

SOME METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS IN ALEXANDRINE POETRY: A REPLY TO DR. GIANGRANDE

IN *CQ* N.S. xxi (1971), 146 f. Dr. G. Giangrande reaffirms his claim that the reading of most manuscripts at A. R. 1. 1333 *πέρι γάρ μ' ἄχος ἦκεν ἐνισπείν* is sound. I argued in *CQ* N.S. xix (1969), 274 f. that *ἦκεν* is more likely to be from *ἦμι* than from *ἦκω*, on the ground that readers (or hearers) of an epic poem would not take it in any other way, since Homer has only *ἦκω* and *ἦκειν* from *ἦκω*. Giangrande now produces the variants *ἦκοι* and *ἦκεν* found here and there in Homer's text. According to him, 'the more obscure and debated the variant, the more elegant its reproduction was felt to be'. Apollonius thus campaigns for *ἦκεν* from *ἦκω* on the basis of these obscure variants. I must confess that I can find no trace of any such 'debate' in antiquity. I can assure Giangrande that I am well aware that Alexandrine poets took an interest in variants in the Homeric text; but I also believe that some discrimination should be exercised in using the variants *at our disposal* as evidence for the state of Homer's text in the time of Apollonius. In other words, I would invite him to consider the credentials of the witnesses he invokes—and I can warn him in advance that they are not impressive. The term 'variant in Homer's text' is readily used by critics of Alexandrine poetry; but it is only meaningful when the status of a given variant is assessed, and assessed properly.

I am further taken to task for perpetrating 'basic methodological errors,' which I understand to refer to the *catena* of 'rules' invented (or developed) by Giangrande himself in a number of papers which will be familiar to students of Alexandrine poetry. It is alarming enough to see these methods applied to Hesiod, who apparently sits and plays at *oppositio in imitando* with Homer in his study (see now M. L. West, *CR* N.S. xx [1970], 416), and to Anacreon, who is represented as a fully fledged Alexandrine epigrammatist (*Entretiens Hardt* xiv. 93 f.). But to be fair, they were devised in the first instance for Alexandrine poets. The validity of any method can be tested only by the results it produces. I submit a random selection of the results (with brief comments) for Giangrande's favourite audience of 'cognoscenti' to savour and assess:

(i) In *Rh. Mus.* cx (1967), 154 f. Giangrande notes the obvious resemblance of Call. *H.* iv. 66 *νησάων . . . εὐρείων* to Homer's *Κρητάων . . . εὐρείων* in the same metrical position (*Od.* 14. 199, 16. 62). He observes a variant *εὐρεϊάων* in the second of the Homeric passages and transfers it to Callimachus' text. This is a monstrous misapplication of the method referred to above. A glance at any reasonably full apparatus of the *Odyssey* will show that this reading is unlikely to be of the slightest relevance to Callimachus' text. What justification is there for importing the scribbles of a late witness into a text of the third century B.C.? Giangrande calls *εὐρεϊάων* a 'disputed' reading, when it is plainly a graphic error of the most elementary kind. Callimachus' *νησάων . . . εὐρείων* is clearly intended to echo Homer's *Κρητάων . . . εὐρείων* and nothing else. In this hymn the poet pokes fun at Iris, and the point of *εὐρείων* may be that it makes out her role to be far more significant than it really is (*εὐρείων*

suits Crete, but hardly *all* the islands). But other explanations are possible (Pfeiffer's *αἰπείων* gains only scant support from the papyrus and adds nothing to the sense).

(ii) In the same line of Callimachus, ἡ δ' ἐπὶ νησάων ἑτέρῃ σκοπὸς εὐρείων, the words ἐπὶ and σκοπὸς are explained in terms of sophisticated Homeric criticism (op. cit. 153 f.). The construction of ἡ δ' ἐπὶ νησάων, 'she, presiding over the islands', is, it is claimed, prosaic. Callimachus avoids this construction by adverting to *Od.* 8. 163 ἐπίσκοπος . . . ὀδαίων, where Aristophanes read ἐπίστροφος. We are now in a position to appreciate that Callimachus agreed: by splitting up ἐπίσκοπος he tells us that he too did not believe in this instance of ἐπίσκοπος c. gen. in Homer. I fear that here the process of linguistic acrobatics is pushed too far; perhaps Giangrande's mind will be changed if he looks at the remarkably similar piece of prose in *A. R.* 4. 973 *Λαμπετή* δ' ἐπὶ βουσὶν κτλ. (I hope that he will not argue that Apollonius deliberately resurrected the 'prosaic' construction out of sheer defiance! It is time that we were rid of squabbling poets.)

(iii) *A. R.* 1. 905 (speech of Jason): σὺ: τὸ S. In his search for Doric features in epic poetry (*Hermes* xcvi [1970], 257 f.) Giangrande has come across S's τὸ. He suggests (p. 274 n. 4) that since Pfeiffer accepts τὸ in *Call.* fr. 281 (an epic line) as *lectio difficilior*, we should perhaps read τὸ in Apollonius also. What method is there here? (a) Apollonius, unlike Callimachus, entirely avoids such analogous forms as τὶν, φιν. (b) Given the general uniformity of Apollonius' language, it would be not merely unparalleled but absurd and senseless for the speaker to lapse here into a dialect form of σύ of all words. τὴν at 901 is of course a different matter. (c) The cause of S's τὸ stares one in the face: τὴν occurs at 901 above. τὸ is obviously either an abortive τὴν or a mere reminiscence of the general form of a word copied shortly before—a common type of error, and disconcertingly common in S.

(iv) *A. R.* 4. 392 διὰ . . . †ἔμπεδα† πάντα κέσσσαι. The Homeric text bristles with linguistic oddities which the earliest Greek scholars were quick to seize upon. It is often rewarding for a student of later epic to look at what they have to say about them. But Giangrande does not seem to know where to call a halt. In *Antiq. Class.* xxxix (1970), 60 f. he asserts that the notorious ἔμπεδα of *Od.* xix. 113 is relevant to Apollonius' line, and translates 'destroy the crew who had landed'. Giangrande notes that the Homeric ἔμπεδα was interpreted by some as 'living beings who *stand* on the soil as opposed to fish who swim in the sea'. In Apollonius there is a 'zoological employment' of the word, and it 'refers to the crew, who were no longer at sea, *but had now landed* (italics mine) on the *terra firma*'. This process of reasoning is remarkable; it is condemned by its very absurdity. (I have tried to elucidate this passage in rather less involved terms in 'Further Notes on A.R.', *CQ* xxi (1971), 420.)

(v) Finally, *A. R.* 1. 685 πῶς τῆμος βώσσεσθε, δυσάμμοροι; In *Antiq. Class.* loc. cit. 56 f., Giangrande rejects Σ's explanation of the curious βώσσεσθε· ἀντὶ τοῦ βώσσεσθε. An examination of Homeric and Hellenistic *Sprachegebrauch* informs him that βώσσεσθε can only be from βοάω. But the reluctant rendering, 'are you perhaps going to cry for help?' is almost comic. The context cries out for the meaning 'how are you then going to *subsist*?'. The speaker goes on to ask 'Will your oxen plough unasked? Will they gather in the harvest for nothing?' The main theme of the speech is the imminent lack of βίος: the Lemnian women, deprived of their menfolk, simply cannot go on living.

Giangrande demands linguistic consistency, forgetting in this case the *arte allusiva* which he demands as imperative in others. The parallels in Ardizzoni's note are close enough to justify βώσεσθε from βιώω.

Note. I can only attribute Giangrande's attempted defence of ἦκεν in A. R. 1. 74 and 2. 239 to his determination to work ἦκω into Apollonius' epic (p. 148 n. 1). At 1. 74 only PE offer ἦκεν, which is not encouraging. ἦεν was extremely prone to corruption in ancient texts, and, to use Giangrande's term, was often 'chased out'. At 2. 239 ἔδνοισιν . . . ἦκεν ἄκοιτις does not seem to me to be capable of bearing the meaning which Giangrande elicits from it; ἦγον in contrast is supported by plentiful parallels, including two from Apollonius himself, quoted by me in my note ad loc. (p. 275 n. 1). It is perhaps unnecessary to add that confusion of γ and κ is common in many types of Greek script.

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Editors' note

In order to close the controversy to which Mr. Campbell's note is a further contribution, the Editors offered to Dr. Giangrande the opportunity of a final, brief reply. While thanking them for their offer of hospitality, Dr. Giangrande has found it more convenient to publish his reply elsewhere.