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CALLIMACHUS, HECALE FRG. 3–5 H.

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CALLIMACHUS, HECALE FRs. 3-5 H.

Fr. 3 (364 Pf.) πολύθρονον

This anonymous lemma in Suidas (glossed πολυφάρμακον) is attributed to Callimachus' Hecale by 'Hecker's Law'.¹ Pfeiffer plausibly referred it to the sorceress Medea, and according I placed it near the beginning of the poem, where (to judge from the Diegesis) Callimachus narrated Medea's attempt to poison her stepson Theseus. But both Pfeiffer and I erred in saying that πολύθρονος occurs elsewhere only as a variant reading (rejected by Gow and Scholfield) in Nicander, Theriaca 875. There is a second unquestionable occurrence of the compound epithet in Nonnus, Dionysiaca 13,331, where Medea's aunt Circe is described as κύγγονος Αιήταο πολύθρονος. Setting this alongside Ap.Rh, 3,27 κούρην Αιήτεω πολυφάρμακον, I wonder whether both Apollonius and Nonnus are varying a Callimachean original κούρην Αιήταο πολύθρονον.² It would then be possible (obviously one can say no more) that fr. 4 H. followed immediately:³

κούρην Αιήταο πολύθρονον · ἢ δ' ἐκόηεν
τοῦνεκεν Αιγέος ἔσκεν

Whether or not frs. 3 and 4 H. can be joined, it is perhaps just worth considering (as a third, and much more speculative, hypothesis) whether we might delete the final ν of ἔσκεν in fr. 4,2, and complete the hexameter with γόνος Πανδιονίδαο.⁴ This idea is based on the possibility that Dionysius Periegetes' account of the attempted poisoning (1023-1024)⁵ borrows a phrase as well as a theme from the Hecale:⁶

¹See my Oxford, 1990, edition of the Hecale, pp. 41-44 and 358.

² This possibility had occurred to me on the basis just of Ap.Rh. 3,27, but did not seem worth mentioning without further support.

³ One would then have to admit that Suppl. Hell. 280,8]αιγέος[(text also on p. 142 of my Hecale) does not contain fr. 4,2 H.

⁴ The sources which quote fr. 4 H. are concerned with the meaning of the verb κοεῖν and the (allegedly incorrect) use of τοῦνεκεν. Thus they could have cut off the quotation at a point when the sense might have been complete, even if in fact it was not complete. But Mr. W.S.Barrett warns me that it is less plausible to postulate that this was done by *two* sources quoting the fragment for quite different purposes. He also questions whether Callimachus would have been likely to add the patronymic Πανδιονίδαο to Αιγέος unless this were the first mention of Aegeus in the whole poem. That seems to me not inconceivable; perhaps Theseus encountered Medea before he met his father (we know very little about this part of the poem). There could also be a special point in the use of the patronymic here: it would stress that Theseus belonged to the royal line of Pandion, and hence represented a particular threat to the position of Medea.

⁵ quoted in my Hecale, p. 143.

⁶ For imitations of the Hecale in Dion. Per., see my Hecale p. 388 (Index of Allusions and Imitations). We can see one verbatim borrowing: Dion. Per. 757 ἔργον ἀραχνάων (though not in the same part of the line) comes from Hecale fr. 42,6 H. = fr. 253,12 Pf. = SH 285,12.

εὔτε γὰρ Ἀκταίοιο παρὰ ῥόον Ἴλιςσοῖο
φάρμακ' ἐμήσατο λυγρὰ γονῶι Πανδιονίδαο

One could even refer to this line the marginal scholia which constitute fr. 5 H. These seem to be discussing the identity of Aegeus' father (both Scirus and Pandion are mentioned) and perhaps go on to specify the poison which Medea used against Theseus (line 7]παρδα[λιαγγέε Pf.):

5 (i, p. 506 Pf.), scholia marginalia

· · · · ·
] φ. [] []
]ωνεπανω[
Cκί]ρου δὲ ὁ Αἰ[γεύς
Παν]δίωνος []
5 ἀκολ]ουθησα[]
]νονμ. []
]παρδα[]
· · · · ·

Scholia litteris minoribus scripta in margine inferiore *P. Oxy.* 2258 (= pap. 2), A fr. 11, pagina 'versa' (pagina 'recta' = fr. 6; ultra praecedat incertum). De *Hecale* cogitaverunt Lobel, Pfeiffer, propter res narratas (Aegei genus, ut videtur, et fortasse Medeae venenum)

If the scholiast were commenting on a lemma Πανδιονίδαο,⁷ he could well, after expounding that genealogy,⁸ continue 'but Aegeus <is called by some> the son of Scirus, <not> of Pandion',⁹ cf. Apollodorus 3,15,5 ἔνιοι δὲ Αἰγέα Cκίρου [Cκυρίου codd., corr. Robert] εἶναι λέγουσιν, ὑποβληθῆναι δὲ ὑπὸ Πανδίωνος. The word-order of line 3 Cκί]ρου δὲ ὁ Αἰ[γεύς seems to emphasize Cκίρου in a way which would suit this general sentiment.

At the most optimistic, therefore, we might retrieve from frs. 3-5 H. two complete and consecutive hexameters describing the initial encounter between Theseus and Medea, (κούρην Αἰήταο) πολύθρονον· ἥ δ' ἐκόησεν | τοῦνεκεν Αἰγέος ἔσκε (γόνος Πανδιονίδαο). But that would require all three hypotheses in this paper to be confirmed, which is too much to ask. At the least, discovery of a second instance of the compound

⁷ Hexameters ending with the genitive singular patronymic -δαο are particularly common in the learned poets (e.g. Call., hymn 3,209 καὶ Κεφάλου ξανθὴν ἄλοχον Δητιονίδαο) as they had been in the Hesiodic Catalogues (Πανδιονίδαο ends a hexameter also in [Hes.] fr. 43(a), 70 M-W). If my idea of completing fr. 4,2 H. proved incorrect, one could still bear in mind the possibility that the scholia of fr. 5 may be commenting on this patronymic.

⁸ Line 2 of the scholia, τ]ῶν ἐπάνω[, might be part of that exposition. I am now inclined to think that these words more probably belong to the commentary than to a lemma (as Pfeiffer had suggested).

⁹ This could be expressed more briefly, or at greater length (e.g. by specifying the author(s) who favoured the rarer parentage). These scholia come from the lower margin of a small fragment of *P.Oxy.* 2258. At least in the *Coma Berenices* and *Victoria Sosibii* (*P.Oxy.* vol. XX, 1952, pp. 84-91), lines of scholia in the lower margin of this papyrus start further to the left, and end further to the right, than the lines of text above them. If the same was true of the scholia on the *Hecale*, there might have been upwards of 60 letters missing between the preserved parts of lines 3 and 4.

πολύθρονος, in a context which may teach us something about the Hecale, seems a useful if small advance.¹⁰

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¹⁰ I am grateful to Mr. W.S.Barrett and Dr. M.L.West for comments (their agreement should not be assumed).