

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

ANACREON FRAGMENT 13 PAGE

σφαιρῇ δηντέ με πορφυρῇ
βάλλων χρυσοκόμης Ἐρως
νήνι ποικιλοσταμβάλῳ
συμπταιμένι προκαλεῖται·
ἢ δ', ἐστὶν γάρ ἀπ' εὐκτίτον
Λέσβου. τὴν μὲν ἐμὴν κόμην.
λεύκη γάρ, καταμέμφεται.
πρὸς δ' ἄλλην τινὰ χάσκει.

There is still no agreement as to the meaning of this poem. Because of the apparent balance within the final sentence, many supply *κόμην* with *ἄλλην*, and, at first sight, this seems the natural way to construe. So recently Malcolm Campbell in *Museum Criticum* 8/9 [1973–74]: 168–69). H. W. Smyth explained *πρὸς δ' ἄλλην τινὰ* as equivalent to *πρὸς δ' ἄλλον τινὸς κόμην*.¹ Wilamowitz, Gentili (but see below), and others have agreed. Some scholars, however, take *ἄλλην* to mean another girl: “The truth is that since she comes from Lesbos her interest is in one of her own sex.”² Others still cut the Gordian knot by accepting Barnes’ conjecture of *ἄλλον* for *ἄλλην*; so Bergk, Davison, Edmunds, and, hesitantly, Fränkel.³ Wilamowitz correctly described this as a “monströse Änderung.”⁴ West has proposed a *media via*; *ἄλλην τινὰ* refers to another girl, but the allusion is not erotic: “. . . ‘Gawping’ [i.e., χάσκει] might be said of someone in love, but it need not mean more than ‘foolishly preoccupied.’ . . . The girl is deep in trivial conversation with her friend. . . . Anacreon . . . plays the old man blowing hopeful kisses at heedless (but not homosexual) young girls. . . .”⁵ This can hardly be correct. To conclude the poem with “but she is preoccupied with someone else” would be bland, but possible; to conclude with “but she is preoccupied with someone else, a woman”—in West’s nonerotic sense—is surely pointless.

Giangrande takes still another approach; he argues that *ἄλλην* (sc. *κόμην*) refers to the poet’s pubic hair: “Since pubic hair remains black after cephalic hair has

1. *Greek Melic Poets* (London, 1906; repr. 1963), p. 288.

2. D. A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (New York, 1967), p. 321. Representative advocates of this interpretation are: Denys Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford, 1959), p. 143; A. E. Harvey, “Homeric Epithets in Greek Lyric Poetry,” *CQ* 7 (1957): 213; C. M. Bowra, *Greek Lyric Poetry*² (Oxford, 1961), p. 285; D. E. Gerber, *Euterpe: An Anthology of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac and Iambic Poetry* (Amsterdam, 1970), p. 230; G. M. Kirkwood, *Early Greek Monody: The History of a Poetic Type* (Ithaca and London, 1974), p. 167.

3. “Das überlieferte ἄλλην bezieht sich entweder auf κόμην, oder es ist für ἄλλον verschrieben, in mechanischem Anschluss an die vorangehenden Feminina” (*Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*³ [Munich, 1969], p. 333, n. 3).

4. *Sappho und Simonides* (Berlin, 1913; repr. 1963), p. 116, n. 1.

5. “Melica,” *CQ* 20 (1970): 209.

turned white, and since *fellatrices* direct their expectant mouths towards pubic hair, the point which Anacreon makes is clear.⁷⁶ Gentili agrees with Giangrande that the reference is to pubic hair; he differs only in regarding it, not as the poet's own, but as that of some other man.⁷⁷ In support of their interpretation both scholars stress (1) "the fact that *χάσκω*, applied to girls in amatory contexts, is the *terminus technicus* denoting eagerness to *fellare*."⁷⁸ and (2) "Lesbian girls were notorious in antiquity for their being addicted to *fellatio*.⁷⁹

That *χάσκω* is a technical term in reference to *fellatio* is simply false. The notion goes back to J. A. Davison⁸⁰ and, especially, to a note by M. Wigodsky.⁸¹ Davison's evidence consists of one passage from Athenaeus (9. 389E), a reference to partridges (!): *πέτονται τε περὶ τὸν τῆς ὄχειας καιρὸν χάσκοντες καὶ τὴν γλῶσσαν ἔξω ἔχοντες οἵ τε θήλεις καὶ οἱ ἄρρενες*. How a bird can engage in the practice in question while flying is not apparent. ("And so, at the season of mating, they fly about with beak open and with tongue projecting, the females as well as the males." So Gulick renders the passage in the Loeb edition, obviously correctly.) Wigodsky refers to Davison's Athenaeus passage and adds a second piece of evidence, Aristophanes *Vespae* 1345–50:

ὅρᾶς ἐγώ σ' ὡς δεξιῶς ὑφειλόμην
μέλλουσσαν ἡδη λεσβιεῖν τοὺς ἔνυπότας·
ἀν εἴνεκ' ἀπόδοσ τῷ πέτει τῷδι χάρων.
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀποδώσεις οὐδὲ ἐφιαλεῖς, οἰδ' ὅτι,
ἀλλ' ἔξαπατήσεις κάγχανει τούτῳ μέγα·
πολλοῖς γάρ ἡδη χάτεροις αὐτ' ἡργάσω.

Λεσβι(ά)ζω, it is generally agreed, refers to the practice of *fellatio*. Here we find in the same passage *λεσβίζω* (1346) and the *compound* *ἐγχάσκω* (1349). Wigodsky drew the astonishing conclusion that *χάσκω* and *ἐγχάσκω* therefore refer to *fellatio*; even more astonishingly, prominent scholars—Giangrande and Gentili are not alone—have believed him.⁸² One need only read the passage to see that, so far from being equated there, *λεσβιεῖν* and *ἐγχάνει* are actually contrasted: "You see how cleverly I filched you away when you were about to *λεσβιεῖν* the drinking companions. Wherefore repay the favor to my *πέος*. But you will *not* repay it.

6. "Anacreon and the Lesbian Girl," *QUCC* 16 (1973): 129–33. The words quoted in the text are to be found on p. 132. Giangrande had already proposed this interpretation in *L'Épigramme grecque* (Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 14 [Geneva, 1968]), p. 112; cf. Gentili's comments in the same volume, p. 176.

7. "La ragazza di Lesbo," *QUCC* 16 (1973): 124–28; see esp. p. 127: "E allora 'l'altra' (ἄλλην) verso la quale 'sta a bocca aperta' la ragazza di Lesbo, che rifiuta la chioma bianca del poeta, sarà un'altra, una diversa . . . chioma (pubica), evidentemente nera, di un altro convitato."

8. Giangrande, "Lesbian Girl," p. 132; compare Gentili, "La ragazza di Lesbo," p. 127, with n. 11.

9. Giangrande, "Lesbian Girl," p. 132; compare Gentili, "La ragazza di Lesbo," pp. 125–26.

10. "Anacreon, Fr. 5 Diehl," *TAPA* 90 (1959): 44–46 = *From Archilochus to Pindar* (London, 1968), pp. 251–53.

11. "Anacreon and the Girl from Lesbos," *CP* 57 (1962): 109.

12. So sober a scholar as Kirkwood could write: "It is possible that *χάσκει* [sc. in Anacreon frag. 13] has an obscene implication; the use of *ἐγχάσκειν*, Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1349, and the fact that *λεσβιάζειν* could be identified with *fellatio* (Wilamowitz, *SuS* 72–73) suggest it. For discussion, see Michael Wigodsky . . . Giuseppe Giangrande . . . Davison . . ." (*Early Greek Monody*, p. 275, n. 35).

. . . You will practice deception and *scuff at* (*ἐγχανεῖ*). . . .”¹³ Giangrande’s *χάσκω* as *terminus technicus* is a fiction.¹⁴

In fact, all attempts to see a reference to *any* explicit sexual act in the final verse fail as interpretations of the poem as a whole. This little vignette is clearly conceived as taking place in the open; the occasion is social and involves, at the least, three persons—the old lover manqué, the young girl decked out in her elegant sandals, and a third party whom she prefers. Diogenes the Cynic dog may have engaged in public copulation, but such exhibitionism was as alien to ancient Greek mores as it is to ours. This Greek girl of fashion would hardly have proceeded to *fellatio*, or any other sexual act, with Anacreon looking on. The poem contains no bedroom scene.

Interpretation of the poem is chiefly complicated by the statement in lines 5–6 that the girl is from Lesbos. Alcaeus fragment 130. 32–33 Lobel–Page, Theophrastus apud Athenaeus 13. 610A, and Scholium A to *Iliad* 9. 129 all mention beauty contests on Lesbos. If Lesbian women were renowned for their beauty, the statement here could simply mean that the girl can afford to pick and choose; she is beautiful. It is also quite possible that Lesbos in Anacreon’s time already suggested female homosexuality. Sappho’s fame alone could adequately account for that. Unfortunately, if such were the case, this poem is the only extant evidence for it, and any formal argument as to the meaning of the poem based on the mention of Lesbos in lines 5–6 runs the risk, unavoidably, of circularity. Davison, Giangrande, Gentili, and M. Campbell all stress that there is no evidence contemporary with Anacreon to show that Lesbian women already had a reputation for lesbianism in the modern sense. That statement is true enough, but, given the scanty remains from this period, it is hardly significant, much less decisive. Curiously, these scholars ignore the fact that neither is there any contemporary evidence for Lesbian women as *fellatrices*. The evidence for that is the verb *λεσβιάζειν*, which first occurs in Aristophanes. When it is urged that we do not know when the *adjective* *Λέσβιος* first came to mean “lesbian,” that is also true, but irrelevant. This adjective need never have acquired such a meaning; to state that “she is from Lesbos,” as Anacreon does in lines 5–6, could still suggest lesbianism to those who associated the island with the practice.¹⁵ As noted, Sappho’s famous poems could have been quite sufficient to establish such an association.

We stand the best chance of establishing Anacreon’s meaning by undertaking, without presuppositions as far as possible, a careful analysis of the Greek itself in lines 5–8. The subject *ἡ* (5) is followed immediately by a parenthetical sentence (*ἐστιν γάρ ἀπ’ εὐκτίτου Λέσβου*) which interrupts the syntax and postpones the

13. For the meaning “scuff at,” see LSJ, s.v. *ἐγχάσκω* II, and MacDowell on Ar. *Vesp.* 721 *ἐγχάσκειν*: “‘laugh’ in the sense of ‘play a trick and get away with it.’ It resembles *χαίρω* in the sense of ‘act with impunity,’ except that *ἐγχάσκω* always has a hostile or disparaging tone. The person tricked is sometimes, as here, expressed in the dative. Cf. 1007, 1349, *Ach.* 221, *Knights* 1313, *Clouds* 1436, *Lys.* 272.” Clearly *ἐγχάσκω* is a colloquial verb expressive of contempt, not erotic passion.

14. It is not my intent to deny outright that *χάσκω*, given the appropriate surrounding context, could be used in connection with *fellatio*. For such a passage, apparently overlooked by all, see Lucian *Pseudol.* 27. (Even here there is no question of a *terminus technicus*; that remains a fiction.)

15. Implicit in the objections to the “lesbian” interpretation of lines 5–6 is the assumption that the meaning of the verb *λεσβιάζειν* (*fellare*) precludes the noun *Λέσβος* and the adjective *Λέσβιος* from having, or suggesting, another connotation (i.e., lesbianism). That is a non sequitur.

predicate. This parenthesis, by semantically qualifying *ἡ* and, at the same time, syntactically isolating it from its proper predicate, has the effect of making *ἡ* very emphatic: “But as for the girl, *she . . .*” (*vel sim.*). The *γάρ* in line 5 is anticipatory; it is the first of several devices designed to arouse our curiosity. Not until the end of line 7 do we discover what “she” is doing. For an exactly parallel sentence-structure, see Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae* 37–39:

δ γάρ ἀνήρ, ὁ φιλάτη,
Σαλαμίνιος γάρ ἐστιν φένειμ' ἔγω,
τὴν νύχθ' ὅλην ἥλαυνέ μ' ἐν τοῖς στρώμασιν.

The girl is from “well-founded” Lesbos. *Εὐκτίτος* (*εὖ-*) is epic diction and sets a correspondingly elevated tone;¹⁶ the epithet is a small, but significant, indication that Anacreon intends the words to be taken as complimentary—at least at this stage. Next comes the direct object, triply emphasized. *Τὴν ἐμὴν κόμην* is (1) separated from the subject by a parenthesis, (2) separated from its verb by a second parenthesis (*λεύκη γάρ*), and (3) marked as opposed to something to come by the *μέν*. When the verb at last occurs, it is an emphatic compound, *καταμέμφεται*. The word survives almost exclusively in prose; it is blunt, but not coarse, diction. This example is the oldest extant occurrence (not in LSJ). The structure of lines 5–7 is elaborate: subject plus parenthesis plus *τὴν μέν ἐμὴν κόμην* plus parenthesis plus verb. *Τὴν μέν ἐμὴν κόμην* is the centerpiece, as it were; the two parentheses isolate it syntactically from both sides. The consequence is that *τὴν ἐμὴν κόμην* is in a sort of “suspension,” which concentrates attention upon it in a most emphatic way. The *μέν* acquires considerable weight as a forward pointer by virtue of its association with *τὴν ἐμὴν κόμην* so placed.

When one then proceeds to *πρὸς δ(ε) ἀλλην τινὰ* (no further), it is all but unavoidable to supply mentally a corresponding *κόμην*. What other feminine substantive fits the syntactic pattern that has been so carefully set up? The apparent, and natural, sequence is thus: “She disparages my hair, on the one hand, for it is white, but as for a certain other head of hair (*she speaks words of praise because it is not white*).” That is the path down which Anacreon has been leading us. But the final word of the poem is not the verb expected, some Greek word for “praise” (the logical contrast to *καταμέμφεται*), but “gape at with mouth wide open.” Anacreon is disgruntled at his rejection and gets his revenge by the use of an insulting phrase. *Χάσκειν πρός* in this sense is clearly uncomplimentary and probably verges on slang usage. The comic poets so used it often; cf., e.g., Ar. *Eq.* 651 *πρὸς ἔμ' ἐκεχήνεσαν*; 804 *πρὸς σὲ κεχήνη*; id., *Nub.* 996 *πρὸς ταῦτα κεχηνώσ.* Van Leeuwen on *Equites* 651 accurately captures its tone: “*πρὸς ἔμ' ἐκεχήνεσαν] aperto ore*—quod stolidi admirantis avideque expectantis est—*me intuebantur.*” Thus the very emphatic verb that concludes the poem, so at variance with the elegant language used throughout the rest of it, and in particular with the complimentary adjectives associated with the girl (*ποικιλοσαμβάλω, εὐκτίτου*), clearly constitutes an ending *παρὰ προσδοκίαν*. Just how much of a *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* is the question.

16. On the epithet here, see A. E. Harvey, “Homeric Epithets,” p. 213.

There are two possibilities; they depend upon the meaning of *ἐστιν γάρ ἀπ'* *εὐκτίτον Λέσβον* in lines 5–6. (1) If that statement is taken at face value as a complimentary allusion to the girl's origins, then *κόμην* is to be understood with *ἄλλην* in line 6, and Anacreon's revenge consists solely in the use of an unflattering expression (*χάσκειν πρός*) to describe her misdirected attentions (as he sees it). The poem is heterosexual on this reading; the sense is acceptable. (2) If the statement that the girl is from Lesbos intimates that she is a lesbian—and that would not become apparent (deliberately so) until the final verse—then *ἄλλην* refers to a woman and the *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* is even more pronounced. If this interpretation is correct, *Λέσβον* and *ἄλλην* are each intentionally ambiguous: one should not then insist, with most scholars, that *ἄλλην* must refer *either* to "hair" or to "a girl" to the exclusion of the other. It may refer, at different levels, to *both*. In support of this reading of the poem is the fact that, if such were not Anacreon's intention, it would be a remarkable coincidence that both *Λέσβον* and *ἄλλην* admit of such pointed ambiguity.

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, we shall never be quite sure of Anacreon's meaning, for we are no longer in a position to know with certitude which of the two interpretations of *ἐστιν γάρ ἀπ'* *εὐκτίτον Λέσβον* is correct. And if such a conclusion appear unsatisfactory to some, I can but refer them to Grotius: "nescire quaedam magna pars sapientiae est." To end on a more positive note, it seems to me perfectly safe to assert that one or the other of these two interpretations of the poem must be correct. There is no *tertium quid*; all other proposals are to be rejected.¹⁷

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17. Readers who notice no reference to L. Woodbury, "Gold Hair and Grey, or The Game of Love: Anacreon Fr. 13:358 *PMG*, 13 Gentili," *TAPA* 109 (1979): 277–87, should ascribe the omission to simple ignorance on my part, and I am grateful to Prof. Anthony Podlecki for remedying it some time after the present article had been accepted by *CP*. Although I do not agree with Prof. Woodbury's conclusion, I believe that his article is a serious contribution to the study of this poem.

PERSONAL DISAGREEMENTS IN THE MANUSCRIPTS OF TERENCE

When copying ancient dramatic texts, scribes frequently changed, consciously or unconsciously, the personal endings of verbal forms. A systematic study of the apparatus in editions of tragedies and comedies would produce a long list of variants similar to those which appear, for example, in the manuscripts of the *Medea* of Euripides: 85 *γι(γ)νώσκεις* ~ *γινώσκει*; 267 *δρᾶσον* ~ *δράσω*; 551 *μετέστη* ~ *μετέστην*; 640 *προσβάλ(λ)οι* ~ *προσβάλοιμι*; 746 *ὅμνυ* ~ *ὅμνυμι*; 1135 *τέρψειας* ~ *τέρψειαν*.¹ An obvious reason for these "personal disagreements" is that there

1. I include cases where a second person imperative form is found in the tradition alongside a first or third person form in a different mood.