

APOLLONIUS RHODIUS 1.103: AN EMENDATION

At 1.101-104 Apollonius explains why Theseus was not among the Argonauts:

Θησεία δ', ὃς περὶ πάντας Ἐρεχθεΐδας ἐκέκαστο,
Ταιναρίην αἰδηλὸς ὑπὸ χθόνα δεσμὸς ἔρυκε,
Πειρίθῳ ἐσπόμενον κοινήν ὁδόν· ἧ τέ κεν ἄμφω
ῥήτερον καμάτοιο τέλος πάντεσσιν ἔθεντο.

The epithet defining ὁδόν is variously transmitted as κοινήν ('shared'), κεινήν ('futile') or κείνην ('that')¹. Fränkel, Ardizzoni, and Pompella print κοινήν; Vian and Race prefer κεινήν². None of the variants is altogether impossible; but, as the disagreement between the editors shows, none is entirely satisfactory. Κοινήν is somewhat redundant after ἐσπόμενον. Κεινήν is probably not the form Apollonius would have used in this metrical position³; moreover, to say that their journey to Hades was 'futile' is a bit of an understatement. Κείνην – a pointer to the Hesiodic catabasis of Pirithous⁴ – cannot be ruled out, but will hardly be missed.

I propose σκοτίνην (corruption triggered by the omission of the sigma?), which is an apposite epithet to describe the path to the underworld⁵. As Haslam observed in a study of papyrus fragments of Apollonius, they “are a constant reminder that even an apparently sound text is not necessarily sound, that a conjecture does not have to be necessary in order to be true”⁶. I admit that my conjecture may not be necessary; but it also has some external support, if not as strong as that of a papyrus. The phrase σκοτίνην ὁδόν actually appears, in the same metrical position, in the so-called *Argonautica*

¹ The scholia seem to favour κεινήν, though they also knew κείνην.

² H. Fränkel, *Apollonii Rhodii Argonautica*, Oxford 1961, 103; A. Ardizzoni, *Apollonio Rodio: Le Argonautiche, libro I*, Roma 1967, 10; G. Pompella, *Apollonii Rhodii Argonautica*, Hildesheim 2006, 3; F. Vian, *Apollonios de Rhodes: Argonautiques*, vol. 1, Paris 1974, 55; W.H. Race, *Apollonius Rhodius: Argonautica*, Cambridge MA 2008, 10.

³ Elsewhere Apollonius uses forms of κενεός: 1.285; 2.254, 445; 3.126, 1120. A form of κεινός occurs only once at a verse-end: 3.1346. Cf. R. F. P. Brunck, *Apollonii Rhodii Argonautica*, vol. 1, Leipzig 1810², 197: “Si ματαίαν in animo habuisset poëta, more suo et absque ambiguitate κεινήν scripsisset, vel μελέην”.

⁴ Cf. Brunck (n. 3), 197: “scilicet *Illam*, cum emphasi, tanquam de re celebri et decantata”.

⁵ Cf. *Od.* 24.9-10 ἦρχε δ' ἄρα σφιν / Ἑρμείας ἀκάκητα κατ' εὐρώεντα κέλευθα (with Suda s.v. εὐρώεντα: σκοτεινά, ζοφώδη); Catull. 3.11-12 *qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum / illuc unde negant redire quemquam*; Sil. 14.239-240 *hic specus ingentem laxans telluris hiatus / caecum iter ad manes tenebroso limite pandit*.

⁶ M. W. Haslam, *Apollonius Rhodius and the papyri*, “ICS” 3, 1978, 47–73, at 48. On the state of Apollonius' medieval tradition in the light of papyrus fragments, cf. in general G. Schade, P. Eleuteri, *The textual tradition of the Argonautica*, in T. D. Papanghelis, A. Rengakos (edd.), *Brill's Companion to Apollonius Rhodius*, Leiden 2008², 29-50, at 35-39.

of *Orpheus* (40-42):

ἄλλα δέ σοι κατέλεξ' ἅ περ εἴσιδον ἠδ' ἐνόησα,
 Ταινάρου ἠνίκ' ἔβην σκοτίνην ὁδὸν Ἄϊδος εἴσω,
 ἡμετέρη πίσυνος κιθάρη δι' ἔρωτ' ἀλόχοιο.

Although referring to a different catabasis, the 'Orphic' passage may well be based on the Apollonian one (note that both mention Taenarus)⁷. If so, it may not just provide a parallel for, but also be an indirect witness to, Apollonius' use of that phrase at 1.103.

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ABSTRACT:

At A.R. 1.103 the epithet defining ὁδὸν is variously transmitted as κοινήν, κεινήν or κείνην; rather than choosing from these variants, none of which is compelling, I propose to restore σκοτίνην on the basis of [Orph.] *Arg.* 41 σκοτίνην ὁδὸν.

KEYWORDS:

Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica of Orpheus*, textual criticism.

MORETVM 20: AN EMENDATION

After rekindling the hearth (8-12) and lighting the lamp (13-14), Simulus fetches grain from the storeroom (15-18), goes to the quern and places the lamp on a shelf hung on the wall:

*inde abit adsistitque molae parvae tabella,
 quam fixam paries illos servabat in usus, 20
 lumina fida locat.*

Although scholars are usually unconcerned by it, the verb *servabat* is patently inappropriate in this context: one does not 'preserve' a shelf on the wall, it is simply there. It is true that there is no lack of parallels for *servare in aliquos usus*, which commentators duly note; but these only emphasise the

⁷ On the use of Apollonius in the *Argonautica of Orpheus*, see in general H. Venzke, *Die orphische Argonautika in ihrem Verhältnis zu Apollonios Rhodios*, Berlin 1941; cf. also O. Schelske, *Orpheus in der Spätantike: Studien und Kommentar zu den Ardonautika des Orpheus*, Berlin 2011, *passim*.