

THE VERBAL FORM ἈΡΝΗΣ IN CALLIMACHUS

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La forma verbal ἈΡΝΗΣ en el epigrama de Calímaco AP 12.139.6, identificada ya por Salmasius y Anna Fabri, es un subjuntivo dubitativo.

The verbal form ἈΡΝΗΣ in Callimachus' epigram AP 12.139.6, first identified by Salmasius and Anna Fabri, is a dubitative subjunctive.

Appropriate word-division can serve to solve the most difficult textual problems in Callimachus: one instructive example of this interpretative technique, concerning *epigr.* 46 Pf. (AP 12.150), line 7, has been offered by G. Giangrande in *Habis* 26 (1995) 323-324, and another interesting instance, regarding AP 12.139.6, has been contributed by us in *Habis* 27 (1996) 41-43. We should like to dilate on this latter epigram, in the hope of helping the reader who is not entirely familiar with the intricacies of Hellenistic poetry. Salmasius and Anna Fabri have the merit of having "correctly recognized in the reading of the *Palatinus* the verbal form ἈΡΝΗΣ" (*Habis* 27, 42) at AP 12.139.6. This active form (which could of course be spelled ἈΡΝΗΣ, without *iota subscriptum*)¹ is attested in the manuscript, not a conjectural invention by them. The text suggested by Salmasius and Anna Fabri²,

¹ Cf. Kühner-Blass, II, 134.

² Cf. Jacobs, *Anthol. Gr.*, III (Lipsiae 1817) 764.

which we quote in *Habis* 27, 42³, was adopted *tel quel* by J. A. Ernesti, in his edition of Callimachus⁴, although he opted, in his notes (*op. cit.*, 313), for Bentley's untenable conjecture; likewise Jacobs⁵ praised the text proposed by Salmasius and A. Fabri as beautiful ("specie quadam commendatur"), but in the end succumbed to Bentley's fallacious suggestion. The verbal form ἀρνῆς is characteristic of Hellenistic *Sprachgebrauch*: in Hellenistic (and later) poetry and prose, as Salmasius, Anna Fabri, Ernesti and Jacobs knew and as is well known to all students of Hellenistic texts to-day, middle and active forms were very often interchanged. The active form ἀρνῆς is one of the many colloquialisms employed in his epigrams by Callimachus, because active ἀρνῶ reappears in late prose⁶: such reappearances are typical of the colloquialisms used by Hellenistic poets. Salmasius and Anna Fabri believed that ἀρνῆς (second person singular of the present subjunctive of active ἀρνῶ) was, at *AP* 12.139.6, governed by εἴ γε, but this is "contextually impossible", as we have underlined (*Habis* 27, 42), all the more so as A. Fabri's text would, like Bentley's conjecture, entail the unsustainable conclusion that Menexenus was not the boy whose embraces Callimachus fears and rejects: in reality, in Callimachus' line the subjunctive ἀρνῆς is used by the poet in a dubitative question ("do you perhaps deny it?"). This type of dubitative subjunctive, which already in classical times can be employed in the second person singular (Kühner-Gerth, I, 221, quote Eur. *H.F.* 1417) is current in Hellenistic and later Greek⁷.

³ Cf. also Jacobs, *Animadv. in Epigr. Anthol. Gr.* I = VII, 258f.

⁴ *Callim. Hymni, Epigr. et fragm.* I (Lugduni Batavorum 1761) 312.

⁵ *Anthol. Gr.*, III, 764.

⁶ Cf. e.g. E. Κριαράς, *Λεξικό τῆς Μεσαιωνικῆς ἑλληνικῆς δημώδους γραμματείας*, III (Θεσσαλονίκη 1973), s.v. ἀρνῶ.

⁷ Cf. Blass-Debrunner-Rehkopf, *Gramm. neut. Griech.* (Göttingen 1976), § 366.1: "Auch die 2. Person".