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L'exclamation en Grec ancien

Michèle Biraud, Camille Denizot, Richard Faure, *L'exclamation en Grec ancien. Collection linguistique, 107*. Leuven; Paris: Peeters, 2021. Pp. 528. ISBN 9789042946354 €70,00.

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This collective volume is a philological and linguistic study of the phenomenon of exclamation in Ancient Greek, based on an exhaustive analysis of a corpus of dramatic philosophical texts, deliberately chosen for their strong dialogical nature: Aristophanes' *Acharnians, Frogs, Wasps, Clouds, Plutus*; Euripides' *Alcestis, Cyclops, Medea, Hecuba, Bacchae*; Plato's *Gorgias, Hippias Minor, Hipparchus, Protagoras*. References to some other works are abundant; Sophocles, Aeschylus and Menander, for example, are frequently mentioned. It is noteworthy, however, that examples from Plato are less often used to illustrate or motivate the theoretical discussion than examples drawn from drama. This is a pity, because it would have added to the study, in my opinion, to compare the phenomena found in verse and prose.

The criteria for isolating the expressions subject to analysis are predominantly (and rightly) formal: they include exclamations introduced by relative pronouns, evaluative noun phrases and other diachronically more recent structures, such as the exclamatory genitive, the exclamatory infinitive or the so-called "subjonctif de protestation," a variety of deliberative subjunctive. The authors also consider indirect exclamatory acts.

A number of previous works (by the authors and other scholars)[1] that focus on interjections, orders or invocations, or on borderline phenomena, such as interrogatives in classical languages, lay the foundations for the developments in this volume, which brings together the authors' overlapping interests and their shared concern with the exclamatory modality and seems a natural outcome of their collaboration.

The book is long, dense and thorough. It is divided into four parts, which are further subdivided into chapters and subsequent headings, preceded by a general introduction and followed by a general conclusion, two appendices with tables and several indices. A short conclusion winds up each part of the volume. This is certainly helpful in preventing readers from losing track every now and then, and in reminding them of the general premises when re-reading.

In the introduction, the authors start with a psychological definition of exclamation as an evaluative reaction to an unexpected or surprising stimulus. They discuss the link connecting exclamatory acts with interjections, elements which have received considerable attention, and then go on to specify that the difference between the two lies in the analytic or synthetic way in which the evaluative reaction is conveyed. In doing so, they offer a brief *status quaestionis* on exclamatives, highlighting the fact that their most significant features are factivity and obvious similarities with both assertion and interrogation. (The resemblance to assertion lies in the rhematic character of exclamatory utterances, and the resemblance to interrogation lies in formal features such as the inversion of the subject-verb order and certain morphological material in partial questions). They also note that exclamation is part of the set of expressive speech acts.

The first part (chapters I to III), by Richard Faure, deals with exclamatory utterances introduced by an element of the paradigm of the relative ὅς. They are called "elements in *h-*", in reference to this aspirated formant characteristic of the relative. This marks independent utterances as unambiguously exclamatory. The analysis is approached from the morpho-syntactic point of view to show that such utterances hold a focal position. Those analysed as dialogical or even those that function as commentaries are particularly interesting (pp. 108-109). It is valuable to read this chapter with Faure's newly published and meticulous work on Wh-clauses.[2]

The second part (chapters IV to VI) is the work of Michèle Biraud. It focuses on the analysis of evaluative noun phrases, both one-element ("prédicat") and two-element ("prédicat" and "support de prédication"), referring to the first person (elocutives), second person (allocutives) or third person (delocutives). Their main feature is that they hold a focal position. The key to distinguishing exclamatory utterances from assertive ones lies in the reversed word order (predicate-subject or predicate-pronoun). When in doubt, one must attend to the context to determine whether the utterance is exclamatory. What is most interesting about this section is the correlation found between certain interjections or particles (γε, ἄρα) and certain types of allocutive or delocutive exclamations. The dissimilarity between these structures and those of the first section lies in the scope of the focalisation: the whole utterance for the former, and only the adjective for the latter.

The third part includes sections by Michèle Biraud (chapter VII) and Camille Denizot (VIII and IX). It aims to determine whether structures that according to the authors emerge more recently in the history of the Greek language, such as the exclamatory genitive, the exclamatory infinitive or the "subjonctif de protestation"[3], should be considered exclamatory. They hypothesize that the exclamatory genitive, given its relational nature, consists of an elliptical structure with an implied theme. The authors claim that the exclamatory genitive is in fact (*contra* Chantraine and Lasso de la Vega[4]) unknown in the Homeric poems (p.229); they seem to be unaware of *Odyssey.* 20.209 "ὤ μοι ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος." They explain the exclamatory infinitive, related to the epexegetic infinitive, within the framework of Constructional Grammar as

a conventionalized structure to convey surprise, clarifying that differences in the order of constituents must be descriptively significant. This theoretical discussion sheds light on some passages that have been erroneously interpreted, such as Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* 27 (p.334-335), which the authors reject as a specific construction, maintaining that it should be considered as a type of "reprise en écho," coded, according to them (and against Anderson) in the indicative mood.

Camille Denizot was in charge of the fourth section (chapters X and XI). This section is devoted to the study of indirect exclamative acts, i.e. those without formal marking allowing for a univocal interpretation. They are careful, in their theorizing, not to fall into circular arguments. Thus, it is said that there are interrogative and assertive and, marginally, expressive utterances, which may be interpreted as exclamatives. Chapter X is the most remarkable chapter of the book, as it deals with the boundaries between elusive and often equated concepts: emotion, expressivity and exclamation. Denizot concludes that these concepts behave in sets: emotion contains expressivity and both contain exclamation, and the latter can only be defined with certainty (in the absence of intonational information), if the formal marks mentioned in the previous chapters are found. The discussion is deeply enthralling and brutally honest too, because it sets out to explore both the indices for detecting expressivity (repetitions, insults, vocatives, interjections, etc.) and the limitations of such criteria. Nonetheless, the reader could have benefited from more explicit distinctions, were the terminological differences between expressive acts, expressiveness and exclamation as clearly defined in X.1.1 as in footnote 1 in XI. Turning to ambiguous interrogative acts, Denizot roughly applies the methodology of Conversation Analysis, concluding that reactive utterances (reformulations, echoic questions, etc.) can develop an exclamatory illocutionary force. For both indirect exclamatory acts with interrogative form and indirect acts with assertive form, the author provides an orderly and reasoned list of her findings at the end of each section, which is a welcome addition.

Given its collaborative nature, the book does not seek to be methodologically homogeneous, but the authors have cooperated in the text analysis, which was carried out in pairs. They have always taken the immediate context into account, accepting the guidance of their "sentiment du philologue et du traducteur" (p.21) in cases that do not fit the gramatical and which could nevertheless be considered as exclamatory. Each strand of evidence is carefully assessed throughout.

A few more notes: Readers will be pleased to find at the end of the volume a rich general index, which facilitates the search for specific topics and for Greek words relevant to the discussion, such as the adverb εἶτα, the subject of commentary both in chapter V, on noun phrases consisting of only one element, and in chapter XI, on indirect exclamatory acts. Debates on the correct translation of each fragment are of tremendous interest, particularly for the classicist reader. The comments on the diachronic evolution of certain phenomena, such as the exclamatory genitive (VII) are audacious, albeit not entirely convincing. Nonetheless, the diachronic criterion has been cleverly applied to solve certain problems, like the origin and use of the exclamatory

infinitive. The numerous tables, 21 in total, located throughout the volume, are of immense help in the synthesis of the data provided, although these unfortunately lack references to the passages to which the figures and percentages pertain.

In spite of the neat and careful proofreading of the book (there are only a couple of errata: an italicised "Eschyle" on p.238 and the misspelling "advierbo" instead of "adverbio" on p.511), some references to the corpus in the footnotes fail to appear in the *index locorum*. As for the appendices, it would have been more helpful to list in Appendix I the passages in which these introductory verbs of subordinate exclamatives appear and to provide an intertextual reference to the pages of the volume where the topic of embedded exclamatorys exclamatives is handled (pp. 55-59 and 109-115). For Appendix II, a cross-reference on p.472 would definitely facilitate consultation.

To sum up: Given the authors' frequent comparisons with structures in a variety of modern languages and their use not only of previous classical scholarship but of other very pertinent work, this volume will be of great interest not only to Hellenists, but also, as the authors intend, to general linguists. It is a bold initiative to tackle such a broad and slippery phenomenon as exclamation, bringing together previous work on adjacent phenomena, and the result—extensive, and laden with interesting observations and threads to pull on—is a must-read for Ancient Greek linguists. The authors correctly propose the volume as a point of departure from and arrival to the texts. That is, the place it should occupy in current scholarship is that of a sourcebook for learning about exclamation and also, ultimately, better interpreting Greek texts. It is already having a beneficial impact on some particularly riveting recent work,[5] where some of the conclusions drawn in this volume are applied to studies in word order.

Notes

[1] Take for example, Michèle Biraud (2010) *Les interjections du théâtre grec Antique,* Peeters; Camille Denizot (2011) *Donner des ordres en grec ancien. Étude linguistique des formes de l'injoction,* Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, or Richard Faure's multiple publications on exclamatives.

[2] Richard Faure (2021) *The syntax and semantics of Wh-clauses in classical Greek: relatives, interrogatives, exclamatory*, Leiden, Brill.

[3] A translation, perhaps, of "repudiative subjuntive", term coined by Anderson, which roughly coincides with the description of a deliberative subjuntive, in Andrew R. Anderson (1914) "Studies in the Exclamatory Infinitive", *Classical Philology* Vol.9 No.1, pp.60-76.

[4] Pierre Chantraine (1963) *Grammaire homérique.* Vol. II., Paris, Klincksieck, p.66 ; José Lasso de la Vega (1968) *Sintaxis griega I,* Madrid, CSIC, p.533.

[5] Nicolas Bertrand & Richard Faure (2022) "Wh-interrogatives in Ancient Greek. Disentangling focus-movement and wh-movement", *Studia Linguistica,* Wiley Blackwell.