

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

THREE PLACES IN PLATO'S *SYMPOSIUM*

Symposium 174B:

Ἔπου τοίνυν, ἔφη, ἵνα καὶ τὴν παροιμίαν διαφθείρωμεν μεταβαλόντες, ὥς ἄρα καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἐπὶ δαίτας ἴασιν αὐτόματοι ἀγαθοί. Ὅμηρος μὲν γὰρ κινδυνεύει οὐ μόνον διαφθεῖραι ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑβρίσαι εἰς ταύτην τὴν παροιμίαν κτλ.

ἀγαθῶν : Ἐγάθων' Lachmann

Two versions of the proverb alluded to here are attested: αὐτόματοι δ' ἀγαθοὶ ἀγαθῶν ἐπὶ δαίτας ἴασιν (or ἵενται); and αὐτόματοι δ' ἀγαθοὶ δειλῶν ἐπὶ δαίτας ἴασιν. Scholars agree neither on which version is original nor on which Plato had in mind nor on what he actually wrote here (see Bury *ad loc.* for discussion and further details). That this passage caused difficulties already in antiquity is clear from Athenaeus (5. 178 A–E), Zenobius 2. 19, and the T scholium to Plato (*ad loc.*).

I consider it all but certain that the original version of the proverb had ἀγαθῶν and that δειλῶν arose as a comic parody thereof, this latter version being explicitly attested for Eupolis (frag. 315 Kassel–Austin = frag. 289 Kock). The most recent statement, that of Kassel and Austin, is the best summation of the facts:

Hesiodi παλαιὸν λόγον Eupolim substituto δειλῶν pro ἀγαθῶν ludibundum immutavisse diximus ad Cratin. fr. 182 nec credimus in verbis ἵνα καὶ τὴν παροιμίαν διαφθείρωμεν μεταβάλλοντες, ὥς ἄρα καὶ ἀγαθῶν (Ἐγάθων' i.e. Ἐγάθωνι Lachmann Babr. p. xix) ἐπὶ δαίτας ἴασιν αὐτόματοι ἀγαθοί Platoni Eupolideam 'proverbii' formam, quod multis placuit, pro prisca et vera observatam esse. nobis Lachmann rectam viam ingressus esse videtur (vid. imprimis Hug *ad locum* et Josifovič *Phil.* 91, 1936, 52–58), sed cum Ἐγάθων' neque scripturae rationi neque verborum structurae satisfaciat (vid. Wil. *Platon* II² p. 358 et Dover *ad loc.*), Ἐγάθωνος mavult Kassel; numeros Plato soluto semel hexametro primario non curavit.

Lachmann's Ἐγάθων', though clever, is awkward Greek and would have been intelligible only in *scriptio plena*, which some may wish to contemplate. Nevertheless, it has the real merit of providing a point to Plato's rewriting of the proverb—just the sort of point that is wanted, since here Socrates is persuading an uninvited guest to go to *Agathon's* for dinner.

K. J. Dover, who retains ἀγαθῶν and believes that the proverb Plato had in mind was δειλῶν, as in Eupolis, remarks (*ad loc.*): "The proverb in Hesiod [frag. 264 M.–W.] is a complete hexameter; but since very many proverbs had the metrical form $\approx - \approx - \approx - \approx -$ Plato has inverted the ingredients of the verse so as to start off in that rhythm." This seems beside the mark. If Plato had

Permission to reprint a note in this section may be obtained only from the author.

revised so as to produce an *independent* paroemiac, and nothing more, this metrical sequence might have been significant. As it is, Plato's rewriting dismantles the meter of the whole saying (Kassel and Austin are correct on this):¹ the reason for the change in word-order is surely not metrical at all, but rather to place the word that points the pun in the emphatic first position; the corresponding ἀγαθοί is placed at the end for comparable considerations of emphasis.

Kassel's Ἀγάθων(ος) is an improvement on Lachmann's Ἀγάθων, but if Plato had written that, the sense would have been so obvious that corruption is unlikely. The following form seems to me to give a more effective play on words, and one all but doomed from the start to suffer corruption at the hands of uncomprehending scribes: Ἀγαθών(ων) ἐπὶ δαΐτας ἴασιν αὐτόματοι ἀγαθοί. The generalizing plural Ἀγαθώνων (= "Agathon and people like him") suits the proverb better than the singular would and echoes the original ἀγαθὼν with a jingle that cannot be reproduced in English. For such plurals in Plato, see *Symposium* 218A–B καὶ ὁρῶν αὐ Φαίδρου, Ἀγάθωνας, Ἐρυξιμάχους, Πausanίας, Ἀριστοδήμους τε καὶ Ἀριστοφάνους; *Phaedrus* 229D ὄχλος τοιούτων Γοργόνων καὶ Πηγάσων; *Menexenus* 245D οὐ . . . Πέλοπες οὐδὲ Κάδμοι; *Theaetetus* 169B Ἡρακλέες τε καὶ Θησέες.²

Symposium 178A–C:

τὸ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατον εἶναι τὸν θεὸν τίμιον, ἡ δ' ὅς· τεκμήριον δὲ τούτου· γονῆς γὰρ Ἑρωτος οὗτ' εἰσὶν οὔτε λέγονται ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὔτε ἰδιώτου οὔτε ποιητοῦ, ἀλλ' Ἡσιόδος πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γενέσθαι,

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

Γαί' εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἕδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ,

ἡ δ' Ἑρος.

φησὶ μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρωτα. Παρμενίδης δὲ τὴν γένεσιν λέγει

πρώτιστον μὲν Ἑρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων.

Ἡσιόδω δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλειω ὁμολογεῖ. οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται ὃ Ἑρως ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατος εἶναι.

This is the text as it comes down in the manuscripts (with a minor variant or two), and it is, essentially, the text that Léon Robin (among recent editors) prints in the Budé edition. (He inserts δὴ after φησὶ in B8; see below.) The soundness of the paradosis has often, and rightly, been questioned. The two sentences that have been matter of dispute are B8–9 φησὶ μετὰ τὸ Χάος . . .

1. Compare Pl. *Phd.* 69C: εἰσὶν γὰρ δὴ, [ὥς] φασιν οἱ περὶ τὰς τελετάς, "ναρθηκοφόροι μὲν πολλοί, βάκχοι δὲ τε παῦροι." Plato here quotes—with two changes in the word order, one of which dismantles the meter—a hexameter that was a familiar "Orphic" saying, namely, πολλοὶ μὲν ναρθηκοφόροι παῦροι δὲ τε βάκχοι (= frag. 235 Kern, who rightly describes it as a "celeberrimus versus"). John Burnet in his commentary to the *Phaedo*, loc. cit., appositely remarked: "Plato often adapts the beginning of a verse to his own prose, preferring to slip into the verse rather than give a formal quotation. The original must have been πολλοὶ μὲν ναρθηκοφόροι." (It was; Kern gives the evidence.) I add only that here, too, Plato's version begins with an apparent paroemiac; that is accident.

2. Other examples of this usage, with discussion, can be found in E. Schwyzler and A. Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik*³, vol. 2 (Munich, 1966), p. 45; see also E. Fraenkel's note to Aesch. *Ag.* 1438.

"Ερωτα and C1 'Ησιόδω δὲ καὶ 'Ακουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ; there has been considerable diversity in the treatment of them. A number of scholars—A. Hommel seems to have been the first to do so—delete B8–9 as an interpolation, while many have followed F. A. Wolf in transposing 'Ησιόδω . . . ὁμολογεῖ so as to come immediately after the quotation from Hesiod. Thus Bury, for example, prints the following version:

τὸ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατον εἶναι τὸν θεὸν τίμιον, ἡ δ' ὅς· τεκμήριον δὲ τούτου·
γονῆς γὰρ "Ερωτος οὐτ' εἰσὶν οὔτε λέγονται ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὔτε ἰδιώτου οὔτε ποιητοῦ,
ἀλλ' "Ησιόδος πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γενέσθαι,

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

Γαί' εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ,
ἡδ' "Ερος.

'Ησιόδω δὲ καὶ 'Ακουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ [φησὶ μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ "Ερωτα]. Παρμενίδης δὲ τὴν Γένεσιν λέγει

πρώτιστον μὲν "Ερωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων.

οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται ὃ "Ερος ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατος εἶναι.

This I take to be the correct treatment of the passage; but both John Burnet, in the OCT, and K. J. Dover, the most recent editor, print what will be seen, I hope, to be a Gordian solution:

τὸ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατον εἶναι τὸν θεὸν τίμιον, ἡ δ' ὅς· τεκμήριον δὲ τούτου·
γονῆς γὰρ "Ερωτος οὔτε εἰσὶν οὔτε λέγονται ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὔτε ἰδιώτου οὔτε ποιητοῦ,
ἀλλ' "Ησιόδος πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γενέσθαι,

αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα

Γαί' εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ,
ἡδ' "Ερος.

'Ησιόδω δὲ καὶ 'Ακουσίλεως σύμφησιν μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ "Ερωτα. Παρμενίδης δὲ τὴν γένεσιν λέγει·

πρώτιστον μὲν "Ερωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων.

οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται ὃ "Ερος ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατος εἶναι.

This involves transposing 'Ησιόδω δὲ καὶ 'Ακουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ from its place in the manuscripts at C1, and replacing both ὁμολογεῖ and φησὶ (in B8) by σύμφησιν on the "authority" of Stobaeus. Dover writes (at 178B8): "The probability is that Plato wrote here the words which in the manuscripts come after the quotation (B11) from Parmenides, and that the word φησὶ is a stopgap interpolation occasioned by the misplacing. Stobaeus (*Eclogae* 1. 9. 12) omits the quotations from B3–11 (they have already been given, on their own, in 1. 9. 5 and 1. 9. 6), and then goes on 'Ησιόδω δὲ καὶ 'Ακουσίλεως ξύμφησιν ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις (sic) εἶναι; from this the classical and characteristically Platonic σύμφησι is worth rescuing, in preference to the banal ὁμολογεῖ of the manuscripts."

It seems to me that the evidence of Stobaeus points in another direction; I quote the passage more fully:

τὸ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πρεσβύτατον εἶναι τῶν θεῶν τίμιον, ἡ δ' ὅς· τεκμήριον δὲ τούτου·
γοναὶ γὰρ "Ερωτος οὐτ' εἰσὶν οὔτε λέγονται ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὔτε ἰδιώτου οὔτε ποιητοῦ,
ἀλλὰ "Ησιόδος πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γίνεσθαι, μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι,
Γῆν τε καὶ "Ερωτα. 'Ησιόδω δὲ καὶ 'Ακουσίλεως ξύμφησιν ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις
εἶναι·

Clearly Stobaeus, once he had omitted the quotations from Hesiod and Parmenides, found it necessary to make some adaptations to his abridged text. We can still make out the joins in his handiwork. After all mention of Parmenides had been dropped, Stobaeus felt that the remaining two authorities adduced, Hesiod and Acusilaus, no longer justified the statement οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται κτλ. in C1, and accordingly he omitted it. Note, however, that the infinitive clause that ξύμφησιν introduces in Stobaeus is ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις εἶναι, not μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρώτα (as in the reconstructed text printed by Burnet and Dover). In Stobaeus this latter clause is introduced by φησὶ, just as in the manuscripts of Plato. What Stobaeus has in fact done is to combine twice two sentences into one.

The first telescoping is to be seen in the omission of the quotation from Hesiod along with the immediately following φησὶ (to avoid the redundant sequence . . . φησὶ γενέσθαι φησὶ . . .), the result being: . . . Ἡσιόδος πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γίγνεσθαι, μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρώτα. The most awkward absence of a connective for μετὰ τὸ Χάος κτλ. is a telltale indication of careless abridgement.³ The second telescoping consists in compressing Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ. οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται ὁ Ἑρως ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις εἶναι into Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ξύμφησιν ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις εἶναι. Observe that since the words concluding the immediately preceding sentence in Stobaeus' version are Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρώτα, *both* these ought naturally to be the understood subject of ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις εἶναι. In other words, πρεσβυτάτοις may be, not an accidental corruption of Plato's πρεσβύτατος, but a deliberate change to accommodate the new version.⁴ The main point that all this demonstrates is that Stobaeus read a text of Plato essentially identical with that of our manuscripts of Plato—a text showing the order printed, for example, by Robin (see above).

And what of Stobaeus' ξύμφησιν? It should be clear from this analysis of his rather drastic rewriting of Plato that the verb can easily be Stobaeus' own contribution: one ought not to introduce it into the text of Plato—certainly not to govern an infinitive clause quite distinct from the clause that ξύμφησιν governs in Stobaeus.⁵ It is not difficult to conjecture why Stobaeus chose to change verbs. As we have seen, his ξύμφησιν actually replaces not one but two occurrences of ὁμολογῶ, involving both an active and a passive form (ὁμολογεῖ and ὁμολογεῖται). It is possible that, under the circumstances, he preferred to use an entirely different verb. Be that as it may, both ὁμολογῶ and σύμφημι may govern either a dative or an infinitive clause. Stobaeus' revision (Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ξύμφησιν ἐν τοῖς πρεσβυτάτοις εἶναι) combines both

3. Hermann Diels (*Vorsokr.*⁹ 9 B 2 [1:53. 16–22]) conjectured <καὶ> μετὰ, easy enough in itself, although μετὰ τὸ Χάος <δὲ> or μετὰ <δὲ> τὸ Χάος would have been preferable; but any change is probably a misguided attempt to improve upon Stobaeus' own words.

4. The revised syntax of the sentence required *some* change; πρεσβυτάτος could not have remained in the nominative—assuming, of course, that Stobaeus' copy had -τος, not an already corrupt -τοις.

5. Why Dover describes ξύμφησι as "classical and characteristically Platonic" and ὁμολογεῖ as "banal" I do not understand. Both verbs are classical and ὁμολογῶ is far commoner in Plato than σύμφημι. If he is referring to the particular *form*, ὁμολογεῖ occurs some dozen times in Plato, σύμφημι never.

constructions, unlike Plato's original. This may be significant. Elsewhere this combination is found with σύμφημι (see Soph. *OT* 553 ζύμφημί σοι ταῦτ' ἐνδικ' εἰρησθαι, Pl. *Lach.* 199A σὺ ἡμῖν, ὦ Νικία, σύμφης περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν τὴν αὐτὴν ἐπιστήμην καὶ ἐσομένων καὶ γιγνομένων καὶ γεγονότων ἐπαΐειν, [Pl.] *Hipparch.* 232B σύμφης γοῦν ἡμῖν πάντα τὰ κέρδη ἀγαθὰ εἶναι). By contrast, unless I have missed something, the double construction appears to be avoided with ὁμολογῶ. I know of no example, and Stobaeus' native ear may well have guided him instinctively to the more idiomatic verb for this construction.

Let us now return to the passage in Plato. The sentence φησί μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρῶτα is shown to be an interpolation by the absence of the stylistically mandatory connective (sc. γάρ; cf. below, n. 7). Without such a connective the sentence is simply too abrupt. (Robin's attempt to get around this by conjecturing φησί <δὴ> introduces a collocation unattested for Plato.) Many have felt the awkwardness of the missing particle, hence the various rewritings of the passage. Now, though the significance of the absence of a connecting word has sometimes been appreciated for proving what this sentence is *not*—namely, genuine—the significance of the same missing word for demonstrating what the sentence is does not seem to have been adequately grasped.

Whether the subject of φησί is Hesiod or Acusilaus (which depends on where one places the sentence) may be ignored for the moment. There is a context in which such a sentence, with φησί and without connective, is not only acceptable Greek but common. That context is the isolated scholium or explanatory marginal gloss, where—since it forms no part of a connected period but is self-contained—a connecting particle is not only unnecessary but even inappropriate. Examples of independent φησί-statements are numerous (see, e.g., Σ Pl. *Phdr.* 227A φησὶν Ὀλυμπιόδωρος . . . ὡς πρῶτος ὁ Φαῖδρος διάλογος τῷ Πλάτῳ γέγραπται, *ibid.* 261D Ζήνωνά φησι τὸν Παρμενίδου ἐταῖρον κτλ., Σ Pl. *Resp.* 339A ὁ Πρόκλος φησί τὴν μὲν Δώριον ἀρμονίαν εἰς παιδείαν ἐξαρκεῖν κτλ., *ibid.* 424A Τιμαῖός φησι ταύτην λεχθῆναι τὴν παροιμίαν κτλ.).

Those scholars, therefore, who pronounced the words φησί μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρῶτα a marginal gloss were correct. Furthermore, the sentence surely makes more sense as an explanation, whether founded on fact or mere inference,⁶ of Acusilaus' beliefs than as an explanation of Hesiod's, which have already been spelled out. It is also clear, as many have seen, that the statement Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ makes a better fit at B8, immediately after the Hesiod quotation, than after the Parmenides quotation, where it appears in the manuscripts.⁷ Remove the φησί-sentence to the margin and restore the Acusilaus-sentence to B8 and the result is Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ. Παρμενίδης δὲ τὴν γένεσιν λέγει. . . . The two clauses have almost the same number of letters, both begin with a proper name followed

6. Contrast what is reported of Acusilaus in Diels-Kranz, *Vorsokr.*⁹ B 1 (1:53, 7–15).

7. Some accept this transposition *and* retain the φησί-sentence, thus: Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ· φησί μετὰ τὸ Χάος δύο τούτω γενέσθαι, Γῆν τε καὶ Ἑρῶτα. This sequence shows strikingly how bad a join the φησί-clause makes. Any Greek would have written φησί γάρ here, and such φησί γάρ . . . explanatory sentences are so common, both in the writings of Plato and elsewhere, that any documentation would be superfluous.

by a δέ, and, most significantly, they both end with sequences of letters that in uncials appear, respectively, thus: . . . COMOLOΓΕΙ . . . ΕCINAEΓΕΙ . . . This is a situation that explains at once how the first sentence could have been accidentally omitted by a leap of the eye. The error would then have been caught and Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ written in the margin—now next to the separate marginal sentence φησὶ μετὰ τὸ Χάος κτλ. The next copyist carelessly “restored” both sentences to the text proper, putting Ἡσιόδῳ δὲ καὶ Ἀκουσίλεως ὁμολογεῖ at C1, because it seemed to belong with οὕτω πολλαχόθεν ὁμολογεῖται, and φησὶ μετὰ τὸ Χάος κτλ. at B8, because it seemed to echo B3–7 πρῶτον μὲν Χάος φησὶ γενέσθαι κτλ.

This has been a long tale, but it is perhaps justified as cautionary; most current editions of the *Symposium* print a seriously flawed version of the text here.

Symposium 197A–B:

τοξικὴν γε μὴν καὶ ἰατρικὴν καὶ μαντικὴν Ἀπόλλων ἀνὴρ ἔπιθυμίας καὶ ἔρωτος ἡγεμονεύσαντος, ὥστε καὶ οὗτος Ἔρωτος ἂν εἴη μαθητής, καὶ Μοῦσαι μουσικῆς καὶ Ἥφαιστος χαλκείας καὶ Ἀθηνᾶ ἰστοουργίας καὶ “Ζεὺς κυβερνᾶν θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων.”

The *mise-en-scène* of the dialogue, it will be remembered, is a supper party given by the poet Agathon to celebrate his victory in tragic competition in 416 B.C. The words set out above come from Agathon’s own speech in praise of Eros. He has just announced (196D) that he intends to honor “our art,” that is, tragedy, just as Eryximachus has already honored his art, medicine. In the space of less than one page of OCT text Agathon introduces three poetic tags, all apparent quotations from actual tragedies. First, 196C: καὶ μὴν εἰς γε ἀνδρείαν Ἔρωτι “οὐδ’ Ἄρης ἀνθίσταται,” which is now widely acknowledged to be from Sophocles’ *Thyestes* (frag. 256 πρὸς τὴν ἀνάγκην οὐδ’ Ἄρης ἀνθίσταται). Then 196E: πᾶς γοῦν ποιητής γίγνεται, “κἂν ἄμουσος ἢ τὸ πρὶν” οὐ ἂν Ἔρωσ ἄψηται, from the *Stheneboea* of Euripides (frag. 663 ποιητὴν δ’ ἄρα / Ἔρωσ διδάσκει, κἂν ἄμουσος ἢ τὸ πρὶν). Lastly, here, 197B: . . . Ζεὺς κυβερνᾶν θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων, which Hermann Usener was the first to identify as a tragic fragment. Kannicht and Snell print it thus (trag. frag. adesp. 348 g): x Ζεὺς κυβερνᾶν θεῶν τε ἀνθρώπων ~ —. Both the metaphorical use of κυβερνᾶν and the rare genitive construction (on the analogy of ἄρχειν and other verbs of ruling) instead of the usual accusative clearly mark the phrase as poetic, and it is surprising that Dover, exceptionally among editors, is silent here.

Here the matter now stands; more can perhaps be said. In the case of the two other quotations it happens that we can confirm independently that the gods who appear in Plato were the gods of the original contexts, Ares in Sophocles and Eros in Euripides. Agathon’s speech in the *Symposium* is a most carefully constructed composition; in particular, it is characterized by considerable balancing of its parts. We may assume with confidence that Zeus was the god who “piloted” gods and men in the original context as well as in Plato’s (whether or not the actual word Ζεὺς occurred immediately before κυβερνᾶν). This does not take us very far, of course, for Zeus would be the most likely candidate in any

event. But perhaps there is a more significant, and more subtle, type of balance present here. Agathon, who wished to honor his own art, tragedy—and that means also honoring tragedians—has just quoted Sophocles and Euripides. Is it not probable that the third (and final) tragic quotation should be removed from the limbo of the adespota and be assigned to the third of the great tragedians, Aeschylus? Aristophanes' *Frogs* (66–85, 758–94, 1515–23) shows that the classical triad of tragedians, though not established in 404 B.C., was well on its way to becoming such. (The only other real candidate there is Agathon himself; Iophon is hardly treated with equal respect.) As R. Pfeiffer observes, “the passionate debate about the pre-eminence among the Attic tragedians, still going on in Aristophanes' *Frogs*, must have been settled by the middle or second half of the fourth century B.C. when Heraclides Ponticus wrote *Περὶ τῶν τριῶν τραγωδοποιῶν*.”⁸ This gives us, of course, only a demonstrable terminus post quem; there is nothing inherently improbable in the existence of the canon Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides already a bit earlier than Heraclides' work, that is, at the time of the composition of the *Symposium*.

The image of Zeus the helmsman in this fragment would be very appropriate to Aeschylus (see, e.g., Fraenkel on Aesch. *Ag.* 182–83), but that is not proof. It might be worthwhile, however, to call attention to another passage for the combination Plato–Aeschylus–helmsman, *Euthydemus* 291D: . . . καὶ ἀτεχνῶς κατὰ τὸ Αἰσχύλου ἱαμβεῖον [cf. *Sept.* 2–3] μόνη ἐν τῇ πρύμνῃ καθῆσθαι τῆς πόλεως, πάντα κυβερνῶσα καὶ πάντων ἄρχουσα πάντα χρήσιμα ποιεῖν.

R. RENEHAN
University of California,
Santa Barbara

8. *History of Classical Scholarship from the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford, 1968), p. 204.

NEW EVIDENCE FOR THE DATING OF ARISTOTLE *METEOROLOGICA* 1–3

Previous attempts to date *Meteorologica* 1–3 have been based on four passages:¹

(a) At 2 362b9 the text says the constellation of the Crown (Corona Borealis) appears directly overhead when it is on the meridian. J. L. Ideler claimed that this statement would place Aristotle at the latitude of Athens and would therefore imply a date after 335 or before 347, when Aristotle was in Athens.² This conclusion assumes an improbably high degree of accuracy in the observation: how, for example, does one determine the center of the constellation, when a

1. *Meteorologica* 4 is widely held to be a separate work; *Meteorologica* 1–3 seem to be a compilation.

2. The reference is to J. L. Ideler, *Aristotelis "Meteorologicum" Libri IV*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1836), p. ix, which we have not been able to see. It is cited in the Loeb *Meteorologica*, trans. H. D. P. Lee (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1978), p. xxiv. Mathematical formulae for calculating the past positions of stars, which change because of a wobble in the earth's axis of rotation (resulting in a phenomenon known as precession), were published in German in 1830 by F. W. Bessel.