

An Emendation in Philochorus *FGrHist* 328 F 194

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PHILOCHORUS offers a detail about the early practice of sacrifice (*FGrHist* 328 F 194 = schol. Soph. *OC* 100, p.12.12–20 De Marco, p.404.6–16 Papageorgiou):

καὶ οὐ μόνον θυσίας νηφαλίους ἀλλὰ καὶ ξύλα τινὰ ἐφ' ὧν ἔκαιον <νηφάλια ἐκάλουν>· Κράτης μὲν οὖν ὁ Ἀθηναῖος (362 F 4) τὰ μὴ ἀμπέλινα τῶν ξύλων πάντα νηφάλια φησιν προσ-αγορεύεσθαι, ὁ δὲ Φιλόχορος ἀκριβέστερόν φησι τὰ μῆτε ἀμπέλινα μῆτε σύκινα ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν θύμων νηφάλια [φησι] καλεῖσθαι· καὶ πρώτη φησὶν ὕλη πρὸς τὰς ἐμπύρους θυσίας ταύτη κεκρήσθαι, παρ' ὃ καὶ τοῦνομα λαβεῖν τὸν θύμον ὡς παρὰ τὴν θυμίασιν καὶ τὴν θυὴν πεποιημένης τῆς φωνῆς ...

This is the text as printed by Jacoby.¹ The underlined sentence is a faithful reproduction of what appears in L (= *Laur.* 32.9),² and Jacoby is not the only scholar who follows the paradosis in this section of the text. Additionally, there are, on the one hand, Karl Müller, Virgilio Costa, and Nicholas Jones,³ and, on the other, all the editors of the *scholia vetera* to Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*. However, the sentence in question contains a difficulty,

¹ The supplement νηφάλια ἐκάλουν belongs to Jacoby; the first to delete φησί was Triclinius (*Paris.gr.* 2711, fol. 151^v), not Brunck.

² I have checked the Triclinian MS. *Paris.gr.* 2711 and found it to repeat L's readings in this sentence. For the Byzantine scholar's correction of some of L's mistakes see V. De Marco, "Gli scolii all'Edipo a Colono di Sofocle e la loro tradizione manoscritta," *Rend.Nap* N.S. 26 (1951) 26, and *Scholia in Sophoclis Oedipum Coloneum* (Rome 1952) ix.

³ K. Müller, *FHG* I (1841) 389, F 31; V. Costa, *Filocoloro di Atene* I (Tivoli 2007) 116, F 12a; N. Jones, in *Brill's New Jacoby* 328 F 194.

which concerns the subject to which *κεχρησθαι* refers.

The existing translations fail to recognise the real subject of *κεχρησθαι*: “Atque primo dicit hoc ligno ad cremanda sacra *usos esse*” (Müller); “And he says that *they* used this wood first for burnt sacrifices” (Harding);⁴ “And he says that (*they*) used this wood first for sacrifices over fire” (Jones). There is nothing in the Greek that corresponds to the translators’ “they” or “usos.”⁵ Costa’s translation (117) is also inaccurate vis-à-vis the transmitted text:⁶ “(Filocoro) riferisce che questo legname fu il primo ad essere usato per i sacrifici sul fuoco.”⁷

⁴ P. Harding, *The Story of Athens: The Fragments of the Local Chronicles of Attika* (London/New York 2008) 44, F 48.

⁵ Müller’s translation omits the subject accusative of the infinitive, which is strange in Latin syntax, and therefore leaves the reference obscure. However his *usos* suggests that he too felt inclined to make “they” or a similar notion the subject of *κεχρησθαι*.

⁶ On Costa’s translation see n. 11 below.

⁷ It has been suggested to me that the subject of *κεχρησθαι* is indefinite (“And he says that *people* used this wood first for burnt sacrifices”) and that its absence from the sentence is under the rule defined in e.g. H. W. Smyth, *A Greek Grammar for Colleges* (New York 1920) §937a, that “an indefinite subject of the infinitive is usually omitted.” With all due respect, this suggestion is based on a misconception. Smyth 937a and §1980 (to which the reader is referred in §937a) are not relevant to our case in two respects. §1980 provides three examples: (i) *φιλόανθρωπον εἶναι δεῖ* “one (τινά) must be humane” Isoc. 2.15; (ii) *ῥῶον παραινεῖν ἢ παθόντα καρτερεῖν* “it is easier for a man to give advice than to endure suffering” Men. *Sent.* 471; (iii) *δρῶντας γὰρ ἢ μὴ δρῶντας ἥδιον θανεῖν* “for it is preferable to die in action rather than doing nothing” Eur. *Hel.* 814. In these passages the governing verbs are either impersonal verbs or impersonal expressions, and, as such, they are not connected with any kind of definite subject. This suggests that the omitted subject of the infinitive can acquire the idea of indefiniteness only if that idea exists already in relation to the governing verb. In other words, the idea of indefiniteness is transferred from the ‘subject’ of the governing verb to the omitted subject of the infinitive. By contrast, in *Φιλόχορος ... πρώτη φησὶν ὕλη ... ταύτη κεχρησθαι* the subject of the governing verb is definite (*Φιλόχορος*). So in our case there is absolutely no source from which the omitted subject of the infinitive could acquire the notion of indefiniteness. The second respect in which the rule is irrelevant can be described as follows:

The (omitted) subject of *κεχρήσθαι* can be none other than the subject of the leading verb *φησίν*, that is, Philochorus, and the correct translation can be nothing but “And he says that *he* used this material (scil. thyme wood = τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν θύμων ξύλα) first for burnt sacrifices.” However, to accept Philochorus as the subject of *κεχρήσθαι* is problematic. To be sure, the original context from which the Philochorean material was extracted is lost; the passage in its present shape was probably written by Didymus, who was gathering the views of earlier scholars on what species of wood should be considered “sober.”⁸ Still an inference about the content of the original Philochorean material is possible: although Philochorus had a profession related to the conduct of sacrifices,⁹ it is inconceivable that he should have mentioned his own sacrificial practice and then proceeded in the next sentence, *παρ’ ὃ καὶ τοῦνομα λαβεῖν τὸν θύμον* (“on account of which thyme also took its name”), to identify it as the basis for the wood to acquire the name *θύμος*! After all, we know that the word *θύμον/θύμος* existed before Philochorus’ time (ca. 340–263/2 B.C.): cf. e.g. Pherecrates F 177 K.-A. *ἀρκεῖ μία σκόνυζα καὶ θύμω δύο*.

Now in our Didymean passage the central idea is, quite expectedly, “wood”; this is well brought out by the fact that *all* the subjects of the other three infinitives of our passage, that is, *προσαγορεύεσθαι*, *καλεῖσθαι*, and *λαβεῖν*, are various sorts of wood. This offers a clue as to how we can solve the problem. I

in contrast to our case, which has an infinitive in Indirect Discourse, Smyth’s examples involve infinitives *not* in Indirect Discourse. The difference of the two types of infinitives in relation to the indefiniteness/definiteness of the omitted subject is well explained by W. W. Goodwin, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses of the Greek Verb* (London 1889) §744, and need not be repeated here.

⁸ Cf. Jacoby’s notes on Philochorus F 12 (p.279).

⁹ According to *FGrHist* 328 T 1 = *Suda* φ 441 s.v. *Φιλόχορος*, Philochorus was an inspector of sacrificial victims (*ἱεροσκόπος*), and he wrote a book *On Sacrifices* (*Περὶ θυσίων α’*). For the Attidographers’ connection to the religious life of Athens see J. Dillery, “Greek Sacred History,” *AJP* 126 (2005) 508–509.

believe that the transmitted text of the Didymeian passage requires emendation. Reasons of symmetry as well as meaning suggest that, like the other three infinitives, *κεχρήσθαι* too should be provided with a subject related to a species of wood. I correct the transmitted text to *καὶ πρώτην φησὶν ὕλην πρὸς τὰς ἐμπύρους θυσίας ταύτην κεχρήσθαι*,¹⁰ “And he says that *this material was used first* for burnt sacrifices.”¹¹

In this new constitution of the text *κεχρήσθαι* is now to be taken in its passive meaning, and the three datives connected with it, *πρώτη ... ὕλη ... ταύτη*, which served as the object of *κεχρήσθαι* and the qualifications thereof, have been changed to accusatives to function as the subject of *κεχρήσθαι* and the qualifications thereof. Admittedly, the passive meaning of *κεχρήσθαι* is uncommon; however, there are parallels, which, importantly, come from the field of ancient scholarship, precisely like our passage: (i) Phrynichus *Ecl.* 403 (ed. Fischer) Γελάσιμον· Στράτιν μὲν φασὶ τὸν κωμωδοποιὸν (F 83 K.-A.) εἰρηκέναι τοῦνομα· ἀλλ’ ἡμεῖς οὐ τοῖς ἀπαξ εἰρημένοις προσέχομεν τὸν νοῦν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς πολλάκις κεχρημένοις, κέχρηται δὲ τὸ γελοῖον. (ii) schol. Hom. *Il.* 24.23 τὸν δ’ ἐλεαίρεσκον: ἀπὸ τούτου ὀκτῶ (sc. 23–30) ἀθετοῦσι καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐπτὰ (sc. 24–30) οὐκ ἀλόγως. ὁ δὲ πρῶτος ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ δεόντως κεχρήσθαι ὥστε τὴν συναφὴν εἶναι· “τὸν δ’ ἐλεαίρεσκον μάκαρες θεοὶ εἰσορόωντες” / “ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ ῥ’ ἐκ

¹⁰ The *Suda* (v 356 s.v. νηφάλιος θυσία) offers a slightly altered version of schol. Soph. *OC* 100. Among other alterations (e.g. omissions of the names of certain authors), it reworded our passage in such a way as to avoid *κεχρήσθαι*, presumably because it had noticed the problem arising from Philochorus’ being the subject of *κεχρήσθαι*: καὶ ξύλα δὲ νηφάλια, τὰ μὴ ἀμπέλινα μήτε σόκινα, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν θύμων. καὶ πρώτη ἐστὶν αὕτη ὕλη πρὸς τὰς ἐμπύρους θυσίας, παρ’ ὃ καὶ τοῦνομα.... It is significant that the sense of the *Suda*’s version coincides with the sense obtained from the Greek text as emended in this article.

¹¹ Costa’s translation corresponds more closely to the revised than the transmitted version of the text. Is it possible that he understood the verb as a passive, as argued here, but neglected to mention the problem with the datives and suggest an emendation?

τοῖο” (23. 31).¹² With regard to the mechanism of corruption, it is entirely plausible that the rare passive construction *πρώτην ... ὕλην ... ταύτην κεχρηῆσθαι* was trivialised to the common active construction *πρώτη ... ὕλη ... ταύτη κεχρηῆσθαι*.¹³

It is helpful to end by offering a translation of the revised Greek text in its context:

Now, Crates the Athenian says that all of the woods not from the vine are called sober. But Philochorus says more accurately that neither wood from the vine nor from the fig but rather wood from thyme is called sober. And he says that this material was used first for burnt sacrifices, on account of which thyme (θύμος) also took its name, on the grounds that the word was formed from the fuming (θυμίασις) and the burnt sacrifice (θυή).¹⁴

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¹² LSJ s.v. *χράω* (B) C.VII is the relevant section, but it should include examples of the perfect tense besides those of the aorist. Moreover, as the discussion has made clear, Erbse’s adoption of Villoison’s conjecture τῶ in schol. *Il.* 5.266b is not necessary: τὸ ποινή κέχρηται is an acceptable construction and means “ποινή is used.”

¹³ A less satisfactory way to resolve the textual problem would be to add the subject <τοὺς Ἀθηναίους> to *κεχρηῆσθαι*: the scholion on *OC* 100 itself arose out of the need to provide the reader with information on an *Athenian* sacrificial practice, and in the part of the scholion which precedes Philochorus F 194 the notion of “the Athenians” occurs both explicitly and implicitly: e.g. in De Marco’s edition p.12.7 Ἀθηναῖοι ... θύουσιν; p.12.11 δρωμένων, scil. ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων; ἔκαιον, scil. Ἀθηναῖοι. Moreover, the supplement restores an acceptable degree of generality to the sense of the passage. However, there are two disadvantages to this approach: (i) it is difficult to explain the loss of the phrase in the course of the manuscript transmission. By contrast, the loss of *νηφάλια ἐκάλου* (see n.1) is more easily explicable: the scribe’s eye skipped from *EKAION* to the similar *EKAΛOYN*. (ii) τοὺς Ἀθηναίους as subject of *κεχρηῆσθαι* would not be in perfect harmony with the subjects of the other three infinitives.

¹⁴ I wish to thank the anonymous reader for his judicious comments on this article, and Professor Kent Rigsby for the speedy review process.