One of the most important contributions to the study of the text of Babrius in this century is a footnote in Professor Turyn's *The Byzantine Manuscript Tradition of the Tragedies of Euripides*, in which inter alia he cautions any future editor of Babrius (e.g., the present writer) to collate the Athoan MS (Brit. Mus. Add. MS 22087 = A) carefully by autopsy. In a volume honoring this great scholar it is appropriate that the usefulness of this advice be noted.

The text in question is lines 14-16 of Babrius' first prologue, found on fol. 3 recto of A. The MS has suffered very serious damage here, and the original writing has been retraced by two later hands (one of them Triclinius'), whose work is not always a guarantee of the original. Thus an editor of the *Mythiambi* needs spend many an hour examining this page in natural, artificial and ultra-violet light with the aid of various magnifying devices.

Let us begin by resuming the matter of lines 1-13. Babrius tells his dedicatee of the three ages of man, of which the Golden was witness to the ability of animals to speak like humans. Other verbal phenomena included pine trees, the leaves of laurels, fish and sparrows. "All things grew from the earth, which required nothing, and mortals consort ed with gods."

The next three lines read as follows in A: 3)

14 μαθὼν δ' ἄρο ὀὔτω ταῦτ' ἔχοντα καὶ γυνίης
ἐκ τοῦ σοφοῦ ἡμῶν γέροντος Αἰσώπου
μύθους φράσαντ' οἷς τῆς ἐλευθέρης μούσης. 4)

The main problem in line 14 is raised by μαθὼν δ' ἄρο (= μαθὼν δ' ἄρ'). The *editio princeps* of A 5) was based on a copy made by Mynas, which read μάθοις δ' ἄν. All subsequent editors of Babrius agree that this is A's reading. This includes Crusius, 6) who used a collation made by Eberhard, 7) and Perry, 8) who apparently used a microfilm copy of A. 9)
The first dissident was Mynas himself, who wrote μαθὼν δ' ἄν in another copy he made of Α (Vatopedi cod. 736 fol. 58r). Next comes Pius Knoell, who twice reported the correct reading, but (alas!) went unheeded first by Crusius, then by Perry. Not, however, by the present writer, who has re-examined the passage carefully in both natural and ultra-violet light, generously aided and abetted by Mr Nigel Wilson, who agrees in reading omega-nu after theta and rho before οὐτω: sc. μαθὼν...

Between nu and rho the ink has almost entirely disappeared, but the pen strokes can still be made out on the surface of the parchment, and traces of ink are visible under ultra-violet light. Thus delta and alpha (following nu) are probable readings. Knoell read the letter following alpha as nu, though he noted rho as possible. The loop of a rho is visible, and nu may be ruled out. The original accent on omega is lost. An acute (a sharp stroke in black ink) was added probably by Triclinius, who treated δ' as enclitic. Following delta traces of apostrophe, smooth breathing and grave accent justify the report given above.

In his later report Knoell states that the reading of the first hand (μαθὼν δ' ἄν or μ. δ' ἄρ') was subsequently altered to μάθοις δ' ἄν by another hand. There is, however, no trace of -οις visible in Α. Thus μάθοις should be considered Mynas' conjecture, falsely reported as A's reading and so printed by Boissonade.

A reads (with minimal restoration) μαθὼν δ' ἄρ'. Is this acceptable? Crusius denies Babrius the use of ἄρα, as opposed to ἄρα. But normal poetic usage (cf. Denniston, Greek Particles 33-41, 44-46) and the evidence of A here are sufficient to set aside this dogma. Again, the transitional and consequential use of δ' ἄρα (= "and so"), which suits the present passage, is found at Babrius fab. 72.19 (δ' ἄρα) and is amply attested in writers of the Second Sophistic: cf. Philostr. VA 1.9, 12 (1.8.12, 11.24 Kayser); Aristid. Panath. 23 (1.26 Behr = 1.162 Dindorf); and in general, Schmid, Der Atticismus in seinen Hauptvertretern 1.183, 425; 2.304; 3.335; 4.550.

Again, δ' ἄρ' (as opposed to δ' ἄν) permits us to take the participle as factual and temporal rather than modal: "And so having learned that this is so (sc. from vv. 1-13) ..." Kaί may then be taken as adverbial, and the optative as one of wish: "... may you also come to know (this) from wise old Aesop..." The potential optative without ἄν is also possible: "... you may also come to know (this) ..."
We next turn to line 15, where the problems are primarily metrical. As transmitted by A, the verse lacks caesura and contains hiatus.  

Two such anomalies cannot stand together. Triclinius has written the letters beta, alpha and gamma (in that order) over the last three words, indicating the following transposition: γέροντος ἡμῶν Αἰσώπου. This removes hiatus and restores caesura. The genitive pronoun (better taken as enclitic ἡμῶν) makes sense as possessive: "sapientis senis nostri Aesopi" (Boissonade).  

But we are still faced with a serious metrical difficulty. A long element 9 is very rare, and the violation of Porson's Law raises considerable doubt, especially in view of A's interpolated violations at lines 3f:

τρίτη δ' ἀπ' αὐτῶν <-> ἐγενήθη χαλκείη.  
μεθ' ἂν γενέσθαι φασὶ θείαν ἱρώων.  

The remaining evidence in A regarding Porson's Law serves to increase doubt even further. For example, at the end of 103.4 A reads ἀληθῶς ἀσθμαίνων. Here the offensive long is removed by the Suda's ἀληθές.  

Two other instances of violation occur in the metrical epimythia, which are frequently the products of interpolation. One of these (13.13f) warns against incurring undeserved hatred by associating with wicked men. But the fable stresses the capture and execution of an innocent stork caught in a trap intended for guilty cranes (cf. 13.1f, 4, 11f). This weak summary is more likely the work of an interpolator than of Babrius.  

The case is more complicated at 82.9-11, which reads as follows:

9 Ἀρχόμενον ἄρτι τὸ ἀφασὶ τῶν ὑβριζόντων,  
kάν μικρὸν ἦ, κύλυε, μηδὲ συχυώμει  
eὐκαταφρόνητοι εἶναι σαυτόν τοῖς φαύλοις.  

At line 11 the impossible long in element 7 is eliminated by transposition (sc. σαυτόν εἶναι). But we are left with a violation of Porson's Law and a suspicious "dactyl" as well. Moreover, μηδὲ - φαύλοις (10f) has little to do with the fable which precedes.  

There a sleeping lion is startled by a mouse and later replies to a fox who makes fun of him for so reacting: "You wretch! It's not that I fear the mouse may scratch my hide in his escape. But he was about to make a mess on my mane." The point is that what seems small and insignificant may do real damage, and this is the message of 9f (Ἀρχόμενον ... κύλυε), but not of the rest of the epimythium. Moreover, it is precisely line 11 that raises the metrical problems noted above. The
solution proposed here is to delete line 11 and treat κῶλυε μηδὲ συγχώρει as the end of the epimythium. 25) Thus another violation of Porson’s Law is eliminated.

This leaves 99.4. 26) In this fable an eagle proposes partnership to a lion. "Fine," says the lion

3 ἀλλ' ἂν ἔνεχυρον δώσεις τῶκυπτέρως 28) σου μὴ μεθείναι τὴν πίστιν πῶς γὰρ φίλω σοι μὴ μένοντι πιστεύσω;"

It must be admitted that apart from violating Porson's Law the end of line 4 is unexceptionable. "So as not to let go your pledge" means "so as not to break your pledge." 29) The aorist aspect after negation and the article ("your") are both in order.

Thus one could argue that Pr. 1.15 and 99.4 support one another and that two instances of word-end after a long ninth element should be admitted in the Mythiambi. But against this we should note the following. (1) Not only are there no other instances of this metrical anomaly in some 1700 verses, but a short is almost universal in element 9. (2) Three instances of this anomaly in A are shown to be corrupt on the evidence of other witnesses; two occur in epimythia that are probably interpolated. (3) Neither at Pr. 1.15 nor at 99.4 are we dealing with technical terms or proper names that could not otherwise be accommodated in the choliambus. (4) The anomaly at Pr. 1.15 is itself the result of conjecture. We are thus entitled to conclude that the text in both passages is corrupt. The easiest solution at 99.4 is to read μὴ μεθείναι πίστιν,30) and at Pr. 1.15 Seidler proposes ἡμῖν for ἡμῶν. 31)

In conclusion, Pr. 1.14-16 should read:

μαθὼν δ' ἄρ' ὠτί ταῦτ' ἔχοντα καὶ γνοιν ἐν τοῦ σοφοῦ γέροντος ἡμῖν Ἀισώπου μύθοις φοράσαντος τῆς ἐλευθερίας μούσης.

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NOTES

1) (Urbana 1957, rpr. Rome 1970) 250ff n. 236 (henceforth: ManTradEur.)

2) On Triclinius' activities on fol. 3r see Turyn, ManTradEur 250f n. 236 with pl. XV.

3) This and subsequent reports of A are based on autopsy.


Henceforth: Crusius.

7) Cf. Crusius, pp. III-IV.


9) I infer this from the paleographic errata at CP 52 (1957) 23 n. 7. For the truth cf. Knoell, WSt 31 (1909) 205f, who collated the original.

10) I wish to thank the director and staff of the Institut de Recherches et d'Histoire des Textes for the opportunity to collate a microfilm copy of this MS.

11) WSt 3 (1881) 192f, WSt 31 (1909) 204.

12) Cf. W. J. W. Koster, Autour d'un MS d'Aristophane ... (Groningen 1957) 84 n. 1.

13) Index, s.v. ἄρα (p. 322).

14) Cf. Goodwin, GMT § 224; Fraenkel on Aesch. Ag. 1048.

15) On the usage see Kühner-Gerth 1.225f and Schwyzer-Debrunner 2.325.

16) On caesura see Crusius, pp. XLVI-VII; on hiatus, id. p. L.


19) Cf. Crusius, pp. XL-XLI.


21) The fundamental modern study is E. Hohmann, De indole atque autori-tate epitmythionm Babrianorum (Diss. Königsberg 1907). See also Perry, op. cit. 2 (supra, n. 8) pp. lxii-lxiv; Luck, Gnomon 39 (1967) 569f.


23) Indicated by a later hand (not Triclinius') in A.

24) Apart from 82.9, 11 there are 18 examples of resolved element 2 following long element 1 in Babrius. Five parallel 82.9 (30.6, 62.1, 54.2, 86.5, 112.9); one parallels 82.11 (80.4: note that the "dactylic" opening of 75.6 results from an unnecessary conjecture of Crusius). The occurrence of two such "dactyls" in the space of three lines has no parallel in Babrius.

25) For the use of μηδέ see Kühner-Gerth 2.293; Denniston, Greek Particles 191. For the stylistically unexceptionable pleonasm see Kühner-Gerth 2.586. Hohmann, op. cit. (supra, n. 21) 103 holds that the epimythium as a whole misses the point of the fable, but his argument is not cogent.
26) By assuming false prosody we can create a violation of Porson's Law at 65.1a Crusius (quoted by the Suda): Λίβυσσα γέρανος ἦδε ταῦς εὐπήλης. But if we are to assume that Babrius scanned the alpha of ταῦς long, we might as well give him the form ταῦς assumed by τίνες at Choerob. in Theod. 1.284.13ff: cf. ταῦς at Jacoby, FGrHist 541 F 2 (Menodotus) = Athen. 14.655A; Pollux 6.52.

27) The two MSS (A and V) that preserve this fable have probably lost a short syllable between ἀλλ' and ἐνέχυρον, since a word of type ——— in elements 8-10 is more probable than a word of type —— ——— in elements 7-9. The former is found at 102.5, 140.6 (cf. 47.8); the latter, only by conjecture in v. 3 of Pr. 1.3-5 interpolated in A (see Crusius' text and apparatus), though 2.14 is a possible parallel. Thus AV probably lack a short in element 7, which is most easily supplied by Eberhard's supplement printed here (made in Babrii fabulae ed. A. Eberhard [Berlin 1875]). For ἀλλάδ γε see J. Blomqvist, Greek Particles in Hellenistic Prose 129 with n. 65.


29) Cf. ἀθετεῖν τὴν πίστιν found in Polybius and the NT (see Bauer, WörterbNT, s.v. ἀθετέω 1.a). Babrius may be imitating Homeric μεθίησι χόλον. Cf. also Aesch. PV 1037f, Pers. 699; Eur. Med. 176f, 590.

30) A. Eberhard, Verbesserungsvorschläge zum Text des Babrios (Berlin 1866) 12. The article, which would be natural in prose, was inserted by error. Then the aspect of the infinitive was changed to yield a verse of twelve elements.

31) In Eberhard's edition of Babrius (supra, n. 27). Rutherford, who supposes that the corruption in A lies too deep to yield to so easy a cure, may well be right (op. cit. [supra, n. 28] ad loc.).