

A connection of this nature cannot, of course, be proved definitively, especially when the fifth-century evidence is so scanty. One could also argue (from points 3 and 4 above and from *Euthydemus* 277e = DK 84 A 16) that Aristophanes is drawing upon his own mental amalgam of Protagoras and Prodicus. But were Prodicus uppermost in his mind, one would have expected a more direct parody of his synonymics, such as that which Plato, Aristophanes' heir in such matters, so deliciously provides in *Protagoras* 337 a-c.

This brief study, in addition, has some bearing on our limited evidence about the historical Protagoras. It strengthens the likelihood that Protagoras' interpretation of Simonides in Plato's dialogue may correspond rather closely to actual fact. One may even wonder whether *Protagoras* 338e-339d reflects the same work as that which, according to Aristotle, criticized the poem of the *Iliad*¹²).

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12) [*Addendum*. R. Pfeiffer's *History of Classical Scholarship* (see above, note 4), which appeared after the completion of this paper, now provides independent evidence for the historicity of Protagoras' interpretation of the Scopas poem: see pp. 32-33. Pfeiffer also notes the connection between *Frogs* 1182-88 and *Protagoras* 339bff, but he refers this kind of criticism to Prodicus rather than Protagoras (p. 40).]

Αὐτολήκυθος

In a famous passage of his speech against Conon, Demosthenes refers in scathing terms to the activities of the defendant's sons and of other young men in contemporary Athens: *καὶ ἐρεῖν ὡς εἰσὶν ἐν τῇ πόλει πολλοί, καλῶν κάγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν νιεῖς, οἱ παίζοντες οἷ ἄνθρωποι νέοι σφίσις αὐτοῖς ἐπωνυμίας πεποιήγνται, καὶ καλοῦσι τοὺς μὲν ἰθυφάλλους, τοὺς δ' αὐτοληκύθους, ἐρῶσι δ' ἐκ τούτων ἑταιρῶν τινές...* 54. 14.

In the case of *ἰθυφάλλοι*, the obscene connotation is unambiguous. Both the context and the formation of the word require it

to mean 'those with erect penis' (certainly not merely 'lewd fellows', as LSJ)¹). The context would indicate that behind the nickname *αὐτολήκυθοι* there lurks a similarly obscene meaning. This however was not recognized by the ancient commentators. Harpocration gives no fewer than five possible meanings: *αὐτολήκυθοι* are either

- (a) those girt up for exercise and ready to do all manner of deeds; or are
- (b) wretchedly poor and own nothing but lekythoi (this is the meaning given by Hesychius also); or are
- (c) men who work on their own account (*αὐτονομοί*); or are
- (d) ready to inflict blows and stripes and to indulge in insolent conduct; or are
- (e) men with money ready *πρὸς τὰς μίξεις* (nisi leg. *πράξεις*) – this money they keep in their lekythoi.

Although, on the face of it, meaning (a) appears to fit the context better than any of the others, it is (b) which has found most favour among modern scholars. The meaning 'wretchedly poor' seems so inappropriate to the rich *blousons noirs* attacked by Demosthenes that a curious tradition has grown up (admittedly with some slight support from ancient authorities)²). The *αὐτολήκυθοι* who associated with Conon's sons were not really poor, but when they were going out for a night's revelry they would behave like poor men, that is, they would have no slave to carry their lekythoi for them; in this way, they would be free even from the slight restraint that a slave's presence might put on their activities. Though this view is favoured by editors and by LSJ, the reasoning which leads to it seems rather tortuous; worse, the sense arrived at does not fit the context, which calls for a meaning as brutally clear as that of *ἰθύφαλλοι*.

Two Dutch scholars, van Lennep and Verdenius³), have refused to conform to this doctrine and so have laid the basis of a more satisfactory interpretation. They deal with the two points of the usual theory which raise the greatest difficulty.

1) Cf. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb tragedy and comedy* (1962²) ed. Webster, pp. 140–141. H. Herter, *Vom dionysischen Tanz zum komischen Spiel*, Iserlohn 1947.

2) See Sandys' Excursus (c) in his edition of the *Select private orations* II (1910⁴), pp. 240–242.

3) In *Hermeneus* 30 (1962), respectively at p. 192 and at p. 225. Professor Verdenius kindly points out to me that C. Zink reached a similar conclusion in 1883 (*Adnotationes ad Demosthenis orationem in Cononem*, p. 22).

Van Lennep rightly insists that the *λήκυθος* element in the compound must be understood in an obscene sense. He compares the meaning of *ληκώ* as preserved by the lexicographers and the obscene reference to another vessel in Aristophanes:

λαβὲ τόνδε τὸν ἀλάβαστ(ρ)ον. *Lys.* 947.

He does not, however, suggest how *ληκώ* and *λήκυθος* are connected or why the latter should be obscene. Verdenius, for his part, thinks it not unlikely that *αὐτολήκυθοι* means 'λήκυθοι pure and simple' and recalls Semonides' *αὐτόκωλος* and *αὐτομήτωρ* and a number of other Greek compounds having *αὐτο* – as the first part and conveying the sense of 'purely, simply'. If we take the word *αὐτολήκυθοι* to mean 'those who are *λήκυθοι* pure and simple, through and through', how do we fit it into its context? A possible answer appears if *λήκυθος* is given a metaphorical sense. Various metaphorical meanings in literary contexts have been considered by Quincey, who points to the importance of the *shape* of the vessel⁴). With *αὐτολήκυθοι* the metaphor is an obscene one, deriving also, of course, from the shape of the *lekythos*. A young associate of Conon's sons was so licentious and rampant that he could be described as a 'λήκυθος (i.e. *πέος*) pure and simple' (a fit companion for an *ἰθύφαλλος*)⁵).

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4) 'The metaphorical sense of *ΛΗΚΥΘΟΣ* and *AMPULLA*', *CQ* 43 (1949), pp. 32–44. See now Whitman, *Ληκύθιον Ἀπώλεσεν*, *HSCP* 73 (1969), pp. 109–112.

5) Plutarch *Moralia* 50C and Lucian *Lexiphanes* 10 also use *αὐτολήκυθος*. In neither passage is *αὐτολήκυθος* treated as a word whose meaning would be immediately apparent to the reader. By his use of *λεγόμενος*, Plutarch seems almost to be reviving a long defunct literary word, by his time imperfectly understood, while Lucian inserts *αὐτολήκυθος* in a passage abounding in rare and extravagant formations. *Pace* LSJ, *αὐτολήκυθος* does not itself mean 'flatterer, parasite' in Plutarch and Lucian; it is applied to persons already so identified in other ways.