

NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

MARCUS AURELIUS AND MANDRAGORA

An interesting article by T. W. Africa in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXII (1961), 97-102, has assembled evidence which implies that Marcus Aurelius was addicted to opium. A statement in Galen's *De antidotis* (K. XIV, 3-4) is central to Africa's thesis. The Emperor was in the habit of taking a certain small quantity of theriac (δσον Αιγυπτίου κυάμου μέγεθος). When he discovered that he was getting drowsy, he had the poppy juice removed from the compound. When sleepless nights ensued he was compelled to return to the preparation containing the juice.¹ Marcus Aurelius took theriac as a general medicine, not exclusively in order to survive possible poisoning.² The antidote of Andromachus the younger (written in prose) used twenty-four drachms of opium;³ that of Andromachus the elder, four drachms, two obols.⁴ According to Africa this equals "about 286 grains of opium";⁵ of the recipe of Andromachus the younger "a *kyamos* (Marcus Aurelius' daily dose) would contain about .033 gram of opium, hardly sufficient for addiction."⁶ It is unclear from Galen (and from Africa's discussion) which formula for ἀντιδοτος Galen followed during the campaign on the Danube (to which XIV, 4 refers). Apparently one common preparation contained about six times as much opium as the other. Africa refers perhaps hyperbolically to the Emperor's insomnia as the "physical effects of withdrawal"⁷ and says this suggests a larger daily dose of opium than .033 gram. He may be right. But apart from Galen nowhere does he cite an unambiguous contemporary statement that Marcus Aurelius was ever thought to be under the influence of drugs. If such surmises were to be made by an ancient reader of Galen they would occur only

after at least the year 193, thirteen years after the death of Marcus Aurelius. For Galen refers in this book *De antidotis* to his preparing theriac for Séptimius Severus in 193.⁸ Dio Cassius, who is the other source for speculation about Marcus' daily dosages, was only twenty-five, newly arrived in Rome, when the Emperor died.⁹

I should like to suggest that there was current during Marcus' life a rumor that the Emperor was regularly under the influence of a soporific. In Lucian *Adv. indoctum* 23 we read: ἄλλ', ὡ κατὰ πύγον, οἷε τοσοῦτον μανδραγόραν κατακεχύσθαι αὐτοῦ ὡς ταῦτα μὲν ἀκούειν, ἐκεῖνα δὲ μὴ εἰδέναι, οἷος μὲν σοι ὁ μεθ' ἡμέραν βλος . . . (in reference to the Emperor). The translation by H. W. and F. G. Fowler of this passage is misleading:¹⁰ "And is the Emperor drugged with mandragora that he should hear of this and never know the rest?" Harmon is better:¹¹ "But do you suppose, you rotter, that he is so steeped in mandragora as to hear that and yet not know. . . ?" It has never been doubted that the Emperor is Marcus Aurelius.¹² Further, the date of *Adv. indoctum* is established. It was written after the death of Peregrinus in 165 and while Marcus was alive.¹³

Mandragora is more commonly referred to in Greek than in Latin literature. "The almost universal nature of these allusions is to its narcotic powers which were proverbial."¹⁴ J. André, *Notes de lexicographie botanique grecque* (Paris, 1958), lists μανδραγόρας under κικαῖον.¹⁵ Some call it *circaea*, because the root is held (δοκεῖ) to be useful for making philters.¹⁶ But it is its narcotic effect that is mentioned more frequently than its aphrodisiac effect in antiquity.¹⁷ Two other passages in Lucian refer to the soporific powers of mandragora. *Timon* 2: ὑπὸ μανδραγόρα καθεύδεις, ὅς οὔτε

τῶν ἐπιγορκοῦντων ἀκούεις οὔτε τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας ἐπισκοπεῖς. In *Veræ historiae* 2. 33, in reference to the city of sleep: κῶκλω μὲν περὶ πᾶσαν αὐτὴν ὄλη ἀνέστηκε, τὰ δένδρα δ' ἔστι μῆκρονες ὕψηλα καὶ μανδραγόρα. In connection with the passage from *Adv. indoctum* Randolph notes that it admits of two possible interpretations: "one might see here a reference to madness produced by mandragora: 'do you think him so mad that, while he hears this, he does not investigate your record?'; but it is probably better to understand a reference to lethargy; this of course in line with the other allusions to mandragora in Lucian."¹⁸

Perhaps not all of Lucian's readers were aware that a reference to a real situation lay under what seems to be exaggeration. The allusion is too open for it to have but the one significance, highly uncompli-

mentary to the chief of state. Rather, for those who know the secret, Lucian's question gains complexity. For those not privy to what indeed may have had but little currency, the statement still has the ring of gross exaggeration. But to suppose some degree of general knowledge of the Emperor's daily dose and its effects lends force and point to the question. One can conclude that it was not in poor taste to refer to such a habit, as it would be today to refer, even obliquely, to alcoholism in high families. Surely Galen and Dio Cassius, after their subject's death, were at no pains either to parade the fact or to conceal it.

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NOTES

1. Africa, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
2. See P. von Rohden, *RE*, I¹ (1894), 2307; Dio Cassius 71. 6. 4; Africa, *op. cit.*, p. 99, n. 18; the recipe he gives, the antidote of Andromachus (K. XIV, 107), is the mithridatic antidote.
3. Galen XIV, 42; Africa, *op. cit.*, p. 102, n. 78; it contained as well twenty-four drachms ἀρτισκῶν θηριακῶν which had no opium but rather were made from viper meat; see Galen XIV, 307. Neither of the two recipes with less opium (cited n. 4 below) uses these pastilles.
4. XIV, 107; cf. the elegiac version XIV, 32-42. Another, that of Antipater and Cleophantus (XIV, 108), has the same amount of opium.
5. Africa, *op. cit.*, p. 99, n. 18.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 102, n. 78.
7. *Ibid.*; cf. p. 99.
8. Galen XIV, 65; cf. Mowaldt, *RE*, VII (1912), 581. G. died around 199.
9. Dio Cassius 71. 6. 4. Little is known about the recovery and preservation of Marcus' *Ad seipsum* from which Africa draws conclusions about the Emperor's supposed addiction. Julian does not mention the book (see A. S. L. Farquharson, *Marcus Aurelius*¹ [Oxford,

1952], p. 120), and it certainly was not accessible while Marcus lived. Fronto (cited by Africa) contains nothing pertinent to this discussion; Julian is late.

10. Lucian, *Works*, III (Oxford, 1905), 275.
11. LCL, III, 203.
12. Helm, *RE*, XIII (1927), 1730; cf. eds. of Hemsterhuys, Reitz, Gesner, Lehmann. Apparently the identification of the βασιλεὺς of *Adv. indoctum* 22 with Marcus Aurelius goes back to Guyet.
13. Cf. *Adv. indoctum* 14 and 22; Helm, *RE*, XIII (1927), 1730.
14. C. B. Randolph, "The Mandragora of the Ancients in Folklore and Medicine," *Proc. Amer. Acad. Arts and Sci.*, XL (1905), 489. This is the fullest discussion of the topic (pp. 487-537).
15. André, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Cf. Randolph, *op. cit.*, p. 501 and n. there and on p. 502. See also A. Schmidt, *Drogen u. Drogenhandel* (Leipzig, 1924), pp. 53, 73f.
16. Diosc. 1. 570.
17. Steier, *RE*, XIV (1928), 1032.
18. Randolph, *op. cit.*, p. 510, note. Cf. Steier, *loc. cit.*, who also takes it as referring to sluggishness.

A THEORY OF THE LATIN SENTENCE

This paper attempts to present in as simple and summary form as possible a theoretical framework or model of the basic syntactical structures characteristic of the Latin sentence.

The sentence I define as the segment of utterance occurring between *distinctiones*.

Experience may dictate certain qualifications in order to exclude possible forms of nonsentence utterances, if such actually occur; but this definition should prove adequate for practical purposes.

My purpose is primarily theoretical; and I deliberately forgo, for the moment,