

Babrius, *Fab.* 78: A New MS

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Several MSS that contain the tetrasticha of Ignatius Diaconus and his imitators also preserve a fable of Babrius (*Fab.* 12) in abridged form. (Incidentally, this is how Babrius first got into print, via the Aldine Aesop of 1505.) A previously unnoticed MS, Vaticanus Barberinianus graecus 354 (henceforth "Vb"), contains another recension of the tetrasticha, which here yields up a version of Babrius, *Fab.* 78.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the case of *Fab.* 12 and that of another fable (no. 58), separately and uniquely attested in two MSS,<sup>2</sup> Vb offers evidence useful in sorting out the text of its fable.

That fable (no. 78) is also attested by the principal MS (A) and by T, a set of wax tablets dated to the third century A.D.<sup>3</sup> To this is added a version of the paraphrase (*Fabb.* 169c-d Chambry).<sup>4</sup> The texts follow with minor corrections—that of T is partly restored.

κόραξ νοστήσας εἶπε μητρὶ κλαιούσῃ  
 "μὴ κλαίε, μητέρα, ἀλλὰ τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχου  
 νόσου με δεινῆς καὶ πόνων ἀνασφῆλαι."  
 "καὶ τίς σε" φησὶ "τῶν θεῶν, τέκνον, σώσει;  
 τίνος γὰρ ὑπὸ σοῦ βωμὸς οὐκ ἐσυλήθη;"

A

<sup>1</sup> The Aesopica follow a fragment of a Greek grammar copied in 1479. *Babr. Fab.* 78 is in fact inserted between the general title of the tetrasticha and the promythium of the first tetrastichon. This part of the MS (ff. 119<sup>v</sup>-23) may be dated to the last quarter of the 15th cent., not long after 1479; see the authorities cited by P. Canart and V. Peri, *Sussidi bibliografici per i manoscritti greci della Biblioteca Vaticana* (Vatican City 1970) 146. The reports given here and below of MSS A, T and Vb are based on autopsy. On the MSS of the tetrasticha, see C. F. Müller in *Babrii fabulae Aesopaeae*, ed. by O. Crusius (Leipzig 1897) 251-63.

<sup>2</sup> On *Fab.* 58 see J. Vaio, *Emerita* 48 (1980) 1-3. The variants of the abridged version of *Fab.* 12 are not reported in *Babrii Mythiambi Aesopei*, ed. by M. J. Luzzatto (*Fabb.* 1-80) and A. La Penna (*Fabb.* 81-144), (Leipzig 1986) 14-16; for these variants see Crusius (previous note) 19 f.

<sup>3</sup> First published by D. C. Hesseling, "On Waxen Tablets with Fables of Babrius," *JHS* 13 (1892-93) 293-314, with plates XIII-XIX.

<sup>4</sup> *Aesopi Fabulae*, ed. by E. Chambry (Paris 1925-26) II 290.

κοραξ νοσησας ελεγε μητρει κλεουση  
μη κλαε μητερ αλλα τοις θεοις ευχου<sup>5</sup>  
η δ ειπε τεκνον και τισ<sup>6</sup> σε των θεων σωσει  
ποιος γαρ βω<μοσ><sup>7</sup> υπο σου ουκ εσυληθη

T

κόραξ νοσήσας τῇ μητρὶ κλαιούσῃ εἶπεν· “εὐχου τοῖς θεοῖς, μήτερ, καὶ μὴ κλαῖε.” ἡ δὲ εἶπεν· “τίς σε τῶν θεῶν, τέκνον, ἐλεήσει; τίνος γὰρ αὐτῶν βωμὸς ὑπὸ σοῦ οὐκ ἐσυλήθη;”

paraphr.

Vb's uncorrected text of lines 1–3 reads as follows:

κόραξ νοσήσ(ας) εἶπε μ(ητ)ρὶ κλεουση :  
μη κλαῖε μ(ῆτ)ερ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς θεοῖς εὐχου :  
νοσου με δεινῆς κ(αὶ) πό(νων) ανασφηλαι :

In line 1 Vb agrees with A against T (εἶπε: ελεγε).<sup>8</sup> In line 2 all witnesses are in essential agreement. Line 3 is missing in T and the paraphrast, and this omission led Hesseling, who first published T, to consider the line spurious.<sup>9</sup> The evidence of the new MS (Vb) is further vindication of this line, if such as needed, since like A it contains line 3, but agrees substantially with T in line 4. T's version may have been abridged arbitrarily by the schoolmaster who apparently dictated it.<sup>10</sup> That the paraphrase also omits this verse is of little or no value as evidence, since it frequently abbreviates its source.<sup>11</sup>

A more serious textual difficulty occurs in line 4, partly metrical, but mainly due to disagreement among the witnesses, whose texts follow:

“καὶ τίς σε” φησί “τῶν θεῶν, τέκνον, σώσει;

A

η δ ειπε τεκνον και τισ<sup>12</sup> σε των θεων σωσει

T

ἡ δὲ εἶπεν· “τίς σε τῶν θεῶν, τέκνον, ἐλεήσει;

paraphr.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The fable is written twice in T, once in uncials (2<sup>v</sup>) and once in cursive (3<sup>f</sup>). The combination of both versions yields a complete text for line 2. Contrast Hesseling (above, note 3) 305 and Luzzatto (above, note 2) ad loc.

<sup>6</sup> Luzzatto (above, note 2) ad loc. reads καισετων for Hesseling's και . . . σετων ((above, note 3) 305). In the uncial version (on 2<sup>v</sup>) και occurs near the end of line 16 and is followed by space enough (9 cm) for, and traces of, three letters. In the cursive version (3<sup>f</sup>, line 4) τισ may be clearly read between κ . . and σετων. Thus T reads καιτισετων.

<sup>7</sup> The syllable missing on 2<sup>v</sup> may have been on 3<sup>f</sup>: sc. βωμ . . υ . . σου.

<sup>8</sup> Vb here supports A against T. Luzzatto ((above, note 2) 77) sides with T; contrast La Penna (above, note 2) ad loc.

<sup>9</sup> Hesseling (above, note 3) 305; contrast Crusius, *Philologus* 53 (1894) 235.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Crusius (previous note) 232 ff., esp. 238; idem (above, note 1) xi.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Crusius (above, note 1) xx.

<sup>12</sup> On T's reading, see above (note 6).

<sup>13</sup> On the text of the paraphrast's source, see below (note 23).

Here Vb reads:

ἡ δ' εἶπεν τέκνον, τίς σε τ(ῶν) θεῶν σώσει : (sic)

and goes back to a source common to itself and T, but varying considerably from A.<sup>14</sup> We then have two versions of the line with different word order and narrative style.

Luzzatto<sup>15</sup> following Hesseling<sup>16</sup> adopts T's version (T's καί is deleted) and offers:

ἡ δ' εἶπε· "τέκνον, τίς σε τῶν θεῶν σώσει;

The new Teubner thus offers the reading of our MS (with slight corrections) as the result of independent conjecture.

But what are we to make of this reading in contrast to A's variant, adopted by Crusius and Perry<sup>17</sup> in preference to T? One point in favor of A is its style. The reading based on T/Vb makes the change of subject explicit, but at the cost of the lively and idiomatic καί,<sup>18</sup> whose effect is sharpened by its position at the beginning of the verse. Moreover, the fact that καί is hypermetrically retained in T strongly suggests that the source of A and T/Vb had the particle, and that A is closer to that source.<sup>19</sup> Vb has taken the process one step further and removed the καί.

On the other hand, A presents a metrical difficulty: τέκνον in elements 9–10 of the trimeter, which either yields an impossible long in element 9 or exhibits a form of correction rare for Babrius.<sup>20</sup> This difficulty can be removed by adopting the following transposition, proposed by Nauck<sup>21</sup> and adopted by Crusius and Perry:

καὶ τίς σε, τέκνον, φησί, τῶν θεῶν σώσει;

"transposuit Nck adstipulante FT" (Crusius [above, note 1] ad loc.)

But if A's is the primary reading here, then the position of τέκνον in T (and Vb), i.e., in elements 4–5, could be merely the result of a reviser's wish

<sup>14</sup> The paraphrase agrees with T/Vb in the introductory phrase, but has the vocative like A directly before the verb. The latter is the more telling index of affinity linking the paraphrase with A in this pair of variants, especially if the source of the paraphrase read καὶ τίς σε, as argued below (note 23).

<sup>15</sup> Luzzatto (above, note 2) 77.

<sup>16</sup> Hesseling (above, note 3) 305. Note (*pace* Luzzatto) that Hesseling does not conjecture τίς for καί in T. He reads καὶ [τίς] and deletes the conjunction; see above (note 6).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Crusius (above, note 1) 70; B. E. Perry, *Aesopica* I (Urbana, IL 1952) *Fab.* 324; idem, *Babrius and Phaedrus* (Cambridge, MA and London 1965) 98. Both Crusius and Perry adopt Nauck's transposition of A's text discussed below.

<sup>18</sup> On this use of the particle, see Denniston, *GP*<sup>2</sup> 309 f.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Hesseling (above, note 3) 305. Note that καί may also have been in the source of the paraphrase; see below (note 23).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Luzzatto (above, note 2) c, civ; contrast Crusius (above, note 1) lviii–lvix, and see discussion below.

<sup>21</sup> *Philologus* 6 (1851) 407.

to begin the mother's reply with the vocative. As regards F (= *Fab.* 169b Chambray), the matter is more complex. This version in dodecasyllabic verse derives from the paraphrase (or its source),<sup>22</sup> but has καί before τίς,<sup>23</sup> sc. ἡ δὲ . . . ἔφη· / "καὶ τίς σε, τέκνον, τῶν θεῶν ἐλέησει;" (3-4). Here the vocative may have been transposed from its position in the paraphrase in order to achieve a regular Byzantine Zwölf-silber (xxx-ο|xxxxx-ο), that is, in order to avoid word-end after the sixth syllable with neither B5 nor B7.<sup>24</sup>

Thus the evidence of T/Vb and the dodecasyllabic fable is neutral regarding Nauck's transposition. Nor is the prosody a certain index of corruption. For if one follows Crusius in keeping A's reading at *Fab.* 70. 6 (μῆ γούν ἔθνη που in elements 1-5) and adopting C. E. Schneider's correction at 129. 8 (παρὰ φάτναισι in elements 6-9), then these "correptiones satis singulares . . . altera alteram defendunt neque a Babrio abiudicanda videntur."<sup>25</sup> And with A's version of 78. 4 they add up to three, an even stronger confirmation of this prosody. Nevertheless, one must always reckon with transposition as a type of corruption in the Babrian MSS,<sup>26</sup> and here it could be explained as an attempt effectively to join τῶν θεῶν with τίς. The best procedure would be to print A and record Nauck's conjecture in the apparatus.

In line 5 Vb reads τίνος γ(άρ) δε ὑπό σου βώμος οὐκ ἐσυληθη (sic). Except for the intrusive δε it stands with A against T's ποιοσ γαρ βω<μοσ> υπο σου ουκ εσυληθη.

In sum, the evidence of Vb supports adoption of A against the innovations of Luzzatto, based on T. Here Loeb has the advantage over Teubner.

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<sup>22</sup> On these fables, see F. Fedde, *Ueber eine noch nicht edirte Sammlung Aesopischer Fabeln* . . . (Progr. Breslau 1877) 15 ff., esp. 16 f.; U. Ursing, *Studien zur griechischen Fabel* (diss. Lund 1930) esp. 88-90; B. E. Perry, *Studies in the Text History of the Life and Fables of Aesop* (Haverford, PA 1936) 183 ff., esp. 195 f. (with n. 33), 204; Luzzatto (above, note 2) lxxvii ff.; F. R. Adrados, *Historia de la fábula greco-latina* (Madrid 1985) II 427 ff.; J. Vaio, "Babrius and the Byzantine Fable," in *La fable*, Entretiens Fond. Hardt 30 (Vandœuvres-Geneva 1984) 206 ff.

<sup>23</sup> All the witnesses except Vb and the principal MSS of the paraphrase have καὶ τίς σε, and the conjunction may have been in the latter's source. The dodecasyllabic version and Bd, a lesser MS in the paraphrastic tradition, have καί. True, Bd adds ᾠ before τέκνον and could have added καί, but the evidence of the dodecasyllabic fable suggests otherwise.

<sup>24</sup> For theory and notation see P. Maas, *BZ* 12 (1903) 278 ff., esp. 287 ff. (= *Kl. Schr.* 242 ff., esp. 251 ff.); for the meter of these fables, see Ursing (above, note 22) 7-14.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Crusius (above, note 1) lviii-lix; contrast Luzzatto (above, note 2) civ. *Fab.* 29. 5 (ἀκμῆς in elements 9-10) would be an exact parallel, but the verse is otherwise corrupt, and its text uncertain. Moreover, the authenticity of the epimythium in which it occurs is still in question, as is that of individual epimythia generally, despite Luzzatto's discussion ([above, note 2] xci-xcvi).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. J. Vaio, "Four Notes on the Text of Babrius," *CP* 64 (1969) 158 with n. 49.