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The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book, Edited by Kathryn Gutzwiller, Oxford 2005, 394 pages.

This book contains a collection of essays concerning Posidippus and the Hellenistic epigram. The competent reader will know that Prof. G. Giangrande has made a fundamentally important contribution to our understanding of the Greek epigram through his investigation of Hellenistic *Sprachgebrauch*. Moreover, as David Sider has pointed out, “much of G. Giangrande’s work on the Greek epigram has been dedicated to elucidating the peculiarly Hellenistic point”, which comes at the end of the epigram: cf. *Myrtia* 14, 1999, page 261. Surprisingly and most unfortunately, the work of Giangrande and his school is totally ignored in this volume.

The *pointes* in Posidippus’ epigrams have often not been understood: cf. (one instructive example which I could easily multiply), G. Giangrande in *L’Ant. Class.* 72, 2003, page 195.

I would now like to make the following observations concerning the various essays contained in this volume.

On page 61 Frank Nisetich discusses the meaning of the words καθαροῖς οὖσιν. I have suggested that the poet has made use of adjectival *enallage*. Thus the Muses are said to listen with pure ears because they are pure: cf. *Mus. Phil. Lond.* XI, 2002, page 172.

On page 94 Nita Krevans mentions Meleager’s *Garland*. According to ancient evidence, Meleager arranged the epigrams in his *Garland* in alphabetical order: cf. *Habis* 31, 2000, page 535 f.

On page 113 Dirk Obbink discusses *A. P.* 9, 507. I have suggested that ἔσχατον, in line 2, means “for the last time”. The poet states that Aratus has not imitated Hesiod for the last time, but he has imitated the sweetest of his verses: cf. *Athena* 2005, page 31 ff.

On page 121 Peter Bing discusses Theocritus, *Idyll* 17, 86-92. The poet has made use of the historical present in this passage. Thus lines 86-87 list the countries that Ptolemy annexed ἀποτέμνεται) during the First Syrian War: cf. *Myrtia* 14, 1999, page 50 f., where the encomium is explained in detail (Bing is nescient of this paper).

On page 156 Ann Kuttner mentions Nabataea. Propertius refers to Nabataea at 4, 5, 21: *si te Eoa iuvat Nabatharumque aurea ripa* (“if the Eastern

and golden shore of Nabataea pleases you”). Cf. my *Studies In the Text of Propertius* (Athens 2002), page 148.

On page 173 David Sider refers to a shearwater diving under the water in the morning (ἡερίην). According to Lactantius, the phoenix travelled to the city of Heliopolis towards the time when the sun rises (*solis ad ortus*), i. e. towards dawn: cf. *Phoenix* line 121.

On page 185 Andrew Stewart mentions the touchstone (βάσανος). For the Lydian touchstone cf. *Veleia* 21, 2004, page 157. Theocritus (*Idyll* 12, 34 ff.) states that money-changers test gold on the Lydian touchstone, to see whether or not it is genuine.

On page 211 Alexander Sens discusses Theocritus, *Idyll* 7, 39-48. At line 46 the variant reading Εὐρυμέδοντος provides perfect sense. A builder is said to make a house as high as the mountain of Eurymedon (= Mount Atlas): cf. *Corolla Londiniensis* 1981, page 159 ff. Theocritus is referring to the debate concerning the correct length for epic poetry: cf. *Habis* 29, 1998, page 391 and *Veleia* 21, 2004, page 147. Of all this, Sens knows literally nothing.

On page 237 Susan Stephens mentions Zeus Ammon. Propertius refers to Juppiter Ammon as *pater Africus*: cf. my *Studies In the Text of Propertius*, page 137.

On page 264 (note 54) Marco Fantuzzi refers to Catullus 66. I have explained that at line 94 *proximus* means “like”. Thus Orion is said to shine like Aquarius: cf. my *New Chapters In Hellenistic Poetry* (Athens 1996), page 38.

On page 283 (note 88) Dorothy J. Thompson refers to gems and semi-precious stones. It was commonly believed that in the east the beaches were strewn with jewels and pearls, which had been cast up by the sea. Thus Propertius states that the shores gleam (*collucent*) with natural (*nativis*) gems. Cf. my *Studies*, page 11.

On page 293 Kathryn Gutzwiller discusses *A. P.* 7, 447. Perfect sense can be restored to this epigram if we translate as follows: “The stranger was concise and so is the verse. I shall not say much. Theris, the son of Aristaeus, a long (i. e. tall) Cretan is under me (ὕπ’ ἐμοί)”. The intended contrast is between the short verse and the tall¹ man.

On page 335 (note 34) Alessandro Barchiesi discusses the employment of the noun θυμός in the *Aetia*. He does not know that Giangrande has explained that

¹ Short epigrams (i. e. distichs) and tall men were regarded as attractive.

θυμός means *mentula* : cf. *Habis* 35, 2004, page 108. Both Sotades and Callimachus alluded to the fact that Zeus and Hera were said to have indulged in *fellatio*.

Conclusion: The authors have provided an interesting volume of essays concerning the poetry of Posidippus. They have not, however, devoted any attention to recent research work on Hellenistic *Sprachgebrauch*. This is disappointing because, as I have recently underlined, linguistic analysis and the study of *topoi* are of fundamental importance, and literary studies which ignore the poet's language are of little scientific value: cf. *Habis* 35, 2004, page 462.

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