

## NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

### JUPITER, AMPHITRYON, AND THE CUCKOO

The cuckoo, as the ancients knew, is a parasitic bird, and hence lazy.<sup>1</sup> Horace uses this meaning in referring to the practice of calling a *vindemiator* "cuckoo" if he has not pruned his vines before the spring return of the cuckoo (*Sat.* 1. 7. 31); extended to "silly" and even more derogatorily "stupid" is the meaning in Aristophanes (*Acharn.* 598) and three times in Plautus (*Persa* 282, *Pseud.* 29, and *Trin.* 245).

In later Latin further development as applied to human behavior took place; Forcellini<sup>2</sup> so defines *cuculus*: "hinc dicitur de adultero, quia ex alienis uxoribus liberos gignit, quemadmodum ille qui uxorem habens adulteram alienos liberos enutrit pro suis." From this sense through French the modern meaning of the betrayed husband is reached.<sup>3</sup> The biologically necessary sexual inversion from the action of the female bird to that of the male human is an easy and natural transition. The word retained its application to all three partners of the situation: husband, wife, and paramour. But there seems to be no evidence of this developed sense in classical literature, either of the medieval "adulterer," let alone the modern "betrayed husband."

The only passage in which the word appears even to have a sexual connotation is Plautus *Asin.* 923–24, where the *senex* Demaenetus is involved in (potential) sexual infidelity and could be (from the point of view of his son and the girl) considered an interloper, i.e., adulterer! One need not be too serious about this analogy since the girl is not married and is but a *meretrix*, but from the point of view of Demaenetus' wife it makes no difference! She calls him *cucule*. I would not press the *Asinaria*

passage as showing anything more than that *cuculus* may by Plautus' time have achieved some association with extramarital sexual behavior.<sup>4</sup>

Such an interpretation, however, may receive some support from consideration of several passages in the *Amphitruo* and in turn suggest a rather striking effect which, I believe, Plautus intended his audience to hear. The situation in the *Amphitruo*, of course, exactly represents the modern developed meaning, the cuckolded husband. In five passages various characters refer to the fact that during the "long night" Jupiter has been taking his pleasure of Alcmena: In the Prologue Mercury refers to them in the present tense, "meus pater nunc intus hic cum illa cubat" (112); Sosia in monologue comments on the length of the night as being suitable to dalliance with a girl (288) and Mercury, who is still unseen by Sosia, notes in a humorous aside that on that basis Jupiter is making good use of his time, "qui complexus cum Alcmena cubat amans animo obsequens" (290); Amphitruo and Alcmena are already at odds concerning his presence the night before, and she states categorically, "immo mecum cenavisti et mecum cubuisti" (735); later in the same scene she replies to her husband's question, "ubi tu cubuisti?" with the following, "in eodem lecto tecum una in cubiculo," which completes his belief in her infidelity (808); in the denouement Bromia explains to Amphitruo that Jupiter had revealed to her amid the thunder-claps, "is se dixit cum Alcmena clam consuetum cubitibus" (1122).

In each of these five passages the syllable *cu-* occurs twice (112 and 808) or three times

1. Aristot. *Hist. anim.* 6. 7, 563b and 11. 29, 618a. Plin. *HN* 18. 66. 3.

2. Forcellini, s.v. *cuculus*.

3. Old French *cucu*, *cocu*, *coucou*; also *cucuault* which becomes in English, with excrescent *-d*, "cuckold." The noun might refer to either betrayed husband or adulterer in French; in English, only to the husband; earliest use ca. 1250 *Owl and*

*Night* (cf. *OED*, s.v.). The verb may have as subject either wife (as in *Othello*, IV, 1, 211, and Dryden's transl. of Juvenal *Sat.* 6. 398–401) or paramour (*Merry Wives of Windsor*, III, 5, 138, and *Othello*, I, 3, 375).

4. Furlanetto added, with reference to this passage, "sed hic uxor cuculum vocat maritum suum qui cum filii amica eo praesente accubat."

(290, 735, and 1122); in 290 the repetition is in very close proximity: *cum Alcumena cubat*; in 1122 the third *cu-* is more distant, but the constant alliteration of *c-* maintains the effect until climaxed by *cubitibus*.<sup>5</sup>

It seems more than reasonable that the repeated harping on and close repetition of the syllable *cu-* was intended by Plautus to suggest aurally the sound *cucu*, and by association the bird cuckoo—and quite possibly the concept of marital infidelity, which is, indeed, the subject of each passage.

Although the circumstances are different, such a joke would not be unworthy of the writer with the *latranti nomine* (Cas. 34) who could make an inebriated swain deny his condition with the word *mammadere* (Most. 331) or suggest that a teeth-chattering sea-soaked *leno* hire himself out as a *manducus* (Rud. 535).

JOHN N. HOUGH

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

5. The evidence for the ethlipsis of *cum* before a vowel is so vague and contradictory that it would not be wise to assume the complete disappearance of the *u* sound in the *cum* of ll. 112, 290, 808, and 1122. Quintilian's discussion of the sound of final *-m* (Inst. 9. 4. 40) indicates, as does also Probus (ap. Gell. 13. 21. 60) that the final *-m* had some sort of a sound unlike either *m* or *n*. The difference of which

Probus speaks between *turrem* and *turrim* before a vowel clearly indicates that the vowel is not entirely lost, Marius Sacerdos (449. 6 K.) notwithstanding. Marius Victor (6. 16. 4 K.) supports the existence of an *m* sound, hence of the retention of a vowel. All that is needed for the present argument is that enough of the *u* be retained to suggest, with the other *u*'s the *cu-cu* imitation.

#### HERAKLEIDES' ARCHONSHIP AND ABASKANTOS' PAIDOTRIBIA

The year A.D. 171/2, in which James A. Notopoulos has dated the archonship of Klaudios Herakleides Meliteus,<sup>1</sup> is also the first year of the *παιδοτριβία* of Markos [Λεύκιος ὁ καὶ Μᾶρκος Μαραθώνιος], for in A.D. 173/4 Markos was *παιδοτρίβης* for the third year.<sup>2</sup> The date of the archonship of Herakleides, however, does not appear to be correct; or if correct, some adjustment presumably is warranted, because Herakleides was archon when Abaskantos Kephisieus was *παιδοτρίβης*.<sup>3</sup> This conclusion is reached from the appearance of the ephebes Πό(π)λιος)

Ἀΐλιος Λεύκιος Παλλ(νεύς) and Τελεσφόρος Μενεκρά[άτ(ους) Φιλ(άδης)]<sup>4</sup> in yet another document where Abaskantos is attested as the *παιδοτρίβης*.<sup>5</sup> Thus the archonship of Herakleides must be dated anew and a suitable year must be found. His archonship may not be dated before A.D. 165/6,<sup>6</sup> since Menekrates, son of Telesphoros and father of the ephebes Onesimos and Telesphoros, was himself an ephebe in 145/6;<sup>7</sup> but neither can it be dated after 168/9, because of the office of the διδάσκαλος.<sup>8</sup>

The archon Klaudios Herakleides Meliteus

1. "Studies in the Chronology of Athens under the Empire," *Hesp.*, XVIII (1949), 53 = *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2104, lines 1–2. All dates in the present article are A.D.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 53 = *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2103, lines 9–11.

3. The new evidence toward a reconsideration of the date of Herakleides' archonship was made possible by M. T. Mitsos' merger of *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2069, 2138, 2162, 2166, 2045, 2093A = *Arch. Eph.*, 1950–51, p. 37, No. 18. The *IG* II<sup>2</sup> documents had been dated by J. Kirchner in the *med. s. ii p.*, *s. ii p.*, *s. ii p.*, *post a. 136/7*, and *c. a. 165 p.* respectively. Kirchner was led to these dates by prosopographical considerations, and Mitsos' joining of the various fragments has facilitated matters.

4. *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2104, lines 7 and 11 ([φίλοι] / καὶ ἀνατάται [lines 4–5]).

5. *Arch. Eph.*, 1950–51, p. 40, No. 18, line 170: [παιδο]-τρίβης Ἀβάσκαν[τος Εὐμόλπου Κηφισιεύς]. Lines 175–76: Ἀἰ Λεύκιος [Παλληνεύς] / Θαρρηλ[ῶς Ἐκα[τομ]] (the demotic

being restored by the writer). Lines 179–80: Τελεσφόρος Μενεκρά[ / τοὺς Φιλ(άδης) Π(ανεύς)] (or Π[οσειδ]); both patronymic and month being supplied by this writer. The demotic should read Φιλ(άδης). The two ephebes were γυμνασάρχαι in the months recorded above. On Telesphoros, see below, n. 7; and on Leukios, see *AJP*, LXX (1949), 307, n. 15.

6. See Notopoulos, *Hesp.*, *loc. cit.* (n. 1 above), p. 29.

7. *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2052, line 41, and 2055, line 10. Sons: *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2104, lines 9, Ὀνήσιμος Μενεκράτ(ους) Φιλ(άδης), and 11, Τελεσφόρος Μενεκράτ(ους) Φιλ(άδης). Τελεσφόρος Μενεκράτ(ους) Φιλ(άδης) is the well-known *παιδοτρίβης*, who was in office from 205/6 (*IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2193, line 34 = *Hesp.*, *loc. cit.*, p. 53) to 223/4 (*IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2224, line 4 = *Hesp.*, *loc. cit.*, p. 54). In 223/4 Telesphoros was apparently in his seventies.

8. The known διδάσκαλοι in the sixties are Στράτων Εὐνόμου Παιανιεύς (attested as διδάσκαλος in *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2086, line 31 [163/4], and in *IG*, II<sup>2</sup>, 2099 [*latus dextrum*], line 38 +