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MISZELLEN

EURIPIDES, CYCLOPS 89

tεῦχη φέρονται κενά, βοράς κεχρημένοι,
kρωσσοῦς θ' ύδηλοὺς.

LSJ defines ὑδηλοῦς as “damp, moist” and so it would seem difficult
to defend the received reading here. To be sure, one might think that we
are supposed to imagine jugs so empty that they are no more than damp on
their inside bottoms. But how could Silenus, catching sight of the Greek
strangers from some distance, ascertain their inner condition? An easy and
obvious improvement would be ὑδηροῦς (= ὑδατηροῦς): Silenus observes
that they are carrying jars or jugs for fetching water.

If this emendation is so simple and yields such good sense, why has it
not been proposed? The answer appears when we turn to Aeschylus, fr. 44
Mette (96 Nauck ²) of Kabeiroi, which presents a collocation consciously or
unconsciously imitated by Euripides:

a.) Pollux VI 23: ...καὶ ἀληθῆς ...καὶ Ἀλεξάτηλος. “μήτε κρωσσοῦς /
μητ' ὁδηροῦς [μηθ' ὑδατηροῦς] / λα(ε)πείν ἀφενέοις δόμοιν”

b.) Antiatt. [Phrynichus] p. 115, 3 Bekker “ὑδηροῦς” πίθον καὶ
“οἰνηροῦς” Ἀλεξάτηλος Καβέρους.

Fr. 44 b seems to suggest that something is wrong with the lexicon.
Since the fragment is obviously describing jars for water and jars for wine,
this notice appears to establish that ὑδηροῦς can mean “for water” (and
consequently that the received reading of Cyc. 89 is sound). However Mette
fails to acknowledge that ὑδηροῦς is in fact the ms. reading reported by
Bekker and that ὑδηροῦς is Nauck’s emendation. Nauck gave no reason for
this emendation but faute de mieux I would suppose he offered it under the
influence of Cyc. 89. The reasoning is not compelling since ὑδηροῦς is evi-
dently not elsewhere encountered as a synonym for ὑδατηροῦς. On the whole
it would appear more judicious to leave the Aeschylean fragment as found
and emend Cyc. 89.

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1) Mette prints this word in daggers but it might be preferable to
acknowledge it as a v. l.