whom the Demos elects, two from the whole body of the citi-
zens, one from the Eumolpidai, and one from the Kerykes?’. It
is a carefully contrived arrangement; but for the Epidauria it is
wholly set aside. A quite different official, the Arkhon, is put in
charge. The reason may not be solely because it was a late cre-
tion, nor because the Arkhon marshalled other processions as
well, but rather because for the Mystai it was an unlucky day;
at least, they stayed indoors. Unlucky or not, the day of the Epi-
dauria gave them a rest in preparation for the ensuing strenuous
days of the Mysteries. The relatively new festival was meant to
be distinct, and giving it to the Arkhon helped to emphasize this.

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ON THE FIRST VERSE OF EURIPIDES’
ELEKTRA

Dedicated to A Turyn on the
occasion of his 70th birthday.

My dear Turyn,
I take this opportunity to wish you πάντα ωαλά and to iterate
the profession of my indebtedness to you. We share a concern
with Euripides; it therefore seems proper on this occasion to
offer you a few lines about him.

Step by step, and largely through your immense labours,
we have gained some clarity about the extant evidence for his
plays – its kind, value and shortcomings; and we know that,
without a well-founded notion of the history of his text, any
approach to his poetry is liable to miss the mark. I am not now,
of course, speaking of those who, for the benefit of the Greek-
less crowd, translate corrupt texts as fluently as sound ones, but
of those who are concerned to grasp the real word of the real
poet. They will, I feel sure, before long be provided, by students
younger than you and I, with the full evidence for the Byzantine
triad; for the rest of the plays with scholia, the same has already
been achieved or, at any rate, is within our grasp. And, finally,
concerning the ‘alphabetic plays’, we know that the slender evi-
dence is basically authoritative but beset with numberless cor-
rupture small and great (he who will not believe his eyes may consider the ancient citations listed e.g. by Wilamowitz on pp. 218f of his Einleitung or, now, the papyrus of Helena). Once you really know what the transmitted wording is, you will be in a position to evaluate, and deal with, problematical detail. This would be the purpose of a new and truly critical edition or, perhaps, of a long critical hypomnema. Within the present limited frame, may I invite you to glance with me at one small but symptomatical instance; namely, the first verse of the Elektra?

There can be no doubt about its transmitted wording. Fol. 192r of cod. Laur. 32. 2 (top) reads

† εὔφωτίδον ἡλέκτρα †

† αὐτογραφός:

δ ἡ γῆς παλαιων ἄγγος ἡ βάθον ὠραὶ·

and P (Flor. Conv. soppr. 172, fol. 28r) copies this faithfully (though dropping the colon after ἄγγος). In this form, then, the verse stood in the one manuscript on which Triclinius was able to lay hands about A.D. 1315; thus it was printed by P. Victorius in 1545 and by many – or all? – editors after him; yet with certain differences. Wecklein, for example, under his text quotes three conjectures and, in his Appendix, nine printed lines’ worth of further suggestions, from Musgrave’s down to H. Weil’s and G. Vitelli’s. G. Murray in his app. crit. mentions three of them and, besides, offers a justification of the transmitted wording or, rather, letters. Nearest to our own time, finally, L. Parmentier admits no need for either conjectures or justification; he prints the verse as it stands in LP, and he translates it.

Is this the measure of our progress, that we can understand, without effort, a wording which perplexed a Musgrave, a Reiske, a Kirchhoff et hoc genus omne? The translation will show. “Terre antique d’Argos”; this is the rendering of "Ω γῆς παλαιών ἄγγος ("terre antique": γῆς παλαιών); the rendering, not by one of the cheapjack’s just mentioned, but by the authority who did the Elektra (and many other things) for the Collection Budé. Dare we correct him? Dare we say (what, of course, was not unknown to Professor Parmentier) that the cited words mean: “O ancient Argos of the earth?” It is small wonder that he preferred to hush it up; for this rendering may be ever so correct, but it makes no sense. And worse is to come; for this “ancient Argos” is immediately described as “the flowing river Inachos”; but whether “Argos” is supposed to denote the city, or the country, it is hard
to see how it could be equated with the river; and yet: that is what the text indicates. Its puzzles are not eliminated by incorrect translation.

In fact, Argos—whether town or river—could not have been mentioned in this verse at all, for “this Argos” comes in v. 6. There, it indicates the scene of the play, in accordance with Euripides’ ‘almost invariable praxis’ (Barrett on Hipppol. 12), and this formal indication could not, without any reference, have been anticipated five verses earlier. It is useless, in justification to point to the totally different style of Herodotus (as Denniston does); besides, Herodotus in cases of ‘repetition’ (of the kind quoted by Denniston) does recall the earlier mention by adding a demonstrative pronoun; not so Euripides in the passage under discussion. G. Murray appreciated this difficulty and sought to overcome it by a device which appealed also to Denniston, who commented: “ἀγος, with a small a, is, I think, sound.”

The admirable sensitivity of Greek audiences! There they sit in the theatre awaiting the first performance of a new play. They know that it will center on Elektra, the princess of Argos; they hear the word ‘Argos’ in the opening line; and they are quick to realize that Argos, the home of Agamemnon and his daughter, is not meant (but something different of which, as we shall presently see, they had never heard). Five lines later, though, when hearing the same sound a-r-g-o-s, it is (according to Denniston ad v. 6) “clearly felt as a proper name”, i.e. this time it is acknowledged as denoting the home of the Atridae.

It could not denote anything else in the first verse either—if indeed it did occur there. We may perhaps grant Denniston that “the word (ἀγος) originally means plain”; but the audience of Euripides did not know that. Our knowledge on this point comes from Strabo, who says (viii. 372) that the νεώτεροι, i.e. Hellenistic poets, used the word ἀγος with this connotation; he stresses that this usage does not occur in Homer (whose use of the name Argos is otherwise so wide), and indeed we only know it from Kallimachos and one other Hellenistic poet (see Pfeiffer ad Callim. fr. 299). Strabo adds that the noun is supposed to be Macedonian or Thessalian; Stephanos Byz. (followed by Eustathios) specifies the meaning (“almost any plain by the sea”) but otherwise gives no more. At any rate, the word is not Homeric and not Attic and it did not occur with the great lyric poets—this follows from Strabo’s statement and is confirmed by the (negative) evidence—; it therefore could not have been used be-
on the first verse of Euripides' *Elektra* 279

fore an Athenian fifth century audience; and least of all in the opening line of an Argive play.

But suppose the impossible to have happened: we should be faced with the same dilemma as before. How could the 'old plain' have been equated with the river Inachos? (The two could not have been connected by 'and': Camper’s conjectures – see Wecklein – are sufficient to show this much.) Denniston indeed asserts that the ‘apposition’ (i.e. the addition, unconnected, to the word ‘plain’) of the streams which water the plain is easy, but the stubborn fact remains that a plain *is* not a river; he also asserts that γῆς means ‘of our land’ and that ‘‘our’ is easily supplied from the context’. C.H. Keene had, long ago, described this as “a very bold ellipse”; in fact, there is no ‘context’ to explain the very first word of the play. Unaided and unqualified, it can only mean ‘earth’; and what is that ‘old plain of the earth’ which is also the river Inachos?

It has, I suspect, become clear that (a) ‘Argos’ is indeed transmitted and could only be intended as the proper name, and (b) it cannot be original. Our result is anything but new. H. Weil, a century ago, observed (ad loc.): “Les mots ὀ γῆς παλαιῶν Ἀργος sont certainement alterés, quoiqu’en disent Seidler et Matthiae”, and Musgrave had perceived this another hundred years earlier. The fault does not appear to be a scribal slip – the conjectures based on this supposition, ἄγγος, ἄγκος, ἄργος, ἀλός, ἄνθος, are its sufficient refutation; rather, it was a gloss. This too was noted by Weil (“la glose Ἀργος a expulsé un autre mot”) and, at greater length, by Keene. The original text, then, must have contained a word which (a) could reasonably be glossed by Ἀργος and (b) would fit the context and, in particular, could be defined, or specified, by Ἰνάχος ἴοαί; and this word need not have looked, or sounded, similar to the gloss.

Among the many suggestions that have been made, Kirchhoff’s γάνος bears the mark of his thorough perception of the Euripidean style (cf. esp. *Suppl.* 1150 and *Hel.* 462); but although it fulfills our second requirement, it hardly satisfies the first; and it has the further weakness of necessitating a change of the transmitted order of the words (ὁ γῆς γάνος παλ.). Vitelli’s proposal ἔγνας likewise is in the true Euripidean style (cf. esp. *Held.* 441), but it does not perfectly suit the context, seeing that the Inachos does not by any means ‘gird’ the Argive land but flows through the middle of it. The same objection applies to the similar suggestions δρινόν (Rauchenstein) and ὀρίσματ(a) (Wecklein); still
others (see Wecklein’s Appendix) are unsatisfactory for other, obvious reasons. Denniston thus seems justified, at least, in observing that “none of the suggested emendations is attractive”, and if I venture to propose still another one, I do not flatter myself that it could escape similar censure. However, a text is not proved sound by people making bad conjectures on it.

The second verse states that, from the place indicated in the first, Agamemnon set out for Troy. That place, generally speaking, was Argos; it was here indicated in a way which suited its description, immediately afterwards, as ‘stream of Inachos’. It might seem not unreasonable to assume that the river itself was described as providing, for Argos, the harbour, or roadstead, from which Agamemnon’s journey started; and indeed, where else could he have embarked – seeing that the subjection of Nauspia was, at the time, a matter of the distant future? Recalling Ἡερ. 450 Δωρίδος ὀμον αἰας, we may present ὀμος as a competitor for the place occupied by the gloss Ἀγγος. The roadstead formed by priscus Inachus – perhaps the place of the later Temenion – well deserved the epithet ‘ancient’; no more so, though, than the Argive land itself (cf. schol. Soph. El. 4), and this land could have been intimated by the adjective ‘ancient’ referring, rather, to it.

If, then, as an alternative to other suggestions, we beg to consider reading Ω γῆς παλαιᾶς ὀμος, Ἰνάχον ὄοια, we may refer to the analogy of Eur. Suppl. 638 παλαιᾶς Κεκρο-πίας οἰκῆτορες and Andr. 1265 παλαιᾶς Κωμάδος κοιλὸν μυκόν; still basing ourselves on the assumption that the two syllables of Ἀγγος have ousted two original syllables. It is however perfectly possible, and perhaps even probable, that the whole phrase παλαιῶν Ἀγγος was taken over from Sophokles’ Elektra v. 4; be it for explanation or as a parallel. It thus could have ousted five original syllables. If this is so, our chances of recovering the original wording shrink to a minimum – until, with luck, a papyrus brings enlightenment. This much however ought to be admitted: what we read in LP is not the original form of the first verse of Euripides’ Elektra.

The few lines which I proposed to write to you have grown into pages, quite out of proportion with the slight subject. Perhaps, though, you have of late been reminded, as I have been, of the words of a certain classical scholar of the last century ... let me quote a few of them, in conclusion: “Wozu Griechen? wozu
Römer? – Alle Voraussetzungen zu einer gelehrten Cultur, alle wissenschaftlichen Methoden waren bereits da; man hatte die große, die unvergleichliche Kunst, gut zu lesen, bereits festgestellt – *diese Voraussetzung zur Tradition der Cultur...*

Our illustrious colleague was referring to the end of Antiquity. Perhaps, though, his words have some contemporary applicability? And, perhaps, we are beholden, in our little way, to resist the trend which they describe?

Yours ever

Buxton

Günther Zuntz

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**PHRYNICHOS UND DIE RÜCKBERUFUNG DES ALKIBIADES***


Westlake ist allerdings der Ansicht, daß der Bericht des Thukydides äußerst unklar formuliert sei und daß, was der Scharfsinn des kritischen Historikers heute eruiere, eigentlich fast Thukydides zum Trotz gewonnen werde.

Die beiden anderen Arbeiten, die sich mit der Episode befassen, E.Delebecques Buch „Thucydidès et Alcibiade“²) und

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¹) Phrynichos and Astyochos (Thucydidès VIII 50–1), JHS 76, 1956, 99–104.