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Two Greek Paratext Poems from the Manuscript Q No. 2 of the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences*

Dimitrija Rasljic

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy,
18-20, Cika Ljubina, Belgrade, 11000, Republic of Serbia; dmtr@rasljic.xyz

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This paper sheds new light on two Greek texts accompanying Aeschylus' *Prometheus Vincetus*, in the fifteenth-century manuscript Q No. 2 of the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Saint Petersburg. The first text is a didactic poem on iambic versification, allegedly composed by Michael Psellos, and the other one is a mixture of book epigrams related to the subject of the *Prometheus Vincetus*. August Nauck studied the manuscript and published these texts. All further mentions of the manuscript depend on Nauck's readings, which nobody seems to question. In the latest edition of Psellos, prepared by Westerink, the manuscript from St Petersburg has not been taken into account, albeit the editor mentions Nauck's publication. As for the epigrams, they have been published several times, also without taking that manuscript into account. A new study of the codex shows that Nauck's edition contains several minor misreadings, therefore, I propose a new edition, based on the St Petersburg manuscript, as well as other manuscripts bearing same or similar verses, which were, apparently, unknown to him. Analyzing the epigrams on Prometheus, I compare our manuscript with others which contain the same verses (usually in different order). I try to explain some of the mistakes in these texts and correct them, as well as to compare them with other readings.

Keywords: manuscript, iamb, iambic trimeter, book epigrams, readings, Nauck, Psellos.

1. Introduction

From the philological point of view, the manuscript Q No. 2 of the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg is more than interesting on many levels.

* I thank Elena Ermolaeva and Grigory Vorobyev for their help during my MA thesis writing which led to this article.

It contains Pindar's *Olympian Odes* and two tragedies of Aeschylus: *Prometheus Vincetus* and *Septem contra Thebes*.¹ Even though these main texts have not yet been scrutinized to a satisfactory level, they are unlikely to yield enormous discoveries on the level of the textual criticism. Beside these texts, the manuscript contains several short paratexts, two of which I will try to elaborate in this paper. Among the manuscripts bearing Greek plays, numerous ones contain, apart from usual paratexts like *argumentum*, *hypothesis* or *vita*, yet another kind of paratext, namely short poems, mostly Byzantine, about the poet or the play, copied before and after the latter; the codex Q No. 2 is one of such manuscripts. Besides, it abounds in Slavic/Serbian short accounts, inscriptions and glosses, which might be interesting for the history of the reception of Pindar and Aeschylus in the Balkans after the fall of Constantinople.² The manuscript also contains several cryptograms, one of which has been deciphered and others are yet to be researched.³ Occasionally, the codex cites smaller Greek texts of other authors, but such occurrences are rare (one example will be given below)

The manuscript dates from the fifteenth century, 1474 to be precise.⁴ Where it was copied and by whom, remains unknown. There is no external evidence, nor does the manuscript itself provide information of that kind.⁵ All we know is that it was in the town of Novo Brdo in the sixteenth century,⁶ and after that in the Monastery of the Serbian Patriarchate of Peć up to 1857. The hypothesis, made by Đ. Trifunović,⁷ that the manuscript belonged to Demetrius Kantakouzenos, a Greek man of letters who lived in Novo Brdo and wrote in Slavic, is indeed interesting, but could hardly be proven and remains a hypothesis. In 1863, the slavist Alexander Hilferding brought the manuscript to St Petersburg and it is still kept there to this day.

The same year that the manuscript was brought to St Petersburg, A. Nauck published his paper about the codex, mainly focusing his attention on the Greek part of it.⁸ Almost every other mention of the manuscript depends on his work. His reasoning, even though mostly correct, still needs correction here and there.⁹ Moreover, nobody seems to have questioned the conclusions he made on the level of textual criticism or his readings of the manuscript. Apparently, apart from Mstislav A. Shangin,¹⁰ who published a more general

¹ Nauck 1863, 487–518 (488–492); Irigoin 1952, 442; Turyn 1943, 43–46; Шангин М.А. Академическая рукопись Пиндара и Эсхила. *Известия Академии Наук СССР*, VI серия, 1927, том 21, выпуск 3, 501–502.

² Васенко П. Г. Сербские записи на греческой рукописи XV в., принадлежащей Библиотеке Академии наук СССР. *Известия Академии Наук СССР*, VII Серия, Отд. гум. наук, 1928. №. 1; Радојчић Н. *Закон о рудницима деспота Стефана Лазаревића*. Београд, Научно дело, 1962. 11–14.

³ For the deciphered cryptogram see Shangin 1927, 499. The other cryptograms are listed below in the present paper.

⁴ On exact date see Shangin 1927, 500.

⁵ The manuscript might have contained some information on its initial folios, but those are now lost. More precisely, around 8 initial folios are missing.

⁶ It is quite probable that the codex might have been copied there. Indeed, the economical and cultural importance of Novo Brdo rose in the period around the fall of Byzantium.

⁷ Трифуновић Ђ. *Димитрије Кантакузин*, Београд, Нолит, 1963, 23–24, 165.

⁸ Nauck 1863, 487–518.

⁹ This is also true for the main texts and its later editors. Nauck thought that our manuscript is closely related to the Paris. gr. 2782A, which is true, but not completely. Comparing them, first we see that they have not so few different readings, in the text of Pindar at least, but also different mistakes. Paris. gr. 2782A dates from the XVI century and is, by no means, *apographos* of our manuscript.

¹⁰ Shangin 1972, 499–510.

article on the whole manuscript in 1926, nobody has studied the Greek part of the manuscript thoroughly after Nauck. Nauck also published both poems which are the main matter of this article. His edition is mostly correct, but nonetheless ought to be somewhat revised. In his aforementioned article, Shangin corrected some of the mistakes Nauck made, but not all of them, and, most importantly, deciphered the cryptogram concealing the exact date when the scribe finished his work. Though Shangin's article is also quite important, it is not free from flaws. I will only point to a particular misreading of Shangin, who published several Greek passages from the main text of the manuscript that had been left out by Nauck.

Namely, top margin of the f. 91^r reads (original orthography preserved):¹¹

ἀρχὴ σοφί(ας) φόβος κ(υρίο)υ φησὶ τις θ<ε>ῖος
 ἀνὴρ εἰ γουν σοφί(ας) κ(αὶ) σὺ ᾧ παιδίον ὄς¹² α
 γαθὸν ἀπάντω<ν> κρυτον<α> (καὶ) ὑψηλότερα

Shangin, on the other hand, published this text as follows:¹³

ἀρχὴ σοφίφοβος καὶ φησὶ τις θεῖος ἀνὴρ εἰ γόνυ σοφίας καὶ σὺ ᾧ παιδίον
 ὄς ἀγαθὸν ἀπαντα κρυτονος ὑψηλοτερα

Shangin read interlinear cryptograms (f. 14^v οφιμ¹⁴ νκαβα νοίαρ ; -, f. 15^r ντὰ γα νο : -¹⁵, f. 18^v α πιμ¹⁶; f. 19^r ηρμιομ¹⁷ | ζοτ νμ εε : -,¹⁸ f. 19^v να κραε¹⁹), but couldn't decipher them. He also does not mention these cryptograms:

f. 15^r: +μρπῆται εχσνά ηρμμόου ζτμοενε· χοατρνι τβρνες· αμννο (καὶ)
 τλασσοι χαικ ἀμοῦμιταζ· υοντομ :- ἀλπνιοτιτ πῆθασε· ηρμιῶ υμοοτμζόενη :-
 f. 51^v:²⁰ θουρκαγστοπροημεντος γ...
 f. 120^v: +αεδσιφιακῶτθτοθ²¹· πεας:ᾧνῖοταιᾶ:

2. A poem on iambic versification

Folios 1^r–54^r contain Pindar's *Olympian Odes*.²² On f. 54^v, before Aeschylus, a 19-verse-long poem is copied.²³ Pindar's text is mostly copied by one hand. Yet, these verses, on the other hand, as well as the epigrams on *Prometheus*, are written by hands different from the main text. The text of the iambic instruction has now partially faded out, which makes it somewhat difficult to read. These verses are found in at least fourteen

¹¹ The handwriting is different from that of the main text. cf. ms. London, BL, Harley 5624, f. 210^r.

¹² Should be ὦς.

¹³ Shangin 1927, 505.

¹⁴ Or οριμ... This line is written between δ' ἔστι σοφοῖς ἄβατον and κάσοφοῖς οὐ μὴν διώξω Pi. O. 3, 44.

¹⁵ Written below αὐτίκ' ἀγγελίαν Pi. O. 4, 5.

¹⁶ Or αταμί... Between εὐλογίαν προτιθείς, μὴ ματεύ and ση θεὸς γενέσθαι : — νζ Pi. O. 5, 24

¹⁷ Bellow ἀκίνδινοι δ' ἄρεται Pi. O. 6, 9.

¹⁸ Bellow οὐτ' ἐν ναυσὶ Pi. O. 6, 10.

¹⁹ Above μάντιν τ' ἀγαθὸν Pi. O. 6, 16.

²⁰ Written in *monocondylia*.

²¹ A sign resembling a mirrored abbreviation for -εν is written *supra lineam* above the last letter (θ).

²² With minor lacunas, and without the 11th ode.

²³ Besides, that folio abounds in Serbian inscriptions, but none of them, as also in many other cases throughout the manuscript, are related to the Greek text. They date from the mid-sixteenth century as one can read from their initial lines which usually begin with 'In the year X I...'

manuscripts, including our codex. L. G. Westerink did not know about some of them, such as Vat. gr. 224, fourteenth century, which has the verses in question (17 lines) on f. 220^v;²⁴ Madrid, Biblioteca nacional, 4576, f. 38^v–39^v; Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Pergamene varie, 70, f. 1^v, as well as other two, both from the Vatican, which I will mention below. Several codices ‘recentes’, quite similar in readings between each other, attribute these verses to Michael Psellos. Namely, manuscripts Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci 125 (f. 81^v); and Vienna, ÖNB phil. gr. 287 (f. 25^{r-v}) have the title as follows: Τοῦ σοφωτάτου Ψελλοῦ στίχοι ὁμοιοὶ περὶ τοῦ ἰαμβικοῦ μέτρου. In the Baroccianus, the verses are copied after the work ‘On Meters’ by the grammarian Trypho. In the codex Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, A 110 sup. (f. 56^r), the poem is copied after other anonymous metrical works and bears the title: Τοῦ Ψελλοῦ περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μέτρου. Yet another codex attributes this text to Psellos.²⁵ It is now held at the National Library of Russia in St Petersburg, Φ. № 906 (Gr.) 731, f. 2^r. It was earlier known as codex Lesbius Leimonis 267.²⁶ The manuscript itself dates from the fifteenth century, but it is important to mention that the first three folios (verses are found on f. 2^r) were added later.²⁷ In this manuscript the poem has the following title: Τοῦ σοφωτάτου Ψελλοῦ μέθοδος περὶ τοῦ ἰαμβικοῦ μέτρου. The same title is found in the codex Vat. Barb. gr. 71, f. 45^v (not mentioned in Westerink’s edition either. In the latter manuscript, there is also another work on iambic meter, on folios 38^r–36^r. Besides, two manuscripts attribute our poem not to Psellos, but to a certain monk Ioannicius. One of them is codex Ambrosianus H 22 sup., f. 299^r, (τοῦ μοναχοῦ κυροῦ Ἰωαννικίου), but the name in that manuscript is added, most probably, by a later hand, which makes the attribution questionable.²⁸ Vat. Pal. gr. 72 (also not mentioned by Westerink) has the same title (f. 122^v). Psellos is known for his vast erudition and diverse writings, often reflecting his didactic approach to literature. Thematically it is out of the question that a polymath as he was could write another poetical instruction on versification. But as it is known that numerous works are attributed to him only because of his importance and popularity, it might well be that the real author is left unknown. As this paper is not meant to deal with the authorship itself, we will focus more on the text rather than its author.

I give the text accompanied with an *apparatus criticus* which has readings from the manuscript Q No. 2 and is based mostly on Westerink’s edition and other manuscripts, not mentioned by him. These verses were first published (from the codex Florence, BML, Conv. Soppr. 20) in 1853 in Paris by N. Piccolos.²⁹ After Nauck’s 1863 edition the poem was published in 1886 by W. Studemund³⁰ from the codex Vienna, ÖNB, phil. gr. 287. In 1890 G. Cozza-Luzi published his readings from the twelfth-century manuscript now in Palermo, which contains just seven verses from this poem.³¹ Nauck’s mistakes and conjectures are also mentioned in the *apparatus*.

²⁴ Franchi de’ Cavalieri & Mercati 1923, 294.

²⁵ M. Richard says in his catalogue that the codex Lesbius is lost, cf. Richard 1958, 139–140. Westerink didn’t know about this manuscript since he thought that it was lost (cf. Westerink 1992, 22).

²⁶ Παπαδόπουλος-Κεραμεύς Α. Μαυρογορδάτειος Βιβλιοθήκη ἤτοι γενικός περιγραφικός κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἀνά τὴν Ἀνατολὴν βιβλιοθηκαῖς εὕρισκομένων ἑλληνικῶν χειρογράφων καταρτισθεῖσα καὶ συνταχθεῖσα κατ’ ἐντολὴν τοῦ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ἑλληνικοῦ Φιλολογικοῦ Συλλόγου, ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει, τύποις Σ. Ἰ. Βουτύρα (Lorentz & Keil), 1884, 123.

²⁷ Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1884, 123.

²⁸ Westerink 1992, 236–237.

²⁹ Piccolos 1853, 218–219.

³⁰ Studemund 1886, 198–199.

³¹ Cozza-Luzi 1890, 22–35, (24–25).

Manuscripts containing this text with Westerink's and my sigla:³²

- j**^{p33} — Oxford, Bodleian Library, Barocci (gr.) 125, XVI cent., f. 81^v;
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, A 110 sup., XV/XVI cent., f. 56^r;
Vienna, ÖNB, phil. gr. 287, XVI cent., f. 25^{r-v};
- j**^a — Florence, BML, Conv. Soppr. 20, 1341, f. 73^v;
- j**^b — Vienna, ÖNB, phil. gr. 279, XV cent., f. 86^r;
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, E 26 sup., XVI cent., ff. 160^v–161^r;
- j**ⁱ — Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, H 22 sup., XV cent., f. 299^r;
- V**^{a34} — Vatican, BAV, Vat. gr. 224, XIV cent., f. 220^v;
- V**^b — Vatican, BAV, Barb. gr. 71, XVI cent., f. 45^v;
- M** — Madrid, Biblioteca nacional, 4576, XV cent., f. 38^v–39^v;
- P** — Palermo, Archivio di Stato, Pergamene varie, 70, XII cent., f. 1^v;
- V**^c — Vatican, BAV, Pal. gr. 92, XV cent., f. 122^v;
- L** — St Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Φ. № 906 (Gr.) 731, XV cent., f. 2^r
(ex-Lesbius Leimonis 267);³⁵
- y** — St Petersburg, Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Q No. 2,
XV cent., f. 54^v;
^{ac} — *ante correctionem*;
^{pc} — *post correctionem*.

Note that the manuscript Q No. 2 (**y**) generally omits iota subscriptum and sometimes it is difficult to differentiate ει from α, 'lying' ε from η, and η from ει.

τὸ μέτρον οὕτω τῶν ἰάμβων μοι νόει·

- καὶ τοὺς πόδας μὲν ἢ μέλισσα δεικνύτω
τῶν συλλαβῶν δὲ τὴν ἀρίθμησιν κύκλον
τὸν ζωδιακὸν εἰσορῶν μάνθανέ μοι.
- 5 μέλλων δὲ μετρεῖν καὶ στίχους πλέκειν, φίλε,
ἅπασαν ἐν νῶ τοῦ σκοποῦ τὴν εἰκόνα
προσλαμβάνων ἄριστα τοὺς στίχους πλέκε.
πρῶτον μὲν οὖν καὶ τρίτον ἢ πέμπτον πόδα
ἴαμβος ἢ σπονδεῖος εὐτρεπιζέτω,
- 10 τὸν δεύτερον δὲ καὶ τέταρτον ἀξίως
ἴαμβον ἀπλοῦν εἰσφέρων ἔτοιμάσεις,
ἔκτος δ' ἴαμβῷ τέρπεται κόσμον φέρων
καὶ πυρριχίῳ τὴν κάραν ὑψοῦ φέρει.
ἔστωσαν οὖν σοι πυρριχίος μὲν λόγος·
- 15 σπονδεῖος Αἴας ἐκ μακρῶν χρόνων δύο·
Λάχης δ' ἴαμβος καὶ λέβης αὖ καὶ θέων.
ἰδοῦ τὸ πᾶν εἴληφας ἐν βραχεῖ μέτρῳ·
μαθῶν τὸ μέτρον, εὐφυῶς πλέκε στίχου[ς].
{ἰδὲ μέτρον ἰαμβικὸν ὦ φίλος ὦδε.}

³² The apparatus is based mostly on Westerink's edition, with the addition of readings from the manuscript Q No. 2 and other manuscripts not mentioned by Westerink, found in Moore 2005, 490–491.

³³ These are grouped together since there are practically no differences between them.

³⁴ The sigla from **V**^a to **y** have been introduced by myself (they are not found in Westerink's edition).

³⁵ Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1884, 123.

1 τὸ μέτρον οὕτω] τῷ μέτρῳ τούτῳ V^b 1 μοι] om. Nauck 1 νόει] j^bv, νό[ει γ, μέτρου L, μέτρει cet. 2 μέλισσα] μέλιττα V^b 2 δεικνύτω] δεικνύει Nauck, δεικν[ύτω γ 3 δὲ] μὲν V^b 3 κύκλον] κύκλος V^b, κύκλο[ν γ 4 ζωδιακὸν] ζωδιακῶν Lγ^{ac} 5 μέλλων] θέλων γ j^b, μέλλων cet. 5 φίλε] φ[ίλε γ, φίλους j^aL, φίλος cet. 6 ἐν νῶ] ἐν ᾧ V^b 6 σκοποῦ] σκόπου V^b 7 προσλαμβάνων] προλαμβάνων j^aV^c jⁱ 7 τοὺς] καὶ j^pV^bL 8 τρίτον ἢ πέμπτον] πόδα ἢ πέμπτον L 9 ἴαμβος ἢ σπονδεῖος εὐτρεπιζέτω] ἴαμβον ἢ σπονδεῖον εὐτρέπιζέ μοι j^a, εὐπρεπιζέτω γ 11 ἐτοιμάσεις] γ j^b, ἀπαρτίσεις cet. 12 ἴαμβῳ] ἴαμβῳ j^ajⁱV^c, ἴαμβος γ, ἴαμβου cet. 13 ὑποῦ] ὑψι Nauck 13 φέρει] φέροει γ^{pc}, φέροι γ^{ac}, φέρει cet. 14 ἔστωσαν] ἔστι μὲν γ j^b, ἔστω μὲν L 14 σοι] ὁ γ 15 Αἴας] γ j^aV^c j^b j^y, Ἄτλας cet. 16 Λάχης] χάλης j^pV^bL 16 αὖ] τε γ j^b 17 βραχεῖ] βραχὺ V^bL 17 μέτρῳ] j^pV^b, μέτρος j^aV^{c(ac)}L, -ον γ j^b, λόγῳ

2 — μέλισσα because the bee has six feet, just as the iambic trimeter has six metrical units. It could also be understood as a word-play since μέλισσα is a metaphor for poet, cf. Pind. P 4.60, Aristoph. Ec. 974, Idem Av. 748;

3–4 — κύκλον τὸν ζωδιακόν; 12 months of the Zodiac, because of the 12 syllables in the (Byzantine) iambic trimeter.

12 — ἴαμβος in our manuscript is mistakenly understood with ἔκτος; ἔκτος however would presuppose πούς; the verb τέρπεται goes with dat., so the correct reading should be ἴαμβῳ;

13 — πυρριχίῳ, i.e., πούς π. a pyrrhic; a foot consisting of two short syllables, used in a war-dance.

14–16 — λόγος etc.; it may seem curious, why exactly this word is chosen to represent two short syllables, and other words respectively, but it seems that there is no connection between their meanings.

Below, I give my translation, without any poetic pretension, just for the sake of understanding the author's instructions.

- This is how you should apprehend iambic meter;
 And the bee shall show the feet;
 As for counting the number of syllables,
 Look at the Zodiac cycle and learn from there.
- 5 If you want to measure and weave verses, my friend,
 Bearing in mind the whole picture of the scope
 You shall weave the verses the best way.
 So, for the first, third and fifth foot
 Iamb or spondee should be acceptable.
- 10 And second and fourth you will properly
 Prepare by introducing plain iamb.
 Sixth, bringing its adornment, enjoys iamb
 And holds its head proud high with pyrrhic.
 Now, for pyrrhic you should consider λόγος;
- 15 For spondee Αἴας, forming two long syllables;
 Λάχης for iamb as well as λέβης and θέων.
 There, in short time you have learned completely your meter.
 Having learned this meter, weave now beautifully verses.
 Look, my friend, at this iambic meter.

Only our manuscript adds the last line ἴδε μέτρον ἱαμβικὸν ᾧ φίλος ᾧδε. That verse metrically does not fit in. Nauck thinks that this is because the versificator does not know

the meter well.³⁶ Now, after line 17 in the manuscript a large interlinear space is left. Apparently, this was the end of the instruction. Indeed, the verse ἰδοῦ τὸ πᾶν εἴληφας ἐν βραχεῖ μέτρον seems to be a logical conclusion. Moreover, after the word μέτρον one can read a usual sign marking the end of a passage (or text), i. e. [. :], and other manuscripts usually have 17 lines, without the additional two. Nauck does not mention this probably because those lines were written with the same ink as the previous ones and, most likely, by the same hand. It might be that the scribe was copying text from another manuscript and then tried to add his own lines at the end. Line 18 μαθὼν τὸ μέτρον, εὐφυῶς πλέκε στίχους logically repeats στίχους πλέκε/-ειν from lines 5 and 7. The manuscript from Palermo is interesting in this regard, because it has a similar line which is not found in other manuscripts but is thematically close to ours. It reads:³⁷

λοιπὸν στοιχίζε καὶ στίχους ὄλους γράφε³⁸

However, the last line of our manuscript's text does not seem to be completely wrong. It just scans as anapaestic dimeter with catalexis. After the last line one can barely read the text because of the faded letters, but quite certainly it reads ...τέλος ἦλθ<ε>, which can testify that the last line is not a later addition, but that it was written as a whole.

Endings of some words have faded out. The manuscript reading φέροει emerged from a scribal correction.³⁹ Our manuscript, among several others, lacks metrical signs at lines 14–16, which read, in j^p and partly in jⁱ.

In the codex Q N2, the instruction on iambic meter is followed by usual paratexts, i. e. *Vita Aeschyli* and an argumentum to the *Prometheus Vincetus*. The main text of the tragedy is copied thereafter.

3. Book epigrams on the *Prometheus Vincetus*

After the *Prometheus*, on folio 94^r, the manuscript has a poem which consists of four epigrams mixed together. This paratext is a mixture of so called 'book epigrams' written in dodecasyllables.⁴⁰ Such short poems, which can, e. g. represent literary merits of the poet, are not rare. They were composed as early as in Alexandrian times, throughout late antiquity and until late Byzantium. Apparently, A. Nauck did not know about the occurrences of these epigrams in other manuscripts, hence his edition needs correction. All the known manuscripts are listed below, together with a complete *apparatus*. Our manuscript is textually closest to the codex Vienna, ÖNB, phil. gr. 197 (dated 1413), f. 180^r, albeit the order of epigrams is different. In the manuscript Q No. 2, the text of the epigrams is much easier to read than the iambic instruction published above, since the ink is much darker and the writing is more professional. Indeed, these lines were written by yet another hand, i. e., neither by the one that copied the main text, nor by the one that wrote the verses on iambic trimeter. Some parts of it are decorated with red ink.⁴¹ These epigrams were

³⁶ Nauck 1863, 493.

³⁷ Note that the Palermo manuscript has only 7 verses (verses 8–13 plus an additional one).

³⁸ For more information about this manuscript see Perria 1981, 1–24 and Acconcia-Longo 1981, 25–59 (28–29).

³⁹ Nauck 1863, 493.

⁴⁰ Byzantine version of iambic trimeter. For more information see Tomadaki & Opstall 2019, 193–220.

⁴¹ Byzantine book epigrams are often decorated with ink different from the main text; cf Tomadaki & Opstall 2019, 194.

first published by Cougny⁴² and later by Herington.⁴³ The latest edition was prepared by L. Spyridonova and A. Kurbanov in 2021,⁴⁴ but even though they mention the manuscript Q No. 2 (**Sp** p. 526.), none of its readings appear in the *apparatus*, nor is anything said about the order of epigrams in this codex. In fact, our manuscript provides four lines (11–14) which are absent from Cougny’s edition. The first epigram can be read in several other manuscripts, and some manuscripts have the epigrams mixed, as in the case of our manuscript. The codex Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, No. 175 sup. (fifteenth century), as well as the Vat. gr. 1332 attribute these epigrams to John Tzetzes.⁴⁵ A. Allegrini also argues that these three epigrams were composed by Tzetzes because of his polemical tone, direct addresses and expressions like ἀνθ’ ὧν and ὁμοτρόπων.⁴⁶

The known manuscripts containing these epigrams are:

- B** — Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 31.3, XIV cent., f. 181^r;
- D** — Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, G 56 sup., XIV cent., f. 76^v;
- N** — Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 4677, XV cent., f. 152^v–153^r;
- O** — Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. gr. Q^o 4A, XIII cent., f. 13^v;
- P** — Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2787, XV cent., f. 39^r;
- Y** — Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Voss. gr. Q^o 6, XIV cent., f. 8^r;
- H** — Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Pal. gr. 18, XIII cent., f. 111^r;
- W** — Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1332, XIII–XIV cent., f. 88^v;
- Wb** — Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. gr. 155, XV cent., f. 33^v;
- Lc** — Cambridge, University Library, Nn. III. 17, XIV cent., f. 30^v;
- V** — Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. Z. 468 (coll. 653), XIV cent., f. 59^r;
- Ea** — Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, suppl. gr. 110; XIV cent., f. 23^v;
- Nc** — Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 28.25, XIV cent., f. 70^v;
- X** — Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 31.2, XIV cent., f. 46^v;
- Xa** — Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, N 175 sup., XV cent., f. 21^r;
- Xc** — Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Conv. Soppr. 98, XIV cent., f. 126^r–207^v;
- Ya** — Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, phil. gr. 197, 1413, f. 180^r;
- Yb** — Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, phil. gr. 279, XV cent., f. 8^r–8^v;
- Yc** — St Petersburg, Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Q, 1475, f. 94^r;
- Yd** — Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, gr. 2787A, XVI cent., f. 126^v;
- Fd** — Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 91 sup. 5, XIV cent., f. 40^r;
- Rc** — Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Conv. Soppr. 7, XIV–XV cent., f. 39^r;
- Zb** — Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Rep. I 43, XV–XVI cent., f. 49^r;

ἀνθ’ ὧν τὸ πῦρ δέδωκας ἀνθρώπων γένει,
τρήχη βία φάραγγι προσπεπηγμένος.

⁴² Cougny 1890, 414.

⁴³ Herington 1972, 240–241.

⁴⁴ Spyridonova & Kurbanov 2021, 524–537.

⁴⁵ Tomadaki & Opstall 2019, 196 agree and explain it with its author’s irony and criticism.

⁴⁶ Allegrini 1971–1972, 219–233 (227–229). For more information about the authorship cf. Spyridonova & Kurbanov 2021, 531–533.

- τὸ πῦρ, Προμηθεῦ, ὃ βροτοῖς ἐχαρίσω,
 ὕλη πρὸς ἀκάμαντον εὐρέθη φλόγα
 5 ὀργῆς κατὰ σοῦ πρὸς θεῶν πυρσουμένης.
 Αἰσχύλε, τί φῆς; τοὺς θεοὺς σου προσφέρεις
 πάσχοντας αἰσchrῶς ἐκ θεῶν ὁμοτρόπων;
 καὶ πῶς ἄρα λέληθας σαυτὸν εἰς τέλος
 θεοῦ σεβάζων τοὺς παθητοὺς τὴν φύσιν
 10 καὶ μὴ δυνατοὺς ἐκφυγεῖν τιμωρίας;
 κλέψας τὸ πῦρ παρέσχε τοῖς θνητοῖς γέρα
 καὶ κάπτεται μάστιγι ταῖς Διὸς τάλας·
 ψευδώνυμον λέλογχε τὴν κλῆσιν μόνος.
 προμηθείας δεῖται γὰρ ἢ προβουλίας.
 15 αἴ αἴ Προμηθεῦ, κράζον οὐαὶ σου μέγα·
 χάριν βροτῶν γὰρ ἠπάτησας τὸν Δία
 καὶ λάθρα τούτου πῶς τὸ πῦρ ἐκεκλόφεις
 εἰτ' οὐδ' ἐπέισθης ὧν περ ἔσταυρωμένος
 τὸν ἐκβαλόντα τῶν θρόνων εἰπεῖν Δία,
 20 τῷ τοι κεραυνὸς ἐκ πόλου κατηγμένος
 ἔργον τίθησι συντριβῆς σε τὸν τάλα<ν>.
 αἶαζε τοίνυν· τοῦτο γὰρ πάρεστί σοι.

3 βροτοῖς] βροτοῖσι **P**, βροτοῦ **W** 4 ἀκάμαντον] ἀκάματον **BLcNcFdH**, ἀκάμαντον **DNPS-jΞaXYaYd** 5] *versum om.* **P** 5 πυρσουμένης] πυργουμένης **Fd** 6 Αἰσχύλε] αἰσchrῶλος **Lc** 8 λέληθας σαυτὸν] σαυτὸν λέληθας **Nauck**, αὐτὸν **Fd** 9 θεοῦ] θεοὺς *cet.* 10 τιμωρίας] **BNPFdYa**, τιμωρίαν **Yc^{pc}** *cet.* 11 γέρα] **NΞaYaYd** γ γέρας *cet.* 12 κάπτεται μάστιγι] **Yd**, κάμπεται μάστιγι **Ξa**, κάμπεται μάστιγι **Ya** 13 ψευδώνυμον] ψευδωνύμως **Y**, -ον *cet.* 13 μόνος] μόνον **Y** 14 προμηθείας] προμηθείας γ 14 ἢ προβουλίας] ἢ προβουλία **Y** 15 αἴ αἴ] οὐαὶ **BNCWVYa**, αἴ αἴ **Sj** αἴ **Yd** 15 κράζον] κρώζων **Nc**, κῤῥῶζον **SjWV**, κράζον **YaYd**, κῤῥῶζων **B** 15 οὐαὶ] αἴ αἴ γ^{ac} 15 σου] **Yd** γ^{pc}, σοι γ^{ac} *cet.* 16 Δία] διαν **W** 17 πῶς] πως **Couigny** 18 ἐπέισθης] ἐπέισθεις **H** 19 ἐκβαλόντα] ἐκβαλοῦντα **DVXa** 19 τῶν θρόνων] **YaXaXc**, τὸν θρόνον **BNCW**, τοῦ θρόνου **Couigny** 20 πόλου] **SjYaYd**, πολλοῦ **BNC^{HW}** 21 συντριβῆς σε] συντριβῆσε **BD** 22 τοίνυν] τίνυν **Yd**

2 — βία φάραγγι *cf.* **Aesch. Prom.** 15.

4 — ἀκάμαντον; *metrically incorrect.*

6 — τοὺς θεοὺς σου; I wouldn't strongly argue that the author meant 'pagan gods' when he wrote 'your gods'; he might rather mean 'gods in your play; gods as you represent them.'

9 — θεοῦ; a mistake that makes no sense. There is no occurrence of the verb σέβομαι, σέβω, σεβάζω with *gen.* It has to be *θεοὺς*.

10 — τιμωρίας; ἐκφεύγω is attested with both *gen.* and *acc.*

12 — κάπτεται; κάπτω 'to gulp down' is very rare and does not really make sense here. It should be κάμπτεται.

15 — οὐαὶ; the word is mostly attested in the Septuagint and the New Testament; οὐαὶ usually goes with *dat.*; σου is a trace of later Greek influence, αἴ (expressing sorrow or surprise) usually goes with *voc.* or *nom.*

15 — κράζον; this seems to be a better reading than κρώζων attested in some manuscripts.

19 — ἐκβαλόντα; future participle, ἐκβαλοῦντα, seems to be better here. At the end of the play Prometheus, predicting the future to Io, did not name the one who will dethrone Zeus.

19 — τῶν θρόνων is better than τοῦ θρόνου since it prevents hiatus.⁴⁷

20 — ἐκ πόλου (axis; celestial sphere) is better and it should be kept. ἐκ πολλοῦ is lectio facilior, which does not quite fit metrically.

- Since you have given the fire to the human race,
You are now suffering, fastened to a cliff by force.
The fire, Prometheus, which you have kindly given to mankind,
Turned out to be brushwood for an unwearying flame,
5 For the wrath of gods blazes against you.
Aeschylus, what are you saying? You portray your gods
Shamefully suffering at the hand of same-tempered gods?
And how didn't you notice in the end that you
Worship gods that are by nature prone to suffering
10 And are not able to escape punishment?
Having stolen the fire, he gave a gift to the mortals
And is bowed down by Zeus' scourge;
He alone has been falsely named;
For he lacks forethought and foresight.
15 Oh, oh, Prometheus, cry now deeply, woe to you;
For the sake of mankind you deceived Zeus
And how you have stolen the fire without him knowing?
And after that you have not obeyed, even though crucified,
To tell the name of the one dethroning Zeus.
20 That is why a lightning, rushing down from heaven,
Is crushing you much, you wretch.
Therefore weep now; for this is all you can do.

The manuscript Ξα contains only verses 1–12. It marks with a cross (+) the new beginning at the line 11 (κλέψας τὸ πῦρ ...), but has only two lines of that epigram.⁴⁸ In N, the poem starts with κλέψας τὸ πῦρ... and omits οὐαὶ Προμηθεῦ... The codex Yd, which is very close to our readings, omits lines 9–10. Lc has verses 1–10 with a new beginning marked at line 6, i. e. αἰσχύλος, τί φής ... Nc and H provide a title: Στίχοι εἰς τὸν Προμηθεά. X and Fd have just lines 1–10. D has a title for first four epigrams: Στίχοι εἰς τὸν Προμηθεά τοῦ Τζέτζου. In W, the title reads: Στίχοι εἰς τὸν Προμηθεά αὐτοῦ Τζέτζου. W begins with αἰσχύλε τί φής... and continues with ἀνθ' ὧν τὸ πῦρ... It also has +πάχοντας αἰσχροῦς... after οὐαὶ προμηθεῦ... The text of our manuscript seems to be mostly the same as Yd, Sj and Yd. The main differences are as follows: Sj omits lines 11–14 (κλέψας τὸ πῦρ...), Ya places the epigram κλέψας τὸ πῦρ... at the end, which seems, indeed, somewhat more logical.⁴⁹ It is worth mentioning that our manuscript reads two decorative crosses after

⁴⁷ Even though the root of the verb εἶπον had a digamma.

⁴⁸ Note τοῦ θεοῦ instead of τοῖς θεοῖς and γέρα instead of γέρας.

⁴⁹ Note the shift from 2nd to 3rd person singular.

line 14. Yd bears a marginal note at the beginning of the last epigram: ἔτ(ε)ροι παλαιοί. It also has the title στίχοι, written in red ink.⁵⁰ Yd adds this line after the verses:

+ πρώτου ὄρα δράματος τέρμα Αἰσχύλου, +
ὄν πρὸς Προμηθέ' ἔλλείποντα προμηθίας :

The composer of these verses addresses Aeschylus as well as Prometheus in the poem and, as M. Tomadaki & E. v. Opstall argue,⁵¹ 'warns the Christian reader against too much impudence'.

They suppose that all of these epigrams were composed after the tenth century, i. e. after the Byzantine selection of Aeschylus' triad, because epigrams are not included in the earliest manuscripts. This seems plausible, but I would argue that the epigram 'κλέψας τὸ πῦρ...' (lines 11–14 in our manuscript), might be older. It is probably older than Byzantine. Firstly, this hypothesis can be backed up by the note ἕτεροι παλαιοί at the right margin of the manuscript Yd. Secondly, the content and moral of this epigram appear to be pre-Christian. A Christian most probably would have understood well the self-sacrifice for the good of others and would not have reproached it. Indeed, line 14 says that if Prometheus, the benefactor of mankind, had known the outcome, i. e. that he would suffer, he would not have dared to steal fire. In lines 11–14 there does not seem to be any allusion to a divine martyrdom whatsoever. Besides, the shift from the 2nd to the 3rd person singular in lines 11–14 seems very odd and certainly proves that this epigram does not belong here.

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⁵⁰ It is important to mention that, just like the manuscript Q No. 2, Ya (Vind. phil. gr. 197) has a cryptogram after the *Prometheus*, and it is quite similar to the one deciphered by Shangin. It reads: + ψέολω κᾶλξβαέσω, ἀωύχολχ +, i. e. τέλος προμηθέως αἰσχύλου, cf. Montfaucon 1708, 288.; Shangin 1927, 499.

⁵¹ Tomadaki & Opstall 2019, 198.

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