

AN ATTIC COOT FOR HESYCHIUS

Φαληρίς, we learn from Cotter (2014), signified not just ‘marsh bird’ or ‘coot’ and ‘canary grass’, definitions long known from Aristophanes, Aristotle, Galen et al., but also ‘phallus’, a meaning which nobody had noticed previously – and not merely ‘phallus’ but ‘phallus bird’ and even ‘a wanton male’ (p. 111). Cotter expresses (asterisked) gratitude to me for “email discussions on several points” in his paper (p. 105) – without a hint that my emails all were written to dissuade him from pursuing what I felt was a highly dubious thesis! The present note considers his reading of what is surely a corrupt gloss entry in Hesychius and – with collegial disagreement as protreptic – proposes a new supplement for that entry which may help to explain how the corruption arose.

Cotter introduces his equation φαληρίς = φάλης with an appeal to the manuscript text of Hesychius (= ‘Hesychius’ here and elsewhere below), s.v. φαληρίς: ὄρνις λιμναίος καὶ τὸ φάλης δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρ(ε)ῖον. Editors unanimously conclude that this entry is corrupt and posit a lacuna after καὶ τὸ, supposing that a second definition of φαληρίς (“coot: swamp bird and ...”) once stood before the new gloss word Φάλης (cf. Hansen / Cunningham 2009, glosses φ 103 and φ 104); ‘Coot’ and ‘Phallus’ then are simply lexicographical, alphabetical neighbours. Cotter however identifies the τὸ of καὶ τὸ φάλης not as the simple neuter article with missing neuter noun, but rather as the grammatical τὸ (LSJ s.v. ὁ, ἡ, τὸ, B 5) which, he says, will be “treating φάλης as a second lexeme under the gloss Φαληρίς”. As a parallel for this τὸ φάλης, he cites (n. 3) Hesychius’ entry on the francolin (Latte 1953, α 8177): ἀτταβυγάς· εἶδος ὄρνέου, καὶ τὸ ἀτταγᾶς. But τὸ there marks or draws attention to ἀτταγᾶς, not as a “second lexeme” of the gloss word ἀτταβυγάς, but as another form of the bird’s name, obviously with the same definition, ‘type of bird’ (εἶδος ὄρνέου). Similarly, in the entry on ‘lullaby’ (v 733), νύννιον· ἐπὶ τοῖς παιδίοις καταβυκαλουμένοις φασὶ λέγεσθαι, ὁμοίως καὶ τὸ νύννιος, the τὸ marks masculine νύννιος as an alternative to the neuter form. If τὸ had such a marking function in φαληρίς: ὄρνις λιμναίος καὶ τὸ φάλης, we should then, merrily, have ‘coot’ and ‘phallus’ defined as ‘swamp bird’! And the neuter adjectival phrase δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον would still be a puzzle. Emendation of the MS text – separation of ‘Coot’ and ‘Phallus’ – was imperative. Φάλης is a new gloss, and δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρεῖον part if not all of its elucidation. It scarcely needs to be added that Φάλης is a priori precisely the sort of gloss that the old lexicographers found interesting and inviting; we may compare its inclusion as a separate entry in the *Suda*, as gloss φ 50, after φ 48 Φαληρίς and φ 49 Φάληροι (Adler 1928–35).

While editors today mark a lacuna after καὶ τὸ, J. Palmerius (Le Paulmier) deserves mention for his vigorous argument (ap. Alberti 1766, 1491) that καὶ τὸ entails a preceding lacuna; a gloss word, identical to φάλης in meaning but of a different form, will have stood before that phrase: (Φαλλός, ὁ) καὶ τὸ φάλης, δερμάτινον αἰδοῖον (with αἰδοῖον for MS καὶ ἀνδρεῖον); the τὸ then functioned as it does in the gloss entries on ἀτταβυγάς and νύννιον. The conjecture is little remembered today. Despite Palmerius’ pleading, it seems improbable that Hesychius would have written Φαλλός, ὁ ... δερμάτινον αἰδοῖον and then, a dozen glosses later, (φ 115) Φαλλός· τὸ ξύλινον αἰδοῖον ἀνδρικόν.

The now vulgate lacuna, Φαληρίς· ὄρνις λιμναίος καὶ τὸ () Φάλης ..., is unlikely to be extensive, and a second, accepted definition of the gloss word might

seem to be the best bet for filling it. As remarked above, a second meaning of φαληρίς is ‘grass’: Galen 12.149 (Φαληρίδος τῆς πόας); Dioscorides Pedanius, Eurp. 2.112 (καὶ τῆς λεγομένης φαλήρεως βοτάνης); 3.142 (φαληρίς· καυλία ἀνίσθιν ἐκ ριζῶν); Pliny, NH 27.126 (*Phaleris thyrsum habet longum* ...). Accordingly, Schmidt 1862, 229 proposed φυτόν as the supplemental noun to follow καὶ τό. But φυτόν is semantically unsatisfactory – as Schmidt himself perhaps quietly suspected, since he confined it to his critical notes (“*Post τό excidit φυτόν*”). Hesychius’ favourite terms for ‘grass’ are πόα (especially) and βοτάνη, in contrast with the blandly generic φυτόν (‘plant’). Besides, it is hard to see why φυτόν should have dropped out of the text before the next gloss, καὶ τὸ φυτόν. Φάλης.

Since no suitable grassy term is available to fill the lacuna, καὶ τὸ (<...), and since consequently there is even less reason to suppose that Hesychius was any more interested than the Suda (φ 48 Φαληρίς· ὄρνις λιμναία) in giving a second definition of φαληρίς, I should like to propose a quite different sort of supplement. Hesychius has an almost overly precise lexicographer’s penchant for noting dialectal differences, even when such differences might seem to us to be so obvious as scarcely to require comment. Here are a few examples of his Ionic / Attic notations: α 6829 ἀπρήκτως / ἀπράκτως; θ 46 θαλία / 47 θαλίη; ι 883 ἴρηξ / ἴεραξ; κ 806 κάρη / κάρα; κ 3835 κούραι / κόραι; κ 3844 κούρη / κόρη; ν 212 νέην / νέαν; π 1250 περιήσομαι / πειράσομαι; σ 2965 σχεδίη / σχεδία; σ 2982 Σχερίη / Σχερία. Let me suggest, then, that in his entry on Φαληρίς, he included the Attic form of the bird’s name (which seems in fact to have been the more usual; cf. Gossen 1937, 121, s.v. φαληρίς, “*Meistens φαλαρίς geschrieben*”). The dialectal variant will have been marked or signalled by τό, just as synonym and masculine form are marked by τό in the entries on ἀτταβυγάς and νύννιον, quoted above. The lacuna may now be filled:

Φαληρίς· ὄρνις λιμναῖος, καὶ τὸ φαλ(α)ρίς. Φάλης· δερμάτινον καὶ ἀνδρ(ε)ῖον. With φαλαρίς and the new gloss Φάλης so juxtaposed, the loss of -αρίς φαλ- in our MS will hardly require argument.

New York

Archibald Allen

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