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Life of Aesop and Adventures of Criticism:
A Review-Article on Manolis Papathomopoulos' Recent Edition
of the *Vita Aesopi*, Version G

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MANOLIS PAPATHOMOPOULOS, *Βίβλος Ξάνθου φιλοσόφου καὶ Αἰσώπου δούλου αὐτοῦ περὶ τῆς ἀναστροφῆς Αἰσώπου. Κριτικὴ ἔκδοσις μὲ Εἰσαγωγὴ καὶ Μετάφραση* (*The Book of the philosopher Xanthos and his slave Aesop, concerning Aesop's course of life. A critical edition with introduction and translation*), "Aletheia" Publications, Athens, 2010, 241 pp. + 7 plates.

The so-called *Vita Aesopi* or *Aesop Romance*, a fictional biography of the legendary fabulist Aesop, composed between the 1st century B.C. and the 2nd century A.D., is an enchanting piece of writing. Whoever sets his hand to it, is bound to be captured by its allure and will remain a captive for a long time; he will often be tempted to return and work again on this enticing text. The late Manolis Papathomopoulos (1930-2011) repeatedly devoted his labours to the Aesopic *Vita*. In 1990 he critically edited the G version, the longest of its extant redactions and the most vivid one with regard to narrative and language; this version is also widely considered to be the closest to the lost prototype of the *Aesop Romance*.¹ Slightly

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An earlier version of this review-article was published in Modern Greek in *Hellenika* 61 (2011) 295-308. For the present publication, the text was substantially revised and expanded with additional critical remarks and bibliographical references, not included in the original Greek printing. I am deeply obliged to the editors of the *Hellenika* for granting me permission to reissue my article in English translation. My warmest thanks are due to Consuelo Ruiz Montero, for her invitation to publish my text in *Myrtia*, as well as for the long hours we have spent discussing the *Vita Aesopi* and other ancient novels.

¹ This has occasionally been contested, chiefly by Italian scholars: see FERRARI 1997, pp. 12-20, 42-43; LUZZATTO 2003, p. 35; SCHIRRU 2009, pp. 41-42. For a refutation of their arguments see KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 122-123. The most detailed and in-depth studies of the textual

before his edition, Papathomopoulos (henceforward Pap.) published an accompanying volume, containing critical remarks on the text of the *Vita*.² There followed in 1999 an edition of the other major version of the romance, the so-called W or Westermanniana; this provided for the first time separate texts for the two distinct recensions of the W (MORN and BPTThSA).³ In the same year Pap. also published a series of Modern Greek popular redactions of the *Vita Aesopi*.⁴ Finally, two decades after his first edition of the G, the author returned to this same version and offered a revised and updated critical text of it, taking account of the new findings of Aesopic research in the intervening years. This book, reviewed here, also includes a medium-length introduction to the *Vita*, as well as a translation of the G text into Modern Greek.

In his introduction (pp. 13-60), Pap. investigates a series of issues regarding the *Vita Aesopi*, its textual tradition and literary aspects. In particular, he attempts to determine the genre to which the *Vita* belongs — a peculiar creation standing between biography and romance. Further, he surveys the ancient testimonies concerning Aesop as a historical personage and the legends that developed around his figure, as fictional elements were being added to the historical core in the course of time. Pap. then summarizes the contents of the *Vita* and analyzes its structure. In this respect, he mostly follows N. Holzberg's ingenious insights with regard to the plot pattern of the *Vita* and the structural principles governing its composition (triple repetition of the basic themes and motifs, alternation of different types of Aesopic discourse within the narrative).⁵ Pap. argues that the primary core of the *Vita* goes

tradition of the *Vita Aesopi* are still the works of PERRY 1933; PERRY 1936, pp. 1-70; and the monumental PERRY 1952, especially pp. 1-4, 10-32. For useful shorter surveys see FERRARI 1997, pp. 41-45; KARLA 2001, pp. 10-15; HOLZBERG 2002, pp. 72-73; KURKE 2011, pp. 16-17.

² See PPATHOMOPOULOS 1989 and PPATHOMOPOULOS 1990.

³ See PPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a. Since then, the BPTThSA recension has been critically edited by KARLA 2001. Perry, in his own edition (1952), made no distinction between the two recensions; instead, he conflated their texts into a composite compilation of his own.

⁴ See PPATHOMOPOULOS 1999b. The Modern Greek versions have now been magisterially re-edited with extensive introduction and commentary by EIDENEIER 2011.

⁵ See the seminal studies of HOLZBERG 1992, pp. ix-xv, 33-75; HOLZBERG 1993; HOLZBERG 2002, pp. 76-84. Holzberg was the first to highlight the narrative cohesion of the *Vita* as a literary work, tracing the well-structured pattern that is hidden under its seemingly naïve, linear exposition of the main hero's adventures. He also analyzed many of the artifices developed by the author of the *Vita* for ensuring its narrative consistence. Subsequent studies have elaborated this kind of approach, further disclosing the *Vita*-author's compositional practices and literary

back to an older, possibly written biographical tale about Aesop, which was created in the 6th or 5th century B.C. He goes on to enumerate the extant versions of the work (G, W, Planudea, papyrus fragments) and concisely describe their differences and interrelations. He discusses the dating of the original text of the *Vita*, placing it in the 1st or 2nd century A.D. (along with the vast majority of scholars), as well as the various theories forwarded with regard to its geographical provenance (Egypt according to Perry, Syria for the G and Sicily for the W in the opinion of La Penna).⁶ He also comments on important literary and ideological themes of the narrative: the central hero's ugliness, the philosophical ideas reflected in the text (especially Cynic and Socratic ones), Aesop's relations with the gods involved in his life story (Isis and Apollo), the erotic element prominent in certain episodes, and the connections between the *Vita* and comedy. In addition, Pap. briefly treats the later reception of the *Vita* in East and West. Finally, he devotes a sizeable section to an examination of the G's language, a lively and popular form of the Greek Koine encompassing many elements of oral speech. Here Pap. is chiefly indebted to W. H. Hostetter's study:⁷ based on her material and categorizations, he surveys the linguistic features of the text on all levels (phonetics, spelling, morphology, syntax, vocabulary).

The introduction is the weakest part of Pap.'s book. It contains nothing substantially new. The author merely overviews the contributions of earlier scholars concerning the various topics he treats, without much methodical rigour or systematic exposition, sometimes indeed in a disorderly manner, not avoiding repetitions. In

techniques. See FERRARI 1997, pp. 21-39; PERVO 1998, pp. 81-120; KONSTANTAKOS 2010, pp. 257-274; KONSTANTAKOS 2013; RUIZ MONTERO forthcoming.

⁶ See PERRY 1952, pp. 2-4; LA PENNA 1962, pp. 272-273. Subsequent scholars tried to enhance Perry's thesis by detecting finer and more complicated allusions to Isiac and Osiriatic worship in the text: see VON MÖLLENDORFF 1994, pp. 154-156; DILLERY 1999. The possibility of Syriac provenance had already been raised by MARC 1902, pp. 398-399; cf. PERVO 1998, p. 83. LUZZATTO 1996, pp. 1310, 1323-1324, offers a variant of La Penna's theory, locating the genesis of the original *Vita* in the Greek communities of Asia Minor. Pap., however, takes no account of these later contributions. In recent studies, I drew attention to the abundant details of Egyptian local colour included in the Egyptian episodes of the *Vita* (§§ 111-123); no such topographical realism is found in any other section of the work. I therefore argued that the *Vita*-author maintained a strong interest in Egypt and its culture, which indicates some kind of connection to that country: he must have travelled or resided there for some time. See KONSTANTAKOS 2011; KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 293-351.

⁷ See HOSTETTER 1955. Pap. also refers to a few other important studies in this field: SÁNCHEZ ALACID 2003; STAMOULAKIS 2006. See also RUIZ MONTERO 2010.

addition, his presentation suffers from several deficiencies: important topics are inadequately treated or too summarily discussed, leaving many questions unanswered. I select here two striking examples.

Firstly, in his attempt to determine the literary genre of the *Vita Aesopi*, Pap. correlates this work with another famous narrative from later antiquity: the so-called *Alexander Romance*, with which the *Vita* shares indeed common features, such as the apparently loose and episodic narration of the main hero's acts, as well as the "open" tradition comprising several variant textual versions in parallel circulation (pp. 13-16).⁸ However, Pap. forgets another group of comparable writings: the ancient *Lives* of Homer, such as the so-called (*Pseudo-*)*Herodotean Vita* and the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*. These fictional biographies also consist of a sequence of loosely bound episodes, paratactically setting out the protagonist's adventures; and their main figure is again an "intellectual" or "cultural" hero, like Aesop. Other narratives with similar episodic structure might also be adduced: e.g. the humorous novel *Lucius or the Ass*, which likewise follows the adventures of an anti-hero (almost a picaresque figure, just as Aesop is in his own way); or the Latin romance *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri*, characterized by an "open" textual tradition of different redactions, like the *Vita Aesopi*. If Pap. had examined all these texts together, he might have come up with fruitful reflections concerning their common features, their coincidence in time (all belong to the Imperial period) and the kind of literary phenomenon they represent. Unfortunately, Pap. seems to be unaware of D. Konstan's fundamental essay on this topic.⁹ Konstan has discussed these ancient texts in comparison and described their common compositional traits: all of them highlight the central hero's cunning through a series of anecdotal incidents, which are rather laxly connected with each other in an episodic narrative; the hero is regularly shown as triumphing over his opponents thanks to his masterly control and adroit manipulation of language. Hence, Konstan classified these narrative works in a special literary category, branding them as "open texts".¹⁰

⁸ The *Vita* and the *Alexander Romance* also have another point in common, which Pap. misses: they both largely consist of earlier "texts" (whether orally transmitted folk legends or written narratives), which have been integrated into their storyline and structure. See below, nn. 15-17.

⁹ See KONSTAN 1998.

¹⁰ Although Konstan's definition of this category comprises a series of interconnected literary features, concerning various aspects of the texts involved (plot, composition, the main

Secondly, in trying to trace the primary core of the *Vita Aesopi* back to a narrative of the 6th/5th century B.C. (pp. 29-30), Pap. fails to specify what this hypothetical primitive core might have comprised in terms of narrative material. The reader needs to turn back to a previous section of the introduction, the one referring to Aesop's historicity (pp. 16-19), in order to find out what information is provided on Aesop by the earlier Greek sources; and on the basis of the latter, he is left to form his own notion concerning the relevant traditions that were available during the 5th century. Pap. expressly assigns only one component to the early core of the *Vita*: the contrast between Aesop and the philosopher Xanthos. Yet, this particular literary conception is certainly not traceable back to so early an age. As proved by the investigations of N. Holzberg and T. Hägg, the episodes involving Xanthos and Aesop, at least in the form we read them in the *Vita*, owe a great deal to postclassical literary genres and philosophical movements. Their structure and narrative evolution is largely inspired by the plots of New Comedy, whose crafty slaves have also influenced Aesop's comic presentation. Their ideological background and themes are indebted to popularized Cynic philosophy and its literary modes of expression.¹¹ Therefore, the entire confrontation of Aesop and Xanthos in the *Vita* presupposes the culture and education of the Hellenistic world. Indeed, these postclassical

hero's character, and the multifarious text tradition), yet subsequent scholars have chiefly emphasized one of these elements: the circulation of many variant versions, differing from each other in wording and content, and the consequent "fluidity" of textual transmission. See e.g. KARLA 2009, pp. 26-28; EIDENEIER 2011, pp. 24-26. Konstan's criteria are likewise met by certain ancient Near-Eastern narratives, which recount the exploits of a wise central personage and are also characterized by an "open" textual tradition: the *Tale of Ahiqar* and the Jewish books of *Daniel* and *Tobit*. Cf. DALLEY 2001. However, the multiplicity of variant versions, taken in isolation, is not an exclusive trait of Konstan's class of narrative texts. It also pertains to another category of works: compilations of briefer narrative materials, such as the prose collections of Aesopic fables, the joke-book *Philogelos*, the medieval Latin *Gesta Romanorum*, and (from Eastern literatures) the Indian *Pañcatantra* and *Śukasaptati*, the widely diffused *Book of Sindibad*, and the famous *Thousand and One Nights*. These writings are very different from the type of "open text" envisaged by Konstan. Consequently, proper scholarly use of Konstan's terminology should take into account all the components of his definition for "open texts", not merely the fluid textual transmission.

¹¹ See HOLZBERG 1992, pp. 47-63, 72-73; HÄGG 2004, pp. 49-68. Recently, SCHIRRU 2009, pp. 46-55, 60-81, also argued that a preliminary but complete form of the *Vita*, already including all the basic parts of the extant later versions, was current in Aristophanes' Athens. This is hardly convincing, for the reasons expounded above. See KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 63-64, 80, for more arguments against Schirru's thesis.

components are so organically integrated in the layout of the narrative, that they cannot be explained away as later additions or products of a secondary reworking. They are inherent in the primary conception of the *Vita* as a peculiar literary whole. If a written “biography” of Aesop was already composed in the 5th century, it would have been a work very different from the now known *Vita*, in every conceivable aspect.¹²

Furthermore, the introduction contains many factual errors, pieces of wrong information and infelicitous expressions. The gravest cases are enumerated below:

P. 13. There is no indication that the Hellenistic biographer Satyros attempted to “parallel” the biographies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, in the manner that Plutarch later composed “parallel lives” of prominent Greeks and Romans. Satyros simply arranged his biographical accounts in homogeneous thematic groups, according to the main activity of the persons he was writing about (tragic poets, philosophers, statesmen, kings etc.).¹³

Pp. 13-14. Herakleides Lembos did not write original biographies of his own. He merely prepared “epitomes”, i.e. abridged versions or summaries of more extensive biographical works composed by earlier authors, such as Satyros, Sotion and Hermippos. The papyrus text adduced by Pap. (P.Oxy. 1367) transmits precisely Herakleides’ epitome of a series of biographical works written by Hermippos (lives of legislators, of the Seven Sages, and of Pythagoras).¹⁴

P. 14. Pap. designates the *Vita Aesopi*, like the *Alexander Romance*, as a “work of open oral tradition” (ἔργο ἀνοιχτῆς προφορικῆς παράδοσης). The term “oral” is highly problematic in this connection, and Pap. fails to provide any clarification of its meaning. Does he imply that the *Vita Aesopi* and the *Alexander Romance* were orally transmitted, in the same way as, for instance, folktales or popular heroic epics are in many pre-modern cultures? If so, he is wrong: there are no indications for such oral circulation of these particular literary compositions. The *Vita Aesopi* incorporates, of course, several individual narratives which were previously independent tales. These include old legends about Aesop himself (his servitude in Samos, his quarrel with the Delphians and death at Delphi), as well as

¹² On the form that such an early Aesopic book might have taken see WEST 1984, pp. 119-126; LUZZATTO 1996, pp. 1319-1323.

¹³ See SCHORN 2004, pp. 17-18.

¹⁴ See BOLLANSÉE 1999a, pp. 2-7, 14-19 (*FGrHist* 1026 T 5, 7a, 8a, 9a, F 3); BOLLANSÉE 1999b, pp. 26, 113, 190, 192.

stories originally pertaining to other cultural figures, which the *Vita*-author has transferred to his own protagonist (e.g. various tales about Diogenes the Cynic, Socrates, Bias of Priene and other members of the Seven Sages, and of course the Near-Eastern *Tale of Ahikar*).¹⁵ Some of these tales, as separate narrative entities, may have also enjoyed an oral dissemination in the ancient world,¹⁶ although this does not prove that the *Vita*-author received them from oral tradition, rather than from written sources.¹⁷ But it can hardly be argued that a long and complex prose work such as the *Vita* could have been orally diffused at any point of its textual history. In the course of time, certain episodes of it may conceivably have been detached from the broader work and infiltrated into oral tradition, thus turning into folk narratives. But this remains to be proved, and Pap. has nothing to contribute in such a direction.¹⁸

P. 14. Pap. classifies the *Vita Aesopi* and the *Alexander Romance* as “popular literature”, together with the lost *Margites* and the mock-epic *Batrachomyomachia*. A literary category comprising works of so different genres (epyllion, iambic poetry, prose narrative) and periods is obviously problematic. A more precise and thorough definition of the concept of “popular literature”, with particular reference to the ancient world, was required at this point. Pap. ought to have consulted the specialized study of W. Hansen, who establishes specific criteria for the inclusion of a work in the category of “popular literature”.¹⁹ On the basis of Hansen’s criteria (plain language, emphasis on content rather than on form, unknown authorship, fluidity of textual

¹⁵ On this practice in the *Vita* see HOLZBERG 1992, pp. xiii, 64-65; MERKLE 1996, p. 212; and my discussion in KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 74-78, 541-542, with many examples and bibliography.

¹⁶ One sequence of scenes in the *Vita* (§§ 44-46 and 49-50, the episode about the εὐνοῦσα) reflects the storyline of a well-known oral folktale, widespread in world tradition: ATU type 921B (*Best Friend, Worst Enemy*); see HANSEN 2002, pp. 49-54.

¹⁷ At least with regard to the tales about the Seven Sages, the *Vita*-author seems to have drawn his material from a written source, possibly a biographical compilation or a collection of anecdotes and sayings of these legendary wise men: see KONSTANTAKOS 2004, pp. 101-103, 125-126; KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 75-76. The *Alexander Romance* also appears to have taken over its basic ingredients from previous written works: see KONSTANTAKOS 2009a, pp. 107, 110, with further bibliography.

¹⁸ Even the *Vita*’s reverberations on Modern Greek popular culture (e.g. its possible influence on the shadow theatre of Karagiozis) do not necessarily presuppose that its narrative was appropriated by oral tradition. In the early Modern Greek world the *Vita* was adapted into Demotic Greek and circulated in a number of versions between the 16th and the 19th century, presumably as popular reading stuff. See PAPADEMETRIOU 1997, pp. 54, 73-83; KONSTANTAKOS 2008, II pp. 313-314; and above, n. 4.

¹⁹ See HANSEN 1998, pp. xi-xxiii.

transmission and multiplicity of variant versions, non-organic composition), the *Batrachomyomachia* and the *Margites* do not qualify as popular literature texts. By contrast, other works, more or less relevant to the *Vita*, might be considered as belonging here: the prose collections of Aesopic fables, the *Life of Secundus*, and the comic novel *Lucius or the Ass* (all of them represented in Hansen's anthology).

P. 17. Herodotus resided in Samos for some time before 431 B.C. (not 531 B.C.).

P. 18. The correct references to Aristophanes are: *Wasps* 1446-1448 (not 422), *Peace* 129-130 (not 421).

Pp. 18-19. In the section on Aesop's historicity, Pap. vaguely dates the fabulist around 575 B.C. (before 575 he was a slave of Iadmon of Samos; after that year, he became politically active in Samos and Delphi). But Pap. adduces no ancient authorities or other means of calculation to justify the choice of this particular year. He omits to cite several important ancient testimonies which provide exact dates about Aesop's life and death and thus delineate the tangible chronological frame connected by the ancients with the fabulist's figure. These are: Diog. Laert. 1.72, placing Aesop's *acme* in the 52nd Olympiad (572-569 B.C.); IG XIV 1297.II.16-18 and Eusebios' *Chronicle* (Armenian version, II p. 94 SCHOENE), which date Aesop's execution at Delphi in 564 B.C.; cf. Suda α 334, assigning the same event to the 54th Olympiad.²⁰

P. 19. The text on Aesop as a slave of Xanthos, which Pap. attributes to Herakleides of Pontos, belongs in fact to a different author of the same name: Herakleides Lembos. It comes from the epitome of Aristotle's *Politeiai*, compiled by Herakleides Lembos in the 2nd century B.C. Pap. copies his text from the antiquated edition of V. ROSE, *Aristotelis qui ferebantur librorum fragmenta*, Leipzig, 1886 (although he misleadingly cites only the date of its reprint, 1967). But there is a more recent and satisfactory edition of Herakleides' epitome: M. R. DILTS, *Heraclidis Lembi Excerpta Politiarum*, Durham NC, 1971 (see § 33, p. 24, for this particular citation).

P. 20. It is not correct that Aristophanes and Plato Comicus present (παρουσιάζουν) Aesop in their plays. As far as we can see, these comic dramatists only make passing references to Aesop (see *Wasps* 566, 1259, 1401-1405, 1446-1448; *Peace* 129-130; *Birds* 471-475, 651-653; Plato Com. fr. 70 K-A). The only playwright known to have brought Aesop as a character on stage is Alexis, who devoted an entire comedy to him (*Aisopos*, fr. 9 K-A).

²⁰ For these chronological testimonies see PERRY 1952, pp. 216-217; LUZZATTO 1996, pp. 1308-1309; KONSTANTAKOS 2009a, pp. 102-103.

Pp. 20-21. In the list of ancient literary references to Aesop there is one notable omission: the testimony of Diodoros 9.26-28 concerning Aesop and the Seven Sages in Kroisos' court. This is widely believed to have been drawn from the historian Ephoros (4th century B.C.); it is therefore the earliest extant testimony about Aesop's relations with Kroisos and (along with Alexis fr. 9) about his association with the renowned Seven Wise Men.²¹ Both these traditions formed thenceforth a vital part of Aesop's legend and have important reverberations on the *Vita*.

P. 26. Pap. describes the outcome of the *Tale of Ahīqar* as follows: "When he (sc. Ahīqar) returns to Babylon, he tries with admonitions to make Nadan aware of his ingratitude. The latter refuses all nourishment, out of remorse, and dies".²² This brief statement contains a series of errors. Ahīqar does not return to Babylon but to Assyria: this latter country is the place of action in most surviving redactions of the *Tale of Ahīqar*. It is the Greek *Vita* that transfers this location to Babylon.²³ Further, the hero does not merely admonish the ungrateful Nadan: he harshly punishes him with a sound thrashing, binds him with heavy chains, keeps him on a frugal diet of bread and water in moderate portions, and submits him to a number of other tortures; additionally, he pronounces against him a long sequence of terrible reproachful parables. Finally, Nadan does not die by refusing to accept food: according to most versions, he swells up like a bag or bladder and bursts asunder, perishing miserably (so in the Syriac, Arabic, Neo-Aramaic, Armenian and Old Turkish redactions). Variant texts may attribute him a less grotesque ending: in the Romanian recension the rascal dies of the blows; in the Slavonic one he is simply said to have expired, presumably due to the tortures; in the Ethiopic one he is put to death for his crimes by order of the king.²⁴ In fact, the much milder scenario

²¹ See KONSTANTAKOS 2005, pp. 20-21 with extensive bibliography. On the possibility that these associations go back to the 5th century (though never mentioned in so early sources) see lately KURKE 2011, pp. 31-33, 125-137, 405-412, 428-431.

²² "Όταν έπιστρέφει στη Βαβυλώνα, προσπαθει με νουθεσίες να κάνει τον Nadan να συναισθανθει την άγνωμοσύνη του. Αύτος από τις τύψεις του άρνείται κάθε τροφή και πεθαίνει".

²³ See KONSTANTAKOS 2009b, pp. 117-118; and KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 113-118, for references to the main texts, as well as an explanation of the reasons for this displacement.

²⁴ For the various versions of *Ahīqar* see CONYBEARE - HARRIS - LEWIS 1913, pp. 21-23 (Slavonic), 51-55, 82-85 (Armenian), 98 (Old Turkish), 122-127 (Syriac), 156-161 (Arabic); PENNACCHIETTI 2005, pp. 219-225 (Syriac); LIDZBARSKI 1896, pp. 35-41 (Neo-Aramaic); SCHNEIDER 1978, p. 152, and LUSINI 2005, p. 266 (Ethiopic); GASTER 1900, p. 309

described by Pap. does not belong to the *Tale of Ahikar* but to the *Vita Aesopi*. The author of the *Vita* changed the punishment bestowed on the ungrateful young man, as well as the manner of his demise, eliminating the crueller elements of the oriental *Ahikar* narrative. His aim was presumably to render his own central hero more lenient and humane and adapt the austere Eastern tale to the different sensibilities of the Hellenic reading public.²⁵

Further, according to Pap., Ahikar is the counsellor of the Assyrian king Sennacherib, who is the wise vizier's master throughout the main narrative. This holds true for most late recensions of the *Tale of Ahikar*, but not for the earliest Aramaic text of the Elephantine papyrus (5th century B.C.). There Sennacherib is only briefly mentioned at the beginning of the text, but he is immediately said to have died and been succeeded by his son and heir Esarhaddon. It is this latter monarch that rules in the main narrative and gets involved in Ahikar's adventures.²⁶

P. 27. The form Ἐννοϛ (or Ἐνοϛ) for the ungrateful young man's name (attested only in a codex transmitting a Modern Greek rendition of the *Vita*) is obviously a misspelt variant of Αἴνοϛ, the standard appellation of this character in the W version. Therefore, it does not deserve to be listed as a distinct name alongside the traditional ones (Αἴνοϛ, Ἡλιος, Λῆνοϛ).²⁷

P. 28. Nektanebo's statement in § 121 (G: "because of this ugly-formed and accursed man, I shall have to pay tribute to King Lykourgos") is not the only reference to Aesop's ugliness in the section based on *Ahikar*. There is another instance in § 112 according to the two recensions of the W: as soon as Aesop sets foot in Egypt, the locals, seeing his "loathsome physique", deem him a ridiculous personage.²⁸ Generally, the redactor of the W is not in the habit of adding such colourful details to the text. In addition, he has omitted the mention of Aesop's

(Romanian). Cf. also DANON 1921, pp. 121-122 (Turkish); NAU 1922, pp. 264-265, and GIAIERO 2005, p. 230 (various Arabic recensions).

²⁵ On these changes see most recently LUZZATTO 2003, pp. 36-39; and KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 261-278, with extensive analysis and bibliography.

²⁶ See PORTEN - YARDENI 1993, pp. 26-35; CONTINI 2005, pp. 116-121; NIEHR 2007, pp. 38-42.

²⁷ Concerning the young man's name and its variant forms, Pap. should have cited (apart from PERRY 1966) the more recent discussions of KANAVOU 2006, pp. 211-212, 215, and KONSTANTAKOS 2009b, pp. 326-339.

²⁸ See MORN § 112 (PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a, p. 125): Ἴδόντες δὲ οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι τὸν Αἴσωπον μυσαρὸν ὄντα τῇ θεᾷ ἔδοξαν παίγιον εἶναι. The same, with small verbal variants, in BPT_hSA (KARLA 2001, p. 222). This phrase has no equivalent in the G.

deformity in § 121; so it is difficult to imagine him adding on his own a reference to this same theme elsewhere. I therefore suspect that the relevant phrase of W § 112 is an element of the original *Vita*, which was omitted from the G but survived in the W version, as indeed happens sometimes in the tradition.²⁹

P. 28. That the inhabitants of Delphi paid to Iadmon the price for Aesop's murder is stated by Herodotus (2.134.3-4), not by the *Vita*. In the latter (§ 142), revenge for the fabulist's death is exacted by the people of Greece, the Babylonians and the Samians (G version) or by the lords of Greece and the other wise teachers (W version).³⁰

P. 29. The *Vita* may be styled a text of "open" (ἀνοιχτή) tradition,³¹ but not because it merely includes part of the tales circulating about Aesop in the Greek world, as maintained here by Pap. The text tradition of a narrative work may be designated as "open" if this work is transmitted in several variant recensions, which substantially differ from each other in terms of phrasing and style, structure, arrangement of the material, or content and number of episodes.³² However, one may not speak of "open tradition" when a given work comprises only some episodes from a broader group of narratives that generally existed about a certain hero. If it were so, then the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and all classical Greek tragedies (among many other texts) should have been branded as works of "open tradition".

P. 29. The existence of an early written "biography" of Aesop (or another literary composition of a comparable kind) in the 6th or (more probably) the 5th century B.C. has indeed been upheld by some scholars.³³ However, the idea of an "oral" form of Aesop's biography at that time, as forwarded here by Pap., is strange. It is unlikely that an extensive and composite "biography" of the fabulist, like the one we know from the extant *Vita*, would have been formed in oral tradition. The orally circulating, folk material would have taken different shapes: it would probably consist of various separate legends or anecdotes about Aesop's adventures and

²⁹ See KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 383-384 for a detailed discussion.

³⁰ MORN § 142: οἱ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἔξαρχοι καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ διδάσκαλοι. Some codices of BPT_hSA add καὶ σοφοί after the διδάσκαλοι. See PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a, pp. 145, 206; KARLA 2001, p. 238.

³¹ Pap. adds again at this point the word "oral" (προφορικῆ) in connection with the *Vita*'s tradition. On the ineptitude of this term, see above.

³² Note, however, the remarks made above, n. 10.

³³ See above, n. 12, and the following footnote below.

exploits. If one undertook to systematically combine all these distinct stories together, then a kind of connected “biography” might have ensued. But such a compilation is not a usual phenomenon within oral tradition. It is rather the work of a learned collector or compiler, who gathers the various tales current in his environment and arranges them in a coherent, organically integrated narrative in written form. Whether such a Greek “Elias Lönnrot” can have existed for the archaic Aesopic traditions already before Hellenistic times, is still open to debate.

Pap. is also wrong to declare that the early biographical narrative about Aesop “was born, lived and developed in the popular strata of society” (γεννήθηκε, ἔζησε καὶ ἀναπτύχθηκε μέσα στὰ λαϊκὰ στρώματα τῆς κοινωνίας). Such a thesis comes dangerously close to reviving the outdated theory that the old Aesopic *Life* was a kind of *Volksbuch* — a concept out of place in the context of archaic and classical Greek literature. Modern scholars agree that the early “biography” of Aesop must have been a literary composition of an erudite author.³⁴

P. 32 n. 67. According to Theon (*Progymnasmata* 3, II p. 72 Spengel), “a false discourse depicting the truth” (λόγος ψευδῆς εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν) is the fable itself, not the epimythium.

P. 38. “The Alexandrian archetype of the *Vita*” (τὸ ἀλεξανδρινὸ ἀρχέτυπο τοῦ *Bίου*) is another one of Pap.’s infelicitous expressions. What does the adjective “Alexandrian” mean in this connection? It certainly cannot suggest that the archetype of the *Vita* was composed in the Hellenistic (Alexandrian) age: Pap. himself, both before (pp. 29-30) and immediately afterwards (p. 38), subscribes to the opinion of the vast majority of scholars, that this archetype was created in the 1st or 2nd century A.D., i.e. in the Imperial period.³⁵ Does Pap. perhaps intend to convey that the

³⁴ See WEST 1984, pp. 122-127; GIANNATTASIO ANDRIA 1995, p. 53. For earlier bibliography pro and contra this purported *Volksbuch* see BESCHORNER - HOLZBERG 1992, p. 173.

³⁵ ADRADOS 1999, pp. 648-652, 659-660, has indeed argued that the prototype of the *Vita* must be dated to the early Hellenistic age, because of the many Cynic elements contained in the narrative. I do not find his theory convincing, given that Cynicism also flourished in the early Roman period (1st-2nd century A.D.) and its literary products (*diatribe*, *chreiai* etc.) exerted considerable influence on authors of those times (Dio Chrysostom, Lucian, Horace and other Roman satirists, even Plutarch and Seneca to a certain extent). On the other hand, the *Vita* as we know it, apart from containing sundry words of Latin origin, also reflects customs and social realities of the Roman age, which are so organically integrated in the plot that they cannot be deemed secondary accretions. See KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 63-64, for a detailed argument. In any case, Papathomopoulos makes no reference to Adrados’ thesis.

archetypal *Vita* was written in Alexandria? There are no indications for this. Perry simply argued that the creator of the *Vita* was of Egyptian origin, but found no evidence to specifically locate him in Alexandria. Or does the phrase imply that the archetypal text in question was kept in the Alexandrian library? Again, I am not aware of any supportive data to this effect. But it would be worth pondering whether a work of this kind would have been deemed worthy of preservation in that renowned book repository of the ancient world.

P. 38. With regard to the episode of Aesop's sleep and divine cure (§ 7), Isis is not "replaced by Apollo" in the W version (so Pap.). In most manuscripts of the W, the role of Isis is undertaken by the goddess Tyche, while two codices (OP) use instead the deified Philoxenia. Isis' priestess (G §§ 4-5) is replaced by priests of Artemis in some manuscripts of the W (BSA), while others still speak of a priest or priests of Isis (MOP).³⁶ In this connection, Pap.'s statement (pp. 35, 39) that Isis' role is "more restricted" in the W version by comparison to the G, is not precise. Actually, Isis' role is virtually non-existent in the W; the goddess herself never appears in the action. The only trace left of her original presence is the mention of her priests in a few codices.

P. 43 n. 108. The correct reference is: Elias, *Prolegomena Philosophiae 2* (CAG XVIII, p. 4.21-22 Busse). This parallel was pointed out by C. Ruiz Montero and M. D. Sánchez Alacid.³⁷ Pap. has doubtless borrowed it from their essay (albeit misunderstanding their reference), but did not take the trouble to acknowledge it.

Pp. 44-45. Concerning the enmity between Aesop and Apollo, it should have been noted that this theme is only found in the G, while it has been eliminated from the W (probably due to religious censorship). Most scholars regard the "anti-Apollonian" theme as a component of the original *Vita*; but F. Ferrari's heretic view that Apollo's hostility represents a secondary addition of the G-redactor, alien to the primary form of the Aesopic romance, has lately gained some acceptance among Italian scholars.³⁸ I do not find Ferrari's theory persuasive, but it would merit mention in a footnote at this point of the book.

³⁶ On this phenomenon see most recently ROBERTSON 2003, pp. 247-249; KURKE 2011, pp. 37, 63.

³⁷ See RUIZ MONTERO - SÁNCHEZ ALACID 2003, pp. 421-422.

³⁸ See FERRARI 1997, pp. 12-20; LUZZATTO 2003, p. 35; SCHIRRU 2009, pp. 41-42. For a detailed refutation of their arguments see KONSTANTAKOS 2009b, pp. 121-123, and KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 121-124, with extensive bibliography on the "anti-Apollonian" theme of the *Vita*.

Pp. 45-46. With regard to the piquant adultery episode of §§ 75-76, Pap. expresses himself with unjustifiable prudishness. The text is crystal clear in describing the sexual encounter of Aesop and Xanthos' wife: Aesop is said to possess a long and thick genital member; he has sex nine times with the woman, but in his tenth attempt he ejaculates on her thigh.³⁹ Yet, Pap. seems oddly ashamed of calling things with their proper names: in his description Aesop is “endowed by nature with certain peculiar bodily qualifications”, and there is no reference to the sexual act and Aesop's misfired final ejection. There is obviously no point in discussing the “erotic elements of the *Vita*” (Pap.'s avowed topic in this section), if one is not prepared to speak about such matters without circumlocutions and prudery.

Overall, this section is unsatisfactory. Pap. limits himself to summarizing the episodes of the *Vita* that contain erotic tales or incidents. He does not analyze the role of erotic themes within the narrative. He also fails to ask the most interesting related question: how does the *Vita* compare in this respect with the canonical ancient novels, which focus on the love story of the protagonists? Such a comparison might lead to fruitful conclusions, showing e.g. how love, a pivotal theme in the canonical novels, is pushed to the margins of the narrative in the *Vita*, only surfacing in episodes peripheral to the main action. Further, the romantic *eros* of the love novels is clearly parodied in the *Vita*: it is reduced to the lowest level of bodily lust and often illicit or perverted sex (e.g. §§ 75, 131, 141); and the grotesquely ugly Aesop, who is nonetheless superbly endowed for sexual performance, functions as a comic inversion of the ideally beautiful lover-hero of canonical ancient love-fiction.⁴⁰

Pp. 51-52. In the section on the *Nachleben* of the *Vita*, one misses some reference to its possible reverberations on important works of European literature during the Renaissance and Baroque age, such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and the picaresque genre, Basile's *Pentamerone*, perhaps even the *Don Quixote*.⁴¹

P. 53. I doubt that forms such as πείν (instead of πιεῖν) and ταμείον (instead of ταμιεῖον) should be called “contracted” or “resulting from synaeresis” (συννηρημένων). The loss of the iota in these cases is not due to synaeresis, but rather to silencing; the

³⁹ See § 75 in MO (PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a, p. 95): τὸ μῆκος καὶ τὸ πάχος τῆς αἰδοῦς αὐτοῦ (...) ὁ δὲ Αἴσωπος (...) ἐπετέλει τὸ πάθος ἕως ἑννέα (...) πολλὰ οὖν κοπιάσας τὸ δέκατον εἰς τὸν μηρὸν ἐτέλεσεν.

⁴⁰ On erotic themes in the *Vita* see KONSTANTAKOS 2006; PAPADEMETRIΟΥ 2009.

⁴¹ See handily HOLZBERG 1992, pp. ix-xi; PAPADEMETRIΟΥ 1997, pp. 58-72, and KONSTANTAKOS 2008, II pp. 310-321, with much further bibliography.

iota is simply dropped in pronunciation before $\epsilon\iota$, which ended up having the same sound ([i]) in the Koine.

P. 54. “Use of absolute superlative (...) without comparative (συγκριτική) genitive” (so Pap.). It should have been of course “partitive genitive”.

P. 55. “Historical present indicative instead of imperfect or future” (so Pap.) This is an odd statement, given that the present tense used instead of the future cannot be termed “historical” (not to mention that “present indicative in place of future” has been listed immediately above).

There is also a number of striking bibliographical omissions, especially of important recent studies which bear immediate connection to various topics discussed in Pap.’s introduction. Concerning riddles and kindred intellectual problems, a recurrent theme of the *Vita*, Pap. (p. 16) only provides a general reference to K. Ohlert’s old monograph (*Rätsel und Gesellschaftsspiele der alten Griechen*, Berlin 1886 — he presumably does not know the second and expanded edition of this book, Berlin 1912). This is a broad survey of riddles and similar quiz games in antiquity but contains little specifically on the *Vita Aesopi*. There are other, fairly recent specialized investigations concerning the riddles of the *Vita*, which should have been cited.⁴² The same is true of jesters (*gelotopoi*), the etymology of Aesop’s name, the scene in which Aesop is sold into slavery (Αἰσώπου πρᾶσις), the Milesian tales, and other issues.⁴³

There are countless typographical errors in the bibliography listed in pp. 61-71. I limit myself to a single page (p. 64), by way of example: Fitzgerald, not Fitgerald; *biografici*, not *biographici* (in the title of I. Gallo’s book); Disabled, not Diseabled (in the title of R. Garland’s article); *Maronée*, not *Mantinée* (in the title of Y. Grandjean’s monograph); Grottanelli, not Grotanelli, and *im*, not *in* in the title of the corresponding volume. Many analogous misprints are found in every page of the bibliography, as well as in several footnotes of the introduction.

⁴² See notably JEDRKIEWICZ 1989, pp. 109-110, 131-135, 184-191; FERRARI 1997, pp. 23, 27-31, 35; and my own contributions: KONSTANTAKOS 2003; KONSTANTAKOS 2004, pp. 101-103, 120-130; KONSTANTAKOS 2008, I pp. 39-53; and most extensively KONSTANTAKOS 2010 (with more bibliography in p. 258).

⁴³ *Gelotopoi* (p. 21 n. 33): apart from Maas’ *RE* entry, see BREMMER 1997. Etymology of Aisopos (p. 22 n. 38): see the survey of KANAVOU 2006, pp. 213-214. Αἰσώπου πρᾶσις (pp. 25 n. 51, 41): see KONSTANTAKOS 2003, p. 111, where I refute the thesis of Donzelli (cited by Pap.). Historical basis of Ahiqar (p. 27 n. 53): see FALES 1993; PARPOLA 2005; and my remarks in KONSTANTAKOS 2008, I pp. 175-177. Milesian tales (pp. 45-46): see HARRISON 1998.

Passing on to the critical text, the reader experiences some relief, because in this domain Pap. has performed more diligent work. The text of the present edition is generally superior to that of Pap.'s former (1990) editorial attempt. In certain passages it is even better than the text of F. Ferrari, the latest scholar to have previously undertaken a critical edition of the G version (1997). Of course, this is largely due to the fact that Pap. knew and exploited Ferrari's work, just as he benefited from the contributions of other scholars who laboured on the text of the *Vita* during the last two decades, chiefly J.-Th. A. Papademetriou, E. Degani, I. Stamoulakis and G. Karla.⁴⁴ Incorporating the findings of these scholars, as well as generally the advances accomplished by previous research, and of course occasionally contributing his own suggestions, Pap. establishes a mostly satisfactory text. Sundry problematic passages of the G manuscript have been restored in a convincing manner. Among other things, many pieces of text which Perry condemned or excluded as spurious interpolations, are now harmoniously integrated into the narrative and make acceptable sense, thanks to small critical interventions.

Nonetheless, there still remain several oversights, errors and omissions, both in the text and in the critical apparatus. There are also cases in which Pap.'s suggestions for restoring the text do not seem successful. I select again the most salient examples:

The catalogue of the sigla (p. 73) includes the symbol λ, which is explained as standing for "Consensus librorum LFV". But it is never mentioned, either in this catalogue or anywhere else in the book, which codices are meant by the sigla LFV.

§ 2.13 (περικαθέζουσι τοῖς σύκοις G). Perry's emendation περικαθίζουσι (also adopted by Ferrari) seems preferable to Pap.'s παρακαθίζουσι, because it requires a smaller change of the transmitted reading and makes fully satisfactory sense. The slaves "sit around the figs", i.e. one of them sits on one side of the fruits and the other one on the other side; they thus "place the figs between them".

§ 2.16-17. G's indicatives λέγομεν and γινόμεθα do not need to be emended into subjunctives (λέγωμεν, γινόμεθα). They can be retained as present indicatives in

⁴⁴ See most notably PAPADEMETRIOU 1991-1992; STAMOULAKIS 1991-1992; DEGANI 1997; KARLA 2001; STAMOULAKIS 2001-2002; STAMOULAKIS 2006. It is to Pap.'s credit that he acknowledges this in his preface, calling his present edition "the product of the work/co-operation of many scholars" (προϊὸν τῆς (συν)ἐργασίας πολλῶν λογίων, p. 12).

place of the future tense (a usage also occurring elsewhere in the G text).⁴⁵ Their paratactic conjunction to the subjunctive *συμφωνήσωμεν*, employed slightly before (§ 2.15), exemplifies the tendency for loose syntax and anacolutha, which is a prominent feature of the G.

§ 5.3 in the critical apparatus. The G reads Ἰση, not Ἱση.

§ 6.7-8. Presumably through oversight, Pap. writes: τῆ γῆ πόνω (sic) προσβαλὼν δικέλλα <τῆν> δίκελλαν, τὸν μάνδικα etc. In this way, he conflates his own older emendation (τῆ γῆ πόνω προσβαλὼν δικέλλα, for the G's τῆ γῆ πόνω προσβαλὼν δίκελλαν) with that of Perry (τῆ γῆ [πόνω] προσβαλὼν <τῆν> δίκελλαν). The doublet δικέλλα <τῆν> δίκελλαν is obviously a mistake. What Pap. presumably intended to write is: τῆ γῆ πόνω προσβαλὼν δικέλλα τὸν μάνδικα etc. Note that with this emendation no comma should be placed after δικέλλα: τὸν μάνδικα will serve as direct object of προσβαλὼν (“he put his wallet next to/by his mattock”).

I believe, however, that the G's text is defensible with very little change. It is not even necessary to delete πόνω, as Perry suggested: Aesop τῆ γῆ πόνω προσβαλὼν <τῆν> δίκελλαν, τὸν μάνδικα καὶ τὴν μηλωτὴν πρὸς κεφαλὴν θέμενος, ἀνεπαύετο, “after putting down on the earth his mattock with fatigue, and placing his wallet and his sheepskin under his head, he rested”. Indeed, the soft wallet (μάνδιξ) is more appropriate for serving as a pillow than for being merely left next to the mattock.

The description of the idyllic *locus amoenus* in § 6 is a highly corrupt passage, possibly the most difficult part of the entire G version. Many scholars have laboured on it, but its full restoration is possibly beyond human capacity. I thus do not deem it fair or expedient to discuss every single editorial choice of Pap. in this chapter and assess how far his interventions are satisfactory by comparison to those of other scholars — especially since I cannot offer new and better suggestions of my own. At one point, however, the text he prints is untenable:

§ 6.10-12. χλοερά τιναχθέντα φυτὰ κατέπνευεν (singular verb with neuter plural subject, a regular Attic idiom) αὐραν <καὶ> τὴν περίφυτον <καὶ> εὐανθῆ (τὴν περὶ φυτῶν τῶν ἀνθεων G) ὕλην ἠδεῖαν καὶ προσηνῆ προσέφερων (plural verb). Even for the standards of G's lively popular language, such an abrupt change of syntax, with the verb first in the singular and immediately afterwards in the plural, sounds too harsh and hence unlikely. If προσέφερων is retained and not deleted (so Perry and

⁴⁵ See HOSTETTER 1955, pp. 76-77; cf. KARLA 2001, pp. 107-108, for the same phenomenon in the W, with further bibliography.

Ferrari, who also athetize the phrase τὴν περὶ φυτῶν τῶν ἀνθεων ὕλην shortly before), then it must be emended into προσέφερεν, or else the preceding κατέπνευεν must be turned into κατέπνευον.

§ 7.14. Pap.'s εἰς τὸ Ἑλικῶνος (ἐλικὸν G) ἀνέβησαν ὄρος is definitely better than Perry's and Ferrari's εἰς τὸ (sic) Ἑλικῶνα ἀνέβησαν ὄρος, which seems ungrammatical (Ἑλικῶνα could only be construed as an apposition to τὸ ... ὄρος; but in that case it should never have been interposed between the article and the substantive). Nevertheless, I consider Papademetriou's solution far more preferable: emend into εἰς τὸν Ἑλικῶνα ἀνέβησαν {ὄρος}, deleting ὄρος as a naïve marginal gloss on Ἑλικῶνα, which subsequently crept into the text.⁴⁶

§ 8.1. Pap. adopts Papademetriou's proposal: αὐτῷ (αὐτὸ G) τὸ ταχθὲν ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως ὑπνώσας, taking φύσεως in the sense "law, regulation"; Aesop "slept as long as it was prescribed to him by the regulations", referring to the two-hour interval allowed him by his master for repose (§ 6.2-3).⁴⁷ Nonetheless, in spite of Papademetriou's copious and ingenious argumentation, I find it hard to believe that the word φύσις can actually bear a meaning identical to its antonym νόμος ("law, regulation" etc.).⁴⁸ In addition, no parallel for this meaning has ever been discovered outside the G itself and its supposed examples (§§ 13.5, 103.7, and perhaps 10.18). It is preferable to retain G's αὐτὸ and translate: "Aesop slept exactly as much as was imposed (sc. on him) by nature", i.e. "by his natural needs", or more freely "as much as he naturally needed".

§ 13.8. καταστροφή does not mean "change" or "alteration", but "end, close, conclusion" (*LSJ* s.v. καταστροφή II). Hence, it would be advisable not to emend into ἦδε καταστροφή αὐτοῦ τί; ("What does this change of his mean?", signifying Aesop's new kind of behaviour after he acquired the ability of speech).⁴⁹ It is preferable to retain G's reading: ἦ δὲ καταστροφή αὐτοῦ τί; ("What will be the end of him?" or "Where will this behaviour of his end?"). The fellow-slave pronouncing these words is apparently worried that Aesop's sudden awkwardness and rebelliousness may lead to unpredictable consequences.

⁴⁶ See PAPADEMETRIOU 1989, pp. 42-43.

⁴⁷ See PAPADEMETRIOU 1991-1992, pp. 178-180.

⁴⁸ It is significant that, although *LSJ Suppl.* (p. 149, s.v. φύσις) had added a supplementary meaning to this effect ("VIII. apptly. = νόμος, *Vit. Aesop.*(G) 13,103"), this has not been retained in the revised supplement (*LSJ Rev. Suppl.* p. 310).

⁴⁹ Similarly FERRARI 1997, pp. 82-83: ἦδε καταστροφή αὐτοῦ τί; BONELLI and SANDROLINI *ad loc.* likewise translate: "Guarda un po' che razza di cambiamento!".

§ 19.19 in the critical apparatus. G reads ὑποχεῖραν, not ὑπὸ χεῖραν.

§ 20.13-14. G reads πάσαν ἀρχὴν, which has been variously emended, e.g. into πασανἀρχην (Perry, “overseer”) or πασταδάρχην (Dölger, “majordomo”). Pap. retains G’s reading in his text, placing it between cruces as incurably corrupt. Yet, he emends the manuscript’s πάσαν into πᾶσαν. Since the reading has been placed in cruces, such emendation is superfluous.

§ 21.3 and 7. Pap. notes in the apparatus: “ὀράριον conieci: ὀράριον Perry”. This, however, yields no information as to the actual reading of the G. He should have written something like “ὀράριον conieci: ὀράριον G, ret. Perry”.

§ 22.7. Pap. places a lacuna after the word Ξάνθος and notes in the apparatus: “post Ξάνθος lacunam statuit Ferrari”. Yet, in Ferrari’s edition (1997, p. 96) no lacuna is marked at this point. Indeed, the text flows with perfect coherence and intelligibility: προελθὼν ὁ Ξάνθος καὶ τοὺς σχολαστικούς ἀσπασάμενος καὶ ὀλίγα φιλολογήσας, ἐξῆλθεν τῆς μελέτης, “Xanthos came out, saluted his students and limited himself to a brief philosophical discussion, and then he left the place of instruction”. There is no need to assume a lacuna in this passage.

§ 29.6-7. Since Pap. retains G’s καταγογγύζεις (not emending it into καταγογγύσεις or καταγογγύσης, as proposed by Charitonides), he should have also kept the following ἔχεις (§ 29.7) instead of turning it into ἔχης. These two indicative forms can be accepted as examples of present tense in place of future.

§ 32.13 in the critical apparatus. G reads διαπεχθεῖ, not διαπαιχθεῖ.

§ 42.2 in the apparatus. The abbreviation “Fab. Roman. p. 253, 13” refers in fact to the so-called Accursiana or Planudea, the secondary Byzantine redaction of the *Vita Aesopi* composed by Maximos Planoudes.⁵⁰ This should have been made clear in the apparatus: it is important for the reader to know that the parallel adduced comes from a later version of the *Vita*.

§ 56.5-6. G reads: πολλοὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὰ ἀλλότρια τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες τὰ ἀλλότρια περιεργάζονται. Pap. emends this into τὰ οἰκεῖα τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες etc. However, his rewriting does not really improve the sense of the text. This phrase is uttered by Aesop, who intends hereby to give a definition of the meddlesome (περίεργος) and his opposite, the “unmeddlesome” (ἀπερίεργος) man. In this connection, it is pointless to remark that the meddlesome person is someone who “eats and drinks his own goods”. This hardly contributes to determining the

⁵⁰ On this version see most recently KARLA 2003 and KARLA 2006, pp. 221-223.

character and qualities of meddlesomeness. In addition, Pap.'s emendation does not suit the immediate context of this episode. Shortly before, Aesop branded one of Xanthos' students as "meddlesome" (περίεργος); this student was participating in a dinner-party at Xanthos' house and addressed to his host nasty words about Aesop (§ 55). It was this personage's behaviour that inspired Aesop with the definition of meddlesomeness and non-meddlesomeness given at the beginning of § 56. The student was dining in Xanthos' house, i.e. eating and drinking τὰ ἀλλότρια (another man's goods); and yet, instead of keeping his mouth shut, as befits a peaceful and discrete man, he strove to slander Aesop before the master of the house, i.e. he poked his nose into other people's affairs. For this reason, the transmitted phrase τὰ ἀλλότρια τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες must remain unaltered. It represents a faithful description of the student's attitude, which has motivated Aesop's entire statement. If any intervention is deemed necessary, so as to avoid the repetition of τὰ ἀλλότρια, the best solution would be to delete one of the two occurrences of this word: e.g. πολλοὶ γὰρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὰ ἀλλότρια τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες <ταῦτα> {τὰ ἀλλότρια} περιεργάζονται. However, the text can perfectly stand as it is, and this is how Perry printed it.⁵¹

§ 63.3. οὔτε στρόβιλον [ἔχει], and in the apparatus: "alt. ἔχει secl. Perry". However, Perry in his edition (1952, p. 55) does not delete this ἔχει. He retains it in his text, without placing it within square brackets or other symbols signifying athetization. He simply notes in his apparatus that all three words οὔτε στρόβιλον ἔχει "additamenti speciem prae se ferunt".

§ 69.3. Due to oversight, Pap. has omitted the ὡς that precedes πανοῦργον in the G.

§ 73.6. {καὶ ἄλλοι} should be [καὶ ἄλλοι].

§ 80.11 in the apparatus: "post γενναίως dist. Ferrari". Yet, already Perry (1952, p. 60) punctuated with an upper dot (·) after γενναίως.

⁵¹ Pap. was obviously prompted to this emendation by the corresponding text of the W version (in codd. MO). There, however, the words τὰ οἰκεῖα are inserted in a different context and perform a diverse function: εἰσὶ πολλοὶ τὰ οἰκεῖα τρώγοντες καὶ πίνοντες καὶ τὰ ἴδια μεριμνῶντες, ἔνιοι δὲ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἰδίων οὐ μνημονεύοντες τὰ ἀλλότρια περιεργάζονται (see PPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a, p. 81). Here eating τὰ οἰκεῖα (one's own goods) is a characteristic of the non-meddlesome man, and this does not produce any contradiction with the context. As is evident, the phrasing of the W version is much altered by comparison to the G, and the entire structure of Aesop's simile has been transformed. Hence, the W's formulation is not a reliable guide for the restoration of this passage in the G.

§ 104 and 108-110. In the section based on *Ahiqar*, the G standardly gives the name Ἡλῖος to the ungrateful young man adopted by Aesop. Pap. transforms this everywhere into Λίνοϛ, occasionally without even taking the trouble to note his emendation or mention the manuscript reading in the apparatus (so in §§ 104.12, 108.14). The only source transmitting the name Λῖνοϛ (*sic*, with circumflex) for this personage is cod. Vindobonensis theol. gr. 128, which contains §§ 109-110 of the *Vita* (Aesop's admonitions to the young man), having presumably excerpted them from an old manuscript of the work (probably a codex written in majuscule script before the 9th century).⁵² In the W version the adoptive son's name is consistently Αῖνοϛ. In the very early P.Oxy. 3720 (3rd century A.D., i.e. close to the time of composition of the original *Vita*) the text of the corresponding passage (col. i, v. 9) is unfortunately too corrupt; only the final sigma of the name can be practically made out. According to the editor of the papyrus, M. W. Haslam, the reading at this point might be Αῖνοϛ or Λῖνοϛ, while the form Ἡλῖος seems less likely. Nonetheless, given the bad state of the papyrus text, nothing is certain.⁵³ In any case, the reading Λῖνοϛ of cod. Vind. 128 is obviously a corruption or misspelling of the form Αῖνοϛ, provided by all the manuscripts of the W version (due to the common scribal confusion of capital A and Λ). This is the only explanation that accounts for the irregular and otherwise unparalleled accentuation of the form Λῖνοϛ with a circumflex.⁵⁴ Everywhere else in ancient Greek the word Λίνοϛ, both as a proper

⁵² On this codex and the oldness of its source see PERRY 1952, pp. 17, 21-22, 69. Perry dates the ultimate source (π) of cod. Vind. 128 already in the 2nd century A.D. He further assumes that π belonged to a very ancient redaction of the *Vita*, from which other material also stems (the additional episodes of §§ 50a, 77a and 77b, which only occur in the BPTSA recension, as well as many variant readings of this latter branch of the tradition). HASLAM 1986, p. 152, rightly remarks that all this material need not be traced back to a single source. The multiformity of extant papyri indicates that already in late Imperial times several different versions of the *Vita* were in circulation. In itself, however, the dating of π at such an early age is not improbable.

⁵³ See HASLAM 1986, pp. 152, 154-155, 163. It is therefore mistaken to assume that the young man's name in the papyrus version was undoubtedly Αῖνοϛ or Λῖνοϛ (so G. BONELLI - G. SANDROLINI in FERRARI 1997, p. 219 and JOUANNO 2006, p. 179, who have been misled by Haslam's *exempli gratia* supplement in v. 9).

⁵⁴ Thus in cod. Vind. 128. Pap., aggravating his methodological error, writes everywhere Λίνοϛ with acute accent, without once acknowledging in his apparatus the circumflex transmitted in the manuscript.

name and as a substantive, has a short iota.⁵⁵ In addition, as I have shown in recent contributions, the name Λίνος does not suit Aesop's story in any respect. By contrast, the other two transmitted appellations, Αἴνος and Ἥλιος, can be explained as apt speaking names, referring to basic narrative themes of the *Vita*: the former points to Aesop's activity as a fabulist (αἴνος was the archaic Greek term for the fable) and to the admonitions he addresses to his adoptive son (cf. the cognates παραίνω, παραίνεις etc.); the latter alludes to the enmity between Aesop and the solar god Apollo.⁵⁶

Consequently, it is arbitrary to impose, in an edition of the G version, a form of the young man's name which (a) is nowhere transmitted in the G manuscript, (b) was unknown in the archetype of the G version and most probably also in the original form of the *Vita*, and (c) is arguably a mere spelling error of a later scribe. In an edition of the G version the only admissible name for the young man is of course Ἥλιος, the form invariably transmitted in all relevant passages of the G codex.

§ 107.10. Pap.'s note in the apparatus (“ἀληθείης Perry: ἀληθείεις G fort. recte sermone vulgari”) is not precise. It should be: ἀληθείεις G et Perry in textu, fort. recte sermone vulgari: ἀληθείης Perry in apparatu.

§ 109.2 in the apparatus. Cod. Vind. theol. gr. 128 reads ἀποδέδωκας, not ἀνταπέδωκας.

§ 115.14-15. This passage belongs to the concluding part of the game of “simile riddles”, the first test to which the Egyptian king Nektanebo submits Aesop in the context of their riddle competition. In the previous stages of the game, the Egyptian monarch and his courtiers have been successively compared to the moon and the stars, the sun of springtime and the fruits of the earth, and finally the sun and its rays (§§ 112-115). Now Aesop must find a stronger counter-simile for his own

⁵⁵ See e.g. Hom. *Il.* 18.570; Hes. fr. 305 M-W; Theocr. 24.105; epigram in Diog. Laert. 1.4; Nonn. *Dion.* 41.376. So also in the Latin poets: Verg. *Ecl.* 4.56; Ov. *Amor.* 3.9.23 etc.

⁵⁶ On the young man's names in the various versions of the *Vita* and their connections to the overall plot see in detail KONSTANTAKOS 2009b, pp. 325-339, and KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 138-149. There I refute the proposition of HASLAM 1986, p. 152, that Λίνος may have been the young man's authentic name in the original form of the *Vita*, because it supposedly tallies with the anti-Apollonian theme of the narrative, given Linos' mythical connections with Apollo. In myths, Linos is usually presented as Apollo's antagonist or (in one way or another) as the god's victim. He is thus a figure parallel to Aesop, the enemy and victim of the Delphic god. Therefore, his name cannot be appropriate for the treacherous adoptive son, who is Aesop's persecutor and destroyer, i.e. acts in accordance with Apollo's will.

king, Lykourgos (or Lykoros) of Babylon, comparing him to an entity superior to all the things hitherto associated with the Egyptian ruler. Aesop aptly likens his king to Zeus, the cosmic master of the world, who controls the celestial bodies, seasons and natural phenomena; thus, the hero caps over all the similes formerly employed for Nektanebo. This entire episode is based on a very similar sequence of scenes in the *Tale of Ahiqar*.⁵⁷

At the point in question (§ 115.14-15), in Aesop's description of Zeus' power over the world, the G reads: ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην φέρειν. Perry (1952, p. 71) felicitously emended the pointless φέρειν into φαίνειν, and rightly guessed that the irrelevant ἐπειδὴ must have arisen from corruption of the verb required in this clause. Thus, he emended ἐπειδὴ into ποιεῖ (Zeus "makes the sun and the moon shine"), and this suggestion is adopted by Pap. in his present edition. However, the corresponding description in the *Tale of Ahiqar* offers exactly the opposite image. In the various versions of the Near-Eastern narrative, the God or the God of Heaven is said by Ahiqar to act as follows:

"He restrains the sun from rising, and its rays from being seen (...) and he will hinder the moon from rising and the stars from appearing" (Syriac).

"He holds the sun, and it gives not its light, and the moon and the stars, and they circle not" (Arabic).

"He thunders, and imprisons the rays of the sun" (Armenian).

"He obscures the sun, so that it may not come out, as well as its rays, so that they may not be seen. He can also prevent (...) the moon and the stars from shining" (Neo-Aramaic).

"He obscures the sky and everything that it contains" (Ethiopic).⁵⁸

Because of these formulations of *Ahiqar*, it is preferable to emend ἐπειδὴ into ἐμποδίζει, as suggested by Pap. in his former edition (1990) and adopted by Ferrari.⁵⁹ In this way, the text of the G coincides with the corresponding image of *Ahiqar*.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ For the episode of the simile riddles in *Ahiqar* and in the *Vita* see KONSTANTAKOS 2004, p. 129; KONSTANTAKOS 2008, I pp. 40-41; KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 189-214, 226-227.

⁵⁸ See CONYBEARE - HARRIS - LEWIS 1913, pp. 48 (Armenian), 119 (Syriac), 151 (Arabic); PENNACCHIETTI 2005, p. 215 (Syriac); LIDZBARSKI 1896, p. 29 (Neo-Aramaic); SCHNEIDER 1978, p. 151, and LUSINI 2005, p. 265 (Ethiopic).

⁵⁹ See PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1990, p. 155; FERRARI 1997, p. 230.

⁶⁰ The continuation of the phrase in the G (καὶ τὰς ὥρας εὐσταθεῖν) presents no problem with the emendation ἐμποδίζει: Zeus "prevents the seasons from keeping their order". In other words, he may upturn the usual, regular nature of each season of the year, e.g. by causing bad

§ 115.18 in the apparatus. The G reads βαπτίζεται, not βαπτίζεσθαι.

§ 115.21. Aesop concludes his counter-simile with a general remark about the power of his own king: Lykourgos “with the splendour of his kingship makes the bright kingdom dark and the dark one bright”.⁶¹ This phrase has no equivalent in any version of *Ahiqar*, but it recalls attested Greek sayings about the activity of the gods, which are indeed attributed to Aesop in gnomological sources: Zeus “lowers the high ones and exalts the low ones”; the gods “build some things and demolish others”.⁶² The author of the *Vita* has transferred this kind of antithetical gnomic pattern to another type of metaphorical imagery (“bright and dark”, instead of “high and low” or “building and demolishing”).

This sentence is followed in the G by a corrupt string of words: ἡ γὰρ ὑμῶν περιοχῆ καταπάσσει. Pap. emends this into τὰ γὰρ ἐν ὑπεροχῆ καταπαρ>άσσει, “because he effects (fulfils) all things supreme”. However, after the previous apophthegm about King Lykourgos’ antithetical achievements with regard to the monarchies of the world, this seems a *non sequitur*. The sense here requires rather something like the restorations proposed by Perry and Ferrari: <πάντ>α γὰρ ἐν ὑπεροχῆ καταπαύει or τὰ γὰρ ἐν ὑπεροχῆ καταπαύει, “for he puts an end to (all) things superior”.⁶³ Such

weather during spring and summer, or conversely provoking a relatively warm winter. The god of *Ahiqar* is described as producing an analogous result: with his rain and hail, he spoils the spring month and destroys its flowers and vegetation. See CONYBEARE - HARRIS - LEWIS 1913, pp. 48 (Armenian), 151 (Arabic); LIDZBARSKI 1896, p. 29 (Neo-Aramaic); SCHNEIDER 1978, p. 151, and LUSINI 2005, pp. 265-266 (Ethiopic). Thus, once again, the text of the G broadly agrees with the oriental model.

⁶¹ So with the supplements of PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1990, p. 155, which are also reproduced in his present edition: τῆ λαμπρότητι τῆς βασιλείας <αὐτοῦ> φω<τεινῆν> βασιλείαν ποιεῖ σκο<τεινῆν> καὶ σκοτεινῆν ποιεῖ φω<τεινῆν> (thus restoring the G’s corrupt τῆ λαμπρότητι τῆς βασιλείας φωτεινῆν καὶ σκοτινῆν ποιεῖ φωνῆν). Similarly FERRARI 1997, pp. 230-232: τῆ λαμπρότητι τῆς βασιλείας φωτεινῆν <βασιλείαν ποιεῖ σκοτεινῆν> καὶ σκοτεινῆν ποιεῖ φωτεινῆν. Both on palaeographical grounds and because of the parallel Hellenic maxims cited above, I consider this restoration far superior to the suggestion of PERRY 1952, p. 71 (τῆ λαμπρότητι τῆς βασιλείας <αὐτοῦ τῆν ὑμῶν λαμπρότητα> [φωτεινῆν] σκοτεινῆν ποιεῖ καὶ ἀφανῆ).

⁶² See Diog. Laert. 1.69: φασι δ’ αὐτὸν (Chilon) καὶ Αἰσώπου πυθέσθαι, ὁ Ζεὺς τί εἶη ποιῶν· τὸν δὲ φάναι, ‘τὰ μὲν ὑψηλὰ ταπεινῶν, τὰ δὲ ταπεινὰ ὑψηλῶν’. Similarly, but with reversed roles, in *Gnomologium Vaticanum* 553; for the thought cf. also Archilochus fr. 130 W. Stobaeus 4.41.61 (III p. 945 HENSE): Αἴσωπος ἐρωτηθεὶς ὑπὸ τινος τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ, εἰ οἶδε τί πράττουσιν οἱ θεοί, ‘τὰ μὲν οἰκοδομοῦσιν’ ἔφη ‘τὰ δὲ καταβάλλουσιν’. For more gnomological sources see STERNBACH 1963, p. 198.

⁶³ See PERRY 1952, p. 71; FERRARI 1997, p. 232.

a phrase also recalls famous Hellenic maxims concerning the gods and their power. Compare e.g. Herodotus' gnomic sayings: "the god loves to cut down all things exalted (...) for the god does not allow anyone other than himself to entertain big thoughts" (7.10ε); "god gives a glimpse of good fortune to many people, only to utterly ruin them" (1.32.9).⁶⁴ In order to stress the quasi-divine greatness of the Babylonian monarch, Aesop concludes by transferring to him well-known Greek formulations about the power of god.

§ 118.2. In the G, the wonderful cock supposedly killed by the Egyptian cat is described as νέον καὶ μάχιμον ("young and combative"), a phrase retained without change in Pap.'s present edition (as was also by Perry). However, the corresponding passage in the W version reads γενναῖον καὶ μάχιμον ("brave and combative"), and the word γενναῖον was introduced into the G text, as an emendation of the transmitted νέον, by Pap. in his previous edition (1990) and Ferrari.⁶⁵ A strong case can be made here in favour of the reading γενναῖον. This latter adjective (unlike G's νέον) tallies very well with the following μάχιμον: both words refer to the bird's courage and fighting spirit, which would have rendered it apt for cockfights, a highly popular sport in the ancient Greek world.⁶⁶ The same vocabulary is regularly employed in other sources referring to this sport: a cock thoroughbred and suitable for cockfights is called γενναῖος, while one unfit for such use is styled ἀγεννής.⁶⁷ The Suda (τ 69, cf. α 1117) designates the cocks of Tanagra, which were greatly demanded in cockfights, with the terms εὐγενεῖς and μαχηταί, which are very close to the phrase γενναῖον καὶ μάχιμον of the W.

§ 120.3 in the apparatus: "περιτρέχουσι conieci ex V". It should be "ex W" (V, i.e. cod. Vind. theol. gr. 128, does not even transmit this chapter).

⁶⁴ Hdt. 7.10ε: φιλέει γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέχοντα πάντα κολουεῖν (...) οὐ γὰρ εἴα φρονέειν μέγα ὁ θεὸς ἄλλον ἢ ἑαυτόν. Id. 1.32.9: πολλοῖσι γὰρ δὴ ὑποδέξας ὄλβον ὁ θεὸς προρορίζους ἀνέτρεψε.

⁶⁵ See PPATHOMOPOULOS 1990, pp. 157, 159; FERRARI 1997, p. 234. Both recensions of the W (MORN and BPTThSA) agree on γενναῖον: see PPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a, p. 129; KARLA 2001, p. 226.

⁶⁶ See KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 440-441, with further bibliography.

⁶⁷ γενναῖος: see Men. *Theoph.* fr. 1.12 ARNOTT; Herakleides (Com.) fr. 1.5 (with KASSEL - AUSTIN *ad loc.*); Klytos, *FGrHist* 490 F 1 (= Ath. 14.655c); Arr. *Epict.* 2.2.13; cf. Ar. *Av.* 285 (with DUNBAR *ad loc.*); Arist. *HA* 558b 14-16, *GA* 749b 30-34. ἀγεννής: Pl. *Tht.* 164c; Men. *Theoph.* fr. 1.13; Arr. and Arist. *loc. cit.* Cf. also εὐγενεῖς, Suda α 1117, τ 69; Ael. fr. 72, 101a DOMINGO-FORASTÉ; μάχιμοι, Paus. 9.22.4. See CSAPO 1993, p. 21.

§ 128.13-15. Pap. divides the text into three lines of poetry. However, only the first line is a regular iambic trimeter (and this only with Pap.'s emendations and final supplement <φρυγῆϊν>). The other two lines, even with Pap.'s interventions, do not fit the iambic trimeter or any other Greek metrical form.

§ 133.2. It should be πλούσιον, not πλούσον.

A general remark concerns the use of large sections from the W version to supplement the lacunae or the purported omissions of the G. As in his previous edition (1990), Pap. fills in the larger lacunae of the G by quoting the text offered by the W version at the corresponding passages; these supplements from the W are printed in italics and placed inside square brackets, so as to be clearly distinguished from the authentic text of the G (see §§ 2, 24-25, 37, 57-59, 74-76, 113-114, 141). This practice, of course, is not proper for a critical edition: it rather pertains to a popularized or student handbook, which aims at a wider audience and therefore takes care to restore the missing parts of the text for the reader's sake, so as to help him follow the narrative more easily. By contrast, in a critical or philological edition it is methodologically unsound to mix textual pieces from different versions of the *Vita*. Notwithstanding these objections, the aforementioned practice, introduced in Pap.'s previous edition of the G (1990), was also adopted (to some extent) by Ferrari⁶⁸ and has thus now become something of a habit, with a history of two decades. It might therefore be condoned, as a laxity permissible in so peculiar a text — although stricter philologists may still deem this a dangerous legitimization.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ It must be noted, however, that in FERRARI 1997 this happens only in the translation (by G. BONELLI - G. SANDROLINI): it is only there that the missing parts of the G are filled in with Italian renderings of the corresponding pieces from the W version. The Greek critical text does not contain any such passage lifted from the W. This is much sounder than Pap.'s practice.

⁶⁹ The ideal solution, of course, would be to include in the same volume the G text and the two recensions of the W version (BPTHSA and MORN), editing each one of them separately, as a distinct redaction. In this way, alien supplements would be avoided in the G, and at the same time the reader would not miss the lost passages of the lacunae: he would be able to turn to the MORN or the BPTHSA, a few pages afterwards, and read the corresponding text. PERRY 1952 opted for this layout, although he did not distinguish between the MORN and BPTHSA recensions of the W. For the principle of collecting all the main different versions in a single volume cf. e.g. G. Schmeling's handy edition of the *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri* in the Teubner series, or R. Stoneman's ongoing edition of the *Alexander Romance* in Mondadori. Some publishing house should undertake to offer us such a collection for the *Vita Aesopi*, whether reproducing existing critical texts of its main recensions or commissioning them anew. The BPTHSA has been edited in an almost exemplary manner by KARLA 2001; but the MORN needs a better edition than

Another practice of Pap., however, seems inadmissible: to include in the edition of the G the chapters 50a, 77a and 77b, which were never part of the G manuscript in the first place. These chapters are only transmitted by certain codices of the W version (MBPSA). Perry, based on his textual researches, argued that they must be secondary interpolations, unknown to the original form of the *Vita* and also absent from the archetype of the version represented by the G manuscript. Holzberg's subsequent investigations into the literary structure of the *Vita* supported this conclusion: these three chapters seem indeed to be secondary accretions, which disturb the well-formed structural pattern of the entire narrative.⁷⁰ Therefore, these chapters have no place in any edition of the G version, whether a critical or a popularized one, since they never formed part of this particular textual redaction.

Regarding the apparatus criticus, Pap. often forgets to note that the text he prints is the product of emendation (usually by Perry, sometimes by Pap. himself), while the G transmits a different, misspelt or syntactically unacceptable reading. The following cases should have been marked as indicated: § 3.22 τῷ Perry: τὸ G. — § 6.9 καὶ supplevit Perry. — § 13.2 καλείτω Perry: καλείτο G. — § 16.14 ποιήση Perry: ποιήσει G. — § 19.19 στρώματα: στρόματα G, ω supra ο scriptum. — § 23.7 διὰ λόγων Perry: διαλόγων G. — § 32.12 αἰσχρᾶ ὕβρει Perry: ἐσχραι ὕβρηι G. — § 81.2-3 ἐκκλησίας - χειροτονῆσαι secl. Perry. — § 86.5 ὃς conieci: οὖν G. — § 99.10 πτερῶν Perry: πτερῶ G. — § 102.3 ἐν supplevi. — § 108.5 παρακάλυμμα Perry: παρακάλλυμμα G. — § 115.15 αὐτὸς supplevi, ἐκεῖνος suppl. Perry. — Cf. also § 25.5-6, where it should have been noted: ποταπὼς G ante corr.: ποταπὸς G post corr.

Finally, there are inconsistencies in the manner in which Pap. has compiled his apparatus. A characteristic example is offered by the cases of a misspelt reading in the G, which has been corrected by Perry, and this correction has been adopted in Pap.'s text. In many of those occasions Pap. arranges his apparatus in the following manner, which is indeed the fullest and most appropriate one (I select one illustrative example

PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1999a; and the G, though served well enough by FERRARI 1997 and now by Pap., has still to find its ideal editor. A volume gathering together all these redactions (and perhaps also the Planudea and the Latin Lolliniana) would do well commercially, given the great interest presented by the *Vita Aesopi* as a pivotal text in the history of the ancient and Byzantine novel.

⁷⁰ See PERRY 1933, pp. 222-223, 230-231; PERRY 1936, pp. 30, 35-39; PERRY 1952, pp. 17-22; HOLZBERG 1992, pp. 39-40, 57-63. Only MERKLE 1996, pp. 221-222, has raised some objections to Holzberg's structural arguments.

from § 11.2): παίζεις Perry: πέζεις G. Elsewhere, however, Pap. only provides in his apparatus the erroneous reading of the G, without adding that the corrected form printed in the main text is due to Perry: e.g. § 43.10 χριστούς G (instead of χρηστούς Perry: χριστούς G); § 44.15 σκορπήσασα G (instead of σκορπίσασα Perry: σκορπήσασα G); § 52.5 άλοπηπέρεως G (instead of άλοπεπέρεως Perry: άλοπηπέρεως G); § 52.14 λωπάδα G (instead of λοπάδα Perry: λωπάδα G); § 72.12 παριστήκει G (instead of παρειστήκει Perry: παριστήκει G, or παριστήκει G, corr. Perry). Finally, in a few instances Pap. adopts a third pattern: e.g. § 36.8 δεῖ] δή G; § 61.13 σε] σαι G; § 137.3 τοῦ] τὸ G. Again, there is no indication that the corrected form before the square bracket is due to Perry. The reader has the impression that Pap. compiled his apparatus over different periods, following different typographical conventions each time.

The translation of the G version is not as easy a task as one might have imagined on the first impression of its seemingly simple language and style. In fact, the G offers a throbbingly vivid text, whose plain but fluent narrative and lively theatrical dialogues are peppered with touches of linguistic inventiveness, almost on the scale of an Aristophanes or a Rabelais.⁷¹ Pap.'s Modern Greek rendering does not have literary aspirations, but generally attempts to be faithful and precise. Unfortunately, there are again several cases where the phrasing is inept or the text is not translated with exactitude:

§ 1.3-4. προκέφαλος: not “with a pointed head” (ὀξυκέφαλος), but “with a protrusion on his head”. — § 2.17. άμάχητοι γινώμεθα: not “let us never be caught” (νᾱ μὴν πιανόμαστε ποτέ), but “let us be immune to offensive”, “let nobody be able to take it out on us”. — § 3.2. εὐπέπτως ἔχων πρὸς τὰ σύκα: not “considering figs as digestive” (καθὼς θεωροῦσε χωνευτικὰ τὰ σύκα), but “having an appetite for figs” (see *LSJ Rev. Suppl.* s.v. εὔπεπτος). — § 3.4. διαπαίζεται: not “he is being played” (τὸν παίζου), but “he is being mocked”. — *Ibid.* διαπονηθείς: not “he did not endure the leg-pull” (δὲν ἄντεξε τὸ δούλημα), but “he was annoyed” or “vexed” (cf. *LSJ Rev. Suppl.* s.v. διαπονέω). — § 3.14. σπαράξας ἑαυτόν: not “making various convulsions” (κάνοντας διάφορες συσπάσεις), but “provoking sickness to himself”,

⁷¹ Professor Gregory Nagy once confessed that he was immediately fascinated by the G version's lively language from the first time he read it, especially when he came across the extraordinary phrase of § 88: πιθήκων περιμιπιλάριος!

or more precisely “exciting (or tickling) his throat (or gullet)”. — § 3.22. ἄμα τῷ χαλάσαι τὸν δάκτυλον: not “as soon as they loosened their fingers” (μόλις ... χαλάρωσαν τὰ δάχτυλα), but “as soon as they lowered (or let down) their finger” (sc. towards their gullet; see *LSJ* s.v. χαλάω I.2: “let down, let fall”). — § 4.8-9. τὸ τῆς θεοῦ σχῆμα ... περιεΐμενον: not “wearing the shape of the goddess” (νὰ φοράει τὸ σχῆμα τῆς θεᾶς), but “wearing the vestments of the goddess” (i.e. the vestments proper to Isis’ cult) or “bearing the distinctive traits (the sacred symbols) of the goddess”. — § 5.4. κακοπαθοῦντα: not “unfortunate” (κακότυχο), but “wretched”, “afflicted by hardship”. — § 6.9. <ἐκ> τῶν πέριξ δένδρων: not “from the rustle of the trees” (ἀπὸ τὸ θρόισμα τῶν δέντρων), but “from (or through) the trees around”. — § 7.8-9. αὐτὴ δὴ ἡ Ἴσις ἐχαρίσατο <τὴν φωνήν>: not “this is what Isis gave him as a gift” (αὐτὸ τοῦ χάρισε ἡ Ἴσις), but “Isis herself gave him <the voice> as a gift”. — § 8.2. Pap. standardly retains in his translation the ancient exclamation οὐᾶ, here and in all other passages. In Modern Greek, however, this interjection is unknown and means nothing to present-day readers. In § 8 οὐᾶ is better rendered as “aah” or “haaugh”, imitating the yawn of the man waking up from sleep or the sound he emits as he stretches himself. Elsewhere, οὐᾶ functions as a cry or exclamation (“hey”, “ahoy”, e.g. § 21.11), indicates admiration (“ho”, “bravo”, “wow”, e.g. §§ 23.3, 25.14, 31.2, 51.10) or affliction (“woe”, “alas”, e.g. § 54.18). — § 9.3. κατέξανεν: not “tore to pieces” (ἔκανε κομμάτια), but “gave a sound thrashing”, “beat black and blue”, “filled with wounds” (cf. *Ar. Ach.* 320). — § 14.2. ἀπόμαγμα: not “garbage” (σκοουπίδι), but “dirty scrap” (cf. *LSJ* s.v. ἀπόμαγμα: “anything used for wiping or cleaning”). — § 16.9-10. Ὁμοφωνία πάντων ἐγένετο: not “all of them with one voice returned his salute” (ὅλοι μὲ μιὰ φωνὴ τοῦ ἀνταπέδωσαν τὸν χαιρετισμό), but “all of them together raised a cry”, “all of them screamed together”. The slaves scream out of surprise or shock at Aesop’s grotesque ugliness. The hero understands this, and therefore apologetically acknowledges his deformity (§ 16.10-11: ἄνδρες, σύνδουλος ὑμῶν εἰμι. ἀλλ’ ὅμως σαπρὸς εἰμι, “people, I am also a slave in your company, only I am ugly”). — § 20.12. ἵνα ἔχη παρὰ νεωτερικοῖς εὐφροσύνην τέρπεσθαι: not “so as to have him in the voluptuous and degenerate manifestations of young individuals and be merry” (νὰ τὸν ἔχει στὶς φιλήδονες καὶ ἔκφυλες ἐκδηλώσεις νεαρῶν ἀτόμων καὶ νὰ κάνει κέφι), but more precisely “so as to use him for pleasure and enjoyment in the entertainments of young people”. — § 21.5. βαθὺν ὑπόδημα: not “deep shoes” (βαθειὰ παπούτσια), but “high boots”. The adjective βαθὺν here clearly refers to the height of the boot above the ankle: reaching up to the knee, the

boots hide the slave's ugly gaunt shanks. — § 22.5. ὑπηρετεῖσαι: not “you move along” (πορεύεσαι), but “you are being served”. — § 24.18 (in the supplementary text from the W). πρὸς πάντα γελᾷ: not “he laughs at everyone” (γελᾷ μὲ τὸν καθένα), but “he laughs at everything”. — § 28.11. στομαχώδῃ: not “having them (sc. my slaves) in the stomach” (τοὺς ἔχω στὸ στομάχι), but “irascible”, “bad-tempered”. — § 32.9. ἀργυρωνήτω: not “a bought girl” (ἀγορασμένη κοπέλλα), but rather “a prostitute” (whose services are bought with money by the lover). — § 32.29. γύναιον καταπλήξει ἐπράϋνα: not “I managed to get a hold on a little woman and calm her down” (κατάφερα νὰ πάρω τὸν ἀέρα σ' ἕνα γυναικάκι καὶ νὰ τὸ καλμάρω), but “I managed to calm down a little woman through intimidation”. — § 35.2-3. ποῦ μοι ὑπάγει: not “What are you getting at?” (Ποῦ τὸ πᾶς;), but “What use have I for this?”, “What do I care about this?”. § 40.3. εὔκρατον: not “wine” (κρασί), but “lukewarm water”. § 46.7-8. ἐγὼ αὐτῇ ἀμύνομαι: not “I have her at heart” or “I hold her dear” (ἐγὼ τὴν ἔχω στὴν καρδιά μου), but “I protect her”, “I look after her”, or “I reciprocate her feelings”, “I repay her for this”. — § 47.8. θαλάσσιον πρόβατον: not “cod” (μπακαλιάρo); this comic expression (a kind of kenning) should rather be kept as it is, “a marine sheep”, “a sheep of the sea”.⁷² — § 55.11-12. While in his text Pap. retains G's reading πολλῶν (κακεντρεχέστερος εἶναι πολλῶν), yet he translates as though he had adopted Perry's emendation πολλῶ: “you are far more malicious” (εἶσαι πολὺ πιὸ κακεντρεχής), instead of “you are more malicious than many others”. — § 57.7. κομψότατε: not “most learned man” (λογιότατε), but “kind sir”. — § 58.4. λοπάς: not “bowl” (γαβάθα), but “dish, plate”. — § 62.7. χάρυβδις δελφῖνος: not “a dolphin's suction” (ρουφήχτρα δελφινιοῦ), but better “a greedy (rapacious) dolphin” (cf. Ar. Eq. 248: Χάρυβδιν ἄρπαγῆς, “a Charybdis of rapaciousness”, for an insatiable grabber). — § 69.1. ἐπιφερόμενον: not “behaving arrogantly” (νὰ συμπεριφέρεται ἀλαζονικά), but “losing his head”, “being beside himself”. — § 69.4. ἀπόρρητα: not “insoluble mysteries” (ἄλυτα μυστήρια), but “insoluble problems”, “impossibilities”. — § 75.6. Pap. avoids translating the ancient word αἰδοῦς, “genital member”, “penis”. § 75.12. στολήν ... ἱματίων: not “many clothes” (πολλὰ ρούχα), but “a suit (or a set) of clothes”. — § 76.4ff. κοκκύμηλον and κοκκυμηλέαν: not “apricot” and “apricot-tree” (βερύκοκκο, βερυκοκκιά), but “plum” and “plum-tree”.⁷³ — § 76.14.

⁷² On the meaning of this humorous phrase see in detail KONSTANTAKOS 2003.

⁷³ On the meaning of these words see KONSTANTAKOS 2009c.

ἀκηδιώδης: not “low-spirited” (κακόκεφος), but “exhausted”, “tired” (*languidus*, PERRY 1952, p. 59), or “free of cares”, “with nothing else to do”. — § 78.4. ἀσύμφωνα: not “having no sense” (ποῦ δὲν εἶχαν κανένα νόημα), but “incoherent”, “not fitting with each other”. — § 80.16. ἐξουθενηθεῖς: not “now that I have played a trick on you” (τώρα ποῦ σοῦ τὴν ἔφερα), but “now that I have eliminated you” or “now that I have made mincemeat of you”. — § 81.16. τὸν βίον διακυβεύουσιν: not “carry off with frauds our property” (ἀρπάζουν μὲ ἀπάτες τὸ βιός μας), but “waste their life on dicing”, “spend their entire life playing dice”. — § 81.17. ἐστὶν ἔμπρακτος παιδείας: not “he has such education as to know how to produce results” (ἔχει παιδεία τέτοια ποῦ νὰ ξέρει νὰ φέρνει ἀποτελέσματα), but “he has real education”, “he is truly educated”. — § 88.4-5. λαγυνίσκος εἰκαζόμενος: not “a mould of a pitcher” (καλούπι λαγηνιοῦ), but “a painted image of a pitcher”. — § 99.2. <τ> προσθεῖναι: not “add a favour to me” (νὰ προσθέσεις κάποια χάρη γιὰ μένα), but simply “add something”. — § 115.5. Pap. omits to translate καὶ ἀμίαντος, “and unstained” or “unblemished”. — § 115.15. φαίνειν: not “to appear” (νὰ φαίνονται), but “to shine”, “to give light”. — § 116.10. In Nektanebo’s astonished question (πόθεν ἐμοὶ πτηνοὺς ἀνθρώπους;) a verb must be inferred suitable to govern the accusative ἀνθρώπους: e.g. ἤγαγες, ἤνεγκας, ἐκόμισας (with the dative ἐμοὶ as indirect complement) or εὔρες (with ἐμοὶ as dative of disadvantage); “Wherefrom did you bring me flying (winged) men?”, or “Woe is me, where did you find flying men?”.⁷⁴ Aesop’s answer perfectly tallies with this question: Lykourgos “has flying men” (ἀλλὰ Λυκοῦργος ἔχει πτηνοὺς ἀνθρώπους), and hence Aesop had no difficulty to find them and bring them from Babylon. Pap., however, translates: “Where can I find winged men?” (Ποῦ νὰ βρῶ φτερωτοὺς ἀνθρώπους;). This rendering is not in accordance with the syntax of the G text.⁷⁵ It rather suits the variant formulation found in the recensions of the W: πόθεν ἐμοὶ πτηνοὶ ἄνθρωποι; Here the nominative ἄνθρωποι implies a different verb, e.g. ἔσονται or γένωνται: “Where shall (can) I find flying men?”. I suspect that the G has retained the authentic

⁷⁴ Cf. similar translations in DALY 1961, p. 83 (“Where did you trump up these winged men?”); STAMOULAKIS - MAKRYGIANNI 1999, p. 89 (“Από πού μου ’φερες ανθρώπους που πετούν;”); PAPATHOMOPOULOS 1990, p. 156 (“Από ποῦ, πανάθεμά με, βρῆκες φτερωτοὺς ἀνθρώπους;”).

⁷⁵ The same applies to the translations of BONELLI - SANDROLINI in FERRARI 1997, p. 233, and GROTTANELLI - DETTORI 2005, p. 173 (“E dove li trovo uomini alati?”); JOUANNO 2006, p. 133 (“Où trouverai-je des hommes ailés?”).

form of the phrase, since its syntax is less transparent; the W's reading looks rather like a trivialization of G's more difficult passage. Probably the redactor of the W did not understand the original syntax of the accusative, and hence transformed it into something that appeared more natural to him. — § 117.6 and 11. *θέα ἱερά θεοῦ Βουβάστεως*: Pap. keeps in his translation the word *θέα* ("appearance", "sight" in Modern Greek). It is better, however, to translate it as "symbol", "representation" or "image", given that the Egyptian goddess Bastet (Boubastis in Greek) was regularly pictured in the form of a cat or with a cat's head.⁷⁶ — § 120.7-8. *διὰ τὸ ἀσφαλῶς αὐτὸν βεβηκέναι*: not "because it steadily marches on" (*γιατὶ πορεύεται σταθερά*), but "because it stands steadfast on its base". — § 122.6-7. *τὸ ψευδῆ χειρόγραφον*: Pap. forgot to translate *ψευδῆ* ("false"). — § 137.1. *δυσφορῶν*: not "being in agony (distress)" (*ποῦ βρισκόταν σὲ ἀγωνία*), but "because he was indignant". — Cf. also p. 22. *λορδός*: not "having a hump on the chest" (*μὲ καμπούρα στὸ στέρνο*), but "bent backward", "convex in front".

In conclusion, Pap.'s new edition of the G is better than the previous one of 1990, but still marred by flaws: many oversights in the critical text, plenty of errors and omissions in the introduction, and a translation that could have been both more precise and more entertaining to read. Significantly, many of the book's shortcomings might have been avoided, if Pap. had simply taken the trouble to carefully read and trim his text before handing it over to the printer. He should have demonstrated greater diligence and less haste.

A few words must be added here, by way of epilogue. Manolis Papatomopoulos died in April 2011, months before my Greek review appeared in print. He never had a chance to read my remarks or respond to them. There is one thing that should be said in his favour, even in his defence. In spite of all the flaws and errors of his publications, Papatomopoulos was an indefatigable worker who produced a very large body of scholarly writings. Especially with regard to the *Vita Aesopi*, he published a series of editions, making available most of its redactions. His earlier critical work on the G version, even though marred by carelessness and unwarranted speculations, did contribute to the improvement of the frustrating text of the G codex; more than a handful of his suggestions have been adopted or ameliorated by subsequent researchers and are now part of the scholarly consensus. His edition of the MORN recension is currently the only available text for this particular branch of

⁷⁶ See KONSTANTAKOS 2013, pp. 318-322, with many references and bibliography.

the tradition, given that Perry did not distinguish between the separate recensions of the W version but conflated their texts into a methodologically questionable concoction. With these volumes, Papathomopoulos has rendered service to Aesopic scholars worldwide, offering a basis for further work, even though one that must be used with considerable caution. All things considered, Papathomopoulos has made an unignorable contribution to Aesopic studies. It is now for us, the scholarly community, to assess whether this matters more or less than his many dozens of confusions, errors and misprints.

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