THRASYMACHOS AT ATHENS: ARISTOPHANES FR. 205 (*DAITALES*)

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From the lost *Daitales* of Aristophanes, the comedian's first play, produced in 427, Galen cites the following exchange between a father and his profligate (ἀκόλαστος) son (fr. 205 K-A):[1]

A: ἀλλ' εἶ σορέλλη καὶ μύρον καὶ ταινίαι.
B: ἰδοὺ σορέλλη· τοῦτο παρὰ Λυσιστράτου.
A: ἦ μὴν ἴσως σὺ καταπλιγήσῃ τῷ χρόνῳ.
B: τὸ καταπλιγήσῃ τοῦτο παρὰ τῶν ῥητόρων.
A: ἀποβήσεταί σοι ταῦτά ποι τὰ ῥήματα.
B: παρ' Ἀλκιβιάδου τοῦτο τἀποβήσεται.
A: τί ὑποτεκμαίρῃ καὶ κακῶς ἄνδρας λέγεις
καλοκἀγαθίαν ἀσκοῦντας; B: οἴμ', ὦ Θρασύμαχε,
τίς τοῦτο τῶν ξυνηγόρων τερατεύεται;

The orthodox interpretation of verses 8–9 is to see an allusion to the sophist, Thrasymachos of Chalkedon, most familiar to us from his appearance in the first book of Plato's *Republic*. Almost all studies of the past century and a half accept without question a reference here to the sophist, an assumption that has important consequences for the careers and chronology of both Thrasymachos and Lysias.[2] My purpose in this paper is to re-examine this accepted identification, to conclude that Aristophanes' comic practice makes it an unlikely one, and to suggest that Thrasymachos' *floruit* at Athens belongs rather later in the fifth century than is usually assumed.

I see three possible ways of considering the allusion to Thrasymachos at fr. 205.8: (1) that the comedian *is* referring to the sophist, (2) that another prominent Thrasymachos is meant, and (3) that Thrasymachos was the name of a character in *Daitales*. The name is rare at Athens; *PA* has seven entries, two from the late fifth century: 7349—Th., mentioned incidentally at Lys. 8.14–16; 7352—Th. of Hippothontis, war casualty ca 425 (*IG* I^2 949.26). Neither seems particularly appropriate as a *komodoumenos*, and I am inclined to discard the second explanation and to prefer either (1) or (3).

[1]Galen, *Gloss. Hippokr.* 29, p. 66K. The text is that of R. Kassel and C. Austin, *Poetae comici graeci, 3.2, Aristophanes: Testimonia et fragmenta* (Berlin and New York 1984), cited as "Kassel-Austin" or "K-A."

[2]In particular I cite T. Kock, *Comicorum atticorum fragmenta* 1 (Leipzig 1880) 440; G. Murray, *Aristophanes* (Oxford 1933) 21; K. Oppenheimer, "Thrasymachos," *RE* 6A (1936) 583–592; H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* 2 (Berlin 1960/61) 320; W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge 1971) 294. All these will be cited by author's name alone, except for Diels and Kranz ("DK").

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If we accept (1), that the sophist is intended, there are two ways of interpreting the vocative. Either the father (who is clearly speaker B) is calling his son "Thrasymachos" to include him by implication among the sophistic *rhetores* of the day—"filium sic appellat pater, ut simul sophistam significet" (Süvern [1826] *apud* Kassel-Austin 126). Just as we might address a brilliant pupil as "Einstein," here the *enfant terrible* embarked upon a rhetorical career becomes "Thrasymachos." Alternatively, the father is not addressing the son at all, but apostrophizing an absent Thrasymachos, invoked as the exemplar of rhetorical invention. This is how Kock understood the passage—"ad Thrasymachum tamquam universi eius generis inventorem se convertit, ridicule absentis implorans auxilium."

However, Aristophanes' use of the vocative supports neither interpretation. In the extant plays, the vocative of a personal name (with or without ὦ) is employed in one of the following ways: (1) a direct address to a character on stage, either to a speaking character (e.g., *Lysist.* 6: χαῖρ', ὦ Καλονίκη . . . καὶ σύ γ', ὦ Λυσιστράτη) or to a mute person (e.g., *Birds* 656 f.: ἄγε δὴ Ξανθία καὶ Μανόδωρε); (2) a summons to an off-stage character about to enter (e.g., *Ach.* 566: ἰὼ Λάμαχ');[3] (3) an address to a member of the audience (e.g., *Wasps* 83: μὰ τὸν κυν', ὦ Νικόστρατ', οὐ φιλόξενος); (4) a direct address in an imaginary situation (e.g., *Ach.* 11: εἴσαγ', ὦ Θέογνι, τὸν χόρον). A fifth class can be created if we included the frequent invocations to gods and heroes (e.g., the very common ὦ Ζεῦ or Ἡρακλεῖς), but I am confining my discussion to real personal names. Only a few passages fail to fall into one of the above groups; these will be discussed later. Addresses to *komodoumenoi* are found in all four groups.

For the first interpretation, that the father addresses his son as "you-who-are-like-Thrasymachos," I can find no good or close parallel in extant Aristophanes. As far as I can ascertain, the comedian does not use the name of a real contemporary in such a transferred fashion. The closest example which does correspond superficially with fr. 205.8–9 is *Frogs* 1451 where Dionysos responds to a typically clever suggestion by Euripides: εὖ γ', ὦ Παλαμήδες, ὦ σοφωτάτη φύσις. However, Palamedes is no contemporary, but an accepted figure of legend, and we might understand the line not so much as an address to Euripides=Palamedes but as an invocation to Palamedes, the patron of invention. There is also the well-known description of Meton at *Birds* 1009 (ἄνθρωπος Θάλης), but again Thales is no contemporary and the passage not an address in the vocative. The interpretation of Süvern is thus without good parallel in extant Aristophanes.

The alternative might seem more promising, that an absent Thrasymachos is apostrophized as the patron of *xynegoroi*. However, I can find no compel-

[3]I include here the summons at *Knights* 242 f. to Simon and Panaitios who as *hipparchoi* can be considered as part of the chorus.

ling parallel here either. Two passages may be adduced where an absent *komodoumenos* is addressed and which thus might support Kock's interpretation. First we may consider *Ach.* 400 f.: ὦ τρισμακάρι' Εὐριπίδη, / ὅθ' ὁ δοῦλος οὑτωσὶ σαφῶς ἀπεκρίνατο. Here Euripides is apostrophized for the cleverness of his slave in much the same way that Thrasymachos might be invoked for the young man's powers of verbal invention. However, Euripides is about to appear (at 407–410); he is thus hardly an absent addressee, but in fact a *dramatis persona* about to enter. Second, there is *Wasps* 197: ὦ ξυνδικασταὶ καὶ Κλέων, ἀμύνατε, where the hard-pressed Philokleon summons his natural allies. However, Kleon is not absent from *Wasps*—witness the character-names Philo*kleon* and Bdely*kleon*, and the thinly disguised "Kyon" in the mock-trial (892–1008). If Thrasymachos the sophist *is* intended at fr. 205.8–9, then these passages suggest that he had more than an incidental role in *Daitales*. Neither passage is a convincing parallel of the sort of off-hand address to Thrasymachos that Kock imagined.

The most natural interpretation of the vocative is to suppose that Thrasymachos was the name of a character in the play. Of the nearly two hundred instances of the vocative of a personal name in the eleven surviving comedies, over 90 per cent are to a character on stage or to one about to enter. There are two places where a member of the audience is addressed (*Wasps* 83, 1275), four places where a person is addressed in an imaginary situation (*Ach.* 11, *Clouds* 691, *Peace* 473, *Birds* 139), and the two passages discussed above (*Ach.* 400 f., *Wasps* 197). The weight of numbers favours regarding Thrasymachos as a *dramatis persona*.

But which character in *Daitales* was called "Thrasymachos"? It is clear that the play featured a father and his two sons (the latter two described at *Clouds* 529 as ὁ σώφρων τε χὠ καταπύγων—the *katapygon* clearly the same as Galen's *akolastos*). Fritzsche argued that the good son was called "Thrasymachos," addressed here by his father exasperated by the other son.[4] There were thus three characters in this scene. Meineke rightly rejected Thrasymachos as an inappropriate name for the *sophron*, but argued that it was quite suitable for the *akolastos*, "qui novitiae disciplinae tabe infectus fuit."[5] The etymology (θρασύς + μάχη) is quite reasonable for the name of an Aristophanic character. The comedian takes care over such names, e.g., Dikaiopolis, Strepsiades the "twister," the market-reared Agorakritos, and of course Lysistrate. θρασύς is used a number of times in its principal sense of "bold," "daring," but certain overtones may be detected. Both θράσος and θρασύς are used of Paphlagon and the Sausage-seller in *Knights* (181, 304, 331, 429) and with γλῶτταν in the speech to the *boule* at 637. At *Clouds* 445 the ideal

[4]F. V. Fritzsche, *De Daetalensibus Aristophanis commentatio* (Leipzig 1831) 54.
[5]A. Meineke, *Fragmenta comicorum graecorum* 2.1 (Berlin 1839) 1037.

pupil of Socrates is described as θρασὺς εὔγλωττος; at *Clouds* 890, 915 θρασύς is used of Wrong (he is θρασύς, while Right is ἀρχαῖος). Pheidippides in the second agon is θρασύς (1349); so too the disguised *kedestes* after his speech defending Euripides (*Th.* 523), and Euripides himself during his contest with Aeschylus (*Frogs* 846). There exist therefore the connotations of youth, confrontation, and debate. "Thrasymachos" is, I maintain, an excellent name for a young man in love with the new rhetoric and the law-courts, of the sort described in the *parabasis* of *Acharnians* (676–718). Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1400b20) quotes an etymological jest by Herodikos on Thrasymachos ("always bold in battle"), and Plato (*Rep.* 336) presents Thrasymachos on the attack like a wild beast, much as Aristophanes uses θράσος of the physical threat of Paphlagon at *Knights* 693.

The name Thrasymachos was rare at Athens, and I shall argue that the sophist from Chalkedon was as yet unknown. The name was chosen for the *akolastos* because of its etymology and its overtones; no contemporary reference was intended.

At this point two objections could be made to my interpretation of fr. 205.8–9.[6] First, the invocation of Thrasymachos fits well with the other certain allusions to *komodoumenoi* at verses 2, 6 (Lysistratos, Alkibiades). However, examine closely the rhythm of these lines: verse 2—σορέλλη, that is from Lysistratos, verse 4—καταπλιγήσῃ, that is from the *rhetores*, verse 6—ἀποβήσεται, that is from Alkibiades, verses 8–9—καλοκἀγαθίαν ἀσκοῦντας, that is from the *xynegoroi*. the pattern is clear: *komodoumenos* + general group, *komodoumenos* + general group. A reference to Thrasymachos as a *komodoumenos* would break that pattern. Second, parents in Aristophanes usually call a son by the words τέκνον, παιδίον, παῖ, and not by the actual name. This is true, although in *Clouds* Strepsiades does call his son by name twice (80, 827) and five times as τέκνον/παῖ. In *Wasps* (the other father/son comedy) Philokleon addresses his son once only (as οὗτος, 829). At 372 he refers to his son as "Bdelykleon" where any sort of periphrasis would have done. Any address in the vocative seems to be unusual, not just the use of a proper name. We can observe also that at a later date in Menander's *Samia*, the use of the proper name ("Moschion") is far more common than a word such as "son," or "child." Thus I think that the interpretation of Thrasymachos as a vocative to a character may stand.

My conclusion has strong implications for the career of the sophist, since this passage from *Daitales* is almost universally accepted as putting him in Athens before 427 and making him by that date sufficiently prominent to be good comic material (e.g., the statement of the most recent commentator—

[6]They were in fact raised by the referees for *Phoenix*, and I attempt in this paragraph to answer their concerns.

"il passo é importante perché prova che nel 427 Trasimaco erà già ad Atene, e forse da lungo tempo"[7]). Refuse to see the sophist here, remove this chronological linchpin, and Thrasymachos' dates are free to settle where they will. From the *testimonia* to and the fragments from Thrasymachos' work, the following indications of date may be ascertained (DK 85, pp. 319–326):

(a) fr. 2, from his *Hyper Larisaion*, which mentions Archelaos of Macedon (411–399).

(b) fr. 1, from a *Peri politeias*, delivered at Athens, in which the speaker alludes to the effects of war and faction and mentions the debate over the *patrios politeia*.. Guthrie (297) plausibly dates this speech late in the War.

(c) Dion. Hal. *Lysias* 6, that Lysias (born 459 on his date) was older than Thrasymachos. That Dionysios' date for Lysias' birth is in all likelihood too high[8] need not affect the argument. I suspect that Dionysios had evidence of Thrasymachos' birth after 459—he admits that the actual priority is a matter of dispute—and reckoned accordingly. In any case he is clear that Lysias' notoriety at Athens preceded that of Thrasymachos. On the traditional scheme, Thrasymachos would have been at most 30 in 427, a rather young age for a foreign sophist to have made himself prominent. The critics who accept Thrasymachos' presence in *Daitales* reject Dionysios' evidence altogether and set Thrasymachos' birth well before 460.

(d) Arist. *Soph. El.* 183b29 ff., who establishes the chronological sequence: Teisias, Thrasymachos, Theodoros: οἱ δὲ νῦν εὐδοκιμοῦντες παραλαβόντες παρὰ πολλῶν οἷον ἐκ διαδοχῆς κατὰ μέρος προαγαγόντων οὕτως ηὐξήκασι, Τεισίας μὲν μετὰ τοὺς πρώτους, Θρασύμαχον δὲ μετὰ Τεισίαν, Θεόδωρον δὲ μετὰ τοῦτον, καὶ πολλοὶ πολλὰ συνενηνόχασι μέρη. The dates of Theodoros of Byzantion are disputed; the fullest treatment is that of Solmsen.[9] Theodoros is usually associated with Lysias and Thrasymachos (Plat. *Phdr.* 216c, 266e; Cic. *Brut.* 48). The first passage casts Theodoros or Thrasymachos as an Odysseus to Gorgias' Nestor; if Gorgias was around 60 in 427 (Guthrie's estimate), then clearly Thrasymachos and Theodoros belong to the next generation (i.e., a birthdate in the late 450s). The titles of two speeches of Theodoros, *Kata Thrasyboulou*, and *Kat' Andokidou*, suggest an activity

[7]A. C. Cassio, *Aristofane. I Banchettanti* (Pisa 1977) 48. See also M. Untersteiner, *The Sophists*, tr. K. Freeman (London 1957) 311–313, and S. Usher, *Dionysius of Halicarnassus, The Critical Essays* 1 (London 1974) 30–31.

[8]For a revised chronology of Lysias which puts his birth ca 444, his departure to Thurioi ca 430, and his return to Athens ca 420–418, see K. J. Dover, *Lysias and the* Corpus Lysiacum (Berkeley 1968) 28–46.

[9]F. Solmsen, "Theodoros," *RE* 5A (1934) 1839–47.

around the turn of the century.[10] A *floruit* for Theodoros of 420–390 seems indicated; *pace* Aristotle, he seems to be Thrasymachos' contemporary, not his *diadochos*.

(e) the dramatic date of *Republic*, a notoriously controversial issue which involves finding a date when Lysias, Kephalos, Polemarchos, Socrates, Thrasymachos, Glaukon, and Adeimantos were alive, in Athens, and of the right ages.[11] None of the usually accepted dates fits (422 or 412), and one cannot feel optimistic about attempts to determine a consistent dramatic date for *Republic* (or for any Platonic dialogue) and thus to use Thrasymachos' presence in *Republic* 1 as evidence for his age or his career.

(f) the dramatic date of Plato's *Phaidros*, in which Lysias plays a crucial role and Thrasymachos is mentioned on several occasions. This is an equally thorny matter as the orthodox date for Lysias' return to Athens is 412 (Dion. Hal. *Lysias* 1) and Phaidros had been in exile since 415 (*SEG* 13.17.122). Dover has shown in his revised chronology for Lysias that *if* there is a consistent dramatic date for *Phaidros*, then 418–416 is the most reasonable. However, this dialogue likewise cannot be taken as a reliable source for Thrasymachos' career.[12]

What indications there are for the activity of Thrasymachos suggest a *floruit* closer to 410 than to 430. The ancient sources connect him with Lysias, not with the older and earlier Gorgias. The sole piece of evidence for the appearance of Thrasymachos at Athens before the 410s is this fragment of *Daitales*. Without it, one would not have felt any reason to date Thrasymachos at Athens much before 418. I have argued that the natural interpretation of fr. 205.8–9 is as an address to a *dramatis persona* named Thrasymachos and not as an invocation of the sophist. Having eliminated him as *komodoumenos* in 427, we are free to date his activity at Athens later in the century as the evidence suggests.[13]

[10]Solmsen (above, n. 9) uses the passage from Aristotle to argue that the πολλοί include Gorgias and all the other sophists. Theodoros thus antedates Gorgias, Protagoras, *et al.*, and his career began "zum mindestens im letzten Jahrzehnt vor dem peloponnischen Kriege." The speeches *Kata Thrasyboulou* and *Kat' Andokidou* Solmsen dates rather implausibly ca 410 (at the end of Theodoros' career) or rejects them altogether as the result of confusion with speeches attributed to Lysias. Both Thrasymachos and Theodoros have been dated too early; career-dates of ca 420–390 seem more reasonable.

[11]See W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* 4 (Cambridge 1975) 437; Dover (above, n. 8) 31.

[12]Dover (above, n. 8) 32–43; see also Guthrie (above, n. 11) 396.

[13]At the original presentation of this paper the objection was raised that one must accept Aristophanes' comic coinage ("Thrasymachos") in 427 and the coincidence of the arrival of a sophist with that very name some eight or ten years later. However, Aristophanes' names do

In an important discussion of the dramatic date of Plato's *Protagoras*, J. Walsh has argued persuasively that there are two strata of chronological material in that dialogue (ca 431—Sokrates' return from Potidaia, and ca 419—production of Pherekrates' *Agrioi*), and that contrary to the usual interpretation the later stratum is the primary one and the earlier intrusive.[14] Thus Protagoras' visit to Athens belongs to the late 420s, not to the 430s, perhaps made possible by the lull in hostilities in 423/2. Eupolis' *Kolakes* (421) and Plato's *Protagoras* thus reflect the same phenomenon, a sophistic incursion ca 422. Dover has made a strong case for Lysias' return to Athens ca 418 (in the period of peace after 421). I suspect that Thrasymachos, not mentioned by Plato in *Protagoras*, arrived shortly thereafter. He is not, therefore, a *komodoumenos* in *Daitales* (427).[15]

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occur in the real world. Agorakritos, a name clearly dependent on its etymology (*Knights* 1257–58), is known as that of a non-Athenian contemporary, Agorakritos of Paros (*RE* 1 [1894] 882–883). For Dikaiopolis, L. Edmunds, "Aristophanes' *Acharnians*," *YCS* 26 (1980) 1–41, at 1, n. 2, demonstrates the historicity of that name; and Lysistrate has been detected not only after 411 (*SEG* 24.256) but also before (*SEG* 10.321—ca 455). Nor should it matter to us or to Aristophanes if the inscriptional evidence should reveal an obscure Pheidippides alive and well in 423. The etymology is what matters; the name itself bears the stress of the comedian's intention.

[14]J. Walsh, "The Dramatic Dates of Plato's *Protagoras* and the Lesson of ἀρετή," *CQ* NS 34 (1984) 101–106. One of the readers for *Phoenix* directs my attention to a possible similar "telescoping" in Plato's *Timaios* (see J. K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families 600–300 B.C.* [Oxford 1971] 325–326).

[15]This paper was orginally delivered in May 1987 to the annual meeting of the Classical Association of Canada at McMaster University. I must thank Professor Mark Joyal for allowing me to try out these ideas privately and for some useful leads in the right direction, and also Professor M. G. Fry for her many penetrating comments and criticisms of the original version.