

SPECIMENS FROM HERONDAS' ZOO

They are right, I think, who liken the *Mimiambi* of Herondas (or Herodas)¹ to the canvasses produced by Dutch „genre“ painters in the seventeenth century of our era.² Herondas too portrays not heroes behaving heroically, but ordinary folk behaving much as one might expect ordinary folk to behave. And, again like the „genre“ painters, the ancient mimiambist accompanies his human agents with appropriate beasts, beasts noteworthy chiefly for their humility. There are present in his choliambic verses no AEschylean rapacious eagles or hawks— and, for that matter, no timorous doves or hares to serve as their prey. Homeric four-footed *Raubtiere* are likewise out of the picture. The only exception to this rule may not even be an exception; for the lion whom the pander Battaros would cheerfully strangle, had he the strength of Thales, against whom he has initiated legal proceedings, exists probably nowhere, save in the imaginations of latter-day scholars concerned to fill in a lacuna between the letters λϵ and the letters οιμ in the text of *Mim.* 2,78 as transmitted by British Museum Papyrus 135, our sole authority for most of Herondas' extant verses.³

With what sort of animal life, then, is the Herondean zoo—or, better, menagerie—thronged? The reader of the *Mimiambi* will encounter cattle (3,68; 4,15 and 66 and 70; 7,119), horses (more precisely mares) (7,123), asses (3,27; 6,83), gazelles (3,19 and 65), goats (8,67), swine (4,15; 8,2 and 7), dogs (6,14; 7,63), polecats (7,90), foxes (7,72), monkeys (3,41), fowl (4,12 and 16 and 31 and 90; 6,100; 7,48), snakes

¹ Though the latter appears to have stronger attestation (see the ancient references cited by I. C. Cunningham at the start of the introduction to his annotated Herodas, *Mimiambi* (Oxford 1971) (my review will appear shortly in *AJP*) p. 1 (see also p. 2 ad init. and n. 1), I retain the nasalized form, whether out of perversity or because its distinctiveness ensures against confusion of the mimiambist with Herodes Attikos. The two authors are deliberately conflated by R. J. Walker, *The Academy* XLVIII (July-Dec., 1895) 228, whose formulations are effectively demolished by F. G. Kenyon, *ibid.* p. 252.

² See the final paragraph respectively of Th. Reinach's „Hérodas le mimographe“, *REG* IV (1891) 209—232, and of G. C. Richards' „The Mimiambi of Herondas“, *New Chapters in the History of Greek Literature* (edd. J. U. Powell and E. A. Barber) (Oxford 1921) pp. 112—120.

³ Whereas such possibilities as λϵων or λϵωι (accusative and dative singular of λϵως presumably) are recognized by F. G. Kenyon, who, however, prints θαρσεων λϵ . . . [λεγ]οιμ αν (see p. 19 of *Classical Texts from Papyri in the British Museum, including the Newly Discovered Poems of Herondas* (London 1891)), the restoration λϵο[ντ] ἄγγ[λο]ιμ' ἄν seems to have originated rather with Fr. Bücheler. See the text, but not the apparatus (where no information concerning line 78 is offered) of the latter's *Herondae Mimiambi*² (Bonn 1892). Cf. F. Blass' proposed λϵο[ν]τα [ἄ]λοιμ' ἄν (*GGA* 1892 (6) 233), accepted into R. Meister's annotated *Die Mimiamben des Herodas* (= *Abh. Leipz* XIII 7, 611—884) (Leipzig 1893), but with the rough breathing eliminated. Meister's predilection for psilosis (explained in the course of a mammoth grammatico-linguistic *Anhang*: see pp. 776—778 specifically) is shared by Cunningham, who, however, stops short of printing in its Oxford text any reading which features a lion. See his commentary ad loc., and note too his complaint that the reading proposed by Bücheler is often wrongly ascribed to G. Kaibel. (e. g. by O. Crusius: see the apparatus ad loc. to his *Herondae Mimiambi*⁵ (Leipzig 1914) (Crusius himself reads θαρσεων λϵως λ(ἔγ)οιμ' ἄν cf. Kenyon's reading quoted above).

(4,91), mice (1,15; 2,63; 3,76 and 85), shellfish (4,44), possibly even certain species of insects (1,15 and 57).⁴

Very few of these creatures actually appear on the scene, however—if, indeed, the *Mimiambi* are even intended for staging by a company of actors and attendant beasts.⁵ More often than not they are present only as a figment of this or that interlocutor's imagination. For example, Metrotime looks up at her roof and sees not a real monkey perched there, but her mischievous son Kottalos, whose position and whose antics call simian analogies readily to mind:

ἦ τοῦ τέγευς ὑπερθε τὰ σκέλεα τείνας
κάθηγε' ὄκως τις καλλίης κάτω κύπτων. [3 40 sq.]⁶

Similarly when Metrotime speaks of asses, those humble creatures are not standing patiently by to await their master's command, but are introduced *exempli gratia*; their care and feeding are considered a fitter occupation than literary studies for such a blockhead as young Kottalos:

... ὥστ' ἔγωγ' εἴπα
ἀνουν ἐμαυτὴν ἦτις οὐκ ὄνους βόσκειν
αὐτὸν διδάσκαω, γραμμάτων δὲ παιδείην [ibid. 26-28]⁷

I suspect that there is more to these two references than appears immediately on the surface. A monkey, after all, may be no less mischievous than Metrotime's exasperating son; yet it is likely to exhibit

⁴ On the identity of the creature mentioned at 1,15—whether mouse or fly—see the discussion below, p. 4.

⁵ A number of scholars have concluded that all speaking parts were assigned to a single reciter, who varied his voice and gestures to correspond to the personalities of the various characters portrayed. See, in particular, C. Hertling, *Quaestiones mimicae* (Diss., Strasbourg 1899) pp. 23 sq.; H. Krakert *Herodas in mimiambis quatenus comoediam respexisse uideatur* (Diss., Freiburg 1902) pp. 7 sq.; Richards, op. cit. (above, n. 2) p. 114 ad fin.; Cunningham, op. cit. (above, n. 1) Introduction (pp. 15 sq. especially: see also p. 119 and n. 1 of the same scholar's „Herodas 4,“ *CQ* NS XVI (1966) 113—125).

⁶ Here and elsewhere I quote from Cunningham's Oxford text.

⁷ What precipitated this particular suggestion was Metrotime's remembrance of how her son kept substituting the name Σίμων when he should have said Μάρων (24—26). I doubt that anyone would take seriously any longer R. Ellis' attempt to revamp Herondean chronology on the supposition that the latter of the two names denoted the Roman poet Virgil (P. Vergilius Maro and that parallelisms between the *Mimiambi* and the *Aeneid* (several of which he quotes, along with some correspondences of the former with lyrics of Catullus) are more than coincidental (Note on the Epoch of Herodas,“ *CR* V (1891) 457: see also p. 17 of „Aduersaria V,“ *JP* XXVIII (1903) 16—23). Whether or not Cunningham is right in pooh-poohing the notion of W. Headlam (see ad loc. the massive edition of Herodas, *The Mimes and Fragments* (Cambridge 1922: repr. 1966), whose completion was entrusted to A. D. Knox) that Μάρων no less than Σίμων was the name of a „throw“ at dice or knécklebones (cf. Eubulos, fr. 57 and the observations of that pioneering editor W. G. Rutherford (*Herodas, A First Recension* (London 1891)) I leave open for now. Still, Headlam's „and when the name [sc. Μάρων] is set the b. y. to spell, it puts the names of gambling throws into his head and causes him to spell another [sc. Σίμων]“ calls to mind Aristophanes' not so block-headed Pheidippides, so addicted to horse races that he staged them even in his sleep.

cleverness and cunning as well. And surely some of Kottalos' rpsanks are such as no mere dunce would devise.⁸ Moreover, whereas he is *compared* with a monkey, he is *not compared* with asses, only thought better suited to be the keeper of these proverbially stupid creatures than to attempt any sort of career dependent on easy absorption of book-learning. It may well be—though possibly to interpret thus is to read in too much latter-day child psychology—that Kottalos' misbehavior was a sort of signal to his overambitious parents that they were pushing him too hard in the wrong direction. Unfortunately Metrotime's flash of insight was only fleeting; in the end she turned sadistic and, dissatisfied with the flogging administered by the reluctant schoolmaster with the aid of some of the boy's classmates, vowed to continue vigorous corporal punishment of the much chastened Kottalos at home (94 sqq.):

In the fourth Mimiamb a number of animals gain attention only as pictorial representations executed by famous artists at the shrine of Asklepios. Yet Kynno and her companion, whose naive aesthetics seem to have had a counterpart even among the edncated, admire these art works precisely because they can beguile the spectator into believing that the figures in them are alive and in action.⁹

However, whereas the spectacle of a vulpanser's being strangled by a little boy,

. . . ἄ πρὸς Μοιρέων
τὴν χηναλώπεκα ὡς τὸ παιδίον πνίγει. [4,30 sq.]

— how like the lethal squeezes delivered by the infant Herakles to two snakes simultaneously!¹⁰ — is only an illusionary result of the clever application of paint to canvas,¹¹ I suspect, as did E. R. Dodds in rebuttal to Rudolf Herzog and others, that the reference toward the end of the same Mimiamb,

. . . ἔς τε τὴν τρώγλην
τὸν πελανὸν ἔνθεος τοῦ δράκοντος εὐφήμῳ
καὶ ψαιστὰ δεῦσον . . . [ibid. 90-92]

⁸ E. g. the covert references to gambling — if the theories of Rutherford and Headlam mentioned above, n. 7 carry any weight

⁹ I leave aside the question of whether *Mim.* 4 postdates or antedates Theokritos' rather similarly oriented fifteenth Idyll. Theokrit an preoccupation with the artist's success in creating an illusion of reality is demonstrated especially in the first Idyll's mid-section. Concerning similar illusory effects in the decoration of the cloak given by the goddess Athena to Apollonios' Jason see my „Δίπλαξ πορφυρέη,” *RFIC* XCVIII (1970) 17—36 (especially pp. 19 sqq., where Theokritos too is mentioned).

¹⁰ See particularly Theokritos, *Id.* 24, 54 sqq.

¹¹ Headlam, however, suspects that the work in question isi identifiable with a creation of the silversmith Boëthos, to which Pliny the Elder makes reference at HN XXXIV 84. Concerning various sculptural representations of this theme (some of which are reproduced to accompany the article) see R. Herzog's „Das Kind mit der Fuchsgans,” *JOAI* VI (1903) 215—236.

is to a real rather than to a bronze snake, to a real lair rather than to a treasury, to real food rather than to the insertion of a coin.¹²

What of Herondas' several references to mice? In one instance, at least (i. e. at 3,85, where the schoolmaster Lampriskos addresses himself to a frightened Kottalos), μῦς may mean, as I. C. Cunningham suggests, „a gag of some kind.“¹³ If so, perhaps the development of new meanings, even application to inanimate objects, or a term originally denoting an animal is comparable in this instance to the case of ὄνος which clearly meant „ass“ when uttered by Metrotime earlier in the same *Mimiamb*,¹⁴ but which at 6,83 seems to mean a millstone rather.¹⁵ In the works of other authors, moreover, ὄνος can denote not only a windlass, a wine-cup, or a spindle, but—returning once again to the animal realm—also a fish such as the hake, a woodlouse, even a wingless locust.¹⁶

Some scholars question even whether a mouse is intended at 1,15, where the old matchmaker Gyllis (or is „matchmaker“ too euphemistic?)¹⁷ complains of her dwindling strength. Does she really say ἐγὼ δὲ δραινῶ μῦς ἕσσον;¹⁸ Or has she likened herself to

¹² See Herzog, „Aus dem Asklepieion von Kos,“ *ARW* X (1907) 201—228 (pp. 205 sqq. in particular); 400—415. Thus far I have been unable to gain access to K. Meuli's similar conclusions in *Philobolion Von der Mühl* (p. 209, n. 6), save indirectly via Cunningham, w. o. clings — wrongly, I think — to the interpretation favored by the both over against that offered by Dodds at p. 114 (129) n. 66 of *The Greeks and the Irrational* (= *Sather Classical Lectures XXV*) (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951: repr. 1956).

¹³ „That 'mouse' is a popular name for a gag,“ Cunningham argues further in his note ad loc., „because of the resemblance between μῦς and μύω seems more probable than that there existed another word μῦς, etymologically connected with μύω and surviving only here.“ The latter theory was advanced by Meister in a long and learned note at pp. 699—701 of his op. cit. (above, n. 3).

¹⁴ More exactly „asses.“ See 3,27 (quoted above, p. 2).

¹⁵ That such is the meaning of the word here ought to be apparent from the fuller context of lines 82—84:

αὐτὴ γὰρ ἡμέων ἡμέρην τε καί[τ]ι νύκτα
 τρίβουσα τὸν ὄνον σκωρίην πεποίηκεν,
 ὅπως τὸν οὐτῆς μὴ τετραβάλλου κόψῃ.

¹⁶ So indicate LSJ s. v.

¹⁷ The alternative titles *Προκυκλῆς* and *Μαστροπός* are only dimly recoverable (especially the latter) from the British Museum Papyrus 135, a fascimile of which was published at London one year after the publication of Kenyon's op. cit. (above, n. 3). The former term is equated by Hesychios with *προμνήστρια* I find it rather amusing that LSJ, though they cite Hesychios as their only other authority, apart from Herondas, for the existence of *προκυκλῆς*, mention the equation with *προμνήστια* (as do generally the editors of annotated texts of the *Mimiambi*) not at all, yet define the former term as „procuress,“ the latter as „matchmaker“(!). Hence Richard Braun, for one, ought not to be faulted for labelling *Mim.* 1 (which he translates into English verse at *Arion* II 4 (1963) 58—61) as if „The Matchmaker“ corresponded to whatever Herondas had in mind. If LSJ are to be trusted — but at least some of the attestations are taken from Comedy or from the writings of Lukianos — *μαστροπός*, by contrast which can be either masculine or feminine, may be defined unequivocally as „pimp“ or „procuress.“

¹⁸ So O. Crusius, *Untersuchungen zu den Mimiamben des Herondas* (Leipzig 1892) p. 4. who follows the reading μῦ[ς] ἕσσον already printed (but without accents or breathings) by Kenyon. But see n. 19 ad init. below.

an even frailer creature, namely a fly ($\mu\tilde{\nu}\alpha$)?¹⁹ The British Museum Papyrus is rather equivocal in this regard, seemingly offering the latter of the two in the text, the former out on the margin. As it happens, this verse is transmitted independently in a quotation in Stobaios' *Florilegium*. That authority's somewhat garbled $\mu\tilde{\nu}\delta\varsigma \acute{\omega}\nu$ (116,18) is thought by some scholars, at least, to lend credence to the surmise that Herondas himself wrote $\mu\tilde{\nu}$ "δσον rather than $\mu\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$ "δσον²⁰. I myself opt for „fly“ rather than „mouse“ precisely because I think that it would be in character for Gyllis to see herself at this point as the analogue of the least creature imaginable.²¹

As for the proverbial „mouse in pitch“ to whom the not so confident pander-plaintiff Battaros thinks himself comparable vis-à-vis Thales (2,62 sq.: for the fuller context see lines 60 sqq.), there are those who scoff altogether at the rationalizing explanation essayed in Hadrianic times by Zenobios and resuscitated in the 1890's, but subsequently abandoned by Otto Crusius, who took the criticisms of Georg Kaibel and others too much to heart.²² In my own opinion it is quite possible that Herondas availed himself of the familiar proverb (employed likewise by Theokritos, for example),²³ yet at the same time engaged in some punning at the expense of Mys, the Tarentine boxer who triumphed—albeit with great difficulty—at the Olympic games of 336 B. C. The fact that the very next words after $\delta\sigma\sigma\alpha \kappa\eta\mu \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\sigma\eta$ (or $\Pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\sigma\eta$ = $\Pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\eta$ sc. „at Olympia“)/ $\mu\tilde{\nu}\delta\varsigma$ (or $M\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$) are $\pi\tilde{\nu}\xi \acute{\epsilon}\pi\lambda\eta\gamma\gamma\eta\nu$ would seem to corroborate such a thesis.²⁴ On the other hand, Batta-

¹⁹ Crusius seems to have changed his mind in this regard. For in his Teubner edition he not only prints $\mu\tilde{\nu}$? "δσον but also offers supportive parallels, as does Headlam, but more voluminously and possibly more confusedly. Cf. n. 21 below. Other editors who choose insect over rodent include Rutherford (who expresses some heitancy in his note ad loc. as to which choice is correct), Bücheler, Meister, and Cunningham, likewise P. Groeneboom, whose much admired *Les Mimiambes d'Hérodas I—VI* (Groningen 1922) was unfortunately never followed by a companion volume devoted to *Mimn.* 7 sq. and fr.

²⁰ See the various editions listed above, n. 19.

²¹ The supportive parallels mentioned, but not quoted above, n. 19 include Petronius 42,4 (*minoris quam muscae sumus*), even Chaucer's „I wol nat wirche as muchel as a gnat“ (*Wyf of Bathes Prologe* 347). „ $M\tilde{\nu}\delta\varsigma$ is also used as typical of what is weak and insignificant,“ concedes Headlam, who quotes the proverbial $\delta\delta\iota\nu\epsilon\nu \delta\rho\sigma\varsigma, \text{Ze}\delta\varsigma \delta' \acute{\epsilon}\phi\rho\beta\epsilon\iota\tau\omicron, \tau\delta \delta' \acute{\epsilon}\tau\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\nu \mu\tilde{\nu}$ (Athenaios XIV 6.616 D), an obvious forerunner both to Horace's *parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* (*Ars* 139) and to Phaedrus' somewhat more dramatic *mons parturibat, gemitus immanes ciens, / eratque in terris maxima exspectatio. / at ille murem peperit* (IV 23 ad init.).

²² See the apparatus ad loc. to Crusius' Teubner edition of the *Mimiambi*. His earlier formulations are to be found at op. cit. (above, n. 18) pp. 40 sqq., Kaibel's objections at pp. 56 sq. of „Sententiarum liber VI,“ *Hermes* XXVIII (1893) 40—64.

²³ Sc. at *Id.* 14, 62 (... $\mu\tilde{\nu}\delta\varsigma, \phi\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}, \Theta\omega\delta\acute{\omega}\nu\iota\chi\epsilon\iota, \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\mu\mu\epsilon\theta\alpha \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\sigma\alpha\varsigma$).

²⁴ Cf. Crusius, op. cit. (above, n. 18) p. 41, who quotes the passage from Zenobios to which reference has been made above, p. 4 ad fin. (emphasis Crusius' own):

$M\tilde{\nu}\delta\varsigma \delta\nu\omicron\mu\acute{\alpha} \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu, \acute{\omega}\varsigma \phi\alpha\sigma\iota, \text{Ταραντίνου πύκτου, δς ἐνίκησεν ἐν Πίσσηι}^{\circ}$
 πολλάς πληγὰς λαβὼν κατὰ κῦπὸ τῶν ἀνταγωνιστῶν τὴν ῥια Ὀλυμπιάδα. καί
 τις διηγούμενος περὶ αὐτοῦ ἔλεγεν· ὕσα ἔπαθεν ὁ $M\tilde{\nu}\delta\varsigma$ ἐν τῇ Πίσσηι.

ros is clearly victim rather than victor: the successful pugilist from Tarentum has more in common with the deliverer of the blow, Battaros' foe Thales.

I leave mice aside now (though those who gnaw on metal or metal-filings — figuratively at least — at 3,75 sq. might deserve more exacting study)²⁵ and turn to dogs—albeit to dogs whose teeth are exercised much as a rodent's would be. I. C. Cunningham is probably right in attempting an erotically oriented explanation of the shoemaker (and dildo-peddler) Kerdon's little riddle about the predilection of women and dogs for gnawing on leather:

... ὡς ἂν αἰσθοισθε
σκύτεια γυναῖκες καὶ κύνες τί βρώζουσιν [7.63zq.]²⁶

On the other hand, though he offers a cogent explanation likewise for κύνων ὑλακτέω (6,14), words uttered by Kerdon's lascivious customer-to be Metro,²⁷ Cunningham fails to capitalize on the likelihood that this hookup of canine imagery between two adjacent *Mimiambi* (keep in mind that Metro herself is the addressee of Kerdon's words, just as Koritto, upon whose recommendation Metro sought Kerdon out, is Metro's addressee) corroborates still further his already quite credible thesis that *Mimm.* 6 and 7 were consciously designed by Herondas himself to form a diptych.²⁸

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²⁵ Line 76 as a whole (οἱ μῶς ἁμοίως τὸν σίδηρον τρώγουσιν) is discussed but not really explained by H. H. Johnson, „On Herodas and Horace,“ *CR XXI* (1907) 233, who focusses rather on replacing the adverb with ἁμοίως (= κακῶς), which latter he takes as further evidence of Herondas' having, like his fellow mimiambist Cn. Matius, „drawn linguistic drafts on the land that was associated with their craft, Sicily.“ Only in passing do eshe acknowledge Seneca's proverbial-sounding *uenisti huc, ubi mures ferrum rodunt* and *quia Romae. . . mures molas lingunt* (*Apolokokyntosis* 7,1 and 8,3).

²⁶ Writing more than half a century after Queen Victoria's demise, G. Williams does not hesitate to bypass what Cunningham in a note ad loc. dismisses as „the contortions of previous editors.“ See Williams' „Dogs and Leather,“ *CR NS IX* (1959) 97—100, where an obscene rather than a purely gastronomic significance is extracted from Kerbon's proverbial quip. Cf. the bold interpretation essayed by Cunningham himself at p. 34 of „Herodas 6 and 7,“ *CQ NS XIV* (1964) 32—35.

²⁷ Cunningham in his note ad loc. understands this locution not as „I bark like a dog“ (cf. Headlam's „I act the part of a dog barking“), but as „I become a barking dog.“

²⁸ See Cunningham's art. cit. (above, n. 26 ad fin.). Cf. pp. 26 sq. of the Introduction to O. Crusius' and R. Herzog's bilingual *Die Mimiamben des Herondas*² (Leipzig 1926; repr. Hildesheim 1967).