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Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; (John 2:4)
Philological, Contextual, and Exegetical Arguments for the Understanding: "What Does This Matter to Me and to You?"

1. The Modern Versions, the *Vulgate*, and the *Vetus Latina*

In John 2:4, at the wedding feast in Cana, the episode that inaugurates Jesus' σημεῖα, after his mother has said to him that wine is lacking, he replies, with no variant reading in the Greek[1]: τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; οὔπω ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου.[2]

The English translations, apart from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), to which we shall return, all render this question in a more or less similar way. The Revised Standard Version (RSV) runs as follows: "O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come"; likewise, the American Standard Version (ASV) has: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come". Other old versions are very similar, such as the King James Version (KJV): "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come", the Darby Bible: "What have I to do with thee, woman? mine hour has not yet come", and the Webster translation: "Woman, what have I to do with thee? my hour is not yet come". Luther's version, too, is entirely analogous: "Weib, was habe ich mit dir zu schaffen? Meine Stunde ist noch nicht gekommen", just like the Italian CEI translation, "Che ho da fare con te, o donna? Non è ancora giunta la mia ora", and the French Bible de Jérusalem version: "Que me veux-tu, femme?". With a slight improvement, but also with a very free rendering, the God's Word Version has: "Why did you come to me? My time has

[1] See e.g. *Novum Testamentum graece et latine*, Romae 1984, 311.

[2] Difficulties in interpretation are also pointed out by M. Welker, "Weinwunder – Weinstock – lebendiges Wasser – Geist. Die anstößige Botschaft der Hochzeit zu Kana", in A. Wagner u.a. (Hg.), *Gott im Wort – Gott im Bild. Bilderlosigkeit als Bedingung des Monotheismus*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2005, 201-5.

not yet come", and the Bible in Basic English (BBE): "Woman, this is not your business; my time is still to come". Commentators generally follow the most widespread interpretation[3].

The Vulgate translation, at first sight, does not seem to be particularly illuminating –but I shall show that this is not the case–, in that it closely retains the structure of the Greek, with the sole addition of the verb "to be": "Quid mihi et tibi est mulier<?> nondum venit hora mea". Somewhat more telling would seem the fact that four manuscripts, all very ancient (sixth to early eighth century) and among the main Vulgate *testimonia* for the Gospels, present an inversion between the two pronouns: A M F P read: "Quid tibi et mihi est mulier"[4]. This strongly suggests that the order of the two pronouns was not felt to make a big difference as for the meaning: "What is to me and to you?" was perceived as interchangeable with "What is to you and to me?", as a literal translation from the Latin would run.

I shall soon point out that even the addition of *est*, which does not occur everywhere in the Vulgate along with such double-dative expressions, but only in very particular cases, is likely to be highly significant just in respect to the meaning of these expressions.

It is remarkable that *est* is present also in the main witnesses to the Vetus Latina[5]. Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.16) and Ambrose (*In Ps. 118* 1181B and *De inst. virg.* 257D) both translate: "Et dicit ei Jesus: Quid mihi et tibi *est* mulier?". Only Augustine's version clearly presupposes an understanding of this problematic question as the expression of a

[3] So e.g. H. Thyen, *Das Johannesevangelium*, Tübingen 2005, 155; K. Wengst, *Il Vangelo di Giovanni*, Brescia 2005, 109. Somewhat better R. Schnackenburg, *Das Johannesevangelium*, Freiburg 1967, I, 332-4, who also speaks of "Distanzierung", but, rather than stressing that Jesus wants to have nothing in common with his mother, he notes that he wishes to be left in peace: "Laß mich in Ruhe!".

[4] See the critical apparatus of R. Weber, *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, Stuttgart 1994[4], 1660. The mss. are: Amiatinus (Florence, Biblioteca Mediceo-Laurenziana, Amiatino I, copied at the beginning of the 8th century in Northumbria), Mediolanensis (Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, C 39 inf., copied in the 6th century in Northern Italy), Fuldensis or Victoris (Fulda, Landesbibliothek, Bonifatianus 1, copied in Capua in AD 547), and Splitensis (Bibliotheca Capitoli sine numero, copied in Italy in the 6th or 7th century).

[5] P. Sabatier, *Bibliorum Sacrorum Latinae Versiones Antiquae seu Vetus Italica et Ceterae*, Remis 1714, III, 393.

reproach to Mary and of the wish to take a distance from her. But, in order to do so, Augustine feels the need to add an initial clarifying clause, which is entirely absent in the Gospel, and to reverse the order between the interrogative and the personal pronouns inside the question: "Recede a me mulier: mihi et tibi quid est? Nondum venit hora mea" (*De vera rel.* 1.757F).

2. The Correct Understanding and an Outline of the Arguments Supporting it.

Contextual Arguments

Now, what I set out to argue is that, in this passage, Jesus wishes to take a distance not from his own mother, but from the situation, and that τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, literally meaning "What to me and to you?", ought to be translated, not "What do I have to do with you?", but "What does this matter to me and to you?", in direct reference to the immediately preceding statement: "They have no wine [left]". Indeed, I think that the most correct – even if not perfect – translation that has been provided so far is that of the NRSV, although, rather than respecting the Greek, it follows the reverse order of the two pronouns that, as I mentioned, is attested in some Vulgate manuscripts: "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come". The only other correct translations I am aware of are that of the Spanish Sagrada Biblia (Facultad de Teología, Universidad de Navarra), "¿Qué tenemos que ver nosotros?" – which resolves the pronouns ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί into one plural pronoun, as though the Greek question were τί ἡμῖν; – and that by Piero Rossano: "E che importa a me e a te?"[6]. This interpretation is generally not embraced, nor even discussed, in commentaries, including some among the most recent and outstanding.

There are, however, arguments that strongly point to this understanding and that I wish to put forward in the present contribution. They are essentially of two kinds: one kind is based on context, sense, and logic; the other is grounded in philology, linguistics, ancient translations, and grammar. To these, moreover, I shall add a third set of arguments taken from Patristic exegesis. This

[6] P. Rossano, *Vangelo secondo Giovanni*, Milano 1984, 27.

too is highly significant, to my mind, since it shows that already some ancient interpreters understood Jesus' words in the very same way I propose to understand them. This, to be sure, does not necessarily imply, *per se*, that the interpretation at stake must be the right one, but it certainly proves that it was possible to understand those Greek words in this sense, and that they actually were understood thusly.

Let us begin with the arguments based on context, sense, and logic. In all the other translations, Jesus' words ("What have I to do with you?") inevitably sound like an offence to his mother, and this in a public situation and in presence of other people. This would seem all the more absurd in that it must come from John or his tradition, that is to say, precisely the disciple to whom Jesus, from the cross, entrusted the care of his mother, and who took her into his own house, according to the very same Gospel. Probably it was Mary herself who recounted this episode to the Beloved Disciple[7].

There is certainly no offence in Jesus' words if, instead, we understand them as meaning, "What does this matter to me and to you?", where the subject to which "this" refers is the fact that "they have no wine", οἶνον οὐκ ἔχουσι, mentioned by Jesus' mother immediately before his reply. On this interpretation, moreover, the intrinsic train of thought turns out to be much better: "They have no more wine. – What does this matter to me and to you? Why should we worry about this? The time has not yet come for me to work 'signs'". The most widespread rendering, on the contrary, makes very little sense in itself ("They have no more wine. – What have I to do with you?..."), and still less if we consider the context of the Johannine scene, and above all that the person who is addressed in this manner by Jesus is his mother.

3.1. Linguistic Arguments. The Syriac and Coptic Versions

Now – to turn to the second set of arguments, which will be the most developed in the present study – it is indispensable to analyse this passage carefully from the linguistic point of view, in order to verify that this interpretation is justified. It must be said first of all that, also in this passage, the "What to me and to you" expression could be

[7] This is what Richard Bauckham too seems to imply in his *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, Grand Rapids, Mi. / Cambridge, UK 2006, 63.

– but not necessarily – a well-known Semitic construct transposed into Greek[8], of the kind we shall repeatedly encounter in the subsequent analysis, above all in the examination of the relevant passages in the Septuagint (henceforth: LXX) and in the Hebrew text.

The ancient Syriac versions simply reproduce each single Greek word. The Peshitta and the Ḥarklean version[9] are absolutely identical in this bit; they both render: ܡܐ ܠܝ ܘܠܟ ܐܢܬܬ, literally "What (is) to me and to you, woman?". No variant readings or reversals in the order of the two pronouns are attested[10]. Only, in the Peshitta, the village where the wedding feast is held is named, not Cana, but Qatna, probably as a result of an early oral tradition[11].

Coptic, unlike Syriac, is no Semitic language. Its rendering of Jesus' question here is very interesting,[12] first of all for the striking number of variant readings attested, which suggests a difficulty in understanding the precise meaning of Jesus' words. Manuscript Huntington 17, in the Bodleyan Library, reads: ⲁϫⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲏ ⲁⲱⲓ ⲧⲥⲁⲓⲙⲓ, which can be rendered: "What with me and also with you, woman?". This can perfectly be understood in the sense in which I suggest taking John 2:4 in Greek, too: "What does this matter to me and also to you, o woman?". Manuscript B^{c} is similar; it just adds a vocative "o" before "woman": ⲁϫⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲏ ⲁⲱⲓ ⲱⲧⲥⲁⲓⲙⲓ, literally "What with me and also with you, o woman?". Manuscript ℵ, instead, reads: ⲁϫⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲏ ⲁⲱ ⲧⲥⲁⲓⲙⲓ, where ⲁⲱ expresses an emphatic "me", so the sense of the whole question is: "What with me, indeed, with

[8] See J.-P. Michaud, "Le signe de Cana dans son contexte johannique", *LThPh* 18, 1962, 239-85: 247-53.

[9] On the Peshitta and the Harklean version see S. Brock, *The Bible in the Syriac Tradition*, Piscataway 2006^{2}, 17-9; 34-7.

[10] I base myself on G.A. Kiraz, *Comparative Edition of the Syriac Gospels, Aligning the Sinaiticus, Curetonianus, Peshîṭtâ and Ḥarklean Version*, Leiden-New York-Köln 1996, IV, *John*, *ad loc*. Neither the Sinaiticus nor the Curetonianus (the two oldest witnesses to the so-called Vetus Syra) are available for this passage, so Kiraz only aligns the Peshitta and the Harklean translation. On the Vetus Syra or Old Syriac version, more recent than Tatian's *Diatessaron*, but more ancient than the Peshitta, see Brock, *The Bible*, 33-4.

[11] So Brock, *The Bible*, 110.

[12] *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Northern Dialect*, Osnabrück 1969 (reprint of the 1898-1905 edition), II, 346.

me, woman?". The meaning is clear: "What does it matter to me, what has it to do with me, that they have no wine left? My hour has not yet come". Manuscript Q simply adds the vocative "o", and reads: ⲁⲛⲟ ⲛⲉⲙⲏⲓ ⲥⲱⲱⲧⲥⲁⲓⲙⲓ (it is necessary to separate the last word as follow ⲥⲱ ⲱⲧⲥⲁⲓⲙⲓ). Manuscript Γ* omits ⲥⲁⲓⲙⲓ, "woman". I find that the Coptic versions, in both their main streams, with ⲥⲱⲓ and with ⲥⲱ, do support my understanding of John 2:4.

3.2.a. Further Linguistic Exploration: All the Greek Attestations of the Construct

What is definitely needed at this point is a methodical investigation of all the Greek attestations, in both the classical and the Patristic period, of the construct τί + dative personal pronoun + καί + another dative. What emerges from a search of the whole corpus of Greek literature recorded in the TLG is truly telling and crucial to the understanding of John 2:4.

It is remarkable, fist of all, that such expressions first appear in texts that have a strong Jewish background: the LXX and the NT. Indeed, it is only in the Septuagint that we first find the expression, τί ἐμοί / σοι / ἡμῖν / ὑμῖν καί + another dative; generally, such expressions are uttered by a person who, for one reason or another, wishes to be left in peace, as we shall see in a moment. Arrianus, in the Diatribes of Epictetus, is the first to use the expression τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί / αὐτῷ / αὐτοῖς in Greek apart from the Bible – and, notably, *after* the Bible, in the second century –, to express a lack of concern.[13] He is also the first

[13] In *Diss.* 1.27.14 a person who does not believe in the gods and is in a desperate situation even insults them, for, if they do not care for him, why should they matter to him? (λοιδορῶ τὸν Δία καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς τοὺς ἄλλους· εἰ γὰρ μὴ ἐπιστρέφονταί μου, τί ἐμοὶ καὶ αὐτοῖς;). Likewise in 1.22.15: τί μοι καὶ αὐτῷ, εἰ οὐ δύναταί μοι βοηθῆσαι ... τί μοι καὶ αὐτῷ, εἰ θέλει μ' ἐν τοιούτοις εἶναι ἐν οἷς εἰμι; "why should Zeus matter to me if he cannot help me, or if he even wants me to find myself in such a bad condition?". And in 2.19.19 a man says to another, τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, ἄνθρωπε; ἀρκεῖ ἐμοὶ τὰ ἐμὰ κακά, "What do you matter to me? Why should I care for you? I have enough of my own problems". This meaning is clearly different from that of John 2:4. Similarly, in the treatise Νοῦς πρὸς Ἑρμῆν of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, 21.4 (see I. Ramelli, *Corpus Hermeticum*, Milano 2005, with commentary) the same expression designates a person who has nothing in common with God: τί σοι καὶ τῷ θεῷ; οὐδὲν γὰρ δύνασαι τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν, φιλοσώματος καὶ κακὸς ὤν, νοῆσαι· ἡ γὰρ τελεία κακία, τὸ ἀγνοεῖν τὸ θεῖον.

and only pagan author after the LXX who uses τί σοι καί + another dative in *Diss.* 3.18.7: τί σοὶ καὶ τῷ ἀλλοτρίῳ κακῷ; in the sense "What does someone else's evil matter to you?". In *Diss.* 1.1.16 he uses the same construct to indicate that we should not care for things that are not under our control: τίς ἄνεμος πνεῖ; βορέας – τί ἡμῖν καὶ αὐτῷ; The meaning is: "What does this wind matter to us?". Finally, the same syntagm in *Diss*. 2.19.16 is particularly interesting because of its peculiar meaning: τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, ἄνθρωπε; ἀπολλύμεθα καὶ σὺ ἐλθὼν παίζεις means, not "What have we to do with you?", but "What do you want with us? What are your intentions in regard to us? We die and you come here to joke". The same double-dative construct is found again in the alchemist Pelagius in the third century, in the treatise entitled Πελαγίου φιλοσόφου περὶ τῆς θείας ταύτης καὶ ἱερᾶς τέχνης, where, in 2.257.13, we find[14]: Τί ὑμῖν καὶ τῇ πολλῇ ὕλῃ, ἑνὸς ὄντος τοῦ φυσικοῦ, καὶ μιᾶς φύσεως νικώσης τὸ πᾶν; The sense is: "What does the abundance of substance matter to you? For the gold (φύσις = φύσις χρουσοῦ), which is one single material, is superior to all the rest". Still in the seventh century, the historian Theophylactus Simocatta, who also wrote letters, uses the τί + double-dative construct in *Hist.* 7.10.5, in the words addressed by a barbarian chief to the Roman Priscus: τί ὑμῖν, ὦ Ῥωμαῖοι, καὶ τῇ γῇ τῇ ἐμῇ; τί περαιτέρω τοῦ πρέποντος πόδας ἐκτείνετε; ξένος ὁ Ἴστρος ὑμῖν, the meaning being: "What intention have you with my territory? What do you want with my territory?".

Achilles Tatius, one or two centuries after the NT, also employs this idiomatic expression, but remarkably feels the need to explain it by adding κοινόν to the couple of datives separated by καί and by further clarifying the meaning by way of the verb μέλει, "matters".[15]

[14] The same passage occurs again in a Christian alchemist of the sixth century, in the treatise entitled Ἀντίθεσις λέγουσα ὅτι τὸ θεῖον ὕδωρ ἓν ἐστι τῷ εἴδει καὶ ἡ λύσις αὐτῆς, 2.406.20, and, in the seventh century, in the alchemist Stephanus' *De magna et sacra arte*, 2.200.23 and 2.214.37.

[15] Ὦ κακὸν σὺ θηρίον, μέχρι τίνος μοι μιαίνεις τὰ ὦτα; τί ἐμοὶ καὶ Θερσάνδρῳ κοινόν; καλὸς ἔστω Μελίτῃ καὶ πλούσιος τῇ πόλει, χρηστός τε καὶ μεγαλόψυχος τοῖς δεομένοις· ἐμοὶ δὲ οὐδὲν μέλει τούτων (6.12.3). A similar construct was already present, but with πρᾶγμα, in Menander's *Dyskolos*: σοὶ δὲ κἀμοὶ πρᾶγμα τί ἐστιν; (114), in the sense of "What business have you

The simple form τί σοι is attested already in Homer in the meaning "what does this matter to you?", but with μέλει (*Il.* 24.683: ὦ γέ ρον οὔ νύ τι σοί γε μέλει κακόν), and in several other authors, also with parallel constructions (τί ἡμῖν μέλει, etc.).[16] Likewise, we find τί σοι διαφέρει in the sense, "What does this matter to you?", from Plato onward.[17] These expressions with μέλει and διαφέρει + datives, of course, also occur among Christian authors[18].

and I in common?". The addition of κοινόν will be still used by Photius in his paraphrase of John 2:4 in *Ep.* 45.132 (ἐπὶ τοῖς θαύμασιν οὐδὲν ἦν κοινὸν τῇ μητρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ); he too, however, like several Fathers, insists that no offence to Mary was meant (οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν εἰς ὕβριν τῆς μητρικῆς στοργῆς καὶ αἰδοῦς) and Jesus was always ready to render her glory: τὴν πρέπουσαν αὐ τῇ πανταχόθεν συνάγει δόξαν καὶ εὐφημίαν … τῇ μητρὶ μᾶλλον δόξαν περιάπτοντα καὶ τιμὴν ἢ παρόρασιν ὅλως ἀφιέντα.

[16] Pl. *Phd.* 60D: εἰ οὖν τί σοι μέλει τοῦ ἔχειν ἐμὲ Εὐήνῳ ἀποκρίνασθαι; *R.* 469E8: ἐάν τι ἡμῖν μέλῃ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους Ἕλληνας εὐνοίας; *Cri.* 44C6: τί ἡμῖν … τῆς τῶν πολλῶν δόξης μέλει; X. *Cyr.* 3.1.30: εἰ δέ τί σοι, ἔφη, μέλει καὶ τοῦ ὡς ἥκιστα τεταραγμένα τάδε καταλιπεῖν … εἰ δέ τί σοι; Men. *Pk.* 485: μέλει τούτων τί σοι; Teles *De fuga* 30.1: ἢ τὴν ἀρχὴν εἰ μὴ ταφήσῃ, τί σοι μέλει; Epict. *Diss.* 2.6.18-19: τί σοι μέλει ποίᾳ ὁδῷ καταβῇς εἰς Ἅιδου; ἴσαι πᾶσαί εἰσιν; 3.1.23: σὺ δὲ τίς εἶ; – καὶ τί σοὶ μέλει; 3.22.37 τί ὑμῖν μέλει; 4.5.22: τῶν ἀγνοούντων; τί σοι μέλει; 4.10.3: τί σοι μέλει; *Anacreont.* fr. 15.6: τίς εἶ; – τί σοι μέλει δέ; the sense is analogous in other, non interrogative, statements: Aristid. *In Platonem de rhetorica* 109.20 Jebb: εἴ τί σοι μέλει τῆς ἀληθείας; M. Ant. 3.14.1: εἴ τί σοι μέλει σεαυτοῦ; Jul. *ad Cyn. Her.* 13.9: εἴ τί σοι τῆς ῥητορικῆς ἐμέλησεν, οὐκ ἀξύνετος εἶ; Lib. *Ep.* 706.1: κοινώνησον δὴ τῆς ἱκετείας, εἴ τί σοι μέλει τοῦ ἐρρῶσθαί με; *Decl.* 34.2.45: εἶτα τί σοι τούτων μέλει;

[17] In conditional and other non-interrogative statements the meaning is the same: Pl. *Hp. Ma.* 287A: εἰ οὖν μή τί σοι διαφέρει, βούλομαι ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι, ἵν' ἐρρωμενέστερον μάθω; *Grg.* 497B: Ἀλλ' ἃ τί σοὶ διαφέρει; πάντως οὐ σὴ αὕτη ἡ τιμή; *Sph.* 237B: τοῦτο οὖν αὐτὸ πρῶτον θεασώμεθα, εἰ μή τί σοι διαφέρει; Men. Fr. 451.5 Koerte = *Psd.* fr. 1.5 Meineke = fr. 518.5 Kock: χοιρίδιον ἓν θύομεν, ὀκτὼ ποιήσοντες τραπέζας δ' ἢ μίαν, τί σοι διαφέρει τοῦτο; Plut. *Agis et Cleom.* 25.4: εἰ μή τί σοι διαφέρει, γράψον ἡμῖν; Aristid. *In Plat. de quattuor* p. 276.10 Jebb: τί σοι τοῦτο διαφέρει; M. Ant. 12.36.1: τί σοι διαφέρει, εἰ πέντε ἔτεσιν ἢ πεντήκοντα;

[18] Epiphanius knows the non-Biblical usage with τί + dative + διαφέρει and employs it: *Pan.* 2.433.25: Καὶ τί σοι, ἔφη, τοῦτο διαφέρει; and Gregory Nazianzen uses the parallel construct with μέλει, in a conditional clause:

3.2.b. Specific Investigation into the LXX and the Hebrew Bible

Before turning to Patristic authors, who often cite the words of the Gospel of John and similar double-dative expressions in both the OT and the NT, it is necessary to analyse all the occurrences of the τί + double dative construct in the LXX and in the NT, and to endeavour to grasp the exact meaning and its nuances, which are not identical in all cases.

In Jud 11:12 the LXX reads: Καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Ιεφθαε ἀγγέλους πρὸς βασιλέα υἱῶν Αμμων λέγων· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, ὅτι ἥκεις πρός με σὺ πολεμῆσαί με ἐν τῇ γῇ μου; In Hebrew we have: מה־לי ולְךָ, literally "What to me and to you?", of which the Greek Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί is a word-for-word rendering. The Vulgate adds the verb "to be": "Quid mihi et tibi est?", and the KJV, the Webster version, the Darby Bible and the ASV all render Jephthae's words according to the traditional fixed formula: "What hast thou to do with me?", just as Luther's version: "Was hast du mit mir zu schaffen?", the Spanish Sagrada Biblia, "¿Qué tenemos que ver tú y yo?", the Italian CEI translation: "Che c'è tra me e te?", and the French Bible de Jérusalem: "Qu'y a-t-il donc entre toi et moi?". The God's Word version does not even render these words, which are considered to be insignificant. The NRSV has: "What is there between you and me?", and the RSV, better: "What have you against me?". For Jephthae wants to know the reason why the king of the Ammonites intends to attack him, whereas he wishes to be left in peace. The sense of the question "What to me and to you?" here is: "What do you want? Why are you annoying me?".

On another occasion the same idiomatic expression is employed to rebuke an attacker: in 2Chron 35:20-21 in the LXX we read: Καὶ ἀνέβη Φαραω Νεχαω βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου ἐπὶ τὸν βασιλέα Ἀσσυρίων ἐπὶ τὸν ποταμὸν Εὐφράτην, καὶ ἐπορεύθη ὁ βασιλεὺς Ιωσιας εἰς συνάντησιν αὐτῷ. καὶ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀγγέλους λέ

Ep. 120.3: Ταῦθ᾽ ἡμῶν προσεύχου καὶ ὑπερεύχου, εἴ τί σοι μέλει τοῦ τὰ μέγιστα εὖ ποιεῖν ἡμᾶς. Similarly Basil in *Ep.* 208.1: εἴ τί σοι μέλει τοῦ δικαίου; Synesius in *Ep.* 16.16: τῶν ἐμῶν εἴ τί σοι μέλει, καλῶς ποιεῖς· καὶ εἰ μὴ μέλει, οὐδὲ ἐμοὶ τούτου μέλει; and John Chrysostom in *de sacerd.* 6.13.80: εἴ τί σοι μέλει τῶν ἐμῶν; *Hom. Gen.* PG 53.64.1: Τί σοι μέλει; and *in I Cor.* PG 61.206.62: εἰ δὲ Ἕλλην τις εἴη, τί σοι τούτου μέλει;

γων· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, βασιλεῦ Ιουδα; οὐκ ἐπὶ σὲ ἥκω σήμερον πόλεμον ποιῆσαι. The Vulgate translates, as usual: "Quid mihi et tibi est?". The NRSV, like all the other versions, translates: "What have I to do with you [or: thee]?", not differently from the French Bible de Jérusalem, "Qu'ai-je à faire avec toi?", and from the Italian CEI translation: "Che c'è fra me e te?". Only the RSV has: "What have we to do with each other?", like the Spanish Sagrada Biblia: "¿Qué hay entre nosotros?". And the God's Word translation renders: "What's your quarrel with me?". The king of Egypt is addressing Josiah, who is attacking him without being provoked. Therefore, the sense clearly is: "What do you want with me? Why don't you leave me in peace?". Josiah will attack all the same and will perish in that war[19].

In 3Kgs 17:18 in the LXX we find: Καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς Ηλιου Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, ἄνθρωπε τοῦ θεοῦ; εἰσῆλθες πρός με τοῦ ἀναμνῆσαι τὰς ἀδικίας μου καὶ θανατῶσαι τὸν υἱόν μου. The Hebrew parallel in 1Kgs 17:18 has: מה־לי ולך, literally, "What to me and to you?"; the RSV and the NRSV translate: "What have you against me?", whereas the KJV, the Darby Bible, the BBE, the ASV, and the Webster, all render in the standard way, "What have I to do with thee/you?"; Luther's version has, similarly: "Was habe ich mit dir zu schaffen?". Only the God's Word translation has: "What do you and I have in common?"; the French Bible de Jérusalem reads: "Qu'ai-je à faire avec toi?", the Italian CEI version has: "Che c'è fra me e te, uomo di Dio?", and the Spanish Sagrada Biblia renders: "¿Qué tengo que ver yo contigo, hombre de Dios?". The widow who is the host of Elijah is blaming him, because just during his stay in her house her son has died, and she thinks that this has happened because of him (so, Elijah will feel obliged to save the child by imploring God to let him live again, and he will actually succeed). The sense of the widow's question is: "What do you want with me? Why did you come to me for my ruin? Leave me in peace".

In 4Kgs 3:14 (LXX) there is another instance of a very similar meaning for this enigmatic expression: καὶ εἶπεν Ελισαιε πρὸς βασιλέα Ισραηλ· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; δεῦρο πρὸς τοὺς προφήτας τοῦ πατρός σου. In the corresponding Hebrew passage in 2Kgs 3:13 we

[19] The same episode is recounted in 1 Esdra, where in 1.24 (LXX) the question is also repeated: Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί ἐστιν, βασιλεῦ τῆς Ιουδαίας;

have: מה־לי ולך, literally, "What to me and to you?". The Vulgate, as usual, renders: "Quid mihi et tibi est?". The RSV and the NRSV, just as the KJV, the Darby Bible, the BBE, the ASV, and the Webster, have: "What have I to do with you (thee)?", like the Spanish Sagrada Biblia: "¿Qué tengo que ver yo contigo?" and the French Bible de Jéusalem: "Qu'ai-je à faire avec toi?". And Luther's version, likewise: "Was hast du mit mir zu schaffen?". The God's Word version, more freely and in a better way as regards the sense, has: "Why did you come to me?". The Italian CEI translation renders: "Che c'è fra me e te?". The king of Israel has gone to Elishah to consult God through him for his imminent war against the king of Moab. Elishah is not at all pleased with this, and invites the king to rather consult the prophets of his parents (but then he helps him all the same). The sense is: "Why do you come here to disturb me? What do you want with me? Leave me in peace".

In 4Kgs 9:18 (LXX) we have: Τάδε λέγει ὁ βασιλεύς· Εἰ εἰρήνη; καὶ εἶπεν Ιου· Τί σοι καὶ εἰρήνῃ; The corresponding Hebrew in 2Kgs 9:18 has: השלום ... מה־לך ולשלום, literally, "Peace – What to you and to peace?". The Vulgate transposes as follows: "Pacata sunt omnia [it is not clear whether this is meant to be a question] ... Quid tibi et paci?". The NRSV, just like the RSV and the BBE, translates: "Is it peace? ... What have you to do with peace?", and likewise the KJV, the ASV, the Webster and the Darby translations: "[Is it] peace? ... What hast thou to do with peace?", and Luther's version: "Ist's Friede? ... Was geht dir der Friede an?" The God's Word version freely translates: "Is everything alright? ... What should that matter to you?" and similarly the French Bible de Jérusalem, "Cela va-t-il bien? – Que t'importe si cela va bien?", the Italian CEI version, "Tutto bene? – Che importa a te come vada?", and the Spanish Sagrada Biblia: "¿Va todo bien? – ¿Qué te importa a ti si todo va bien?". The question of the king's envoy, literally, "Whether peace (is with you)" in Greek, or simply "Peace" in Hebrew (the usual form of greeting and address), is answered, "What does peace matter to you?", as a reproach for asking that question. In fact, this reply to the ambassadors comes from the man who is attacking those who have sent them.

In 2Kgs 16:9-10 we come across an even more interesting case. The LXX reads: Εἶπεν Αβεσσα υἱὸς Σαρουιας πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα· Ἵνα τί καταρᾶται ὁ κύων ὁ τεθνηκὼς οὗτος τὸν κύριόν μου τὸν

βασιλέα; διαβήσομαι δὴ καὶ ἀφελῶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ. καὶ εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεύς· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ ὑμῖν, υἱοὶ Σαρουιας; ἄφετε αὐτὸν καὶ οὕτως καταράσθω, ὅτι κύριος εἶπεν αὐτῷ καταρᾶσθαι τὸν Δαυιδ. The corresponding Hebrew passage in 2Sam 16:10 has: מה־לי ולכם, literally, "What to me and to you [plural]?". The Vulgate transposes the Hebrew into Latin word for word: "Quid mihi et vobis?"; the NRSV renders like the RSV, the KJB, the BBE, the Darby Bible, the ASV, and the Webster: "What have I to do with you?" exactly like Luther's version, "Was habe ich mit euch zu schaffen?", the French Bible de Jérusalem, "Qu'ai-je à faire avec vous?", and the Spanish Sagrada Biblia: "¿Qué tengo que ver yo con ustedes?". The God's Word Translation is free: "You don't think like me at all", and the Italian CEI version renders: "Che ho in comune con voi?". King David is reproaching one of the sons of Zerujah, who wishes to kill a man who is insulting David. The king replies to his defender by ordering him to give up his attempt and to let that man abuse him, because it is God who has induced him to do so, and perhaps God, after having him be insulted, will have mercy upon him. The sense of David's annoyed reaction is: "Leave me in peace". Here, notably, τί ἐμοὶ καὶ ὑμῖν could even be rendered: "What does this matter to me and to you?", implying: "Why should we kill that man? What does it matter to me and to you if he is insulting me?". This perfectly fits the sense and the sequence of exclamations on the part of the son of Zerujah and David: That man is insulting the king my lord: let me kill him – What does this matter to me and to you that he is abusing me? Let him curse me. In fact, the sequel to the Biblical narrative reports that David allowed that man to walk together with him and his supporters and continue to abuse him for a long while. The meaning, "What does this matter to me and to you?", is exactly the same I am supporting in this study for the corresponding passage in John 2:4.

In 2Kgs 19:22-23 (LXX) we come across an analogous episode: Αβεσσα υἱὸς Σαρουιας εἶπεν· Μὴ ἀντὶ τούτου οὐ θανατωθήσεται ... ὅτι κατηράσατο τὸν χριστὸν κυρίου; καὶ εἶπεν Δαυιδ· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ ὑμῖν, υἱοὶ Σαρουιας, ὅτι γίνεσθέ μοι σήμερον εἰς ἐπίβουλον; σήμερον οὐ θανατωθήσεταί τις ἀνήρ. The relevant Hebrew bit in 2Sam 19:23 is identical to that in the previous passage: מה־לי ולכם, literally, "What to me and to you?"; the Latin, English, French, Spanish, and Italian translations also are the same as in the previous passage. Again, here David is reproaching one of the sons of Zerujah,

who wishes to kill a man who has cursed David. The king's reply means: "What does it matter to me and to you that he has cursed me? Leave me in peace, instead of instigating me, and let him live, because I shall not put to death anyone". In fact, soon after, David personally promises the man who cursed him that he will let him live.

That of Jer 2:18 is a particular case: καὶ νῦν τί σοι καὶ τῇ ὁδῷ Αἰγύπτου τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ Γηων; καὶ τί σοι καὶ τῇ ὁδῷ Ἀσσυρίων τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ ποταμῶν; The Greek, here too, translates τί σοι καί + dative, but this time the underlying Hebrew construct is different: מה־לְּךָ לדרך מצרים ... ומה־לְּךָ לדרך אשור, literally, "What to you to the way of Egypt? ... And what to you to the way of Assyria?". The KJV, the ASV and the Darby Bible apply the traditional translation to this passage as well: "What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt?"; and similarly the BBE: "What have you to do on the way to Egypt?". The God's Word version, more freely, but with a good grasp of the meaning, runs: "You won't gain anything by going to Egypt", and not dissimilar are Luther's version, "Was hilft's dir, daß du nach Ägypten ziehst?", the RSV and the NRSV: "What do you gain by going to Egypt / Assyria?", and the French Bible de Jérusalem: "à quoi bon partir en Egypte? ... à quoi bon partir en Assyrie?". The Italian CEI version, more concisely, runs as follows: "Perché corri verso l'Egitto? ... Perché corri verso l'Assiria?", and the Spanish Sagrada Biblia has: "¿por qué tienes que tomar el camino de Egipto? … ¿Por qué tienes que tomar el camino de Asiria?". Through Jeremiah, the Lord is rebuking Israel: it was unfaithful and now is in misery. And now what interest does it have to run toward Egypt and Assyria? But here, as I have pointed out, the underlying Hebrew syntax is different.

The same is the case with another passage in which the Greek translates the Hebrew by means of a double dative separated by καί, but the Hebrew has another phrase. In Hos 14:9 the LXX presents: τῷ Εφραιμ, τί αὐτῷ ἔτι καὶ εἰδώλοις; (or: τῷ Εφραιμ, τί ἔτι αὐτῷ καὶ εἰδώλοις; in ms. A or codex Alexandrinus, 5th century), literally: "Ephraim, what still to him and to the idols?". But the Hebrew runs as follows: אפרים מה־לי עוד לעצבים, without an interposed *waw* and with the pronoun at the first person, literally: "Ephraim: what to me still to the idols?", as though Ephraim were speaking in first person. The Vulgate is closer to the Hebrew: "Ephraim<:> quid mihi ultra idola<?>". Ephraim's words mean: "What idols are to me

by now? What do they still matter to me?". The Greek translator felt that he could use the fixed double-dative syntagm separated by καί to express the absence of concern: "Ephraim, what do idols matter to him by now?". It is the same notion that also appears in the analogous construct in John.

There is an opposite instance in which the Greek gives the impression that we are facing a different construct, but a check of the Hebrew immediately reveals that this is not the case. In Joshua 22:24 there is no καί between ἡμῖν and Κυρίῳ in the LXX (ἀλλ᾽ ἕνεκεν εὐ λαβείας ῥήματος ἐποιήσαμεν τοῦτο λέγοντες· Ἵνα μὴ εἴπωσιν αὔριον τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν τοῖς τέκνοις ἡμῶν· Τί ὑμῖν κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ Ισραηλ;), but the Hebrew here has the usual construct with double dative separated by the *waw* coordinative conjunction: אלהי ישראל מה־לכם וליהוה, literally, "What to you and to YHWH the God of Israel?". The Vulgate renders: "Quid vobis et domino deo israhel<?>" The NRSV, like the RSV, the KJV, the Darby Bible, the BBE, the ASV, and the Webster, has: "What have you to do with the Lord?". The God's Word Bible renders: "What relationship do you have with the Lord?", and Luther's version: "Was geht euch der Herr an?". The Italian CEI translation has: "Che avete in comune voi con il Signore Dio di Israele?", like the French Bible de Jérusalem, "Qu'y a-t-il de commun entre vous et Yahvé, le Dieu d'Israël?", and the Spanish Sagrada Biblia: "¿Qué tienen que ver ustedes con el Señor, el Dios de Israel?". The speakers are preventing a possible future accusation of lack of piety.

In conclusion, there are at least two passages in the LXX, 2Kgs 16:10 and 19:23, in which the two dative personal pronouns separated by καί can be understood in the sense: "What does this matter to me and to you?", in reference to an immediately preceding remark of the interlocutor. This is precisely the same meaning I think we also find in John 2:4. And in a third case, Hos 14:9, the double-dative syntagm separated by καί in the LXX bears the same meaning: "What do idols matter to him by now?".

3.2.c. Specific Investigation into the Greek New Testament

Let us now examine the New Testament. In Mark 5:7 Jesus is going to drive an unclean spirit out of a person. This spirit approaches him and cries: Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; ὁρκίζω

σε τὸν θεόν, μή με βασανίσῃς. The RSV and the NRSV have, with an inversion of the pronouns: "What have you to do with me?". The KJV, the Darby Bible, the BBE, the ASV, and the Webster render: "What have I to do with thee/you?", just as Luther's version: "Was habe ich mit dir zu tun?". The God's Word Version, as usual, offers a less literal translation, but one that, I think, precisely grasps the meaning: "Why are you bothering me now?", like the Sagrada Biblia version, "¿Qué quieres de mí?", and the French Bible de Jérusalem: "Que me veux-tu?". The sense, in fact, here is: "What is your intention in regard to me? Why do you come here to disturb me? Leave me in peace". The Vulgate, as usual, presents a word-to-word translation: "Quid mihi et tibi", without the addition of *est* that we have noticed in John 2:4. I find that this is significant: in the case of John 2:4, but not here, *est* precisely conveys the sense of "matters": "Quid mihi et tibi est?", "What does this matter to me and to you?"[20].

Another scene of exorcism is found in Matt 8:29, where two persons possessed by demons say to Jesus: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; the translations are the same as in the preceding occurrence: "What have you to do with us?", or: "What have we to do with you/thee?", and (in the God's Word Version): "Why are you bothering us now?". The meaning is the same as well: "What are your intentions in regard to us? Why do you come here to disturb us? Leave us in peace"[21]. A good translation is that of the Spanish Sagrada Biblia, "¿Qué quieres de nosotros?", and of the French Bible de Jérusalem: "Que nous veux-tu?". Most notably, the

[20] Luke 8:28 is simply a parallel: Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου; δέομαί σου, μή με βασανίσῃς. The translations, of course, are the same as for the other passage.

[21] Raymond E. Brown, albeit he translates John 2:4 in the most widespread way, "What have I to do with you?", rightly notices that this Semitic expression acquires two different meanings in this passage and in the other Synoptic passages where it is addressed by demons to Jesus: in the latter case it implies hostility; in John this does not happen. However, he does not differentiate the translations and does not understand that Jesus is saying to his mother that the lack of wine does not matter either to him or to her. Cf. his *Giovanni. Commento al Vangelo spirituale*, Assisi 1991[3] [original edition *The Gospel according to John*, New York 1983], 128-9.

Vulgate omits again *est* and renders: "Quid nobis et tibi?". This makes it all the more significant that in John 2:4, instead, *est* is added in the Latin version, both in the Vulgate and in the main witnesses to the Vetus Latina. Indeed, in these scenes with the demons the meaning is really "What do we have in common with you?", "What have you to do with us?", whereas in John 2:4, as is indicated by the Vulgate through the addition of *est*, the meaning is, "What does this *matter* to me and to you?".

The scene is very similar in Mark 1:24, where an unclean spirit persecuting a man in a synagogue cries to Jesus: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ. All the English translations are similar: "What have you to do with us?" or "What have we to do with you / thee?", apart from the God's Word Version, which renders: "*What do you want with us?*", which is similar to the Spanish Sagrada Biblia version, "¿Qué quieres de nosotros?", and to that of the French Bible de Jérusalem: "Que nous veux-tu?". The sense is precisely: "What do you want with us? What is your intention in regard to us? Leave us in peace". Again, I point out that the Vulgate here, differently from John 2:4, translates without *est*: "Quid nobis et tibi?". The parallel in Luke 4:34 is identical: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ.

And here, once more, it is highly significant to my mind that there is no *est* in the Latin, for the Vulgate simply has: "Quid nobis et tibi?". Indeed, the meaning, too, is very different from John 2:4. All this strongly confirms my argument that in John 2:4 the meaning is: "What does this matter to me and to you?".

3.2.d. A Couple of Revealing Details in Plato and Porphyry

There is a noteworthy text in Plato's *Gorgias* (455D2), where the presence of the verb εἰμί – just like the presence of *est* in the Vulgate translation – determines the sense of "what will this matter to us?" (Τί ἡμῖν, ὦ Γοργία, ἔσται, ἐάν σοι συνῶμεν;), the same sense as we have in John 2:4: "What does this matter to me and to you?". The construct is the same, τί + dative pronoun(s).

The author of the Gospel of John probably knew not only the Semitic double-dative expression, but also this one and analogous expressions in classical Greek. A couple of centuries after this Gospel, the same phrase is repeated by Porphyry, who of course

knew Plato very well (and also knew the Gospels): ἐὰν ὑμᾶς πάντες μιμήσωνται, τί ἡμῖν ἔσται; (*Abst.* 4.18): the meaning clearly is, again: "What will this matter to us?".

4. Patristic Exegesis: Confirmations and Conclusions

It is now opportune to turn to the Patristic quotations and interpretations of John 2:4 and parallel constructs, which reserve surprises that are really worthy of note[22].

4.1. Origen and the Adamantius Dialogue

In the late second – early third century, Origen in the dubious *Fr. Ps.* 144.15 cites Jesus' words in John 2:4, but comments only on the fact that his hour had not yet come, since signs are only for incredulous: καιρὸν σημείων οὐχ ἥκειν ἔφασκεν, εἴπερ τὰ σημεῖα οὐ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀπίστοις.

It is remarkable that, independently of our Johannine passage, he also uses the τί + double dative construct in *Hom. Ier.* 20.8 (ἀναχωρῶ, τί μοι καὶ πράγμασιν;), not in the sense, "What have I to do with chores?", but in the sense, "What do chores matter to me?".

In *Co. Io.* 6.47.247 Origen also cites Jer 2:18 (LXX), Τί σοι καὶ τῇ ὁδῷ Αἰγύπτου τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ Γηῶν, καὶ τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ ποταμῶν, also offering a variant reading from the Hebrew, ἢ ὡς τὸ Ἑβραϊκὸν ἔχει· τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ Σιών. He understands it, allegorically, as a reproach to those who wish to drink the Egyptian water rather than the heavenly one: Καὶ ὁ Ἱερεμίας δὲ ἐπιπλήσσει τοῖς θέλουσιν Αἰγύπτιον ὕδωρ πιεῖν καὶ καταλείπουσιν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καταβαῖνον [23].

[22] A brief and very partial investigation was undertaken many years ago by J. Reuss, "Joh 2,3-4 in Johanneskommentaren der griechischen Kirche", in J. Blinzler, O. Kuss, F. Mussner (eds.), *Neutestamentliche Aufsätze*, Regensburg 1963, 207-13, who considered only the Greek Fathers who wrote commentaries on the Gospel of John, whereas the most interesting points emerge from Patristic writings of other kinds. More extensive and complete, but only for the Latin Fathers who here are less relevant because they worked on translations of John rather than the original Greek, is A. Bresolin, "L'esegesi di Giov. 2,4 nei Padri latini", *REA* 8, 1962, 268-96.

[23] As he was familiar with the Bible, Synesius also cites the LXX passage: *Ep.* 128.5: νόμιζε καὶ πρὸς σὲ τὸν προφήτην μεγαλοφώνως κεκραγέναι·

In *Co. Io.* 10.11.52 Origen also cites the demons' address to Jesus: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; Ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; Οἶδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, and again, with a slight variation, in 10.11.56: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; Οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ.[24] Origen, however, does not comment specifically on the expression τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί or τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί.

The same is the case with the so-called *Dialogue of Adamantius on Orthodoxy*, which was probably composed in Greek by a disciple of Methodius and reworked in Greek around AD 330; then it was ascribed to Origen himself by the authors of the *Philocalia*, and for this reason it was translated into Latin by Rufinus at the end of the fourth century. The *Dialogue*, on p. 34.20, cites the words that the demons addressed to Jesus, τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι με; but with no discussion of the precise meaning of the problematic expression under investigation: the point is rather Jesus' failing to chastise Judas[25].

4.2. The *Acts of Thomas*

In the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas*, 45, probably stemming from the third century, we find a patent imitation, with an iteration and an amplification, of the words addressed by the demons to Jesus. Here they are addressed to Thomas, his apostle and "double": Φωνῇ

Τί σοὶ καὶ τῇ γῇ Αἰγύπτου τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ Γεὼν; τὸ γὰρ ἔθνος θεομάχον ἀρχαῖον καὶ πατράσιν ἁγίοις πολέμιον.

[24] See also *Fr. Io.* 85.10: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; *Co. Matt.* 11.17: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ;

[25] Τοῦτον ἐθεώρει θανάτῳ ὑποβληθέντα ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰούδα. εἰκὸς οὖν μήτε ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ Χριστοῦ κολάζεσθαι τὸν Ἰούδαν, ἀγαθὸς γὰρ οὐδέποτε κολάζει. Only a quotation of the same Gospel passage is found, likewise, in the fourth century in Asterius: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; Ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; (*Hom. Ps.* 18.23). Eustathius, in the fourth century, in his polemic with Origen, also quotes the demons' words to Jesus in Matt 8:29: αὐ τολεξεὶ τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί κεκραγότες υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς; (*De eng.* 23.6), but without specific comments on the expression τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί. See *The "Belly Mother" of Endor. Interpretations of 1 Kingdoms 28 in the Early Church*, translated with an Introduction and Notes by R.A. Greer and M.M. Mitchell, Atlanta 2007, esp. 136-7.

μεγίστῃ χρησάμενος εἶπεν πάντων ἀκουόντων· Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ ἀπόστολε τοῦ ὑψίστου; τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ δοῦλε Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ σύμβουλε τοῦ ἁγίου υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ; διὰ τί βούλει ἡμᾶς ἀπολέσαι, τοῦ καιροῦ ἡμῶν μηδέπω ἐνεστῶτος; τίνος ἕνεκα βούλει λαβεῖν ἡμῶν τὴν ἐξουσίαν; ἕως γὰρ τῆς νῦν ὥρας εἴχομεν ἐλπίδα καὶ καιρὸν περιλειπόμενον. τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί; σὺ ἔχεις ἐξουσίαν ἐν τοῖς σοῖς, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέροις.

The last sentence is particularly illuminating in regard to the meaning of τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί in the exclamations of the demons, which are completely different from Jesus' words to his mother in John 2:4: the demons really wish to have nothing in common with Jesus, to have their dominions completely separated. This has really nothing to do with Jesus' reply to his mother.

4.3. Apollinaris and Eusebius

Apollinaris of Laodicaea, the fourth-century defender of the Nicene faith, grasps in Jesus' allocution in John 3:4 the sense of wishing to be left alone, in *Fr. Io.* 7 on John 2:4-5. He is concerned that Jesus' words may be felt as a sign of offence or δυσωπεῖν, just as when God says to Moses: "Leave me in peace!" (but then he listens to him and satisfies his requests). Likewise, Jesus is obedient to his mother, who knows this: this is why she tells the servants to do what Jesus will order them: Οἶδεν ἡ μήτηρ πειθήνιον ὡς υἱὸν αὐτῇ γινόμενον τὸν κύριον. καὶ δὴ καὶ ἡ ἀπόκρισις τοῦτο ἐπεδείξατο τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι· ὡς γὰρ δυσωπεῖν δυνάμενος τοῦτο ἀπεκρίνατο, οἷον ἦν τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πρὸς Μωυσέα· ἔασόν με, ὡς δυνάμενον δηλαδὴ δυσωπῆσαι καὶ πεῖσαι. εἰδυῖα δὴ καὶ πιστικῶς πρὸς αὐτὴν διακείμενον καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἀποκρίσεως ὁρῶσα πρὸς τὴν ἀξίωσιν ἐγγὺς ἐπινεύοντα τοῖς διακόνοις ἐπιτάττει ποιεῖν ὃ κελεύει.

Eusebius too, like Origen, who was deeply admired by him, comments on the Jeremiah passage containing the double-dative construction in *Co. Is.* 1.75.198, and, again drawing inspiration from Origen, interprets it in reference to the demons, here identified with the divinities of Egypt: οὗ ἀποτρέπων ἕτερος προφήτης ἐβόα λέγων· τί σοι καὶ τῇ ὁδῷ Αἰγύπτου τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ Γειών; Τὰ δ' ἑξῆς ἐπιλεγόμενα περὶ ἀφανῶν ἀρχόντων, οἳ μάλιστα ταῖς μεγίσταις καὶ διαφανέσι τῆς Αἰγύπτου πόλεσιν ἐφήδρευόν ποτε, λέγω δὲ τῇ Τάνει καὶ τῇ Μέμφει, θεσπίζεται. Another faithful follower

of Origen, too, Didymus the Blind, in *Co Zac.* 3.158.10, cites and comments on the same LXX passage[26].

Eusebius also presents a series of quotations of the Gospel phrases with the double-dative construct, but in most of them he does not comment on the specific meaning of these expressions. *Dem. Ev.* 3.6.37: the demons, μὴ φέροντες αὐτοῦ τὴν παρουσίαν, ἄλλος ἄλλοθεν ἐβόα· ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; 4.10.13: some demons, having recognized the divine identity of Jesus, said: ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σύ, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦ λθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; (curiously, here the text has σύ instead of σοί, but I think that an emendation is needed, because in all other occurrences Eusebius quotes σοί); 6.13.9: the demons are forced to confess the divinity of Jesus: ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθες πρὸς καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ; 9.7.7: the demons recognize Jesus after his permanence in the desert, φάσκοντες αὐτῷ· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; *Co. Is.* 1.62: βοᾶν αὐτοὺς καὶ λέγειν· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ; *Co. Ps.* PG 23.400.18: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; Ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς;

The same quotation appears *ibid.* 684.49, accompanied by the consideration that after Jesus' resurrection the demons have been completely dispersed (ὧν παντελὴς διασκορπισμὸς μετὰ τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν γέγονεν), and already at the appearance of Jesus during his earthly life they melted like wax in front of the fire (τηκόμενοι ὡς κηρὸς ἀπὸ προσώπου πυρός); for the rays of his divinity were painful to them: Αἱ γὰρ τῆς θεότητος αὐτοῦ ἀόρατοι καὶ ἀφανεῖς ἀκτῖνες, βασάνους καὶ ἀλγηδόνας τοῖς ταῦτα λέγουσι παρεῖχον.[27]

[26] Οἷοί εἰσιν οἱ τοῦ Φαραὼ οἷς ἐγκαθεζόμενος κομπάζει λέγων· Ἐμοῦ εἰσιν οἱ ποταμοί, κἀγὼ ἐποίησα αὐτούς. Τούτων ὁ ποτισμὸς ἀπαγορεύεται ὑπὸ Θεοῦ ἐν Ἱερεμίᾳ τῷ προφήτῃ· Καὶ νῦν γάρ, φησίν, τί σοι καὶ τῇ γῇ Αἰγύπτου, τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ Γηών; καὶ τί σοι καὶ τῇ γῇ Ἀσσυρίων, τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ ποταμῶν; In the treatise *De Trinitate* ascribed to Didymus the Blind, PG 39.633.15, the demons' words to Jesus are quoted: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ, Ἰησοῦ Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος; Ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς;

[27] Cfr. *ibid.* 1073.50 with the same quotation (Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρῆνε; Οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ) and the same interpretation

4.4. Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa

Notably, Athanasius of Alexandria, also in the fourth century, in *De Incarn.* 32.5, although without quoting John's problematic words, reverses the Gospel quotation of the demon's words to Jesus, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, into τί σοι καὶ ἡμῖν. He quotes them as follows: Ἔα, τί σοι καὶ ἡμῖν, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; δέομαί σου, μή με βασανίσῃς. This means that the order was felt as indifferent: "what have you to do with us?" or, "What have we to do with you?".

In his biography of St Antony PG 26.861.35 Athanasius again echoes the Gospel expression and adapts it; here it is the demons who speak to the saint: ἤκουον ὡς ὄχλων ἔνδον θορυβούντων, κτυπούντων, φωνὰς ἀφιέντων οἰκτρὰς καὶ κραζόντων· Ἀπόστα τῶν ἡμετέρων· τί σοὶ καὶ τῇ ἐρήμῳ; The sense is: "What does the desert matter to you? Why do you come here? Leave us in peace"[28].

Athanasius in *Exp. Ps.* PG 27.320D refers to the apostles' question to Jesus, which is expressed in an interesting τί + dative form: Ἰδοὺ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα, καὶ ἠκολουθήσαμέν σοι· τί ἡμῖν ἔσται; The meaning clearly is: "What will this mean for us? What advantage

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that the demons could not bear Christ's divine power (μὴ φέροντες αὐτοῦ τὴν ἔνθεον δύναμιν κολαστικὴν οὖσαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀπελαστικήν). The same Gospel quotation appears again *ibid*. 1157.11 together with the statement that the demons fear Jesus, because they knew his divine identity: ἔφριττον αὐτὸν οἱ δαίμονες, ὡμολόγουν τε αὐτὸν εἰδέναι ὅστις εἴη ... Ἀπὸ γὰρ τῆς πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνεχθείσης φωνῆς μεμαθήκεισαν ὅστις ἦν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφ' ὧν εἰργάσατο κατὰ τὸν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ καιρὸν ᾔδεσαν αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν. The same quotation, with no particular stress on the meaning of our construct, repeatedly occurs in the homilies of Pseudo-Macarius: *Hom. 64*: 50.2.5: τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; 34.2.1: τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; τί πρὸ καιροῦ ἦλθες βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; = 53.3.3 = *Hom. 50*: 11.157.

[28] The Jeremiah phrase is also cited in the spurious *Dialogue of Athanasius and Zacchaeus*: τί σοι καὶ τῇ ὁδῷ αἰγύπτου, τοῦ πιεῖν ὕδωρ γαιῶν; (52.5), and in the spurious *Sermo contra omnes haereses* ascribed to Athanasius: Καὶ δύο σὺν αὐτῷ ἦσαν λῃσταὶ κρεμάμενοι· καὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς καταρωμένου, εἶπεν ὁ ἕτερος λῃστής· Τί καταρᾶσαι τῷ δικαίῳ; ἡμεῖς κατὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἑαυτῶν πεπόνθαμεν· τί σοὶ καὶ τῷ δικαίῳ; (PG 28.505.3).

will it represent for us that we have abandoned everything else to follow you?"[29].

Toward the end of the fourth century, Gregory of Nyssa, an admirer and follower of Origen, in *In Illud: Tunc et Ipse Filius* p. 8.24 Downing, interprets John 2:4 in the sense that Jesus refuses to obey his mother, but because he takes as a rhetorical question his subsequent words οὔπω ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου, as though he meant: "am I not grown up enough to decide for myself?". Indeed, Gregory quotes and paraphrases Jesus' words as follows: Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; μὴ καὶ ταύτης μου τῆς ἡλικίας ἐπιστατεῖν ἐθέλεις; Οὔπω ἥκει μου ἡ ὥρα ἡ τὸ αὐτοκρατὲς παρεχομένη τῇ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ αὐτεξούσιον;

But this interpretation is well explained by the polemical context in which Gregory proposes it: he is contrasting those who read 1Cor 15:28 as a sign of the subordination of the Son to the Father inside the Trinity[30], whereas – he insists – Jesus only obeyed his parents when he was young, and already at Cana he claims that his hour has come, he is adult now and no longer subjected to his parent: τὴν δὲ μητρῴαν συμβουλὴν ὡς οὐκέτι κατὰ καιρὸν αὐτῷ προσαγομένην ἀπεποιήσατο ... τὸ καθῆκον τῆς ἡλικίας μέτρον τὴν τῆς γεννησαμένης ὑποταγὴν ἀποσείεται. Moreover, Gregory also notes that Jesus did not refuse,

[29] The Gospel words addressed by the demons to Jesus are simply quoted in the *Sermo in nativitatem Christi* attributed to Athanasius: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς (PG 28.969.6 and 37); it is insisted on that the demons recognized the danger of the threat of the judgment upon them.

[30] See I. Ramelli, "'In Illud: Tunc et Ipse Filius…' (1Cor 15,27-28): Gregory of Nyssa's Exegesis, Some Derivations from Origen, and Early Patristic Interpretations Related to Origen's", Seminar paper at the 2007 *Oxford International Conference on Patristic Studies*, forthcoming in *Studia Patristica*; Ead., Essay and commentary on Gregory's *In illud: Tunc et Ipse Filius*, in *Gregorio di Nissa. Sull'anima e la resurrezione*, ed. Ead., Milano 2007; Ead., "The Trinitiarian Theology of Gregory in his *In Illud: Tunc et ipse Filius*: His polemic against 'Arian' Subordinationism and the Apokatastasis" in *International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa*, Tübingen, 17-21 September 2008, forthcoming.

in the end, to provide the wine as he was invited to do (τὴν χάριν τοῖς δεομένοις παρασχεῖν οὐκ ἠρνήσατο)[31].

4.5. Epiphanius and John Chrysostom

Epiphanius is concerned with the absence of Joseph and of any brother of Jesus at the wedding banquet in Cana, which only Jesus and his mother seem to have attended (*Pan.* 3.463.29). This suggests that Joseph had already died and that the so-called "brothers" of Jesus were not really his siblings, but other relatives, according to a widespread Semitic use[32].

As for Jesus' question, more specifically, he argues that it does not diminish in any way the importance of the mother of Jesus, the holy Virgin, but he rather calls her with a honorific and prophetic epithet, "Woman". On this ground, Epiphanius develops a polemic against the heretics in *Pan.* 3. 479: ἵνα ἀπὸ τοῦ Γύναι, τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; μή τινες νομίσωσι περισσότερόν τι εἶναι τὴν ἁγίαν παρθένον, γυναῖκα ταύτην κέκληκεν, ὡς προφητεύων, τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς σχισμάτων τε καὶ αἱρέσεων χάριν, ἵνα μή τινες ὑπερβολῇ θαυμάσαντες τὴν ἁγίαν εἰς τοῦτο ὑποπέσωσι τῆς αἱρέσεως τὸ ληρολόγημα. In fact, the treatise *De numerorum mysteriis* ascribed to Epiphanius, where Jesus' question in John 2:4 is listed among the rebukes addressed to Mary by her child, is surely spurious[33].

[31] In the *Enarratio in prophetam Isaiam* ascribed to Basil, but of dubious authorship, at 9.226 we find a quotation of the demons' address to Jesus (Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; Ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς;) together with the comment that the demons prefer to be burnt in the fire than to be judged by Christ's manifestation in the flesh: τότε αἱροῦνται γενέσθαι πυρίκαυστοι μᾶλλον ἢ ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν σαρκὶ Χριστοῦ ἐπιφανείας κατακρίνεσθαι.

[32] Ἐκλήθη Ἰησοῦς εἰς γάμους, καὶ ἦν ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ ἐκεῖ. καὶ οὐδαμοῦ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ καὶ οὐδαμοῦ Ἰωσήφ. φησὶ γάρ· τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; οὔπω ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου, καὶ οὐκ εἶπε τί ἐμοὶ καὶ ὑμῖν, ἄνθρωποι; In *Pan.* 2.279.13 Epiphanius limits himself to citing Jesus' question in John 2:4.

[33] PG 43.512.34: Τρεῖς αἱ κατὰ τῆς Παρθένου τοῦ Μονογενοῦς ἐπιτιμήσεις· Τί ὅτι ἐζητεῖτέ με; οὐκ ᾔδεις ὅτι ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Πατρός μου δεῖ με εἶναι; Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ γύναι; οὔπω ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου· Τίς ἐστιν ἡ μήτηρ μου, καὶ τίνες οἱ ἀδελφοί μου;

In *Pan.* 3.74.27 Epiphanius quotes the Gospel words addressed by the demons to Jesus: ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι πρὸ καιροῦ ἦλθες βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ, and again in 3.75.5116, where he also discusses the variant readings between the parallel synoptic passages.

John Chrysostom's approach to John 2:4 and its immediate context is entirely moral and psychological, as often his exegesis is[34]. In his *Hom. Io.* PG 59.130, Chrysostom, imagining that Mary wished that Jesus began his miracles for the glory coming from them, he perceives Jesus' answer as a bit excessive in its decision (σφοδρότερον ἀπεκρίνατο)[35], and feels the need to explain that, in fact, Jesus was devoted to his mother and worried about her when he was on the cross (which, moreover, is reported in the same Gospel, that of John)[36].

As for the reasons of Jesus' reaction, Chrysostom envisages two of them: 1) Jesus was not only Mary's child, but also her Lord (εἰ προσεδόκα ὡς παρὰ παιδὸς ἀεὶ τιμηθήσεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ ὡς Δεσπότην ἥξειν αὐτόν)[37]; 2) he wished to be asked directly by those who needed his intervention, not by his mother (Ὥστε μὴ ὑποπτευθῆναι τὰ γινόμενα θαύματα. Παρὰ γὰρ τῶν δεομένων παρακληθῆναι ἐχρῆν, οὐ παρὰ τῆς μητρός). By means of what Chrysostom considers to be a rebuke, Jesus wished to teach his

[34] See e.g. I. Ramelli, "Giovanni Crisostomo e l'esegesi scritturale: le scuole di Alessandria e di Antiochia e le polemiche con gli allegoristi pagani", in *Giovanni Crisostomo: Oriente e Occidente tra IV e V secolo.* Atti del XXXIII Incontro di Studiosi dell'Antichità Cristiana, Roma, Augustinianum 6-8.V.2004, I, Roma 2005 (SEA 93.1), 121-62.

[35] Καὶ τάχα τι καὶ ἀνθρώπινον ἔπασχε, καθάπερ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ, λέγοντες, Δεῖξον σεαυτὸν τῷ κόσμῳ, βουλόμενοι τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν θαυμάτων δόξαν καρπώσασθαι.

[36] Ἐπεὶ ὅτι σφόδρα ἠδεῖτο τὴν τεκοῦσαν, ἄκουσον τοῦ Λουκᾶ διηγουμένου πῶς ὑποτεταγμένος τοῖς γονεῦσιν ἦν, καὶ αὐτοῦ δὲ τούτου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ δεικνύντος, πῶς αὐτῆς προενόησε καὶ παρ' αὐτὸν τοῦ σταυροῦ τὸν καιρόν.

[37] A similar argument is adduced to explain Jesus' words in John 2:4 by Anastasius of Sinai in his third Homily *On the Creation of the Human Being to the Image of God*, 3: Ὅταν δὲ πάλιν πρὸς τὴν μητέρα λέγῃ· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; καί· Τίς ἐστί μου πατὴρ ἢ μήτηρ εἰ μὴ ὁ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με; ἐνταῦθα παιδεύει ἡμᾶς τὸ θεῖον καὶ ὑπὲρ φύσιν θέλημα.

mother not to ask him for miracles any more in the future: Διὸ καὶ τότε ἐπετίμησε, λέγων· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, γύναι; παιδεύων αὐτὴν εἰς τὸ μέλλον μηκέτι τὰ τοιαῦτα ποιεῖν. For he was certainly concerned with the honour of his mother, but also with the salvation of the souls[38].

Chrysostom devoted the whole, long Homily 22 on John precisely to John 2:4. Here, in PG 59.133D, he focuses above all on Jesus' hour having not yet come and on his doing everything according to an order. Chrysostom stresses that, after responding to his mother, Jesus actually did what she asked him to do – a fact that will later be particularly stressed by Photius, too –[39], but he wished to be asked by those who needed the wine, not by his mother (Ἐχρῆν δὲ τοὺς δεομένους προσελθεῖν, καὶ δεηθῆναι). Nevertheless, he did what she wished because he did not want to offend her, moreover in presence of so many: Ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ τιμῶν τὴν μητέρα, ἵνα μὴ διαπαντὸς ἀντιλέγειν αὐτῇ δόξῃ, ἵνα μὴ ἀσθενείας λάβῃ δόξαν, ἵνα μὴ αἰσχύνῃ τὴν τεκοῦσαν, παρόντων τοσούτων.

Again in another homily on John, PG 59.461CD, he insists on Jesus' love and care for his mother, whom he hands to his beloved disciple just before dying (παρατίθεται τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ τῷ μαθητῇ, παιδεύων ἡμᾶς μέχρις ἐσχάτης ἀναπνοῆς πᾶσαν ποιεῖσθαι ἐπιμέλειαν τῶν γεγεννηκότων … πολλὴν τὴν φιλοστοργίαν ἐπιδείκνυται, καὶ παρατίθεται αὐτὴν τῷ μαθητῇ ὃν ἠγάπα), even if he pronounced the words in John 2:4 when she annoyed him inopportunely (ἀκαίρως ἠνόχλησε).

[38] Ἔμελε γὰρ αὐτῷ καὶ τῆς εἰς τὴν μητέρα τιμῆς πολλῷ δὲ πλέον τῆς σωτηρίας τῆς κατὰ ψυχὴν, καὶ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν εὐεργεσίας, δι' ἣν καὶ τὴν σάρκα ὑπέδυ.

[39] *Ep.* 45.151: εἶτα πράττειν τὸ παρ' αὐτῆς προτεινόμενον, πόσῳ πολλαπλασίονα τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν αἰδῶ κατασκευάζει ἢ εἰ μὴ ταῦτα εἴρητό τε καὶ ἐπεδείκνυτο; … ὅτι καὶ τὰ μητρικά σοι δίκαια ἀκαινοτόμητα διασῴζω καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ νόμον θέμενός εἰμι μητρὶ τοὺς παῖδας τὴν σεβασμιότητα νέμειν, μᾶλλον δὲ ὅτι καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ φύσει θεωρουμένων εἱρμῶν καὶ τῆς ἐπιτηδειότητος τοῦ καιροῦ τὴν σὴν αἰδῶ καὶ ὑπακοὴν καὶ δόξαν ἔμπροσθεν ποιοῦμαι, ἰδοὺ μεταβάλλω τὸ ὕδωρ εἰς οἶνον, τῆς σῆς ἀξιώσεως ἐκεῖνα δεύτερα ποιησαμένης.

Notably, Chrysostom uses a similar phrase on his own in *Hom. in Acta Apost.* PG 60.75A: ἐν μὲν τῇ βασιλείᾳ ὀλίγοι, ἐν δὲ τῇ γεέννῃ πολλοί. Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ τῷ πλήθει; τί τὸ ὄφελος; Οὐδέν. The sense is: "What have I to do with the crowd?", or better: "What does it matter to me if I have much? Or if I am together with the majority?" What's the usefulness of this? Quite nothing".

John Chrysostom also cites the demons' questions to Jesus in *Exp. Ps.* PG 55.210.41 (Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; Ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς;) as a proof that Jesus' divinity was frightening for them: Ὕψιστος φοβερός. The same quotation occurs again in *In Matth*. PG 57.352.31 as an example of the proclamation of Jesus' divinity on the part of the demons, and again in *In Ps. 118* PG 95.691.23[40]. The meaning of their question is nicely clarified by Chrysostom through the addition of μέτεστι, which indicates participation, in *Co. Iob.* 12.13[41]: in their question, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί; means "What have we in common with you?". Clearly, this sense is different from that of Jesus' question to his mother in John 2:4. In *In illud: Hoc scitote* PG 56.275.44 Chrysostom cites another interesting τί + dative expression used by the apostles while speaking to Jesus: Ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν πάντα, καὶ ἠκολουθήσαμέν σοι, τί ἡμῖν ἔσται; "What will this be to us?" means "What reward shall we have for having left everything in order to follow you?".

4.6. Cyril of Alexandria, Hesychius, and Basil of Seleucia

In the fifth century, Cyril of Alexandria, *Co. Io.* 1.201-202[42], after quoting Jesus' words in John 2:4, interprets them by insisting on the need for order that they express – a need that was already emphasised by Origen in his exegesis –, together with the idea that Jesus needed to be asked to work a miracle: οὐ γὰρ ἔδει δρομαῖον ἐπὶ τὸ πράττειν

[40] Cf. likewise the spurious *In S. Pascha* ascribed to him, line 62.

[41] Οἱ δαίμονες τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἰδόντες ἐβόων λέγοντες· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί; οὐδὲ γὰρ τῆς στάσεως μέτεστιν αὐτῷ τῆς μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων. ἦλθον, φησίν, οἱ ἄγγελοι, καὶ ὁ διάβολος ἦλθε μετ' αὐτῶν περιελθὼν τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσας τὴν ὑπ' οὐρανόν. τί μανθάνομεν ἀπὸ τούτου; ὅτι καὶ δαιμόνων καὶ ἀγγέλων ἡ οἰκουμένη πεπλήρωται, καὶ ὅτι ἑκάτεροι ὑπὸ τὴν ἐξουσίαν εἰσὶ τοῦ θεοῦ.

[42] On this scarcely studied writing see now L.M. Farag, *Saint Cyril of Alexandria, a New Testament Exegete*, Piscataway, NJ 2007.

ἐλθεῖν, οὐδὲ αὐτόμολον ὥσπερ ὁρᾶσθαι θαυματουργόν, κεκλημένον δὲ μόλις ἐπὶ τοῦτο βαδίζειν, καὶ τῇ χρείᾳ μᾶλλον ἢ περ τοῖς ὁρῶσιν ἐπιδοῦναι τὴν χάριν.

Cyril, *ibid.* 1.671, explains that the time of which Jesus speaks in John 2:4 is that of his manifestation through his signs: οὔπω γὰρ ἦκει, φησίν, ὁ τῆς ἀναδείξεώς μου καιρὸς τῆς διὰ σημείων [43]. Cyril also quotes the words of the demons addressed to Jesus, which he regards as a further testimony rendered to his divinity: μαρτυροῦσι χωλοί, μαρτυροῦσι νεκροὶ ἐγειρόμενοι. Δαίμονες μαρτυροῦσι λέγοντες· Τί ἡμῖν καί σοι Ἰησοῦ· οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ (*Cat.* 10.19)[44].

Notably, in one of the many passages in which he reports the demons' question to Jesus[45], Cyril also offers a paraphrase of it which clearly indicates the way he interprets this formula: as an invitation to leave them in peace. It is in a fragment from his Commentary on Luke

[43] Cyril in a fragment of his Commentary on Luke preserved by the Catenae (PG 72.633.32) also quotes the words of the demons addressed to Jesus: Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; commenting that these words are a sign of their foolishness and fear: δεῖγμα μὲν γὰρ ἀπονοίας διαβολικῆς, τὸ τολμῆσαι λέγειν· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; Δειλίας δὲ τὸ δέεσθαι ἵνα μὴ βασανισθῇ.

[44] Cf. *Cat.* 11.6: Περὶ οὗ μαρτυρῶν ὁ Ἰωάννης ἔλεγε· Καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ Πατρός· πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. Ὃν τρέμοντες οἱ δαίμονες, ἔλεγον· Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καί σοι, Ἰησοῦ, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.

[45] *Co. Io.* 2.95.19: Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ· ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ· ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; ὅτι μὲν γὰρ ἐπιδημήσας ὁ Κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστὸς κατατήξειν ἤμελλεν αὐτοὺς καὶ ποικίλως ἀνιάσειν, ᾔδεσάν που πάντως καὶ αὐτοί; *Co. Matt.* Fr. 101.9: εἰδότες, ὅτι τιμωρηθήσονται, ὥστε ὑπερόπται λέγουσιν· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί· ἔχει γὰρ λόγον μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ κριτής, ἀφ' οὗ παρέβημεν τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ; *De ador. et cultu in spir.* PG 68.429.7; Ἔα, τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ, Ἰησοῦ Ναζαρηνέ; ἦλθες ἀπολέσαι ἡμᾶς· οἴδαμέν σε τίς εἶ, ὁ Ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ; *Glaph. in Pent.* PG 69.401.38; *Exp. Ps.* PG 69.1145.5. Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί; Οἱ δὲ πάλαι πλανώμενοι καὶ τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν Κτίστην λελατρευκότες, ὀρφανοί τινες ὄντες κατὰ τόνδε τὸν κόσμον ἀνεπικούρητοι παντελῶς, καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν πλεονεξίαν ἕτοιμοι; *Co. Is.* PG 70.369.40; *Enc. in S. Mariam Deip.* PG 77.1037.32: φρίξαντας αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ φωνήσαντας· Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Ἰησοῦ Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς.

preserved in the Catenae, B f. 53 PG 72.548.54: Ἠλαύνοντο τοίνυν τὰ πονηρὰ δαιμόνια, καὶ δὴ καὶ πρὸς αἴσθησιν ἐνηνεγμένα τῆς ἀνικήτου δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καὶ μὴ φέροντες τὰς προσβολὰς τῆς θεότητος, τυραννικὸν καὶ πανοῦργον ἀνεφθέγγοντο· Ἔα, λέγοντα· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί; τουτέστι· Τί οὐκ ἐᾷς ἡμᾶς χώραν ἔχειν; "What to us and to you?" means "Why don't you leave us in peace? Why don't you allow us to have our own room?". The demons wish to have their own domain, separate from that of Jesus.

Hesychius too, in the fifth century, in his Homily 2 *De S. Maria Deipara* 8 quotes the demons' words to Jesus as a proof of the universal confession of his divinity: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος; Αἰδέσθητι ἀγγέλων καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ δαιμόνων καὶ πάσης ὁμοῦ τῆς κτίσεως τὴν περὶ τοῦ δεσπότου Χριστοῦ ὁμολογίαν.

Basil of Seleucia, on the contrary, still in the fifth century, sees in the demons' allocution to Jesus a sign of despise and the proof that they didn't know that in Jesus' flesh was hiding his divinity: Οὐ γὰρ φέροντες τοῦ παρόντος τὴν ἀστραπὴν ἀνεβόων οἱ δαίμονες· Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοὶ, Ἰησοῦ; Πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον τῆς σαρκὸς στασιάζουσιν, οὐκ εἰδότες ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ κρυπτομένην θεότητα. Ποῦ γὰρ ἂν πρὸς δεσπότην οἰκέτης βοήσειεν· Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; Περιφρονοῦσι τοῦ βλεπομένου, μὴ ὁρῶντες τὸν βασανίζοντα (*Sermones XLI* 273.13-16). Jesus' allocution to his mother in John 2:4, instead, cannot clearly be a sign of despise[46].

4.7. The Crucial Witness of the *Quaestiones et Responsiones ad Orthodoxos*

But the most interesting interpretation of the enigmatic question in John 2:4 comes from a passage of the *Quaestiones et Responsiones ad Orthodoxos* traditionally ascribed to Justin Martyr, but attributed

[46] In the sixth century, Romanus the Melodist, *Cant.* 18.10.2, quotes Jesus' allocution to his mother in John 2:4, but he is not concerned with the words Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί, but rather with what follows, Οὐχ ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου. He contrasts the exegesis of those who read this statement as indicating that Christ was subjected to necessity and time: Τοῦτον τινὲς τὸν λόγον πρόφασιν ἀσεβείας ἑαυτοῖς κατεσκεύασαν, οἱ λέγοντες Χριστὸν ὑποκεῖσθαι ἀνάγκαις, οἱ φάσκοντες αὐτὸν καὶ ταῖς ὥραις δουλεύειν, οὐ νοοῦντες τοῦ λόγου τὴν ἔννοιαν.

by some to Theodoretus, col. 485BD of the *editio Morelliana* = p. 140-141 of Theodoretus[47]. I provide both the text and my translation (italics mine):

> Ἐν τῷ γάμῳ, διὰ τὸ Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ γύναι; τῇ μητρὶ λέγειν, ἐπέπληξεν …
>
> Τὸ Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοὶ γύναι; οὐ πρὸς ἐπίπληξιν εἴρηται τῇ μητρὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἔνδειξιν τοῦ μὴ ἡμᾶς, φησίν, εἶναι τοὺς ἀναδεδεγμένους τοῦ ἐν τῷ γάμῳ ἀναλισκομένου οἴνου τὴν φροντίδα· ὅμως ἐκ πολλῆς ἀγάπης, εἰ θέλεις, ἵνα μὴ λείψῃ αὐτοῖς οἶνος, εἰπὲ τοῖς ὑπηρέταις ἵνα ποιήσωσιν ἃ λέγω αὐτοῖς, καὶ βλέπεις ὅτι οὐ μὴ λείψει αὐτοῖς οἶνος.

[Problem:] During the wedding feast Jesus, by saying to his mother "What to me and to you, o woman?", blamed her.

[Solution:] The words "What to me and to you, o woman?" were not pronounced by the Saviour in order to blame his mother, but to express what follows: "*It is not we who ought to take care of the wine that is being consumed during the wedding feast*. However, out of my deep love, if you wish, lest they fall short of wine, tell the servants to do what I say to them, and you will see that they will not fall short of wine".

The author is concerned with explaining that Jesus is not offending his mother because his words must be interpreted just as I am arguing in this paper that they should be understood: "What does it matter to us if they have no wine left? We should not care for this, we should have no φροντίς for this".

[47] Theodoretus also quotes the demons' question to Jesus in *Graec. Aff. Cur.* 10.44 (Ἔα· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; ἦλθες ὧδε πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς) and in *Co. Is.* 10.89; *De incarn.* PG 75.1440 (Νῦν μὲν βοῶν, Τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ; τί ἦλθες πρὸ καιροῦ βασανίσαι ἡμᾶς; νῦν δὲ Οἶδά σε τίς εἶ, ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁρκίζω σε μή με βασανίσῃς); *Interpr. in Ps.* PG 80.1377.36; *Interpr. in XII proph. Min.* PG 81.1888.40, and *Haer. Fab. Comp.* PG 83.449.6 and 83.473.25 as a confession of Jesus' divinity on the part of the devil and the demons, but he never focuses on the precise meaning of τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί.

It is patent that this exegesis strongly supports my interpretation. The author of these *Quaestiones et responsiones*, whoever he may be, took Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; to mean, not "What have I to do with you?", but "What does this matter to me and to you?", according to the syntagm τί + dative pronoun (+ εἶναι) already attested in Plato in the sense, "What does this matter to *x*?". This construct is still used in Hymn 66 ascribed to Romanus the Melodist, in the words of a pious person: φησὶν ὁ εὐσεβής, τί ἐμοὶ δολερὰ κολακεύματα; "What do deceiving adulations matter to me? Why should they touch me?"[48].

Indeed, that the expression τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί has two completely different meanings in John 2:4 and in other episodes where the demons address such words to Jesus, is made clear by Photius, *Ep*. 45.161[49].

4.8. A Revealing Attestation in the So-Called *Ephraem Graecus*, and Conclusion

Above all, the Greek translation of Ephraem the Syrian's *Sermones Paraenetici ad monachos Aegypti* is extremely interesting from the linguistic point of view, for it parallels two forms, one with τί + double dative separated by καί and the other with τί + simple dative + καί + nominative: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ τῷ κόσμῳ; Τί ἡμῖν καὶ αἱ πραγματεῖαι τοῦ βίου τούτου τοῖς ἀποθανοῦσι τῷ κόσμῳ; (*Serm.* 45.9-10)[50].

[48] And it appears again in the ninth century in Nicetas Ammianus, *Vita Philareti Misericordis* 137.12, but in a still different meaning: τί ἐμοὶ τοῦτο, ὅτι κατηξιώσατε εἰς πτωχοῦ καλύβην εἰσελθεῖν; Why is this happening to me, that you have deemed it worthy of you to enter the modest repair of a poor?

[49] Οὐδὲ γὰρ κατὰ τὸν ἴσον τρόπον ἐνταῦθα εἴρηται τὸ Τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; καθ' ὃν εἴρηται πρὸς τὸν ἐπιζητοῦντα διαιτητὴν αὐτῷ τοῦ πατρικοῦ κλήρου χρηματίσαι. ἐκεῖ μὲν γὰρ εἰπὼν τί ἐμοὶ καὶ σοί; καὶ τίς με κατέστησεν ἄρχοντα καὶ δικαστὴν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς; τῇ πράξει τὴν ἐν τῷ λόγῳ παραίτησιν ἐβεβαίωσεν καὶ δικαστὴς ἀμφισβητήσεως χαμαιζήλου καὶ προσύλου κέρδους οὐχ εἵλετο γενέσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ῥήμασιν ἀπαγόρευσιν ἡ διὰ τῶν ἔργων παραγραφὴ διεδέξατο.

[50] In Ephraem's *Testamentum* 428.5 there is only a quotation of the demon's words addressed to Jesus as an example of the demons' hostility: Ὁ ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ἀποστασίας αὐτῶν ἐκβοᾷ καὶ λέγει· τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ;

The meaning is: "What have we to do with the world? *Also, what do the businesses of this life matter to us*, who have died to this world?". The second form, with τί + simple dative + καί + nominative, which is most relevant to my argument, appears again a few lines later: Τί ἡμῖν καὶ ἡ ὁδὸς τῶν κωμῶν, μοναχέ; (*Serm.* 45.14-15).

Here we find the very same meaning and form as in Jesus' question: in John 2:4 there is no nominative because it is clearly understood that the subject is the immediately preceding clause, οἶνον οὐκ ἔχουσιν, and the datives are two simply because the persons to whom the thing doesn't matter are two, Jesus and Mary:

"They have no wine (left)".

"What does this matter to me and to you, Woman? My hour has not yet come".

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