

# AN EMENDATION IN PORPHYRY'S COMMENTARY ON PTOLEMY'S *HARMONICS*

ἐγὼ δὲ τοσούτου δέω παραιτεῖσθαι χρῆσθαι τοῖς ὑγιῶς τισιν εἰρημένοις, ὥστε καὶ εὐξαίμην  
ἂν πάντας τὰ αὐτὰ λέγειν περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ ὡς ὁ Σωκράτης ἔφασκε διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν, καὶ οὐκ  
ἂν ἦν ἀναμφίλεκτος περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἔρις.

So far am I from rejecting the use of what has been well stated by others, that I would wish that everyone said the same things about the same things and, as Socrates puts it, in the same words, and then there would be no undisputed quarrelling among men about the matters at hand.

Porph., in *Harm.* p. 5.3–6 Düring

There are two allusions here, the first to Plato, *Symposium* 221e, the second (unnoticed by previous editors of Porphyry) to Euripides, *Phoenissae* 499–500 εἰ πᾶσι ταῦτὸ καλὸν ἔφν σοφὸν θ' ἄμα, / οὐκ ἦν ἂν ἀμφίλεκτος ἀνθρώποις ἔρις.<sup>1</sup> There is also one negation too many, for Porphyry's point is that his approach would eliminate scholarly squabbling rather than rendering it 'undisputed'. The repetition of the letters *αν* at the beginning of the final clause points the way to a solution: ἀμφίλεκτος ought to be read for ἀναμφίλεκτος. What is less clear is where we ought to put ἂν, which in prose is routinely second word in its clause and regularly follows initial negative.<sup>2</sup> If Porphyry quoted *Phoenissae* accurately, the fact that in the Euripidean line ἂν appears in third position in its clause might have led a copyist who thought in terms of prose order to transform the letters into a privative prefix before ἀμφίλεκτος, after which a second copyist or corrector will have added ἂν after οὐκ. Since Porphyry has adapted the verse in other ways, by placing a definite article before ἀνθρώποις and adding περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, however, it seems more likely that he put the line in prose order himself by writing οὐκ ἂν ἦν ἀμφίλεκτος, and that a scribe familiar with Euripides subsequently 'corrected' the text by adding a second ἂν (later attached to ἀμφίλεκτος) after the verb.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In commentaries on technical subjects, the prologue tends to be the place for literary adornment. For the citation of E. *Ph.* 499–500 in a similar context, cf. Gal., *De pulsuum differentiis* 8.636f. Kühn. There may also be an allusion to the passage at Longin. 7.4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Jacob Wackernagel, *Kleine Schriften* I (Göttingen, 1955), 45–70; Eduard Fraenkel, *Kleine Beiträge zur Klassischen Philologie* I (Rome, 1964), 93–122.

<sup>3</sup> For this phenomenon elsewhere, see W. S. Barrett (ed.), *Euripides: Hippolytus* (Oxford, 1964), 429–30. Thanks are due an anonymous referee, whose careful comments greatly improved this paper.

## CORRECTION

In the article by D. L. Cairns, “‘Off with her αἰδώς’: Herodotus 1.8.3–4”, *CQ* 46.1 (May 1996), 78–83, a mistake was made in the setting of the opening sentence: please read ‘contrive’, not ‘contrived’.