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# WHAT IS WRONG WITH NICOSTRATUS? (AR. *VESP.* 82–83)

The beginning of *Wasps*[1] is structured similarly to the beginnings of the earlier *Horsemen* and later *Peace*, following the three-part scheme of Aristophanes' prologues as formulated by Paul Mazon: *parade* – *boniment* – *scène*.[2] The audience first observes a funny sketch involving two slaves engaged in some burdensome but incomprehensible activity (in *Wasps* they are on a night watch around the house, with their master, Bdelycleon, on the roof); finally one of them steps forward and addresses the audience directly to explain what is going on. In *Wasps*, however, as in *Peace*, this clarification (*boniment*) is preceded by a discussion of incorrect guesses that the spectators make and the actors comment on. The technique itself appears to be traditional for ancient comedy:[3] in addition to *Pax* 43 ff.,[4] we have fragments by Cratinus (342 K.–A., from an unknown play) and Pherecrates (154 K.–A., from *Pseudherakles*) that also suggest the situation "Now one of the audience, who thinks himself too clever, must be saying...". But only in *Wasps* is it uniquely deployed as a self-contained episode, with the audience asking for an answer to the question "What is the sickness of our master's father?", whereupon the

[1] In the autumn of 2018, while teaching *Wasps* to my class at St Petersburg Classical Gymnasium, I reached the lines 82 ff. and, with no second thoughts, presented their traditional interpretation – only to be immediately grilled by the students about its weakness. In a lively discussion that ensued, I came up with the explanation offered below. It is thus my pleasure to dedicate this paper to the *studiosa cohors* of my former pupils: Valeria Aganina, Daria Artemieva, Xenia Biriukova, Vera Garmanova, Stanislava Khizhniakova, Ivan Lapikov, Alexander Sverdlin, and Sergei Zhikharev. The time is out of joint, my friends, and you are born to set it right.

[2] Mazon 1904, 170–172; 177.

[3] Whittaker 1935, 181–183.

[4] It is, however, worth noting the close relationship between *Peace* and *Wasps*, which is not limited to the similar structure of their prologues and includes textual borrowings in the *parabasis* (Moulton 1981, 84).

named Athenians shout out their versions like children at a matinee, and the slaves reject them one by one while simultaneously ridiculing their authors (71 ff.):

νόσον γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἀλλόκοτον αὐτοῦ νοσεῖ,
ἣν οὐδ' ἂν εἷς γνοίη ποτ' οὐδὲ ξυμβάλοι,
εἰ μὴ πύθοιθ' ἡμῶν· ἐπεὶ τοπάζετε.
– Ἀμυνίας μὲν ὁ Προνάπους φήσ' οὑτοσὶ
εἶναι φιλόκυβον αὐτόν.
– ἀλλ' οὐδὲν λέγει,
μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἀφ' αὐτοῦ τὴν νόσον τεκμαίρεται.
– οὔκ, ἀλλὰ "φιλο-" μέν ἐστιν ἀρχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ.
ὁδὶ δέ φησι Σωσίας πρὸς Δερκύλον
εἶναι φιλοπότην αὐτόν.
– οὐδαμῶς γ', ἐπεὶ
αὕτη γε χρηστῶν ἐστιν ἀνδρῶν ἡ νόσος.
– Νικόστρατος δ' αὖ φησιν ὁ Σκαμβωνίδης
εἶναι φιλοθύτην αὐτὸν ἢ φιλόξενον.
– μὰ τὸν κύν', ὦ Νικόστρατ', οὐ φιλόξενος,
ἐπεὶ καταπύγων ἐστὶν ὅ γε Φιλόξενος.
ἄλλως φλυαρεῖτ'· οὐ γὰρ ἐξευρήσετε...

The answer is then given: the old man is φιληλιαστής (a *hapax legomenon* and, apparently, a coined word).[5]

Before getting to the point, I will have to briefly address three issues. The first is how this amazing scene could have played out in the theatre. Indeed, unlike the mentioned passage in *Peace*, which requires no stage tricks (there, as in Cratinus' and Pherecrates' fragments, the audience reactions are introduced via *optativus potentialis*: "Some young clever boy must now be saying..., and, I guess, the Ionian sitting next to him replies..."), here a reference to theatrical convention is not sufficient: the names of the Athenians "giving voice" are accompanied by the deictic pronouns ὁδί, οὑτοσί, and the address ὦ Νικόστρατε, which means that actors had to point at them – that is, not only to be sure of their presence, but to know exactly where they sit, with Sosias and Dercylus necessarily

[5] By the way, the character's comic name itself also begins with Φιλο-. The audience does not yet know this, but when they soon do (at the very end of the same explanatory monologue of the slave, v. 133), they will undoubtedly relate it to the list of "φιλο- infirmities" (Kanavou 2011, 81; Biles–Olson 2015, 128; Nicoletta Kanavou also notes that in v. 270 the chorus calls Philocleon φιλῳδός).

having to be near each other. C. F. Russo suggests that Aristophanes arranged this in advance with "several friends":[6] this is hardly plausible, since the jokes made further about Amynias and the others are by no means friendly. In formulating this objection, Douglas MacDowell puts forward another explanation: all four of those named were officials and therefore enjoyed the right of *proedria*, so the actor was sure in advance which places of honour in the front row they would end up in.[7] This hypothesis gives MacDowell support for the controversial identification of Nicostratus and Amynias, which I shall briefly discuss further below. One could give scope for directorial imagination here – for instance, to suppose that special people were seated around the theatre who took turns shouting the appropriate φιλο- words, and that the actor "identified" these shouts with certain Athenians, so to speak, not by face but by content.

The second difficulty has to do with the distribution of the lines in the episode. The manuscript tradition is contradictory, and the scholiast of the Ravenna codex (ad v. 74) testifies to the hesitation of the early interpreters: τινὲς ἀμοιβαῖα· χαριέστερον δὲ λέγεσθαι αὐτὰ συνεχῶς πρὸς ἑνός ("some see dialogue here, but it would be better if the whole were spoken by one character"). As for the editors, some do give the whole text to Xanthias (though, as MacDowell observes, in that case his monologue 54–135 would prove exceptionally long for Aristophanes); others divide it between Xanthias and Sosias, suggesting that one slave remains at the house door, while the other walks along the edge of the orchestra and reports the audience's remarks to his colleague; this division has been done in several different ways, none of which has distinct advantages over the others. I have no fresh arguments on this point, and for my purpose the question is not crucial; so I simply ask the readers to keep in mind that the distribution of the lines is debatable, and I will try not to use the names Sosias and Xanthias any longer. The only thing I would like to strongly object to is the lacuna after v. 76 that was postulated by Bergk[8] and adopted by Meineke, Starkey, MacDowell *et al.* Bergk drew attention to οὔκ at the beginning of v. 77 and regarded it as a negative response to some other diagnosis that had fallen out between 'lover of gambling' and 'lover of drinking' (MacDowell even hypothesized what might have stood in the lacuna: 'lover of women', 'lover of boys', etc.). Two things, however, seem to militate against this. Firstly, as some commentators have rightly pointed out, the slave's clue, "Yes, this disease does begin with φιλο-,"

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[6] Russo 1962, 195.
[7] MacDowell 1965, 49–50 (and n. 4 in p. 50); MacDowell 1971, 138–139.
[8] Bergk 1852, XV.

should have been uttered after the first attempt to solve the riddle, i.e. after φιλόκυβος.[9] Secondly, all of the slave's responses to the assumptions of the audience contain some poignancy, and in Bergk's version v. 77 would stand out as disappointingly flat.[10] As for οὔκ, as Wilamowitz has already explained, it must be regarded as a response to Amynias' remark.[11]

Finally, a few words should be said about the identification of the five Athenians mentioned. Philoxenus and Amynias are the *bêtes noires* of comic poets;[12] about Sosias and Dercylus we can say virtually nothing.[13] As for Nicostratus of the deme Scambonidae, his identification with the son of Dietrephes (whose deme is unknown), a rather important Athenian politician and *strategos* (including in 423/2) who fell in 418 in the battle of Mantinea, was proposed in 1877 by Gustav Gilbert, got into *RE*, *LGPN,*

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[9] Gilula 1983, 359; Biles–Olson 2015, 110.

[10] Sider 1975 made a sophisticated attempt to deal with both of these difficulties at once: if the lacuna contained the diagnosis φίλαρχος, the answer οὔκ, ἀλλὰ "φιλο-" μέν ἐστιν ἀρχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ would make a pun with the double meaning of ἀρχή.

[11] Wilamowitz 1911, 515 (= Wilamowitz 1935, 333–334); Gilula 1983, 359; Biles–Olson 2015, 110.

[12] Philoxenus, "ispiratore, intorno alla seconda metà degli anni Venti del quinto secolo, di una vera e propria *vogue* tra i commediografi dell'*archaia*" (Stama 2014, 264), is made fun of as an effeminate καταπύγων and πόρνος also in *Nub.* 685–687, Eupolid. fr. 249 K.–A., and Phrynich. fr. 49 K.–A.; see further: Storey 1995; Chronopoulos 2017, 306–307. Amynias "seems <…> to be enjoying a comic vogue *c.* 423/2" (Storey 2003, 216). According to the scholia to *Wasps*, he was mocked by Cratinus (fr. 227 K.–A.) as ἀλαζών, κόλαξ, and συκοφάντης. In our play, he is mentioned twice more, as an aristocrat and supporter of oligarchy (466 ff.) and as a member of the embassy to Pharsalos who is ruined despite his wealthy friends (1267 ff., where the scholiast quotes an obscure and corrupted fragment from Eupolis' *Poleis*, fr. 222 K.–A.; cf. also *Com. adesp.* fr. 244 K.–A., where Amynias' name was introduced by Meineke: there he (?) is called πτωχαλαζών). Last not least, in *Clouds* he is derided alongside Philoxenus as an *effeminatus* unfit for military service (690–692). MacDowell (1965, 50–51), trying to reinforce Kaibel's interpretation of Hermipp. fr. 5 West by means of the *argumentum ad* προεδρίαν, argues that Amynias was a *strategos* in 423/2. See Storey 2003, 225–226; Chronopoulos 2017, 302–303 (with further bibl.).

[13] The scholiast notes *ad loc.*: "there were two Sosiae, the son of Pythis and the son of Parmenon", while he gives two references at once about Dercylus: according to one, he was a comic actor, and according to the other, a drunkard or innkeeper (οὗτος ὡς κάπηλος ἢ μεθυστὴς κωμῳδεῖται). Although this last definition will be of some use to my point (*v. infra*), it is obviously composed *ad hoc* to explain φιλοπότης; as for the actor, this suggestion is probably because one of the slaves in *The Wasps* is called Sosias (MacDowell 1971, 140). See further Chronopoulos 2017, 303–305 (with bibl.).

and *PAA* (but not into *PA*),[14] became the subject of a special paper by MacDowell (who proceeded, as we recall, from the '*proedria* argument') and is accepted by most modern commentators of *Wasps*.[15] It will not matter to us whether this is in fact that particular Nicostratus, or some other bearer of this very common name (over 200 entries in *PAA*); what will matter to us is that we know absolutely nothing about the character, way of life, or personal habits of Nicostratus the *strategos*: Thucydides, our almost sole source about his fate, gives not the slightest clue in this respect. Indeed, Gilbert, Starkie, and Lutz Lenz, trying to prove that the epithets φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος from the prologue of *Wasps* fit the *strategos* well, are forced to refer to the piety and generosity of… Nicias, and then transfer them to Nicostratus, since they were acting in concert and were likeminded.[16]

Now we can come to the main problem. Those who guess what an "unusually severe disease" (ἀλλοκότος νόσος) afflicts Philocleon make, one by one, four assumptions, each of which somehow compromises the person who offers it: in other words, "the tongue ever turns to the aching tooth". This is explicitly expressed in the slave's response to Amynias (v. 76): "he judges illness by his own example", i.e. he himself is subject to the love of gambling. But while the first two of these diagnoses indisputably point to real ailments, gambling addiction and drunkenness, the next two, φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος, suggested by Nicostratus, are of a very different kind. How could they get on the list of "diseases" and how do they characterize Nicostratus?

This difficulty has already been confronted by the scholiasts. The solutions they offer are markedly heterogeneous, so that one can speak of two ways of explanation, originally going back to different interpreters:

> *Schol. ad* 81: ἐπτόητο δὲ οὗτος περὶ τὰς θυσίας καὶ μαντείας. 82a: φιλοθύτην αὐτόν· φιλοθύται εἰσὶν οἱ δεισιδαίμονες, καὶ θύουσιν ἀεὶ τοῖς θεοῖς νομίζοντες ἐκ τούτου ἀβλαβεῖς ἔσεσθαι. 82b: ἢ φιλόξενον· ὁ μὲν πρὸς τὸν ἀγαθὸν τρόπον εἶπε τὸ φιλόξενος, ὁ δὲ ὡς κύριον ἥρπασεν· καὶ γὰρ ὁ Φιλόξενος ἐκωμῳδεῖτο ὡς πόρνος.

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[14] Even before Kirchner, Julius Beloch rejected it as "eine ganz unbegründete Vermuthung" (Beloch 1884, 334).

[15] Gilbert 1877, 144–145; Lang 1890, 103 ("möglicherweise"); Starkie 1897, 123–124; van Leeuwen 1909, 18; MacDowell 1965; MacDowell 1971, 138–139; Sommerstein 1983, 159; Lenz 2014, 81; Biles–Olson 2015, 111 ("probably"); Chronopoulos 2017, 305–306; etc.

[16] Charles Fornara (1970) found an unexpected argument for establishing the identity: based on an *ostrakon* bearing the name of Dietrephes, son of Euthoinos, he promptly pointed out that Aristophanes' φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος could be an allusion to the literal meaning of the name of the *strategos*' grandfather (εὔθοινος).

As we can see, the scholion finds the possibility of a pejorative understanding for φιλοθύτης (it would mean 'superstitious': people of this kind tend to sacrifice strenuously to protect themselves from the wrath of the gods, and such was Nicostratus), but not for φιλόξενος: instead, it is suddenly claimed that Nicostratus himself uses the epithet *in bonam partem* (but then why is it a disease?), and the slave understands it as a proper name joking about Piloxenus the καταπύγων. Nevertheless, this inherently contradictory construction found support among many commentators prior to 1900.[17] Following the scholia, they interpret φιλοθύτης *in malam partem* as δεισιδαίμων, regarding superstition as a property of Nicostratus himself,[18] while in φιλόξενος they see a positive characteristic: "the joke appears to be exhausted with the epithet φιλοθύτης", says Rogers,[19] and Aristophanes needs φιλόξενος only as a springboard for a witticism about Philoxenus.

This explanation, however, is unsatisfactory for several reasons. Firstly, as we shall see, nowhere else does the rather common word φιλοθύτης denote the superstitious man, and our scholion is not fit for the role of *classicus testis* because he is merely trying to solve *ad hoc* the problem posed by Aristophanes' text. Secondly, as van Leeuwen rightly pointed out, φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος must denote naturally related qualities, for Nicostratus refers to them as symptoms of the same disease, i.e. as virtual synonyms;[20] 'superstitious or hospitable' do not go together. We are left, therefore, either with two vices or with two virtues.

The second option has been chosen by H. Müller-Strübing and MacDowell: "Aristophanes introduced them not because he seriously regards such activities as faults, but simply to provide an opportunity for comic comment on Nikostratos and Philoxenos".[21] It is a capitulation: the whole line is recognized as having no independent meaning. Moreover, do we really have any comic comment *on Nicostratus* here? Why are the words φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος put into the mouth of this man, with an indication of his deme, which suggests a personal invective?

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[17] Without going further back than the second half of the 19th century, we can mention Richter 1858, 188; Rogers 1875, 16; Lang 1890, 101; Merry 1893, 9 (2nd pag.); van Leeuwen 1893, 15; Graves 1894, 88; Starkie 1897, 184; etc.

[18] Lang (1890, 101) and Starkie (1897, 184) assume that the euphemistic oath in v. 84 (μὰ τὸν κύν', ὦ Νικόστρατ', οὐ φιλόξενος) "is a reflexion of the superstition of Nicostratus"; but cf. Chronopoulos 2017, 161 n. 158.

[19] Rogers 1875, 16.

[20] Van Leeuwen 1909, 19.

[21] MacDowell 1971, 141; cf. Müller-Strübing 1880, 90 n. 3 ("ganz harmlos").

On the contrary, the first option – i.e. turning φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος into vices – has proved much more popular. This is not an easy task. Let's start with Dwora Gilula's hypothesis[22] on the meaning of φιλόξενος, as it shows just how scholars have to twist the arms of the Greek dictionary to postulate the pejorative meaning of the epithet. Gilula draws attention to the servant's reply: "No, Philocleon is not φιλόξενος, because Philoxenus is καταπύγων", from which she deduces that "being a καταπύγων excludes the possibility of being a φιλόξενος". Then she refers to K. J. Dover's *Greek Homosexuality*: according to the law attributed to Solon, male prostitution in Athens was punishable by partial *atimia*, and thus the business was most likely kept by the metics. So, φιλόξενος, 'lover of foreigners', would be a designation of a regular client of these καταπύγονες. This construction seems to be based on a misinterpretation of the joke about Philoxenus, which means simply "Are you mad to call my master's old father Philoxenus who is a καταπύγων!"[23] As for φιλοθύτης, beginning with a fair critique of "the superstitious" ("one's man superstition is another's religion"), Gilula comes to conclude that the word means 'glutton', since any sacrifice involves the eating of meat. As we shall now see, this latter suggestion was also made much earlier and in a different context.

Indeed, the point of contact between φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος was found in 1896 by Carl Wilhelm Volgraff, then a twenty-year-old student, whose short note published in a Brussels university journal might have gone unnoticed had it not been supported by Carl von Holzinger in *Bursians Jahresberichte* and then by van Leeuwen in the second edition of his commentary.[24] According to Volgraff, it is the feast accompanying any sacrifice that brings the two qualities together. Since then, most commentators and translators have preferred to understand both words in Volgraff's way,[25] but exaggeratedly: Nicostratus is an *excessive* lover of sacrifices and pleasing guests, a *maniac* of offerings and receptions. For the last hundred years, this is an *opinio communis*.[26] It is only the reason

[22] Gilula 1983, 361–362.

[23] This incongruence was noticed by S. Chronopoulos (2017, 161–162 n. 159).

[24] Volgraff 1896/7; Holzinger 1903, 225–226; van Leeuwen 1909, 19.

[25] Thanks to the acclaimed works of M. P. Nilsson and Paul Veyne, the over-generalized statement "As every time that a beast was killed at home the form was that of a sacrifice, it became nothing but a form; *lover of sacrifice* (*philothytes*) means no more than *hospitable*" (Nilsson 1948, 12; cf. Nilsson 1940, 75; Nilsson 1955, 145; Veyne 1987, 196) has spread wide, despite the sober objections of Casabona 1966, 143 and Renehan 1975, 198.

[26] However, "the superstitious man" was recently resurrected by Orth 2014, 453 and Lenz 2014, 81.

for such an exotic vice that varies: Nicostratus does so either because of his zest for life, willing to eat heartily and to indulge his friends,[27] or because of his unbridled generosity that is next to wastefulness and causes damage to his household.[28] Only John Vaio and, following him, Stylianos Chronopoulos managed to get rid of the overly sympathetic image of Nicostratus (for it still should be a disease!):[29] as they presume, his love for sacrifices and feasts is the kind of demonstrative consumption typical of the aristocracy and asserting its social status.[30]

To assess these hypotheses, let us turn to the analysis of the two epithets. Φιλοθύτης has strictly positive connotations, denoting not even an ambivalent or neutral feature, but precisely a virtue. Pollux (1. 20) defines it as ὁ θεοὺς νομίζων ἀνήρ (in explicit opposition to δεισιδαίμων!) and offers εὐσεβής, ὅσιος, θεῶν ἐπιμελής, etc. as its synonyms.[31] Sometimes a connotation of 'well-versed, experienced in the *Opferpraktik*' can be picked up in it;[32] in other cases, the meaning seems to be rather general ('religious' without specific references to the sacrifices).[33] More interesting are the 'social' contexts in which φιλοθυσία appears as unconditionally approved behaviour and is associated not so much with personal piety

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[27] Volgraff 1896/7; van Leeuwen 1909, 19.

[28] Sommerstein 1983, 159–160; Biles–Olson 2015, 111.

[29] In van Leeuwen's description, Nicostratus is quite a nice chap: "Amat Nicostratus […] bovis recens mactati carnibus cum familiaribus vesci" (van Leeuwen 1909, 19).

[30] Vaio 1971, 338–339; Chronopoulos 2017, 161–162.

[31] The word appears also in Poll. 7. 188 (θύται, φιλοθύται, μάγοι, γόητες, ἐξηγηταί, καθαρταί, τελεσταί, ἀπομάκται, ἀπομάκτριαι...), which is not, *pace* Orth 2014, 453, "eine Liste von Wörtern für religiöse Charlatane", but an unordered medley of *nomina agentium* related to rites and magic. Φιλοθύτης equals δεισιδαίμων only for a Christian soul (Socr. Schol. 3. 20).

[32] *DL* 2. 56 (on Xenophon): εὐσεβής τε καὶ φιλοθύτης καὶ ἱερεῖα διαγνῶναι ἱκανός; Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 631 A: ὁ δ' εὐσεβὴς καὶ φιλοθύτης, διηγηματικὸς ὀνείρων καὶ ὅσα χρησάμενος ἢ φήμαις ἢ ἱεροῖς θεῶν εὐμενείᾳ κατώρθωσεν, ἡδέως ἂν καὶ περὶ τούτων ἐρωτῷτο; *Rom.* 7. 2: τοῦ δὲ Ῥωμύλου πρός τινα θυσίαν ἀποτραπομένου (καὶ γὰρ ἦν φιλοθύτης καὶ μαντικός)…; *Aem. Paul.* 17. 10: ἀλλὰ τῷ θείῳ πολὺ νέμων, καὶ φιλοθύτης ὢν καὶ μαντικός, ὡς εἶδε πρῶτον τὴν σελήνην ἀποκαθαιρομένην, ἕνδεκα μόσχους αὐτῇ κατέθυσεν; Philostr. *Vita Apoll.* 4. 19: τὴν μὲν δὴ πρώτην διάλεξιν, ἐπειδὴ φιλοθύτας τοὺς Ἀθηναίους εἶδεν, ὑπὲρ ἱερῶν διελέξατο.

[33] Philostr. *Vita Apoll.* 5. 21: "τί δὲ ἄλλο γε", ἦ δ' ὁ Κάνος "ἢ τὸν λυπούμενον μὲν κοιμίζεσθαι αὐτῷ τὴν λύπην ὑπὸ τοῦ αὐλοῦ, τὸν δὲ χαίροντα ἱλαρώτερον ἑαυτοῦ γίγνεσθαι, τὸν δὲ ἐρῶντα θερμότερον, τὸν δὲ φιλοθύτην ἐνθεώτερόν τε καὶ ὑμνῴδη;" Eunap. *Vita soph.* 10. 6. 3: τυχὼν δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φιλοτιμίαν τύχης ἀξίας (τὸ γὰρ καλούμενον Ἰλλυρικὸν ἐπετέτραπτο), καὶ φιλοθύτης ὢν καὶ διαφερόντως Ἕλλην…

as with a willingness to spend for the common good and for the joy of others.[34] Philosophical or quasi-philosophical reasoning about stinginess, generosity, and extravagance often emphasizes that abundant spending on sacrifices, as well as on other social needs, can never be excessive and unjustified; Aristotle discusses this in the 4th book of *EN*, while constructing one of his usual triads (μεγαλοπρέπεια / μικροπρέπεια / βαναυσία): Ἔστι δὲ τῶν δαπανημάτων οἷα λέγομεν τὰ τίμια, οἷον τὰ περὶ θεούς, ἀναθήματα καὶ κατασκευαὶ καὶ θυσίαι, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον (1122 b 19 sqq.). Even in a difficult passage by Theophrastus, touching precisely on questions of excessive spending for sacrifices (fr. 523 Fortenbaugh [= Stob. 3. 3. 42]: χρὴ τοίνυν τὸν μέλλοντα θαυμασθήσεσθαι περὶ τὸ θεῖον φιλοθύτην εἶναι, μὴ τῷ πολλὰ θύειν ἀλλὰ τῷ πυκνὰ τιμᾶν τὸ θεῖον· τὸ μὲν γὰρ εὐπορίας, τὸ δ' ὁσιότητος σημεῖον), φιλοθύτης, as it seems, is used in a positive sense. The desire to arouse admiration for one's piety, which requires being φιλοθύτης, is not itself reprehensible for Theophrastus; however, as he points out, it must not be a one-time luxurious action for which nothing but money is needed, but regular devotional activity. Thus, the very possibility of a "compulsive" or "manic" φιλοθυσία turns out to be seriously compromised.

Here I shall have to issue a caveat. Metagenes, one of the last poets of the ἀρχαία, wrote a play called Φιλοθύτης; its few extant fragments (13–16 K.–A.) give no information on either the plot or the main character. August Meineke, referring to the cited scholium to *Vesp.* 82, suggested that he was comically superstitious;[35] although, as we have seen, in the interpretation of *Vesp.* 82 the 'superstition' idea was almost abandoned after Volgraff, it has survived among Metagenes' editors as far as Kassel–Austin and Chr. Orth.[36] Accordingly, too, the commentators of *Wasps* from time to time mention Metagenes' play to prove that the φιλοθυσία, when excessive, may also have been regarded as a weakness.[37] It should be emphasized, however, that among the numerous titles of Greek

[34] Antiph. *Tetr.* 1. 2. 12: ἐμὲ δὲ ἔκ γε τῶν προειργασμένων γνώσεσθε <…> πολλὰς μὲν καὶ μεγάλας εἰσφορὰς εἰσφέροντα, πολλὰ δὲ τριηραρχοῦντα, λαμπρῶς δὲ χορηγοῦντα, πολλοὺς δὲ ἐρανίζοντα, μεγάλας δὲ ὑπὲρ πολλῶν ἐγγύας ἀποτίνοντα, τὴν δὲ οὐσίαν οὐ δικαζόμενον ἀλλ' ἐργαζόμενον κεκτημένον, φιλοθύτην δὲ καὶ νόμιμον ὄντα; Plut. *Themist.* 5. 1: σύντονον δ' αὐτὸν γεγονέναι χρηματιστὴν οἱ μέν τινές φασι δι' ἐλευθεριότητα· καὶ γὰρ φιλοθύτην ὄντα καὶ λαμπρὸν ἐν ταῖς περὶ τοὺς ξένους δαπάναις, ἀφθόνου δεῖσθαι χορηγίας ...

[35] Meineke 1839, 221.

[36] Orth 2014, 453.

[37] E.g. Biles–Olson 2015, 111.

comedies containing a composite of the φιλοτοιοῦτος type (according to the lists drawn up by Alfred Körte and Andreas Bagordo, there are a total of 38, including 20 different ones),[38] alongside negative characteristics like Φιλοκλίνης and Φυλάργυρος, there are definitely positive ones: e.g. Φιλέταιρος[39] (-οι) by Philonides (ἀρχαία), Antiphanes, Amphis, Hegiochus, Alexis, Philemon, and Hegesippus; Φιλάδελφοι (-ος) by Amphides, Menander, Diphilus, Philippides, Apollodorus, and Sosicrates; Φιλοπάτωρ by Antiphanes; Φιλομήτωρ by Antiphanes and Posidippus; Φιλοδέσποτος by Theognetes, Timostratus, and Sogenes; Φιλαθήναιος by Alexis and Philippides; etc.[40] Of course, we cannot rule out that in the course of Metagenes' play the hero's φιλοθυσία led to some undesirable consequences (say, ruining him), but the characteristic in itself in no way suggests a vice.

I have no need to analyze φιλόξενος, a far more frequent epithet, in as much detail.[41] Since the time of Homer (cf. the formula that Odysseus repeats when reaching an unknown place [ζ 119 etc.]: ὤ μοι ἐγώ, τέων αὖτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἱκάνω; / ἦ ῥ' οἵ γ' ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, / ἦε φιλόξεινοι καί σφιν νόος ἐστὶ θεουδής;), hospitality is an unquestionable virtue, both private and public, a duty towards men and gods. The whole of Euripides' *Alcestis* (where the servant speaks of Admetus: ἄγαν ἐκεῖνός ἐστ' ἄγαν φιλόξενος [v. 809]) is an extended

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[38] Körte 1938, 123–124; Bagordo 2014, 167–168.

[39] Hardly a proper name or the lover of *hetairai*; cf. Arnott 1996, 156–157.

[40] It is edifying for our purpose that Körte, facing ]ανθρώποις Διφί(λου) in a didascalic inscription, prefers to restore Φιλ]ανθρώποις instead of Μισ]ανθρώποις of the *editio princeps* (Körte 1938, 123–124).

[41] This word cannot mean a 'foreign agent'. It is instructive to trace the story of an *ostrakon* ΑΡΧΕΝΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΣΕΝΟΝ (6th/5th century BC) found in the Athenian agora in 1938. Its first editor (Vanderpool 1949, 395) suggested an error instead of ΑΡΧΕΝΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΣΕΝΟ (*gen. sing.*); then Mabel Lang interpreted ΦΙΛΟΣΣΕΝΟΝ as a pejorative φιλοξενῶν, 'Archenus, a lover of foreigners', i.e. most probably a μηδίζων (Lang 1990, 33–34, no. 18). However, Stefan Brenne rightly rejected this assumption (shared by Masson 1992, 113, Giugni 2001, 12, and Surikov 2018a [И. Е. Суриков, "Прозвища у греков архаической и классической эпох. III. Прозвища политиков", *Проблемы истории, филологии, культуры*], 102, who immediately changed his mind: v. Surikov 2018b [И. Е. Суриков, "Прозвища у греков архаической и классической эпох. IV. Афины: От 'великих остракизмов' до 'великих демагогов'", *Проблемы истории, филологии, культуры*], 173) and returned to the misspelled patronymic, arguing, *inter alia*, that "φιλοξενέω ist sonst allerdings nicht mit dieser negativen Konnotation behaftet; das Gegenteil ist der Fall, da nur so die Häufigkeit des Namens Philoxenos spätestens seit den sechziger Jahren des 5. Jhs. zu erklären ist" (Brenne 2002, 81; cf. Brenne 2001, 108; 271–272).

statement that there are no limits to φιλοξενία and it cannot be excessive, even if in some circumstances we think otherwise.

I come to my point. All interpreters assume that the three jokes about Amynias, Sosias/Dercyllus, and Nicostratus are of the same kind: people name the vices that they themselves indulge in. Meanwhile, already the second of these jokes (v. 78 ff.) does not necessarily mean "Sosias and Dercylus are φιλοπόται": this is well understood by the scholiast, who suggests that Dercylus could be not only a μεθυστής but also a κάπηλος.[42] The third diagnosis is also self-defeating to the one who puts it forward, but self-defeating in a slightly different way. Both φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος are unequivocally positive traits,[43] and only Nicostratus, unlike everyone else in the audience, paradoxically considers them symptoms of a dangerous mental disease; only he is convinced that φιλοθύται and φιλόξενοι are *fous à lier*. Nicostratus is neither superstitious nor prodigal: he is greedy.[44]

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[42] Other versions are also possible: Sosias and Dercylus could be ἀγαθοδαιμονισταί, or the drunkard son and his austere father, etc. etc.

[43] Palmira Cipriano argues that the unusual understanding of φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος in *Vesp.* 83 as terms of blame is supported by the overall context of the episode (Cipriano 1990, 38–39; on the "importance of the context", cf. also Casabona 1966, 143; Biles–Olson 2015, 111). However, the situation where the slave encourages the audience to name diseases beginning with φιλο- suggests a kind of 'zero context', as in a dictionary or crossword puzzle.

[44] It is well known that, in Greek literature, saving on sacrifices and hospitality are the constant features of an avaricious person: it suffices to say that all four chapters on misers in Theophrastus' *Characters* refer to some petty manipulations in distributing sacrificial meat to guests (9. 3; 10. 11; 22. 4; 30. 4). Cf. also Plut. *Themist.* 5. 1 (cit. *supra*, n. 34), where φιλοθύτης and λαμπρὸς ἐν ταῖς περὶ τοὺς ξένους δαπάναις go together as qualities requiring vast expenditure.

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In *Vesp.* 71 ff. two slaves invite the audience to guess what dangerous disease, beginning with φιλο-, their master's father is ill with. The named Athenians make their assumptions, each of which somehow compromises the person who offers it: first φιλόκυβος, then φιλοπότης, and finally a certain Nicostratus shouts out the strange φιλοθύτης ἢ φιλόξενος. The scholia, followed by old commentators, understand φιλοθύτης as δεισιδαίμων (which has no parallel); modern *opinio*

*communis* suggests that φιλοθύτης ἢ φιλόξενος means an *over*-hospitable *amphitryon*, i.e. a careless spender or a boastful aristocrat: Nicostratus attributes these qualities to Philocleon because he himself is one. The present paper stresses that φιλοθύτης and φιλόξενος are unconditional virtues, both private and public, and it is impossible to give them any pejorative meaning. Aristophanes' joke is that only Nicostratus, and no one else, paradoxically considers spending on sacrifices and guests to be vices, and that all φιλοθύται and φιλόξενοι are dangerous madmen who must be guarded by their household. In other words, Nicostratus, whoever he was, is ridiculed by Aristophanes as a miser.

В прологе *Oc* (71 слл.) два раба предлагают публике угадать, какой опасной болезнью, начинающейся на φιλο-, болен отец их хозяина. Называемые по имени афиняне выдвигают версии (которые, очевидно, как-то компрометируют их самих): сперва φιλόκυβος, затем φιλοπότης и, наконец, некий Никострат выкрикивает странное φιλοθύτης ἢ φιλόξενος. Схолиаст, за которым последовали многие старые интерпретаторы, понимает φιλοθύτης как δεισιδαίμων (что не находит параллелей); современная *opinio communis* предполагает, что слова φιλοθύτης ἢ φιλόξενος означают *чрезмерно* гостеприимного хозяина, т. е. беспечного мота или хвастливого аристократа: Никострат приписывает эти качества Филоклеону, потому что сам таков. В статье подчеркивается, что φιλοθύτης и φιλόξενος – это безусловные добродетели, не только частные, но и общественные, и придавать им сколько-нибудь пейоративное значение невозможно. Шутка Аристофана состоит в том, что только Никострат, и больше никто, парадоксально считает траты на жертвоприношения и гостей пороками, а всех φιλοθύται и φιλόξενοι – опасными безумцами, которых их домашние должны стеречь. Иначе говоря, Никострат, кто бы он ни был, высмеивается Аристофаном как скупец.

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