

MISANTHROPOI OR PHILANTHROPOI

Alfred Körte, in his learned and instructive comment¹ upon the didascallic inscription, of a unique type, found in the Athenian Agora in 1935, which Meritt published in *Hesperia*, VII, 1938, pp. 116 ff., has raised objections to the restoration of line 8: *Μισα]νθρώποις Διφί(λου)*, for which Meritt gives me the credit. I regard Körte's reasons for preferring the title *Φιλα]νθρώποις*, however, as quite untenable. And inasmuch as American scholars are not now receiving *Hermes*² and other European journals, I quote Körte's objections in full.

Meritt expressed the opinion that, although the play is not otherwise attested, the proposed reading "seems quite certain." To this Körte replies:

Er hat übersehen, dass den Raumverhältnissen nach ebensogut *Φιλα]νθρώποις* ergänzt werden kann, und diese Ergänzung halte ich für ungleich wahrscheinlicher. Als Komödientitel sind beide Bildungen nicht belegt, und man würde sich ja freuen, einen antiken Vorgänger von Molières Misanthrope begrüßen zu dürfen, aber das Adjectiv *μισάνθρωπος* ist recht selten, *φιλόανθρωπος* dagegen sehr häufig, gerade in der nachklassischen Zeit. Ausserdem hat die mittlere und neue Komödie eine ausgesprochene Vorliebe für Titel, die mit *φιλο-* zusammengesetzt sind: Diphilos schrieb einen *Φιλάδελφος*, *Φιλάδελφοι* gab es von Amphis, Apollodoros von Gela, Menander, Philippides, Sosikrates, ich nenne weiter *Φιλοίκειος* (Timostratos), *Φιλαθήναιος* (Alexis, Philippides), *Φιλοθήβαιος* (Antiphanes), *Φιλολάκων* (Stephanos), *Φιλάργυρος* (oder *-ροι*: Philiskos, Dioxiippos, Philippides), *Φιλοδέσποτος* (Sogenes, Theognetos, Timostratos), *Φιλοδικαστής* (Timokles), *Φιλενριπίδης* (Axionikos, Philippides), *Φιλοτραγῳδός* (Alexis). Im ganzen finde ich unter den Titeln der *μέση* und *νέα* 38 mit *φιλο-* gebildete, denen mit *μισο-* nur der eine *Μισογύνης* Menanders gegenübersteht.

It is perfectly true, as Körte says, that there were two possibilities open to Meritt as editor of this inscription when called upon to fill a lacuna of four letters to precede *-νθρωπος*. It may therefore be assumed, not that the possibility of *φιλα-* was overlooked, but that the choice of *μισα-* was deliberate and that the criterion was the greater suitability, for the period of Diphilos,³ of a comedy on the subject of the misanthrope than one dealing with men of good will, benevolent persons. In this matter a statistical showing of the relative frequency of the two adjectives in either Greek literature or in the known titles of Attic comedies is by no means a safe guide. The large number of titles known to us which are unique is in itself a warning against the application of such a method here. Let us suppose that we found in a didascallic

¹ In *Hermes*, LXXIII, 1938, pp. 123 ff.

² I am indebted to Körte for his courtesy in sending a reprint of this article.

³ The play was produced in 256/5, the year before the archonship of Alkibiades, whose year of office is now placed by Pritchett and Meritt in 255/4: see their *Chronology of Hellenistic Athens* (1940), p. 97.

inscription, like that under consideration, merely . . . ΓΥΝΕΙ, and that we had no knowledge that Menander wrote such a play, what a blunder this new method would lead us to—Φιλογύνει! Körte's preference, then, comes to this—that he calls Φιλα]νθρώποις “ungleich wahrscheinlicher” on subjective grounds; and, as an outstanding scholar in the field of Attic comedy, he is entitled to his opinion. But I hope to offer some considerations, drawn from the history of Attic comedy, which will show that in the Old, Middle, and New periods the character of the misanthrope made a strong appeal to several poets and that we have records of a series of plays based upon that theme. We shall, however, have to deal with three titles, not one only, as Körte has chosen to do.

The earliest play of this kind was, so far as we know, the *Monotropos* of Phrynichos, contemporary of Aristophanes. Meineke⁴ describes the theme as follows: *Nomen fabulae inditum ab homine tristi et moroso, qui Timonis instar solitariam vitam sequeretur et hominum lucem adspectumque fugeret. Ita Plutarchus Moral., p. 479 c, coniunxit μονότροπον ἄμικτον ἄφιλον.* This title, therefore, carries the same connotation as *Misanthropos* and is quite as important as statistics of word-formation for the determination of the problem how to restore the title in our inscription. We find it used again, in the Middle Comedy, by Anaxilas, a play of which a single fragment survives, and possibly also by Ophelion, though the statement of Suidas *s.v.* seems to have mingled titles of Phrynichos with those attributed to the practically unknown Ophelion. In the New Comedy the title recurs in *I.G.*, II², 2323, *c* ([--- Μονο-τ]ρόπωι), its author's name being lost; the date of its production is in the second century B.C.

Of the *Monotropos* of Phrynichos the most revealing fragment is from its prologue (Kock, *C.A.F.*, I, p. 375):

ὄνομα δὲ μοῦστι Μονότροπος
 ζῶ δὲ Τίμωνος βίον
 ἄγαμον, ἄδουλον, ὄξύθυμον, ἀπρόσοδον,
 ἀγέλαστον, ἀδιάλεκτον, ἰδιογνώμονα.

The reference to Timon is significant of the type, for Timon had already in the time of Phrynichos impressed his contemporaries as being, more than any other man of his time, a professed hater of his kind. It is also significant that Phrynichos gave the name of “*Monotropos*” to his leading character, not “*Timon*,” whose manner of life he so cleverly characterizes in the two following lines. But Antiphanes, whose comedy was produced, it may be, a century⁵ after that of Phrynichos, preferred to give the

⁴ *Historia critica comicorum Graecorum*, p. 156 (vol. I, of *Frag. Comicorum Graecorum*, Berlin, 1839).

⁵ There is no need to discuss here the perhaps insoluble problem of the chronology of Antiphanes' life; the statement of Suidas that he died at the age of 74 may be correct, and also

bearer of the leading role his proper name, and in this he was followed by Lucian in his satire and by Shakespeare in his comedy. Meineke, *op. cit.*, p. 328, expresses the belief that Lucian may have based his *Timon* on that of Antiphanes, and Kock seems to share his view.

Körte omits all mention of another comedy of which Kock discovered two lines at least from Libanius' oration entitled *Timon*; it is in Förster's edition, Vol. V, p. 542 (*Orat.* XII, 15) and in Kock's *C.A.F.* (Vol. III, p. 436) under the Adespota of the New Comedy, No. 143. This remarkable oration purports to be an arraignment of himself before the Boule of Athens coupled with a petition that he be condemned to death, his crime being that he, who had spent a lifetime in the consistent practice of misanthropy, has become infatuated with the beauty of Alkibiades. The passage from which Kock makes his excerpt reads: Ταῦτα ἐλογιζόμεν, τοῦτον ἔζων τὸν βίον, ἐπὶ τῷσαύτης διήγον εὐδαιμονίας καὶ τὸ καλὸν πρόσρημα 'Μισάνθρωπος' ὀνομαζόμεν, ἀλλ' οὐ 'Τίμων' ἔτι, τὴν προσηγορίαν ἀπὸ τοῦ τρόπου μεταλαμβάνων. ἀλλ' ὁ φθόνος καθ' ἡμῶν ἴσχυσε καὶ δαίμων τις πονηρὸς ἀνέτρεψέ μου τὸν βίον, κτλ. To judge by the free use of anapaests the quoted portion was taken from a play of the New Comedy, and when compared with the speaker of the prologue of the *Monotropos* of Phrynichos quoted above, who names his name in the comedy, this prologue was spoken by Misanthropos, bearer of the title-role, who tells us that his name in real life was Timon. The evidence seems to indicate a play entitled *Misanthropos*, and the author may well have been Diphilos himself.⁶ A good deal of this prologue seems to have been worked into Timon's speech as invented by Libanius, for we recognize other iambic verse-ends in addition to the two lines which Kock reconstructed, such as ταῦτ' ἐλογιζόμεν, τοῦτον ἔζων τὸν βίον, and οὐ Τίμων' ἔτι; but for our present argument we cite only the lines which Kock printed, namely:

καλὸν
πρόσρημα "Μισάνθρωπος" ὀνομαζόμεν,
προσηγορίαν ἀπὸ τοῦ τρόπου μεταλαμβάνων.

The speaker, who "is known by the name of Misanthropos and no longer by his real name, Timon," explains that the title, of which he was proud, represents his real character, now ruined by his love of a human being. The plural title of the play of Diphilos indicates a second misanthrope, who served as a foil to the leading role. Kaibel, in his article "Antiphanes" in Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, s. v., 2519, makes this shrewd observation about these plural titles: "Unter den Titeln [i. e., of Antiphanes] wiegen die vor, welche Charaktertypen bezeichnen (über 30); merkwürdig oft kehrt

not out of harmony with the date of his *floruit* as given by Suidas, if we accept Bernhardt's correction ργ' (Olymp. 103) for the Ξγ' of Suidas. In that case he may have lived to 311. See Pauly-Wissowa, *R.E.*, Supplement I, p. 93.

⁶ Though Kock's guess, *loc. cit.*, was: fortasse ex Antiphanis *Timone* excerptum.

das Motiv wieder, zwei gleichartige oder verschieden geartete Charaktere nebeneinanderzustellen — — —,” an observation which holds good for the best poets of the New Comedy also. But the fragment just quoted is cited chiefly to indicate that the misanthrope, both the character and the name, was by no means alien to Attic comedy in any of its three great periods, much less to the New Comedy, which restlessly sought after character-themes which lent themselves to the comic treatment exemplified in so many instances in the remains which have been preserved and in the Roman comedies modelled after Greek originals of that period.

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