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THE FIRST WORD OF CALLIMACHUS' *AITIA*

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THE FIRST WORD OF CALLIMACHUS' *AITIA**Spesso il male di vivere ho incontrato*

In his first speech before the Ithacan assembly, Telemachus describes as follows the second (and greater) of the two evils that have fallen upon him and his house (Od. β 50):

μητέρι μοι μνηστῆρες ἐπέχραον οὐκ ἐθελούση.

In the manuscript Marc. gr. 613, one of the most important (and perhaps less carefully studied) testimonia of the Odyssean scholia<sup>1</sup>, the interlinear note to the first part of this line, written by the hand classified by Ludwich as M<sup>a</sup>, reads (f. 20r = p. 80, 2 Dindorf):

μητέρι μὲν ὡς πολλάκις Τελχῖνες.

Neither Dindorf – who simply suggested the obvious emendation μοι for μὲν<sup>2</sup>, so as to make a lemma out of the first two words – nor, as far as I know, any of the subsequent critics has dedicated any comment to this scholium. One might be struck by the lack of any evident analogy between the Telchines and Penelope's suitors: nothing of what is known about the former (neither the Rhodian and Cretan legends about their life, nor their nature of magical daemons credited with the discovery and use of metals, nor, finally, their antonomastic role as the genii of envy)<sup>3</sup> can be safely connected with the Homeric picture of the suitors.

The only common feature may be detected in the fact that both the Telchines and the suitors are malevolent subjects operating collectively in a multitude with the aim to disturb or attack somebody (but here again, no cases are known of Telchines importuning a woman, let alone asking her hand for marriage against her will): in my opinion, too slight a parallel to be remarked in a scholium. And anyway: a) *πολλάκις* would point to a habitual action of the Telchines, and I wonder to which episodes the reference could be; b) this interpretation would force us to change the lemma from *μητέρι μοι* (the Telchines never did any harm to mothers or widows) to *ἐπέχραον* (the word expressing the idea of “disturbing”, “annoying”, “attacking”), although one must observe that this verb is never used of the Telchines, so that the parallel could in no way imply a verbal reminiscence<sup>4</sup>.

If this explanation appears to be unsatisfactory, I dare suggest a different one. The first two words of β 50 (namely the lemma of our scholium) represent one of the many Homeric instances of the so-called “double dative” created by the overlap of a dative (μοι, whether ethical, possessive or of disadvantage<sup>5</sup>) with another dative governed by the verb (μητέρι)<sup>6</sup>. Aristonicus' (and therefore Aristarchus') typical explanation for this type of construction, as well as for the similar one called “*σχῆμα καθ' ὄλον καὶ*

<sup>1</sup> Having started a new *recensio* of the text of the scholia to the *Odyssey*, I can certify that Dindorf's account of M's readings, based exclusively on Cobet's collations of books α–δ, is often unreliable. The opposite is true for Ludwich's partial edition of the scholia to α (*Scholia in Homeri Odysseae A 1–309 auctiora et emendatiora*, ed. A. L., Königsberg 1888–1890 [repr. Hildesheim 1966]) and for the same author's *Programm* devoted to this manuscript (A. Ludwich, *Scholia ad Odysseae l. XIII ex codicibus mss. Veneto et Monacensi edita*, Regimonti 1871 [«Acad. Alb. Regim. 1871. I»], 1–4): both these works proceed from good, independent collations and contribute to drawing a distinction between the annotating hands.

<sup>2</sup> It may be enough to quote one more error of this sort: in Σ ad β 319 (p. 109, 1 Dindorf) the ms. E (Ambr. E 89 sup., b. 19v) has a wrong μὲν instead of μου after *κατηναλωκότας*.

<sup>3</sup> The most complete survey on the Telchines is still the article by H. Herter in *RE V A* (1934), 197–224.

<sup>4</sup> M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and Scholia of the Iliad*, I, Leiden 1963, 264 n. 311, argues that Apollonius Rhodius, when using the word *ἐπέχραον* for the *ἐτήσιοι ἄνθρωποι* in *Arg.* II, 498, wishes to represent the winds «as living and malicious beings». In fact, the Telchines fit in well with this description, but I find it hard to believe that such a subtle analogy might have been remarked by an ancient scholiast.

<sup>5</sup> S. West ad loc. comments (in A. Heubeck – S. West – J. B. Hainsworth, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey I*, Oxford 1988, 133): «It is hard to say whether the dative μοι should be classified as possessive, ethical or of disadvantage».

<sup>6</sup> For similar cases see e. g. E. Schwyzer (– A. Debrunner), *Griechische Grammatik II*, München 1950, 149.

μέρος”<sup>7</sup>, is: δοτική ἀντὶ γενικῆς, i. e. “the dative instead of the genitive”<sup>8</sup>. As a matter of fact, the personal pronoun in the dative can almost always be given possessive force, and thus be rendered by means of a possessive (in our case, “my mother”): this is the solution most frequently adopted in modern translations<sup>9</sup>.

Now, our scholium may be interpreted as dealing with precisely this grammatical issue, the “double dative” in the lemma, and as referring to another famous passage containing a “double dative”, i. e. the opening line of Callimachus’ *Aitia*:

πολλάκι μοι Τελχίνες ἐπιτρύζουσιν ἄοιδῆ.

Admittedly, three objections can be raised against this reconstruction.

a) One should assume that the text of the scholium is badly mutilated, and restore it to the following:

μητέρι μοι: ὡς “πολλάκι{ς} <μοι> Τελχίνες <ἐπιτρύζουσιν ἄοιδῆ>”.

This, however, will immediately appear as no major difficulty to anyone who is acquainted with the tradition of Homeric scholia (and particularly of the Odyssean ones), in which often even essential words (in this case, particularly the μοι of Callimachus’ line, which perhaps at some stage may have turned into the final sigma of πολλάκις) have been swallowed up by textual corruption.

b) The “double dative” in Callimachus’ line is not certain (in so far as some editors read ἄοιδῆς for ἄοιδῆ) and is anyway of different nature from the one in β 50.

This objection can be easily rejected: ἄοιδῆ at the end of *Aitia* I, 1 is the reading one can gather from the only witness of the last word of this line (*in lacuna* in POxy 2079), i. e. the Scholia Florentina (PSI XI, 1219), which carry ΑΟΙΔΗ and normally omit the iota mutum<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, the syntax of *Aitia* I, 2 (νήιδες οἱ Μούσης οὐκ ἐγένοντο φίλοι), whether brachylogical (Μούσης depending ἀπὸ κοινοῦ on νήιδες and φίλοι) or not (νήιδες meaning “ignorant, stupid”)<sup>11</sup>, does stand on its own and thus allows the reading ἄοιδῆ in the foregoing line. As for the syntactical nature of μοι ... ἄοιδῆ, I doubt that it can be described as a σχῆμα καθ’ ὅλον καὶ μέρος *stricto sensu*<sup>12</sup>, since this σχῆμα only occurs with parts of the body, with the “mind”, thoughts or the like<sup>13</sup>: I would rather see here the overlap of two datives, with μοι (whether ethical, possessive or of disadvantage) implying the same deep involvement that was remarked by Nitzsch in the μοι of β 50<sup>14</sup>. Anyway, the scholiast may hardly

<sup>7</sup> See Schwyzer, *ibid.* 81; R. Kühner (– B. Gerth), *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache* II/1, Hannover–Leipzig 1898, 289–290.

<sup>8</sup> See Σ Ariston. ad A 24a with Erbse’s *apparatus testimoniorum* and L. Friedlaender in Aristonici *περὶ σημείων Ἰλιάδος reliquiae emendatiores*, ed. L. F., Göttingen 1853 (repr. Amsterdam 1965), 22. The same applies, as far as the σχῆμα καθ’ ὅλον καὶ μέρος is concerned, to the accusative case: see Friedländer, *ibid.* 20.

<sup>9</sup> The ancients felt the same, as is shown by the (mis)quotation of the beginning of β 50 in Σ ex. ad I 225a μητρί τ’ ἐμῆ μνηστῆρες (ms. T).

<sup>10</sup> The reading ἄοιδῆ in the papyrus was first suggested in the *editio princeps* (M. Norsa – G. Vitelli, *Da papiri della Società Italiana*, in *Bulletin de la Société Royale d’Archéologie d’Alexandrie* 28, 1933, 123–142: 126 and 129), and immediately taken to refer to Callimachus’ poetry. It might be worth noting that after ΑΟΙΔΗ the papyrus has a double dash, with the only purpose of finishing the line for justification on the right-hand margin.

<sup>11</sup> The former interpretation is favoured by Pfeiffer, though with some doubts; see L. Torraca, *Il prologo dei Telchini e l’inizio degli Aitia di Callimaco*, Napoli 1973<sup>2</sup>, 26–27; Massimilla (= Callimaco, *Aitia. Libri primo e secondo*, ed. G. M., Pisa 1996), 201–202. The latter is now supported with convincing arguments by E. Magnelli, *Quelle bestie dei Telchini*, in *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 127, 1999, pp. 52–58. The last vigorous supporter of ἄοιδῆς in l. 1 is A. Cameron, *Callimachus and his Critics*, Princeton (N. J.) 1995, 340.

<sup>12</sup> As believe M. Pohlenz, *Kallimachos’ Aitia*, in *Hermes* 68, 1933, 313–327: 317 (= Id., *Kleine Schriften* II, Hildesheim 1965, 44–58: 48); F. Lapp, *De Callimachi Cyrenaei tropis et figuris*, diss. Bonnæ 1965, 92; Torraca (as in note 11), 23; Massimilla (as in note 11), 201.

<sup>13</sup> See Schwyzer (as in note 6), 81 (who admits this figure only with a «Körperteil, auch als Sitz einer geistigen Funktion»). Consequently, I do not think that O 162 εἰ δέ μοι οὐκ ἐπέεσσ’ ἐπιπέισεται, quoted by Pfeiffer in his *apparatus*, can be considered as an example of this σχῆμα.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Kühner (as in note 7), 429.

have gone beyond the observation of the *prima facie* analogy between the structure of the two lines, an analogy that also partially extends to their metrical and rhythmical pattern (dactylic word + μοι + trisyllabic word + feminine caesura + word beginning by ἐπ-).

c) The quotation of a parallel from a νεώτερος poet is far from frequent in Homeric scholia dealing with syntactical matters<sup>15</sup>; it also sounds rather strange that the parallel is introduced so briskly with a mere ὥς, without any explanation regarding the reason of the quotation and without the name of the poet quoted.

As a counter-argument I may adduce Σ ex. ad Δ 100c:

ὄϊστευσον Μενελάου: ὥς “ἐξέρρηξεν ὁδοῖο” (Ψ 421) καὶ “κατεάγη τῆς κεφαλῆς” (Ar. Vesp. 1428).

Here the only link is represented by ὥς, and the issue is by all means a syntactical one. If in this context a good reason for quoting Aristophanes was that the use of the genitive instead of the accusative was regarded by Aristarchus as specifically Attic, and numbered among the proofs of Homer's Attic origin<sup>16</sup>, in other “syntactical” exegetical scholia no such motives for quoting a νεώτερος can be detected: see e. g. Σ ex. ad E 878b:

σοί τ' ἐπιπέθονται καὶ δεδμήμεσθα ἕκαστος: περὶ πρόσωπον τὸ σχῆμα, ὥς παρὰ Εὐριπίδη (Or. 1483) “διαπρεπεῖς ἐγένοντο Φρύγες”,

and Σ ex. ad I 77b<sup>1</sup>:

τίς τάδε γηθήσειεν: οὐ λείπει τὸ ὄρων, ἀλλ' ἔστι παλαιὰ συνήθεια: “ἀλλ' ἕτερον ἦσθην” (Ar. Ach. 13) ...

The instances of quotations from younger poets in connection with syntactical issues are admittedly sporadic<sup>17</sup>, and most of the numerous quotations from Callimachus in the exegetical scholia concern grammatical peculiarities, mythological issues or the occurrence of rare words, so that our scholium would not be of the commonest form (unless, of course, a wider corruption of its text is assumed). Yet, the presence of Hellenistic poetry in the Homeric scholia of Aristarchean origin has been the object of recent reappraisals, which show its width and its depth<sup>18</sup>; on the ground of this and of the aforementioned examples, I believe that the reconstruction of the scholium given above is intrinsically possible and that it accounts best for the sibylline *iunctura* πολλακίς Τελχίνας.

If this is true, Lobel's integration of πολλακί at the beginning of *Aitia* I, 1 in POxy 2079<sup>19</sup>, *per se* very likely and favoured or adopted by most editors and critics<sup>20</sup>, attains the degree of certainty.

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<sup>15</sup> My argument will focus on the Iliadic scholia, where a reliable edition and good indexes are at hand.

<sup>16</sup> See e. g. Friedlaender (as in note 8), 21; Carnuth in Aristonici *περὶ σημείων Ὀδυσσεύως reliquiae emendatiores*, ed. O. C., Lipsiae 1869, 19–20; Σ Ariston. ad Γ 5 with Erbse's apparatus; T. Hedberg, *Eusthatios als Attizist*, diss. Uppsala 1935, 191–193.

<sup>17</sup> See also Pindar in Σ ex. ad B 367a<sup>1</sup>, Theocritus in Σ ex. ad Γ 323b etc.

<sup>18</sup> See F. Montanari, Aristarco ad Odissea II 136–137. Appunti di filologia omerica antica, in *Materiali e discussioni* 3, 1979, 157–170 = Id., *Studi di filologia omerica antica* II, Pisa 1995, 27–40 (esp. 27–33, where the author argues that a rather obscure quotation from Callimachus in an Aristarchean scholium actually concerns a syntactical issue); Id., *Filologi alessandrini e poeti alessandrini. La filologia sui “contemporanei”*, in *Aevum antiquum* 8, 1995, 47–63, esp. 53–60.

<sup>19</sup> E. Lobel, Callimachea, in *Hermes* 70, 1935, 31–45: 32.

<sup>20</sup> See especially Torraca (as in note 11), 22 and Cameron (as in note 11), 339 (to his list of poetic parallels for such an *incipit* one might add two modern poets who most certainly did not have Callimachus in mind: Politian's 53rd Greek epigram – inc. Πολλακί τοξευθεῖς φλεχθεῖς θ' ὑπὸ Πίκος Ἐρώτων – and Eugenio Montale's line quoted as *exergo* of this paper). Pfeiffer's tentative suggestion πάντοθι is favoured by d'Alessio (Callimaco, *Aitia. Giambi* etc., ed. G. B. d'A., Milano 1996), but convincingly refuted by Massimilla (as in note 11) 201.