

THE FABLES OF AESOP IN URB. GR. 135

CHAUNCEY E. FINCH

Saint Louis University

An important manuscript of the Fables of Aesop not yet utilized by any of the editors of critical editions is Codex Vat. Urb. Gr. 135, *saec.* XV (henceforth designated Mp). A brief description of this manuscript can be found in the Vatican catalogue of the Urbinates Graeci codices,¹ but for some strange reason it is not listed under Aesop in the alphabetical index appended to this catalogue. This doubtless accounts for the fact that the codex has thus far escaped the attention of editors.²

The following list identifies the 186 fables found in Mp with the numbers assigned to them by Chambry.³ When Chambry presents more than one version of a given fable, letters are used to indicate which of Chambry's versions is present in Mp.

1—42a, 2—40a, 3—12a, 4—26a, 5—31a, 6—35a, 7—22a, 8—43a, 9—287, 10—45a, 11—3a, 12—5a, 13—4a, 14—8a, 15—14a, 16—24, 17—37a, 18—41a, 19—34a, 20—21a, 21—30a, 22—56a, 23—53, 24—52a, 25—51a, 26—46a, 27—60a, 28—54, 29—68a, 30—66a, 31—70a, 32—293a, 33—75a, 34—74a, 35—76a, 36—84a, 37—81a, 38—80a, 39—89a, 40—90a, 41—77a, 42—78a, 43—82a, 44—96, 45—178a, 46—255a, 47—248a, 48—115a, 49—67a, 50—62, 51—101f, 52—236a, 53—306a, 54—103a, 55—106a, 56—105a, 57—104a, 58—309, 59—13a, 60—241a, 61—38a, 62—270a, 63—307, 64—150a, 65—94a, 66—158, 67—276a, 68—300a, 69—116a, 70—108a, 71—107a, 72—125a, 73—163a, 74—110, 75—112, 76—122, 77—126a, 78—131, 79—135a, 80—138a, 81—151a, 82—147a, 83—154a, 84—155, 85—156a, 86—157a, 87—159a, 88—162, 89—166a, 90—168, 91—171a, 92—186a, 93—192a, 94—199a, 95—202a, 96—197a, 97—212a,

¹ Cosimus Stornajolo, *Codices Urbinates Graeci Bibliothecae Vaticanae* (Rome 1895) 255–56.

² Information about this manuscript and the other Vatican manuscripts cited in this paper is based on microfilm copies of these documents placed at my disposal by The Knights of Columbus Vatican Film Library at Saint Louis University.

³ Aemilius Chambry, *Aesopi Fabulae*, two volumes (Paris 1925–26).

98—198, 99—214a, 100—210a, 101—207a, 102—218, 103—222a, 104—221, 105—230, 106—195a, 107—223, 108—214b, 109—234a, 110—235a, 111—237, 112—239a, 113—240a, 114—244a, 115—247a, 116—249a, 117—250a, 118—252a, 119—254a, 120—262a, 121—258, 122—82b, 123—259a, 124—266a, 125—279a, 126—268, 127—294a, 128—299, 129—303a, 130—310a, 131—327a, 132—331a, 133—101e, 134—332a, 135—308a, 136—343a, 137—345a, 138—353a, 139—354a, 140—349, 141—352a, 142—357a, 143—336d, 144—52d, 145—182, 146—7b, 147—23c, 148—50c, 149—55c, 150—61c, 151—179c, 152—6a, 153—142a, 154—63a, 155—83b, 156—338a, 157—11, 158—32f, 159—239e, 160—87b, 161—86b, 162—100a, 163—92a, 164—102a, 165—262b, 166—326a, 167—346a, 168—129a, 169—133c, 170—319b, 171—116c, 172—184b, 173—185c, 174—169b, 175—188a, 176—170c, 177—181b, 178—59c, 179—201e, 180—224c, 181—225c, 182—229a, 183—318a, 184—251c, 185—348b, 186—282c.

At the end of the section of his work in which he discusses in detail the manuscripts of his first or P class Chambry lists a small group of additional manuscripts which apparently belong to this class, but have not been utilized in the preparation of his text. Among this group is one designated simply as “Urbinas, XVI saeculi, hodie in bibliotheca Vaticana.”⁴ It is further noted that this manuscript was copied from Pf (= Pal. Gr. 156, *saec.* XV). At first sight it might appear that Chambry is here referring to Urb. Gr. 135. But, if such is the case, it must be emphasized that he is completely unfamiliar with the contents of Mp, since this manuscript contains many fables not found in Pf. Examples (listed according to Chambry’s numbers) are, to cite only a few, 5a, 14a, 24, 26a, 34a, 37a, 40a, and 45a. In view of the absence of these fables of Mp from Pf, it is obvious that Pf could not have been the source from which Mp was derived.

In discussing his class of manuscripts designated *codices mixti*, Chambry lists as the outstanding member of this group Palatinus Graecus 195 (= Ma)—a fifteenth-century document, containing 186 fables.⁵ At a later point in his discussion of this same class he points out that codex Barb. Gr. 47, *saec.* XV (= Mo) is made up of 153 fables, the first 146 of which follow the same order and have approximately the same texts as the first 146 fables of Ma. At this point, however,

⁴ Chambry (above, note 3) 8.

⁵ Chambry (above, note 3) 19–20.

Chambry calls attention to the fact that in fable 77 (Ch. 126a) Ma has a lacuna which is not shared by Mo, and hence Mo cannot be regarded as a copy of Ma. Instead, the two must be regarded as gemelli for the first 146 fables.⁶ Since the next five fables in Mo (147-51) are also found in Ma, but in a different order (164, 158, 162, 178, 159), and since only the last two (152-53 = Ch. 163e, 86e) are absent from Ma, Chambry disregards Mo except for its last two fables in the preparation of his edition.⁷

Hausrath has a much higher opinion of Mo than does Chambry. After pointing out that Ma (his B) is in places very difficult to read, he expresses satisfaction over the fact that we have in Mo (his Ba) a much clearer and better copy of the same text for the first 146 fables.⁸

It can now be reported that a second gemellus of Ma is available to scholars in Mp—a gemellus not merely for the first 146 fables plus five scattered fables, but for the entire collection of 186 fables. A comparison of the list of items in Mp provided above with the apparatus criticus of Chambry's edition will show that the fables in Mp correspond perfectly both in order and in identity with the fables in Ma. Even in the case of the last item (186, Ch. 282c), which is incomplete in Ma, Mp breaks off in the middle at the same spot at which Ma ends. Hence, the two documents are obviously very closely related. Neither, however, can have been copied from the other, since each has significant errors, as will be shown below, where the other is correct. Thus they must be regarded as gemelli derived from a common source. In summary, then, it may be said that we have three independent gemelli of the first 146 fables of Ma plus five scattered fables (Ma, Mo, Mp) and two independent gemelli of the remaining 35 fables of Ma (Ma, Mp).

Mo and Mp are about equal in value for the 151 fables shared by the two, with Mp perhaps being slightly better. But both Mo and Mp are better than Ma for the texts of the 151 items common to all three, and Mp is much better than Ma for the remaining 35 fables. I have compared the texts of Ma and Mp very carefully, and have found that in the cases in which there is disagreement between the two, it is

⁶ Chambry (above, note 3) 23-24. The same information is provided by Ben Edwin Perry, *Aesopica* (Urbana 1952) 309.

⁷ Chambry (above, note 3) 24.

⁸ Augustus Hausrath, *Corpus Fabularum Aesopicarum*, Vol. 1, fasc. 1 (Leipzig 1957) viii.

usually (though not always) Mp which is correct with Ma being in error.

As pointed out above, Chambry notes that in fable 77 (Ch. 126a) Ma has a lacuna which is not found in Mo. He is not entirely correct in this statement, since a little less than the entire text in question is present in Mo. The full wording of the passage omitted by Ma is (lines 2-3) *διαπορῶν τὴν αἰτίαν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ἐπυνθάνετο αὐτῆς*. Mo omits *τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ*, but retains the remaining words. Mp has all of the text except the two words omitted by Mo. The superiority of MoMp over Ma for the 151 fables common to the three is further emphasized by the following list of instances in which Mo (unnoticed by Chambry) and Mp retain the full text where omissions occur in Ma:

49 (Ch. 67a). 4 *καὶ ἀμείνονος* Mp, *καὶ ἄμεινον* Mo, om. Ma; 93 (Ch. 192a). 4 *τῆς ποδοσοφίας αὐτοὺς εἰς τὰ βαθῆ* MoMp, om. Ma; 94 (Ch. 199a). 3-4 *ἐπενόησεν ἐπειδὴ συνεχῶς αὐτῷ ὁ λέων* MoMp, om. Ma; 100 (Ch. 210a). 9-10 *διανέμειν ἐδίδαξεν ἢ ἀλώπηξ εἶπεν ἢ τοῦ ὄνου* *διανέμειν ἐδίδαξεν ἔφη αἱ τοῦ ὄνου* MoMp, om. Ma; 105 (Ch. 230). 3 *παρετηρεῖτο ἐπεὶ δὲ (ἐπειδὴ Mp) συνεχῶς ἐκείνος* MoMp, om. Ma.

In the 35 fables of MaMp not included in Mo there are two instances in which Mp supplies the text for rather long lacunae in Ma:

153 (Ch. 142a). 3-4 *ὁ δὲ ὄνος πεσὼν ἐκ τοῦ κόπου ἐτελεύτησεν* Mp, om. Ma; 156 Ch. 338a). 6 *ἀλώπεκος δὲ τούτῳ θαρρεῖν καὶ μὴ φεύγειν* Mp, om. Ma.

Particularly significant as an indication of the relative worth of Mp is the fact that in fable 118 (Ch. 252a).7 it retains the words *τοῖς μυσὶ* which are omitted by both Ma and Mo.

Another feature which emphasizes the superiority of Mo over Ma, and of Mp over both of these, is the treatment of the epimythia in the three documents. There is some confusion in all three, but this is much the greatest in Ma. The following detailed analysis of the epimythia in Ma will show just how corrupt this manuscript is in this respect: fables 1-39, 68-86, 91-138, 140, 142-182, 184 have their own epimythia in their proper places; 88 has only half of its epimythion, but this is in its proper position; fables 42-49, 52-55, 57-59, 61-64, 67, 89, 90 have in each case the epimythion of the preceding fable; fables 41, 50, 56,

60, 65, 66 have in each case a portion of the epimythion of the preceding fable; fables 51, 87, 139, 141, 183, 185, 186 are without epimythia; 40 is followed by a few words from its own epimythion and these in turn are followed by a few words from the epimythion of the preceding fable (39). The absence of the epimythion from 51 in Ma can be accounted for by the fact that the epimythion of 50, which might be expected to appear here, was omitted in the archetype of this group of manuscripts as is shown by its absence from MoMp. In the case of 139, Ma shares its omission of the epimythion with MoMp, and in the case of 185, with Mp. The epimythion of 186 is omitted by reason of this fable's being mutilated in Ma as in Mp.

The arrangement of the epimythia in Mo, though considerably less confused than that in Ma, shows some irregularities of its own. The epimythion of 79 in this manuscript was obviously originally omitted from its correct position by reason of the fact that the scribe inserted in the space following 79 the epimythion of 81. The epimythion of 79, however, was later added in the margin opposite the body of the fable. After fable 80 the scribe inserted the first line of the epimythion of 81, then crossed this out, and finally added the correct epimythion. The epimythia of 50, 95, and 139 are omitted by Mo, but the omission of these from 50 and 139 is characteristic of other members of the group.

In contrast with Ma, and in less degree with Mo, Mp shows only minor irregularities in the arrangement of its epimythia. Fable 50, like its counterparts in MaMo, has no epimythion. Fable 86 omits its own epimythion, substituting that proper to 87, with the result that this epimythion appears twice in Mp, once in its proper position after 87 and once after 86. In 185 the epimythion is omitted by Mp, as by Ma and several other manuscripts of its family. Fable 186, being mutilated, is without epimythion in Mp as in Ma. In summary, then, the only significant irregularity in the arrangement of the epimythia in Mp not characteristic of its family is the omission of the epimythion of fable 86.

There is abundant evidence available for restoring the texts of two of the epimythia omitted by Ma—87 and 141—since these are present in both Mo and Mp. In fact, two copies (both identical) of the epimythion of 87 are preserved in Mp. The texts of the epimythia so restored are:

87 ὁ λόγος δηλοῖ ὅτι μάλιστα τοῖς πονηροῖς (πονηροῖς om. Mo)
ἐναντιοῦται ἃ διὰ τῶν χρηστῶν ἐστὶν εὐεργετήματα Mp (bis) Mo.

141 ὁ μῦθος δηλοῖ ὅτι πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν ταῖς φοινίκαις (sic)
ἐαυτοὺς καταβλάπτονται Mp Mo.

Less abundant evidence is available for restoring the lost epimythion of Ma 183, since this fable is not among those found in Mo. But sound evidence does exist, since the text is found in Mp in the following form: ὅτι μεγίστην βλάβην καὶ θάνατον οἶδε προσφέρειν ἢ τῶν κακῶν συνουσία. It will be noted that according to the apparatus criticus of Chambry's edition this is the text found in almost all of the M manuscripts (codices mixti).

Thus it becomes clear that Mp, by restoring many of the readings which have been lost by Ma, particularly when those readings are not supplied by Mo, has an important role to play in the refinement of the texts of the fables contained in the MaMoMp group.