

THE COMEDY OF MUCEDORUS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649023813

The Comedy of Mucedorus by Karl Warnke & Ludwig Proescholdt

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

KARL WARNKE & LUDWIG PROESCHOLDT

THE COMEDY OF MUCEDORUS

THE COMEDY OF MUCEDORUS

REVISED AND EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

KARL WARNKE, PH. D.

AND

LUDWIG PROESCHOLDT, PH. D.

HALLE:

MAX NIERMEYER.

1878.

175.1 - 175.2

TO

PROFESSOR KARL ELZE, PH. D.

THIS EDITION OF 'MUCEDORUS'

IS INSCRIBED

IN TOKEN OF THEIR HIGH ESTEEM AND

SINCERE GRATITUDE

BY

THE EDITORS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE earliest known edition of the comedy of Mucedorus was published in 1598, with the title: A Most pleasant Comedie of Mucedorus the kings sonne of Valentia and Amadine the king's daughter of Arragon, with the merie conceites of Mouse. Newly set foorth, as it hath bin sundrie times plaide in the honorable Cittie of London. Very delectable and full of mirth. London Printed for William Jones, dwelling at Holborne conduit, at the signe of the Gunne. 1598. 4^o (QA). As appears from the words *newly set foorth*, the *Editio Princeps* of the play has been lost and we must now consider the edition of 1598 as such. A second edition, mentioned by Dyce¹⁾, was issued in 1606 (QB); it bears the same title as QA, of which it seems to have been a mere reprint. In the beginning of the reign of king James I, several additions were made to the play, and it was published again in 1609 (QC) and in 1610 (QD), the latter edition being entitled: A Most pleasant Comedie of Mucedorus the kings sonne of Valentia, and Amadine the kings daughter of Aragon. With the merry conceites of Mouse. Amplified with new additions, as it was acted before the king's Maiestie at White-hall on Shroue-Sunday night. By his Highnes Seruants vsually playing at the Globe. Very delectable, and full of conceited Mirth. Imprinted at London for William Jones, dwelling neare Holborne Conduit, at the signe of the Gunne. 1610. 4^o.

The scenes added in these editions are: 1. The Prologue. — 2. The dialogue between Mucedorus and Anselmo (I, 1). — 3. The soliloquy of Mouse (I, 2). — 4. The scene in which Anselmo com-

¹⁾ The Works of Beaumont and Fletcher, The Knight of the Burning Pestle. Note to the Induction.

municates to the distressed king of Valentia the reason of the clandestine departure of his son (IV, 1). — 5. The last scene of the play was amplified in QC by the introduction of the king of Valentia with his train just at the moment, when the king of Arragon has bestowed the hand of his daughter Amadine on Mucedorus. The introduction of the king of Valentia and of Anselmo who do not appear in the two earliest editions, at the same time made it necessary to raise the original number of eight actors (in QA) to ten (in QC). — 6. The epilogue, from l. 14, has been altered.

From this altered form of the epilogue, we learn the occasion on which the new scenes were added. 'A comedy', says the late R. Simpson²), 'by some poet unaccustomed to write for the company, had been acted at the Globe, and afterwards at court before the king himself. It was full of dark sentences for which the actors were delated to the magistrate, to their great danger. And on occasion of their being admitted to act again at court, they presented the old, inoffensive Mucedorus as their peace-offering, with an elaborate excuse for their error.' (Epilogue ll. 15—77.) R. Simpson then goes on to enumerate several plays of a scandalous character which were performed at the Globe between the publication of Mucedorus in 1606 and the issue of the edition of 1610; it is however difficult to say which of them had given the offence alluded to in the epilogue.

From the very beginning, the comedy of Mucedorus, probably on account of 'the merry conceits of Mouse', seems to have been highly popular. An allusion to this effect is found in Beaumont and Fletcher's drama: *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, first acted in 1611, in the Induction of which the wife of a citizen says with regard to her husband's apprentice: 'Nay, gentlemen, he hath play'd before, my husband says, Mucedorus, before the wardens of our company'. — Another proof of the great popularity which, for more than half a century, our play enjoyed, consists in the great number of editions still extant. Not even the period during which the theatres were closed, and in which so many old plays sank into oblivion, deprived the comedy of Mucedorus of the esteem in which it was held by the play-going public: for in

²) Pseudo-Shaksperian Dramas. In: *The Academy*, Apr. 29, 1876, p. 401.