

ON A FEW PASSAGES OF ARISTOPHANES' RANAE

In *Ran.* 970 the establishment and interpretation of the text give rise to difficulties. Theramenes notorious as an unreliable politician, who sometimes changed his faction, is ridiculed. He succeeded in avoiding dangers: *πέπτωκεν ἔξω τῶν κακῶν, οὐ Χίος ἀλλὰ Κεῖος*. It is obvious that the poet is alluding to the game of dice, as is made clear by *πέπτωκεν* as well as by *Χίος*, the worst throw in the game of dice². As to the word *Κεῖος*, no less than three readings are to be found: (1) *Κεῖος* which occurs in the majority of the MSS and in *Sud.* *θ* 345. (2) *Κῶος* which was put forward by Aristarchus. (3) *Κίος* which occurs in a number of MSS; it is also mentioned by Tzetzes (982,2 Koster) and was offered by Demetrius Ixion (as to Didymus, see below).

The reading *Κῶος* can be dismissed at once, for it was given by Aristarchus only and has no support whatever in the MSS. It illustrates the mentality of this great critic in an interesting way. A comparison with the evidence of the Homeric text and the Scholia makes it likely that Aristarchus now and again offered personal emendations which were not based on textual evidence³. This view is confirmed, I think, by our passage. Aristarchus, who was a clever critic, considered it to be his task to make a difficult text understandable. Now in the game of dice the *Κῶος* which was the highest throw (cf. *LSJ* s.v. *Κῶος* II) was opposed to the *Χίος*⁴. Therefore, he altered the text which now presented a satisfactory sense: Theramenes is clever; he is never a loser (Chios), but always a winner (Kōios). The false reading

¹ The following abbreviations are used in this paper:

Cantarella = R. Cantarella, *Aristofane, Le Commedie, Tom. V (Ranae)*, Milano 1948
Coulon, Ed. = V. Coulon et H. van Daele, *Aristophane, Édition, Tome IV (Ranae)*, Paris 1946
Duebner = H. Duebner, *Scholia Graeca in Aristophanem*, Parisiis 1877
Henderson = J. Henderson, *The maculate Muse*, London 1975
Koster, Tzetzes = Tzetzae Commentarii in Aristophanem, Pars IV, Fascic. III, Groningae 1962
K.G.B. = Kühner-Gerth-Blass, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*, Hannover und Leipzig³ 1898 (repr. Darmstadt 1966)
v. Leeuwen = Aristophanes, *Ranae*, ed. J. van Leeuwen, Lugduni Bat. 1896
Radermacher = L. Radermacher, *Aristophanes, Frösche. Einleitung, Text und Kommentar*, besorgt von W. Kraus, Wien 1967
Willems = A. Willems, *Aristophane, Traduction, Tome III (Ranae)*, Paris 1919

² On *πέπτωκεν* see v. Leeuwen 151 on *Ran.* 969 f. Radermacher, followed by Coulon, Ed., changed *Χίος* into *Χεῖος* – so as to secure an agreement viz. *Χεῖος* ~ *Κεῖος*: The emendation can be dismissed at once. A *Χίος* occurs in all the MSS as well as in Tzetzes and in Eust. 1290,1. b. *Χίος* (see above) indicates the throw in a game of dice; see also Koster, Tzetzes 982.

³ See M. van der Valk, *Researches on the text and scholia of the Iliad, Part II*, Leyden 1964, Chap. XI, and M. van der Valk, *Textual criticism of the Odyssey*, Leyden 1949, § 11. H. Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem*, Vol. IV, Berolini 1975, p. 76 (on *Ο* 307), takes the view that Aristarchus „eos codices secutus est, quos optimos existimavit”. I think he is right, but I am of the opinion that Aristarchus made equally subjective emendations; see also Gnomon 37, 1965, 532 ff., where Erbse agrees with my standpoint.

⁴ The fact is especially borne out by proverbs where the two throws are contrasted; on this point see Koster, Tzetzes 982.

has not, however, been accepted by the MSS⁵. In reality the comic poet presented a point that was even wittier than Aristarchus supposed (see below).

The reading *Κῖος* seems to be a more serious candidate *inter alia* because of the way in which it is attested (see above). I think, however, that *Κεῖος* offers the authentic text⁶: (a) The letter *χ*, so I think, was pronounced by the ancients as a soft aspirated *κ* and so the public could have hardly perceived any difference between *Χῖος* and *Κῖος*, whereas *Χῖος* and *Κεῖος* though beginning with nearly similar sounds contain vowels (*ι* and *ει*) that differ markedly. (b) Schol. Ran. 970 (320b36-8 Duebner) seems to attest to a reading *Κῖος* of Didymus; the latter mentions in this respect a proverb *οὐ Χῖος ἀλλὰ Κῖος*. The fact seems to be interesting, because Didymus wrote on proverbs: cf. e.g. RE V 467 f. — However, Kios is a Bithynian town — see RE XI 486, s.v. Kios. Therefore, I consider it to be unlikely that in Aristophanes' age Chios and Kios were contrasted in a proverb, for I can hardly imagine that the geographical horizon of the Athenians of those days was so vast that they were interested in a Bithynian town and made mention of it in a proverb⁷.

The reading *Κῖος* appears the more to be incorrect, because a satisfactory explanation of the passage can be given, if one follows the reading *Κεῖος*. It is obvious (see above) that the poet alludes to the game of dice and it is, moreover, likely that he refers to the contrast between the highest and the lowest throw. This is, however, done in a specific way, for in connection with this reading attention must be called to Plutarch. Nicias 2,1, who cites an important witness, Aristotle. The latter praises Theramenes, but says that he was less influential: *καὶ γὰρ εἰς δυσγένειαν ὡς ξένος ἐκ Κέω λελοιδόρηται*. A few modern critics take the view that this quotation in fact originates in the passage of Aristophanes. In this case it is subjective and attributable to a witticism of Aristophanes which neither we nor the ancients were able to explain. On the other hand, is it strange that Theramenes, as the quotation seems to say, should have been a citizen of Keos⁸.

It is true that politicians were taunted sometimes by the comic poets, because, so it seems, they were foreigners⁹. However, men of this type, like Archedemos and

⁵ The fact can be paralleled again from Homer, for one can state that readings that are, in my opinion, incorrect emendations of Aristarchus, have been only accepted by part of the MSS or were not accepted by them at all, see Valk, Textual critic. *Odyssey* § 5 and p. 179 (Summary). The passage of Schol. Ran. 970 (302b39 f. Duebner) seems to contain a textual corruption, for it is obvious that Theramenes was not by origin from the Doric Kos.

⁶ *Κῖος* was accepted by one of the most recent critics: Koster, Tzetzes 982 „*Contra genuinas lectiones Χῖος et Κῖος esse puto*”. On the other hand, Willems 75 as well as Cantarella 162 correctly read *Κεῖος*.

⁷ The proverb (*οὐ Χῖος ἀλλὰ Κῖος*) is never mentioned in the tradition which is, however, not conclusive, because for instance the evidence from Eustathius shows that the latter now and again mentions proverbs that do not occur in the Collection of Proverbs which have come down to us. One might think that in the Schol. a corruption occurs and that we must read *Κῶος*, because this saying is understandable. This solution, however, seems to be unlikely, because the Schol. in its explanation says *ποικίλος τις ὢν καθωμίλει τοὺς καιροὺς* which one might explain in this way: He sometimes personated an inhabitant of Chios and sometimes an inhabitant of Kios. In this case Didymus in fact confirms the existence of the above-mentioned proverb which, however, must be of a later period than the age of Aristophanes.

⁸ This explanation was accepted by Willems 75, n. 4. Cantarella 163 on Ran. 970 did not accept it and he was right in doing so.

⁹ Cf. Ran. 416-21 and 674-685.

Kleophon, were plebeians and belonged to the lower strata of the community, where suchlike irregularities, as the evidence of Aristophanes shows, sometimes occurred. Theramenes, on the other hand, and his father Hagnon belonged to the highest aristocracy, and so it is unthinkable that he was a complete foreigner. Fortunately, however, a notice concerning the same point has been preserved, for Schol. *Ran.* 970 (302b28-30 Duebner) says of Theramenes *ὅτι δοκεῖ προσγεγράφθαι τῇ πολιτείᾳ Ἄγνωνος αὐτὸν ποιησαμένου ὡς Εὐπολις Πόλεσω*. This time we are not confronted with a subjective and unfounded interpretation, but reference is made to a contemporary of Aristophanes, who, moreover, in his *Πόλεις* spoke about Athenian statesmen and also actually raised the question of humble or unlawful origin, as is borne out by a fragment dealing with the son of Pericles¹⁰. Accordingly, one can understand that in this play Theramenes, too, was mentioned and that comment was made upon his origin. In this connection I should mention that in practice the Athenians were not always strict on the point of citizenship. Influential persons, as one can understand, were in a position to bypass the laws. Thus Kimon was married to a wife who was not an Athenian, while Themostokles' mother was not an Athenian either.

Therefore, as I see it, the situation was as follows. Hagnon, Theramenes' father, was an Athenian who belonged to the aristocracy and who had an estate, as is clear from the sources¹¹. This Athenian, an associate of Pericles, was of course not a Cean, but it is likely that he was married to or had intercourse with a woman from Ceos, of which union Theramenes was the product. In this way the reference in the Schol. can be explained. Strictly speaking, however, he was not an adoptive son of Hagnon, as the Schol. says, but a son, who according to the Athenian laws was illegitimate, but who was made a citizen, because he was accepted by the *φρατρία* of his father. The case of Pericles' son by Aspasia can be compared. If this explanation is true, it can also throw light on the curious political career of Theramenes and his vacillation between aristocrats and democrats. By virtue of his family he belonged to the high aristocracy of Athens, but because of his birth he was, to all appearance, not completely acceptable to his fellow-aristocrats and so he was sometimes connected with the democrats.

The line of Aristophanes can now also be explained. Theramenes is a wily politician. He is never a Chios (a loser), he belongs to the winning side and is a *Κῶος* or rather a *Κεῖος*. So the poet succeeds in offering in one and the same word two hate-filled allusions: the craftiness of Theramenes and the latter's doubtful birth.

*

¹⁰ See Plutarch. *Pericl.* 24,10; *Eupolis* fr. 98,1 Kock.

¹¹ See v. Leeuwen 151, ad loc., where testimonies from Lysias and Thucydides are adduced. Hagnon is also mentioned in *Kratinos' Πλοῦτοι*; cf. also Goossens, *REA* 37, 1935, 425-9. In this play he is accused of being a *νεόπλουτος*, which, I think, is a slander which also Goossens, rejects. On the contrary, he is *ἀρχαῖοπλουτος*, see also *Gnomon* 46, 1974, 591. In a dialogue of Aeschines — cf. *Pap. Oxy.* 39, Nr. 2889 — he is one of the characters (with Socrates and Euripides).

In the parodus of the chorus where in ll. 416-30 three Athenians are ridiculed, ll. 422-30 in which Kleisthenes' son and Kallias are derided, must be closely connected, for they contain sexual jokes, a subject which was popular in old Attic comedy. The topics of homosexual relations and of relations with women are treated successively in the passage about the son of Kleisthenes¹² who in this relation is represented as a pathicus and about Kallias, a well-known debauchee and lady-killer. They are both connected with the battle at the Arginoussai (see already v. Leeuwen 74). The son of Kleisthenes, the pathicus, assumes the female role, for he is depicted as mourning at the tomb of his friend(husband) who has been killed in the battle¹³. In those times the role of the mourner was usually allotted to women, who are weaker and more emotional and who, as passages from the tragic authors show, are often represented as pulling out their hair and scratching their cheeks¹⁴. In the same way the poet makes Kleisthenes' son pluck the hair of his ... buttock, the place where he had sexual intercourse with his friend, and he makes him scratch his beardless cheeks (see e.g. v. Leeuwen 74, ad 10c.).

In the case of Kallias his masculine qualities, just like the female qualities of Kleisthenes' son, have been purposely exaggerated, for he is represented as one of the outstanding heroes of the sea-battle and as being clad in a lion-skin, the typical attribute of the greatest Greek hero, Heracles. The word *ναυμαχεῖν* is appropriate, because it indicates the erotic fight with women¹⁵; which leads up to sexual intercourse. The image and allusion have been continued, because the lion-skin consists of a *κύσθος*¹⁶, the female pudenda, which in a way cover the male genitals during

¹² The reading *τὸν Κλεισθένης* occurs in most MSS – cf. Coulon, Ed., and Cantarella, p. 98, App. cr. ad l. 420 – and is also presupposed by Tzetzets and by Schol. 288a53-288b2 Duebner. The reading *Κλεισθένη* occurs in one MS only and in Schol. 288a49-51 Duebner; it is accepted by Tzetzets and by v. Leeuwen. The reading *τὸν Κλεισθένης* is the original one to my mind, for the son had apparently the same faults as his father (see also rightly Cantarella 97, on 416 ff.) Kleisthenes himself was a well-known homosexual – see e.g. Dover, Aristophanes, Clouds, p. 148, on Nub. 355; Wilamowitz, Lysistrate (Berlin 21964), p. 160, on Lys. 621 –, who is also mocked in our play (Ran. 48). I think that the text was corrupted, because Kleisthenes himself was a notorious homosexual who has been repeatedly satirized in Aristophanes' plays. Schol. Ran. 288a49-51 Duebner which presents the reading *Κλεισθένη* may be of a later date because it contains the word *φαιλόβως* which in the Thesaurus of Stephanus (VIII, p. 681, s.v.) is only attested to from this passage and may be of a later date.

¹³ The sexual connotation of the names Sebinos and Anaphlystos has been rightly recognized by the Commentators (v. Leeuwen 75; Cantarella 97; Ussher, Aristophanes, Ecclesiazusae 212 f.) Sebinos is a fictitious character which may have been invented by Aristoph. himself, who years afterwards introduced him again in the Eccles. (l. 979 f.). The name may have occurred in real life; Pape-Benseler, Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen II 1356, s.v., only list the passages from Arist. He was of course the pathicus, see also Henderson 91 f.; Radermacher 205 has erred here.

¹⁴ I have treated this point in Studi in onore di Q. Cataudella (Catania 1972), 79 f.; see also *ibid.* n. 38, where passages are mentioned.

¹⁵ See Taillardat Nr. 182; Henderson 93 and 163. Perhaps *ναυμαχεῖν* also alludes to the sperm which is wet.

¹⁶ On the genitive (*κύσθου*) see Willems 113; K.G.B. II 1, p. 333 (§ 414e). I do not think that the text must be emended, as some critics assume – see Henderson 163 and the scholars he mentions. – In l. 428 *γε (καὶ Καλλιαν γέ φασι)* indicates emphasis – Willems 38, n. 3, wrongly combats Cobet here. – Perhaps the passages about Kl. and Kall. were sung by different parts of the chorus. After the passage of Kleisth. has been presented, the other part chimes in and says („You are speaking about Kl.), but you must rather (*γε*) hear about Kallias.”

sexual intercourse^{16a}.

One point is astonishing in this part. It is not strange that the battle of the Arginoussai should be mentioned in a play presented in 405 B.C. However, one sees that even the funeral of the soldiers who have fallen in the defence of their country has been made an object of fun by the comic poet. It is obvious that the public did not take exception to this mode of representation, an attitude unthinkable in our days which can be praised on this account. One may think here also of passages of the *Iliad*, where heroes pride themselves on deriding their dead opponents. Apparently, the ancients were more callous in this respect and were prepared to greet with applause a representation in which a lamentable and solemn event, such as the public funeral of the soldiers, was transposed into a comic-sexual scenario.

In connection with this passage I should also call attention to *Ran.* 501, where Xanthias has disguised himself as Heracles and says that he is as yet a *Ἡρακλειοξανθίας*, whereupon Dionysos says *ἀληθῶς οὐκ Μελίτης μαστιγίας*. The Scholia refer to the fact that a famous chapel of Heracles was to be found in the *demos* Melite. Since Xanthias is a slave, it is not surprising that Dionysos, even when praising the latter, mingles his praise with derision¹⁷. However, though the comic poets are bold in their representation of gods and sometimes make fun of the illustrious Olympians, there are limits. Moreover, the chapel at Melite was erected during the great plague of 429 B.C. and was dedicated to Heracles Alexikakos, who was considered to avert evil and who was said to have combated that plague effectively. For these reasons I find it hard to believe that this respectable heros or god has been held in such low esteem by the poet that for no apparent reason he is called a *μαστιγίας*. Moreover, the ancient critic Apollonios referred to the fact that the indication *ὁ ἐκ*, followed by the name of a place, is never used of gods but always of human beings¹⁸. Therefore he assumed that the poet was not referring to Heracles but to Kallias who also lived in Melite¹⁹. This point is corroborated by a quote from Eupolis who called Kallias a *στιγματίας*²⁰. It is likely that Kallias struck the imagination of his fellow-citizens by his eccentric and extravagant conduct. This is clear for example from the *Κόλακες* of Eupolis and from the passage we discussed above. Thus we may suppose that the Athenian public immediately understood the allusion, when Dionysos spoke of the „rascal from Melite”, i.e. Kallias. Accordingly,

^{16a} I should like to compare in this respect *Lysistr.* 80 f. The Spartan woman Lampito is admired by the Athenian women who say *κἄν ταῦρον ἀγχοίς*. The word *ταῦρος* can indicate the male genitals — ccf. *LSJ* s.v. and s.v. *λάστανρος*; *Sud.* τ 167. — The word *ἀγχειν* refers to the act of sexual intercourse, during which the male genitals are so to speak squeezed and strangled and losing their strength.

¹⁷ *Μαστιγίας* is a common nickname of slaves and it can also be used in a general sense: „knave, rogue, scoundrel”, see e.g. *LSJ* s.v. The word is all the more appropriate, because Xanthias is an impudent fellow who has not hesitated for a moment to impersonate a god.

¹⁸ See *Schol. Ran.* 501 (290b39-42 *Diebner*); see also v. *Leeuwen* 84. However, the other arguments brought forward by Apollonios in defence of his thesis, are incorrect and even nonsensical. See also *RE X* 1618, 55-8.

¹⁹ See *Schol. Ran.* 501 (290b34). *Cantarella* 107, note, also mentions Kallias, but he thinks that Aristophanes alluded to Herakles as well as to Kallias.

²⁰ Cf. *Fgm. inc. CXL Meineke*; see also *Radermacher* 217 who has called attention to this point.

Aristophanes with one expression, as he did more than once, achieved two goals: (a) He did not ridicule Heracles and could nevertheless say that Xanthias resembled a contemptible person. (b) He could poke fun at a well-known Athenian, whom he had derided shortly before (ll. 428-30).

If, in fact, this interpretation is correct, another proposition can be based on it. For if the public understood at once that a person clad in a lion-skin, who dwelled in Melite, was the same as Kallias, the latter must have now and again appeared in public in this dress²¹. If this is true, I think that the latter appeared in this way, because he wished to identify himself with his illustrious neighbour (Heracles). One must not forget that Kallias was one of the richest Athenians and belonged to a distinguished family which consisted, moreover, of Eleusinian priests. Now from the fourth century B.C. evidence can be found of human beings who wished to identify themselves with gods. We may refer to the well-known instances of Alexander and of his father Philippus as well as of Demetrius Poliorketes²². We also know that a contemporary of Philippus, who was like Kallias a private person viz. the physician Menekrates, dressed himself and his followers in the same way as the gods and even wished to receive divine honours (cf. Athen. 289a-f). Of special interest in this respect is the evidence concerning Lysander which dates from the last part of the fifth century and is accordingly contemporary with the Ranae. The latter received divine honours at Samos, while paean were sung in his honour (Plut. Lys. 18,5-7). This point can be corroborated by a passage in Euripides: H.F. 687-700, for when Heracles who is portrayed by the poet as an ordinary human being, is returning from the nether-world, the chorus sing in his honour a paean, such as are (so the chorus say) addressed to Apollo²³. So I consider it to be possible that Kallias wished to associate himself with a divine being which was perhaps less offensive, in this case, because Heracles was not a god but a hero²⁴.

Papendrecht

M. VAN DER VALK

²¹ Schol. Ran. 501 (290b36 f. Duebner) says in fact that Kallias was accustomed to wear a lion-skin on the battle-field. But this reference may be subjective and may have been only based on Ran. 530. Diod. 16,44 says that in the fourth century the Argive Nikostratos wore the club and lion-skin of Heracles on the battle-field. The situation is different in the fable, where the ass sometimes wears a lion-skin, see e.g. Gnomon 49, 1977, 415.

²² On Demetrius see especially Plutarch, Demetr. Chapt. 10-13.

²³ As to this point I should also mention Arist., Pax 917 *καὶ πλὴν γε τῶν θεῶν ἀεὶ σ' ἠγησόμεθα πρῶτον*, where a distinction is made. In Eq. 1338 Agorakritos says to Demos whom he has rejuvenated *ἐμὲ γὰρ νομίζεις ἄν θεόν*. In Plat., Euthyd. 273e, Socrates says to the two sophists (admittedly he is exaggerating): *σφῶ ὡς περ θεῶ προσαγορεύω* and he adds *ἄλω εἶτον* and in 293a he calls the two sophists as Dioskouroi to his aid. Homer already said *θεὸν ὡς εἰσορόωσω* and the Spartans spoke of a *σεῖος ἀνὴρ* (cf. Aristot. EN 1145a26 f.), but this did not imply an identification. Later ages showed less reluctance on this point. Thus Philostr., V. Apoll. 5,24, says of the latter *θεῶ ἴσα ἀπέβλεπον καὶ διεχώρου* (made way) *τῶν στενωπῶν ὡς τοῖς φέρουσι τὰ ἱερά*. As to Aristophanes' age I would also mention Alcibiades who had himself depicted in the arms of the goddess Nemea (Plut. Alcib. 16,7). It is true that in archaic pictures heroes are sometimes represented in the company of gods, but on this occasion the connection with the goddess is a very close one.

²⁴ On this point — viz. Heracles was considered to be inferior to the gods —, cf. also Valk, AntCl 45, 1976, 425 f.