

## NOTAS E INFORMACIÓN

### EN LA MUERTE DEL PROFESOR GIANGRANDE

Con gran pesar recibimos la triste noticia del fallecimiento, el 12 de junio de 2013, del Prof. Giuseppe Giangrande, políglota y eximio filólogo clásico, de manera preferente en el campo de la Filología Griega, cuyo prestigio fue reconocido con varios Doctorados *honoris causa* por universidades de distintos países. Es imposible dar en estas breves líneas una impresión completa de sus numerosas actividades. Los campos en los que investigó y en los que cosechó las más prestigiosas publicaciones fueron sobre todo la poesía helenística y la crítica textual. Desde su cátedra de la Universidad de Londres difundía su saber y su magisterio de aguda y certera interpretación de los textos. Se relacionó con muchos Departamentos de Filología Clásica españoles, que él tenía en gran estima y en los que ha dejado una grande y fructuosa huella. Vino a nuestro país con frecuencia para dictar conferencias y aquí contaba con numerosos colegas y amigos. Fueron testigos de su presencia y brillantez filológica universidades como las de Cádiz, Sevilla, Valladolid, Málaga, León, etc., y en particular la de Oviedo, con la que mantenía estrechos vínculos académicos y de amistad, que visitó en varias ocasiones, la última todavía en abril de 2011. *Emerita* acogió en sus páginas varias de sus contribuciones. Bajo estas líneas puede leerse un último trabajo, que envió a esta revista, ahora póstumo. Su recuerdo como sabio, persona cercana e incansable investigador permanecerá para siempre con nosotros.

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### Written Composition and Early Greek Lyric Poetry

Composición escrita y primera poesía lírica griega

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*Resumen:* Se pone de relieve que la transmisión de la poesía lírica griega fue escrita, no oral.

*Palabras clave:* poesía lírica griega; escritura.

*Abstract:* The written, not oral, transmission of Greek lyric poetry is emphasized.

*Key words:* written poetry; oral poetry; Greek lyric poetry.

In a recent paper, Carey 2012, p. 62 ff., offers to classics undergraduates and to Greekless students (hence the English translation added to the texts he quotes) a useful survey of well-known items such as the characteristics, the *ethos* and the sociological background of invective as a literary form in Greek archaic poetry. The paper serves its didactic purposes impeccably, but its usefulness is, alas, marred by the fact that the author was (when a student) initiated to the cult of the now, as far as I can see, fortunately defunct «oral poetry», a fatal disease of the intellect which decades ago became endemic amongst British classicists until it was providentially cured and wiped out by eminent German scholars, who invited me to support them<sup>1</sup>.

Carey's initiation to the cult in question has caused him to misconceive of the process whereby early Greek lyric poetry was produced (i.e. composed) and disseminated: I deem it necessary to correct such misconception of his lest it might lead astray the inexperienced student. Carey, as a devotee of «oralism», believes that poets like Hipponax, Sappho, Alcaeus, Archilochus, etc., extemporized their poems orally, without having prepared a written text, in front of a convened audience: the members of the audience, according to Carey, ensured the «widespread dissemination» (2012, p. 71) of the said orally delivered poems by «memorization»: that is to say, they «memorized» every line of such poems which they «experienced aurally» (2012, p. 63) and recited the poems thus memorized to newly convened audiences: this way of making the memorized poems «circulate orally» (2012, p. 63) was «indefinitely» (2012, p. 77) replicated, so that the poetry originally recited by Sappho, Hipponax, Archilochus, etc., could reach «posterity... *ad infinitum*» (2012, p. 77).

The process imagined by Carey cannot possibly have taken place. How could any member of the audience miraculously «memorize», like a sort of human tape-recorder, the «whole text» (2012, p. 63) of poems like Archilochus fr. 196a (2012, p. 64 ff.), Hipponax fr. 115 (2012, p. 70 ff.) or Alcaeus fr. 127 (2012, p. 73 f.), i.e. memorize them line by line, «à mesure que» each line was uttered *una tantum* and not at dictation speed by the poet? And why should anybody, having thus memorized a poem recited «in performance» (2012, p. 71) by one of the lyric poets just mentioned, wish to repeat orally its memorized wording to anybody else, in a sort of vicarious «reperformance» (*ibid.*)? Significantly, no such «reperformance» is recorded.

Carey's postulation of a chain of subsequent human tape-recorders is patently untenable: it is, *par surcroît*, unnecessary, because we know that written poetry did circulate in Greece at least as early as in Hesiod's days (cf. *supra*, note 1).

By way of appendix, it must be noted that Carey 2012, mesmerized by his oralistic creed, has misunderstood Sappho fr. 55, quoted on page 58 of his article:

<sup>1</sup> On all this cf. especially Giangrande 1972, p. 189 ff. and White 1992, p. 39.

κατθάνοισα δὲ κείσῃ οὐδέ ποτα μναμοσύνα σέθεν  
ἔσσετ' οὐδὲ ποκ' ὕστερον· οὐ γὰρ πεδέχητις βρόδων  
τῶν ἐκ Πιερίας ἀλλ' ἀφανῆς καὶ Άιδα δόμῳ  
φοιτάσῃς πεδ' ἀμαύρων νεκύων ἔκπεποταμένα.

In death you will lie and there will be no remembrance of you ever  
at any time in future. For you have no share in the roses  
from Pieria. But invisible in the house of Hades too  
You will wander among the pale dead one you have flitted off.

Whether or not Sappho mentioned the name of the woman is irrelevant: Sappho wrote (Stob. *Flor.* IV, 12) πρὸς ἀπαίδευτον γυναῖκα, and accordingly says that the woman will not be remembered (οὐδέ ποτα μναμοσύνα σέθεν κ.τ.λ.) not because she was «nameless» (i.e. because her name was not orally mentioned by Sappho), but explicitly because (οὐ γὰρ κ.τ.λ.) —I quote Edmonds' accurate translation in his Loeb edition— «you have no part in the roses that come from Pieria», i.e. because she, unlike the famous poetess Sappho, did not compose poetry, which makes its author famous. As of course all the critics have comprehended (e.g. Edmonds), ἀφανῆς means not ‘invisible’, as Carey erroneously thinks (the dead are not invisible in Hades) but ‘unknown’ and so does ἀμαύρων, ‘obscure’ = ‘unknown’.

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