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A CRITICAL NOTE ON SERVIUS'
COMMENTARY ON VERG. AEN. 6. 1–2

Verg. *Aen.* 6. 1–2:

Sic fatur lacrimans classique immittit habenas
et tandem Euboicis Cumarum adlabitur oris.

In modern editions of the *Aeneid*, as in the early manuscripts, these lines open book 6. According to Servius (On *Aen.* 5. 871), however, they were originally left by Vergil at the end of book 5 and were subsequently moved by Tucca and Varius to their current position. This editorial intervention, he explains, accounts for why some ancient manuscripts begin book 6 instead with *obuertunt* (6. 3 in modern editions):

sciendum sane Tuccam et Varium hunc finem quinti esse uoluisse:
nam a Vergilio duo uersus sequentes huic iuncti fuerunt: unde in
non nullis antiquis codicibus sexti initium est *obuertunt pelago
proras, tum dente tenaci*.¹

He then proceeds to defend the decision of Tucca and Varius to relocate the lines (*Praef.* on *Aen.* 6):

sane sciendum, licet primos duos uersus Probus et alii in quinti
reliquerint fine, prudenter ad initium sexti esse translatos; nam et
coniunctio poematis melior est et Homerus etiam sic inchoauit:
ὡς φάτο δάκρυ χέων.

Two reasons are offered in support of the rearrangement: (a) it improves the *coniunctio poematis*, and (b) Homer *inchoauit* in a com-

¹ For the sake of convenience, I quote in both instances the text of Thilo and Hagen 1881–1887, which, apart from minor differences in orthography and punctuation, is identical in the second quotation to that of Jeunet-Mancy 2017.

parable manner. The first point is not further explained, but it may be taken to mean that Servius, recognising that the verses are scarcely intelligible unless read immediately after the close of book 5, thought that relocating them to their present position at the opening of book 6 created a stronger linkage between the two books. Turning to (b), which is the point that concerns us: Servius notes that Homer “opened” in a similar way – that is, with the phrase ὦς φάτο δάκρυ χέων. Considering the argument he is making, there can be no doubt that *inchoavit* in this context must refer to the introductory words of a book. No book of Homer, however, opens with this phrase.² It occurs only twice in the Homeric corpus, in both cases well within a book rather than at its opening: *Il.* 1. 357 and *Od.* 24. 438. Rather than assume that Servius was under the misapprehension that the phrase did in fact stand at the beginning of some book of Homer – a possible yet unconvincing scenario – I propose that δάκρυ χέων has been interpolated. While this assumption cannot be firmly supported by manuscript evidence – the two forms of the commentary (S and DS) are both heavily contaminated, requiring editors to consider every plausible reading³ – the ninth-century manuscript C (Casselanus Ms. Poet. Fol. 6) of the DS tradition may be adduced to provide a possible explanation: against the various misspelled versions of ὦς φάτο found in most manuscripts, C transmits ΩΣ ΕΦΑΤΟ, preserving Servius’ intended Ὠς ἔφαθ’ as a reference to the opening of book 13 of the *Odyssey*.⁴ On recognising the clear Homeric echo in Vergil’s *Sic fatur lacrimans*, a compiler seems to have added the words δάκρυ χέων as a separate scholium. These two scholia were subsequently conflated, producing the the perfectly sound yet, in this context, unsuitable ὦς φάτο δάκρυ χέων.

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² Cf. Harrison 1980, 370 n. 31: “Servius cites here the irrelevant ὦς φάτο δάκρυ χέων, which appears in the middle of Iliad One (357)”.

³ On the transmission of the texts of Servius and Servius Auctus, see Murgia–Kaster 2018, XI–XXVIII.

⁴ Hom. *Od.* 13. 1 Ὠς ἔφαθ’, οἱ δ’ ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῆ.

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This note suggests that, in defending Tucca and Varius' relocation of *Aen.* 6. 1–2 from the end of the fifth book to their current position, Servius did not originally cite the Homeric ὦς φάτο δάκρυ χέων (*Il.* 1. 357 and *Od.* 24. 438) but simply ὦς ἔφαθ', as a reference to the opening of *Od.* 13.

В статье доказывається, що Сервій, в захисту проведеного Туккою і Варієм переміщення строк *Aen.* VI, 1–2 із кінця книги V на їх нинішнє місце, цитував із Гомера не ὦς φάτο δάκρυ χέων (*Il.* I, 357 і *Od.* XXIV, 438), а просто ὦς ἔφαθ' із початку *Od.* XIII.

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