

A LEVEL

Prescribed Literary Sources

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

H408

For first teaching in 2017

Democracy and the Athenians (H408/34)

Version 1



Aeschylus, *Eumenides*

The following passages from Aeschylus' *Eumenides* have been translated by George Theodoridis, and taken from Poetry in Translation website:

<http://www.poetryintranslation.com/Admin/Copyright.htm>

Lines 674–710

ATHENA: (674)

Shall I now call upon the judges to give their just vote according to their conscience? Have you said enough?

CHORUS: (676)

We have shot our every arrow but we want to hear the result of the issue.

ATHENA [*To Apollo*]: (678)

Well, now, have all things been done impeccably?

APOLLO [*To the Areopagates-judges*]:

Friends, you've heard all you have heard. When you cast your vote, respect the oath you have in your heart.

ATHENA [*Also to the Areopagates*]: (679)

Men of Attica, hear now my decree: You will be pronouncing judgement upon the first trial ever involving bloodshed. This court of judges will forever rule in the land of Aegaeus. Here, on the rock of Ares where the Amazons set up their tents in order to fight Theseus – through hatred – and then also raised opposite the city a new and tall tower and sacrificed to Ares, from which act the rock was named "The Hill of Ares". Here Reverence and his brother Fear will hold strongly the citizens' injustice not only during the day but during the night also, so long as they, themselves do not alter the laws. If you stain clear water with pollution

Notes

you shall never have a sweet drink.

Accept neither Anarchy nor Tyranny and do not banish Fear from the city; who among the mortal is righteous if he fears nothing? If you revere such a thing you'll have for your city the strongest defence ever, stronger than that of the Scythians and that of Pelops.

I now establish this court. Neither profit nor lust should violate it and it should remain an august guardian of the land, vigilantly defending those asleep, and quick to avenge.

These then are my words uttered for the good of my citizens for all future.

Now let every man stand, pick up his ballot, think of his oath and judge accordingly. My speech has ended.

The Areopagates obey.

Notes

Euripides, *Suppliants*

The following passages from Euripides' *Suppliants* have been translated by George Theodoridis, and taken from Poetry in Translation website:

<http://www.poetryintranslation.com/Admin/Copyright.htm>

Lines 399–456

THEBAN HERALD: (399)

Who rules this land? Who will receive the message I bring from Creon, ruler of Cadmus' land, now that Eteocles is dead, killed by Polyneices, his brother, outside our seven gates?

THESEUS: (403)

Hold it, stranger! You began your speech with the wrong word. There is no "ruler" here. This city is free of such men. It is ruled by the citizens themselves, rich and poor alike and it is they who hold the various offices of the State, in annual turns. Rich and poor are equal here.

THEBAN HERALD: (409)

Ha! And your words – they're like a lucky throw of the dice for me! My city, the city that has sent me here, is ruled by one man and one man only, not by a mob. It is a city which allows no one to trick its people with sweet words, trick them into doing now one thing, now another – into doing things that suit his own pockets. It doesn't have men whose first speeches are received well but who then destroy everything. And then, what do they do, these men? They lie to hide all the damage they've caused and with those lies they escape justice!

How can a mindless herd rule a city properly? It can't! Wisdom cannot be obtained by haste but by patience, by time. Take a poor farmer for example. Even if he is wise, how is he going to be able to apply himself to the city's affairs

Notes

when he's so burdened by the hard work on his farm? And then, it's a bitter thing to see, men of base birth enter a city, make some fine speeches to the people and then with those speeches become even more prominent than the nobles!

THESEUS: (426)

Oh, what an eloquent herald we have here! What a profusion of irrelevant little words! All right then, my man. You've started this debate so let's play by the rules. You said your piece now hear mine: There's no heavier burden for a city to bear than a monarch. To begin with, a city like that has no laws that are equal to all of its citizens. It can't. It is a place where one man holds all the laws of the city in his own hands and dictates them as he wants. What then of equality? Written laws, however, give this equal treatment to all, rich and poor. If a poor man is insulted by a rich one, then that poor man has every right to use the same words against that rich man. The poor can win against the rich if justice is on his side. The essence of freedom is in these words: "He who has a good idea for the city let him bring it before its citizens." You see? This way, he who has a good idea for the city will gain praise. The others are free to stay silent. Is there a greater exhibition of fairness than this?

Where the people hold the power, they can watch with great enjoyment the youth of their city thrive. Not so when there is a single ruler. The moment he sees someone who stands out in some way, he becomes afraid of losing his crown and so he kills him. So how could a city possibly flourish like that? How could it grow in strength when someone goes about culling its bright youth like a farmer goes about cutting off the highest tips of his wheat during Spring? Who would anyone want to bother with wealth and livelihood for his children if it will all end up in the ruler's hands? Why bother raising sweet daughters in your house if they, too, will end up with the ruler, whenever he wants them, leaving you with tears of sorrow? I'd rather die than have my daughters dragged against their will into a man's bed!

So, these are the arrows I shot at your argument.

Notes

Aristophanes, *Acharnians*

The following extract from Aristophanes' *Acharnians* has been taken from Aristophanes *Acharnians* edited with translation and commentary by Alan H. Sommerstein (ISBN: 978-0856681721).

We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available translation booklet.

Lines 1–203

DICAEOPOLIS [*alone*]: (1)
 How often have I bitten my own heart with rage! My moments of delight have been scant – very scant, just four! And the times I've been pained, there have been sandgrain-hundred-loads of them. Let me see now, what have I enjoyed that was fit for euphorication? I know – something I rejoiced in my heart to see: the five talents that Cleon coughed up. How I brightened at that! I love the Knights for that exploit: it was a worthwhile thing for Greece. But then I had another pain, a tragic one, when I was open-mouthed in expectation of Aeschylus, and the herald proclaimed "Bring in your chorus, Theognis". Can you imagine what a shaking that gave my heart? Another time I was pleased was once when Dexitheus came on after Moschus to play a Boeotian tune. But there was a sight this year that racked me to death, when Chaeris came stooping in to play the Orthian. But never since I first washed has soap stung my eyebrows as I feel stung now, when there's a regular meeting of the Assembly fixed for sunrise and here's the Pnyx deserted, while the people chatter in the Agora and run up and down dodging the vermilioned rope. Not even the Prytaneis are here; they'll arrive late, and then when they do come you can't think how they'll jostle one another for front seats, as they stream down in a body. But that there shall be peace they care not at all. O my city, my city! For myself, I always come to

Notes

the Assembly before anyone else and sit here; then, when I'm alone, I sigh and yawn, stretch and fart, don't know what to do, draw on the ground, pluck myself, count to myself, gazing at the countryside and yearning for peace, loathing the town and longing for my village – my village, which never cried “buy charcoal” or “buy vinegar” or “buy oil”; it knew not “buy”, it produced everything itself, and Mr. Buysome was not to be found there. So now I've come absolutely prepared to shout, interrupt, abuse the speakers, if anyone speaks about anything but peace. *[Enter Herald, Prytaneis, and Archers, followed by a crowd of citizens.]* Ah, here are the Prytaneis – at midday. Didn't I tell you? It's just as I said: every man pushing and shoving for a front place.

HERALD: (43)

Move forward! Move, to be inside the purified area!

GODSCHILD¹ *[arriving late; aside to Dicaeopolis]:* (45)

Has anyone spoken yet?

HERALD: (45)

Who wishes to speak?

GODSCHILD: (46)

I do.

HERALD: (46)

Who are you?

GODSCHILD: (46)

Godschild.

HERALD: (46)

You are not human?

¹ Godchild = Amphytheus in the Penguin translation

Notes

GODSCHILD: (46)

No, I am an immortal. The original Godschild was son of Demeter and Triptolemus, and to him was born Celeus; and Celeus married my grandmother Phaenarete, of whom was born Lycinus; and as the son of the latter, I am immortal. And the gods have entrusted the making of peace with the Spartans me, myself alone. But though I am immortal, gentlemen, I have no journey-money; the Prytaneis refuse to provide it.

HERALD [*at a signal from the chairman of the Prytaneis.*] (54)

Archers!

GODSCHILD [*as he is dragged off*]: (55)

Triptolemus and Celeus, will you ignore my plight?

DICAEOPOLIS: (56)

Prytaneis, you wrong the Assembly by arresting the man who was ready to make peace for us and let us hang up our shields.

HERALD: (59)

Stay seated and keep silence.

DICAEOPOLIS: (59)

By Apollo, not I, unless you initiate a debate about peace.

HERALD: (61)

The ambassadors from the [Persian] King!

DICAEOPOLIS: (62)

You and your King! I'm tired of ambassadors and their peacocks and their bragging.

HERALD: (64)

Silence!

[*Enter a party of Ambassadors, richly attired.*]

Notes

DICAEOPOLIS: (64)

Whew! Ecbatana, what a get-up!

AMBASSADOR [*to the people*]: (65)

You sent us to the Great King, drawing a salary of two drachmas a day, in the archonship of Euthymenes –

DICAEOPOLIS: (67)

Alas for the drachmas!

AMBASSADOR: (68)

And we wore ourselves out meandering through Caystrian plains under awnings, softly bedded down in carriages – we were practically dying.

DICAEOPOLIS: (71)

I must have been absolutely thriving, then, bedded in rubbish by the ramparts!

AMBASSADOR: (73)

And when we were entertained, we were compelled to drink unmixed sweet wine from cups of glass and gold –

DICAEOPOLIS: (75)

City of Cranaus! Are you aware how these ambassadors mock you?

AMBASSADOR: (77)

Because the barbarians regard as real men only those who can eat and drink vast quantities.

DICAEOPOLIS: (79)

As we do pathics and male prostitutes.

AMBASSADOR: (80)

After three years we arrived at the King's residence; but he had gone off with an army to a bog, and stayed shitting for eight months on the Golden Hills –

DICAEOPOLIS: (83)

And how long did he take to close up his arse? Was it at the full moon?

Notes

AMBASSADOR: (84)

– and then he went off home. Then he entertained us, and served us up oxen baked whole in the oven –

DICAEOPOLIS: (86)

And who’s ever seen oven-baked oxen? What bragging balderdash!

AMBASSADOR: (88)

And also, I swear it, he served us a bird three times the size of Cleonymus; it was called a fooler.

DICAEOPOLIS: (90)

So that’s why you were making fools of us, and drawing two drachmas a day for it.

AMBASSADOR: (91)

And now we have come back, bringing with us Pseudartabas, the King’s Eye.

DICAEOPOLIS: (92)

May a crow knock it out with his beak, and your ambassadorial eye along with it!

HERALD: (94)

The King’s Eye! [*Enter Pseudartabas, with a single great central eye, his face partly swathed, attended by two eunuchs.*]

DICAEOPOLIS: (94)

Lord Heracles! Heavens, man, what are you doing looking like a warship? Are you rounding a point and on the look-out for a ship-shed? I suppose that’s an oarport leather you’ve got round your lower eye!

AMBASSADOR: (98)

Come now, Pseudartabas, say what the King has sent you to tell the Athenians.

PSEUDARTABAS: (100)

Iartaman exarxas apisona satra.

Notes

- AMBASSADOR:** (101)
Did you understand what he says?
- DICAEOPOLIS:** (101)
By Apollo, I didn't.
- AMBASSADOR:** (102)
He says the King is going to send you gold. [*To Pseudartabas.*] Speak louder, and plainly, about the gold.
- PSEUDARTABAS:** (104)
You not vill get goldo, you open-arsed Iaianian.
- DICAEOPOLIS:** (105)
Good grief! That's plain all right!
- AMBASSADOR:** (105)
Why, what does he say?
- DICAEOPOLIS:** (106)
What does he say? He says that the Ionians are open-arsed dodderers if they expect gold from the barbarians.
- AMBASSADOR:** (108)
No, he says open carts full of gold.
- DICAEOPOLIS:** (109)
Open carts my foot! You're a great big liar. Be off with you; I'll examine this man myself. [*Exeunt Ambassadors.*] Here, you, tell me distinctly in the presence of this witness [*raising his fist*], or else I'll dye you Sardinian purple: is the King going to send us gold? [*Pseudartabas throws back his head, indicating "no."*] So we're just being deceived by our ambassadors? [*Pseudartabas and the eunuchs nod.*] Very Greek, the way these fellows nod. I'm quite sure they come from this very city – and one of the eunuchs, this one, I know who he is [*unswathing the face of the "eunuch"*] Cleisthenes son of Sibyrtius! O thou that shav'st thy hot-desiring arse,

Notes

dost thou, O monkey, with a beard like thine come among us dressed up as a eunuch? And who may this one be? Surely not Strato?

HERALD: (123)

Silence! Sit down! The Council invite the King's Eye to the Prytaneum.

[*Pseudartabas and the eunuchs go out.*]

DICAEOPOLIS: (125)

Doesn't this make you want to hang yourself? Do you think I'm dallying here, when no host's door is ever closed to *them*? I'm going to do a great and fearful deed. Where do I find Godschild?

GODSCHILD [*who has slipped back into the Assembly*] (129)

Here I am.

DICAEOPOLIS: (130)

Take these eight drachmas and make peace with the Spartans for me, myself alone, and my children and my consort. You lot can have your embassies and your gaping mouths! [*Exit Godschild.*]

HERALD: (134)

Let Theorus, who comes from the court of [King] Sitalces, come forward.

THEORUS: (134)

Here I am.

DICAEOPOLIS: (135)

Here's another con-man being ushered in.

THEORUS: (136)

We would not have been long in Thrace –

DICAEOPOLIS: (137)

No more you would, if you hadn't been drawing so much pay.

Notes

THEORUS: (138)

– if the whole of Thrace had not been blanketed with snow, and the rivers frozen, about the same time that Theognis was competing here. During that time I was ... drinking with Sitacles. And I must say he was incredibly pro-Athenian, and a true lover of you all, so much so that he kept writing up on the walls “The Athenians are beautiful”. And his son, whom we’d made an Athenian, he was yearning to eat sausages at the Apaturia, and begged his father to succour his fatherland; and Sitalces swore over a libation that he would do so, with so great an army that the Athenians would say, “What a swarm of locusts is coming!”

DICAEOPOLIS: (151)

I’ll be damned if I believe a word of what you’ve said here, except for the locusts.

THEORUS: (153)

And now he has sent you the most warlike tribe in Thrace.

DICAEOPOLIS: (154)

Now *that* at least is something definite.

HERALD: (155)

Come forward, the Thracians whom Theorus has brought. [*Enter some Thracian soldiers.*]

DICAEOPOLIS: (156)

What is this rabble?

THEORUS: (156)

An army of Odomanti.

DICAEOPOLIS: (157)

Odomanti, fiddlesticks! Here, tell me, what is this? Who’s been stripping the Odomantians’ cocks?

Notes

THEORUS: (159)

These men, if you pay them two drachmas, will peltasticize all Boeotia into the ground.

DICAEOPOLIS: (161)

Two drachmas for these foreskinless wonders? The upper-oar folk, the city's bulwark, would resent that a bit, I fancy! – Bloody hell! I'm being murdered – having my garlic pillaged by the Odomanti. [*To the soldiers*] Here, drop that garlic, will you?

THEORUS: (165)

You idiot, you mustn't go near them when they're garlic-primed!

DICAEOPOLIS: (167)

Prytaneis, do you allow me to suffer this in my own city, and, what is more, at the hands of barbarians? I forbid you to continue holding the Assembly on the subject of pay for the Thracians; I declare to you that there is a sign from Zeus and a drop of rain has struck me.

HERALD: (172)

The Thracians will withdraw, and be in attendance the day after tomorrow. The Prytaneis hereby dissolve the Assembly. [*Exeunt all but Dicaeopolis.*]

DICAEOPOLIS [*as he walks home*]: (174)

Ah, what a savoury mash I've lost! [*Enter Godschild, running and breathless.*] But look, here's Godschild come from Sparta. Good day, Godschild.

GODSCHILD: (176)

Not a good day yet, not till I've stopped running. I'm on the run from the Acharnians; I've got to get away from them.

DICAEOPOLIS: (178)

What's happened?

Notes

GODSCHILD: (178)

I was hurrying here with treaties for you, and they smelt them – some old men from Acharnae, tough old folk, hard as holm-oak, unyielding Marathon-fighters, men of maple. Then they all cried out “You villain, do you bring treaties when our vines have been cut down?” and began gathering stones in their cloaks. And I ran off, and they chased me, shouting.

DICAEOPOLIS: (186)

Well, let them shout. You’ve got the treaties?

GODSCHILD: (187)

I have indeed, these three samples here. [*showing three wine-skins.*] This is a five-year one. Take it and taste it.

DICAEOPOLIS: (189)

Ugh!

GODSCHILD: (189)

What’s the matter?

DICAEOPOLIS: (189)

I don’t like it; it smells of pitch and naval preparations.

GODSCHILD: (191)

Well then, you take this ten-year one and taste it.

DICAEOPOLIS: (192)

This one smells too – of embassies to the states of the alliance – a very acid smell, as if the allies were being ground down.

GODSCHILD: (194)

Well, *this* is a thirty-year treaty by land and sea.

Notes

DICAEOPOLIS [*tasting it*]: (195)

Holy Dionysia! This smells of ambrosia and nectar, and of not being on the alert for the words "three days' rations", and it says on my palate "Go where you please". I accept this, I make the libation of peace, and I'll drink it dry; and a hearty goodbye to the Acharnians! Myself, released from war and misery, I'll go inside and celebrate the Country Dionysia. [*He goes into his house.*]

GODSCHILD: (203)

And I'll run from the Acharnians. [*He runs off*]

Notes

Aristophanes, *Ecclesiazusae* (Assemblywomen)

The following extract from Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* has been taken from Aristophanes *Ecclesiazusae* edited with translation and commentary by Alan H. Sommerstein (ISBN: 978-0856687082).

We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available translation booklet.

Lines 1–310

[The stage-house represents three town houses. Praxagora comes out of the middle one. She is wearing man's clothes, but her pale, smooth face proclaims her a woman. In her right hand she carries a lamp, in her left hand she is clutching a walking-stick and various other objects. She holds out the lamp at arm's length and apostrophises it, declaiming in tragic style.]

PRAXAGORA:

(1)

O eye most radiant of the wheel-borne lamp,
 Superb invention of sagacious men –
 For I thy birth and fortunes shall declare:
 Born on a wheel, by power of potter's arm,
 Thou hast the sun's bright glories in thy nozzles –
 Send forth the flaming signal as agreed!

[She waves the lamp around, repeating the same pattern of movements several times.]

To thee alone our secret we'll reveal;
 And rightly, for within our bedrooms too,
 When we try out new sexual variations,
 Close by thou standest, and thine eye o'ersees
 Our arching bodies, yet none ever shuts it

Notes

Out of the chamber; thou alone dost shine
 Into the secret corners of our thighs
 When singeing off the hairs that sprout from them;
 By us thou standest when illicitly
 We open up the brimming granaries
 And stores of Bacchic juice – yet, true accomplice,
 You never blab a word to other folk!
 And therefore shalt thou know our present scheme,
 All that my friends resolved on at the Scira. –

[*Looking off, left and right*] But none of those who were supposed to come is here, although it's beginning to get light; the Assembly will be starting very soon, and we've got to bag places and get seated there without being noticed, acting *in the most intimate cooperation* as Phylomachus once put it, if you remember that now. [*Looking off again*] What *can* it be? Is it that they haven't got the beards sewn together, which they were told to have? Or have they found it hard to nick those men's cloaks unobserved? Ah, but here I see a lamp coming this way. Here now, let me step back again, in case by any chance the person coming is actually a man. [*She withdraws under an open wing of the stage-house, left, as several women enter from the other side – the first of the groups which will form the chorus. They are wearing women's inner (but not outer) garments, and carrying men's cloaks, shoes, walking-sticks and false beards.*]

CHORUS-LEADER [*calling back to her companions as she approaches*]: (30)
 Time to be moving now, because the morning herald has just crowed for the second time as we were coming along!

PRAXAGORA [*emerging to meet the new arrivals*]: (32)
 And I've been awake all night waiting for you lot. But look, let me call out my neighbour here, just *scratching* at her door, because her husband mustn't hear anything.

Notes

[*She taps very gently on the door to the left of her own. After a short delay a woman (First Woman) comes out; she is already wearing man's shoes.*]

FIRST WOMAN: (35)

I was putting these shoes on, you know, and I did hear the scrape of your fingers. Because I never got to sleep. My husband, my darling – because my other half comes from Salamis, you see, and all night long he was *rowing* me under the covers. So it was only just now that I was able to take this cloak of his.

PRAXAGORA [*looking off, right*]: (41)

Now I can also see Cleinarete coming – and here's Sostrate – and Philaenete.

CHORUS-LEADER [*calling out to those approaching*]: (43)

Well, hurry up, won't you? Because Glyce took an oath that the last of us to arrive would have to pay a fine of two gallons of wine and a quart of chickpeas.

PRAXAGORA [*to First Woman*]: (46)

And don't you see Smicythion's wife, Melistiche, hurrying along in his shoes? And I think she was the only one that was able to get away from her husband in her own time.

FIRST WOMAN: (49)

And don't you see the tavern-keeper's wife, Geusistrate, with the torch in her right hand?

PRAXAGORA: (51)

Yes, and I can see Philodoretus' and Chaeretades' wives coming, and a great many other women, all that's worth anything in the City. [*By now a full chorus of twenty-four has assembled.*]

SECOND WOMAN [*arriving last, breathlessly apologetic*]: (54)

Oh, darling, I really had the greatest trouble escaping and slipping along here! The whole night long my husband was coughing, because last evening he'd stuffed himself with anchovies.

Notes

PRAXAGORA [*to all the women*]: (57)

Well, sit down, then [*they do so*], so that now I see you're all assembled, I can ask you this: have you done all the things that we resolved on at the Scira?

FIRST WOMAN: (60)

I have. To begin with, I've got armpits that are bushier than a shrubbery, just as we agreed. Then, whenever my husband went off to the Agora, I oiled myself all over and stood in the sun all day to get a tan.

SECOND WOMAN: (65)

Me too; but the *first* thing I did was throw my razor out of the house, so that I would get hairy all over and not look like a woman at all any more.

PRAXAGORA: (68)

And have you got the beards, which you were all told to have with you when we met?

FIRST WOMAN [*displaying the false beard she has brought*]: (70)

Yes, by Hecate, I've got a lovely one here.

SECOND WOMAN [*ditto*]: (71)

And I've got one that beats Epicrates by a street!

PRAXAGORA [*to the others*]: (72)

And you, what's your answer?

FIRST WOMAN [*surveying the group*]: (72)

It's yes; at least they're nodding.

PRAXAGORA: (73)

And the other things I can see you've done; you've got Laconian shoes, and walking-sticks, and men's cloaks, just as we said.

FIRST WOMAN [*displaying a walking-stick with a knobbed head*]: (76)

I have, anyway; I brought out this cudgel of Lamius' on the sly when he was asleep.

Notes

SECOND WOMAN: (78)

So *that's* the one he goes around with, farting!

PRAXAGORA: (79)

By Zeus the Saviour, if he put on the leather coat of the All-seeing One, he, if any man, would be the proper person to be one-to-one with ... the public executioner! But come now, let's make sure we get on with our job, while there are still stars in the sky. The Assembly meeting, which we've made preparations to go to, is due to begin at sunrise.

FIRST WOMAN: (86)

Yes, it is, so we really must occupy some seats, at the foot of the Rock, directly facing the Prytaneis.

SECOND WOMAN [*displaying a woman's work-basket, which she has brought along in addition to her masculine paraphernalia*]: (88)

Actually that's why I brought along this stuff, so I could do some carding while the Assembly was filling up.

PRAXAGORA [*furious*]: (90)

Filling up, you idiot?

SECOND WOMAN: (90)

Yes, indeed, by Artemis. I won't be any less well able to hear the speeches, will I, if I'm carding as well? And my children have nothing to wear!

PRAXAGORA: (93)

Listen to you – carding! When you ought not to be showing any part of your body to the men sitting there! Why, it would be a fine thing for us, if the Assembly was already full, and then one of us was climbing over them, lifted up her clothes and revealed her real Phorm...isius! But if we get ourselves seated *first*, nobody will see who we are if we draw the cloaks tight around us; and when we sport the long beards that we're going to have tied on there, who that sees us won't think we're men? After all, Agyrrhius has nicked Pronomus' beard

Notes

without anyone noticing – and that although *he* used to be a woman; and now, do you see, he’s screwing up the City with the best of them! This, I tell you, this, by the holy light of this dawning day [*she stretches out her arms towards the eastern horizon*], is the reason why we are venturing this great venture, to see if we can succeed in taking over the running of the City so that we can do it some good. Because as things are now, we’re dead in the water.

FIRST WOMAN: (110)

But how will a “feminine-minded company of women” be able to make public speeches?

PRAXAGORA: (111)

Why, very well indeed, I fancy! They say, don’t they, that the young men who get shagged the most turn out to be the smartest speakers? Well, by a stroke of luck, we all have that advantage!

FIRST WOMAN: (115)

I don’t know about that, but inexperience is a daunting thing.

PRAXAGORA: (116)

Well, wasn’t that exactly why we gathered here, in order to rehearse what we’re to say when we go there? You can’t tie on your beard too soon, and likewise all the others who, I take it, have practised their talks.

SECOND WOMAN: (120)

Well, dear girl, every one of us knows how to *talk*!

PRAXAGORA: (121)

You come on, now, tie it on, and quickly turn into a man; and I’ll lay down the garlands and tie one on myself together with you, in case I decide to make a speech.

[*Praxagora lays two garlands on the stage-altar. She then puts on her false beard, as do First Woman and Second Woman.*]

Notes

SECOND WOMAN [*who has been examining her new face in her mirror*]: (124)

Come here, Praxagora, my sweet! [*Praxagora goes over to her.*] Look, my dear [*offering her the mirror*], and see how really ludicrous the thing looks.

PRAXAGORA: (126)

In what way ludicrous?

SECOND WOMAN: (126)

It's as if someone tied beards on to lightly browned cuttlefish!

PRAXAGORA [*returning to the platform, and taking the role of herald*]: (128)

Purifier, please carry the ferret round the bounds. [*Loudly*] Move forward!

[*Pointing to an imaginary person at the back of the meeting*] Stop talking, Ariphrades; move forward and sit down. [*After a pause*] Who wishes to speak?

SECOND WOMAN [*coming forward*]: (131)

I do.

PRAXAGORA: (131)

Then put on the garland, and may it bring you good fortune.

SECOND WOMAN [*taking a garland and putting it on her head*]: (132)

There you are. [*She takes her stand on the platform and looks inquisitively about her.*]

PRAXAGORA: (132)

Go on, speak.

SECOND WOMAN: (132)

You mean I'm to make a speech before having a drink?

PRAXAGORA: (133)

Drink indeed!

SECOND WOMAN: (133)

My good woman, what else did I put on a garland for?

PRAXAGORA: (134)

Off you go, out of the way. You'd have gone there and done the same sort of

Notes

thing to us.

SECOND WOMAN [*standing her ground*]: (135)

What, don't they drink in the Assembly too?

PRAXAGORA: (136)

Listen to you – “don't they drink”!

SECOND WOMAN: (136)

They *do*, by Artemis, and pretty strong stuff too! At any rate their policies, if you consider all the things they do, are crazy enough to be the work of drunkards. And what's more, they pour libations, they do; or else why would they make all those prayers, if there wasn't any wine there? *And* they rail at each other like men who've had a few, and then someone turns violent and is carried out by the archers.

PRAXAGORA: (144)

You go and sit down. You're useless.

SECOND WOMAN [*reluctantly relinquishing her garland and returning to her place*]: (145)

By Zeus, I'd have been better off staying beardless. I'm so thirsty, I think I'm going to die of dehydration.

PRAXAGORA: (147)

Is there anyone else who wants to speak?

FIRST WOMAN [*coming forward*]: (147)

I do.

PRAXAGORA: (148)

Come on, then, garland yourself; the job's been started now. [*First Woman puts on the second garland.*] Now look, make sure that you speak man's language and speak well, and lean hard with your body on your stick.

FIRST WOMAN [*taking the platform*]: (151)

Notes

I would have wished that someone else, one of the regular speakers, had given the best advice, so that I could have sat quiet. But as it is, so far as in me lies, I will not stand for the installation in taverns of storage-pits for water! I think it's wrong, by the Two Goddesses!

PRAXAGORA: (156)

By the Two Goddesses, you fool? Where have you put your brain?

FIRST WOMAN: (157)

What's wrong? I certainly didn't ask you for a drink!

PRAXAGORA: (158)

No, but you swore by the Two Goddesses when you were being a *man* – although *otherwise* you spoke very skilfully indeed.

FIRST WOMAN: (160)

Oh, yes, by Apollo –

PRAXAGORA: (160)

So stop; because I'm not going to put one foot in front of the other to go to the Assembly, unless these things are got exactly right.

[*As First Woman returns to her place, Second Woman eagerly comes forward again.*]

SECOND WOMAN: (163)

Give me the garland. I'm going to have another turn at speaking. I think I've practised it properly now. [*Mounting the platform, and pulling on the first garland*]

In my opinion, ladies of the Assembly –

PRAXAGORA: (166)

Again, you wretch? You're calling the men "ladies"!

SECOND WOMAN [*pointing into the audience*]: (167)

That was because of Epigonus over there. I looked over that way, and it made me think I was speaking to women.

PRAXAGORA: (169)

Notes

Be off with you too, and sit down, away from here! [*Second Woman retires.*] If this is what you lot are like, I think I'm going to take this and speak. [*She takes up the first garland and holds it up over the altar.*] I pray to the gods that I may succeed in bringing our plans to fruition. [*Putting on the garland, and addressing both the women and the theatre audience*] I have as much of a stake in this country as you do; and I am vexed and grieved at the whole situation the City is in. I see her employing leaders who are always villains: even if one of them acts decently for a day, he then behaves wickedly for ten. You try entrusting your affairs to someone else? He'll do even more harm! Well, it is difficult to advise men who are so hard to please, men who are afraid of those who want to be their friends and are for ever on their knees to those who *don't* want to. There was a time when we didn't have Assemblies at all; but at least we thought that Agyrrhius was a villain. Now, when we do have them, whoever has received cash praises him to the skies, while whoever hasn't had any says that those who try to treat the Assembly as a wage-earning job deserve to be put to death.

FIRST WOMAN: (189)

By Aphrodite, that's well said!

PRAXAGORA: (190)

Swearing by Aphrodite, you fool? A nice thing you'd have done if you'd said that at the Assembly!

FIRST WOMAN: (192)

But I wouldn't have said it there.

PRAXAGORA: (192)

Well, don't get *now* into the *habit* of saying it. – Again, this Alliance, when we were considering making it, they said that if it didn't come off, it would mean the end of the City; then, when it did come off, they were annoyed, and all at once the politician who had induced us to make it ran off and disappeared. We need to launch a fleet: the poor man says yes, the rich and the farmers say no. Now you get annoyed with the Corinthians, and so do they with you;

Notes

now they're decent chaps, and you're told you should be decent too now. The Argives are stupid; but Hieronymus is sensible. We get a glimpse of salvation; but Thrasylbulus is furious because *he* isn't invited to take charge.

FIRST WOMAN: (204)

Smart man, this!

PRAXAGORA: (204)

Now *that's* the right way to praise the speaker. – You, the people, you are the cause of all this. You take public money in wages, and you each look out for a way to gain a profit for yourselves, while the public interest gets kicked around like Aesimus. Now then, if you listen to my advice, you will yet be able to win through. I say that we should hand over the City to the women. After all, we already employ them as managers and controllers of our households.

SECOND WOMAN: (213)

Bravo, bravo! Bravo, by Zeus!

FIRST WOMAN: (213)

More, more! Good man!

PRAXAGORA: (214)

I will also show that they have better qualities than we do. In the first place, they maintain, one and all, their ancient custom of dyeing wool in hot water, and you won't ever see them experimenting with anything different; whereas the Athenian state, if that was satisfactory, wouldn't want to preserve it – quite the contrary, they'd be pointlessly busying themselves with some innovation or other. Women parch corn sitting on their haunches, just like in the old days. They carry things on their heads, just like in the old days. They keep the Thesmophoria just like in the old days. They bake their flat-cakes just like in the old days. They make life hell for their husbands just like in the old days. They keep lovers in the house just like in the old days. They buy extra food for themselves just like in the old days. They like good strong wine just like in the

Notes

old days. They enjoy getting fucked just like in the old days. So, gentlemen, let us hand over the City to them; let's not indulge in unnecessary chatter, nor inquire of them what it is they actually mean to do, but quite simply let them govern. Consider only these points: in the first place, being the mothers of our soldiers, they will be anxious to secure their safety; then again, who would be quicker than their mother to send them extra supplies? There is nothing more resourceful than a women when it comes to finding financial resources, and when in power she's never going to be deceived, because women are so used to being deceivers themselves. The rest of what I might say I will pass over. If you follow this advice of mine, you will live happily ever after. *[Acclamation.]*

SECOND WOMAN: (241)

Bravo, Praxagora, my sweet! How clever! Where did you learn that stuff so well, my dear?

PRAXAGORA: (243)

In the refugee time I lived with my husband on the Pnyx; that enabled me to listen to the speakers and learn of their tricks.

FIRST WOMAN: (245)

No wonder you were so skilful and expert, my good friend! And now *[looking round the gathering to indicate that she is seeking its support]* we women here and now elect you to be general if you succeed in this plan of yours. *[All raise their hands in approval.]* But in the Assembly, if that blasted Cephalus comes up and starts abusing you, how will you respond to him?

PRAXAGORA: (250)

I'll say he's off his rocker.

FIRST WOMAN: (250)

But everyone knows *that* already!

PRAXAGORA: (251)

Then I'll say he's completely barmy.

Notes

- FIRST WOMAN:** (252)
They know that as well.
- PRAXAGORA:** (252)
Then I'll say he makes his pots shoddily – but that he's making the City go to pot all right, good and proper!
- FIRST WOMAN:** (254)
But what if that bleary-eyed Neocleides abuses you?
- PRAXAGORA** [*making an insulting gesture*]: (255)
My advice to *him* is to look up a dog's arse!
- FIRST WOMAN:** (256)
What if they interrupt and try to knock you off your stride?
- PRAXAGORA** [*making suggestive pelvic motions*]: (256)
I'll thrust back; I've got substantial and varied experience as far as *knocking* goes!
- FIRST WOMAN:** (258)
There's only one thing we haven't considered: if two of the archers start dragging you off, what, may I ask, will you do then?
- PRAXAGORA:** (259)
I'll do the elbow trick, like this [*making a sharp sideways thrust with both elbows*];
I'll never submit to being held in the middle!
- FIRST WOMAN:** (261)
And if they lift you off the ground, *we'll* ... tell them to leave you alone.
- SECOND WOMAN:** (262)
Well, we've taken all these things into account all right, but here's something we haven't thought of. How are we going to remember, come the vote, to raise our *hands*? We're so used to raising our *legs*!
- PRAXAGORA:** (266)
Difficult problem! But all the same, you must put your hands up, baring one arm

Notes

from the shoulder. – [As *Praxagora* successively gives the following orders, all the women complete their disguises as instructed, so far as they have not already done so.]

Now come on and shorten your underdresses; and put on your Laconians, quick as you can, just as you've seen your husband do every time he was getting ready to go to the Assembly or go out anywhere. Then, when all that is in proper order, tie on your beards; and *when* you've fitted those on and adjusted them precisely, then put on your men's cloaks as well, the ones that you stole, and then move off, leaning on your sticks and singing an old men's song, imitating the way country people act.

CHORUS-LEADER: (279)

Very good.

PRAXAGORA [to *First and Second Women*, who have completed their preparations]: (279)

And let's us go ahead of them, because I expect that there'll be other women from the countryside who'll come straight to the Pnyx. [To the chorus, some of whom are not quite ready] Now hurry up, because the practice up there is for <the magistrate to tell> those who haven't arrived before daybreak to slink away home without getting so much as a bean. [She goes out, left, accompanied by *First and Second Women*.]

CHORUS LEADER [as the chorus form up for their exit]: (285)

It's time for us to be moving, *men* – for that's what we must always remember to say, to make sure it never slips our minds. We're running no small risk, if we are caught taking on an undercover venture of this magnitude.

CHORUS [circling the orchestra]: (289)

Let's go to the Assembly, men! Because the magistrate has issued a warning that if anyone doesn't come good and early, when it's still dark, covered with dust content with a pickled-garlic breakfast

Notes

and with a *sauce piquante* look in his eye,
he won't give him his three obols.

So, Charitimides
and Smicythus and Draces,
follow us, be quick,
and take great care to avoid
striking any wrong note
in the display you've got to make.
And when we've got our tickets,
then we must make sure
we sit close together,
so that we can vote to approve
all of the measures
our sisters may need –
only, what am I saying? I should
have called them our *brethren*.

Make sure we thrust aside these folk coming
from town, all those who previously,
when the fee due for coming along
was only one obol,
used to sit down and chat
among the garland stalls,
but who *now* make themselves a thorough nuisance!
It wasn't like this when the noble
Myronides was general:
no one then would have had the audacity
to draw pay for managing
the City's affairs.
No, everyone would come
bringing for himself

Notes

a drink in a little leather flask, and also
a loaf, two onions
and three olives.
But *now* they expect
to get three obols when they
do something for the common good, as if
they were builders' labourers!

Notes

Aristophanes, *Knights*

The following extract from Aristophanes' *Knights* has been taken from Aristophanes *Knights* edited with translation and commentary by Alan H. Sommerstein (ISBN: 978-0856681783).

We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available translation booklet.

Lines 147–395

DEMOSTHENES: (147)

Blest sausage-seller! Come here, come up here, beloved one, arisen a saviour to the city and to us!

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (150)

What is it? Why are you calling me?

DEMOSTHENES: (150)

Come here, so that you may learn how fortunate you are and how greatly blessed. [*The Sausage-seller mounts the platform in front of the house.*]

NICIAS: (152)

You carry on, take his table off him and explain to him the meaning of the god's oracle; I'll go and keep an eye on Paphlagon. [*He goes into the house.*]

DEMOSTHENES: (155)

Come now, first of all put your things down on the ground; then make obeisance to the earth and the gods.

SAUSAGE-SELLER [*doing as he is bid*]: (157)

There you are. What *is* this?

Notes

DEMOSTHENES: (157)

Blest man! Man of wealth! Today nobody, tomorrow a colossus! Grand-marshal of Athens the blest!

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (160)

My good man, why don't you let me wash my tripe and sell my sausages, instead of making fun of me?

DEMOSTHENES: (162)

What do you mean, tripe, you stupid fool? Look over here. Do you see the serried ranks of this assembled host [*meaning the audience*]?

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (163)

Yes.

DEMOSTHENES: (164)

Of all these you shall be the paramount chief, chief too of the market, the harbours and the Pnyx. You'll trample on the Council and trim back the generals; you'll chain, you'll imprison, you'll ... suck cocks in the Prytaneum.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (168)

Me?

DEMOSTHENES: (168)

Yes, you; and you haven't seen it all yet. Climb higher up, on this table, and look down on all the islands all around.

SAUSAGE-SELLER [*on the table*]: (171)

I see them.

DEMOSTHENES: (171)

What else do you see? The trading ports and the merchant ships?

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (172)

Yes.

Notes

DEMOSTHENES: (172)

How then can you say you are not greatly blessed? Now again, cast your right eye round to Caria, and the other to Carthage.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (175)

I *shall* be blest, if I twist my neck!

DEMOSTHENES: (176)

It's not that; it's that all that expense is to be bought and sold at your will. For as this oracle here says, you are to become a great man.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (178)

And how, tell me, am I, a sausage-seller, going to become a *man*?

DEMOSTHENES: (180)

It's for exactly that reason, don't you see, that you are to become great, because you're low and from the Agora and bold as brass.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (182)

I don't consider myself worthy to hold great power.

DEMOSTHENES: (183)

Heavens, whatever's the matter, that you should say you're not worthy? It seems to me you've something good on your conscience. You don't come of good, upright stock, do you?

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (185)

Good god, no! Nothing but bad stock.

DEMOSTHENES: (186)

Oh, congratulations! What good luck! What an advantage you've got for political life!

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (188)

But, my good man, I've not even had any education, except for reading and writing, and I'm proper bad at that.

Notes

DEMOSTHENES: (190)

That's your only impediment, that you know them at all, even "proper bad". The leadership of the people is no longer a job for an educated man or one of good qualities, but for one who's ignorant and foul. Don't let slip what the gods offer you in their oracle.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (195)

What does the oracle say, then?

DEMOSTHENES: (195)

It speaks good, by all the gods; it's wrapped in rather complex and crafty riddling language:

"But when the crook-taloned eagle of leather shall seize in his beak the blood-quaffing blockhead serpent, even then perisheth the garlic-brine of the Paphlagon and to the sellers of tripe the god grants great glory, sith they prefer not rather to vend sausages."

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (202)

Well, what's that got to do with me? Explain it to me.

DEMOSTHENES: (203)

Well, the "eagle of leather" is Paphlagon here [*pointing to Cleon in the audience*].

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (204)

And what's "crook-taloned"?

DEMOSTHENES: (204)

I fancy it speaks for itself: it means that he seizes things and carries them off with hands *crooked* like claws.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (206)

And what's the point of the serpent?

DEMOSTHENES: (206)

That's patently obvious. The serpent is a long thing, and the sausage also is a

Notes

long thing; then again, both the sausage and the serpent are “blood-quaffers”; so it says that the serpent is now about to vanquish the eagle of leather, “sith” he is not made soft by words.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (211)

The oracle tickles my pride; but I’m amazed how I’m supposed to be capable of exercising the stewardship of the people.

DEMOSTHENES: (213)

Easy as pie: do the same things you do already. Mix all their affairs together and stir them into a hash, and always try to win the people over with little touches of elegantly prepared rhetoric as sweeteners. The other demagogic qualities you possess: a repellent voice, low birth, and you’re a typical product of the Agora, You have everything that’s needed for public life, and oracles and the voice of Pytho are in agreement. Now crown yourself and pour libation to the god Blockhead, and then let’s see you pay the man out.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (222)

But who will be my ally? For the rich are frightened of him, and the poor folk fart with terror.

DEMOSTHENES: (225)

But there are the Knights, a thousand fine men, who hate him and will come to your aid, and all who are honest and decent among the citizens, and every man of intelligence in the audience, and myself along with them; and the god will lend his assistance. And have no fear, he’s not portrayed with his own face; the property-makers were too frightened for any of them to be prepared to make a portrait mask of him. He’ll be recognized all the same; the audience is intelligent enough!

NICIAS [*within*]: (234)

Heaven preserve us, Paphlagon’s coming out!

Notes

PAPHLAGON [*coming out of the house*]: (235)

By the Twelve Gods, you two won't get away with this long-standing conspiracy of yours against the people! What's this Chalcidian cup doing? It can only be that you are inciting the Chalcidians to revolt. [*Screaming*] You will perish, you will die, you pair of villains! [*The Sausage-seller retreats in terror.*]

DEMOSTHENES: (240)

Here, you, why are you running away? Stay put! Noble sausage-seller, don't betray the cause! [*Calling into the wings*] Men of the cavalry, come here! Now's the moment. Simon, Panaetius drive, drive for the right wing! [*To the Sausage-seller*] They're near us. Wheel round again and defend yourself! The dust-cloud is plain to see; they're right close and attacking. Fight him, chase him, put him to flight! [*The Sausage-seller returns, and he and Demosthenes set upon Paphlagon as the chorus charge in.*]

CHORUS-LEADER: (247)

Hit him, hit the villain, the harrier of the cavalry corps, the tax-farmer, the bottomless chasm and Charybdis of robbery, the villain, the villain! I'll say it several times, for he was a villain several times a day. Strike him, chase him, harry him and worry him, abominate him (for so do we), and shout as you attack him! Take care he doesn't escape you; for he knows the routes by which Eucrates used to make his getaway straight into clover!

PAPHLAGON: (255)

Venerable jurymen! Brethren of the Order of the Three Obols, whom I feed by my loud denunciations, true or false! Come to my aid, for I am being beaten up by conspirators!

CHORUS-LEADER: (258)

And rightly too; for you eat up the public funds before the lot has fallen on you, and you pick off the outgoing magistrates like figs, pressing them to see which of them is green or ripe or not yet ripe. Yes, and you seek out any private citizen who's a silly lamb, rich and not wicked and frightened of public affairs, and if you

Notes

discover one of them who's a simple fellow minding his own business, you bring him home from the Chersonese, take him round the waist with slanders, hook his leg, then twist back his shoulder and plant your foot on him.

PAPHLAGON: (266)

Do you join in the attack too? But, gentlemen, I'm being beaten up on your account, because I was about to make a proposal that it's fitting to set up a monument to you on the Acropolis in honour of your courage.

CHORUS-LEADER: (269)

What a fraud! What a supple rogue! Do you see how he tries to flatter us and humbug us, as if we were senile? Well, if he moves *this* way, he'll be struck by *this* [presenting his fist]; and if he tries to duck out *this* way, he'll butt against a leg. [The chorus place themselves to block any attempt by Paphlagon to descend from the platform.]

PAPHLAGON: (273)

My city! My people! Look at these animals who punch me in the stomach!

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (274)

Oh, you shout, do you, the same way you always try to make yourself master of the city?

PAPHLAGON: (275)

With these same shouts for my weapons, I'll put you first to flight!

CHORUS-LEADER: (276)

Well, if you're victorious with your shouts, you're the hurrah-man; but if he surpasses you in shamelessness, then we take the cake.

PAPHLAGON: (278)

I denounce this man; I say that he exports soup containing naval *stocks* for the Peloponnesians' triremes!

Notes

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (280)

And I, by Zeus, denounce *this* man, for running into the Prytaneum with an empty stomach and then running out again with a full one.

DEMOSTHENES: (282)

That's right – and taking prohibited goods out with him, bread and meat together and a slice of fish, which Pericles was never in his life thought to deserve.

PAPHLAGON: (284)

The two of you will die this minute!

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (285)

I'll bawl three times as loud as you.

PAPHLAGON: (286)

I'll shout you down with my shouts.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (287)

I'll bawl you down with my bawls.

PAPHLAGON: (288)

I'll smear you, if you become a general.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (289)

I'll flay your back like a dog's.

PAPHLAGON: (290)

I'll encircle you with claptrap.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (291)

I'll cut off your lines of retreat.

PAPHLAGON: (292)

Look me in the eye without blinking.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (293)

I too was bred in the Agora.

Notes

PAPHLAGON: (294)

If you so much as grunt, I'll tear you in pieces.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (295)

If you so much as talk, I'll fling you on the dung-heap.

PAPHLAGON: (296)

I avow myself a thief; you aren't one.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (297)

Yes, I am, by Hermes of the Agora; *and* I can steal before witnesses and deny it on oath.

PAPHLAGON: (299)

That's plagiarism! And I expose you to the Prytaneis as being in possession of sacred tripe belonging to the gods on which no tithe has been paid!

CHORUS: (304)

Villainous and loathsome screamer! Your audacity fills the whole earth, the whole Assembly, all taxes, all indictments, all law-courts, you mud-churner, you who have thrown our whole city into chaos and confusion, you who have deafened our Athens with your shouting, watching like the tunny-fishers from the rocks above for shoals of tribute.

PAPHLAGON: (314)

I know from what leather this plot has long since been stitched up.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (315)

Yes, if you don't know about stitching leather I don't know about making sausages! You used to cut the hide of a rotten old ox at an angle, so that it looked thick, and cheat the country people by selling it to them; and before they'd worn it on their feet a day, it was two handbreadths bigger!

Notes

DEMOSTHENES: (319)

He did just the same thing to me, by heaven, with the result that I became a tremendous laughing-stock to my friends and fellow-demesmen. Before I got to Pergase I was swimming in my shoes.

CHORUS: (324)

Did you not, then, right from the start display
Shamelessness, the sole guardian deity of politicians?
Trusting in her, you strip the most fruitful of the foreigners,
you, the Number One, while the son of Hippodamus streams with tears as he
watches.

But now another man has appeared much
more villainous than you, so that I rejoice,
a man who will put a stop to you and will surpass you, it's clear right away,
in roguery and audacity
and in power to humbug.

CHORUS-LEADER [*to Sausage-seller*]: (333)

Now, you who were reared in that place whence all men come who are real
men, show us now just how worthless a decent upbringing is.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (335)

Now listen and hear what sort of a citizen this man is!

PAPHLAGON: (336)

Are you still not going to let me speak?

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (336)

No, because I'm a low fellow too.

DEMOSTHENES: (337)

And if that doesn't make him yield, add that you're of low ancestry as well.

Notes

- PAPHLAGON:** (338)
Are you still not going to let me speak?
- SAUSAGE-SELLER:** (338)
No, by Zeus.
- PAPHLAGON:** (338)
By Zeus, yes.
- SAUSAGE-SELLER:** (338)
By Poseidon, no; I'll fight it out first for the right to speak before you.
- PAPHLAGON:** (340)
By god, I'm ready to burst.
- SAUSAGE-SELLER:** (340)
No, I *won't* let you.
- DEMOSTHENES:** (341)
In heaven's name, let him, let him burst!
- PAPHLAGON:** (342)
What gives you this assurance, that you see fit to speak in opposition to me?
- SAUSAGE-SELLER:** (343)
Because I'm as capable as you of speaking and of stirring things up.
- PAPHLAGON:** (344)
Speaking, he says! Oh, you'd do a fine job if a case fell to you and you had to take it all torn and raw – you'd handle it excellently! Do you know what I think's come over you? What comes over most people. I suppose you gave a good speech in a piffling little case against an alien immigrant, after muttering it over all night, repeating it to yourself in the streets, drinking water, rehearsing to an audience and exasperating your friends – and then you thought you were capable of public speaking. You fool, what an absurd idea!

Notes

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (351)

Well, what is it *you* drink, that you've made the city such that now you yourself alone can master her with your tongue and reduce her to silence?

PAPHLAGON: (353)

Do you compare any man alive to me? I'll swallow down hot slices of tunny, and then drink a jugful of neat wine to follow, and straight away I'll screw the generals at Pylos!

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (356)

And I'll gulp down reed tripe and hog's tripe, and then drink off the gravy, and before washing my hands I'll throttle the politicians and ruffle Nicias.

DEMOSTHENES: (359)

I was pleased with the rest of what you said; but one thing doesn't appeal to me – that you mean to lap up the political gravy all by yourself.

PAPHLAGON: (361)

You won't devour the Milesians' bass and then fall on them like a hurricane.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (362)

But I'll eat sides of beef and then buy mining leases.

PAPHLAGON: (363)

I'll leap upon the Council and give it a violent shaking.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (364)

And I'll stuff your arse like a sausage skin.

PAPHLAGON: (365)

And I'll drag you out of doors by the buttocks, head downwards.

DEMOSTHENES: (366)

By Poseidon, if you drag him, you'll have to drag me too!

PAPHLAGON: (367)

How I'll clap you in the stocks!

Notes

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (368)

I'll indict you for cowardice.

PAPHLAGON: (369)

Your hide will be stretched on the tanning-bench.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (370)

I'll flay you into a thief's hold-all.

PAPHLAGON: (371)

You'll be spread out and pegged to the ground.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (372)

I'll make mincemeat out of you.

PAPHLAGON: (373)

I'll pluck out your eyelashes.

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (374)

I'll cut out your crop.

DEMOSTHENES: (375)

And, by Zeus, we'll shove a peg in his mouth as the butchers do, then pull out his tongue and take a good and proper look at him, there with his gaping ... arse, to see if he's measly.

CHORUS: (382)

So there really are other things hotter than fire, and speeches more shameless than the shameless speeches that are uttered in the city; and this business is not just something trifling <or insignificant>.

Attack him, make him twist and twirl; do nothing by halves;
for now he is gripped by the waist.

CHORUS-LEADER: (389)

I tell you, if you soften him up now with your attacks, you'll find him a coward;
I know his nature.

Notes

SAUSAGE-SELLER: (391)

And yet, having been that sort of character all his life, he's now managed to pass for a man by reaping another's harvest. And now, those ears of corn he brought home from there, he's clapped them in prison and is parching them and hoping to sell them.

PAPHLAGON: (395)

I have no fear of you, while the council chamber lives, and while Demos continues to sit booby-faced on the Pnyx.

Notes

Aristophanes, *Peace*

The following extract from Aristophanes' *Peace* has been taken from Aristophanes *Peace* edited with translation and commentary by Alan H. Sommerstein (ISBN: 978-0856687853).

We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available translation booklet.

Lines 729–760

CHORUS-LEADER: (729)

Go, and good luck to you. As for us, meanwhile, let us hand over this gear to the attendants and give it them to keep safe, because there are a great many thieves who are very much in the habit of skulking around the stage-building and doing their dirty work there. [*As the chorus give their agricultural tools to the attendants*] Now guard these bravely; and let us for our part tell the spectators “the path of words that is ours, and all that is in our minds”.

Really the stewards ought to beat any comic poet who comes forward and extols himself before the audience in the anapaests. However, if it is proper, O daughter of Zeus, to honour one who has been and is the best and most renowned comic producer in the world, then our producer says that he is worthy of great praise. First of all, he, alone of all men, stopped his rivals always making fun of rags and waging war on lice; then he was the first to outlaw and expel from the stage those Heracleses who kneaded dough or went hungry; and he got rid of the slaves who were always running away from someone, or deceiving someone, or getting beaten just in order that a fellow-slave might make fun of his bruises and ask him: “Poor devil, what have you had done to your skin? It’s not a bristle-whip, is it, that’s invaded your sides in great strength and laid waste

Notes

your back?" Such poor stuff, such rubbish, such ignoble buffoonery, he has removed; he has created a great art for us, and built it up to towering dimensions with mighty words and ideas and with jokes that are not vulgar. Nor has he satirized the little man or woman in private life; rather, with a spirit like that of Heracles, he tackled the greatest monsters, striding through terrible smells of leather and the menaces of a muckraker's rage. And first of all these I fought with the Jag-toothed One himself, from whose eyes shone terrible rays like those of the Bitch-star, while all around his head licked serpent-like a hundred head of accursed flatterers; he had the voice of a torrent in destructive spate, the smell of a seal, the unwashed balls of a Lamia, and the arse of a camel. On seeing such a monstrosity I did not take fright; no, I stood my ground all the time, fighting for you and also for the islands.

Notes

Aristophanes, *Wasps*

The following extracts from Aristophanes' *Wasps* has been taken from Aristophanes *Wasps* edited with translation and commentary by Alan H. Sommerstein (ISBN: 978-0856682131).

We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available translation booklet.

Lines 471–712

BDELYCLEON: (471)

Is there any way we can get into a discussion and an agreement with each other, without fighting and without this shrill screaming?

CHORUS: (473)

A discussion with you, you enemy of the people, you lover of monarchy, who consorts with Brasidas and wears tassels of wool and grows his beard untrimmed?

BDELYCLEON: (477)

By heaven, I'd be better off renouncing my father altogether rather than battling with all these troubles day after day.

CHORUS-LEADER: (480)

Oh no, you haven't even got to the celery yet, or the rue either (we'll throw that in from our stock of six-pint phrases). You're not getting hurt now, but wait till a prosecutor empties this same stuff over you in court and calls you a conspirator!

BDELYCLEON: (484)

In heaven's name, can you leave me alone? Or am I doomed to flay and be flayed the whole day long?

Notes

CHORUS: (486)

Never, no never, not while a fibre of my being lives –
you who have thus set out to gain dictatorship over us!

BDELYCLEON: (488)

How you make everything into “dictatorship” and “conspirators”, if anyone makes a criticism of anything big or little! I hadn’t even heard the *word* “dictatorship” for fifty years back, but now it’s a good deal cheaper than salted fish, so much so that its name is actually bandied about in the market place. If someone buys perch and doesn’t want sprats, straight away the man selling sprats nearby says: “This man seems to be buying his fish like a would-be dictator.” Or if he asks for a free onion to season his sardines a bit, the woman selling vegetables gives him a sidelong glance with one eye and says: “Tell me, are you asking for an onion because you hope to be dictator? Or do you think Athens owes you a tribute of seasonings?”

XANTHIAS: (500)

And I got it from that tart yesterday, when I went into her place at midday. Just because I asked her to straddle me, she got sharp with me and asked if I was trying to put old Hippias back in the saddle.

BDELYCLEON: (503)

These people must *enjoy* hearing those words, if this time too, just because I want my father to abandon his early morning-going-out-and-judging-trumped-up-lawsuit-toil-and-troublous habits and live a classy life like Morychus, I get accused of doing it because I’m a conspirator and have dictatorial ambitions.

PHILOCLEON: (508)

It’s what you deserve, by Zeus. I wouldn’t even take pigeon’s milk in exchange for the way of life that you’re trying now to deprive me of. I don’t take pleasure in skate or eel either; I’d enjoy much more eating a nice little lawsuit, stewed in a casserole!

Notes

BDELYCLEON: (512)

Of course; you've got used to enjoying things like that. But if you can endure keeping quiet and absorb what I say to you, I think I'll make you understand that you're completely mistaken about the matter.

PHILOCLEON: (515)

I'm mistaken to be a juror?

BDELYCLEON: (515)

More than that, you don't understand that you're being made a fool of by men whom you all but worship. You're a slave, and you're not aware of it.

PHILOCLEON: (517)

Stop talking about slavery. Me? I'm the lord of all!

BDELYCLEON: (518)

No, you're not. You think you're the ruler, but you're really a servant. Come on, father, explain to us what profit you get from garnering the fruits of Greece.

PHILOCLEON: (521)

Certainly. And I want to make these men the judges of the question.

BDELYCLEON: (521)

So do I. Let him go, all of you. [*Philocleon is released by his guards.*]

PHILOCLEON [*calling after the four slaves as they go inside*]: (522)

And give me a sword. [*To Bdelycleon*] Because if I'm beaten by you in the debate, I'm going to fall on the sword.

BDELYCLEON: (524)

And tell me, what if you don't – what's it called? – abide by the arbitrators' award?

PHILOCLEON: (525)

Then may I never drink neat pay from the Good Spirit's cup!

[*A slave brings out a sword, puts it in Philocleon's hand, and goes back into the house.*]

Notes

CHORUS: (526)

Now the man from our gym
must say something novel,
so that you may be shown –

BDELYCLEON [*calling into the house*]: (529)

Will someone bring me my handbox here right away? [*To the chorus-leader*] But what kind of man will he show himself to be – if that’s what you’re advising him about?

CHORUS: (531)

– to be an abler speaker
than this young man. For you see
that you have a crucial contest
where everything is at stake.
For if, which heaven forbid,
he’s going to beat you now –

[A slave has brought out Bdelycleon’s handbox. Bdelycleon takes out writing-tablets and a stylus, and sits down, ready to take notes. The slave takes the box away.]

BDELYCLEON: (538)

Yes, I’m going to write myself down memoranda of absolutely everything he says!

PHILOCLEON [*to the chorus*]: (539)

Yes, what are you saying, if he defeats me in the debate?

CHORUS: (540)

– then the multitude of the old
aren’t the least bit of use any more;
and <forthwith> we’d be mocked
in all the streets
and called scion-bearers
or the husks of affidavits.

Notes

CHORUS-LEADER [*to Philocleon*]: (546)

So now, you who are to argue in defence of all our kingly power, take courage and try out every verbal skill.

PHILOCLEON: (548)

Yes, right from the start I'm going to prove as far as our power is concerned that it's equal to that of any king. What creature is there today more happy and enviable, or more pampered, or more to be feared, than a juror, and that though he's an old man? First of all, when I come from my bed, there are big men, six-footers, watching out for me at the court railings. Then as soon as I approach, he puts his soft hand in mine, the hand that's been stealing some public money; and they bow down and supplicate me, puring forth their plea in a piteous tone: "Have mercy on me, father, I beg you, if ever you yourself have nicked anything when you were holding some office or buying food for your mess on campaign." And this a man who wouldn't even have known of my existence if it hadn't been for his acquittal that previous time!

BDELYCLEON: (559)

Let me have a note of this, about the suppliants. [*Writes.*]

PHILOCLEON: (560)

Then when I've been supplicated and had my anger wiped away, and gone into court, once I'm inside I take no account of all the promises I've made; I just listen to them leaving nothing unsaid to get themselves off. Tell me, what kind of wheedling can't a juror hear there? Some of them bewail their poverty, and exaggerate the misery they are in, until as he goes on he makes it out to be as great as mine. Others tell us stories, others something funny of Aesop's; others again make jokes in the hope that I'll laugh and lay aside my wrath. And if we're not persuaded by these means, straight away he drags his little children, the girls and the boys, by the hand up to the platform, and I listen while they all hang their heads and bleat in unison, and then their father beseeches me on their behalf, trembling as if I were a god, to acquit him on his audit: "If thou delightest

Notes

in the voice of the lamb, I pray thee take pity on my son's cry" – and on the other hand if I enjoy *pork* he asks me to heed the voice of his daughter. And then we lower the pitch of our anger a bit for him. Isn't this a mighty power that allows us to mock at wealth?

BDELYCLEON: (576)

That's now the second point of yours I'm writing down. [*Writing*] "Allows us to mock at wealth." And now please mention the benefits you get from your so-called dominion over Greece.

PHILOCLEON: (578)

Well then, we get the chance to look at boys' private parts when they're being examined for registration. And if Oeagrus comes into court as a defendant, he doesn't get off until he's picked out the finest speech in *Niobe* and recited it to us. And if a flautist wins his case, he rewards us for it by putting on his muzzle and playing a voluntary for us as we leave. And if a father leaves a daughter as heiress and gives her to someone on his deathbed, then we tell the will it can go and boil its head, and the same to the shell that's lying very grandly over the seals, and we give the girl to anyone whose entreaties persuade us. And for doing all this we cannot be called to account – which is true of no other public authority.

BDELYCLEON [*making another note*]: (588)

Yes, you know, that *is* grand; on that, what you've mentioned, I congratulate you. But it's wrong of you to unshell the heiress against her will.

PHILOCLEON: (590)

Then again, the Council and People, when it's at a loss to decide an important case, votes to hand the criminals over to the jurors. Then Euathlus and that big fellow Flatteronymus, the one who threw away his shield, keep saying they'll never betray us and they'll fight for the masses. And no one ever carries a motion in the Assembly unless he first proposes to discharge the courts after they've tried one case. And Cleon himself, the mighty screamer, we're the only

Notes

people he doesn't take bites out of; he watches over us, holds us in his arms and keeps off the flies. You've never done anything at all like that for your own father! But Theorus – and he's a man no less important than ... Euphemius – uses his sponge to black our shoes with pitch from his basin. Look at the sort of blessings you're shutting me off and holding me back from. And you said you were going to prove that it was slavery and subjection!

BDELYCLEON: (603)

Talk your fill. You're bound to stop some time, and then you'll be revealed as an arse too dirty to be laundered by this splendid power of yours.

PHILOCLEON: (605)

But what's the most delightful of all of them, which I'd forgotten, is when I come home with my pay, and then when I arrive they all together greet me lovingly because of the money. First of all my daughter washes me and anoints my feet and bends down to kiss me, and keeps calling me "daddy dear" while really trying to fish my three obols out of me with her tongue. And the little wife fawns on me, bringing me a puff-pastry and then sitting down beside me and forcing me to have it – "eat this, take a nibble of this." I delight in all that; and I'll never need to look at you and your steward, wondering when he'll come cursing and grumbling to serve lunch. No, if he doesn't knead it up for me quickly, this is what I've got as a bulwark against troubles, an accoutrement to ward off missiles. And if you don't pour wine for me to drink, I bring in this "donkey" full of wine [*showing a small flask*], and then tip it up and pour myself some; and it opens its mouth and brays, and gives a big martial fart at your goblet. Do I not wield great power, in no way inferior to that of Zeus – seeing that the same things are said of Zeus and of me? For example, if we get noisy, every passer-by says: "What a thunder's coming from the court! Lord Zeus!" and if I make lightning, the rich and the very grand all cluck and shit in their clothes for fear of me. And you yourself are terribly afraid of me – by Demeter, you are – but I'll be damned if I'm afraid of you!

Notes

CHORUS: (631)

Never have we heard anyone
who spoke so lucidly
or with such intelligence.

PHILOCLEON: (634)

No, but he thought he'd just have an easy time stripping an unwatched vineyard.
He knew quite well that I'm the best in this line!

CHORUS: (636)

How he discussed everything
and passed nothing over, so that I
felt taller as I listened,
and fancied I was actually judging
in the Isles of the Blest,
so much did his speech delight me.

PHILOCLEON: (642)

How he fidgets now, how he's beside himself! [*To Bdelycleon*] I swear I'll put a
whipped look on your face today.

CHORUS [*to Bdelycleon*]: (644)

Yes, you must weave every kind
of device to get yourself off;
for to mellow my anger
is hard for one
who doesn't speak to my liking.

CHORUS-LEADER: (648)

So unless you've got something sensible to say, it's time for you to be looking for
a good, freshly-cut millstone that will be capable of grinding down my wrath.

BDELYCLEON: (650)

It is a hard task, calling for formidable intelligence above the level found among

Notes

comedians, to cure a long-standing malady that is innate in this city. But, O our Father, son of Cronus –

PHILOCLEON [*thinking himself addressed*]: (652)

Stop, none of this “father” stuff. If you don’t explain it to me quickly in what way I’m a slave, then [*waving his sword*] you will most certainly perish, even if it means I have to keep away from the sacrificial feasts.

BDELYCLEON: (655)

Then unknit your brow a little, Daddy, and listen. First of all reckon up roughly, not with counters but just on your hands, the amount of tribute that comes in to us altogether from the allied states, and apart from that the taxes, one by one, and the many one-per-cents, court fees, mines, markets, harbours, rentals, confiscations. We get a total for all these of nearly two thousand talents. Out of this now put down pay for the jurors for a year, six thousand of them (ne’er yet have more this land inhabited): we get, I think, a hundred and fifty talents.

PHILOCLEON: (664)

You mean our pay doesn’t even come to one tenth of the revenue!

BDELYCLEON: (665)

No, indeed it doesn’t.

PHILOCLEON: (665)

In that case where does the rest of the money go?

BDELYCLEON: (666)

It goes to those “I-will-never-betray-the-Athenian-rabble-and-I’ll-always-fight-for-the-masses” people. You’re bamboozled, father, by these deft phrases, and you choose them to rule over you. And then they get bribed by the allied states to the tune of fifty talents, by making terrifying threats like this: “You will give me your tribute, or I will overthrow your city with my thunder.” While *you* are quite content to nibble at the trotters of your own empire. And since the allies have realised that the common riffraff are being fed a starvation diet from a voting-

Notes

urn funnel and regaling themselves on zero, they regard you as mere ballot-fodder, while these men they ply with gifts – jars of salt-fish, wine, rugs, cheese, honey, sesame, pillows, libation-bowls, dress clothes, crowns, necklaces, drinking-cups, health-and-wealth. But to *you*, none of the people whom you got to rule by dint of much toil on land and much oar-work on the waters gives so much as a head of garlic for your boiled fish.

PHILOCLEON: (680)

No, indeed; only yesterday I had to send out for three cloves from Eucharides. But you're getting on my nerves with not explaining to me what my actual slavery is.

BDELYCLEON: (682)

Well, isn't it absolute slavery for all these men, themselves and their bootlickers, to be holding office and drawing salaries, while *you're* quite content if someone gives you those three obols, money that you yourself originally acquired by hard toil, rowing and fighting and besieging? And on top of that, you go to and fro under orders. That's what makes me choke most of all, when in comes a pansy young man, the son of Chaereas, spreads his legs like this, waggles his body voluptuously, and tells you to arrive early and in good time to judge, "because any of you who arrives after the sign goes up won't get his three obols." *He* gets his prosecutor's fee, a drachma, even if he does come late. Then he goes shares with someone else among his colleagues in office, if one of the defendants has offered any bribe, and the two of them organize the business and both speak very earnestly, but then they're like a pair of sawyers, one pulling and the other yielding in turn. You're just agape for the paymaster, and you don't notice what's being done.

PHILOCLEON: (696)

Do they do that to me? Heaven help me, what are you saying? How you churn up my deepest sediments, and win over my mind more, and do I don't know what to me!

Notes

BDELYCLEON: (698)

Consider then how, when it would be possible for you and the whole people to be rich, you've been penned up somehow or other by these men who always say they're for the people. You rule over a vast number of cities, from the Black Sea to Sardinia, but you don't get the least bit of benefit, except that pay you draw, and they drip that into you with a piece of wool, like oil, always a little at a time, just to keep you alive. The reason is that they *want* you to be poor, and I'll tell you why that's so. It's so that you should know your trainer, and then, when *he* hisses to you to set you on one of his enemies, you'll leap savagely upon them. If they wanted to provide a living for the people, it would be easy. There *are* a thousand states which now pay us tribute. If one had ordered each of these to maintain twenty men, then twenty thousand of the common folk would be living in abundance of hare's meat, of crowns of all kinds, of beestings fresh and boiled, enjoying a life worthy of this land and of the trophy at Marathon. As it is you're like olive-pickers, going at the beck and call of the man who has your wages.

Lines 824–862

BDELYCLEON: (824)

If you were quicker sitting down, I'd be quicker calling on a case.

PHILOCLEON [*hastily taking his seat*]: (825)

Call one, then; I was sitting down long ago.

BDELYCLEON [*to himself*]: (826)

Let me see now, what case shall I bring before him first? What has one of the people in the house done wrong? Thratta who scorched that pot the other day –

Notes

- PHILOCLEON:** (829)
Stop, you! Why, you nearly made me die! Do you mean to call the case on when the court has no railings? That was the first of the sacred objects to be displayed to us!
- BDELYCLEON:** (832)
Heavens, no, it's not there.
- PHILOCLEON** [*rising*]: (832)
Well, I'll run myself and get one for the time being from inside. [*He runs into the house.*]
- BDELYCLEON** [*alone*]: (834)
What's all this about? What a powerful thing one's love for a place can be!
- XANTHIAS** [*coming out of the house, shouting angrily over his shoulder*]: (835)
To hell with you! To think that we keep a dog like that!
- BDELYCLEON:** (836)
Tell me, what's the matter?
- XANTHIAS:** (836)
If it isn't that dog Labes! He just dashed through into the kitchen, grabbed a long Sicilian cheese, and he's eaten it all up.
- BDELYCLEON:** (839)
Then that must be the first crime I bring before my father. You be here to prosecute.
- XANTHIAS:** (841)
No, not me; actually the other dog says he'll be prosecuting if a charge is brought into court.
- BDELYCLEON:** (843)
Go on then and bring them both here.

Notes

XANTHIAS: (843)

I'd better do that.

[He goes inside just as Philocleon comes out carrying a framework of bars that would form three sides of an animal-cage.]

BDELYCLEON: (844)

What's that?

PHILOCLEON: (844)

It's Hestia's sacred pig-pen.

BDELYCLEON: (845)

You mean you've committed sacrilege to take it?

PHILOCLEON: (845)

No, I just want to start the right way about bacon the accused alive. *[He sets up the framework as a railing near his seat, and then sits down.]* Hurry up, bring on a case, I'm looking forward to assessing the penalty.

BDELYCLEON: (848)

Now then, let me fetch the notices and the indictments. *[He goes inside.]*

PHILOCLEON *[calling after him]:* (849)

Dammit, you're wasting time! Using up the whole day – you'll be the death of me! I was wanting to plough up that wax field!

BDELYCLEON *[returning with some boards inscribed with notices, which he hangs up near his father's seat]:* (851)

There you are.

PHILOCLEON: (851)

Call a case, then.

BDELYCLEON: (851)

All right. *[He goes to the seat placed for the presiding magistrate.]*

Notes

PHILOCLEON [*to himself, as he tries to read the notices*]: (851)

Who's this one who's coming on first?

[*Bdelycleon is just sitting down when he abruptly starts to his feet.*]

BDELYCLEON: (852)

Blast! I'm so annoyed, I forgot to bring out the voting-urns. [*He runs towards the house.*]

PHILOCLEON: (854)

Hey, you, where are you running?

BDELYCLEON: (854)

To get urns.

PHILOCLEON: (854)

No need at all. I already had these ladling cups. [*He gives two cups to Bdelycleon, who puts them on a table in the centre.*]

BDELYCLEON [*returning to his place*]: (856)

That's fine, then; we've got everything here that we need – oh, that is, except the water-clock.

PHILOCLEON [*pointing to the chamber-pot*]: (858)

Well, what's that? Isn't it a water-clock?

BDELYCLEON: (859)

You're very good at supplying the gear, like a true Athenian. Now will someone bring fire as quickly as possible, and myrtle-wreaths, and the incense from inside, so that we can begin by praying to the gods.

Notes

Lines 891–994

[Bdelycleon takes his seat as presiding magistrate.]

BDELYCLEON: (891)

If any juror is outside, he should come in; we will not admit anyone while the speeches are in progress.

[A slave takes down one of the court notices and gives it to Bdelycleon.]

PHILOCLEON: (893)

So who's this defendant? How thoroughly he'll be convicted!

BDELYCLEON: (894)

Now hear the indictment. *[Reading]* "The Hound of Cydathenaeum indicts Labes of Aexone for the crime of having eaten up the Sicilian cheese all by himself. Proposed penalty: a figwood collar."

PHILOCLEON: (898)

No, a dog's death, if once he's found guilty.

[During the reading of the indictment Xanthias has come out of the house, leading the Hound and Labes. He shows Labes to the defendant's place.]

BDELYCLEON: (899)

And here is the defendant, Labes, present.

PHILOCLEON: (900)

Oh, the villain he is! What a thievish creature he looks, too! How he grins and thinks he'll deceive me! But where's the prosecutor, the dog from Cydathenaeum?

HOUND *[coming forward]:* (903)

Bow-wow!

BDELYCLEON: (903)

He is present.

Notes

XANTHIAS: (903)

This one's just another Labes – a good one for barking and for licking the pots clean.

BDELYCLEON: (905)

Silence! Sit down! [*To Hound*] You take the stand and speak for the prosecution. [*The Hound mounts the speaker's platform.*]

PHILOCLEON [*to himself*]: (906)

Here now, in the meantime let me for my part pour this out and drink it. [*He helps himself to soup.*]

HOUND: (907)

You have heard, members of the jury, the indictment I have entered against the defendant here. He has committed the most disgraceful of crimes against me and against the great yo-ho. He ran off into the corner and ensicilized a great amount of cheese and stuffed himself with it in the dark –

PHILOCLEON: (912)

By Zeus, but he plainly did! Why, just now the loathsome creature belched at me, and there was a dreadful smell of cheese!

HOUND: (914)

– and didn't give me a share when I asked. Now who will be able to look after your interests, unless some food is also thrown to me, your Hound?

PHILOCLEON: (917)

He didn't give a share to me, the public, either. The man's hot stuff – as hot as this soup.

BDELYCLEON: (919)

In the gods' name, father, don't prejudge him guilty; wait till you've heard both sides.

PHILOCLEON: (920)

But, my dear fellow, it's a plain case. The facts speak loudly for themselves.

Notes

HOUND: (922)

So don't you let him off, because he's also, of all dogs alive, by far the worst man for solitary eating. Why, he sailed right round the mortar, and he's eaten the rind off all the cities.

PHILOCLEON: (926)

And I haven't even enough mortar to mend my water-pot.

HOUND: (927)

In view of all this, you must punish him – for one kitchen can never feed two thieves – and then I won't have been barking uselessly to no purpose. Otherwise, I won't bark at all in future.

PHILOCLEON [*as the Hound resumes his place in the body of the court*]: (931)

Hurrah! How many villainies he has denounced! A thieving sort of a man, this one! [*Turning to the cock*] Don't you think so too, old bird? – He does, by Zeus; at any rate he's winking agreement. [*Looking for Bdelycleon, who has left his seat*] Mr. President! Where is that man? I want him to give me a jerry.

BDELYCLEON [*who is at the house door*]: (936)

Take it down yourself. I'm calling in the witnesses. [*Philocleon gets up and takes the pot from its peg. Bdelycleon calls into the house.*] Will these attend as witnesses for Labes: Bowl, Pestle, Cheese-grater, Brazier, Pot, and the other utensils scalded to give evidence. [*The kitchen utensils file out of the house and stand at the side of the court. Bdelycleon returns to his place. To Philocleon:*] Are you still pissing? Haven't you sat down yet?

PHILOCLEON [*pulling down the pot and returning to his seat*]: (941)

Well, I imagine *he* [*pointing to Labes*] will be *shitting* before the day is out.

BDELYCLEON: (942)

Will you still not stop being harsh and ill-tempered, and with accused people, what's more? Must you keep them in the grip of your teeth? [*To Labes*] Take the stand and make your defence. [*Labes mounts the platform, but remains silent.*] Why don't you speak? Go on!

Notes

PHILOCLEON: (945)

He doesn't seem to have anything to say.

BDELYCLEON: (946)

No, I think he's had the same thing happen to him that once happened to Thucydides when he was on trial; he suddenly got paralysed in the jaws.

[*To Labes*] Move over out of the way; I'll do the defending. [*He takes Labes' place on the platform.*] It is difficult, gentlemen, to reply on behalf of a slandered dog, but nevertheless I will speak. He is brave, and he chases away the wolves.

PHILOCLEON: (953)

No, he's a thief and a conspirator, he is.

BDELYCLEON: (954)

Not at all; he's the finest dog of today, capable of taking charge of a large flock of sheep.

PHILOCLEON: (956)

So what use is that, if he eats up the cheese?

BDELYCLEON: (957)

What use? He fights for you, he keeps guard on the door, and quite generally he's an excellent dog. If he did pinch the cheese, forgive him: he's never learnt to play the lyre.

PHILOCLEON: (960)

I could have wished he hadn't learnt to read and write either; then he couldn't have submitted dishonest accounts to us.

BDELYCLEON: (962)

My dear sir, please hear my witnesses. Come up here, Cheese-grater. [*The cheese-grater comes to the platform.*] And speak up. You were actually the treasurer. Answer clearly whether you didn't grate out what you received to the troops. [*The cheese-grater nods.*] It says it did.

Notes

PHILOCLEON [*as the cheese-grater leaves the platform*]: (966)

To be sure, but it's lying.

BDELYCLEON: (967)

My dear sir, take pity on those in distress. This Labes will eat meat-scrap and fish-bones, and he never stays in one place for long. But the other – what a creature he is! He's just a stay-at-home. He stays right here, and whatever anyone brings into the house, he demands a share of it, and bites if he doesn't get one.

PHILOCLEON: (973)

Ah, what can this be that is making me soft? Some malady is overpowering me, and I am being won over.

BDELYCLEON: (975)

Come, I beg you, have mercy on him, father, and don't destroy him. Where are his children? [*A number of puppies come out of the house.*] Come up here, you poor things, and implore and beseech and whimper and weep. [*The puppies crowd around Bdelycleon and wordlessly display their grief and fear for their father Labes.*]

PHILOCLEON [*in tears*]: (979)

Step down, step down, step down, step down.

BDELYCLEON: (979)

I will step down. And yet those words "step down" have deceived very many men before now. But all the same I will step down. [*Bdelycleon leaves the platform, followed by the puppies, who now group themselves around Labes.*]

PHILOCLEON: (982)

Dammit, what a harmful thing soup-drinking is! I just burst into tears, and in my opinion the only reason was that I'd filled myself with that lentil soup.

BDELYCLEON: (985)

So he's not going to get off, then?

Notes

PHILOCLEON: (985)

It's hard to be sure.

BDELYCLEON [*giving his father a pebble*]: (986)

Come on, father dear, turn to better ways. Take this pebble, shut your eyes, rush over to the second urn, and let him off, father.

PHILOCLEON: (989)

No. I never learnt to play the lyre, either.

BDELYCLEON: (990)

Here now, let me take you round this way, it's the quickest. [*He leads Philocleon to the urns by a roundabout route, so that they come first to the urn for acquittal.*]

PHILOCLEON: (991)

Is this the first?

BDELYCLEON: (991)

That's it.

PHILOCLEON: (991)

There, in she goes! [*He drops his pebble into the acquittal urn, and returns to his seat.*]

BDELYCLEON [*aside to the audience*]: (992)

He's been tricked; he's let him off without meaning to. [*Standing over the urns*]

Here, let me empty them. [*He turns the two urns upside down on the table, without revealing their contents.*]

PHILOCLEON: (993)

So what result have we got?

BDELYCLEON: (994)

I think that will be shown presently. [*He lifts the urns and solemnly counts the one vote.*] Labes, you are acquitted.

Notes

Aristophanes, *Frogs*

The following extract from Aristophanes' *Frogs* has been taken from Aristophanes *Frogs* edited with translation and commentary by Alan H. Sommerstein (ISBN: 978-0856686481).

We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available translation booklet.

Lines 686–737

CHORUS-LEADER:

(686)

It is right and proper for the sacred chorus to take part in giving good advice and instruction to the community. In the first place, accordingly, we think that all citizens should be made equal and their fears removed; and if someone went wrong at all through being tripped up by the wiles of Phrynichus, I say that those who slipped up at that time should be given the right to clear themselves of any charge and wipe out their previous errors. Secondly, I say that there ought to be no one in the city who is deprived of his rights as a citizen. It is really disgraceful that men who have fought in just one naval battle should straight away be Plataeans and change from slaves into masters – and even that I couldn't in any way say was a bad thing; on the contrary, I congratulate you on it, it's the only sensible thing you've done; but in addition to that it's only fair, when there are men who have fought alongside you, and whose fathers have fought, in a great *many* naval battles, and who are your kith and kin, that you should pardon them this one misfortune when they beg you to. So, you men of innate wisdom, let us tone down our anger, let us readily accept as our kinsmen, and as citizens with full rights, every man who fights in our fleet. If we puff ourselves up about this and are too proud to do it, and that too when our city finds itself "in the arms of the waves", there will come a time hereafter when men will think we were not wise.

Notes

CHORUS:

(706)

“If I can see aright the life or character
of a man” who will really catch it one of these days,
neither will that monkey who’s so bothersome at present,
pint-sized Cleigenes
the vilest bathman among all
the ash-stirrers who hold sway
over adulterated washing soda
and over the fuller’s earth,
spend much more time among us; and it’s because he sees this
that he is bellicose, for fear that some night when drunk he may be stripped of
his clothes
if he walks without a stick!

CHORUS-LEADER:

(718)

Very often we’ve thought that the city is behaving in the same way towards its
good upstanding citizens as it is towards the old coinage and the new gold.
Those were no counterfeit stuff but, as all agree, the finest coins of all, the only
ones that were honestly struck, tested and proved everywhere among Greeks
and barbarians alike – but we don’t make any use of them; instead we use these
wretched coppers, struck only yesterday or the day before, the vilest coinage
ever. Similarly with regard to our citizens: those whom we know to be well-born,
virtuous, honest, fine, upstanding men, reared in wrestling-schools and choruses
and culture, we spurn with contempt, and in all our affairs we make use of those
men of base metal, aliens, redheads, low fellows of low ancestry, johnny-come-
very-latelys, whom formerly the city wouldn’t have used lightly in a hurry even
as scapegoats. But even at this late time, you foolish folk, change your ways and
honour the honest again. That will be creditable for you if you are successful,
and if you trip up at all, well, even if something does happen to you, at least
discerning people will think it’s happening “on a respectable tree”!

Notes

Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*

Copyright for the following translation is held by OCR.

2.36–42

2.36

[1] I will speak first about our ancestors, for it is right and proper that now, whilst we are mourning the dead, we should pay tribute to them before anything else. They have lived, uninterrupted, in this land, which has been handed down from generation to generation, and by their courage, has been given to us as a free state. [2] But if our distant forefathers are worthy of praise, our fathers are even more so; those who expanded their inheritances, and passed this great empire to us, their sons, after many toils. [3] We ourselves who are gathered here today, most of whom are still (more or less) in the prime of our lives, have increased our fathers' improvements even further, and furnished our city with all things imaginable so she might be able to look after herself in both times of war or peace. I will not speak of the military campaigns through which many of these possessions were acquired, or of the zeal with which our fathers or we ourselves resisted our enemies, Greek or foreign. It is too long-winded and well-known for me to detail here. But before I praise the dead, I wish to set forth the following: how, and by what efforts we rose to power, and under what governance and which ways of life did our empire become great. For I believe that such thoughts are not inappropriate for this occasion, and that it will be constructive for this large assembly of citizens and strangers to listen to them.

2.37

[1] The Athenian constitution is not a rival to the laws of our neighbour states;

Notes

rather, we are a model to others than imitators. It favours the majority, instead of the few; this is why it is called a “democracy”. If we consider the laws, they provide equal justice to all in their personal disputes; they also recognise worthiness, so that if one citizen is particularly distinguished, the majority does not honour him because of his social class, but because of his virtue. So long as he can do good for the state, he will not be returned to poverty because of the obscurity of his social status. [2] We live freely not only in government, but also in our everyday lives, in which we do not feel jealousy towards each other, or angry with a neighbour for acting on his own urges and doing what he wants; we do not then shoot him dirty glances, which are unpleasant, even if they are harmless. [3] Although we are unrestrained in our personal relationships, this does not make us unlawful citizens: fear of public transgression makes us reverent and obedient to the authorities and the laws themselves, especially those unwritten ones which lay undeniable shame upon those who break them.

2.38

[1] We have also provided our minds with many ways to rest from toil; with established public contests and sacrifices throughout the year; our own homes are attractive and well-prepared, both of which offer daily pleasure and expel sadness. [2] All the fruits of the earth are imported into our city because of its greatness, so we are able to enjoy the luxuries of other nations with the same familiarity as those of our own.

2.39

[1] Furthermore, we differ to our enemies in our attention to military training. We leave our city open to all, and never banish a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything, even if, made public, the knowledge might give advantage to an enemy. We do not rely upon preparation or deceit, but upon own deeds and courage. We also differ in education: whilst our enemies seek bravery with painful training from the cradle, we live at ease, yet are equally prepared to face the same dangers as them. [2] This is the proof: the Spartans

Notes

do not enter Attica alone, but rather with the aid of all their allies. We, however, enter a neighbouring land alone, and although we are fighting on foreign soil, against opponents defending their homes, most of the time we have no difficulty in beating them.

[3] Our rivals have never yet experienced the full force of our allied military strength, because our efforts have to be divided between maintaining the navy and despatching our own men to countless different places on land. But they, if they encounter and defeat just one part of our army, are as proud as if they had defeated us all. Likewise, when they are defeated, they pretend that they were defeated by our entire force. [4] And yet, when we opt to face danger with valiant hearts formed out of habit, rather than intensive training demanded by law, surely we gain the most by far? We do not anticipate the suffering, although when the occasion arises, we can be as brave as those who never rest from their military training. Thus, our city is equally distinguished, both in war and peace.

2.40

[1] For we are lovers of beauty, yet economical in taste; we pursue knowledge without effeminacy. We use our wealth for action, rather than to boast about. It is no shame to admit to poverty, whereas it is a disgrace to do nothing to avoid it. [2] Athenian citizens give equal care to the affairs of the state and to their own affairs, and even those of us engaged in business have a fair understanding of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs not as a harmless, but as a useless individual; and although few of us determine them, we are all sound judges of policy. The great obstacle to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but rather not gaining the required knowledge by discussion before taking the necessary action. [3] For we have a distinctive characteristic of thinking before we act and of acting too, whereas other men are brave out of ignorance, but hesitate after they stop to think. Surely the men who should be considered the bravest souls are those who do not shrink away from danger even with the clearest idea of both the pains and pleasures of life.

Notes

[4] In good deeds, we are again unlike others. We build friendships out of co-operation, not by receiving favours. Indeed, he who grants a favour is the better friend, because he will save the thanks owed to him by the one to whom he granted it. The recipient of the favour is less keen, since he knows that in repaying another's generosity he will not receive any gratitude; he is only paying a debt. [5] We alone do good to our neighbours, not because we have worked out our profit, because we have confidence and trust in freedom.

2.41

[1] To sum up: I say that our city is an education to Greece, and that each Athenian citizen in his own right has the ability to adapt himself to the most varied forms of action with outstanding versatility and virtue. [2] This is no idle boast for the occasion, but truth and fact, and my claim is proved true by the power that Athens has won through these qualities. [3] For when in testing times, only Athens among her neighbours is found to be even better than her reputation. No enemy who fights her feels shame at the setbacks he sustains at the hands of such a city; nor does any subject complain of being governed by people unworthy of ruling them. [4] For both now and in the future, we shall be admired; our power has not gone unwitnessed, and is demonstrated by mighty evidence. We will not need the praises of Homer, or anyone else whose poetry may delight us for the moment, whose estimation of the facts will fall short of what is really true. With our daring spirit, we have forced open a path to every land and every sea; and everywhere we have gone, we have left eternal memorials of our alliances and enemies. [5] Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died: they could not bear the idea of losing her. So, every one of us survivors must be ready to suffer on her behalf.

2.42

[1] Indeed, if I have spoken at length upon the nature of Athens, it has been to demonstrate that there is more at stake for us than for others who do not have such fortune to lose, and also to establish definitive proof of the greatness

Notes

of the men over whom I speak. [2] Their greatest praise has been spoken, for the Athens I have saluted is only what the heroism of such men have made her; men who, unlike so many Greeks, can be said to have fame equal to their achievements! It seems to me that a death such as theirs provides the true measure of a man's worth: perhaps the first revelation of their virtues, but certainly their final confirmation. [3] For it is a just claim that bravery in defence of their native land should be like a cloak to cover his other shortcomings; since the good action has obscured the bad, and his merit as a citizen more than outweighed his individual misdeeds.

[4] But none of these men allowed wealth and its prospect of future pleasure to discourage their spirits; or poverty, with the hope of eventually escaping and becoming rich, to tempt them to shield themselves from danger. For their desire above all personal fortune was to exact revenge upon their enemies. Considering this to be the most noble of dangers, they willingly decided to accept the risk, to pursue honourable vengeance, and to leave behind their other wishes. They left the uncertainty of success to Hope, and thought it best to act bravely and trust only in themselves in the events which lay before them. So, they chose to die resisting rather than live in submission; they fled only from dishonour, and stood fast in the face of war. In an instant, at the height of their fortune, they slipped away: not in fear, but out of glory.

Notes

2.65

[1] These were the arguments presented by Pericles to try and appease the Athenians' anger towards him, and to turn their minds away from their present concerns. [2] They took his advice on the conduct of public affairs and sent no further embassies to Sparta, and sent themselves to war with even greater zeal. In private, however, they felt their sufferings acutely. The lower classes had been deprived of the very little they owned, and the upper classes had lost fine country estates with all their houses and luxurious furniture. But the worst thing was that instead of enjoying peace, they were now at war. [3] Public discontent did not cease until they had fined Pericles, [4] but soon afterwards, with the typical inconsistency of a crowd, they elected him general, and put him in charge of all their affairs. They were beginning to feel their personal grievances less keenly, and believed that on the whole there was no man better than him in a time of public crisis.

[5] During peacetime, he had ruled moderately and steadfastly. Athens had been safe under his leadership, and had indeed reached the very height of her greatness. When the war began, he also demonstrated that he had made an accurate estimate of Athens' power under these circumstances. He outlived the outbreak of war by two years and six months, [6] and after his death, his foresight was appreciated even more than when he was alive. [7] He had told the Athenians to be patient and take care of their navy, not to attempt to enlarge their empire during the war, and not to put the city in danger; if they did all of this, they would be victorious. In fact, they did everything he told them not to do, adopting policies with disastrous effects for themselves and their allies in matters seemingly unrelated to the war, motivated by personal ambition and self-interest. Had this been successful, it would have brought honour and profit only to individuals, and if unsuccessful, it would have sabotaged the city's war effort.

Notes

[8] The reason for this was not difficult to find. Pericles derived his authority from his high reputation and intelligence, while he was also clearly incorruptible. Therefore he was able to control the people freely: to lead, rather than be led by them. Since he did not seek power by dishonest means, he did not need to flatter them; because of the strength of his own worthy character, he could go so far as to oppose and even to anger the people. [9] When he saw them unsuitably over-confident and arrogant, his words would strike fear into them; when they were needlessly fearful, he would build up their confidence again. Thus Athens, although a democracy in name, was in fact ruled by its first citizen.

[10] It was different for his successors. They were more on a par with each other, and, each one of them scrabbling for power, ended up giving over the affairs of state to the desires of the public. [11] This, as one might expect from a great and powerful state, meant many mistakes were made. The expedition to Sicily was one such mistake, although this wasn't so much due to a poor estimate of the power of the enemy, as the senders not giving enough support to their forces overseas. Instead, they busied themselves with personal intrigues for the leadership of the people. Consequently, they not only knocked the spirit out of operations abroad, but also stirred up trouble in the city.

[12] Yet despite losing most of their fleet and other forces in Sicily, and were now distracted by revolution, still they held out for three years not only against their original enemies but also the Sicilians and most of their own allies who had revolted. Even when Cyrus, the Persian King's son, joined the war, and funded the Peloponnesian navy, they did not let up until they were finally conquered by their own unfortunate stomach troubles. [13] So that at the time Pericles was more than justified in the conviction at which he prophesied that the Athenians would easily have outlasted the Peloponnesians in this war.

Notes

Plato, *Republic*

Copyright for the following translation is held by OCR.

6.485–487a

“So, then: shall we talk about how a single person will be able to possess the two distinct sets of qualities?”

“Yes, absolutely.”

“Well as we were saying at the start of this discussion, their essential nature is the first thing for us to understand. I should imagine that if we can come to a sufficient agreement on that, then we can also agree that the same men can possess both sets of qualities and that we should choose nobody but them for our heads of state.”

“How do we do that, then?”

“As far as philosophers’ natures are concerned, let’s agree that they are always besotted with the sort of learning which reveals to them the eternal part of existence – the part that doesn’t wander about, driven by birth and death.”

“Yes, agreed.”

“And,” I said, “they are devoted to all of it. They don’t pass any bit by if it’s bigger or smaller, more valued or less valued. It’s very similar to what we were saying earlier about those who pursue honour and love.”

“You’re right,” he said.

“Now, let’s consider the next thing: must these people whom we’ve been discussing have something else in their natures besides this?”

Notes

"Like what?"

"Honesty, and never being willing to accept anything other than the truth. They hate lies, and love truth."

"Fair enough," he said.

"Not only is that fair enough, my friend, but someone who loves something by nature is completely compelled to love everything that is like or related to the thing that he loves so much."

"You're quite right," he said.

"Could you find anything closer to wisdom than truth?"

"No! How on earth could I do that?"

"Could a lover of wisdom and a lover of lies have the same nature?"

"Absolutely not!"

"So, someone who is a true lover of learning must seek out the truth – the whole truth – all the way from his childhood."

"Yes."

"But still, we know that people who feel very strongly for one thing are generally less inclined towards others, like a stream that has been diverted into another channel."

"Of course they are."

"So if someone is a real philosopher, not a fake one, I think that when his passions are channelled into his learning and everything like that, he would be led to the pleasures of the soul by the soul itself, and leave out those pleasures that come through the body."

"Yes, that must be right."

"This kind of man is self-disciplined and not at all greedy with his money."

Notes

Someone else can worry about why money and reckless spending are a problem.”

“Well, indeed.”

(486a) “And I think there’s a further point to be discussed, about when you distinguish between the characters of a philosopher and a non-philosopher.”

“How do you do that?”

“You shouldn’t overlook any sign of narrow-mindedness. I think pettiness is the polar opposite of a soul which is constantly giving itself to the full spectrum of all things, divine and mortal.”

“Isn’t that the truth!” he said.

“So, when someone has an incredible mind with all of time and existence in it, do you think it’s possible to consider human life something great?”

“No. Impossible!” he said.

“This kind of person won’t consider death a frightening prospect either then, will he?”

“No, not at all.”

“So then, it would appear that a cowardly and narrow-minded nature contains no true philosophy.”

“Why... I don’t think so.”

“What then? Is there any way at all that someone who isn’t reckless, uninterested in money, nor boastful or cowardly turn into someone who could drive hard bargains or act unjustly?”

“No, no there isn’t.”

“One more thing: when you are comparing philosophical and unphilosophical souls, look all the way back to childhood to see which one is fair and kind, and

Notes

which is antisocial and unpleasant.”

“I will!”

“There’s also another thing I don’t think you should forget.”

“What...?”

“Whether he learns quickly or slowly. Can you expect anyone to love what he does, when it’s a painful effort for him to do anything, and what little he does manage to achieve, is after a huge struggle?”

“Well, no. That wouldn’t make sense.”

“What if he had an awful memory and couldn’t remember anything he had learnt? Could he fail to be empty of knowledge?”

“How on earth could he fail to be?”

“Well then, if he sweats away working for no gain, don’t you think that after a while he will have to end up hating himself and whatever he’s doing?”

“Of course!”

“So let’s never add a forgetful man to our list of decent philosophers; let’s be firm that we are looking for one with a good memory.”

“Yes, absolutely.”

“And we might also say that an unrefined and ill-formed nature could lead to nowhere but disorder.”

“Where else?”

“Do you think the truth is similar to order or to disorder?”

“Order, of course.”

“Then let’s also look for a mind with a natural understanding of order and grace, on top of everything else. Its very being will make it easy to direct it towards the

Notes

concept of every aspect of reality.”

“Yes.”

“Well then! Tell me, do you think that we have listed the characteristics which are neither essential nor compatible with one another for a soul which is going to participate well and completely in reality?”

(487a) “We have gone through all the most essential points.” he said.

“Is there any way,” I said, “that you could criticise something which you would never be able to do well without having a good memory, a talent for learning, sensibility, elegance, and a fondness and understanding of truth, justice, courage, and self-control?”

“Not even Momus could find a fault with this occupation.” he said.

“Well then,” I replied, “when men like this have reached maturity in learning and age, wouldn’t you entrust the state to them, and them alone?”

6.488–489

(488a) “Well then!” I said, “Are you making fun of me when you’ve landed me in an argument that’s this hard to win? Listen to my analogy, then, so you can see even better how I negotiate these tricky images. For what the best and cleverest men experience is so complex that there is nothing comparable to it; and therefore when drawing comparisons and making a case, one must take things from lots of different places, just like a painter paints weird, mixed-up creatures like stag-goats.

(488b) So, imagine this happening, on one ship, or maybe a fleet of ships. You have a ship’s owner who is bigger and stronger than everyone else, but a bit hard of hearing and short sighted, and his knowledge of navigation is about the same. The crew are completely at odds with each other about how to steer

Notes

the ship, and each one thinks he should be captain, despite never having been taught how, let alone being able to say who taught him and when. What's more, they say the skill can't be taught anyway, and threaten to knife anyone who says it can be. (488c) They are always crowding around the ship's owner, begging and doing everything they can to get him to give them control of the rudder. But if they don't manage to persuade him whilst others are making a better attempt, they either kill the others or throw them overboard, and, after binding and subduing their noble leader by drugging him or getting him drunk or something else, they take charge of the ship. As they sail, they drink the ship dry and gorge themselves on all the provisions, just as you would expect of men like these. (488d) Not only that, they also praise to the skies the men who contribute towards subduing or persuading the helmsmen to give over his power, and describe him as a seaman, a captain and a naval expert whilst they write off the ones who can't help as useless. They have no idea of what it is to be a true captain, that he must be an expert in the seasons, the weather, the stars, the winds, and everything else that might affect his skills if he really is fit for the job. In fact, they do not believe that there is an exact science for successfully seizing the helm, whether others want it or not, or that there is any possibility of mastering this so called "art" at the same time as the science of helmsmanship. If this sort of thing happens on board, don't you think that the true helmsman would be referred to as a lazy, useless star-gazer by the crew on a ship like this?"

(489a) "Absolutely," said Adeimantus.

"I don't believe I need to give you any analysis of my analogy, as I'm sure we can agree that what I have said is an exact match for the attitudes of society towards true philosophers."

"Indeed it is," he said.

"First of all, then, try explaining the analogy to the man who is surprised that philosophers are not honoured in their cities, and try to convince him that it would be much more surprising if they were!"

Notes

(489b) "I will do just that – I will teach him." he said.

"And then say to him that he is right, that the finest philosophers' spirits are of no use to the masses. But tell him not to accuse these noble spirits of being useless – he should blame those who don't know how to use them. You see, it isn't natural for a captain to beg his sailors to be commanded by him, or that wise men should go to the doors of the rich. Whoever came up with that one was lying! The truth is that the sick man should go to the doctor's door, whether he's rich or poor, (489c) and everyone who needs to be governed should go to the door of the man who can govern, who in turn shouldn't beg the people to be governed by him, if he's any good as a leader. But you can't go too far wrong if you compare today's political leaders and these sailors we've been talking about, and the ones they call useless star-gazers to the true helmsmen."

"Very true indeed." he said.

(489d) "So, under these conditions, it is difficult for the best way of doing things to be held in high esteem by those who practice the polar opposite. But the biggest and nastiest criticism of philosophy comes from those who allege to follow that way of life, but do not. These are the people who you were talking about when you stated that the critics say that the majority of her followers are delinquents (and the best of them are merely useless). And I agreed with you. Isn't that right?"

"Yes."

"So have we explained the reason that the educated are useless?"

"Yes we have."

Notes

6.493

“But there is still another point on top of all of these for you to accept.” I said.

“What is it?”

“Every one of those private fee-charging individuals, and whom the people call sophists and consider them their direct competition, they don’t teach anything but the ordinary thoughts of the majority of ordinary people. They spread this around when they meet, and call it “knowledge”. Suppose a man was in charge of a large and powerful beast, and made a study of its moods and wants; he would learn when to approach and handle it, when and why it was especially savage or gentle, what the different noises it made meant and what tone of voice to use to soothe or annoy it. Then, when he has learned all this from spending time with and observing the animal, he would call it “wisdom”, and reduce it to a system and set-up to teach it. But he would not really know which of the creature’s tastes and desires was admirable or shameful, good or bad, right or wrong. He would name all of these concepts according to what he had learned from the beast: what it enjoyed was “good”, and what had angered it was “bad”. He wouldn’t have any other words to describe these things, but would call the compelling demands of the animal’s nature just and good, even though he had never seen the full extent of the differences between the “good” and the “necessary” and would certainly not be able to explain it to anybody else. Don’t you think, by god, that this sort of man would make a very odd teacher?”

“Yes he would.”

“So do you think, therefore, that a man who thinks “wisdom” is studying the moods and pleasures of the many others he meets, whether they concern painting, music, or politics, at all different from this man? For that would mean that if a man associates with such people and shows them some poetry, or

Notes

some of his handiwork, or some political service, he will give the general public power over him, more than is unavoidable, the so-called necessity of Diomedes will force him to give the crowds whatever they want. Sometimes they might argue that what the masses like coincides with what is genuinely good and honourable. Have you ever heard one of them produce an argument that isn't laughably bad?"

"No," he said, "and I doubt I ever will!"

Notes

Old Oligarch ('Pseudo-Xenophon'), *Constitution of the Athenians*

Copyright for the following translation is held by OCR.

1.1–1.20

[1] As for the type of constitution which has been chosen by the Athenians, I do not particularly approve of their choice because of how it allows the worst people to be better off than the good. This is why I do not commend it. They have, however, decided that it will be this way, so I will endeavour to demonstrate both how well they maintain their constitution, and how they achieve the other things for which they receive criticism from the other Greeks.

[2] First of all, I wish to say that it is right that the poor and the common people should have more power than the noble and the rich, because it is the common people who man the fleet and bring the city her power; the helmsmen, boatswains, sub-boatswains, look-outs and shipbuilders give far *more* strength to the city than the hoplites, the noble, and the good men. As this is the case, it seems fair for everyone to have a share in the offices of state, whether they vote by lot or by election. This way, any citizen is able to have his say if he wishes.

[3] Then there are the offices which, depending on how well they are executed, can provide safety or bring danger. The common people take no share in these positions, as they do not believe they should be allotted a vote in the selection of generals or cavalry commanders. The common people understand that it is better off for such decisions to be taken out of their hands and given to the most capable men. Of course, the common people are keen to hold the positions which offer a salary and benefits for their household.

[4] Then, and this bit some find extraordinary, there is the fact that they distribute

Notes

more, in every sense, to the worst people, to the poor and to those sympathetic to the common people, than to the good men. In this very example, they can be seen to preserve their democracy. For the poor, the members of the common people, and the wicked, as long as they are doing well and there are many of them, they will increase the democracy. If the wealthy and good men are doing well, however, the members of the common people will create a strong opposition against them. [5] Everywhere in the world, the best people oppose democracy! You see, the best people are highly unlikely to be motivated by licentiousness and disregard for what is just, but have great regard for good whereas among the common people there is a plethora of ignorance, disorder and wickedness. This is because poverty pushes them to do awful things, and because some men can be uneducated and foolish when they have little money.

[6] Someone may well say that it's not right to allow everyone to make speeches or to sit on the Council; it should only be the cleverest and best. But this precise policy, of letting even the worst people speak, is excellent. If the good men were the ones to speak and make laws, it would be great for them and their sort, but not so much for the common people who aren't like them. But the way things are is that any bad man can stand up and get something that's good for him and for people just like him. [7] Then someone might say, "Exactly *what* good would such a man propose for himself and for the common people?" But they know that this man's ignorance, vice, and good-will are far better than a good man's virtue, wisdom, and ill-will.

[8] A city wouldn't necessarily be the best if it was run like this, but it would certainly be the best way of maintaining the democracy. You see, the common people don't want a good government which makes them its slaves; they want to be free and in control. It doesn't bother them much whether the government is bad; what you think of as "bad" government is where the common people's strength and freedom comes from! [9] If you are looking for a

Notes

good government, you will see first of all the cleverest men making laws which suit their own interests. The good will punish the bad, make policies for the city, and not allow madmen to participate, or to speak their minds, or meet in the Assembly. The consequences of these marks of *excellent* government? The common people would quickly fall into slavery.

[10] Now, among all the slaves and metics in Athens, there is a massive problem with uncontrolled nastiness and excessive behaviour. You can't strike them there, and slaves won't stand aside for you. I'll tell you why this is their local practice: if it were customary for a slave (or metic, or freedman) to be struck by a free citizen, you would often accidentally hit an Athenian citizen, assuming he was a slave. You see, the people there don't dress any better than the slaves or metics, and they certainly aren't any better looking! [11] And if anyone is amazed by how they let slaves live in luxury there, (why, some even live like kings!) it's clear that they even do this for a good reason. Where there is a naval power, money compels the people to be enslaved to slaves, in order to take a portion of their wages; then they have to be freed. Where there are rich slaves, it is not worth for my slave to be afraid of you. He would be afraid of you in Sparta, but if *your* slave is afraid of me, he's more likely to hand over his money to get rid of all his worries. [12] For this reason, we have set up equality between slaves and freemen, and between metics and citizens. The city needs metics because of the multiplicity of her industries and for her fleet, so similar equality has been set up for them as well.

[13] The common people at Athens have spoiled the athletics and musical activities because they thought them "unfitting" because they know they can't do them! They know that when it comes to training the dramatic choruses, sponsoring athletics competitions, and launching triremes, it is the wealthy who pay for the choruses, but the common people who are paid to be in them, and it's the wealthy who sponsor the athletics, but the common people who take part in the games *and* row in the triremes. At least the common people

Notes

consider themselves worthy of taking money for singing, running, dancing, and sailing, so that they end up richer and the rich end up poorer. In the law-courts, they are concerned with their own self-interest much more than actual justice.

[14] As far as the allies are concerned, the Athenians sail out and bring vexatious charges against the good men and hate them, at least because they know that a ruler has to be hated by the ruled, and if the cities' rich and good men are strong, the common people's rule at Athens will be rather short-lived. This is why they strip the good men of their voting rights and money, exile them, and kill them, while increasing the power of the lower classes. The Athenian aristocrats try to protect their contemporaries in allied cities, as they know that it will always be in their best interests to look out for their own.

[15] Someone might say that the Athenians' strength consists in the allies' ability to pay tribute-money; but the rabble thinks it more advantageous for each one of the Athenians to possess the money of the allies and for the allies themselves to possess only enough to live and work on, while being unable to plot against them.

[16] There is another point in which the Athenians are thought to act unwisely: they make their allies sail to Athens for court cases. They argue that the common people of Athens benefit from it: firstly, they get their dicastic pay throughout the year from the legal deposits the allies pay. They also manage the allied cities' affairs sat at home without even setting foot on a ship, and protect those who belong to the common people and ruin their opponents in the courts. If each of the allies held their trials at home, they would, since this would show they were annoyed with Athens, and ruin their citizens who were particularly friendly to the Athenian common people.

[17] Additionally, the common people benefit from allied trials being held at Athens in the following ways: firstly, the 1% tax levied in Peiraeus is good for the city's economy; [18] secondly, it's good for anyone who rents out lodgings, and anyone who hires out slaves or teams of animals. Also, the heralds at the

Notes

assembly do well out of having the allies in town. Not only that, but if the allies didn't go away for their days in court, they would only honour the Athenians who sailed out to them; namely the generals, trierarchs, and ambassadors. The way it is now, every one of the allies has to flatter the entire Athenian population, because they realise that justice for anyone coming to Athens is in the hands of the population itself – that's the law there! In the courts too, they are obliged to grab the hands of whoever comes in and plead with him. This is how the allies have become the Athenians' slaves, rather than their allies.

[19] Furthermore, because of all the possessions they keep abroad, and the magistracies which take them away from home, the Athenians and all associated with them have quietly learned how to row. You see, it's often necessary for a man to pick up an oar when he is often at sea, and his slave too, and they all learn naval terminology. [20] Indeed, they become great helmsmen through experience and practice. Some are trained as helmsmen on a normal ship, others on a cargo ship, and others on triremes. Many are able to row as soon as they step on board their ships, as they've been practising their entire lives.

2.9–2.10

[9] The common people understand that it is impossible for each of the poor to make sacrifices, observe festivals and feast days, set up shrines, and to govern a beautiful, great city yet the people have discovered how to have sacrifices, shrines, feasts, and temples. The city makes many sacrifices using public funds, but it is the common people who enjoy the sumptuous feasts and obtain a share in the sacrifices. [10] Some wealthy people have their own private *gymnasia*, baths, and dressing rooms, but the common people have built, for their own use, a huge number of wrestling schools, dressing rooms, and public baths. The common people get far more enjoyment out of these facilities than the rich upper-classes out of their own.

Notes

2.14–3.13

[14] The Athenians do lack one thing. If they were island-dwellers and masters of the sea, it would be possible for them to start an offensive if they wanted, but as long as they ruled the sea, they would suffer neither an attack on their own land nor the arrival of their enemies. At present, the farmers and rich men of Athens fraternise with the enemy, but the common people live without fear and refuse to do likewise, as they know none of their property will be burnt or ravaged.

[15] And indeed, if they lived on an island, they would have got rid of another fear: the city would never be betrayed by oligarchs, or the gates be thrown open for enemies, for how would these things work for islanders? And nobody would rebel against the common people if they lived on an island. In the present circumstances, if there was some sort of rebellion, the rebels would base all their hopes on the enemy bringing their army in by land. If they lived on an island, however, this wouldn't be a possibility.

[16] Since, however, they haven't always lived on an island, this is what they are doing now: they deposit all their property on islands and, trusting in their control of the sea, allow Attica to be ruined. This is because they realise that if they fret about that, they'll end up losing far bigger things. [17] Furthermore, oligarchic cities need abide by their oaths and alliances. If they ignore agreements, or if some injustice is done, then there are the names of the handful of people who made the agreement in the first place. But the agreements made by the common people can be thrown out by laying the blame on whoever spoke or took the vote, whilst everyone else claims they were absent or didn't approve of what was agreed in the full Assembly. If it seems like a good idea for their decisions to be ineffective, they make up all sorts of excuses for not doing what they don't want to do. If the common people's policy produces bad results, they blame a small number of people working against them and destroying them while if the policy produces good results, they take all the credit for themselves.

Notes

[18] They do not allow the common people to be ridiculed in comedy, so they won't be heard of badly. If anyone wants to ridicule a private individual, however, they ask the poet to write it in because they know that the person who gets ridiculed in comedy doesn't generally come from the common people, but is someone who is rich, noble, or well-known. A handful of poor, plebeian types are mocked in comedy, yes, but only if they've been meddling where they shouldn't and trying to rise above their station. This is so the common people don't feel put out by seeing people like them mocked.

[19] I believe that the common people in Athens recognise which citizens are good and which are bad, but despite knowing this they tend to like those who are the easiest and most useful for them to like, even if they're bad, and they are also inclined to hate the good. You see, they think that the good are naturally virtuous to the detriment of the people, rather than for their benefit. Of course, on the other hand, some people are not naturally sympathetic to the common people, yet are truly on their side. [20] I excuse the common people for their democracy – one must forgive the everyday man for looking after his own interests. But a man who isn't one of the common people, yet still prefers to live in a democracy rather than an oligarchy, must be preparing to do wrong and has realised that it's easier for evil to go unnoticed in a democracy than in an oligarchy.

3

[1] As for the constitution of the Athenians: I don't think much of its form, but since they have chosen democracy, I think they have preserved the democracy well using the ways I have just described.

I also realise that people object against the Athenians because sometimes it's impossible for someone to negotiate with the Council or the Assembly, even if he sits for a year or so. This happens in Athens for no other reason than that they have to deal with so many decisions, they cannot deal with everyone's business.

[2] Indeed, how could they? Firstly, they have to celebrate more festivals than

Notes

any other Greek city, and when they are happening it's even more difficult to deal with any city business. Secondly, they have to preside over private and public trials and audits into the conduct of magistrates to a far greater degree than all other men. Thirdly, the Council has to consider many issues concerning war, money, laws, local issues as and when they occur, and also many issues to do with the allies, and to receive tribute and care for the dockyards and shrines. So, is it any surprise at all that if they have this much to deal with, they can't negotiate with absolutely everyone?

[3] But some say: "If you go to the Council or Assembly with money, you will get things done." I would agree with these people that many things in Athens are accomplished with money, and even more would be accomplished if more people offered money! I do know, however, that the city just isn't able to deal with *everyone* who asks, no matter how much gold and silver you give them. [4] They also have to preside over cases where someone hasn't repaired his trireme, or builds something on public land, and in addition to that they also have to settle disputes every year as to who will finance the chorus at the Dionysia, the Thargelia, the Panathenaea, the Promethia, and the Hephaestia.

There are 400 trierarchs appointed every year, and disputes over these have to be settled for anyone who wants to argue their case. Magistrates also have to be scrutinised and have their disputes settled, orphans have to be approved and prison guards appointed. All of this happens every year! [5] From time-to-time they have to deal with desertion and other unexpected offenses, whether they are random, reckless acts or an act of impiety. There are plenty of other things I'm skipping over – the most important ones have been mentioned already except for the assessments of tribute, which generally happen every four years. [6] Should we think that all of these things *shouldn't* be dealt with? Let someone tell us what isn't worthy of handling. If, however, we should think it's all necessary, then adjudications have to go on all year round; even now, when they do adjudicate all year, they can't stop all the wrongdoers because there are

Notes

so many.

[7] Yes, someone else will say that there are plenty of cases which ought to be judged, but there should be smaller juries. Unless there are a few courts, there will need to be a small number of jurors in each court, so it will be easier to manipulate a few jurors and bribe them, and consequently easier to give an unjust verdict. [8] Furthermore, you have to consider that the Athenians must hold festivals, during which the courts are closed, and that they hold twice as many festivals than anyone else, but I am only counting the ones which have equivalents in the states which have the least.

So, under these circumstances, I deny that it is possible for Athens to conduct matters in any different way to how they do it now, apart from taking away and adding a few bits and pieces. Any big changes are impossible without removing some part of the democracy. [9] It is possible, however, to work out many ways of making the democracy better, but it isn't easy to find a way which allows the democracy to keep going, whilst simultaneously providing better governance. This is very difficult apart from, as I just said, adding or subtracting little bits.

[10] The Athenians also seem to act ill-advisedly in the following way: they take the side of the worse men in cities involved in civil strife. They do it deliberately; if they favoured the better people, they would be favouring those who don't share their own ideas. There is no city where the best people are well-disposed towards the common people, but the worst elements in each city are those who are well-disposed to the common people. Like are well-disposed to like, and as such the Athenians prefer those who are sympathetic towards them and their values. [11] Whenever they have favoured the best people, it hasn't gone well for them: the common people of Boeotia were enslaved in no time at all, and when they favoured the best people in Miletos, it wasn't long before they had revolted and massacred the common people. Similarly, when they favoured the Spartans over the Messenians, the Spartans quickly subjugated the Messenians and were going to war against the Athenians.

Notes

[12] Someone might suggest that nobody has ever been unfairly disenfranchised in Athens. I think there are some who have been unfairly disenfranchised, but only a very small number. But it needs more than a few to attack the democracy at Athens. [13] As this is the case, it's unnecessary to think about whether anyone has been justly disenfranchised; only whether unjust. How could anyone believe that many Athenians had been unfairly disenfranchised, when at Athens, the common people are the ones who hold the offices? People are only disenfranchised in Athens from failing to be a just magistrate, or failing to say or do the right thing. With all this in mind, you mustn't think that Athens is under any threat at all from the disenfranchised.

Notes



We'd like to know your view on the resources we produce. By clicking on the 'Like' or 'Dislike' button you can help us to ensure that our resources work for you. When the email template pops up please add additional comments if you wish and then just click 'Send'. Thank you.

Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR, or are considering switching from your current provider/awarding organisation, you can request more information by completing the Expression of Interest form which can be found here: www.ocr.org.uk/expression-of-interest

OCR Resources: *the small print*

OCR's resources are provided to support the delivery of OCR qualifications, but in no way constitute an endorsed teaching method that is required by OCR. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, OCR cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions within these resources. We update our resources on a regular basis, so please check the OCR website to ensure you have the most up to date version.

This resource may be freely copied and distributed, as long as the OCR logo and this small print remain intact and OCR is acknowledged as the originator of this work.

OCR acknowledges the use of the following content:

The extracts from Aeschylus, *Eumenides* and Euripides, *Suppliants* have been translated by George Theodoridis, and taken from Poetry in Translation website: www.poetryintranslation.com

The extracts from Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, *Ecclesiazusae*, *Knights*, *Peace*, *Wasps* and *Frogs* have been translated by Alan H. Sommerstein. We would like to thank Liverpool University Press who have kindly allowed OCR to replicate the translation in this freely available booklet.

Page 97 Square down and Square up - alexwhite/Shutterstock.com

Please get in touch if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support delivery of our qualifications: resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk

Looking for a resource?

There is now a quick and easy search tool to help find **free** resources for your qualification:

www.ocr.org.uk/i-want-to/find-resources/

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR Customer Contact Centre

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

OCR is part of Cambridge Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge. *For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored.*

© **OCR 2017** Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England. Registered office 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.



Cambridge
Assessment

