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P. MIL. VOGL. VIII 309 c. XV 12 = POSIDIPP. 99,2 A.–B.

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## P. MIL. VOGL. VIII 309 C. XV 12 = POSIDIPP. 99,2 A.–B.

While the text of the epigrams that make up the *Iamatikà* section of the ‘new Posidippus’ is relatively well preserved, the fifth one, for Asclas of Crete, poses a serious problem.<sup>1</sup> I reproduce the epigram here in the most recent edition hosted by the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies, in which the text is accompanied by a periodically updated apparatus:<sup>2</sup>

col. XV

- 11 ὁ Κρής κωφὸς ἐὼν ακκ.[...].οιος ἀκούειν  
 12 αἰγιαλῶν ἥτιοςτ' μηδ' ἀνέμων πάταγον,  
 13 εὐθὺς ἀπ' εὐχολέων Ἀσκληπιοῦ οἴκαδ' ἀπήνει,  
 14 — καὶ τὰ διὰ πλίνθων ῥήματ' ἀκουσόμενος.

11 Ἀκκλ[ῶ] ed. pr., min. (Ἀκκλας Männlein-Robert 2015) μη]δ' οἴος ed. pr., min. (def. Gronewald 2004, Di Nino 2004a, Russo 2009, Männlein-Robert 2015) : μη] διοιδ' Gronewald 1993 : μη] τοῖος Lapini 2002 : μη]δ' ὥσιν De Stefani 2002 : μη]δ' ἦχον Handley 2004. 12 -ὦν ὅςτος Gronewald 2004 : -ὦν οἴος Lapini 2002 (Handley 2004, Russo 2009) : -ὦν οἴος Voutiras 1994 : -ὦν <διοιδ'> Gronewald 1993 : -ὦν δοῦπον vel ῥόχθον Austin 2001a : -ὦν ἦχον Gigante 1993 (et Di Nino 2004a) : -οὐ ῥόθιον? ed. min. : -ὦν ῥόθιον Männlein-Robert 2015 : -οἴο ῥόθον Angiò 1996 : -ὦν <ῥοῖςζοκ'> Russo 2009 : ὁ τάλας vel μέλεος vel ὀλοὸν (πάταγον) Zanetto 2016 πάταγο<ς> Gronewald 2004 13 απηει P

The general meaning seems clear enough: whereas previously he could not even hear Mother Nature's raging roars, the Cretan, after Asclepius' intervention, is blessed with superlative hearing, which he will put to (good?) use once back home.<sup>3</sup> The textual problem affecting the second line, however, remains unsolved. Nowhere else did the editors of Posidippus' *Omnia* resort to *obelis* to dagger a word,<sup>4</sup> which helps explain why a number of articles are fully or partially devoted to the problem.<sup>5</sup>

Russo and Zanetto have carefully reviewed and discussed the solutions put forth by the scholars who have tackled the textual crux,<sup>6</sup> so there is no need to rehearse the relevant arguments once again here. Suffice it to say that there have been numerous attempts to remedy what looks like a scribal error involv-

<sup>1</sup> On the section as a whole, see P. Bing, Posidippus' *Iamatika*, in B. Acosta-Hughes, E. Kosmetatou, and M. Baumbach (eds.), *Labored in Papyrus Leaves. Perspectives on an Epigram Collection Attributed to Posidippus* (P.Mil.Vogl. VIII 309), Washington, DC 2004: 276–291; S. Pozzi, Sulle sezioni *Iamatikà* e *Tropoi* del nuovo Posidippo (95–105 A.–B.), *Eikasmos* 17, 2006: 181–202; B. Wickkiser, The *Iamatika* of the Milan Posidippus, *CQ* 63, 2013: 623–632; I. Männlein-Robert, *Iamatika* (95–101), in B. Seidensticker, A. Stähli, and A. Wessels (eds.), *Der Neue Poseidipp: Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Darmstadt 2015: 343–374.

<sup>2</sup> F. Angiò, M. Cuypers, B. Acosta-Hughes, and E. Kosmetatou, 2021, *New Poems Attributed to Posidippus*. A text in progress, version 14, February 2021, Washington DC. References in the apparatus are to the introductory bibliography that precedes the text.

<sup>3</sup> The tone of the epigram is elusive. Do the Cretan's acoustic superpowers imply the less than commendable intention of spying on his neighbours? While there is quite probably something funny to the last line, it is far less clear whether that should be taken as sarcasm or as a gentle touch of humour. Cf. e.g., respectively, Männlein-Robert, *Iamatika*: 366–367, and G. Zanetto, L'epigramma per Asclas di Creta: Posidippo, 99 A.–B.: problemi di testo e contesto, in A. Casanova, G. Messeri, and R. Pintaudi (eds.), *E sì d'amici pieno. Omaggio di studiosi italiani a Guido Bastianini per il suo settantesimo compleanno*, 2, Florence, 2016: 587–591, especially 590–591.

<sup>4</sup> C. Austin and G. Bastianini (eds.), *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milan 2002. By contrast, the Center for Hellenic Studies edition also daggers c. XIII 39 = Posidipp. 88,5 A.–B. and c. XIV 15 = Posidipp. 92,1 A.–B.

<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the epigram was circulated, along with a few others, well before the *editio princeps*: G. Bastianini and C. Gallazzi, Il poeta ritrovato, *Ca' de Sass* 121, 1993: 34–39. On the textual problem, see, e.g., E. Voutiras, Wortkarge Söldner? Ein Interpretationsvorschlag zum neuen Poseidippos, *ZPE* 104, 1994: 27–31; F. Angiò, L'epigramma di Posidippo per la miracolosa guarigione del cretese Arcade, *APF* 42, 1996: 23–25; G. Russo, Due note al nuovo Posidippo (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309), *Eikasmos* 20, 2009: 187–194; Zanetto, l'epigramma.

<sup>6</sup> Zanetto, L'epigramma.

ing duplication, given that οἷος is found in the first line as well. According to a majority of scholars, what is missing here is a noun referring to the roaring sea: δοῦπον, ἦχον, ῥόθιον, ῥοῖζον or ῥόχθον, to list in alphabetical order the conjectures put forth by those who have espoused this interpretative line.<sup>7</sup> With the exception of Russo's <ῥ>οῖ<ζ>ο<ν>,<sup>8</sup> none of these looks promising in paleographical terms, but scholars have operated on the assumption that the problem lies in a blunder by the scribe, so that any suitable noun would be worth considering.<sup>9</sup>

Leaving aside the merits of other solutions based on a syntactically different understanding of the text, I would like to put forth a new conjecture that strikes me as far more convincing than any of the five listed above:

αἰγιαλῶν φλοῖσβον μηδ' ἀνέμων πάταγον

The word that the scribe failed to copy, I submit, is likely to be φλοῖσβος, i.e. 'any confused roaring noise' (*LSJ*). This solution has several advantages: to begin with, the word contains a sequence of letters (οῖς) that may account for the scribe's error; secondly, the sea is πολύφλοισβος by (Homeric) definition, according to a very frequent epic formula; thirdly, Heliodorus uses the pair formed by φλοῖσβος and πάταγος to describe a roaring noise produced by water, which can be heard (ἐξάκουστον) even at a very great distance;<sup>10</sup> finally, both Tzetzes and Eustathius explain that φλοῖσβος is precisely the sound of the sea waves hitting sandy shores (αἰγιαλοί).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. also Angiò's αἰγιαλοῖο ῥόθον (Angiò, *L'epigramma di Posidippo*).

<sup>8</sup> However, ῥοῖζος means 'hissing' rather than 'roar' and is rarely used with reference to the sea. Ultimately, Russo himself (Due note: 193–194) opts for a different solution, in an attempt to make sense of the text as it stands.

<sup>9</sup> G. Bastianini and C. Gallazzi (eds.), *Posidippo, Epigrammi. Testo e traduzione*, Milan 2001: 226.

<sup>10</sup> 9.3.5 Οἶα δὲ ἐξ ὑπερδεξίων πρὸς χθαμαλότερον καὶ ἐξ ἀπείρου τῆς κατὰ τὸν Νεῖλον εὐρύτητος στενῷ πορθμῷ τὸ ὕδωρ ἐμπίπτον καὶ ταῖς χειροποιήτοις ὄχθαις θλιβόμενον πολὺν τινα καὶ ἄφραστον κατὰ μὲν τὸ στόμιον φλοῖσβον κατὰ δὲ τὸν ὄλκον ἐξάκουστον καὶ τοῖς πορρωτάτῳ πάταγον ἀπετέλει.

<sup>11</sup> *Exegesis in Homeri Iliadem* 1.135.1–6 Parathomopoulos: φλοῖσβος δὲ λέγεται ἐπὶ συριγμοῦ τε καὶ βέλους ἀπηχήσεως, φερομένου διὰ τοῦ ἀέρος, καὶ ἐπὶ κυμάτων ἐκφορᾶς θαλασσίων, περὶ ψαμμώδη ἐκρηγνυμένων αἰγιαλὸν ἡρεμαίως, ὥς τι μὲν τοῦ παρεσπαρμένου ἀέρος ὑποχωρεῖν, τὶ δὲ ἀνθίστασθαι καὶ ποιεῖν οὕτως ὥσπερ ἐναρμόνιον τὴν ἀπήχησιν; *Parekbolai* 1.51.21–22 Van der Valk: φλοῖσβος κατὰ ὀνοματοποιίαν ἡχος ὕδατος θαλασσίου ἐν τῇ ἐκκυμάνσει γινόμενος πρὸς τοῖς αἰγιαλοῖς παλιννοστοῦντος τοῦ κύματος. διὸ καὶ πολύφλοισβος λέγεται θάλασσα.