

Theocritus 17.2 Once Again

Ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχώμεσθα καὶ ἐς Δία λήγετε Μοῖσαι,
ἀθανάτων τὸν ἄριστον, ἐπὴν ᾠαῖδωμεν ἀοιδᾶς...

Gow on Theocritus 17. 1 ff proves that ἀθανάτων τὸν ἄριστον is in apposition to Δία, and cannot be the object of αἰδωμεν. The manuscripts give αἰδωμεν and αἰδωμεν. The correction to ἄδωμεν is easy enough, and the unmetrical αἰδωμεν perhaps arose from the following word (ἀει-: ἀοι-)¹). Gow rejected the vulgate ἄδωμεν because he thought it would have to take τὸν ἄριστον as its object²), but failed to consider the possibility that the object might follow ἄδωμεν. I thought of ἀοιδᾶς, a conjecture that I have since found to have been proposed by J. A. Hartung. The dative with ἄδωμεν would not be impossible, but an accusative with this verb is the usual construction in Theocritus: Cf. [9]. 28–29: ᾠδάν / τάν (ᾠδᾶς / τᾶς: P^QW) ποκ' ἐγὼ τήνοισι ... ἄεσα νομεῦσι [8]. 34: ... ἄσε μέλος /; 18. 7: αἰδον δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι ἐς ἐν μέλος ἐγκροτέουσαι / ποσσὶ περιπλέκτοισ³). I therefore conclude that Hartung's ἄδωμεν ἀοιδᾶς is the most reasonable solution to this

1) See Gow *ad loc.*

2) CQ 13 (1919) 22, note 1.

3) For ἄδ- (beside ἀειδ-) in Theocritus cf. also 1. 148; 14. 30. LSJ and Gow take μέλος in 18. 7 with ἐς ἐν. I understand ἐς as idiomatic with ἐγκροτέουσαι (Cf. Ar. *Ran.* 372 ff), and ἐς ἐν as elliptical for ἐς ἐν πέδον or the like (Cf. 22. 27; Ap. Rh. 4, 1195). The hyperbaton of μέλος with αἰδον is not difficult, and hyperbata in Theocritus are frequent (see Gow on *Epiqr.* 21, 1). The construction (without hyperbaton) is paralleled at 11. 18; Cf. [8]. 55–56. Dancers do not strike a *song* with their feet, they strike the ground, or “dance a dance” (Cf. Ar. *Ran.* 330 ff, where, to be sure, χορεύειν is in apposition to τιμάν).

uncertain passage, and that attention should again be called to his conjecture in view of the universal neglect it has received from all recent editors⁴).

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