PLATO REPUBLIC 328C

Εὐθὺς ὁ Με ιὸν ὁ Κέφαλος ἦσπάζετο τε καὶ εἶπεν. Ἡ Ω Σώκρατες, οὐδὲ θαμίζεις ἡμῖν καταβαίνων εἰς τὸν Ἱεραίῳ.

οὐδὲ, the mss. reading is surely wrong. Editors who seek to justify it have been forced into the most unlikely defences e.g. that here οὐδὲ is elliptical (= ‘you don’t do other things which you should nor do you visit us very often’) and that ‘the idiom has a kind of colloquial effect’ (Adam) or ‘οὐδὲ, if correct, must be regarded as one of those colloquial idioms which, logical enough in their origin, imperceptibly shift their application till they defy strict analysis’ (Tucker). This is in fact tantamount to saying that οὐδὲ can’t be explained but may nevertheless be right!

Emendation seems the safer course. Among the suggestions of previous editors οὐ δέ with an implied ἀσπάζομαι μὲν is too subtle to be worth considering at all; οὐ τι is at first sight intrinsically possible but there is no real reason to implicate Homer; and οὐ δὴ is palaeographically reasonable but otherwise unattractive.

I suggest that both sense and text can be satisfied if we assume that something has fallen out before οὐδὲ, and if we also delete καταβαίνων. I would fill out the text with οὐ + verb probably in the second person singular and probably beginning with the letters δε-: thus something like <οὔ δειπνεῖς> οὐδὲ θαμίζεις may be considered as a possible restoration. The awkwardness which now remains, in that one would expect θαμίζεις to apply equally to the dining and the visiting, – which would necessitate a considerable recasting of the clause so that a participle δειπνῶν could be worked in – can be easily removed by deleting καταβαίνων as a typical explanatory gloss which has become incorporated in the text. Such an explanation could quite reasonably have been supplied by a scribe who sought to eluci-
date the construction of θαμίζεις by importing additional information from the first words of the dialogue. θαμίζεις without participle, however, is instanced elsewhere in Plato (Hyp. Ma. 281 b ὅ ὅ θαμίζω εἰς τὸ ἄδε τοὺς τόπους. cf. Xen. Cyr. 7.3.2 πρόθενθα θαμίζον ἄφ᾽ ῥήματι.)

There are three points to note on this reading: (i) δευτερεύεις is a present of ‘customary action’ (cf. e.g. Dem. 19.46 ὅστος μὲν γὰρ ὡδώρ, ἤγερε δ᾽ ὅλον πίνω), ‘you don’t customarily take dinner’; (ii) ἕμων is placed beside θαμίζεις in order to particularize the general location indicated by εἰς τὸν Πειραιᾶ, but is to be construed in sense with δευτερεύεις also: ‘you don’t customarily take dinner with us nor...’; (iii) ὅδε is here in its climactic sense (‘nor even’, see Denniston The Greek Particles p. 193, and cf. Rep. 347δ οὐκ ἔχοντες ἐν τῷ βελτίων ἐπιτρέψαι ὅδε ὁμοίως.)

Reading then Ὁ Σώμποτες, ὅ δευτερεύεις ὅδε θαμίζεις ἕμων εἰς τὸν Πειραιᾶ, we translate: ‘Socrates, you don’t dine with us nor even come down often to visit us at the Peiraeus.’

But it may still be objected: why should Cephalus assume that Socrates has come to dinner? It seems reasonable to infer that the time is at least afternoon when Socrates meets Polemarchus. Polemarchus urges Socrates to come home with him, and at 328 a he tempts him with the prospect of watching a παννύχιον: ἐξαισθησόμεθα γὰρ μετὰ τὸ δεύτερον καὶ τὴν παννύχια θεασόμεθα. We need not boggle at the fact that this δεύτερον is not again alluded to, for the lengthy discussion into which the Republic devolves is a natural sequel to the early arguments in Book i. However, if Polemarchus appears at home – his own or his father’s is not in question here – with Socrates probably in the early evening, is it not likely that Cephalus would assume that Socrates has come for a meal? In the words οὗ δευτερεύεις Cephalus is implicitly inviting and welcoming Socrates to a meal and explicitly chiding him for the infrequency with which he shares their hospitality.

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