

ON THE TEXT OF ALEXANDER AETOLUS

The elegy by Alexander Aetolus, which Parthenius (*Erot. Pathem.* XIV) has preserved for us, needs the attention of textual critics. The poem extends to 34 lines, very many of which have been unwarrantably disfigured by unnecessary conjectures. The most complex textual problem is represented by lines 14-16, and I shall deal with it at the end of the present paper. First of all, I shall try to illustrate, very rapidly but I hope clearly, the textual peculiarities which are present in the rest of the elegy.

3. It is not clear from the *Palatinus* (cf. now Martini's edition of Parthenius) whether the reading is ἰξεται or ῥῖξεται. The verb ἰκνέομαι would be, of course, the normal one in its context, and indeed Passow, who thought that the *Palatinus* read ῥῖξεται, conjectured ῥῖξε-ται. However, if the *Palatinus* reads ἰξεται instead of ἰξεται, the said reading ῥῖξεται should not be altered conjecturally into ἰξεται. First of all, middle forms of ῥῖχω are known to exist in prose (cf. LSJ, s.v. ῥῖχω). Moreover, the middle ῥῖξεται is attested in late epic (*Or. Sib.* XII = XIV, 199 = 200). Late epic poetry often borrows forms from Hellenistic epic and elegy: therefore, the fact that we find ῥῖξεται in *Or. Sib.*, *loc. cit.* renders the conjectural alteration of ῥῖξεται into ἰξεται, in the line of Alexander Aetolus under discussion, unjustified. It is of course well known that Hellenistic poets liked to employ words and forms attested in prose (cf. my paper «*Problemi testuali nei poeti alessandrini*», in «*La critica Testuale, oggi: metodi e problemi*», Rome 1981, p. 383 ff.). For these two reasons (i.e. the fact that middle

forms of ἦκω are attested in prose and in late epic) it follows, we may conclude, that ἤξεται, if this is the reading of the *Palatinus*, must not be altered.

4. The nominative participle ἐλισσομένη is sound, because it is anakolouthic. The same applies to the genitive of the participle καθαψαμένης in line 13. On these two anakolouthic participles cf. my observations in «*Habis*» 1989, p. 55; cf. also Kühner-Gerth, II, p. 105 ff., and G. M. Bolling, *The Participle in Apollonius Rhodius* (*Studies in Honor of B. L. Gildersleeve*, Baltimore 1902), p. 461.

6. The aorist participle ἐπιβωσάμενος should not be altered into the future participle ἐπιβωσόμενος, as suggested by scholars. Here, the aorist participle ἐπιβωσάμενος denotes simultaneity, not anteriority, the sense being «*invoking*, simultaneously with his arrival, the sure oaths of hostageship». For the use of the aorist participle denoting simultaneity cf. Chryssafis, in his commentary on Theocr. XXV, line 203. One such participle occurs in Hemesianax's elegy, line 46, where παυσάμενος (which the critics wanted to alter into παυσόμενος) is correct: the sense is that Antimachus wrote his elegies not in order to stop his love-pangs (which would be the sense if Hermesianax had written παυσόμενος), but that he wrote his elegies, thereby *stopping* (παυσάμενος: the aorist participle denotes simultaneity with the act of writing elegies) his love-pangs *whilst* he wrote his verse. Cf. H. White, *L'Ant. Class.* 1991 (LX), p. 218.

8. f. ὕδωρ / θελήσει μέγαν υἱόν, ἀφ' οὗ μέγα χάσμα κ.τ.λ. The adjective μέγαν is perfectly sound. To begin with, being μέγας (i.e. tall) was a pre-requisite of beauty (cf. my observations in *L'humour des alexandrins*, p. 21 ff.). Secondly, the water of rivers and fountains, as Meineke (*Anal. Alex.*, *ad loc.*) notes, was said to be κουροτρόφον and αὐξητικόν (*schol. Il.* 23, 142: *tomus* IV, p. 310 Dindorf) i.e. was said to stimulate the growth of young people: here, the sense is that the water of the fountain Peirene produces tall (μέγαν, in line 9, means «tall»), i.e. beautiful¹, boys. The repetition of the same adject-

¹ Capellmann (*Alex. Aetol. fragm.*, Bonn 1830), p. 73 writes, on line 9: «*pro μέγαν mallet legere καλόν, nisi hoc nimium ab illo differret*». The fact is that, here in line 9,

tive μέγαν... μέγα in line 9 is typical of Hellenistic poetry (cf. Lapp, *De Callim. tropis*, p. 63 f. «polyptoton... in uno versu»). Metrically, the verb θελήσει presents no difficulties. Just as Phanocles and Hermesianax used so-called *meiourois* hexameter (cf. K. Alexander, *A Stylistic Commentary on Phanocles*, p. 55 ff.), so Alexander Aetolus may well have used, here in line 9, the parallel type of hexameter, called *akephalos* (cf. van Leeuwen, *Enchir. dict. epicae*, sec. ed., p. 95 f.). On the other hand, it may well be that here the ε of θελήσει is to be scanned long, as a case of Hellenistic «Quantitätsausgleich» (cf. my note in Παρνασσός 1991, p. 380 ff.). The verb θέλω with the personal accusative υἷόν means here «look upon with favour» (Lampe, *Patr. Lex.*, s.v. θέλω, II), «delight in» (LSJ, s.v. ἐθέλω, 4; cf. e.g. *A.P.* XII, 68, 1), «Gefallen haben an» (Bauer, *Wört. N.T.*, s.v. θέλω, 4). The phrase Πειρήνης ὕδωρ is a poetic periphrasis (cf. Thes., s.v. ὕδωρ 65 C; Bernhardt, *Wiss. Synt.* p. 52 ff.) meaning «the fountain Peirene»; the fountain is here, obviously, personified, the sense being «the fountain Peirene will not delight, for the benefit of Melissus, in such (τοιόνδε) a beautiful (μέγαν) son».

11. The ms. reading ὧ ἔνι was altered into ὧ ἔπι by Cornarius, whom the editors follow (cf. especially Meineke, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.*). In reality, the text is sound because here the phrase ὧ ἔνι means «wherefore»² (cf. e. g. Bauer, *Wört. N. T.*, s. v. ἐν III, 3). The sense is that Antheus was so beautiful, that Hermes, the notorious lover of young boys, loved him (this has been clarified by Meineke *ad loc.*, and by Capellmann, *Alex. Aetol. fragm.*, Bonn 1830, *ad loc.*), «wherefore» (ὧ ἔνι), so continues Alexander Aetolus (that is to say, since Antheus was so beautiful) «the young bride, mad with love (μαινάς), will conceive for him a culpable passion (τὸν λιθόλευστον ἔρων: the accusative ἔρων is perfectly sound, of course, and need not be changed into ἔρον)».

μέγαν «tall» is synonymous with «beautiful», and agrees with the ancient beliefs according to which the water of fountains was αὐξητικόν.

² «Weswegen»: Blass-Debrunner, *Gramm. neut. Griech.*, § 219, note 2. On causal ἐν cf. e. g. Rossberg, *De praeposit. graec. in chartis Aegyptiis Ptolem. aet. usu*, Diss. Jena 1909, p. 29.

14: the future πείσει is *futurum de conatu* (cf. Capellmann, *op. cit. ad. loc.*: «*persuadere conabitur*»; on the *futurum de conatu*, which scholars often lose sight of, cf. Kühner-Gerth I, p. 170): the same *futurum de conatu*, πείσει, is in Lycophron, 672.

20ff. The passage has already been understood by Passow: after χρύσεος, we must place a full stop; the words φρεΐατος ἐκ κ.τ.λ. are attached to the preceding sentence asyndetically. The sense is: «I have a golden pitcher. Now, as it was being pulled up (νῦν ὃ γ' ἀνελκόμενος) from the bottom of the well, it cut (διὰ... ἤρικεν, in tmesis) the wretched cable (καλὸν οὖσον), and fell alone (αὐτός: that is to say, separated from the cable that supported it) down to the bottom of the well». The epithet καλόν is patently ironic (cf. *Sic. Gymn.* 1989, p. 33). Meineke objected to Passow that the asyndeta was not welcome, but now we know that asyndeton is very common in Hellenistic poetry (cf. *Scr. Min. Alex.*, vol. II, *Index*, s.v. asyndeton): asyndeta are especially frequent in direct speech (cf. Zimmermann, *Griech. Roman-papyri, Sachregister*, s.v. *Asyndeton*; Vian, in his commentary on Ap. Rhod. *Arg.* III, lines 409, 528, etc.); here, Cleoboea is speaking in the first person. Cf. H. White, *L'Ant. Class.* 1991 (LX), p. 216 f. 23. It is worth reminding the reader that the sense of καὶ πᾶσιν, words which certain critics would like to alter, was well explained by Meineke, *ad. loc.*

25. The text of the manuscript presents no difficulties, if we read τοῦ ἄν μετὰ, i.e. if we take μετὰ to refer, in anastrophe, to τοῖα, and if ἄν is a «*particula... interiecta*» (van Leuwen, *op. cit.*, p. 376). The sense is: «after such an action (τοῖα... μετὰ) you would be my great friend (ἄν φίλτατος εἴης)». The diphthong τοῦ is here, of course, scanned short: cf. my already quoted article in *Παρουσασσός*.

27. The aorist φθέγγατο is an aorist used «*pro futuro*», cf. my observations in *Habis* 1989, p. 47.

33. The words ἡρίον δγκώσει were not aptly defended by Haupt, whilst other scholars have changed them by conjecture (cf. Martini's apparatus). The problem has not been solved by Haupt (*Opusc.* II, p. 99), and I shall solve it now. The verb δγκώω, as Haupt notes, was used of tombs, in the sense «*in altum extruere*». But how can Antheus, by dying, «raise» (δγκώσει) his own tomb? Haupt thought that Ale-

xander Aetolus has used here an erroneous expression: «*dicendum erat: «tum fiet ut super infelicissimo hospite fatalis tumultus in altum extruatur»*», writes Haupt³, because the deceased Antheus could not raise his own tomb (ὀγκώσει) himself. In reality, the text is sound and most elegant. Antheus, by drowning and falling to the bottom of the water contained in the well, raised the level of the water; since the water was his own tomb, it can certainly be said that he raised (ὀγκώσει, «will raise», in the prophecy of the oracle) his own tomb. The same *topos*, whereby an object, falling to the bottom of the water contained in a receptacle, raises the level of the water, is attested in a Hellenistic epigram, which I have explained in *Mus. Phil. Lond.* IV, 1981, p. 230 f.

34. The phrase σὺν τῷ has been wrongly suspected (cf. Martini's apparatus). It is perfectly sound, and means «with him»; cf. e.g. Xenophanes 2, 20 Gent.-Prato ἐπὶ τῷ, at the other end of the pentameter.

And now, to conclude, we shall explain lines 14-16:

... ὁ δὲ Ζῆνα Ξείνιον αἰδόμενος
 σπονδὰς τ' ἐν Φοβίου καὶ ἄλα ξυνεῶνα θαλάσσης
 κρήναις καὶ ποταμοῖς νύψεται' ἀεικὲς ἔπος.

The sense of these lines is clear: Antheus, being a guest of Phobius, will not bring himself to betray the laws of hospitality: fearing the wrath of Ζεὺς Ξείνιος, and being in awe of the libations and the salt he had shared, in Phobius' house, with his host Phobius, he «will wash away in springs and rivers the unseemly word» (Gaselee, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.*), i.e. he will refuse to cuckold Phobius. On the «*mos veterum nefanda audita fluviiis abluendi*» cf. Capellmann, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.*, with bibliography. However, although the sense of the lines under discussion is obvious, line 15 presents an unsurmountable difficulty, as we shall see; the difficulty in question can be solved by first of all examining the parallel passage in Lycophron, 133 ff.:

³ Meineke (*Anal. Alex.*, *ad loc.*) notes that, if Alexander Aetolus wanted to say «*sepetietur*», this «*graece non aliter dici potuit quam ὀγκωθήσεται ἡρίφ*».

... οὐκ αἰδούμενος
 οὐδ' Ἀνθέως ἔρωτας οὐδὲ τὸν ξένοις
 σύνδορπον Αἰγαίωτος ἀγνίτην πάγον
 ἔτλης θεῶν ἀλοιτὸς ἐκβῆναι δίκην,
 λάξας τράπεζαν κ.τ.λ.

Lycophron's lines represent a neat *Umkehrung* of the motif present in Alexander Aetolus: «Paris, as a guest of Menelaus, had 'eaten his salt'» (so A. W. Mair, in his Loeb edition of Lycophron), and yet, not standing in awe (οὐκ αἰδούμενος) of the salt of hospitality he had shared with his host, he cuckolded Menelaus. The periphrasis Αἰγαίωτος ἀγνίτην πάγον means «salt», and the phrase ξένοις σύνδορπον denotes the salt which is «shared at table by host and guest», «companion at table of host and guest». In Alexander Aetolus, ἄλα corresponds to Lycophron's Αἰγαίωτος ἀγνίτην πάγον, and the epithet ξυνεῶνα means «on the common table», i.e. shared by guest and host at table. All this is clear, but the genitive θαλάσσης, at the end of line 15, causes the unsurmountable difficulty which I just mentioned. When the word ξυνεῶν is followed by a genitive, it cannot but govern it: if ξυνεῶνα were followed, in line 15, by the genitive θαλάσσης, the adjective ξυνεῶνα would not be used absolutely, in the sense «shared on the common table», but would have to govern θαλάσσης, whereby the sense would be «the salt, the comrade of the sea» (ἄλα ξυνεῶνα θαλάσσης): cf. Gaselee, *Loeb. edit. of. Parthenius, ad loc.* This sense would be contextually impossible, because Antheus stood in awe not of salt in general, as the mineral which one obtains from the sea, but of the specific amount of salt he had shared at table with his host, i.e. the «salt of hospitality» (Gaselee, *op. cit., ad loc.*). The only way of overcoming this difficulty is to eliminate from the line the genitive θαλάσσης: and in fact Legrand conjectured

... ὁ δὲ Ζῆνα Ξείνιον αἰδόμενος
 σπονδὰς τ' ἐν Φοβίου καὶ ἄλα ξυνεῶνα, θαλάσση
 κρήναις καὶ ποταμοῖς νίψεται ἀεικὲς ἔπος.

The sense, according to Legrand's conjecture, would be: «but he, standing in awe of Ζεὺς Ξείνιος, of the libations he had held in the house of his host Phobius and of the salt of hospitality, will wash away

the unseemly word with sea, springs and rivers». Legrand's conjecture, strangely blamed by Meineke (*op. cit.*, *ad loc.*), is adroit, because it brings into the open a felicitous *enjambement* between lines 15 and 16, by placing a comma after the word ξυνεῶνα, in line 15: *enjambement*, as everybody knows, is typical of elegiac couplets⁴. Moreover, Legrand's conjecture is confirmed by *Realien*, because purification rituals were effected by means of the water not only of rivers or fountains (as Capellmann noted in his commentary on line 16), but also of the sea (cf. *schol.* on Lycophr. 135, p. 64 ed. Scheer: ἐν παροιμίᾳ θάλασσα κλύζει πάντα τάνθρώπων κακά, cf. Eur. *Iph. T.* 1193, and Mooney, in his commentary on Lycophron, line 135).

There is, however, no need to alter the text, as Legrand suggested: θαλάσσης, here, is a plural dative, without the *iota subscriptum*.

We may conclude that the correct text is the following:

... ὁ δὲ Ζῆνα Ξείνιον αἰδόμενος
 σπονδάς τ' ἐν Φοβίου καὶ ἄλα ξυνεῶνα, θαλάσσης
 κρήναις καὶ ποταμοῖς νίψεται' ἀεικὲς ἔπος.

The sense is: «and he, standing in awe of Ζεὺς Ξείνιος, of the libations he had held at Phobius' house and of the salt of hospitality (ἄλα ξυνεῶνα), will wash away the unseemly word in seas, springs and rivers». The employment of dative plural endings in -ης (θαλάσσης) and -αις (κρήναις) next to each other is typical of epic poetry, from Homer down to Quintus Smyrnaeus. The plurals θαλάσσης, κρήναις and ποταμοῖς are *plurales poetici*: obviously, the water of one sea, one fountain and one river would serve Antheus' purificatory

⁴ The best on this subject has been written by J. Mesk, *Satz und Vers im elegischen Distichon der Griechen*, Prgr. Brünn 1900, and J. Renner, *Ueber das Formelwesen... in der älteren griech. Elegie*, Prgr. Freiberg I-II, 1871-1872. Capellmann, *op. cit.*, *ad loc.*, notes that Legrand's conjecture is «*optima*», and adds that Galeus had, before Legrand, recognized the *enjambement* between lines 15 and 16. Galeus suggested placing a comma between ξυνεῶνα and θαλάσσης, but his proposal (cf. Capellmann *ad loc.*) was rightly rejected by scholars, for two reasons. First of all, the word ξυνεῶν, as I have already observed, governs, in Greek, the genitive by which it is followed (in this case, the genitive θαλάσσης). Secondly, the phrase θαλάσσης κρήναις καὶ ποταμοῖς would mean «fountains and rivers of salt water» (ὁ ἀργύρου κρήνη, ἐλαίου κρήνη, κρήνη οἴνου, ποταμοὶ πυρός, ποταμοὶ νοημάτων cf. Thes., s. v. κρήνη and ποταμός), which would be meaningless.

purposes. Poetic plurals are, of course, a compulsory ingredient in Hellenistic poetry: cf. e.g. *Scr. Min. Alex.* I, p. 63, 168, 181; II, p. 459; H. White, *New Studies in Greek Poetry*, Amsterdam 1989, p. 35. On the plural θάλασσαι cf. *Thes.*, s.v. θάλασσα, 232 B. The particle καί joins here only «the last pair», i.e. κρήναις and ποταμοῖς: this usage is attested not only in prose (cf. *LSJ*, s.v. καί, A), but also in poetry, e.g. Nonn. *Dionys.* XI, 100. The usage in question is a Homeric rarity: cf. Ebeling, *Lex. Homer*, p. 615, col. II, quoting *Odyssey* 22, lines 158 ff., for καί connecting «*membra tria*».

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