

Ioannis M. Konstantakos

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

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The braggart soldier

Antiphanes, *Stratiotes*, fr. 200

(A.) ἐν Κύπρῳ φήεις, εἰπέ μοι, διήγετε
πολὺν χρόνον; (B.) τὸν πάνθ' ἕως ἦν ὁ πόλεμος.
(A.) ἐν τίνι τόπῳ μάλιστα; λέγε γάρ. (B.) ἐν Πάφῳ.
οὐ πρᾶγμα τρυφερὸν διαφερόντως ἦν ἰδεῖν
ἄλλως τ' ἄπιστον. (A.) ποῖον; (B.) ἐρριπίζετο
ὑπὸ τῶν περιστερῶν, ὑπ' ἄλλου δ' οὐδενὸς
δειπνῶν ὁ βασιλεύς. (A.) πῶς; ἐάσας τᾶλλα γὰρ
ἐρήσομαί σε τοῦθ'. (B.) ὄπως; ἠλείφετο
ἐκ τῆς Συρίας ἤκοντι τοιοῦτου μύρω
καρποῦ σύχν' οἷόν φασι τὰς περιστεράς
τρώγειν. διὰ τὴν ὄσμην δὲ τούτου πετόμεναι
παρήσαν, οἷαί τ' ἦσαν ἐπικαθιζάνειν
ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν. παῖδες δὲ παρακαθήμενοι
ἐσόβουν. ἀπαίρουσαι δὲ μικρόν, οὐ πολὺ,
τοῦ μήτ' ἐκεῖσε μήτε δεῦρο παντελῶς,
οὕτως ἀνερρίπιζον, ὥστε σύμμετρον
αὐτῷ τὸ πνεῦμα, μὴ περίσκληρον, ποιεῖν

(A.) Tell me — you say you spent a lot of time on Cyprus? (B.) Yes, the whole war. (A.) Where, precisely? Tell me! (B.) In Paphos, where you could see something extraordinarily luxurious, as well as incredible. (A.) What? (B.) When the king was having dinner, he was fanned by pigeons — and pigeons only! (A.) How? I'm going to ignore everything else and ask you this. (B.) How? He anointed himself with perfume that was imported from Syria and scented with the type of fruit, they say, that pigeons often eat. The pigeons were there, flying around, because of its smell; they could have roosted on his head, except that slaves sitting beside him kept shooing them off. But they stayed just a bit away from him, not too far in either direction; and they fanned up the air enough to make the cloud of scent just the same size as he was and not too strong.

Mnesimachus, *Philip*, fr. 7

ἄρ' οἶσθ' ὅτι πρὸς ἄνδρας ἐστὶ σοι μάχη,
οἷ τὰ ξίφη δειπνοῦμεν ἠκονημένα,
ὄψον δὲ δᾶδας ἠμμένας καταπίνομεν;
ἐντεῦθεν εὐθὺς ἐπιφέρει τραγήματα
ἡμῖν ὁ παῖς μετὰ δεῖπνον ἀκίδας Κρητικὰς,
ὥσπερ ἐρεβίνθους, δορατίων τε λείψανα
κατεαγότ', ἀσπίδας δὲ προσκεφάλαια καὶ
θώρακας ἔχομεν, πρὸς ποδῶν δὲ σφενδόνας
καὶ τόξα, καταπάλταισι δ' ἐστεφανώμεθα

Do you realize that you will have to give battle against men like us that use to eat sharpened swords for dinner and gulp down flaming torches for a side-dish? Then, after the main course, the waiter immediately serves us crunchy Cretan bayonets for dessert; and for dried fruit we have broken splinters from javelins. In place of pillows, we use shields and breastplates, and our feet rest on slings and bows instead of cushions, and on our heads we wear catapults instead of wreaths.

The parasite: glutton and factotum

Alexis, *Parasitos*, fr. 183

καλοῦσι δ' αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ νεώτεροι
Παράσιτον ὑποκόρισμα· τῷ δ' οὐδὲν μέλει.
δειπνεῖ δ' ἄφωνος Τήλεφος, νεύων μόνον
πρὸς τοὺς ἐπερωτῶντάς τι, ὥστε πολλάκις
αὐτὸν ὁ κεκληκῶς τὰ Σαμοθράκι' εὐχεται
λῆξαι πνέοντα καὶ γαληνίσαι ποτέ.
χειμῶν ὁ μειρακίσκος ἐστὶ τοῖς φίλοις

The younger crowd all nickname him “parasite”, but he does not care. He is like a silent Telephus at dinner, only nodding if he is asked a question, so that his host quite often prays the Samothracian prayers for him to stop blowing and calm down sometime. The lad is a natural disaster to his friends.



Aristophon, *Pythagoristes*, fr. 10

πρὸς μὲν τὸ πεινῆν ἐσθίειν τε μηδὲ ἔν
νόμιζ' ὄραν Τιθύμαλλον ἢ Φιλιππίδην.
ὔδωρ δὲ πίνειν βάτραχος, ἀπολαῦσαι θύμων
λαχάνων τε κάμπη, πρὸς τὸ μὴ λοῦσθαι ῥύπος,
ὑπαίθριος χειμῶνα διάγειν κόψιχος,
πνῖγος ὑπομεῖναι καὶ μεσημβρίας λαλεῖν
τέττιξ, ἐλαίῳ μήτε χρῆσθαι μήθ' ὄραν
κονιορτός, ἀνυπόδητος ὄρθρου περιπατεῖν
γέρανος, καθεύδειν μηδὲ μικρὸν νυκτερίς

When it comes to starving or eating nothing, you'd think you were looking at Tithymallus or Philippides. For drinking water, I am a frog; for feeding myself on thyme and greens I am a caterpillar; at nonbathing, I am filth itself, at staying outdoors in winter, a crow; at chattering happily in the noonday heat, a cicada; for total abstinence from body oil, a dust storm; at walking outside in the morning without shoes, a crane; at not sleeping a wink, a bat.

The hetaira: kind-heartedness and cajoling wiles

Antiphanes, *Hydria*, fr. 210

οὔτος δ' ὄν λέγω
ἐν γειτόνων αὐτῷ κατοικούσης τινὸς
ιδὼν ἑταίρας εἰς ἔρωτ' ἀφίκετο,
ἀστῆς, ἐρήμου δ' ἐπιτρόπου καὶ συγγενῶν,
ἦθος τι χρυσοῦν πρὸς ἀρετὴν κεκτημένης,
ὄντως ἑταίρας· αἱ μὲν ἄλλαι τοῦνομα
βλάπτουσι τοῖς τρόποις γὰρ ὄντως ὄν καλόν

This man I am speaking of saw a girl living there in his neighbourhood and fell in love with her. She was a hetaira, of citizen birth, though deprived of guardian and kinsmen. But she had a golden character, full of virtue; she was a true hetaira. For all the other women of this class spoil by their manners that name which is really so fair.

Anaxilas, *Neottis*, fr. 21

ἐὰν δέ τις μέτρια † καὶ λέγουσα
τοῖς δεομένοις τινῶν ὑπουργῆ πρὸς χάριν,
ἐκ τῆς ἑταιρείας ἑταίρα τοῦνομα
προσηγορεύθη. καὶ σὺ νῦν οὐχ ὡς λέγεις
πόρνης, ἑταίρας δ' εἰς ἔρωτα τυγχάνεις
ἐλληλυθῶς ἄρ' ὡς ἀληθῶς· ἔστι γοῦν
ἀπλῆ τις. (B) ἀστεία μὲν οὖν, νῆ τὸν Δία

(A.) But if a girl talks moderately and offers her services as a favour to those who ask for certain things, from the act of companionship she gets the name of hetaira. So also with you now: the girl with whom you have fallen in love is not a prostitute, as you call her, but a hetaira, true to her name. For indeed she is a frank person. (B) Yes, by God, she is a real lady!

Antiphanes, *Agroikos or Boutalion*, fr. 69

(ΕΤΑΙΡΑ) καὶ μὴν ἐστιάσω τήμερον
ὕμας ἐγώ· σὺ δ' ἀγοράσεις ἡμῖν λαβών,
Πίστ', ἀργύριον. (ΠΙΣΤΟΣ) ἄλλως γὰρ οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι
χρηστῶς ἀγοράζειν. (ΕΤ.) φράζε δή, φιλούμενε,
ὄψω τίτι χαίρεις; (ΑΓΡΟΙΚΟΣ) πᾶσι. (ΕΤ.) καθ' ἕκαστον λέγε·
ἰχθὺν τίν' ἠδέως φάγοις ἄν; (ΑΓΡ.) εἰς ἀγρὸν
ἦλθεν φέρων ποτ' ἰχθυοπώλης μαινίδας
καὶ τριγλίδας, καὶ νῆ Δί' ἤρρεσεν σφόδρα
ἡμῖν ἅπασιν. (ΕΤ.) εἶτα καὶ νῦν, εἶπέ μοι,
τούτων φάγοις ἄν; (ΑΓΡ.) κἂν τις ἄλλος μικρὸς ἦ·
τοὺς γὰρ μεγάλους τούτους ἅπαντας νενόμικα
ἀνθρωποφάγους ἰχθυῶς. (ΕΤ.) τί φῆς, ὦ φίλτατε;
ἀνθρωποφάγους, πῶς; (ΠΙΣΤ.) οὗς <ἄν> ἀνθρωπος φάγοι,
δῆλον ὅτι· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν Ἑλένης βρώματα,
ἃ φησιν οὔτος, μαινίδας καὶ τριγλίδας

(HETAIRA) Well and truly today shall I feast you. You there, Pistos, do some shopping after taking money. (PISTOS) That is the only way I know how to shop decently. (HET.) Tell me, my good man, what food do you like? (RUSTIC) Everything. (HET.) Tell me in detail: what fish would you like to eat? (RU.) Once a fish seller came to our farm bringing sprats and mini-mullets; by Zeus, we all liked them a lot. (HET.) So you would like to eat some of them, then? (RU.) And anything else that is small. All these great big ones must be man-eaters, I'm sure. (HET.) What do you mean, my fine fellow? How "man-eaters"? (PIST.) Obviously he means any fish that a man might really eat. The stuff this guy wants, mini-mullets and sprats, that is the diet of a Helen!

The *mala meretrix*: a voracious monster

Anaxilas, *Neottis*, fr. 22

ὅστις ἀνθρώπων ἑταίραν ἠγάπησε πώποτε,
οὗ γένος τίς ἂν δύναίτο παρανομώτερον φράσαι;
τίς γὰρ ἢ δράκαιν' ἄμεικτος, ἢ Χίμαιρα πύρπνοος,
ἢ Χάρυβδις, ἢ τρίκρανος Σκύλλα, ποντία κύων,
Σφίγξ, Ὕδρα, λέαινα, ἔχιδνα, πτηνά θ' Ἀρπυϊῶν γένη,
εἰς ὑπερβολὴν ἀφίκται τοῦ καταπτύστου γένους;
οὐκ ἔνεσθ'· αὐταὶ δ' ἀπάντων ὑπερέχουσι τῶν κακῶν.
ἔστι δὲ σκοπεῖν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πρῶτα μὲν τὴν Πλαγγόνα,
ἣτις ὥσπερ ἡ Χίμαιρα πυρπολεῖ τοὺς βαρβάρους.
εἷς μόνος δ' ἵππεύς τις αὐτῆς τὸν βίον παρείλετο·
πάντα τὰ σκευὴ γὰρ ἔλκων ὄχετ' ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας.
οἱ Σινώπη δ' αὖ συνόντες οὐχ Ὕδρα σύνεισι νῦν;
γραῦς μὲν αὕτη, παραπέφυκε δ' ἡ Γνάθαινα πλησίον·
ὥστ' ἀπαλλαγείσι ταύτης ἔστι διπλάσιον κακόν.
ἡ δὲ Νάννιον τί νυνὶ διαφέρειν Σκύλλης δοκεῖ;
οὐ δὴ ἀποπνίξασ' ἑταίρους τὸν τρίτον θηρεύεται
ἔτι λαβεῖν; ἀλλ' ἐξέπεσε ἄπορθμις ἐλατίνῳ πλάτη.
ἡ δὲ Φρύνη τὴν Χάρυβδιν οὐχὶ πόρρω που ποιεῖ,
τόν τε ναύκληρον λαβοῦσα καταπέπωκ' αὐτῷ σκάφει;
ἡ Θεανῶ δ' οὐχὶ Σειρήν ἔστιν ἀποτετιλμένη;
βλέμμα καὶ φωνὴ γυναικός, τὰ σκέλη δὲ κομήχου.
Σφίγγα Θηβαίαν δὲ πάσας ἔστι τὰς πόρνas καλεῖν,
αἱ λαλοῦσ' ἀπλῶς μὲν οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἐν αἰνιγμοῖς τισιν,
ὡς ἐρῶσι καὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ σύνεισιν ἠδέως.
εἶτα “τετράπους μοι γένοιτο”, φησί, ἄ“τήνπρος ἢ θρόνος”·
εἶτα δὴ “τρίπους τις”, εἶτα, φησί, “παιδίσκη δίπους”·
εἶθ' ὁ μὲν γνοὺς ταῦτ' ἀπῆλθεν εὐθύς ὥσπερ Οἰδίπους,
οὐδ' ἰδεῖν δόξας ἐκείνην, σφάζεται δ' ἄκων μόνος.
οἱ δ' ἐρᾶσθαι προσδοκῶντες εὐθύς εἰσιν ἠρμένοι,
καὶ φέρονθ' ὑποῦ πρὸς αἴθραν. συντεμόντι δ' οὐδὲ ἔν
ἔσθ' ἑταίρας ὅσα πέρ ἔστιν θηρί' ἐξωλέστερον

If any man has ever loved a prostitute, who couldn't fail to name a more lawless form of life? What fire-breathing Chimaera, of Charybdis, or three-headed Scylla, dog of the sea, Hydra, lioness, viper, winged race of Harpies, or plain old dragonness, has ever topped this detestable species? It's inadmissible. These women surpass all evils.

We can start out review with Plangon first, who sets foreigners alight like the Chimaera. Only a single horseman robbed her of her life, who left after tearing all her furnishings out of her house. And those who keep company with Sinope, aren't they with a present-day Hydra? She is a hag, and Gnathaena is close by, so that those who escape the one face a second danger. Or Nannion, how is she any different from Scylla? After choking the life out of two companions, isn't she on the trail of the third? But the ἄpassage with a pine oar failed! And Phryne, doesn't she act close to Charybdis, seizing the sea captain and drowning him boat and all? And isn't Theano like a plucked Siren? The voice and face of a woman, the legs of a crow.

And you could call all these whores Theban Sphinxes, since they never say anything straight but talk of lovemaking and kissing and sex in sort of riddles: first “I want the four-foot”, then she says “ἄat the . . . a chair”, then a “three-foot”, then she says “a girlie on two feet”. Anyone who understands this, like Oedipus, goes away, pretending not to see her and being the only one to escape, reluctantly, alive. But the others, who expect sex, are immediately raised up and carried off to the clouds. In sum, of all the beasts there is none more deadly than a prostitute.

The *mala meretrix*: cosmetics and deceit

Alexis, *Isostasion*, fr. 103

πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ πρὸς τὸ κέρδος καὶ τὸ συλᾶν τοὺς πέλας
πάντα τᾶλλ' αὐταῖς πάρεργα γίνεται· ῥάπτουσι δὲ
πᾶσιν ἐπιβουλάς. ἐπειδὴν δ' εὐπορήσωσιν ποτε,
ἀνέλαβον καινὰς ἐταίρας, πρωτοπείρους τῆς τέχνης·
εὐθὺς ἀναπλάττουσι ταύτας, ὥστε μήτε τοὺς τρόπους
μήτε τὰς ὄψεις ὁμοίας διατελεῖν οὐσας ἔτι.
τυγχάνει μικρά τις οὖσα, φελλὸς ἐν ταῖς βαυκίσιν
ἐγκεκάττυται. μακρά τις· διάβαθρον λεπτὸν φορεῖ
τὴν τε κεφαλὴν ἐπὶ τὸν ὤμον καταβαλοῦσ' ἐξέρχεται·
τοῦτο τοῦ μήκους ἀφεῖλεν. οὐκ ἔχει τις ἰσχία·
ὑπενέδυσ' ἔρραμμέν' αὐτήν, ὥστε τὴν εὐπυγίαν
ἀναβοᾶν τοὺς εἰσιδόντας. κοιλίαν ἀδρὰν ἔχει·
στηθί' ἔστ' αὐταῖσι τούτων ὧν ἔχουσ' οἱ κωμικοί·
ὀρθὰ προσθεῖσαι τοιαῦτα τοῦνδυτον τῆς κοιλίας
ὥσπερ εἰ κοντοῖσι τούτοις εἰς τὸ πρόσθ' ἀπήγαγον.
τὰς ὀφρῦς πυρρὰς ἔχει τις· ζωγραφοῦσιν ἀσβόλω.
συμβέβηκ' εἶναι μέλαιναν· κατέπλασε ψιμυθίῳ.
λευκόχρως λίαν τίς ἐστι· παιδέρωτ' ἐντρίβεται.
καλὸν ἔχει τοῦ σώματός τι· τοῦτο γυμνὸν δείκνυται.
εὐφυεῖς ὀδόντας ἔσχεν· ἐξ ἀνάγκης δεῖ γελᾶν,
ἵνα θεωρῶσ' οἱ παρόντες τὸ στόμ' ὡς κομψὸν φορεῖ.
ἂν δὲ μὴ χαίρη γελῶσα, διατελεῖ τὴν ἡμέραν
ἔνδον, ὥσπερ τοῖς μαγεῖροις ἃ παράκειθ' ἐκάστοτε,
ἥνικ' ἂν πωλῶσιν αἰγῶν κρανία, ξυλήφιον
μυρρίνης ἔχουσα λεπτὸν ὀρθὸν ἐν τοῖς χεῖλεσιν·
ὥστε τῷ χρόνῳ σέσηρεν, ἂν τε βούλητ' ἂν τε μή

Now first of all, for courtesans everything else takes
second place to profit and fleecing their neighbors, and
they plot against everybody. Whenever they prosper,
they take on new courtesans, apprentices at the trade.
At once they remodel these women, so that neither
their manners nor their faces remain the same. One
woman is so short: a cork lift is stitched into her shoes.
One is tall: she wears thin slippers and goes out with
her head nodding on her shoulder; that trims her
height. One has no hips: she pads her underwear, so
that the onlookers cry, "What a great bottom!" She has
got a potbelly? They have the sort of breasts the comic
actors use; by pushing them straight out like this, they
swing the dress out away from the stomach as if with
barge poles. One woman has red eyebrows: they paint
them with lampblack. She happens to be dark? Plaster
her with white lead. She is too light-skinned? Rub on a
little rouge. Some part of her body has real beauty?
Show it naked. If she has well-formed teeth, she
absolutely must smile, so that everyone there can see
how elegant her mouth is. If she doesn't like to smile,
she spends her day inside, just like those displays at
cookshops, whenever they sell goat's heads, holding a
nice straight piece of myrrh wood in her jaws: that
way she will grin in time, whether she wants to or not.

The young lover: desire and sentiment

Alexis, *Phaidros*, fr. 247

πορευομένῳ δ' ἐκ Πειραιῶς ὑπὸ τῶν κακῶν
καὶ τῆς ἀπορίας φιλοσοφεῖν ἐπήλθέ μοι.
καί μοι δοκοῦσιν ἀγνοεῖν οἱ ζωγράφοι
τὸν Ἔρωτα, συντομώτατον δ' εἰπεῖν, ὅσοι
τοῦ δαίμονος τούτου ποιοῦσιν εἰκόνας.
ἔστιν γὰρ οὔτε θῆλυς οὔτ' ἄρσιν, πάλιν
οὔτε θεὸς οὔτ' ἄνθρωπος, οὔτ' ἀβέλτερος
οὔτ' αὔθις ἔμφρων, ἀλλὰ συνενηγεμένος
πανταχόθεν, ἐνὶ τύπῳ τε πόλλ' εἶδη φέρων.
ἢ τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἀνδρός, ἢ δὲ δειλία
γυναικός, ἢ δ' ἄνοια μανίας, ὁ δὲ λόγος
φρονοῦντος, ἢ σφοδρότης δὲ θηρός, ὁ δὲ πόνος
ἀδάμαντος, ἢ φιλοτιμία δὲ δαίμονος.
καὶ ταῦτ' ἐγώ, μὰ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν καὶ θεοῦς,
οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τι ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἔχει γέ τι
τοιοῦτον, ἐγγύς τ' εἰμι τοῦνόματος

As I was coming from the Peiraeus, it occurred to me to philosophize about my troubles and confusion. They seem ignorant to me, in short, these artists of Eros, when they make images of this god. It's neither female nor male, nor again god or human, neither stupid nor wise, but put together from everywhere, supporting many forms in one shape. It has the courage of a man, but a woman's timidity, the confusion of madness, but the logic of sense, a beast's violence, but the endurance of steel, and a divine pride. And these things — by Athena and the gods! I don't know exactly what it is, but nonetheless it's something like this, and I'm close to naming it.

Eubulus, *Kampylon*, fr. 40

τίς ἦν ὁ γράψας πρῶτος ἀνθρώπων ἄρα
ἢ κηροπλαστήσας Ἔρωθ' ὑπόπτερον;
ὡς οὐδὲν ἦδει πλὴν χελιδόνας γράφειν,
ἀλλ' ἦν ἄπειρος τῶν τρόπων τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ.
ἔστιν γὰρ οὔτε κοῦφος, οὔτε ῥάδιος
ἀπαλλαγῆναι τῷ φέροντι τὴν νόσον,
βαρὺς δὲ κομιδῆ. πῶς ἂν οὖν ἔχοι πτερὰ
τοιοῦτο πρᾶγμα; λῆρος, εἰ κᾶφισέ τις

Who in the world first drew a picture or made a wax mould of Eros that was winged? He must have known only how to paint swallows, and been totally ignorant of this god's ways. He is neither light nor easy to throw off, if you carry his disease, but extremely heavy. How could such a thing wear wings? Nonsense, even if it *is* said!

Eubulus, *Kampylon*, fr. 41

ὡς δ' ἐδείπνει κοσμίως,
οὐχ ὥσπερ ἄλλαι τῶν πράσων ποιούμεναι
τολύπας ἔσαπτον τὰς γνάθους καὶ τῶν κρεῶν
ἀπέβρυκον αἰσχυρῶς, ἀλλ' ἐκάστου μικρὸν ἂν
ἀπεγεύεθ' ὥσπερ παρθένος Μιλησία

What nice manners she had at dinner! Not like other women, who stuffed their jaws with leeks which they rolled up in balls, and greedily bit off pieces of meat in ugly fashion. No — from each portion she would take a small taste, as demurely as a young virgin from Miletus.

Philetaerus, *Korinthiastes*, fr. 5

ὡς τακερόν, ὦ Ζεῦ, καὶ μαλακὸν τὸ βλέμμ' ἔχει.
οὐκ ἐτὸς ἐταίρας ἱερόν ἐστι πανταχοῦ,
ἀλλ' οὐχὶ γαμετῆς οὐδαμοῦ τῆς Ἑλλάδος.

How melting, my god, and how soft is her eye! No wonder there is a shrine to the Hetaira everywhere, but nowhere in all Greece is there one to the Wife!

The young lover: schemes and intrigues

Alexis, *Agonis or Hippiskos*, fr. 2

ἀπίντων τῷ ξένῳ
εἰς τὴν κατάλυσιν ἴησονην ἰαῖθων ἀνήρ.
τοῖς παισὶ τ' εἶπα (δύο γὰρ ἦγον οἰκοθεν)
τάκπώματ' εἰς τὸ φανερόν ἐκλελιτρωμένα
θεῖναι· κύαθος δ' ἦν ἀργυροῦς ἰακπώματα ἰ
ἦγεν δύο δραχμάς, κυμβίον δὲ τέτταρας
ἴσως ἑτέρας, ψυκτηρίδιον δὲ δέκ' ὀβολούς,
Φιλίπιδου λεπτότερον. (B.) ἀλλὰ ταῦθ' ὄλωσ
πρὸς ἀλαζονείαν οὐ κακῶς νενοημέν' ἦν

(YOUNG MAN) I was meeting the stranger in my lodgings ... an impetuous man. And I told my slaves—you see, I brought two of them from home—to clean the cups with soda and place them somewhere for all to see. Now, there was a silver laddle, it weighed two drachmas; and a brimmed cup weighing perhaps four more; and a small cooler that fetched ten obols, slenderer than Philippides. (HETAIRA) Well, this was not at all badly conceived for boasting.

Eubulus, *Pamphilos*, fr. 80

ἐγὼ δέ, καὶ γὰρ ἔτυχεν ὄν κατ' ἀντικρὺ
τῆς οἰκίας καινὸν κατηλεῖον μέγα,
ἐνταῦθ' ἐπετήρουν τὴν τροφὸν τῆς παρθένου,
κεράσαι κελεύσας τὸν κάπηλόν μοι χοῶ
ὀβολοῦ, παραθεῖναι θ' ὡς μέγιστον κἀνθαρον
ὁ δὲ κἀνθαρος πάλαι κενός ὡς ξηραίνεται
ἅμα δὲ λαβοῦσ' ἠφάνικε πηλίκον τινὰ
οἶεσθε μέγεθος ἰάρεσιαν ἰ μέγαν πάνυ
καὶ ξηρὸν ἐποίησ' εὐθέως τὸν κἀνθαρον

As for myself—you see, there happened to be a large new wine-shop across the street from the house—, there I kept watch for the girl's nurse. I had ordered the publican to mix me up a pint of wine, a penny's worth, and set beside me the largest drinking-bowl he had. [...] The bowl has long been emptied. See how dry it is! [...] And thereupon she seized the huge thing and gulped it down—you can't imagine how big it was in size—and straightaway she drained the wine-bowl dry.

The pimp advertising his girls

Xenarchus, *Pentathlos*, fr. 4

δεινά, δεινὰ κοῦκ ἀνασχετὰ
ἐν τῇ πόλει πράπτουσιν οἱ νεώτεροι.
ὅπου γὰρ οὐσῶν μειράκων μάλ' εὐπρεπῶν
ἐπὶ τοῖσι πορνείοισιν, ἄς ἔξεσθ' ὄρᾶν
εἰληθερούσας, στέρν' ἀπημφισμένας,
γυμνάς ἐφεξῆς τ' ἐπὶ κέρως τεταγμένας
ὧν ἔστιν ἐκλεξάμενον ἡ τις ἦδεταί,
λεπτῇ, παχείᾳ, στρογγύλῃ, μακρᾷ, ρικνῇ,
νέα, παλαιᾷ, μεσοκόπῳ, πεπαιτέρα,
μὴ κλίμακα στησάμενον εἰσβῆναι λάθρα
μηδὲ δι' ὀπῆς κάτωθεν εἰσδῦναι στέγης
μηδ' ἐν ἀχύροισιν εἰσενεχθῆναι τέχνῃ.
αὐταὶ βιάζονται γὰρ εἰσέλκουσί τε
τοὺς μὲν γέροντας ὄντας ἐπικαλούμεναι
πατριδία, τοὺς δ' ἀφάρια, τοὺς νεωτέρους.
καὶ τῶνδ' ἐκάστην ἔστιν ἀδεῶς, εὐτελεῶς,
μεθ' ἡμέραν, πρὸς ἑσπέραν, πάντας τρόπους·
ἄς δ' οὐτ' ἰδεῖν ἔστ' οὐθ' ὄρῶντ' ἰδεῖν σαφῶς,
ἀεὶ δὲ τετρεμαίνοντα καὶ φοβοῦμενον,
δεδιότα ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα
< ὡς πῶς ποτ', ὧ δέσποινά ποντία Κύπρι,
βινεῖν δύνανται, τῶν Δρακοντείων νόμων
ὁπόταν ἀναμνησθῶσι προσκινούμενοι;

It's dreadful, dreadful and I won't stand for it, what the young men in town are doing. Here you have quite decent-looking girls at the brothels—you can eye them sunbathing, topless, lined up in formation and stripped for action; choose one of these that tickles your fancy, lean, fat, round, tall, wizened, young, old, middle-aged, past her prime, without having to use a ladder to sneak in or sliding down the chimney from the roof, or the old being-carried-in-with-the-straw trick. These women rape *you*, and drag you in and they use pet names: for the elderly, “daddykins”, “lover-boy” for the youngsters. Each of these is yours with impunity, at bargain prices, day or night, any style there is. And yet it's the ones you can't look at (or, if you do, get a *good* look anyway), in constant fear and trepidation, <these are the ones they chase and have to have>. Dear Aphrodite, mistress of the sea, while they're being bounced, when they remember the laws of Dracon, how can they keep on fucking?

The elderly father: stern paterfamilias or *senex amator*

Theophilus, *Philaulos*, fr. 11

τοῦ μή ποτ' αὐτὸν ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς Λαΐδα
φερόμενον ἢ Μηκωνίδ' ἢ Σισύμβριον
ἢ Βάραθρον ἢ Θάλλουσαν ἢ τούτων τινὰ
ὧν ἐμπλέκουσι τοῖς λίνοις αἱ μαστροποί,
† ἢ ναυσιον ἢ Μαλθάκη

So that he may never fall into the clutches of Lais, as he is rushing headlong, or those of Miss Poppy, or Madame Bergamot, or Lady Deathpit, or Mrs Bloom, or any one of those women in whose nets the pimps entangle you, or ... or Miss Softie.

Alexis, *Kouris*, fr. 113

ὁ μὲν οὖν ἐμὸς υἱός, οἷον ὑμεῖς ἀρτίως
εἶδετε, τοιοῦτος γέγονεν, Οἰνοπίων τις ἢ
Μάρων τις ἢ Κάπηλος ἢ καὶ Τιμοκλῆς.
μεθύει γάρ, οὐδὲν ἕτερον· ὁ δ' ἕτερος — τί ἂν
τύχοιμ' ὀνομάσας; βῶλος, ἄροτρον, γηγενῆς
ἄνθρωπος

Now my son, as you all have just seen, has become such a fellow, an Oinopion, or a Maron, or a Capelus or even a Timocles. He's drunk, yes — nothing else. But the other boy — what could I call him? A lump of earth, a plow, a clod turned human.

Alexis, *Phaidros*, fr. 248

σχολῆ γε, νῆ τὸν ἥλιον, σχολῆ λέγεις.
Ἐπιχαρίδης ὁ μικρὸς ἐν πένθ' ἡμέραις
σφαῖραν ἐποίησε τὴν πατρῶαν οὐσίαν·
οὕτω συνεστρόγγυλεν ἰταμῶς καὶ ταχύ

Little by little — yes, by god, little by little, you say. Epicharides the runt in five days has turned his inheritance into a football, he's rolled it up so easily and swiftly .

Philetaerus, *Kynagis*, fr. 6

παῦσαι γέρων ὧν τοὺς τρόπους. οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅτι
ἡδιστόν ἐστιν ἀποθανεῖν βινοῦνθ' ἅμα,
ὥσπερ λέγουσιν ἀποθανεῖν Φορμίσιον;

Stop being an old man in your behaviour. Don't you know that is is the most delightful thing to die in the act of fucking, as they say Phormisius died?



**The New York group of terracottas (400-390 BC):
A repertoire of stereotyped characters**



Attic terracotta figurines, from a grave in Attica, ca. 400-390 BC. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 13.225.13-28. Comic actors representing various typical characters of comedy (greedy Heracles, traveller, parasite, slaves, hetairai, old women).

The New York group of terracottas: The figures - 1



a) Heracles the glutton



b) The weeping traveller
(Odysseus?)



c) Slave with a basket
(carrying provisions)



d) Slave with a jug
(carrying wine?)



e) Seated traveller



f) Seated slave with purse
(thief?)



g) Seated slave



h) Cunning slave

The New York group of terracottas: The figures - 2



i) Slave sitting and plotting



j) The coquettish hetaira



k) The shy girl



l) Young man (parasite?)



m) Old woman



n) Old woman



o) Old nurse with baby

The New York group of terracottas: The two hetairai



The modest hetaira, covering her face: perhaps a “false hetaira”, to be recognized by her true citizen relatives at the end.



The impudent and coquettish hetaira: a specimen of *meretrix mala* in Middle Comedy.



The New York group of terracottas: The fat parasite and the slaves carrying provisions



The parasite, a fat young man with a pot-belly, eating at other people's expense.



Two slaves carrying provisions for a banquet.



Seated slave: perhaps a *servus currens*, resting after having completed his run.

The New York group of terracottas: The cunning slave meditating



Cunning slave in a thinking pose, with his hand at the side of his head.



Cunning slave, sitting and propping his chin, thinking over a plan.

Cf. the witty slave in Antiphanes, *Boutalion*, fr. 69

(ΕΤΑΙΡΑ) και μὴν ἐστιάσω τήμερον
ὕμας ἐγώ· σὺ δ' ἀγοράσεις ἡμῖν λαβών,
Πίστ', ἀργύριον. **(ΠΙΣΤΟΣ) ἄλλως γὰρ οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι
χρηστῶς ἀγοράζειν.** (ΕΤ.) φράζε δὴ, φιλούμενε,
ὄψω τίτι χαίρεις; (ΑΓΡΟΙΚΟΣ) πᾶσι. (ΕΤ.) καθ' ἕκαστον λέγε·
ἰχθὺν τίν' ἠδέως φάγοις ἄν; (ΑΓΡ.) εἰς ἀγρὸν
ἦλθεν φέρων ποτ' ἰχθυοπώλης μαινίδας
καὶ τριγλίδας, καὶ νῆ Δί' ἤρρεσεν σφόδρα
ἡμῖν ἅπασιν. (ΕΤ.) εἶτα καὶ νῦν, εἰπέ μοι,
τούτων φάγοις ἄν; (ΑΓΡ.) κἄν τις ἄλλος μικρὸς ἦ·
τοὺς γὰρ μεγάλους τούτους ἅπαντας γενόμικα
ἀνθρωποφάγους ἰχθῦς. (ΕΤ.) τί φῆς, ὦ φίλτατε;
ἀνθρωποφάγους, πῶς; **(ΠΙΣΤ.) οὖς <ἄν> ἀνθρώπος φάγοι,
δῆλον ὅτι· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν Ἑλένης βρώματα,
ἃ φησὶν οὗτος, μαινίδας καὶ τριγλίδας**

(HETAIRA) Well and truly today shall I feast you. You there, Pistos, do some shopping after taking money. **(PISTOS) That is the only way I know how to shop decently.** (HET.) Tell me, my good man, what food do you like? (RUSTIC) Everything. (HET.) Tell me in detail: what fish would you like to eat? (RU.) Once a fish seller came to our farm bringing sprats and mini-mullets; by Zeus, we all liked them a lot. (HET.) So you would like to eat some of them, then? (RU.) And anything else that is small. All these great big ones must be man-eaters, I'm sure. (HET.) What do you mean, my fine fellow? How "man-eaters"? **(PIST.) Obviously he means any fish that a man might really eat. The stuff this guy wants, mini-mullets and sprats, that is the diet of a Helen!**

The cunning slave: taking refuge on an altar to avoid punishment



Slave seated on altar with (stolen?)
purse, ca. 400-390 BC. New York,
Metropolitan Museum, 13.225.18.



Slave seated on altar, in a thoughtful
pose, ca. 350 BC. British Museum,
1879,0306.5.



Slave seated on altar, with a cheeky
attitude, ca. 150 BC. British
Museum, 1873,1020.2.

The obsessive-compulsive character in Old and Middle Comedy

Old Comedy

Aristophanes, *Wasps* (obsessive judge)

Phrynichus, *Monotropos* (misanthrope)

Pherecrates, *Agrioi* (misanthropes)

Middle Comedy

Antiphanes, *Misoponeros* (misanthrope)

Antiphanes, *Timon* (probably the legendary misanthrope)

Antiphanes, *Neottis* (miser)

Antiphanes, *Oionistes* (superstitious man)

Eubulus, *Pornoboskos* (miser)

Philiscus, *Philargyroi* (misers)

Dioxippus, *Philargyros* (miser)

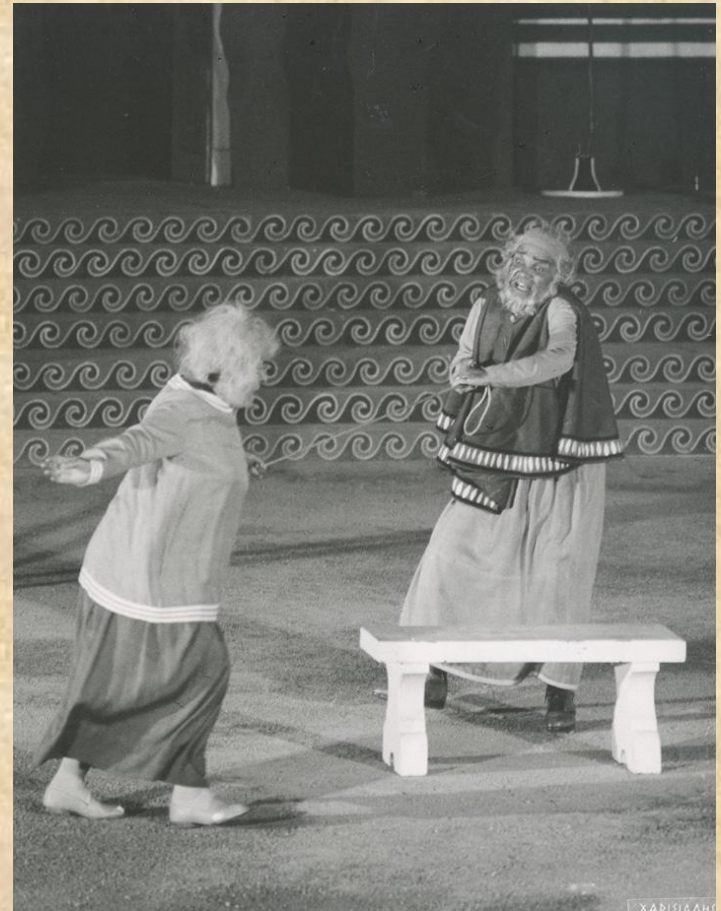
Mnesimachus, *Dyskolos* (misanthrope)

Anaxilas, *Monotropos* (misanthrope)

On Antiphanes' *Oionistes* see Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 10.3.13
(from Porphyry, *Φιλόλογος Ἀκρόασις*, Book I, fr. 408.70-73 Smith):

Κεκίλιος δέ, ὥς τι μέγα πεφωρακῶς, ὄλον δρᾶμα ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἰς τέλος Ἄντιφάνου, τὸν Οἰωνιστὴν, μεταγράψαι φησὶ τὸν Μένανδρον εἰς τὸν Δεισιδαίμονα.

And Caecilius (Caecilius of Calacte, fr. 164 Ofenloch), as though he had brought to light a great crime, says that Menander in his *Deisidaimon* transcribed a whole play of Antiphanes, the *Oionistes*, from beginning to end.



The obsessive character: The prologue sketch and surreal extravagance

Aristophanes, *Wasps* 87-113

ΞΑΝΘΙΑΣ

φράσω γὰρ ἤδη τὴν νόσον τοῦ δεσπότου.
φιληλιαστής ἐστιν ὡς οὐδεὶς ἀνὴρ,
ἐρᾷ τε τούτου, τοῦ δικάζειν, καὶ στένει
ἢν μὴ ἔπι τοῦ πρώτου καθίζηται ζύλου.
ὑπνου δ' ὄρᾳ τῆς νυκτὸς οὐδὲ πασπάλην.
ἢν δ' οὖν καταμύση κἂν ἄχνην, ὅμως ἐκεῖ
ὁ νοῦς πέτεται τὴν νύκτα περὶ τὴν κλεψύδραν.
ὑπὸ τοῦ δὲ τὴν ψῆφόν γ' ἔχειν εἰωθῆναι
τοὺς τρεῖς ξυνέχων τῶν δακτύλων ἀνίσταται,
ὥσπερ λιβανωτὸν ἐπιτιθεῖς νουμηνία.
καὶ νῆ Δί' ἢν ἴδη γέ που γεγραμμένον
υἶὸν Πυριλάμπους ἐν θύρᾳ Δῆμον καλόν,
ἰὼν παρέγραψε πλησίον “κημὸς καλός”.
τὸν ἀλεκτρυόνα δ', ὃς ἦδ' ἀφ' ἐσπέρας, ἔφη
ὄψ' ἐξεγείρειν αὐτὸν ἀναπεπεισμένον,
παρὰ τῶν ὑπευθύνων ἔχοντα χρήματα.
εὐθύς δ' ἀπὸ δορπηστοῦ κέκραγεν ἐμβάδας,
κάπειτ' ἐκεῖσ' ἐλθὼν προκαθεύδει πρὸ πάνυ,
ὥσπερ λεπὰς προσεχόμενος τῷ κίονι.
ὑπὸ δυσκολίας δ' ἅπασι τιμῶν τὴν μακρὰν
ὥσπερ μέλιττ' ἢ βομβυλιὸς εἰσέρχεται
ὑπὸ τοῖς ὄνυξι κηρὸν ἀναπεπλασμένος.
ψῆφων δὲ δείσας μὴ δεηθῆῖ ποτέ,
ἴν' ἔχοι δικάζειν, αἰγιαλὸν ἔνδον τρέφει.
τοιαῦτ' ἀλύει νουθετούμενος δ' ἀεὶ
μᾶλλον δικάζει. τοῦτον οὖν φυλάττομεν
μοχλοῖσιν ἐγκλήσαντες, ὡς ἂν μὴ ἔξῃ

XANTHIAS: Keep quiet then, and I'll tell you what the old man's trouble is. He is what they call a 'trialophile' — the worst case I've ever come across. He yearns to sit in judgment, and pines if he is denied a front-row seat. He never sleeps a wink at night — or if he does drop off, his spirit flutters round the courtroom clock till he wakes up again. He is so used to clutching his voting-pebble that he wakes up with his thumb and two fingers glued together, as though he had been sprinkling incense for a new-moon sacrifice. If he goes past Demos' house and sees what someone has written on the gatepost — you know the sort of thing, 'O Demos, how I dote on you!' — he goes and writes underneath: 'O urn, how I vote in you! It's no joke. Once he complained that the cock was late calling him — and it was well before midnight! He said the retiring magistrates must have bribed it because their accounts were coming up for review the next day. Oh, he had it bad: as soon as supper was over he would shout for his shoes, and off he would go to court, sleeping through the small hours at the head of the queue, clinging to the doorpost like a limpet. And he is so harsh! He scratches a long line on his tablet every time they get a conviction — full damages. Honestly, he comes home with enough wax under his fingernails to stock a beehive. He is so afraid of running out of voting pebbles that he keeps a whole beach of them inside the house. Such is his madness: the more you warn him, the more he goes to court. That is why we've had to bolt him in and guard the house, in case he gets out.

The obsessive character: Menander's prologue sketches

Menander, *Dyskolos* 5-23, 30-35

ΠΑΝ τὸν ἀγρὸν δὲ τὸν [ἐ]πι δεξί' οἰκεῖ τουτονὶ
Κνήμων, ἀπάνθρωπός τις ἄνθρωπος σφόδρα
καὶ δύσκολος πρὸς ἅπαντας, οὐ χαίρων τ' ὄχλω —
“ὄχλω” λέγω; ζ[ῶ]ν οὗτος ἐπεικῶς χρόνον
πολὺν λελάληκεν ἡδέως ἐν τῷ βίῳ
οὐδενί, προσηγόρευκε πρότερος δ' οὐδένα,
πλὴν ἐξ ἀνάγκης γεινιῶν παριῶν τ' ἐμέ,
τὸν Πᾶνα· καὶ τοῦτ' εὐθὺς αὐτῷ μεταμέλει,
εὖ οἶδ'. ὅμως οὖν, τῷ τρόπῳ τοιοῦτος ὢν,
χῆραν γυναῖκ' ἔγημε, τετελευτηκότος
αὐτῆ νεωστὶ τοῦ λαβόντος τὸ πρότερον
ὑοῦ τε καταλελειμμένου μικροῦ τότε.
ταύτη ζυγομαχῶν οὐ μόνον τὰς ἡμέρας
ἐπιλαμβάνων δὲ καὶ τὸ πολὺ νυκτὸς μέρος
ἔζη κακῶς. θυγάτριον αὐτῷ γίνεται·
ἔτι μᾶλλον. ὡς δ' ἦν τὸ κακὸν οἶον οὐθὲν ἄν
ἕτερον γένοιθ', ὁ βίος τ' ἐπίπονος καὶ πικρὸς,
ἀπῆλθε πρὸς τὸν ὑὸν ἢ γυνὴ πάλιν
τὸν πρότερον αὐτῆ γενόμενον. [...]
ὁ γέρων δ' ἔχων τὴν θυγατέρ' αὐτὸς ζῆ μόνος
καὶ γραῦν θεράπαιναν, ξυλοφορῶν σκάπτων τ', ἀε[ῖ]
πονῶν, ἀπὸ τούτων ἀρξάμενος τῶν γειτόνων
καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς μέχρι Χολαργέων κάτω
μισῶν ἐφεξῆς πάντας.

Menander, *Aspis* 114-121

ΤΥΧΗ ὁ γέρων δ' ὁ πάντ' ἀνακρίνων ἀρτίως
γένει μὲν αὐτῷ θεῖός ἐστι πρὸς πατρὸς
πονηρία δὲ πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὅλως
ὑπερέπαικεν· οὗτος οὔτε συγγενῆ
οὔτε φίλον οἶδεν οὐδὲ τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ
αἰσχυρῶν πεφρόντικ' οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ βούλεται
ἔχειν ἅπαντα· τοῦτο γινώσκει μόνον
καὶ ζῆ μόνότροπος, γραῦν ἔχων διάκονον.

PAN This farm here on my right is where Knemon lives: he is a real hermit of a man, who snarls at everyone and hates company — ‘company’ isn’t the word: he is getting on now, and he has never addressed a civil word to anyone in his life! He has never volunteered a polite greeting to anyone except myself (I’m the god Pan): and that is only because he lives beside me, and can’t help passing my door. And I am quite sure that, as soon as he does, he promptly regrets it. Still, in spite of being such a hermit, he did get married, to a widow whose former husband had just died, leaving her with a small son. Well, he quarrelled with his wife, every day and most of the night too — a miserable life. A baby daughter was born, and that just made things worse. Finally, when things got so bad that there was no hope of change, and life was hard and bitter, his wife left him and went back to her son, the one from her former marriage. He owns this small-holding here, next door, and there he is now struggling to support his mother, himself and one loyal family servant. [...] The old man lives alone with his daughter, and an old servant woman. He is always working, fetching his own wood and doing his own digging — and hating absolutely everyone, from his neighbours here and his wife, right down to the suburbs of Athens.

FORTUNE The old chap who was asking all the questions just now, is Kleostratos’ uncle on his father’s side, and a real villain, biggest twister in the world. He takes no account of the claims of relatives or friends, never gives a thought to the wickedness of his life. He wants everything for himself. That’s his one idea. He lives alone, with an old crone as his housekeeper.

The obsessive character: The prologue sketches of Middle Comedy

Antiphanes, *Neottis*, fr. 166

παῖς ὢν μετ' ἀδελφῆς εἰς Ἀθήνας ἐνθάδε
ἀφικόμην ἀχθεῖς ὑπό τινος ἐμπόρου,
Σύρος τὸ γένος ὢν. περιτυχὼν δ' ἡμῖν ὀδὶ
κηρυττομένοις ὀβολοστάτης ὢν ἐπρίατο,
ἄνθρωπος ἀνυπέρβλητος εἰς πονηρίαν,
τοιοῦτος οἷος μηδὲν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν
μηδ' ὢν ὁ Πυθαγόρας ἐκεῖνος ἦσθιεν,
ὁ τρισμακαρίτης, εἰσφέρειν ἔξω θύμου

In my childhood I came here to Athens together with my sister, brought by a slave merchant. I am a Syrian by birth, you know. Then, as we were being auctioned in the market, this fellow here chanced to see us and bought us both. He is a petty usurer surpassing all mankind in villainy. Why, he is such a skinflint that he never brings into his house anything at all, not even those things the famous thrice-blessed Pythagoras used to eat. Nothing, I tell you — except some wretched root bulbs.



Eubulus, *Pornoboskos*, fr. 87

τρέφει με Θετταλός τις ἄνθρωπος βαρύς,
πλουτῶν, φιλάργυρος δὲ κάλιτήριος,
ὀψοφάγος, ὀψωνῶν δὲ μέχρι τριωβόλου

A man from Thessaly is my keeper, a heavy-tempered fellow. He is rich, but a miser and a villain. Oh, he is a lover of fine food, all right — but he buys no food worth more than three obols!



The obsessive character: Complex and compound figures

Mnesimachus, *Dyskolos*, fr. 3

(ΔΥΣΚΟΛΟΣ) ἀλλ' ἀντιβολῶ σ', ἐπίταττέ μοι μὴ πόλλ' ἄγαν,
μηδ' ἄγρια λίαν μηδ' ἐπηργυρωμένα,
μέτρια δέ, τῷ θείῳ σεαυτοῦ. (NEANIAΣ) πῶς ἔτι
μετριώτερ' ὧ δαιμόνιε; (ΔΥΣΚ.) πῶς; σύντεμνε καὶ
ἐπεξαπάτα με. τοὺς μὲν ἰχθῦς μοι κάλει
ἰχθύδι· ὄψον δ' ἂν λέγῃς ἕτερον, κάλει
ὄψάριον. ἦδιον γὰρ ἀπολοῦμαι πολὺ

Athenaeus VIII 359c: ὁ δὲ παρὰ Μνησιμάχῳ ἐν τῷ ὁμωνύμῳ δράματι
δύσκολος φιλάργυρος ὦν σφόδρα πρὸς τὸν ἀσωτευτόμενον νεανίσκον
φησὶν.

(GROUCH) But I beg you, do not exact too many things from me, your
own uncle — things which are too cruel, too overlaid with money. Make
your demands moderate. (YOUNG MAN) But good heavens, man, how
could they be more moderate? (GROUCH) How? Fool me by using
diminutive terms. Call fishes little fishes; IF you speak of any other nice
food, call it a little food-bit. Then I shall die more happily, by far!

Ath. VIII 359c: And the grouch in Mnesimachus' play of that name is a
terrible miser and says to the young man who leads a spendthrift life.

Cf. also Smicrines in Menander's *Aspis* 117-121:

οὔτος οὔτε συγγενῇ
οὔτε φίλον οἶδεν οὐδὲ τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ
αἰσχυρῶν πεφρόντικ' οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ βούλεται
ἔχειν ἅπαντα· τοῦτο γινώσκει μόνον
καὶ ζῆ μόνότροπος, γραῦν ἔχων διάκονον.

He takes no account of the claims of relatives or friends, never gives a
thought to the wickedness of his life. He wants everything for himself.
That's his one idea. He lives alone, with an old crone as his housekeeper.

Antiphanes, *Timon*, fr. 204

ἦκω πολυτελῶς ἀγοράσας εἰς τοὺς γάμους,
λιβανωτὸν ὀβολοῦ τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ ταῖς θεαῖς
πάσαισι, τοῖς δ' ἥρωσι τὰ ψαίστ' ἀπνεμῶ.
ἡμῖν δὲ τοῖς θνητοῖς ἐπριάμην κωβιούς.
ὡς προσβαλεῖν δ' ἐκέλευσα τὸν τοιχωρῦχον,
τὸν ἰχθυοπώλην, 'προστίθημι', φησί, 'σοὶ
τὸν δῆμον αὐτῶν· εἰσὶ γὰρ Φαληρικοί'.
ἄλλοι δ' ἐπώλουν, ὡς ἔοικ', Ὀτρυνικούς

I have come from an expensive shopping trip for the wedding:
incense for all the gods and goddesses for an obol; for the
heroes I shall hand out ground cakes. But for us mortals I have
bought gobies. And when I asked that bandit, the fishmonger,
to top it off with some extra, he says "I'll top it off with their
deme: they come from Phaleron". As if the others were selling
them from Otryne!

Cf. Cnemon in Menander's *Dyskolos*, e.g. 326-333:

(ΓΟΡΓΙΑΣ) ὑπερβολή τις ἐστὶν τοῦ κακοῦ.
τούτῳ ταλάντων ἔστ' ἴσως τουτὶ δυεῖν
τὸ κτῆμα. τουτ' αὐτὸς γεωργῶν διατελεῖ
μόνος, συνεργὸν δ' οὐδέν' ἀνθρώπων ἔχων,
οὐκ οἰκέτην οἰκεῖον, οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ τόπου
μισθωτόν, οὐχὶ γείτον', ἀλλ' αὐτὸς μόνος.
ἦδιστόν ἐστ' αὐτῷ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ὄραν
οὐδένα.

GORGIAΣ He is trouble, and more than trouble. His property
here is really a very decent one, but he persists in farming it all
by himself. He won't have any help — no farm servant, no
locally hired labour, no neighbour to lend a hand; just himself
alone. His chief pleasure is never to set eyes on another human
being.

Antiphanes' *Misoponeros*

fr. 157

εἴτ' οὐ σοφοὶ δῆτ' εἰσὶν οἱ Σκύθαι σφόδρα,
οἱ γενομένοισιν εὐθέως τοῖς παιδίοις
διδόασιν ἵππων καὶ βοῶν πίνειν γάλα;
μὰ Δί' οὐχὶ τίτθας εἰσάγουσι βασκάνους,
καὶ παιδαγωγοὺς αὐθις, ὧν μεῖζον <κακὸν
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδέν, μετὰ> γε μαίας νῆ Δία·
αὐταὶ δ' ὑπερβάλλουσι, μετὰ γε νῆ Δία
τοὺς μητραγυρτοῦντάς γε· πολὺ γὰρ αὖ γένος
μιαρώτατον τοῦτ' ἔστιν, εἰ μὴ νῆ Δία
τοὺς ἰχθυοπώλας †βούλεται λέγειν
<X – U> μετὰ γε τοὺς τραπεζίτας· ἔθνος
τούτου γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστιν ἐξωλέστερον

Aren't the Scythians quite wise, then, who give their babies right after birth mares' milk and cows' milk to drink? No by Zeus, they don't bring in those witches the wet nurses, and the pedagogues too, than whom <there is no greater evil, except> of course for the midwives, by Zeus. Those are the worst, except of course for the mendicant priests of Cybele, by Zeus. They are by far the foulest kind, unless by Zeus someone wishes to say the fish sellers; [. . .] Except of course for the moneylenders. No race is more pestilential than this.

Cf. Menander, *Dyskolos* 381-389:

ΣΩΣΤΡΑΤΟΣ ὦ πολυτίμητοι θεοί,
οἷς ἀποτρέπεις νυνὶ γὰρ ὡς οἶε με σύ,
τούτοις παρῶξυμ' εἰς τὸ πρᾶγμα διπλασίως.
εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἐν γυναιξίν ἐστιν ἡ κόρη
τεθραμμένη μηδ' οἶδε τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ
τούτων κακῶν μηδὲν ὑπὸ τηθίδος τινὸς
δειδισαμένη μαίας τ', ἐλευθερίως δέ πως
μετὰ πατρὸς ἀγρίου μισοπονήρου τῷ τρόπῳ,
πῶς οὐκ ἐπιτυχεῖν ἐστι ταύτης μακάριον;

SOSTRATUS Heavens, man, you think you are putting me off, but everything you say is making me twice as enthusiastic for the job. If the girl hasn't grown up among a pack of women and so knows nothing of 'life's miseries', has had no frightening stories from aunt or nurse, but has been pretty properly brought up by a fierce father who is naturally against all vice — then surely it's bliss to win her?

Cf. the legendary misanthrope Timon in Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 812-819:

οὗτος οὖν ὁ Τίμων
ᾧχεθ' ὑπὸ μίσους
πολλὰ καταρασάμενος ἀνδράσι **πονηροῖς.**
οὕτω 'κεῖνος ὑμᾶς **ἀντεμίσει**
τοὺς πονηροὺς ἄνδρας ἀεὶ

So Timon now, this fellow, went off because of hate, calling down curses on all evil men. And that is how much he hated you, the evil men, forever.

Antiphanes' *Misoponeros* and contemporary rhetoric

Demosthenes, *Against Meidias* 218 (346 BC)

ἀλλ' ἐὰν μὲν κολάσητε, δόξετε σόφρονες εἶναι καὶ καλοὶ
κάγαθοι καὶ μισοπόνηροι, ἂν δ' ἀφήτε, ἄλλου τινὸς
ἤττησθαι.

If you punish him, you will be thought men of discretion
and honor and haters of wickedness; but if you acquit
him, you will seem to have capitulated to some other
motive.

Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* 69 (345 BC)

ἀναβήσεται γὰρ οἶμαι δεῦρο πιστεύων τῷ ἑαυτοῦ βίῳ,
ἀνὴρ καλὸς κάγαθὸς καὶ μισοπόνηρος.

For he will come up here to the witness stand, I suppose,
trusting in his record, honorable and upright man that he
is, an enemy of all evil-doing.

Aeschines, *On the Embassy* 171 (343 BC)

πρώτην ταύτην ὑμᾶς ἀπαιτῶ χάριν, τὴν τοῦ σώματος
σωτηρίαν, οὐ μισόδημος ὢν, ὡς φησιν ὁ κατήγορος, ἀλλὰ
μισοπόνηρος.

I ask of you this as my first reward, the saving of my life.
For I am not a hater of the democracy, as my accuser
asserts, but a hater of wickedness.

Cf. Menander, *Dyskolos* 153-166:

ΚΝΗΜΩΝ

εἶτ' οὐ μακάριος ἦν ὁ Περσεὺς κατὰ δύο
τρόπους ἐκεῖνος, ὅτι πετηνὸς ἐγένετο
κουδενὶ συνήντα τῶν βαδιζόντων χαμαί,
εἶθ' ὅτι τοιοῦτο κτῆμ' ἐκέκτηθ' ᾧ λίθους
ἅπαντας ἐπόει τοὺς ἐνοχλοῦντας; ὅπερ ἐμοὶ
νυνὶ γένοιτ'· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀφθονώτερον
λιθίνων γένοιτ' <ἂν> ἀνδριάντων πανταχοῦ.
νῦν δ' οὐ βιωτόν ἐστι, μὰ τὸν Ἀσκληπιόν.
λαλοῦσ' ἐπεμβαίνοντες εἰς τὸ χωρίον
ἤδη· παρ' αὐτὴν τὴν ὁδὸν γάρ, νῆ Δία,
εἶωθα διατρίβειν· ὅς οὐδ' ἐργάζομαι
τοῦτο τὸ μέρος <τοῦ> χωρίου, πέφευγα δὲ
διὰ τοὺς παριόντας. ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τοὺς λόφους ἄνω
ἤδη διώκουσ'. ὦ πολυπληθείας ὄχλου.

Well, wasn't Perseus the lucky one, twice over, too. First,
he could fly, so he never had to meet any of those who
walk the earth; and then he had this marvellous device
with which he used to turn anyone who annoyed him into
stone. I wish I had it now. There would be no shortage of
stone statues all round here. Life is becoming intolerable,
by God it is. People are actually walking on to my land
now, and talking to me. Of course, I'm used to hanging
about on the public highway — sure I am! When I do not
even work this part of my land any longer, I have
abandoned it because of the traffic. But now they are
following me up to the tops, hordes of them.

Misanthrope and *misoponeros*



Jean-Louis Barrault as Alceste in Molière's *Le Misanthrope* (1954)



Jonathan Pryce as Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* (1981)



Giorgos Glynos as Cnemon in Menander's *Dyskolos* — the first performance of the play in the modern age, Epidaurus, 1960

The comedy of characters

