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A. G. Laird

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XENOPHON, *OECONOMICUS*, 20. 16

ῥαδίως γὰρ ἀνὴρ εἰς παρὰ τοὺς δέκα διαφέρει τῷ ἐν ὥρᾳ ἐργάζεσθαι, καὶ ἄλλος γε ἀνὴρ διαφέρει τῷ πρὸ τῆς ὥρας ἀπιέναι.

THERE are a number of interpretations of this passage, but none is satisfactory. Emendations also have been suggested. *μή* has been inserted in one or other of the infinitive clauses; Richards (*Xenophon and Others*, p. 13) suggests changing *διαφέρει* in both cases to *διαφθείρει*; and the second *διαφέρει* has been dropped.

In the first place it may be accepted as certain that ἐν ὥρᾳ ἐργάζεσθαι means *getting to work in time*, and not *working at the time* (Dakyns), or *working his full time* (Holden, as an alternative). This is settled by the contrast with πρὸ τῆς ὥρας ἀπιέναι, and by the fact that the contrast of *working at the time* with *loafing on the job* is given in the next section. The meaning *in time* for ἐν ὥρᾳ is common enough (cf. Aristoph. *Peace* 122, *Wasps* 242).

The interpretation of Dakyns, Graux and Jacob, and others is *one man easily surpasses ten*; but, apart from the fact that no parallel is cited for παρὰ with διαφέρει instead of the ordinary genitive, it is an absurd exaggeration to say that one man is worth more than ten if he gets to work in time. In the next paragraph the difference between loafing on the job and steady work is said to be in the ratio of one to two, so that an exaggerated statement is quite out of place here. Moreover, we cannot take διαφέρει in the second clause to mean *surpasses*, unless we insert *μή* with the infinitive, or make τοὺς δέκα its subject (Graux and Jacob, Bolla). Dakyns, here, says *another may as easily fall short*, apparently leaving the *ten men* entirely out of account.

Holden's version is 'for one man in a total of ten easily makes a difference by being at work at the proper time (or working his full time), and another again makes a difference in the united labour by leaving off work before the end of his time.' Against this a number of objections may be raised:

(1) To get a proper parallelism between the clauses, we must, with Richards and Thalheim, insert *μή* before ἐν ὥρᾳ. Otherwise what 'makes the difference' is not one man being in time, but the other nine being behind time. While the emendation removes this difficulty, an interpretation that does not require a change of the text will of course be more satisfactory.

(2) παρὰ τοὺς δέκα is difficult. In the first place, the words in a total of ten come as a surprise. They seem to add very little to the statement that it makes a difference in the work if one man is not in time. And why *ten* rather than a larger or smaller number? If the statement were 'even in as large a gang as ten men it makes a difference if one man is behind time or leaves before the time,' there would be some point in it. It may also be argued that, just as in the following paragraph the contrast is between the overseer who keeps *all* his men at work and the one who lets them loaf, so here the context suggests that the contrast is between the overseer who gets *all* his men to work in time and the one who does not. But, putting these objections aside as inconclusive, it may be seriously doubted whether παρὰ with the accusative could be used in such a sentence as 'one man in a total of ten makes a difference by being behind time.' διαφέρει, indeed, inevitably suggests that παρὰ is used in its comparative sense. And, finally, I object even to the article with the numeral in such a context. It does not seem to me that the case can be classed easily under any of the ordinary usages.

(3) ἄλλος γε ἀνὴρ is not used naturally. If the meaning is what it is claimed to be, we should expect the simple statement that in a gang of ten men *one* man makes a difference by being behind behind time or leaving before the time. Why this emphasis upon *another* man? In the first clause we have a contrast between the number *one* and the number *ten*; but, if εἰς ἀνὴρ is contrasted with ἄλλος ἀνὴρ, we either have something corresponding to the late use of εἰς μὲν — ἕτερος δέ, in which case εἰς loses its

numerical value as a contrast to *δέκα*, or, if *εἷς* means *one* as opposed to *ten*, then *ἄλλος* must mean *an additional one*, a *second*. This objection is equally valid against the interpretation 'one man surpasses ten.'

(4) Richards (*l.c.*) objects to translating *διαφέρει* by *causes a difference*; and, while we may translate *οἱ τεκόντες διαφέρουσι* by *the parents make the difference* (cf. L. and S.), i.e. *are different*, it of course does not follow that we can substitute for this the phrase *cause a difference*. In this connection it will be well to quote the sentences that follow.

(17) τὸ δὲ δὴ ἂν ῥαδιουργεῖν δι' ὅλης τῆς ἡμέρας τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ῥαδίως τὸ ἥμισυ διαφέρει τοῦ ἔργου παντός. (18) ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ὁδοιπορίαις παρὰ στάδια διακόσια ἔστιν ὅτε τοῖς ἑκατὸν σταδίοις διήνεγκαν ἀλλήλων ἀνθρώποι τῷ τάχει . . . ὅταν ὁ μὲν πρᾶττη ἐφ' ᾧ περ ὥρμηται, βαδίζων, ὁ δὲ ῥαστώνει κτέ.

The meaning of § 17 is perfectly clear; if there were any doubt about it, it would be removed by the illustration in § 18. We may translate, as Dakyns does, 'to let the fellows take things easily the whole day through will *make a difference* easily of half in the whole work,' and *make a difference* is here equal to *cause a difference*. Richards, indeed, asserts that 'τὸ ἥμισυ is oddly used. Μέγα, πολύ, τοσοῦτον διαφέρειν are right and regular, but τὸ ἥμισυ is not, and we should expect τῷ ἡμίσει, just as in the fourth case we have τοῖς ἑκατὸν σταδίοις.' Richards, of course, is perfectly correct in claiming that the degree of difference is generally expressed by the dative, but to my mind τὸ ἥμισυ διαφέρει is a perfectly natural development from μέγα or πολύ διαφέρει. From such a sentence διαφέρει might easily have developed the meaning *causes a difference*, and it would then have had a subject and cognate object. However, it does not seem to have so developed; at any rate, this meaning is not present in § 16, for there we should have an object such as *τι*, to correspond to τὸ ἥμισυ.

Another construction that could

develop from such a sentence as we have in § 17 would be that τὸ ἥμισυ should be felt as the subject of διαφέρει meaning *there is a difference of one-half*. Such a development we seem to have in ψῆφοι τρεῖς διήνεγκαν τὸ μὴ θανάτου τιμῆσαι Dem. 23. 167. In this case it would be natural that what *caused* the difference should be expressed by the dative. This is the construction that I find in § 16. ἀνὴρ εἷς παρὰ τοὺς δέκα is the subject of διαφέρει, corresponding to τὸ ἥμισυ in § 17 or τρεῖς ψῆφοι in the Demosthenes passage; ῥαδίως modifies εἷς παρὰ τοὺς δέκα, as it modifies τὸ ἥμισυ in § 17; and τῷ—ἐργάζεσθαι is what causes the difference. εἷς παρὰ τοὺς δέκα is a proportion, meaning *one in ten*, and the whole sentence should be translated 'there is easily a difference of one man in ten by reason of getting to work in time, and a difference of still another by reason of leaving before the time.' That is, in comparison with a gang of ten men that puts in a full day's work, another gang of ten that turns up late does only nine men's work, and, if they quit early, only eight men's work. In this interpretation it is immaterial whether we have a μή or not in either of the infinitival clauses; in παρὰ τοὺς δέκα a proper meaning is given both to the παρά and the τοὺς; εἷς—ἄλλος is used as we should expect; and ῥαδίως has something to modify. The only objection that can be raised is to the meaning given to ἀνὴρ εἷς διαφέρει, and this, it seems to me, is sufficiently supported by τρεῖς ψῆφοι διήνεγκαν, if the satisfactory meaning given to the whole passage were not in itself a proof of its correctness.

I might, in conclusion, cite the translation of Talbot: 'Il y a la différence de un à dix entre deux hommes, dont l'un emploie bien son temps, et dont l'autre quitte l'ouvrage avant l'heure.' It will be seen that he gives to εἷς παρὰ τοὺς δέκα the same meaning as I have given, though he combines the two clauses in an impossible way.

A. G. LAIRD.

University of Wisconsin.