not unusual in that period. Indeed, Taurus, among others, had written texts with similar content.¹³

⁶ Dillon, 1996: 248; Kalligas, 2004: 37–56; Oliver, 1977: 160–178; Oliver, 1981: 216–217, 222–225.

⁷ Benakis, 1976: 437–438.

⁸ Merlan, 1967: 63.

⁹ Dillon, 1996: 248.

¹⁰ Des Places, 1977: 7–8.

¹¹ Karamanolis, 2006: 150.

¹² Sharples, 2010: 250.

¹³ Des Places, 1977: 16.

Most of *Πρός τοὺς διὰ τῶν Ἀριστοτέλους τὰ Πλάτωνος ὑπισχνουμένους* – Eusebius’ surviving work on Atticus – addresses this very issue, though the original title of Atticus’ treatise might not have been this.¹⁴ Of course, Eusebius finds weakness in Atticus’ work and fights Aristotle’s views that were not compatible with Christian theology.¹⁵ It is definitely no coincidence that a few years earlier *History of Philosophy* by Aristotle – a Peripatetic philosopher and mentor of the famous Alexander of Aphrodisias – circulated in Athens. In this work, Plato was presented as inferior to Aristotle.¹⁶ At this point, it is worthwhile noting that Atticus’ texts are marked by a greater tendency to eloquence. As shall be seen later Herod Atticus was distinguished in rhetoric.

Belonging to the classical line of Greek philosophy, Atticus accepted the tripartite division of philosophy into ethics, physics and logic.¹⁷ Atticus’ thought is characterized by focusing his interest primarily on God rather than on nature. In particular, his debate focused on Aristotle’s views on divine providence, eternity of the world and the refusal to accept the immortality of the soul. All of them mainly originate from Aristotle’s theory of entelecheia. Aristotle’s theology at least, as perceived by Atticus, was a form of atheism since it denied providence and deprived God from the ability to intervene in earthly affairs. For Atticus, providence, nature and cosmic soul were the same.¹⁸ Furthermore, in his work the Demiurge and the cosmic soul are replaced by reason, in the vein of earlier Platonists who had tried but never reached the point of equating God with reason. Reason will always remain a tool in the hands of God. He also stresses how the one and only God arranged for the creation of the world, which is connected to providence. In fact his conception of God is dualistic (God-world), while other Middle Platonists could be characterized as monists.¹⁹

Atticus did not avoid though being influenced by Stoic philosophy in topics regarding the presence of God in the world and the conception that only virtue can ensure human happiness without the assistance of material factors, as argued by the Peripatetic School. On the other hand, he never reached the point of supporting the position of the Stoics on severe limitation of passions.²⁰ Regarding this point, his ideas seem to converge to those of Eudorus and diverge from those of Antiochus and Plutarch. However, Aristotle’s questioning of the Platonic view that virtue is sufficient for the conquest and retention of happiness, troubled him.

¹⁴ Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, ch. 11, 15; Karamanolis, 2006: 152.

¹⁵ Festugiere, 1932: 257–258.

¹⁶ Mras, 1936: 183–188.

¹⁷ Baltès, 1983: 38–57; Dillon, 1996: 251.

¹⁸ Des Places, 1977: 66.

¹⁹ Baltès, 1983: 38–57; Dillon, 1996: 252–257.

²⁰ Georgoulis, 2004: 483–484; Dillon, 1996: 281–282.

In addition, Atticus wrote comments on Plato's *Timaeus* and *Republic*. Of course, he identified the Demiurge in *Timaeus* with the essence of good.²¹ In the interpretation of *Timaeus*, Atticus suggested the existence of an uncreated matter, which exists in continuous and chaotic motion under the effect of the bad soul of the world. The Demiurge intervenes to give form to matter and mind to the bad soul of the world. Disordered matter, whose main cause of existence is the bad soul, is thought to exist before the *κακεργέτιδα ψυχή* (worst soul) which remained *ἔμψρων* and not rational during Creation due to the intervention of the intellect.²²

Consequently, Atticus' reasoning is roughly as follows: motion emanates from the soul but it is disordered. It follows that the soul is disordered. The soul is distorted by the pressure exerted by higher forms and descends downward. The result of this motion is the existence of a lesser cosmic soul comparable to Plutarch's Isis. This soul is inferior to the actual cosmic soul which, for Atticus, has a similar role as the Demiurge in *Timaeus*. Atticus thinks of the Demiurge as the transcendent God. It is no coincidence that he named Him 'mind' and associated Him with goodness.²³ He is transcendent and of the *νοητόν ζῶον* (intelligible form of life) thus even transcending the Platonic world of forms.²⁴

From Atticus' texts, it can easily be concluded that it is enough to consider the forms as God's thoughts. This is consistent with the perception of other Platonists who accept the trinity of the Godhead, Matter, and Form.²⁵ Nevertheless, Porphyry accuses him to place the forms out of the mind while, according to him, they are subjective.²⁶ From a comment of the Neo-Platonist Syrianus, we could infer that, for Atticus, forms exist at the level of the cosmic soul and not in the mind of the transcendent God.²⁷ However, connecting a transcendent God to the forms remained an unsolvable problem to every Platonist who believed in the existence of such a transcendent God.

Both Atticus and Plutarch argued that the world has a specific beginning in time, which is a position sufficiently studied by many Neo-Platonic philosophers. This assertion arose from a reading of *Timaeus* which led to the conclusion that time existed before the world, since motion characterized the universe before the creation of the world and time is a measure of motion. Atticus' view was that limits should be

²¹ Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I.305.

²² Merlan, 1967: 76–77.

²³ Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I.305.

²⁴ Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I.431; Dillon, 1996: 253–258.

²⁵ Des Places, 1977: 67–69.

²⁶ Proclus, *In Timaeum*, I.394, 6.

²⁷ Dillon, 1996: 256.

placed on the creative power of God, as Aristotle and his disciples had attempted.²⁸

Numenius of Apamea in Syria is classified as a Neo-Pythagorean,²⁹ though strongly influenced by the principles of Platonic philosophy.³⁰ He exercised a strong influence on Harpocration and Atticus, without supporting the discipleship of neither one of them. Other scholars classify him with the representatives of Middle Platonism, which were strongly affected by Neo-Pythagoreanism.³¹ Indeed, he dedicated his life to reconciling Platonic concepts with Pythagorean doctrines, while arguing that the differences between them are only verbal.

Neo-Pythagoreanism probably developed in Alexandria in Egypt along with the Greek-Jewish philosophy. It aimed at discovering the absolute truth through studying the teachings of the Orphics, the Pythagoreans and Plato with the assistance of mysticism and Gnosticism. From the first century B.C. the attempt to revive Pythagoreanism began to form, but its end was marked by the person of Apollonius of Tyana towards the first century A.D.³²

Numenius lived in the second century A.D. Around the middle of his life he authored an attack against Antiochus of Ascalon, who attempted to identify Platonic and Stoic philosophy. Nevertheless, in his work, apart from Pythagoras and Plato whom he thought equal, he extolled Maggi, Egyptian priests, Brahmins and Moses to whom Numenius reserved a special treatment saying: “τί γάρ ἐστί Πλάτων ἢ Μωυσῆς ἀπτικίζων;”.³³ Discerning between God and matter, individualism and dualism, he renders direct action of God in matter impossible. This made him posit a second Creator God. The world constituted his third God. Matter, according to Numenius, was associated with a bad soul from which the irrational part of the human soul comes. Numenius thinks that the entrance of the soul in the body is degradation and misfortune. The soul’s goal is to leave it and unite with the divine. Numenius also seems to accept posthumous punishment of wicked souls in hell.³⁴ Cronius, who shared many of Numenius’ views, also seems to exercise a noticeable influence on Harpocration.

²⁸ Des Places, 1977: 51.

²⁹ Des Places, 1973.

³⁰ Des Places, 1973: 19–20; Karamanolis, 2006: 127–149; Merlan, 1967: 96–106.

³¹ Burnyeat, 2005: 143–169; Georgoulis, 2004: 484; Zeller – Nestle, 2004: 369–370.

³² Zeller – Nestle, 2004: 359–362.

³³ Eusebius, *Praeparatio*, IX 6, 9.

³⁴ Georgoulis, 2004: 470–471, 484; Zeller – Nestle, 2004: 369–370.

INFORMATION ABOUT HARPOCRATION'S LIFE

According to Suda's dictionary, written around the tenth century A.D., Harpocraton was a partner and friend of a certain Caesar (*συμβιωτής*), while he probably had a notable rank in the imperial court: "Ἀρποκρατίων, Ἀργεῖος, Πλατωνικὸς φιλόσοφος, συμβιωτὴς Καίσαρος. ἔγραψεν ὑπόμνημα εἰς Πλάτωνα ἐν βιβλίοις κδ', Λέξεις Πλάτωνος ἐν βιβλίοις β'".³⁵ Suda mentioned three other under the same name: "Ἀρποκρατίων, ὁ Γάϊος χρηματίσας, σοφιστής... Ἀρποκρατίων, ὁ Αἴλιος χρηματίσας, σοφιστής... Ἀρποκρατίων, ὁ Βαλέριος χρηματίσας, ῥήτωρ".³⁶

Some scholars believe that a reference to the grammarian Harpocraton refers to the Argive philosopher.³⁷ The referred grammarian was the mentor of the heir to the imperial throne of Rome, Lucius Verus who was born around 130 A.D. and ascended the throne of Rome in 161 A.D. as co-emperor with Marcus Aurelius.³⁸ This Harpocraton was listed as *Grammaticus*, while the philosophical education of Lucius Verus was assumed by Sextus, Plutarch's nephew, together with the Stoic philosopher Apollonius, who also were Marcus Aurelius' teachers of philosophy. Lucius Verus' discipleship to Harpocraton took place around 140–160 A.D., before he ascended to the throne. During the same period, Herod Atticus had assumed the task of educating Marcus Aurelius at the request of his father, emperor Hadrian, who had the young Lucius Verus under his protection during the latter's childhood.³⁹ Marcus Aurelius was one of the greatest philosophers of the ancient world, adhering to the movement current of Stoic philosophy.

Others argue that the Argive Harpocraton was not the teacher of Lucius Verus since referring to him as *grammaticus* does not suit his competence as a philosopher. They suggest Valerius Harpocraton as Lucius Verus' teacher. He was a Greek from Alexandria in Egypt and the author of *Περὶ τῶν λέξεων τῶν δέκα ρητόρων*, which is a large dictionary on the work of the orators of Attica. However, objections were raised against the period during which Valerius Harpocraton lived. Indeed, some scholars confirm it to be towards the late second and third century, based on the fact that there are references in his work to the Athenian author of *Δειπνοσοφιστών*.⁴⁰

³⁵ Suda, *Lexicon*, 4011.

³⁶ Suda, *Lexicon*, 4012–4014.

³⁷ Hohl, 1965: II 5.

³⁸ Dillon, 1971: 126.

³⁹ Chaignet, 1890: 189–190; Skiadas, 1976: 406.

⁴⁰ Donaldson, 1858: 383–384; Sharpe, 2003: 189; Smith, 1880: 353.

At the beginning, Dillon argued that perhaps the Argive philosopher Harpocraton accepted this office, not having any better alternative.⁴¹ Later (1996), he confirmed that the Argive Harpocraton was not Lucius Verus' teacher because, being Atticus' student, he would have been about the same age of Lucius Verus. A link is thus suggested between the Argive Harpocraton and the reign of another emperor, not Marcus Aurelius, because the latter did not cite his name, i.e. that of the Argive Harpocraton, in his work *Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτὸν* where he mentioned his mentors.⁴² Dillon's view is not adequately supported. The emperors of that period are not so many: Hadrian, Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus and Commodus. Accurate chronological dating of the philosophers of the second century A.D. is extremely difficult. Atticus and Numenius, the two persons who influenced Harpocraton, must have existed around the same time with Herod Atticus, who was born in the beginning of the second century A.D. Both were famous philosophers towards the middle of the same century.

Of course, the question arises: how could the Argive philosopher Harpocraton be associated with the imperial court of Rome? The answer can be helpful in clarifying the general issue. We could assume that the family of Atticus played a key role setting him up using their access to Roman nobility. Moreover, the family of Atticus had very good relations with the emperors Hadrian, Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius.⁴³ The presence of the family of Atticus in their villa in Eve, near Astros, could be behind their acquaintance with the intellectual circle of the city of Argos, which was the largest urban center of the region at the time. The presence of Herod Atticus could not go unnoticed. Certainly, it enhanced the spiritual life of Argos. Furthermore, it should not escape our attention that Herod used to teach students in special places he chose and not in some school. The apprenticeship of Harpocraton to Atticus and his possible presence in the imperial court of Rome may be the result of his relationship with the Atticus family. Indeed, even when he was young, Harpocraton may have taught Lucius Verus for some time, or simply 'lived with' (*συμβιώτης*) him.

As to Herod Atticus, he was born and died in Marathon (101/2–177/8 A.D.). Atticus and his son Herod held Roman citizenship transmitted to them by their predecessors. Because of the wealth and eminent social position held by his father, the young Herod received careful education. In his childhood, he visited Rome and joined the imperial milieu. In 125/26, on the occasion of the visit of Emperor Hadrian to their city, the

⁴¹ Dillon, 1971: 126.

⁴² Dillon, 1996: 259.

⁴³ Steiris, 2005: 257–260.

Athenians awarded Herod with a noble title, due to the knowledge of his personal friendship with Hadrian. Choosing Herod as the mentor of the future emperor Marcus Aurelius was a personal choice made by the emperor Hadrian. Around 140, his social activity expanded greatly. In 143 he was honored with the office of Consul. Before 160, emperor Antoninus appointed him professor of Rhetoric in the Rhetoric School of Athens, which was directly sponsored by the Romans.⁴⁴

Apart from his contribution to rhetoric, Herod realized an important architectural project from which most notable are the Odeon, the Panathenaic Stadium, the Nymfaeum in Olympia and others. He also extended and embellished the villa he inherited from his father in Eve of Kynouria, near Astros, trying to imitate the architecture of Hadrian's villa in Tivoli. In this one, he united much of his art collection, both from his era and earlier. In fact, he had organized some kind of museum, scientific and artistic institution, unique in Greece.⁴⁵

Unfortunately, the surviving data do not inform us about the deeds of Herod Atticus in Kynouria and his alleged relationship with Harpocraton. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that the material prosperity of Roman Argos may have been accompanied by an intellectual development which could nurture a philosopher of such a range. The existence of Harpocraton, coupled with the simultaneous presence of Herod Atticus in Eve of Kynouria, where he had formed cultural sites under the frame of his holiday residence, is evidence to substantiate the existence of a remarkable intellectual activity in Eastern Peloponnese during the second century A.D.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL WORK OF HARPOCRATION

Harpocraton, following the example of his teacher Atticus, wrote detailed comments on almost all the texts of Plato that occupied a total of 24 volumes. This work is not preserved, though references to it can be tracked in philosophical texts that study the Platonic dialogues, mainly *Timaeus*, *Alcibiades* and *Phaedo*.⁴⁶ In addition, the dictionary of Suda attributes to him the writing of a two-volume Platonic dictionary.

Walking in the footsteps of Plutarch and Atticus, Harpocraton thought that the world was created in time: “Ὁ Ἀρποκρατίων καὶ ὁ Ἀττικὸς οἱ τὸ γενητὸν λέγεσθαι τὸν κόσμον ἐν Τιμαίῳ ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος κατὰ χρόνον ἀκούοντες, ἐπειδὴ ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐγκαλεῖ τὸ

⁴⁴ Skiadas, 1976: 406.

⁴⁵ Skiadas, 1976: 406.

⁴⁶ Hermias, *In Platonis Phaedrum Scholia*, 102.14.

θείῳ Πλάτωνι ἐν τῇ Περί οὐρανοῦ, διότι λέγειν κατὰ χρόνον τόν κόσμον γενητόν...”.⁴⁷

Like Atticus, Harpocration believed in the existence of an uncreated matter that exists in perpetual chaotic motion caused by the bad cosmic soul. The Demiurge, a pure Platonic concept, is the one who gives form to matter and mind to the cosmic soul. In view of that, Harpocration's thought lies closer to Numenius who distinguished three gods, the Father, the Creator and the Creation, whereby the Creation is equated to the World. Both Harpocration and Numenius understood Plato to have already separated the Father from the Demiurge in *Timeaus*.⁴⁸ However, Harpocration named the first God Uranus and Saturn, while the second was Jupiter and the third was the Cosmos. He later changed his position and named the first God 'Jupiter and king of the world' while the second was Archon, believing that the relationship between Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus is that of son, father and grandfather respectively. We draw this information from the work of Proclus who is very likely to have different interpretations of Harpocration. Proclus states specifically:

Ἀρποκρατίων δε θαυμάσαιμ' ἄν, εἰ καὶ αὐτός ἐαυτόν γε ἀρέσκει τοιαῦτα περὶ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ διαταττόμενος· ἔπεται μὲν γάρ τῳδε τῷ ἀνδρὶ κατὰ τὴν τῶν τριῶν θεῶν παράδοσιν καὶ καθόσον διττόν ποιεῖ τόν δημιουργόν, ἀποκαλεῖ δέ τόν μὲν πρῶτον θεόν Οὐρανόν καὶ Κρόνον, τόν δέ δεῦτερον Δία καὶ Ζῆνα, τόν δέ τρίτον οὐρανόν καὶ κόσμον. Πάλιν δ' αὖ μεταβαλὼν τόν πρῶτον Δία προσαγορεύει καὶ βασιλέα τοῦ νοητοῦ, τόν δέ δεῦτερον ἄρχοντα, καὶ ὁ αὐτός αὐτῷ γίγνεται Ζεὺς καὶ Κρόνος καὶ Οὐρανός.⁴⁹

Most probably, the term God refers to the first God and the term Lord to the Creator.⁵⁰ It is worthwhile noting that the term Lord was widely used by the Gnostics, especially Basilides while it is attributed to the devil in the Gospel of St. John.⁵¹

Harpocration diverged from his teacher Atticus on the question of the origin of evil that exists in the human soul. Particularly, unlike Atticus, he alleged that evil does not exist in the soul, but around us, in the world which is thus completely bad.⁵² He thought of the body as the source of evil and not matter in general, as did Numenius. According to Harpocration, each incarnation favors the development of evil.⁵³ Although Harpocration's positions on the issue of the creation of the world are platonic, he

⁴⁷ Proclus, *In Rempublicam Comentarii*, II 37.

⁴⁸ Plato, *Timeaus*, 28c.

⁴⁹ Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum Commentaria*, I 303–304.

⁵⁰ Dillon, 1996: 259–260.

⁵¹ John: 12:31, 14:30, 16:11.

⁵² Van den Broek, 1979:265.

⁵³ Johannes Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, I.49.37.97; Dillon, 1996: 260–262; Dillon – Finamore, 2002: 137–138.

tends to adopt the Neopythagorean thoughts of Numenius and Cronius⁵⁴ on the issue of the evil: “τῶν δ’ αὖ διισταμένων προς τούτους καί ἀπό τῶν ἔξωθεν προσφυομένων προστιθέντων ὁπωσοῦν τῇ ψυχῇ το κακόν, ἀπό μὲν τῆς ὕλης Νουμηνίου καί Κρονίου πολλάκις, ἀπό δε τῶν σωμάτων αὐτῶν τούτων ἔστιν ὅτε καί Ἀρποκρατίωνος”.⁵⁵

On the soul, Hermias reports that Harpocraton considered each of its kinds as immortal, as Numenius believed, while both did not illustrate the fate of the inanimate part of the soul after the death of the body. Harpocraton’s solution was helpful even for Marsiglio Ficino⁵⁶:

Πρῶτον περί ποίας ψυχῆς ὁ λόγος ζητητέον. οἱ μὲν γάρ περί τῆς τοῦ κόσμου μόνης ᾠήθησαν εἶναι τόν λόγον διὰ τό εἰρηκέναι αὐτόν ‘πᾶσα’ καί μετ’ ὀλίγα ἐπάγειν ‘ἢ πάντα τε οὐρανόν πᾶσαν τε γένεσιν ξυμπεσοῦσαν στήναι’ ὧν ἔστι Ποσειδώνιος ὁ Στωικός. οἱ δέ περί πάσης ἀπλῶς καί τῆς τοῦ μύρμηκος καί μυίας, ὧν ἔστιν Ἀρποκρατίων· τό γάρ ‘πᾶσα’ ἐπί πάσης ψυχῆς ἀκούει.⁵⁷

According to Olympiodorus, Harpocraton could not interpret certain puzzling passages from *Phaedo*, where Plato discussed the way philosophers and non-philosophers faced death. Harpocraton asked why Plato underestimated the love of pleasure, but he was not able to provide an answer:

Καί φησιν ὅτι εἰ φιλόσοφος, ἀδεῆς περί τόν θάνατον, οὐκ εἶπεν δέ, εἰ ἀδεῆς περί τόν θάνατον, καί φιλόσοφος· πολλοί γάρ διὰ θράσος καί προπέτειαν ἐθέλουσιν ἀποθνήσκειν μὴ ὄντες φιλόσοφοι. εἰ σὺν φιλόσοφος, καί ἀδεῆς περί τόν θάνατον, καί εἰ μὴ ἀδεῆς περί τόν θάνατον, οὐ φιλόσοφος, ἀλλά τις φιλοσώματος· ὁ τοιοῦτος δέ ἢ φιλοχρήματος ἔστιν ἢ φιλότιμος. Καί διὰ τί τὸ φιλήδονον παρήκεν; ὁ μὲν Ἀρποκρατίων ἀπορήσας οὐκ ἐπελύσατο.⁵⁸

On the contrary an anonymous commentary on *Phaedo* informs us that Harpocraton gave two possible answers: he equated the lover of the body with the lover of pleasure. Otherwise we are obliged to suppose, according to Harpocraton, that Plato censured Socrates.⁵⁹

Nonetheless, in another source, Harpocraton seems to support perpetual creation of souls. This position distances him away from classical Platonic philosophy and brings him closer to Christianity, despite the fact that Aeneas of Gaza presented Harpocraton as a champion of the reincarnation of the soul:

⁵⁴ Dillon, 1996: 261.

⁵⁵ Johannes Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, 1.49.37.97; Dillon, 1971: 141.

⁵⁶ Allen, 1990: 120.

⁵⁷ Hermias, *In Platonis Phaedrum scholia*, 102.10–15; Dillon, 1971: 140.

⁵⁸ Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Phaedonem commentaria*, 7.4.13–7.5.1.

⁵⁹ Snyder, 2000: 104.

Πλωτῖνος γοῦν καὶ Ἀρποκρατίων, ἀμέλει καὶ Βοηθὸς καὶ Νουμήνιος τὸν τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἰκτῖνον παραλαβόντες ἰκτῖνον παραδιδόασι, καὶ τὸν λύκον λύκον, καὶ ὄνον τὸν ὄνον, καὶ ὁ πίθηκος αὐτοῖς οὐκ ἄλλο ἢ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ κύκνος οὐκ ἄλλο ἢ κύκνος νομίζεται• καὶ γὰρ πρὸ τοῦ σώματος κακίας ἐμπίμπλασθαι τὴν ψυχὴν δυνατόν εἶναι λέγουσι καὶ τοῖς ἀλόγοις ἐξεικάζεσθαι• ὧ γοῦν ὁμοιώθη, κατὰ τοῦτο φέρεται, ἄλλη ἄλλο ζῷον ὑποδῶσα.⁶⁰

According to Damascius, Harpocraton expressed also views on the nature of earth.⁶¹ As evidenced by Olympiodorus and Damascius, Harpocraton was also interested in war, arguing that the two main motivations for it are enrichment and looting.⁶² Concerning virtue, he distinguishes false from true virtues taking into consideration political virtues, in some sense, as rhetorical qualities⁶³:

Ὅτι σκοπὸς αὐτῷ ἀποδιακρίναι καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς καθῆραι τὰς καθαρτικὰς ἀρετὰς τῶν καταδεστέρων πασῶν ἀρετῶν, οὐ μόνον τῶν ψευδωνύμων, ὡς Ἀρποκρατίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἑσκιαγραφημένων, οἷον τῶν φυσικῶν τε καὶ ἠθικῶν, οὐδὲ τούτων μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν τελείων πολιτικῶν. ἀποκρίνας γὰρ τὰς κακίας εἰκότως νῦν καὶ τὰς χεῖρους ἀρετὰς ἀποκαθαίρει.⁶⁴

Harpocraton was probably interested in politics, because he interpreted politically even passions.⁶⁵ Harpocraton also was interested in love of body and honor, arguing that the human body has an inclination to honor.⁶⁶ In addition Harpocraton suggested that braveness and prudence are almost the same: the abstention from the worst. As for justice, Harpocraton adopted the Platonic definition:

Ὁ μὲν οὖν Ἀρποκρατίων εἷξας καὶ ἐνταῦθα τὰς ἐν Πολιτείᾳ φησὶ παραδίδοσθαι. ἡμῖν δὲ ρητέον ὅτι πᾶσαι τοὺς οἰκείους χαρακτῆρας ἐπιδείκνυνται πανταχοῦ κοινούς ὄντας ἰδίως ἐν ἐκάστοις• ἔστι γὰρ τῆς μὲν ἀνδρείας τὸ ἀρρεπὲς πρὸς τὰ χεῖρω, τῆς δὲ σωφροσύνης τὸ ἀποστρέφειν ἀπὸ τοῦ χείρονος, τῆς δὲ δικαιοσύνης ἡ ἴδιος ἐνέργεια καὶ τῷ ὄντι προσήκουσα, τῆς δὲ φρονήσεως τὸ ἐκλεκτικὸν τε καὶ ἀτεκλεκτικὸν ἀγαθῶν τε καὶ κακῶν. διὸ τὸ ‘μάλιστα’ πρόσκειται.⁶⁷

In conclusion, we would say that in the few passages that have survived from Harpocraton's work, we observe a version of Platonic

⁶⁰ Aeneas Gaza, *Theophrastus*, P. G., 85, c. 892 b; p. 12, l. 5–11, in Numenius, *Fragmenta*, 5.49.1–9; Dillon, 1971: 135–136.

⁶¹ Damascius, *In Phaedonem*, 503.

⁶² Damascius, *In Phaedonem*, 110.1–4; Dillon, 1971: 129.

⁶³ Dillon, 1971: 132–134.

⁶⁴ Damascius, *In Phaedonem*, 147.

⁶⁵ Damascius, *In Phaedonem*, 164.4–5.

⁶⁶ Damascius, *In Phaedonem*, 137.

⁶⁷ Damascius, *In Phaedonem*, 149.6–12.

thought clearly influenced by the current of Gnosticism. Harpocraton's influence on both his contemporaries and his successors remains sufficiently obscure. Iamblichus, Proclus, Hermias, Olympiodorus, and Damascius as well as philosophers who were included in the current of Neoplatonism, spanning from the third to the sixth century A.D., had knowledge of his work. Proclus included Harpocraton, with Numenius, Albinus, Gaius, Maximus of Nicaea, Euclid and Porphyry, among the top Platonists (τῶν Πλατωνικῶν οἱ κορυφαῖοι).⁶⁸ Aeneas of Gaza, a Christian philosopher of the sixth century who followed the Neoplatonic tradition, also mentioned him. We cannot safely conclude from the sources whether all of them had studied the writings of Harpocraton or their testimonies came from indirect sources.

However, the testimony of Olympiodorus – who probably implied the existence of disciples to Harpocraton “ὥς οἱ περὶ Ἀρποκρατίωνα ἡξίωσαν ἀκούειν”⁶⁹ – is of a particular interest. Dillon believes that it is not clear from this sentence whether there actually was a circle of students of Harpocraton. Such expressions are not uncommon in Neo-Platonic texts. Nonetheless, we would not say that something like that cannot be; it is very likely, if we accept that Lucius Verus was actually Harpocraton's student, which strengthens the possibility of his teaching activity.

PHILOSOPHY IN ARGOS IN PRE-CHRISTIAN TIMES

Nevertheless, this is not the only known philosophical activity in the city of Argos. This is confirmed by the existence of many philosophers from Argos in classical antiquity who, to some extent like Harpocraton much later, adhered to the current of Pythagoreanism. Pythagoras was born in Samos; however, in 532 BC, he moved to southern Italy, in an attempt to escape the tyrannical power of the tyrant Polycrates of Samos. In Croton he founded a philosophical school, with religious and political perspectives. The influence of his ideas expanded later to Tarentum and Metapontum, where he settled towards the end of his life. His teaching was oral and secret. No written text of his survived. His biographers included mainly: Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry and Iamblichus. Supposedly, they extracted information about Pythagoras' life from the treatises of Aristoxenus and Dicaearchus, who were Peripatetics. Similarly, Aristotle had probably written “*Περὶ Πυθαγορείων*”, which unfortunately did not survive.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Proclus, *In Platonis rem publicam comentarii*, 2.96.10–13.

⁶⁹ Dillon, 1971: 129.

⁷⁰ Georgoulis, 2004: 53–62; Huffman, 2010.
Zeller – Nestle, 2004: 38–45.

Pythagoras believed in reincarnation.⁷¹ Moreover, he claimed that he had a clear knowledge of the stages of reincarnation and of his own soul. According to Diodorus Siculus, Pythagoras told his disciples that in his previous life he was Euphorbus, the hero of the Trojan War. When Pythagoras visited Argos, he recognized in the temple of Hera his armor which the people of Argos robbed from Troy. Indeed, he wept when he saw the shield which made the people of Argos confused and they asked him about the reason of his emotions. When he explained to them, they called him crazy. To convince them, Pythagoras told them that he had written the name Euphorbus on the inside of the shield which was not visible. The people of Argos brought the shield down for the first time in centuries and his words were proved true⁷²:

ὅτι ὁ Πυθαγόρας μετεμψύχωσιν ἐδόξαζε καὶ κρεοφαγίαν ὡς ἀποτρόπαιον ἡγεῖτο, πάντων τῶν ζώων τὰς ψυχὰς μετὰ θάνατον εἰς ἕτερα ζῷα λέγων εἰσέρχεσθαι. καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ἑαυτὸν ἔφασκεν ἐπὶ τῶν Τρωικῶν χρόνων μεμνησθαι γεγεννημένον Εὐφορβον τὸν Πάνθου μὲν υἱόν, ἀναιρεθέντα δὲ ὑπὸ Μενελάου. ὅτι φασὶν αὐτὸν ἐν Ἀργεὶ ποτὲ παρεπιδημήσαντα καὶ θεασάμενον τῶν Τρωικῶν σκύλων ἀσπίδα προσηλωμένην δακρύνειν. ἐρωτηθέντα δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀργείων τὴν τοῦ πάθους αἰτίαν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι τὴν ἀσπίδα ταύτην εἶχεν αὐτὸς ἐν Τροίᾳ γεγωνὸς Εὐφορβος. ἀπίστως δὲ διακειμένων καὶ μανίαν αὐτοῦ καταγινώσκόντων, σημεῖον ἔρεῖν ἔφησεν ἀληθὲς τοῦ ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχειν: ἐκ τοῦ γὰρ ἐντὸς μέρους ἐπιγεγράφθαι τὴν ἀσπίδα γράμμασιν ἀρχαίοις ΕΥΦΟΡΒΟΥ. πάντων δὲ διὰ τὸ παράδοξον εἰπόντων καθελεῖν αὐτὴν, ἐντὸς συνέβη τὴν ἐπιγραφὴν εὐρεθῆναι.⁷³

The great Roman poet Ovidius delivers the story in one of his *Metamorphoses*, where Pythagoras himself narrates the incident that happened in the temple of Hera:

O genus attonitum gelidae formidine mortis,
quid Styga, quid manes et nomina vana timetis,
materiem vatum, falsique pericula mundi?
Corpora, sive rogos flamma, seu tabe vetustas
abstulerit, mala posse pati non ulla putetis!
Morte carent animae, semperque priore relictæ
sede novis domibus vivunt habitantque receptæ.
Ipse ego (nam meminì) Troiani tempore belli
Panthoides Euphorbus eram, cui pectore quondam
haesit in adverso gravis hasta minoris Atridae:
cognovi clipeum, laevæ gestamina nostræ,
nuper Abanteis templo Iunonis in Argis.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Diels – Kranz, 1952: 21B7.

⁷² Barnes, 1982: 86–88.

⁷³ Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, X.6.2–3.

⁷⁴ Publius Ovidius Naso, *Metamorphoses*, 15. 61–72.

In Pythagoras' biography, Diogenes Laertius shows that Euphorbus was one of the figures where Pythagoras' soul had previously incarnated:

ἐν μὲν οὖν τῇ ζωῇ πάντων διαμνημονεῦσαι, ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀποθάνοι τηρῆσαι τὴν αὐτὴν μνήμην. χρόνῳ δ' ὕστερον εἰς Εὐφορβον ἐλθεῖν καὶ ὑπὸ Μενέλω τρωθῆναι. ὁ δ' Εὐφορβος ἔλεγεν ὡς Αἰθαλίδης ποτὲ γεγονόι καὶ ὅτι παρ' Ἑρμοῦ τὸ δῶρον λάβοι καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς περιπόλησιν, ὡς περιεπολήθη καὶ εἰς ὅσα φυτὰ καὶ ζῷα παρεγένετο καὶ ὅσα ἡ ψυχὴ ἐν τῷ Ἄϊδι ἔπαθε καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ τίνα ὑπομένουσιν. ἐπειδὴ δὲ Εὐφορβος ἀποθάνοι, μεταβῆναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ εἰς Ἑρμότιμον, ὃς καὶ αὐτὸς πίστιν θέλων δοῦναι ἐπανήλθεν εἰς Βραγχίδας καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὸ τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ἱερὸν ἐπέδειξεν ἣν Μενέλαος ἀνέθηκεν ἀσπίδα, (ἐφη γὰρ αὐτόν, ὅτ' ἀπέπλει ἐκ Τροίας, ἀναθεῖναι τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τὴν ἀσπίδα,) διασεσπυῖαν ἦδη, μόνον δὲ διαμένειν τὸ ἐλεφάντινον πρόσωπον. ἐπειδὴ δ' Ἑρμότιμος ἀπέθανε, γενέσθαι Πύρρον τὸν Δήλιον ἀλιέα καὶ πάντα πάλιν μνημονεύειν, πῶς πρόσθεν Αἰθαλίδης, εἴτ' Εὐφορβος, εἴτα Ἑρμότιμος, εἴτα Πύρρος γένοιτο. ἐπειδὴ δὲ Πύρρος ἀπέθανε, γενέσθαι Πυθαγόραν καὶ πάντων τῶν εἰρημένων μεμνήσθαι.⁷⁵

Pausanias and Diogenes Laertius report that Pythagoras came from Phlius, near Nemea. This city, in the ancient times, flourished and was a loyal ally of the people of Sparta against those of Argos. When Falcus, son of Temenus of Argos, attacked Phlius, Hypassos, an ancestor of Pythagoras, moved to Samos, where existed, as in Argos, a famous temple of Hera. Particularly, Pausanias wrote:

Ἡρακλειδῶν δὲ κατελθόντων Πελοπόννησος ἐταράχθη πᾶσα πλὴν Ἀρκάδων, ὡς πολλὰς μὲν τῶν πόλεων συνοίκους ἐκ τοῦ Δωρικοῦ προσλαβεῖν, πλείονας δὲ εἶτι γενέσθαι τὰς μεταβολὰς τοῖς οἰκῆτορσι. τὰ δὲ κατὰ Φλιοῦντα οὕτως ἔχει. Ῥηγνίδας ἐπ' αὐτὴν ὁ Φάλκου τοῦ Τημένου Δωριεὺς ἐκ τε Ἄργους στρατεύει καὶ ἐκ τῆς Σικυωνίας, τῶν δὲ Φλιασίων τοῖς μὲν ἃ προεκαλεῖτο Ῥηγνίδας ἐφαίνετο ἄρεστά, μένοντας ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν βασιλέα Ῥηγνίδα καὶ τοὺς σὺν ἐκείνῳ Δωριεῖς ἐπὶ ἀναδασμῷ γῆς δέχεσθαι. Ἰππασος δὲ καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ διεκελεύοντο ἀμύνεσθαι μηδὲ πολλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἀμαχεῖ τοῖς Δωριεῦσιν ἀφίστασθαι. προσεμένου δὲ τοῦ δήμου τὴν ἐναντίαν γνώμην, οὕτως Ἰππασος σὺν τοῖς ἐθέλουσιν ἐς Σάμον φεύγει. Ἰππάσου δὲ τούτου τέταρτος ἦν ἀπόγονος Πυθαγόρας ὁ λεγόμενος γενέσθαι σοφός. Μησάρχου γὰρ Πυθαγόρας ἦν τοῦ Εὐφρονος τοῦ Ἰππάσου. ταῦτα μὲν Φλιασιοὶ λέγουσι περὶ αὐτῶν, ὁμολογοῦσι δὲ σφισι τὰ πολλὰ καὶ Σικυνῶνιοι.⁷⁶

Diogenes Laertius reports: “ἔνιοι δ' υἱὸν μὲν εἶναι Μαρμάκου τοῦ Ἰππάσου τοῦ Εὐθύφρονος τοῦ Κλεωνύμου φυγάδος ἐκ Φλιοῦντος, οἰκεῖν δ' ἐν Σάμῳ τὸν Μάρμακον, ὅθεν Σάμιον τὸν Πυθαγόραν λέγεσθαι”.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, VIII 4–5.

⁷⁶ Pausanias, *Pausaniae Graeciae Descriptio*, XIII, 1–2.

⁷⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, VIII 1–2.

In Iamblichus' work *De vita Pythagorica*, Hippomedon, Timosthenes, Evelthon, Thrasydamus, Criton, Polycrator and Possidis are mentioned as followers of Pythagoreanism. They fall within the current of the Pythagoreans and originate from the city of Argos. Furthermore, in the same work, Iamblichus reports the names of 17 women who lived and were active during the 6th–4th centuries B.C. Like the aforementioned males, these women had learned Pythagorean mathematics and Pythagorean philosophy. Two of them were from Argos: Boio and Vavelyca.⁷⁸ Moreover, the Argive sculptor Polykleitos seems to have been influenced by Pythagoras' philosophy.⁷⁹ He argued that beauty results from numbers. Except for a portion of researchers, some doubts are still raised about the validity of Iamblichus' reports because his work is not very accurate in some respects. I would say that the list Iamblichus provides is probably valid because its inaccuracy has not been proven so far.⁸⁰

To strengthen the writings of Iamblichus relative to the existence of intense philosophical activity in Argos in the classical period, it is necessary to briefly refer to the case of Phlius, a relatively small town west of Nemea, shortly distance from Argos. From Phlius, the following philosophers of the classical period came: the Pythagoreans Phadon, Echecrates, Diocles and Polymnastos. They were considered to be disciples of Philolaus and Eurytus who, in turn, were among the most prominent Pythagoreans of ancient times.⁸¹ Moreover, the Pythagorean Echecrateia had her origin from Phlius. In addition to the Pythagoreans, we have Asclpiades from Phlius (4th/3rd century B.C.). He initially studied at the Academy of Athens, but then went to Megara where he became a disciple of Stilpon, a philosopher of Megarian School. Furthermore, the very important Timon (320–230 B.C.) was also a student of Stilpon, coming from Phlius and left a diverse work consisting of comedies and tragedies along with satirical poems and philosophical texts. He also was a student of the great skeptic philosopher Pyrrho of Elis who, in turn, had accompanied Alexander the Great in his campaign to India (given in Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoniae Hypotyposes*, first book and *Adversos Mathematicos*, books I, III, VI, VII, IX, X and XI, Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Philosophers*). Axiothea was a student in Plato's Academy as well. She came to Athens from Phlius and showed particular interest in mathematics and natural philosophy (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Philosophers*, Books III and IV). She later taught these sciences in Corinth and Athens.⁸²

⁷⁸ Iamblichus, *De vita Pythagorica*, ch. 128, 167.

⁷⁹ Huffman, 2002: 303–327.

⁸⁰ Huffman, 2010.

⁸¹ Diels – Kranz, 1952: I 442–443; Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, II 124–125.

⁸² Georgoulis, 2004: 352, 358, 444–445.

CONCLUSIONS

I think it is obvious to assume that there is a close affinity of philosophical activity in Phlius and in Argos which remains to be investigated in more detail in the future. The research of written and archaeological sources can flourish further still. I hope that in the near future there will be evidence enough for a fuller presentation of philosophical activity in ancient Argos.

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Γεώργιος Στείρης
Αθήνα

Ο ΑΡΓΕΙΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΣ ΑΡΠΟΚΡΑΤΙΩΝ ΚΑΙ Η ΓΕΝΙΚΟΤΕΡΗ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΚΗ ΚΙΝΗΣΗ ΣΤΟ ΚΛΑΣΣΙΚΟ ΚΑΙ ΡΩΜΑΪΚΟ ἌΡΓΟΣ

Περίληψις

Ο Αργεῖος Αρποκρατίων υπήρξε φιλόσοφος και υπομνηματιστής του 2^{ου} μ.Χ. αιώνα, μαθητής του φιλοσόφου Αττικού, ο οποίος ανήκε στην παράδοση της μέσης πλατωνικής φιλοσοφίας. Σύμφωνα με το λεξικό της Σούδας ο Αρποκρατίων υπήρξε συνομιλητής και φίλος κάποιου Καίσαρα ("συμβιώτης"), ενώ πιθανότατα κατείχε και αξίωμα στην αυτοκρατορική αυλή. Ο Αρποκρατίων, ακολουθώντας το παράδειγμα

του δασκάλου του Αττικού, συνέγραψε αναλυτικότερα σχόλια για το σύνολο σχεδόν των κειμένων του Πλάτωνα, τα οποία συνολικά κατελάμβαναν 24 τόμους. Το έργο αυτό δεν διασώζεται, αλλά σημεία που το αποπνέουν μπορούν να αλιευθούν σε φιλοσοφικά κείμενα. Το λεξικό της Σούδας του αποδίδει επιπλέον τη συγγραφή ενός δίτομου Πλατωνικού Λεξικού. Συμπερασματικά, θα λέγαμε πως στα ελάχιστα αποσπάσματα που έχουν διασωθεί από το έργο του Αρποκρατίωνα παρατηρείται μια εκδοχή της πλατωνικής σκέψης σαφώς επηρεασμένη από το ρεύμα του γνωστικισμού. Αρκετά σκοτεινή παραμένει και η επίδραση του Αρποκρατίωνα τόσο στους συγχρόνους του, όσο και στους μεταγενεστέρους. Γνώση του έργου του είχαν οι Ιάμβλιχος, Πρόκλος, Ερμείας, Ολυμπιόδωρος, Δαμάσκιος. Τον αναφέρει επίσης ο Αινείας Γαζαίος, χριστιανός φιλόσοφος του 6^{ου} μ.Χ. αιώνα. Ιδιαίτερο όμως ενδιαφέρον παρουσιάζει η μαρτυρία του Ολυμπιόδωρου, ο οποίος πιθανότατα υπονοεί την ύπαρξη μαθητών του Αρποκρατίωνα: “ὡς οἱ περὶ Ἀρποκρατίωνα ἡξίωσαν ἀκούειν”. Αυτή δεν είναι όμως η μόνη γνωστή φιλοσοφική δραστηριότητα στην πόλη του Άργους, καθώς και στην κλασσική αρχαιότητα μαρτυρούνται Αργεῖοι φιλόσοφοι, οι οποίοι, όπως και κατά ένα μέρος ο Αρποκρατίων αρκετά αργότερα, εντάσσονται στο ρεύμα του πυθαγορισμού. Ακόμα και ο Αργεῖος γλύπτης Πολύκλειτος φαίνεται να είχε επηρεαστεί από τη φιλοσοφία του Πυθαγόρα, καθώς υποστήριζε πως το ωραίο προκύπτει από τους αριθμούς.

