



ABUSIVE MOUTHS
in Classical Athens

NANCY WORMAN

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ABUSIVE MOUTHS IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

This study of the language of insult charts abuse in classical Athenian literature that centers on the mouth and its appetites, especially talking, eating, drinking, and sexual activities. Attic comedy, Platonic dialogue, and fourth-century oratory often deploy insulting depictions of the mouth and its excesses in order to deride professional speakers as sophists, demagogues, and women. Although the patterns of imagery explored are very prominent in ancient invective and later western literary traditions, this is the first book to discuss this phenomenon in classical literature. It responds to a growing interest in both abusive speech genres and the representation of the body, illuminating an iambic discourse that isolates the intemperate mouth as a visible emblem of behaviors ridiculed in the democratic arenas of classical Athens.

NANCY WORMAN is Associate Professor of Classics and Comparative Literature at Barnard College, Columbia University, and author of *The Cast of Character: Style in Greek Literature* (2002).

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For Iakovos

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All translations in the book are my own.

Abbreviations

- A C. Austin, ed. *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Berlin, 1973)
- AA *Archäologischer Anzeiger*
- AJP *American Journal of Philology*
- C F. D. Caizzi, ed. *Antisthenis Fragmenta* (Milan, 1966)
- CA *Classical Antiquity*
- CJ *Classical Journal*
- CP *Classical Philology*
- CQ *Classical Quarterly*
- CW *Classical World*
- D H. Diehl, ed. *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca* (Leipzig, 1949–)
- DK H. Diels and W. Kranz, eds. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 12th ed. (Berlin, 1966–67)
- FGH F. Jacoby, ed. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin/Leiden, 1923–58)
- G&R *Greece and Rome*
- GRBS *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*
- HSCP *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
- IG *Inscriptiones Graeci* (Berlin, 1873–)
- JHS *Journal of Hellenic Studies*
- K T. Kock, ed. *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1880)
- K-A R. Kassel and C. Austin, eds. *Poetae Comici Graeci*, vols. i–ix, (Berlin, 1983–)
- Kannicht R. K. Kannicht, ed. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, vol. 5.1–2 (Göttingen, 2004)
- L-P E. Lobel and D. L. Page, eds. *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta* (Oxford, 1955)
- M A. Meineke, ed. *Poetarum Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Hildesheim, 1989)
- N A. Nauck, ed. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 2nd ed. (Heidelsheim, 1964)

<i>NJb</i>	<i>Neue Jahrbucher für klassische Altertum</i>
<i>P</i>	D. L. Page, ed. <i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> (Oxford, 1962)
<i>PCPS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
<i>PMG</i>	<i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> , ed. D. L. Page (Oxford, 1962)
<i>R</i>	S. Radt, ed. <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , vol. 4 (Göttingen, 1977)
<i>REA</i>	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des études Grecques</i>
<i>RhM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</i>
<i>Rose</i>	V. Rose, ed. <i>Aristoteles Fragmenta</i> (Leipzig, 1886)
<i>SEG</i>	J. J. E. Hondius, ed. <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> (Leiden, 1923–)
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses</i>
<i>Stu. Urb</i>	<i>Studi Urbinati</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>Valk</i>	M. van der Valk, ed. <i>Eustathii Commentarii ad Homeri Iliaden Pertinentes</i> (Leiden, 1971–87)
<i>W</i>	M. L. West, ed. <i>Iambi et Elegi Graeci</i> , 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1989–92)
<i>YCS</i>	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>

Introduction

πόλιν οὐ τὴν ἐπὶ προγόνων τὴν ναυμάχον,
ἀλλὰ γραῦν σανδάλια ὑποδεδεμένην
καὶ πτισάνην ῥοφῶσαν.
[Athens], no longer the city of our ancestors,
ready for sea-battles, but an old hag, wearing slippers
and gulping her broth.

Demades, fr. 18¹

The language of insult has a long and far-flung history of lampooning the oral behaviors that polite society carefully regulates, especially as the main fare of comic invective. Scornful analogies with low-status demeanors may serve to denigrate entire cities, as in the quotation above, or particular players on the public stage. This study charts abuse in classical Athenian literature that centers on the mouth and its activities: especially talking, eating, drinking, and sexual practices. The patterns of imagery that it illuminates dominate ancient invective and pervade insulting talk in western cultures. Students of Roman satire will find this use of the ignoble body familiar, as will readers of Rabelais and modern picaresque novels.² I aim to supplement the burgeoning interest in both abusive speech genres and the representation of the body, by demonstrating that in the classical period public mockery of professional speakers forges an iambic discourse that isolates the intemperate mouth as a visible emblem of behaviors pilloried in the democratic arena.

¹ The fragments of the fourth-century orator Demades are collected in de Falco 1954. This one is quoted by Demetrius and attributed to Demades, as an example of “vibrancy” (*deimotēs*) in style (*de Eloc.* 282, 285).

² On comic imagery and the grotesque, see Edwards 1993 and Platter 1993; on Roman satire, see Henderson 1999, as well as the special edition of *Arethusa* entitled *Vile Bodies* (1998). Most of these articles respond in one way or another to Bakhtin’s famous monograph on Rabelais (1984). On the mouth as a site of impurity in Roman literature more generally, see Richlin 1983 [1992]: 99; Corbeil 1996: 101–24, and further below.

While in recent years scholars have increasingly paid attention to how Athenian drama and oratory respond to each other, they have not noticed the consistent patterns that shape defamation in these genres.³ Dramatic and rhetorical works from the classical period that depict popular orators and teachers often focus on oral behaviors, revealing how the feminized or vulgar appetites of these figures match their speaking styles and render them worthy of abuse. Old comedy, the satyr play, Platonic dialogue, and oratorical invective portray figures such as the sophists, Socrates, Cleon, and Alcibiades as ranging from loud-mouthed, crude, and rapacious to chattering, effeminate, and fastidious, as do the barbed exchanges of Aeschines and Demosthenes. This scheme plays upon Athenian attitudes toward the appetites and in turn influences them, in some instances even affecting public policy by means of open ridicule.

My discussion thus charts a crucial conjunction between the body as a social entity and ancient political discourse. Athenian writers contrast speaking in the courts and assembly with other traditional spaces for exercising oral activities, most notably the symposium and the agora. In these arenas insulting depictions highlight the speaker's style in a broad sense (including vocal tone, dress, and deportment), focusing in on the concrete visibility of the talking citizen in a public setting and often connecting other physical attributes to oral techniques.⁴ The critique of professional speakers is a whole-body affair, with the mouth serving as a central indicator of various types of behavioral excess. This abuse of the speaker in action emerges from types of pointedly offensive speech performance in archaic society, namely heroic invective and the insult poetry (iambos) of the aristocratic symposium.⁵ When defamation spawned in elite settings infiltrates the arenas for public speaking that are central to the administration of the democratic city, the mouth emerges as a dominant metonymy for behaviors and attitudes that menace the well-being of Athens.

³ Regarding the intersection of drama and oratory, see, e.g., Ober and Strauss 1990; Worthington (ed.) 1994; Hall 1995; Goldhill and Osborne (eds.) 1999. Both Ussher 1960 (on Theophrastus) and Rowe 1966 (on Demosthenes) point to Aristophanic influence, but they do not make any claims about the larger discursive development.

⁴ See Worman 2002a on ancient ideas about style and oral performance; also Gleason 1995 on professional speakers' visible character traits.

⁵ By heroic invective I mean the exchange of insults that typically precedes hand-to-hand combat between prominent warriors in Homer. Cf. Martin 1989: 67–75. What is known about iambic poetry indicates that it was often agonistic and insulting, whether this functioned as an apotropaic device in fertility rituals or bawdy entertainment at symposia. See West 1974: 22–39; Nagy 1979: 222–52; Bowie 1986; Gentili 1988: 107–14; Bartol 1993: 61–74; Stehle 1997: 213–27; Ford 2002: 25–45, and further below.

A MAN'S, MAN'S WORLD

Given the likelihood that iambos originated in the agonistic, manly, and drunken setting of the archaic symposium, it should come as little surprise that the formalities that govern ritualized insult tend to foster a rude, masculine verbal style that lampoons weak and feminizing habits.⁶ In social spaces devoted to talking and eating, the voice of invective may be concertededly crude and reviled as much as it reviles, but it is almost never unmanly. Speakers sometimes ventriloquize women, as they do other low-status types, but this imposture merely isolates certain figures as targets for abuse. Indeed, women, with their vulnerable, soft bodies, serve in abusive talk as the predominant negative measure in the regulation of male behaviors, especially those involving the appetites. Demetrius, for example, explains that Demades' image of Athens as a "hag" (γρᾶν) indicates that it is "weak and already fading" (ἀσθενῆ καὶ ἐξίτηλον ἤδη), while the details of her dress and table manners point to a city "amused by feasts and banquets" (ἐν κρεανομίαις τότε καὶ πανδαισίαις διάγουσαν) (*de Eloc.* 286).⁷

As such metaphors indicate, in abusive public speech the female body may represent figuratively the weakness and indulgence that mark male social practices (e.g., the feasts and banquets). A number of scholars have noticed that female characters play a facilitating or mediating role in Greek literature,⁸ and the material explored in this study often reveals an anxious calibration of "female" appetites. While it consists largely of instances in which male speakers direct abuse at male targets, its imagery is underpinned by fundamental social tensions – those structured by class and perhaps most importantly by gender. In fact, the contrasts that organize the oral images discussed here arise from perceived distinctions between male and female behaviors, while aspects of class reinforce these basic differences. Thus Aristophanes depicts the sophist as a louche, effeminate chatterer, while the demagogue is a tough guy with a big mouth. Classicists have largely overlooked the centrality of this opposition to both ancient democratic thought and the larger literary tradition, but it constitutes a persistent scheme in western expression. Indeed, the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu points out that in popular French usage the gaping maw (*la gueule*) of the loud-mouthed,

⁶ Cf. further discussion in ch. 1. See Bowie 1986; Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 32–38; Bartol 1993: 51–74; also Ford 2002: 25–39.

⁷ Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 9: βροσκημάτων δίκην κάτω αἰεὶ βλέποντες καὶ κεκυφότες εἰς γῆν καὶ εἰς τραπέζας βόσκονται χορταζόμενοι καὶ ὀχεύοντες (586a7–8).

⁸ See especially Zeitlin 1990; also Loraux 1995; Wohl 1998; Foley 2001.

greedy, manly speaker operates in the realm of lowbrow insults and physical violence. The prim, feminized *bouche*, on the other hand, is allied with polite bourgeois utterance.⁹

Elite genres, then, traditionally figure the language of insult as male and lower-class, so that those who insult usually engage in a form of imposture, being themselves elite male participants in symposia and festivals.¹⁰ This abuse also focuses on the body and its parts, forging a rude, voracious discourse. Mikhail Bakhtin has famously emphasized that popular, abusive language effectively cannibalizes the body and reveals a particularly crude palate; such speech “is flooded with genitals, bellies, defecations, urine, disease, noses, mouths, and dismembered parts.”¹¹ Insulting talk centers on the open mouth, which like the Gorgon’s maw in ancient depiction elicits both fascination and revulsion.¹² This oral fixation also has a sustained presence in western literature, most notably in ancient satire and the genre that it helped to spawn: the modern novel. Rabelais’ *Gargantua and Pantagruel* manifests a gleeful absorption in the workings of the mouth and other bodily apertures, and its proto-novelistic form allows for the confrontation of competing attitudes toward the appetites.

Indeed, one could trace an arc of aggressively masculine lampoon centered on these appetites that runs effectively from Aristophanic comedy, the poetry of Catullus and Martial, Roman satire, and the “novel” of Petronius on one end, to the satirical verses of Ben Jonson, John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, Robert Herrick, and John Donne, or contemporary American writers such as Kurt Vonnegut, Philip Roth, and Charles Bukowski, on the other. While these clearly constitute only a few of many such arcs, my point is that this imagery has very broad significance. It forges a dominant strain in western literature that situates the body in ignoble and sometimes obscene postures and often highlights the mouth as a metonymy for excess.¹³

⁹ Bourdieu 1991: 86–87.

¹⁰ Although there are abusive female characters in iambic poetry and Attic comedy, these ventriloquisms are largely employed, as far as I can determine, as reference points for shaping male insult, a strategy that also marks iambic discourse in later prose. To say this is to make no claims about forms of abuse that may have been originally female (e.g. *gephurismos*, the “bridge insult” of Eleusinian ritual; cf. Ar. *Ran.* 391ff., *Plut.* 1014; and see O’Higgins 2003: 20, 57). See further in ch. 1.

¹¹ Bakhtin 1984: 319.

¹² On the Gorgon as an apotropaic device that exorcizes internal demons, see Frontisi-Ducroux 1984: 152–55. Frontisi-Ducroux argues more generally that the frontal gaze in Greek art confronts the viewer with his own mortality; as such the Gorgon’s open-mouthed grin serves as a fundamental metonymy for the human condition. Cf. also Vernant 1991: 111–25.

¹³ As ch. 5 explores, this scheme extends not only to comic or satirical texts but also to oratorical invective. Demosthenes’ mocking of his opponents’ appetites has its most grotesque extension in Cicero’s *Second Philippic* (esp. 62–75), which depicts his opponent Antony as all mouth – a bawling, drunken, blood-sucking Charybdis. Although Corbeil (1996: 104–24) does not address sufficiently Cicero’s depiction of Antony, he does emphasize the importance of mouth imagery in Cicero’s

Catullus, for instance, employs an infamously crude means of silencing his critics in *carmen* 16, which begins *pedicabo ego vos et irrumabo* (“I’ll bugger you and shove it in your mouths”) – a wielding of the authorial phallus unparalleled in ancient literature. This gesture aims at chastening those who read him (i.e., “Catullus”) as “bad at being a man” (*male me marem*, 16.13) for writing “softie” little verses (cf. the diminutives *versiculi* and *molliculi*, 16.3–4). This and other poems chart the bodily schemes by which Catullus mocks the weaknesses of his fellow elite Romans, as well as those of his poetic *ego*. The body emerges as a site of degradation in which appetitive vulnerabilities run from mouth to anus (e.g., 15, 21) and the narrator sometimes himself submits to the aggressions of others (e.g., 11, 28).¹⁴

Horace’s *Epodes* make a similar use of the ignoble body, situating the collection of poems as a vitriolic confrontation between the poet and his alter ego, the bitter witch Canidia, who – like women more generally – threatens to sap the phallic energies of the poet and thereby elicits abuse in defense of both his poetry and his manhood.¹⁵ The *Satires* also depose the male body in comically weak and challenged postures. When, for instance, Horace depicts the journey to an important diplomatic meeting as his body’s debasement through dyspepsia and masturbation (*Serm.* 1.5), his discomfort, fastidiousness, and disappointment effectively upstage the momentous political event. The scene of Trimalchio’s dinner in Petronius’ *Satyricon*, during which the host stuffs his mouth with food and verbiage and fondles boys at table, emerges as a gross extension of the satirist’s wry warnings about the body’s weaknesses. The dinner is a seemingly endless round of oral excesses, with the host’s lowbrow crudity resulting in a profligate jumble of outré delicacies, boastful misquotations, and purging from both ends.¹⁶

This ancient relationship between satire and the picaresque, in which the latter paints in florid detail what the former bitingly denigrates, has

invective. Focusing on Cicero’s attacks on Verres (e.g., *Verr.* 2.3.5, 2.3.23) and Clodius (e.g., *Dom.* 25, 47, 104), Corbeill directs attention especially to the implications of sexual “degradation” (e.g., cunnilingus) as well as drunkenness. Following Richlin 1983 [1992]: 99, he argues that the “impure mouth” (*os impurum*) has class implications. See further in the epilogue.

¹⁴ Fitzgerald (1995: 72) recognizes that in Roman culture the mouth “was the most important site of purity and contamination”; cf. Richlin 1983 [1992]: 99; Henderson 1999: 69–72; also Corbeill 1996: 104–05. Although Adams 1982 does not have an entry for *os*, this may suggest the paucity of its metaphorical uses in Latin (versus the “tainting” of the orifice itself by association, juxtaposition, innuendo, etc.).

¹⁵ Old women serve as dominant targets in the *Epodes* (e.g., 3, 5, 8, 12, 17), with Canidia as their most prominent member. They are a doggish, disgusting group (Oliensis 1991; also Henderson 1999: 93–113 on *Ep.* 8). Cf. the seventeenth-century poet Robert Herrick’s offering: “The staffe is now greas’d,/ And very well pleas’d,/ She cokes out her Arse at the parting,/ To an old Ram Goat,/ That rattles i’t’h’throat,/ Halfe choakt at the stink of her farting” (“The Hagg,” 1648 [1963]: 441).

¹⁶ On the “palate” of Roman satire (including Petronius), see Gowers 1993.

an enduring afterlife. Witness, for instance, Ben Johnson's 118th epigram, "On Gut":

GUT eats all day and lechers all the night,
 So all his meat he tasteth over twice;
 And striving so to double his delight,
 He makes himself a thorough-fare of vice.
 Thus, in his belly, can he change a sin,
 Lust it comes out, that gluttony went in.¹⁷

The English satirist charts a confluence of appetites in which modern avatars of the picaresque gleefully wallow. Think of Alexander Portnoy, the roguish self-abusing hero of Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint*, who inhabits precisely this confluence in his relationship with a piece of liver: "My first piece I had in the privacy of my own home, rolled round my cock at three-thirty – and then again on the end of my fork, at five-thirty, along with the other members of that poor innocent family of mine." Since the novel is staged as one long riotous therapy session, Portnoy also offers his "analyst" the obscene conclusion to this transgression: "So. Now you know the worst thing I have ever done. I fucked my own family's dinner."¹⁸

Portnoy's Complaint focuses its bawdy abjection on the hero's controlling mother, whose looming presence impinges on his teenage fantasies and adult relationships alike. Although Roth's novel, like so much of Bukowski's writing, careens from one appetite to another, sexual desire serves as the anxious strain that runs through its outrageous rants. Consider in this light Bukowski's poem "the sniveler," in which a female interlocutor says over the phone to the narrator (who is pining for another woman), "oh my god, you're impossible, you big soft/ baby's ass!" He responds, "suck me off and maybe I can forget, help me/ forget." They hang up and the narrator considers his options:

I thought, well, I can masturbate, I can look at television,
 and then there's suicide.
 having already masturbated twice that day
 I had two choices left and
 being a big soft baby's ass I
 switched on the tv.¹⁹

¹⁷ Johnson 1616 [1947]: 76. Cf. also John Donne, who in one of his satirical poems envisions the rival writer as a plagiarizing "glutton": "But hee is worst,/ Who beggarly doth chaw/ Others wits fruits, and in his ravenous maw/ Rankly digested dost those things out-spue,/ As his owne things; and they are his owne, 'tis true,/ For if one eate my meat, though it be knowne,/ The meat was mine, th' excrement is his owne" (1601 [1952]: 94).

¹⁸ Roth, *Portnoy's Complaint* 1967 [1994]: 134. ¹⁹ Bukowski 1981: 192–93.

Sex, for these aggressively male, heterosexual writers, means women, and with women come anxieties about the very maleness they so rudely and self-mockingly celebrate. Much of ancient abuse exhibits a similar unease, which also fosters male posturing and obsession with the phallus.

Something rather different happens when the protagonist is a woman, a difference revealing for the equations drawn among talk, food, and the female body familiar (in more obscene forms) from ancient comedies that feature “women on top.”²⁰ In Margaret Atwood’s novel *The Edible Woman*, the increasingly fastidious Marian observes her fellow workers at a Christmas party: “She looked around the room at all the women there, at the mouths opening and shutting, to talk or to eat.”²¹ Her fear of food, which grows apace with her discomfort with her conventional life, generates an internal commentary bearing many features of ancient abuse. Hers is a rebellious idiom; and although it remains carefully cordoned off from the polite talk of social interaction, much like Attic old comedy and the satyr play it relentlessly dismantles the “natural” coherences of social life into its detritus, focusing on the debased body and especially on the organ most difficult to control: the open mouth. Thus Marian sits silently in the middle of the party and says to herself, “What peculiar creatures they were; and the continual flux between the outside and the inside, taking things in, giving them out, chewing, words, potato-chips, burps, grease, hair, babies, milk, excrement, cookies, vomit, coffee, tomato juice, blood, tea, sweat, liquor, tears, and garbage.”²²

Women at a tea party: to Marian this appears as one of life’s greatest grotesqueries, the very propriety of the sweet food and trivial talk catalyzing her bitterly hilarious response. In this pivotal scene Atwood appropriates for her biting protagonist the familiar elements of abusive speech – the focus on the permeable female body, the insulting outsider’s voice with its omnivorous palate, and the social setting that both generates the derisive talk and serves as its target. That the speaker is a woman and the invective internalized ironically signals the protagonist’s alienation from her own body, as opposed to the gleeful indulgence that often characterizes male discourses. Both factors also throw into especially sharp relief the overt, masculine antagonism of ancient invective, which parades conflicts in public spaces that tend in modern bourgeois idioms to be confined to internalized rants in domestic settings. Greek comedy, for instance, may isolate its mockery as ritual abuse in a formal arena, but it nevertheless frequently constitutes

²⁰ See further in ch. 2. ²¹ Atwood 1969 [1998]: 180.

²² Atwood 1969 [1998]: 181. Cf. Bukowski’s depiction of his father: “pork chops, said my father, I love/ porkchops!/ and I watched him slide the grease into his mouth” (“retired,” 1986: 17).

a direct attack on public figures before a mass audience, much like the slandering of opponents in oratory.

Ancient insult does, however, confirm a tension between polite ritual and rude critique comparable to that of Roth's dinner-table travesty or Atwood's monstrous tea party. Further, ancient poets and prose writers similarly appropriate abusive talk as a means of passing judgment on their own kind. Although classical invective probably originated in the elite setting of the aristocratic symposium, the setting itself subsequently emerges either as a potentially enervating sphere in contrast to the vulgar but vigorous marketplace (i.e., the Athenian agora) or, conversely, as a forum for fostering the proper educational training of the elite citizen.²³ Perhaps because of the tensions that developed around class status in the democratic city-state, the iambic speaker may occupy a complex position in relation to his audience and his own usage. The patent imposture of low-status figures isolates crude talk as derisive quotation, but at the same time it signals to elite listeners the wit and wisdom of the (male) ventriloquist. This imposture thus implicitly promotes aristocratic sentiments by means of lowbrow critique, as is the case with archaic iambos. Think of the commonplace chat of Socrates, whose arguments foster antidemocratic ideas; or Demosthenes' arch and colorful invective, which often denigrates opponents as low-class habitués of the agora.

IAMBOS AND IAMBIC DISCOURSE

A consideration of the archaic background of iambic poetry (*iambos*), which I take up at greater length in chapter 1, reveals the adumbrated origins of abusive themes and vocabulary. The texts focused on here span the comedies of Aristophanes in the 420s to the sketches of Theophrastus in the 320s, but the iambic tradition that fosters this phenomenon extends back to Homer. In the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* it surfaces intermittently as the insulting talk of "low-status" figures (i.e., characters assigned non-heroic status, whether actual or assumed) who embody a threat to epic discourse and its heroes.²⁴ The blaming function of iambos in this "high" or praise genre suggests that it was first formulated as invective (*psogos*), typically with high-status figures as its targets. As a genre, however, iambos is oddly elusive: it is not metrically

²³ Bowie (1997:3) argues that actual symposiasts were probably exclusively upper-class; Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 222–31 and Fisher 2000 have contested this. *Wasps* indicates that the symposium might involve playful imitation of upper-class habits and conceits. See also Wycherly 1956, Wilkins 2000a on the character of the agora.

²⁴ Cf. Nagy 1979. I consider this aspect of iambos in ch. 1.

uniform; nor does it necessarily involve blaming speech.²⁵ The two most famous proponents of this mode, Archilochus and Hipponax, wrote in a number of meters (e.g., trimeters, tetrameters, epodes) and about topics that range from desire and erotic contest to soldiering and the brevity of life. We might note that these are subjects typical of the symposium, and the fragments that remain share features that reflect this drunken setting: a focus on the concrete needs of the body; an irreverent, deprecating tone; and a concertedly crude sensibility.

In fact, it is significant for this discussion that the origins and generic boundaries of iambs are rather obscure. While Ewen Bowie and others are concerned with determining the parameters of this “network of poetic types,”²⁶ I would call attention instead to the discursive nature of abusive speech. Many broad features of abuse traverse generic boundaries, while showing a remarkable consistency of tone (irreverent), subject matter (commonplace), and speaker’s fictive status (usually low). In addition, like iambs, the discourse that develops in the fifth century around professional speakers often focuses on “vulgar” activities, especially eating and sex.²⁷ Like iambs, it sometimes includes elements of animal fables (*ainoi*) as well as the communal street revels (*kōmoi*) from which Attic comedy is thought to have developed.²⁸ Further, this discourse often seems aimed, like the *ainos*, at education of the young: witness the ephebic satyr chorus, the plot of Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, and Socrates’ youthful audiences in Plato.²⁹ It also sustains across genres more precise elements such as vocabulary and imagery, so that a reprehensible figure like the sophistic butcher (*mageiros*)

²⁵ Cf. West 1974; Rosen 1988a: 12–14; Bowie 2001.

²⁶ This is Bowie’s phrase (2001: 6). Cf. Bartol 1993: 30–41.

²⁷ I should note that the word “discourse” is particularly useful here, since it designates a linguistic arena with shared conventions and vocabulary that does not conform to any one genre, although it is usually fostered in a particular social context (cf. Foucault 1977). In this case the discourse develops in a number of formal literary settings that share a performative element (delivery before an audience), a general speech type (abusive), and a particular target (professional speakers).

²⁸ Aristotle, *Po.* 1448a35–36; see Rosen 1988a; Zanetto 2001. Aristotle also represents iambs as spawning comedy and treats both with some disdain, assigning these “low” genres to poets with base personalities (*Po.* 1448b24–1449a5). For the connection to *ainoi*, see Semonides 7 W and Archilochus frs. 182–87 W; cf. Nagy 1979: 222–41; Cole 1991: 48–49; Zanetto 2001; Ford 2002: 74–80. West (1974: 23–25) hypothesized that iambs developed in the context of the worship of Dionysus, whose cultic titles and modes (*dithyrambos*, *thriambos*, and *ithumbos*) suggest links with iambs, and also of Demeter, who was cheered by the “indecent” jokes of Iambe in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (cf. O’Higgins 2003 and further in chs. 1 and 2). Both ties would help to explain the transformation of iambs into comic performance, as well as its pervasive emphasis on the physical world and bodily need. Rosen (1988a: 15–16) has pointed to the association of iambs with physical pain, the verbal equivalent of a blow.

²⁹ See Degani 1984; Bartol 1993: 73–74; Steinrück 2000: 1–4, 82–86; Griffith 2002.

turns up in comedy, the satyr play, Platonic dialogue, and the sketches of Theophrastus.³⁰

I thus do not employ the term “iambic” merely for purposes of economy, but because fifth- and fourth-century invective and its objects show clear ties to the poetry more strictly designated as iambos. While scholars have argued for the influences of iambic poetry on comic drama, I demonstrate that through the essential vehicle of comedy, iambic modes share features with the satyr play, shape oratorical defamation of character, and contribute to the Platonic depiction of Socrates. Indeed, I contend that over a century in which the public critique of professional speakers moved from the dramatic to the oratorical arena, these genres perpetuated iambic connections among abusive language, those who use it, and its targets. As comedy began to move away from the (frequently obscene) lampooning of public figures, orators appropriated abusive vocabulary from that genre, although in this politer context obscene characterizations were merely suggested rather than explicit.³¹ This points additionally to the transformation during this period of public forums for social dialogue and critique, since the move of invective from the comic stage to the oratorical platform parallels the waning of the former and the burgeoning of the latter as a setting for civic self-articulation and analysis. My discussion thus innovates most importantly by tracing the trajectory of iambic language in conjunction with the development of oratory and Platonic dialogue out of dramatic forms, as well as the ways in which the shift in public arenas alters the effects of this language.

This transformation is evident in later rhetorical theory as well, which indicates the ongoing awareness of oratory’s debt to comic language and its appropriation of the fiction of the low-status iambic speaker. Note, for example, that Demetrius cautions his reader against the rough style of Demades, who was famous in antiquity for his claim to be self-taught.³² Demetrius regards Demades’ language as “peculiar and eccentric” (ἴδιον καὶ ἄτοπον, 282), which is how Socrates’ interlocutors often characterize his speech techniques.³³ Demetrius also warns that Demades’ style is not without its danger (τι ἐπισφαλές) and is mixed with comedy (μικτὸν κωμωδίας) (286). The crude orator, much like the mocking philosopher

³⁰ See further discussion below and in chs. 2, 3, and 6.

³¹ This is not to make any claims about fourth-century audiences’ actual exposure to comic insults and obscenities in particular plays, especially since the shift toward more restrained comic representation could indicate that the abusive and often obscene political plays may not have continued to be performed. Rather, I would argue that the comic vocabulary and characterizations that turn up later in oratory and rhetorical theory had become part of the common idiom, as is the nature of discursive language.

³² Cf. de Falco 1954: 12–13 and further in ch. 5. ³³ See ch. 4.

and the comic abuser,³⁴ thus engages a potentially hazardous combination of techniques that are nonetheless piquant and effective in argument.

In both the fifth and fourth centuries iambic talk becomes especially prominent as a witty, irreverent tactic with a serious purpose: determining which types ought to be trusted with the well-being of the democratic city. The fact that the abusive language employed by writers in this period shows a remarkable degree of consistency suggests that during the century in which Athens lost its empire an abusive discourse developed around public speaking and forged a cohesive critique of the verbal excesses perceived to threaten the democratic polis. This is thus a specifically Athenian medium, focused on issues of particular importance to a city-state that many regarded as uniquely vulnerable to persuasive speech. Like archaic iambos, this elite discourse appropriates various “low” perspectives as a means of reinforcing distinctions between friends and enemies, insiders and outsiders. Old comedy, for example, reconceives symposiastic invective, usually in the service of promoting aristocratic (or at least culturally conservative) values to a mass audience. Compare again Platonic dialogue, which uses an iambic stance to identify radical democracy as the true enemy of Athens.

For all that such elements point to innovations on the archaic genre, one feature of iambic talk in the classical period distinguishes it importantly from earlier iambos. Archaic poetry often indicates the appetitive behaviors of certain characters (e.g., the hungry outsider in Hipponax). In some contrast, a central distinction organizes the classical imagery and vocabulary along a continuum that effectively extends from “weak” to “strong” types, assigning certain behaviors and attitudes to one end of this spectrum or the other. Writers tend to portray professional speakers as ranging from the overly polished, hair-splitting chatterbox at one end, to the voluble, booming haranguer at the other. Both types show an overuse or misuse of the mouth and its vocal organs. But while the chatterer may be associated with effeminacy and what came to be called the “fine style” (*ischmos charaktēr*), the voluble speaker is more often portrayed as a greedy gobbler of words who indulges his ability to perform in the “grand style” (later termed the *megaloprepēs charaktēr*).³⁵ Not surprisingly, the chatterer is more often the target of abuse, while the haranguer doles out as much slander as he takes. These categories are not, of course, always consistently drawn in Athenian literature of the classical period. The style of the brash Thrasymachus, for

³⁴ Cf. Ach. Tat. 8.9.1–5 and the discussion in the epilogue.

³⁵ See O’Sullivan 1992 on this distinction.

example, was said to be both overly polished and grandly emotional, a combination of effects that Demosthenes also often employs.³⁶

Insulting labels, defaming character associations, and violent invective together forge a strain of negative responses to the verbal performances of orators and teachers. The use of “sophist” and “demagogue” as denigrating labels turns up repeatedly in these depictions, which indicates the extent to which certain kinds of intellectual and political engagement were regarded by many elites as excessive in one way or another. As scholars have noted, during the fifth and fourth centuries the sophist became a general figure of abuse, maligned as much for the bold rhetorical tricks that he reputedly taught young elites as for the decadent morals he was said to promote.³⁷ In depictions of the period, the demagogue usually emerges as a crude marketplace wrangler with an overly agile tongue, while the sophist is often an effete symposiast with a taste for ornate locutions. And what was more disturbing, the sophist might train others to become like him. He sometimes even shares features with demagogues, who may be his students; these run the gamut from the crude, loud-mouthed Cleon of Aristophanic depiction to the subtle, versatile Alcibiades who seduces his audiences in Thucydides and Plato.³⁸

Add to this scorning of the sophist that of the woman – or more precisely, the female body, as highlighted above. Male thinking about appetite and its regulation also inevitably involves thinking about the form most commonly suppressed in Athenian public speech.³⁹ In the classical period this specter and its notorious weaknesses became the focus of anxieties about how to maintain the power and integrity of the citizen body, both the body of the male citizen and the citizens as a political body. The complexity of this discursive thread, which ties together not only various behavioral excesses but also certain key body parts, is redoubled by a constant (if often oblique) referencing of “feminine” behaviors and female physical characteristics. A penchant for soft clothes and idle chatter, for instance, signals attitudes and proclivities unsuitable in public leaders. And while the scrupulous rejection of these tastes manifestly celebrates the male body, it is only by indexing female bodies and behaviors that such distinctions can be formulated. Moreover, the literary genre establishes its own parameters, its laudatory

³⁶ This is what Theophrastus apparently termed the “mixed” style; cf. DH *Dem.* 3; Theophr. fr. B 6 D-K; Pl. *Phdr.* 266e4–5, 267c9–d1; Cic. *Orat.* 39; Plut. *Dem.* 8–9.

³⁷ See Guthrie 1971: 27–34; Kerferd 1981: ch. 2; Ford 1993; Worman 2002a: 151–54. Cf. also Carey 2000: 425, who notes that the sophist is “assimilated to a type rather than isolated and presented as a distinctive phenomenon.”

³⁸ Cf. Ar. *Eq.*, *Vesp.*; Thuc. 6.15–19; Pl. *Symp.* 212–22 and further discussions in chs. 2 and 4.

³⁹ Cf. Foucault 1985; Dover 1978; Winkler 1990; Zeitlin 1990; Cohen 1992; Wohl 2002.

and denigrated attributes, by means of this suppressed form. In Attic comedy, for instance, feminine “chatter” (*lalia*) signals the kind of language that the comic idiom and its “heroes” (both male and female) associate with weakness and effeminacy.⁴⁰ Theophrastus indicates his understanding of the underlying implications of this denigrated style when he portrays the babbler (*lalos*) as a twittering fool who keeps others from more manly pursuits in the schools and wrestling rings.⁴¹ Thus the demagogue, the sophist, and the female serve as negative reference points for constituting praiseworthy male behaviors and their attendant discourses.

The predominantly male social settings that frame this iambic talk and help to shape its parameters – the courts and assembly, the agora, the public dining hall (Prytaneium) or sympotic salon – further indicate the conceptual intersections among oral activities. Each setting condones certain oral behaviors and proscribes others, the implicit coercion of which suggests that regulating the mouth’s activities constituted a central form of social control in democratic Athens. Again, poets and prose writers frequently introduce these settings as a face-off between the private, elite symposium and the public, vulgar agora, both of which shape this discourse and provide contexts for its expression. Writers may assess the courts, the assembly, and the speakers who perform there in terms of this contrast and introduce other dining rituals that color this opposition, most notably various formal types of festive eating and revelry. Moreover, the agora, as a multi-functional social space, embraces many differently coded activities, including not only commercial activities but also public feasts and sacrifices. Both dramatic and oratorical depictions show a tendency to associate loud-mouthed demagogues and other crude talkers with the agora, and chattering, effete sophists with the symposium. In these abusive portraits of public speakers, neither setting enhances their personas, since each can be seen to have its negative side. If, for instance, the symposium indulges decadent tastes and thereby enervates its participants, the agora fosters lowbrow and brutal behaviors. These concrete social contexts also map important political conflicts, reflecting tensions such as those between the oligarchic tendencies of aristocratic leaders and the mass appeal of radical democrats.

The unexpected intermingling or juxtaposition of rituals sometimes complicates this rather crude polarization, however. Writers often conflate or invert, for instance, the ritual mandates of the dinner (*dorpon*, *deipnon*), the public feast (*dais*, *heortē*, *eranos*), and the drinking party (*sumposion*),

⁴⁰ For this phenomenon cf. also tragedy and see further in chapter 2.

⁴¹ Thphr. *Char.* 7.4. Women’s talk is frequently analogized to that of birds; see further in chs. 2, 5, and 6.

or the sacrifice (*thusia*) and the revel (*kōmos, thiasos*), usually in order to draw parallels between these activities and the formalities of professional speechmaking.⁴² Euripides' Cyclops, for example, substitutes the human sacrifice for the dinner party, while his enemy Odysseus convinces him to trade his wine-less *deipnon* for a lonely and disastrous symposium. In Demosthenes' speeches as in Theophrastus, a man may reveal his boorishness as much by shouting in the theater as by dancing the lewd, comic *kordax* when sober. Inversions of the class affiliations indicated above are also common. Aristophanes' crude demagogues stuff their boorish constituents with "tasty" proposals as if they were at some fancy dinner party, while Plato's Socrates sometimes engages his elite interlocutors in a "feast of talk" amid the jostle of the agora.⁴³ The consistency with which iambic depictions make use of these arenas and their rituals to draw distinctions among types indicates the extent to which abusive talk is both grounded in and challenging of the social formalities that govern eating and drinking as well as speaking.

THE APPETITIVE BODY

Bourdieu recognizes the importance of this concrete social frame, since he analyzes language as a social performance and thus emphasizes the ways in which the body figures in linguistic exchanges. As mentioned, the mouth garners particular attention in this discussion, since it is the focal point of the speaking body, as well as a site for the convergence of appetites. The talking mouth is also an eating and drinking mouth (as well as one that spits, chokes, sucks, and so on); these activities motivate its association with a rude, visceral, appetitive discourse.

Bourdieu argues that the mouth focuses many different aspects of what he calls *bodily hexis*, the "life-style made flesh" of deportment, facial expression, tone, and typical linguistic usage.⁴⁴ He notes further that even the vocabulary that describes usage disallowed in polite society reflects this

⁴² See Murray 1990: 5–6; Schmitt-Pantel 1990: 112; 1992: 209–42; Bowie 1993, 1997 on the categories of feasts in literary depiction. Cf. Ford 2002: 35, who emphasizes that although literary depiction may intermingle social settings, poetic composition has a different character and effect in different contexts. See further in ch. 1.

⁴³ The agora is more often, however, the site of chance meetings, while full conversations occur in elite settings (e.g., the palaistra, private houses). The agora does *figure* frequently in Platonic dialogues as a place of vulgar, lowbrow activities; and Socrates usually himself introduces marketplace analogies or is associated with these by his more insulting interlocutors. See Nails 1995; and further in ch. 4.

⁴⁴ Bourdieu 1991: 86. Cf. Klöckner 2002 for attention to how habitus and status are embodied in classical relief.

association of the body with language, and especially with abusive speech: “Domesticated language, censorship made natural, which proscribes ‘gross’ remarks, ‘coarse’ jokes and ‘thick’ accents, goes hand in hand with the domestication of the body which excludes all excessive manifestations of appetites or feelings.”⁴⁵ The interaction of the body and language thus pervades the metaphorical register that distinguishes “high” from “low” language, especially aspects of class status and gender identity that serve to elevate or undermine one’s authority. Similarly, in Aristophanes as in Theophrastus, clamorous hucksters in the agora exhibit “coarse” (*miaros*) speaking styles, while effeminate loungers at symposia tend to be glib and “soft” (*malakos*).

Indeed, the teachers and orators who take center stage in the dramas and speeches from the late fifth to the mid fourth century consistently broadcast their types by their oral behaviors: they are voracious consumers or babbling fawners, obnoxiously loud or quibbling; correlatively, they are goods grabbers or ass wagers. The multiple uses to which they put their mouths underscore this organ’s importance to the symbolic scheme. The mouth initiates a cluster of metonymies and metaphors for political activities, the consumption of food, drink, and/or sex forging the common register for articulating differences in social and political styles. From Bourdieu’s perspective such elements serve as tools for the consolidating of social “capital”; in the case of public performance in the classical period as in more modern contexts, this capital manifests itself most frequently as a confluence of linguistic authority and political influence. Appetitive images signify in this powerful manner because they indicate not only class and gender associations – say, simple, tough-man’s foods versus effeminizing delicacies – but also a comprehensive physical scheme (e.g., aggressive consumption versus sexual passivity). While Bourdieu’s sociology of the talking body is not primarily concerned with literary semiosis, his emphasis on how concrete social contexts shape the reception of different discourses clearly offers insights for analyzing the ancient forms of insult that foreground the symposium and the agora.

Bakhtin’s reading of the open, gobbling, abusive mouth in Rabelais’ *Gargantua and Pantagruel* as an emblem of carnivalesque attitudes emanating from the folk also sets oral imagery squarely in the realm of social realities. Bakhtin addresses the literary ramifications of the figurative imagery he invokes in relation to medieval feasting as well as the ancient symposium, identifying this latter setting as “the clearest and most classical form” of

⁴⁵ Bourdieu 1991: 87.

the ritually significant connection between eating and speaking.⁴⁶ Bakhtin sometimes draws a distinction between the wise talk of the symposium and the jesting of “festive speech,” but he seems in general to conceive of both as formative in the development of abuse genres. On the one hand he acknowledges the prandial, joking elements of symposiastic speech, and on the other he locates both jests and the language of insult within the marketplace. These modes reiterate essential connections to the body’s parts and functions, being effectively rooted in the guts of daily life.⁴⁷

The literary context contributes further nuances to the focus of this imagery. In ancient performance settings the defaming speaker invokes his target’s mouth or related organs less to denigrate his actual physical habits than to suggest moral excesses that should exclude him from public office or aristocratic symposia and relegate him to the agora or (worse) the city gates. These excesses are also programmatic in the sense that they highlight concerns central to abusive genres. In Aristophanes’ depictions, for example, if a given character is reputed to have a rapacious mouth or gaping posterior, he not only reveals himself to be unfit for upper-class pursuits and public duties; he is also a paradigmatic target, the embodiment of all that comedy mocks and rejects.⁴⁸ This judgment emerges through a network of imagery that overshadows how he (or his historical counterpart) actually comports himself in respect to his apertures. Further, such references place this character in relation to an iambic literary tradition that organizes characters by their oral activities and suggests crucial parallels between appetites and discourses. These figurative parallels repeatedly articulate one set of activities in terms of another, and usually differentiate speech types most central to the given genre.

Indeed, in Aristophanes as in other quasi-comic settings such as Euripides’ *Cyclops*, the imagery, while clearly inspired by contemporaneous social habits, invokes a metonymic scheme (e.g., implements of cookery) that distinguishes speaking styles in relation to what is actually at stake in the action of the play (e.g., control of the Athenian assembly). This scheme is

⁴⁶ Bakhtin 1984: 283.

⁴⁷ Bakhtin recognizes, for example, that celebrated heroes such as Odysseus may turn up in debased form on some vase-paintings and in satyr plays (1984: 30–31, 148, cf. also 168–69 on Socrates).

⁴⁸ Although the female body would seem to be even more vulnerable to such treatment, comedy does not appear to have emphasized the match between, say, “mouths.” Indeed neither Greek nor Roman usage shows evidence of using “mouth” (G. στόμα / L. *os*) as a metaphor in this way. This does not, of course mean that the vagina was never conceived of as a lower “hole” in conjunction with the mouth (cf., e.g., Hippon. 135b; and Eustath. iv.835.13 Valk, and see discussion in the epilogue below). Rather, the mouth–anus combination prevails, most likely because anxiety about public speaking centers on the male body.

manifestly figurative and programmatic, but it also offers a register of contemporaneous attitudes and appetites, because, being good abusive talk, it is so replete with the rough stuff of daily life. A number of scholars have considered what the sexual or culinary imagery employed in Attic comedy and oratory may tell us about the social settings in which they were performed.⁴⁹ I want to extend such discussions by investigating the ways in which the metonymies and metaphors that shape the oral imagery index these social settings, as well as what this suggests about the relationship of such imagery to both generic conventions and the public, ritualized tradition of abusive talk.

Consider, for example, Aristophanes' use of the adjective *euruprōktos* ("wide-holed," or less clinically, "gape-assed"⁵⁰), which has encouraged scholars to discuss homosexual practice in fifth-century Athens. A closer look at the semiotic patterns in the comedies reveals that the adjective is in fact a metonymic attribute that encodes not so much sexual as verbal activity. This does not mean that information about ancient sexuality is not relevant. Rather, since the term *euruprōktos* accretes meaning in Aristophanes' texts by its predication of characters that are first and foremost voluble talkers in settings where this activity predominates (e.g., the courts, the theater), the target behavior is first and foremost verbal rather than sexual. That is, the metonym comes into play through its equation with another bodily orifice: the open mouth. It thereby serves as an index of excessive verbal styles, while its application to public figures itself represents an instance of abusive talk. Moreover, the adjective encodes concerns not only about public speaking but also about comic conventions, querying how these intersect with and comment upon each other. This is especially clear in the *Clouds*, where the Weaker Argument manipulates the Stronger into an admission that most professionals whose medium is language – including politicians, lawyers, and tragic (but not comic) poets – are *euruprōktoi*, as are their audiences (*Nub.* 1085–1100).⁵¹

The connection established between one organ and another thus suggests parallels between their typical uses, so that, for instance, the prattling mouth of the orator in assembly may imply his effeminate vulnerability in other settings. This is where implications of homosexual activity reenter

⁴⁹ E.g., Schmitt-Pantel 1992; Davidson 1997; Fisher 2000, 2001; Wilkins 1997, 2000a. Cf. Wohl 2002 for a discussion more focused on the referencing of these practices as political metaphors.

⁵⁰ Since *prōktos* most precisely means "anus," this is a difficult term to translate without sounding either euphemistic or clinical; cf. Henderson 1975 [1991]: 201–02, 209–13.

⁵¹ Cf. Dover 1978: 140–138–46; Henderson 1975 [1991]: 75–77, 210; Davidson 1997: 167–82. See further in ch. 2.

the same's path: if being *euruprōktos* means that the mouth is always open, then it also suggests more "shameful" activities than talking. The comic scheme thus maps onto the body a set of correspondences that dismantles its natural coherence and reassembles it in a new and debased form. The result is a metonymic reconfiguration that clearly indexes cultural practices in concrete settings: witness the demagogue in *Knights* who fellates rather than eats in the Prytaneium (*Eq.* 167). But the comic depiction itself forges its own realities, which means that this grotesque body is essentially fabricated by the text's operations and generic mandates.

Roland Barthes famously expressed the irony of how literary representation configures the body in dismantling, misleading ways in his analysis of Balzac's short story "Sarrasine," which embeds a tale about a sculptor who becomes unwittingly enamored of a castrato with the stage name "La Zambinella." Barthes remarks, "The symbolic field is occupied by a single object from which it derives its unity. . . . This object is the human body."⁵² Further, when crucial "economies" are not respected in a narrative – when, for instance, conventional gender categories are not maintained – the result is a collapse of the very unifying, organizing function that the body should serve in that narrative. This gives rise to a proliferation of metonymies, in which objects and body parts index character categories or categories mask individuals. The latter creates what Barthes calls "metonymic falsehoods," as when Balzac's figuring of La Zambinella as an "excluded other" (genus) elides the fact that the desired, unattainable "female" (species) is in fact a castrato.⁵³ Consider again Aristophanes' use of the term *euruprōktos*, which includes the species of smooth-talking public poet who sings like a woman but is really a man.⁵⁴

In addition, the very act of description has a disintegrating effect on the body. This Barthes attributes to "the spitefulness of language," which cannot capture the body in its entirety. Thus, he argues, "the total body must revert to the dust of words, to the listing of details," a reversion marked by the use of the *blason* (Eng. "blazon").⁵⁵ This figure predicates a general characteristic – say, for our purposes, rapacity – on a series of anatomical

⁵² Barthes 1974: 214–15. ⁵³ Barthes 1974: 162.

⁵⁴ Cf. Agathon in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazousae* and see further in ch. 2.

⁵⁵ Barthes 1974: 113–14. Cf. Lanham 1991: 61, who defines "blazon" by the Latin *effictio*, the technique common in elevated, laudatory erotic poetry of listing the attributes that make the beloved beautiful. But cf. Bakhtin 1984: 426–27, who argues that the *blason* in medieval French usage originally denoted praise or blame: "a systematic dissection and anatomization of woman in a tone of humorous, familiar praise or denigration" (427). Consider, e.g., Herrick's "False in legs, false in thighs:/ False in breast, teeth, hair, and eyes" ("Upon Some Women," 1648 [1963]: 109; and Rochester's "Her hand, her foot, her very look's a cunt" ("The Imperfect Enjoyment"), 1680 [1999]: 14, line 18). In Greek comedy, where the focus tends to be more on the male body, this "disintegration" may ramify outwards:

attributes (e.g., mouth, throat, belly, anus). The body is thereby reduced to its parts, which in turn are reassembled under a signifying standard (*blason*) rather than as a whole body.

This disintegration of the body in language helps to account for why the mouth becomes the body part most saturated with meaning in Attic comedy and, indeed, in the larger iambic discourse about public speaking, even attracting attributes that are usually dispersed elsewhere (e.g., sexual and gender connotations).⁵⁶ Thus it is not merely that the mouth of the debased body utters abuse; this is in any event not always the case. More importantly, it, its associated organs, and their activation serve as central metonymies for that body. Repeatedly disintegrated by the figurative strategies of abusive language, the body is also reassembled in monstrous form by means of a series of crude juxtapositions with the mouth and entered under a blazon that cements these new and shameful connections.⁵⁷ The mouth thus stands in for other body parts, but it also indexes aggressive or ignoble oral activities of many kinds.

Close attention to such semiotic patterns helps to illuminate the complex intersection of the body in public performance (i.e., on the comic stage or oratorical platform [*bēma*]) and its reconfiguring by iambic imagery. This is, of course, the ultimate irony of the discourse of comic drama as well as oratory: that as much as the language of abuse dismantles the body, this is also consistently countered by its reconstitution in debased or elevated form on stage. Other scholars have focused on the visible profile of the comic body, and a few have shown interest in the deportments (*schēmata*) of the orator.⁵⁸ The present study aims to supplement this discussion as well, by considering how the linguistic codes and conventions of these performance genres affect our understanding of the symbolic significance of the iambic body's abused and abusive parts.

cf. Strepsiades' depairing conclusion to being hounded by his debtors: "bereft of money, bereft of skin,/ bereft of soul,/ and bereft of shoe" (φροῦδα τὰ χρήματα, φροῦδη χροιά,/ φροῦδη ψυχή, φροῦδη δ' ἔμβόας, *Nub.* 718–19).

⁵⁶ Cf. Barthes' analysis of the castrato's voice: "[It is] as though, by selective hypertrophy, sexual density were obliged to abandon the rest of the body and lodge in the throat, thereby draining the body of all that *connects* it" (1974: 109).

⁵⁷ In comic contexts (including the satyr play) another figure is also prominent: what Aristotle calls analogy, a metonymic exchange that fashions a similarly monstrous body by means of trade-offs between body parts and inanimate objects (e.g., calling the belly a ship's hold [*skapnos*] in Euripides' *Cyclops*). This figure turns up in prose usage as well, but not with the same frequency; see further in chs. 2 and 3.

⁵⁸ See Foley 2000 on comic bodies; also Dover 1978 on Timarchus; Hall 1995 on forensic speakers; Zanker 1995 on Socrates, Demosthenes, and Aeschines; Gödde 2001 on bodily image in tragedy.

THE DISCURSIVE SCHEME

My discussion begins in chapter 1 with an overview of archaic poets' ideas about the balance and fair exchange that should govern both spoken interactions and dinner-table etiquette. In settings from Homer to Pindar slander is analogized to ravenous gobbling (e.g., Hom. *Od.* 18.1–9; Pind. *Nem.* 8.21–25), while appropriate speech is marked by an attention to the fair portion (e.g., *Il.* 19.186, *Od.* 4.266, 14.509; cf. Hipponax fr. 128 W).⁵⁹ The insightful work of scholars on such equations in archaic poetry has revealed their programmatic quality in the formulation of iambos, where impotence of a hungry, rude outsider draws connections between food and talk. Early iambos clearly engages this insulting scheme, as Bowie and others have explained; this chapter considers as well elements of the genre that prefigure themes and imagery in iambic discourse of the classical period.⁶⁰ Besides becoming crucial to character representation in Attic comedy (as chapter 2 explores), connections between speech and consumption also paved the way for those drawn in Athenian tragedy between the speaker and his appetites.⁶¹ Tragedy famously makes pervasive use of the imagery of sacrifice, a practice with potential to taint its participants and thus to impede their abilities to speak in a lucid and communicative manner. This is clearly the case in Sophocles' *Antigone*, where the impious treatment of Polyneices' body infects the speech of the Theban citizens and gluts the city's altars with polluted carrion.⁶²

Chapters 2 and 3 treat more comic settings, which are far more influential on abusive language in prose writing. In both old comedy and the satyr play, the programmatic attention to consumption frames characters as mercenary, craven types who are ripe for insults, especially those involving bodily appetites. The influence of iambic insult in these genres shapes oppositions between the voracious, monstrous demagogue and the effeminate, polished sophist. While extant titles reveal that the satyric genre and comedy show some overlap in subject matter, comic imagery – as the product of a genre that developed out of fertility rituals and adopted the apotropaic use of insult talk as its central mode – is much ruder and more confrontational. It thus indulges freely in the abusive vocabulary that comes to shape iambic discourse in the classical period. Aristophanic comedy in particular emerges as very influential in the development of this discourse, to the extent that

⁵⁹ Cf. Nagy 1979: 222–36; Steiner 2001b, 2002.

⁶⁰ Bowie 1986; also Bartol 1993: 51–74; Ford 2002: 25–39.

⁶¹ Cf. Saïd 1979; Nagy 1979: 225–35; Steinrück 2000; Steiner 2001b, 2002.

⁶² Cf. Seaford 1994: 281–301.

its imagery and vocabulary turn up in fourth-century rhetorical settings, even though the more obscene plays that contributed important elements to the discourse were no longer being performed. This suggests that the lexical and imagistic schemes had entered the common idiom, since otherwise audiences would not respond to such schemes and writers have no use for them.

Thus, for instance, Aristophanes' repeated depiction of the polished (*kompsos*) style as woman's chatter (*lalia*), which O'Sullivan has shown characterizes Euripides, Socrates, and the sophists, shapes later portrayals of weak or effeminate speakers in other genres, where invoking such distinctions may have a startling impact on audience or interlocutor.⁶³ Comic use of such attributions, however, underscores the license of the genre. In *Frogs*, for example, the sophistic Euripides promotes a style too glib and finely wrought, while *Knights* contrasts this polished style with that of the shouting, gobbling, agora-swaggering Paphlagon – a stage name for Cleon, the demagogue whom Aristophanes repeatedly depicts as a threat to Athens. His opponent the Sausage Seller is an equally reprehensible denizen of the marketplace, although he shows signs of more effeminate, lubricious behaviors that indicate his self-prostituting type. Like tragedy, comedy often employs the imagery of sacrifice, but *Knights* in particular formulates this as an analogy between politicians' slavish pandering and the manipulations of mercenary chefs.

Chapter 3 considers the interconnections between comic depictions of oral excess and the characterization of the voracious Cyclops in Euripides' satyr play. While the lexicon of this genre is notably more elevated than that of comedy, it does represent the moment of unwinding at the end of the tragic trilogy, when the audience as well as the chorus of satyrs were likely to be indulging certain appetites, especially bibulous ones. An opposition between types familiar from comedy – and the metaphors of intemperance that accompany it – also mark the face-off between a glib, wary Odysseus and the greedy, talkative Polyphemus.⁶⁴ The play thus extends my discussion in an important direction, insofar as it reveals that satyric drama participated in iambic patterns of imagery if not so much in abusive vocabulary.⁶⁵ The monstrous sophist, whom commentators have likened to Calicles in Plato's *Gorgias*, is a rapacious speechifier who systematically coopts and reconstitutes the careful, fair-sharing speech delivered by Odysseus, refashioning his hopeful references to feasting as sacrifice, with the guests

⁶³ O'Sullivan 1992: 131–33. Cf. discussions in chs. 3, 4, and 6. ⁶⁴ Cf. Worman 2002b.

⁶⁵ That the Cyclops narrative turns up in comic drama and that certain comedies had satyr choruses further support this overlap. Cf. Cratinus, *Odysseuses*, *Dionysalexandros*, and *Satyrs*; Callias, *Cyclopes*.

as victims. Both comedy and the satyr play, then, make use of distinctions among excessive speaking styles and correlate these with other uses of the mouth. Both also set the confrontations in the context of feasting and sacrifice, matching verbal modes to these ritualized forms of consumption.

In the second half of the book I turn to prose texts, particularly to the ways in which the discourse of oral excess helps to shape critiques of character and technique in writings on rhetoric and in oratory. These chapters represent the more essential component of my overall argument, in that they demonstrate the persistence of iambic discourse in fourth-century prose texts and thereby reveal a crucial transposition that proves influential in later periods. In fact, the appropriation of the comic vocabulary and tropes centered on the mouth by fourth-century orators and writers on rhetoric may well have contributed essential tools for the crafting of character assassination in Roman prose, whether in oratorical invective or novelistic lampoon.⁶⁶

Chapter 4 examines the development of iambic characterization and vocabulary in Plato's depictions of Socrates and the sophists. It thus addresses material that initiates a shift of this abusive talk to fourth-century prose works. In the fourth century more generally, iambic language moved effectively from the comic stage to the oratorical platform. As comedy became less political in focus and less crude in diction, orators adopted its vocabulary to denigrate opponents, while rhetorical theorists such as Plato reframed its application as mock abuse of Socrates, the chief critic of civic leaders and their teachers. Plato's adoption of the language of insult from dramatic genres for use in prose dialogues signals the performative nature of these dialogues, as well as their participation in the characterological schemes that shape iambic discourse. In this more private setting and more overtly intellectualized genre, the comic abuse isolates Socrates as a lowbrow outsider who challenges his elite interlocutors with rude and unfamiliar questions about their moral attitudes.

Plato's portraits tend to avoid easy oppositions between speakers, but debasing language familiar from comedy frames the confrontations between Socrates and his sophistic interlocutors. Platonic dialogue thus appropriates abusive talk from the comic stage in order to dramatize Socrates' outsider status and lampoon the conceits of the sophists. As in comedy Plato's use of iambic imagery tends to align the misbehaviors of professional speakers with other oral activities. But while Aristophanes is primarily interested in the impact of demagogues in public arenas, Plato focuses attention on the

⁶⁶ See further in the epilogue.

sophists' putative corruption of elites in quasi-private settings. As critiques of professional speakers, the Platonic dialogues that focus on sophists thus transpose comic invective to a more privileged forum while maintaining the dramatic force of the abuse.

Chapter 5 treats the imagery deployed by those who, unlike Socrates, employed their mouths to full effect in the courts; it analyzes the transformation of comic insult into a formidable weapon for use in momentous forensic cases. This chapter is especially concerned with the defamatory portraits forged by Demosthenes and Aeschines of each other. It demonstrates that their focus on oral imagery reworks Aristophanic and Platonic usage by implementing it in civic arenas whose functions are quite distinct from those of either comedy or philosophical dialogue. The overtly political nature of oratorical abuse in the courts and the assembly influences public decision-making by promoting ideas about appetitive types and their relationship to sound policies. The use of comic insult in this context is more polite in certain regards (e.g., sexual innuendo is rarer and more oblique), and more brutal in others, since the piling on of abusive detail aimed at the ruin of one's opponent.

In their disputes over the embassy to Philip (Aesch. 2, Dem. 19) and over whether Demosthenes should be crowned as a public benefactor (Aesch. 3, Dem. 18), the character types that both speakers formulate for each other repeatedly associate the mouth with various types of intemperate behavior. The booming voice of Aeschines encourages his opponent to offer it as evidence of a voracious and low-class type. The timorous chatter of Demosthenes, in contrast, suggests to Aeschines his enemy's softness and effeminacy (Aesch. 1.126–31; cf. Dem. 18.180).⁶⁷ Demosthenes claims that Aeschines has sold his vocal talents in both the theater and public speaking, depicting him as a marketplace hack (18.127, 131, 262). Aeschines characterizes Demosthenes' voice as squeaky and discordant (2.157; cf. 3.229), while also suggesting that his mouth may be open for another kind of business (2.23, 88). Neither type seems likely to be very trustworthy as a leader of Athens in a time of crisis.

In these contexts, then, the spectrum of styles runs the gamut from violent, voracious shouting to polished chattering. Excessive verbal modes are poised in relation to other types of oral intemperance: on the one end is violent excess, on the other gabbling weakness. This contrasting pattern, although often inflected with more complex associations, comports with the ways in which Aristotle argues that one falls short of the virtuous mean. In

⁶⁷ See Dover 1978: 75; for a contrasting view, see Yunis 2001.

the *Nicomachean Ethics* (2.2, 2.6) he aligns types of intemperance (*akolasia*) with faults of excess or weakness. Both Aristotle's treatments of character (especially those in the *Rhetoric*) and Theophrastus' portraits in *Characters* indicate the importance of such distinctions to rhetorical technique, as well as their centrality to the public performance of the orator more generally.

Chapter 6 examines the realm of rhetorical theory, assessing how Aristotle and especially Theophrastus characterize the relationship between oral activities and oratorical styles. The discussion demonstrates the significance of those points at which they focus on uses of the mouth to highlight essential distinctions among speakers. We may observe, for example, that when Aristotle addresses the representation of character in the oratorical setting, he associates excesses of emotion and verbal versatility with the young (*Rhet.* 1389b4–11), loquacity and querulousness with old men (1390a9–10, 22–24). While Theophrastus' *Characters* records the distinct behaviors of private citizens, it also delineates some types as weak and chattering and others as aggressive and loud. The idle chatterer engages in talk that is so copious and insistently pointless that he is impossible either to engage or to avoid. The boor, in contrast, is apt to slurp down his rustic gruel (*kukeōn*) on the way to Assembly (4.2) and drink his wine too strong, both of which suggest a different kind of oral excess. In their focus on the average citizen, Theophrastus' sketches also pursue the trajectory initiated by Plato's Socrates, who so frequently positions himself as a private, pedestrian sort up against the polished verbiage of the professional speaker. The sketches recalibrate the habits of well-known teachers and orators to suit the particularities of ordinary citizens' lives, thereby transforming the intemperate mouths of public figures, which cause such concern in other texts, into little more than an irritating aspect of hanging out in the agora.

Most of these iambic portraits, however, reference oral activities as a central means of mocking putatively brutal demagogues or craven sophists and opposing them to an idealized notion of the Athenian citizen. The recognition that the voice can be capitalized on for mercenary ends, or that the mouth can be used for less honorable activities than powerful speaking, reveals the kind of debasement and servitude most open to ridicule in a community that prided itself on its freedom of speech (*parrēsia*). These denigrating portrayals of the mouth's capacities contribute to a larger abusive discourse that develops around professional speakers during this period, and thus further the understanding of classical Greek attitudes toward both bodily appetite and the power of insult.

The mouth and its abuses in epic, lyric, and tragedy

κᾶν Σαλμυδ[ησσ]ῶ γυμνὸν εὐφρονε[
 Θρήικες ἀκρό[κ]ομοι
 λάβοιεν. ἔνθα πόλλ' ἀναπλήσαι κακὰ
 δούλιον ἄρτον ἔδων,
 ῥίγει πεπηγόντ' αὐτόν· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ χνόου
 φυκία πόλλ' ἐπέχοι,
 κροτέοι δ' ὀδόντας. ὡς [κ]ύων ἐπὶ στόμα
 κείμενος ἀκρασίη

And in Salmydessus may the top-knotted Thracians
 graciously take him in, naked,
 where he will carry out many lowly tasks
 eating slave's bread,
 seized by cold; and from the foam
 may he clutch heaps of seaweed,
 chattering his teeth, mouth down like a dog
 lying in helplessness.

A dog's life, snappish talk, the ravenous mouth: these rude images cluster in the language of insult from early on in Greek poetry, often crystallizing in the form of curses such as this one.¹ While the features of iambic literature clearly developed piecemeal, disparate settings for poetic performance offer strikingly similar figurative language to capture the speaking styles and characterizations of both those who deploy insults and their targets. In the broadest sense, this abusive talk runs the gamut from invective and character assassination on the one hand, to mockery and lampoon on the other; that is to say, some modes are quite vitriolic, others more droll. The genres in which such abuse appears reflect this diversity. Indeed, I would submit

¹ This elegiac fragment has been attributed to Archilochus by Reitzenstein 1899 and to Hipponax by Blass 1900. West follows Blass (= fr. 115). Hendrickson 1925 emphasizes its form (an imprecation in response to a transgression of oaths), which is a central mode of iambos and a narrative element in the *vitae* of famous iambic poets. See further below.

that abusive modes shadow many, if not most, genres, often functioning in irreverent, devious, or sinister contrast to the perspectives openly valued by the given text.

This book more generally treats those settings in the classical period in which such contrasts are most informative and consequential in the shaping of abusive vocabulary and tropes. The present chapter pieces together speech modes, character types, and imagery that influenced the beginnings of an iambic discourse centered on the mouth, and argues that this discourse developed, during a period of shifting ideas about community, out of the chafing between praise genres and the insult talk they attempt to foreclose. The chapter thus focuses not only on iambic poetry per se but also on figures and speech types in epic, lyric, and tragedy that open out toward iamboi: the appetitive deviser, the devilish talker, as well as the denigrating and potentially damaging speech modes and settings that reinforce their unheroic statures. In Homeric epic, for instance, dog epithets are a common form of abuse, and a beggared, doggish Odysseus exchanges cruel abuses with other lowly types. Pindar and writers of tragedy, on the other hand, distance their genres from the language of blame by associating it with designing women or sly, sophistic types – especially Odysseus. Indeed, the figure of Odysseus appears to have been curiously inspirational in the development of the voice central to iambic depiction: that of the debased and mocking outsider.²

From the perceptible beginnings of iambic discourse, moreover, the rude body is identified with lowly, mischievous talkers who elicit imprecations and scorn from others, who are themselves sensitive to bodily need and therefore make use of clever mockeries and adumbrated curses to gain their ground.³ The hungry, clownish outsider is a key figure of this iambic imposture, as is the teasing or bawdy low-status female, both of whom seem to have provided entertainment for elites at symposia, perhaps as characters whom aristocratic party-goers or hired actors impersonated. The later books of the *Odyssey* develop the former type as a beggar man of uncertain identity; these books also depict (although less centrally) the mocking servant woman in the figure of Melantho. There are traces in iambic poetry of these stock personas, some better-attested than others. And it is clear that in the cultic tradition of Demeter the figure of Iambe/Baubo embodies a milder form of the mocking female servant; in fact some ancient traditions make her

² On Odysseus' connection to iamboi, see also Seidensticker 1978; Casolari 2003: 204–05.

³ Nagy 1979: 229–31 has argued that the *margos* (“greedy”) man is necessarily a blame speaker; the idea that blame poetry is allied with the belly's demands turns up in Homer, iamboi, and Pindar.

(or someone like her) the inventor of iambos.⁴ This pair of low-status types (i.e., the hungry male, the bawdy female, as well as the tropes that attend them), are ultimately given fullest expression in Attic comedy.

High-status figures may also give and receive abuse for their character traits or transgressions, as epic flying and invective in tragedy reveal. This strain of iambic conflict involves blame (*oneidos*) and curses (*arai*) between peers and forges a conceptual bond between insult and violent feasting or sacrifice.⁵ The *Iliad* develops this aspect of iambos without allowing much room for the low, abusive voice; only Thersites in book 2 really embodies this iambic stance and thereby shares features with the rude outsiders of the *Odyssey*.⁶ More crucial to the tenor of the *Iliad*, however, is the kind of abuse that warriors exchange, insults to rank and proclivity that reject the facile tongue, indulgence of appetite, and any indication of effeminacy.⁷ Shadowing such judgments are two emergent types – the distracting seductress and the deceptive politician – who become essential figures in describing the moral parameters of tragedy. I have argued elsewhere that Helen and Odysseus embody most fully the threats that facile and seductive speakers pose to the order and transparency of praise genres and the social hierarchies they support.⁸ Here I want merely to remark that both figures are elite targets of abuse in epic, lyric, and tragedy because they crystallize anxieties about indulgence and craft, thus foreshadowing attacks on high-status opponents in Socratic dialogue and oratory. Both are also associated with doggish traits and more tenuously with the link that the *Iliad* in particular emphasizes between insult and carrion-feeding.⁹

However various the tenor, target, and setting of such proto-iambic moments, the confrontations of warriors share with more lowbrow exchanges a focus on the mouth and its excesses. The routine pairing of food and talk in Greek civic life goes some way toward explaining why this appetitive, insulting mouth became a central metonymy for iambic performance. While scholars have shown that eating rituals consistently intersect with speech performances, which range from the songs of professional

⁴ See West 1974; Rosen 1988a; O'Higgins 2003: 60–69 and further below.

⁵ On the centrality of cursing to the shaping of iambos see Hendrickson 1925; on flying see e.g. Martin 1989; Parks 1990.

⁶ Cf. Nagy 1979: 228–35, 259–64; on Thersites see Adkins 1972: 15–16; Thalmann 1988: 17–21; Rose 1988; Seibel 1995; Worman 2002a: 66–67, 91–93; Marks 2005.

⁷ This last characteristic is especially clear in the figure of Paris, who elicits abuse from Hector – as well as from Helen – for his languishing, woman-loving ways (*Il.* 3.38–57, 3.428–36, 6.321–31).

⁸ Worman 2002a.

⁹ On Helen as a doggish figure of abuse see especially Graver 1995, also Worman 2002a: 47–56; on Odysseus see further below.

bards to the insults and lampoons of participants in symposia,¹⁰ they have focused less attention on how iambic imagery forges a distinctive set of connections around the open mouth. Pauline Schmitt-Pantel, for instance, demonstrates exhaustively that different forms of poetic composition are clearly paired with different forms of eating and drinking, so that speech appropriate for and commensurate with the dinner-party (*dorpon*) may not be so for the symposium on the one hand and the public feast (*dais*) on the other.¹¹ The texts analyzed in this chapter often reflect such distinctions among rituals, but in a more narrowly focused scheme: the *Odyssey* and iambic poets such as Hipponax highlight the figure of the hungry, insolent poet as a potential threat to aristocratic feasting, while the *Iliad* and tragedy repeatedly match violent or devious talk with savage ingestion.

The oral imagery that we find in Homer thus shares features with that of other “high” genres, especially Pindar’s lyrics and tragedy, in its focus on the verbal violence of flyting and cursing and in its marginalizing of iambic figures. These embody irreverent responses to the heroic tenor of praise genres and forge a discourse whose features are highlighted by means of rude metaphors (e.g., the cannibalizing threat, the bite of slander).¹² I would argue, however, that such metaphorical transferences arise not merely from the festivities that conjoin eating and speaking (or singing) but even more essentially from apprehensions about the correspondences between these activities and the functional similarities established by their shared bodily organ, the mouth.¹³ This apprehension likely arose from the confluence of concerns about greed on the one hand and the potentially deadly power of damning talk on the other. The mouth thus first becomes a focus of anxiety because of the elusive nature of verbal dominance during a period that Ian Morris has identified with the emergence of “a conception of the state as a community of middling citizens,” as opposed to that of aristocrats from allied city-states.¹⁴ While he understandably aligns iambos (versus epic) with this emergence, both epic and lyric reveal an awareness of the need to

¹⁰ Detienne and Vernant 1979 [1989]; Schmitt-Pantel 1992; cf. Arnould 1989; Loraux 1990; Murray 1990; Murray and Teğusan 1995.

¹¹ Schmitt-Pantel 1990: 112; 1992: 38–39; cf. Murray 1990: 5–6.

¹² Cf. Nagy 1979, who argues that archaic depictions of feasting and quarreling repeatedly intersect, leading to judgments about behavior that are expressed by means of transferred images (i.e., metaphors). See further below.

¹³ Hesiod famously rails against leaders who gobble up gifts (βασιλῆας/ δωροφάγους, *WD* 38–39, 263–64; ἀνδρες/ . . . δωροφάγοι, 220–21), while Pindar depicts the slanderer as a snappish, greedy sort (e.g., δάκος, *P.* 2.53; δάψεν, *N.* 8.21–25). Cf. also Alcaeus fr. 129 L-P and the “pot-bellied” (φύσγων) Pittacus. Note that all of these phrases are used in scenes that involve verbal contestation, especially the passing of judgments or oath-taking. See Steiner 2001b, 2002 and further below.

¹⁴ Morris 1996.

foster and control speech that covertly skewers its target or has the open force of a punch. My discussion thus begins with Homeric epic, since it is there that images associating the voracious mouth or belly with insults, curses, and crafty devices originate.

HUNGRY TALK IN HOMER

In the later books of the Homeric epics imagery of consumption and aggressive verbalization punctuate the increasing violence of the narratives. Both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* establish vibrant and disturbing interconnections between the mouth (and jaws, belly) as an ingester of food and the mouth (and teeth, tongue) as an expeller of verbiage. Food and words are traded across the teeth's barrier, and different types of ingestion are matched with different styles of speaking. Furious, grieving characters like Achilles and Hecuba envision themselves as cannibals hovering over the bodies of their enemies, ready to feed on their raw flesh. The targeted bodies of this murderous feasting turn vulnerable to manipulation and dissection, like beasts for slaughter. Eating and speaking may themselves intermingle in legitimate and illegitimate ways, in settings that underscore the regulation of the mouth's activities. The beggar-hero catches signs of the festivities taking place in his own halls and approves the combination of food and song, while muttering darkly about how the belly drives men to violence. Both epics emphasize the extremes to which warriors may go in their zeal for violent retribution and counterpose this to the peacetime rituals that maintain community cohesion and continuity.¹⁵ As a narrative of homecoming, the *Odyssey* highlights the dark circumstances under which these peaceful rituals are themselves transgressed, so that the feast becomes a battle and the host himself is threatened with the violent consumption of his household riches and thereby his life.¹⁶

The greedy kings of archaic poetry, who feed on the people and their goods, clearly transgress the careful fair-sharing that should govern communal rituals. Their rapacity extends from their bellies to their characteristic strategies, which include how they speak in disputes. Agamemnon is the most famous example of this kind of greedy, verbally aggressive leader. In the first book of the *Iliad*, Achilles depicts him as an inveterate grabber of others' fair allotments, terming him a "people-eating king" (δημοβόρος βασιλεύς, *Il.* 1.231; cf. again Hes. *WD* 38–39, 220–21, 263–64). Meanwhile the king himself snaps angrily at those who challenge him

¹⁵ Cf. Redfield 1975, 1983.

¹⁶ Cf. Saïd 1979b.

and repeatedly leaves the diplomatic Odysseus to defend his greed. Agamemnon's end, as he tells it to Odysseus in the underworld, is a gruesomely fitting inversion of this behavior: the voracious king is cut down at table (δειπνίσσας) "like an ox in his pen" (ὡς . . . βοῦν ἐπὶ φάτνῃ), his companions slaughtered like pigs at a rich man's feast (σῦες ὡς ἀργιόδοντες/ οἱ ῥά τ' ἐν ἀφνειοῦ ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο ἢ γάμῳ ἢ ἐράνῳ ἢ εἰλαπίνῃ τεθαλυίῃ) (*Od.* 11.411–15). In a foreshadowing of Odysseus' slaughter of the suitors, the bodies lie scattered by the mixing bowl and loaded tables (ἀμφὶ κρητῆρα τραπέζας τε πληθούσας κείμεθ) while the floor runs with blood (δάπεδον δ' ἅπαν αἵματι θῦεν) (11.419–20).

Other figures in archaic depiction show a tendency to be driven by their bellies, but often out of a need to fill them rather than from the unfettered gluttony that brings on violence. Poets and storytellers fall into this category: Hesiod's all-belly shepherds (γαστέρες οἶον, *Th.* 26) and Odysseus in the *Odyssey* both trace a connection between the belly's demands and speaking to please.¹⁷ There as elsewhere, the appetite is suspected of driving the indigent man to flatter and deceive. In Hesiod, the Muses insult the narrator before declaring that they may lie and conferring on him the poet's staff and inspired voice. Their patronage is thus couched in terms that warn him against the excesses and deceits that naturally tempt such voluble types. And as I discuss in a subsequent section, the iambic poets also make use of the figure of the hungry outsider whose utterances both highlight bodily need and deploy insulting talk.

The cannibalistic warrior

Odysseus occupies a diplomatic role in the *Iliad*, emphasizing the normal (and normalizing) rituals of hospitality and exchange in the face of Achilles' angry isolation.¹⁸ The calculating henchman who encourages adherence to communal ritual is actually less concerned with eating itself, and more with the meal as a medium for group cohesion. As I have discussed elsewhere, Odysseus' repeated emphasis on the fair portion has rhetorical as well as social implications, and centers on his struggles with Achilles.¹⁹ I recall

¹⁷ On the significance of the *gastēr*, see Svenbro 1976: 50–59; Pucci 1987: 157–208. Cf. also Katz and Volk 2000, although the evidence in the archaic Greek material for elevating the belly to an "inspired" organ seems a bit scanty.

¹⁸ See Motto and Clark 1969 for the significance of the *dais eisē* for Achilles; also Redfield 1975: 107–08.

¹⁹ Cf. Worman 1999, 2002a: 65–74, 2002b. Scholars have argued for the connection between the themes of the *Odyssey* and the satyric genre (e.g., Sutton 1974b), which I would not contest. But the *Iliad*, for all its proto-tragic tone, contains scenes that set up Odysseus as a bartering type focused on the body's needs and thus also participates in a discourse focused around the hungry belly.

here the basic outlines of this conflict in order to highlight two important schemes that shape iambic discourse: (1) the association of a clever speechifier with food and thus the crude, needy body; and (2) the association of harsh talk (e.g., curses, invective) with battlefield savagery and thus the raging with the ravening mouth.

Odysseus twice tries to persuade Achilles to reenter the community of warriors and the battle (*Il.* 9.225–306 and 19.155–83, 216–37), both times deploying the imagery of fair-sharing. As a member of the embassy to Achilles in *Iliad* 9, Odysseus fills Achilles' cup with wine and greets him genially, calling attention to the food they have enjoyed together and the pleasures of such shared repasts (9.225–29).²⁰ Achilles, he says, would enjoy the same pleasures at Agamemnon's table, the shared feast (δαιτὸς μὲν ἔϊσθης) that binds leaders in a mutually satisfying ritual.²¹ In book 19 Odysseus also urges Achilles to eat (and to allow his men to eat) before returning to battle. His speech is punctuated by references to sustenance (e.g., σίτου καὶ οἴνοιο, 19.160) and the needs of the body, which he associates with Achilles' getting his fair share (αὐτὰρ ἔπειτά σε δαιτὶ ἐνὶ κλισίῃς ἀρεσάσθω/ πειρή, ἴνα μὴ τι δίκης ἐπιδευῆς ἔχησθα, 19.179–80).²² Food and drink embolden the heart (θαρσαλέον . . . ἦτορ, 19.169) in battle, in contrast to the harsh fury that Achilles nurses.²³

Achilles' response dismantles such pragmatic and sanguine schemes, and establishes far grimmer combinations. He links the division of food to the dismembered bodies of the Greek dead, and especially to the savaged body of Patroclus (νῦν δ' οἱ μὲν κέαται δεδαιγμένοι, 19.203; δεδαιγμένους, 19.210; cf. 19.319).²⁴ Swearing that no food or drink will pass down his throat while his friend lies unavenged (19.210; cf. 10.320), he declares that he cares only for carnage, blood, and the anguished groaning of men (ἀλλὰ φόνος τε καὶ αἷμα καὶ ἀργαλέος στόνος ἀνδρῶν, 19.214). Achilles thus uses his mouth for mournful ejaculation rather than ingestion and causes

²⁰ Cf. *Il.* 4.343–46 for the suggestion that Odysseus is particularly concerned with the feast, and *Od.* 14.193–95 for a more intimate version of this rhetorical pleasantry.

²¹ *Il.* 9.227–29; cf. 9.90, where the *menoieikēs dais* in Agamemnon's tent is specifically mentioned. Again, see Nagy 1979: 127–41. I am arguing that the imagery of the *dais eisē* focuses the differences between the two heroes; but Nagy also notes that the famous *neikos* of Achilles and Odysseus (*Od.* 8.72–82) happened at a *dais* of the gods, and relates the *dais* especially to Achilles' heritage and fate. We might add that in the *Odyssey* Odysseus is characterized by his “well-balanced mind” (φρένας ἔνδοον ἔϊσος, 11.337), as is his son (14.178). The imagery suggests a connection between the balanced social practices that Odysseus promotes in the *Iliad* and the balanced quality of his mind in the *Odyssey*.

²² Cf. 9.225–27: δαιτὸς μὲν ἔϊσθης οὐκ ἐπιδευεῖς/ ἡμὲν ἐνὶ κλισίῃ Ἄγαμέμνονος Ἄτρεΐδαο/ ἠδὲ καὶ ἐνθάδε νῦν.

²³ Cf. Lohmann 1970: 66.

²⁴ See Saïd 1979b: 16, who points out that some *dai-* cognates also describe violent partition.

the mouths of other men to emit cries of despair, as in his cannibalizing grief he feeds his heart on their slaughter (cf. also 19.314–38). His reply thus transforms the ritual apportioning of meat into an act that savagely repeats the dismemberment of human bodies by the enemy. But this harsh and desolate vocalizing does little to assuage his pain, and he is eager to enter “the mouth of bloody war” (πολέμου στόμα δύμεναι αίματόεντος, 19.313). This gruesome image is matched by Achilles’ own oral savagery: now he arms himself, gnashing his teeth (τοῦ καὶ ὀδόντων μὲν καναχῆ πέλε, 19.365) and raging for Trojans (ὁ δ’ ἄρα Τρωσὶν μενεαίνων, 19.367).

This later exchange between Odysseus and Achilles thus highlights the interaction between two uses of the mouth: ingestion and the emission of sounds, especially those of lamentation. It also connects one speech mode with eating as a social ritual and another with a vengeful, cannibalistic feeding. If Odysseus’ arguments forge a calm, well-balanced speech that matches his emphasis on commensality and bodily care, Achilles’ speeches are brutal and bitter. Their tone comports with the images of bodily destruction that serve as a macabre feast for the vengeful warrior. As such, it is this savage imagery that forges the crucial link between warriors’ exchanges of abuse (i.e., flyting, cursing) and their armed combat: the raging hero fantasizes that he might become a ravening dog and so effect a more deadly insult to his enemy.

As scholars have noted, this quasi-cannibalistic response to commensality takes a more explicit form in book 22. Achilles stands over the body of the dying Hector and assuages his grief for Patroclus by envisioning himself consuming his enemy’s flesh. “If only my fury and passion,” he declares, “would somehow drive me to cut up your raw flesh and eat it” (αἶ γὰρ πῶς αὐτόν με μένος καὶ θυμὸς ἀνείη/ μ’ ἀποταμνόμενον κρέα ἔδμεναι, *Il.* 22.346–47).²⁵ Although Hector has requested that his enemy respect his corpse, Achilles offers what is effectively the opposite response: not only will he not return the corpse to Hector’s family, but he himself would devour it if he could. And since he cannot, he will feed it to the dogs and birds (22.335–36; 22.356). Later, in book 24, Hecuba echoes this cannibalistic desire, when she declares that she wishes she might set her teeth in Achilles’ liver and eat it (ἔγῳ μέσον ἦπαρ ἔχοιμι/ ἔσθέμεναι προσφῦσα, 24.212–13) in payment for killing her child. This, as James Redfield and others have pointed out,

²⁵ See Nagy 1979: 136, who compares the passage to *Il.* 24.41–43, where Achilles is likened to a lion whose *thumos* drives it to making a “feast” (*dais*) of sheep. Cf. also Motto and Clark 1969: 112 on Achilles’ monstrous images, such as the simile of the ravenous sea monster (ὡς δ’ ὑπὸ δελφίνος μεγακήτεος ἰχθύες ἄλλοι/ φεύγοντες . . . μάλα γὰρ τε κατεσθίει ὄν κε λάβησιν, *Il.* 21.22); and Redfield 1975: 197–99 on cannibalistic imagery in the *Iliad* and its implications.

articulates the violent terminus of the warrior's (and his family's) physical aggression. Envisioning one's enemy as carrion is itself what Redfield terms "vicarious cannibalism," so that as a verbal gesture it is parallel to wishing that one might sink one's own teeth into the enemy's flesh.²⁶

Expressions of fear of becoming carrion or the savage desire for one's enemy to become so reach their highest pitch in book 22. The gruesome image of the human body as food for animals surfaces again and again in the speeches that surround the death of Hector. First his terrified, grieving parents call to him from the wall, begging him to retreat into the city and not face Achilles, who bears down on the city like the dog star (22.26–31). Priam cries out that he wishes the gods hated Achilles, that he might lie dead, and the dogs and vultures eat him (τάχα κέν ἔ κύνες καὶ γῦπτες ἔδοιεν/ κείμενον, 22.42–43²⁷). The bite of his words indicates the desire for his enemy likewise to be bitten. Priam goes on to lament that if Hector does not retreat he, Priam, will have to endure this terrible fate himself, being consumed by his own dogs (αὐτὸν δ' ἄν πύματόν με κύνες πρώτῃσι θύρησιν/ ὠμησθαὶ ἐρούουσιν, 22.66–67) after he has been cut down by some warrior. He piteously offers one of the grimmest images in the book, picturing the dogs trained at his own table lapping up his spilled blood and lying down sated in his courtyard (οἶ κ' ἔμὸν αἶμα πιόντες ἀλήσσοντες περὶ θυμῶ/ καίσονται ἐν προθύροισι, 22.70–71). Thus his vengeful desire at the beginning of his speech that Achilles lie (κείμενον, 22.43) vulnerable to the ravaging mouths of carrion birds and dogs is matched at the end by the monstrous image of his dogs, glutted on their master's blood, lying (καίσονται, 22.71) at his door. Being eaten by one's own dogs in one's courtyard constitutes a terrible inversion of the desire to leave the enemy as carrion in the field: if exposing or even eating the enemy in battle is the warrior's fiercest wish, becoming food for his dogs at home would be his greatest fear.²⁸

That said, however ferociously abusive some flyting talk is, the connection between insult and this savage imagery is not as transparent as it might be. The language we find in the *Iliad* allied with violent images of enemy cannibalizing, while it employs some elements of blaming speech, also resembles speech types closely connected to death and Hades. The most obvious of these is lamentation, the bitter mode taken up by Achilles in book 19, by Priam and Hecuba in book 22, and by Hecuba in book 24.

²⁶ Redfield 1975: 199; Nagy 1979: 136–37. ²⁷ Cf. also Hecuba, 22.89, Andromache, 22.509.

²⁸ In the *Odyssey* this circumstance is uttered as a threat against low-status types (*Od.* 18.86–87 [Irus], 21.362–63 [Eumaeus]). Redfield 1975: 194–95 argues that these house dogs are merely ornamental, overlooking their potential for violent feeding that so neatly inverts battlefield "cannibalism."

All three of these characters employ a kind of lamentation that shares features with traditional mourning speeches (e.g., Briseis' in book 19, Andromache's in book 22): expiation on the physical state of the dead, grief for one's own fate as one bereft of what is most precious, fearful depictions of what the future holds for those left behind.²⁹ But unlike Briseis or Andromache, they add to these pitiful images a harsh desire for revenge. At these junctures their words recall the language of curse, since wishing that the enemy become prey to carrion dogs evokes the dark Fates and Hades, where Cerberus guards the door.³⁰

An example may bring this contrast into clearer focus. When Andromache hears of her husband's death, she begins to lament (γούωσα, 22.476). The verb identifies her words as a mourning speech (cf. γόοιο, 24.723, 747, 760), and what she says follows along traditional lines. Most pointedly she bewails that without his father's protection their son Astyanax will be shoved away from the feast, beaten, and verbally abused (ἐκ δαιτύος ἐστυφέλιξε,/ χερσὶν πεπληγῶς καὶ ὄνειδείοισιν ἐνίσσων, 22.496). She thus mourns the loss of social rituals accorded the aristocratic young man, similar to the kind of commensality that Odysseus advocated in book 19. This concern is diametrically opposed to that of harsher mourners like Achilles and Hecuba (or even Priam), who wish to eat their enemies rather than fearing rebuttal at the feast.³¹ When Priam and Achilles do finally lament together, they no longer utter curses. Rather, in a move that effectively reverses the desire to feed on his enemy, Priam puts his lips to the hands of the man who has murdered so many of his sons (ἀνδρὸς παιδοφόνιοιο ποτὶ στόμα χεῖρ' ὀρέγεσθαι, 24.506). Priam's words rouse in Achilles the desire for a proper *goos* (ἴμερον ὤρσε γόοιο, 24.507), and they both weep – son for father and father for son.

The other kind of speech that makes use of the imagery of violent eating is the vaunting language of the vanquishing warrior, the bleak endpoint of warriors' flying. This brash finale parallels the most violent of actions – the killing of the enemy – and thus contains elements of blaming speech and, again, curse. Gregory Nagy has identified calling one's enemy a dog as

²⁹ Cf. Alexiou 1974; Holst-Warhaft 1992.

³⁰ Dogs in general are associated with Hades; and fates (Keres, Erinyes) are often depicted as doggish monsters (cf. Hes. *Asp.* 160, 248–50, A. *Eum.* 51–54, 110–11, 131–32, 246–53, etc.). See Redfield 1975: 184; Goldhill 1988: 9–19; Graver 1995.

³¹ Note also that their speeches are preceded by screeches and groans: Achilles sighs vehemently (ἀδινῶς ἀναείκαστο, 22.314) before beginning to mourn Patroclus; Priam groans repeatedly (ζῆμωξεν, 22.33; οἰμῶξας, 22.34); in book 24 Hecuba screams (κῶκυσεν, 24.200) at the outset of her piteous and grisly speech.

a signature gesture in the discourse of blame (*oneidos*).³² The most famous example occurs in book 1 of the *Iliad*, when Achilles deems Agamemnon “dog-faced” (κυνῶπια, 159; cf. κυνὸς ὄμματ’, 225) as he is about to kill him for stealing Briseis. Similarly, when he stands over the dying Hector, Achilles calls his enemy a dog (κύον, 22.345) before telling him he would glut himself on his flesh if he could. Achilles has come on Troy like the dog star, and facing his doggish enemy, he wants to sink his teeth into him like a carrion-feeder.³³ Achilles is more often depicted as a lion, but at this moment – as he strikes the deadly blow and utters his violent, blaming speech – he resembles more a snappish dog. He also draws nearer to his own fate: Hector warns Achilles that he may become a curse (μῆνιμα, 24.358) to his vaunting enemy, answering his insulting speech with this ominous finality. Clearly, when Priam wishes that Achilles might become carrion and when Hecuba wishes that she might eat Achilles’ liver, they are also participating in doggish, cursing language. Hecuba becomes a dog in later tradition, a terminus whose suitability may have been suggested by this moment of would-be carrion-feeding.³⁴

These speeches, I submit, contribute a set of harsh associations that parallel those employed in flyting and help to shape later invective. Further, insofar as such threats border on the language of imprecation, they anticipate the curse-centered *vitae* of famous iambic poets, particularly Archilochus’ cursing of the daughters of Lycambes and Hipponax’s of the sculptor Bupalus.³⁵

The appetitive guest

In the *Odyssey* eating is a general cause for concern, in that it is frequently hard to come by and ultimately drives Odysseus to sing for his supper in a number of dining scenes. In more outlandish settings, eating tends to involve some kind of threat, transgression, or need for careful negotiation. Many of the adventures that Odysseus relates to the Phaiacians in the *Odyssey* include dangerous types of consumption: the ill-advised feasting after the Kikonian battle, the *lēthē*-inducing Lotus Eaters, the cannibalistic Cyclopes and Lastrygonians, and the transmogrifying potion (*kukeōn*) of Circe. Transgressive eating also drives the narrative of the deadly Cattle of the Sun, the significance of which the poet signals at the opening of the poem (cf. *Od.* 1.7–9). But the eating scenes most consequential for

³² Nagy 1979: 226–27.

³³ Cf. Redfield 1975: 194, 198–99, who points out that war brings out this doggish side in warriors.

³⁴ E. *Hec.* 1265–73; Cic. *Tusc.* 3.63.13. ³⁵ See further below.

the hero as a figure of insult are set in his own house, where the suitors greedily consume his life goods, with little or no recognition of the manifest impiety and even (as the poet indicates) social cannibalism that attends such eating.

As the beggar-storyteller, Odysseus repeatedly excites awareness in his interlocutors of the trade-off between the good meal and the good story, which may involve the worry that such characters will say anything for warm food or a thick cloak.³⁶ The belly takes on an ominous presence in the language of the beggar and those who confront him. The abusive goatherd Melantheus calls Odysseus a greedy guts (μολοβρόν, 17.219) and a feast-spoiler (δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντήρα, 17.220; cf. 17.377), a natural-born beggar man who would rather scrounge handouts than work to sate his bottomless belly (γαστέρ' ἀναλτον, 17.228; cf. 18.364). When Eumaeus curses him in response, Melantheus calls him a dog (κῦων, 17.248), which additionally signals the abusive tenor of the scene.³⁷

Melantheus' aggressive verbal jabs suggest that the hungry belly may spoil those very rituals that are meant to sate it (cf. 17.219–20) and thus lead to destruction.³⁸ Compare Odysseus' remarks, as he and Eumaeus pause before his own halls. He declares that he can smell and hear that feast and song are being enjoyed within (17.269–71). But then he adds ominously that the belly (*gastēr*) is irrepressible (γαστέρα δ' οὐ πως ἔστιν ἀποκρύψαι μεμαῦϊαν, 17.286; cf. 17.473) and drives men to war. The belly's urgings thus not only provide the genial context for song; they may also threaten its rituals. The scene indicates the inherent dangers in the connections between eating and speaking (or singing) that go beyond the image of the lying beggar-poet. While the greedy suitors consume the hero's wealth and menace his *philoī* verbally, the belly of the scheming Odysseus also urges him to violence. Recall that Alkinoos' similarly well-equipped table aroused the needy Odysseus to declare that nothing is more “doggish” than the hateful belly (οὐ γάρ τι στυγερεῖ ἔπι γαστέρι κύντερον ἄλλο/ἔπλετο, 7.216–17), which further indicates its connections to the language of abuse.

One of the most pointed intersections of violent feasting and aggressive speaking occurs in the exchange between Odysseus and Antinoos in

³⁶ E.g., *Od.* 14.127–32, 362–65, 395–97, 508–17; 17.415–18, 559–60.

³⁷ On the significance of the “dog” tag in this scene, cf. Goldhill 1988: 15–17. Lateiner (1995: 189–93) tracks how Odysseus plays the beggar in his deportment and attentiveness to the body's vulnerabilities.

³⁸ Cf. again Svenbro 1976: 50–59; Pucci 1987: 157–208; Rose 1992: 108–12 on the belly's demands; Saïd 1979b on violence in the banquet setting; also Nagy 1979: 222–32; Slater 1990.

book 17. The beggar initiates the confrontation by calling on the ritual trade-off that should govern the aristocrat's response to the hungry man. "Give, friend" (δός, φίλος), Odysseus says, "since you do not seem to me to be the worst of the Achaeans, but rather the best" (οὐ μὲν μοι δοκέεις ὁ κάκιστος Ἀχαιῶν / ἔμμεναι, ἀλλ' ὤριστός) (17.415–16). He then assures the would-be giver that he will get something in return, since as a begging teller of tales he will sing the aristocrat's praises throughout the lands (ἐγὼ δέ κέ σε κλείω κατ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν, 17.418). But instead of the peaceful sharing of food and well-balanced words, the scene is marked by physical and verbal violence, in which the request for an alimentary gift is answered by a "gift" of quite another sort: Antinoos insults Odysseus and hurls a footstool at him.³⁹ He thus mockingly reconstitutes the fair exchange invoked by Odysseus as the beating that beggars deserve.⁴⁰ Odysseus responds with a gift of his own: he curses Antinoos, calling upon the gods and the Erinyes and wishing him an untimely death (17.475–76⁴¹).

Nagy has pointed to the importance of the confrontation between Odysseus and his fellow beggar Irus, whose greedy belly (γαστέρι μάργρη, 18.2) signals his participation in the language of blame.⁴² I would emphasize that the brutally dismantling imagery that both beggars employ in their conflict anticipates the centering of iambos around the debased body and its needs. Moreover, this exchange is of a piece with Odysseus' confrontations with other rude and gluttonous characters, who threaten him with a cannibalizing language that contributes to the later apprehension of insult's "bite." The suitors and their henchmen abuse him as a worthless, all-belly sort and simultaneously consume his livelihood.⁴³ Irus likens him to a beast whose greedy mouth deserves violence, his words suggesting an intimate link between the scrounging animal and the begging wanderer. He declares to Odysseus that he will knock "all the teeth from his jaws" (πάντας ὀδόντας/ γναθμῶν) as if he were a crop-destroying pig (σὺς ὡς ληϊβοτείρης) (18.28–29).

³⁹ Cf. also Eurymachus, 18.394–97; and see Saïd 1979b: 31, who points out that Antinoos' *refus du don* effectively brings war into the feast, and thus perpetrates the intermingling of the two settings most opposed in the Homeric world.

⁴⁰ This is an assessment shared by the suitors and their henchmen; it is first formulated by goatherd Melantheus, who predicts that the beggar's "insatiable belly" (γαστερ' ἄναλτου) will spur the suitors to throw footstools at him (17.217–32). Cf. also Eurymachus (18.357–64) and Ktessipos (20.299–301).

⁴¹ Penelope also uses this tone with the suitors by referring to the Keres (17.500, 546–47); cf. Hendrickson 1925: 108.

⁴² Nagy 1979: 228–31, who compares the *Margites*, a mock-epic that Aristotle attributes to Homer (*Poet.* 1448b28–38). See Allen 1912: 152–59 for the collected testimonia and fragments.

⁴³ Cf., again, Melantheus (*Od.* 17.219–28); also Eurymachus (*Od.* 18.389–93).

Iambic talk often envisions such violence to the body; in the books that lead up to his stringing of the bow, Odysseus is repeatedly threatened with physical violence, as well as with being sold into labor or put to work like a farm animal.⁴⁴ Compare in particular the threats of Melantheus (17.230–32, 479–80) and the two scenes with Melanthe, the mocking servant woman who disdains beggars but sleeps with suitors. She abuses Odysseus (αἰσχρῶς ἐνένιπτε, 18.321; ἐνένιπτε, 19.65) for his bold talk, which she attributes to a wine-addled mind, innate foolishness, and/or vainglory (18.331–33); she also threatens him in very visceral terms with physical violence. Some beggar who is tougher than Irus will come along, she declares, beat Odysseus about the head with his thick hands (σ' ἀμφὶ κάρη κεκοπῶς χερσὶ στιβαρῆσι), and send him from the house covered in blood (δῶμα-τος ἐκπέμψησι φορύξας αἵματι πολλῷ) (18.335–36; cf. 18.69). Odysseus responds in kind, calling her a dog (κύον; cf. 18.91) and warning that when he has reported her insults to Telemachos, he will come and cut her to bits (διὰ μελεῖστί τάμησιν) (18.338–39).

This conflict with a lascivious and mocking servant woman should be recognized as importantly parallel to the confrontations of the iambic poet with Iambe or other scornful female figures. As Ralph Rosen has argued for Hipponax, such scenes suggest initiation rituals and should be aligned with Hesiod's altercation with the Muses, as well as the confrontations of Archilochus with various female types, both high- and low-status.⁴⁵ This would indicate that Odysseus, as a proto-iambic figure, undergoes a particular kind of test with Melanthe, as opposed to his other abusers: that of the hungry poet who contends with women to shore up his power as a curser of men. His words, thus sanctioned, would carry a special, even divine, force – as indeed they often seem to in the denouement of the *Odyssey*. The mocking female figure may indicate that this process had some origin in rituals controlled by women, as Laurie O'Higgins has explored.⁴⁶ There is, moreover, evidence (scant though it is) that curse poems were written by women, an additional sign that such ritual abuses may have originally been considered a female concern.⁴⁷

The scene with Irus, in contrast, effects a more visceral degradation of the beggar's body, a fitting verbal match for the fistfight that follows.⁴⁸ The

⁴⁴ E.g., *Od.* 17.223–25, 18.357–64. See also Bakhtin 1984: 197 regarding the objectification of and thus the physical violence directed toward the target of abuse.

⁴⁵ Rosen 1988b; see further below. ⁴⁶ O'Higgins 2003.

⁴⁷ Hendrickson 1925: 109 and O'Higgins 2003: 82 cite the aptly named Moiro (Christ xxx: II.110), although her *Arui* is from the Hellenistic period. Note as well that female *daimones* such as the Keres and Erinyes oversee the grimmer side of fate (e.g., retribution, blood vengeance).

⁴⁸ Cf. Rosen 1988a: 15–16, who points to the association of iambos with physical pain, the verbal equivalent of a blow.

comparison to a domestic animal not only pairs ruinous beast with feast-destroying man; it also exposes Odysseus' vulnerability to parallels between his physical status and that of the food consumed at his house. Indeed, when the suitors instigate the beggars' fistfight, they decide to give the victorious beggar a goat's belly (*gastēr*) as a prize (18.44–47), so that the scene is framed by a link between the violent belly of the hungry man and the food he will consume, an objectification that highlights his debased and beaten body as one potentially edible. A later passage confirms this equation: at 20.25–30, Odysseus is himself compared to a sausage (*γαστέρ*) on the fire, as he twists and turns, wondering how to take on the suitors alone.

A similar type of debasing, cannibalizing imagery frames Odysseus' interactions with the suitors, who consume Odysseus' life goods in an aggressive and heedless manner. Their abuse of another's table also lays them open to slaughter in turn. At the end of book 18, when Odysseus has been subjected to all manner of verbal and physical abuse, Telemachus turns on the suitors and declares, "Strange men, you are maddened and no longer hide your food and drink in your hearts" (δοιμόνιοι, μίνεσθε καὶ οὐκέτι κεύθετε θυμῶ/βρωτῶν οὐδὲ ποτῆτα, 18.406–07). His words make clear that what the suitors have consumed is somehow defiled, that their appropriation of Odysseus' livestock and wine involves a form of ingestion so tainted it will drive the ingester mad. Indeed, his words seem even to imply that their feasting is equivalent to eating the flesh and blood of the man who owns the goods they consume. Penelope later underscored this illicit consumption more bluntly, when she tells Eurymachus that there is no honor among those who "eat up a noble man's substance" (οἶκον ἀτιμάζοντες ἔδουσιν/ἀνδρὸς ἀριστῆος, 21.332–33).

An ominous passage in book 20 spells out the fate of those who engage in this approximation of cannibalism and imagines the suitors' reckless consumption as gruesome impiety. Telemachus has just declared that he will hand over his mother and marriage gifts to the man of her choice, which causes the suitors to behave in a strange manner. Athena sends them into a frenzy, so that they laugh with alien jaws, eat blood-defiled flesh (*γναθμοῖσι γελῶων ἀλλοτρίοισιν/αἰμοφόρυκτα δὲ δὴ κρέα ἦσθιον*, 20.347–48), and finally end up weeping and moaning (348–49).⁴⁹ Their greed for Odysseus' wealth, including his wife, is here exposed as a bloody feast at which the diners' jaws flap with unholy laughter that leads to lamentation. The seer Theoclymenus reads in this odd behavior their demise: their heads are covered in mist, blood seeps down the walls, and the doorway is full of ghosts (20.351–57).

⁴⁹ On the laughter of the suitors, see Saïd 1979b; Levine 1980.

In fulfillment of this deadly reversal, Odysseus announces his presence in his own house by inviting the suitors to the feast. Stringing his bow like a bard with a lyre (21.406–09), he sends an arrow through the axes and then offers the suitors “an evening meal in the daytime” (δῶρον . . . / ἐν φάει), complete with music and dance (21.428–30). This anomalous dinner proves deadly: Odysseus slaughters the suitors while they are at table, addressing them as “Dogs” (ὦ κύνες, 22.35) and cutting them down as they consume his meat and wine. Most tellingly, he pierces the abusive Antinoos through the throat just as he lifts his cup to drink, so that instead of pouring the wine down his gullet (22.10–11) he spills out his life-blood through his nose (αὐλὸς ἀνὰ ῥίνας παχὺς ἤλθεν/ αἵματος ἀνδρομέοιο). In a precise inversion of his overweening deportment when alive, his dying hand drops the goblet and his dying foot kicks over the table full of food (δέπας δέ οἱ ἔκπεσε χειρὸς / βλημένου . . . θοῶς δ’ ἀπὸ εἶο τράπεζαν / ὥσε ποδὶ πλήξας, ἀπὸ δ’ εἶδατα χεῦεν ἔραζε) (22.17–20). Gone is the bartering Odysseus of the *Iliad*; now he rejects Eury-machus’ promise of cattle in reparation (τιμὴν . . . ἕικοσάβοιον, 22.57) and slaughters the suitors as if they were cattle themselves (βόες ὧς ἀγελαῖαι, 22.299).

The intense emphasis in these passages on the greedy, debased, and even edible body in violent conflict clearly opens out onto the realm of iambic contention. It is here, at the end of the *Odyssey*, that the hero of one genre is especially vulnerable to becoming the target of others – most evidently Pindaric epinician and tragedy, and apparently also the satyr play.⁵⁰ Perhaps more crucially, his beggar man’s stance itself generates the central figure of iambos: the abusive, appetitive outsider. Indeed, Bernd Seidensticker has noted similarities between the elements in the lies Odysseus tells and the details of the life of “Archilochus,” a connection that points to the influence of Odysseus’ figure on iambos as well as to the fabricated quality of the iambic poet’s persona and thus his life story.⁵¹

IAMBOS AND THE HUNGRY “OUTSIDER”

Alcman, the Spartan poet best known for his patently aristocratic “virgins’ songs” (*partheneia*), reveals the tensions inherent in competing notions of community cohesion when he evokes the persona of the “all-consuming” (πάμφαγος) poet who loves his bean soup warm (ἔτνεος, οἶον ὁ παμφάγος Ἄλκμῶν ἠράσθη χλιαρόν) and rejects fancy dishes in favor of the

⁵⁰ See further in ch. 3 below.

⁵¹ Seidensticker 1978; cf. also Latte 1968.

common “fare” (τὰ κοινά) of the demos (fr. 17 P). This hungry, scrounging voice dominates the archaic poetry of blame and lampoon that claims as its territory the margins of society, although it was clearly forged by elite speakers for an elite audience. The corpus of Hipponax, for instance, includes a mocking curse poem in epic meter and vocabulary that pillories a tyrannical, greedy leader whose appetite is violent and who deserves exile.⁵² In the seventh and six centuries, as notions of community were shifting, this iambic mode employed the guise of the rude outsider as a vehicle for critiques of citizen behavior, social status, and authority.⁵³ The language of insult and appetite furnishes its central vocabulary and topoi, and it is poised against poetic traditions that embrace the straightforward praise of elites and the heroes with which they are allied. The fragments of Archilochus also frequently celebrate the indulgence of “low” appetites, especially those of a sexual nature. But iambic utterance does not simply encourage such behaviors; rather, it seeks to express them as a means of regulation within a community of equal citizens. As O’Higgins has noted, “[I]ambic literature not only exemplified excess, it defined the field of reference, set the limits, and spelled the consequences of excessive speech and behavior.”⁵⁴

This focus on the regulation of excess (and perhaps especially oral indulgences) in a community of equals dovetails neatly with the suppositions of scholars that archaic iambos originated either in the symposium (where peer bonding, drink, and song flourished), in fertility rituals (where community cohesion, ritual insults, and sexual symbols dominated), or in both.⁵⁵ Martin West hypothesized that such revelry involved the clownish impersonation of lowly figures such as burglars, cooks, and prostitutes, the occasional use of a phallus, and perhaps even suitable gestures (i.e., acting out the part).⁵⁶ Vase evidence indicating that seventh- and sixth-century symposia

⁵² See further below. ⁵³ Again, cf. Morris 1996. ⁵⁴ O’Higgins 2001: 144–45.

⁵⁵ The study of Bartol 1993 is a sober adjudication of this debate; cf. also West 1974; Miralles and Pòrtulas 1983; Bowie 1986, 2002; Gentili 1988: 107–14; Stehle 1997: 213–27; Andrisano 2001; O’Higgins 2001, 2003; Ford 2002: 25–45. It is now commonly assumed that the majority of lyric forms had their origin in the symposium; and a remark of Aristotle in the *Politics* points to a possible role for literary iambos there as well, at least during the classical period: τοὺς νεωτέρους οὐτ’ ἰάμβων οὐτ’ κωμῳδίας θεατὰς νομοθετήτεον πρὶν ἢ τὴν ἡλικίαν λάβωσιν ἐν ἧ καὶ κατακλισέως ὑπάρξει κοινωνεῖν ἤδη καὶ μέθης (1336b20–22). Cf. also *Adesp. el.* Fr. 27 W, in which “symptotic men” (συμπόται ἄνδρες) are described as coming together in order to talk nonsense and joke (ἐξ ἀλλήλους τε φ[ι]λαρεῖν/ καὶ σκώπτειν), among other pleasures. Cf. ch. 4 on the significance of this vocabulary for the depiction of Socrates in the Platonic dialogues.

⁵⁶ West 1974: 32–33. The inclusion of such elements, of course, assumes a strong connection to later comedy, even down to the presence of cooks and prostitutes (cf. also Theophrastus’ lowbrow characters). Bowie 2002: 39 dismisses the idea that there is any evidence of what might be considered comic costume.

may have included the imposture of combative, rude personas and the performance of bawdy dances by grotesquely comic characters also supports the idea that iambos was part of early sympotic celebration. Burkhard Fehr has argued that the uninvited guest (*aklētos*) appears as a beggar type both in Homer and in the archaic symposium, which suggests that the blaming, crude poet-impostor might turn up there as well.⁵⁷ Fehr reads the vase evidence as depicting entertainment at these drinking parties by round-bellied and possibly lame dancers, which may further indicate that archaic symposia at least sometimes included such comic, lowly, and manifestly appetitive types, either in piquant contrast to the guests' attitudes and statuses or in festive combination with guests' own impersonations.

The imposture of low-status characters with food on their minds by symposiastic performers and/or participants would seem to conflict sharply with the elite and patently erotic atmosphere of the setting; but just as lewd dances may represent the ruder end of eros, so may the hungry outsider's voice represent the ruder end of elite dining. Moreover, some scholars have contested the characterization of the symposium as a narrowly elite institution.⁵⁸ And if Morris is right in detecting in iambic utterance an emphasis on the "middling" citizen as a corrective to aristocratic pretensions, this bawdy, appetitive voice emerges as an important foil that anticipates later "outsider" challenges to elite attitudes. Think of the comic poets' chastening lampoons of open-mouthed and wide-holed politicians, or Socrates' didactic mockery of the overblown locutions of his elite interlocutors in Platonic dialogue. Like iambos, the imagery of appetite dominates both settings, as does the pairing of the hungry with the mocking mouth.⁵⁹

The emphasis on the grotesque, all-belly body calls to mind not only later comedy but also the possible origins of iambos in fertility rituals involving ritual insult (*aischrologia*). While Ewen Bowie in particular has cautioned against making too much of this connection, there are clearly some

⁵⁷ Fehr 1990; cf. also Seeberg 1995: 4–9; Foley 2000. Cf. Ar. *Av.* 983, where the boaster is envisioned as an uninvited guest (ἀκλητος ἰὼν ἀνθρώπος ἀλαζών).

⁵⁸ Most trenchantly Schmitt-Pantel (1992); see also Bowie 1986; Fisher 2000.

⁵⁹ The poetic origins of iambos are obscure in other ways, of course. The extant fragments suggest that Archilochus was the first to use the label *iambos*, a poetic mode that he would engage in if he were happier (καί μ' οὔτ' ἰάμβων οὔτε τερπωλέων μέλει, fr. 215 W). Both he and Hipponax contributed to the development of the iambic trimeter and, in Hipponax's case, the scazon, meters that approximate common speech rhythms while sustaining a syncopated, aggressive cadence. These poets, however, also employ other meters; and insulting talk does not seem to have been restricted to the trimeter or the scazon. Bartol 1993: 68 notes the presence of joking and abuse in other genres; Bowie 1986 the overlap between iambos, elegy, and ainetic discourse. Cf. also West 1974: 22; Gentili 1988: 107–09.

suggestive similarities between ritual obscenities and iambic lampoons.⁶⁰ Again, both Archilochus and Hipponax depict revelry involving not only consumption but also sexual encounters in graphic and sometimes insulting terms.⁶¹ Moreover, the famous “incident” depicted on a stone from the third century BC that offers an explanation for Archilochus’ advent as a blame poet suggests a similar confluence of iampos and this kind of ritual abuse.⁶² While on his way to sell a cow at the town market, the poet encountered some jesting women who exchanged barbs with him, as well as asking if he would sell them his cow. When he agreed, both they and the cow vanished, leaving a lyre in their place. As mentioned, this sounds like a typical meeting of poet and Muses, in which a man of humble status who is engaged in bucolic activities endures abuse and wins divine sanction for his craft (cf. again Hes. *Th.* 22–34). It also recalls the ritual exchange of *aischrologia* in the course of fertility rituals.⁶³ Both connections would help to explain the transformation of iampos into comic performance, as well as its pervasive emphasis on the physical world and bodily need.

These incidents, in addition, point to the initiatory role of the female jester in iampos, as well as the fabricated nature of the iambic persona.⁶⁴ O’Higgins makes much of the female presence in iampos, for which there is some evidence (i.e., the initiatory scenes, the iambic fragments that involve lowbrow, mocking female characters and/or insult of women, the comic depictions of female “bridge insult” [*gephurismos*], the traces of female composers of curses). The difficulty comes, however, in the fact that no genuine female iambic voice is extant. What we have instead is a series of more-or-less slanderous impostures of female figures by male writers and performers, augmented by the hunches inspired by comparative anthropology that this female presence may reflect an original role in ritual insult. There clearly were female performers and even writers of archaic poetry, most notably the choral singers in Alcman fr. 1 and the *Delian Hymn to Apollo* and the poets Sappho and Corinna. Nor is it so extravagant to propose that elite women wrote and/or performed insult poetry, as the trace evidence may indicate.

⁶⁰ Bowie 2002.

⁶¹ E.g., Archil. frs. 25, 43, 48, 67?, and the Cologne epode (196a W); Hippon. frs. 16–17, 78, 84, 92, 104, 155.

⁶² This is from part of the so-called *Monimentum Parium* (fr. 51 Diehl); cf. also the fragment that relates an incident in which “Archilochus” insults Lykambes’ daughters by claiming to have engaged in a sexual romp with them (fr. 29 W). See Miralles and Pörtulas 1983: 63–80; Carey 1986.

⁶³ Both the Eleusinian Mysteries and Dionysian celebration involved such practices. Cf. again West 1974: 23–25, who thinks that iampos may have developed in the context of the worship of Dionysus (see Introduction, n. 25).

⁶⁴ O’Higgins 2001, 2003; cf. also Hendrickson 1925; West 1974; Bowie 2001.

However, I emphasize here a more accessible (albeit more negative) way in which a female presence is strongly felt in iambic discourse. While male voices dominate iambos and male versions of female voices dominate the extant material that could be considered relevant to the reconstruction of iambic origins, the female does quite obviously have an essential symbolic role to play. Not only may mocking female characters operate as iambic Muses; but female appetites are also pervasively employed in iambos as a – perhaps the – negative measure in contradistinction to which the elite male defines himself. This is particularly clear in Attic comedy, as chapter 2 explores.

Where does this leave us, then? What unifies a body of poems, largely fragmentary, for which there is no definitive setting, no single meter, no irrefutable ritual origins, and little shared vocabulary with later genres? Again, the appetitive and debased body constitutes a central common element, a body whose needs are focused around the open mouth. If we revisit the curse poem that opens this chapter, we can see this unifying presence in the elements that dominate it. Although the meter is elegiac, the tone is clearly iambic in this broader sense. The poet envisions his enemy in a thoroughly debased state: naked and reduced to eating “slaves’ bread” (δούλιον ἄρτον ἔδων); his teeth chattering with cold (κροτέοι ὀδόντας); lying helpless on the shore, mouth down like a dog (ὡς [κ]ύων ἐπὶ στόμα/κείμενος ἀκρασίη) (Hippon. fr. 115.5–12). A less contentious and broader claim might be that content (insulting, bawdy) and occasion (forms of revelry) shape ancient designations of certain poems as iambic and certain poets as iambographers. Indeed, the poems of Hipponax and Archilochus embody essential attitudes that both ancient and modern commentators recognize as iambic, especially those inhabiting a blunt, abusive, and/or needy stance as a counter to high-status conceits and social niceties. While the vocabulary they use differs from later abusive language, the attitudes they assume and the patterns of imagery they deploy are similar to those that shape the defamatory discourse around elite speakers in the classical period.⁶⁵

The fragments of Hipponax’s poetry indicate most consistently how this iambic mode employs the imagery of appetite to establish social distinctions. The fragments are littered with references to food and drink, as well as to sex. Those involving sex make bawdy reference to erotic play that includes biting (frs. 84, 104 W) and whipping (fr. 92 W), and often take

⁶⁵ See Rosen 1988a and Bowie’s 2002 response regarding the claim that there is meaningful shared vocabulary between iambos and comedy.

place in ravines (frs. 61, 92, 155 W) – that is, they inhabit a realm “outside,” where such play belongs. The fragments involving food are more revealing of social hierarchies, couched as they are in language that traces a clear opposition between the needy scrounger and the decadent glutton. The iambic narrator wishes at one point (fr. 8 W) for dried figs, barley cakes, and cheese, which he characterizes as the food of outcasts (κάφῃ παρέξειν ἰσχάδας τε καὶ μᾶζαν/ καὶ τυρόν, οἶον ἐσθίουσι φαρμακοί). In fragment 26 W the speaker seems to be a father who depicts his decadent son dining at his leisure on tuna and savory dip (θύνναν τε καὶ μυσσωτόν, 26.2), eating his fill like the eunuch Lampsakes (δαίνυμενος ὥσπερ Λαμψικανὸς εὐνοῦχος/ κατέφαγε δὴ τὸν κληῖρον, 26.3–4). The father instead digs up the rocky hillside, munching on lowly figs and barley rolls, which he deems “slavish fodder” (σῦκα μέτρια τρώγων/ καὶ κρίθινον κόλλικα, δούλιον χόρτον, 26.5–6). This may be the same man who claims not to gobble up francolins and hares (οὐκ ἄτταγέας τε καὶ λαγούς καταβρύκων, fr. 26a.1 W), the former being a delicacy that seems to have resembled the ortolan in its gourmandizing cachet.⁶⁶ Nor does the speaker spice up pancakes with sesame seeds (οὐ τηγανίτας σησάμοισι φαρμάσσων, 26a.2), or dip cakes in honeycomb (οὐδ’ ἄττανίτας κηρίοισιν ἐμβάπτων, 26a.3).

By implication, at least, we can understand the consumption of such fancy food as the habit of the decadent or greedy elite. The mock-heroic narrative mentioned above calls upon the Muse to tell about the “Eurymedontian Charybdis” who has a “knife in the belly” (i.e., consumes things whole, ἐγγαστιμάχαιραν⁶⁷) and a rude eating style (ἐσθίει οὐ κατὰ κόσμον), a man excessive in his greed and fit for stoning by public decree (fr. 128 W).⁶⁸ Robert Parker points out that those who are punished by stoning tend to

⁶⁶ Cf. *Ar. Av.* 247, 761; *Ach.* 875; *Vesp.* 257; fr. 433; also *Ath.* 9.387. Although the *attagas* is a type of partridge and thus a larger bird, we might compare the role of the ortolan in modern consumption. Oscar Wilde’s effete interlocutor Gilbert in his dialogue “The Critic as Artist” (1891 [1968]: 371) offers a definitive lampoon of the match between such alimentary delicacies and verbal conceits: “After we have discussed some Chambertin and a few ortolans, we will pass on to the question of the critic considered in the light of the interpreter.” The ortolan is by now such an endangered species that eating it has been outlawed and even world-famous chefs are ashamed of their taste for the little bird. In 1997 at a secret gathering in Bordeaux, five of these chefs covered their heads with their napkins while consuming the birds (as custom dictates) and went on to describe the “gustatory thrill” (*New York Times*, December 31, 1997). The French president François Mitterrand apparently made a deathbed request for ortolans, consuming them with head suitably covered (*The Irish Times*, August 13, 2005, with thanks to Stephen O’Connor for the reference).

⁶⁷ Hesychius glosses the word in this way (τὴν ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ κατατέμνουσαν, cf. fr. 128 W).

⁶⁸ Cf. the discussion of Davidson 1997: 181, who suggests a connection with the “Eurymedon vase,” and thus wants to see this fragment as an early example of a *katapugōn* type (see also Dover 1978: 105 and discussion in ch. 2). In the *Od.* κατὰ κόσμον, its negation, and related phrases usually involve Odysseus and refer to speaking style (8.179, 489, 14.363, 509). Cf. also *HHerm.* 433, 479; and see the discussion in Worman 2002a: 21–29.

be prominent men who have abused or misled the people: tyrants, disloyal or deceitful generals, traitors.⁶⁹ The vantage point of the hungry outsider, who needs little and has suffered much, paradoxically frees his tongue and even gives it ominous power: he lampoons the violent greed of the miscreant leader, cursing him and any others who wrong him. When not begging for a bit of humble fare, he wishes a similar fate on his enemy – that he be outcast and rambling, always turning his belly toward the setting sun (πρὸς ἥλιον δύνοντα γαστέρα τρέψας, fr. 42 W).⁷⁰

References to drink are a little sparser, and perhaps not quite as pointed in their implications. Nevertheless, Hipponax' thirsty narrator does twice describe drinking from the milk pail (ἐκ πελλίδος πίνοντες) because the servant broke the drinking cup (κύλιξ) (fr. 13.1–2 W; cf. also fr. 14 W), which suggests a playful turn on elite drinking at a symposium and the rough implements available to the lowly character who nevertheless has a “boy” (παῖς) to bring his drink. In fragment 39 W a world-weary type asks for a huge amount of roasted barley (κριθέων/ μέδιμνον), but not as a means of staving off hunger. Instead, he wants it in order to make a potion as a salve for life's ills (ὡς ἂν ἀλφίτων ποιήσομαι/ κυκεῶνα πίνειν φάρμακον πονηρίας, 39.3–4 W).⁷¹ This request recalls the curative potion (κυκειῶ) that Nestor's concubine Hecamede makes for the heroes in his tent (*Il.* 11.637–41) or, more ominously, the transmogrifying one that Circe mixes up (ἐκύκα, *Od.* 10.235) for Odysseus' hapless companions, into which she tosses a different kind of salve (i.e., φάρμακα λύγρ', 10.236). Both passages also specifically mention the use of pearled barley (ἄλφιτα, *Il.* 11.640; *Od.* 10. 234) and indicate that the mixtures possess some quasi-magical transformative power.⁷² In the Hipponax fragment, however, the speaker lacks the materials with which to make his potion, the “curative” brew he needs – for his ills and perhaps for his poetry as well.

Fragment 39 W is thus of a piece with other poems depicting a destitute type, but it also indicates the sophisticated literary tenor of such requests.

⁶⁹ Parker 1983: 194n. 20.

⁷⁰ Fragments also refer to fistfights with enemies; these seem to be staged fights like that between Odysseus and Irus in the *Odyssey*. They are thus a relevant feature of the iambic type but not directly related to eating. Cf. frs. Hippon. 120, 121 W.

⁷¹ A *medimnos* equals about twelve gallons; this seems to be some sort of joke about making a lot of beer. Cf. also frs. 6–10.

⁷² *Alphiton* is probably the most inclusive term for the grain; e.g., it is used metaphorically to designate one's substance but in the Hipponax passage seems to denote boiled barley (cf. Gallo 1983). See also Amouretti 1986; Dalby 2003; I am indebted to Stephen O'Connor for discussion and references. O'Higgins (2003: 61) associates the *kukeōn* with the drink mixed for Demeter on her specifications in the *Hymn*, but (1) it does not include barley and (2) I think she overstates the connection of iambos to ritual.

Earlier scholars (including some ancient commentators) tended to assume that the iambic ego could simply be equated with the simple, rustic (and hence authentic) voice of the poet. But this kind of literary allusion, as well as the possibility that iambic performance involved dress-up and imposture, points up the fabricated quality of that “I.”⁷³ The speaker may thus inhabit the stance of the outsider, even that of the wandering, uninvited beggar, while being in fact an elite member of a symposium. The disguise itself, moreover, recalls that of Odysseus posing as a beggar in his own house.

A number of other fragments are similarly appetitive and Odyssean in tenor, insofar as they call for help in obtaining a cloak, other clothing, and/or money. In fragment 32 W “Hipponax” is shaking with cold so that his teeth chatter (κάρτα γὰρ κακῶς ῥιγῶ/ καὶ βαμβαλύζω, 32.2–3). He calls upon Hermes (patron deity of wanderers, thieves, and beggars) for help in obtaining an entire outfit: a cloak, a “shirty,” some “little sandals,” and “booties” as well (δὸς χλαῖναν Ἴππωνάκτι καὶ κυπασσίσκον/ καὶ σαμβάλισκα κάσκερίσκα, 32.4–5). The request is thus framed by a necessity as dire and complete as that of Odysseus at his most bereft, brine-smearing and naked on the shores of Scheria (*Od.* 5.453–57, 6.135–37).⁷⁴ Its tone, however, is far from grim: the diminutives mimic a wheedling jest in the form of a clever ditty. This is a lighter version of the Odyssean narrative, in which the beggars are adroit buffoons and the donors their patrons or peers at symposia in need of some witty chastening.

While the darkly humorous destitution of the begging speaker in Hipponax’ poetry may recall in some general sense the image of the naked Odysseus, washed up on Scheria, a more interesting Homeric parallel is the episode in book 14 of the *Odyssey*, in which Odysseus, shivering with cold in the hut of the swineherd Eumaeus, tells a story about “Odysseus” tricking a young soldier into giving up his cloak during a frigid night watch outside of Troy (*Od.* 14.457–522). The beggar deems the tale he is about to tell “something boastful” (εὐξάμενός τι) and claims it is inspired by wine (οἶνος ἀνώγει). This “maddening” (ἠλεός) substance may rouse singing, gentle laughter, even dance (ἐφέηκε . . . ἀείσαι/ καὶ θ’ ἄπαλδον γελάσαι, καὶ τ’ ὀρχήσασθαι ἀνῆκε), as well as a speech better left unspoken (τι ἔπος . . . ἄρρητον ἄμεινον) (14.463–66). The episode thus contains many elements suggestive of iambic performance in the symposium, and more narrowly anticipates the persona of Hipponax: the boastful talk of a “beggar man”; a tale that forges a double imposture for material gain; the presence of wine

⁷³ Cf. West 1974; Tsagarakis 1977: 30–50, 99–104.

⁷⁴ Fragment 34 expresses a similar need for cloak and boots as protection from the cold, while fr. 36 asks for money.

and its characterization as a substance inspiring song, laughter, dance, and rude talk.

What conclusions can we draw, finally, about this handful of images whose generic origins and literary allusions are barely discernible? In keeping with the idiom, a bold claim might be made. This pattern of distinguishing high from low (or decadent from moderate) forms of consumption emerges first as a critique of aristocratic excesses and elaborates on similar patterns present in nascent form in Homeric poetry (especially the *Odyssey*). Not only does it articulate the anxieties about moderation during a period of social transition; it also influences ideas about consumption and its proper regulation in later periods marked by upheaval and critique – most notably late fifth- and fourth-century Athens. Indeed, as chapters 2 and 4 discuss, references to types of food and drink in comedy and Platonic dialogue indicate the impact of such differentiations among substances and the social habits that attend them.

Iambos may thus not only furnish the rude, beggar man's tone that inspires the abuse of public speakers in the fifth and fourth centuries. It may also initiate the focus on consumption and its relation to excessive talk that shapes so much of the abuse in the classical period, as well as the oppositions between certain kinds of food and drink that chart social behaviors by what goes into the belly. Indeed, Nagy may well be correct in thinking that the name Archilochus was a stage name related to *bōmolochos* (“altar-scrap grabber”), a craven, scrabbling buffoon that turns up in comedy.⁷⁵ This would suggest that “Archilochus” is one source for the lowbrow, small-talking type who insults boastful loudmouths in old comedy and Socratic dialogue. Such patterns may also have become entrenched in later tradition. The second-century AD humorist Lucian depicts Archilochus characterizing himself as a cicada, an idling chatterer by nature (φύσει μὲν λόλω ὄντι καὶ ἄνευ τινὸς ἀνάγκης).⁷⁶

THE SLANDEROUS MOUTH IN PINDAR

Later fifth- and fourth-century writers make use of variations on the connection between abusive talk and violent consumption in order to portray a certain kind of public character: the rapacious, sophistic politician. Pindar

⁷⁵ Nagy 1979: 245 n. 3. Note that Cratinus wrote an *Archilochoi* (*Archilochuses*) that may have featured a chorus of sophists. On the *bōmolochus* see Rosenbloom 2002: 329–32 and further in ch. 2.

⁷⁶ Luc. *Pseud.* 1.1. Ancient etymologists follow suit; cf. βᾶβας: λάλος, φλύαρος . . . Ἀρχίλοχος (fr. 297 W). But cf. ch. 2 for complications of this characterization, and ch. 4 regarding the cicadas in Pl. *Phdr.*

anticipates this association, characterizing the iambographer as a snappish, greedy type. Being a praise poet, Pindar himself must avoid the “bite” of invective (ἔμῃ δὲ χρεῶν/ φεύγειν δάκος ἄδινὸν κακαγοριᾶν, *P.* 2.52–53), and to characterize the abusive Archilochus, in contrast, as “fattening” himself (πικαινόμενον, *P.* 2.55–56) on envious talk.⁷⁷ We might recall that the iambic poet represents himself as a fighter, his bellicose words reiterating his physical aggressiveness.⁷⁸ Further, for Archilochus, as for Hipponax, the iambic poet’s activities are closely tied to his persona’s needs and constitute the very fabric of his poetry. If Hipponax calls attention to the demands of “his” physical body, often the formulation of its wants and failings make the poem.⁷⁹ The poet who lauds aristocratic valor, in contrast, assiduously avoids the vulgarities and stark realities of this contract, instead celebrating the bond between poet and warrior or athlete as a mutual honor.⁸⁰ While the *Odyssey*, for instance, sometimes acknowledges the necessary trade-off that drives bards and storytellers (i.e., song for meat), it only allows such concerns to surface in grimmer form in relation to the lying hero, in order to emphasize the potentially egregious effects of singing for one’s supper. Pindar distances himself both from Homer and from the iambic poet, since the one is a liar and the other a cannibalizing slanderer.

Unsurprisingly, then, Pindar chooses Odysseus as a crucial embodiment of the abusive talker’s oral rapacity. If Odysseus is singled out by later tradition as the Homeric hero who engages in mercenary, appetitive sophistic strategies, Pindar’s depiction of him as a lying, grasping talker paves the way for this denigration of his character. In *Nemean* 7, for instance, Pindar introduces the contest between Ajax and Odysseus over Achilles’ arms by declaring, “Cleverness operates secretly, leading astray with stories” (σοφία/ δὲ κλέπτει παράγοισα μύθοις, 23–24). For Pindar, Odysseus plays the role of the slandering liar chiefly because he verbally overruns the nobler and silent Ajax, the bulwark of the Achaeans.⁸¹ Pindar’s formulation of how the clever man’s language wins out also points to a link between the activities

⁷⁷ Cf. also Bacch. 3.67–68, where the praise poet is conceived as one who does not fatten himself on envy (ὄστις μὴ φθόνῳ πικίνεται). This imagery was noticed by Nagy 1979: 224–32; cf. also the discussions of Steiner 2001b, 2002.

⁷⁸ Cf., e.g., Archil. 67 D; Hippon. 70 D, 120, 121 W. ⁷⁹ Cf. Hippon. 3, 24, 29 D.

⁸⁰ Cf. Mauss 1925, who bases his discussion on the understanding that gift exchange is transacted in an atmosphere of formal pretense and social deception, while Bourdieu 1977: 4–6 notes that the very obligatory character of the exchange must be “misrecognized” as voluntary and genial by the participants for the economic system to be maintained. Pindaric imagery often represents this bond in terms that obfuscate the economic realities of the epicinian poet; see Kurke 1991. Cf. also Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 55–57 on the ambiguities of the *xenia* exchange.

⁸¹ Cf. Pratt 1993: 121, 128. A similar tradition developed around Palamedes (e.g., Plato *Ap.* 41b; Xen. *Ap.* 26).

of the poet (e.g., Homer) and those of the politician (e.g., Odysseus), both of whom lie to please. This association, with its traces of the mercenary and the greedy, becomes increasingly central to how fifth-century writers characterize the questionable strategies of sophists, whom they represent as agile, decadent liars with political ambitions.

As Deborah Steiner has pointed out, the poem ends with an explicit jab at the trite “yapping” (μαψυλάκας) of those who practice invective – a doggish, detracting mode.⁸² *Nemean* 8 takes this negative characterization of both Odysseus and insult a step further. Pindar depicts Odysseus “grabbing” (ἄπτεται), “biting” (δάσεν), and “skewering” (ἀμφικυλίσσας) Ajax (*N.* 8.23–24) with his arguments as if he were a side of beef, his imagery now prefiguring the later representation of the greedy hero as a rapacious sophist. For this kind of speaker, words are a “tasty treat” (ὄψον, 8.21); his envy of his betters is manifested by the relish with which he engages in blaming speech.⁸³ Pindar also characterizes “beguilement” (πάρφασις) as a “deceit deviser” (δολοφροδής) and an “evil-working reproach” (κακοποιὸν ὄνειδος) (8.33–34), associating both with Odysseus.

We might note first that the theme of deceit is again emphasized, as well as that of blame, since *oneidos* designates both the production of abusive talk and its target. Second, Odysseus is again the figure who represents the confluence of these two modes and indicates why they might be thus conjoined: the liar plays a mercenary, even shameful role within the heroic idiom, his figure revealing the instinct for self-preservation and thus for privileging the body’s base needs over the hero’s honor. And as in the *Odyssey* and iambos, the impersonating outsider both gives and takes abuse. Further echoes of the later books of the *Odyssey* thus emerge in the imagery with which Pindar depicts the slanderer. Nagy points out that the language of the *Nemean* 8 passage indicates not merely that the blame poet uses insult to get some food; more ominously, it suggests that he may (doggishly) make a meal of his victim, since the vocabulary Pindar employs overlaps with that of carrion-feeding.⁸⁴ I would add that for Pindar the abusive talker threatens his target in two parallel ways: by lying and by “consuming” him – that is, by forging the brutal link between a hero’s shame and his suicide. The verbal gesture thus robs the victim of his reputation and ultimately his life. The cruder implications of this equation repeatedly come to the

⁸² Steiner 2001b; cf. also Steiner 2002.

⁸³ See Davidson 1997: 20–26 on the nature of the *opson* as the tasty supplement to grains, and its significance in relation to ideas about moderate social behavior. See further discussion in ch. 2.

⁸⁴ Nagy 1979: 225–26; Steiner 2001b.

fore in the dramatic and oratorical texts of the classical period. Witness, for instance, the sophistic chef who attempts to orchestrate deceptions and threatens to eat his interlocutors in Euripides' *Cyclops* and Attic comedy.

DANGEROUS MOUTHS IN ATHENIAN TRAGEDY

The tragic genre developed as both celebration and critique of the democratic polis, flourishing during a period when Athens was under continuous threats from inside and outside of the polis. While the Peloponnesian War and thus prominent enemy cities such as Thebes provided obvious fodder for dramatic condemnation, tragic poets reserve their most damning characterizations for those whose verbal aggression or subterfuge jeopardize the community from within. Both Euripides and perhaps especially Sophocles repeatedly isolate sophistic, deceitful, and feminized speakers as the targets of insult from which they seek to distance both tragic heroes and tragedy itself. These poets also often match bold, violent speaking styles with savage eating and/or botched sacrifice.⁸⁵

As the chapters that follow explore, in classical drama and oratory those professional speakers who show a penchant for voluble or glib speech have demagogic or sophistic leanings.⁸⁶ The tragic poets represent sophistic speakers as morally dubious, concerned with the pleasures of their own chatter rather than with accuracy, and thus as tending to dissemble or otherwise employ a feminine indirection.⁸⁷ Tragedy most often characterizes female speech as gossip and therefore ill-intentioned, covertly ignoble, and insidiously smooth. In Euripides' *Trojan Women*, for example, Andromache refers deprecatingly to the "polished feminine chatter" (κομψὰ θηλειῶν

⁸⁵ Comedy also makes abundant use of this ritual subtext, but usually by means of the imagery of festive eating and drinking (rather than slaughter); cf. Ar. *Dait.* (frs.), *Eq.*, *Vesp.*, and discussion in ch. 2. Cf. Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 209–21 on the banquet in the tragicomic *Ion*; she argues that Euripides' description of a civic banquet is unique in fifth-century literature, differentiating it from the transgressions of ritual that characterize comic depiction (see also 222–31). Seaford (1994: 281–327) has explored the imagery of sacrifice in Euripides' *Bacchae*, the extant tragedy most saturated with connections between ritual killing and Dionysiac worship.

⁸⁶ In Sophocles' *Philoctetes*, a careful Odysseus who abjures long speeches (12) encourages Neoptolemus to "play the sophist" (σοφισθῆναι, 77), in order to deceive Philoctetes. Cf. Plato's portrait of Protagoras and the *makros logos* (*Prot.* 329a–b). In the *Andromache* Hermione tries to blame her craven behavior on the profligate, elaborate chatter of the "wise Sirens" in the house (τούσδε Σειρήνων λόγους/ σοφῶν πανούργων ποικίλων λαλημάτων, 936–37). As is discussed in ch. 2, Aristophanes also repeatedly characterizes the polished (*kompsos*) style as woman's chatter (*lalia*), and attributes it to pallid, feminized speakers (cf., e.g., *Lys.* 356, 442, 627; *Thesm.* 393). Rowe 1966 explores the similarities between dramatic characterization and Demosthenes' portrayal of Aeschines in *On the Crown*; Dover 1974b: 30–33 notes the overlaps between comic portrayals and both orators' depictions of each other.

⁸⁷ On Plato's similar characterization, see Zeitlin 1990: 92–99; Jarratt 1991: 65.

ἔπη, 651) in which she refuses to indulge (cf. *Andr.* 234–38, 830–35, 930–53). She thereby distinguishes herself most pointedly from Helen, who is accused by Hecuba of seeking to “pretty up” her wrongdoings (τὸ σὸν κακὸν κοσμοῦσα, *Tro.* 981–82).

In tragedy as in comedy, however, formidable speakers may also be represented as voluble, rough types, like the man in Euripides’ *Orestes* who argues in the Argive assembly for putting the hero to death. This nameless person is a brazen type (ισχύων θράσει) of ambiguous status (Ἀργεῖος οὐκ Ἀργεῖος) with a “doorless” tongue (ἄθυρόγλωσσος) (903–04). Such bold speakers are often unscrupulous (*panourgos*), artful (*poikilos*), and show a tendency toward aggressive pandering.

The poisonous politician

Odysseus is, not surprisingly, the embodiment of this unscrupulous type.⁸⁸ In Sophocles’ *Ajax* the chorus of Salaminian sailors envisions Odysseus’ sly whisperings (λόγους ψιθύροις, 148) about Ajax’s mania and the mean pleasure they give the listener (καὶ πᾶς ὁ κλύων/ τοῦ λέξαντος χαίρει, 151–52). With implicit reference to Odysseus, the sailors warn against the secret tales (κλέπτουσι μύθοις, 188) and rampant tongues that have the power to wound (πάντων βακχαζόντων/ γλώσσαις βαρυάληγτα, 198–99). When Ajax’s vision clears, he groans at the thought of the pleasure (ἡδονῆς) this “keen-eyed tool of evil” (πάνθ’ ὄρων τ’ ἀεὶ/ κακῶν ὄργανον) might get from his downfall (379–82). To the stalwart hero Odysseus is a wheedler (αἰμυλώτατον, 388) and an irritant (ἄλημα, 381, 389); Ajax chafes at the laughter his dilemma will cause, a companion of the insults generated (in his imagination, at least) by Odysseus.

Such characterizations of Odysseus’ sly talk are familiar, as is his association with devilry. In the *Trojan Women* Hecuba bewails the fact that she is destined to be Odysseus’ slave, whom she terms a “lawless beast” (παρانونῶ δάκει) with a “double-folded tongue” (διπτύχῳ γλώσσῳ) (284–86). In *Hecuba* he is a “subtle-minded, sweet-talking, people-pleasing wrangler” (ὁ ποικιλόφρων/ κόπις ἡδυλόγος δημοχαριστής, 133–34), while Agamemnon in *Iphigeneia in Aulis* describes him as “always subtle and with the crowd” (ποικίλος ἀεὶ . . . τοῦ τ’ ὄχλος μέτα, 526).⁸⁹ In the fragmentary *Philoctetes* of Euripides, the wounded man, on hearing about the machinations of Odysseus, calls him “most devilish” (πανουργότατε,

⁸⁸ See Worman 1999, 2002a.

⁸⁹ Cf. the nameless man in *E. Or.*, who is also verbally pleasing (ἡδύς τις λόγοις, 907).

fr. 578 N). In Sophocles' *Philoctetes* Odysseus manipulates others into speaking in this subtle manner (cf. ποικίλως, 130), while the beleaguered Philoctetes describes the politicking hero as so despicable that Neoptolemus thinks he is talking about the quintessential low-status abuser, Thersites (cf. γλώσση δὲ δεινοῦ καὶ σοφοῦ, 440).⁹⁰

Let us consider *Philoctetes* in a bit more detail, since it most fully explores how the figure of Odysseus generates this atmosphere of deceit and blame, and does so by means of pointed zeugmas between oral behaviors. The play was staged in 408 BC, after Athens had suffered the oligarchic coup of 411 and then restored the democracy at the demands of troops victorious in Cyzicus.⁹¹ That is, *Philoctetes* was produced in the period directly following the most profound upheaval democratic Athens had yet faced; during the next two years Athens' fortunes in the Peloponnesian War (as well as the grain supply) depended at least in part on the suspect machinations of Alcibiades in the Hellespont and environs.⁹² While on its surface the drama bears little relation to these events, it does take place on a deserted island in the eastern Aegean and does feature a hero riddled by disease at the mercy of a politician's treacherous maneuvers.⁹³ The drama's focus on ravening mouths draws connections between the poisonous bite of the serpent and the deceptive talk of Odysseus; both debilitate the hero, who babbles and cries out helplessly.⁹⁴

When the play opens, Odysseus explains that Philoctetes had to be removed from the community because his wild, ill-omened cries (ἀγρίαίς / . . . δυσφημίαις, 9–10) disrupted libation and sacrifice. Odysseus deems this shouting and groaning (βοῶν, στενάζων, 11) dangerous for group cohesion, and so Philoctetes, with his uncontrollable mouth and suppurating foot, has been exiled to Lemnos. The cause of his disease is itself the result of transgression: a serpent bit him as he trod in the precinct of the nymph Chryse.⁹⁵ He cries out that he is “devoured” (βρύκομαι, 745) by the bite, which has turned him into a gibbering, bellowing savage.⁹⁶ At the same time Philoctetes also associates Odysseus and his evil-working mouth with this bite. This is the man who, Philoctetes says, “touches all

⁹⁰ Odysseus is also a “clever wrestler” (σοφὸς παλιστής, 431); cf. κόπις, E. *Hec.* 134 and Pl. *Thr.* 169b4 regarding Socrates' contentious style (ἀποδύσας ἐν τοῖς λόγοις προσπαλαῖσαι).

⁹¹ Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.14; Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 34.1.

⁹² During this period Alcibiades was in exile, having effectively played double agent to Sparta and Persia; he seems to have had a hand in the coup, but then because of his victories in the east was welcomed home in 408 as a hero (Xen. *Hell.* 1.3; Plut. *Alcib.* 27–34).

⁹³ Note as well that civic miasma is a familiar metaphor in tragedy.

⁹⁴ See Worman 2000 for further discussion of this imagery; and cf. Segal 1981; Blundell 1987, 1989; Rose 1992: 266–30; Hesk 2000: 188–201; Schein 2002.

⁹⁵ Cf. S. *Ph.* 192–200, 266–67, 1326–28. ⁹⁶ Cf., e.g., S. *Ph.* 173, 189–90, 218, 695, 730–805.

slander and devilry with his tongue” (παντὸς . . . λόγου κακοῦ / γλώσση θιγόντα καὶ πανουργίας, 407–08). When he hears that Odysseus is somewhere in the vicinity, he declares that he “would far rather listen to the hateful snake” (θᾶσσον ἄν τῆς πλεῖστον ἐχθίστης ἐμοί/ κλύοιμ’ ἐχίδνης, 631–32) than the bold talker (cf. πάντα λεκτά, πάντα δὲ/ τολμητά, 633–34). He depicts Odysseus’ soul as “peering into crevices” (ἡ κακὴ σὴ διὰ μυχῶν βλέπουσ’ ἀεὶ/ ψυχῆ, 1013–14) like a slinking reptile and teaching Neoptolemus to be clever at mischief (ἐν κακοῖς εἶναι σοφόν, 1015).

Thus while Philoctetes may disrupt sacrificial ritual with his wild locutions, the deceitful verbiage of Odysseus poisons its listener like the serpent’s bite. Connections between snake-like qualities and rhetorical agility turn up in Platonic dialogue and fourth-century oratory as well, so that Philoctetes’ experience of Odysseus as a poisonous politician participates in a common discourse around sophistic types.⁹⁷ Further, in a city so rattled by war and civic upheaval that some citizens were poised to welcome home the traitorous but masterfully manipulative Alcibiades, the figure of the similarly ruthless and manipulative Odysseus would have offered an ominous warning.

In addition, the play sets normal ritual feeding off against the outcast eating of Philoctetes, and aligns the latter with the voice of lament. Philoctetes dines alone on the wild beasts he has shot with his bow, a savage form of consumption that seems particularly disturbing to the chorus of sailors. They mourn the lack of company at his solitary feast (μηδὲ ξύντροφον ὄμμ’ ἔχων, 171) and the fact that the babbling echo (ἄθυρόστομος/ ἄχώ, 188–89) is his only interlocutor. The suffering that gnaws on his heart (δακέθυμος ἄτα, 706) he endures alone, without even the comfort of wine (μηδ’ οἶνοχύτου/ πώματος ἦσθη, 714–15) to ease his pain. The fear of carrion-feeding also surfaces toward the end of the play, when Philoctetes laments that the removal of his bow will reverse the food chain. In grim recognition of his fate, he calls upon the birds that were his former prey, exhorting them to glut their mouths on his mottled flesh, slaughter in return for slaughter (νῦν καλὸν/ ἀντίφονον κορέσαι στόμα πρὸς χάριν/ ἐμᾶς σαρκὸς αἰόλας) (1155–57). Odysseus’ plot, then, not only “bites” Philoctetes with its brutality; it may also lead to the carrion-feeding that on the Homeric battlefield amounts to vicarious cannibalism.

In the Platonic dialogues, *panourgos* types like Odysseus tend to be aggressive talkers, revealing violent tendencies and excessive pride. Socrates and Hippias in *Hippias Minor* argue over whether Odysseus is a “boaster”

⁹⁷ Cf. Ober 1989: 169–71; Worman 2000: 29–33 and the discussion in chapter 5.

(ἀλαζόνα, 369c4), a type that Aristotle opposes to the mock-modest man (*eirōn*, *NE* 1127b22–26). John Wilkins has demonstrated definitively how comedy depicts chefs (*mageiroi*) as boastful types who not only oversee public and private eating rituals but also often behave like proud sophists, making extravagant claims about their virtuosity and magician’s abilities.⁹⁸ Comic depictions also indicate that cooks were regarded as lowbrow hucksters, which raises further questions about the background and intentions of the boastful, unscrupulous type.

We might recall, however, that Odysseus sometimes stands in contrast to the braggart sophist. As subsequent chapters elaborate, the decadent Polyphemus of Euripides’ *Cyclops*, whom the chorus calls the “chef of Hades” (Ἄιδου μαγειρῶ, 397), and the appetitive Callicles in Plato’s *Gorgias* provide some of the most outrageous portraits of this voracious type. When opposed to such excessive speakers, Odysseus looks less like Alcibiades and more like Socrates: scheming, lowbrow, understated.⁹⁹ This reflects his ignoble stance in tragedy, where he confronts heroes whose tragic excesses make his strategies seem either too political or too diffident.¹⁰⁰ Thus Odysseus is not always consistently delineated in the dramatic settings as either dashing and aggressive or indirect and careful. Rather, like Socrates he may appear less extreme when opposed to other violent speakers, whose excesses contrast sharply with his manipulative and dissembling style. This mutability is, of course, in keeping with his character. But it also reflects the fact that in iambic discourse certain terms are unusually flexible, especially those that are most convenient to divest oneself of and affix to one’s opponent. Thus, as with the label “sophist,” the deceiver may be either a sly, understated type or a grandiose confector of tall tales, which is why both the voluble Aeschines and the twittering Demosthenes charge each other with sophistry and deception, as I discuss in chapter 5.

Female talk and its hazards

Because of its associations with ignoble, persuasive chatter, one other denigrated category exhibits a similarly inclusive pattern: that of “female.” Women’s supposed propensities for gossip and other excesses function in tragedy, as elsewhere, as measures that separate the trustworthy and honorable characters (both male and female) from their opposites. Tragic dramas are rife with morally questionable characters, of course, but as with the

⁹⁸ Wilkins 2000a; see further in chs. 2 and 3.

⁹⁹ See further in chapter 4. ¹⁰⁰ Cf. Worman 1999.

figure of the lying sophist, a certain kind of shameful, manipulative female talk provides many tragedies with a general reference point for articulating the weakness and indulgence that threatens the social group – by implication both the archaic community and the democratic polis.¹⁰¹ Think of figures such as Clytemnestra, a mannish, violent speechifier in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* and a shallow, self-deceiving wheedler in Euripides' *Electra*. Euripides' *Medea* is another obvious example of female excess, not only in the violence of her actions but also in her clever verbal strategies. Jason makes much of this cleverness, first depicting her particular wordiness as wounding (τὴν σὴν στόμαργον . . . γλωσσολαγίαν, 525) and finally rejecting the entire race of women as pestilential (573–75).¹⁰² In a strikingly metatheatrical moment, the chorus of *Medea* appears to address the problem of insults against women as well as women's speech, critiquing the slanderous tradition generated by male poets and claiming that things would be different if women sang the songs (410–30).

As I have explored elsewhere, however, the most pervasively blameworthy female figure in tragedy is Helen. She serves Aeschylus and especially Euripides as a pointed metonymy for female inconstancy and indulgence, the figure against which all women (and perhaps some men as well) must be distinguished.¹⁰³ Euripides' *Trojan Women* most emphasizes her function as a target of insult and moral condemnation. In pointed contrast to all of the Trojan women, she is seductive, dissembling, disastrously appealing. She overdresses (1022–24), deploys an elaborate, self-flattering speech (914–65), and renders Menelaus incapable of harming her – from Hecuba's perspective the only proper physical counterpart to her well-deserved condemnation. The chorus of Trojan women envision themselves sailing off in her company – they enslaved, she unscathed and gazing lovingly into her mirror (1105–09).

As should be apparent from the analysis of *Philoctetes* above, Sophocles' dramas are sensitive to these negative measures of male and female excess. As a number of scholars have demonstrated, *Antigone* in particular offers a singularly complex and curious critique of what constitutes "female" speech.¹⁰⁴ The play is clearly shadowed by an anxiety about both sophistry and feminine verbiage, especially in relation to authoritative utterance, but the female protagonist indulges in neither. Instead the deluded

¹⁰¹ See McClure 1999.

¹⁰² It is not, of course, unusual in tragedy for male characters to express this kind of Semonides-inspired insult (e.g., *A. Sept.*, *E. Hipp.*).

¹⁰³ For this phenomenon more generally, see Worman 2002a.

¹⁰⁴ E.g., Griffith 1999: 51–54, 2001; Foley 1996.

politician Creon designates any verbal opposition to his rigid, boastful statements as womanly and craven or otherwise base. *Antigone* thus underscores this contrast in a pointed manner, by putting the most slanderous utterances about women's speech into the mouth of this myopic leader. Other tragedies make use of misogynistic claims as a means of pointing up male myopia, of course; witness Eteocles in *Seven Against Thebes*, Hippolytus in the eponymous play, and (again) Jason in *Medea*. But, as Mark Griffith has pointed out, *Antigone* approaches female speech in a singularly revealing manner, with the result that the speaking style designated "female" is clearly distinct from the gender of the speaker.¹⁰⁵ Further, in contrasting this feminized style to a boastful, aggressive one, the play reflects oppositions that structure iambic discourse in other genres and similarly calibrates this contrast to indications of power and status within the community.¹⁰⁶

Finally, in *Antigone* this focus on boastful versus "female" speech is crosscut by imagery that frames the links between violent feeding and dangerous locutions as a central concern of the polis. Perhaps because of this emphasis on the threat of bold or craven talk to civic health, *Antigone* retained its influence through the fourth century, during which period both Demosthenes and Aristotle mine it for exempla of proper citizen behavior.¹⁰⁷ The play's most famous ode, which celebrates human ingenuity in ambiguous terms, lists "talk and windy thought and the civic temper" (καὶ φθέγμα καὶ ἀνεμόεν καὶ ἀστυνόμους/ ὀργάς, 353–54) as a cluster among many formidable (cf. δεινός, 331) inventions.

And in fact ways of talking in the civic setting quickly emerge as a source of great contention in *Antigone*. The contrast that frames the interchanges among characters opposes the boastful and tyrannical Creon to the speech he scorns, what he considers to be overly feminized, clever, or profiteering chatter. The myopia of kingship fosters the one style of speaking: Creon's decree, which he regards as courageous and regal, mandates the maltreatment of Polyneices' corpse and leads to disaster. Fear fosters the other: since anyone who opposes Creon suffers his abuse as a feminized speaker or one out for gain, rumor runs rampant and his interlocutors equivocate. Creon's conflict with Antigone, as well as his confrontations with his son Haemon and the seer Teiresias, thus reveals a pervasive concern with speech that chokes off civic dialogue. This is matched with the imagery of carrion-feeding, which taints the city's altars and gluts the

¹⁰⁵ Griffith 2001: 121–22. ¹⁰⁶ See further in chs. 2, 4, and 5.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Dem. 2.247; Arist. *Pol.* 1253a, 1260a24; and discussion in ch. 5.

throats of the birds of prey, so that they are unable to signify properly to the seer.

The connection between dangerous speech and violent feeding is set up at the beginning of the play. In the parodos the chorus describes the Argive enemy as a ravenous eagle who attacks the Theban “serpent” (δράκοντος, 126).¹⁰⁸ The Argive force stands over the Theban halls (στὰς ὑπὲρ μελάθρων), encompassing the seven-gated city with its yawning mouth full of murderous lances (φονώσαισιν ἀμφι-/ χανῶν κύκλω/ λόγχαις ἐπτάπυλον στόμα) (117–19). Before the jaws of this monstrous creature can be sated with blood (αἰμάτων γένυσιν πλησθῆναι), however, it is driven back by the serpent throng (120–26). Zeus, the chorus continues, despises the boasts of a big tongue (μεγάλης γλώσσης κόμπους/ ὑπερεχθαίρει, 127); this spurs him to strike down the Argive (presumably the famous boaster Kapaneus), who breathes forth blasts of hateful wind (ἐνέπνει/ ῥιπαῖς ἐχθίστων ἀνέμων, 137) as he falls.¹⁰⁹ This ominous pairing of bloody mouths and boastful speech traces the central revelation of the play: that bold, tyrannical talk is synonymous with the violent mouth of war and its consequence – civic miasma.

When Creon enters directly after this grim ode, he declares brashly that he will not “keep a lock on his tongue out of fear” (ἐκ φόβου του γλώσσαν ἐγκλῆσας ἔχει, 180). He thus gives a harsh order: that the body of Polyneices be left unburied, to be fed upon by birds and dogs (πρὸς οἰωνῶν δέμας/ καὶ πρὸς κυνῶν ἐδεστόν, 205–06). In Redfield’s terms, this brutal decree approaches the vicarious cannibalism of the Homeric battlefield. And as its violence portends, Creon then faces a series of abrasive encounters, in which he is pained by and abuses those who seek to call attention to the dangers of braggart’s talk. The sentry’s news that someone has covered and watched over Polyneices’ corpse “bites” (δάκνει, 317) Creon; in irritation he terms the sentry a “chatterer” (λάλημα, 320) who indulges in witty talk (κόμψευε, 324).¹¹⁰ When he confronts the disobedient Antigone, he threatens her by analogy to hot-tempered horses in need of the bit (συμικρῶ

¹⁰⁸ This reference to the story that the Theban aristocracy was descended from men sown from the teeth of a dragon (cf. E. *Phoen.* 639–75) also echoes a common pairing in oracles: the eagle and the snake. Plato cites a famous Homeric example in *Ion* 539b3–d1 (= *Il.* 12.200–07); cf. also the oracle in Aristophanes’ *Knights* (197–201), where the struggle between eagle and snake is similarly interpreted as portending trouble for the “eagle” (i.e., Paphlagon-Cleon). Sophists and demagogues are frequently deemed “snakes”; further below and in chs. 4 and 5.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. the theme of boasting that structures Aeschylus’ *Septem*, particularly in the figure of Kapaneus and his boastful shield; also E. *Hec.* 626–27 (τὰ δ’ οὐδὲν ἄλλως, φροντίδων βουλευματα/ γλώσσης τε κόμπτοι). Boastful talk in comedy and fourth-century prose is the purview of the loudmouth; see further in chs. 2, 5, and 6.

¹¹⁰ Cf. the depictions of this type in chs. 2 and 3.

χαλινῶ δ' οἶδα τοὺς θυμουμένους/ ἵππους καταρτυθέντας, 477–78). He accuses her of boasting (ὕβριζειν, 480; ἐπαυχεῖν, 482) about what she has done, even though it is he who most embodies this arrogant attitude.¹¹¹ Her open defiance he contrasts with the covert disobedience of Ismene, whom he compares to a viper that drinks his life-blood (ἢ κατ' οἴκους ὡς ἔχιδον' ὑφειμένη/ λήθουσά μ' ἐξέπινες, 531–32).

In reply to Creon's accusations, Antigone declares that others would approve her actions if their tongues were not "locked in fear" (εἰ μὴ γλῶσσαν ἐγκλήοι φόβος, 505; cf. ὑπίλλουσιν στόμα, 509). The repetition of the metaphor reveals the problem with speech in Creon's city: those who ought to have more restraint do not, while others fear to speak up. This is confirmed in Creon's exchange with Haemon, who tells his father that the "dark rumor" (ἐρεμνή . . . φάτις, 700) in the city supports Antigone. He warns him against thinking only his own tongue or heart (γλῶσσαν . . . ἢ ψυχὴν, 708) are right, a position he represents as empty tyranny.

Creon depicts any speech opposed to his arrogant verbiage as not merely babbling or clever; it is also feminine or mercenary. The bold talk of the manly aristocrat thus contrasts with the chatter of the marketplace or the women's quarters. First, his startled anger at a woman's defiance causes him to cast his conflict in gendered terms. He swears that Antigone is the man rather than he (ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἀνὴρ. αὕτη δ' ἀνὴρ), if she does not pay for her deeds (484–85). In his speech to Haemon he concludes by vowing not to give in to a woman, against which he sets order and contests with men (677–80). He accuses Haemon of siding with a woman (740), which renders his nature "low" or "tainted" (μιαρόν, 746).¹¹² Finally, he calls his son a woman's slave (γυναικὸς . . . δούλευμα) and warns Haemon not to "wheedle" him (κώτιλλέ με) (756). The implications of Creon's abuse of his son connect the female with slavish or base behaviors; his treatment of Teiresias seeks to denigrate the seer in similar ways.

Teiresias arrives before Creon has seen the destructive effects of his boastful, violent talk on his family, but the seer declares that the king's decree has already been disastrous for the city. The signs are grim: the birds scream barbarously (κλάζοντας οἷστρω βεβαρβαραμένω, 1002) and attack each other; the entrails stream with dark ooze (1007–09). The entire city is sick (νοσεῖ πόλις, 1015); now that there is no one to protect Polyneices'

¹¹¹ See Griffith 2001 on Antigone's attitude and speaking style; cf. also Foley 1996; and McClure 1999 for the larger context.

¹¹² See Griffith 2001: 121–22; cf. also McClure 1995. The term *miaros* typically designates lowbrow and/or hireling speakers in comedy and oratory; cf. chs. 2 and 5.

corpse, the city altars are choked with carrion (βωμοὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐσχάραι τε παντελεῖς/ πλήρεις ὑπ' οἰωνῶν τε καὶ κυνῶν βορᾶς, 1016–17). As the birds of augury alarm the seers with their raucous, unfamiliar voices, the birds of prey do not cry out anything that signifies (οὐδ' ὄρνις εὐσήμους ἀπορροιβδεῖ βοάς), so gluttoned are they with the bloody fat of murdered flesh (ἀνδροφθόρου βεβρωῶτες αἵματος λίπος) (1021–22). Creon responds obtusely that he is a victim of the prophets' greed (1034–36); he dismisses Teiresias as one of those overly clever men (χοὶ . . . δεινοί) who eloquently utter base words for gain (λόγους/ αἰσχροὺς καλῶς λέγωσι τοῦ κέρδους χάριν) (1046–47). Teiresias then warns Creon that his acts will move the citizens in hatred against him, and echoing Haemon hopes that the king may learn to foster a “calmer tongue and better mind” (τρέφειν τὴν γλῶσσαν ἥσυχωτέραν/ τὸν νοῦν τ' ἀμείνω, 1089). Creon does not in fact come to possess either of these until it is too late, Antigone suffers for her bold talk, and those who speak like women or merchants turn out to be wiser than the braggart king.

The play ends with a confirmation of the connection between boasting and violence: “The big words of over-proud people,” the chorus says, “bring on blows as big” (μεγάλοι δὲ λόγοι/ μεγάλας πληγὰς τῶν ὑπεραύχων/ ἀποτείσαντες, 1350–52). *Antigone* thus ultimately concludes that the boastful (rather than the strictly feminine) tongue is an instrument of brutality, the wielding of which leads to physical violence, tainted feasting, and ultimately the destruction of family and city. Chattering, ignoble, or “female” speech, in contrast, is merely ineffectual; the weaker voices of Ismene, Haemon, and Teiresias carry little force against the bold locutions of Creon and Antigone.

The epic represents the connection between insult and the mouth's gluttoning (with carrion, with ill-gotten gains) as a consequence of battlefield violence, iambos as the inevitable confluence of rude talk and rough circumstance, tragedy as the grim result of botched sacrifice and/or sophistic mischief. Although the elevated register of epic, epinician, and tragedy mandates vocabulary and figurative associations largely distinct from those of iambos, these genres all contribute significant details to what the mouth, as a metonym for the appetitive body, can mean in contexts marked by verbal strife and, frequently, physical violence.

While Pindar's programmatic statements seek to define the laudatory ethics of epinician against iambic contention in particular, Homeric epic incorporates the iambic perspective as a necessary (if also necessarily denigrated) corrective to aristocratic hubris. Tragic drama also focuses blame

on an array of verbal excesses, but perhaps most insistently on those who are boastful, deceptive, or feminine. The plays that emphasize such excesses associate aggressive verbiage with ravening mouths, and the insidious tongue with the poisonous bite.

Iambic poetry, in many ways more essential for this discussion, extends the lowbrow but chastening role of the beggar Odysseus in the figure of the hungry outsider, and in so doing develops a crude, ridiculing, and often confrontational voice that centers on the body's debasement. In iambos the mocking mouth is mocked in turn and frequently threatened with a variety of physical maltreatments, such as deprivation, choking, or blows. This abusive lyric mode, then, initiates the focus on mouth as a site of vulnerability and excess that, through its metonymic relationship to the body and its appetites, precipitates other physical humiliations. In addition, iambic poetry uses the critical outsider's voice as a means of drawing distinctions between high and low status, as well as between male and female, usually through the mediums of food, drink, or sex. In these regards it directly influences Attic comedy's focus on the mouth as the central metonym for the excesses of the democratic polis, in public assembly and private practice alike. These equations and the social settings against which they are articulated thus frame many of the interconnections among oral activities depicted in both comic poetry and prose works focused on rhetoric and oratory. I begin with mouth imagery in Attic comedy, since it is not only the literary setting most adjacent to iambos but also the source for many of the stances and locutions that in prose works highlight distinctions among types of speakers and their particular excesses.

*Open mouths and abusive talk
in Aristophanes*

εἰς ἄλλοτρίας γαστέρας ἐνδύς κωμωδικὰ πολλὰ χέασθαι
μετὰ τοῦτο δὲ καὶ φανερώς ἤδη κινδυνεύων καθ' ἑαυτὸν
οὐκ ἄλλοτρίων ἄλλ' οἰκείων μουσῶν στόμαθ' ἠνιοχῆσας.
He poured forth many witticisms from within the bellies of others;
but now he takes the risk in the open on his own,
curbing the mouths of his own Muses rather than others'.

Wasps 1020–22¹

In the early comedies of Aristophanes the mouth serves as a focal point in the denigration of professional speakers' bodies, both politicians' and poets'. These plays tend to depict loud, brash talkers as voracious consumers – not only of food and wine, but also of sex, money, and land. This type, embodied especially by the demagogue Cleon in *Knights* and *Wasps*, is a low-class cannibal, ready to gobble up comestibles and citizens' lifeblood indiscriminately. His speech is glutted with bodily references, and he is eager to consume his opponent in argument (e.g., *Eq.* 698–99). Conversely, glib, effete types like the students of Socrates in *Clouds* are typically the receivers of this abuse; they may be quick-tongued, but they are also subtle, slippery, and “gape-assed” (*euruprōktoi*).² They drink water rather than wine (e.g., *Eq.* 349); but like the glutton they shun crude, simple food and choose the *opson* (i.e., the delicacy³). They also exhibit enervating artistic and sexual tastes (e.g., *Nub.* 969–80). Both kinds of speakers risk debilitating association with female appetites, the one for his monstrous greed, the other for his louche inclinations.

All of the comic tropes that demarcate the body and its appetites contribute to the mobile, often contradictory, but consistently recurring

¹ The chorus is speaking of the poet writing plays that others directed, probably because he was too young to serve as *didaskalos* until *Knights* (424); cf. Dover *ad Nub.* 530.

² Cf. the fastidious *bouche* in Bourdieu's scheme (1991: 86–87). See also Taillardat 1962: 68 and Bakhtin 1984: 317 for the parallelism between mouth and anus.

³ Cf. *Clouds* 983, *Wasps* 508–11. Note that Paphlagon is a fish-eater; see Davidson 1997: 3–35; Fisher 2000: 66–71; and Wilkins 2000a: 257–311.

slanders aimed at professional speakers. They range in type from the bold haranguer to the idle gabbler; and the alacrity with which abusers internal and external to the plot bandy, reconfigure, or recombine such labels indicates that they served as flashpoints for anxieties about how appetite and democratic practice converge. Such figurative strategies thus likely refract in some fairly nuanced and revealing ways the changing attitudes of Athenians in the late fifth century (and into the fourth) toward the proper behavior of the citizen.⁴ They intersect around concerns that expose elite struggles over control of the citizen body during a period of political and cultural stress: the greed of the demagogues, say, or the decadent tastes of the “new intellectuals.” They forge a recurring scheme in a number of Attic comedies produced early on in the Peloponnesian War (the 420s), particularly Aristophanes’ three plays that focus on arenas of citizen training and interaction: *Knights* (assembly demagoguery); *Clouds* (elite education); and *Wasps* (forensic participation). References to appetite in other later dramas of Aristophanes contain important material for comparison, especially those that focus on female proclivities, as I explore below. Also revealing are lampoons of sophists, demagogues, and women in the fragments of contemporaneous comic poets, notably those of Cratinus, Ameipsias, and Eupolis.

It is, however, the three plays of Aristophanes produced at the beginning of his career in the years 424, 423, and 422 – after the death of Pericles and spanning Cleon’s full dominance and demise – that dramatize most pervasively and consistently mocking distinctions among the appetites of voracious demagogues and brutal or decadent sophists, in addition to figures who overlap with these types, such as prostituting politicians and glib poets. All three portray elderly citizens in thrall to demagogues or sophists, who sometimes serve as the antiheroes of the dramas.⁵ A metatheatrical

⁴ Precisely how, when, and to what extent these literary images do coincide with the actual attitudes and perspectives of Athenians during this period is largely unrecoverable, of course, since the only attitudes accessible to the modern observer are those already schematized by cultural (and indeed literary or artistic) convention (cf. Worman 2002a: 11–12).

⁵ The contemporaneous plays *Acharnians* (425) and *Peace* (421) share some similar concerns and vocabulary, but they both depict citizen-heroes who take it upon themselves to save Athens. This relegates any sophistic or demagogic figures to the background of the action; the dung beetle in *Peace*, for instance, clearly serves as another stand-in for Cleon, but he has no speaking part and the citizen Trygaeus “rides” him rather than the reverse. (The slave at the beginning of the play explicitly points to the *ainos*: δοκέω μὲν, ἔς Κλέωνα τοῦτ’ αἰνίσσεται, ὡς καῖνος ἀναιδέως τὴν σπατίλην ἔσθιει, 48; cf. also μιὰρὸς τὸ χρῆμα καὶ κάκοσμον καὶ βόρον, 38.) Further, although in later productions awareness of demagoguery and sophistry surfaces intermittently, this awareness does not always find expression in the same representational patterns or with the same degree of censure. In *Birds*, for example, the citizen Peisthetaerus is a smooth, subtle type (σόφισμα κύρμα τρίμμα παιπάλιμ’ ὀλον, 428) who serves up speeches that are “well mixed and kneaded” (προπεφύραται λόγος εὔ

frame, usually articulated in the parabases, indicates that the comic poet with the appropriate oral restraint (as the chapter's epigram suggests) may save the citizen from such slavish misjudgments. These dramas single out the demagogue Cleon and the sophist Socrates for special treatment. As I discuss in more detail at the end of the chapter, Cleon receives the most steady abuse from Aristophanes, as it seems had Pericles from his predecessor Cratinus, the first comic poet to attack politicians by name (*onomasti kōmōidein*).⁶ If Cratinus criticizes Pericles as a secretly indulgent type who projected a restrained public image, Aristophanes positions himself and his own "appetites" against Cleon, Pericles' successor and the Athenian leader who was singularly dominant during the 420s in the running of the war.⁷ *Knights* stages the details of Cleon's putative abuses (e.g., snatching the glory at Pylos in 425⁸), and in the brutality of its lampoon registers with disgust the robust political stature of Cleon, whom the Athenians in fact reelected *stratēgos* shortly after the Lenaia at which Aristophanes' play was produced (424). *Acharnians*, *Clouds*, *Wasps*, and *Peace* also position the figure of the poet himself against Cleon in particular (as apparently did the lost *Babylonians* [426]), and repeatedly suggest that the comic didaskalos may be the only one who could present an accurate critique of Cleon's abusive relationship to the citizen body and thereby successfully chasten the demagogue.

The mouth of the professional speaker, including that of the poet, thus emerges as a site of contestation and aggression, often in pointed combination with other bodily apertures.⁹ As metonyms that index political losses and gains, these apertures also repeatedly appear vulnerable to physical abuse and ingress. They tend to be highlighted as conduits for explosive utterance or the reverse: for stuffing greedily, for silencing, for serving (or servicing) others. Further, correlations among "holes" isolate types by means of mocking anatomical reconfigurations shaped by gender, age, and class associations. For instance, in *Clouds* the "Stronger" Argument who represents an earlier generation is initially horrified by the profligate life outlined by the "Weaker," patently sophistic Argument and convinced that it will

μοι/ ὄν διαμάττειν οὐ κωλύει), as well as "big and fatty" (μέγα καὶ λαρινόν, 465). Kelting 2007 shows that Peisthetaerus is both an *alazōn* (i.e., a big talker) and a subtle, sophistic maker of "sauces" (i.e., *opsa* that render inferior "food" superior). Vickers 1988: 154–170 argues that Peisthetaerus represents Alcibiades, but it seems unlikely that this is so simple a match, given the fact that Peisthetaerus is an old citizen who is looking for an "idle place" (τόπον ἀπράγμουα, 44). See also Slater 1997.

⁶ So Athenaeus (268d). See Rosen 1988a: 37–58; and cf. Halliwell 1984.

⁷ See Ameling 1979; McGlew 2002: 42–56 on Cratinus' criticisms of Pericles.

⁸ *Eq.* 54–57; cf. Thuc. 4.27–39.

⁹ Cf. Goldhill 1991: 185, who emphasizes that the comic poet shared status with the politicians he criticized – i.e., "a citizen *sophos* whose utterance raises a question of the limits of licence."

render his beloved youths flabby and pallid (1017–19). Once, however, he comes to see that most of the elites who engage verbally in the public arena (e.g., poets and politicians) are gape-assed (*euruprōktoi*) types who indulge similarly, he divests himself of both dress and verbal decorum, exclaiming, “O fuckers (κινούμενοι); take my cloak, damn it, so I can desert to your side” (ὡς ἔξαυτομολῶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς, 1102–04).¹⁰

These comedies contribute crucially to the development of iambic discourse in the classical period, shaping an abusive lexicon that becomes influential in fourth-century prose depictions of professional speakers.¹¹ They also continue the trend in iambic poetry of staging crude characters with base concerns, although old comedy was clearly unique in its use of exaggerated visual spectacle to underscore insulting depiction. Understanding how this comic scheme aligns the body in relation to Athenian social and political discourse should bring into clearer focus why the mouth serves the abusive idiom as such an important cathexis. In the section that follows I first consider the impact of language on the body, which both reiterates visible deportments in social settings and produces a semiotic scheme that rearranges its “natural” form. The remaining sections analyze in detail the figurative patterns by which Aristophanes’ plays lampoon female appetites and thereby the oral habits of demagogues and sophists.

CONFIGURATIONS OF THE BODY

A number of scholars have analyzed the imagery of appetite during this period, but from perspectives quite different from the one I am adopting here. In his study of Greek ideas about speaking styles, for example, Neil O’Sullivan argues that Aristophanes aligns styles in a consistent oppositional pattern with physical types and social categories, so that the “grand” (*μεγαλοπρεπής*) and “thin” (*ἰσχνός*) styles of oratory extend to speakers’ types and habits. Discussion about appetites, however, is secondary to the analysis of a burgeoning rhetorical vocabulary.¹² James Davidson, in some contrast, has pursued correspondences among social categories and appetites from a historical perspective, which has led him to be rather too skeptical about the specificity and unique impact of literary formulations.¹³

¹⁰ The stage business here must involve a set of discrete gestures: something like the Stronger Argument first addressing the audience, then tossing his cloak to the Weaker Argument, and finally leaving the stage by exiting into the seats or the *phrontistērion*. See Revermann 2006: 219–22 for a judicious discussion of the problems with this staging; also Stone 1981: 424–25.

¹¹ See chs. 4, 5, and 6. ¹² O’Sullivan 1992; see further discussion below.

¹³ One of the more relevant instances of this shortcoming emerges in Davidson’s argument that terms apparently designating lascivious behavior such as *katapugōn* and *kinaidos* should not be

John Wilkins employs a materialist framework to analyze the connections between gluttony and aggressive politicking in the comic text, detailing how it forges debasing ties among familiar objects, social spaces, public figures, and civic rituals.¹⁴ Victoria Wohl, on the other hand, looks at how the Athenians employed the language of eros to talk about political power, although she recognizes that the appetites more generally frame the material on which she focuses.¹⁵

While these studies each contribute important concepts for formulating the parameters of a discussion of the appetites, I am concerned more narrowly with the ways in which literary semiosis shapes the body and its urges within the given text. This is somewhat in keeping with O'Sullivan's focus; but the oppositional imagery that he thinks Aristophanes employs to distinguish grand from plain oratory turns out to be intricate and contradictory, once it is looked at in relation to other behaviors, to the particular dramatic plot, and to the social practices it references.¹⁶ The complex intersection between textual imagery and visual spectacle in comedy raises a number of challenges for assessing the impact of comic insult, as does the ritual frame. Civic feasting often serves as an alimentary subtext for the action of the plays. In *Knights*, for instance, both of the slavish demagogues compete to feed Demos fancy fare (*passim*), while in *Wasps* Philocleon denies that the demagogue merely throws crumbs to his constituents while keeping the good stuff for himself (672–77). In the original productions the bodies of characters that oversaw food preparation would have resembled the paunchy interlopers at the archaic symposium familiar from iambos, while their roles recalled that of butchers (*mageiroi*) in public sacrificial rituals.¹⁷ But while such culinary rituals and the figures that superintend them shape a clear referential frame of customary social practices, the tropes

understood as labels for those who engage in pathic sex, but rather for all kinds of intemperate types. This obscures the fact that comic portrayals make use of a figurative scheme that frequently highlights crucial distinctions among character types, distinctions dependent especially on notions of “feminine” excesses for their force and humor. While the idea made popular by Dover and Foucault that sexual practice revolved around a firm distinction between active and passive partners is surely too schematic to capture the vicissitudes of either social practice or literary imagery, the comic poets, like the philosophical writers and orators, seem more than ready to align certain sexual activities with weak, prissy speakers and others with bombastic, violent ones. See Davidson 1997: 177–80 and Wohl's subtle discussion (2002: 12–20).

¹⁴ Wilkins 2000a; cf. the “edible choruses” of Wilkins 2000b. ¹⁵ Wohl 2002.

¹⁶ On the other hand, discussions that downplay the literariness of the imagery, by ignoring generic elements and/or by treating this imagery as merely reflective of cultural habit, risk losing the precision and nuance of the comic idiom. This is, I think, a problem with Davidson's analysis, and perhaps also with Wohl's, although both are, like O'Sullivan's, rich and useful discussions.

¹⁷ Cf. Fehr 1990; Seeberg 1995; and discussion in ch. 1. Regarding the *mageiros*, see Wilkins 2000a and further below. Nick Fisher (2000) has emphasized that involvement in and knowledge of

of the dramatic text forge their own realities, many of which counteract or directly crosscut visible effects and the social rituals in which they are deployed. Since comedy's main characters sported protruding bellies, asses, and outsized phalluses on stage, imagery that pointed up excessive behaviors by exaggerated metonymies or the grotesque juxtaposition of body parts would have augmented or reconfigured the visibly bulging, gaping body in question.¹⁸ Thus in *Knights* the rapacious Paphlagon's opponents envision assessing him as if he were a pig at the butcher's, his mouth pried open to measure the health of his . . . anus (380–81; cf. *Ar. Thesm.* 222).

This conjunction of imagery and spectacle uniquely reveals the body as an unnatural object, something not only fenced in by social delimitations but also formed (or deformed) by language and marked by visible cues in performance.¹⁹ Such articulations of the body are what Judith Butler describes as “fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.”²⁰ While Butler argues that all social interactions are performative and thus constitutive in this way, the dramatic stage clearly redoubles the sense of the body as amassed through signification. Indeed, since comedy dismantles and reassembles the body in grotesque permutations, it further disrupts notions of natural coherence and demarcation in relation to class, generation, and especially gender.²¹

How, then, ought we to approach the body that the comic texts fabricate, a pointedly artificial deformation whose free-wheeling, rebellious idiom belies its elite provenance and subtle literary tenor? Bourdieu's ideas about how the talking body is shaped and controlled through social habituation offer some help with the significance of this irreverent dismantling by rude, open-mouthed talkers, which he considers a rejection of the censorship that dominant discourses (e.g., educated, “polite,” or official) impose on speakers. In a moment of witty ventriloquism, he argues that this outspokenness is such that, “in reducing humanity to its common nature – belly, bum, bullocks, grub, guts, and shit – it tends to turn the social world upside-down,

symposiastic and other commensal rituals were probably much more widespread among average Athenians than many scholars have assumed, so that concerns with moderate behavior attach to ideas about social mobility. Cf. Bowie 1997 for a different view; also Pütz 2003 for the relation between symposium and *kōmos* in the comic setting. On luxury and leisure activities, see also Braud 1994; Wilkins 1996; Fisher 1998.

¹⁸ For a discussion of the evidence from vase paintings and its relation to extant comedies, see Taplin 1993; Foley 2000.

¹⁹ Regarding the effects of taboo on the body, see Douglas 1969: 4: “It is only by exaggerating the differences between within and without, above and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created.”

²⁰ Butler 1990: 136. ²¹ Cf. Bourdieu 1991: 88 and further below.

arse over head.”²² He emphasizes the power of this performative rebellion and invokes Bakhtin, linking his work on festive talk to revolutionary crisis. Both foster a “verbal explosion” of restrictions normally imposed, especially on subjugated groups, according to hierarchized notions of sex, class, and generation. Bourdieu accumulates instances of such constraints from both literature and social history that reveal how emblems of power demarcate the authoritative speaker and control the speech of those subordinated to her (or more likely him) in social interactions.²³

Ancient comedy is a paradox in this regard, since it both perpetuates dominant discourses and indulges in explosive talk. In its function as an organ of the state it certainly did not foster revolution – rather the reverse, as Bakhtin recognized. His work on Rabelais adds another layer of complexity to the question of how to assess the corporeal style of comic insult, since it argues that festive, marketplace (i.e., non-literary, non-official) talk organizes a set of tropes around the grotesque body. While he treats the strategies of Rabelais’ narrative as a direct reflection of this carnivalesque, insulting play, he omits any discussion of Aristophanes, viewing ancient comedy as an elite literary institution.²⁴ Attic comedy does combine communal insult (i.e., *iambos*) with revelry (*kōmos*) in a state-run medium, thereby transforming looser festive modes into an official ritual.²⁵ For our purposes it is important to recognize that insofar as ancient comedy mocks, dismantles, and reassembles both the body and social rituals its literary texture is “explosive” – that is, obscene, irreverent, challenging of norms. But while it bears traces of festive rituals not restricted to elites and targets a wide

²² Bourdieu 1991: 88. Cf. Herrick: “Her Belly, Buttocks, and her Waste,/ By my soft *Nerv’lits* were embraced” (“The Vine,” 1648 [1963]: 26); although the poem is quite romantic, its interplay of body parts and “vine” effects an insouciant dismantling.

²³ E.g., Bourdieu’s analysis of how the *skeptron* confers visible status in the *Iliad*, as does the judge’s wig and robe in modern settings (Bourdieu 1991: 109–13).

²⁴ See Bakhtin 1984: 281–84. Edwards argues that Bakhtin’s notion of the popular grotesque identifies a stance coopted by the elite in Attic old comedy, noting that Aristophanes denigrates the demos as a “doulocracy or republic of tradesman” (1993: 104). Wilkins 1997: 258 points out that the “exuberant hawkers” of Aristophanic comedy challenge civic order in a fashion that anticipates the “popular grotesque” mode of Rabelais in Bakhtin’s conception; but, as Goldhill 1991: 184 notes, these are citizens playing citizens to citizens, so that class hierarchies might not be felt in ancient comedy as much they were in medieval carnival. Platter 1993 argues that Aristophanes’ parodic mode is in fact closer to Rabelais’ than Bakhtin himself thought. See also Carrière 1979: 26–32; Wilkins 2000a: 55–56; vs. Möllendorf 1995: 90–109, who closes the distance between “carnavalesque” and literary representation by arguing that Bakhtin’s ideas about literature as a festive mode in fact capture ancient comic poësis.

²⁵ See Henderson 1990: 271–75. Cf. also Carrière 1979, who rightly emphasizes the political ambiguities of Aristophanic comedy; also Rosen 1988a; Bowie 1986, 2001; Konstan 1995; Heath 1997. Henderson’s formulation may exaggerate the differences between, say, the ritual obscenities (*aischrologia*) of Dionysiac celebration and the invective of comic competition, but his analysis emphasizes the public and performative roots of this invective, which also indicate its discursive character.

audience, its literary character and its institutional function both importantly delimit its poësis.²⁶ In fact, it appropriates social practices for use in a ritualized literary sphere as a means of civic regulation, redirecting casual, rude locutions at public figures in their political capacities in a ventriloquism of the lowbrow, common citizen. As such, ancient comedy initiated the introduction of abusive talk into official contexts, thereby rendering it accessible to other public political settings, as the orators' techniques of defamation reveal.²⁷

In tracing the strategies by which festive talk dismantles the grotesque body, Bakhtin points to certain tropes that reveal how literary figuration wreaks havoc on its integrity.²⁸ As I discuss in the introduction, this is a central contention of Barthes' study of Balzac. If the open-mouthed, voracious body clearly serves the carnivalesque idiom as its grounding image, Barthes contends that semiotic schemes often depend on the human body more generally for their coherence.²⁹ In his view, when a text does not preserve coherences received as natural (the most essential trope of which is bodily integrity), the organizing principles that the body should provide the narrative give way to multiplying metonymies. Discrete entities (e.g., the gaping mouth, the "big decree"³⁰) then come to stand in for concepts such as character and larger, unified notions of identity are reduced to their representative parts. These parts are often rearranged and misassigned, so that characters emerge as grotesques or look to be one thing while really being another.

Barthes' ideas about figuration provide my analysis with its most crucial tool: the means of tracing the precise patterns by which such politically and socially explosive tropes are insolently deployed and then safely rerouted to serve elite didactic purposes. Comic imagery indulges in the playful and yet cautionary disintegration of the body by activating at least two figurative strategies that Barthes identifies: the laudatory or abusive blazon, with its enumeration of body parts; and the metonymic "falsehood," which indexes debasing categories such as the female in the characterization of

²⁶ Möllendorf 1995: 150–51 points out that for Bakhtin the equivalence between festival and literature is functional rather than causal (i.e., the one is not primary and the other only vital in proximity to it); contrast Carrière 1979: 138–39.

²⁷ To say this is not to ignore the existing ritual settings in which abusive talk was central (e.g., the *aischrologia* of fertility rituals; cf. O'Higgins 2003), since my point concerns the incorporation of insult into heterogeneous literary settings (i.e., those that produce a "text").

²⁸ E.g., the blazon (Bakhtin 1984: 426–27); see further below.

²⁹ Cf., e.g., Barthes 1974: 214–15. On Aristophanes' figurative language in broader scope, see Taillardat 1962; Müller 1974.

³⁰ Cf. *Nub.* 1019, where the phrase is a pointed euphemism for the overly active penis of the decadent youth.

male behaviors. A third figure takes the form of metaphor that Aristotle calls analogy (ἀνάλογον, *Po.* 1457b9), which involves the substitution of one metonymic item for another; Aristotle offers the example of calling a wine goblet the “shield of Dionysus.”³¹ Comic settings (including the satyr play) commonly activate this figure by drawing analogies between two sets of metonymies and then exchanging one part (often anatomical) for another.³² In Aristophanes’ *Birds*, for example, when the bird-woman Procne comes on stage and the buffoonish Euelpides expresses a desire to “spread her legs” (διαμηρίζοιμ’ ἄν αὐτήν, 669), Peisthetaerus points out that she has a beak (and/or *auloi*³³). Euelpides responds to this warning with an enthusiastic analogy: “Just like an egg, by god, I’ll peel the shell off her head and kiss her that way (ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ ὦδὸν νῆ Δί’ ἀπολέψαντα χρῆ/ ἄπὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς τὸ λέμμα κᾶθ’ οὕτω φιλεῖν, 673–74).

Ironically enough, such images ultimately control and neutralize the ramifying, polymorphous body, rather than freeing and celebrating it. In combination with the concertedly non-naturalistic costume (including a body stocking with parts attached), comic figuration deploys the grotesque body as an emblem that was effectively apotropaic in its monitory challenge. Thus when anatomical tropes drew joking, slanderous correlations between the mouth and the anus (or, as here, the “egg” and the “head”), these were further arrayed in grotesque comparison with other parts held up, perhaps literally, for praise or abuse in an instructive warning to citizen spectators. For instance, in *Clouds* the atavistic Stronger Argument celebrates the “small-tongued” youth of old with a loving blazon: in addition to other features he had large buttocks, a physiognomy that signals athleticism and modest continence. His glorious ass is opposed to the tiny, flabby buttocks of those open-mouthed types who have worn out their “holes” while seducing boys, women, and the body politic more generally. Thus one type of body emerges as a ludicrous cluster of recesses and protrusions, while the other only appears to resist mocking reconfiguration, since its celebration nonetheless reduces it to its parts. We know that the upstanding youth maintains his physical integrity by assessing his deportment and anatomy, from modest mouth to dewy balls (*Nub.* 978–80). The blazon furnishes an idealized vision that should have contrasted wryly with the

³¹ Such strategies reinforce what Foley 1988 analogizes to Brechtian theater’s politicization of the audience, insofar as they impede emotional identification with characters and transform the audience member into a critical observer. I find this distinction more useful than (e.g.) Silk’s 1990, 2000a distinction between theatrical realism and non-realism, which he thinks shapes “stable” versus “discontinuous” style and characterization (e.g., 2000a: 136–58, 207–16, 221–44).

³² See further below and in ch. 3. ³³ Cf. Dunbar 1995 *ad loc.*

characters on stage, given their bulging, gaping bodies and their verbal excesses. In this instance as in many, however, we face a further complication, since the comic body usually exhibited a big ass in addition to its other outsized features (e.g., mouth, belly, phallus).³⁴ It seems that even the celebrated body of the youth cannot escape the degrading combination of comic tropes and comic spectacle, since the big ass may indicate either athleticism or lubricity, both of which may be exercised at the gymnasium.

In Aristophanes' semiotic scheme, then, bodily deportments and deformations both visible and verbal broadcast characters' attributes in a bewildering array, especially calibrating their oral habits to other inclinations. These delimitations of the body are, again, didactic and proscriptive; even as they are cast in riotous, lampooning language they aim at instruction and regulation. Generational and class lines cut across these distinctions, which is to say that they are organized at least in part by the kinds of social hierarchies that Bourdieu argues clearly tie bodily hexis to ideas about the "proper" ways of using the mouth.³⁵ The generational conflict comes very strongly to the fore in *Clouds*, as it does in *Wasps*. Not only do father and son clash in their outlooks in both plays, but in *Clouds* the two Arguments represent old versus new approaches to the nurturing of young male citizens.³⁶ In *Knights* the confrontation centers more on distinctions (or confusions) among behaviors that run the gamut from active to passive, while the generational lines that are drawn serve as the background against which these distinctions are played out.³⁷

APPETITIVE ACTIVITIES IN OLD COMEDY

Although comedy ranges oral habits along a continuum from loud and aggressive to glib and soft, the most outrageous types usually exceed categorization. These characters tend to embrace one end of the spectrum more than the other, but they are often brash as well as servile, fastidious as well

³⁴ As Foley (2000: 301) has noted, also pointing out that not only Strepsiades and Socrates but perhaps also the Arguments likely wore some version of the comic body. See also Revermann 2006: 153–59, who expresses doubt that many characters escaped what he terms "the ubiquitous pattern of comic ugliness" (159).

³⁵ Bourdieu 1991: 81–88. On class indicators (e.g., *chrēstos* vs. *ponēros*), see Rosenbloom 2002: 300–12.

³⁶ Cf. Bowie's (1997) concern about such generational differences; I elaborate on this pattern further below.

³⁷ E.g., the chorus and the Sausage Seller may cement their allegiance in generational as well as moral terms (e.g., *νεανικώτατε*, *Eq.* 611; *νεανίσκων*, 731). Note, however, that these terms may point to deportment (i.e., "swaggering") as well as or rather than age (cf. *νεανιεύεσθαι*, *Pl. Gorg.* 482c4, *νεανιεύεσθαι*, 527d6; *νεανιεύεται*, *Dem.* 19.242, also 21.18, 69, 131, 201); and see discussions in chs. 4 and 5.

as greedy, sly as well as brutal. Socrates, for example, may be manifestly a chattering idler, but he also reveals traits that point to a much more belligerent type. Indeed, the attributes that Socrates' training can produce run the gamut, in Strepsiades' enthusiastic catalogue of types, from the bold, obnoxious boaster (θρασύς; βδελυρός; ἀλαζών) to the glib, subtle ironist (εὐγλωττος; μάσθλης, εἴρων, (*Nub.* 445–49).³⁸ Not surprisingly, the label “sophist” turns out to be very crucial to this comic pattern, since it is not only used as a zeugma between the political and the educational realm but also predicated of other brutish types.³⁹ Accordingly, these sophists emerge as flatterers and manipulators of the citizen body; their followers also frequently imitate their immoderate ways.

All comic character types are, however, arrayed against (or assessed in hazardous proximity to) the most negative measure of Athenian citizen behavior: the female. As iambic literature indicates, greed for food, drink, and sex are regarded as feminine, and references to the appetites often invoke attitudes and behaviors recognized as essentially female. Likewise, in many plays of Aristophanes the specter of femininity haunts the anxious calibration of the male body, so that the female enters the picture primarily as an embodiment of the threat of weakness, indulgence, and unfettered greed. Both *Knights* and *Clouds* make implicit use of the female body as a negative model for citizen behavior, while *Wasps* deploys cozy fantasies of women conveniently reduced to their serviceable parts.⁴⁰ In all three plays the corrupt Athenian youth also tend to show a distinct penchant for luxury and often are themselves soft, lipping types whose penetrable, unmanly bodies broadcast their sybaritic lifestyles. I thus begin my discussion of this comic imagery with a slight detour, in order to establish what urges comedy depicts as particularly feminine and how these affect the comic characterizations of male behavior.

Excursus: staging “female” appetites

A number of authorities on ancient drama have emphasized that female characters play a facilitating or mediating role in Greek drama.⁴¹ These and other readers of ancient comedy have pointed to the association of women

³⁸ Cf. *Ar. Av.* 983, where the boaster is an uninvited guest (ἐκκλητος ἰὼν ἀνθρώπος ἀλαζών), which would suggest a connection to the all-belly *aklētoi* of archaic symposia (see further in ch. 1).

³⁹ Cf. Carey 2000: 425.

⁴⁰ Again, cf. Barthes' notion of the “metonymic falsehood” (1974: 162); in such cases a genus like “female” subsumes a species like “chatterer.”

⁴¹ See especially Zeitlin 1990; also Loraux 1995; Wohl 1998; Foley 2001.

with costuming and deceit on the one hand and sexuality on the other.⁴² It has also become commonplace to acknowledge that male citizens performed these female characters, although not as many scholars have recognized the importance of the fact that they did so in costumes that emphasized their own grotesque theatricality. Helene Foley has pointed to this phenomenon in comedy; and Gwen Compton has argued that in Aristophanes successful manipulation of costume is correlated with masculinity and its reverse with the feminine.⁴³

Scholars of ancient comedy have not, however, explored very fully the ways in which the dramatists associate the female with excessive and debased appetites.⁴⁴ Nor have they noticed how these associations are constantly recalibrated (i.e., reorganized and reattached) by the transposing of female perspectives into the mouths of lampooning men. Acknowledging the impact of the original staging of comic dramas, especially those that dramatize “women on top” (e.g., Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazusae*, *Lysistrata*, and *Ecclesiazusae*), is essential to any accurate assessment of how the female body serves as a cautionary object in the chastening of male behaviors. Aristophanes was not alone in his representation of female initiative and appetite; comic fragments suggest that other contemporaneous poets also put female figures on stage in a number of capacities, from symbolic entities (e.g., Phrynichus’ Muses, Cratinus’ Comedy) to rebellious militants (e.g., Cratinus’ *Thracian Women*, Theopompus’ *Women on Campaign*). The combination of denigrating metonymies and visibly absurd costuming would have likely fostered the deployment of “female” as a category in a manner that effectively foreclosed the authority and power usually associated with female characters in these comedies. The female protagonists often behave like men, mocking excesses as female and isolating certain male behaviors as proper or at least defensible. It is, moreover, only by referencing other female bodies and their putative inclinations that such distinctions can be contrived. Indeed, Attic comedy more broadly depicts female appetites as a means of identifying attitudes and discourses (including comic discourse) that might check the typical weaknesses and indulgences of Athenian men.⁴⁵

⁴² Costuming and deceit: Zeitlin 1981; Case 1985; Taaffe 1993; Bassi 1998. On sexuality, esp. Loraux 1993.

⁴³ Foley 2000; Compton-Engle 2003.

⁴⁴ Taillardat 1962: 395–98 notes the connection comedy makes between women and the “politics of the belly”; Zeitlin 1999 emphasizes the importance of female appetite to ideas about whether women are fit to rule. See also Zeitlin 1981, 1990; Loraux 1993, 1995; Wohl 2002; Foley 1982, 2000, 2001.

⁴⁵ Cf. Foucault 1985 and the notion of ancient sexuality as shaped by the regulation of pleasures. On the appetites more generally see Davidson 1997; Wilkins 2000a; Wohl 2002.

In Aristophanes' plays that feature female protagonists, characters deploy abusive metonymies as a means of passing judgment on their own kind, and do so as "women" – that is, as characters already mockingly delineated by the grotesque accoutrements that identify their gender within the mimetic frame. Again, all such talk denigrates the female body, especially as it signals sexual proclivities.⁴⁶ A penchant for soft clothes and idle chatter (*lalia*) broadcasts a correlative appetite for louché sex, which is marked as womanly and thus as fostering attributes and inclinations that no right-thinking citizen – or, apparently, citizen's wife – should countenance in public leaders. The female body would appear to serve both male and female speakers as a crucial negative reference point for delineating how (to paraphrase Judith Butler⁴⁷) one should perform oneself as a man.

On the comic stage, then, gendered bodies and their appropriate costumes served as indices for recognizing appetites as male or (perhaps especially) female. But at least in this ancient setting, two other factors contributed to the complexity of such identifications. First, both the bodies and the costumes seem to have been obviously theatrical – that is, clear overlays on a non-grotesque male body.⁴⁸ Second, comic language repeatedly crosscuts these gender associations, non-realistic as they were, further undermining any sense of stable identification. Verbal reconfigurations of the body such as those that Barthes has identified as metonymic falsehoods and blazons weaken and feminize the male form.⁴⁹ Thus the derisive referencing of the female body on stage coincides with and indeed frequently inspires linguistic strategies that result in rude juxtapositions of body parts and miscued identifications.

When, for instance, in *Thesmophoriazousai* Euripides is preparing his old in-law (called "Mnesilochus" in some manuscripts) for infiltrating the Thesmophoria, the very "debasement" of his male body by shaving his face and singeing his pubic area generates a series of jokes about the feminine/effeminate body (*Thesm.* 230–48). The shaving of the Inlaw's jaw (γυᾶθον, 221) makes him think of Kleisthenes, whom Aristophanes ridicules repeatedly in his plays as effeminate and sexually submissive.⁵⁰ The mere absence of chin hair thus makes the Inlaw a "Kleisthenes," which is to say a "woman" (or something like it), if we take this as a false metonymy.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Cf. Foucault 1985; Dover 1978; Winkler 1990; Zeitlin 1990; Cohen 1992; Wohl 2002.

⁴⁷ Cf. Butler 1990: 139 ff. ⁴⁸ Foley 2000: 304–05.

⁴⁹ Cf. the discussion in the Introduction and further below, pp. 105–07.

⁵⁰ E.g., *Ar. Ach.* 355, *Eq.* 1373–75, *Nub.* 355, *Av.* 829–31, *Lys.* 1091–92, *Ran.* 57, 422–24.

⁵¹ Since the Inlaw is supposed to be disguising himself as a woman, his reference to Kleisthenes points up how the "drag" of effeminate men achieves this miscuing.

Further, this association is directly juxtaposed to the fiery depilation of the Inlaw's pubis – which, he exclaims, makes him a “piggy” (δελφάκιον, 237) with a flaming asshole (cf. πρωκτόν, 242).⁵² The term *delphax* (dim. *delphakion*) is slang for mature female genitalia; note that the Inlaw is himself a pig (*Thesm.* 222; cf. *Eq.* 375–81), which redoubles the mocking conflation of mouth (or jaw) and “twat.” As the Inlaw wriggles and cries out at his incremental (ef)feminization, Euripides asks him whether he wants to be “laughed down at” (καταγέλαστος, 226) as one half-shaved.⁵³ The Inlaw replies disconsolately that it matters little to him (227), as if any depilation at all would anyway render him half a man.

A handful of plays by Aristophanes from the late fifth century employ a fairly coherent set of ideas about female appetites. While they were thus produced later than the plays on which this chapter focuses, their portrayals of female appetite make more explicit the nature of the feminization that threatens many if not most male characters at one point or another in the earlier plays. These later comedies stage female characters either in their traditional roles as participants in cultic rituals (*Thesmophoriazusae*) or in the process of wresting political control from the men (*Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazusae*). And again, many of the appetites highlighted in these “women” plays have their parallels in other Attic comedies as a subtext for assessing male weakness and indulgence. Neither the politicians nor the poets escape this pervasive critique, since all (with the possible exception of a certain type of comic poet) show themselves to have tastes for various feminizing pleasures.

The comedies on which I am focusing, however, stage such pleasures in more emphatic form, as embodied by female characters or feminized men (usually in drag).⁵⁴ In all of these plays the early scenes establish a gendered framing of appetites that is crosscut by the layered identifications of the characters and the misleading metonymies that undermine them.

Thesmophoriazusae

In this most elaborate lampoon of tragic conceits, female attitudes and appetites are associated with the deceptions of theater on the one hand and sexual indulgence on the other.⁵⁵ The female characters in the play are indeed

⁵² But see Henderson 1975 [1991]: 131–32, who argues that this term is opposed to χοῖρος, which designates a young or depilated pubis; also Austin and Olson 2004: 132 (*ad* 236–37).

⁵³ As Austin and Olson note (*ad* 226), *katagelastos* designates one who is “an object of hostile laughter”; cf. how Plato deploys this term and its cognates around the figure of Socrates and the discussion in ch. 4.

⁵⁴ On sex and gender in relation to costume see (e.g.) Case 1985; Taaffe 1993; Saïd 1987; Foley 2000.

⁵⁵ Cf. Zeitlin 1981.

word-proud, materialistic, and lubricious; like Praxagora in *Ecclesiazusae* they have pretensions to fine oration but only in order to defend their penchants for sex and drink. However, unlike their more obscene counterparts in *Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazusae*, the women at the Thesmophoria are outraged by the crude attitudes of the impostor (i.e., Euripides' in-law) who serves as Agathon's appetitive opposite. The opening scene of this drama that purportedly focuses on a female fertility ritual stages the clash of appetites for talk and sex as, predictably enough, a conflict between male types. Thus early on in the action two cross-dressing male characters divide between them the symbolic space putatively occupied by women, and the tender body of one inspires abusive language in the other.

I treat this play in more detail in a subsequent section (see pp. 106–07), where it can be seen to contribute substantially to the formulation of the feminized, prattling type of speaker. The opening scenes of *Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazusae*, in some contrast, help to clarify more generally the indulgences that female characters embody. These plays feature women scheming with each other to fix what has gone wrong with Athens. In *Lysistrata* the eponymous character proposes to her peers that they all withhold sex from their husbands until they agree to end the Peloponnesian War. In *Ecclesiazusae* the impressively wordy Praxagora convinces her companions to steal their husbands' clothes and take over the Assembly. Fine, bold plans require disciplined and stalwart executors, however; and the opening scenes of both plays highlight how tenuous the female hold is on either militant chastity or manly imposture.

Lysistrata

The Athenian women whom Lysistrata urges to join her in her boycott are both lascivious in the extreme and of weak resolve. They hear sexual innuendo in every sentence; they declare themselves incapable of giving up sex; and they view others – male and female alike – with an appropriative, lewd eye. Indeed, they seem more indulgent of their appetites than their counterparts from other demes, and the exchanges among the women suggest that there might be something endemic to Athens that makes this the case. When Lysistrata first begins to tell Kalonike of her plan, she declares it to be “big” (μέγα), which encourages Kalonike to respond “and hunky?” (καὶ παχύ;) (23). Lysistrata answers in the affirmative, and Kalonike responds wryly that she is surprised that all the women have not assembled long ago. She mixes this kind of joking innuendo with mockery of her sex; how, she asks, can they do anything to save Greece if they spend all their time at home, dolled up in delicate gowns, make-up, lingerie, and fancy slippers

(αἱ καθήμεθ' ἐξηγησιμένοι κροκωτοφοροῦσαι καὶ κεκαλλωπισμένοι/ καὶ Κιμβερίκ' ὀρθοστάδια καὶ περιβαρίδας, 43–45). Lysistrata explains that such seductive finery is precisely what will become most useful in controlling the husbands, and Kalonike embraces it in a “typically feminine” swoon over fancy clothes.

Soon the other women arrive, including those from Sparta, Thebes, and Corinth. The Athenian women assess their counterparts physically, apparently aided by their Doric dress – that is, gowns open at the sides. If these characters were indeed draped in such revealing attire, it is equally likely that they also wore female body stockings on which breasts and curves were prominent.⁵⁶ The Athenian “women” certainly respond as if these outsized feminine accoutrements were strikingly visible. Indeed, their collective eye is exceedingly objectifying, dehumanizing, and even colonizing: Lysistrata and Kalonike exclaim over the Spartan Lampito’s high color, buff body, and fabulous “tits” (τὸ χρῆμα τῶν τιτῶν) until she bridles that they may as well be assessing her for sacrifice (ἱερεῖον) (83–84). Meanwhile Myrrhine (another Athenian) peers down the Theban Ismenia’s dress and admires her Boeotian “field” (τὸ πῆδιον, 88) as if it were hers to conquer.⁵⁷

All are united in their appetite for sex, however. When Lysistrata exhorts the representative group to “give up the cock” (ἀφέκτεα . . . τοῦ πέους, 124), they recoil in horror. The Athenian women are the first to refuse, declaring that they would rather go through fire than give up sex (133–38).⁵⁸ Their adamant attachment to the male organ causes Lysistrata to exclaim in exasperation, “Our entire [female] race is thoroughly twat-mad” (ὃ παγκατάπυγον θῆμέτερον ἅπαν γένος, 137). Finally Lampito, the brave and buxom Spartan, declares that she will give up “the ready cock” (ψωλᾶς, 143) for peace. With some reluctance the women agree to swear an oath to remain stalwart in the face of their desirous husbands and their own wavering resolve.

What can we say, then, about this representation of female appetite? First and most simply, women, and especially Athenian women, have such a craving for sexual pleasure that they prefer it to peace. Further, they have a difficult time understanding anything as independent of sex, so that their

⁵⁶ Foley 2000.

⁵⁷ This coy euphemism must refer to Ismenia’s belly rather than her pubis, since the latter is exclaimed over in the line following as nicely polished and plucked (κομφότατα τὴν βλήχω γε παροτετιλμένη, 89).

⁵⁸ Cf. McGlew 2002: 151–54, who emphasizes that it is essential to the plot that the women withhold from the men not just their bodies but also their desire.

preferred attire has a “come hither” cast to it and most of their talk is colored by obscene reference. Their favorite verbal strategies reduce the body to its parts, a gleeful deployment of metonymies that is metatheatrically misleading and thus a source of redoubled hilarity. Finally, their appetite for “raising their Persian slippers to the ceiling” (πρὸς τὸν ὄροφον ἀνατένω τῶ Περσικά, 229–30) extends to a sensual, appropriative attitude toward the world in general, so that the bodies of others are assessed as territories to invade.

That is, these female characters are much like Athenian men. As subsequent sections demonstrate, elsewhere in comic representation male characters are indulgent in the extreme of sensual pleasures that span the body from mouth to anus. Some are heavy drinkers, some eat to excess, some talk too much, some like to take it in the mouth or the ass; many want whatever they can get or all of the above. While such obscene and mocking characterizations are, again, central to iambic tradition, certain distinctions are particular to the comic depiction of females or feminine types and others to more aggressive sorts. If, for instance, a penchant for soft clothing and sex signals feminine proclivities, a voracious, appropriative attitude toward food and wine (as well as sex, but only secondarily) suggests a more “manly” stance. The ravenous Cleon of *Knights* most fully embodies this sort. Unlike Agathon, who in *Thesmophoriazusa*e appropriates the feminine by trying to feel like a woman (*Thesm.* 149–52), Cleon objectifies all he surveys, reducing it to something that he can consume (e.g., *Eq.* 78–79, 698–99). Thus when the Athenian women swoon over finery and seem obsessed with sex, they deport themselves like soft men (*malakoi*). When, in contrast, they fight over the wine and ogle the bodies of their counterparts from Sparta and Thebes, they assume the gaze and stance of an aggressive Athenian male. Lest we miss the significance of this posturing, it is repeated at the end of the play when Lysistrata oversees the assessment of the naked female figure Reconciliation (Διἀλλογῆ, *Lys.* 1114) and assists the apportioning of her “body” like a diplomatic madam.

The only feature of the portrait of female appetite offered by *Lysistrata* that the comedy seems to reserve as specifically feminine is a gleeful obsession with the phallus, the central symbolic implement of comedy. Male characters may be threatened with penetration or depicted as having an overweening desire for it, but the lack of anxiety with which the female characters regard their appetite for cock approaches ritualistic celebration. In their hands the penis is, effectively, an emblem of fertility and abundance; only when desire for it trumps all other concerns is Athens in trouble. Although it should go without saying that women have no control

over their urges, Lysistrata's plan does seem to work for the good of Athens. On the other hand, if we envision this celebration as enacted by citizen men with clearly grotesque female attributions (e.g., the body stocking), it emerges as a singularly masculine ritual and dramatic moment. What would have been staged, from this perspective, is men celebrating their own anatomy via a mocking imposture of women. Or perhaps we should not even regard their enactment as imitating women, but rather deploying the female body as a ritual artifact.

Ecclesiazusae

Even the reversal of this phenomenon in *Ecclesiazusae* – that is, female characters posing as men – produces a similar type of purposeful and insulting misrecognition. There the “men” have to remember not to “lift their legs” (ἀῖρειν τὸ σκέλη, 265) when voting and thereby reveal their “true” nature along with their sex. This pointedly obscene metonymy (i.e., genitals indexing gender) quotes a feature of the Demeter narrative, in which Baubo flashes the goddess (the *anasyrma*).⁵⁹ A similar reversal is actually staged when the Thesmophoria celebrants “unmask” the Inlaw, a moment that clinches the final appropriation of the female joke by the substitution of the phallus as its punch line (*Thesm.* 647–48). The *Ecclesiazusae*, however, suggests something different. Euripides' old relative tries to resist such exposure, while the women preparing to infiltrate the Assembly are reminded that this display of genitals and the desire for sex that it signals captures their gender as a whole.

In *Ecclesiazusae* as well, then, the primary focus of female appetite is sexual pleasure. The women who take over the Assembly are generous sorts, though; they seek to institute equal amounts of sex for everyone – male and female, young and old, rich and poor, beautiful and ugly.⁶⁰ Their leader Praxagora proves herself early in the play to be an impressive orator, fully capable of imitating male performance style and attitudes. She employs a familiar series of stereotypes about female greed, bibulous tendencies, and love of sex (225–28) in order to argue that women's “traditionalism” makes them preeminently suitable for running the city.⁶¹ While the other women whom she has convinced to assume the clothes of their husbands and attend Assembly have less facile tongues, Praxagora encourages them by

⁵⁹ Clement, *Protrept.* 2.20.1–21.2; cf. Zeitlin 1982: 144–45; Foley 1994: 46.

⁶⁰ This communistic impulse extends to the distribution of wealth in general, but sex becomes the focus of the plot. Cf. Saïd 1979a on the feminizing aspects of the communistic economies instituted by Praxagora and her followers.

⁶¹ In fact, of course, it is the traditionalism of the insults that makes the joke.

noting wryly that those young men who are “pounded the most” (πλεῖστοι σποδοῦνται) are the most formidable speakers (δεινोटάτους εἶναι λέγειν) (112–13).⁶² After further urging, one of her comrades responds, “Who of us doesn’t know how to chatter [λαλέειν]?” (120).

As I explore further below, *lalia* is a signature feature of female or effeminized characters.⁶³ Elsewhere as here in *Ecclesiazusae*, the calibration of bodily apertures indicates a connection between facile public speaking and a taste for being penetrated. That is, indiscriminate use of one hole fosters indiscriminate use of the other. And again, the very focus on the body’s parts and their insulting reconfiguration feminizes the body, so that abusive linguistic strategies reinforce the threat to male cohesion and coherence. If idle blabber is clearly female and thus effeminizing, the sexual activities that match have an equally deleterious effect: young men wear out their asses in pursuit of such pleasures (*Nub.* 1018–19; *Ran.* 1069–71). When men behave like women, then, they exhaust themselves; they become open at both ends and thus primed for corruption. There may be some relevance here in the familiar iambic representation of female sexuality in general as depleting of male energy and power (cf. Hes. *WD* 586–87; Alc. fr. 347; Hippon. fr. 92; Sem. 7).

Comic dramatists single out cunnilingus in particular as the activity of sybaritic men, possibly those fellow poets whose styles were considered too refined or feminized (Ar. *Eq.* 1284–86; *Vesp.* 1283; *Pax* 885; Eup. fr. 52.2).⁶⁴ This metonym on the surface suggests that contact with this female orifice has a particularly corrupting effect. But I would argue that, as with the label *euruprōktos*, the critique focuses ultimately on speaking style rather than sexual habit. This comic slander does not, then, say as much about attitudes toward oral sex as about a poetic and/or musical mode of which Aristophanes (and perhaps some of his contemporaries) disapproved.⁶⁵ Most likely this style was too decadent, luxurious, even eastern and thus “feminine.”⁶⁶

When, for instance, in *Ecclesiazusae* the herald of Praxagora’s new Athens calls the citizens to the feast, he snidely notes that one Smoeus is among

⁶² Cf. Ar. *Eq.* 424–26. ⁶³ O’Sullivan 1992: 19–20, 131–33; see pp. 96–110 below.

⁶⁴ Martial’s sexual imagery, although it often possesses more a social than a literary critical edge, makes similarly rude calibrations involving cunnilingus. In 3.81, for instance, a eunuch is described as being a “man at the mouth” (*ore vir est*, 6), as if his tongue had become a “male member” (cf. 2.84, 3.73, 4.43). In another poem (2.33), Martial achieves something like the reverse of this: kissing a woman who resembles a penis becomes, in effect, fellatio (*fellat*, 4).

⁶⁵ Note the probable pun on *Vesp.* 1283 (γλωττοποιεῖν); cf. Sommerstein 1977: 276. Also elsewhere Aristophanes is less negative about the sexual practice (e.g., *Pax* 716), which further suggests that the joke has to do with poetic style.

⁶⁶ On *mousikē* and stylistic differences, see Murray and Wilson 2004.

the girl servers, “licking the plates of the women” (τὰ τῶν γυναικῶν διακαθαίρει τρύβλια, 847⁶⁷). While nothing is known about this Smoeus, his name may be cognate with σμοκορδοῦν, which means to exhibit feminine deportment; he is also described as wearing riding gear (ἵππικὴν στολὴν ἔχων, 846), an outfit that suggests an over-zealous readiness for sex.⁶⁸ Similarly, the second parabasis of *Knights* makes disparaging reference to AIPHRADES, who spends his time in brothels soiling his beard with the “revolting dew” (τὴν ἀπόπτυστον δρόσον, 1284) of prostitutes (a charge repeated at *Vesp.* 1283; *Pax* 885). Sommerstein suggests that this dew-lapper may have been a rival comic dramatist, since the repetition of the lampoon seems to indicate pointed disparagement within the idiom.⁶⁹

In other words, in Greek representation men are sapped by sex (and/or the indulgences it symbolizes), and those who pursue it in excess (whether as feminized receivers or as overly keen pursuers) are perceived as soft – like Paris in Homer, they are lovers rather than fighters and this marks them out for abuse. Indeed, even tougher types may be effectively unmanned by desire. In *Lysistrata*, for example, Lampito notes wryly that the stalwart Menelaus dropped his sword when Helen showed him her breasts (155–56; cf. Eur. *Andr.* 629–30).

Women, in contrast, are not depleted by indulgence in sexual pleasure, or at least not as their subjectivity is fabricated in comic depiction. They seek to leave “no hole unfilled” (μηδεμίαις τρύπημα κενόν, 624), as Praxagora’s startled husband Blepyrus exclaims when she explains her plan. Sex is their primary focus and goal, and desire for it drives them to assume control of the city in order to insure universal satisfaction. Note that all of Aristophanes’ extant plays with female protagonists involve taking over the Acropolis or Pnyx, central spaces for civic practices.⁷⁰

It is at least possible that this comic role for female protagonists was understood as the counterpart to that of the male protagonist as civic “chef” (*mageiros*), a role that comes to the fore in middle and late comedy.⁷¹ For our purposes this suggests that male protagonists engage the culinary as the primary metaphorical register in relation to the regulation of appetites.

⁶⁷ On this metaphor cf. Henderson 1975 [1991]: 186.

⁶⁸ Cf. Anacreon fr. 417 L-P. ⁶⁹ Sommerstein 1981 *ad loc.*

⁷⁰ Cf. Foley 1982, who argues that these civic spaces are domesticated by the women, but on a model already present in Athenian notions of oikos/polis space; see also Loraux 1993: 159–67 regarding the Acropolis as a paradoxical civic space for women (i.e., non-citizens) to occupy.

⁷¹ As Ribbeck and others have shown, the term *mageiros* may refer to a private chef or a public butcher, the one preparing luxurious feasts for the elite, the other sacrifices for civic celebrations. See Ribbeck 1882: 18–26; Rankin 1907: 48–66; Giannini 1960; Berthiaume 1982: 17–37; Wilkins 2000a: 369–71 and further below, pp. 84–88.

Thus if in the comic scheme a “chef” often controls the consumption of “food and wine” for the polis, perhaps a “madam” might control the distribution of “sex,” especially at a moment of democratic crisis.⁷² Both concern civic abundance and how the governing of pleasures can make for a healthy, well-ordered community – although the efforts of these civic officials are not always clearly salutary or successful, as (e.g.) *Knights* and *Ecclesiazusae* reveal.

What, finally, might this “madam” role contribute to our understanding of the way comic discourse employs the female body in the regulation of male behaviors? It could indicate a more positive place for the feminine within the symbolic scheme (and perhaps even for women in ancient Athens), insofar as it appears to assign to female agents one area of civic regulation. But this would be to ignore the fact that this role is occupied on stage (and thus in the only relevant public setting) by a male citizen who deploys the clearly theatrical implements of female identification as a ritual appropriation of the feminine. Thus the “madam” as a dramatic function would appear to be even more fully equivalent to the chef than we might first recognize, since both roles involve situating the male citizen as a possible savior of the city by virtue of his proper regulation of the appetites.

Further, assuming some positive female civic role would conflate the metaphorical (or at least the analogical) with the actual: citizen appetites for food, wine, and sex are not really as central to the political as they are to the domestic economy. The Assembly may be concerned to regulate grain imports (e.g.), but only because the people have to eat. Anxiety about excessive behaviors within the political sphere in actuality serves at most as a means of assessing a leader’s integrity – ultimately in the Assembly, not in bed or at table. While (then as now) a politician’s reputation might suffer if he is known to be too indulgent of one appetite or another, this is at least putatively because of what this indulgence could suggest about his ability to be a good servant of the state. In ancient Athens, and essentially still now, domestic economies are understood as the central concern of women, which means that within the symbolic scheme the female must necessarily have a different relationship to comedy’s use of domestic metonymies to talk about political issues.

Even if we emphasize that the “female” protagonists are in fact men in drag who mouth women’s talk but articulate the male perspective, I think

⁷² Both *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Lysistrata* were produced in 411, as the oligarchic coup of the “Four Hundred” was heating up (*Lysistrata*) and then in place (*Thesmophoriazusae*). It may have been less threatening (i.e., more remote) during such upheaval to stage plays in which a woman rather than a man takes charge. I owe this observation to Mary English.

that a further foreclosure of female authority is at work here. Comic discourse more broadly regards the indulgence of appetite itself as female, and dramatizes the extent to which *all* male characters are weakened by their excessive desires.⁷³ The plays that depict women seizing power make this point all the more evident, since these authoritative characters embody appetites that should be carefully governed. Thus it appears that even attending to appetites may effeminize the politician. In both the ancient and the modern setting, real men zealously wage wars (even unjust ones), while those who focus on satisfying what we might call domestic desires are “girly men.”⁷⁴

The loud-mouthed consumer

The historical figure who would seem most obviously to escape this kind of female taint is Cleon. He dominates the plays of Aristophanes produced in the 420s as he did the politics of Athens during this period, so that the comic image of the open-mouthed, violent monster shadows this famously persuasive demagogue’s political ascent and demise.⁷⁵ We have little knowledge of what the real Cleon was like, since Thucydides sets him up as the antitype of Pericles and Aristophanes treats him as the embodiment of political greed. Unlike the character of Socrates, for whom the largely flattering portrayals of Plato and Xenophon serve as a counterweight to Aristophanes’ insulting depictions, Cleon has no ancient defenders.⁷⁶ I am, however, primarily concerned with these important social actors as literary constructs, since they (or their significant body parts) are used in the comic idiom as metonyms for concerns about appetite and the moral failings that supposedly precipitate political disaster. From this perspective, information that such characters may provide about the climate of late fifth-century Athens has less to do with what they were actually like than

⁷³ Cf. Arist. *NE* 1144b35–36, where he associates incontinence (ἀκρασία) with softness (μαλακία) and luxury (τρυφή).

⁷⁴ This phrase was made famous most recently by Arnold Schwarzenegger. Speaking at the 2004 Republican National Convention, he lampooned Democrats as “girly men” for their concerns that the domestic economy was suffering because of the money being poured into the Iraq War (*New York Times*, September 1, 2004).

⁷⁵ See Wohl 2002: 71–123; also Lang 1972; Flower 1992. Cf. Thucydides’ portrait of Cleon as the “most violent and persuasive” speaker (βιάστατος καὶ πιθανότατος, 3.36–38) in Athens. Elsewhere Cleon is depicted as an overly loud and mobile performer, who spoke with his cloak thrown back and/or garments hitched up (*Ath. Pol.* 28.3; *Plut. Nic.* 8.3); cf. Aeschines’ depiction of Timarchus’ delivery style (1.26) and further in ch. 5. Thucydides also gives details of Cleon’s activities during this period, and the extent of his influence in the Assembly and thus in the running of the Peloponnesian War (cf., e.g., 4.27–39, 5.2–7).

⁷⁶ Cf. *Plut. Per.* 33, *Nic.* 2–3.

with what the influential writers of the period chose to emphasize as their dominant features in order to chasten their fellow citizens.

Cleon turns up in all three of the plays of Aristophanes under consideration here; he also serves as an important target in the *Acharnians* and *Peace*. He is identified in *Peace* as the greedy “tanner” (βυρσοπόλης, 648) who rendered the city so desperate that it “snapped up every bit of slander” (ἄττα διαβάλοι τις αὐτῆ, ταῦτ’ ἄν ἤδιστ’ ἤσθιεν), while its allies “stuffed the mouths of [politicians] with gold” (χρυσίῳ τῶν ταῦτα ποιούντων ἐβύνουν τὸ στόμα (643–45). Aristophanes always depicts Cleon as loud-mouthed – a voluble, violently grand, and startling type, in oratorical style adjacent (if not exactly similar) to the comic depiction of the sophist Gorgias. In *Birds* Aristophanes refers to Gorgias as one of the “tongue-stomach men” (ἐγγλωττογαστόρων, *Av.* 1695–1702; cf. *Vesp.* 421), a representative of a greedy, manipulative class of people who feed their stomachs by the indiscriminate use of their wagging tongues.

Further, this monstrous reassemblage of body parts invigorates a sense of the professional speechmaker as a crude, artificially cobbled presence whose outlandish language matches the violent juxtaposition of his organs. The ignoble connection familiar from archaic poetry between the speaking mouth and the consuming *gastēr* inevitably suggests that the speaker may say whatever he thinks will best fill his gaping mouth and empty belly, as well as that violence may mark his speaking style or quickly follow on his speech.⁷⁷ Thus the greedy “sophist” in comic representation is a not only a variant of the boastful butcher (*mageiros*) from the agora. He is also a descendant of the hungry, lying poets from the archaic period, with the added concern that in the democratic setting the persuasive abilities of such creatures make them politically destructive. Indeed, so voracious are Cleon’s rhetorical style and political ambition alike that Aristophanes sometimes assimilates him to the chthonic monster Typhoeus, whom Hesiod represents as a bellowing, polyglot grotesque (*Th.* 820–41).

The sophistic butcher

In examining how Aristophanes frames Cleon’s character as this outlandish type, one figure emerges as importantly adjacent to his depiction: the swaggering cook or butcher (*mageiros*). In *Knights*, as in many of his plays (esp. *Acharnians*, *Peace*, and *Birds*), the pervasive metaphorical register is that of food and its preparation. The patterns of this imagery shape the profiles of the demagogic types who seek to control the demos (as antiheroes) or

⁷⁷ Cf. ch. 1.

alternatively those of the old citizens (as comic heroes). The main contenders in the action of the dramas must take on roles that put them in some proximity to both the kitchen and the agora, where food selling and butchering go on.⁷⁸ This is especially true in *Knights*, which fashions the competing demagogues as cooks who feed fancy fare to Demos in the form of pandering verbiage. As Ribbeck and others have shown, the term *mageiros* may refer to a private chef or a public butcher, the one preparing luxurious feasts for the elite, the other sacrifices for civic celebrations.⁷⁹

Wilkins argues that the figure of the “boastful chef” served as a subtext for the formulation of characters in old comedy, which anticipated the emergence of the slavish, sophistic gourmet in middle and new comedy. Thus the subsequent prominence of the *mageiros* develops out of the sacrificing role that the usually stubborn and wily protagonist plays.⁸⁰ For example, both Dicaeopolis in *Acharnians* and Trygaeus in *Peace* engage in feast preparation and are encouraged at almost the same junctures in the respective plots to carry out their duties “in a chef-like manner” (μυγειρικῶς, *Ach.* 1015; *Pax* 1017).⁸¹ From being a role that serves as the subtext for the protagonist’s actions, the boastful, sophistic cook burgeons into a dominant character in his own right, analogous to that of the parasite or clever slave in Menander and Plautus. The pervasiveness of this figure in later comedy has encouraged Wilkins to hypothesize that it was more dominant in old comedy than extant plays suggest.

This connection between food and talk anticipates those that Socrates forges in the *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias* when he chastises sophists for pandering to the demos. If comedy shows an increasing interest in the character of the sophistic chef, the trajectory of this development parallels that of iambic discourse in many important ways. The chef of middle comedy is an *alazōn* – a verbose, boastful preparer of luxurious feasts, who seeks to exhibit his overly clever verbiage as much as his elaborate dishes.⁸² Antiphanes in particular paints this figure as a clear extension of the word-proud sophist, while his slavish, marketplace status reveals the lowbrow truths that underlie his high-blown talk. Indeed, Gregory Dobrov

⁷⁸ The connection of this figure to the agora indicates his mercenary profile and low class status; see Wilkins 2000a (*passim*) and Rosenbloom 2002: esp. 238–39.

⁷⁹ Ribbeck 1882: 18–26; Rankin 1907: 48–66; Giannini 1960; Berthiaume 1982: 17–37; Wilkins 2000a: 369–71.

⁸⁰ Wilkins 2000a: 372–80.

⁸¹ Cf. also *Dait.*, which features a party of sophists and may well have included a character that embodies this combination of ornate verbiage and gourmet skill; also *Av.* 462–65, where Peisthetaerus prepares his listeners for his “big and beefy” speech as if for dinner (cf. δειπνήσειν μέλλομεν:, 464).

⁸² See Nesselrath 1990: 297–309; Wilkins 2000a: 403–08.

has argued that the language of Antiphanes' boastful chef possesses its own poetics: a penchant for ornate and riddling language, a blusterer's mix of the grandiose orator's display and symposiastic word-games.⁸³

More crucial for this discussion, however, is the dominance in iambic discourse around public speakers of the analogies between language use and food preparation and consumption, especially sophistic verbiage and fancy fare. Thus the greedy, sophistic Cyclops is called a chef (*mageiros*) of Hades in Euripides' satyr play, as I explore in chapter 3; and the pandering chef turns up as the ultimate insult in Socrates' development of mocking analogies for the sophists, discussed in chapter 4. Moreover, both the orators and Theophrastus show an awareness of this lowbrow butcher as a figure that can indicate by mere association the questionable characters of one's enemies.⁸⁴ Like the label *sophistēs*, then, *mageiros* signals oral excess, usually the sort practiced by the loud-mouthed, boastful, mercenary denizen of the agora rather than the effete panderer. Since the term "sophist" tends to surface whenever someone engages in overly clever and brash verbal techniques, it should not be surprising that the chef is most often aggressive and mercenary, as well as engaging in other activities that point to this bold type: boasting, embellishing, and yelling. That said, like the sophist this braggart butcher may also exhibit traits that bear a more feminine cast, since manipulation, deceit, and a penchant for fancy locutions often betray female characters or characters acting like women. Thus even this bold talker sometimes reveals "female" weaknesses, in part because appetite itself opens one up to such vulnerabilities.

While both demagogues in Aristophanes' *Knights* expose their own particular weaknesses when faced with the butcher, they also each display in distinct ways the crude, manipulative, pandering aspects of his role in the agora. Aristophanes positions his antagonistic demagogue-slaves in *Knights* so that they exhibit slightly differing positions in relation to food and its preparation. The Sausage Seller occupies an even more base status than the tanner Paphlagon, as evidenced by the fact that he filches the detritus of sacrifice (cf. *Eq.* 299–302) and hawks his sausages at the city gates. This is where prostitutes and other low-lives hang out, types who do not even merit a place in the agora (*Eq.* 1398; cf. 141). But sausage making also involves butchery and cooking, both of which turn out to be useful skills for dominance in the Athenian Assembly. If Paphlagon can effectively beat his constituents into shape, the Sausage Seller can stuff them with a

⁸³ Dobrov 2002.

⁸⁴ E.g., Dem. 25.46, 45.71; Ps-Apollod. *Neaera* 18; Lycurg. fr. 10–11.13. Cf. Thphr. *Char.* 4, 7.

hodge-podge of recommendations. When, for instance, the upstart demagogue worries about how he will compete with Paphlagon, the bolder slave (identified as “Demosthenes” by commentators⁸⁵) says that he need only do what he already knows how to: make hash (χόρδευ) of the people’s affairs and sweet-talk them (ὑπογλυκαίνων) by means of gourmet phraselets (ῥηματίοις μαγειρικοῖς) (215–16). Thus his cooking skills will suffice to manufacture the kind of language that the demos (and the old citizen Demos) will appreciate as pleasingly ornamental.

As Aristophanes’ wry vocabulary indicates, this sweet stuff hardly constitutes serious argument. Like Socrates’ assessment of sophists’ fare in the *Protagoras*, it is something “cooked up,” aimed at seducing the tongue rather than nourishing the body.⁸⁶ Just as the citizens happily swallow down fancy foods (*opsa*) when these are offered to them, they like such chef’s confections better than the truth. In addition, this comic analogy between food and talk highlights the mouth rather than the ear as the point of ingress. That is, while food ought to please the tongue and words the ear, the metaphorical system reconfigures the body of the citizen so that he takes in everything through this primary orifice. As I discuss below, this focus on the mouth allows for other ruder analogies, further dismantling the body’s integrity and reassembling it in debased forms.

If the demagogues compete to occupy this chef’s role, the imagery that connects politicking and cookery is denigrating in the extreme. For instance, the bold, wine-swilling slave Demosthenes attempts to further the Sausage Seller’s case by threatening Paphlagon with being treated like a pig at the butcher’s (μαγειρικῶς, *Eq.* 376): pegged to the ground, mouth and anus gaping. I analyze this image further below; here it is important to note that while the Sausage Seller clearly utilizes a chef’s techniques, in keeping with his stated profession, Paphlagon is menaced with the cook’s techniques more than he employs them. He plies Demos with delicacies and also gobbles them up himself – in fact he is the primary consumer of *opsa* in the play. But he is less intimately associated with the preparation of these comestibles, preferring to appropriate the food that others have cooked and pawn it off as his own (*Eq.* 52–57). Unlike later comedy, however, these characters are never directly called *mageiroi*; rather, both are

⁸⁵ While some MSS. refer to the two slaves as Demosthenes and Nicias, after the two generals that their characters clearly lampoon, the fact that they are never named in the play indicates that they were probably not named explicitly in the earliest MSS (Neil 1901: 6). I use the names in order to highlight the ways in which Aristophanes distinguishes the appetites and inclinations of these leaders. See further below.

⁸⁶ Pl. *Prot.* 313c5–d2; cf. also *Gorg.* 521e3–522a4.

situated in demeaning relationship to them. Thus the Sausage Seller reveals his sly, more effeminate type by relating how he used to steal meat from the butchers (μαγείρους, 418) by stuffing it between the cheeks of his ass (τὰ κοχώννα, 424).

Paphlagon in Knights

In keeping with this contrast between the greedy, gaping maw and crafty, gaping ass, Paphlagon is portrayed as a bawling, blustering tanner of hides. Cleon's fortunes supposedly were connected to this trade, although indications of his actual family background do not consistently support this implication of lower-class status. While a scholium (*ad Eq.* 44) claiming that Cleon's father owned a tannery has caused some scholars to assess Aristophanes' slurs as historical fact, even *Knights* itself complicates this picture by suggesting an elite status for Cleon's father (*Eq.* 574).⁸⁷ Like most commercial occupations in Aristophanes, tanning is figured as a lowly, crude activity associated with the bold and pushy character of the Athenian agora. The violent metaphors that the activity of tanning easily generates may also have recommended it as a fitting analogy for Cleon's aggressive type. Thus Paphlagon (or "Splutterer,"⁸⁸) is a steady source of beatings (πληγὰς, 5; μαστιγούμεθα, 64)⁸⁹ and the verbal mode that parallels them: slanderous talk (διαβολαῖς, 7, 45, 64, 262). His speech flows like a torrent (κυκλοβόρου φωνήν, 137; cf. 692, also *Ach.* 381, *Vesp.* 1034) and blows like Typhoeus (511; cf. φολοκομπτίαις, 696⁹⁰). He is a rapacious and aggressive harpy or Charybdis (ὑφαρπάσας, 56; cf. 197; Χάρυβδιν ἄρπαγῆς, 248;⁹¹ cf. ἄρπάζων, 205), an unscrupulous (*panourgos*, 45, 246–49, 683–85) and repulsive (*bdeluros*, 304–05; cf. 134, 193, 252⁹²) politician with a huge

⁸⁷ See Ehrenberg 1943: 91–92; Connor 1971 [1992]: 151–63; Lind 1990: 88–93; MacDowell 1995: 80–83. The caricature may indicate disdain for the *nouveau riche* man on the rise, but see Henderson 1990: 279–84, who argues that the details of this comic profile were largely fictional and offered as political critique. Cf. also *Nub.* 581–86.

⁸⁸ From *paphlazō*, cf. *Eq.* 919; the chorus announces that this is a stage name for Cleon at *Eq.* 976. Cf. *Eup.* fr. 95 K-A.

⁸⁹ Cf. *Eur. Cyc.* and *Ar. Nub.* 1321–1510 for the figure of the violent sophist (as well as violence against sophists).

⁹⁰ This word also means something like "lurid bluster"; cf. the Cyclops' pun in Euripides' play (κομψός/κόμπος, 315–17). On the qualities of the voice in comedy, see Halliwell 1990.

⁹¹ Cicero echoes this imagery in his invective against Antony (*Charybdis tam vorax*, *Phil.* 2.66); cf. also similarly monstrous imagery in a later speech (*quem gurgitem, quam voraginem!*, *Phil.* 11.10), and in one of his speeches against Verres, in which he calls his henchman Apronius' mouth "an immense abyss or whirlpool" (*immensa aliqua vorago est aut gurgis*, *Verr.* 2.3.23). See further in the Epilogue.

⁹² Cf. *Plut. Nic.* 2 and further discussion of this term in chs. 4 and 5.

appetite and a monstrosly booming voice (βόσκω κεκραγώς, 256; cf. 274, 863, etc.).⁹³

Although he too is a bold talker, the Sausage Seller responds to Paphlagon as something more extreme, as all open-mouthed aggression. Constantly shouting and eating, Paphlagon calls upon his contender to match him in volume, violence, and consumption: they engage in a shouting match (285–98), a “skinning” match (367–81), and then an eating and drinking match (691–721).⁹⁴ But the tanner is clearly the character that embodies this oral rapacity; and while the Sausage Seller struggles to match him in kind, the other slaves and the chorus repeatedly indicate that this is Paphlagon’s signature style (e.g., 137, 247–65, 303–13, 486–87). The Sausage Seller threatens that this rapacity will finally bring him down, when he “chokes” (ἀποπνιγείης, 940) while trying to gobble down a pan-full of squid and simultaneously rush to speak in the Assembly for a bribe.

The mouth does double duty by ingesting food and expelling words, indexing the engorging, explosive body that this aggressive type sports. Thus he stuffs his maw with food (280–83, 353–55, 927–40, cf. 1219–20),⁹⁵ money (258, 707, 824–26), and even people (259–60, 693–700), and farts and snores with abandon (115). His bold deportment is mapped across the lands of Greece, so that he straddles whole “territories,” his body stretched out from one villainy to another. He has one leg in Pylos and other in the Assembly; his anus is “in Chaos” (ὁ πρωκτός ἐστὶν αὐτόχρημ’ ἐν Χάοσιν [Chaonia]), his hands in Extortion (τῶ χειρ’ ἐν Αἰτωλοῖς [Aetolia]), and his mind in Larceny (ὁ νοῦς δ’ ἐν Κλωπιδῶν [Clopis, a little deme in northern Attica]) (78–79). All of his apertures are so rapacious that he swaggers (διαβεβηκότος, 77) like an arrogant general,⁹⁶ his gait suggesting not only mastery but also absorption into his all-consuming body. Meanwhile he spurts streams of invective (διαβαλεῖ, 486; cf. 7, 64, 262, 711), the slanderous style of his verbiage suiting his violent, loud-mouthed mode (626–31). The “screamer” (κράκτα) throws the entire city into confusion (τὴν πόλιν ἅπασιν ἡ-/ μῶν ἀνατετυρβακῶς) and deafens it with his shouts (ἐκκεκῶφωκας βοῶν) (304–11).⁹⁷

⁹³ The blustering style is one that the comic poet Timocles accused Hyperides of employing (fr. 15), even though the latter’s style is generally considered quite restrained. Eubulus says that foreigners speak in this way (fr. 108 K-A); and Hippocrates uses *paphlazō* to characterize verbal spluttering (*Epid.* 2.5.2). On *panourgos* types and their connections to aggressive oral styles, see Worman 1999, 2002a.

⁹⁴ Cf. the confluence of abusive talk and physical violence that Bakhtin (1984: 195, 347ff.) highlights.

⁹⁵ Cf. Lycurg. fr. 15.6.

⁹⁶ Cf. Archil. fr. 114 W for a portrait of the swaggering general.

⁹⁷ Note that the comic mask may also have emphasized this character’s particular excesses. Early on in the play the slave Demosthenes tells the audience that Cleon’s mask will not be life-like because the

It would seem, then, that in the figure of Paphlagon-Cleon we have a clearly defined aggressive type, all of whose metonymic associations cohere in one voracious body. Yet this intemperate demagogue is also by necessity a flatterer (ἐκολάκευ', 48) and occasionally even a chatterer (λαλήσεις, 295⁹⁸), who may be beaten (273, 453) or “pegged” like any weak, feminized type.⁹⁹ When, for instance, Paphlagon and the Sausage Seller engage in one of many exchanges of insults, the tanner threatens the latter with being pegged to the ground (διαπατταλευθήσει χαμαί, 371), while the Sausage Seller returns the favor by claiming that he will cut out his enemy’s “crop” (πρηγορεῶνα, 374). However, the slave Demosthenes provides the more telling image, describing in insulting detail how they will treat the tanner like a pig at the butcher’s – putting a peg in his mouth, inspecting his tongue, and looking into his open . . . anus (κεχηνότος/ τὸν πρωκτόν, 380–81). The substitution of “anus” for “mouth” effects the kind of startling juxtaposition that especially marks these debasing reconfigurations. Indeed, although the Sausage Seller and Paphlagon had already threatened each other with violence to their asses (cf. 364–65), the substitution provides the excuse for presenting Paphlagon as a gape-assed type. The implication of this interchange among body parts is that, since Paphlagon-Cleon is most famous for his gaping, bawling mouth, he must by rights be wide-open at the other end as well.

But this gaping orifice itself should be distinguished from others. Some open mouths indicate fatuousness and thus vulnerability to aggressively persuasive types. In *Knights* both the character Demos and Athenians more generally are consistently depicted as slack-jawed in the face of politicians’ persuasive rhetoric (ἐκεχήνεσαν, 651, 755, 804; cf. Κεχηναίων, 1202; χασμῶ, 824; χάσκης, 1032). Recall as well that in *Clouds* prominent Athenians – including politicians, poets, and philosophers – are all depicted as gape-assed (εὐρύπρωκτος, *passim* 1084–1100). In this case the image suggests the rampant decadence of Athenian leaders, with little or no distinctions

mask-makers were too frightened to make it so; but he assures them that they will recognize him nonetheless, being clever (δῆξιον, 233). This arch allusion suggests that the mask was an exaggerated version of the standard comic form (i.e., narrowed eyes, pug nose, gaping mouth). The appropriate caricature for the loud, abrasive demagogue would especially feature a gaping mouth and thus capture the oratorical style that “clever” (i.e., right-minded elite) audience members would apprehend as his signature. See Dover 1967; Foley 2000; cf. Wiles 1991. Regarding the relevance of the term *dexios* to this playful deployment of grotesque images, see Carrière 1979: 138.

⁹⁸ Cf. *Pax* 252–54, but this is not a regular attribute of Cleon’s character; see further below.

⁹⁹ Cf. also *Ach.* 664 (δείλος καὶ λακαταπύγων); but this seems to indicate the kind of rapacity represented by someone like Timarchus (cf. *Nub.* 1330 [Pheidippides]; Eup. fr. 351 K [wine-guzzler]; Aeschin. 1.84 [Timarchus]). See Henderson 1975 [1991]: 212, 214 and the discussion of Timarchus’ character in ch. 5.

among types. Most commentators have assumed that this vocabulary is generally applied in this blanket manner, Jeffrey Henderson also treating both *euruprōktos* and *chaskō* as referring primarily to the disposition of the anus.¹⁰⁰ On this view, all politicians and their followers would be “gaping” in the same way, and while the disposition of the anus would be understood to correspond to that of the mouth, the focus would remain primarily on the former organ and thus on sexual proclivities.

If we consider the arguments offered above, however, we can see that not only is Aristophanes’ imagery more complicated than this, but also that it is importantly ambiguous between upper and lower apertures. In fact, as I argue in the Introduction, it would seem to have more to do with public speaking than sexual activity. While this may seem an obvious thing to say on the surface of it (since the term is most often predicated of politicians and poets), commentators have usually been sufficiently distracted by the piquant quality of the sexual imagery that they have tended to downplay the possibility that some words may refer more obviously and importantly to oral deportment (e.g., *chaskō*) and that others achieve their full impact only in the apprehension of their extension to the uses of the mouth in public settings (e.g., *euruprōktos*).

Moreover, such metonyms often delineate essential distinctions among types. Indeed, *Knights* offers a quite complex and yet ultimately polarized picture, in which the politicians’ gaping apertures tend to differentiate their characters: one type usually has an open mouth, the other an open anus. Both Paphlagon and the Sausage Seller exhibit gaping jaws at one point or another, but only those of Paphlagon always yawn wide to emit the screams, yells, and barks of the loud-mouthed politician (e.g., χάσχων καὶ ὑπερ σοῦ δεινὰ κεκράγως, 1018). He proudly represents his ear-splitting volubility as his trademark, declaring himself a dog (ἔγώ μὲν εἰμ’ ὁ κύων, 1023) who defends Demos (i.e., the polity) by barking (κεκράγως, 1018) and baying (ἀπύω, 1023) at the croaking “jackdaws” (κολοιοί, 1020) who are his enemies.¹⁰¹

That is, his signature opening explosively emits things – in this case sounds – rather than taking things in. The Sausage Seller, in some contrast, depicts himself as opening his mouth wide only to compete with his enemy (κἀναχχανῶν, 641), not because this bawling mouth is his special

¹⁰⁰ Henderson 1975 [1991]: 68, 77, 209–210; cf. Taillardat 1962: 264–67; Dover 1978: 140–45. Wohl 2002: 83–86 also recognizes the connection to oral activities but makes no distinctions between different types of gaping apertures.

¹⁰¹ This may signal one of his similarities to the monstrous female, since women are traditionally regarded as doggish – greedy, groveling beasts (e.g., Hes. *WD*; Semonides); see further below.

characteristic. In addition, his gaping mouth matches his wagging rump, which further points up what type he really is.¹⁰² This difference may also have been rendered visible by distinctions of comic costume, so that Paphlagon and thereby Cleon might be recognized as biggest in belly and all mouth. It is equally possible, though, that an ultimately more disturbing *lack* of differentiation, at least in body type, would have cautioned the ancient spectators against thinking that they can really distinguish one dangerously greedy and debased demagogue from another.

That said, Aristophanes does depict Paphlagon-Cleon most consistently as this voracious type. He is described as a flatterer only once in *Knights*; and those images that may suggest feminizing tendencies ultimately emphasize the capacities of his unusually appetitive profile. But since iambic tradition regards women as singularly greedy, this does not in itself constitute a contradiction so much as an additional revelation: Paphlagon is only “female” in this monstrous capacity, as an all-consuming body. Like women he drinks to excess (μεθύων, 104) and eats whatever he can get his hands on, a voraciousness that also correlates with his verbal style.¹⁰³ This tends to be slanderous and so orally aggressive that the Sausage Seller describes him as if he were a menace to all around him, a barfly who threatens to “drink down” (καταπιόμενος, 693) his fellow tipplers. Paphlagon boasts that he intends instead to “eat up” (ἐκφάγω, 698) the Sausage Seller, and when the latter attempts to respond in kind, he admits that he might burst (ἐπιδιαρραγῶ, 701) if he were to swallow such a creature. Then he offers this gaping maw a purse (βόλλαντίω, 707) as food, underscoring Paphlagon’s rapacious attitude toward the city coffers as well.

Kuōn-Cleon in Wasps

The depiction of Cleon in *Wasps* shares many features with the rapacious Paphlagon. The old Athenian Philocleon is in thrall to the object of admiration that his name indicates, regarding Cleon as the source of all bounty for citizens like him. His son Bdelycleon (“Hate-Cleon”) seeks to show his father that the demagogue is really greedy and doggish in his behavior and aims. Philocleon claims that the “shout-master” (ὁ κεκραξιδάμας) Cleon does not “nibble” (οὐ περιτρῶγει) the citizen-jurors (596); rather, he keeps them in hand and wards off the “mice” (τὰς μυίας ἀπαμύνει, 597) – that is,

¹⁰² I return to this point in more detail below, pp. 107–10.

¹⁰³ Cf. again Cicero’s depictions of his opponents’ excesses (e.g., *Verr.* 2.3.31; *Pis.* 41; *Phil.* 2.63–68, 11.10). Corbeil (1996: 132–33) points to the imagery of “drinking down” (G. *katapino*, L. *ebibo*) as a metaphor for financial mismanagement, with which Aristophanes also charges Cleon.

the politicians who really eat away at the city's resources.¹⁰⁴ This is precisely the function that the slave Demosthenes describes Paphlagon as serving in *Knights* (ἀποσοβεῖ τοὺς ῥήτορας, 60). In *Wasps* Bdelycleon attempts to counter his father's enthusiasm by arguing that the politicians all take advantage of the jurors, offering them scraps to nibble (τοὺς ἀργελοφούς περιτρῶγων) and keeping the fancy fare for themselves (672–77). The juror, in turn, is so busy “gaping after” (χασκάζεις, 695) his pay that he barely attends to the argument at hand.

When the son manages to persuade his father to stay away from the courts, he stages a case for him at home, putting a dog named Labes¹⁰⁵ on trial for stealing a cheese and having the “Dog” (Κυῶν) of Kydathenaion (Cleon's deme) give the prosecution speech (891–1008). Κυῶν-Cleon comes off the worse in the trial. When he first begins to speak, he barks instead (αὔ αὔ, 903; cf. κεκλάγγω and κεκλάγξομαι, 929–30); Philocleon shows his appreciation of this loud-mouthed style by affirming that “the case shouts” (αὐτὸ γὰρ βοᾷ, 921). Meanwhile Κυῶν maintains that Labes is the “loneliest eater” (μονοφαγίστατον, 923¹⁰⁶), meaning that he grabs everything for himself. But Bdelycleon, speaking for Labes, charges Κυῶν with being merely a house dog (οἰκουρός, 970) who demands a share of whatever anyone brings in, and bites (δάκνει, 972) if denied.

In the parabasis, the chorus reveals the “true” nature of this greedy leader: Cleon is a monster, with jagged teeth (καρχαρόδοντι) and the gleaming eyes of a doggy prostitute (ὁ δεινόταται μὲν ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν Κύννης ἀκτίνες ἔλαμπον).¹⁰⁷ The licking heads of groaning flatterers encircle his crown (ἐκάτων δὲ κύκλω κεφαλαὶ κολάκων οἰμωξομένων ἐλιχμῶντο/περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν).¹⁰⁸ His voice sounds like a destructive torrent (χαράδρας ὄλεθρον τετοκυίας); he has the stink of a seal (φώκης δ' ὁσμήν) and the unwashed testicles of a man-eating bogey (Λαμίας δ' ὄρχεις ἀπλύτους) (1031–35). Their description recalls the dream that the slave Sosias

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Crane 1997: 209; he compares Bourdieu's concept of *méconnaissance* (1977: 191) in social relations, which insures that domination of one group by another is masked by a set of polite fictions.

¹⁰⁵ The name seems to be a combination of “Grabber” (from λαβεῖν) and “Laches,” a political enemy of Cleon's. See MacDowell 1971 *ad loc.*

¹⁰⁶ MacDowell 1971 *ad loc.* compares the common label ὀσοφαγίστατος, which suggests that Laches matches Cleon in his tastes as well. As an eater of *opsa*, he would be the effete correlative of the coarse but greedy Cleon.

¹⁰⁷ The name Κύννα is both that of a well-known prostitute (cf. *Eq.* 765) and a variant of the word for “dog” (cf. κυνός). The passage is repeated at *Pax* 755–58.

¹⁰⁸ Note that while Paphlagon-Cleon is labeled a flatterer (*kolax*) in *Knights*, here in *Wasps* Typhoeus-Cleon carries them around on his head as a writhing, discontented wig. That is, he is not so much himself cast in this servile role as pursued by others of whom he makes aggressive use. Cf. Eupolis' *Kolakes*, the fragments of which make clear that this was a typical label aimed at the sophist as well as other pandering, wordy types (e.g., frs. 172, 178, 180 K-A).

recounts at the beginning of the play, when he sees a “rapacious whale” (φάλλαινα πανδοκείτρια) with the “voice of a bloated sow” (ἔχουσα φωνὴν ἐμπειρημένης ὑός) addressing the people (35–36).

Like Sosias’ dream, the chorus’ portrait centers on the imagery of voracious bestiality. It combines features of at least two Hesiodic monsters, as well as those of more contemporaneous creatures. Not only does Cleon have the viperous heads of Typhoeus (echoing the comparison in *Knights*) and the terrible teeth of Cerberus, the dog of Hades; he also has the flaming eyes of Kynna and the bestial filth of Lamia, an ogress said to consume children.¹⁰⁹ Thus the monstrously reassembled body of Cleon manifests traits of snappish, aggressive animals and depraved females. As mentioned above, that Cleon might be compared to a rapacious monster is less surprising than that this monster might also display feminine features, a move that we can now recognize as a metonymic falsehood that subsumes male violence under female bestiality. The females to whom Cleon is compared are themselves marked by brutish, aggressive traits; their presence does not seem to signal passivity so much as profligate consumption. Thus Cleon is a “Kynna” only insofar as he pushes himself on others like a hungry bitch; and he is a “Lamia” only insofar as he gobbles up profits and citizens like an enterprising harpy. Moreover, any true monster is a hybrid – whence the image, for instance, of Lamia as a voracious female with male genitalia.¹¹⁰ Cleon’s figure similarly embraces contradictory features: a snappish dog with Medusa’s coiffure, an all-consuming whale with the voice of a fat sow.

Socrates in Clouds?

To the extent that both Cleon and Socrates are represented in comedy as brutal arguers who are tough and aggressive in their intercourse with the older citizens of whom they tend to take advantage, their types seem to overlap. Socrates’ physical habits and thus his oral proclivities are, however, quite different from those of the Cleon character in Aristophanes’ plays; I discuss this further below. But like Cleon, Socrates has a strong attraction for the character of the old citizen, who thinks that an aggressive leader or teacher will improve his lot in some concrete way. In *Clouds* Strepsiades turns to Socrates for instruction in how to speak (βουλόμενος μαθεῖν λέγειν, 239), but primarily because his extravagant son has landed

¹⁰⁹ Hes. *Tb.* 305–12. On Typhoeus see O’Sullivan 1992: 120–24; Nightingale 1995: 134–35. MacDowell 1971 ad 1035 notes that this last feature suggests that Lamia was a hermaphroditic figure, citing *Vesp.* 1177 (ἡ Λάμι) and *Ekk.* 77 (τοῦ Λαμίου). Cf. Johnston 1995 on the imagery of female bogeys such as Lamia and the discussion of this insult in ch. 5.

¹¹⁰ Cf. also Bakhtin 1984: 328, who adduces figures with outsized testicles as a feature of the grotesque.

him in debt and he wants to learn how to weasel his way out by clever speechifying. He deems this situation a “horsey” illness (νόσος ἵππική) that is “fearsome in eating” (δεινὴ φαγεῖν) (243). His household resources are being consumed by his son’s aristocratic tastes, whose name (Pheidipides) reflects his penchant for horse racing and other expensive pursuits. Further, the phrase δεινὴ φαγεῖν is a humorous pun on the familiar charge against sophists and sophistic characters in tragedy: that they are “fearsome in speaking” (δεινὸς λέγειν).¹¹¹ The famous opening of Plato’s *Apology*, in which Socrates attempts to shrug off this same charge, reveals that Aristophanes was not alone in considering Socrates a sophist.¹¹² Thus Strepsiades has come to Socrates to combat his son’s fearsome consumption of goods with the sophist’s fearsome speech techniques.

While Aristophanes does not directly label Cleon a sophist, in *Knights* he depicts him as an impressive speaker in a loud, violent mode who brings chaos to the city. Socrates’ sophistic training in *Clouds* begins with the mandate that his student worship only three deities: Chaos, Clouds, and Tongue (τὸ Χάος τουτί καὶ τὰς Νεφέλας καὶ τὴν Γλῶτταν, 424).¹¹³ The Clouds themselves declare that they listen to Socrates because he “swaggers in the streets” (βρενθῦει τ’ ἐν ταῖσιν ὁδοῖς) with his dirty feet, looking very serious (362–63). Like Cleon, whom Aristophanes depicts as a greedy grabber of others’ goods (e.g., *Eq.* 137; *Vesp.* 971–72), Socrates is also a robber, though apparently only of cloaks (*Nub.* 179, 497, 856).¹¹⁴ And like the crude, haranguing Cleon, this teacher is the consummate interloper – of dubious class status, badly educated,¹¹⁵ ever hungry and yet irremediably idle. In fact, Socrates bears a closer resemblance to the all-belly beggars of archaic poetry than does the greedy politician; like the *aklētoi* at archaic symposia, his protruding comic belly would signal a desperate need for sustenance rather than (as in Cleon’s case) gluttonous consumption of the city’s coffers.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ E.g., E. *Tro.* 968, fr. 442 Kannicht; S. *Phil.* 440, *OT* 545.

¹¹² Cf. *Nub.* 331; Pl. *Ap.* 17b1; see Vander Waerdt 1994.

¹¹³ Cf. Arist. *Ran.* 892, where Euripides prays that the “flexible tongue” (γλώσσης στρόφιγξ) may help him in his contest with Aeschylus. On the nature of the Cloud chorus, see Segal 1967.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Revermann 2006: 203–05, 221–23 on the significance of the cloak (i.e., its ratty state or absence) to Socrates’ profile. In *Birds*, “long-haired and hungry and dirty” types are “Socrates-y” (ἐκόμην, ἐπίειων, ἐρρύπων, ἐσωκράτων, 1282; cf. ἄλουτος . . . / . . . Σωκράτης, 1554–55).

¹¹⁵ Amepsias (fr. 9 K-A) may depict Socrates failing to learn to play the cithara from his bad teacher (*Connus*, cf. Ar. *Eq.* 533–36), which would imply that he is *amousikos* (i.e., unskilled in the arts of a gentleman); and the chorus of *Knights* portrays Cleon as incapable of learning anything but Doric tunes (or, rather, Dōric [Δωριστί], 989–91) on the lyre, a joke that joins crude ineptness to a fondness for bribes (cf. δῶρα).

¹¹⁶ Cf. Ar. *Av.* 938 (ἄκλητος ἰὼν ἄνθρωπος ἀλαζών). Note that as with comic asses (which may index modest athleticism or louche excess), the comic belly may signal greed, need, or both. Need fosters

Beggars, we might recall, may also engage in the slinging of both fists and insults for food, and Socrates' teaching has equally brutal results for his student. Strepsiades eventually finds himself being beaten by his son, who has learned to play the sophist all too well (1324ff.).¹¹⁷ The son's aggressive behavior is paralleled by his argumentation; he defends his actions by claiming that since his father beat him as a child, there is no reason why the father's body should not suffer the same indignities (1408ff.). In his fury Strepsiades burns down Socrates' school, so that the play ends in violence and disarray. Recall as well that Bakhtin emphasizes that abusive speech parallels physical violence.¹¹⁸ Not only does such language consistently envision the body as dismembered and abused; it may also lead to or combine with bodily harm. In Attic comedy, however, the threat of physical harm is less the rebellious result of popular disdain than the punitive gesture of supremacy, since it emanates from a state institution that seeks to marginalize those perceived by dominant elites as threatening to the city. The idiom demands that their bodies be ritualistically debased and dismembered by language; disassembled and recombined into grotesques, their parts are paraded as metonyms of excess and warnings to the people.

The prattling mouth-worker

While the figure of Socrates may resemble that of Cleon in the role he assumes in relation to the old citizen, as well as in the implicit brutality that his leadership entails, in other respects he is quite strongly differentiated from the loud-mouthed politician. Indeed, unlike the greedy Cleon in Aristophanes, Socrates is famously ascetic. Elsewhere in the tradition he dresses simply and rarely wears shoes; in Plato this often seems to indicate his control of his appetites quite generally.¹¹⁹ For Aristophanes, Socrates' disregard of his body suggests instead a kind of excess opposite to that of Cleon – a lack of proper respect for one's physical health, which makes one not only tough but also potentially brutish.

Unlike the redoubtable Socrates, however, the figures that most fully inhabit this extreme are often overly fastidious in respect to some appetites (e.g., food, drink) and overly indulgent in respect to others (e.g., sex). They

greed; and just as one might go to the gymnasium for exercise or sex, so might one belly up to the table out of hunger or gluttony. Marshall 1999: 194 has argued that Socrates wore a Silenus mask, a visible tag that would further contribute to the association of his figure with the appetites, since Silenus is randy, drunken, and usually depicted with a round belly and ass.

¹¹⁷ Cf. *Ar. Av.* 1347–50, where Peisthetaerus represents father-beating as one of the birds' "very manly" laws (ἀνδρεϊόν γε πᾶντι, 1349).

¹¹⁸ Bakhtin 1984: 199–207. ¹¹⁹ See, e.g., *Pl. Symp.* 174a3–5, 220a6–c1; *Phdr.* 229a3–6.

are thus more clearly feminized, not only in their preoccupation with sex but also in their apparent softness and vulnerability. Their repressions manifest as weak-willed or timid responses to typical Athenian excesses such as drunkenness; their indulgences tend toward soft clothes, fancy foods, and passive sexuality. All share a typical verbal style: feminine, gossipy chatter.¹²⁰ As O'Sullivan has recognized, in Aristophanes *lalia* ("chatter") and the related term *stōmulia* ("wordiness") characterize Euripides, Socrates, and the sophists, as well as the young men who sit at their feet, listening and learning from these glib teachers.¹²¹ There may be some connotation of sexual passivity in the focus on the mouth; the idea that the inveterate prattler may also be easily penetrable shows up repeatedly in the imagery of Aristophanes.¹²² One can be a "mouth-worker" (*stomatourgos*) like Euripides, for instance, in more than one way: by engaging in polished "chatter," by pandering, and by using the mouth in sexual servicing – mostly fellatio but also cunnilingus, both of which prove debilitating. Thus the glib speaker often appears effeminate.

If *Frogs* and *Clouds* reveal that Euripides gets included in this group for his glib style, *Thesmophoriazusae* shows that Agathon does as well, for his delicate, feminine lyrics and cross-dressing habits. *Wasps* and *Clouds* indicate that the younger generation has a special proclivity for this sybaritic extreme. *Knights* emphasizes that even the politician who tries to take over the coddling of the demos from a voracious type may display a number of qualities shared by the prattling *stomatourgos*.

Socrates in *Clouds*?

An earlier play of Aristophanes entitled *Banqueters* (427) staged a condemnation of sophistic teachers, the setting very clearly aligning them with profligate habits (cf. *Nub.* 529); and other comic poets (e.g., Eupolis, Ameipsias) had lampooned Socrates, as one especially ridiculous figure among many. In Aristophanes' play that focuses on him, Socrates' tough and brutish nature manifests itself primarily in his personal hygiene and apparent indigence: he is unkempt, dirty, and, again, apt to nab the clothes of others, since he has no respectable way of making his living.¹²³ He shares

¹²⁰ We might compare the metonymic extensions of *la bouche* that Bourdieu argues delineate prim, fastidious linguistic usage and deportment in modern French (1991: 86–87).

¹²¹ O'Sullivan 1992: 19–20, 131–33. Aristophanes associates *στοματουργός* with *στωμυλία* and *λαλία*; this style later became aligned with the *ισχνός χαρακτήρ* (Cic. *Orat.* 62–64, DH *Dem.* 2). For the figure of the idler see Baldry 1953.

¹²² E.g., *Ach.* 716; *Nub.* 1085–93; *Eq.* 1381, fr. 128 K-A. Hesychius gives *στοματεύω* as a gloss on *λεσβιάζω* (i.e., *fellare*).

¹²³ Cf. above; also *Nub.* 836–37; *Av.* 1554.

these qualities with his students, as well as his pallid complexion and a tendency to “prattle” (λαλεῖν).¹²⁴ Here and elsewhere Aristophanes repeatedly characterizes this wordy style as polished (*kompos*), overly subtle (*paipalē*), and gossipy (*stōmulos*).¹²⁵ This polish is what Socrates promises Strepsiades his metrical instruction will accomplish (649); and *lalia* constitutes the signature style of the Weaker Argument, who apparently embodies Socrates’ teachings (cf. 931, 1003).

The Socrates of *Clouds* does not in fact exhibit the weakness and effeminacy of his followers, however; only later, in *Frogs* (produced in 405), does Aristophanes clearly assign Socrates to the group of chatterers that includes both his followers and Euripides (see further below). In *Clouds*, in some contrast, it is Socrates’ students who display the postures and dispositions of the feminized prattler. Socrates himself embodies the insensitivity to physical discomfort for which he is famous in Plato and Xenophon. In Aristophanes’ depiction this insensitivity leads to a perverse result: his brutality appears consonant with the verbal sleights-of-hand often attributed to the sophists and their followers.

Early on in *Clouds* Socrates tells Strepsiades that the Cloud chorus nourishes (βόσκουσι) many sophistic types, including “tune-twisters” (ἄσματοκάμπτας) and similar quacks (cf. -φένακας, *Nub.* 333). Strepsiades applauds the idea that through Socrates’ training he will become impervious to all sorts of physical outrages. In a perverse catalogue he lists not only hunger, thirst, squalor, and cold, but also beatings and being flayed alive (τύπτειν, πεινῆν, διψῆν, / αὐχμεῖν, ῥιγῶν, ἄσκον δείρειν, 441–42).¹²⁶ This imperviousness will make him, he declares, both bold and smooth talking (θρασύς, εὐγλωττος, 445), as well as other more ambiguous things (e.g., a fabricator of lies [ψευδῶν συγκολλητήης], a clatterer [κρόταλον], and a scraps-licker [ματιολοιχός], 446–51).¹²⁷ Many of the terms Strepsiades includes in his list index a pliant deportment that itself signals the verbal machinations of Athenian orators (e.g., μάσθλης [“supple”], γλοιός [“slippery”], στρόφης [“twisting”], 449–50). The causal connection that Strepsiades draws between physical abuse and oral dexterity suggests that the imperviousness of the Socratic body is matched by a disturbing

¹²⁴ *Nub.* 505, 931, 1003; cf. *Ran.* 1492; *Ach.* 429, 705; *Eq.* 1381. Regarding paleness: *Nub.* 103, 119–20, 198–99, 1112, 1171.

¹²⁵ E.g., *Nub.* 260, 1003; *Ran.* 91, 815, 841, 943, 1069, 1071, 1160, 1492 (see further below on the *Frogs* imagery). Cf. Aristoph. *Lys.* 356, 442, 627; *Thesm.* 138, 393.

¹²⁶ Cf. Eup. fr. 386 K-A, where Socrates is characterized as “thinking about everything else but where he will get his meals” (ὅς ἄλλα μὲν πεφρόντικεν/ ὀπόθεν δὲ καταφαγεῖν ἔχοι/ τοῦτου κατημέληκεν).

¹²⁷ Regarding these latter traits cf. especially Odysseus in the *Cyclops* and discussion in ch. 3.

flexibility. The result is an overly pliant, mercenary, and scheming style of language.

This focus on the mouth and its uses is initiated and immediately lampooned early on in the play. Let us consider Strepsiades' reaction to the gnat "argument." When Strepsiades first encounters the student who will be his guide in the ways of Socrates' school, the student uses this argument as an example of Socratic investigation. He says that Chaerephon asked Socrates whether the gnat produces buzzing from its mouth (στόμα) or its anus (τούρροπύγιον) (158). Socrates reasoned that it must use its anus; since its stomach is narrow, its breath is necessarily forced out the other end (160–64). Strepsiades replies to this deduction with enthusiasm and a snappy substitution, "So the anus is the trumpet of the gnat!" (σάλπιγξ ὁ πρωκτός ἐστὶν ἄρα τῶν ἐμπιδῶν, 165). The story is not merely a caricature of Socratic reasoning; Strepsiades' use of analogy also anticipates Socrates' famous self-characterization in Plato's *Apology* as the gadfly of the Athenians. As in *Knights*, when the enemies of the piggish Paphlagon depict him as ready for slaughter and jokingly conflate his gaping mouth with his anus, here the student depicts the irritating Socrates "reasoning" about a gnat who effectively talks out of his ass. Aristophanes thus associates this trade-off between apertures with the brutish philosopher as well as the brutal politician.

The younger generation in Clouds and Wasps

While in *Clouds* Socrates himself may not exhibit the feminized, louche behavior of the prattler, he certainly seems to encourage it in his younger followers. In some this behavior takes the form of sexual passivity; in others it manifests as a love of luxury, especially as a taste for soft clothes and fancy foods (*opsa*) – the indulgences that older Athenians, who claim to adhere to simpler modes of life, supposedly spurn. Often the consumption of such goods parallels the verbal affects of the consumers, so that they also chatter and preen like flirtatious girls. Thus the presence of one weakness suggests by metonymic substitution the imminent appearance of others: those who eat *opsa* may also open themselves up to the attractions of the submissive lifestyle, or find it necessary to satisfy their delicate palates by making a living with their babbling tongues.

In *Clouds* the generational conflict revolves around this difference in appetite and inclination. Strepsiades, who portrays himself as a rustic type satisfied with the simple life, bewails his son's urbane, upper-class tastes – especially his weakness for horses, as mentioned above. But the picture is complicated by the fact that Pheidippides initially spurns the denizens of

Socrates' "think tank" (*phrontistērion*), who should constitute his cohort, as pale and barefoot bounders (τοὺς ἀλαζόνας, / τοὺς ὠχριῶντας, τοὺς ἀνυποδήτους, 102–03).¹²⁸ Because he wants these denizens to teach his son to argue his way out of debt, Strepsiades laments this evidence that the scornful Pheidippides does not have more respect for his father's "barley" (i.e., his resources, πατρῶων ἀλφίτων, 106). When Strepsiades finally does succeed in persuading his son to undertake Socrates' instruction, he creates a monster that beats his father and defends his actions with dialectical tricks borrowed from the Weaker Argument. Now the young Pheidippides declares his love of Euripidean poetry (1377), spurning his father's archaic penchant for Aeschylus' bombast, and delights in "delicate phrases, words, and thoughts" (γνώμαις δὲ λεπταῖς καὶ λόγοις . . . καὶ μερίμναις, 1404) instead of horses.

The generations are similarly divided in *Wasps*, where the urbane Bdelycleon encourages his tough old father Philocleon to put more refined things in his mouth than his three-obol jury pay (609, 791).¹²⁹ When Bdelycleon tries to keep his father from the courts, Philocleon declares that he would rather eat "a little stewed lawsuit on a platter" (δικίδιον σμικρὸν φάγοιμ' ἂν ἐν λοπάδι πεπνιγμένον) than "lampreys and eels" (οὐδὲ χαίρω βατίσιν οὐδ' ἐγγέλεισιν), the fancy fare that symbolizes the life his son offers him (510–11). According to the slave Xanthias, Bdelycleon "has some snooty ways" (ἔχων τρόπους φρυγαμσοσημνάκουσ τινάς, 135). After he succeeds in persuading his father to stay at home, the chorus (his father's contemporaries) sings about how tough they used to be, especially compared to the "gape-assed deportment" (σχῆμα κεύρυπρωκτίαν, 1070) of the younger generation. In keeping with his delicate inclinations, Bdelycleon gets his father to trade in his rough old cloak and shoes for a Persian gown (1137) and Spartan sandals (1158), and teaches him to "swagger luxuriously like a plutocrat" (πλουσίως/ ὥδι προβάς τρυφερόν τι διασαλακῶνισον, 1168–69). Once the son has shown his father how to behave at a symposium, he takes him off to the party. But Philocleon proves too cantankerous for such an affair, getting rowdy in a "rustic" manner (σκώπτων ἀγροίκως, 1320) and not appreciating in the least the refined manners that keep such a gathering intact.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Cf. again Eupolis, who depicts the sophist Protagoras as talking pretentiously (ἀλαζονεύεται, fr. 157 K-A).

¹²⁹ It was common to carry small change in the mouth; cf. also *Eq.* 51, *Av.* 503, *Ecl.* 818, frs. 3, 48 K-A.

¹³⁰ Bowie (1997: 3) worries that Aristophanes' comedies often depict family members as different classes, or at least as having different attitudes towards symposia. But in these plays the old citizen usually adheres to a tough, poor man's ethos, in contradistinction to their urbane and decadent sons.

In *Clouds* the first suggestion of any soft inclinations in Socrates' students occurs when Strepsiades views them at work in the *phrontistērion*. He asks his tour guide why they are bent over studying the ground and scanning the skies with their anuses (τί δῆθ' ὁ πρωκτὸς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν βλέπει:, 193).¹³¹ The posture manifestly apes passive sex; we might compare the vase image of the bent-over Persian famously analyzed by Dover.¹³² The depiction of the anus as an "eye" that seeks meteorological knowledge refashions scientific investigation as a kind of buggery, so that the process of taking in information through the visual apertures is shadowed by the proclivity for penetration of a different sort. This irreverent interchange of the investigative eye and the receptive anus represents a different kind of metonymic trade-off than analogy. Like the pegged pig image in *Knights*, the exchange of organs grotesquely reconfigures the body and thereby suggests that there might be something decadent and weakening about intellectual pursuits quite generally. A manly Athenian citizen would be out exercising in the *palaistra* or *gymnasion*, working up the right kinds of appetites. Instead Socrates' students are taught to steal and sell the cloaks of those who exercise (cf. 179, e.g.) in order to feed themselves.

The inclination for soft living that the younger generation supposedly manifests is elaborated on in the contest (*agōn*) between the Stronger and the Weaker Arguments (961–1104). The Weaker Argument, who represents the "new youth," a decadent, sophistic crowd, is both an overly fastidious chatterer (*stōmullos*) and a groveling buffoon (a *bōmolochos*, or "altar-scrap grabber").¹³³ Meanwhile the Stronger Argument obviously lusts after his young charges and indulges in extravagant insults, wielding slanderous compounds like the blustering old Aeschylus in the *Frogs*. He offers a dewy-eyed and inadvertently lascivious blazon of the upright young men of earlier times, when Athenians were educated properly in the ways of modesty and hardy living. These youths were never heard mumbling (παίδος φωνὴν γρύζαντος μὴ δέν' ἀκοῦσαι, 963); they marched about in an orderly fashion, "naked" (γυμνοῦς, 965 [i.e., without their cloaks]), singing only appropriately martial hymns handed down from their fathers (964–68). If anyone "groveled" (βωμολοχεύσαιτ) or "twisted" (κάμψειεν) a tune, he

Cf. Biles' (2002) more interesting contention that Philocleon is a caricature of Cratinus, Aristophanes' older rival who was famous for his drunkenness. See also Handley 1993.

¹³¹ Cf. Ar. *Av.* 441–43, where there is a misunderstanding between interlocutors involving precisely this conflation (i.e., of eyes and anus), but without the intellectual overlay.

¹³² *CVA* 8, pl. 46.1c. See Dover 1978: 105; and Davidson 1997: 170–82 for the contention that the image does not indicate much more than a joke about excesses in general. See also Scholl 2001 for depictions of Persians; Stähli 2001 for homosexual imagery in classical art.

¹³³ On the *bōmolochos*, cf. Henderson 1975 [1991]: 87–88; Rosenbloom 2002: 329–32.

would be beaten up for having besmirched the Muse (τυπτόμενος πολ-
 λὰς ὡς τὰς Μούσας ἀφανίζων) (972). A young man did not make his
 voice soft for some lover (μαλακὴν φουρασάμενος τὴν φωνὴν πρὸς τὸν
 ἔραστήν), or lead him on with his eyes (προαγωγεύων τοῖν ὀφθαλμοῖν)
 (979–80). When dining (δειπνοῦντ') he did not snatch any condiments
 before his elders (981–82), nor delight in fancy foods (ὀψοφαγεῖν), nor
 titter (κιχλίζειν), nor cross his legs (ἴσχειν τῷ πόδ' ἐναλλάξ) (983). The
 deportments that the Stronger Argument spurns reassemble metonymi-
 cally a pliable, mincing body that indicates everything the intact, upright
 youth was not. We might compare the adjectives predicated of the twist-
 ing, sly sophist that Strepsiades aims to become through Socrates' education
 (445–51).

The Stronger Argument claims to be so disturbed by the overdressed,
 debauched (ἐν ἱματίοισι . . . ἐντετυλίχθαι) youths of today that he
 “chokes” (μ' ἀπάγχεσθ') whenever he sees some weakling dance in the
 Panathenaia with his shield flapping around his crotch (τὴν ἄσπίδα τῆς
 κωλῆς προέχων) (987–89). Thus his commentary not only includes how
 young Athenians ought to comport themselves, especially in relation to
 the uses of their mouths; it also indicates the physical effect of sybaritic
 deportment on the observer, who finds himself strangled with disgust at
 the sight.¹³⁴ Studying with the Stronger Argument, Pheidippides will learn
 the opposite of such lax behavior, showing proper respect to his elders
 and never “blabbing” in the marketplace (στωμύλλων κατὰ τὴν ἀγοράν,
 1003; cf. 991–99). The result of this restraint will be visible in his very body:
 he will have a glorious chest, gleaming skin, big shoulders, a tiny tongue
 (γλωτταν βαιάν), big buttocks, and a little “thingy” (πόσθην μικράν)
 (1012–14).¹³⁵ In this laudatory blazon, the match between tongue and penis
 is most significant: if the young man keeps his tongue quiet, his body will
 remain chaste, and only those muscles that ought to swell with activity will
 do so.

If the Weaker Argument trains the youth, in contrast, he will have pale
 skin and a delicate chest; he will also be the proud possessor of a big tongue
 (γλωτταν μεγάλην), a large “piece of meat” (κωλὴν μεγάλην), and a
 large “decree” (ψήφισμα μακρόν) to match (1018–19).¹³⁶ The parallelism

¹³⁴ Cf. Demosthenes' claim of the effect that Aeschines' brash deportment has on him (ἀποσπνίγομαι, 19.199; cf. 19.208–09).

¹³⁵ The moniker πόσθην is a euphemistic diminutive used for children, as Henderson 1975 [1991]: 109 has explained.

¹³⁶ Dover 1968 *ad* 1019 wants to omit κωλὴν μεγάλην, even though the majority of other manuscripts (RV^sENY₂) contain the phrase. Others have nothing between γλωτταν μεγάλην and ψήφισμα

among these items suggests that the young sophist would wield his tongue indiscriminately in public arenas in a manner that matches the plying of his other organ elsewhere. While one might appreciate the familiar metaphor of the politician as whore, my point once again is that the analogy points away from sexual activity and toward verbal. That is, the imagery does not indicate the presence of actual homosexual practice in the political arena. Rather, the reconfiguration of the body that results in the rude juxtaposition of tongue and penis means that the activity of the one organ parallels figuratively the activity of the other in the quest for political gain. The politician resembles the prostitute (and indeed women more generally) in his seductive verbiage, his pliable deportment, and his enterprising greed – all of which aim at dominating in the Assembly rather than in bed.

After the Stronger Argument has finished his tirade, the chorus warns the Weaker Argument that he had better put his “speciously fancy” Muse (κομποπρεπή μούσων) to good use and come up with some “new thing” (τι καινόν) (1031–32).¹³⁷ The Weaker Argument declares in response that he himself has long been “choking” (πνιγόμεν, 1036) and irate at the claims of his opponent. He then proceeds to engage the Stronger Argument in a dialogue that elicits further prejudicial remarks from the latter, who claims that it is precisely such quibbling that fills the agora with chattering young men (τῶν νεανίσκων . . . λαλούντων, 1053) and empties the wrestling schools.¹³⁸ The Weaker Argument points out that if this kind of marketplace talk (ἐν ἀγορᾷ τὴν διατριβήν, 1055) were really so lowbrow, Homer would not have made the old hero Nestor a public speaker (ἀγορητήν, 1057). This brings him back to the tongue (εἰς τὴν γλῶτταν), which he thinks young Athenians should learn to exercise (ἄσκεῖν) (1058–59). In direct opposition to the Stronger Argument, he offers Pheidippides access to all kinds of sensory pleasures associated with the symposium – boys, women, games, fancy foods (ῥψων), drink, laughter (1073) – and connects the unfettered pursuit of these with the ability to use the tongue defensively, should one get caught out in some indiscretion (1076–82). When

μακρόν (AKΘ). Dover’s problem with κωλὴν μεγάλην is that he thinks κωλή always means buttocks (or thigh), rather than sometimes, as Taillardat (1962: 59–60) and Henderson (1975 [1991]: 129) have shown, being crude usage for penis (i.e., “meat”; cf. Ar. fr. 128.3 K-A). See Stähli 2001 for the homosexual body type in classical art; and cf. Maischberger 2002. For the pale skin cf. the effeminate Lydian Stranger in Euripides’ *Bacchae* (455–59).

¹³⁷ The vocabulary of speciousness, polish, and novelty clearly indicates to what category the Weaker Argument’s type belongs: this is the realm of the sophists (cf. O’Sullivan 1992: 130–34; Worman 2002a: 111–14 and further below).

¹³⁸ Cf. *Ran.* 1070–71 and further below. Dialogue is of course Socrates’ signature mode.

the Stronger Argument points out that clever talk will do little to fend off the mortifying punishments exacted on the adulterer (e.g., having a radish shoved up the anus, 1083), the Weaker Argument questions whether being “gape-assed” (εὐρύπρωκτος) is such a bad thing (1085). In a lampoon of the Socratic elenchus, he then forces his opponent to admit that most of the city’s leaders possess this physical trait, including lawyers, poets, demagogues, and theater-goers, many of whom he knows (1088–1100). With this realization, the Stronger Argument throws down his cloak and runs off with the “other fuckers” (κινούμενοι, 1102).

Strepsiadēs tells his victorious opponent that he wants his son’s “jaw” (γνάθον, 1109) honed for both legal wrangles and affairs of state. The Weaker Argument responds that he will send him home a “proper sophist” (σοφιστὴν δεξιόν), while Pheidippides grumbles, “a pale-faced wretch, I think” (ὠχρὸν μὲν οὖν οἶμαι γε καὶ κακοδαίμονα) (1111–12). Later, when Strepsiadēs receives his polished son back from Socrates, he sings a paean to his “gleaming tongue” (γλώττη λάμπων, 1160) and exclaims happily over his pallid skin, his aggressive, “you talkin’ to me” (τὸ “τί λέγεις σύ:”) expression, and his “Attic look” (Ἀττικὸν βλέπος) (1171–76).¹³⁹ What Strepsiadēs does not foresee is that this reconstitution of his son’s body will prove to have violent effects. Soon the young man is beating up his father for denying the genius of Euripides (1371–76) and defending his actions by means of Socratic subtleties.

Thus in *Clouds* the sophistic Socrates, Euripides, and the younger generation who champion them manifest traits that are both weak and aggressive, sybaritic and ascetic. That is, they are characterized by a *lack* of one sort or another – whether it be failure of will, absence of restraint, or want of manly energy. Their biggest organs are their tongues, which get plenty of exercise chattering in the marketplace and lapping up delicacies at the dinner table. The juxtaposition of disparate body parts also correlates these activities with those that are more obviously sexually lubricious; the penises and buttocks of these types are depicted as wagging like their busy tongues, so that in feminine fashion they trail suggestions of sex into settings in which it has little or no place. Aristophanes’ imagery thus configures this pliable body itself as a metonymic indicator of a profligacy that promises trouble for the future of Athens.

¹³⁹ Commentators seem unclear as to what this last phrase points to, but see Hall 1995: 51 regarding using the eyes in oral performance. It may have to do with maintaining a straightforward, innocent glance in the persuasive setting while being in fact a sly type; cf., e.g., S. *Phil.* 110. Foley 2000: 296 suggests that Bdelycleon comes back on stage with a changed costume and mask.

Euripides in Frogs and Agathon in Thesmophoriazusae

In Aristophanes' depiction, Euripides' poetry exhibits the kind of fluid, polished verbal style and decadent attitudes the young are depicted as admiring most. In *Frogs*, when Aeschylus and Euripides are about to engage in the contest to determine who might best save the city, the chorus calls the sophistic Euripides a "mouth-worker" (στοματοουργός, 826). They describe his tongue as smooth (λίσπη/ γλώσσ', 826–27), and declare that he is a delicate splitter of hairs (ρήματα δαιομένη καταλεπτολογήσει, 828). The bold and blustering Aeschylus adds to this imagery by deeming his opponent a "gossip gatherer" (στωμυλιοσυλλεκτάδης, 841), a label that further associates Euripides with women's chatter.¹⁴⁰ Euripides indicates that his sense of his own abilities comports with this focus on the soft and pliable mouth: when he prays before the contest, he invokes among other things the "hinge of the tongue" (γλώττης στρόφιγξ, 892). But in Aristophanes' depiction, the flexibility that Euripides seeks implies not only slippery rhetoric but also some parallel physical weakness: a lack of backbone, perhaps, or a willingness to bend over. Indeed, in Aeschylus' view Euripides' poetry is oversexed and effeminizing (1043–56); it "teaches [men] to practice chatter and gossip, which empties the wrestling rings and wears out the rumps of babbling young men" (εἴτ' αὖ λαλιὰν ἐπιτηδεύσαι καὶ στωμυλίαν ἐδίδαξας, / ἢ ξεκένωσεν τὰς τε παλαίστρας καὶ τὰς πυγὰς ἐνέτριψεν/ τῶν μειρακίων στωμυλλομένων, 1069–71). Once again, this figurative reassembling implicitly references the female body, juxtaposing disparate apertures or organs and indexing an ignoble pliability of character.

In *Knights* the timid slave whom some manuscripts call "Nicias" coins a special term for this mode, when seeking a way to control his master Demos. "How," he despairs, "can I possibly say [what I need to] with Euripidean polish?" (κομψευριπικῶς, 18). He says he has no "guts" (ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔνι μοι τὸ θρέττε, 17), and can only devise an escape from his circumstances by wordplay that makes use of the rhythm of masturbation (ὥσπερ δεφόμενος, 25; cf. 21–26). Nicias quickly reveals himself to be passive and shrinking also in his other tastes, especially when it comes to such manly activities as wine-drinking (87–88). His fellow slave Demosthenes, who possesses a much more sanguine attitude toward brash speech and heavy drinking, cements this depiction of Nicias' weak type by calling him a "fountain of babbling swill" (κρουνοχυτροληραῖον, 89).¹⁴¹ Demosthenes proceeds to

¹⁴⁰ Again, see O'Sullivan 1992: 130–49 on the parameters of this vocabulary.

¹⁴¹ This may indicate that the general Nicias was a teetotaler (cf. Plut. *Nic.* 5).

praise drink as leading to all kinds of brave actions (92–93), to indulge himself liberally, and then to devise a plan for winning their way with Demos. As the action of the play progresses, he supervises the plot, while Nicias disappears into the house. The metonymies that delineate both characters suggest that such fastidious, wordy types are too weak-willed to make a difference where it matters most: in the arena of Athenian politics, where a loud, brash wine-drinker can artfully control the demos. Like women, water drinkers diddle about, babble ineffectually, and shrink from bold action.

Thesmophoriazusae takes this connection between glib talk and passive traits a little further, setting up the cross-dressing, delicate poet Agathon as another effeminized prattler.¹⁴² When Agathon's servant comes out and announces pompously to Euripides and his old relative that the younger poet is in the process of “rolling and casting” (γογγύλλει/ καὶ χοανεύει) phrases, the gleefully crude Inlaw finishes the image with a verb that probably indicates oral or anal penetration (λαϊκάζει) (56–57).¹⁴³ While the servant declares that the poet achieves the fine molding of words with his mouth, the Inlaw's substitution of sexual for verbal activity suggests that there is something lubricious about the poet's creative organs. Accordingly, he declares that he will press both the poet and his servant up against the wall and “cast in this here penis” (τουτί τὸ πέος χοανεῦσαι, 62).¹⁴⁴ His crude, “manly” response to the haughty servant and his effete master enacts what Bourdieu identifies as a linguistic rebellion against the domestication of the body in “polite” (and feminized) discourse.¹⁴⁵ Further, the Inlaw's insistence on juxtaposing verbal and sexual activities reconfigures the body, so that his metonymic jostling matches his generally aggressive attitude, a match that Bakhtin argues characterizes the language of abuse.¹⁴⁶

When Agathon enters, dressed in women's clothing and singing a maiden's song, his performance causes the Inlaw to respond with arch admiration, “What sweet and womanly strains!” (ὥς ἦδὺ τὸ μέλος . . . / καὶ θηλυδριῶδες, 130–31). To the Inlaw's questions about his feminine attire, Agathon responds that a poet must dress as he desires to write,

¹⁴² See Silk 1990 for an analysis of character portrayal in the play.

¹⁴³ Jocelyn 1980 argues that λαϊκάζειν primarily denotes fellatio, and points briefly to the connections forged in comic depictions of demagogues between talking and fellating (26). Henderson 1975 [1991]: 153 thinks, however, that λαϊκάζειν points more generally to “whoring” and/or pederastic sex. The thrust of the joke could thus be that Agathon might perform fellatio (so Sommerstein) in a similarly fancy manner, or “roll and mold” a plug for his own anus (as per Barrett's rather overly imaginative translation [1964]). Cf. Dover 1978: 142. On the vocabulary of crafting, see Austin and Olson 2004 (*ad* 56).

¹⁴⁴ The deictic τουτί indicates the comic body that the Inlaw is sporting (Foley 2000).

¹⁴⁵ Bourdieu 1991: 87–88. ¹⁴⁶ Cf. Bakhtin 1984: 202.

wearing women's clothes if he wishes to express women's feelings, and so on (149–52).¹⁴⁷ This correlation underscores the implications of accusing a writer or orator of womanly chatter: that his sweet-voiced and gossipy ways reveal his effeminized nature, which may extend not only to wearing soft clothes but also to offering up his soft rump to the “castings” of more manly types. Indeed, near the end of their encounter, the Inlaw deems Agathon both “gape-assed” (εὐρύπρωκτος) and a “bugger” (κατάπυγον) not merely in his words but also in his “experiences” (or “submissive acts,” οὐ τοῖς λόγοισιν ἀλλὰ τοῖς παθήμασιν, 200–01). The juxtaposition of activities involving mouth and anus again reveals that the imagery's primary implication is oral, while insultingly reconfiguring the body of the public figure to suggest sexual activities as well.¹⁴⁸

Further, the figure of Agathon indicates more clearly than the other characters considered here the significance of gender as a category that subtends the dominant metonymies. If the metonymic falsehood of Balzac's La Zambinella is that she is an “excluded other” (genus) not by virtue of being an inaccessible woman (species) but rather by virtue of being a castrato, the “falsehood” of Agathon – and, to a less obvious extent, of other glib types – is that he is a *euruproktos* (genus) not because he is a penetrable woman (species) but because he is a smooth-tongued man. While Agathon embraces women's ways (including their dress, deportment, and language), the import of this transvestism centers not so much on his sexual proclivities as on his verbal habits. He is a poet, after all, and the gendering of his speaking style leeches it of any power it might otherwise possess. Unlike Balzac's bourgeois romanticism, which fashions a place for feminine erotic power, the “resolutely masculine”¹⁴⁹ scheme of ancient comedy follows the Greek iambic tradition in treating the feminine only as a repository of weak-willed attitudes and enervating sexuality.

The Sausage Seller in Knights

Aristophanes' *Knights* offers a somewhat more complicated picture of the correlations among body parts and activities that delineate the glib demagogue. When the slave Demosthenes elects the Sausage Seller to beat out Paphlagon for control of the city, he identifies qualifications that parallel Bourdieu's emphasis on the brash, lower-class associations of the loud,

¹⁴⁷ On this equation see Muecke 1982; and cf. Saïd 1987.

¹⁴⁸ See Henderson 1975 [1991]: 209–10 on how these terms (and also χάσκειν) often conflate oratorical activity and passive sexuality; cf. also Dover 2002: 94–95. The Agathon scene, the Euripides scene in *Frogs*, and the blanket statements at the end of the agon in *Clouds* indicate that while such calibrations may mark the body of any public citizen, it applies especially to poets.

¹⁴⁹ This is Wilkins' phrase (2000a: 56).

open mouth (*la gueule*).¹⁵⁰ He is “a low-life,” from the marketplace, and bold (πονηρὸς κᾶξ ἀγορᾶς εἶ καὶ θρασύς, 181), with a coarse voice, base social status, and a huckster’s ways (φωνή μιαιρά, γέγονας κακῶς, ἀγοραῖος, 218).¹⁵¹ In *Frogs* Dionysus also deems Euripides a low-life (πονήρ, 852), while Aeschylus makes reference to his purportedly humble background (840) as the son of a greengrocer – a slur that Aristophanes likes to repeat (e.g., *Eq.* 19; *Thesm.* 387). Boldness seems to be most often the trait of the aggressive, loud-mouthed manipulator (cf., e.g., *Eq.* 304, 637, 693¹⁵²), like the loud Paphlagon (cf. 304–05).¹⁵³ Thus the Sausage Seller would seem to be identical in type to the man he wants to replace. But other charges suggest that this new demagogue is not merely as obnoxious as his predecessor; he also exhibits traits that point to a more conniving, effeminized type.¹⁵⁴

For instance, the blusterer Paphlagon accuses his opponent of babbling, chattering, and drinking water when practicing (θρυσλῶν καὶ λαλῶν . . . / ὕδωρ τε πίνων, 348–49), clear signs of a glib, prissy, and overly polished speaker.¹⁵⁵ While the slave Demosthenes promises the Sausage Seller that he will kick the council around and break down the generals (βουλὴν πατήσεις καὶ στρατηγούς κλαστάσεις, 166), he finishes up triumphantly with the claim that the new demagogue will also engage in some form of sexual act in the Prytaneium (ἐν πρυτανείῳ λαϊκάσεις, 167).¹⁵⁶ The substitution of the verb *laikazein* here may indicate performing fellatio; since civil servants and civic benefactors usually take meals in the Prytaneium,

¹⁵⁰ Bourdieu 1991: 87.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Rosenbloom’s important discussion on the social and political hierarchies inherent in this language (2002); for Rosenbloom the *agoraios* demagogue is one who “sells the delusion of the ideological hegemony of the demos” (307).

¹⁵² Cf. also Odysseus in *S. Phil.* ¹⁵³ Cf. Dover 2002: 95–96 on comic usage of *miaros*.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Vickers 1988: 98–106, who argues that the Sausage Seller represents Alcibiades. Although I think Vickers overplays this sort of equation, Aristophanes does like to lampoon Alcibiades’ lisping, flashy style (cf. *Vesp.* 44–45; *Av.* 1412, 1573, 1657–58), which conforms with the argument that the Sausage Seller is a more effeminate type.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. *Crat. Put.* (fr. 203 K-A), which denies the water drinker any creativity; and Aeschines’ characterization of Demosthenes (e.g., 1.131, 2.88, 2.99; cf. *Hyp. Dem.* [Prisc. 18.235]; *Ath. Deipn.* 10.424d). The point is that although the Sausage Seller can show his appetitive and verbally aggressive side, he is not a yeller, and displays some more pathetic tendencies than the violent “Blusterer” (cf. again *Eq.* 424–25, 721, also 167, regarding fellatio in the Prytaneium). Like the effete sons in *Clouds* and *Wasps*, at the end of *Knights* the Sausage Seller encourages Demos to dress up like a soft and fancy tyrant, complete with old-fashioned ceremonial robes and a scepter. See Foley 2000: 302–03; Wohl 2002: 83–86 for a different view.

¹⁵⁶ On the Prytaneium as the space for aristocratic eating, as opposed to the democratic Tholos, see Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 147–77; Wilkins 2000a: 175–83; and the objections of Fisher 2000: 361–62. For the purposes of this discussion, the elitist atmosphere would suit the sybaritic inclinations of the fellator.

the matching of activities should indicate another oral activity.¹⁵⁷ Thus the Sausage Seller's chattering verbal style is shadowed by an activity that indexes his servile, pliable deportment. Like Euripides in the *Frogs*, he will be a "mouth-worker" in more ways than one. Indeed, even though the Sausage Seller claims that he can out-shout the deafening Paphlagon, his description of his first moments before the council slyly point to his true nature, as Henderson has argued.¹⁵⁸ He appropriates the fart of a "bugger" (ἐπέπαρδε καταπύγων ἀνήρ) for use as the good omen he needs to make his move, knocks aside the barrier that keeps the public out of the council chamber by wagging his rump (τῷ πρωκτῷ θενών/ τῆν κιγκλίδ'), and shouts out, "gaping widely" (κἀναχακῶν μέγα) (638–42). With his ass wriggling like a prostitute and his mouth yawning open like that of any fatuous, penetrable type,¹⁵⁹ the Sausage Seller undermines even his most verbally aggressive moment with his effeminate deportment.

In keeping with these indications of effeminizing behavior is the Sausage Seller's claim that he used to steal meat by hiding it in his buttocks (ἀποκρυπτόμενος εἰς τὰ κοχῶνα, 424) and lying about it.¹⁶⁰ His trick, he says, caused an orator to say that he would one day become a guardian of the people (τὸν δῆμον ἐπιτροπέυσει, 426). Demosthenes then seals this rude correlation by affirming that perjury and buggery are sure signs of future leadership (ἀτὰρ δῆλόν γ' ἄφ' οὗ ξυνέγνω· ὅτι τῆ ἴπιώρκεις θ' ἥρπακῶς καὶ κρέας ὁ πρωκτὸς εἶχεν, 427–28).¹⁶¹ Thus using the mouth to swear falsely (ἴπιώρκεις) corresponds to offering up the anus to someone's "meat." Similarly, the Sausage Seller later equates hawking his wares with being raped as a boy (ἠλλαντοπώλουν καὶ τι καὶ βινεσκόμην, 1242¹⁶²). This jumble of organs and affects reconfigures the body in a new and monstrous form: that of the brash but lubricious politician. Moreover, the depiction of the Sausage Seller exhibits the same "flood" of body parts as

¹⁵⁷ See Sommerstein 1981 *ad* 167; but the word *laikazein* clearly does not mean this at *Thesm.* 57 and thus must take its implication from the metonymic exchange (i.e. the type of metaphor that Aristotle calls "analogy"). Cf. also Henderson 1975 [1991]: 153; Jocelyn 1980; Dover 1978: 142; and n. 143 above. None of these commentators remark on the effects of the metonymies, emphasizing instead the sexual implications of the imagery.

¹⁵⁸ Henderson 1975 [1991]: 209–10.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. the council members themselves (καὶ πρὸς ἑμ' ἐκεχήμεσαν, 651); and Demos' gaping (755, 804, 1119).

¹⁶⁰ A scholiast on this line (Triclinius *ad* 428) offers two explanations for the force of the joke: either the Sausage Seller ate the meat afterward or was treated as a woman in his youth. The one points to the conflation of mouth and anus, the other to his submissive proclivities.

¹⁶¹ Henderson 1975 [1991]: 200–01 argues that κοχῶνη refers to the perineum; like πρωκτός, it usually indicates anal intercourse. Cf. also Taillardat 1962: 70–71.

¹⁶² In passive forms, the verb βίνειν seems to indicate pederastic sex, especially violent types (i.e., rape) (Henderson 1975 [1991]: 152).

his own speech, so that he and his usage both participate in the kind of gleefully debasing imagery that Bakhtin identifies in Rabelais' text as the marketplace grotesque.

This violent imagery occasionally pertains also to the aggressive Paphlagon, but it only takes the form of threats to his body, representing attempts by the Sausage Seller, as well as his supporters, to rearrange his opponent's physiognomy by means of slander and threat.¹⁶³ Moreover, the imagery is restricted to one scene, where the Sausage Seller tries to get the upper hand by matching the violent deportment of his opponent with intimations of violent anal attacks. At one point he claims that he will "stuff [Paphlagon's] anus like a sausage" (ἐγὼ δὲ βυνήσω γέ σου τὸν πρωκτὸν ἀντὶ φύσκης, 364¹⁶⁴). As mentioned above, Demosthenes enjoins his fellow abusers soon after this to treat Paphlagon like the pig that he is, pegging open his mouth and checking his anus for disease (375–81). But the abusers' impertinent metonymies only match Paphlagon's own type in their obnoxiously aggressive tone, rather than in the submissive sex they threaten. The actual deportment of the Sausage Seller, in contrast, reveals his glib, prancing sort. While Paphlagon expends his energy shouting and cursing, the chorus envies the Sausage Seller his facile tongue (ζηλῶ σε τῆς εὐγλωττίας, 837). The "glib tongue" (γλωτταν εὔπορον) and "shameless voice" (φωνὴν ἀναιδῆ) that he calls upon to achieve his ends comport with his boldness (θράσος) (637–38).¹⁶⁵ This combination of traits is primary among those that Strepsiades thinks one can learn from Socrates in *Clouds* (θρασύς, εὐγλωττος, 445), as specialties of the sophists (i.e., of the Weaker Argument). Thus they mark their possessor as a proponent of a newer, more louche, perhaps even more dangerous form of politicking, in which the orator is reconfigured as a smooth-talking, ass-wiggling prostitute whose effeminate ways announce less his sexual passivity than his agility in verbally seducing the body politic.

The hungry old citizen

The recalcitrant elderly Athenian occupies a third position in this cluster of metonymic figures. He seems generally resistant to the urbane, sybaritic

¹⁶³ Cf. also the discussion of Paphlagon-Cleon's type above.

¹⁶⁴ Some MSS. have βυνήσω ("fuck"), some (more weakly?) κινήσω ("hump" [vel sim.]); on these terms as standard slang, see Henderson 1975 [1991]: 151–53.

¹⁶⁵ Ruffell 2002 argues that the Sausage Seller is a stand-in for Aristophanes, whose style may resemble that of another smooth-talking figure: Euripides (cf. *Ran.* 841; and the label εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων, *Crat.* fr. 342 K-A). See Dover 2002: 90–92 on the valences of *euglottos* and *thrasus*.

tastes of the younger generation and their teachers, embodying the sterner morality that ostensibly fostered the courage and manliness of Athens in an earlier period. In all of these plays, however, the old man's resistance is compromised by his own scheming, greedy nature, so that he emerges in the end less as some measured type than as an unruly element in need of guidance and control. The mouth imagery associated with him largely centers around eating, which situates his place in the semiotic scheme as adjacent to the loud-mouthed, voracious type. As mentioned, Wilkins has examined in detail how food operates in Attic comedy as a materialist metaphor for social interaction.¹⁶⁶ In this section I consider briefly some of the same imagery, but in relation to how Aristophanes situates the particular character traits within the metaphorical scheme, since the images associated with the old citizen generally reveal that he serves as a foil for the excessive characters. While he repeatedly voices a recalcitrant attitude toward luxuries, he often apes the behaviors of public figures and fails to resist their blandishments, thereby revealing his implication in both the political and the figurative plots.

Demos in Knights

Of the three plays focused on in this discussion, *Knights* displays the most consistent focus on food, its preparation, and its consumption as a set of metonymies that together forge the dominant metaphor for political practice. *Wasps* organizes a similar set of indices in relation to the courts and jury participation. Both plays center around attacks on Cleon, which suggests that the pervasive food metaphors are spun out of the emphasis on his putative greed. While, as Wilkins has shown, many other comedies of Aristophanes and his contemporaries make use of food metaphors, these two early plays do so in a manner that bears a special relation to a particular type of excessive character. As mentioned above, the fragments of Aristophanes' first play, *The Banqueters*, as well as the parabasis of *Clouds*, indicate that the concerns worked out in the later play were initially aired in the earlier one, with a chorus of feasters as the backdrop to an argument against sophistic teaching. Aristophanes may thus have conceived of various types of eating as metaphors for the social practices that are engaged and often transmogrified by both sophistic training and demagoguery, with Socrates and Cleon serving as the dominant metonymic figures for brutish disdain on the one hand and destructive rapacity on the other.

¹⁶⁶ Wilkins 2000a: 1–51.

In *Knights* the care that the competing politicians take of “Demos” revolves almost entirely around food. Aristophanes presents the procuring of food items, their preparation, and the feeding of them to Demos as metaphors for the ways in which demagogues pander to and manipulate the citizens. Demos himself is introduced as a fierce-tempered old “bean-chewer” (ἄγροικος ὀργήν, κυαμοτρῶξ, 41), whose rough disposition and humble food of choice underscores his rustic, simple ways.¹⁶⁷ His slave Paphlagon is primarily concerned with Demos’ “feeding”; he tempts him with food, drink, and obols indiscriminately. That is, the slave flatters and deceives the master by offering him all the things he might like to put in his mouth, anything by which he can gain concrete oral satisfaction (46–51). Later on in the play, when Paphlagon and the Sausage Seller are fighting over control of Demos, Paphlagon boasts that he will “nourish and serve” him (αὐτὸν θρέψω γὼ καὶ θεραπεύσω, 799). This causes the Sausage Seller to claim that if Demos should ever “go off to the country and live peacefully, find his courage through eating grits, and reacquaint himself with the olive” (εἰ δέ ποτ’ εἰς ἀγρὸν οὔτος ἀπελθὼν εἰρηναῖος διατριψῆ/ καὶ χῖδρα φαγῶν ἀναθαρρήσῃ καὶ στεμφύλω εἰς λόγον ἔλθῃ, 805–06), he would return a “sharp rustic” (δριμύς ἄγροικος, 808) and see how Paphlagon had cheated him. Thus eating itself is not the downfall of the Athenian citizen, but rather his debilitating penchant for the demagogue’s pandering – the activity for which fancy dining serves as a metaphor. This exchange suggests as well that Demos’ body has been rendered malleable by the soft handling of Paphlagon, and that weaning him from it will restore his backbone.

However, a later exchange between the chorus and Demos himself precisely inverts this scheme, points to a more complex interaction between the politician and the citizenry, and raises questions about the putative limitations of that citizenry (and thereby Aristophanes’ old citizen character). It emerges that the demagogues themselves are vulnerable to a similarly insulting reduction of man to meat: in fact, the Demos raises (τρέφει) the demagogues on the Pnyx and, whenever he is without a tasty treat (ὄψον), sacrificing (θύσας) the fattest, he dines off of him (ἐπιδειπνεῖς) (1135–40). Thus both the civic body (i.e., Demos) and that of the demagogue would appear to run this risk – namely, that if they are not vigilant, they will end up as someone else’s meal.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Sommerstein 1981 *ad* 41.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. the iambic body’s vulnerabilities (discussed in ch. 1); and the importance of this generalized vulnerability to the semiotics of Euripides’ *Cyclops* (discussed in ch. 3).

In keeping both with this alimentary inversion and with the corresponding hint that the old citizens may be less gullible than they seem, the Sausage Seller reconstitutes Demos as his young, upright, hardy self by boiling him down like sausage meat. Thus the hungry citizen, who would pay attention to anyone who fed him the best tidbits, can only emerge renewed by being himself treated like a sausage. Not only is he boiled down by this redoubtable chef, he is also encased in the gleaming splendor of an earlier period (1331). Before he always held his mouth agape (cf. again 651, 755, 804, 1032, 1202), ready for any choice words or fancy offerings from the demagogues. Now the Sausage Seller enjoins the crowd upon the entrance of Demos to “keep silent and shut their mouths” (εὐφημεῖν χρῆ καὶ στόμα κλίειν, 1316). Soon Demos himself is promising to clear the marketplace of young men who “babble” (στωμύλλεται, 1376) flatteries to false leaders. The defeated Paphlagon is relegated to selling sausages alone at the city gates (1398), where he can exchange abuse (λοιδορήσεται, 1400) and shout (διακεκραγέναι, 1403) with prostitutes.

Philocleon in Wasps

While Philocleon seems largely concerned with what he can put in his mouth, his tastes are the relatively simple ones of a rustic older Athenian. He resists his son’s attempts to wean him from his fava beans, three obols of jury pay, and rough old cloak, claiming he has little use for fancier foods and softer clothes (508–11). When he enters into an argument with his son over his rough lifestyle and his attachment to jury service, he casts the benefits he receives from his chosen life in terms of his concrete pleasure. Again, these are quite modest: he likes defendants who offer a “little joke from Aesop” (Αἰσώπου τι γέλοισιν, 566), a little sex with “piglets” (τοῖς χοιριδίσις χαίρω, 573), or a “fine speech from *Niobe*” (ἐκ τῆς Νιόβης εἴπη ῥῆσιν τὴν καλλίστην, 580).¹⁶⁹ When Philocleon goes home, he has his pay, which he keeps in his mouth for his daughter to fish out with her tongue (τῆ γλώττη τὸ τρίωβον ἐκκαλαμάται, 609).¹⁷⁰ This curious little scene conflates food, sex, and money in a gleeful saturation of metonymies. Philocleon’s description is so dense with concrete details that the effect is a clear instance of the jumbled images that fill the joking, abusive mouth in Bakhtin’s conception.¹⁷¹ Once Philocleon has relinquished his pay, his “little wifey”

¹⁶⁹ Note that the references to Aesop and “piglets” give Philocleon’s description of his tastes a rustic air.

¹⁷⁰ MacDowell 1971 ad 791 deplors the practice of carrying money in the mouth (“Greeks had neither pockets nor a sense of oral hygiene”).

¹⁷¹ Bakhtin 1984: 317–19; cf. Silk 2000b.

offers him edibles to pop into his mouth (καὶ τὸ γύναιόν μ' ὑποθωπεῖσαν φυστήν μᾶζαν προσενέγκη) and urges him to “eat this, and swallow down that” (φάγε τουτί/ ἔντραγε τουτί) (610–12). He does not need his son’s fancy butler, but has his own little mug of wine, and drinks when he pleases (613–18).

Bdelycleon paints a different picture of the leaders who apparently provide his father with this modestly comfortable life. While Philocleon thinks he is being served so well by Cleon and his lot, in reality he and others like him merely “lap up the crumbs” (τοὺς ἀργελόφους περιτρώγων, 672) dropped by the demagogues in their scheming. But when his son offers him a cozy life at home, where he can judge to his heart’s content and not even wait for lunch, Philocleon worries that he might not be able to “chew over” (μασώμενος, 780) the case as he did before, and then asks where he will get his pay. Bdelycleon says that he himself will put up the money, and Philocleon agrees that this would be good, since he has been swindled out of it before, getting a mouthful of fish-scales rather than his cherished obols (ἐνέθηκε τρεῖς λοπίδας μοι κεστρέων/ κάγώ ἴνεκαψ· ὀβολοὺς γὰρ ᾧόμην λαβεῖν, 790–91). The case Bdelycleon sets up at home also revolves around eating: the dog who stole the cheese is put on trial, while Philocleon happily watches the proceedings, slurping away on his bean soup (906). Only later does it become clear that he is not so malleable, when his rustic cavorting (1320) disrupts the urbane symposium to which his son has taken him.

Strepsiades in Clouds

For this old man as well, everything has to do with his concrete resources, if not necessarily always his food. In *Clouds* Strepsiades is mostly concerned with maintaining a grip on his money, which his son Pheidippides is fast depleting. He conceives of rhetorical instruction only as a means of outfoxing his creditors. When he goes to Socrates’ school to inquire about instruction for his son, he has difficulty grasping what is going on there, since it bears no obvious relation to one’s material well-being – rather the reverse. Not only are the students pallid and barefoot; Strepsiades also extracts from the young student who serves as his guide an admission that the pupils at the *phrontistērion* had had no dinner (δεῖπνον, 175) the night before. This causes Strepsiades to inquire what Socrates had devised for them in the way of sustenance (πρὸς τᾶλφιτ’ ἐπαλαμήσατο, 176). The student replies that Socrates “sprinkled” (καταπάσας) some ash on the table, wielding a spit that should hold meat (κάμψας ὀβελίσκον) and a

compass (177–78).¹⁷² Thus instead of roasting on the spit and creating ash like a proper chef, Socrates offers his students a geometry lesson to fill their empty stomachs. When this does not suffice, he resorts to the theft of a cloak (θειμάτιον ὑφείλετο, 179) for lunch money.

Socrates' crafty substitutions seem to tickle Strepsiades, and he persists in believing that the sophist has something valuable to teach his son. When the contest is conducted between the Stronger and the Weaker Arguments for the benefit of father and son, Strepsiades is easily won over by the Weaker argument and seems to regret not at all the retreat of the Stronger Argument, who should have been his ally. While the life that the Stronger Argument depicts largely matches that which Strepsiades champions, especially in its rejection of delicacies (*opsa*) and other luxurious items, the old man readily opts for the training that appears to offer the most obviously successful results. Indeed, he accepts at face value the trouncing that the Weaker Argument achieves by means of a sophistic argument that proves that all prominent Athenians are buggers.

The old citizens thus do not in fact present any firm resistance to the open-mouthed, abusive tactics of the sophists and demagogues who, at least according to Aristophanes' defaming depictions, are intent on leading Athens in the wrong direction. Like the pleasure-loving audiences of orators in the depictions of writers like Thucydides, Plato, and Demosthenes, these old men are easily distracted by "tidbits" such as novel stories, jokes, and dramatic delivery.¹⁷³ Indeed, the comic characterization of this pandering behavior and those it serves turns up repeatedly in Plato and the orators, indicating its influential role in forging an abusive discourse around professional speakers. When the orators want to cast their opponents as outrageous types that no self-respecting Athenian would support, they resort to vocabulary the same or similar to that employed in these plays. And when Plato wants to indicate Socrates' pedestrian status in contrast to the professionals, he gives this vocabulary to his teacher's more outspoken and aggressive interlocutors. Thus comic usage (and perhaps Aristophanes' in particular) becomes a means of signaling that the target of abuse should be recognized as a type so ridiculous as to be thoroughly revolting and even impious. Without the help of the mordant depictions of the comic poet, however, the audiences of the demagogues or sophists might miss the

¹⁷² So Dover 1968 *ad* 177.

¹⁷³ Cf., e.g., Thuc. 3.36–38; Pl. *Gorg.* 521e3–522a3; Dem. 18.139; also Aesch. 1.126. See further in chs. 4 and 5.

implications of such characterizations, distracted as they are by flattery and entertaining tales.¹⁷⁴ Even his fellow poets may not be so effective, as their lampoons in the parabases suggest.

Indeed, in these explicitly didactic and metatheatrical moments Aristophanes' presentation of his career is often couched in the same kind of oral imagery that I have traced throughout this chapter, as the claim from the *Wasps* quoted at its outset indicates.¹⁷⁵ In this speech the chorus also represents Aristophanes as Heracles fighting a hideous monster (i.e., Cleon). This monster manifests a formidable combination of grotesque features, including a headdress of groaning, lapping flatterers (κεφαλαὶ κολάκων οἰμωξομένων ἐλιχμῶντο) and a torrential, ruinous voice (φωνὴν . . . χαράδρας ὄλεθρον τετοκίνας) (*Vesp.* 1030–35).¹⁷⁶ In *Knights*, although the plot revolves around the figure of Cleon, the chorus focuses on the poet's assessment of his fellow *didaskaloi*. They say that he recognizes that his career was slow to develop (as in *Wasps*), but offer his excuse that the Athenian audience is fickle. They cite the evidence of the bibulous Cratinus, who flooded his audience with a bland profusion of images, suffered a piteous, babbling (παρὰληροῦντ') decline – like Socrates' old music teacher Connus – and now ought to be “drinking” in the Prytaneium (πίνειν ἐν τῷ πρυτανείῳ) (526–36).¹⁷⁷ Cratinus' *Putinē* (*Wine Flask*, produced in 423) responds to this insult by defending the drinking life. In fr. 198 K-A, for instance, a character bears witness to the fountains of words that spurt from the poet; he warns that they will “flood the place with poetry” (ἅπαντα ταῦτα κατακλύσει ποιήμασιν), unless someone stops up his mouth (εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἐπιβύσει τις αὐτοῦ τὸ στόμα) as one might an upended wine flask. This volubility presumably contrasts with Aristophanes' restrained orifice in *Wasps*, the drama that Aristophanes produced in the following year and that Zachary Biles has argued responds to Cratinus' *Putinē*.¹⁷⁸ With his drunken creativity and flood of words Cratinus resembles Archilochus, whose stylistic heir he was.¹⁷⁹ Further, if Ian Ruffell

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Willi 2002 on comedy as an “anti-genre.”

¹⁷⁵ See Sifakis 1971; Hubbard 1991 on the function of the parabasis more generally.

¹⁷⁶ See the discussion of the image above, pp. 93–94.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Ameipsias' *Connus*, produced the year after (423). Sommerstein 1981 ad 535 notes that the Prytaneium was primarily a place of communal eating rather than drinking, so that the image underscores Cratinus' proclivity for drink. See Sidwell 1995; Luppe 2000; Biles 2002; Ruffell 2002 on the rivalry between Aristophanes and Cratinus and its metatheatrical implications. For metatheatrical elements in Aristophanes more generally, see Slater 2002.

¹⁷⁸ Biles 2002: 189–201 focuses especially on the figure of Philocleon, in whose drunken behavior at symposium he sees a lampoon of Cratinus. See also Rosen 2000; Ruffell 2002 on Cratinus' style and the puzzle of whether a “flood of words” could be a positive image.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Ps.-Longinus 33.5 comparing Archilochus' style to an unleashed flood, an image that Horace in his satires uses to denigrate his predecessor Lucilius' style (*Serm.* 1.4.21, 1.10.50); also Archil.

is correct in his attribution of an unassigned fragment to Cratinus' play, we would then find the poet describing someone as his opposite by comparing him to both Euripides and Aristophanes: "an overly subtle speechifier, an idea-peddler, a Euripidaristophaniser" (ὕπολεπτολόγος, γνωμιδιώκτης, εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων, *inc. fab. fr.* 342).¹⁸⁰

Aristophanes' contemporary Crates, on the other hand, is a chef who concocts slight repasts and accompanies these by tart urbanities. He offers the audience a "light lunch" (ἀπὸ σμικρᾶς δαπάνης . . . ἀριστιζῶν) and rolls out refined thoughts from his "dry" mouth (ἀπὸ κραμβοτάτου στόματος μάπτων ἀστειοτάτας ἐπινοίας) (*Eq.* 537–39).¹⁸¹ The parabasis in *Clouds* similarly denigrates fellow poets, especially those like Cratinus and Ameipsias whose plays *Putinē* and *Connus* beat *Clouds* for the top prizes in 423 (competitors whom the poet deems "vulgar men," ἀνδρῶν φορτικῶν, 524).¹⁸² While the play itself focuses on the figure of Socrates, the parabasis takes a swipe at Cleon as well, referring to the poet's caricature in the *Knights* as hitting Cleon "in the belly" while he was at his most powerful (ὄς μέγιστον ὄντα Κλέων' ἔπαισ' εἰς τὴν γαστέρα, 549; cf. also 581–86). The focus on a punch in the belly points to the iambic tenor of Cleon's actual contention with Aristophanes (whose play *Babylonians* [426] he publicly denounced), as well as its immediate source: his gluttonous profile in *Knights*. Indeed, Ralph Rosen has argued that the feud between Aristophanes and Cleon had its roots in archaic iambos and was effectively shaped as an agon reiterating comedy's ties to that genre.¹⁸³

There is clearly a political as well as a literary reason for this consistency of focus and imagery, at both the metatheatrical level and that internal to the plot. During the 420s suspicion among certain elites settled on Cleon, for his general rapacity, "violent" speechifying, and aggressive conduct of the war, and on the sophists (perhaps especially Socrates), for their mercenary

fr. 120 W regarding the creative powers of wine, as well as Cratinus' dismissal of the creative potential of the water drinker (fr. 203 K-A). The testimony of 17 K-A seems to suggest that Cratinus consciously fashioned his poetic persona and style after Archilochus.

¹⁸⁰ This is Ruffell's piquant translation (2002: 160). Note again that Aristophanes himself lampoons Euripides' style as overly subtle and delicate; and see above, p. 105.

¹⁸¹ Neil *ad loc.* suggests this interpretation of κράμβος, a very rare word; cf. also Phryn. on Polemon (οὐ γλύξις οὐδ' ὑπόχυτος, ἀλλ' Πράμνιος, fr. 68 K-A), except that Pramnian is usually considered fine, while Crates' "wine" seems to lack some body.

¹⁸² This reference as well as explicit admission in *Nub.* 523 indicates that the play was produced a second time. See Dover 1968: lxxx–xcviii. For an assessment of Ameipsias' *Connus* and other "intellectual" plays of the period, see Carey 2000.

¹⁸³ Rosen 1988a: 59–82; cf. Kugelmeier 1996; Ruffell 2002. Cf. the discussion in ch. 4 regarding the tradition of iambic vituperation between Plato and Antisthenes.

attitudes and deceitful techniques of argumentation.¹⁸⁴ Both of these assessments are clearly ideologically driven, but the essential point is that Cleon and Socrates seem to have crystallized concerns in the early years of the Peloponnesian War about what types of citizen threatened to lead Athenians and therefore the city as a whole in dangerous directions, politically as well as morally. Thus Aristophanes' *Banqueters* (426) and *Clouds* (423), as well as Ameipsias' *Connus* (423) and Eupolis' *Kolakes* (421), mock the sophists and Socrates as morally corrupt, chattering idlers. Aristophanes' focus on Cleon as a rapacious loudmouth appears, in some contrast, to be the poet's personal obsession; the figure of Cleon turns up in one form or another in *Babylonians*, *Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Clouds*, *Wasps*, and *Peace*.¹⁸⁵ Like Thucydides, Aristophanes regarded Cleon as a violent, overly clever politician, whose attitudes and actions together revealed a fundamental contempt for democracy.¹⁸⁶

The imagery of the parabases suggests not only that Aristophanes made use of an imagistic and lexical scheme that mocked these putatively dangerous types, but also that he set himself up as their iambic contender, chastening the idling yet potentially brutal sophist and countering the onslaughts of the belligerent, bellowing demagogue. Again, the latter contest is figured as Aristophanes' special labor; he represents himself braving abusive exchanges with Cleon like the dogged Heracles (*Vesp.* 1030; *Pax* 752).¹⁸⁷ Having learned his craft in the "bellies" of senior comic *didaskaloi*, he is able to curb his own "mouth" in ways that other teachers of the demos cannot. This judgment may be aimed especially at the bibulous Cratinus, whose outsized appetites and voluble style resemble those of Paphlagon-Cleon.¹⁸⁸ Moreover, it may be comedy itself that has honed Aristophanes

¹⁸⁴ On Thucydides' and Aristophanes' abuse of Cleon, see esp. Wohl 2002: 73–123; on the treatment of Socrates, see esp. O'Regan 1992.

¹⁸⁵ While there are references to Cleon in contemporaneous fragments of Eupolis (frs. 290, 308, 456 K), it is unclear that he is similarly dominant in the plays from which the fragments come. McGlew 2002: 92–111 emphasizes the parallelism between Cratinus' comic treatment of Pericles and Aristophanes' of Cleon. Cf. Sommerstein 2000 on the dearth of "demagogue-comedies" until after the deaths of Pericles and subsequently Cleon; also Vickers 1988; Lind 1990; Mastromarco 1993.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. McGlew 2002: 97–111.

¹⁸⁷ This use of the Heracles topos supports Rosen's argument for the connection to iambos (1988a: 59–82) – i.e., that the hostilities between Aristophanes and Cleon were overplayed by the poet as a metatheatrical means of ramifying the iambic contest central to his genre. But see Carawan 1990 and Atkinson 1992, who focus on the possible facts of the matter. Steinrück (2000: 44–47) argues that Heracles was a deity central to archaic iambos. Cf. also Wilkins 2000a: 90–97 on the centrality of Heracles to Doric and Attic drama, especially comedy and the satyr play. And note how often Socrates casts himself as an enduring, wrangling Heracles in Plato (*Euthd.* 297c, *Ap.* 22a, *Phd.* 89c; cf. *Tht.* 169b).

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Ruffell 2002: 148–55, who argues for this connection, as well as that of Aristophanes with the Sausage Seller. This would constitute a quite startling example of self-mockery, although the

in this impressive manner: in *Clouds* only the comic poets are exempt from the crowd of elite, urbane writers and spectators who are *euruprōktoi* (1084–1100) and therefore corrupt at the other end as well.

The old citizens – who come closest to representing the simple, sturdy values of an earlier Athens – thus ought to be attended to and guided properly, perhaps by the comic *didaskalos* who can craft the most subtle and pointed abuse. But their susceptibility to the pandering attentions of the politicians also indicates the extent to which their body parts and affects may serve as foils for those of more rapacious types, their own open mouths and hungry bellies merely mirroring in miniature the wider apertures and larger appetites of the city's leaders. Whether Aristophanes portrays these public figures as voracious, badgering gobblers of Athens' resources or fastidious, glib seducers of its citizens, he makes it clear through culinary and erotic metonymies that the old characters are no more impervious to their blandishments than they are to feminine flatteries or brash manipulations. When the cunning slave offers supper to Demos or the little wife tempts Philocleon with pastry, the old men open their mouths obediently and swallow down what they are given.

Comic slander often centers on oral activities, and the imagery it engages also draws into focus other bodily apertures and organs, so that the body as a natural whole is repeatedly dismantled, disassembled by mocking tropes and metonymies. Further, in Attic comedy, and perhaps especially in the plays of Aristophanes, a set of vocabulary emerges that distinguishes the appetites and especially the oral behaviors of character types. Thus the idling chatterer (*lalos*, *adoleschēs*) anchors one end of a continuum that extends to that of the aggressive loud-mouth (*boōn*, *kekraktēs*) at the other. Although in comic depiction sophists, demagogues, and sometimes poets as well are profligate in numerous ways, many of which overlap across this appetitive continuum, the shouting demagogue tends to be revealed by his appetite for food and drink, while the loquacious sophist or poet shows more interest in sex. In this the latter are like comic female characters, who generally exhibit louche attitudes while their most extravagant attentions are lavished on the phallus.

This comic scheme has its most engaged elaborations in fourth-century prose settings that address public speaking and its pleasures: Platonic dialogue, oratory, and rhetorical theory. Before turning to these texts, however,

fragments of Cratinus' *Putinē* indicate a similarly mordant self-portrait. Ruffell also suggests that the figure of Paphlagon may additionally be a revisionist response to Cratinus' lampoons of Pericles (in *Dionysalexandros*, *Cheirones*, *Nemesis*, *Ploutoi*).

I consider Euripides' *Cyclops*, in order to pursue the development of a significant trope that emerges from the loud, aggressive end of the continuum: that of the *mageiros*, the public butcher. The eponymous character of the *Cyclops* seems to have been common fodder for comic and satyric depiction during the late fifth century. In the Cyclops' confrontation with a clever but debased Odysseus, a set of contrasting images centered on the monster's voracious jaws distinguishes the sophistic butcher from the hungry pragmatist. The play thus serves as a tantalizing supplement to iambic tradition, since it represents the merest edge of what was apparently a rich and various source of lampoon in both comedy and the satyr play.

Gluttonous speechifying in Euripides' Cyclops

In the *Odyssey*, the Cyclops consumes his meat raw. One of the more gruesome moments in book 9 occurs when the monster snatches up two of Odysseus' men, dashes their heads so that their brains run on the ground (ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέει, 9.290¹), and gobbles them up like a mountain lion, bones and all (ἐγκατα τε σάρκας τε καὶ ὀστέα μυελόνετα, 9.293). Polyphemus is not, however, ignorant of wine (9.357–58), in sharp contrast to his rudimentary culinary techniques; as I discuss further below, in Euripides' play this ignorance coexists rather oddly with his fancy cookery. Nor does the Homeric poet depict the Cyclops as especially verbally adept, although he does show some wit (e.g., 9.369–70). Euripides' sophistic gourmet is thus something of innovation, at least in relation to the Homeric figure.

Comic fragments do indicate that poets were elaborating on some similar themes; and it is there that we find a developing model for the sophistic chef in Euripides' play.² Commentators have argued over the extent to which the persona of the monster is intended to represent a particular brand of sophistic argumentation, some finding him not very clever at all. No one, however, has considered the relationship between how he eats and how he talks, in contradistinction to Odysseus and Silenus, the other main characters in the drama. Nor have they recognized sufficiently the significance of his resemblance to the comic *mageiros*, who in turn becomes a sophistic type in fourth-century comedy. Since, as I elaborate in chapter 2, among iambic tropes the *mageiros* represents one important way in which the figure of the sophist is mocked and denigrated, the fashioning of the Cyclops as a chef reinforces the idea that this satyr play participates uniquely in the abusive discourse developing around professional speakers.

¹ Cf. ἐγκέφαλον ἐξέρρανε, E. *Cyc.* 402.

² E.g., Cratinus, *Odysseuses*; Callias, *Cyclopes*. Again, see Giannini 1960; cf. Dohm 1964; Berthiaume 1982; Wilkins 2000a.

Euripides' *Cyclops* is the sole satyr play that is extant in its entirety. It thus poses a special challenge in the charting of an iambic discourse centered on oral activities. Like Theophrastus' *Characters*, the *Cyclops* raises questions about its literary conventions that are difficult if not impossible to answer; unlike that later text, we have little doubt of its genre and only some about how representative it is. Numerous fragments of other satyr plays exist, which help to place the themes and imagery of the *Cyclops* in context.³ Most commentators agree that the basic features of the play appear to adhere to tradition; nor was the use of these characters unique, since the late fifth century saw a number of satyr plays and comedies featuring Odysseus and/or the Cyclops.⁴ The plot may, however, have seemed especially salient when it was produced (probably around 412⁵), since the disastrous effects of demagoguery during wartime were by then alarmingly apparent, at least to many elite Athenians. The long shadow of the Sicilian expedition and its terrible denouement in 413 likely contributed a grim motivation for depicting the Cyclops as a gourmandizing, sophistic cannibal from that fateful island. Indeed, the news of the defeat and imprisonment of Athenian troops in Sicily would have reached Athens at the end of the summer of 413. It thus seems reasonable that this shocking blow to the city's power – especially if Thucydides' claim is accurate that “all of Greece” was immediately up in arms against Athens (εὐθύς οἱ Ἕλληνες πάντες ἐπηρμένοι ἦσαν, 8.2.1) – would have encouraged a plot produced in the following spring that skewers a monstrous Sicilian chef, whose verbal skills expose his decadent brutality toward those who have the temerity to set foot on his island.⁶

The *Cyclops* thus provides the exploration of the mouth and its abuses with a strikingly familiar and topical confluence of affects, since its antagonist is effectively an enemy of Athens who argues captiously with and hopes to feed upon his interlocutors, themselves hapless troops in a hostile land. The drama's hero, moreover, is a pointedly altered version of the sophistic Odysseus from tragedy, since this time his character is focused on what we might recognize as a primary civic concern in enemy territory: the acquisition of food. I emphasize these elements not to argue for reducing the play's complexities to an elaboration of its historical moment, but rather to

³ These have been gathered and assessed most recently in an authoritative volume edited by Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker (1999).

⁴ For conventional features of the satyr play, see Waltz 1931; Guggisberg 1947; Steffen 1971; Arnott 1972; Rossi 1972; Ussher 1978; Sutton 1980; Seaford 1988: 33; Seidensticker 1989; Voelke 2000; Griffith 2002. Regarding other Odysseus plays, see Fauth 1973; Wilkins 2000a; and further below.

⁵ See Seaford 1982, who dates the play on metrical grounds.

⁶ But cf. Seaford 1984, who appears to think that the Sicilian tragedy would have discouraged such a depiction; see further below.

highlight once again the topicality of the imagery explored in this discussion. Like Attic comedy, the *Cyclops* sustains a number of elements common to iambic discourse, one of the most essential of which is a mocking critique of public speakers. This time, however, the mockery centers less on a particular Athenian demagogue such as Cleon and more on the source of sophistic trickery: Sicily and its teachers, who reputedly taught Athenians to indulge in the decadent thrills of passive listening and themselves to foster dramatic deceptions. We might note that Thucydides represents the Athenians as indulging in precisely such thrills when they embraced Alcibiades' overblown image of the city's strength and voted to send troops to Sicily (6.15–26).

That said, the play also forges more general connections between greedy ingestion and sophistic tricks, which share important similarities with Attic old comedy. Further, it anticipates Socrates' treatment of sophists and demagogues as "grubbers" (*kolakes*⁷) in Platonic dialogue, as well as the slandering of opponents as greedy wordsmiths in fourth-century oratory. Unlike the non-dramatic genres, however, the satyr play stages such interactions as a ritual drama – that is, worshipping Dionysus in his capacity as the god of wine. While it therefore tends to privilege the symposiastic setting over that of the feast, inverting comic emphases, the *Cyclops* features a confrontation between a glutton and a hungry man. Thus the imagery of this satyr play is much closer to that of comedies like Aristophanes' *Knights*, where the dominant metaphors are alimentary. This insistent foregrounding of food and wine is quite distinct from other genres that focus on the abuse of professional speakers. Although Platonic dialogue draws parallels between fancy fare and sophistic pandering, these are largely absent from the one dialogue that takes place at a symposium. References to the consumption of food and wine may also shape defamatory portraits in oratory, but without constituting a dominant theme.

Since this is a satyr play, however, the vocabulary that is used to highlight the opponents' types does not overlap much with other depictions of professional speakers in other settings. We might expect that the lexicon used in the two dramatic genres (i.e. satyr play and comedy) would be more similar than that, for instance, of comedy and oratory. But in fact satyric diction shares more with tragedy than with comedy, and thus contains fewer elements that we could consider iambic.⁸ As a result the satyr play has a more complicated and tenuous connection to iamboi than the

⁷ See ch. 4 for a discussion of this term.

⁸ See Seaford 1984: 47–48. While both tragedy and the satyr play may include defamatory exchanges (e.g., the confrontation between Teucer and the Atreidae in S. *Ajax*), these largely avoid the insulting comic vocabulary that both Platonic dialogue and oratory later adopt.

other genres treated here. Martin Steinrück has argued for the centrality of ephebic education to iambos, which suggests a point of overlap with the satyr play; and West has pointed to the crude sexuality of iambic poetry, a feature also associated with satyrs.⁹ We can note as well that the hungry persona that the iambic poet assumes bears some similarity to the thirsty tones of the satyrs. Both inhabit an irreverent, outsider's perspective; both are impudent, needy types. The satyr play is, again, unquestionably adjacent to comedy, which does have strong ties to archaic iambos.¹⁰ Further, Plato appropriates both comic vocabulary and the *silenos*, satyric drama's dominant figure, in his depiction of the Socratic persona, which indicates an additional intertwining of iambic tropes across these genres.¹¹ Even if the direct connections between iambos and the satyr play are difficult to substantiate, the satyric mode appears to have a number of points of contact with iambic conventions and thus to have made a contribution to the development of defamatory discourse around professional speakers.

In addition to these difficulties, the satyr play only somewhat conforms to the iambic scheme in respect to such elusive aspects of the genre as visual spectacle. Depending largely on the evidence provided by vase imagery, scholars have argued that the body of the comic character and that of the satyr were quite different, the grotesque distensions of the one (i.e., belly, ass, phallus) being largely absent from the other.¹² From this perspective, the satyr chorus would have been only nominally phallic and clearly ephebic, with Silenus as the only older and possibly more visibly lascivious figure. Nor would the hero and antagonist have exhibited grotesque features, except in the case of monstrous characters. This more restrained visual mode would therefore have paralleled the elevated language, influencing the perception of the speakers' types as more august than those of comedy.

But the satyr play also enacts a pointed debasement of tragic themes. The tone, largely set by the satyrs themselves, tends to be playful and insolent, which contributes to the diminution of the hero's stature as well as

⁹ Steinrück 2000: 48–52, 112–19; West 1974: 28–29.

¹⁰ See Rosen 1988a; Bowie 1986, 2001; and cf. discussion in ch. 2. The *Thesmophoriazousai* offers a nice appreciation of this link, when Euripides' Inlaw teases Agathon about his claim that he has to inhabit the inclinations of his characters. The bawdy cousin offers the effeminate poet help with writing a satyr play, since, he says, "I can take you from behind with my stiffy" (ἵνα συμποιῶ σοῦπισθεν ἐστυκῶς ἐγὼ) (157–58).

¹¹ Plato also depicts a didactic relationship between the philosopher and his (often youthful) interlocutors that echoes the relationship between Silenus and his fellow satyrs. The satyrs may be related as well to *aimos* and the animal fable tradition in their connections to ritual knowledge. See Usher 2002 and further discussion in ch. 4.

¹² See Hall 1998; Foley 2000; Griffith 2002: 217–22; cf. Lissarrague 1990a, 1990b for how the vase imagery complicates this idea.

that of his antagonist. Further, unlike in other largely non-mimetic settings in which performative elements are less fantastical, tensions would have built on the satyric stage in the chafing between a character's lofty lexicon and his debased or outlandish deportment. In contrast, while Plato clearly echoes satyric elements in Socrates' interactions with young interlocutors – including the insouciant tone, the playfully insulting depictions of highbrow sophists, and the ironic denigration of the *silenos* figure – such references remain metaphorical. The orators also draw insulting analogies between each other's deportments and those of iambic figures, but they do so *in propria persona*. I should emphasize, however, that all of these genres participate to some extent in the projection of fictional personas, share an interest in visible behaviors, and thus often focus on the visual aspects of speech performance. Further, they all make liberal use of bodily metonymies as indices of character, concentrating especially on ruder parts and intemperate behaviors. Thus the gap between, say, the aggressive style of the monster Cyclops and that of the orator Aeschines is narrowed by the emphasis in both settings on the visible excesses of the voluble sophist.

Despite these reservations about the satyr play's connections to iambic discourse, Euripides' *Cyclops* makes a more pointed contribution to the defamation of public speakers than other satyr plays seem to. As a central indication of its special relevance, the play introduces a figure that becomes increasingly important in the development of ancient comedy: the boastful chef, whose verbal facility matches his mastery in the kitchen. As I discuss in chapter 2, scholars have argued about whether lost plays from old comedy would indicate a more central role for this figure, or whether the protagonist merely occupies the role of master of the sacrifice and thus anticipates the clear ascendancy of the braggart *mageiros* in middle comedy.¹³ For our purposes, a number of the Cyclops' attributes suggest an appropriation of the comic figure: he is actually deemed a "chef of Hades" (Ἄιδου μαγειρῶν, 397); he is proto-Sicilian;¹⁴ in common with a number of comic protagonists, his cooking talents center on sacrifice; and his dominant mode is boastful and sophistic. The figure of the Cyclops may well echo particular comic characters, such as the dissolute brother from Aristophanes' fragmentary play *Banqueters* or the monstrous, gourmandizing Paphlagon from *Knights*. Indeed, the character and the plot more generally reflect the intersection of these genres around certain themes and characters. While Euripides' play

¹³ See Giannini 1960; Berthiaume 1982; Wilkins 2000a; and discussions in chaps. 4 and 6.

¹⁴ On references to the decadence of Sicilian cookery, cf. Ar. *Dait.* fr. 225 K-A; Eub. fr. 119 K-A; Pl. *Rep.* 404d1–3. On the figure of the Sicilian chef more generally, see Wilkins 2000a: 312–68.

may import the comic *mageiros* into the satyric genre, the Cyclops also turns up in old comedy, as do satyr choruses.¹⁵ Indeed, Wolfgang Fauth has pointed to a likely common source for this cook in both comedy and the satyr play: Epicharmus' mimes, the fragments of which detail plenty of food preparation (including *opsa*), as well as featuring a hungry Odysseus in one mime and a Cyclops who craves sausages, chops, and innards in another.¹⁶

Compare the confrontation between the two demagogues in Aristophanes' *Knights*. Like Paphlagon in his *agōn* with the Sausage Seller, the gruesomely sophistic Polyphemus in the *Cyclops* argues in an aggressive, open-mouthed style, and is ultimately thwarted by a more glib and wily type. Like the Sausage Seller, the needy, mercenary Odysseus outmaneuvers his opponent by appropriating his sophistic tactics, encouraging his enemy in his greed, and besting him in the battle of consumption over communication. At the end of *Knights*, Paphlagon is left alone at the city gates, with no one to talk to but prostitutes. Polyphemus emerges at the end of the *Cyclops* as a similarly bereft character, whose voice echoes across the lonely island. And as with Aristophanes' play, the resemblance between the opponents is very strong; in both plays, they occupy two adjacent points on a continuum, which makes their rivalry all the more intense and elaborate. While scholars have tended to regard Odysseus' character in the *Cyclops* as quite heroic, both the monster and the hero manifest in their appropriative rhetorical maneuvers a rapacious sophistry that reduces men to meat and fine talk to deceptive barter. That is to say, as in *Knights*, both characters are mercenary and appetitive. The *Cyclops* attaches such attributes to Odysseus and thereby reconfigures him as a greedy sophistic huckster, participating in an increasingly derogatory tradition aimed at the diminution of his heroic stature. If I am correct in arguing in chapter 1 that the Odyssean beggar from Homeric epic provides iambic discourse with a central metonymy for the convergence of insult and appetite, it should be clear that the *Cyclops* furthers this dominant strain.¹⁷

The fact that, as with comedy, Bakhtin's arguments about abusive language are functionally if not formally relevant offers an additional

¹⁵ For the Cyclops story, cf. Cratinus, *Odysseuses* and Callias, *Cyclopes*; for satyr choruses, Cratinus, *Dionysalexandros* and *Satyrus*.

¹⁶ Fauth 1973: 43–46. For the Epicharmus fragments: (Cyclops) Athen. 366b, 498e; (Odysseus) frs. 97–107, Athen. 277f.

¹⁷ Aeschylus wrote a satyr play that is not extant (*Ostologoi*) featuring Odysseus as a figure of abuse; and cf. again Epicharmus, *Cyclopes*; Cratinus, *Odysseuses*; Callias, *Cyclopes*; see Casolari 2003: 136–58 for analysis. For the scant fragments of *Ostologoi*, cf. Krumeich, Pechstein, and Seidensticker 1999: 206–07, which depict Odysseus complaining about Eurymachus' behavior at symposium.

confirmation of the connections between the satyr play and iambic discourse.¹⁸ Satiric writers describe the grotesque body in piecemeal fashion, with its most disreputable parts foregrounded especially when being beaten, abused, denied, or threatened with a dismemberment that reiterates the representational scheme.¹⁹ The rhetorical ploys of the greedy character thus intersect schematically with his all-consuming interest in his belly's satisfaction, the activities of speaking and eating creating a counterpoint between aggressive verbal strategies and the threat of cannibalism.²⁰

In the larger tradition, Odysseus' association with the belly (*gastēr*) as well as with wily verbal strategies also forges connections between uses of the mouth, and Euripides' *Cyclops* extends this set of analogies.²¹ It lampoons and reconfigures rituals of speaking and eating, with the obnoxiously witty and gourmandizing Cyclops as Odysseus' challenging host.²² In what follows I consider how the *Cyclops* responds to the earlier representations of Odysseus' oral activities discussed in chapter 1, focusing especially on Polyphemus' sophistic rejoinder in the supplication scene. This effectively reconstitutes Odysseus' arguments as a cannibal's feast (*deipnon*), since the Cyclops argues in support of dining on (rather than with) his succulent guests. Later, however, in order to lure the Cyclops into a solitary drinking party (*kōmos*), Odysseus sets aside his famous preoccupation with fair exchange and tricks the monster by pandering to his greed.

SOPHISTRY AND SUPPER

The imagery of grotesque ingestion comes to the fore almost immediately in the play. As Odysseus and his men approach the cave of Polyphemus, Silenus

¹⁸ Note again Bakhtin's argument that depictions of character centered on a gleefully aggressive, omnivorous consumption have their roots in the ancient symposium, the exchange of food, wine, conversation, and jests constituting a tactile communication with and absorption of the world (1984: 281–84). Cf. Schmitt-Pantel 1992: 30–38 regarding the interaction of the three elements of the banquet: food, drink, and “diverses formes de communication” (30), including most importantly poetry. For Bakhtin the vitality of this omnivorous attitude signals a satirical revolt against elevated representations of the body as noble in form and unified in its parts (1984: 29; 317–18; 320–22); but see ch. 2 above for the problems with using Bakhtin's ideas about the carnivalesque as a folk practice to illuminate the strategies of an elite literary form (with Möllendorf 1995: 90–109).

¹⁹ Cf. Bakhtin 1984: 195, 347ff.

²⁰ Bakhtin himself points to ancient dramatic precedents for this grotesque physique, including the satyric Odysseus (1984: 30–31, 148, 168–69). But again, see the discussion in ch. 2 for caveats about such connections.

²¹ Again, cf. A. *Ostologoi*; Crat. *Odysseuses*. For the Homeric depiction of Odysseus as a figure associated with the *gastēr*, see Pucci 1987: 178–87; also Svenbro 1975 and further in ch. 1.

²² Bakhtin 1984: 343, in discussing sources for Rabelais' mammoth consumers, notes that the writer was familiar with the Cyclopes, and that they turn up twice in *Gargantua and Pantagruel*.

announces their arrival as “approaching the Cyclopien jaw” (Κυκλωπίων γνάθον/ . . . ἀφιγμένοι, 92–93). The very setting appears voracious,²³ and Silenus matches this image with a comment that Odysseus and his men approach with empty vessels. Odysseus, when he arrives on stage, affirms that the Greeks are both thirsty and hungry. His entrance is thus structured by references to consumption; he brings with him on stage the belly’s demands, an emphasis that represents a more moderate outlook than that of the absent Polyphemus, for whose rapacity the yawning cave serves as an ominous metonymy. At the outset of his exchange with Silenus, Odysseus inquires about how the Cyclopes stand in relation to guest–host rituals (φιλόξενοι δὲ χῶσιοι περὶ ξένους:), to which Silenus archly replies, “They say that strangers have the sweetest flesh” (γλυκύτετα φασὶ τὰ κρέα τοὺς ξένους φορεῖν) (125–26). Silenus is thus the first to report the Cyclops’ mocking perversion of the rhetoric and rituals of guest–host relations (*xenia*), which Odysseus emphasizes throughout the first part of the play. Silenus’ saucy response foreshadows the monster’s scorn for such niceties in the supplication scene, in that his retort reconstitutes a question about social communion as one about cannibalizing consumption.

When Odysseus discovers that the Cyclops is away from the cave on a hunting expedition (130), he barter for the meat and cheese that make up Polyphemus’ diet, offering Silenus his own favorite sustenance: wine. Again, Odysseus first requests only the staple grain (σῖτον, 133), and the fact that Polyphemus does not eat this at all signals his luxurious barbarism. Since Greek dietary references from Homer on treat all additions to the basic grain as unnecessary supplements, this is a strange situation indeed. From this perspective, the Cyclops effectively eats only delicacies (*opsa*). And even though his fare is very rural, its lack of grains and presence of cow’s milk (βοῶς γάλα, 136) signals its foreign, decadent character. Commentators have puzzled over the presence of cow’s milk, since Polyphemus seems to herd only sheep.²⁴ But only prosperous families had cows in the

²³ Seaford *ad Cyc.* 92 notes the image, and suggests that it may be less metaphorical than actual. Bakhtin 1984: 317 remarks, “. . . the most important of all human features for the grotesque is the mouth. It dominates all else. The grotesque face is actually reduced to the gaping mouth; the other features are only a frame encasing this wide-open bodily abyss.”

²⁴ Seaford *ad* 136. See also the discussion of Shaw 1982, who points out that the Cyclops is a nomad and that this milk-drinking conforms to the general conception of nomads in antiquity, as does flesh-eating and occasionally cannibalism. See also Douglas 1971: 71, 78 on ancient Jewish prohibitions against mixing meat and milk. *Sitos* may designate food in general, but more strictly bread as opposed to meat. Odysseus “settles” for meat and cheese, since this is what is available; my point is only that he does not request it. Cf. the vegetarian diet that Socrates suggests for the good city (*Rep.* 372c4–d3); and see again Shaw 1982 on the diet of nomads; Davidson 1997: 21–25 on *opsa*; and Wilkins 2000a: 164–75 on the foods sold in the “comic marketplace.”

Greek economy, and only foreigners drank milk, so that this addition indicates that they have access to a rich, outlandish diet.²⁵ Odysseus responds enthusiastically to the idea of meat (ἡδὺ λιμοῦ καὶ τόδε σχετήριον, 135), and is happy to take the cheese and milk as well. This negotiation locates his alimentary habits at a median point between the decadent tastes of the Cyclops and the humble diet of the *sitos*-eater. It conforms to his verbal tactics as well, insofar as these are marked by a reasonable tone and a pragmatic emphasis on fair exchange.

The wine that Odysseus offers Silenus in return for the food is of high quality and strong. The satyr is eager to get it down his throat, though he boasts that the amount offered would not fill his “jaw” (οὔτος μὲν οὐδ’ ἄν τὴν γνάθον πλήσειέ μου, 146). His language recalls the “jaw” of the cave that indexes the monster’s greed and anticipates the arrival of the mouth that all the other characters fear. But it also points to Silenus’ own lack of temperance, which has to do particularly with wine. This overweening love precipitates not only a heady reaction once the wine touches his lips (cf. 164–74); it also makes him appear to one ignorant of wine as if he had been beaten (225–27), and encourages his wily dishonesty. When the Cyclops arrives, Silenus capitalizes on the monster’s inability to recognize the mien of a drunkard by claiming that Odysseus and his men beat him up (πυρέσσω συγκεκομμένος τόλας, 228) and tried to steal food from the cave. He further instigates by maintaining that Odysseus and his men have threatened violence even against the Cyclops himself, offering some gruesome details of their boasts as proof. The thieves, he says, were going to bind Polyphemus with a huge dog’s collar (δήσαντες δὲ σέ/ κλωῶν τριπήχει), and disembowel him in full view of his single eye (κατὰ τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν μέσον/ τὰ σπλάγχχ’ . . . ἐξαμήσεσθαι βίῃ) (234–36). They would also whip him (μάστιγί τ’ εὔ τὸ νῶτον ἀπολέπειν σέθεν) and sell him as a slave (237–40). This insulting and grotesque claim envisions the body of the monster in the abused state that is a much more extreme form of Silenus’ own “beating” by the wine. The lies he tells thus exhibit an excess that parallels his imbibing, as well as offering images of physical violence and debasement that Bakhtin has argued are central to open-mouthed, abusive discourses.

Douglas Olson has proposed that in offering Silenus the wine, Odysseus effectively brings Dionysus on stage with him and thereby embodies the trader-pirate in whose captivity the god languishes.²⁶ Odysseus’ actions

²⁵ Herodotus refers repeatedly to milk drinking as a foreign habit (1.216, 3.23, 4.2); cf. *Il.* 13.5; Hes. fr. 150.15. Again, see Shaw 1982.

²⁶ Olson 1988.

would thus also recall the more brutal players in the merchant-seaman stories that he deploys so cleverly in Homeric epic and Sophoclean tragedy. Further, his role would then be not so very different from that which Silenus depicts in his explanation to the Cyclops. Although he has only beaten up the satyr in a figurative sense, by playing to his weaknesses, he is also attempting an illegitimate trade. Odysseus knows that the food is not Silenus' to give, and that he is essentially aiming to rob Polyphemus. In addition, his ploy with the wine anticipates his later tricks with this substance, which will result in the Cyclops losing his eye as well as his lonely sobriety. In this he resembles Silenus, but his circumspect nature leads him to ply the wine in order to manipulate others, rather than consuming it himself.

After the bartering but before the arrival of the Cyclops, the chorus leader (*coryphaeus*) cynically questions Odysseus about the Trojan War, taking up an attitude that prefigures that of the monster. The juxtaposition of this discussion of the war to the mockery of guest–host and bartering language contributes to its denigration as a waste of time carried out for worthless people. Minus the tense ambivalence that surrounds it in tragedy, the Trojan War emerges as merely one more mercenary scenario that resituates the Homeric Odysseus in a debasing setting.²⁷ By this time Silenus has already referred to Odysseus as a “shrill chatterer” (κρόταλον δριμύ, 104), a phrase that recalls the abusive reactions to him by stalwart heroes in tragedy.²⁸ The image also serves to cast some doubt on Odysseus' motivations and especially his verbal tactics, a concern that will turn out to be one the Cyclops should have entertained. In this exchange the *coryphaeus* further undermines Odysseus' status as a war hero by deriding the war prize. He points to Helen's susceptibility to fine dress (182–85), his words recalling Hecuba's characterization of her in the *Trojan Women* as bedazzled by Persian riches (991–92). He also humorously refracts lyric language²⁹ to cast both her and Menelaus in the worst possible light. Sandwiched between the bartering over food and wine, the statements about the war revolve around debased bodies. Helen's attracts sexual abuse (διεκροτήσαστ', 180³⁰), and

²⁷ On the different characters' attitudes toward the war, see Paganelli 1979: 75–112.

²⁸ Cf. S. *Aj.* 381, *Phil.* 927; πάνσοφον κρόττημα, S. fr. 913; αἰμυλώτατον κρόττημ', *E. Rhes.* 498.

²⁹ Cf., e.g., Alcaeus frs. 134, 283 P; Sappho frs. 16, 31 L-P. Seaford (*ad Cjc.* 177–87) also suggests that the reference to Helen by the satyrs may echo a satyric tradition, and cites Sophocles' *Helenēs gamos* as evidence.

³⁰ I.e., a treatment that menaces the satyric body. The meaning of διεκροτέω is obscure; it probably meant something like “pierce” and thus would imply rape, but it seems also to have been used in the sense of “beat” (cf. Plut. 2.304b). Cf. also Bakhtin 1984: 204–05 regarding the erotic connotations of “beating” (etc.) in Rabelais.

Paris' is the overdressed one that fluttered her shameless heart (182–85).³¹ Menelaus himself is referred to dismissively as a “little man” (ἀνθρώπιον) who is nonetheless the best (λῶστος) of the bunch (185–86).

Thus when Odysseus declares at the approach of the Cyclops that the monster must be faced nobly and invokes his own former bravery in the war, the chorus leader has already emptied the war record of its noble tenor and refashioned it to focus on physical debasement and bodily urges – a more suitable frame for the hero's reduced stature as the hungry barterer.

Unsurprisingly, Polyphemus sustains the focus on bodies and their ignoble treatment. If this attitude is central to the satyr play, the bibulous Silenus, the greedy Cyclops, and the mercenary Odysseus all heighten its resonance in the scenes that follow. As mentioned, when Polyphemus asks if pirates or robbers have been snatching his goods, Silenus devilishly introduces the Greeks as pirate types out to collar and eviscerate Polyphemus. The monster responds to the supposed light fingers of these “pirates” with the first of many detailed descriptions of his culinary techniques, envisioning how the villains will be snatched in their turn, and thus make for fine dining. He asks Silenus to get his cleaver (κοπίδας . . . / θήκεις μαχαίρας) and stoke the fire (μέγαν φάκελον ξύλων/ ἐπιθεις ἀνάψεις), so that the dismembered (σφαγέντες) men may fill his belly (πλήσουσι νηδὺν τὴν ἐμήν) (241–44). He elaborates on the preparation, deeming himself the “meat distributor” (τῷ κρεανόμῳ, 245), which makes him sound like an official at a public sacrifice and feast. He also makes it clear that he will grill some parts (ἀπὸ ἄνθρακος/ θερμῆν) and boil others (τὰ δ' ἐκ λέβητος ἐφθὰ καὶ τετηκότα) (244–46), a chef's recipe for handling the tender versus the tougher parts that he follows later on (cf. 357–59, 402–04). Richard Seaford compares the former technique to the grilling of fish (*ad* 244–46), which further supports the notion that the Cyclops is a consumer of *opsa*; references to boiled meats point in the same direction. Usually, Polyphemus claims, he eats lions and deer, but now he has men to supplement his diet (248–49). The addition of this detail further highlights more starkly the excess that marks his eating habits, as well as transforming a Homeric simile into a culinary treat. In the *Odyssey*, the Cyclops is compared to a lion (9.292); here, like some wealthy big-game hunter, he consumes them.

Silenus responds to this anticipated feast like a servant pandering to his fastidious master. He affirms that novelty is delightful (τὰ καινὰ γ' ἐκ τῶν ἠθάδων, ὦ δέσποτα,/ ἠδίου' ἐστίν, 250–51), since strangers have

³¹ Bakhtin 1984: 196–205 uses the Catchpole scene from Rabelais' *Gargantua and Pantagruel* to delineate satire's wittily abusive attitude toward the body, remarking that the Catchpoles represent the old order and are connected to fertility rituals. Both might be said of Helen (see, e.g., Clader 1976).

not come recently to the island. Then Odysseus intervenes and asks the Cyclops to hear “the strangers’ part” (ἐν μέρει καὶ τῶν ξένων, 253), thus calling attention to the give-and-take of properly conducted conversation. Ignoring the fact that the trade was itself illegitimate, he describes the exchange of food for wine that he undertook with Silenus, depicting it as part of a legitimate economy by repeating words and phrases for profit and trade (e.g., ἐμπολήν; ἄρνας . . . ἀντ’ οἴνου; ἀπημπόλα; κἀδίδου πιεῖν λαβῶν, 254–57), and by underscoring that it was entered into willingly and without force on both of their parts (ἐκὼν ἐκοῦσι κοῦδὲν ἦν τούτων βίᾱ, 259). Odysseus thus attempts to cast his and Silenus’ activities as mercantile rather than violently thievish or indeed heroic, setting aside his warrior’s persona and representing himself as merely a good barterer.

But like the chorus, Polyphemus wants to know Odysseus’ identity and inquires about the Trojan War, dismissing Helen as the “worst of women” (κακίστης, 280) and the army as shameful (αἰσχρὸν, 283) for going after her. The commentators note that Polyphemus knows the familiar (i.e., the tragic) line about the war, and that Odysseus’ response somewhat ridiculously casts the motivation for the expedition as the ultimate piety, since he declares that it was carried out in order to insure the continued protection of Greek temples (290–95). But because this argument is in fact aimed at establishing a crucial point of commonality between the Greeks and the Cyclops, it is important to take note of how Odysseus builds up to this claim, and why it is so central to his speech. Odysseus introduces the argument very formally and genially (cf. *Iliad* 9), addressing the Cyclops as “noble child of the sea god” (ὦ θεοῦ ποντίου γενναῖε παῖ, 286) – a familial connection he had just gleaned from Silenus (262³²). He introduces the concept of the suppliant’s right to free speech (ἰκετεύομεν τε καὶ λέγομεν ἔλευθέρως, 287), a rather courteous gesture that reinforces his assumptions about fair exchange.³³ In a bizarre echo of the scenes from the *Iliad* in which he emphasizes the sharing of food as a means of enacting community solidarity, Odysseus urges Polyphemus not to kill those approaching him as friends (σοῦσαφιγμένους φίλους) and put this impious food between his jaws (βορὰν τε δυσσεβῆ θέσθαι γνάθοις) (288–89). He then gives the central reason why he and his men would not make good food: they are returning from fighting the war in defense of Greek places of worship (such as Poseidon’s temples), a practice he claims that Polyphemus shares (ὦν καὶ

³² Seaford argues that the Cyclops’ paternity was probably common knowledge, but Odysseus seems quite ignorant of the Cyclopes in general, and Polyphemus’ name is rarely used in the play.

³³ Like any good gentleman, according to Ussher (*ad* 287); like an Athenian, according to Biehl (*ad* 287).

σὺ κοινοῖ, 297). Stressing the idea that it is impious to eat one's own, Odysseus seeks to demonstrate that the Cyclops would be engaging in an un-Hellenic act were he to gobble up Greek soldiers.

To maintain the allegiance that he has forged verbally, Odysseus then argues that the customary treatment of suppliants includes the performance of guest–host duties and the furnishing of clothes, rather than the roasting of strangers' naked limbs on spits to fill one's belly and jaws (νηδὺν καὶ γνάθον πλῆσαι, 303). Returning again to the war, he reminds the Cyclops of the horrible loss of life there, where “the earth drank much blood” (γαῖ . . . πιοῦσα . . . φόνον, 304–05). He urges him not to exacerbate the cruel effects of this vampiric act by finishing off the remaining Greeks in a “bitter feast” (δαῖτ' . . . πικράν). This he follows with a further exhortation of the Cyclops to be persuaded (πιθοῦ), to “put aside the mad fury of [his] jaws” (πάρες τὸ μάργον σῆς γνάθου), and thus “to take reverence in exchange for irreverence” (τὸ δ' εὐσεβές/ τῆς δυσσεβείας ἀνθελουῦ) (306–11). He finishes this crescendo of references to verbal contracts, consumption, and barter by stating that many men receive painful punishment in exchange for ill-gotten gains (κέρδη πονηρὰ ζημίαν ἡμίψατο, 312). Warnings of this sort are common in Greek literature, but the image of exchange is not usually so highlighted.³⁴

Odysseus' arguments thus pursue a middle ground between the open-mouthed rapacity of the Cyclops and the pandering dishonesty of Silenus. Unlike either of them, he aims at commensal relations, at a social bond that will insure open communication rather than illicit consumption. The weakness and self-interest of his claims to share a Hellenic piety with Polyphemus do not undermine the fact that he pursues some kind of balanced exchange over full deception or violence. His audience does not, however, greet his speech with much appreciation. Silenus responds with a warning for the Cyclops that credits Odysseus with fearsome verbal technique and again highlights the monster's dominant mode. “If you eat his tongue,” Silenus says, “you will become eloquent and most glib” (ἦν δὲ τὴν γλώσσαν δάκης,/ κομψὸς γενήσῃ καὶ λαλίστατος, 314–15).³⁵ His remark is pivotal

³⁴ E.g., Seaford *ad loc.* compares κέρδος πονηρὸν ζημίαν ἀεὶ φέρει, “Men.” *Mon.*

³⁵ A similarly witty and cruel conflation of the speaker's talents with his tongue occurs in Aeschines 3.229. Ussher *ad loc.* rather obtusely notes that this kind of conflation is “typical of primitive belief,” and cites Guépin's 1968 discussion of how Ezekiel ingested a book in order to become a prophet. But surely Silenus' joke is more pointed and historically meaningful here, since it joins sophistic effect and cannibalistic tendencies. Seaford suggests a connection to the ritualistic significance of eating the animal's tongue in sacrifice, 313–15nn., but he does not seem to regard this focus on the tongue as a witty cannibalizing of Odysseus' sophistic talents. Recall that λαλιά can indicate verbal excess and usually characterizes the speech of women and certain sophists (e.g., Prodicus), which became

for this discussion, in that his mocking recognition of both Odysseus' persuasive talents and the Cyclops' voracious attitude conflates the tongue with rhetorical power and thus renders it an entity that affords some "nourishment." The body part becomes a metonymic object that concretely encapsulates the speaker's smooth strategies, so that its ingestion would effectively transform the eater into a cannibalizing sophist. Suggesting with ironic aptness that Polyphemus might grab this polished chatter for himself by taking the man for meat, Silenus' remark captures the central conceptual zeugma in the play: that which joins a balanced, exchange-oriented verbal style to proper guest–host relations and an appropriative style to the greedy ingestion of one's interlocutors.

Polyphemus' response to Odysseus' call for fair behavior cleverly and obnoxiously dismantles the careful connections that Odysseus has sought to forge among those who would share in *xenia* exchanges. The monstrous sophist gives a reply that systematically coopts and reconstitutes the speech delivered by one he views as a future meal. Setting up his dismissive tone by addressing Odysseus as "little man" (ἀνθρώπισκε, 316), the Cyclops begins with a transformation of divinity that many commentators have argued shows a sophistic influence: "Wealth," the monster declares, "is a god for the wise" (ὁ πλοῦτος . . . τοῖς σοφοῖς θεός).³⁶ That is, to Odysseus' warning about the dangers of gain, Polyphemus opposes a rationalizing irreverence that casts the hero's bartering skills in a modern light, stripping them of the pious rituals that cloak them as aristocratic politesse. He counters Silenus' jest about Odysseus' rhetorical powers with a punning scorn: "The rest is only bluster and pretty words" (τὰ δ' ἄλλα κόμπτοι καὶ λόγων εὐμορφία) (316–17). The verbal dexterity that Silenus has deemed eloquent (κομψός) becomes boastful blather (κόμπτοι) in the self-serving lexicon of the Cyclops.

We might recall here that polished (*kompsoi*) speech is the kind that Aristophanes attributes to weak-mouthed wordsmiths and women. Especially since this satyr play shares many features with comedies that address these characters and themes, the usage seems quite purposeful here. If in old comedy *kompsoi* speech is overly smooth and effeminizing, Silenus' statement would suggest some denigration of Odysseus' style. The Cyclops' pun offers a further insult, since the braggart sophist represents the talker as occupying the opposite end of the scale. Silenus' label and Polyphemus'

associated with the ἰσχνός χαρακτήρ (Demetr. *de Eloc.* 36; = *tenuis*, Cic. *Orat.* 20–21, λιπή, DH *Dem.* 2). Hesychius glosses κομψεία – polish associated with the ἰσχνός χαρακτήρ – as ποικίλη λαλιό, a fastidious, ornamental chatter (cf. O'Sullivan 1992: 131–33). Cf. Bourdieu's (1991: 81–89) remarks on verbal style and "bodily hexis" (visible deportment).

³⁶ Particularly Callicles in the *Gorgias* (cf. also above and below).

pun thus together point to the ambiguity surrounding Odysseus' type: is he a craven, slick dissembler like Silenus or a bold and boastful gourmand like the Cyclops? Each sees himself in the mirror of Odysseus' speech, which suggests ruses to the one and bluster to the other.

Having dismissed the hero's urbane speech as mere verbiage, the Cyclops responds to his emphasis on *xenia* strategies by boasting that he does not fear Zeus (presumably Zeus Xenios, 320). Nor, he says dismissively, does he care about "the rest" (τὸ λοιπόν, 322) of what follows from such respect.³⁷ To Odysseus' attempts to curb his ravaging jaws by making him subject to the bonds of Greek piety (297), he opposes a picture of solitary consumption (δαινύμενος, 326), with milk for his bibulous needs and his own belly as god of the feast (329–35). Odysseus' invocation of guest–host bonds as the "law for mortals" (νόμος δὲ θνητοῖς, 299) he rejects as overly complicated ("embroidered," τοὺς νόμους/ . . . ποικίλλοντες, 339³⁸). A final gesture of sarcastic appropriation responds to Odysseus' argument that one should offer strangers clothing. Polyphemus instead suggests fire and the "inherited bronze" as a gruesome cloak (i.e., the caldron, πατρῷον τόνδε χαλκόν, 343³⁹) – lest he be blamed for ignoring *xenia* rituals entirely (ξένια δὲ λήψη τοιάδ', ὡς ἔμεπτος ὦ, 342). And he invites his guests in to stand around the altar "to the god of the cave" (τοῦ κατ' αὐλον θεοῦ, 345). That is, rather than gathering round to participate in a ritual saluting some divinity like Zeus Xenios, who would oversee the proper sharing of food, the monster exhorts Odysseus and his men to encircle the caldron in which they will be boiled, and thereby to revere the belly that will consume them.

Commentators often remark on Polyphemus' sophisticated rhetoric, with the exception of R. G. Ussher, who thinks him a simple country cannibal.⁴⁰ Luigi Paganelli argues that the Cyclops character reflects Sicilian decadence in both his eating habits and his rhetoric. Seaford rejects this

³⁷ This seems to be a rhetorical tick specific to Gorgias that Euripides likes to imitate (cf. *Pal.*; E. *Tro.*).

³⁸ Note that *poikilos* is traditionally a characteristic of Odysseus' mental type (ποικιλομήτης: *Il.* 11.482; *Od.* 3.163, 7.168, 13.293, 22.115, 202, 281). Cf. also E. *Or.* 823, where the word is coupled with impiety (ἀσέβεια ποικίλα); and *Phoen.* 469–70, where the "simple tale of truth" (ἀπλοῦς ὁ μῦθος τῆς ἀληθείας) is opposed to the intricate interpretation (ποικίλων ἐρμηνευμάτων). In Sophocles the outcast Oedipus accuses Creon of managing to extract some fancy trick from every just claim (κάππο παντός ἄν φέρων/ ποικίλον μηχανημα λόγου δικαίου, *OC* 762). Lukinovich 1990 points to Athenaeus' emphasis on *poikilia* as a necessary element in both the banquet and the discourse that attends it.

³⁹ There is a textual crux here: the MSS. read τόνδε λέβητα γ', which does not scan properly (a "split" anapest); Jackson (*Marginalia Scaenica* 91) solved the problem by reading τόνδε χαλκόν, with λέβητα as a gloss.

⁴⁰ Ussher 1978: 99–100.

idea, while admitting that Euripides makes repeated reference to the location and that the monster's manner is both sophistic and sophisticated.⁴¹ Seaford is sufficiently aware of the evidence that this *mageiros* is a stock presence in comedy (e.g., *ad* 244–46), but he denies the further ramifications of the figure. However, John Wilkins has shown that the comic *mageiros* is associated not only with the Athenian agora but also with the Syracusan dinner table, which supports the idea that Euripides' emphasis on his monstrous chef as Sicilian is meant to be significant.⁴² Further, as Paganelli notes, Sicily is also the home of Gorgias, the sophist famed for his ornate locutions. The Cyclops' own style is quite elaborate, and he mouths sentiments for which one of Gorgias' students, the brutal Callicles, became famous.⁴³

Seaford contends that since the play was probably produced not long after the Athenian defeat in Sicily, the sophisticated mien of the monster could not be intended as a reference to Sicilian decadence. But as I indicate above, if this dating of the play is correct, it seems all the more likely that Polyphemos would be cast as a Sicilian sophist and chef from hell. His disturbing blend of savagery and sophistication points up the potential brutalities of such urbane excesses, and these are chastened definitively by the careful deceptions of Odysseus, who plays on the monster's appetitive weaknesses. Plato's Socrates also uses Sicilian practices as an example of how decadent lifestyles corrupt body and soul, (*Rep.* 404d–405c); and the slavish sophistry of the *mageiros* in Attic comedy in itself perpetuates a wicked critique of the Sicilian penchant for luxuries. Plutarch reports that cannibalism (ἀνθρώποφαγία) and dining on delicacies (ὀψοφαγία) were both considered transgressions of sacrificial ritual, an admittedly later but nonetheless pointed indication that these excesses were related in the Greek imaginary.⁴⁴

The *Cyclops* anticipates Socrates' judgment in the *Republic* that overindulged appetites affect how one conducts oneself in public speech, as well as indicating the importance of distinctions among different kinds of consumption. David Konstan has emphasized the triangulation of Polyphemos, Odysseus, and Silenus around food, arguing that Polyphemos is not really a cannibal, insofar as he does not eat his own kind. But Euripides certainly depicts the Cyclops as if he were some form of cannibal, and

⁴¹ Paganelli 1979: 21–34; Seaford 1984. Seaford comments that Odysseus “is in Euripidean tragedy so associated with crafty self-interest” (55) that the audience might have enjoyed seeing him defeated by Polyphemos in the *agôn*. Cf. also Biehl 1986: 21–23 regarding the contemporary coloring of the characters of Polyphemos and Odysseus.

⁴² Wilkins 2000a: 312–68. ⁴³ See further below and in ch. 4. ⁴⁴ Plut. *Mor.* 644b.

this is an important aspect of Odysseus' supplication of him. Moreover, as Seaford has pointed out (*ad* 244–46), the monster's culinary refinement further highlights the grotesque quality of his ingestion. This refinement also stands in some contrast to Odysseus' interest in food, which is comparatively cruder: he just wants what it will take for him and his men to survive. Again, if Polyphemus eagerly anticipates boiling his guests – that is, rendering them *opsa* – Odysseus only requests the fundamental food of a grain-based diet (σῖτον, 133), which the monster does not even have.⁴⁵ Both Silenus' louche negotiations and the Cyclops' excesses also contrast rather sharply with the fair-sharing that Odysseus urges in his attempts at barter, pointing to an arrogant rapacity that overruns healthy communal interaction. We know from Aristophanes that eaters of *opsa* are typically fastidious and grasping; they tend to be figured either as open-mouthed, aggressive types or soft sybarites. Like the greedy Paphlagon, the Cyclops clearly represents the former type when he opts for fancy fare. In *Knights* this parallels the demagogue's grubbing attitudes toward the demos; in the *Cyclops* it reiterates the haughty style with which the monster reconfigures Odysseus' arguments as the bleatings of a sacrificial victim.⁴⁶

Polyphemus' speech in the supplication scene thus aggressively converts Odysseus' emphasis on the rule-governed rituals of proportionate exchange into a lawless consumer's paradise. And yet, being a sophistic gourmet, he repeatedly refers to his solitary consumption as a "feast" (*dais*, 245, 247, 419, 504; cf. 326), a word that denotes a shared repast in a communal setting. This is the kind of balanced division of food and goods among peers that Odysseus conventionally promotes, and it is precisely the opposite of what the Cyclops enjoys.⁴⁷ Indeed, here Odysseus consistently calls both his own necessary fare and the monster's gruesome meal "food" (*bora*, 97, 127, 254, 289, 409), an indication of how far short of the banquets of heroes his straightened circumstances fall. Only once, and with some irony, does he deem his enemy's anticipated cannibalism a "bitter feast" (δαῖτ' πικρῶν, 308), when it would serve as a grim supplement to the earth drinking the blood of the Trojan War dead. The opponents' choice of terms thus underscores the difference in their attitudes toward consumption. For Odysseus, food is a blunt necessity to be obtained and shared out among companions; wine, on the other hand, may be plied as a ruse, since it is itself

⁴⁵ Cf. the discussion above.

⁴⁶ We can compare Socrates' exchanges with haughty sophistic types such as Callicles, who also promotes hedonism; see further below.

⁴⁷ Cf. Odysseus' emphasis on the *dais eisē* in the *Iliad*; and see Nagy 1979: 127–41; Saïd 1979; Worman 2002b.

a divine and tricky substance. For Polyphemus, ingestion quite generally is a festive indulgence of appetites that run the gamut from the savage to the refined – from engorging human flesh to nibbling on delicacies, from slurping milk to sipping wine. Silenus and the chorus of satyrs take a third route: since they cast every action in ritual terms, for them even a perverted feast is a feast (cf. δαινύμενος, 373).

Konstan notes that Silenus does not eat at all, being a figure symbolic of the Dionysian revel (*kōmos*, *thiasos*).⁴⁸ The Cyclops is, again, entirely ignorant of symposiastic custom, of both wine and its divinity. If this ignorance suggests a crudeness that does not conform to his fancy cooking, it also throws into question the true character of the cooking itself. What lover of the feast (*dais*) washes down his food with milk, boldly dismisses any god but his own belly, is happy to dine alone, and finishes his meal with a little self-gratification?⁴⁹ The wry responses of Odysseus and the satyrs to Polyphemus' manners indicate that wine drinking supplements the proper meal and ought only to be indulged in the company of others.⁵⁰ And if the satyrs are any measure, this drinking is also undertaken in the service and celebration of Dionysus, whose festivities frequently include sexual dalliances.

In alimentary terms Polyphemus represents an outlook precisely opposite to that of the satyrs. Their cowardice, lasciviousness, and penchant for drink makes them similar to weak, sybaritic types from old comedy; but they are also impudent, knowing celebrants of the god. Their excessive love of wine, unlike the appetites of the Cyclops, constitutes an indulgence that is socially sanctioned. Polyphemus' rapacity instead perverts both the feast and its supplement: his gobbling up of human *opsa* gives way to his equally voracious gulping of wine. If this turns him into a would-be symposiast – giddy with drink and ready for love – his failure to insist on communing with others leads to his ruin. While the monster's corrupt hosting constitutes an extreme form of voracious sophistry, he reveals his lack of true refinement in his lonely revel. There he gulps down wine with abandon, a Sicilian made brutal by his hedonism.⁵¹

The verbal habits of these characters thus conform to their contrasting attitudes toward consumption. As mentioned above, Seaford and others

⁴⁸ Konstan 1981; cf. Olson 1988.

⁴⁹ Seaford *ad Cyc.* 327–28 argues that πέπλον κρούω and κτυπῶν are images of masturbation rather than farting, as other commentators have thought.

⁵⁰ Cf. Villard 1981 on the rarity of solitary drinking in Greek representation.

⁵¹ Cf. Callicles and his definition of pleasure as having “as much as possible flowing in” 494c2–3; cf. again Wilkins 2000a: 312–68.

have compared the Cyclops' "might makes right" attitudes to those of Callicles in the *Gorgias*; and Paganelli likens his fulsome oratorical style to that of Gorgias himself.⁵² Silenus, having drunk what he could get his hands on, matches his intemperate imbibing with a little dishonest instigating. Odysseus largely resembles his fair-sharing Iliadic type, but with some indications that this may be itself a ruse. The triangulation of attitudes toward consumption and communication among these three characters is supplemented by the chorus' increasingly important role in reframing the action in terms that point to the perversion of ritual. The figurative usage that dominates their odes further highlights the confusion between the activities in which the Cyclops thinks he is engaged and the plot that Odysseus has fashioned for him.

THE EDIBLE BODY

Before turning to Odysseus' revenge, we must give some consideration to how this chorus of satyrs intervenes in the action, and on what level they can be said to do so. I contend that within Euripides' figurative scheme they are not merely the ineffectual presence they seem to be in other satyr plays; rather, the language of their odes facilitates in important ways the action that Odysseus devises for outwitting the monster. A particular figurative pattern dominates their songs, a form of metonymic exchange that Aristophanes also employs when envisioning the grotesque body and its habits, a figure that especially marks the debasing, defamatory imagery of iambic discourse. In the *Cyclops* these metonymies situate the body parts of characters in relation to significant objects, thereby rendering them edible or at least tractable and vulnerable. Most important, this metonymic usage reconfigures the monster's body so that his wounding by Odysseus merely represents the literal act for which the figurative patterns pave the way.

When they first come on stage, the satyrs sing a parodos that is a paradigm of its type: pastoral, playful, and centering around a thematic element particular to the plot of the drama.⁵³ Their "father" Silenus announces the rowdy entrance of this chorus by highlighting the kind of song and dance they usually perform. It is swaggering (σαυλούμενοι⁵⁴) and marked

⁵² Seaford 1984: 52–55; Paganelli 1979: 26–30; cf. also the objections of O'Sullivan 2005, who argues that Callicles is not a sophist and that both he and the Cyclops bear more resemblance to the figure of the tyrant.

⁵³ Cf. Aeschylus' *Circe*, Sophocles' *Ichneutai*; and see the discussion of Waltz 1931.

⁵⁴ See Griffith 2002: 222–26 on the probable dance movements that this implies (equine galloping, etc.); cf. Ussher 1978: 181–82.

by revelry (i.e., a κῶμος), as well as possibly bellicose (συνασπίζοντες) and bawdy (cf. the reference to Ἄλθαιός, a lover of Dionysus) (39–40). The satyrs actually sing a simple, rather pious song, focused on controlling stray sheep (41–62) and mourning the absence of their god on the Cyclopes' island (63–81).⁵⁵ The parodos constitutes their longest and most formal ode; the rest of their choral interludes are shorter, sharper, and closely connected to the action of the play. Satyric drama usually follows this pattern, as Seaford has noted.⁵⁶

More arresting, however, is the trajectory of the satyrs' imagery, which moves from prodding the ram to bewailing their own shabby goatskin dress. The ram should remind the audience of Odysseus' Homeric hiding place in the wool of its belly (*Od.* 9.431–35), as well as the hero's ram-like movements on the Trojan battlefield (*Il.* 3.197–98). The satyr's song thus begins with this suggestive animal, and traces an arc from it to their own bestial associations, dressed as they are in the goatskins of Dionysian performance.⁵⁷ They lament that they must serve the Cyclops in "this miserable goatskin cloak" (σὺν τῷδε τράγου χλαίνῃ μελέῃ, 80) rather than in the περιζώμα – that is, the little skirt with tail and phallus attached that constituted the satyr chorus' normal stage dress. Some scholars have thought that the goatskin is meant to indicate the satyrs' rustic role herding Polyphemus' sheep, but both ancient and modern commentators have often argued that it is an item symbolic of the satyric genre.⁵⁸ While I do not have a solution to the debate over what this *chlaina* actually designates, it may well index the genre by means of a saucy metonymy (i.e., a nasty cloak for an irreverent mode). The surprising effect of such a reduction, however, is the heightening of the satyrs' status, in as much as this metonymic item draws attention to their role as framers of the terms on which the plot unfolds. As inedible *daimones*, they observe the monster's gory rituals and re-present them by means of transmogrifying metonymies.

This bestial imagery at the drama's beginning, which depends on metaphorical equivalences or simple metonymic indexing, gives way to a more complex figure that is typical of the satyr's choral interventions in the

⁵⁵ Biehl 1986: 80 notes this contrast and regards it as reflecting the paradoxes of the satyric character.

⁵⁶ Seaford 1984: 46.

⁵⁷ See Arist. *Poet.* 1449a19–23 on the derivation of tragedy from satyr plays (ἐκ σατυρικοῦ); and Pickard-Cambridge 1927: 149–66 on the many objections to the claim that tragedy originally had something to do with dressing up as goats and that satyr plays were composed of goat choruses. But most commentators acknowledge that goats and/or goatskins seem to have had something to do with the original dithyrambic choruses central to Dionysian celebration.

⁵⁸ Ussher 1978: 181n. 71 considers the goatskin costume "unaccustomed"; Seaford *ad* 80 similarly thinks it has to do with the bucolic setting. But cf. again Pickard-Cambridge 1927: 149–66. See also Lissarrague 1990b: 230–32.

Cyclops. It involves the same sorts of label switching or trade-offs between body parts and objects explored in chapter 2 in relation to Aristophanes' plays. This conforms to the genres' sharing of plot features and themes, which should be attributed not only to their similarly debasing tones but also to their participation in an iambic critique of professional speakers. I have reserved fuller consideration of the figure for this chapter, because it is so central to how the action in the *Cyclops* is perceived.

The trope known to ancient grammarians as *hypallage* (ὑπαλλαγή), which H. W. Smyth calls a "change in the relation of words," came in the modern period to designate only the switching of an adjective from the noun it should modify to another.⁵⁹ In antiquity, however, it seems to have included many different types of figurative substitution, but especially that of concrete entity for abstract concept. Cicero glosses ὑπαλλαγή as μετωνυμία and claims that Aristotle regarded this kind of substitution as an abuse of language (*abusionem*; κατὰχρησιν, *Orat.* 27).⁶⁰ W. Kroll notes that Cicero's examples do not match Aristotle's categories of metaphor (*Poet.* 1457b7–32), which suggests either that Cicero was confused or that *hypallage* denoted some kind of word transference distinct from metaphor.⁶¹ In discussing the same passage J. E. Sandys treats metonymy as a species of metaphor, so that *hypallage* would by extension be a figurative exchange or substitution of words in some similar sense.⁶² Indeed, S. Usher thinks that ancient commentators understood *hypallage* as encompassing any kind of "name-transference," while catachresis only applied to harsh or strained usage.⁶³

In *A Grammar of Motives* Kenneth Burke considers metonymy one of four master tropes, each of which he argues encapsulates a fundamental conceptual strategy.⁶⁴ Metonymy has the effect of reduction, in that it substitutes a concrete object for an abstraction; *hypallage* in the ancient sense similarly seems to have involved substitution of one pivotal object or act for another.

⁵⁹ Smyth 1920: 678. Note first that the phrase τράγου χλαίνα μελέξ is a case of *hypallage* in the narrower modern sense, if the goat rather than the cloak should more properly be considered "miserable"; cf. Ussher *ad* 80.

⁶⁰ Quod quamquam transferendo fit, tamen alio modo transtulit cum dixit Ennius arce et urbe orba sum, alio modo[si pro patria arcem dixisset; et] horridam Africam terribili tremere tumultu [cum dicit pro Afris immutare Africam]: hanc ὑπαλλαγὴν rhetores, quia quasi summantur verba pro verbis, μετωνυμίαν grammatici vocant, quod nomina transferuntur; Aristoteles autem translationi et haec ipsa subiungit et abusionem, quam κατὰχρησιν vocat, ut cum minutum dicimus animum pro parvo. Cf. Quint. 8.6.23; DH *De comp.* 3; Alex. *De figuris* (*Script. Rhet.* ed. Wundt).

⁶¹ Kroll 1913 [1961]: 91–92 (*ad loc.*). ⁶² Sandys 1885: 103 (*ad loc.*). ⁶³ Usher 1985: 28–29a.

⁶⁴ Burke 1945: 503–17. Burke also recognizes that metaphor and metonymy overlap substantially, but he emphasizes that metonymy only operates in one direction – that is, by substituting a concrete entity for an abstraction. Cf. Jakobson and Halle 1956; Todorov 1981; and the elaborations of de Man 1983: 279, 284.

Whatever the connections Cicero may have seen between hypallage and metonymy, in Aristotle's scheme the type of metonymic exchange that turns up in abusive depictions in drama sometimes resembles his fourth type of metaphor. This he calls analogy (ἀνάλογον, *Poet.* 1457b9), a figure in which one metonymic item is traded for another. As mentioned, the example he adduces is that of calling a wine goblet the "shield of Dionysus," the goblet being to Dionysus what the shield is to Ares.⁶⁵ The reciprocal relationship between the pairs of items makes possible this switching (i.e., substituting "shield" for "goblet"). The suppressed terms represent the familiar or conventional relationship between metonymic object and idea (in this case a personage), a relationship that the interchange reconfigures. The numerous examples of this figure that Aristotle provides in the *Rhetoric* (1411b3–23) indicate that it was commonly employed. Nevertheless, its effects in iambic discourse are quite distinctly reductive and insulting. As I point out in the introduction, Barthes argues that metonymies may mock the integrity of the body, reattaching its parts in offensive ways or substituting a debasing object for an organ.

In Euripides' drama such analogies set the stage for Polyphemus' culinary transgressions, insofar as they elide the distinctions among bodies and their parts necessary to "civilized" discourse, thereby creating a permissive frame for the Cyclops' gruesome romp. The chorus in the *Cyclops* thus does not merely mediate the relationship between the two primary antagonists, as Konstan has argued, or simply support the goals of the hero, as many scholars have assumed.⁶⁶ Instead, the satyrs' imagery illuminates the very terms on which the monster and Odysseus confront each other, their use of language often challenging the fundamental distinctions that organize more elevated genres. This may be a Euripidean innovation, in keeping with his tendency to move away from standard tragic formulas. Other satyr plays do not seem to exhibit quite such pointed abuse of what we might call the "grammar" of generic form. This abuse is, however, common in Attic old comedy, and there clearly related to the deployment of debasing associations among body parts and objects as metonyms for the decadent politicking of sophists and demagogues.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ τὸ δὲ ἀνάλογον λέγω, ὅταν ὁμοίως ἔχη τὸ δεύτερον πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον καὶ τὸ τέταρτον πρὸς τὸ τρίτον· ἐρεῖ γὰρ ἀντὶ τοῦ δευτέρου τὸ τέταρτον ἢ ἀντὶ τοῦ τετάρτου τὸ δεύτερον. καὶ ἐνίοτε προστιθέσιν ἀνθ' οὗ λέγει πρὸς ὃ ἐστὶ. λέγω δὲ οἷον ὁμοίως ἔχει φιάλη πρὸς Διόνυσον καὶ ἀσπίς πρὸς Ἄρη· ἐρεῖ τοίνυν τὴν φιάλην ἀσπίδα Διουύσου καὶ τὴν ἀσπίδα φιάλην Ἄρεως. (*Poet.* 1457b16–32; cf. *Rhet.* 1407a16–19, 1411b3–23).

⁶⁶ Konstan 1981. This seems to be the dominant assumption about the satyrs' role in the action more generally, though it is often accompanied by trenchant arguments about the shape of the genre (e.g., Lasserre 1973; Sutton 1974a; Seaford 1984; Griffith 2002).

⁶⁷ E.g., *Eq.* 167, 380–81; *Vesp.* 165, 193; *Nub.* 1018–19; *Thesm.* 56–57.

As mentioned above, the vocabulary of trading and exchange pervades the language of the *Cyclops*, and reflects a tradition of associating Odysseus with such mercenary practices.⁶⁸ The satyrs' use of analogy thus reiterates this emphasis on exchange at a figurative level. Here human, animal, and even divine bodies trade places with each other or with inanimate objects, body parts are equated or their uses conflated, and – as a crucial result of all this swapping – ritualized activities overlap and intersect. The satyrs' odes thus effectively reframe the action of the play in generic or ritual terms, so that what looks like a random drunken appetite (e.g.) becomes a hymeneal or sympotic song. But this imposition of form nevertheless reinforces the connotations and interchanges that operate at the figurative level, in that it militates against differentiation between an inebriated monster and a bridegroom, or a tuneless mumble and a song. And because the satyric perspective reduces the physical form to its most debased and piecemeal instance, every body becomes potentially violated and/or edible – with the convenient exception of the satyrs' own. This is too rambunctious, likely to leap around in the belly (*Cyc.* 220–21). Although their bodies, like those of other characters, are reducible to their parts (i.e., their dancing hooves), they resist ingestion and thus the ultimate trade of man for meat.⁶⁹

One of the best examples of this metonymic exchange occurs in the second choral ode (356–74). After the Cyclops has herded Odysseus and his men into the cave with an eye to dinner, the chorus breaks into an ode that details the monster's culinary habits. Their song emphasizes the open-mouthed aspect of the Cyclops, and points to the transgressions of ritual and social code inherent in such undifferentiated ingestion. They elaborate on the monster's hybrid fare (i.e., both rural and refined, decadent and savage), exposing its bizarre juxtapositions as a brutal perversion of the *mageiros'* role as the orchestrator of public sacrifices or elite feasts. In keeping with their malleable, craven attitudes, the satyrs begin by encouraging his rapacious feast, shouting to him, "Open the rim of your wide gullet, Cyclops" (εὐρείας φάρυγος, ὦ Κύκλωψ, / ἀναστόμου τὸ χεῖλος, 356–57). They envision him as a refined but rustic eater, who feasts on boiled and roasted flesh while reclining in his furry goatskin (δασυμάλλω ἐν αἰγίδι κλινομένω, 357–60). If in Homer Polyphemus eats men raw, he also does so standing up and with little culinary preparation (*Od.* 9.287–93). The satyrs' ode instead depicts him not only as a chef and gourmand, but also as the baleful host of a sacrifice (*thusia*) in whose impious (ἀποβώμιος, 365) rituals they refuse to participate (361). Not that they are invited; this *mageiros* only

⁶⁸ Cf. Konstan 1981; Worman 2002b.

⁶⁹ Even the Cyclops' body is envisioned as eviscerated (*Cyc.* 234–35). Note as well that only Silenus suffers sexual violation (cf. Conrad 1997: 20–24; Griffith 2002: 220–21).

serves himself, a Sicilian banquet of varied delicacies prepared with the glutton's aggressive focus on satiating his belly. Commentators have differed in their interpretations of the satyr's emphatic refusal to participate in this unholy feast, some regarding it as formulaic.⁷⁰ But this response further indicates the perversions of ritual and social routine that Polyphemus' meal represents; the satyrs' mobile demeanor reflects their cowardly but knowing nature.

More important for this discussion, however, is their reference to the Cyclops' belly as a ship's hull (πορθμίδος σκάφος, 362), a curious image wedged in between those of sacrifice and solitary feast.⁷¹ When Polyphemus' transgression of *xenia* practices culminates in his engorging two of his guests, the chorus' response reduces this transformation of guest–host practices to a focus on his belly. The image conflates the sea-trader's conveyance with that of the hedonist's body, trading this debased organ for the ship's container. If we read the image as an “abuse” of mythic grammar, the inanimate hull reveals itself as more than a stand-in for the human belly. Consider the significance of the fact that the satyrs' reference to a ship's hull suggests the kind of bartering in which Odysseus engages, this pragmatic hero who comes from his ship (σκάφος, 85) to trade wine for food. The satyrs' god has been snatched away on another ship; and Odysseus later promises them passage on his own (σκάφος, 467). The one “ship” that no one wants to sail is the terrible *skaphos* on which the Cyclops offers passage.

Further complexities arise from the fact that related words such as *skaphē* and *skaphis* designate bakers' implements in comic usage; *skaphē* may also mean the tray on which metics brought their offerings in the Panathenaia.⁷² Compare also Aristophanes' *Knights*, where the *skaphē* is clearly an implement of the agora. There the chorus leader scorns Hyperbolus, a demagogue who supposedly made his fortune from selling lamps, by declaring, “Let him launch the tubs (τὰς σκάφας) that he used to hold his wares and sail to hell (ἔς κόρακας)” (1314–15).⁷³ The loud-mouthed, lowborn demagogue, like the boastful chef, plies his vessels in the agora; when he is rejected by the demos, this vessel is then reimagined as a merchant seaman's conveyance that will take him where he belongs. In Euripides' *Cyclops*, then, the *skaphos* analogy may additionally point to the cook's role that Polyphemus

⁷⁰ Konstan 1981; Seaford 1984 (*ad* 361). But tragic choruses also often respond in this personal mode. Biehl 1986 compares sympotic expressions, and considers this a typical response in normally communal eating rituals.

⁷¹ Lest we miss its significance, Polyphemus later picks up on the satyrs' trope, affirming his belly's connection to this conveyance (505); I take up this point below.

⁷² Ar. fr. 417 K; Timocl. fr. 33; *JG* 1².844.6, 2².1388.46.

⁷³ Hyperbolus was a favorite target; cf. Ar. *Ach.* 846–47, *Nub.* 551–58, 1065–66, *Pax* 679–92. For lamp-selling as one of many lowly trades, cf. Ar. *Eq.* 738–40.

occupies, as well as to his foreign status. And since the cook is a lowbrow, scheming, marketplace figure in comic settings, we can guess that here he might not be so different from the merchant type that Odysseus resembles. The satyrs' image thus initiates a chain of associations that obscures the differences among the Cyclops' culinary preoccupations, Odysseus' bartering activities, and the monstrous ride he and his men might be forced to take.

In his ingenuity, and in keeping with the gourmand's focus, Odysseus manages to lade wine into Polyphemus rather than more men, offering him a pail (σκούφος, 411; cf. 256, 390) of Maronic to fill his belly. That is, the satyrs' image not only permissively elides differences between types of "trading," it also anticipates the interchange between the trader's hull (*skapos*) and the shepherd's pail (*skuphos*) – precisely the switch that ultimately allows the Greeks to escape. Later the Cyclops and Silenus fight over this *skuphos* (556), until the monster and his elderly Ganymede retire to the cave while Odysseus readies himself and the chorus for attack.

Another less prominent image similarly achieves its significance through its adjacency to and interchange with other objects, and similarly effaces differences between the central agents in the drama. This is the "hose" (σίφωνα, 439) that the chorus leader sports, which he wishes might soon find solace once he has escaped the Cyclops. The word usually refers to the siphon inserted into a cask for drawing off wine, so that the satyr's use of this euphemism for his phallus distills his two great loves – wine and sex – into one humble object.⁷⁴ His reference to this hose directly precedes Odysseus' introduction of his plan for getting the monster inebriated and poking out his eye. As is discussed below, the satyrs depict this wounding as a "marriage" of the brand to the eye, with the Cyclops figured as the unwitting groom awaiting his nubile bride. The metonymy of the hose anticipates another sex scene, which achieves an illicit interchange between sexual satisfaction and wounding Polyphemus. The telescoping of drinking and sex into this lowly object thus not only indexes the satyr's nature but also paves the way for their figurative support of Odysseus' plot. Something parallel occurs at the actual wounding, when the satyrs substitute a chant for actual participation, while Odysseus' brawn drives the brand home (643–62).

THE REVEL'S REVENGE

When the time comes for him to practice his signature deceit, Odysseus agilely deserts his earlier stance, tailoring his arguments to the Cyclops'

⁷⁴ Biehl 1986 (*ad* 439) notes that Σίφωνα may also be a *Beiname* for Dionysus, which would redouble the item's metonymic function.

greedy amorality and cautioning the monster against his new-found urge to share. By this later point in the action, the mercantile language of the bartering Odysseus has been transferred to the body of the Cyclops (361–62, 505–06), and Odysseus has labeled the Cyclops “unscrupulous” (πανούργου, 442), his own notorious attribute.⁷⁵ Moreover, in his “messenger speech” to the satyrs, Odysseus has described his stratagem of the wine as “godlike” (ἔσῃλθέ μοί τι θεῖον, 411), and then called the wine itself godlike (θεῖον . . . πῶμα, 415). This vocabulary is reminiscent of that used of consummate handlers of *logos*, including poets, philosophers, and orators.⁷⁶ It is also precisely the power that the Cyclops had rejected in favor of his belly’s divinity. Thus in the action leading up to the deception scene, there are indications that the hero and the monster are trading roles, that the uses of the mouth (here drinking and speaking) continue to converge, and that Odysseus is assuming more forcefully his familiar function as a sophistic, dissembling speaker.⁷⁷ This time his trick depends on a direct rejection of his own traditional emphasis on fair-sharing, in favor of a similarly appetitive but less social mode.

The third ode the satyrs sing (483–502) marks this shift from barterer to trickster, although we may recognize that the one is an extension of the other. The satyrs also move from sacrificial language to that of the drinking party. Now they really do engage in a *kōmos*, with the hapless Polyphemus as their drunken reveler-bridegroom. The entrance of this off-key celebrant interrupts the satyr’s song, an unusual event in the midst of a choral ode.⁷⁸ Commentators remark on its gruesome subtext, since even the bridegroom imagery seems to point to the upcoming “wedding” of the brand to the eye. Luigi Rossi has argued that the strophes in fact forge a parodic pastiche of pastoral song types: the *skolion* (symposiastic game), the *makarismos* (blessing), the *kōmos* (revel), the *paraklausithuron* (lover at the door), and the *hymenaios* (marriage song).⁷⁹ But when the central celebrant bursts onto the scene, he sings a strophe that begins with the familiar image of his belly as a loaded merchant ship (σκάφος ὄλκας ὧς γεμισθεῖς/ ποτὶ σέλιμα γαστρὸς ἄκρας, 505–06), intruding this nautical metonymy into

⁷⁵ Cf. Worman 1999.

⁷⁶ Gorgias famously uses such terms to describe the powers of speech in the *Encomium of Helen* (θειότατα, 8; ἔνθεοι, 10). Cf. *Il.* 4.192; *Od.* 4.17; *Pl. Rep.* 331e6, *Meno* 99c11–d1, *Phdr.* 234d6; also Philostr. *Vit. Sophist.* 1.18.3 of Aeschines (θείως διατιθέμενος).

⁷⁷ Hamilton 1979 has called attention to a number of reversals in the symposium scene, especially regarding the imagery of eating and drinking, and the shifting of roles among Silenus, the Cyclops, and Odysseus. Many earlier commentators, in contrast, found this scene badly motivated, if humorous (cf. Schmid 1896; Masqueray 1902: 179; Duchemin 1945: xvii).

⁷⁸ See Taplin 1977: 174. ⁷⁹ Rossi 1971.

the satyrs' mockingly celebratory song. The satyrs had already noted that Polyphemus "struck up the Muse" in an unpleasant din (ἄχαριν κέλαδον μουσιζόμενος, 489) and fancied themselves his teacher in the *kōmos* (φέρε μιν κώμοις παιδεύσωμεν, 492). Earlier the monster had perverted his role as host by verbally aggressing and then consuming his guests; now his off-key shouting parallels his failure as a drunken reveler. Both forms of excess, then, indicate how his outsized, overbearing appetite extends also to verbal transgressions.

Rather than further elaborating on the double-entendres that indicate what kind of revel this really is, I want to highlight the conflation of rituals that occurs at this point in the drama. It is not merely that the satyrs frame the future deception and wounding of the Cyclops as a pastoral interlude, but the very presence of this violent subtext suggests that the songs of the sacrifice (*thusia*) may intermingle in an ominous manner with those of the revel (*kōmos*). Indeed, when Odysseus tells the satyrs of his intentions, the chorus leader responds with a pair of similes that underscores precisely this interchange. The first of these similes has worried scholars, since the satyr inquires whether he might take hold of the blazing brand (δαλοῦ, 471), as in a libation to the god (ὡσπερ εἰ σπονδῆς θεοῦ, 469).⁸⁰ But both the pouring of libations and the holding of torches can indicate equally well either a sacrificial or a symposiastic setting, with the Bacchic *thiasos* as the ritual *zeugma* linking the one to the other. The second simile appears to be purely pastoral: the satyr claims that he will "smoke out" Polyphemus' eye as one would a wasps' nest (ἰφθαλμὸν ὡσπερ σφηκιῶν ἐκθύψομεν, 475). The satyrs seem to find this a satisfying verb, returning to it at the moment of the blinding (τυφέσθω, 655; τύφετ', 659). There may be a sacrificial nuance here as well, in addition to a pun on what the victim will become (i.e., blind, *tuphlos*); compare the satyrs' claim about the conclusion of their lesson in revelry (πάντως μέλλει τυφλὸς εἶναι, 494). Polyphemus will become literally blind; at present he is blind to the sacrificial significance of his solitary *kōmos*, because he does not know Dionysus and thus what the wine and the torch portend.

When Polyphemus enters, singing of his loaded belly, the intrusion of the image echoes the satyrs' insertion of it into their earlier sacrificial ode. It thereby reasserts not only the trader's narrative but also that of the *thusia*,

⁸⁰ Ussher 1978 (ad 469–71) thinks ἐκ σπονδῆς refers to Polyphemus' own bibulous rituals. Seaford 1984 tentatively offers the explanation that the pivotal word is *dalos*, which can also mean torch and thus point to the revels that follow on a symposium. But he is dissatisfied with this explanation, and follows it with an emendation (ὡσπερ ἐν σπονδαῖς θεοῦ), which he equates with the *thusiai* of Bacchic ritual.

since here the image is framed instead by the reveler's delight. "How I love a good party!" (γάνυμαι δὲ δαιτὸς ἥβῃ, 504), Polyphemos exclaims enthusiastically. Similarly, after introducing the ship image, he declares, "This happy load urges me to revel with my brothers in springtime" (ὑπάγει μ' ὁ φόρτος εὐφρων/ ἐπὶ κῶμον ἦρος ὄραις/ ἐπὶ Κύκλωπας ἀδελφούς, 506–08). The satyrs reply to his metonymy with what seems to be a wedding song. The text is quite corrupt here, but we can discern an ironic complimenting of Polyphemos' eye (511) and well as references to burning lamps (λύχνα . . . δαῖα, 514), a delicate nymph (515), and a multicolored crown (στεφάνων δ' οὐ μία χροιά, 516–17). These *luchna* are the lamps lit at the beginning of a revel, but in the strophe they are also placed in alarming proximity to the word "skin" (χροά, 515); some editors have even emended the text to forge a direct connection between the burning lamps and this skin. While such emendations seem overly explicit, in their original form the words probably did suggest that this bridegroom will be burned, though not before he is garlanded like a sacrificial victim.⁸¹

This generic interchange is not the trade-off that the Cyclops is looking for. When he positions himself for a celebratory feast, the chorus frames it as a *thusia*. Now, when he is ready for a good party, the satyrs indicate covertly that he will really be attending his own sacrifice. By effacing the distinctions between these rituals, the chorus supplies the confusion that facilitates Odysseus' plan. Now he can encourage Polyphemos in his mistaken worship of Dionysus, and send him back into the cave for a wedding of a different sort than he envisions.

With the satyrs promoting his plot in this figurative manner, Odysseus persuades Polyphemos to stay away from the party by involving him in another debate about the nature of divinity. Now, however, the hero's ruse demands that he use the more mercenary and antisocial argument. Coopting the Cyclops' gourmandizing claim that his belly is the greatest god (τῆ μεγίστη, γαστρὶ τῆδε, δαιμόνων, 335), Odysseus transfers the label to Dionysus, declaring that *he* is the greatest god "in respect to life's pleasures" (ἐς τέρψιν βίου, 522). He thus serves up a divinity to suit the Cyclops' hedonistic emphasis: if the monster's god is his belly, then he must perforce honor a god he can ingest. Their interchange revolves at first around this embodied god. Polyphemos plays along with the metonymic reduction of the divinity to the wine, asking why the god would be satisfied to live in a flask and wear skins (525–27). The gluttonous Cyclops does not like the skin of any food – bestial, human, or divine – and just as his culinary habits

⁸¹ Cf. the chiming of χροά and χροιά, which suggests that it is Polyphemos' skin that will be "colored."

focus on getting at the tender bits (cf. 302–03, 343–44), here he wants only what is inside (μισῶ τὸν ἄσκόν· τὸ δὲ ποτὸν φιλῶ τόδε, 529). Odysseus responds by encouraging him to stay (alone) and drink up (μένων νῦν αὐτοῦ πῖνε κεῦθύμει, 530).⁸²

While in his cups, however, Polyphemus wants to seek out his brothers for a genial *kōmos*. Now Odysseus must argue against sharing, against the rituals of wine and the feast that he usually promotes. He does so first by declaring ironically that one appears more honorable when one keeps the wine to oneself (ἔχων γὰρ αὐτὸς τιμιώτερος φανῆ, 532), in response to the Cyclops' drunken magnanimity (χρῆ . . . προσδοῦνα, 531). This argument in favor of maintaining appearances is one typical of the sophistic Odysseus, and thus highlights his move to take up his more aggressive strategies.⁸³ Polyphemus, in contrast, insists on his nascent ideas about fair-sharing; having discovered his social instincts in the course of his drinking, he argues that giving to friends is more "fitting" (διδούς δὲ τοῖς φίλοισι χρησιμώτερος, 533). Now, as the monstrous sophist did before him, Odysseus bluntly rejects the niceties so necessary in polite society that cloak the obligatory rituals of exchange, while the Cyclops happily mouths their conventions.⁸⁴ Odysseus then invokes the image of the wise man (σοφός, 538), repeating the term of approbation that Polyphemus earlier used of those like himself who value wealth (cf. 316). That is, by conjoining the wise with the mercenary type, and thus revisiting the sophistic attitude he displays elsewhere in tradition, Odysseus supports Polyphemus in his antisocial habits. This last equation of the clever man with the one who stays at home and resists the urge to share convinces the Cyclops to remain where he is, arguing over the wine with his cupbearer and misbegotten *eromenos* Silenus.⁸⁵

Odysseus and Polyphemus thus both demonstrate a grotesquely humorous attention to the belly, the consumer ethic of which is reflected in their appropriative argumentative strategies. Each tries to outfox the other

⁸² Cf. again Villard 1981.

⁸³ Odysseus employs the argument throughout the *Philoctetes*, articulating it openly (δίκαιοι . . . ἐφανούμεθα, 82) when trying to persuade Neoptolemus to trick the wounded hero out of his bow. Cf. Pl. *Rep.* 1 on what famous wise men *say* is just (τὸ φάνα δίκαιον, 336a2; ἐφάνη δικαιοσύνη, 336a9), rather than what justice really is.

⁸⁴ Cf. again Mauss 1925 on the obligatory nature of gift exchange; and Bourdieu 1977: 4–6 on the *méconnaissance* necessary to the sustaining of such rituals. I owe to Mark Griffith the connection of *méconnaissance* to this moment in the play.

⁸⁵ Cf. Usher 2002: 219–23, who compares the Cyclops' advances to those of Alcibiades in Plato's *Symposium*.

by mockingly refiguring the other's imagery, and while Polyphemus combats Odysseus early in the play with his sophistic and cynical responses, Odysseus tricks him later by appropriating his rhetoric and tailoring it to suit his greed. Throughout their interaction their language revolves around activities involving consumption and exchange: guest–host relations, bartering, and finally drunken revelry. Unlike the gourmandizing Cyclops, Odysseus just wants food for survival, and his fair-sharing rhetoric reiterates this pragmatism. Thus the balanced exchanges of food and talk that Odysseus emphasizes in the *Iliad* are replayed here as a series of confrontations between the hungry man's needs and the Sicilian chef's decadent tastes. Odysseus' clever plying of the liquid sacred to Dionysus brings an end to this stand-off, so that the god himself effectively forges the escape of his followers (cf. τὶ θεῖον, 411).

The careful strategies of the hero and the inconsistent efforts of the satyrs to help him make them ill-sorted but necessary allies, against the monstrous Polyphemus whose solitary imbibing marks him out for ruin. The satyrs' role in the action turns out to be largely verbal, their figurative shaping of Odysseus' plot serving to transform the monster from knife-wielding *mageiros* into sacrificial victim. Since they embody the defining elements of the genre, their language thus operates as the essential framing device in the play. Further, their interactions with the central characters serve to taint familiar narratives with their irreverent interpretations of them. The satyrs repeatedly highlight the strategies of both hero and monster in terms of the debased atmosphere of the genre: here *xenia* is a form of cannibalism, heroes fight for worthless causes, and rhetoricians resort to grotesque tricks of the tongue. The bibulous rituals with which Silenus worships his god and the abusive slavery in which the satyrs are entrapped together underscore as crucially satyric the oral rapacity of Polyphemus and the careful bartering of Odysseus, as well as the physical debasement that threatens every character on stage at one point or another in the action.

Euripides' satyric chorus thus ultimately plays a pivotal role in the shaping of the plot against the monster. The satyrs' verbal ploys destabilize the interactions of all the players, their figurative analogies irreverently exchanging man for meat and revel for sacrifice. The chorus thereby reduces heroic might to an edible "load," sets up an analogy between wielding one's "siphon" and the gruesome "marriage" of brand to eye, and inverts the monster's party so that he effectively becomes the feast. If Aristotle really did regard this kind of metonymic trade-off as an abuse of language, the satyrs' imagery perpetrates an abuse on a larger scale. Their tropes debase both

Odysseus' status and Polyphemus' appetite, and confuse the distinctions that separate the monster from his meal.

As I emphasize in chapters 2, 4, and 5, in iambic discourse this same connection between the voracious mouth and physical degradation repeatedly distinguishes the excesses and brutality that characterize sophists and demagogues. Cleon in Aristophanes, Calicles in Plato, and Aeschines in Demosthenes' depictions display an aggressive hedonism, the rapacious qualities of which extend also to how they conduct themselves in argument. I should reiterate, however, that archaic poets and classical writers alike indicate many varied distinctions among these types. Euripides' Cyclops is clearly more an iambic, proto-Rabelaisian figure than is Odysseus, whose character tends to promote a practical, calculating approach to others. Silenus, in contrast to both Odysseus and the Cyclops, represents a dissembling, craven type, his bibulous indulgences matching his sly, mealy-mouthed ways. Polyphemus' pleasures center around his mouth: he likes to talk, he likes to eat, and he likes best of all to combine these activities – to talk about eating, or to try to eat those who talk to him. He thus embodies in a grotesquely literal fashion Bakhtin's portrait of the open-mouthed presence, which precipitates not only these central connections between eating and speaking but also the piecemeal representation of the body. The Cyclops depicts both his own body and those of his prisoners in this way, a grimly humorous dismantling of body parts to which the satyrs and Odysseus respond in kind. Polyphemus himself is the most exaggeratedly appetitive character; he describes his solitary consumption in loving detail, together with the onanistic pleasure that naturally follows. He and the satyrs make repeated references to his belly and its satisfaction, and all of the other characters are envisioned in various states of dismemberment, on their way to gratifying this insatiable *gastēr*: Odysseus and the Greek soldiers become limbs on a spit; the satyrs are pictured as hooves dancing in the Cyclop's stomach; and even Dionysus is viewed as one whose (wine)skin only gets in the way of the monster's gleeful consumption.

Faced with this yawning appetite, Odysseus forsakes his emphasis on fair exchange in favor of his infamous talent for deception, employing the tactics of a mercenary sophist. Aristophanes represents the bold, sly talker as this *agoraios* type, and in the *Cyclops* this role is primarily occupied by Odysseus. The satyrs and the monster himself may figure his belly as a loaded merchant ship, but this image is secondary to that of the chef (*mageiros*). Both the huckster and the chef, however, are denizens of the agora, so that the hero and the monster share a certain aggressive, mercenary profile. And while

Odysseus in the end deserts this mercantile mode in order to trick his interlocutor, Polyphemus inadvertently leaves behind his role as sophistic chef to attempt the more elite guise of symposiastic reveler, a relinquishing that leads to his ruin. In a witty play on the traditions forged around the bartering and deceitful Odysseus, the drama shows the hero taking up the monster's greedy rhetoric in order to trick him. His clever trade-off succeeds also in taking food from the monster's mouth. Thus, effectively persuaded by his own gluttonous attitudes, the Cyclops loses out on the tasty treat he was saving for last.

While the satyr play is an anomalous element in the scheme I am tracing in this study, distinct in vocabulary and outlook, the *Cyclops* nevertheless contributes substantially to the trope of the sophistic butcher, which not only comes to dominate in fourth-century comedy but also turns up at moments that are essentially iambic in the works of Plato and Theophrastus. Further, the figure of the violent, loud-mouthed sophist importantly colors Demosthenes' brilliant lampoons of his opponents' characters. Euripides' play thus serves as a crucial juncture in the transition to prose writings, setting up as it does one crucial figure in the works most central to my argument. A number of important Platonic dialogues constitute the first group among the prose works I consider, not merely because they are chronologically antecedent to the oratorical texts but more essentially because Socrates is himself a mocking (and often self-mocking) satyr figure who repeatedly faces down aggressive, word-proud sophists. The dialogues thus make a profound and witty case for the importance to "serious" prose writing of rambunctious insult centered on the mouth.

Crude talk and fancy fare in Plato

κεῖται δ' ὁ πλήμων τὸ στόμα παρεστραμμένος,
 ὃ τὸν δίμορφον Σωκράτην ἀπώλεσεν.
 And the wretch lies there twisting his mouth,
 which destroyed the two-faced Socrates.¹

Com. Adesp. fr. 386

Near the end of the *Meno*, after Socrates' talk about sophists has sent Anytus off in a huff, Socrates remarks wryly to Meno that they run the risk of being "low" sorts (φαυλοί, 96d5), having not been taught sufficiently by their respective teachers, Gorgias and Prodicus. He declares that only through seeking the best instruction can they avoid scornful laughter (ὡς ἡμᾶς ἔλαθεν καταγελάστως, 96e2). Plato often uses these terms (i.e., *phaulos*, *katagelastos/geloios*) to frame Socrates' interactions with sophists (actual or envisioned), which points to a purposeful appropriation of comic discourse around the depiction of professional speakers and their notorious critic. Indeed, this vocabulary appears to be central to delineating the genre. Aristotle famously defines comic mimesis as depicting "baser" sorts (φαυλότεροι), noting that the "laughable" (τὸ γελοῖον) is an aspect of the shameful (τοῦ αἰσχροῦ) (*Po.* 1449a31–33). Socrates' interlocutors often feel shame at his questioning (e.g., *Gorg.* 494d3–4), while the philosopher himself may be shameless (e.g., ἀναίσχυτεῖν, *Tht.* 196d3–6).²

¹ I am grateful to Stephen Halliwell for help with this difficult fragment.

² The issue of what is base or shameful (αἰσχρός) as opposed to just or noble (*dikaios*, *kalos*) is central to a number of important dialogues (e.g., *Gorgias*, *Republic*, *Laws*). My point here is more narrow: that Plato engages the vocabulary of shame in his depiction of the philosopher as a low outsider who is (like, for instance, the disguised Odysseus) really more noble in attitude than those around him. The *Gorgias* most consistently ironizes the figure of Socrates by showing others reacting to him as a shameless questioner who shocks and embarrasses them by introducing "low" topics into the discussion (cf. esp. 482e3–4). Socrates' interlocutors frequently inquire whether he isn't ashamed (οὐκ αἰσχύνη) to argue as he does (e.g., *Gorg.* 489b6, 494e7; *Prot.* 341b1; *Euthyd.* 295b6; *Hi. Mai.* 304d5). He quotes this question in his defense (*Ap.* 28b3), now generalized to address his entire life's activity as what will likely lead to his death (εἴτ' οὐκ αἰσχύνη, ὃ Σώκρατες, τοιοῦτον ἐπιτήδευμα ἐπιτήδευσας ἐξ οὗ κινδυνεύεις νυνὶ ἀποθανεῖν;). Cf. the dubious *Erastai*, in which the opinion that

Although this would seem to be an odd way of framing philosophical argument, Plato's dialogues consistently portray Socrates as a humorous, irreverent, *silenos* figure who contends with polished, word-proud sophists, their followers, and by implication the demagogues who use their tactics. The language that characterizes Socrates and his opponents shares more with the kind of parodic, insulting usage found in mimes, Attic comedy, and oratorical invective than it does with historical prose writing that depicts public speakers.³ This might give students of Plato some pause, and indeed earlier commentators were often disturbed by indications that Plato's Socrates looks too much like comic types from comparatively low-brow or abusive idioms.⁴ Many scholars have, however, treated the comic business in Plato's writing as integral to his philosophical project, revealing the facility with which he appropriated this dramatic form.⁵ Wilamowitz pointed to the evidence that Plato's *Protagoras* incorporated central elements from Eupolis' *Flatterers*, and J. Adam marshaled a debate over whether Plato's *Republic* responds directly to *Ecclesiazusae* or shares some other source with that comedy. Roger Brock has remarked on the fact that the *Gorgias* seems to adopt the metaphors for political activity that structure Aristophanes' *Knights*.⁶ The *Symposium* makes the most obvious use of comic *topoi*, although its intermittently playful tone comes nowhere near

it is shameful to study philosophy (αἰσχρὸν δοκεῖ σοι εἶναι τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν, 132c2) is attributed to an athletic youth; this is manifestly the opinion of Callicles in the *Gorgias*, who deems the activity fine for the youth (οὐκ αἰσχρὸν μειρακίῳ ὄντι φιλοσοφεῖν) but laughable (καταγέλαστον) for older men (485e). See further below. Note also that the vocabulary of shamefulness is very prominent in the corpus of Demosthenes, for which see ch. 5.

³ Thucydides' portraits of orators are much more straightforwardly serious, which means that neither abusive vocabulary nor mouth imagery is prevalent. Xenophon's depictions of Socrates and his interlocutors may not, for the most part, participate in iambic vocabulary, but they do depict Socrates in a fabular mode that Kurke (2006) argues invokes the figure of Aesop (a low-status outsider) and thus influences the apprehension of certain kinds of prose as lowbrow. Cf. also references to parallels with Plato's imagery in the footnotes below. And while other speechwriters sometimes include slander and invective, abuse relating to appetite and oral activities is especially vivid and central to the dispute between Demosthenes and Aeschines, as ch. 5 explores.

⁴ Cf. Jebb's remarks regarding the dissembler (*eirōn*) in Theophrastus (Sandys ed. 1909: 51–52). The hypothesis that there must have been a shared source for Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* and Plato's *Republic* arose from scholars' squeamishness about the idea that Plato made direct use of Aristophanes' play (cf. Adam 1902; Ussher 1973).

⁵ E.g., Greene 1920; Cooper 1922; Grant 1924: 18–24; Bacon 1959; Clay 1975; Mader 1977; Saxenhouse 1978; Woodruff 1982; Arieti 1991; Brock 1990; Clay 1994; Nightingale 1995; Rosetti 2000. On Plato's use of the dramatic form more generally, cf. Rivaud 1927; Hoffmann 1948; Havelock 1963; Arieti 1991; Rutherford 1995; Gordon 1999; Clay 2000; Blondell 2002.

⁶ On the *Flatterers–Protagoras* connection, see Wilamowitz 1920: I.140; also Norwood 1932; Arieti 1991: 117–31; on that of the *Ecclesiazusae* and the *Republic*, see Adam 1902; Ussher 1973; on the *Knights–Gorgias* connection, see Brock 1990.

the casual buffoonery that marks Xenophon's less philosophical treatment of the dinner-party setting.⁷

While my own discussion traces a particular discursive strain that appears to be largely poetic (i.e., iambic and comic) in origin, Andrea Nightingale has analyzed Plato's parodic response to genres more generally, exposing his appropriation of prose as well as poetic idioms.⁸ Leslie Kurke pursues further a focus on Plato's use of prose traditions, particularly in relation to the figure of Socrates. She articulates the jointures between Socrates and Aesop, regarding the latter's fables as part of the "wandering sage" tradition that serves as its "low" corrective.⁹ While Plato's appropriation of comic vocabulary and imagery in itself represents participation in a comparably "low" idiom, since comedy makes use of the blaming, iambic side of the poetic divide, Kurke contends that in Greek cultural tradition prose occupies a position generally subordinate to poetry. It is, however, essential to my focus to recognize that a dominant movement in the fifth century seeks to align a certain type of prose with poetry, as an elaborate, formal idiom that only treats refined and cultivated topics. The sophists in particular aimed at the representation of their techniques as elite and literary, the roots of which lie in poetic composition and rhapsodic performance; and this conceit generates much of the teasing to which Plato's Socrates subjects them. And again, comic poetry is concertedly lowbrow; its roots lie in iambs and perhaps originally in anti-epic figures like Thersites and the beggar Odysseus. Prose idioms often borrow insulting outsider talk from both poetic and prose genres, shaping a motley discourse that imports crude vocabulary, tropes, and *topoi* into purportedly polite settings.¹⁰

This chapter thus argues that Plato's depiction of Socrates and the sophists participates directly in an iambic discourse about public speaking shaped largely by old comedy in the fifth century and adopted by orators and rhetorical theorists in the fourth. Further, in Plato's dialogues that revolve around debates with sophists agonistic, abusive speech about what to do with one's mouth (i.e., how to talk, what to eat and drink) forges a resistant, outsider's stance in response to elite proclivities, which suggests that oral imagery is central to the delineation of Socrates' philosophical position, and perhaps of Plato's own.¹¹

Since scholars have not been able to date the dialogues with any certainty, it is difficult to tie this phenomenon to a particular cultural moment. This

⁷ See Greene 1920; Bacon 1959; Mader 1977: 61–69. ⁸ Nightingale 1995. ⁹ Kurke 2006.

¹⁰ Kurke does not emphasize the role of the sophists in this divide (but see 2006: 22–23).

¹¹ On Plato's own iambic attitude, see further below, pp. 161–63.

is further complicated by the fact that most of the dramatic dates of the dialogues on which I focus fall between 425 and 405 BC. Plato's response to contemporaneous events is thus filtered through the lens of the period that produced the comic and satyric dramas assessed in the previous two chapters. But the dialogues are not merely general reflections on the time in which Socrates flourished; nor do they just happen to dramatize the same period as do the plays. Set in the crucial years during which Athens lost control of its empire and endured social and political crises in which Plato's friends and family were often intimately involved, the dialogues clearly take up the challenge of exploring how this degradation of Athens' power and control came about.¹² Plato's beloved teacher was not only closely connected to Alcibiades, who played a prominent (and frequently shady) role in the affairs of Athens during the last two decades of the fifth century. Socrates also fought as a hoplite in a number of famous battles in the early years of the war and was a *prytanis* (council member) during the trial after the battle of Arginusae.¹³ Moreover, Plato's relatives were closely involved in political events toward the end of the war. Most notably, his mother's cousin Critias and his uncle Charmides both took part in the usurpation of democratic rule, and were killed in the violent events following it, a series of coups and counter-coups that ultimately led to Socrates' execution.¹⁴ Plato's use of oral imagery in assessing the techniques of sophists (and by implication the demagogues he and others thought they fostered) manifestly responds to the clashes of that period – and indeed perhaps especially to the depictions

¹² On the dramatic dates and contemporaneous political events as well as dramatic productions, see the useful chart by Nails (2002: 357–67) and her longer discussions. The dialogues discussed here are all set in the last twenty years of the fifth century, with the exception of the *Protagoras* (433/32) and with caveats about the *Gorgias*, the historical references for which Plato seems to have made deliberately confusing (e.g., a reference to Pericles points to the later 420s [503c], while one to Socrates' service as a councilman [*bouleutēs*] suggests that it takes place after 406 [473e]) and the *Republic*, which contains references to events throughout the Peloponnesian War (see Nails 2002: 324–27). Otherwise, we can note that the first book of the *Republic*, which is the primary one with which I am concerned here, seems to belong to the late 420s, the *Hippias* dialogues to between 421 and 416, the *Phaedrus* to between 418 and 416; the *Symposium* is clearly set in 415, and the *Euthydemus* probably around 407 (Nails 2002: 313–18, 324). Thus I am focusing on a handful of dialogues many of whose dramatic dates fall within ten years of each other, in the middle of the Peloponnesian War.

¹³ Socrates' military career is recorded by Plato (*Symp.* 220d–e, 221a; *Lach.* 181b). On Socrates' role in the trial after Arginusae, see Pl. *Ap.* 32b; Xen. *Hel.* 1.7.15.

¹⁴ Charmides was also implicated (with Alcibiades) in the profanation of the Eleusinian Mysteries in 415 (cf. Xen. *Hel.* 1.4.13–21). He may not have been a member of the original Thirty, but he is one of the ten chosen to run the Piraeus after the coup and listed among those killed in the ensuing battle with the democratic faction in 404–03 (Xen. *Hel.* 2.3.2–3, 2.4.19). In *Ltr.* VII 324b–d Plato (or someone close to him) says that he was intrigued by the corrective that the Thirty proposed for Athens and although asked to join them, was quickly disgusted by their tyrannical excesses. Cf. Xen. *Hel.* 2.3–4; D. S. 14.4. See Nails 2002: 90–93, 108–13, 245–46.

of such critical disagreements in its dramas – as well as to the attitudes of the early to mid fourth century.

What we have in the figure of Plato's Socrates, then, is an iambic contender whose critique of elites is doubly significant in that, insofar as it addresses historical and cultural phenomena, it presents the democratic crisis of Athens in the late fifth century as a template for envisioning an ideal polis in a city continuing to decline in power and stability.¹⁵ From the perspective of this study, these dialogues with their historical double references and consistent use of iambic vocabulary forge the link between the dramatic productions of the period from 425 to 405 (discussed in chs. 2 and 3) and the forensic speeches of the 440s and 430s (discussed in ch. 5). Thus when Demosthenes deploys similar vocabulary from the orator's *bēma* in his persecution of Aeschines, he is engaging in a discourse that Attic comedy made popular and that Plato's dialogues had already appropriated for use in prose.¹⁶

If Socrates' figure represents a challenge to dominant elites of the city in crisis, it makes sense that, as with lowbrow comic characters, his affect conforms more to the idiom of the marketplace than that of the symposium. While the historical Socrates was probably not himself a craftsman (*banau-sos*) with a shop in the agora, he is represented by Plato and Xenophon as repeatedly drawing analogies to banausic activities.¹⁷ He thus introduces

¹⁵ This is assuming that the dialogues important to this discussion were written between the 390s and the 350s, i.e., during a period when Athens faced a growing Macedonian threat, as well as an uneasy allegiance with Thebes leading up to the Corinthian War (387), ongoing challenges from Sparta (up to the battle of Leuctra in 371), and finally the revolt of allies in the so-called Social War (355–51). Plato was involved with the tyrants Dionysius I and II in Sicily, supposedly as a political advisor in the founding of an ideal polis; this suggests that he had in practice given up on the chastening of Athens, although he continuously focuses on it in his writings, largely as a cautionary tale. Many of the important events during this period are related in Xen. (*Hel.*), besides which only the much later compilation of Diodorus (put together in 40–30 BC) is extant. See Hammond and Griffith 1979; Badian 1995.

¹⁶ While I would rather avoid having to make a claim about Demosthenes' reading material during the years leading up to these speeches, since it would be impossible to substantiate, Demosthenes does refer approvingly to Plato in a letter (*Ep.* 5.3.2); there is also a reference to both Plato and Socrates in a speech that is probably spurious (*Erot.* 45.9, 46.8). Plato established the Academy in the 380s and it flourished throughout the fourth century; it was apparently frequented by those involved in politics as well as those, like Plato, who were not. As with Socrates and the *phrontistērion* in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (and cf. Ameipsias' *Connus*, Eupolis' *Flatterers*), references to Plato and the Academy turn up in many comic fragments that probably date to between 380 and 350 (most notably Eph. *Nau.* fr. 14 K-A; Epicr. Fr. 10 K-A; Antipha. *Ant.* fr. 35 K-A), some of which depict dandified students engaging in "philosophy." The frequency of reference alone suggests at the very least popular knowledge of the Academy and the ideas aired there.

¹⁷ The claims that Socrates was a stonemason or indeed a slave come from later biographical tradition and are likely the product of the shaping of his *vita* to suit his outsider's stance in Plato and Xenophon. This tradition follows these writers in emphasizing his ugliness and poverty (cf. Pl.

what we might call marketplace talk into discussions with members of the Athenian elite. Bakhtin, one of the more famous scholars to remark on the comic aspect of Socrates, regards his philosophical techniques as “clearly linked with the carnival forms of antiquity,” a connection that also points to the agora.¹⁸

While Bakhtin’s remarks on Socrates are made only in passing, his emphasis on the confluence of festive consumption and lampooning talk in the marketplace suggests another means of understanding Socrates’ low-brow style: as extending a critique of high-status speakers (as well as “high” genres) that begins in archaic iambos and culminates in later rhetorical theory. When Socrates confronts the sophists as a means of assessing their speech techniques as well as their moral characters, their exchanges often suggest a face-off between the elite symposium and the agora, with Socrates’ commonplace imagery exposing the “feast of talk” as empty blather. In the dialogues this marketplace idiom would thus offer examples of “low” activities (e.g., cobbling and baking) in order to fashion a detailed critique of the appetite for both fancy fare and grand locutions.¹⁹

Plato’s imagery shares features with that from other abusive settings, but it also recalibrates the oppositions between appetitive types in drama. Unlike Rabelais’ grotesque talkers, Plato’s characterization of Socrates does not simply celebrate the rambunctious, open-mouthed attitudes of the marketplace; rather, Socrates’ crude, small-talking habits appropriate some aspects of this loose, low, marketplace style and set others aside. If, for

Ap. 31c2–3, *Theaet.* 143e7–8, *Symp.* 215a–c, 216c–d, 221d–e; *Xen. Symp.* 4.19, 5.5–7, *Oec.* 2.3; *Cic. de Fato* 5.7), as well as sometimes claiming a humble family background (e.g., a stonemason father, a midwife mother [DL 2.19; cf. *Alc.* I 121a3–4]). But there are also a few indications that his family may have been rather distinguished, such as the possibility that Patrocles was his brother (cf. *Euthd.* 297e), and that his wife Xanthippe’s aristocratic name indicates an elite family background; the fact that he fought as a hoplite suggests that he was at least not destitute (cf. *Nails* 2002: 218–19, 264, 299). Plato contributes to the more dominant portrait by concertedly highlighting Socrates’ humble persona, but it is important to recognize the extent to which this may be a convenient fiction. Indeed, Plato’s own characterization reflects the ambiguities surrounding Socrates’ status: he does not have any apparent occupation (which is the privilege of the elite), and while he claims that this renders him penniless, his social milieu is distinctly upper-class – note that he rarely engages in conversation any but the more prominent citizens.

¹⁸ Bakhtin 1984: 121. As mentioned in previous chapters, Bakhtin’s work on Rabelais has become a familiar frame for thinking about ancient comedy and satire, but his passing references to the ties between Socrates, philosophical practice, and the carnivalesque have gone largely unnoticed. Bakhtin argues that Socrates is not merely a symposiastic but more essentially a marketplace figure, in that he instigates and himself inspires the gleeful mockery central to the sphere in which carnivalesque celebrations (especially festive eating) take place (1984: 168–69). Bakhtin does also indicate, however, that he regards the ancient symposium as forging a connection between earlier festival forms and the Socratic dialogue (1984: 286).

¹⁹ Cf. the story in which Socrates says while he enjoys food, he has “the least need of relish” (ἥκιστον ὄψου, DL 2.27).

instance, the essential metonymy for Rabelais' discourse is the loud, voracious, open mouth, we should understand that this deportment contrasts rather sharply with that of Socrates.²⁰ He is depicted instead as a vulgar prattler who eschews the grand speeches of the sophists, as well as their taste for fine living. If we think again of Bourdieu's opposition between the hedging and restraint of bourgeois speech versus the gaping maw (*la gueule*) of popular usage,²¹ we can see that the figure of Socrates eludes easy class categorization. He bears a unique relationship to both the elite verbal games of the symposium and the crude talk of the agora. While his ignoble appearance and lowbrow speaking style make him look like a marketplace wrangler, his usage aims at exposing others as the real hucksters (*agoraioi*). When Socrates engages his sophistic interlocutors with a mock-modest politeness that masks and yet intimates bold challenge, they sense the insults and respond with their own about his understated, crude ways.

Moreover, comic invective is not only integral to Socrates' arguments with professional talkers; Socrates himself also configures the reaction against effete, grandiose speakers in his very body. In this he resembles some of the old citizens from Attic comedy and perhaps also Silenus in satyr plays, but in a manner less obviously dramatic (in the sense of visible performance) and thus closer to Barthes' notions of how the body organizes (or dismantles) literary discourse. That is, one sharp divergence in Plato's depiction arises from the nature of the genre itself. While the Socratic dialogue is clearly dramatic in form, especially imitating mimes and comedy, and while it is possible that Plato's dialogues were read out in the Academy, there is no evidence of the use of costume or even the playing of parts in some more attenuated sense.²² Nor is there evidence that such readings would have engaged the devices of other verbal performances: namely, the rhapsode's or orator's vocal modulations, deportment, and dramatic use of clothing. In a departure from such spectacles, Plato's portrayal of Socrates and his interlocutors would thus have had an impact on the mind's (rather than the body's) eye. Further, the dialogues portray characters who are for

²⁰ Rabelais uses the Socrates–Silenus analogy from the *Symposium* to introduce the first book of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. In a move that redoubles this figuring of Socrates, he also ratchets up both mocking and laudatory language in his description of the physical appearance of the philosopher in contrast to his soul. He represents himself as a writer who eats and drinks his way to verbal expression; and he expects his readers to drink down his prose with their next quaff. While Plato's Socrates is hardly such an open-mouthed hedonist, the paring of the Socratic persona with the belly's needs recalls important imagery in Plato; see further below.

²¹ Bourdieu 1991: 71, 81–88.

²² But see Nussbaum 1986: 122–35 and Monoson 2000: 138–45 on the Platonic dialogue as a reaction to tragic spectacle. Cf. also Nails 1995.

the most part prominent Athenian citizens from an earlier era, so that highlighting these characters' visible types might be more similar in persuasive effect to, say, Demosthenes' and Aeschines' invocation of Solon as a visibly moral predecessor.²³ These dialogues, like many speeches, situate such visual effects adjacent to and in support of argument.

This is the reason, I submit, that Plato's comic details tend to focus on the speaking styles and appetitive attitudes of both Socrates and his sophistic interlocutors. By incorporating such performative (and specifically iambic) effects into the philosophical setting, Plato transforms the dynamics of performance into a means of emphasizing Socratic philosophy as a process rather than a set of propositions. That is, its impact arises from it being perceived as talk among different types of Athenian citizens. Perhaps because he was profoundly suspicious of tragic spectacle, Plato chose instead the chastening, irreverent imagery of comic depiction and "low" prose, offering his audiences an embodiment of these genres' vulgar heroes: Socrates. As a concertedly idiomatic speaker with a penchant for humble examples, a taste for simple foods, and an imperviousness to the effects of wine, Socrates emerges as a check on the excesses of Athens' leaders, even as his own type retains its iambic coloring and thus the lion's share of abuse.

For all the recognition that Plato is funny and that Socrates is funny looking, readers of the dialogues have not noticed the imagery in Plato that frames an iambic stance and passes defaming judgment on oral excesses. In what follows I explore two intersecting patterns that shape this discourse: Socrates' depictions of his opponents' techniques as a pandering chef's indulgence; and their characterizations of his talk as the crude fare of a marketplace idler. First, however, two issues that frame this opposition must be taken up: (1) the relationship of Socrates' lowbrow type to his cultural setting and the literary tradition that reproduces it as ongoing iambic contention; and (2) the relevance of this low figure to Plato's ideas about likeness, especially since the deployment of insulting analogies is central to comic depiction. The bulk of the discussion assesses how the different reactions to Socrates generate different deflective tactics on his part and thus palliative or abusive vocabulary. The *Gorgias* provides some of the most crucial images for this exploration, as do *Republic* 1 (i.e., *Thrasymachus*), the *Protagoras*, and the *Hippias* dialogues, and to a lesser extent the *Symposium*, *Phaedrus*, and *Euthydemus*. I do not analyze the arguments of these dialogues in any detail, nor do I offer extended readings of any one of them. Rather, I attempt to show where the abusive language and oral

²³ Cf. further discussion in ch. 5.

imagery surface, which images show up where, and why certain settings are more conducive than others to this kind of confrontational talk.

SOCRATES AND PLATO IN IAMBIC CONTENTION

This emphasis on the visible type of Plato's Socrates clearly raises questions about the cultural setting in which Plato's dialogues – and indeed the *Sokratikoi logoi* in general – were forged.²⁴ Socrates' plain-talking, bare-foot resistance to the (purportedly) overblown, money-hungry professional sophists who frequented the elite houses of Athens, and thereby dominated the public spheres, may well have suggested this iambic mode to his students. This would indicate not merely that Plato and his contemporaries self-consciously matched Socrates' type to a fitting genre, but also that they invigorated a generic form suited to the contentious educational setting in which ethical ideas were formulated in the fifth and fourth centuries.

In fact, Plato may have engaged in his own abusive agons, particularly with Antisthenes, his main competitor as Socrates' successor – or so later tradition suggests.²⁵ A comic fragment from Amphis depicts a character declaring, "Plato, you know nothing except how to look sullen" (ὦ Πλάτων,/ ὡς οἶσθα οὐδὲν πλὴν σκυθρωπάζειν μόνον, fr. 13 K). Athenaeus quotes sources that portray Plato as fractious toward everyone (δυσμενής . . . πρὸς ἅπαντας, *Deipn.* 506a6), full of malice (κακοθηΐας, 507a8), and abusive in the extreme.²⁶ Diogenes Laertius focuses instead on Plato's main competitor as Socrates' intellectual heir, opening his remarks on Antisthenes by citing his waspish responses to abuse about his mixed parentage as well as

²⁴ It is difficult to assess from the fragments of the other Socratics the extent to which they employed similar iambic techniques. Although they do not seem to have done so to any marked extent, they do use the prose dialogue, itself an outgrowth of the comic mime. For the fragmentary dialogues of other Socratics, see especially Antisthenes, Aeschines of Sphettos, and Phaedo, in the edition of Giannantoni 1990; and cf. Field 1930; Kahn 1994, 1996: 1–35; Clay 1994; Giannantoni 2001. The tendency among scholars to focus on Plato underplays the importance of the generic development, as well as its ties to Sicilian mime (namely Epicharmus and Sophron; cf. Arist. *Po.* 1447b9–11) and perhaps the influence of Aesop (on the latter see Kurke 2006). Cf. Mader 1977: 53, 71–77 and Clay 1994, although both overemphasize connections to drama rather than the apparently more lowbrow mimes. See also Fauth 1973: 43–46 on the influence of Epicharmus' culinary imagery on Greek comedy; Plato follows this iambic strain as well.

²⁵ German scholars have been particularly convinced that Antisthenes was the primary thinker against whom Plato formulated his dialogues (e.g., Joël 1921; Natorp 1921; vs. Field 1930: 160–69; Caizzi 1964; Guthrie 1971: 310–11); cf. also Kahn 1996: 5–9, 121–24.

²⁶ Athenaeus' terms for Plato's invective constitutes a veritable laundry list of abusive speech forms (διαβάλλει, 505c9; κακολογεί, 506a8; ὀνειδίζει, 506b6; κακηγορίας, 506d9). Kurke (forthcoming, ch. 7, p. 15) argues that the hostile commentary arises from the "low, parodic elements" of Plato's dialogues; my point is that it reproduces the abusive framing of figures that engage in iambic discourse.

his barbed exchanges with Plato.²⁷ Then there is the story that Antisthenes wrote a dialogue aimed at Plato entitled *Sathōn* (“Pecker,” DL 6.16, Ath. *Deipn.* 507a), which Athenaeus characterizes, rather unsurprisingly, as a vulgar locution (καλέσας . . . φορτικῶς, 507a6). Xenophon also represents Antisthenes as rude and abrasive.²⁸ Moreover, while many commentators treat Antisthenes as a sophist, he is also credited with inspiring the foundation of the Cynic school of philosophy, which came to be associated with iambos in Hellenistic and later tradition.²⁹ The iambic flavor of the exchanges between Socrates and the sophists in Plato may thus reiterate the agon between Plato and Antisthenes. Or, to put it another way, if Antisthenes and Plato are treated by ancient tradition as iambic wranglers, Plato’s dialogues offer parallels between certain sophists’ aggressive insults and the cynic’s biting verbal style.³⁰

Anecdotes from ancient writers indicate that at least one of Plato’s older contemporaries recognized his connection to iambos. Athenaeus recounts that Gorgias responded to Plato’s dialogue featuring him by remarking, “How beautifully Plato knows how to engage in iambics!” (ὥς καλῶς οἶδε Πλάτων ἰαμβίζειν). He also reportedly compared him to Archilochus, which reinforces the connection to Ionian insult poetry.³¹ Plato’s reputed fondness for Sophron, a Syracusan writer of *mimoi* (apparently prose caricatures of low-status types), also points to not only this association with iambic discourse but also ancient awareness of it.³² Further, the fact that Socrates is figured as a *silenos* in both Plato and Xenophon offers additional support for connections among genres with iambic features, indicating that a discursive thread runs from iambos through not only old comedy, as scholars have recognized, but also through the satyr play and Socratic

²⁷ Diogenes uses the language of abuse to characterize the give-and-take of insults that marked Antisthenes’ interactions with Athenians (ὄνειδίζοντα, 6.1.2, ἐκφαυλιζῶν, 6.1.7, ὄνειδίζόμενος, 6.4.3, 6.6.3), as well as the two Socratics’ exchanges (κακῶς λέγει, 6.3.7–8 [Plato], ἔσκωπτε, 6.7.5 [Antisthenes]); cf. εἰπὼν κακῶς (Antisthenes), Ath. *Deipn.* 507a5–6.

²⁸ E.g., *Symp.* 2.10, 2.13, 3.6 (brusque retorts); 4.2, 6.5 (argumentative), 6.8 (regarding *loidoria*); 8.6 (“beating up” [συγκόψης] on Socrates).

²⁹ Diogenes cites Antisthenes’ epitaph as reflecting this connection (τὸν βίον ἦσθα κύων, Ἀντίσθενης, ὧδε πεφυκῶς/ ὥστε δακεῖν κραδίην ῥήμασιν, οὐ στόμασιν, DL 6.19.5–6). See Rankin 1986.

³⁰ See Branham and Goulet-Cazé 1996 regarding the Cynics’ rude performances. Cf. how sophists are figured in contemporary discourse as famous Homeric heroes (Loraux 1995: 167–77; Worman 2002a: 183–84). The parallel suggests that abusive exchanges between these agonistic intellectuals are framed as iambic by later tradition.

³¹ Athen. *Deipn.* 505d8. Brock 1990: 46 notes that there is some problem with chronology but also that Gorgias lived to be very old. Athenaeus is, admittedly, a late source, but his language at the least indicates that this connection was recognized in the ancient rhetorical tradition.

³² Duris, *FGH* 76 F 72; DL 3.18. What little is known about the form of early mimes indicates that they were written in prose and depicted social ruffraff (cf. frs. in Olivieri 1946: 2.130–31).

dialogue.³³ All of these genres concern themselves with the education of Athenian ephebes, which would suggest that the young men who hang around Socrates are also being exposed to the acculturating effects of iambos.³⁴

Such considerations, moreover, encourage some care in analyzing who Plato's professional speakers are and what their typical venues seem to be. We never meet a demagogue face-to-face in the dialogues, with the possible exception of Alcibiades; but he appears primarily as one of the most dashing young sophistic types intrigued with Socrates. However, we get glimpses of the techniques and characters of public speakers primarily through the lens forged by Socrates' confrontations with sophists, whose professionalism finds its outlet in staged oratorical displays as well as the somewhat more private settings depicted by Plato.³⁵ Most of these interlocutors were historical personages; Deborah Nails has organized what we know about these figures from Plato and other sources, a taxonomy that reveals that relatively few dominant figures appear only in Plato (e.g., Callicles).³⁶ For my purposes some of the most important features of these sophists are their birth dates, since Socrates' confrontations with them appear to be differentiated at least in part by their respective ages.

For instance, while Socrates treats the oldest sophists with an exaggerated, ironic urbanity and they respond in kind, sophists of the next generation engage in more direct abuse.³⁷ The discussions that Socrates conducts with the oldest generation of sophists (i.e., Gorgias and Protagoras) remain quite

³³ Pl. *Symp.* 215a, 216d; cf. *Pol.* 291a–b, 303c; Xen. *Symp.* 4.19. See Zanker 1995: 32–39; Usher 2002. See also the discussion in ch. 3, and further below.

³⁴ One of the practices connecting these genres was likely the symposium, which may have been the occasion for the performance of iambos, clearly frames the actions in the satyr play, serves as a prominent metaphorical register in old comedy, and provides the setting for one of the most famous Socratic dialogues (cf. also *Rep.* 562c–d; *Leg.* 1–2). As Bowie suggests, the symposium was “good to think with” (1997: 1–2), an elite social practice aimed at the cultural training of young Athenians. See further discussion in the Introduction, and below. The analogies Plato draws between Socrates' techniques and Aesop's *ainoi* forges an additional connection with instruction; see also Kurke (forthcoming, ch. 7).

³⁵ See Pl. *Hi. Min.*, *Hi. Mai.*, *Prot.* for this contrast; cf. Guthrie 1971: 35–36; Kerferd 1981; Rankin 1983: 14–16; Lloyd 1987: 83–102.

³⁶ Nails 2002; cf. also Coventry 1990; Beversliu 2000.

³⁷ Some have thought that the character of Dionysidorus (in the *Euthydemus*) was meant to represent Lysias; see discussions in Gifford 1973: 14–15; Hawtrey 1981: 13–14 and appendix. Schleiermacher 1955 supposes Antisthenes. For the dates of Plato's characters (both attested elsewhere and not), see Nails 2002. Most of her dates agree with those estimated by earlier writers: Gorgias and Protagoras were born in the 480s, Socrates in 470 or so, Thrasymachus in the 450s, and the others (probably including Hippias) between 440 and 450, with the exception of Meno and Theaetetus, who are quite a lot younger (420s?). Nails is alone in dating Hippias to Socrates' generation, as far as I know; cf. Untersteiner 1952: 252, Guthrie 1971: 280 (with objections). See also Rose 1992: 273–78, who argues for three generations of sophists, each more brutal than the one before.

polite, and thus mostly lacking in the agonistic vocabulary that signals reactions against public, professional speakers in many genres. Plato employs iambic vocabulary most pervasively when he depicts Socrates in confrontations with younger sophists: angry or satirical types such as Polus, Callicles, Hippias, Thrasymachus, Euthydemus, and Dionysidorus. The portrayals of friendlier young students of sophists such as Phaedrus, Alcibiades, Meno, and Theaetetus also contribute important elements to this confrontation, but they do so with more sympathy – and thus with a wry, “insider’s” use of slanderous terms – than those who react stringently to Socrates’ critique of professional speakers.³⁸ These professionals all show themselves to be overly confident of their speaking abilities, overblown in their expressions, fastidious about the putative nobility of their topics, and thus very much opposed to the small-talking, mock-modest Socrates, whose lowly analogies to such activities as scratching and eating infuriate them.

The generational distinctions among these different contenders of Socrates indicate that the image of the banauistic, joking Socrates crafts a depiction paramount for educating the youth. He repeatedly throws the younger men off balance like a wrestler in the rings he hangs around, forcing them into confusion (*aporia*) about the values they have been acculturated to cherish. The younger sophists and students of sophists often cast back in Socrates’ face (either angrily or flirtatiously) the same vocabulary that he uses to denigrate their teachers, a linguistic struggle that makes Socrates look more like Aristophanes’ portraits of him. This in itself suggests that what is really at stake here is a set of abusive labels that each of these agonists attempts to attach to those intellectuals or political operators that he thinks have a bad influence on Athenian citizens. Moreover, when this agonistic, crude character challenges young men to take up positions that seem to them distastefully common, he reiterates a cipher analogous to that of the *silenos* figure – a motley creature who is in fact a priest of Dionysus and a protector of his sacred rites.³⁹

Abusive vocabulary usually surfaces during breaks in the argument, where the reactions of the interlocutors highlight Socrates’ type as well as their own conceits. Sometimes it arises as part of a meta-argument regarding how to engage in discussion, or attacks on sophistic techniques by Socrates in the course of arguing about public speaking. At these junctures Plato seems to be participating overtly in the same iambic tradition as Aristophanes and defamatory orators. But he does so with a different aim:

³⁸ Cf. Gordon 1999 for a judicious use of this terminology.

³⁹ Cf. *Symp.* 215b–221e and further below.

to indicate the importance of Socrates' *drama*.⁴⁰ His is a kind of iambic play, apparently just for fun, a bit absurd and irreverent; but it possesses a hidden cache of profundities, like the secret of the god in satyr plays or the revelations of the parabasis in comedy. The confrontations between this satirical figure and sophistic types often devolve into abusive exchanges, especially when Socrates begins to lampoon their verbal styles, to introduce talk about the body, or otherwise to seem to be speaking in a language not fit for what these professionals and their students perceive as polite settings. Thus those dialogues that focus not only on sophists and demagogues but more particularly on their oral activities – their talk and their appetites – furnish the most crucial material for our analysis.

Not surprisingly, then, class issues frequently surface between Socrates and the sophists. Socrates consistently aligns himself against power and perceptible (i.e., aristocratic) virtues.⁴¹ His discourse mirrors this stance; as mentioned, it is usually full of the humble stuff of daily life, which disgusts and irritates highbrow, spirited sophistic types. Socrates also rejects the big talk and big stuff (e.g., statues, tribute, etc.) of aristocratic or climbing leaders, and systematically opposes it to the “small” stuff of his precise interrogations, which so effectively dismantle the grand schemes of the professionals.⁴² Such distinctions fit with the oppositions between types of speakers that have been outlined in preceding chapters. They also conform to the fact that the language of blame swirls around Socrates, since iambic talk is like this, focusing on bodies (especially open mouths and other ruder parts), commonplace items, and humble activities.

It should not be surprising either that one of the most important dialogues for this characterization of Socrates (*Gorgias*) foregrounds not only fancy cooking (*opsopoiikē*) as an insulting analogy for oratory but also the abuse of Socrates as a crude and absurd figure by irritated interlocutors. If *Gorgias* is also the primary dialogue in which Socrates' failure to be persuasive is shown to its fullest (and saddest) extent, it is worth asking as well why the figure of Socrates exhibits such prominent comic elements there. As iambic poetry and old comedy indicate, the language of abuse is agonistic at its core, and if it is funny, its humor is most often quite cruel. By setting the imagery of oral activities in the *Gorgias* next to that of other similar dialogues, we can witness in Plato the use of an iambic

⁴⁰ This is the word the Eleatic Stranger uses for the “plots” of sophists (*Pol.* 303c8); cf. *Symp.* 222d3–4.

⁴¹ *Thr.* 172c–177a; *Gorg.* 463a–466a; *Hi. Mai.* 288b–291a. See Blondell 2002: 75–76; but cf. Ober 1998: 193–97, who points to Socrates' critique of popular opinion.

⁴² We might compare the oratorical deployment of the average citizen as a figure for audience identification; cf. Ober 1989: 170–77.

language to frame Socrates as the consummate outsider, necessarily lampooned because so profoundly misunderstood – and therefore categorized by those who lack understanding as a low-class, overbold type.⁴³ Socrates expresses the core of this comic stance in the *Phaedrus* when he asks, “Isn’t it better to say something ridiculous (γελοῖον) than clever (δεινός) and hateful (ἔχθρός):” (260c). Thus he will effectively play the fool in order to uncover the dangerous conceits of public speakers, a small talker who “knows nothing” versus big mouths with claims to all knowledge.

THE TROUBLE WITH “ LIKENESS ”

A further question one might ask about Plato’s focus on the comic body is what precise philosophical purpose it serves. While such imagery may tie the figure of Socrates to an iambic discourse and cast him in the role of irreverent satyr, clearly something more crucial to Plato’s philosophical program is at stake. First, there is a general and essential motivation for such imagery. Before the intellectual movement that spawned Socrates, concrete-minded Athenians had tended to consider only the body as a locus of harm and good; they lived in a community very focused on the perceptible (and especially visual) apprehension of character type, and assessed everything from class status to moral stature by means of such indicators as gesture, dress, vocal tone, and vocabulary.⁴⁴ In this elite imaginary, inside merely matched outside; as the label *kaloskagathos* suggests, one’s status was clearly evident in one’s stature. Socrates famously gives the lie to this means of moral assessment, and thus configures in his very body a concern central to Socratic and Platonic philosophy.⁴⁵ Since he embodies instead a disdain for physical comforts and the visible trappings of elite status, in the medium of Socratic dialogue his physical presence serves as his own best exemplum. In order that Athenians might be induced to think about benefits for the soul, Socrates’ primary concern, they must be induced to relinquish their attachments to such trappings. Both Socrates’ debased body and his low talk enact how this might come about, how his interlocutors might be

⁴³ Cf. Thersites in *Il.* 2.212ff., whom the Homeric narrator frames as a patently unheroic type, but who also makes the same (salient) points that Achilles makes about the unfairness of Agamemnon. Parker 1983: 260–61 regards Thersites as the “embodiment of ‘grudge’ or ‘envy,’” and notes that some scholars identify Thersites with Pharmakos (“Scapegoat”). He also compares him to Aesop, who is credited with inventing a genre for the chastening of kings. The Cynics, later chasteners of the high and mighty, were interested in Thersites, as Zanker notes (1995: 32).

⁴⁴ See Worman 2002a; Vasiliou 2002b.

⁴⁵ See McLean 2006, who emphasizes Socrates’ failure to exhibit the necessary equation implied by the compound *kaloskagathos*.

brought to recognize goods for the soul by means of a steady use of analogies that revolt them, as does Socrates himself. These largely involve examples of bodily harm and goods – especially such dishonorable treatment as beatings, versus such cossetting as fancy cookery or unmixed drinking. While these analogies render Socrates' discourse "ludicrous" (*katagelastos*) and "shameful" (*aischros*), since comparisons involving the body's appetites are central to comic schemes, they aim at jolting elite and thus presumably well-educated Athenians out of complacent assumptions about what is noble and good (*kalos*).⁴⁶ Socrates often thereby offends his interlocutors, who like to think of themselves as above such undignified considerations.

This use of "crude" examples also affords Plato a means of highlighting how consistently necessary such physical analogies are to articulating which kinds of speech have evil effects on the soul. That is, the images of bodies (fine and foul, often engaged in eating and drinking) are particularly important to the visualizing of different stylistic effects. If, as I have argued elsewhere, Athenians of the classical period perceived linguistic styles primarily as ways of speaking, as (often quite formal) oral performances, then Plato's emphasis on analogies to perceptible effects should not be perceived as unconventional. Rather, it is the *uses* to which he puts such analogies that break with tradition. Stephen Halliwell and others have explored Plato's frequent recourse to visual exempla, especially artistic techniques and products.⁴⁷ Halliwell argues that such analogies ground Plato's aesthetics, both his sensitivity to visual beauty and his attempts to transform appreciation of artistic "imitations" (*mimeseis*) into crucial steps on the path toward apprehension of the Forms. While this is an accurate and helpful approach, I want to emphasize instead the apparently paradoxical aspect of his aesthetic: the unbeautiful features of Socrates' own appearance and verbal style, details of which are repeatedly emphasized in his exchanges with beautiful (*kaloi*) and fine-speaking young sophists.⁴⁸

Socrates' exchange with Meno most directly indicates the importance of such contrasts. Early on in the dialogue Socrates emphasizes that he is an old man (*ἀνδρὶ πρεσβύτῃ*, 76a), while Meno is young and beautiful (*καλός*, 76b5). He further claims that Meno's beauty makes him speak in a particular way (*ἐπιπτάττεις ἐν τοῖς λόγοις*), since he has a weakness in this regard

⁴⁶ Cf. Brock 1990: 45, who notes this feature but does not analyze it. Kurke (2006: 23–31) points to the use of examples as a feature of Aesop's fables, as persuasion through induction (*ἐπαγωγὴ*) (cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1393a25–b10).

⁴⁷ See Halliwell 2002: 37–71, 118–47; also Keuls 1978; Janaway 1995; Murray 1997: 3–12; Steiner 2001a: 63–78. Cf. also Blondell 2002: 85–88 on "mimetic pedagogy."

⁴⁸ Cf. Richter 1955: pls. 3.9–10, 7.1–4; Dover 1967: 28; and Zanker 1995: 32–39, although they do not analyze the dialogues. See also Krell 1972; Clay 2000: 69–72; Blondell 2002: 70–75.

(εἰμί ἤππων τῶν καλῶν) (76b7–c2). Somewhat later in their discussion, when Meno jokingly charges Socrates with numbing him in argument like an “electric eel” (νάρκη, 80a6), Socrates replies by calling Meno “unscrupulous” (πανούργος, 80b8, 81e6). According to Socrates, Meno is *panourgos* because, being handsome, he just wants to play at comparisons (καλαί γάρ . . . τῶν καλῶν καὶ αἱ εἰκόνες, 80c5). That is, his verbal style is a manifestation of his beauty – or, more precisely, of the vanity and assumptions about likeness that traditionally attend such beauty. I have argued elsewhere that *panourgos* types in the classical period are usually those who employ complex and deceptive verbal styles.⁴⁹ In drama Odysseus is the most famous employer of such strategies; accordingly, *panourgos* is one of those labels that public speakers seek to foist onto one another. In the *Meno*, where the charge is clearly made in jest, it may also indicate something about the dangers posed to Meno’s way of thinking by his teacher Gorgias, the most famous advocate of ornately deceptive persuasive techniques.

Moreover, the scene echoes other expressions of the putative match between how one looks and how one talks: think of the lovely, effeminate Agathon in Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazusae*, who claims that one must look beautiful (καλός) if one wishes to write beautiful plays (καλὰ δράματα) (159–70). In his vain and ornamental speech in Plato’s *Symposium*, Agathon fashions Eros in his own image – young, beautiful, and delicate (195a5–196b3). We might recall also Odysseus’ famous dismissal of the handsome Euryalus in book 8 of the *Odyssey*. When the young man insults him by indicating that he thinks he may be too lower-class to be a good athlete, Odysseus responds effectively, “Handsome is as handsome does”: those who are beautiful in appearance do not always speak fittingly (οὐ κατὰ κόσμον, *Od.* 8.158).⁵⁰ Indeed, Odysseus may be a significant model for Plato’s formulation of Socrates’ type.⁵¹ Not only does he consistently manifest a complex relationship to physical beauty while playing the stranger in the *Odyssey*, since his nobility is frequently masked by a low guise; but in fifth-century drama he is both mistaken for and combative with sophistic types. Moreover, he is famously a “much-enduring” (*polutlas*) character, an aspect of Socrates’ type that Plato often indicates and that the Cynics later emphasize.⁵²

⁴⁹ Worman 1999, 2002a.

⁵⁰ Cf. Worman 2002a: 22, 93–94; also Kurke (2006: 29–31) on the example of Aesop.

⁵¹ Note also the importance of Odysseus for Epicharmus and comic poets; see Casolari 2003: 47–55, 205–24.

⁵² On Odysseus as a figure of endurance (and thus an analogy for Socrates), cf. *Rep.* 390d, 441b; *Phdr.* 94d; *Symp.* 220c. See Loraux 1995: 169–70; Haden 1997; Blondell 2002: 158–59. This endurance may

A final feature of Odysseus' type suggests another more complex indication of his importance for Socrates' portrayal. In both the *Odyssey* and in later drama, Odysseus' figure raises questions about issues of likeness. This is not only because he is so notoriously associated with deception and therefore with tricking the eye. It is also, I think, because he comes to be a figure who signals questions about probability (*to eikos*), precisely because *eikos* arguments are based on assumptions about likeness.⁵³ This connection is even foreshadowed in the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus' various states of undress arouse anxiety in those who witness them about how like or unlike he is to a noble type (e.g., *Od.* 4.249–51, 6.242–43). Plato explicitly makes the connection between likenesses and *eikos* arguments in the *Phaedrus*, when he argues that writers of speeches are unscrupulous (πᾶνοῦργοι) because they conceal (ἀποκρύπτονται) the nature of the soul (271c1–3; cf. 261e–262b). Such deception hinders the proper kinds of matching that ought to be at work in oratory: that between the speaker's style and the listener's type of soul (272a; cf. 277c).⁵⁴ This constitutes the good kind of similarity, one quite distinct from those that sophists such as Tisias and Gorgias employ in *eikos* arguments, which persuade the masses because of their "likeness to the truth" (ὁμοιότητα τοῦ ἀληθοῦς, 273d4). The invocation of Sicilian sophists who argue from probability as a cloak for the truth clearly aligns the discourse of likeness with deceptive, posturing speakers who educate their elite students to affirm appearances over realities.

Thus Plato also engages in a critique of the typical ways in which likenesses and *eikos* arguments are employed by public speakers. While in the *Phaedrus* he credits Gorgias and Tisias with inventing such techniques (267d6), the more essential point about them seems to be that their emphasis on appearances ties them to visual distractions, especially beautiful bodies and manifestly noble types. Recall that Socrates repeatedly claims to be susceptible to youthful beauty and often draws attention to how such beauty overwhelms the onlooker, even affecting his ability to speak or listen well.⁵⁵ Such is also the impact of the distracting, elaborate styles of sophistic speakers – those who teach the young elite of Athens to wield

manifest itself in hunting metaphors, as in the openings of Sophocles' *Ajax* and Plato's *Protagoras*. Compare also the emphasis on Odysseus (as well as Heracles) in the works of Antisthenes (DL 6.15–18), the forefather of Cynic philosophy; see Rankin 1983: 219–28, 1986; McKirahan 1994.

⁵³ See further in Worman 2002a: 121–22, 176–77; cf. also Bassi 1998.

⁵⁴ This idea seems to have had some currency among Socratics; Antisthenes also argues for this match as a crucial element in good speeches, but apparently without concern about the difficulty of achieving a true match (fr. 51 Caizzi).

⁵⁵ E.g., *Meno* 76b, 154c; *Charm.* 155d–e. Cf. Goldhill 1998.

their beautiful forms and words to great effect in public settings. Like *eikos* arguments, which only seem like the truth, ornate verbal styles mask the issues at hand and even encourage audiences, by analogy with the speakers' fancy techniques, to mistake fine-sounding things for those truly fine.

Curiously enough, Alcibiades, the most beautiful young elite of all, puts the lie to Socrates' supposed weakness for the *kaloi*. In the *Symposium*, he claims that Socrates in fact cares very little for such surface delights, showing himself to be completely impervious even to Alcibiades' own manifest charms (216d, 219c). Although he begins his encomium of Socrates by comparing him to a *silenos* figure, he says later that in fact Socrates is not like anyone else (μηδενὶ ἀνθρώπων . . . ὁμοιον, 221c4–5). The subtext for this seeming contradiction may well be the convention of comparing contemporaneous sophists and orators with famous speakers from Homeric tradition, so that a notably august, long-winded speaker may be fashioned a “Nestor,” and so on (cf. *Phdr.* 261a).⁵⁶ Thus Socrates would not be comparable to any human type; rather, his singular style can only be comprehended by means of an apparently absurd analogy to the ignoble but divine figure of the satyr, which then must itself be set aside.⁵⁷ As well as denigrating the importance of physical charms, this equation of Socrates with the “insolent” *silenos* (ὕβριστής, *Symp.* 215b7⁵⁸) and its subsequent denial lampoons the tradition of analogy itself, especially that which associates elite orators with famous speakers from the Homeric past.

This means that not only Socrates' visible type but also his verbal tactics are opposite to the fine looks and fine speeches of sophistic types.⁵⁹ Rather than draping himself in fancy language, Socrates affects the “posture” (τὸ σχῆμα, *Symp.* 216d4) of the ignorant, amorous satyr, wearing this crude persona like a carapace (τοῦτο γὰρ οὗτος ἔξωθεν περιβέβληται, ὥσπερ ὁ γεγλυμμένος σιληνός, 216d5–6).⁶⁰ His words as well are encased in the hide of an “outrageous satyr” (τοιαῦτα καὶ ὀνόματα καὶ ῥήματα ἔξωθεν περιαιμπέχονται σατύρου δὴ τινα ὑβριστοῦ δοράν, 221e2–3). Although he talks in this lowbrow style, employing comic vocabulary and

⁵⁶ See Loraux's discussion (1995: 167–77) of the use of this kind of analogy in rhetorical and philosophical discourse of the period, although her discussion is frequently more allusive than explanatory. Note also that like Aristophanes, Socrates makes frequent reference to Heracles as a model for enduring struggle (*Euthd.* 297c, *Ap.* 22c, *Phd.* 89c; cf. *Thr.* 169b), which gives rise to him being paired with Heracles and Odysseus in the Cynic tradition.

⁵⁷ See Belfiore 1980; Usher 2002; and cf. Loraux 1995: 167–69. ⁵⁸ Cf. *Symp.* 175e7, *Alcib.* 114d7.

⁵⁹ Contrast the fancy clothes that the sophists apparently wore, which reportedly made them look like rhapsodes (DK 82 A 9; cf. Pl. *Ion* and *Hi. Min.*). See Guthrie 1971: 42; Kerferd 1981: 29; O'Sullivan 1992: 66–67.

⁶⁰ Socrates characterizes Alcibiades' speech as “fancily draped” (κομψῶς κύκλω περιβαλλόμενος, 222c4–5) – quite the opposite of his own rustic verbal garb.

adding pedestrian exempla from the agora to deflate elite assumptions about the nobility of their pursuits, he enchants his hearers nonetheless. While the satyr Marsyas may use his lips to charm (ἐκῆλει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τῆ ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος δυνάμει, 215c1–2), Socrates is an even more wondrous “piper” (ἀύλητής, 215b8), since he astounds his audience without need of instruments (ἄνευ ὀργάνων τοῖς ψίλοις, 215c7). Peter Wilson has argued that even though the *aulos* has a history of association with Gorgons, satyrs (especially Marsyas), and therefore wildness, both they and their typical instrument become domesticated in the development of Athenian drama. The *aulos* may still be equated with the “wild mouth,” but only in the service of civic ritual, where straps (*phorbeia*) control the facial contortions of the piper.⁶¹ In dramatic performances the *auletai* were usually foreigners, women, and/or slaves.⁶² Alcibiades would therefore seem to analogize Socrates’ style to an ambiguous oral mode, which contains elements of wildness, femininity, and foreign or low social status.⁶³

The fact that Alcibiades’ comparisons are fraught with difficulties and contradictions (e.g., Plato’s dialogues never show Socrates charming anyone with his speeches) brings us to the next point about Plato’s depiction of this odd figure. Like Odysseus in Homeric epic, in his very being Socrates captures the problem with any easy assumptions about likeness generated by the vanities of handsome aristocrats. One may pipe away like a rambunctious satyr or a lowborn woman, but the wise listener will recognize the speech’s content as godlike and extraordinary, even if the speaker also looks like an ignorant buffoon.⁶⁴ This is because, as Alcibiades explains of Socrates, such a speaker has “divine icons of virtue” (ἀγάλματ’ ἀρετῆς, 222a4; cf. 215b3) in his soul. At this crucial juncture in the *Symposium*, Plato has Socrates’ most dashing interlocutor offer the image that clinches the transformation of the visual that both Plato and his teacher sought to bring about in Athens. The analogy shrinks the grand statuary for which Athens was famous to the commonplace, diminutive figures of the god found in

⁶¹ The reed of the *aulos* was called a *glōssa* (“tongue”), which effects the metaphorical connection between mouth and instrument; cf. Wilson 1999: 72. See also Aeschines’ comparison of Demosthenes to an *aulos* (cf. γλωτταν, 3.229). I discuss this image further in ch. 5.

⁶² Wilson 1999: 74–75. Cf. Alcibiades’ suggestion that Socrates turns his listeners into corybants (*Symp.* 215e1) and has a Siren’s effect (216a7).

⁶³ Kurke (2006: 28) notes the mixed crowd that Alcibiades claims is charmed by Socrates (*Symp.* 215d5–6), as well as his use of low examples (221e4–5), both of which she regards as evidence of the connection between Socratic dialogue and Aesop’s fables.

⁶⁴ Cf. the anecdote in which Socrates’ appearance is analyzed by Zopyrus, a magician who claims to be able to read people’s characters in their faces and physical types. He declares Socrates slow, stupid, and womanizing because of his thick neck (Cic. *de Fato* 5.10; fr. in Rosetti 1980: 184–86). On Socrates’ appearance, see Krell 1972; Zanker 1995; McLean 2006.

the *silenoi* sold at shops in the agora, and then reconceives them as features of the soul. This is the only entity, as it turns out, in respect to which one ought to pay attention to likeness, since it is only with knowledge of its stature (and not that of the body) that one may speak in a manner truly fine.

When, therefore, Socrates uses “crude” analogies to bodies, and to eating and drinking, in his attempts to get his haughty interlocutors to think about their souls, he is employing likenesses in a manner familiar from comic settings but with an unfamiliar aim: knowledge of the soul. While he makes no claim to possess such knowledge, the pervasiveness of the physical comparisons conforms to the idea that one should only make use of – and indeed attend to – the kind of likeness that tries to get at the nature of the soul. If such a verbal style seems ignoble or even abusive to Socrates’ interlocutors, at the least it does not allow for the decorative masking of the truth achieved by high-blown *logoi*. It thus in itself indicates the tricky and paradoxical business that truth-seeking is, and suggests that only this kind of iambic wrangling can go any distance toward dismantling received ideas about what constitute virtuous ways of employing one’s mouth.

SOPHISTIC INTERLOCUTORS’ FANCY FARE

Numerous scholars have explored the ways in which Socrates denigrates persuasion (*peithō*) and rhetoric (*rhētorikē*), as well as public speakers (*dēmēgoroi*) and sophists (*sophistai*).⁶⁵ This discussion does not attempt to refute earlier ideas about these topics, but rather to supplement the common understanding of them by emphasizing one aspect of Socrates’ scorn for professional talkers and public speakers: the contrasts between those oral practices associated with rhetoric and its purveyors, on the one hand, and those associated with the “amateur” and dialectic on the other. It is my contention that oral imagery frames these distinctions in a way that throws into sharp relief the haughty styles and outsized appetites of the professionals, while reserving for the philosopher a tough, restrained stance that often looks to his opponents like ethical weakness and incontinent chatter. Given that Plato’s primary targets throughout the dialogues are these professional speakers and their tactics, it should not be surprising that the mouth and its activities provide him with a focal point around which to organize his response to formal oral performances. Nor should it be surprising that the

⁶⁵ There is a large bibliography on this topic. See, e.g., Havelock 1963; Guthrie 1971; Black 1979; Kerferd 1981; Rankin 1983; de Romilly 1992; Wardy 1999. Cf. also the collections edited by Erikson 1979 and Cassin 1986.

vocabulary he employs to articulate this response is largely the same cluster of terms that function as points of contention in other genres around issues of public speaking. Again and again, these attributions associating verbal style and physical appetite turn up, and those who face off over how to talk in a manner most beneficial to Athens attempt to foist onto their opponents the same slanderous labels with which they themselves have been identified. Plato's employment of such terms indicates his awareness of their import, as well as the delicacy with which he must apply them if he is to succeed in maintaining firm distinctions between his teacher and other famous talkers among Athens' elite. Thus Plato's depictions often frame Socrates' usage as *oratio obliqua* (especially that of the mob and/or its misdirected leaders).⁶⁶ Meanwhile Plato's own participation in the active wrangle over defaming labels is complicated by his dramatic reflection of the fact that Socrates comes in for the same sorts of abuse as the sophists. Below I separate out these strands of imagery, focusing first on the sophists' fancy speechifying and reserving the characterization of Socrates' crude style for a separate section.

The most important dialogues for assessing how these characterizations operate are, of course, those that revolve around famous sophists and thus around concerns about persuasion. The *Protagoras* and the *Gorgias*, as well as the *Euthydemus* and the *Phaedrus*, focus in on speakers' and sometimes writers' claims to knowledge, delineating different aspects of Socrates' confrontation with tricky or fancy talk and its purveyors. The *Protagoras* is not overtly about persuasion, because this is not Protagoras' central topic as it is Gorgias' and Phaedrus', the refined student of Lysias. It thus does not revolve around the same kind of attack on persuasive speakers or their putative fields of knowledge that shape the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedrus*. The dialogue does, however, contain some comical portraits of famous sophists, including not only Protagoras but also Prodicus and Hippias. It is narrated by Socrates, which means that Plato depicts Socrates himself as a witty portrayer of sophistic types. Indeed, some of the funniest business in both the *Protagoras* and the *Phaedrus* arises in Socrates' imitations of these professional speakers' styles.

⁶⁶ Alexander Verlinsky (oral communication, April 2003) has suggested that this knowing tone marks a number of key terms in Plato as appropriated "mob" discourse (i.e., the usage of elites without understanding). We might compare the transformation in contemporary idiom of such derogatory labels as "queer" and "fag" into terms of affirmation within the homosexual community. As is even more blatantly the case with a similar appropriation – that of "nigga" by African American speakers – this usage is only clearly positive when used by members of the given ethnic or social group, and even then may carry shades of the original insult. Plato's appropriations similarly retain undercurrents of mockery even as they attempt to counteract them with knowing irony.

Protagoras

While strolling in the courtyard with an acquaintance named Hippocrates before going to meet Protagoras, Socrates likens the typical sophist to a “merchant” (ἔμπορος) or “huckster of portable goods” (κόπηλος τῶν ἀγωγίμων) who might deceive (ἐξαπατήσῃ) buyers, as do those who sell food and drink (*Prot.* 313c5–d2). The analogy captures elegantly the problem with sophistic teaching. First, the buyer may be unsure what he is getting for his money; Socrates wonders about its actual ingredients (313d–e), having asked what one exposed to such teaching would talk cleverly about (cf. περὶ τίνος δεινὸν ποιεῖ λέγειν: 312e3⁶⁷). Moreover, the passage suggests that sophistic teachers feed the appetites in a manner that aims at pleasure rather than real sustenance. Like traveling salesmen, they go around to cities hawking their wares, praising what they sell to the ever-desirous buyer (καπηλεύοντες τῷ ἄει ἐπιθυμοῦντι ἐπαινοῦσιν μὲν πάντα ἃ πωλοῦσιν, 313d7–8), while being themselves ignorant of whether it is beneficial or detrimental to the soul (ἀγνοοῖεν ὧν πωλοῦσιν ὃ τι χρηστὸν ἢ πονηρὸν πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν, 313d9–10). This equation between sophistic teaching and foodstuffs is spelled out in more elaborate detail in other dialogues, most famously the *Gorgias*. There the marketplace analogy is less apparent, but another lowbrow figure is adduced as a match for the sophist: the cook (*mageiros*, 491a2), with rhetoric fashioned as fancy cookery (*opsopoiikē*).⁶⁸ I take up this comparison further below; for now it should suffice to recall that comic poets depict eaters of *opsa* as overly delicate, decadent wastrels. By extension, then, the sophist sells his listeners “relishes” that indulge their weaknesses for such fripperies.

Analogies to the marketplace are familiar enough in other genres. The mercenary sophist is a commonplace type in dramatic settings: Odysseus, for instance, is usually depicted in tragedy as a scheming, sophistic salesman, the negative extension of the merchant seaman guise he employed to make his way home.⁶⁹ We have seen that in Aristophanes’ *Knights* and *Wasps*, demagogues are fashioned as lowbrow, marketplace wranglers (*agoraioi*); *Clouds* reveals sophists to be similarly grasping and mercenary. The fact that later in the *Protagoras* Socrates deems the sophist’s choice of topic

⁶⁷ The phrase *deinos legein* is code for sophistic techniques in drama and oratory of the period (e.g., *E. Tro.* 968, fr. 442; *S. OT* 545, *Phil.* 440, *OC* 806; *Gorg. Pal.* 28; *Antiph.* 2.2.3; *Lys.* 7.12; *Dem.* 19.120–21, 20.150; *Aeschin.* 3.174); cf. also *Pl. Ap.* 17b1–4 for the most famous disavowal of this capability. See North 1988.

⁶⁸ For the low social status of the cook, cf. Wilkins 2000a: 369–414; Dobrov 2002 and further in chs. 2 and 6.

⁶⁹ This is especially true in Sophocles’ *Philoctetes*. See Stanford 1954: 102–17; Worman 2002: 139–48.

agoraios indicates that even this highbrow talker cannot escape the association with salesmanship, since sophists do famously speak for pay.⁷⁰ The Platonic Socrates frequently harps on this aspect of sophistic teaching, while depictions of Socrates in old comedy charge him with being so disinterested in money that he has trouble meeting his basic needs and must resort to theft.⁷¹

In the *Protagoras*, however, Socrates and Hippocrates are greeted at the door of Callias' house (where Protagoras is staying) as if they themselves were such mercenary types. When the servant sees them talking on the stoop, he says, "Aha, some sophists" ("Εα . . . σοφισταί τινες) and claims that Callias has no time for them (οὐ σχολή αὐτῷ) (315d4). When Socrates finally persuades him to let them in and they enter the courtyard, they see Protagoras surrounded by a crowd of admirers. Socrates depicts him as an enchanter like Orpheus "in voice" (κηλῶν τῇ φωνῇ ὡσπερ Ὀρφεύς), and notes that a "chorus and epichorus" of bewitched young men follow this voice (οἱ δὲ κατὰ τὴν φωνὴν ἔπονται κεκληγημένοι, ἦσαν δέ τινες καὶ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἐν τῷ χορῷ, 315a8–b2).⁷² Socrates wonders at how the young men promenade with such care and grace, keeping themselves in an orderly formation (ἐν κόσμῳ περιεσχίζοντο; ἐν κύκλῳ περιιόντες, 315b6–8) like a good dramatic chorus.⁷³ After this description, Socrates' own diction becomes increasingly august, his interlarding of Homeric gestures seemingly inspired by the dramatic setting of the mesmerizing sophist. Later, when Protagoras has delivered a long speech claiming the greatest antiquity for his art, Socrates declares himself also under Protagoras' spell (κεκληγημένος, 328d4–5). Nevertheless, he has enough presence of mind remaining to state that he finds that such big speeches (μακροὶ λόγοι) are like books that cannot answer any objections to their contents (329a–b). Socrates questions both Protagoras' medium, the big display rather than short answers (βραχυλογία, 343b5), and his desire to argue about poetry. This he characterizes as the sympotic entertainment of lowbrow, marketplace men (φαύλων καὶ ἀγοραίων, 347c6), recalling his earlier denigration of sophists as mercenary types. Owing to their lack of education (ὑπὸ ἀπαιδευσίας), these symposiasts purchase the "strange voice of the

⁷⁰ Theophrastus employs similar connections to delineate this type as a haranguing demagogue (see further in ch. 6).

⁷¹ E.g., *Ar. Nub.* 175, 179, 497, 856–57, 1103–04; *Eup. fr.* 386, 395. On the sophists' pay, see *Pl. Ap.* 19e, *Hi. Mai.* 282e; *Cra.* 291b, 384b, 391b.

⁷² This association of witch's "charms" with rhetoric is a commonplace; cf. de Romilly 1979; Parry 1992; and further below.

⁷³ Cf. *Pol.* 291a–b, 303c, where the sophists are called a χορός and likened to satyrs; and further below regarding Socrates' type.

pipes” (ἄλλοτριαν φωνήν τήν τῶν ἀυλῶν⁷⁴), rather than depending on their own voices and speeches (μηδὲ διὰ τῆς φωνῆς καὶ τῶν λόγων τῶν ἑαυτῶν) (347c8–d3). He terms such needs “childish” (παιδιῶν, 347d8), an attribution that usually turns up in the Platonic dialogues in relation to his own tactics.⁷⁵ Protagoras becomes so infuriated with Socrates that he refuses to answer him (348b–c, 360d–e).

Socrates thus manages to suggest throughout the dialogue that Protagoras’ verbal activities share too much with the kind of bewitching, dramatic performance associated with poetry and too little with the symposiastic activities of true gentlemen (καλοὶ κάγαθοί, 347d4), whose own voices (διὰ αὐτῶν φωνῆς, 347d8) in conversation provide sufficient entertainment. While the sophist remains quite polite and generous to his irritating interlocutor (e.g., 361e), he is clearly at pains to make Socrates acknowledge his superior status. He claims rather exaggerated things – such as that all great arts are in fact sophistic craft (σοφιστικὴν τέχνην, 316d3–4) – and has trouble speaking in anything but a fulsome style.⁷⁶ He is thus all the more insulted when Socrates indicates that he thinks his very choice of topic lower-class and childish, especially since arguing about poetry is the life-blood of the sophistic display. Moreover, as mentioned above, it is usually Socrates who gets associated or associates himself with the lowbrow (*phauloi*) and with children, so that his foisting of such attributions onto the famous sophist is in itself a very significant gesture. It seeks, in particular, to disturb the allegiance of an enchanting, fulsome voice and grand, dramatic style with noble pursuits and elite settings like the symposium, precisely what Protagoras wants to claim for rhetoric.

Gorgias

The other sophist that we must consider in this group is, of course, Gorgias. Indeed, Gorgias is by far the most important sophist for Socrates, since he claims to be a master of persuasion, and persuasion is a topic of which Socrates is not only deeply suspicious but also has great need. In all of the Platonic dialogues Gorgias is the only wise man that Socrates deliberately

⁷⁴ We might recall that Socrates is characterized in the *Symposium* as like an *aulos*-player (215b–c); his denigration of the activity here suggests the ambiguity of the comparison there.

⁷⁵ Elsewhere (*Soph.* 235a) Theaetetus queries the Eleatic Stranger’s characterization of the sophists’ tactics as *paidia*; but most often charges of childishness or play are leveled at Socrates.

⁷⁶ Note that in the *Theaetetus* (166c–d) Socrates first imagines how Protagoras would respond to his arguments, and then argues that the sophist would have defended himself in grander style (μεγαλειότερον, 168c4–5) than that which he, Socrates, is capable of.

seeks out (as opposed to being prodded along by an acquaintance, e.g.), which in itself indicates this sophist's importance for Socrates' own practices.⁷⁷ At the opening of the dialogue, Callicles characterizes Socrates' late arrival with a proverb that mocks the late entrance as the way to show up for a "war and a battle" (πολέμου καὶ μάχης). Socrates responds in kind, turning the proverb around by suggesting that it is not the battle that he and Chaerephon have missed, but rather the "feast" (ἑορτῆς). Callicles replies obligingly, "Yes, and a very refined feast it was" (καὶ μάλα γε ἄσπετος ἑορτῆς) (447a1–5). He thus goes along with Socrates' redefinition, unaware of how heavily it foreshadows the manner in which Socrates will treat both his guest and his guest's expertise. This opening scene is very significant in a number of ways. Socrates' switch from the metaphor of fight to that of feast implies precisely what he thinks is wrong with rhetoric: that it is the intellectual equivalent of fancy food. And indeed, Callicles' reply inadvertently confirms his suspicions. Not only does this exchange set up the agonistic atmosphere of the dialogue; it also foregrounds the dialogue's most pervasive comparison – that of cookery and rhetoric. The insulting character of this analogy is thus of a piece with the combative tactics that Socrates and the younger sophists engage throughout the discussion. Like a good iambic wrangler, he will defame his opponents by impugning both their speaking styles and their appetites; and his interlocutors will respond in kind.

Socrates' conversation with Gorgias is much more urbane than this prickly exchange might suggest, however. After Polus has attempted to wear the older sophist's mantle by answering Chaerephon's questions in chiming Gorgianic style,⁷⁸ Socrates intervenes by asking whether Gorgias will put aside the long speech (τὸ μῆκος τῶν λόγων) and consent to answering questions in brief compass (κατὰ βραχύ) (449b6–8). Gorgias proves himself very compliant, and enters into a conversation with Socrates that is quite amiable, answering questions so briefly that Socrates compliments him on his succinctness (449d8, 451d1). Like Protagoras, however, Gorgias does claim grandiose things for the powers of rhetoric, and soon is offering longer answers to Socrates' questions. This leads Socrates to point out mistakes in Gorgias' reasoning, although he does so with little verbal gestures that indicate his reluctance to enter into the invective and defamation that might attend such arguments. For instance, he notes that interlocutors in such situations often grow

⁷⁷ See Vasiliou 2008, esp. ch. 3.2.

⁷⁸ E.g., ἐμπειρῶν ἐμπειρώς . . . ἐμπειρία . . . ἀπειρία; ἄλλοι ἄλλων ἄλλως; ἀρίστων οἱ ἀριστοὶ (448c4–9).

angry (χαλεπαίνουσι) and enter into abusive exchanges (λοιδορηθέντες, 457d3–6), offering to stop lest he offend the sophist. But Gorgias seems unperturbed, and they continue until Socrates catches him in another contradiction. Then Polus jumps in to say that Gorgias was just ashamed (ἡσχύνθη) to say what he thought, and calls such entrapment an indication of Socrates’ “crudeness” (εἰς τὰ τοιαῦτα ἄγειν πολλή ἀγροικία ἐστὶν τοὺς λόγους, 461c3–4). Gorgias, in contrast, remains largely oblivious to the implications of Socrates’ arguments, even later declaring that Socrates’ analogy to cookery has not caused him to feel shame (αἰσχυνθείς, 463a5).⁷⁹ Indeed, when things grow very heated and quite rude between Callicles and Socrates, Callicles only agrees to continue because the amiable Gorgias requests that he do so (497a4–10).

Rhetoric and poetry

The ways in which Socrates characterizes the field of expertise of these elder sophists obviously forge the framework for his responses to them. And since from Socrates’ perspective this field shares a number of negative traits with poetic performance, we might recognize at this juncture that Platonic dialogue depicts these two areas of oral performance as embodying the excesses associated with decadent hungers and grandiose talk alike. The *Gorgias* constitutes the fullest explication of how this connection works, but the *Phaedrus* and *Republic* also contribute important imagery.

Fancy cooking in the Gorgias

While many scholars have treated the analogy between rhetoric and cookery and done so in some detail, they have not often noticed that the equation, because it highlights a certain kind of food preparation, isolates rhetoric as an effete, decadent, and by implication effeminate oral practice.⁸⁰ Let us consider this analogy further. Some of the details will be very familiar; I recall them in order to investigate why the food analogy turns out to be so essential to the larger argument.

When Socrates begins to set up his comparison of rhetoric with fancy cookery (*opsopoiikē*), he hesitates at first to draw the comparison more fully, saying that it may be “rather crude” (ἀγροικότερον) to speak the truth. He claims that he is reluctant (ὀκνῶ) to speak because of Gorgias, lest the

⁷⁹ Note again that in the *Theaetetus* Socrates says that he is prepared to act shamelessly (ἀνοἰσχυρτεῖν, 196d2–3, 197a4–6) in argument, which stands in sharp distinction to the fastidious sophists.

⁸⁰ But cf. Zeitlin 1990: 92–99.

latter think that he is “making a comedy of” (δικαωμωδεῖν) his occupation (462e6–8). Socrates’ reference to *agroikia* echoes Polus’ recent denigration of his tactics (461c3–4); but the more elaborate framing of this particular equation suggests that there is something especially insulting about it. Gorgias remains obtuse about what kind of insult Socrates is fashioning, as mentioned above. It turns out to be a quite elaborate one, which situates cookery and rhetoric as two of four types of “flattery” (κολακεία), including also cosmetics (κομητική) and sophistry (σοφιστική) (463b1–6). While Socrates singles out cosmetics initially as especially evil, deceitful, and low (κακοῦργός τε καὶ ἀπατηλὴ καὶ ἀγεννὴς καὶ ἀνελεύθερος, 465b3–4), it is the food analogy that Callicles, Socrates’ most important interlocutor, fixes on as the most insulting. *Kolakeia* is in any event effectively equivalent to “dinner chasing,” as Ribbeck pointed out long ago, comparing the “stomach monsters” (*gastrimargoi*) of iambic poetry, as well as eaters of delicacies (*opsophagoi*) and pursuing the connections between flattery and the sustenance (*trophē*).⁸¹ As Aristophanes’ insulting label “bread flatterer” (ψωμοκόλαξ, fr. 127 E) also suggests, “flattering” would be better translated “grubbing” and the activity understood as having a clear connection to eating. If comic poets portray eaters of *opsa* as decadent gluttons, the grubbing sophist in Plato sells his listeners fancy fare that lacks any true nourishment.⁸²

At 490c–d, when he is growing increasingly irate with Socrates’ humble examples, Callicles exclaims that his irritating opponent only talks of “food and drink and doctors and drivel” (περὶ σιτία λέγεις καὶ ποιά καὶ ἰατροὺς καὶ φλυαρίας, 490c8–d1). Later he revises the cluster of crude examples that Socrates employs to include “tanners and fullers and cooks and doctors” (σκυτέας τε καὶ κναφέας καὶ μαγείρους λέγων καὶ ἰατρούς, 491a1–2), while he, Callicles, is talking about running the city.⁸³ Admittedly, these are motley clusters of practices and occupations, only partially focused on oral activities. Nevertheless, it soon becomes clear that Socrates is most interested in denigrating oral excesses, which conforms (from Callicles’ perspective) to his lowbrow, mealy-mouthed ways. I return to Callicles’

⁸¹ Ribbeck 1883: 1–2, 21–22; cf. the *trechedeipnoi* in Plutarch (2.726a). Ribbeck argues that κολακεία is derived from κόλον, which he regards as a synonym for τροφή (citing Athen. *Deipn.* 262a). Cf. Hippon. fr. 128 W; Pi. *Ol.* 1.52; Arist. *NE* 1118b19. In the *Phaedo*, Socrates considers such attention to appetite bestial: τοὺς γαστριμαργίας τε καὶ ὕβρεις καὶ φιλοποσίας μεμελετηκότας καὶ μὴ διηυλαβημένους εἰς τὰ τῶν ὄνων γένη καὶ τῶν τοιοῦτων θηρίων εἰκὸς ἐνδύεσθαι (81e5–82a1).

⁸² See chap. 2; also Davidson 1997; Fisher 2000; Wilkins 2000a.

⁸³ Cf. Ar. *Eq.* 1007–10 for a similar hodgepodge of items (“Athens, bean soup, Spartans, fresh fish, bad measurers of barley in the agora”; περὶ Ἀθηνῶν, περὶ φακῆς, / περὶ Λακεδαιμονίων, περὶ σκόμβρων νέων, / περὶ τῶν μετροῦντων τᾶλφιτ’ ἐν ἀγορᾷ κακῶς). Socrates’ lexicon is comic, as the term *phluaria* suggests (see further below).

depiction of Socrates' appetitive type below, considering here instead how his invective relates to Socrates' characterization of rhetoric.

Let us pursue the associations traced by the accumulation of food metaphors. These are initiated when Socrates responds to Callicles' claims that excesses are good for the soul, by offering examples of leaky vessels full of wine, honey, and milk that have to be continuously refilled (493d5–e4). Callicles retorts that nonetheless the best life is to have “as much as possible flowing in” (ὡς πλεῖστον ἐπιρρεῖν, 494b2).⁸⁴ This leads Socrates to offer further examples of “leaks,” such as the torrent bird (χαραδρίου, 494b6), who eats and excretes at the same time. He also returns repeatedly to eating and drinking (494c1, 496c6–d1), analogies that tend to lead off the discussion and then catalyze the consideration of more shameful activities (see further below). It is only when Socrates comes back to *opsopoikē* and argues for its similarity not only to rhetoric (500e4–5; cf. also μαγειρικὴν ἐμπειρίαν, 500b4) but also to public poetry and demagoguery that we can begin to see why this equation might be so central.

As mentioned above, these oral activities – fancy eating, public speaking – aim only at pleasure. This is spelled out fully in the section following the reintroduction of fancy cookery as an analogy for oral performance. Unlike medicine, *opsopoikē* serves pleasure (cf. θεραπεία, 501a4) without any attention to the nature or cause of that pleasure (οὔτε τι τὴν φύσιν σκεψαμένη τῆς ἡδονῆς οὔτε τὴν αἰτίαν, 501a5–6). Moreover, any activity that serves pleasure in this ill-considered manner is a “grubbing” involving either the body or the soul (κολακείαν εἶναι καὶ περὶ σῶμα καὶ περὶ ψυχὴν, 501c3). This leads to questions about musical performance (501e1–502a6), dithyramb (502a7–8), and thus about tragedy (502b1–c1). All of these aim at giving pleasure to the crowd of spectators (τῷ ὄχλῳ τῶν θεατῶν, 502a1), but it is only when the example of tragedy is introduced that Socrates forces Callicles to admit that it must be a form of *kolakeia* (502c3). Next Socrates establishes that tragedy contains speeches (οἱ λόγοι) that play to the crowd, which leads him to conclude that poetry is a form of demagoguery (δημηγορία ἅρα τίς ἐστὶν ἡ ποιητική) and demagoguery in fact rhetoric (οὐκοῦν ῥητορικὴ δημηγορία ἂν εἴη) (502c12–d2). All indulge the crowd, no matter how motley its makeup (cf. 502d6–7).

The effects of such indulgence are articulated a little later on, when Socrates argues that Pericles' rhetoric “made the Athenians idle, cowardly, chattering, and greedy” (ἀργούς καὶ δειλοὺς καὶ λάλους καὶ φιλαργύρους, 515e5–6). Callicles tries to argue the point, saying that Socrates must have

⁸⁴ Cf. Xenophon, who depicts Antisthenes as denigrating excessive types because they are never satisfied (*Symp.* 4.37).

heard such things from those with “broken ears” (τὰ ῥῆτα κατεαγόντων) (515e8–9).⁸⁵ But Socrates is not to be dissuaded, and soon returns to his favorite analogy, claiming that bakers, *opsa* cooks, and tavern-keepers only “stuff and fatten bodies” (ἐμπλήσαντες καὶ παχύναντες τὰ σώματα, 518c5–6) to please consumers and gain praise, just as intemperate orators have “stuffed” (ἐμπεπλήκασι) the city with harbors, arsenals, walls, tribute, and other “trash” (φλυαριῶν) (519a1–4). In one final and telling comparison, Socrates supplements this analogy by declaring that he is likely to be indicted for his ideas as would a doctor who is judged by children, with a fancy chef as the prosecutor (ὡς ἐν παιδίοις ἰατρὸς ἄν κρῖνοιτο κατηγοροῦντος ὀψοποιοῦ, 521e3–4).⁸⁶ The chef will claim that he, Socrates, has committed such atrocities as cutting, burning, starving, and depriving the jury members of drink, because unlike the chef he has not feasted them on “various pleasing tidbits” (πολλὰ καὶ ἡδέα καὶ παντοδαπὰ ἡνώχουν, 522a3). The unpleasant, ascetic dialectician thus suffers abuse in contrast to the pandering, indulgent rhetor.⁸⁷ If for Bakhtin, certain kinds of popular, abusive language reveal a particularly crude palate, a delight in talking about eating and other impolite activities, we can see from this example that Plato’s Socrates instead makes use of such images as a chastener.⁸⁸ Rather than advocating the indulgence of appetite, as festive talk would do, his usage indicates its dangers.

Abusive talk in the Phaedrus

Curiously, food analogies are far less prominent in the *Phaedrus*, the other dialogue focused on rhetoric and persuasion. A cursory glance reveals images that appear to be disparate and indeed disjointed. In Socrates’ first speech on love, for example, the hubris of the lover is fashioned as a kind of Typhon figure, a monstrously extravagant form possessing many names, limbs, and forms (ὑβρις δὲ δὴ πολυμήνυμον· πολυμελὲς γὰρ καὶ πολυειδές, 238a2–3).⁸⁹ Some of these forms turn out to be gluttony (γαστριμαργία)

⁸⁵ Note that ears do not have the same prominence as mouths in abusive idioms; even speech itself is often analogized as food or drink fed to the “mouths” of hearers (cf., e.g., Ar. *Eq.* 50–54; Arist. *Rhet.* 1404b18–21).

⁸⁶ Cf. chs. 2 and 3 for the importance of the character of the *mageiros* in comedy and the *Cyclops*; and see Fauth 1973: 43–46 for the influence of the mime-writer Epicharmus.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Thr.* 175e4–5, where Socrates describes the philosopher as “ignorant of how to sweeten either a delicacy or flattering speeches” (μὴ ἐπισταμένους συσκευάσασθαι μῆδε ὄψον ἡδύναι ἢ θῶπας λόγους).

⁸⁸ Bakhtin 1984: 317–19.

⁸⁹ Cf. earlier, when Socrates wonders whether he is like Typhon or some simpler creature (τι θηρίον Τυφῶνος πολυπλοκώτερον καὶ μάλλον ἐπιτεθυμένον εἴτε ἡμερώτερον τε καὶ ἀπλούστερον ζῶον, 230a2–4). See Nightingale 1995: 134–35, who suggests that in the *Phaedrus* this is an image for the dangerous multi-vocality that occurs when alien voices invade the soul.

and drunkenness (μέθας) (238a6–b2). This speech is a lampoon of Lysias' style, and the analogies quickly devolve into lucid but empty statements, a mimicry suggesting that such excesses are meant to be indicative of stylistic indulgences as well.⁹⁰

As is fitting in a dialogue centered at least initially around speeches on love, another cluster of oral images surfaces in relation to erotic desires and is not tied as firmly to ideas about public speaking. Thus, for instance, Socrates employs a simile of cutting teeth (ὀδοντοφύοντων, 251c1) to describe the development of the soul toward love, and speaks of it having “mouths” (στόματα, 251d2) that open out toward the lover. Similarly, the “black horse” of physical desire, when curbed, starts upbraiding (ἐλοιδορήσεν) the lover as soon as it catches its breath, its “evil-talking tongue and jaws” (τὴν τε κακήγορον γλῶτταν καὶ τὰς γνάθους, 254e3–4) bloodied by the bit.

What do these clusters of images have in common? First, we might notice that they foreground physicality, centering on rather monstrous and disturbing bodily elaborations that inspire mockery and abuse. Second, in the course of the dialogue, abusive talk that envisions excessive appetites (e.g., hubris, licentiousness) in bodily terms eventually gives way to the portrayal of *logos* in particular as potentially the product of misdirected appetites. This coupling of abuse and appetite forges a subtle but subversive motif in the *Phaedrus*; it characterizes reactions to the art of speaking or its proponents and thus serves as a means of denigrating sophists, but in a much more indirect fashion than the *Gorgias*.

After Socrates gives his second speech on love, for instance, Phaedrus worries that Lysias' style will seem “lowly” (ταπεινὸς φανῆ, 257c3) in comparison to such metaphorical brilliance, noting that the orator has recently been “abused” for such things (λοιδορῶν ὠνειδιζε) and called a “speech-writer” (λογογράφον) (257c4).⁹¹ This concern leads Socrates into a discussion of whether speechwriting is shameful (αἰσχρὸς) in general (258d), and he invokes the cicadas singing over his and Phaedrus' heads as tutelary deities of their conversation (259a–c). These creatures, Socrates says, were once men who took such great pleasure in song that they cared nothing for food or drink and thus eventually faded away (ἡμέλησαν σίτων καὶ ποτῶν, καὶ ἔλαθον τελευτήσαντες αὐτούς, 259c1–2). By implication,

⁹⁰ Phaedrus responds to Socrates' language at this point by remarking that he seems “unusually fluent” (παρὰ τὸ εἰωθὸς εὐροιά τις), and Socrates replies archly that indeed he is almost “uttering dithyrambs” (διθυράμβων φθέγγομαι) (238c7–d2). He later deems the speech “foolish and somewhat impious” (εὐήθη καὶ ὑπὸ τι ἄσεβῆ, 242d7), which also supports the idea that it is a lampoon.

⁹¹ On the polished, careful style that this appellation may imply, see O'Sullivan 1992: 130–39.

then, the cicadas' famous choice of words over sustenance renders them fitting chaperones for interlocutors who labor in the heat of the day to determine what a good *logos* might be.⁹²

One apparent irony of the cicadas' oversight emerges when Socrates articulates the jointure between bad speeches and their deviser as a kind of butchery. He declares that a speech should be organized like a body and thus "divided up" (διατέμνειν) properly, rather than being chopped apart as if by a bad butcher (κακοῦ μαγείρου) (265e1–2). Proper division would lead to the art of speech itself "reviling" (ἐλοιδορήσῃ, 266a5) its own bad part, leaving only what is good and honorable about it.⁹³ The analogy, coming as it does effectively under the aegis of the conversation fostered by the cicadas, suggests that only those who would rather talk than eat have the delicacy to carve up a speech rather than a roast and to do so properly. As such it points to a familiar contrast between those who use their mouths for chatter and those who indulge overly in eating and drinking; but here the chatters are revealed as possessing a connection to the Muses and thus potentially to divine understanding.⁹⁴

It follows, then, that Socrates also discusses the danger of the ignorant orator for the city. He playfully wonders whether he and Phaedrus will be accused of "abusing the art of speaking more rudely than necessary" (Ἄρ' οὖν . . . ἀγροικότερον τοῦ δέοντος λελοιδορήκαμεν τὴν τῶν λόγων τέχνην), and imagines that the art will respond with some asperity, "Whatever, strange men, are you babbling about?" (τί ποτ', ὦ θαυμάσιοι, ληρεῖτε; 260d3–5). If Socrates depicts public speaking as giving and taking abuse, he also envisions himself and Phaedrus as small-talking outsiders – "strange men" who scorn received notions about the art of speaking in outlandish and unpopular ways. Thus both "*logos*" and "Socrates" emerge as targets of abuse, but for stylistically opposite reasons. When, for instance, Socrates defines public speaking as the art of "producing likenesses" (ὁμοιοῦν), which leads to "hiding the truth" (ἀποκρυπτομένον) and therefore to deception (ἄπράτη) (261e2–6), he represents the art as a whole as the style of one of its most famous purveyors: Gorgias. This style

⁹² On the other hand, Athenians are commonly held to be chatters and thus may be even more loquacious (or litigious?) than cicadas (cf. *Ar. Av.* 39–41).

⁹³ Note that Socrates declares toward the end of the dialogue that one of the problems with writing is that, when it has been "defamed" (λοιδορηθεῖς, 275e3), it cannot defend itself. This is a trait that Socrates may share; compare Callicles' predictions regarding Socrates' lack of forensic ability in the *Gorgias* (see further below).

⁹⁴ This image suggests a less than positive intellectual model to the modernist writer; cf. Virginia Woolf's depiction of the aging don Edward Partiger in *The Years*: "He had the look of an insect whose body has been eaten out, leaving only the wings, the shell" (1939 [1965]: 405); cf. "these eaten out, hollow-shelled old men" (406).

makes of *logos* what Socrates calls “something laughable” (γελοῖον τινα) and renders it not really an art at all (ἄτεχνον) (262c2).

Again, calling something “laughable” (*gelaios*) or “ridiculous” (*katagelastos*) usually signals that one is engaging in abusive speech, even if in jest.⁹⁵ As emphasized, Socrates and his way of talking come in for this kind of dismissive scorn; and if he abuses persuasive speech in similar terms, this only underscores that his techniques are in direct contention with it and its purveyors. That is, both he and the public speakers he denigrates are in competition for the attention of Athens, or at least for that of its young male elites. In this ongoing contest, Socrates plays the rough outsider who cares too much for knowledge to be polite. For instance, his rather rhetorical question about whether an ignorant man who claims to know different types of public speaking will be scorned or subjected to abuse (268d3ff.) clearly aims at highlighting oratory’s lack of specialized knowledge. Phaedrus thinks that the tragedians may laugh (καταγελῶεν) at this ignorant man, but Socrates reasons that they will not “abuse him too crudely” (ἀγροίκως γε λοιδορήσειαν), being prone to react to ignorance more gently (πρότερον) than they (268d3–e2). He and Phaedrus, says Socrates wryly, are hard on the ignorant man “out of crudity” (ὑπ’ ἀγροικίας, 269b2); he imagines being told by the orators that it is unnecessary to be so angered (οὐ χρὴ χελεπαίνειν, 269b5) by this lack of knowledge. Socrates fashions himself and those who agree with him as the only ones who are willing to ask the ruder questions about the value of public oral performance. The discourse that he engages to make such distinctions is concerted abusive and ironic, as he talks of butchering *logos* like an animal while the cicadas sing overhead.

The feast of talk in Republic I

If the *Phaedrus* seems more concerned with *loidoria* than it does with other oral excesses, it also begins with a reference to Lysias “feasting” his audience on his speeches (τῶν λόγων ὑμᾶς Λυσίας εἰστία, 227b5–6), which recalls the joking exchange that opens the *Gorgias*.⁹⁶ The *Republic* makes more weighty use of the metaphor, and suggests that such feasting needs to be handled carefully if one is to get any sustenance from it. Thrasymachus, the most violent and abusive of Socrates’ interlocutors, inspires Socrates’ use of the metaphor. By the end of book I, Thrasymachus has become thoroughly exasperated with Socrates, and tries to dismiss him by telling him to “enjoy [his] talking” (εὖωχοῦ τοῦ λόγου). Instead Socrates amiably urges him,

⁹⁵ See Mader 1977; he collects the citations for this vocabulary in an appendix (130–32). See also Weeber 1991.

⁹⁶ Cf. also *Lys.* 211c.

“Fill up the rest of my feast” (i.e., “Don’t stop conversing,” τὰ λοιπὰ μοι τῆς ἐστιάσεως ἀποπλήρωσον) (352b3–6). He grudgingly obliges, and when Socrates draws the discussion to a close, Thrasymachus says dryly, “Let these arguments be your share of the feast for Artemis” (ταῦτα δὴ σοι . . . εἰστιάσθω ἐν τοῖς Βενδιδίοις, 354a10–11).⁹⁷ Socrates responds that in fact he has not dined well (οὐ μέντοι καλῶς γε εἰστίμαμι), but that it is through his own fault (354a13–b1). He declares with some irony that he has behaved “as gluttons do” (ὥσπερ οἱ λίχνοι), who always snatch at the dish arriving and taste it before taking measured enjoyment of the one in hand (τοῦ αἰεὶ παραφερομένου ἀπογεύονται ἀρπάζοντες πρὶν τοῦ προτέρου μετρίως ἀπολαύσαι) (354b1–3). Thus he too has passed over important considerations in his haste to talk about everything. Commentators have noted that the “feast of talk” metaphor became a commonplace in the medieval period; we might think also of Petronius’ *Cena Trimalchionis* and Athenaeus’ *Deipnosophistai*.⁹⁸ The parodic atmosphere of these later symposia may echo less Plato’s own *Symposium* than the fact that in Plato the metaphor is usually employed in denigration or mock modesty (as above), which suggests that certain ways of talking are trivial or excessive and indicative of an indulged or luxurious appetite. In *Lysis*, for example, when Socrates and Lysis are chatting about whether Socrates will make a fool of himself (καταγέλαστος γένωμαι, 211c1) in argument, Ctesippus arrives and asks, “Why are you two feasting alone, and why don’t you share the speeches with us?” (τί ὑμεῖς . . . αὐτῶ μόνω ἐστιᾶσθον, ἡμῖν δὲ οὐ μεταδίδοτον τῶν λόγων, 211c9–10). The talk has been rather desultory up to this point, so that, like the other moments of introductory jesting in the *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, the metaphor points to the possible triviality or “empty calories” of the speeches characterized as feasts.⁹⁹

Socrates’ favorite fare, in contrast, is devoid of fancy trimmings, humble, vegetarian. He does not feast his audience, but rather upsets them by talk of bean soup (*Hi. Maj.* 288b) and foods, as Glaucon later exclaims, “fit for a city of pigs” (ὕων πόλιν, *Rep.* 372d4).¹⁰⁰ Indeed, in *Republic* 3 Socrates compares Syracusan feasts and Sicilian delicacies (Συρακοσίαν δέ . . . τράπεζαν

⁹⁷ Bendis is the name under which Artemis was worshipped at Piraeus, where Socrates and his company are conversing.

⁹⁸ See Tatum 1994; Wilkins and Braund 2000.

⁹⁹ Cf. *Euthyph.* 11e–12a and the use of *truphaō* there: Euthyphro is so glutted with his own knowledge that he is stupid.

¹⁰⁰ This occurs when Socrates recommends a diet consisting of olives, cheese, root vegetables, figs, beans, and nuts for the citizens of his ideal city. Cf. his remarks in the *Theaetetus*, where he imagines Protagoras saying that he (Socrates) keeps talking about pigs and baboons and thereby “piggifies” (ὑηνεῖς, 166c7) himself and persuades his hearers to follow suit. We might also compare Antisthenes’ promotion of simple fare in *Xen. Symp.* 4.38. On *opsa* and Socrates’ negative attitude toward such luxuries in Xenophon and Plato, see Davidson 1997: 1, 13, 20–26, 33–35.

καὶ Σικελικὴν ποικιλίαν ὄψου), Corinthian girlfriends, and Attic pastries (Ἀττικῶν πεμμάτων) to the kinds of poetry that he finds enervating. “I think,” he concludes, “that we would be right to compare this entire diet and lifestyle to the lyric odes and songs composed in all sorts of harmonies and rhythms” (ὅλην γάρ, οἶμαι, τὴν τοιαύτην σίτησιν καὶ δίαιταν τῇ μελοποιίᾳ τε καὶ ᾠδῇ τῇ ἐν τῷ παναρμονίῳ καὶ ἐν πᾶσι ῥυθμοῖς πεποιημένα ἄπεικάζοντες ὀρθῶς ἂν ἀπεικάζομεν) (*Rep.* 404d1–e1). Just as elaborate poetry makes the listener intemperate, so does rich food make him ill (Οὐκοῦν ἐκεῖ μὲν ἀκολασίαν ἢ ποικιλία ἐνέτικτεν, ἐνταῦθα δὲ νόσον, 404e3–4).¹⁰¹

SOCRATES' CRUDE BLATHER

In the Platonic dialogues the most consistent connections to both dramatic lampoons and oratorical invective surface in the abusive language surrounding the figure of Socrates. Fractious interlocutors like Polus, Callicles, and Thrasymachus make steady use of defamatory language, wielding many of the same insulting labels that turn up in Attic old comedy and fourth-century oratory. Other sophists of a generation younger than Gorgias and Protagoras such as Hippias, Euthydemus, and Dionysidorus also engage in this kind of agonistic insult, the latter two apparently as a means of attracting young students. More curiously, Socrates often uses these labels of himself, which frequently earns him the charge of being sarcastic (*eirōn*) or dissembling. Scholars have assessed such tactics as an aspect of Socrates' famous irony, but I want to look instead at how this self-abuse aligns with other invective leveled against Socrates' argumentative strategies and his character.¹⁰²

As in the comic – and indeed the oratorical – settings, the vocabulary that gets bandied about in these exchanges constitutes a set of terms from which these contentious interlocutors seek to distance themselves. As potential performers in the democratic arena, these men, most of whom also have strong ties to famous older sophists, are quick to use invective and defamatory language against anyone who seems to pose a threat to received

¹⁰¹ As chs. 1 and 2 emphasize, distinctions among types of food have a long history as tools for differentiating ethical types and speaking styles. Note that Socrates highlights Sicilian delicacies as well as *pemmata* from Attica and cf. ch. 3 on the Cyclops' decadent eating habits. See also Murray and Wilson 2004 on *mousikē* and “decadent” styles.

¹⁰² This dissembling or mock modesty is usually expressed by the noun *eirōneia* or the verb *eirōneuō*; see below. On what constitutes Socratic irony, see Griswold 1987; Vlastos 1991; Gottlieb 1992; Gordon 1999; Vasiliou 1999, 2002. Cf. also Nancy 2000. Edmunds 2004 argues for an understanding of Socrates' irony as “practical,” by which (I take it) he means performative, bodily; his framing of the topic is thus more in line with my discussion.

Athenian values. They thus participate in the larger iambic discourse about intemperate leaders and their craven followers, but usually by arguing in defense of qualities they perceive as evidence of expertise, manliness, and nobility. The concertedley amateurish and lowbrow stance that Socrates hones in contrast to these sophistic types reveals a strategy of distancing himself from other “professionals,” be they teachers or politicians. This is a strategy that scholars have tended to assume Plato endorses, but his depictions of the confrontations between Socrates and these abusive sophists suggests that something more complicated is at work there.¹⁰³ As Socrates’ comic portrayal indicates, he often appears in a guise dangerously close to those of other public speakers, both sophistic and demagogic. While Plato usually puts such attributions in the mouths of obviously hostile interlocutors, occasionally characters more sympathetic to Socrates’ perspective also voice them. Some of these ways of characterizing Socrates and his tactics point to the difficulty he frequently has in persuading his interlocutors; others suggest the reverse – that he stuns his audience like a mesmerizing sophist.

Readers of Plato have not, I think, been sufficiently sensitive to the extent to which these conflicting portraits of Socrates indicate Plato’s own participation in a contentious, sometimes openly defamatory debate over the attributes of character and speaking style that mark the good orator and/or educator. That is to say, for instance, that Plato does not simply oppose Aristophanes’ portrait of Socrates and the sophists; rather, he takes up its challenge, and depicts his teacher as an irreverent, irritating, witty rogue not so far removed from either a sophist or a comic hero. Moreover, Plato frequently frames the terms of abuse that friendlier interlocutors and especially Socrates employ in such a manner that the insults appear ironic or distancing – that is, as if the speaker were quoting popular usage or employing a mocking *oratio obliqua*. The most common contrasts that emerge in these exchanges underscore and recalibrate those we see elsewhere in the larger discourse around public speaking. The typical opposition between glib chatterers and loud-mouthed haranguers emerges also as that between crude, ridiculous “drivellers” and lofty, dashing speechifiers.

Polus

In the *Gorgias* Socrates’ glib and commonplace manner drives both the boastful Polus and the haughty Callicles to insult him in a number of ways. Polus, the more obtuse of these sophistic contenders, resorts to

¹⁰³ Cf. de Romilly 1979; Rutherford 1995: 102–11.

abusive labels, while Callicles offers a brilliant and nasty critique of Socrates' character. In both confrontations the interlocutors deploy vocabulary that Socrates later reapplies either to himself as a means of mocking deflection or to objects and activities prized by his interlocutors. In this dialogue as frequently elsewhere in Plato, the vocabulary of the "laughable" or "ridiculous" frames these exchanges, signaling their iambic atmosphere.

Polus' comical reactions to Socrates' arguments reveal not only his ignorance but also his conventional outlook. When he becomes irritated with Socrates he employs vocabulary familiar from old comedy and laughs outright at him. He is the first to engage in iambic language, when he reacts to Socrates' treatment of Gorgias by claiming that in arguing as he does he introduces "much crudeness" (πολλή ἀγροικία) into the discussion (461c3–4). As indicated above, Socrates himself uses this same language when he frames his insulting analogy of fancy cookery and rhetoric by saying that it may seem "somewhat crude" (ἀγροικότερον, 462e6) to continue along these lines. Indeed, it seems to be a favorite locution of his, when he wants to characterize his responses to questions about public speaking in contrast to those of others: witness the frequency with which he makes reference to behaving crudely in the *Phaedrus*, the other dialogue focused on rhetoric.¹⁰⁴

Aristophanes positions the *agroikos* man in beleaguered opposition to luxurious lifestyles and fancy talk; as we have seen in chapter 2, these rough characters are often older-style Athenians and thus somewhat sympathetic. In *Clouds* Socrates himself declares that he has never seen such a "crude" man as Strepsiades (οὐκ εἶδον οὕτως ἄνδρ' ἀγροικόν οὐδαμοῦ, 628; cf. 43, 646). In *Knights* old Demos is also characterized as a "crude" type, not only because of his rural, bean-chewing ways but also because of his harsh temper (ἀγροικός ὀργήν, κυαμότρωξ, ἀκράχολος, 41; cf. 808). Recall that sophists and demagogues repeatedly try to bamboozle these men, who frequently show themselves to be recalcitrant when offered fancy foods (*opsa*) and clothing, even if they are susceptible to flattering talk.¹⁰⁵ In Aristophanic comedy, then, the *agroikos* man receives more implicit endorsement than do the excessive and pandering professional talkers.

The situation in Plato's dialogues is somewhat more complex. In the *Symposium*, after Agathon has delivered an ornate, Gorgianic speech, he

¹⁰⁴ E.g., ἀγροικότερον, 260d3; ἀγροίκως, 268d3; ὑπ' ἀγροικίας, 269b2. Note as well that at *Rep.* 607b3–5, Socrates remarks that he may well be accused of "a certain harshness and rusticity" (τινα σκληρότητα καὶ ἀγροικίαν) for exiling poetry from his ideal polis. Cf. also Isoc. 5.81–82.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. esp. Philocleon in *Wasps*.

claims that Socrates is trying to “drug” him (φαρμάττειν) with his self-deprecating remarks, so that he will be rattled (θορυβηθῶ) (194a5–6) as much by his questions as if he were at the theater. Socrates demurs that he is sure of Agathon’s confidence before a crowd, but Agathon bristles at the idea that he prefers a large, undiscerning audience to a small, discerning one. This leads Socrates to remark wryly that he did not mean to suggest something crude (ἄγροικόν, 194c2) regarding Agathon’s theatrical abilities. He thereby indicates to any truly discerning listener his disdain for Agathon, while his disclaimer masks the fact that he has insulted the effete poet like a comic *agroikos*.¹⁰⁶ Later Alcibiades makes a distinction between his refined listeners and the domestic slaves or anyone else “lowbrow and crude” (βέβηλός τε καὶ ἄγροικος, 218b), when he tells them about trying to sleep with Socrates. On the surface the distinction would seem to echo Socrates’ own, but in fact it achieves the reverse effect. Socrates’ tone manages to suggest that he might indeed be this rough type, and even that he has reason to be so crude as to question Agathon’s presumptions about his abilities. Alcibiades’ remark instead points to the aristocratic atmosphere of the symposium and thus perhaps to some “gentleman’s agreement” about a subject that Socrates would find truly crude to broach.

In the *Republic* Socrates argues that without a “harmonious” education the soul becomes both cowardly and boorish (τοῦ δὲ ἀναρμόστου δειλῆ καὶ ἄγροικος), while the proper combination of physical and artistic training makes one temperate and manly (σώφρων τε καὶ ἀνδρεία) (410e10–411a3). Thus *agroikia* would seem to be opposed to *sōphrosunē*, and not a trait that one would expect Socrates to embody. Nevertheless, Plato does consistently depict him as a barefoot, pecunious, and irreverent type, a portrait that conforms to Aristophanes’ and that highlights his opposition to the richly dressed and lofty sophists. In the *Gorgias*, *Phaedrus*, and *Symposium*, it may well be preferable to talk in a crude manner, if the alternative is the verbal equivalent of pastry: pleasing to the tongue but lacking any nourishment. Plato’s portrayals of Socrates’ confrontations with rhetoric and rhetoricians (or poets) suggest that such empty fare, which usually takes the form of the “big speech” (*makros logos*), can only be offset by this kind of irreverent disturbance of the pretensions that motivate it.

Given the subtleties of such maneuvers, it should not be surprising that more conventional interlocutors often misunderstand Socrates. When he cannot follow what Socrates is arguing, Polus takes refuge in insult,

¹⁰⁶ The moment echoes the interaction between Agathon and the crude Inlaw at the beginning of Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazousae*; see further in ch. 2.

describing how Socrates speaks in a manner that indicates his irreverent style. For instance, when Socrates argues provocatively that orators and tyrants might be said to do what seems best to them but not what they wish (467a2–b9), Polus declares that Socrates is arguing “shockingly and outrageously” (σχέτλια γὰρ λέγεις καὶ ὑπερφυσῆ).¹⁰⁷ Socrates responds by asking Polus with exaggerated politeness not to slander him (μὴ κακηγόρει, ὦ λῶστέ Πῶλε) (467b10–11), which conforms to his frequent tactic of asking his interlocutors to be gentle with him when he has driven them to the point where they respond abusively.¹⁰⁸ Polus calms down for the moment and continues to reply to Socrates’ questions, until he bursts out in irritation that, although it is difficult (χαλεπὸν) to answer him, even a child would respond that what Socrates is saying is not true (οὐχὶ κἂν παῖς σε ἐλέγξειεν ὅτι οὐκ ἄληθῆ λέγεις, 470c4–5). Socrates has been trying to get Polus to acknowledge that doing wrong is worse than suffering it; but to Polus, who can only understand physical injury (as opposed to mental or spiritual), this seems like nonsense.¹⁰⁹ Thus he calls refuting it child’s play, to which Socrates responds, “Then I will be very grateful to the child, and equally to you, if you should refute me and free me from my blather” (πολλὴν ἄρα ἐγὼ τῷ παιδί χάριν ἔξω, ἴσην δὲ καὶ σοί, ἐάν με ἐλέγξης καὶ ἀπαλλάξης φλυαρίας, 470c6–7).

“Blather” or “drivel” (*phluaria*) is a term that a number of abusive interlocutors use to characterize Socrates’ speech, and that Socrates occasionally turns back on his sophistic opponents.¹¹⁰ Plato employs the term liberally. Often when one of Socrates’ irritated interlocutors begins to insult him, they use the term *phluaria* to indicate scorn not only for the content of his arguments but perhaps more especially for the style in which they are expressed. As I discuss further below, Callicles employs it very pointedly to indicate his contempt for the philosopher’s childish, lowbrow type. *Phluaria* is, as one might expect, associated with sympotic insult (i.e., iambos) and a common jibe in Attic old comedy, where it usually turns up as a criticism of the lowbrow chatterer.¹¹¹ The fact that Polus and Callicles, our aggressive sophists such as Thrasymachus and Euthydemus, and even

¹⁰⁷ See Vasiliou 2002a and 2002b regarding Socrates’ technique of prematurely forcing the interlocutor into aporia in order to get him to enter into the argument. Σχέτλια is sometimes translated (rather inaccurately) as “wretchedly” and thus often taken to denote being *in extremis*; but it usually has the sense of holding on (as a cognate of ἔχω), i.e., being relentless or stubborn and therefore potentially shocking or cruel (cf., e.g., Ar. *Ran.* 612; E. *Cyc.* 587).

¹⁰⁸ *Gorg.* 489d7–8; *Rep.* 354a12–13; *Euthyd.* 302c3; *Hi. Min.* 364c. Note that Callicles regards this request as mocking (εἰρωνεύη), 489e1).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Vasiliou 2002. ¹¹⁰ *Rep.* 336b8; *Euthyd.* 295c10–11.

¹¹¹ E.g., *Adesp. el.*, fr. 27 W (φ[λ]υαρεῖν/ καὶ σκῶπτειν, 5–6). Cf. Eup. fr. 96.78 A; Epich. fr. 84.28 A; Strat. fr. 27 K; Ar. *Nub.* 365, *Vesp.* 85, *Lys.* 159, *Thesm.* 559, *Ran.* 202, 524; also *Eq.* 545, where the

the politer Hippias all characterize Socrates' talk as *phluaria*, points to the shared iambic coloring of their retorts. It also confirms the ties of this abusive speech in Plato to the attacks on such low-status speakers in comedy. The charge of talking *phluaria* matches that of being a lowbrow idler, one who spends his time blabbing about trivia in the agora to anyone who happens to come along.

At this point in the *Gorgias* Socrates parries Polus' insults, telling him that he must be well trained in rhetoric to respond so carelessly (471d3–4); and he answers the charge that he is talking in a willfully “outlandish” manner (ἄτοπα, 473a¹¹²) by saying wryly that he will try to get Polus to speak in the same way, since he counts him as a friend (φίλον, 473a3). Soon Polus bursts out in derisive laughter, and Socrates exclaims, “You’re laughing? What kind of refutation is this, to laugh rather than reply when someone asks something?” (γελᾷς; ἄλλο αὖ τοῦτο εἶδος ἐλέγχου ἐστίν, ἐπειδὴν τίς τι εἶπη, κατὰ γελᾶν, ἐλέγχειν δὲ μή; 473e2–3). Scornful laughter is a commonplace occurrence in Socratic exchanges such as these, and should be understood as equivalent to calling something “laughable” (*geloios*) or “ridiculous” (*katagelastos*). Again, in Plato such terms set the stage for iambic confrontations. In addition, the charge of being ridiculous is often accompanied by the suggestion that one is “playing” (*paizein*) and/or engaging in “child’s play” (*paidia*), a denigration of verbal tactics that Socrates also levels at the sophists.¹¹³

Callicles

Indeed, Polus' laughter may well pave the way for Callicles' question to Chaerephon soon after this, about whether Socrates is serious or joking (σπουδάζει . . . ἢ παίζει, 481b6–7) when he claims that rhetoric appears to be of little use. Chaerephon responds that Socrates seems to him to be

poet urges the audience not to regard him as such. For a later usage that associates the word with fellatio, cf. *Men. Djs.* 892: οὐ λαικάσει φλυαρῶν;. In the *Apology*, Socrates claims that Aristophanes depicted him “driveling drivell” (φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα, *Ap.* 19c), a *figura etymologica* that itself underscores the comic origins of the word. Plato appears to be the only Socratic who makes common use of the term (cf., e.g., *Crit.* 46d4, *Phd.* 66c3, *Crat.* 426b2, *Tht.* 162a1, *Parm.* 130d7, *Symp.* 180a4, 211e3, *Erast.* 132b9, *Euthyd.* 295c11), although it does turn up in the *spuria*. He employs it with especial frequency in the *Gorgias* (7 times).

¹¹² This term also turns up frequently in the sophists' abuse of Socrates, and points especially to his outsider status: *Symp.* 175a10, *Phdr.* 230c6, *Gorg.* 494d1; cf. *Gorg.* 473a1, 480e1 (ἄτοπα); also *Symp.* 221d2 (ἄτοπίο). Cf. Makowski 1994, who argues that this displacement is a condition of the soul. Like many other such labels, Socrates sometimes turns this one back on the sophists (cf. *Gorg.* 519c–d).

¹¹³ *Soph.* 235a; *Pol.* 303c. See Mader 1977: 14, 33–36, 45.

very serious, which causes Callicles to declare that if what Socrates says is true, life would be “turned upside down” (ὁ βίος ἀνατετραμμένος ἀν εἶη, 481c3). Socrates replies to this with an excursus on his love objects, Alcibiades and philosophy, versus those of Callicles, which he identifies as Pylilampes’ son (Demos) and the people (*dēmos*).¹¹⁴ He argues that because Callicles has love objects that are equally changeable, he is often forced into self-contradiction. He also maintains that he, Socrates, would rather have his own lyre – no matter how “harsh-sounding and discordant” (ἀναρμωστῆν τε καὶ διαφωνεῖν, 482b8) – his own chorus, and a crowd of disputants than be caught in self-contradiction.¹¹⁵ Socrates may proudly call his verbal style harsh and discordant, which fits with his mock-modest references to “speaking crudely,” but Callicles finds it juvenile and demagogic (δοκεῖς μοι νεανιεύεσθαι ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, ὡς ἀληθῶς δημηγόρος ὢν, 482c4–5).¹¹⁶

This response sets the tone for the most serious objections in the *Gorgias* to both the content of Socrates’ arguments and their style. While my focus is Callicles’ abusive vocabulary, which is directed primarily at Socrates’ style, some of this vocabulary ties in quite closely to the content of the arguments as well. Callicles begins his scornful and wittily brutal attack on Socrates by noting that Polus has gotten “entangled” (συμποδισθεῖς) in Socrates’ arguments and had his mouth “curbed” (or “stoppered”: ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἐπεστομίσθη) (482e1–2). As scholars have noted, the imagery plays on Polus’ overly eager, coltish qualities; but it also highlights the mouth as a site of vulnerability particularly in relation to verbal tactics and agonistic confrontations, as well as being itself an instance of comic abuse.¹¹⁷ Callicles argues that Polus has hesitated to say what he thought out of shame (αἰσχυνθείς), especially since Socrates introduces into the discussion such lowbrow and popular topics (φορτικὰ καὶ δημηγορικά) (482e2–4). He further characterizes Socrates as “doing devilry in his arguments” (κακουργεῖς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, 483a2–3), by arguing from nature when his interlocutor is talking about convention, and from convention when his interlocutor is

¹¹⁴ That Demos was a famous breeder of peacocks (very expensive birds inherited from his father, a friend of the Persian king, whence the peacocks came originally) and Plato’s half-brother only adds to the irony here (see Nails 2002: 124–25). On this erotic imagery, cf. Monoson 2000: 64–87, 189–96; Wohl 2002: 148–49.

¹¹⁵ Note that this is an elaborate take-off on Socrates’ characterization of the sophists as engaged in dramatic performances with choruses etc.; cf. *Pol.* 303c, *Prot.* 315a–b, *Euthd.* 276b.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Dem. 21.201 on the rich and arrogant Meidias (νεανικόν). See below, and further in ch. 5.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Crat. fr. 198 K-A (εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἐπιβύσει τις αὐτοῦ τὸ στόμα). See Dodds 1959 ad loc., who notes that the image recurs at *Thet.* 165e2; cf. also the curbing of the insolent horse’s abusive mouth at *Phdr.* 254c–e.

talking about nature.¹¹⁸ He goes on to defend natural law, and claims that conventional education, by “bewitching and charming” (κατεπάρδοντες τε καὶ γοητεύοντες) the young, literally “enthalls” (καταδουλούμεθα) them (483e5). Nevertheless, he says, the strong can break out – witness Heracles (484b).¹¹⁹

In Platonic dialogue, much of Callicles’ vocabulary is shared between Socrates and the sophists. For instance, while the sophists very frequently receive charges of bewitching and entralling in Plato, we might note that Socrates is also sometimes characterized as having this effect.¹²⁰ Even more curiously, it is usually his friendlier interlocutors who like to cast him in this guise. Meno, for instance, a student of Gorgias who nevertheless shows some affinity for Socratic argument, exclaims jokingly that Socrates is “bewitching, drugging, and simply enchanting him” (γοητεύεις καὶ φαρμάτεις καὶ ἀτεχνῶς κατεπάρδεις, 80a2–3; cf. γόης, 80b6). As mentioned, he compares him to an electric eel, which stuns those who touch it. He claims that his soul and mouth are benumbed (τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸ στόμα ναρκῶ, 80b1), thereby tying the effects of Socrates’ tactics directly to the mouth and its activities. In the *Symposium* Alcibiades uses similar vocabulary to describe Socrates’ effect on an audience. He says that he and others who listen to Socrates are “astounded and entranced” (ἐκπεπληγμένοι . . . καὶ κατεχόμεθα, 215d5–6) by his discourse and that it has Corybantic effects (215e1–2). Socrates “confounds” him (ἔθορῦβητό μου, 215e6) and he is like the Sirens (216a6–7).¹²¹ Moreover, his discussions bring on a kind of philosophical frenzy (τῆς φιλοσόφου μανίας τε καὶ βακχείας, 218b3–4). The tone of Meno and especially Alcibiades is flirtatious and intimate, signaling the wry appropriation of familiar insults, so that they register instead as praise. Socrates also may engage in this flirtatious play, as when he declares that the beautiful Phaedrus “bewitched his mouth” (διὰ τοῦ

¹¹⁸ This complaint sounds like typical charges made against the sophists (e.g., Arist. *Rhet.* 1402a 23–24; cf. E. *Tro.* 283–87). Socrates’ agility leads Callicles into his notorious argument that “might makes right” is a natural condition. That is, while he starts by attacking Socrates’ style, he ends up addressing his content, which suggests that the stylistic considerations are central to the argument.

¹¹⁹ Again, Heracles is a figure to whom Socrates likes to compare himself (e.g., *Euthd.* 297c, *Ap.* 22a, *Phd.* 89c; cf. *Th.* 169b). See Loraux 1995: 167–77; also Clay 1975. Callicles’ use of the hero as an example of resistance to bad education would thus appear to be an ironic appropriation for the knowing listener.

¹²⁰ E.g., *Soph.* 235a, 267a; *Pol.* 291c, 303c. Cf. de Romilly 1979, who notes this application to Socrates, but thinks he offers another kind of “magic.”

¹²¹ Cf. Aeschines of Sphettos’ depiction of Socrates’ effect on Alcibiades: after Socrates’ speech on the virtue of Themistocles, Alcibiades collapses in tears, with his head on Socrates’ knee (Giannantoni 1990: II a 51). See also Demosthenes’ supposed characterization of Aeschines as a Siren, and further in ch. 5.

ἐμοῦ στόματος καταφάρμακευθέντος, *Phdr.* 242e1), so that he delivered a speech both foolish and impious.

Something similar occurs with the charge of demagoguery. In his second speech on love in the *Phaedrus*, Socrates consigns the penultimate rank for a soul to sophists and demagogues, just above that of the tyrant and below those of humbler occupations such as the trades and farming (δημιουργικός ἢ γεωργικός, 248e2–3). As discussed above, in the *Gorgias* demagoguery emerges as a form of flattery (*kolakeia*) that turns up in tragedy as well (502c–d), since both public performances involve playing to the crowd (οὐκοῦν πρὸς πολλὸν ὄχλον καὶ δῆμον οὔτοι λέγονται οἱ λόγοι;, 502c9–10). Socrates has already categorized both rhetoric and sophistic argumentation as flattery (463b), and here he confirms the connection of mob orating to rhetoric (οὐκοῦν ῥητορικὴ δημηγορία ἂν εἴη, 502d2).¹²² Later in the argument he groups sophists with demagogues (*Gorg.* 520b4). One might then reasonably conclude that demagoguery makes use of sophistic practices as well.

Thus when Callicles calls Socrates a demagogue or “mob orator,” he includes him in the very group that he, Socrates, is criticizing. Callicles uses this slur twice: when Socrates compares his own love objects with those of Callicles, as described above, and when he asks Callicles whether any pleasure is worth indulging, even scratching an itch (cf. δημηγόρος, 494d1). Both instances involve the introduction into the discussion of analogies or examples that strike Callicles as overly bold and/or crude. Note, for instance, that the first time Callicles deems Socrates “truly” a demagogue (ἄληθῶς, 482c5), he equates this with juvenile, swaggering talk (νεανιεύεσθαι, 482c4).¹²³ The second time around, he is clearly responding to Socrates’ use of what he considers lowbrow examples, which any self-respecting elite would consider beneath him even to contemplate. Indeed, Socrates’ next example, that of the *kinaidos*, is so shocking that Callicles asks Socrates whether he isn’t ashamed to introduce it (οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ;, 494e7).¹²⁴

In the view of the haughty sophist, then, talking in a shameless and childish manner is evidence of one’s common, mob-oriented attitudes. Callicles develops this portrait of Socrates in his famous speech defending the right of the stronger. He claims first that, while philosophy is “charming”

¹²² Cf. also *Gorg.* 520a6–7: ταῦτόν . . . ἐστὶν σοφιστῆς καὶ ῥήτωρ.

¹²³ At the end of the dialogue, Socrates says rather melancholically that he and his interlocutors shouldn’t “swagger” (νεανιεύεσθαι), since they have reached such an extent of ignorance (ἐξ τοσοῦτον ἀπαιδευσίας ἤκομεν) (527d6–e1). Cf. Demosthenes’ depiction of how Aeschines will depict his deportment (νεανιεύσεται, 19.242) and the discussion in ch. 5.

¹²⁴ On the *kinaidos* see Winkler 1990: 45–70; Davidson 1997: 167–82. Again, cf. the philosopher’s shamelessness and boldness (n. 2 above).

(χαρίεν), it is also destructive for the young if engaged in too long, because it renders one inexperienced (ἄπειρον) in what makes one an aristocrat (καλὸς κἀγαθός) (484c5–d2). Because of this ignorance of human pleasures and desires (τῶν ἡδονῶν τε καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν τῶν ἀνθρωπείων), as well as of social customs (τῶν ἡθῶν), such people appear ridiculous (καταγέλαστοι) when they engage in public affairs (484d6–e1). It is particularly ridiculous for old men to continue to dabble in philosophy, who are like those who “mumble and play around” (τοὺς ψελλιζομένους καὶ παίζοντας) (485a7–b2). Such verbal habits are not only silly and childish mouthings, as it turns out; they are also unmanly (ἄνανδρον), deserving of blows (πληγῶν ἄξιον), illiberal or slavish (ἀνελεύθερον; δουλοπρεπές¹²⁵), and not fit for noble or well-born topics (οὔτε καλοῦ οὔτε γενναίου πράγματος) (485c2–d1).¹²⁶ The man who engages in this kind of talk does not frequent the public spaces (τὰ μέσα τῆς πόλεως καὶ τὰς ἀγοράς) of the city but instead “cowers” (κατεδεδυκότι) and “whispers” (ψιθυρίζοντα) in corners with a few young men, never uttering anything gentlemanly, consequential, and worthwhile (ἐλεύθερον δὲ καὶ μέγα καὶ ἱκανὸν μηδέποτε φθέγξασθαι) (485d4–e2).¹²⁷ We might note the strong class implications, as well as those regarding masculinity. As is often the case in other iambic settings, the subtext for this tough talk is a denigration of behaviors and physical types regarded as feminine.¹²⁸

Callicles scoffs further that Socrates’ noble soul is “distorted” (διαστρέφεις¹²⁹) by this “boyish” style (μειρακιώδει τινί . . . μορφώματι) (485e7–8), so that if he were to be, for instance, dragged off to court, instead of handling the situation capably he would be rendered dizzy and would gape without anything to say (ἰλιγγιώτης . . . καὶ χασμῶ οὐκ ἔχων ὅτι εἴποις) (486b1). In Aristophanes this disposition of the mouth marks an unmanly fatuousness: the gaping orifice signals weakness.¹³⁰ This is the vulnerability that threatens the philosopher whispering in corners, since

¹²⁵ This is the vocabulary that Socrates uses to characterize cookery and other “knacks” (δουλοπρεπεῖς καὶ διακονικὰς καὶ ἀνελευθέρους, *Gorg.* 518a2–3)

¹²⁶ See Bakhtin 1984: 197–208 on the connections between ritual beatings and abusive language; note again that he describes Socrates as “directly linked with the carnival forms of antiquity” (121). Cf. also discussion in chap. 3, and Worman 2002b.

¹²⁷ The reference to the agora is a bit odd in relation to Socrates, who is notorious for hanging out in public spaces; but Callicles uses the plural (ἀγοράς, 485d5), which suggests spaces related to public speaking and citizen engagement, rather than what he considers idle talk.

¹²⁸ Cf. the discussion in chap. 2.

¹²⁹ This is a textual crux; Dodds 1959 *ad loc.* has διαπρέπεις, but this makes for an awkward transition to what follows.

¹³⁰ The Weaker Argument warns Pheidippides of something similar at *Nub.* 1077; and cf. the discussion in chap. 2.

his pleasure in childish, effeminate gabbling distracts him from learning how to talk manfully and loudly in court in order to defend himself. We might recognize more generally that the language of excess and weakness is very prevalent in Callicles' and Socrates' exchanges; it thus conforms to the oppositions between speakers that surface in dramatic settings marked by iambic confrontation. Compare also Euripides' depiction of the aggressive Cyclops, who grabs all of the food and talk for himself, versus Odysseus, who depends on tricks – an indirection that Socrates' interlocutors often notice.

Wryly echoing Socrates' mock-modest references to his crude talk, Callicles argues that, “if it is not a bit crude to say so” (εἴ τι καὶ ἀγροικότερον εἰρήσθαι), such a person might suffer “a crack on the jaw” (as Dodds renders it, ἐπὶ κόρρης τύπτοντα) without having any recourse to justice (486c2–3).¹³¹ He counsels Socrates to leave aside such “fancy things” (τὰ κομψὰ ταῦτα¹³²), which necessarily come across as “babblings or droolings” (εἶτε ληρήματα . . . εἶτε φλυαρίας) about “small matters” (τὰ μικρά) (486c6–8).¹³³ Callicles' vocabulary not only recalls that of Polus, the other aggressive sophist in the room; it is also emphatically comic, since his terms are those favored by Aristophanes to denote overly polished, chattering, and often effeminate speakers.¹³⁴ Later on in the dialogue Socrates mockingly reverses this characterization of his verbal activities, when he refers to rhetorical techniques as “these fancy things” (τὰ κομψὰ ταῦτα, 521e1–2).

Thus Socrates' type would seem to align quite clearly with those speakers – in Aristophanes and elsewhere in iambic discourse – who are idling wordsmiths, weak and unmanly types who have nothing of import to say, no matter how much time they spend in the agora or hanging around the wrestling ring. Additionally, in Plato such talkers are often characterized as lowbrow or common, worthless, and childish. In contrast to this

¹³¹ See Dodds 1959 *ad loc.*, and (again) Bakhtin 1984: 197–208. Note as well that Callicles sarcastically echoes Socrates' claim to be friendly toward Polus (ἐγὼ δέ . . . πρὸς σὲ ἐπιεικῶς ἔχω φιλικῶς, 485e3; cf. 473a3).

¹³² Callicles is apparently quoting Euripides' *Antiope*, a passage reconstructed by Nauck (fr. 188); cf. Dodds' remarks (1959 *ad loc.*).

¹³³ Socrates sometimes echoes others' dismissals of his subject matter in this way (*Prot.* 329a4–b1, *Hi. Min.* 369b8–c1, cf. *Hi. Mai.* 304a5–c6).

¹³⁴ See chap. 2 regarding the importance of this word in Aristophanes for distinguishing speaking styles. In Plato's usage, *kompos* seems to be a term, like *adoleschēs*, that Socratic insiders employ as *oratio obliqua* for talk that pleases the “mob” (i.e., ignorant elites) (e.g., *Hi. Mai.* 288d, *Phdr.* 227c). Cf. also *Symp.* 222c, where Socrates deems Alcibiades' speech in praise of him “fancily draped” (κομψῶς κύκλω περιβαλλόμενος); and E. *Cyc.* 315–17, where Silenus and Polyphemus deride Odysseus' polished (κομψός) speech (discussed in chap. 3). See O'Sullivan 1992: 134–39; Carey 2000.

unappealing set of attributes, Callicles presents himself by implication as embodying the manly and gentlemanly style. With an elaborate show of liberality Socrates confirms this contrast, repeatedly emphasizing Callicles' style as "free-speaking" (παρρησίαν, 487a3; παρρησίας, 487b1). In keeping with his apparent admiration of this mode, Socrates affirms that he should indeed be considered a "dullard" (βλᾶκκα) and good-for-nothing (μηδενὸς ἄξιον) if he does not follow Callicles' advice (488a8–b1).¹³⁵ The sophist's openness (cf. also παρρησιαζόμενος, 491e6, 492d4) and dashing aggressive style conform to his open-mouthed notions of pleasure – to wit, that the best life is to have as much as possible flowing in.¹³⁶ Since it is this frankness that leads Socrates to introduce "crude" examples such as scratching and pathic sex, Callicles' style in itself would seem to suggest the problems with the rapacious hedonism he advocates: that any pleasure in excess (even speechifying, perhaps) is morally and often also physically degrading.

When Socrates makes joking reference to Callicles' charge of "making mischief in his arguments" (κακουργῶ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, 489b4) in regard to what is natural or conventional, Callicles exclaims, "This man will not stop driveling!" (οὐτοσὶ ἀνὴρ οὐ παύσεται φλυαρῶν, 489b7). He asks him whether he isn't ashamed to be a "word-hunter" at his age (οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ τηλικούτος ὢν ὀνόματα θηρεύων, 489b8) – that is, to be quibbling over meanings – when it is clear that he, Callicles, would never hold the same opinions as a "rabble of slaves" (συρφετός δούλων) or someone of no account from a motley crowd (παντοδαπῶν ἀνθρώπων μηδενὸς ἄξιον) (489c4–5).¹³⁷ When Socrates asks Callicles to "instruct him more gently" (πρᾶότερον), Callicles accuses him of mockery, using the verb that marks many moments of Socrates' famous irony (εἰρωνεύῃ) (489e1).

In this accumulation of insults we have a portrait of Socrates that overlaps substantially with other genres in which the abuse of speakers prevails. Most obviously, in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, Strepsiades hopes Socrates' teaching will make him an *eirōn*, along with a number of other equally questionable things (449). In old comedy and in Theophrastus, the word group (*eirōn*, *eirōneia*, *eirōneuō*) connotes dissembling, in either a toadying or a mocking manner. The *eirōn* understates everything, and is in this

¹³⁵ This is a typical phrase of mocking self-abuse that Socrates uses of himself; but cf. the end of the *Gorgias*, where he deems oratory to be οὐδενὸς ἄξιος (527e7).

¹³⁶ Cf. Monoson 2000: 161–65, who points out that Callicles fails to adhere to his own embracing of such frankness. But note as well that Socrates ironizes the use of the concept.

¹³⁷ Socrates uses *pantodapos* to characterize the agile pandering of rhapsodes, poets, and sophists (e.g., *Ion* 541e; *Symp.* 198b; *Rep.* 559d9, 567e1; cf. παντοδαπά, *Gorg.* 522a3, of the fare sophists feed to juries; παντοδαπὸν, *Rep.* 561e3, regarding the character of the democratic man).

sense a “muttering,” quibbling type opposite to the loud boaster (*alazōn*).¹³⁸ Here, in the characterization of a hostile opponent, Socrates’ sarcasm conforms to his making verbal mischief (*kakourgeō en tois logois*), talking drivell (*phluaria*), and being “trash” (*surphetos*), the last of which is a label he surreptitiously applies to himself to distinguish his common talk from that of another proud sophist, Hippias.

Plato complicates his presentation of even this most famous attribute of Socrates, however, since elsewhere the Eleatic Stranger (a Socratic mouthpiece) applies it to sophists as well. In the dialogue that seeks to define their occupation, the Stranger describes sophists as imitative, in that they deal with the “dissembling part” (ἐἰρωνικοῦ μέρους, *Soph.* 268c8) of the art of opinion. This usage suggests that, like other abusive terms, its application to Socrates in Plato is quite carefully framed as the talk of the “mob” (i.e., elites without understanding and/or their followers). Many scholars have, however, failed to distinguish among (1) hostile interlocutors’ attributions to Socrates of *eirōneia* in its conventional sense (i.e., as dissembling), (2) the use of the term as a wry, knowing quotation by his admirers, and (3) Plato’s representation of Socrates’ irony.¹³⁹ As noted, those sophists who do not understand what Socrates is arguing for inevitably end up irritated and abusive; and it is they who characterize Socrates’ self-denigration and understatement as underhanded and deceptive. Plato’s depiction of Socrates’ tactics in combination with combative interlocutors’ characterization of them as dissembling (*eirōnikos*) worried even Aristotle, who seems for that reason to have attempted a rehabilitation of *eirōneia* in his ethical scheme (cf. *NE* 1127b22ff.).¹⁴⁰

The charge of making mischief (*kakourgein*) or being an unscrupulous rascal (*panourgos*) also turns up in old comedy, usually in order to designate the kind of demagoguery that Callicles associates with Socrates, although *panourgos* in particular is most often used of loud-mouthed, aggressive types rather than idling chatters.¹⁴¹ Fittingly, then, Socrates responds to

¹³⁸ As is common practice in Plato, however, this label is bandied about in comedy, so that Socrates and his students are also referred to by Pheidippides as *alazones* (*Nub.* 103–05; cf. 1492) and Strepsiades boasts that he will become an *alazōn* under Socrates’ tutelage (444–51); cf. Eup. fr. 146b K. For a clearer division between these types (with implicit reference to Socrates), cf. Arist. *NE* 1127b22ff. and further discussion in ch. 6.

¹³⁹ Contrast, for example, Callicles’ and Thrasymachus’ angry usage (*Gorg.* 489e1; *Rep.* 337a4–7) with that of Alcibiades (*Symp.* 216e, 218d); cf. also *Ap.* 37e. Cf. Griswold 1987, and especially Vlastos 1991. Some responses to Vlastos’ ideas have shown an awareness of the importance of who uses the term; see Gottlieb 1992; Gordon 1999: 127–33; Vasiliou 1999, 2002a.

¹⁴⁰ See further discussion in ch. 6.

¹⁴¹ Socrates also uses *panourgos* jokingly of Meno (80a, 81e), who is Gorgias’ student (and therefore likely to be a fancy talker), but who is also relatively sympathetic to Socrates, which suggests that

Callicles' claim that he talks in a mischief-making way by calling him a rascal. Callicles asserts that he has merely been humoring Socrates as one does with children (ὥσπερ τὰ μαιράκια, 499b6), and Socrates exclaims with some drama (ἰοῦ ἰοῦ, 499b9) that Callicles is *panourgos*, since he says now one thing, now another, and deceives him (ἐξάπατῶν με, 499b8–c2). Recall that this is precisely what Callicles has said of Socrates, and that being *kakourgos* or *panourgos* and switching around one's argument with alacrity are both associated with sophistic tactics. Once again, we can see that such terms of abuse are under contention, so that opponents thrust them onto each other at pointed opportunities. I would suggest, however, that some of these charges are more frequently attached to Socrates' dissembling, indirect type and others to his boastful, aggressive opponents.¹⁴²

Hippias

In the *Hippias Minor* Hippias' elaborate dress and claims to *polymathia* recall the figure of the Homeric rhapsode, although elsewhere Plato depicts the rhapsode Ion as less capable in argument and more reserved in his claims to knowledge.¹⁴³ Socrates subjects the elaborate dress of both the sophist and the rhapsode to similarly ironic remarks, implying that it should serve as an analogy for their superficial word-crafting.¹⁴⁴ But the boastful presence of the sophist drives Socrates to engage more aggressively, and as a consequence familiar abusive vocabulary and oppositions are deployed by both interlocutors. Socrates begins his discussion with the sophist in silence, since he apparently has nothing to say about the display that the sophist has given just before the dialogue opens. While Hippias declares complacently that he has never met anyone superior to himself in any respect (364a8–9), Socrates takes the opposite stance, asking Hippias not to ridicule him (μή μου καταγεῖλαι, 364c9) for his ignorance and to answer him gently (πρῶτως) and good-naturedly (εὐκόλως) (364d1–2). As we have seen, this is a typical tactic that Socrates uses with more arrogant sophists; it thus signals the potentially iambic tone of their exchange.¹⁴⁵ He then enters directly into

in this instance Socrates is (once again) quoting "mob" usage. Cf. also *Euthyd.* 300d7 of Ctesippus. In comedy this is the label applied to the loud-mouthed politician; cf. Aristophanes' *Knights* in particular and the discussion in chap. 2.

¹⁴² In common usage *kakourgoi* are criminals, including thieves, kidnapers, and highwaymen. We might recall that in Aristophanes Socrates is a stealer of cloaks. Callicles also calls Socrates "overbearing" (βίαιος, 505d4) and "contentious" (φιλόνηκος, 515b5).

¹⁴³ Cf. Xen. *Symp.* 3.6 regarding the stupidity of rhapsodes.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Guthrie 1971: 42; Richardson 1975; Kerferd 1981: 29; O'Sullivan 1992: 66–67; Kahn 1996: 114.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. *Gorg.* 489d7–8; *Rep.* 354a12–13; *Euthyd.* 302c3.

a topic that is very sophistic in type, insofar as it concerns a comparison of the characters of Homeric heroes (Odysseus and Achilles). When Hippias defines Odysseus as “most multifaceted” (*polutropōtatos*), Socrates asks Hippias whether he thinks people like Odysseus deceive out of ignorance and stupidity (ὑπὸ ἡλιθιότητος καὶ ἀφροσύνης) or unscrupulousness and purpose (ὑπὸ πανουργίας καὶ φρονήσεως) (365e2–4). The question clearly points to the *polutropia* of Hippias’ own profile, and in fact later on Socrates spends some time “admiring” Hippias’ multiple achievements (cf. 368b–e). It also assigns the label *panourgos* to the crafty, circuitous speechifier, a move we have seen in other dialogues that engage the sophists and their students. Hippias affirms that not only do liars knowingly deceive, but they also make mischief by means of such abilities (διὰ ταῦτα κακουργοῦσιν, 365e8–9). Recall that Callicles accused Socrates of “making mischief” in the way he argued; the same pair of insults – being unscrupulous (*panourgos*) and arguing mischievously (*kakougeō en tois logois*) – are implicitly exchanged here. In this more polite conversation, however, they are cloaked as remarks about others: Odysseus, and, as it turns out, liars more generally.¹⁴⁶

It soon emerges that if liars are powerful and wise because they intentionally do as they wish, then Hippias, as a knower, might be another example of their kind (366c1–3).¹⁴⁷ However, before Socrates asks Hippias directly whether he is capable of lying about those things that he knows, he enjoins him to answer “nobly and with dignity” (γενναίως καὶ μεγαλοπρεπῶς, 366e3). The elaborate framing of the question indicates its insulting nature, but this challenge finds Hippias where he lives; since he is very jealous of his dignity (as is apparent from the *Hippias Major* as well), he continues to be compliant. However, once Socrates has led him by a series of discrete steps to a point where he must agree that both Achilles and Odysseus are capable of lying and telling the truth, the sophist exclaims that Socrates is always weaving these sorts of arguments (σύ τις οἰοῦτος πλέκεις λόγους), taking up the most unmanageable (δυσχερέστατον) part and seizing on it in minute detail (κατὰ σμικρὸν ἐφαπτόμενος) (369b8–c1) rather than considering the whole. With an eye to this larger perspective, Hippias offers instead to make a speech (369c2–8). Socrates’ slightly delayed response to this is the same as that which he makes to Gorgias and Protagoras: he requests that the sophist not engage in a “big speech” (μακρὸν . . . λόγον, 373e7) because he, Socrates, will not be able to follow it. At Eudicus’ request,

¹⁴⁶ On the connections between Odysseus, deception, and *panourgia* see Worman 1999, 2002a: 173–80, 189–90.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. below, where Socrates says that Hippias is deceiving him, in imitation of Odysseus (ἐξοπατῆς με . . . καὶ αὐτὸς τὸν Ὀδυσσεά μιμῆ, 370e10–11).

Hippias agrees reluctantly to continue answering Socrates' questions, but he complains that Socrates always "shakes up" (ταράττει) the argument and "seems like a mischief-maker" (ἔοικεν ὡσπερ κακουργοῦντι) (373b4–5).¹⁴⁸ Socrates demurs that he does not do this on purpose (οὐχ ἔκῶν, 373b6) – the same kind of thing he says of the ignorant man who, unlike the liar, goes astray unwillingly.¹⁴⁹

Thus the arguer concerned with little things is opposed to the performer of the big speech; the latter is also surreptitiously connected to deception, Odysseus, and *panourgia* – that is, to attributes that are typical of grand talkers. Meantime the small-talking man begs to be treated gently, and when accused of being a mischief-maker and a disturber of the argument, claims that this is not his intention. He maintains that, unlike Hippias, he is neither wise (σοφός) nor clever (δεινός), and asks to be forgiven his ignorance (συγγνώμην ἔχει) (373b7–8).¹⁵⁰ Here we have what is perhaps the most sardonic depiction of the contrast that Aristotle would later spell out in defense of Socrates: that of the mock-modest man (*eirōn*) versus the boaster (*alazōn*).¹⁵¹

The *Hippias Major* presents a slightly more piquant view of the differences between Socrates and this all-knowing sophist. Some scholars question its authenticity, but the fact that the dialogue employs vocabulary that overlaps with other sophistic confrontations in Plato, and that it seems to be from the same period, makes it a useful supplement to this discussion.¹⁵² Like the *Protagoras* and the *Hippias Minor*, this dialogue depicts the sophist as exaggeratedly highbrow and self-serious. In the opening line Socrates calls Hippias "fine and wise" (καλός τε καὶ σοφός, 281a1), the former being an attribute that he subsequently applies to the sophist's speaking style (καλῶς, 282b1; καλόν, 282e9). This fine style turns out to stand in contrast to his ability to comprehend the nature of the good (τὸ καλόν, 286d1, 287b8, 287d3, etc.). For Hippias, things are only "fine" (*kalos*) if they are worthy of expression in a stately style (cf. σεμνῶς, 288d2), a limitation that reveals his attachment to his craft as guaranteeing such equations. As in the *Hippias Minor* Socrates treats him with elaborately polite irony, even fashioning a third character – some vulgar man who speaks "insolently"

¹⁴⁸ *Taratteō* is a comic term leveled at orators, especially bombastic types like Cleon (Ar. *Ach.* 688, *Eq.* 66, 251, 358, 431, 692, *Vesp.* 696, 1285; cf. Cratinus fr. 7 K [4th-c. comic]); Dinarch. fr. 75).

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *Hi. Min.* 366–67.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Socrates' emphasis on Hippias' wisdom and cleverness (368b2–3).

¹⁵¹ Again, see the discussion in chap. 6.

¹⁵² See, e.g., Tarrant 1928, who thinks that the comic vocabulary indicates a different author. But clearly Plato employed such terms (e.g., συρφετός) as a matter of course; contrast Woodruff 1982. See also Ludlam 1991.

(ὕβριστικῶς, 286c7) and says “lowbrow things” (φαῦλα, 288d2) – to avoid insulting Hippias directly. In introducing this rude type, Socrates despairs of answering him properly, because of his own “lowness” (φαυλότης, 286d2). He explains that, after growing angry with and abusing himself (ὠργιζόμεν καὶ ὠνειδίζον, 286d4), he went in search of wise men, hoping that they might make him capable of refutation and thus keep him from being a “laughing stock” (γέλωτα, 286e3) for a second time.¹⁵³

Hippias responds that teaching Socrates to refute such people is a “small and worthless thing” (σικπρόν . . . καὶ οὐδενὸς ἄξιον, 286e6), and declares that, if he could not do this, his subject matter (πρᾶγμα) would be “lowbrow and amateurish” (φαῦλον . . . καὶ ἰδιωτικόν, 286e9–287a1). This is, of course, precisely the vocabulary that Socrates uses to describe his own practices, and Hippias’ dismissive use of it underscores the polarization between their statuses, as well as the allegiance between the anonymous man and Socrates. Hippias grows increasingly shocked by this crude character with his vulgar questions, asking who this uneducated (ἄπαιδευτός) man is who dares (τολμᾷ) to say such “lowbrow things” (φαῦλα) in an august (σεμνῶ) context (288d1–2). Socrates agrees that such a man (τοιοῦτός τις) is not “polished” (κομψός) but “trash” (συρφετός), who cares for nothing but the truth (288d4–5).¹⁵⁴ When Hippias calls the man “very stupid” (εὐθηέστατος), Socrates notes that Hippias is inexperienced in dealing with such a rough (σχέτλιος) type (289e1–7) and characterizes the man’s discourse as mocking (cf. τωθάσεται; τετυφωμένε σύ, 290a4–5). Later Hippias asks again for his identity and Socrates says that he would not know him (290d9–e2). To this the sophist declares haughtily, “Now I definitely know that he is someone ignorant” (ἀλλὰ καὶ νῦν ἔγωγε γιγνώσκω, ὅτι ἀμαθής τις ἐστίν, 290e3). Socrates again defers to this assessment, saying that the man is “really a pain” (μέμερος¹⁵⁵ πᾶνυ) (290e4) but continuing to speak in his voice. Finally, Hippias declares that he would not even converse with a man asking such questions (291a3–4).

The discussion that has led up to this impasse has involved examples (introduced by the vulgar man) such as cooking pots and bean soup, subject matter that Hippias is loath even to countenance. Socrates agrees that

¹⁵³ The language of derision is particularly prevalent in this dialogue: cf. 282a, 288b, 291e–292a, 299a, 293c, 297d.

¹⁵⁴ This is important vocabulary for Plato, especially *kompsoi*. As mentioned, Socrates and his more sympathetic interlocutors always use it as an ironic lexicon, in *oratio obliqua* for “mob talk.”

¹⁵⁵ This is a Homeric word, a strong term used primarily in the *Iliad* for baneful wartime activities; Brock 1990 argues that this solemn usage lampoons Hippias’ hauteur. I would add that this instance in particular is “debased” and parodic, insofar as it implicitly compares this low-status arguer’s tactics to heroic battle.

it is not fitting (πρέπτοι) for Hippias to “fill himself up with such words” (τοιούτων ὀνομάτων ἀναπίμπλασθαι) since he is so fancily dressed and shod (καλῶς μὲν οὕτως ἄμπεχομένω καὶ ὑποδεδεμένω) (291a5–8). The retort is a supremely absurd example of Aristotelian analogy, trading as it does items unsuitable for lofty discourse with those that this fine “diner” should not deign to eat. The trashy talker from the agora with his pots and soup cannot possibly serve up fare that Hippias would welcome, accustomed as he is to a celebrity’s reception at the best tables. The analogy thus highlights with pointed metonymies Hippias’ vanity, which extends from his overblown talk to his elaborate dress. As is so frequently the case in iambic discourse, here again oral activities converge, with the result that different kinds of talk become associated not only with distinct appetites but also with “high” versus “low” social practices.

The man so squarely opposite to the proud sophist that the latter cannot even converse with him is, of course, Socrates himself. His penchant for commonplace, lowbrow talk and allegiance to the truth indicates as much, as does Socrates’ later claim that he would be ashamed to “babble and fabricate” (ληρῶν καὶ προσποιούμενος) in front of “Sophronicus’ son,” this being the name of his own father (298b9–c2). The allegiance of this alter ego to crude talk and abusive behavior nevertheless remains unshaken to the end: he forces Socrates to say “harsh and grotesque things” (χαλεπά τε καὶ ἀλλόκοτα, 292c5); he engages in vituperation (ὄνειδιεῖ, 293c7); he is bold (cf. θρασεῖ; θράσους, 298a5–7); he accosts him for his ignorance when he comes home (304d4–e3).

Hippias grows increasingly exasperated with Socrates’ plodding argument and bursts out extravagantly that he is arguing “illogically, inconsiderately, stupidly, and thoughtlessly” (ἀλογίστως καὶ ἀσκέπτως καὶ εὐθήως καὶ ἀδιανοήτως, 301c2–3). At the end of the dialogue he deems Socrates’ arguments “gratings and clippings of speeches” (κνήσματά τοί ἐστι καὶ περιμήματα τῶν λόγων, 304a5), nothing like a fine speech delivered in public (οἶον τ’ εἶναι εὖ καὶ καλῶς λόγον καταστησάμενον ἐν δικαστηρίῳ ἢ βουλευτηρίῳ, 304a7–8). Such speeches, Hippias maintains, concern not the smallest but the greatest matters (οὐ τὰ μικρότατα ἀλλὰ τὰ μέγιστα). Therefore one ought to set aside small talk (σμικρολογίας), in order to avoid babblings and drivel (λήρους καὶ φλυαρίας) (304b2–5). Socrates agrees that he certainly does seem to get “mud-spattered” (προπηλακίζομαι) whenever he converses with wise men, just as Hippias now has declared his tactics stupid and small and of no account (ἡλιθιά τε καὶ σμικρὰ καὶ οὐδενὸς ἄξια πραγματεύομαι) (304c3–6). Whatever he says, he receives rebukes from all sides, both from the sophists and from “that

man” (ὅπερ λέγω, κακῶς μὲν ὑπὸ ὑμῶν ἀκούειν καὶ ὄνειδίζεσθαι, κακῶς δὲ ὑπὲρ ἐκείνου, 304e4–5). In this elaborate charade, Socrates’ imposture makes possible a lampoon not only of the boastful, word-proud sophist but also of the self-abuse that reiterates the insults of his opponents and underscores his lowbrow, small-talking ways.

Thrasymachus

The first book of the *Republic* is as famous for its bellicose interlocutor Thrasymachus as it is for its subject matter. Like the *Protagoras*, the dialogue offers a look not only at this irascible sophist but also at Socrates’ techniques of portrayal, since it is he who relates the story of the discussion at the Piraeus. That is, in these first-person dialogues we get a chance to assess how Plato represents Socrates’ own iambic style when it hones in on an agonist whose verbal habits clearly lend themselves to caricature. Like Hippias, Thrasymachus is from a generation younger than the oldest sophists, closer in age to other contentious types such as Calicles, Polus, Euthydemus, and Dionysidorus. Unlike Hippias, whose grandiose sense of self largely prevents him from engaging in direct invective, Thrasymachus is not a polite interlocutor. Nor is he clearly a sophist, although he has been traditionally associated with the sophistic movement.¹⁵⁶ In the *Phaedrus* he is described as the overly clever (*deinos*) inventor of an emotive verbal style that stirs up and mesmerizes the audience (cf. ὀργίσαι; ὠργισμένοις ἐπ’ ἄδων κηλεῖν, 267c6–d1).¹⁵⁷ More interestingly for us, Socrates characterizes Thrasymachus as “the most powerful in slandering and removing slander” (διαβάλλειν τε καὶ ἀπολύσασθαι διαβολὰς ὅθενδὴ κράτιστος, 267d2–3). This attribute in particular suggests his importance as a contender, since slander is an abusive locution that lies at the heart of iambic discourse.

Socrates describes Thrasymachus in *Republic* 1 as exceedingly impatient to join the discussion. He hurls himself into the midst of the conversation, Socrates remarks, “like a wild beast about to tear us up” (ὥσπερ θηρίον ἦκεν ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς ὡς διαρπασόμενος, 336b5–6).¹⁵⁸ A latter-day Cyclops, Thrasymachus would rather sink his teeth into his opposition than dispute in calmer fashion. At least, this is how Socrates depicts

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Untersteiner 1952: 311–13; Guthrie 1971: 295; de Romilly 1992: 116–21.

¹⁵⁷ Thrasymachus is also associated with Odysseus, who during the classical period epitomized the aggressive, resourceful speaker (see Worman 1999, 2002a).

¹⁵⁸ Cf. *Rep.* 493a6–c8 regarding the best qualities of the mass of citizens, and note that their trainers are identified as sophists. The passage also suggests that the trainers and the trained share core features and attitudes.

him, his portrait resembling in its humor and mock-modesty the elaborate politesse with which he handles other brash interlocutors. Fittingly, then, Socrates also represents himself and his interlocutor Polymarchus as “fluttering” (διεπτοίηθμεν) like birds at this attack, while Thrasymachus growls (φθεγξόμενος¹⁵⁹) that the conversation is “trite drivel” (πάλαι φλυαρία) and that those speaking are “stupid” (εὐηθίζεσθε) (336b7–c1; cf. 337b4, 343d2). He declares further that he will not answer if Socrates continues to talk “such nonsense” (ὄθλους, 336d4).¹⁶⁰ Socrates represents himself as stunned (ἔξεπλάγην¹⁶¹) and claims that if he had not looked at Thrasymachus first, he would have been rendered voiceless (ἄφωνος) (336d5–7). In Socrates’ description, then, Thrasymachus is not only a rampant beast; he is also a Cyclops, ready to eat his interlocutors, as well as some sort of Gorgon’s head, capable of turning his enemies to stone.¹⁶²

Thus this monstrous sophist enters the discussion in a rage (ἐξαγριαίνεσθαι) and Socrates trembles as he replies (εἶπον ὑποτρέμων) with his usual understatement (336d8–e2). As with Polus in the *Gorgias*, he begs Thrasymachus not to be “harsh” (χαλεπός, 336e2) with him, and declares that it is fitting that he, Socrates, be pitied rather than pilloried by clever types like his interlocutor (εἰκός ἐστίν που ὑπὸ ὑμῶν τῶν δεινῶν) (336e10–337a1). At this Thrasymachus yawns sardonically (ἀνεκάγχασέ τε μάλα σαρδάνιον¹⁶³), and snaps that Socrates is answering with his customary mock modesty (αὐτῆ κείνη ἢ εἰωθῆα εἰρωνεῖα) (337a3–4; cf. εἰρωνεύσοιο, 337a6). Thrasymachus’ open mouth comports with his aggressive style; we might recall that in Aristophanes the gaping, bawling mouth is the signature metonymy for the loud, violent demagogue. This type is precisely the opposite of the understated small-talker. As if to confirm this contrast, Socrates replies wryly, “You really are wise, Thrasymachus” (σοφὸς γὰρ εἶ . . . ὦ Θρασύμαχε, 337a8). When they enter into argument, Thrasymachus, like Callicles, affirms the right of the stronger (338c), which leads Socrates to ask, “If it is to the benefit (συμφέρει) of the athlete, who is stronger (κρείττων), to eat beefsteak (τὰ βόεια κρέα), wouldn’t it also

¹⁵⁹ The verb often implies nonverbal vocalizing, such as that of animals.

¹⁶⁰ This word, like *phluaria*, may well be of comic origin: when Strepsiades tries to argue with Socrates in the *Clouds*, Socrates responds, “You’re talking nonsense” (ὄθλεις, *Nub.* 783). Cf. *Eup.* fr. 96.78 A, *Eph.* fr. 19 K (associated with dining and young men), *Comic. adesp.* fr. 857 (γραῶν ὄθλος); and *Pl. Lys.* 221d, *Th.* 176b.

¹⁶¹ Cf. the startling effects of grand sophists such as Gorgias (DK 82A4).

¹⁶² Cf. Socrates’ joke regarding Agathon’s ornate, Gorgianic speech at *Symp.* 198b–c. He declares that anyone would be “struck” (ἔξεπλάγη, 195b5) by it; and because it fashions a veritable “Gorgias’ head” (Γοργίου κεφαλήν, 198c3) by its clever elaborations, he fears that it “might render him stone by loss of voice” (με λίθον τῇ ἀφωνίᾳ ποιήσειεν, 198c5).

¹⁶³ Cf. the brusque Ctesippus at *Pl. Euthyd.* 300d3 (μέγα πάνυ ἀνακαγχάσας).

benefit us weaker types (ὄμῖν τοῖς ἥττοισιν) and at the same time be right (δίκαιον)?" (338c7–d2). Disgusted by this turn toward such vulgar concerns as steak, Thrasymachus replies, "You really are obnoxious, Socrates" (βδελυρὸς γὰρ εἶ, ὦ Σώκρατες), and claims that Socrates seizes on whatever way he can make the most mischief in the argument (κακουργήσας μάλιστα τὸν λόγον) (338d3–4).

Once again, we have all of the elements that characterize the confrontations between the lowbrow Socrates and the haughty sophists: Socrates appears weak and understated (cf. *eirōneia*, *eirōneuō*), speaks drivel (*phlularia*), and makes verbal mischief (*kakourgein ton logon*), while he treats the irate interlocutor with a mocking politeness that only further infuriates him. Thrasymachus also deems Socrates "obnoxious" (*bdeluros*) like the coarse demagogues in Aristophanes; in Plato the term appears to be of a piece with the philosopher's customary "crudeness" (*agroikia*). Note as well how the introduction of food into the argument positively repulses Thrasymachus, and that, as in the *Gorgias* and *Hippias Major*, this visceral analogy elicits insult.

Indeed, when Socrates forces him to consider the difficulties inherent in defining the word "stronger" (*kreittōn*), Thrasymachus declares Socrates a "quibbler in the argument" (συκοφάντης . . . ἐν τοῖς λόγοις, 340d1), a phrase that also recalls Callicles' and Thrasymachus' own earlier charge that Socrates "makes mischief in the argument" (*kakourgeō en tois logos*). Here the word *sukophantēs* points to a hair-splitting, pettifogging verbal style; note that Thrasymachus also makes repeated sarcastic references to Socrates' penchant for precision (cf. ὥστε κατὰ κὸν ἀκριβῆ λόγον, ἐπειδὴ καὶ σὺ ἀκριβολογῆ, 340e1–2; ἀκριβέστατον, 340e8; ἀκριβεστάτω . . . λόγῳ, 341b8). The term *sukophantēs* has connotations of boldness and deceit, both of which, unlike precision, are often attributes of aggressive, pandering talkers familiar from Aristophanes.¹⁶⁴ Although Thrasymachus follows his first use of this insulting label with a substantial attempt to refute Socrates' means of determining who can be defined as stronger, Socrates presses him instead on this characterization of his tactics (δοκῶ σοι συκοφαντεῖν; 341a5), as well as that of purposefully making mischief in the argument (οἶε γὰρ με ἐξ ἐπιβουλῆς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις κακουργοῦντά σε ἐρέσθαι ὡς ἠρόμην; 341a7–8). Thrasymachus replies belligerently that Socrates' underhanded tactics will not escape him, nor will he be able surreptitiously to do violence to the argument (οὔτε γὰρ ἂν με λάθοις κακουργῶν, οὔτε μὴ

¹⁶⁴ E.g., Cleon (Ar. *Eq.* 436–37, *Pax* 653), but also contentious types more generally (Eup. fr. 231 K, 96.37 A; Ar. *Ach.* 818ff.; *Vesp.* 505, 1096; *Av.* 285, 1410ff.; *Ecl.* 439, 452, 562; *Pl.* 41, 85off.). Cf. Ober 1989; Henderson [1975] 1991; O'Sullivan 1992.

λαθῶν βιάσασθαι τῷ λόγῳ δύναιο, 341b1–2).¹⁶⁵ Socrates keeps urging him to define his terms, the pressure of which drives Thrasymachus to say dismissively, “Go make mischief and quibble” (κακούργει καὶ συκοφάντει, 341b9). To this Socrates replies archly, “Do you think I am so crazy as to try to shave a lion and quibble with Thrasymachus?” (οἶει γὰρ ἄν με . . . οὕτω μανῆναι ὥστε ξυρεῖν ἐπιχειρεῖν λέοντα καὶ συκοφαντεῖν Θρασύμαχον;, 341c1–2).

The heavy emphasis in this passage on abusive terms for a quibbling, underhanded way of talking suggests that it is somehow important to the argument that Thrasymachus be seen to aggress Socrates in this way. Of the sophists Prodicus is famous for his precision in definition. Socrates treats him more reverentially than he treats other sophistic types, and elsewhere even speaks of Prodicus as having taught him, if not sufficiently (οὐχ ἰκανῶς πεπαιδεικέναι καὶ ἐμὲ Πρόδικος, *Meno* 96d6–7).¹⁶⁶ One of the subtexts of the passage may thus be a face-off between the verbally violent Thrasymachus and the hair-splitting, understated “student” of a rival sophist, Prodicus.¹⁶⁷ If Thrasymachus is notorious for his penchant for stirring things up in public settings, perhaps this scene indicates his inability to do otherwise even in (semi-)private argument, thereby highlighting how his aggressive style suffers from comparison with that of more careful talkers. In addition, the depiction of Thrasymachus conforms to those of Socrates’ other excessive interlocutors, who resort to similar slurs when exasperated by what they regard as underhanded (*kakourgos*) maneuvers.

A number of later insults and lampooning images maintain this contrast between styles. When Thrasymachus reaches an impasse in the argument, he reacts with his customary delicacy, telling Socrates that he clearly needs a nurse to wipe his drool (κορυζῶντα περιορᾷ καὶ οὐκ ἀπομύττει δεόμενον, 343a7).¹⁶⁸ If the understated talker is driveling, the excessive Thrasymachus, in some contrast, spouts like a bath attendant with a flood of words (βαλανεύς ἡμῶν καταντλήσας κατὰ τῶν ὤπτων ἄθρόον καὶ πολὺν τὸν λόγον, 344d2–3).¹⁶⁹ He also “throws” his argument (ἐμβαλὼν λόγον, 344d6) at his listeners, and later struggles and sweats (ἐλκόμενος καὶ μόγις, μετὰ ἰδρῶτος θαυμαστοῦ, 350d1–2) like a wrestler in the ring. In his consternation, Thrasymachus snaps that if Socrates wishes to continue

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Callicles, who calls Socrates βιάος (*Gorg.* 505d4). ¹⁶⁶ Cf. *Prot.* 315e, *Euthd.* 277e.

¹⁶⁷ Note, however, that Theophrastus apparently considered Thrasymachus the inventor of the “mixed” style (*DH Dem.* 3), which might seem to point to a less bombastic mode; but Socrates’ emphasis in the *Phaedrus* on his cheap emotionalism indicates that this mixture may well have included such theatrics.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. *Ar. Eq.* 910; also Aeschin. 1.126; Theophr. 19.4.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Theophrastus on the “shameless” man (9.8).

questioning him, he will treat him as he would old women telling tales (ταῖς γραυσὶ τοῦς μύθους λεγούσαις, 350e2–3). As in Aristophanes, the distinctions between these types are also clearly gendered, the big talker struggling through the argument in a muscular manner, the small talker driveling and chattering like a querulous grandmother.

Euthydemus and Dionysidorus

Like the *Lysis* and *Charmides*, the *Euthydemus* takes place in a sporting arena, here the “undressing room” (ἀποδυτηρίω, 272e2) of the Lyceum. The setting recalls Aristophanes’ lampoon of Euripides’ verbal tactics as teaching young men to chatter in the agora, so that the wrestling schools lie empty (*Ran.* 1069–71). It serves in addition as a fitting frame for the muscular verbal wrangling in which Euthydemus and his brother Dionysidorus engage, especially since they have only recently turned from teaching mastery of physical contests to that of verbal contests (271c6–8). They claim to teach eristic, a sophistic version of the same question-and-answer techniques that Socrates employs. Perhaps because of the directness of the competition they therefore represent for Socrates, his description of them (to his old friend Crito) is extremely mock-flattering. He praises their dashing verbal style and depicts himself as stunned by them, as repeatedly flummoxed by their tactics, and as asking rather dim-witted questions in contrast. He even suggests that he and Crito ought to become students of these wrangling sophists, old men though they are.¹⁷⁰

Euthydemus and Dionysidorus are thus presented as supremely confident of their abilities; as masters of eristic, Socrates says, they claim to be able to teach anyone to be a similarly clever talker (δεινόν, 272b4). As with the older and more august Protagoras, Socrates describes the young men who crowd around them as a “chorus” responding to its director (ὑπὸ διδασκάλου . . . χορὸς ἀποσημῆναντος, 276b6–7). They also make a lot of noise like rowdy Assembly members (ἀνεθορύβησαν) and laugh in appreciation like a good theater audience (ἐγέλασαν).¹⁷¹ Both verbs suggest the performative aspects of the sophists’ display, as well as the typical size of their indiscriminate audience; and indeed it is this aspect of their verbal tactics that Socrates emphasizes most consistently in his description of the encounter. He thereby suggests that they argue merely for effect, to startle

¹⁷⁰ Cf. the *Laches*, and note the similarity of this sentiment to that expressed in the scene between the wise Teiresias and Cadmus in Euripides’ *Bacchae*.

¹⁷¹ Both of these terms are repeated in the dialogue (e.g., 276d, 283d). For the laughter, see once again Mader 1977; for analogizing *thorubos* to verbal style, S. *Phil.* 1263; cf. Dem. 19.23.

their audiences of young men and win their appreciation. Such attributes traditionally fall on the side of the grand speech performance; compare again the famous description of Gorgias as having a stunning effect on his audience (DK82A4). Socrates' style, in contrast, has the opposite effect: the listeners laugh *at* him, and when they raise their voices it is in protest rather than acclamation. Moreover, his audiences are never large; indeed, he often finds himself left talking to one dogged interlocutor, after others have deserted the conversation in irritation.

In keeping with their winning tactics, the brothers are so verbally adept that they talk on before Cleinias – the young beauty (καλός, 271b4) to whom they are showing their wares – can even catch his breath (πρὶν ἀναπνεῦσαι, 276c2) to answer them. This is a technique of the chatterer (*lalos*) in Theophrastus (7.3–4); although this kind of speaker is usually represented as effeminate and idling in Aristophanes, his key attribute in Theophrastus' depiction is an obsessive concern with the kind of verbal mastery that the brothers boast of in the dialogue. Socrates, in contrast, denigrates his own verbal tactics, noting that they may seem “amateurish and laughable” (ἰδιωτικῶς καὶ γελοίως; cf. τέχνην . . . ἰδιώτου ἀνθρώπου, 295e2–3), and attributes this to the fact that he is “daring to improvise” (τολμήσω ἀπαυτοσχεδάσαι) his remarks (278d5–7).¹⁷² He also presents the questions he poses to these new sophists as possibly “stupid” (ἀνόητον, 278e5) and “rather silly” (εὐηθέστερον, 279a3).

The contrast is very pointed and quite familiar: the professional speakers are polished performers who talk a lot and for grand effect, while their pedestrian interlocutor engages in such a casual manner that he seems laughable and thus both easy to insult and himself insulting. This abusive framing of Socrates' questions is more pervasive in this dialogue than anywhere else, the terms that he uses to dismiss his abilities including those that turn up in other dialogues as well as some unique to this setting. For instance, he later declares himself “somewhat thick” (παχέως πως ἐννοῶ) and the question he wishes to pose “rather vulgar” (φορτικώτερον) (286e9–10; cf. φορτικόν, 287a6).¹⁷³ Dionysidorus responds in kind, calling him a “Kronos” for being so stubborn in his questioning, a moniker that in comedy is used to connote being outmoded and doddering.¹⁷⁴ Dionysidorus also accuses Socrates of “babbling” (λαλεῖς) when he tries to get the sophist to answer his “vulgar”

¹⁷² Cf. *Apology* 17a–b.

¹⁷³ Note that Aristotle calls the common Athenian hearer “vulgar” (φόρτικον, *Rhet.* 1395b1–2) for liking maxims (see further in ch. 6 below). Cf. where Socrates worries that he might be regarded as a “dull student” (σκαῖόν . . . φοιτητήν, 295b6–7).

¹⁷⁴ Cf., e.g., *Ar. Nu.* 398, 929, 1070, *Vesp.* 652, *Pl.* 581; also possibly *Crat.* fr. 165 K (=earlier age).

question about what it is that he teaches (287d3). Socrates responds that he may be erring in the argument out of stupidity (διὰ τὴν βλακείαν) or indeed may be speaking rightly (ὀρθῶς), and the sophists themselves arguing something untenable (287e2–7). This challenge leads Ctesippus to abuse Euthydemus and Dionysidorus more directly; he declares that the sophists do not care that they are “talking nonsense” (παραληρεῖν, 288b2).

Socrates relates to Crito that he feared vituperation (λοιδορία, 288b3) in return for this remark, and indeed he gets it from both brothers. It doesn't help matters that he compares them to Proteus, “the Egyptian sophist” (τὸν Ἰγύπτιον σοφιστήν, 288b8), and casts himself in the role of Menelaus. Nor does it help that the comparison foreshadows the more insulting analogy of Heracles battling monsters (297c).¹⁷⁵ Euthydemus grows increasingly irritated with Socrates; like Polus and Callicles, he asks Socrates whether he isn't ashamed (οὐκ αἰσχύνῃ, 295b6) to talk as he does, answering questions with questions. He also calls him “driveling and almost senile” (φλυαρεῖς καὶ ἀρχαιότερος εἶ τοῦ δεόντος, 295c10–11), while Socrates characterizes Euthydemus to Crito as “hunting him down and surrounding him with words” (θηρεῦσαι τὰ ὄνόματα περιστήσας, 295d2). The hunting imagery is similar to that which Callicles uses to characterize Socrates' verbal style (*Gorg.* 489b8), a connection that suggests rather wryly the overlap between their tactics.¹⁷⁶ Fittingly, then, Socrates points out that he is much more “worthless” (φασλότερος, 297c1) than Heracles, who was embattled with a “female sophist” (σοφιστρίξ) Hydra and “male sophist” (σοφιστής) Crab. She possessed a “head of argument” that, when cut off, was replaced by many more (εἰ μίαν κεφαλὴν τοῦ λόγου τις ἀποτέμοι, πολλὰς ἀντὶ τῆς μιᾶς); he engaged in “talking and biting” (λέγων καὶ δάκνων) the hero until he called for help (297c3–4).¹⁷⁷ The brothers are thus figured as monsters with numerous heads and loquacious, snappish mouths, while Socrates emerges as a man of heroic endurance who doggedly continues to combat them.

Toward the end of the dialogue, in a final burst of parodic praise, Socrates declares that the brothers “stitch up the mouths of people”

¹⁷⁵ The Proteus analogy is interesting for its application also to Ion (ὥσπερ ὁ Πρωτεύς παντοδαπὸς γίγνη στροφόμενος ἄνω καὶ κάτω, 541e7). Cf. *Gorg.* 511a4–5. See Richardson 1975: 80–81 on Proteus as a figure for the sophist; he notes that Dionysius of Halicarnassus uses the image of Demosthenes to indicate his versatility (*Dem.* 8).

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Socrates' depiction of the bestial Thrasymachus, who also seeks to dominate the conversation by verbal aggression.

¹⁷⁷ See Loraux 1995: 167–77. The imagery of biting can refer to Socrates' own tactics (e.g., *Thr.* 152c6–7, *Symp.* 217e). Cf. also Barthes 1974: 109–13 on disassembling the female body into fetishized parts.

(ξυρράπτετε τὰ στόματα τῶν ἀνθρώπων).¹⁷⁸ This metaphor carries further the sense that the style of these sophists is overly aggressive, but Socrates couches the harsh image in language that sounds complimentary: since they have this stifling effect also on their own mouths, he claims, their talk seems “agreeable” (χαρίεν) (304e1–4). The dialogue concludes with Crito relating a conversation he had with someone who had witnessed the confrontation, and declared it typical of men who spend their time “chattering” (ληρούντων, 304e4) and making a worthless fuss over topics of no value. This observer also found Socrates “strange” (ἄτοπος, 305a3) for arguing with such types, and declared them all “lowbrow and ridiculous” (φαῦλοι . . . καὶ καταγέλαστοι, 305a7–8). Crito does not like this criticism of his friend, although he does worry that arguing in front of a crowd with such men is “blameworthy” (μέμφεσθαι, 305b3). Most commentators think that this observer is meant to be Isocrates, the influential student of Gorgias who probably never spoke in public and was famous for his elaborate and long-winded style. Thus at the conclusion of the dialogue we have a differentiation not so much between the sophistic brothers and Socrates as between these on-the-spot talkers and the contrived mastery of the writer.

In his teasing manipulation of these sophists, Socrates embodies a version of the crude, calculating arguers lampooned by Aristophanes. In Platonic dialogue, however, the depiction of this iambic persona is formulated for a different end. Both the comic and the Platonic version of Socrates can be understood as aimed at a serious purpose: determining the failings of public speakers and the professionals who train them. But Plato’s portraits clearly settle Socrates in the midst of elite young men and cast him as a crude, irreverent satyr, suggesting that this kind of iambic discourse has a very crucial role to play in the education of male Athenians. Like the satyr play, the chorus of which was probably made up of ephebes,¹⁷⁹ Socrates’ verbal contests with sophists usually take place in front of young male audiences. His iambic persona as Plato highlights it thus challenges these observers to appreciate the perspective of the laughable, motley outsider, perhaps in order to assume with fuller understanding and responsibility their own roles as elite insiders in charge of safeguarding the city. That Socrates himself so fully embodied this laughable outsider and stood so firmly aloof from such activities contributed to some prominent citizens viewing his engagement

¹⁷⁸ Cf. the imagery of “stopping up” the mouth (e.g., *Crat.* fr. 198 K-A; *Pl. Gorg.* 482e1–2; *Dem.* 7.33).

¹⁷⁹ See Griffith 2002 and further in ch. 3.

with these young elites as threatening to Athens' moral and political well-being.

Whether this critical stance had much effect on the citizens of mid-fourth-century Athens, and perhaps most importantly on the leading figures in its public forums, is notably unclear. There is some slight evidence that Demosthenes read Plato;¹⁸⁰ and Aeschines does make an example of Socrates in his famous prosecution of Timarchus. But the fact that he does so in order to denigrate him (and by extension Demosthenes) as a poisonous sophist (cf. τὸν σοφιστήν, 1.173) suggests rather the meager effect of Plato's revisionist portrait and the persistence of comic caricatures. What is evident in the oratorical texts, however, is a parallel engagement with the comic idiom, and in particular with the imagery from comedy that highlights oral excesses. This would indicate that in fourth-century prose, comedy (perhaps especially Aristophanic comedy) was becoming a resource for the kind of outrageous character assassination that entertains the audience and furthers argument. Thus both Plato and Demosthenes – who, as I discuss in the next chapter, makes the most pointed use of this mocking lexicon – would seem to be tapping into the same tradition for slandering their opponents, those big talkers who fool the populace with their fulsome voices and emotive styles.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. n. 16 above.

*Defamation and oral excesses in
Aeschines and Demosthenes*

Although Aristotle dismisses prejudicial techniques as persuasive only for the “lowbrow hearer” (πρὸς φαῦλον γὰρ ἀκροατήν, *Rhet.* 1415b9), it is abundantly evident that Athenian orators made frequent and quite creative use of character assassination (*diabolē, loidoria*), both in forensic cases and in the Assembly.¹ They claimed things about their opponents that were not only openly slanderous but often hilariously exaggerated, drawing on gossip and hearsay and deploying it strategically until it mounted incrementally to the most serious accusation: that the man in question had behaved in a manner unbecoming for an Athenian citizen. This could be witnessed in his very body, disposed in various revealing attitudes in notorious spaces around the city. While this notion of the proper citizen was itself a product of the normative rhetoric of dominant orators, it was repeatedly held up by them as a reality and used in attempts to oust their enemies from the political scene.²

This chapter treats the ongoing conflict between Aeschines and Demosthenes during the years in which the burgeoning Macedonian threat became a militant reality, the conflicts of which resulted in the final waning of Athenian dominance (346–330 BC). The discussion focuses on their later disputes, addressing briefly Aeschines’ prosecution of Timarchus as the sally to which these speeches inevitably respond. In the contests over who behaved badly in the second embassy to Philip (346) and whether Demosthenes deserved a crown for civic benefactions after the defeat at Chaeronea (336–30), the mouth and its vocal organs together serve as a prominent vehicle for relating images of intemperance to ideas about these speakers’ styles. We might recall Bourdieu’s idea that language is effectively a

¹ See Bruns 1896: 469–88, 572–79; Webster 1956: 98–100; Rowe 1966; Harding 1987; Hunter 1990; Halliwell 1991; Carey 1994a and 1994b; Hall 1995. Halliwell points out that although there was at least one law against slander in classical Athens (288–93), it does not seem to have prevented the kind of character abuse exercised in public and private orations.

² See further below on the case against Timarchus, e.g.

“body technique” associated with an “overall way of using the mouth.” How one talks is thus one element in a set of oral habits, which, in combination with other physical features such as dress and deportment, constitute what Bourdieu calls bodily *hexis*.³ In his speech against Timarchus, Aeschines emphasizes precisely this set of associations, when he argues that, just as one can recognize athletes from looking at their fit bodies (εἰς τὰς εὐεξίας αὐτῶν ἀποβλέποντες), so can one recognize those who prostitute themselves from their lack of shame and their boldness (ἐκ τῆς ἀναιδεΐας καὶ τοῦ θράσους). Indeed, Aeschines claims, lack of moderation leads to “a habit of mind that becomes evident from the disorder of one’s style of living” (τινὰ ἕξιν τῆς ψυχῆς ἢ διὰδηλος ἐκ τῆς ἀκοσμίας τοῦ τρόπου γίγνεται) (1.189).⁴

The speeches of Demosthenes and Aeschines treat the mouth as a denigrating metonymy for the visible performances of their enemies, their invective repeatedly contrasting the idealized Athenian citizen with the mercenary excesses attributed to violent demagogues and craven sophists. For the orator these forms of intemperance reveal the indecorous potential of his most crucial tool – his mouth and the organs that give it vocal force – to engage in unmanly or brutish behaviors. Such behaviors taint the style in which he delivers his speeches and thus his contributions to the governing of the polis, exposing him to ridicule. Demosthenes seems particularly aware of this problem, most likely because he spent twenty years opposing Aeschines, an orator possessed of a famously powerful voice.

Much of the imagery in the speeches thus concerns oratorical delivery, especially vocal tone and deportment, which perceptibly project the speaker’s character. These speeches were effectively dramatic performances, as Edith Hall has pointed out.⁵ The political exigencies of these battles, however, often exceeded orators’ attempts at dramatic casting, so that tensions between the pressing realities of the moment and the fabrication of character are evident. Equally as often, orators’ insulting depictions of deportments and usage that they find laughable or inappropriate render tone, gesture, and lexical choices more conspicuous than argument. Pat Easterling has shown that both orators point to the powerful effects of the actor’s vocal abilities – Demosthenes because he wished to emphasize the dangers of such impressive techniques, Aeschines because he wished to capitalize on his own

³ Bourdieu 1991: 86.

⁴ Cf. Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.23 on Apronius, who “himself reveals [his bottomless appetites] not only by his way of life but also by his body and mouth” (*ipse non solum vita sed corpore atque ore significat*). See further discussion of the Ciceronian imagery in Corbeil 1996: 106–12, and in the Epilogue.

⁵ Hall 1995; cf. also Golden 2000: 168–69.

possession of them.⁶ The first generations of Demosthenes' reception were dominated by Peripatetic writers such as Demetrius, who tends to denigrate him as too highly crafted a speaker who sought to offset his natural shortcomings (perhaps especially his mediocre voice) by preparation and practice.⁷ Speakers like the sonorous Aeschines, in contrast, were regarded as naturally gifted, dramatic orators. This distinction is somewhat complicated by the fact that Aeschines apparently trained and worked as an actor, which suggests both the exploitation of a natural capacity and the presence of a certain amount of artistry.⁸

Oral imagery in fifth- and fourth-century representations often reflects such subtle distinctions among speakers' types, which are also shaped by contrasts between social arenas. For instance, both Aristophanes and Demosthenes ally demagoguery in the Assembly with swaggering in the agora.⁹ The law-court setting, in contrast, sometimes inspires writers to invoke the pandering and extravagance of decadent symposiasts.¹⁰ In both periods the speaker's deportment is represented as parallel to his chosen vocabulary and tropes, although oppositions between bolder and more precise usage do not always conform to similar differences in delivery styles (e.g., booming and extravagant versus piping and constrained).¹¹

⁶ Easterling 1999, also Cooper 2000: 233–34; Hesk 2000: 236–37. Demosthenes supposedly identified delivery as the most important feature of a speech, although this is probably apocryphal (Cic. *Brut.* 142; *Orat.* 56; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 11.3.6). Cf. Arist. fr. 133 R, regarding Theodectes' highlighting of the orator's effect on his audience.

⁷ Whether or not Demosthenes actually had a weak voice (i.e., piping, murky, or somehow impeded) is less important to this discussion than that the imagery in the speeches suggests it, as does subsequent tradition. Regarding Demosthenes' various vocal difficulties and over-preparation, see Demetr. frs. 165–68; and cf. Plut. *Dem.* 6.4–5, 8.3, 10.1, 11.1. Note as well DH *Is.* 4, where Demosthenes is said to “feed upon” (σαστίτισται) Isaeus' skills, which suggests a need to supplement his own weaknesses. On the influence of the Peripatetics, see Blass 1877 (3.1), 63–70; Wooten 1989; Cooper 2000.

⁸ Another anecdote that is most likely apocryphal claims that Demosthenes himself engaged the tragic actor Andronicus to help him improve his delivery style. This is reported by Quint. *Inst. Or.* 11.3.6; but see Cooper 2000: 231–33 for the suggestion that the story had its origins among the Peripatetics. See also Kindstrand 1982: 24–25 on Hellenistic ideas about Aeschines' lack of oratorical training; and Harris 1995: 28 on the negative implications of such training.

⁹ E.g., Ar. *Eq. (passim)*; Dem. 18.122–36, 22.66–70; 25.85.

¹⁰ E.g., Pl. *Gorg.* 522; Aeschin. 1.42, 131–33; cf. also Ar. *Vesp.*

¹¹ Theophrastus, for example, apparently considered Phocion, the famously blunt general, to have a simple, direct oratorical style marked by “forcefulness” (*deinotēs*, Plut. *Phoc.* 5.2). This quality may also characterize a more fulsome verbal style: compare Demosthenes' association of it with his extravagant, theatrical opponent (18.242). But Demetrius uses the same term to characterize styles like that of Demosthenes himself, even though he sometimes regards his techniques as affected and overly elaborate (e.g., *Eloc.* 250, fr. 161 Wehrl; cf. Dem. 18.277). Roman writers also emphasize the “force” (*vis*) of Demosthenes' speeches (Cic. *de Orat.* 3.28; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 10.1.76). Cicero says that Aeschines' signature characteristic was his sonorous voice (*sonitum, de Orat.* 3.28), and seems to regard his style more generally as adjacent to that of Demosthenes (*Brut.* 35–36). Nevertheless, scholars who have studied the Hellenistic and Roman reception of Demosthenes and Aeschines find that

What, then, can we hope to ascertain from such attributions? First, this discussion does not focus on what Demosthenes' and Aeschines' linguistic styles are like, that is, on assessing actual figurative usage or periodic rhythms in the extant speeches. Instead it considers the representation and reception of these speakers' types: what they say about their own and each other's visible traits and vocal habits (including vocabulary and phrasing), how their depictions utilize familiar character types, and thus how they make use of the iambic discourse about speakers' performance styles. As in other abusive settings, these tend to range from the overly polished, hair-splitting chatterbox at one end, to the voluble, booming emoter at the other. Both extremes are characterized by an overuse or misuse of the mouth and its vocal organs. While the chatterer may be associated with the sophist's overpreparation, writerly affectation, and even effeminacy, the voluble speaker is more often portrayed as a greedy demagogue, a gobbler of words who indulges his ability to perform in a fulsome, overbearing style. As in other genres, speakers are usually represented as more subtle combinations of affects than these extremes encapsulate, in part because the orators wrangle over a flexible set of denigrating vocabulary that each tries to foist on the other.

While some scholars have recognized that the usage in Demosthenes' speeches in particular echoes that of old comedy, I want to argue instead that both orators make use of a discursive pattern of vocabulary and type-casting that aims at the extreme alienation of one's opponent from the mass of Athenians.¹² As I discuss in chapter 4, Socrates' interactions with sophists reveal that ridicule, no matter how angry and harsh, makes use of comic vocabulary. Something similar is at work here. Late fifth-century speeches and those about private issues such as the disposal of property and physical harm may show some sensitivity to character and speaking styles, and some deliberative speeches involve framing one's proposals by reference to one's own characteristic verbal tactics in contrast to others. But particularly in fourth-century court cases addressing public issues (e.g., disposal of public funds) or attempting to depose a public figure by means of a private suit (e.g., charges of insolence, *dikai hubreōs*), the abuses tossed back and forth between prominent speakers utilize comic vocabulary that delineates by negative measure how the public

Aeschines tends to be allied with the "grand" (μεγαλοπρεπής, *grandis*) style, while Demosthenes is a master of styles from the grand to the plain (ἴσχνος, *tennis*), which indicates the difficulty of aligning vocal power with other stylistic elements. Again, see Kindstrand 1982; Wooten 1989; Cooper 2000.

¹² On Demosthenes' comic usage, cf. Rowe 1966; Dover 1974a: 23–34.

citizen ought to conduct himself in service to the city.¹³ Thus forensic speeches frequently involve exposing unacceptable behaviors, including what one should and should not do with one's mouth. In this way they continue the trend established in other iambic settings, making use of the same or similar vocabulary and establishing familiar oppositions between types.

This insistent focus on oral activities may also arise from the fact that during this period the ongoing aggression directed at the territories and interests of Greek city-states by Philip and then Alexander highlighted the importance of the orator's role in maintaining the well-being and safety of his country.¹⁴ The contest between Demosthenes and Aeschines spanned a period in which Athens effectively lost its stature as a political and military counterweight to Macedonia; and neither leader's policies did much to impede Philip's and then Alexander's incursions.¹⁵ Indeed, although Demosthenes would eventually depict himself as Philip's peer (i.e., as Athens' sole leader and hero), his increasing insistence on a bellicose strategy may well have accelerated Athens' ultimate subjugation by Macedonia.¹⁶ The struggle between these orators thus cuts to the very heart of Athenian values, since their disputes concern the city-state's ability to survive the military and political onslaught of a greedy and insulting monarch. This is the primary reason, I submit, that so many sections of these speeches are devoted to character assassination. In this pressured environment, denigrating one's opponent's appetitive behaviors is paramount to exposing his counsel as immoral and misguided; both orators suggest that the future of Athenian dominance rests on pursuing the policies generated by the citizen with the most restraint and integrity. They repeatedly forge connections between the image of civic moderation and effective leadership, as if arresting greedy or craven behaviors would halt the advancing threat of the Macedonian forces.¹⁷

¹³ Again, cf. Hall 1995; Ober 1989: 141–48. Ober remarks, “The courtroom gave the speaker a greater opportunity to discuss himself and his opponent, and so arguments based on personal character (*ēthos*) could be developed in much greater detail” (147).

¹⁴ On the events that led up to the conflict between Demosthenes and Aeschines, see Sealey 1955, 1993: 102–59; Harris 1995: 63–89; Ryder 2000.

¹⁵ See Griffith 1979; Sealey 1993; Badian 1995; Harris 1995: 124–48.

¹⁶ The defeat of Athens at Chaeronea is one of the most obvious examples of mistaken strategy, although Yunis 2000 argues that Demosthenes' policies had been somewhat successful up to this point. Note that Demosthenes casts himself as a tragic hero in *On the Crown*, in order to offset the perception that his advice might have resulted in disaster for Athens.

¹⁷ Cf. Foucault (1985: 81): “Moderation understood as an aspect of dominion over the self, was on an equal footing with justice, courage, or prudence; that is, it was a virtue that qualified a man to exercise his mastery over others.”

At similarly momentous junctures in the fifth century, this apprehension is played out on the dramatic stage; and there we also see oral imagery repeatedly coming to the fore. While the parameters of dramatic enactment are clearly quite distinct from those of the speaker's podium, in Athenian tradition these spheres shared a significant number of conventions.¹⁸ Thus orators effectively performed themselves as noble characters and slandered their opponents; and while the differences between the speakers and these fabricated personas are more nebulous in oratory than in drama, we should not be distracted by realistic portraiture. Many of the things speakers claim about themselves and especially their opponents are exaggerated or wholly fictitious.¹⁹ Unlike in drama, however, in oratory determining the true character and motivations of the speaker is profoundly important to the process of political decision-making. Both Demosthenes and Aeschines seem to understand that during the years in which they contended, such decisions involved the future of Athenian and perhaps even Greek autonomy. This meant that how they and their fellow orators conducted themselves in public speechmaking, and indeed in relation to other oral activities, was of paramount importance. Demosthenes' imagery in particular suggests that the Macedonian crisis made it imperative that one open one's mouth on behalf of the right causes, and equally important that one not shout down opponents who may be on the side of good. Whether or not he himself actually followed this mandate is less clear.²⁰

The speeches considered here do not, of course, revolve around the abusive imagery explored in the sections that follow. Since many respond to the Macedonian threat, most of the orators involved in policy-making around and especially diplomacy with Macedonia were accused at one time or another of deceiving the populace and taking bribes. Thus by the end of the fourth century these two failings in particular came to be associated with public speakers quite generally, and everyone accused everyone else of being marked by such intemperate behaviors. The insulting depictions of opponents frame in important ways crucial questions about Athenian foreign policy, but they do not necessarily reveal very much about what actually happened at specific points in its unfolding. I aim to highlight how the abusive language deployed by these orators, especially that of Demosthenes, imports into a setting of momentous political deliberation an iambic discourse that had a significant impact on that deliberation.

¹⁸ Cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1403b–1404a, and see further in ch. 6.

¹⁹ This is in contrast to the assumptions of many historians, who frequently treat orator's claims about their own or their opponents' characters and backgrounds as if they were facts (e.g., Dyck 1983; Fox 1994). But cf. Pearson 1976: 111; Hall 1995; Harding 1987; Buckler 2000: 114–15; Harris 1995: 7–16.

²⁰ See, e.g., Wankel 1976; Harding 1987.

This direct political deployment of iambic language appears to have been unprecedented in Athenian public arenas. Insofar as earlier scholars have recognized this “scurrilous” language as character assassination, they have regarded it as presaging the degradation of oratorical techniques.²¹ It is all the more disturbing that Demosthenes, considered from antiquity to have been the greatest Attic orator, is a master of the craft. I would suggest, however, that he found appropriating such comic techniques particularly useful, as a means of offsetting his own *prim persona*. His bold, roguish vocabulary made it possible for him to charge his opponents with all kinds of excesses while simultaneously promoting his own restrained and careful type. Demosthenes’ reputed lack of vocal power may also have contributed to his tendency to cast his opponents as loud-mouthed and voluble.

In the sections that follow I first consider the ways in which fourth-century speeches malign certain types of professional talkers and other creatures of excess, and then turn to the conflict between Aeschines and Demosthenes. Although some of the abusive vocabulary used by Demosthenes and other orators is rather generalizing and thus not very helpful in exposing particular behaviors, much of it is precise and vibrant. It thus transfers to the political arena an abuse of the citizen’s body in action like that found on the comic stage. And while the oratorical usage is far less obscene than that of old comedy, the presence of such vocabulary in these fourth-century speeches indicates that it retained its resonance within the common idiom, since otherwise it would have been of little persuasive use to orators. Thus the deployment of comic vocabulary inevitably would have called to mind for audience members familiar comic types, whether these registered as types inhabiting the dramatic stage, downtown Athens, or both. Further, the orators’ importation of this vocabulary suggests that the success of a leader’s policies was necessarily tied to his public deportment, perhaps especially to his oral activities. Money hunger, gluttony, over-imbibing, and rapacious talk tend to go together in these depictions, and the too obviously greedy speaker cannot hope to win his private cases nor support for his public proposals.

DEMOSTHENES AGAINST THE LOUD-MOUTHS

In the extant speeches from the fifth and fourth centuries, defamation of character centers on excessive behaviors of different sorts, particularly evidence of insolence and personal greed.²² As techniques of character

²¹ See Bruns 1896: 572–79; Burke 1972; Pearson 1976: 80–III; Wankel 1976.

²² Cf., e.g., Lys. 14, 24; Ps.-Andoc. *Alcib.*; Aeschin. 3; Dem. 18, 21, 54; Din. *Dem.*; Hyp. *Dem.*

assassination developed the negative side of *ēthopoia* (one of Lysias' most influential contributions to forensic technique), certain adjectives turn up repeatedly. Thus by the mid fourth century the abusive vocabulary that demarcates the boundaries of iambic discourse becomes more prominent in oratorical usage. Some of this vocabulary is quite common in praise genres (e.g., tragedy), and thus constitutes the outer edge of insult speech, where it overlaps with shocked expressions of moral outrage. One's target may be terribly skillful (*deinos*), for example, often in relation to speaking ability or general cleverness; he is also often insolent (*hubristēs*), shameless (*anaidēs*), and base (*ponēros*).²³ Oratory shows concern about the target as well: the citizen who exhibits a taste for groveling in the service of luxury and is frequently deemed a panderer (*kolax*) or an *aischrokerdēs* – one who goes after shameful kinds of gain. Greed (*pleonexia*) may also come into play here, but usually in characterizing aggressive rather than weak types.²⁴

When the opponent is known as an orator, it appears to be especially important to suggest that he is an overly prepared, subtle speaker.²⁵ Such attributions highlight the confluence of sophistry and deception that Odysseus embodies in the larger tradition: a professional speaker is by necessity a fabricator, someone who molds circumstances and personas to suit the occasion.²⁶ Thus speakers (or their logographers) may work to present themselves as simple and straightforward and their opponents as impulsive and emotional, calling attention to their own lucid, plain approaches and

²³ Again, the charge of being *deinos* or engaging in *deina* activities is common in the dramatic and oratorical texts, especially in relation to speaking ability (e.g., δεινὸς λέγειν: Aeschin. 3.174; cf. E. *Tro.* 968, fr. 442 R; S. *OT* 545, *Phil.* 440, *OC* 806; Lys. 12.86; Dem. 20.146, *Exord.* 32.1; Pl. *Ap.* 17b1–4). See North 1988; Ober 1989: 170–71. The same is true of calling someone *ponēros* or declaring that he engages in *ponēria* (e.g., Aeschin. 1.11, 30, 48, 2.51, 99, 165–66, 3.75, 99, 172–73; Dem. 21.2, 98, 172, 24.6, 25.45, 29.42, 35.1, 7, 40, 42; Din. *Dem.* 3, 91, 103, 108; *Phil.* 1, 18). Shamelessness (*anaideia*) comes up almost as often (e.g., Aeschin. 1.71, 105, 184, 189, 2.150, 3.1; Dem. 8.68 [disavowal], 21.109, 117, 22.47, 56, 25.9, 27, 34.68, 35.25, 35, 40–41; Ps-Andoc. *Alcib.* 17; Din. *Phil.* 3, 16), as does *hubris* (Aeschin. 1. 108, 116, 141, 188, 2.4 [disavowal], 8, 157 [disavowal], 3.94; Dem. 21.1, 143, 148, 22.63, 4.50, 35.25, 35). I should note that Demosthenes' characterization of Philip shares some traits with his bolder opponents (e.g., *hubris*, *aselgia*, *alazoneia*); see further below. The charge of *panourgia* also occurs (e.g., Dem. 30.24, 35.16; cf. Worman 1999).

²⁴ *Kolakeia*: Aeschin. 2.113; Dem. 11.76 (disavowal), 45.65, 66; Ps. Andoc. *Alcib.* 16; Din. *Dem.* 28, 31. *Aischrokerdeia*: Dem. 29.4; Din. *Dem.* 21, 108, *Arist.* 6. *Pleonexia*: Aeschin. 3.94; Dem. 10.2, 22.56; Ps.-Andoc. *Alcib.* 13; Din. *Dem.* 40. The *kolax* shares features with the sycophant (*sukophantēs*), with the difference that the former is more straightforwardly a groveler after gain. The latter term, in contrast, spans behaviors from pettifogging to more aggressive types of mischief that were actionable (e.g., giving false testimony, bribe-taking; cf. Aeschin. 1.1, 3, 20, 2.5, 66, 145 [etc.], 3.64, 172, 231; Dem. 18.95, 113, 121, 212 [etc.], 19.98). See Ribbeck 1883 and further in chs. 4 and 6.

²⁵ E.g., Aeschin. 2 and 3 *passim*; Dem. 18 and 19 *passim*, 52.1; Hyp. *Lyc.* 19. See Ober 1989: 174–77 and further discussion below.

²⁶ Cf. Worman 1999 and further discussion in ch. 1.

projecting their enemies' styles as fulsome and bold.²⁷ The simple type with his common speech frequently opposes the polish that marks the tactics of the practiced professional – a potentially damaging contrast for which well-known orators worked hard to compensate.²⁸

Demosthenes makes frequent use of the terms attached to bold, shameless types, sometimes clearly connecting them to particular excesses and especially oral behaviors. His references to professionalism are usually disavowals, as one might expect, and he regularly charges his opponents with clever lying.²⁹ He also includes other insults that highlight oral inclinations, as I discuss further in the sections that follow. His most vibrant attacks are reserved for types opposite his own, so that his insults tend to be ranged on one end of the continuum. Thus aggressive, loud, and violent speakers receive most of his attention; and he often represents himself as extraordinarily controlled, modest, and careful in contrast. He depicts Meidias, for example, as violent and insolent, while the orator Androtion is shameless and bold. Such attributes precisely oppose the restrained character Demosthenes encourages his audiences to see him as. The portraits of these men conform to a certain extent with that constructed over a period of fifteen years in the speeches against Aeschines, although it is important to note that each occupies a particular place on the scale that runs from the timid, precise speaker to the audacious loud-mouth. Aeschines falls somewhere near the latter end of this scale: he is voluble and booming but also overly practiced and artful. Because of this artfulness he poses a unique threat to Demosthenes' ascendancy. Meidias and Androtion, in contrast, are bold haranguers and big talkers who combine physical excess with aggressive verbiage and whose public profiles are clearly distinct from that of Demosthenes.

In order to demonstrate the consistency of the patterns by which Demosthenes organizes his defamatory vocabulary, I review his attacks on these less challenging opponents and look at other orators' use of defamation of him and one other important figure (Alcibiades). As I have mentioned, among contemporaneous speeches the iambic usage of Demosthenes is the most coherent and developed. His deployment of this insulting vocabulary dominates the genre during this period, and his techniques usher in

²⁷ E.g., *Lys.* 1 and *Dem.* 23, 24 vs. *Dem.* 22 and *Ps.-Andoc. Alcib.*

²⁸ A clear example of this technique is *Dem.* 22.4, where Demosthenes represents his client Diodorus as a simple, just man facing a deceiving professional (see further below). Cf. *Dem.* 18.21–22 regarding the hiring of orators to say good things about bad people; also 21.189–91, where he counters the image of the polished orator with that of the careful man.

²⁹ E.g., *Dem.* 18.95, 121; 22.4, 70; 50 *passim*; 52.1. Aeschines says the same of him (*Aeschin.* 2.153, 3.99, 137), as does Dinarchus (*Dem.* 66, 91, 92, 110).

an awareness of the efficacy of well-honed defamation of the opponent's character. Such techniques, again, arise out of an increasing emphasis on the putative match between the moderate citizen and good public policy, as Philip poses an increasing menace to Athens and a few powerful orators come effectively to control the city.

Big talkers: Meidias and Androtion

When facing the prominent orator Androtion earlier in his career (357–354 BC), Demosthenes employs defaming language that centers on his opponent's speaking style. At the time of the speech Androtion had been active in Athenian politics for thirty years and studied oratory with Isocrates (cf. 22.4, 66).³⁰ He is thus a formidable adversary, especially given that this was Demosthenes' first forensic speech on a public matter. He wrote it for Diodorus, one of the men prosecuting Androtion on a public indictment (*graphē paranomōn*), the "counts" of which included not only introducing an illegal proposal but also mishandling public monies, leading a dishonorable life, and failing to pay his father's debt to the city.³¹ Since Demosthenes was merely the speechwriter (*logographos*) in this case, his insulting profile of the orator probably contrasts not so much with his own as with his client's persona. Little is known about Diodorus, however; and the themes that are sounded are very familiar from other speeches in which Demosthenes himself is the prosecutor or defendant. As a speechwriter he engages in defamation that highlights his client's moderation and simplicity, which suggests that Diodorus was at the least known neither for the kinds of excesses depicted of Androtion nor for sophisticated arguments. The speech thus follows along lines familiar from other Demosthenic portraits, but with added emphasis on the deception and cleverness associated with orators.

Demosthenes declares that his opponent will have nothing simple or just to say (ἀπλοῦν μὲν οὐδὲ δίκαιον οὐδέν), but will instead attempt the fabrication, deception, and maliciousness (ἐξαπατᾶν δ' ὑμᾶς πειράσεται πλάττων καὶ παράγων πρὸς ἕκαστα τούτων κακούργους λόγους) of one who is a "word technician" (τεχνίτης τοῦ λέγειν, 22.4). While this is a typical slur used against professional speakers, it also suggests that deception is a technique unique to the brash, violent speaker, a combination

³⁰ Sealey 1955; Badian 2000: 20–24. For his connection to Isocrates, see Suidas Ἀνδροτίων; also a scholium on 22.4 (ἔστι γὰρ οὗτος τῶν Ἰσοκράτους μαθητῶν ἐπίσημος).

³¹ See Wayte 1979: xxvi–xxvii.

of effects familiar from the portraits of Odysseus in fifth-century drama.³² Not only is Androtion shameless and bold; he is also a thief and arrogant (ἀναιδέῃ καὶ θρασὺν καὶ κλέπτῃν καὶ ὑπερήφανον, 47).³³ He is thus given to boasting (ἀλαζονεία, 47) and harangues (δημηγορίαι, 47–48) like an aggressive demagogue from old comedy.³⁴ Moreover, again like the comic demagogue, he exhibits obnoxious traits (βδελυρία, 52, 59, 66), behaves greedily (πλεονεκτικῶς, 56), and insults others while in his cups (ὕβρισθη κάπαρωνῆθη, 63).³⁵ As a bold and clever talker (θρασὺς καὶ λέγειν δεινός, 66) he is also much like the marketplace huckster that Theophrastus would later isolate as a type (i.e., the *agoraios* man, *Char.* 6): he attacks people in the agora, bawls from the platform (βοῶν . . . ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος, 68), and plays the cheat (ἐφενάκιζε, 70).³⁶ The speech that Demosthenes himself delivered soon after against Androtion's associate Timocrates reiterates this picture of the orator, but with more emphasis on his loud, aggressive tactics. There he and his companion rhetors shout, foment, and insult when they are faced in the assembly with their wrongs (ἐβόων, ἡγανάκτουν, ἐλοιδοροῦντο, 24.13). Later he declares that the jury ought to hate such men, and not even put up with the sound of their voices (φωνή, 24.175).

Demosthenes' accusation of Meidias (348–346 BC) exhibits a more developed deployment of vocabulary that mocks obnoxious types, although with less focus on verbal extravagance. The speech is contemporaneous with Aeschines' prosecution of Timarchus, another citizen with a public persona vulnerable to being exposed for his excesses. Like that speech, *Against Meidias* has received some attention for its caricaturish depiction of the accused and its emphasis on his putative deviance from cultural norms; but for the most part scholars have tended to focus on the details it offers about the *dikē hubreōs*.³⁷ It is also notable as an excessive response to a relatively

³² See Worman 1999, 2002a, and further in ch. 1.

³³ Note that Demosthenes invokes Solon's legislations as a touchstone for moderate behavior (22.25, 31–32), as does Aeschines repeatedly when prosecuting Timarchus (1.6–32). Demosthenes responds to this by insulting Aeschines in turn (see further below).

³⁴ Cf. Rowe 1966, who argues that Demosthenes' portrait of Aeschines in his speech on the crown similarly utilizes the comic trope of the boaster (*alazōn*); see also Dyck's (1985) objections.

³⁵ These traits are especially reminiscent of Paphlagon in Aristophanes' *Knights* (see the discussion in ch. 2). Cf. also comic usage (Ar. *Ach.* 90; *Eq.* 633; *Pax* 1087; *Ran.* 921; *Plut.* 271, 280).

³⁶ Demosthenes is particularly fond of the verb *phenakizō*, especially when arguing against well-known, voluble orators such as Aeschines, Androtion, and Aristocrates (e.g., 19.27, 29, 40, 42–43, 58, 66, 72, etc.; 22.6, 32, 34, 35, 70; 23.20, 107, 143–44, 158–59, 162, etc.). Like many other of Demosthenes' abusive terms, *phenakizō* and its cognates are comic in origin, and usually designate quackery; cf. Ar. *Ach.* 90, *Eq.* 633, *Pax* 1087, *Ran.* 921, *Plut.* 271, 280; Theop. Fr. 8 K, *Eir.* Fr. 2 M; Men. *Sam.* 315. For a discussion of the Theophrastus portrait, see ch. 6.

³⁷ In Aeschines' prosecution of Timarchus, the legislation concerns sexual practices, whereas the speech against Meidias addresses physical violence. Cf. MacDowell 1976; Gagarin 1979; Fisher 1992; Cohen 1995: 93–101.

trivial matter: Meidias, a wealthy citizen of some political prominence, apparently punched Demosthenes while he was in the theater, dressed in the ritual attire of the chorus master (*chorēgos*). Demosthenes entered a complaint (*probolē*) in the Assembly, and won support for bringing a suit against Meidias. Demosthenes settled out of court for a large sum of money but still found it necessary to publish the speech, which shows a high level of contrivance in its depiction of both the event and the enemy.³⁸ In it he tries to inflate this minor event into a capital offense, arguing that Meidias' violence should be treated as an attack on the state because he struck a functionary. The speech is important for our purposes not only because it revolves around the clear opposition between Demosthenes' character and that of his opponent, but also because it emphasizes the ties between the visible qualities of the moderate character and public acts that benefit the city.

The vocabulary Demosthenes employs to paint Meidias in the worst possible light reveals the speech's participation in iambic discourse, as well as oppositions between speaker's types found in other genres. Meidias is foremost a brutal, outrageous man; the first words of Demosthenes' speech point to the general awareness of these traits (Τὴν μὲν ἀσελγίαν . . . καὶ τὴν ὕβριν, 21.1). Demosthenes refers to him repeatedly as "obnoxious" (βδελυρός, 2, 98 [twice], 143, 151), as well as "bold" (θρασύς, 2, 98, 201). We might recall that labels such as these are used of lowbrow demagogues in Aristophanes, and of philosophers like Socrates in Aristophanes and Plato's dialogues.³⁹ Meidias is also a yeller and a threatener (βοῶν, ἀπειλῶν, 17; cf. 201), an abusive haranguer of everyone (ἀπειλεῖς πᾶσιν, ἐλάυνεις πάντας, 135), a voluble talker who slanders and shouts (λέγει, λοιδορεῖται, βοᾷ, 200; cf. 148).⁴⁰ He is "coarse" (μιαρός, 114, 117, 135) as well, again like the demagogues and Socratic types in Aristophanes.⁴¹ His public profile trumpets arrogance (137); like Alcibiades, he is a creature of excess but even worse in his lack of redeeming qualities (143–47). His love of luxury (τρυφή, 158) is matched by his tendency to boast (καταλαζονεύεται, 169).

In an explicit contrast between types, Demosthenes represents himself as moderate, kindly, and merciful (μέτριος καὶ φιλόανθρωπός τις ἡμῶν

³⁸ Cf. Pearson 1976: 105–11; Ober 1989: 209–11.

³⁹ E.g., *Ar. Eq.* 134, 193, 252, 304–05; *Ar. Nub.* 445–46; *Pl. Resp.* 338d3; *Hi. Mai.* 298a5–7; *Tht.* 196d3, 197a4–6. The latter situation is more anomalous, as is discussed in chapter 4. Cf. also Dem. 54, where abusive language and physical attack are similarly joined.

⁴⁰ Among the orators, *legō* may be used negatively, i.e., to connote talking too much or telling a tale (cf. e.g., Dem. 36.50).

⁴¹ E.g., *Ar. Eq.* 125, 218, 239, 304–05; *Nub.* 450, 1332, 1465; *Vesp.* 39, 342, 900. Cf. again Bourdieu's (1991: 86–87) description of the gapping maw of the coarse talker in popular French discourse.

πολλούς ἐλεῶν), while Meidias is the reverse: shameless, insolent, and given to treating everyone around him like beggars (ἀναιδής καὶ πολλοὺς ὑβρίζων καὶ τοὺς μὲν πτωχοὺς . . . ὑπολαμβάνων εἶναι) (185). Moreover, this rude man's emotional, voluble, and debased style (ὀδυρεῖται καὶ πολλοὺς λόγους καὶ ταπεινοὺς ἔρει, 186) contrasts sharply with Demosthenes' restraint. "I do not have children," he declares, "nor would I have them here as supports to weep and wail about the violence I suffered" (ἐμοὶ παιδί' οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδ' ἂν ἔχοιμι ταῦτα παρασθησάμενος κλάειν καὶ δακρύνειν ἐφ' οἷς ὑβρίσθην, 187, cf. 204). Indeed, Meidias' aggressive talk should make tears laughable (γελοῖα, 194). Not only does he think highly of himself (μέγα φρονῶν), he also talks at high volume (μέγα φθεγγόμενος) (201). By means of such imagery, Demosthenes incrementally constructs a portrait of Meidias as loud, boastful, violent, and even bestial; a poisonous politician, he has venom and rancor in his heart (τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πικρίαν καὶ κακόνειον, 204).⁴²

Demosthenes thus appears as a pious, upstanding citizen who is shocked by such brutality. He repeatedly highlights the fact that Meidias punched him while he was dressed up to fulfill his citizen's duty; and he ties this image of formal deportment to his role as rhetor. For instance, he claims that the Athenian assembly raised an uproar (θόρυβον, 216) when they thought he might take a bribe rather than prosecute Meidias.⁴³ Demosthenes depicts himself as so startled by this massive roar that he dropped his cloak, appearing before his fellow citizens "almost naked" (μικροῦ γυμνόν, 216). This visible vulnerability emphasizes his typically formal, restrained, and august deportment as opposed to that of his opponent, whose vocal tone and gestures (καὶ φωνὴν καὶ τὸ σὸν σχῆμα) parallel his boldness (θρασύτητα) and insolence (ὑβριν) (195). The moment is thus of a piece with the repeated underscoring of the fact that he was attacked while in ritual dress, taking care of the city's business in a different but parallel sphere. Just as he suffered insult to his office from the violent Meidias, so in assembly he is startled into dropping his cloak – the orator's visible sign of probity – by the roar of the crowd.⁴⁴

Correlatively, Demosthenes imagines that he might be charged with being an orator (ρήτωρ, 189), a label he accepts as long as it designates one

⁴² Recall Odysseus' type (S. *Phil.* 631–32) and cf. Ar. *Eg.* 198 (where the "stupid, blood-drinking serpent" [δράκοντα κοάλεμον αἱματοπότην] symbolizes the demagogue in waiting), as well as Aeschin. 2.99 (Ἄργος), Ps.-Dem. 25.52 (ὥσπερ ἔχις), and Hyp. Fr. B 19.80 (τοὺς ρήτορας ὁμοίους τοῖς ὄφεισι). See also nn. 59 and 141 below. On the vilification of Meidias and others like him, Pearson (1976: 111) remarks, "There is something highly conventionalized about the various character sketches in this rogue's gallery."

⁴³ See MacDowell 1989 *ad loc.* ⁴⁴ Cf. Aeschin. 1.26; Dem. 19.251.

who counsels the city well and is not a bully (μηδὲν ὑμῖν ἐνοχλεῖν μηδὲ βιάζεσθαι). He also does not deny that he devised his speech with care and preparation (ἔσκεμμένα καὶ παρεσκευασμένα πάντα λέγω νῦν, 191), a common charge made of polished orators.⁴⁵ This is as opposed to Meidias, who, he claims, has never given a thought to the just cause (δίκαιον εἰκὸς ἔστιν, 192). Demosthenes concludes his attack on Meidias in a similar vein, declaring that his enemy's actions are so brutal that prosecuting him would provide a lesson in prudence for others (τοὺς ἄλλους σωφρονίσει, 227).

Greedy rogues and shameless sophists: Aphobus, Apollodorus, Lacritus

Other speeches support this general pattern. Demosthenes consistently depicts himself as retiring, ashamed to brag, and prudent, an image that he hones in both court cases and later in the Assembly. His opponents tend to be loud, boastful, greedy mischief-makers. He makes use of this contrast at the outset of his career in his third speech against Aphobus, the guardian who he claims robbed him of his patrimony (364 BC). Highlighting his young man's modesty, he says that he would shrink (κατώκνουσιν) from speaking if he thought some tale (λόγου τινοῦ) or verbal ornament (ποικιλίας) were needed for arguing the case (29.1). He also characterizes Aphobus as basely greedy and coarse (αἰσχροκερδεῖας . . . καὶ μιαρίας, (4), as well as deceitful and worthless (*ponēros*) (cf. 29.42).

Similarly, in the speech written for the defense of the former slave Phormio (36), Demosthenes depicts his accuser Apollodorus as a coarse man (τῷ μιαρῷ τούτῳ ἀνθρώπῳ) whose success in court would set a shameless (αἰσχρόν) precedent – that of capitulating to the greed of obnoxious sycophants (βδελυροῖς καὶ συκοφάνταις) (36.58). Moreover, Apollodorus' account should be looked upon as all talk and trumpery (λόγον καὶ συκοφαντίας, 60). He is given to slander and insult (βλασφημίας λέγει καὶ κακολογῆ); the speaker warns the jury not to be misled by his use of yelling and shamelessness (μηδ' ὑμᾶς ἢ τούτου κραυγῆ καὶ ἀναίδει' ἔξαπατήσῃ, 61).

Compare also the speech against Lacritus (35), another student of Isocrates whom Demosthenes (in the role of logographer) depicts as embodying the excesses of the bold sophist. The speech was written for Androcles, a merchant who accuses Lacritus of cheating him on a business deal. While it still adheres to the general opposition outlined above, the speech leans more heavily on the image of the mercenary, dissembling

⁴⁵ Cf. Ober 1989: 170–74.

sophist, an emphasis that befits a plainspoken man of business. Lacritus, his brothers Artemo and Apollodorus, and all their kind (the “Phaselites”⁴⁶) are portrayed as fabricating sophisms and excuses (σοφίσματα εὐρίσκουσι καὶ παραγραφὰς καὶ προφάσεις) instead of adhering to their contracts, since they are the most worthless and unfair men (πονηρότατοι ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἄδικώτατοι) (35.2). With his fine oratorical training, Lacritus speaks with “amazing persuasiveness” (λόγους θαυμασίως ὡς πιθανούς, 16) while the brothers quickly grab all the money for themselves. Like so many other excessive swaggerers in the agora, they exhibit insolence and shamelessness (ὑβριν καὶ τὴν ἀναίδειαν), considering the agreement that they made with Androcles “stuff and nonsense” (ῥθλον καὶ φλυαρίαν) (25, cf. 35). We might note that the speaker’s *oratio obliqua* indicates these merchants’ ties to iambic talk, and especially to bold, aggressive sophists. This is the language that Callicles and Thrasymachus use in Platonic dialogues, to characterize Socrates’ casual, chattering style; it is also comic vocabulary and thus points to the speakers’ lowbrow types.⁴⁷

Other familiar comic labels such as “coarse” (*miaros*) and “obnoxious” (*bdeluros*) surface as well. Lacritus and his brother are charged with concocting a “deed more coarse” (πρᾶγμα μιαιώτερον, 35.26) than the speaker has ever come across, as well as with being themselves especially coarse (μιαρώτατοι, 52). The jury is urged to learn about their obnoxiousness and mendacity (τὴν βδελυρίαν . . . καὶ τὴν ψευδολογίαν, 32). Thus the charges of deceit and sophistry bind all of these more common labels to oral activities. Lacritus and his brothers are deemed “mischief-making sophists and unjust men” (κακοῦργοι σοφισταὶ καὶ ἄδικοι ἄνθρωποι, 39, cf. 56). The speaker acknowledges that it may well be all right for Lacritus to study with Isocrates, but not if he thereby plays the part of a worthless sophist (πονηροῦ . . . σοφιστοῦ) (40–41). Indeed, sophistic argument is tied directly to swindling, since it is this ability that supposedly facilitates the brothers’ shady business dealings (41–42).

The brutal, insolent monarch

Demosthenes’ confrontations with Philip hew quite close to this scheme, a similarity that reveals its general usefulness in both the courts and the

⁴⁶ The Phaselites were merchants from Asia Minor; Demosthenes’ negative depiction of their general character traits is at the least chauvinist and probably also racist. Since this kind of ethnic slur is not common in Demosthenes, it may be introduced in order to lend authenticity to the client’s self-presentation.

⁴⁷ See further in ch. 4.

Assembly.⁴⁸ Assembly speeches are generally shorter and more to the point; they thus do not usually engage in extended character assassination in the manner of forensic speeches. Nevertheless, even in debate Demosthenes makes succinct and pointed use of character contrasts and insult. In the first Philippic (4), for example, he describes the Macedonian ruler as having the brutality (ἀσελγείας) of a blusterer and a braggart (ἀπειλεί και λόγους ὑπερηφάνους . . . λέγει) (4.9). In keeping with details that recall other violent opponents, Philip also customarily insults (ὑβριζει) the Athenians. In the second Philippic (6) Demosthenes again highlights Philip's brutality, this time adding greed (ἀσελγεία και πλεονεξία, 6.2) to the litany of traits attached to excessive types. This is reiterated in the letter to Philip (II), where treachery, deceit, and violence emerge as other features of Philip's tactics (ἐξ ἐπιβουλήs και πλεονεξίας ἀπάτη και βία κατέχεται, II.7).

In the second Olynthiac (2), Demosthenes frames a fuller picture of Philip's debauchery with an emphasis on how he would look to a moderate man: "If someone prudent or otherwise fair could not bear the daily incontinence of his life, both the drunkenness and the comic dancing, he was pushed aside and treated as a nobody" (εἰ δέ τις σώφρων ἢ δίκαιος ἄλλως τὴν καθ' ἡμέραν ἀκρασίαν τοῦ βίου και μέθην και κορδακισμοῦs οὐ δυνάμενος φέρειν, παρεῶσθαι και ἐν οὐδενὸs εἶναι μέρει τὸν τοιοῦτον, 2.18).⁴⁹ Demosthenes adds that Philip's court is full of "robbers and grubbers" (ληστὰs και κόλακας), who themselves drink to excess and dance in such ways that he, the restrained Demosthenes, shrinks from naming (οἶ ἔγῶ νῦν ὀκνῶ πρὸs ὑμᾶs ὀνομάσαι) (19). In the speech on the dispute over the island Halonnesus (7), he declares that Philip is also shameless (ἀναιδήs, 7.33). More interestingly, here Demosthenes refines this portrait of excesses by honing in on Philip's relationship to democratic speech. He describes Philip as mocking (χλευάζει, 7.7) the Athenians when he claims that he is ready to arbitrate in the dispute over the island.⁵⁰ Later in the same speech Demosthenes puts the problem with negotiating with a monarch in a more direct and visceral manner: Philip, he says, would stop up

⁴⁸ The Philippics spanned a period of about 10 years, from early 351 to 342, and overlap with the period in which Aeschines and Demosthenes were in conflict over Macedonian policy. It should thus not be surprising that Demosthenes' speeches show some consistency in the way in which he assigns Philip to the category of brutal, decadent boaster and associates his type with Aeschines'. Cf. Halliwell 1991: 289–90 and further below. See also Wooten 1983 on Cicero's use of Demosthenes' techniques.

⁴⁹ On the comic dance (*kordax*) as a metonymy for intemperate behavior, see below and in ch. 6.

⁵⁰ This verb and its cognates may also be comic in origin (cf. Crat. fr. 70 A; Ar. *Ran.* 375; Anax. fr. 34 K; Epicr. frs. 11 K, 1 M; Men. *Epir.* 432).

Athenian mouths (ἐπιστομειῖν ἡμᾶς, 33), effectively buying silence from his opponents.

In contrast to this cumulative portrait of the aggressive ruler, Demosthenes represents himself as a model of restraint and decorum. In the speeches that respond to the ongoing conflict with Philip, he repeatedly distances himself from traits that might be easily attached to orators. For instance, in the second Philippic, he declares that he will speak openly, indulging in neither abuse (λοιδορίαν) like a loud mouth nor chatter (ἄδολεσχῶ) like an idler (6.31–32). In the letter to Philip, Demosthenes maintains that he speaks the truth freely in simple goodwill (ταῦτ' ἔστι τὰ ληθῆ κε τὰ πάσης παρρησίας, ἀπλῶς εὐνοίᾳ), not forging a speech “stuffed with the pandering that comes from mischief or deceit” (οὐ κολακεία βλάβης καὶ ἀπάτης λόγος μεστός) (11.76). In *On the Peace* he claims that he shrinks (ἀποχυνῶ) from self-praise, even though it is obviously profitable to those who are so bold as to make use of it (λυσιτελούντων τοῖς τολμῶσιν). Nevertheless, he says, he finds it vulgar and offensive (φορτικόν καὶ ἐπαχθές) (5.4). He also opposes the tricks (φενაკισμούς), deceptions (ἐξαπατήσας), and blather (ληρεῖν) of his opponents on the policy toward Philip to his own speaking out on behalf of the truth (10). In a masterful use of *paraleipsis*, he declares that although he is convinced of his own probity and far-sightedness, he will not make a boast (ἀλαζονείαν) about his cleverness (11).

Elsewhere it becomes clear that Demosthenes has also been accused of timidity, in both his person and his recommendations. In the speech on the Chersonese (8), he defends himself from charges of being undaring and soft (ἄτολμος . . . καὶ μαλακός) by opposing these traits to others with more negative valence. He declares that he is not bold, obnoxious, and shameless (θρασύς μὲν καὶ βδελυρὸς καὶ ἀναιδής), and deems himself more courageous than many (ἀνδρειότερον . . . πολλῶν) (8.68). Moreover, he does not brag of his benefits to the polis, nor accuse and bribe like other politicians (71). He also reverses the criticism that he has nothing but words to offer (ἔστι δ' οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ λόγοι τὰ παρ' ἑμοῦ, 73), claiming that this is precisely what one ought to look for from a good adviser of the people.⁵¹ Thus in the Assembly setting, Demosthenes' consistent opposition between Philip as the greedy, decadent tyrant and himself as the restrained, upright citizen directly promotes the idea that his moderation furnishes Athens with an effective defense against Philip's excesses.⁵²

⁵¹ Cf. Aeschin. 3.229; Ps.-Demad. *Dodek.* 51.

⁵² Note that Cicero's *Philippics* make more exaggerated use of the trope of oral excess and clearly employ a similar character profile. See below nn. 139, 180, and in the Epilogue.

The snappish dog: Aristogeiton

One further speech deserves mention in this context, if primarily for the familiarity of the defendant's iambic type. This is Demosthenes' first speech against Aristogeiton (25), which some scholars have regarded as pseudonymous because it is not very tightly argued and stoops to scurrilous characterization of the defendant.⁵³ We should recall, however, that Demosthenes is clearly happy to engage in outrageous defamation when it serves his purposes; it may well be the early canonization of Demosthenes that contributes to this sense that he would not have used such tactics. Dionysius of Halicarnassus calls this speech and its partner "unpleasant, vulgar, and crude" (ἀηδεῖς καὶ φορτικοὶ καὶ ἄγροικοὶ, *Dem.* 57), but Longinus considers the first one genuine (*De subl.* 27.3). For our purposes it is merely important that the speech seems to come from the same period and participate in the iambic discourse delineated in this discussion.

Commentators often point out that these speeches contain usage that is not found elsewhere in Demosthenes' corpus, and indeed some of the most colorful insults in all of Attic oratory turn up here. The character of Aristogeiton himself, moreover, is reminiscent of the tales told about Antisthenes "the Dog," the snappish follower of Socrates whose ideas apparently gave birth to Cynic philosophy.⁵⁴ Like him, Aristogeiton was apparently also called "the Dog"; in addition, the speech depicts him as a rude, bellicose orator, so that his style recalls Antisthenes' reputation for acerbity and insolent argumentativeness. Aristogeiton is also a debtor; Antisthenes was famously poor and frequently in debt. Thus his portrait would seem to echo a particular type from early iambos: the doggish, abusive outsider who is hungry and given to conflict.⁵⁵

The speech engages in defamatory vocabulary and images familiar from Demosthenes' speeches, but it takes this abuse much further. Aristogeiton, the speaker declares, heads the company of "beasts" (θηρία) that bring shame on the city.⁵⁶ His behavior is marked by boldness, shouting, false charges, sycophancy, and shamelessness (τόλμαν καὶ κραυγὴν καὶ ψευδεῖς αἰτίας καὶ συκοφαντίαν καὶ ἀναισχυντίαν) (25.9) – a veritable smorgasbord of obnoxious traits, all of which are most common to big talkers.⁵⁷

⁵³ So Schaefer 1858: 113–28 and Treves 1936: 252–58; but not Weil 1886: 287–99, Blass 1887, or Hansen (1976: 144–52), who argue for its authenticity.

⁵⁴ See further in ch. 4. ⁵⁵ Cf. the discussion in ch. 1.

⁵⁶ "Beast" (θηρίον) is a favorite label of Demosthenes' contemporary Dinarchus: cf. *Dem.* 50, *Arist.* 10, *Phil.* 19. Dinarchus is not considered an orator of great talent, and could possibly have written the Aristogeiton speeches (cf. Treves 1936: 252–58).

⁵⁷ Cf. προφάσεις πλάττων καὶ ψευδεῖς αἰτίας συντιθεῖς (25.28).

Moreover, in his bestial guise he resembles the aggressive interlocutors of Socrates, particularly the violent Thrasymachus, while his raucousness recalls the noisome Paphlagon in Aristophanes. As we might expect, he is depicted as especially belligerent and coarse; the charge of sycophancy recurs repeatedly (cf. 25.25, 37, 41, 45, 49, 63), as does the label *miaros* (28, 32, 41, 54, 58, 61). He is also obnoxious (βδελυρός, 27; cf. βδελυρία, 60), like the loud-mouths of comedy. And like Theophrastus' *agoraios* type he is reckless (ἀπρονενημένος, 32), as well as abusive and threatening (λοιδορούμενος καὶ διαβάλλων καὶ ὑπισχνούμενος, 36). He harangues (δημηγορεῖ, 42) like a bold demagogue, shouts and carries on theatrically in court (βοῶν καὶ κεκραγῶς καὶ ἰοῦ ἰοῦ, 47), and parades around the agora, slandering the demos (τὰς βλασφημίας ἃς κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν περιιών, 85).⁵⁸

So far this sounds similar to depictions of brutish, loud types in Demosthenes' other speeches, if a little excessive in its piling on of insults. As noted, the speech also contains bestial imagery, which suggests that a somewhat more brash defamation is underway. The speaker describes Aristogeiton as a kind of public predator: he spends his time in the marketplace, moving like a snake or scorpion with "stinger" at the ready (ὥσπερ ἔχῃς ἢ σκορπίος ἠρκῶς τὸ κέντρον, 25.52).⁵⁹ If he is a dog, he is not the good guardian of the demos that his associates claim (cf. κύων . . . τοῦ δήμου, 40); rather, he is the kind that fails to bite (δάκνειν) the wolves and consumes (κατεσθίειν) the sheep instead (40). The speaker also introduces an incident in which Aristogeiton, while in prison, chatted up a fellow prisoner and stole his purse (60). When the man accused him of the theft, he first tried to hit him and then bit off his nose (ἀπεσθίει τὴν ῥίνα τάνθρώπου, 61). Lest we miss that he engages in both figurative and literal cannibalism, his accuser twice deems him "bloodthirsty" (ὠμός, 63; ὠμότης, 84). The entire portrait recalls Aristophanes' depiction of Cleon in both *Knights* and *Wasps*: he is also a guard dog who claims to defend the city but in fact consumes his constituents, their life-blood, and his fellow demagogues.⁶⁰ Further, both depictions conform to Bakhtin's characterization of marketplace abuse: like

⁵⁸ See also below, βοῶν, συκοφαντῶν, ἀπειλῶν (49), language that recalls the description of Meidias and Androtion; and especially Demosthenes' description of Aeschines' theatrics (βοῶνθ' ὡς εἰσαγγελεῖ με καὶ γράφεται καὶ ἰοῦ ἰοῦ, 19.209) and marketplace haranguing (18.127, 19.314). See further discussion below.

⁵⁹ Again, cf. Hyperides fr. B 19.80: Orators are like snakes (τοὺς ῥήτορας ὁμοίους τοῖς ὄφεισι), all are hateful but some are harmful while others eat (κατεσθίειν) them. In Plato's *Euthydemus*, Socrates characterizes speechmakers as charmers of snakes and other vermin (290a1–2); cf. n. 141 below and discussions in chs. 1 and 4.

⁶⁰ Ar. *Eq.* 259–60, 691–701; 1014–29; *Vesp.* 672–77; 970–72. See further in ch. 2.

Cleon, Aristogeiton is an open-mouthed haranguer, ready to shout down, pummel, and gobble up his opponent.⁶¹

OTHER ORATORS AGAINST THE PANDERERS

In the extant speeches from the period spanning the late fifth century to the mid fourth, a somewhat similar pattern emerges, particularly in defaming portraits of prominent types such as Alcibiades and Demosthenes. Both Ps.-Andocides' speech on Alcibiades and Dinarchus' on Demosthenes depict their enemies in a manner that shares some features with that used by Demosthenes himself. The fact that some terms are thereby revealed as very general and not necessarily attached to loud-mouthed types presents some difficulties for my contention that, especially in his own depiction, Demosthenes' timid, prim demeanor usually contrasts sharply with the demeanors of his excessive enemies. As I argue above, the language of Demosthenes' contemporaries includes vocabulary that may attach to any professional speaker who seeks to shape Athenian policy (e.g., *ponēros*, *miaros*). Other terms are less flexible; certain attributes of the careful orator surface repeatedly in the abusive portraits of Demosthenes (i.e., those of an unmanly *kolax*), while a number of labels common to attacks on bold, loud types are generally absent (e.g., *bdeluros*, *alazōn*).⁶² Again, the tendency to deploy oppositional schemes is most prominent in the speeches of Demosthenes, which suggests that he makes more concerted use of the iambic tradition forged by old comedy. Nevertheless, a brief look at other orators' use of defamation should help to clarify how this abusive vocabulary is mapped in relation to speakers who exhibit traits less easy to categorize.

The versatile charmer

Although the sparse examples of fifth-century oratory suggest that defamation of character had yet to develop as a common persuasive technique, one notorious figure from the late fifth century does receive some abuse: Alcibiades. Readers of Thucydides will not be surprised, since even his

⁶¹ Cf. Bakhtin 1984: 199–203, 316–20.

⁶² One exception is Demades fr. 75, which deems Demosthenes *bdeluros*. But the entire portrait does not adhere very closely to Demosthenes' persona as he himself presents it, which conforms with the idea that the orators all seek to foist a general if somewhat fluid set of negative labels onto their opponents. Aeschines, for instance, calls Demosthenes a boaster in *Against Ctesiphon* (99, 101, 218, 256), which suits the nature of Aeschines' objections to Demosthenes being crowned (i.e., that he is reaching for something he does not deserve). Cf. further below.

measured portrait of this dashing politician suggests a general perception that he was a dangerous and excessive player in late fifth-century public life. The historian describes him as a luxury-lover whom the mass of Athenians feared because of his “lawlessness” in respect to both bodily and mental habits (φοβηθέντες γὰρ αὐτοῦ οἱ πολλοὶ τὸ μέγεθος τῆς τε κατὰ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα παρανομίας ἐς τὴν δίκαιαν καὶ τῆς διανοίας, 6.15.4).⁶³ In a causal connection that anticipates the defamatory claims of Demosthenes and Aeschines, Thucydides also argues that Alcibiades’ personal excess will lead to Athens’ ruin (ὅπερ καὶ καθεῖλεν ὕστερον τὴν τῶν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν, 6.15.3).

As a creature of many and varied attributes, Alcibiades eludes easy categorization.⁶⁴ In this he is like Socrates; while manifestly a very different sort than his would-be mentor, both figures complicate the schemes familiar for depicting more uniform types. Alcibiades differs from his teacher primarily in his love of excess; Plato famously depicts this inclination in the *Symposium*, where the drunken young man crashes the party and tries to make love to Socrates.⁶⁵ Elsewhere Alcibiades is consistently described as a charming decadent who has a flattering, passionate relationship with the demos, as if even his political activities necessarily possessed an erotic charge.⁶⁶ In this regard, his character shares features with softer, more effeminate types, because eros makes one weak and inclined to languid, idling activities.⁶⁷

One depiction also indicates additional excesses, however, and is also reminiscent of the Sausage Seller’s portrait in Aristophanes’ *Knights* in its clutch of offenses that run the gamut from brutality to pandering. In the speech against Alcibiades falsely attributed to (though probably contemporaneous with) the fifth-century orator Andocides, Alcibiades is portrayed as “most violent” (βιαιότιτος, 10), like the aggressive, haranguing Cleon.⁶⁸ In addition, Alcibiades exhibits traits common to loud-mouthed orators or lowbrow philosophers in that he is bold (τόλμησ) and shameless (ἀναίσχυντος) (17); the speaker also accuses his audience of secretly celebrating brutality (ἄσελγαίνοντας, 21) in their support of this villainous demagogue. But Alcibiades engages in flattering (κολακεύων, 16) the

⁶³ Again, cf. Foucault 1985: 78–93 on Athenian connections between the regulation of daily habits and good statesmanship.

⁶⁴ On Alcibiades’ character see de Romilly 1995; Gribble 1999; Wohl 2002: 124–58.

⁶⁵ For discussion of the vocabulary that distinguishes Alcibiades and Socrates, see further in ch. 4.

⁶⁶ E.g., Ar. *Ran.* 1425; Pl. *Alc.* 1 132a2–6; Plut. *Alc.* 24.5. Cf. Wohl 2002: 124–58.

⁶⁷ Cf. Plut. *Alc.* 1.4–7, 16.1. On Love’s effects, cf. Hom. *Il.* 3.441–46, 14.313–28; Sappho, frs. 2, 16, 94, 130 L-P; Alcaeus, fr. 347 W.

⁶⁸ Cf. Thuc. 3.36.

demos as well, while insulting individuals in private. In this he is like Theophrastus' dissembler (*eirōn*), a type usually allied with understated idlers like Socrates.⁶⁹ At the same point as he highlights Alcibiades' brutality, the speaker also claims that in imitation of him young Athenians spend all their time in the courts rather than the gymnasia (22, cf. 39), a charge that resembles those made against chatterers like Euripides in Aristophanes and Socrates in Plato.⁷⁰ Thus in his dashing, aggressive, and pandering persona, Alcibiades embraces both ends of the spectrum of negative characteristics that public speakers manifest. He is a preeminently versatile embodiment of excess, a profile that surfaces in all the portraits of his variegated type.⁷¹

The craven teller of tales

Pseudo-Andocides also attributes to Alcibiades such familiar traits as greed and arrogance (τὴν πλεονεξίαν καὶ τὴν ὑπερφανίαν, 13). In the speech against Demosthenes that his contemporary Dinarchus composed for an unknown orator almost a century later (323), the same charge of greed is made of the accused (40), since it alleges that he accepted a large bribe from the Macedonian noble Harpalus.⁷² Before exploring a few details of the speech, we might note that, since it concerns the taking of bribes, certain characteristics are likely to be highlighted more than others. Greed (*pleonexia*) would obviously be one of these. Others are traits more commonly attached to loud, aggressive types, such as having no care for shame (οὔτ' αἰσχύνῃς . . . μέλει, 48) and being bold enough to lie to the jury (ψεύδεσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς τολμῶν, 49). These features are not, however, dominant in the speech, perhaps because they do not conform very well to Demosthenes' familiar depictions of himself as a careful, restrained type. Further complicating the picture is the fact that Dinarchus repeatedly terms Demosthenes "repulsive" (*miaros*, 18, 21, 24, 50, 92, 95), a label that Demosthenes himself commonly uses of violent haranguers. Aeschines also calls Demosthenes *miaros*; when applied to him it seems to indicate a moral taint that emanates from his craven, mealy-mouthed behavior.⁷³

Other phrases and images align more easily with Demosthenes' reputation. Like Alcibiades, Demosthenes engages in pandering (κολλακεύειν, 31),

⁶⁹ See further in chapters 4 and 6.

⁷⁰ E.g., Ar. *Nub.* 1003, *Ran.* 1069–71; Pl. *Gorg.* 485d6–e2; cf. also Thphr. *Char.* 7.4.

⁷¹ Both Gribble 1999 and Wohl 2002 emphasize this aspect of Alcibiades. ⁷² Cf. Hyperides fr. 8.

⁷³ Some of the labels may thus change in significance when used by orators other than Demosthenes; see further below.

an activity often associated with glib, soft types.⁷⁴ There is one prominent image, moreover, that points quite precisely to where Demosthenes' persona parts ways with those of his louder opponents. While he is, like other prominent orators, deemed a "hireling" (μισθωτός, 28) and a demagogue (δημαγωγός, 31), Dinarchus also stresses that he is a tale-teller (*logopoios*). Not only does he parade around the agora fabricating stories (περιῶν οὔτος κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐλογοποιεῖ, 32); he also suborns other tale-tellers (κατασκευάζων λογοποιούς, 35). Dinarchus then connects Demosthenes' talent for *logopoia* to his putative effeminacy and love of luxury. He imagines him in a fey pose, traipsing around Athens dangling a letter to Philip from his fingertips (ἐκ τῶν δακτύλων ἀναψάμενος περιεπορεύετο) and luxuriating in the city's misfortunes (τρυφῶν ἐν τοῖς τῆς πόλεως κακοῖς) (36). Elsewhere in the tradition, tale-tellers are chattering, dissembling types often allied with poets; Theophrastus casts the *logopoios* as a glib word-monger, a would-be gossip who cannot resist making up his own stories rather than passing on those of others.⁷⁵

In keeping with this depiction, Dinarchus repeatedly claims that Demosthenes is a liar adept at rhetorical sleights of hand. While he sometimes employs standard terms for deception (e.g., ψεύδестhai, 48, 49; ἔξαπατῆσαι, 91, 110), he also declares that the court risks being "led astray by his wizardry" (παρακρουσθῆτε ὑπὸ τῆς τούτου γοητείας, 66; cf. 110). He further warns the jury not to give in to the whining and cheating (τοὺς οἴκτους καὶ τοὺς φενακισμούς) of this repulsive wizard (τοῦ μιανοῦ καὶ γόητος, 92; cf. γόης οὔτος . . . καὶ μιανὸς ἄνθρωπος, 95), thereby linking the image of the dissembling orator to that of the quack.⁷⁶ Aeschines also calls Demosthenes a wizard a number of times, as does the orator Demades.⁷⁷

Indeed, Demades represents Demosthenes as a figure like the "Lydian Stranger" in Euripides' *Bacchae*. A sorcerer (γόης) who wears effeminate garb, drags his cloak languidly behind him, and polishes his words (γυναικίζόμενος χλανίσι τῶν εὐσήμων καὶ σύρων τὸ ἱμάτιον καὶ φωνασκῶν), he shakes, rattles, and rolls through all Hellas (κυκᾷ, ταραττει, θορυβεῖ τὴν σύμπασαν Ἑλλάδα), stirring it up and choking off (φιμώσσειν)

⁷⁴ Cf. Demades fr. 89: κόλαξ, πού φησι, καὶ ἄνθρωπος καὶ γλώττης δυστήνους λόγους μελετῶν κακᾷ τε καὶ ταρασσει.

⁷⁵ Cf. Thuc. 6.38; Pl. *Euthd.* 289c7–e2, *Rep.* 378d3, 392a13, *Leg.* 636d1. Socrates uses *logopoios* to mean speechmakers or poets, which points to parallels between the activities of poets and speechwriters (*logographoi*). Oratorical texts suggest that speechwriters were suspect; cf. Ober 1989: 171–74; Worman 2002a: 37–38. For Theophrastus' characterization, see ch. 6.

⁷⁶ Cf. above, n. 36.

⁷⁷ Cf. Aeschin. 2.124, 3.137, 207; Dem. 18.276, 22.70.

dissent (fr. 75).⁷⁸ While aspects of this depiction are usually predicated of loud, grandiose demagogues (e.g., disrupting the country⁷⁹), Demosthenes' effeminate dress and deportment as well as his word polishing suit the affected persona that others attribute to him.⁸⁰ More than this, the portrait indicates that an orator perceived as having too compelling an affect on the mass of citizens could be represented with some conviction as a violent magician deploying the dangerously enchanting techniques associated with the god of the theater.

That said, Demades had a reputation as a glutton, as well as for being a rough-and-ready speaker who deemed the *bēma* his teacher.⁸¹ Similarly, Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that people called Dinarchus a “crude Demosthenes” (ἄγροικόν τινες Δημοσθένην ἔφασαν), while Hermogenes dismissed him with a comparable emphasis on rural roughness, calling him a “barley Demosthenes” (κρίθινος Δημοσθένης).⁸² Demades was, moreover, apparently unapologetic about his greed; the Macedonian general Antipater dismissed him as nothing but tongue and stomach (μηδὲν ἔτι λοιπὸν ἢ τὴν γλῶσσαν εἶναι καὶ τὴν κοιλίαν).⁸³ Even speeches attributed to Demades follow a pattern of opposing his appetitive type to Demosthenes' more wordy sort. In the speech *On the Twelve Years*, for example, Ps.-Demades describes Demosthenes as a “bitter sycophant” (πικρὸς συκοφάντης) who “debases the subject by twisting it with his cleverness” (διαστρέφων τὸ

⁷⁸ See Eur. *Bacch.* 453–60; Eph. fr. 19 K-A. Plutarch says that Alcibiades' son also paraded around dragging his cloak in imitation of his father (Plut. *Alcib.* 1–7; cf. 16.1). Aristotle considers this affectation evidence of *malakia* (NE 1150b1–5), but Demosthenes also describes Aeschines as swirling his cloak about his ankles as a sign of swaggering arrogance (Dem. 19.314), as does Eupolis in his parody of this deportment (ἐν τοῖν σφυροῖν ἔλκοντα τὴν στρατηγίαν, fr. 104 K-A). Cf. Wohl 2002: 133. Note also that in Plato *Meno* playfully charges Socrates with being a magician when he confounds him in argument (Pl. *Meno* 80a2–3, 80b6; cf. *Hi. Min.* 371a3, *Symp.* 203d8); cf. the discussion in ch. 4. See also de Romilly 1979 and Parry 1992 on oratory's connection to sorcery.

⁷⁹ See also *passim* in Ar. *Eq.* for the vocabulary of disturbance in relation to Paphlagon-Cleon (*tarattein*, 66, 214, 251, 358, 431, 692, 840, 867, 902; *kukan*, 251) as well as the “Olympian” at *Ach.* 531 (ἠστραπτῆ, ἔβροντα, ξυνεκύκα τὴν Ἑλλάδα). On this profile of the “disturbing” politician, cf. Edmunds 1987.

⁸⁰ E.g., Aeschin. 1.126, 131, 2.99, 127 (and further discussion below); cf. Demetr. frs. 165–68; Plut. *Dem.* 6.4–5, 8.3, 10.1, 11.1; Aul. Gell. *Att. Noct.* 1.5.1.

⁸¹ Cf. de Falco 1954: 13–14; also Ps.-Demades *Dodek.* 8, where he states, “I did not put my effort into lawsuits and the occupation of speechwriting, but on speaking freely from the platform” (οὐκ εἰς δίκας καὶ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς λογογραφίας ἐργασίαν ἔθηκα, ἀλλ' εἰς ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος παρησίαν).

⁸² DH *Din.* 8; Herm. *Peri Id.* B 384 W. Dionysius explains, “Crudeness of the political body differed not in form, but in preparation and a certain arrangement of form” (τὸ γὰρ ἄγροικον τοῦ πολιτικοῦ σώματος οὐ μορφῆ, κατασκευῆ δὲ καὶ διαθέσει τινὶ τῆς μορφῆς διήνεγκεν). It may also be relevant to observe that in *krithisnos* there may be a pun on *kriithē* (slang for penis) and/or *Kriithōn*, a comic name; cf. Henderson 1975 [1991]: 119–20.

⁸³ Quoted in Plut. 5.525c7 (*de Cupiditate Divitiarum*); Demad. fr. 71 de Falco. Cf. Ar. *Birds*, where Gorgias is called one of the “tongue-stomach” men (ἐγγλωπτογαστῶρων, *Av.* 1699–1702); and see further in ch. 2.

πρᾶγμα τῆ δεινότητι τῶν ῥημάτων διέβαλεν, 33). Later he deems him a “little man composed of syllables and tongue” (ὁ Δημοσθένης ἀνθρωπάριον ἐκ συλλαβῶν καὶ γλώσσης συγκείμενον, 51). While the fact that the speech is not only probably pseudonymous but also difficult to date might raise questions as to whether it should be considered together with other speeches from the period, it nevertheless participates in a reception of the orators that underscores contrasts between their types. Demades may be all tongue and stomach because he is greedy, but Demosthenes is all words and tongue because he is a “twister” and a babbler.⁸⁴

A significant variation on this opposition between types exposes another aspect of Demosthenes’ persona. The orator Hyperides, whom tradition credits with great urbanity in both his social habits and his verbal style, emphasizes Demosthenes’ repressive attitude toward wine drinking. A handful of these references survive in quotation. In a citation from Priscian, Hyperides declares of Demosthenes, “You insult and slander [the young], calling them wine-gulpers” (ὑβριζεις καὶ ἐλοιδοροῦ ἀκρατοκώθωνας ἀποκαλῶν, 18.235). In the *Deipnosophists*, Athenaeus also quotes Hyperides as criticizing Demosthenes’ repressive attitudes toward wine consumption: “If someone drank rather excessively it would irritate you” (εἰ μὲν τις ἀκρατέστερον ἔπιεν ἐλύπει σε, 10.424d). Hyperides apparently deemed Demosthenes “unmanly” (ἄνδρος, Photius p. 116, 22), which suggests a further opposition between such masculine indulgences and Demosthenes’ prim behavior. Hyperides’ emphasis on wine drinking invokes the elite institution of the symposium, in which context Demosthenes’ restraint would also underscore his failure to adhere to traditional mandates for the sanctioned excesses of manly rituals in elite social settings. Not only can he not make his way like a bold haranguer in the vulgar agora; his fastidious attitudes insure that he also falls short in the urbane symposium. Indications that Demosthenes was regarded as effeminate surface in the speeches of other orators, as mentioned above; and the reputation of water drinkers as soft and affected goes back at least to Aristophanes’ *Knights*.⁸⁵ As we see in old comedy and in Plato, an undercurrent of anxiety about masculine appetite versus feminine weakness runs through these distinctions among orators.

⁸⁴ Note that Callicles depicts Socrates as “twisting the arguments up and down” (στρέφεις ἐκάστοτε τοὺς λόγους ἄνω καὶ κάτω, *Gorg.* 511a4–5); cf. *Phd.* 90c4–5; *Eu.* 15d2; *Ion* 541e7–8 and “twisted” styles in Aristophanes as well as Aristotle (*Nub.* 331–34; *Thesm.* 53–62; *Ran.* 954–58; *Arist. Pol.* 1342a22–24; also *Cic. de Orat.* 3.98).

⁸⁵ Cf. Demades fr. 75 (quoted above), as well as Aeschines’ similar characterization of Demosthenes (analyzed below). Regarding Aristophanes’ *Knights*, see the discussion in ch. 2.

Further, as with the ancient reception of the conflicts between Antisthenes and Plato, such characterizations indicate an awareness among early commentators that Demosthenes and his opponents were participating in an iambic discourse poised around putative differences among speakers that were largely based on familiar types from literature, particularly those made popular in civic performance.⁸⁶ And as with Plato's involvement in iambic contention, the contrasts among speakers drawn by these commentators reiterate those in Demosthenes' own portrayals of himself and his opponents, as well as those depictions of orators antagonistic to him, even in the speeches attributed falsely to them.

Taken altogether, these slanderous portraits reveal the complexity and fluidity of distinctions familiar from old comedy and Platonic dialogue. The boastful, loud-mouthed, shameless rascal may sometimes stand in clear contrast to the restrained, careful, unmanly plodder; but just as often the most pervasive and damning labels reveal themselves to be mutable, easily conforming to various situations and settings and thus especially useful. Demosthenes and his associates seem particularly focused on sustaining oppositions among speaker's types, even in the abstract. In the first speech against Aristogeiton, for example, we find the following declaration: "For depravity is hasty, bold, and greedy, and nobility the opposite: quiet, fastidious, slow, and likely to fail" (ἰταμόν γὰρ ἢ πονηρία καὶ τολμηρόν καὶ πλεονεκτικόν, καὶ τούναντίον ἢ καλοκαγαθία ἡσύχιον καὶ ὀκνηρόν καὶ βραδύ καὶ δεινὸν ἐλαττωθῆναι (25.24). The lively abusive talk scattered throughout the speeches of the Attic orators does not for the most part approach the refinement and complexity of the imagery in the speeches of Demosthenes and Aeschines, which manifest a more consistent use of contrasting images grounded in iambic vocabulary and centered on oral habits.

DEMOSTHENES AND AESCHINES ON BOOMING AND BABBLING

The speeches that frame the dispute between these two orators provide the richest source of iambic depictions in oratory. These speeches are unique among extant oratorical texts in their vocabulary and imagery, representing an extreme of colorful ridicule and character defamation. Further, as documents charting connections between the characters of Athens' foremost citizens and the decline of Athenian power, they reveal the centrality of issues of character and appetite to democratic decision-making and public

⁸⁶ Cf. the discussion in ch. 4.

debate. In ancient Athens, where the wealthy elite set the agenda for this debate, it was all the more essential that those elites proved themselves to be moderate citizens who (therefore) had in mind Athens' best interests, rather than their own aggrandizement or gain. Any open-mouthed, excessive type failed to embody an Athenian ideal. He also revealed himself to be incapable of safeguarding Athens from Macedonian aggression, since his character would then match the rapacity and decadence of the foreign monarch or the slavish behaviors of his henchmen.

The speeches of these two polished and influential orators thus trace an elaborate scheme of distinct appetites. They share an attention to the visible persona of the beneficent citizen and their authors are in direct competition with each other, not only over the control of Athenian foreign policy but also over the traits of the good kind of artful orator. This may be why these speeches more than any others in the Greek oratorical corpus focus attention on details of delivery. Moreover, while Demosthenes was famously interested in delivery, he was not by all accounts a natural performer, as Aeschines seems to have been.⁸⁷ Since orators routinely spoke in fairly large spaces with natural acoustics, the artful orator would be particularly sensitive to the perceptible features of character writ large (e.g., vocal tone, gestures), which communicate most effectively the integrity of the speaker or his lack thereof. Demosthenes and Aeschines make great efforts to highlight their differences, each carefully building up his depiction of his opponent's weaknesses in increasingly sharp contradistinction to his own strengths. Scholars have shown quite convincingly that these speeches were revised, perhaps repeatedly, with an eye to publication, and the images explored below strongly indicate a purposeful honing of the interconnections among certain aspects of these defaming portraits, especially on the part of Demosthenes.⁸⁸ As with his speech against Meidias, which he clearly revised with an eye to iambic caricature, Demosthenes' portraits of himself and Aeschines show a high degree of polish. And this, nicely enough, conforms to his stylistic profile as an overly prepared and careful speaker.

While other orators, and Demosthenes in other settings, usually focus their animus on an excess of preparation, a flair for fabrication, and/or a susceptibility to bribery, the disputes between Demosthenes and Aeschines consistently join such concerns to those familiar from other iambic settings: the aggressive volubility of the loud-mouth, the glib effeminacy of the

⁸⁷ Cf. nn. 6, 7, and 8 above.

⁸⁸ Worthington 1991; Gagarin 1999. They speeches are thus literary products, but shaped by the exigencies of an oral context.

prattler, the salesmanship and humbug common to both. In the disputes between Aeschines and Demosthenes over the second embassy to Philip and over whether Demosthenes deserves the benefactor's crown for his services to Athens, both speakers denigrate each other's visible type, repeatedly associating the mouth and its uses with intemperate behaviors. The loud voice and practiced talk of Aeschines encourages his opponent to paint him as a mercenary, haranguing denizen of the agora. The timorous chatter of Demosthenes, in contrast, suggests to Aeschines a reason for his opponent's nickname Bat(t)alos. He is a "babbler" (cf. βατταρίζω) or perhaps (as Dover would have it) a "Bumsy" (cf. βόττας); both labels point to a weakness centering on one orifice or the other.⁸⁹ The earliest extant speech of Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*, also participates in this imagery, positioning Demosthenes on the soft, effeminate end of the spectrum while charging Timarchus with aggressive self-prostitution.

In the course of the conflict between Demosthenes and Aeschines, which extended over fifteen years punctuated by speeches that manifest a notably consistent set of character portraits, both orators charge their opponents with being sophists and logographers (who write for pay⁹⁰). Aeschines claims that Demosthenes treats his body as something to be sold (e.g., ὁ δὲ οὐδὲν ἄπρωτον ἔχων μέρος τοῦ σώματος, 2.23), and Demosthenes suggests the same of Aeschines' services (μισθώσας σαυτὸν, 18.131, 262). Demosthenes places much of his emphasis on how Aeschines has marketed his vocal talents in both the theater and public speaking, depicting his most powerful organ as being used in the service of those who will pay for the pleasures it affords. Aeschines hints rather that Demosthenes' oral activities extend to even more debasing practices.⁹¹ Thus a contrast between these two speakers arises paradoxically out of the similarity of the abuses that they hurl at one another: Aeschines' style lends itself to brutality and mercenary practices, while Demosthenes' suggests the craven weaknesses of the *kinaidos*.⁹²

⁸⁹ Aeschin. 1.126; Dem. 18.180. See Dover 1978: 75 regarding the possible connections between this supposed nickname and its perversion as Batalos (cf. Eup., fr. 82 K). Henderson (1975 [1991]: 203) rejects Taillardat's supposition (on the basis of a scholium on Aeschin. 1.126) that Batalos was the proper name of a flautist and argues that the word likely meant "anus" (citing Harpocr. 44.9). Its use as an insult of either submissives or stammerers would play on the confluence of the two orifices.

⁹⁰ Aeschin. 1.125, 2.180, 3.16; Dem. 19.246, 250. Note that at 19.246 Demosthenes says Aeschines accuses others of what he is himself; cf. also 18.276. On Demosthenes as a logographer, see Bruns 1896: 534–52; Yunis 1996: 242–47; and cf. Ober 1989: 172–77. See also Wooten 1983: 54–55 on Cicero's use of this theme in his *Philippics*.

⁹¹ Aeschin. 2.23, 88; cf. n. 138 and further discussion below.

⁹² On the *kinaidos* as a type, see Winkler 1990: 176–86; Davidson 1997: 167–82.

I consider first the imagery that Aeschines employs in impugning Timarchus and his defender Demosthenes. The sections that follow, on the embassy speeches and the dispute over the crown, explore this defamatory usage in more detail. Much of the defamatory language that surfaces in Demosthenes' failed attempt to prosecute Aeschines for his supposed misconduct in establishing diplomatic relations with Philip responds to that of the earlier attack on Timarchus; and Aeschines' defense reflects this pattern of ongoing and mutual character assassination. Aeschines' failed attempt to prevent Demosthenes from being crowned and the latter's famous response reiterate this abusive scheme, as well as frequently articulating familiar insults in their most extreme form. While Aeschines demonstrates in his embassy speech his ability to render insult an effective political weapon, *On the Crown* is one of Demosthenes' most remarkable achievements.⁹³ In this final contest with Aeschines, Demosthenes managed character defamation and, correlatively, self-praise so masterfully that he offset the manifest failure of his own policy and convinced an Athenian jury of his heroic stature in the face of Macedonian aggression. These two pairs of speeches thus reveal most thoroughly the political impact of iambic discourse in the oratorical arena. In addition, they indicate how closely defamatory type-casting is tied to public decision-making, and thus how the loud-mouth or the prattler may be equally implicated in leading the city to ruin.

Aeschines' prosecution of Timarchus

Timarchus, another orator and dominant figure in the political arena of the 340s, was an ally of Demosthenes who joined him in an attempt to prosecute Aeschines for misconduct on the second embassy to Philip (346/5 BC). During this period Philip posed an increasing threat to the cities of northern Greece, and his gains at the end of the Third Sacred War (346) spurred Athens to attempt to rein in his expanding power.⁹⁴ The two embassies undertaken between 347 and 346 consisted of ten prominent politicians, who were commissioned to negotiate a peace and an alliance with Philip. Both Demosthenes and Aeschines were among the ambassadors, two chief players in a contentious group who disagreed over how to proceed.⁹⁵ Demosthenes led those who were suspicious of Philip's motives, while

⁹³ Although Athenian political circumstances had changed radically by this point, especially after Chaeronea, and although this surely contributed to the impact of the speech, it is still in itself a brilliant piece of self-promotion.

⁹⁴ See Sealey 1955; MacDowell 2000: 1–14; Ryder 2000.

⁹⁵ MacDowell 2000: 1–14; Fisher 2001: 2–8.

Aeschines favored a more trusting attitude in dealing with Philip. He and another ambassador, Philocrates, negotiated a peace that was named after the latter. But further disputes arose among the ambassadors about how to end the war, and a third embassy was proposed. Both Demosthenes and Aeschines were reluctant to go, and Demosthenes chose this moment to mount a case against Aeschines, alleging that he received bribes from Philip in exchange for negotiating a peace favorable to Macedonia. Aeschines quickly preempted him, responding with his own case, which charged Timarchus with actions unlawful for a citizen who speaks in Assembly and relied on a procedure that Aeschines refers to as the “scrutiny of orators” (δοκιμασία ῥητόρων, 1.28, 186).⁹⁶ While Demosthenes was Aeschines’ real target, Timarchus’ putative excesses apparently recommended him to Aeschines as a means of attacking his enemy.

Both the case that Demosthenes later brought against Aeschines and this one against Timarchus allege excessive behavior: Timarchus is depicted as an indulgent, self-prostituting reprobate, Aeschines as a voracious, violent haranguer. Further, Demosthenes also emerges as a creature of other excesses (the effeminate, prattling kind) in both the earlier speech and the later contests. While I do not mean to suggest that this entire dispute revolved around opposing appetites, it is clear that these orators in particular found it crucial to impugn the policies of their opponents by impugning their habits and thereby demonstrating how disastrously they fail to conform to the profile of the moderate citizen.

In recent years scholars have frequently focused on Aeschines’ speech *Against Timarchus* as a primary example of the legal handling of homosexuality and prostitution.⁹⁷ From Aeschines’ presentation of the case, it appears that if one could prove that a citizen had prostituted himself, the punishment was the effective removal of his citizen’s rights, since he himself had treated his body in an un-free manner. While the increased interest in ancient sexual practice has contributed to the heightened attention that this speech has received, in fact the charge of prostitution (*graphē hetairēsēōs*) was but one of many craven behaviors that could result in disenfranchisement. These included violence toward or neglect of one’s parents and throwing away one’s shield in battle. Aeschines’ choice of prostitution encourages a focus on the sexual aspects of such excesses, but clearly all three point to a lack of self-control. Indeed, he associates

⁹⁶ Cf. MacDowell 1976: 174; Winkler 1990: 187–92; Todd 1993: 116. See also Rhodes 1998.

⁹⁷ E.g., Dover 1978; Foucault 1985; Halperin 1990; Hunter 1990; Winkler 1990; Cohen 1992; Sissa 1999.

both Timarchus and his defender Demosthenes with debased proclivities, insultingly portraying the visible traits of each man as indicative of their excessive and indulgent characters.⁹⁸ Timarchus engages in half-naked “wrestling” on the *bēma* (I.26), and Demosthenes exhibits a penchant for soft, womanly clothes and the inclinations of a decadent symposiast (I.131–33). Although the speech for the defense is not extant, we know that Demosthenes, the real target of Aeschines’ attack, defended Timarchus. And although the respective appetitive failings of these two men, as sketched by Aeschines, are quite distinct, it is clear that the inferences proliferating from the charge were intended to taint Demosthenes’ character as much as Timarchus’.

In Aeschines’ highly colored portrait of him, Timarchus is the embodiment of obnoxiousness (*bdeluria*). We have seen how the crude talker in old comedy may be cast as an aggressive, loud-mouthed *agoraios*, while in Platonic dialogue he is an understated but nevertheless shocking sort, since he argues about the lowly stuff of daily life. Aeschines’ depiction of Timarchus connects most obviously to comic portraits of public speakers whose profligate verbal habits align them with prostitutes.⁹⁹ This type is most familiar from Aristophanes’ *Knights*, where the demagogue is a whorish reprobate whose visible behaviors broadcast his moral failings, because he is either loud and haranguing or polished and pandering. Timarchus’ obnoxiousness is similarly visible to the naked eye. In a move that highlights features of bodily hexis as a visible measure of character, Aeschines invokes the moderate figure of Solon to claim that the legislator thought that one who uses his body in a laughably rude manner and shamefully consumed his patrimony would render his arguments ineffectual (παρὰ δὲ ἀνθρώπου βδελυροῦ καὶ καταγελάστως μὲν κεχρημένου τῷ ἑαυτοῦ σώματι, αἰσχροῦς δὲ τὴν παρτώαν οὐσίαν κατεδηδοκότος, οὐδ’ ἂν εὖ πάνυ λεχθῆ συνόισειν ἠγήσατο, I.31). Correlatively, Timarchus’ gymnastic deportment on the *bēma* smacks of depravity: “Throwing back his cloak, he engaged in all-out fighting naked in the Assembly, . . . depositing himself in base and shameful attitudes because of his drunkenness and obnoxiousness” (ρίψας θοιμάτιον γυμνὸς ἐπαγκρατίαζεν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, . . . κακῶς καὶ αἰσχροῦς διακείμενος ὑπὸ μέθης καὶ βδελυρίας) (I.26; cf. I.33, I.60).

⁹⁸ Again, by “visible traits” I mean the identifying qualities that one can witness in the individual’s actions (including speech acts), significant gestures, deportment, and dress, as well as any indications of his daily routines and typical haunts. Cf. Russell 1990; Bourdieu 1991; Gleason 1995; Hall 1995; Worman 2002a; and the discussion in the Introduction.

⁹⁹ Cf. O’Sullivan 1992: 145. For more general remarks on this analogy, see Wohl 2002: 75–76, 86–90.

Nick Fisher points out that *bdeluria* and its cognates occur thirteen times in the speech against Timarchus, which suggests that it is the signature trait that Aeschines wants to associate with him and those like him.¹⁰⁰ While, as mentioned above, the term turns up with some frequency in speeches of Demosthenes, it does not do so with quite such insistence. Demosthenes uses *bdeluros* most emphatically and repeatedly (eight times) to describe Meidias (Dem. 21), where it delineates his putatively violent and aggressive character. Elsewhere he deploys the term most often against the haranguing Androtion (Dem. 22), as well as the loud-mouthed Aeschines and especially his ally Philocrates in the speech on the embassy (Dem. 19). Demosthenes' portraits of these men seem to be orchestrated less in the interests of accuracy than of effect, the charge of *bdeluria* emerging quite consistently as predicative of those who are excessive in relation to whatever appetites can be unfavorably contrasted with Demosthenes' own restrained and careful behavior. These men are all aggressive in one way or another: physically (Meidias), verbally (Androtion and Aeschines), or perhaps both (Philocrates).¹⁰¹

What, then, can we conclude about Timarchus and Aeschines' application of the slanderous label *bdeluros* to him? The charge of prostitution indicates that it ought to have something to do with sexual practice, although its application in old comedy and Plato suggests that its parameters are usually much more loosely drawn. Fisher, commenting on the passage quoted above in which Aeschines portrays Timarchus as visibly debased, argues that the *bdeluria* "covers more than sexual acts, and may include violence, and . . . perhaps excessive consumption of food and drink."¹⁰² As argued in chapter 4 (pp. 205–06), the deployment of the term is particularly marked in Platonic dialogue, but there because of its status as a *hapax legomenon*. Its single use in the dialogues occurs when Thrasymachus calls Socrates "disgusting" (βδελυρός, 338d3) for introducing the example of the pancratist's steak dinner into the discussion.¹⁰³ Thus, as in Aristophanes'

¹⁰⁰ Fisher 2001: 155.

¹⁰¹ Some years earlier Demosthenes had defended Philocrates in a trial, so his virulent opposition to him is somewhat surprising. In the embassy speech he seems to regard Philocrates as a man whose motives reflect extreme depravity. Cf. Aeschin. 2.13–14, 109; 3.62.

¹⁰² Fisher 2001: 155.

¹⁰³ Fisher 2001: 154 argues that the image of the pancratist suggests a no-holds-barred attack on one's opponent; note that Socrates earns the label *bdeluros* when he queries whether one ought to eat like the athlete who fights in this way. Cf. also Aristogeiton, who struck a man out of *bdeluria*, almost lost owing to drunkenness, and bit off his nose in an all-out fight (Ps.-Dem. 25.61). Clever talkers are frequently characterized as wranglers (e.g., S. *Phil.* 431; E. *Hec.* 132; Aeschin. 1.26, 33; Dem. fr. 61). Note as well that the palaistra is a common setting for Socrates' discussions; and cf. especially the *Euthydemus* for parallels between physical wrangling and sophistic argument.

Knights, *bdeluria* would seem to be strongly tied not merely to excesses of eating and drinking but also of physical violence and brutish talk. Overconsumption may be disgusting, but so are those who parade its effects in their crude verbal displays.

In attempting to clarify the distinctions that underlie such usage, it is important to emphasize again that Timarchus and his defender Demosthenes appear as quite different types. Even though both would seem to be impugned as weak and effeminate owing to their association with homosexual behaviors, it is really only Demosthenes who is cast in this light. In the figure of Timarchus we have instead the aggressive, versatile self-prostitution that Aristophanes associated with the demagogues. These are also voracious marketplace wranglers, and indeed Timarchus fits this description as well.¹⁰⁴ He behaves brutally (ἀσελγάνη, 1.32) and engages in acts of insolence (ὑβρεις, 1.55) like the violent Meidias. As a creature of many types of excess, however, Timarchus gobbles up his patrimony (καταφαγεῖν τὴν πατρώαν) like a greedy demagogue from old comedy and then plays the decadent symposiast, drinking it down as well (καὶ οὐ μόνον κατέφαγεν . . . καὶ κατέπιεν) (1.96). Indeed, Aeschines also portrays him as indulging in “slavish” behaviors (ταῦτα δουλεύων) such as *opsa*-eating and fancy dining, dallying with flute-girls and *hetairai*, playing dice, and other such decadent pastimes (ὀψοφαγίᾳ καὶ πολυτελείᾳ δείπνων καὶ ἀλλητρίσι καὶ ἑταίραις καὶ κύβοις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις) (42). The string of activities in itself highlights the excess; even formal enumeration cannot exhaust Timarchus’ actual extravagance.

Moreover, like the obnoxious demagogues of *Knights*, Timarchus is tainted (or “coarse,” *μιαρός*, 42; cf. 54). This slanderous label is, as noted above, a fairly common way of insulting a public figure. As Aristophanes’ usage would seem to anticipate, the term eventually becomes particularly associated with speech (e.g., *φωνὴ μιαρά*, *Eq.* 218): witness the compounds *μιαρόγλωσσος* and *μιαρόλογος*.¹⁰⁵ In keeping with this association between moral taint and verbal activities, Aeschines claims that Timarchus’ sexual excess sullies his words as well. He cannot even speak in the Assembly without risking derisive laughter, since his words so often suggest double-entendres: “When he mentioned ‘the repair of walls’ or ‘tower’

¹⁰⁴ Aeschines does refer to Demosthenes parading around the agora expressing outrage over the charges against Timarchus (ἀποθαυμάζων οὖν περιέρχεται καὶ τερατευόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἀγοράν, 1.94), and describes his proofs as “marketplace” (ἀγοραῖα τεκμήρια, 1.125). But both of these phrases seem to address more Demosthenes’ pretensions to demagogic status rather than his inhabiting of that status. For instance, Aeschines is also sarcastic about Demosthenes’ attempts to seem casual and witty (e.g., 1.126) – that is, more like a manly, mocking wrangler.

¹⁰⁵ *AP* 7.377, Sch. Luc. 205.7.

or ‘someone taken off somewhere,’ straight away you shouted and hooted and yourselves uttered the proper name of his acts, which you all well knew” (εἰ γὰρ μνησθείη τειχῶν ἐπισκευῆς ἢ πύργου, ἢ ὡς ἀπήγετό ποί τις, εὐθύς ἐβοᾶτε καὶ ἐγελᾶτε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐλέγετε τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν τῶν ἔργων ὧν σύνιστε αὐτῷ, 1.80).¹⁰⁶ Things get worse when mention is made of Timarchus’ oversight of the cisterns (τῶν λάκκων, 1.84), presumably because this recalls for the audience a common slur applied to sexually rapacious or otherwise intemperate citizens (*lakkoprōktos*; *lakatapugōn*).¹⁰⁷

As mentioned above, for Aeschines and perhaps for Dinarchus, *miaros* seems to highlight certain behaviors (and especially oral behaviors) as indulgent and verging on the obscene. Thus a lack of shame marks a tainted man like Timarchus (οὐκ ἡσχύνθη ὁ μιαρὸς οὔτος, 1.42), and he fails to express disgust when he ought to (οὐκ ἐδυσχέρανεν ὁ μιαρὸς οὔτοσί) – for instance, when he is taken home by a public servant (δημόσιος) to serve as his playmate (1.54). Perhaps as a result of the suggestive parameters of the term, Aeschines and Demosthenes only use it of each other when they have each approached the most compromised and “tainted” moments of their careers: in their final confrontation over the benefactor’s crown.¹⁰⁸ Aeschines went into exile after losing this case, and Demosthenes followed some years later, when earlier charges of misconduct came back to haunt him.¹⁰⁹

Although Aeschines’ case was not strong on factual evidence, his presentation of Timarchus as a citizen so marked by excess as to exclude him from being an effective leader convinced the jury, and Timarchus ended his political career in disgrace. In Aeschines’ portrayal, his very deportment on the *bēma* reveals that he is unfit for public office, as do the words he utters. Moreover, Aeschines makes the equation that underscores why these insults about appetite carry so much weight in the fourth-century struggle for control of Athenian foreign policy: Timarchus’ sullyng of his body equally sullies the city (καταισχύνων τὸ σῶμα τὸ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τὴν πόλιν, 1.40), which (by implication) threatens its safety and dominion. As it turns out, Demosthenes’ use of belabored allusions (πεπραγματευμέναις μεταφοραῖς) to insult the young Alexander also renders the city vulnerable, but this time

¹⁰⁶ The areas such as those that Timarchus references were presumably on the outskirts of the city and thus typical venues for prostitutes (Fisher 2001: 216). But cf. Carey (2000: 81 n. 86): “The passage is full of sexual double meanings that are lost on the modern reader.”

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *Ach.* 664; *Nub.* 1330; Eup. fr. 351 K. Henderson (1975 [1991]: 212, 214) points out that these terms, unlike *euruprōktos*, do not seem to indicate effeminacy since they are appended of violent and/or voracious characters (respectively, Cleon, Pheidippides, a wine guzzler).

¹⁰⁸ See further below. ¹⁰⁹ I.e., in the Harpalus affair (324 BC); cf. Worthington 1992: 41–77.

to scornful laughter (καταγέλαστον τὴν πόλιν ποιεῖ) (1.167; cf. 1.175, 3.173).¹¹⁰ Thus both figures endanger Athens, Timarchus by his shameless plying of his body, Demosthenes by his absurdly contrived mouthings. And just as the prominent citizen may find himself subject to damaging abuse, so may the city, with results disastrous not merely for the individual but for the mass of Athenians.

The dispute over the embassy to Philip

Aeschines and Demosthenes were not essentially opposed to each other because of their different oral habits, of course; rather, insinuations about appetite came to the fore in their speeches because they disagreed over how to handle relations with Philip. Aeschines favored a more diplomatic strategy, which laid him open to charges of being a hireling of the Macedonian ruler. Demosthenes initially agreed with this tactic and supported the peace treaty that Aeschines and his ally Philocrates forged with Philip in the spring of 346. Soon, however, he came to believe that a more aggressive and militaristic response was the only strategy that might keep Macedonian forces from advancing on Greek territories and ultimately subduing Athens.¹¹¹ Demosthenes thus attempts to suppress his initial support for the Peace and argues that Aeschines was not sufficiently resistant to Philip's charms, claiming that he treasonously took bribes and agreed to pursue policies that would serve Macedonian interests. Aeschines, in response, maintains that Demosthenes was not only an ineffectual ambassador but also an accuser who offers a false version of events in order to cover up his deficiencies. Thus the one emerges as a brazen and slavish henchman of a tyrant, the other as a dissembling and craven weakling who cannot negotiate effectively with that tyrant.

Demosthenes' prosecution

Demosthenes' counter to Aeschines' impugning of himself and his political ally Timarchus came a few years after that case, perhaps because Aeschines succeeded in delaying the case that Demosthenes was trying to bring against

¹¹⁰ Note again that the term *katagelastos* is very commonly used in Plato to designate elite interlocutors' reactions to Socrates' lowbrow style; see further in ch. 4. Aeschines even compares Demosthenes to Socrates, reminding the jury (in a bold and rather extravagant move) that they killed that "sophist" (τὸν σοφιστὴν) for teaching tyrannical attitudes, just as Demosthenes impedes free speech (τῆς ἰσηγορίας) (1.173; cf. ἐπαρρησιάζετο, 172). Aeschines, like the bold Callicles in Plato's *Gorgias*, does not shrink from free speech (οὐκ ἄκνήσω πρὸς ὑμᾶς παρρησιάζεσθαι, 1.177; cf. παρρησίαν, *Gorg.* 487a3, παρρησίας, 487b1). See also Dem. 12.76.

¹¹¹ See MacDowell 2000: 1–14; also Griffith 1979; Sealey 1993; Badian 1995; Harris 1995.

him.¹¹² In his prosecution of Aeschines for his role in the second embassy to Philip (delivered in 343), the precise charge is somewhat vague. Douglas MacDowell argues that it was probably misconduct on an embassy (*parapresbeia*), rather than something more strictly tied to the reviewing of officials' accounts (*euthunai*) such as the taking of bribes.¹¹³ Demosthenes does accuse Aeschines of taking bribes (δῶρα) from Philip, but this is only one infraction of the five requirements for ambassadors that Demosthenes identifies. The others are accurate reporting, giving good advice, undertaking the duties imposed on him by the Assembly, and performing these duties in good time (19.4). Thus Demosthenes will accuse his opponent of lying and pandering to the demos, and avoiding or delaying the carrying out of his duties. The imagery discussed here primarily concerns the first pair of infractions (lying and pandering), since it is these that involve the oral habits most often impugned in iambic discourse. The charge of taking bribes is also relevant, given that it involves greed and thus an appetitive behavior commonly associated with public speaking.

I want to begin, however, with Demosthenes' self-portrait in his prosecution speech, since much of it highlights his oral weakness in contrast to the excessive Aeschines and thus frames the latter by damning contrast. Demosthenes depicts himself as careful and timid, as trying to get a word in edgewise, while the booming Aeschines and his accomplice Philocrates drown him out (ἐβόων, ἐξέκρουόν με, 19.23). Aeschines' aggressive orality, according to Demosthenes, also paved the way for a debauched symposium with Philip that included excessive imbibing and the violent inducement of vocal entertainment. Demosthenes recounts a scene in which Aeschines, while drinking heavily, beats a captive Olynthian woman to force her to sing (19.196–98; cf. 128, 139).¹¹⁴ References in this speech and in the *Second Philippic* suggest that Demosthenes himself was a teetotaler and thus drank water rather than wine while writing and rehearsing his speeches (Dem. 6.30; 19.46).¹¹⁵ We might connect this with his reputation for being a practitioner who needed the assistance of preparation and artistry, as well as with his failure to drink like a man (i.e., to be a good

¹¹² Cf. Dem. 19.107, 258. ¹¹³ See MacDowell 2000: 14–22.

¹¹⁴ The connections between consumption, vocal expression, and physical abuse in this scene constitute a common triad (cf. again Ar. *Eq.*, *Nub.*; E. *Cyc.*; and see Bakhtin 1984: 195, 347ff.); note also how interested Demosthenes is in others' drinking. We might compare here Demosthenes' depiction of Meidias; cf. Bruns 1896: 557–70; Pearson 1976: 105–11.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Demades, who Lucian says joked that "others would speak by the water, but Demosthenes wrote by it" (ὡς οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι πρὸς ὕδωρ λέγοιεν, τὸν Δημοσθένην δὲ πρὸς ὕδωρ γράφειν, 58.15). The first reference is presumably to the water-clock, by which time was kept in the law courts; the second to Demosthenes' abstemious habits.

symposiast). In both passages Demosthenes acknowledges that this water drinking did little to help his reputation.¹¹⁶ Compare as well the indications from fragments of Hyperides (discussed above) that Demosthenes was regarded as overly fastidious in his attitude toward drinking. If Aristophanes' *Knights* is any indication, a loud-mouthed orator like Cleon would have associated *lalia* (idle chatter) and over-preparation with drinking water (*Eq.* 348–49).

In the embassy speech Demosthenes strives to turn this reputation for fastidiousness to good effect and present himself as the upstanding, moderate man who is the victim of an insulting drunkard (cf. ὑβριστικῶς, 19.46). He also represents his reaction to verbal profligacy as its opposite – verbal restraint. He declares, for instance, that Aeschines' "unclean" type will presently allow him to defend his life boldly to the jury in illustrious tones (ὁ ἀκάθαρτος οὗτος τολμήσει βλέπειν εἰς ὑμᾶς, καὶ τὸν βεβιωμένον αὐτῷ αὐτίκα δὴ μάλ' ἔρει λαμπρῶ τῇ φωνῇ). This combination of moral taint and bold talk has a constricting effect on the prim Demosthenes: it makes him choke (ἐφ' εἷς ἔγωγε ἀποπνίγομαι) (19.199).

In the sections that follow this strikingly apt image, Demosthenes aligns his own vocal weakness with care and moral restraint, while revealing that it is precisely such moral concerns that render his opponent uncharacteristically speechless. The portrait Demosthenes presents of his enemy repeatedly highlights his carrying voice. For instance, he asks, "Who booms out loudest of all and can say very clearly whatever he wishes with that voice? I know that it is this Aeschines here" (τίνα δὲ φθέγγεσθαι μέγιστον ἀπάντων καὶ σαφέστατ' ἂν εἶπειν ὃ τι βούλοιο τῇ φωνῇ: Αἰσχίνην οἶδ' ὅτι τουτονί, 19.206).¹¹⁷ This volume is, not surprisingly, indicative of his reprehensible persona: Demosthenes again pairs Aeschines with the loud-mouthed "rascal" Philocrates (οἱ βδελυρώτατοι . . . καὶ μέγιστον φθεγγομένοι, 208), whom he clearly considers such a reprobate that Aeschines' association with him can only result in the further sully of his reputation. Demosthenes calls Philocrates "obnoxious" (*bdeluros*) a number of other times (e.g., 19.206, 291, 309), a label he also applies to Aeschines in combination with the charge of shamelessness (βδελυρὸς καὶ ἀναιδής, 175).¹¹⁸ As we have seen, such insults tend to arise when Demosthenes faces a particularly

¹¹⁶ Pace MacDowell 2000: 226, who thinks that Demosthenes' mentioning of this indicates that abstaining from drink was not generally looked down on. But the passages do not support this (e.g., καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐγέλσθε, 19.46), nor does the tradition surrounding Demosthenes' prim persona (cf. Athen. 10.424d; Prisc. 18.235).

¹¹⁷ Note as well how the denigrating demonstrative (τουτονί) reinforces the spectacle that such bel-lowing creates. Demosthenes is a master of this type of deictic gesture.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Dem. 18, where he repeatedly deems Aeschines "tainted" (*mīaros*, 134, 141, 153, 289, 296).

aggressive opponent; being bold, obnoxious, and shameless is the purview of violent or haranguing types such as Meidias and Androtion.

Demosthenes argues that Aeschines is also an avid participant in slander, bribe-taking, violent revelry, and mercenary practices involving his own physical abilities. Aeschines' abusive talk about prostituting oneself flows like a river, only in the wrong direction (i.e., back toward its source: ἀνω ποταμῶν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ πάντες οἱ περὶ πορνείας ἐρρήησιν λόγοι, 19.287).¹¹⁹ He consorts with men who exhibit their profligacy in public festivals – a typical charge against those whose deportments trumpet their indecency. Aeschines' brother-in-law Epicrates, Demosthenes claims, participates in the processions of the Dionysia “without the mask” (ἐν ταῖς πομπαῖς ἄνευ τοῦ προσώπου κωμάζει, 19.287). Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux suggests that the mask was that of a satyr, his lack of it constituting a parodic infringement of ritual.¹²⁰ As I discuss in chapter 3, satyrs are paradigmatic creatures of intemperance, especially given to drunkenness and sexual indulgences. According to MacDowell, Demosthenes' charge indicates that Epicrates behaves like a satyr even outside of the festival context.¹²¹ This is the same kind of decadence and profligacy with which Demosthenes charges Philip and his followers in the second *Olynthiac* (cf. above). Elsewhere we find parallel evidence of indecency, such as Lysias' depiction of the younger Alcibiades dancing the night-time *kōmos* during the day (14.25), and Theophrastus' reckless man (ὁ ἀπονενοημένος), who dances the *kordax* even when he is sober (6.3).¹²²

As in other speeches in which he confronts a loud, brash opponent, Demosthenes depicts himself as a careful, even timid speaker. “Whom,” he asks, “do they call unprepossessing and cowardly in front of crowds, but I cautious? Me.” (τίνα δ' οὔτοι μὲν ἄτολμον καὶ δειλὸν πρὸς τοὺς ὄχλους φασὶν εἶναι, ἐγὼ δ' εὐλαβῆ; ἐμὲ, 19.206). He, the most timid of all orators (ἀτολμοτάτου), who speaks with a tiny voice (ἐμοῦ καὶ οὐδενὸς μεῖζον φεγγομένου), can effectively out-shout his obnoxious, loud opponents by telling the truth (208). This is because truth is strong (ἰσχυρόν) and selling out is weak (ἄσθενές).¹²³ With this bold reversal of the categories normally associated with aggressive and timid speakers, Demosthenes claims that the moral rectitude of his own position silences Aeschines in turn. The truth

¹¹⁹ This is a reference to Aeschines' prosecution of Timarchus, to which Demosthenes responds by insulting his brothers-in-law.

¹²⁰ Frontisi-Ducroux 1992. ¹²¹ MacDowell 2000: 330.

¹²² Cf. Arist. *Rhet.* 1408b36 (ὁ δὲ τροχάσις κορδακικώτερος) and subsequent discussions of this remark among the rhetorical theorists (Cope 1877, Kassel 1976 *ad loc.*). See further in ch. 6.

¹²³ Cf. Aeschin. 1.84.

itself twists his tongue, stops up his usually voluble mouth, causes him to strangle, and thus renders him (finally) silent (τοῦτ' ἀποστρέφει τὴν γλῶτταν, ἐμφράττει τὸ στόμα, ἄγχει, σιωπᾶν ποιεῖ, 19.208–09).¹²⁴ The only recourse left open to Aeschines is that of shouting down his restrained opponent with threats of indictment and theatrical exclamation (βοῶνθ' ὡς εἰσαγγελεῖ με καὶ γράφεται καὶ ἰοῦ ἰοῦ, 19.209).

A clear opposition emerges in Demosthenes' speech: the vociferous word salesman who only falls silent in the face of morality, versus the cautious and quiet type who chokes when faced with corruption. The imagery Demosthenes employs emphasizes the deceptive powers of his loud opponent, and how much he achieves in dramatic impact while falling short of the truth. Demosthenes also represents Philip as a *chorēgos* attendant on the performance of this booming actor's fellow players (19.216).¹²⁵ He cautions the audience against paying attention to Aeschines' vocal powers (καλὸν καὶ μέγ' οὔτος φθέγγεται), which he contrasts with some false modesty to his own more paltry abilities (φαῦλον ἐγώ). Like the invocation of truth discussed above, this is a delicate maneuver, since the imagery of both speeches (as well as subsequent tradition) suggests that Demosthenes was indeed somewhat lacking in vocal power. He thus insists that he and his opponent are not engaged in an orators' contest (οὐδὲ γὰρ ῥητόρων οὐδὲ λόγων κρίσιν, 19.216–17), seeking to focus his audience's attention on the distinction between show and substance. He who “booms out well and powerfully” may utter impressive sounds like some fearsome animal, but this says nothing of his capacity to speak with integrity and accuracy. Further, Demosthenes' references to both *chorēgoi* and contests also recall dramatic settings, with their attendant suggestions of fiction and falsehood.

It is thus Aeschines' theatrical training that furnishes Demosthenes with the most pervasive imagistic framework for his opposition between a fine voice and meager or inaccurate content.¹²⁶ He declares that Aeschines, who engages in “new” contests (ἀγῶνας καινούς) as if they were plays (δράματα), is surely a “terribly clever” (πάνδειος) man (19.120; cf. 121: δειῶν, δειότερον). Again, *deinos* is a trait commonly charged against the sophistic speaker and perhaps especially those who speak in a dazzling,

¹²⁴ This image is a curiously precise response (before the fact, n.b.) to Aeschines' depiction of Demosthenes choking with stage fright when speaking before Philip (cf. ἀγχόνη, Aechin. 2.38). The careful calibration of the language suggests editing after delivery; on this topic see Worthington 1991 and Gagarin 1999.

¹²⁵ Cf. Halliwell 1991: 290, who points out that Demosthenes denigrates Philip as someone who has a penchant for such crude entertainments as mime and lampoons (Dem. 2.20).

¹²⁶ Cf. Rowe 1966; Fox 1994; Hall 1995; Easterling 1999.

voluble style. Here Demosthenes seeks to connect this extreme cleverness to a moral (and perhaps also a class) judgment of Aeschines' type: it indicates his theatrical style on the one hand, but also the special kind of depravity (κακίαν) that results from a life of paid performance. This life involves bribe-taking and the wholesale vending of oneself (δεδωροδοκηκότ' αὐτὸν καὶ πεπρακότα πάντ') (19.121) – precisely the kind of debasing habits that might lead seamlessly to serving a decadent tyrant. Later in the speech (19.246–47) he returns again to this theme of Aeschines' acting abilities, having the clerk read some lines spoken by Creon from the *Antigone* (175–90) about what makes a good politician. As is discussed in chapter 1 (pp. 56–60), this play itself places emphasis on the violent effects that craven or tyrannical speech may have on the health of the city.¹²⁷ The part of Creon is one that Demosthenes claims his opponent knew well, although Aeschines himself does not quote Sophocles in any of his extant speeches.¹²⁸ Let us consider the force of such tactics in more detail.

In keeping with his portrait of Aeschines as a violent, loud-mouthed type, much of Demosthenes' depiction of his opponent's acting style is cast in terms that suggest analogies between it and his excesses. Some of this imagery turns up in the speech on the embassy, but the most colorful and insulting details punctuate Demosthenes' defense in the dispute over the crown (see below). Indeed, Demosthenes' portrait of Aeschines' acting is so consistently abusive that most commentators have taken it as indicating the latter's failure in the profession.¹²⁹ While we have no way of assessing Aeschines' actual abilities, it is clear that Demosthenes seeks repeatedly to cast his participation in the profession as evidence not merely of his artifice and deception, but also of his violent, aggressive type.

In the passage mentioned above, for example, Demosthenes claims that Aeschines always played the part of the third actor (i.e., that assigned to the least talented) (19.247). He also emphasizes that this third actor is often a tyrant, as if to suggest some analogy to Aeschines' own behavior. The use of Creon's words is thus clearly a further probing of this connection between actors' parts and their moral characters: the man who plays the tyrant is all the more likely to behave as one (or pander to one) in real life, even if, as Demosthenes suggests, Aeschines did not remember the lines he should have. Demosthenes signals quite precisely what he is doing, indicating the parallelism that should be assumed between character and actor by calling the speaker of the passage he quotes “Creon-Aeschines”

¹²⁷ Cf., e.g., ἐκ φόβου του γλῶσσαν ἐγκλήσας ἔχει, *S. Ant.* 180; εἰ μὴ γλῶσσαν ἐγκλήσοι φόβος, 505; ὑπίλλουσιν στομα, 509; and further below.

¹²⁸ Cf. Fisher 2001: 293. See also Ford 1999 on Aeschines' use of poetic texts.

¹²⁹ But see Harris 1995: 30–31; Easterling 1999; Fisher 2001: 14–15.

(ὁ κρέον Αἰσχίνης, 247). He also claims that Aeschines frequently employs iambs (ἰαμβεῖα, 245; cf. 246), quoting some of the lines from Euripides' *Phoenix* that Aeschines had used to depict Timarchus' character as tainted by the bad company he keeps (cf. Aeschin. 1.151–54). Demosthenes then retorts with his own iambs, spoken by the tyrant Creon, which declare that a man who “keeps a lock on his tongue” (γλώσσαν ἐγκλείσας ἔχει) in times of trouble is most despicable (κάκιστος) (S. *Antig.* 180; Dem. 19.247).¹³⁰

What we have here is not merely an insulting portrait of an actor turned politician whose third-rate mind fails to understand the import of the lines he mouths. Rather, Demosthenes' use of dramatic poetry also interrogates the connection between surface effect or style (the actor's concern) and true character.¹³¹ Moreover, he employs iambs, in direct response to Aeschines' use of them, in a purposeful battle of texts. Demosthenes first turns Euripides' words on Aeschines, so that they can be seen to apply just as well to his evil associates. Then he pits Sophocles' words against Aeschines' own political behavior, so that even the tyrant looks like a man of integrity in contrast to the theatrical orator. We should note as well that the central charge articulated by the quotation – that of keeping one's mouth shut rather than speaking out for good – constitutes a central means by which Demosthenes counters Aeschines' strong voice and abundant verbiage.¹³² Truth chokes the man of pretense, and his mouth claps shut when those he cravenly courts threaten the city. Thus, in Demosthenes' picture, the very fact of Aeschines' acting indicates a gap between his grand, blustering style and his actual behavior. In addition, since he is (according to Demosthenes) a bad actor, he fails to comprehend the moral messages of the parts he plays, resorting instead to the false front thrown up by volubility.

Such falseness, it turns out, is also an indication of Aeschines' connections to another form of artifice: that practiced by sophists and speechwriters. Here Demosthenes is treading on dangerous ground, since he himself was a well-known *logographos* and thus vulnerable to being called a sophist (cf. Aeschin. 1.125, 2.180). Nevertheless, by connecting Aeschines' acting talents to an equally dubious realm of activity, Demosthenes reinforces the impression of untrustworthiness. He affirms that Aeschines is not only a sophist, but a despicable one (πονηρός γε); and not only is he a speechwriter, but an abominable one (θεοῖς ἐχθρός γε) (19.250). Being so base

¹³⁰ This is an odd passage to quote, given the disastrous results of Creon's policies. Demosthenes' highlighting of these lines may thus work both ways: if the jurors follow the full gist of his argument, they will understand that Aeschines should have followed the counsel of the quotation (out of context); if they do not, they will merely remember that Creon's tyrannical attitudes destroyed his family and tainted the city, and that Aeschines is likened to him. Cf. Ford 1999.

¹³¹ Cf. Worman 2002a. ¹³² Cf., e.g., Dem. 18.23–24, 198, 307–08; 19.112.

and dissembling, then, Aeschines passes over the lines he often performed (πολλάκις ἠγωνίσω) but never played in life (οὐδεπώποτ' ἐν τῷ βίῳ ὑπεκρίνω) (19.250), thereby misleading the demos about his true role in the embassy.

Demosthenes maintains this focus on visible style versus true character, echoing Aeschines' own invocation of Solon's contained deportment (Aeschin. 1.25–26). He lampoons his opponent's use of it (εἶσω τὴν χεῖρ' ἔχοντ' ἀναβεβλημένον, 19.251) as a negative example of how a public speaker and community leader ought to comport himself.¹³³ He declares that Aeschines' imitation (ἐμιμήσατο) of the great statesman's physical disposition (τοῦ σχήματος) was far less valuable to the city than trying to reproduce the quality of his mind and soul (τὴν ψυχὴν . . . καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν) might have been (19.253). Aeschines' own deportment, Demosthenes claims, includes a debased alteration of Solon's that reveals his true motivations: he holds his hand out, but with the palm up – for taking bribes (255).¹³⁴ Such aping of formality fits in with Aeschines' portentous speaking style (σεμνολογεῖ), and with his practicing and honing of his “wretched” volubility (λογάρια δύστηνα μελετήσας καὶ φωνασκήσας) (19.255).¹³⁵ Having played the tyrant many times as third actor, now, whenever he is confronted with his lowly past (as actor and clerk) he struts about the agora in high dudgeon, his cloak swirling about his ankles, his cheeks puffed out like any fine friend of Philip (καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγορᾶς πορεύεται θοιμάτιον καθεὶς ἄχρι τῶν σφυρῶν, . . . τὰς γνάθους φυσῶν, 19.314). At the end of his speech, Demosthenes reverts to this point one more time, emphasizing the difference between being a speaker possessed of vibrancy and euphony (δαινότητ' ἢ εὐφωνίαν, 19.339), and being a leader of integrity.

Demosthenes' depiction of Aeschines' theatricality and grandiose vocalizing, then, indicates that such powers are inherently vulgar and

¹³³ Demosthenes was supposed to have been interested in deportment (Cic. *Orat.* 8.26–28), and to have indulged in the theatrical gestures that some found a “vulgar, ill-bred, and effeminate imitation” (ταπεινὸν ἠγοῦντο καὶ ἀγενεῖς τὸ πλάσμα καὶ μαλακόν, Plut. *Dem.* 9.4). Cf. also Cleon, who was apparently quite a mobile and gesticulating speaker (Plut. *Nic.* 8). Aeschines seeks to counter his own theatrical image, to put himself in the category of Solon rather than Cleon, and to relegate both Timarchus and later Demosthenes to the role of stage choreographer (cf. Aeschin. 2.167 and further below).

¹³⁴ Zanker 1995: 45–49, 85–89 argues that the statues of Demosthenes and Aeschines reflect this contrast, emphasizing Demosthenes' genuine, effortful deportment versus Aeschines' superficial affectation of propriety. But this reading of the images would seem to take Demosthenes' self-portrayal and slandering of his opponent at face value (so to speak).

¹³⁵ Note that such attributions actually better capture Demosthenes' own practicing type. Cf. Demades fr. 75; and see Cooper 2000.

untrustworthy, since they point to inbred excesses and involve selling one's talents. Aeschines transacts this self-marketing in many settings: traipsing around the stage, parading through the agora, or fawning in the Macedonian court. Aeschines' sheer ability has also caused him to fail to distinguish between surface effect (i.e., deportment and delivery) and content, so that he makes a poor politician while imitating a good one. Again, the portrait is clearly cast in terms of class: the purely physical abilities of Aeschines look like the cheap tricks of a lowbrow wrangler in contrast to the quiet nobility of the refined Demosthenes. Later, in his speech on the crown, Demosthenes will claim that Aeschines is the kind of speaker who encourages his audience to take delight in slander – a pleasure that, owing to some “vicious habit” (ἔθει τινὶ φασύλω, 18.138), they are only too happy to indulge. In both speeches, Demosthenes rarely makes reference to this powerful voice without also suggesting that it is a product of contrivance and most suited for dramatic fictions, something sellable and thus tainted with corruption. As I discuss below, Demosthenes employs the term *miaros* repeatedly in his oration about the crown, which indicates the coarse defilement that he seeks to associate with Aeschines' loud-mouthed ways.¹³⁶

Aeschines' defense

In his reply to Demosthenes' accusations, Aeschines forges some of his own contrasts between his persona and that of his opponent. For example, he uses the derogatory label *kinaidos* of Demosthenes, which encapsulates the kind of soft, degenerate life that he repeatedly represents him as living (κίναιδον, 2.88; cf. κίναιδίαν, 2.99, κίναίδους, 2.151; cf. 1.181).¹³⁷ In *Against Timarchus* Aeschines had drawn attention to Demosthenes' silken, luxurious clothes, which he claimed were as soft as a woman's (1.131); here in similar fashion he emphasizes his “unmanly” qualities. One reference to Demosthenes being a *kinaidos* includes insinuations about his physical uncleanness (μὴ καθαρεύοντα τῷ σώματι) that extends to his mouth (“whence his voice comes,” ὅθεν τὴν φωνὴν ἀφίησιν) (2.88; cf. 23).¹³⁸ The phrase suggests coyly that Demosthenes' organ may also have been used in other “unclean”

¹³⁶ Note that Demosthenes uses *miaros* primarily of Philocrates in the earlier speech (19.13, 113, 316), which suggests that the later attack on Aeschines' character is more virulent.

¹³⁷ Winkler 1990: 176–77 emphasizes the difficulty of translating *kinaidos*; as he explains, it points to sexual deviance, especially of a submissive nature. See also Davidson 1997: 167–82.

¹³⁸ Both passages claim that Demosthenes' body either has “nothing unsellable” (οὐδὲν ἀπρατον, 23) or is unclean (μὴ καθαρεύοντα, 88), and both append essentially the same phrase relating this to his mouth (ὅθεν τὴν φωνὴν προίεται, 23; ὅθεν τὴν φωνὴν ἀφίησιν, 88). One manuscript tradition deletes the former phrase (A), as does one editor (Weidner), but the majority retain it. A scholiast on the earlier passage remarks, διεβάλλετο γὰρ ὡς ἡταιρικῶς καὶ μισθοῦ λόγους γράφων καὶ δωροδοκῶν (Vat. Laur. Bgim; Schulz 1866: 288), which echoes Demosthenes' own

ways, those particularly related to his weak and submissive type.¹³⁹ Aeschines may hint at this particular weakness earlier, when he portrays Demosthenes as a corrupt seller of his body's parts who nevertheless claims to "spit" (καταπτύει, 2.23) on bribes.¹⁴⁰ In addition, he again adduces Demosthenes' nickname Battalos as a joking proof of his character (cf. 1.126, 131, 164). Whether this nickname means "chatterer" or "bugger," Aeschines links it to *kinaidia* as well as to the ruses and poisonous pandering of the indirect, agile speaker (κιναιδίαν Βάτταλος; Ἄργᾶς; συκοφάντης, 2.99¹⁴¹). Compare the Sausage Seller in Aristophanes' *Knights*, who is tempted by the prospect of performing oral sex in the Prytaneium (ἐν πρυτανεῖῳ λαϊκάσεις, 167) and brags about stealing meat as a boy by hiding it in his ass (τῷ κόκωννα, 424). Both Aristophanes' lampoon and Aeschines' insults seek to reconfigure the orator's body by matching his mouth with his anus. While the comic imagery makes more lavish use of the metonymies and blazons that Barthes identifies as the body's disintegration in language, Aeschines' usage shows evidence of comic influence in this regard as well.¹⁴²

As a despicably weak type, Demosthenes delights in passing his time in outlandish twittering (ἀποδιατρίβωσι τὴν ὑπερόριον λαλιὰν ἀγαπῶντες, 2.49). This is a profile he shares with idle chatterers in Aristophanes such as Euripides and Socrates, as well as Socrates in Plato.¹⁴³ The

claims about Aeschines' mercenary, prostituting ways. Cf. Aeschin. 1.126, 131, and the remarks of Dover 1978: 75 regarding "Battalos"; also Barthes 1974: 109–10 on lodging "sexual density" in the throat.

¹³⁹ This suggestion of the mouth's troubling versatility has its reflection in Roman oratorical invective as well, as Corbeil 1996: 97–127 has explored. In his speeches against Verres as well as Clodius and Cloelius (*de Domo sua*), Cicero draws similar connections between the visible mouth/tongue (*os, lingua*) of his opponent and its other uses, particularly sexual (e.g., cunnilingus, *de Domo* 25). Cicero's attack on Antony in the *Philippics* is even more explicit and extravagant in its focus on the voracious, explosive mouth of his enemy (e.g., 2.63–68). See further in ch. 2 and the Epilogue.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Dem. 18.196, where he deems Aeschines "one who must be spit upon" (κατάπτυστον).

¹⁴¹ On ἄργᾶς ("Snake") as a label for the "savage and bitter" orator (θηριώδεις καὶ πικρόν) see Plut. *Dem.* 4.8; this nickname also points to oral activities (i.e., the biting, poisonous talker), as Plutarch's comments suggest. Cf. other references to orators as snakes (Hyp. fr. B 19.80; Ps.-Dem. 25.52) and nn. 42 and 59 above. The scholiast in F makes a connection between being a snake and idle speechwriting: ὁ ἀργῶν ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων, γράφων δὲ λόγους (Schulz 1866 *ad loc.*). See also Julian and de Pérera 1902, 64 n. 3. Cf. Aeschin. 1.131: Βάτταλος προσαγορεύεται ἐξ ἀνανδρίας καὶ κιναιδίας. In the dispute over the crown, Demosthenes responds to this insult by declaring that Chatterer/Bumsy (βάτταλον) behaved better than the bad actor (κακῶς ἐπέτριψας), who sought to cast himself as a dramatic hero (τινὰ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς) (18.180). Yunis (*ad* 18.180) thinks that Demosthenes' reference to the nickname must mean that it indicated a speech defect, since he would not refer to it if it pointed to pathic sex, but this assumes a more scrupulous attitude than the speeches manifest.

¹⁴² Cf. Barthes 1974: 113–14. See further below.

¹⁴³ Note that in his prosecution of Timarchus, Aeschines refers to Socrates as a sophist and compares Demosthenes to him (1.173).

word *lalia* is common enough in comedy, but it is rarely used in prose writing of the classical period.¹⁴⁴ Plato makes frequent use of the parallel word *adoleschia* (“chatter”), usually to appropriate it as a term of praise for Socrates’ idiomatic, small-talking style.¹⁴⁵ A passage from the spurious Platonic dialogue *Erastai* depicts a young interlocutor associating chatter (*lalia*) about astronomical phenomena with “drivel” and philosophizing (ἀδολέσχουσι μὲν οὖν οὔτοι γε περὶ τῶν μετεώρων καὶ φλυάρουσι φιλοσοφοῦντες, 132b8–10). Since Socrates often praises “chatterers” (*adoleschai*) in pointed appropriation as a pair with “astronomers” (*meteōrologoi*), the young man’s derision clearly responds to the marked usage of the term in other Platonic dialogues.¹⁴⁶ Another spurious text, entitled *Oroi*, offers this definition: “*Lalia* is inarticulate incontinence of speech” (λαλιὰ ἀκρασία λόγου ἄλογος, 416a23). Aristotle contrasts *akrasia* (“incontinence”) with *akolasia* (“intemperance”) as the difference between awareness of one’s excesses (*akrasia*) versus ignorance of what would constitute moderation (*akolasia*) (*NE* 1145b, 1149b). Thus the definition in Ps.-Plato would seem to link a typical word from comedy with Aristotle’s ethical scheme. Most commentators agree that both texts were written (the latter probably compiled) in the fourth century, which makes them useful for our discussion, insofar as they indicate contemporaneous usage that still recognizes *lalia* as a marked term.

Aeschines’ attribution of *lalia* to Demosthenes, then, may be a pointed appropriation of familiar comic vocabulary, which he employs in the course of ridiculing Demosthenes’ less than effective performance in front of Philip. Aeschines describes Demosthenes as “squawking out some murky introduction” (φθέγγεται τὸ θηρίον προοίμιον σκοτεινόν τι) when addressing Philip, beset as the orator is by general stage fright: “Dead from fear, he fell suddenly silent and was at a loss” (τεθνηκὸς δειλίᾳ . . . ἐξαιφνης ἐσίγησε καὶ διηπορήθη) (2.34–35). Unlike his theatrical opponent, Demosthenes has trouble playing to the crowd, and so suffers a “strangling” (ἀγχόνη) from frustration that he performs so poorly (2.38). Aeschines links his craven type to his faulty speaking style, depicting it as clearly evident in the awkwardness and pandering exaggeration

¹⁴⁴ E.g., *Eup.* fr. 116 K-A; *Ar. Ach.* 705, 716; *Ran.* 91, 954, 1069, 1492; fr. 392 K-A. Cf. O’Sullivan 1992: 19–20, 131–33 and the discussion in ch. 2.

¹⁴⁵ E.g., *Phd.* 70c1, *Crat.* 401b8, *Th.* 195b10, 195c2, *Soph.* 225d10, *Polit.* 299b7, *Parm.* 135d3–5, *Phdr.* 269e4–270d1. Demosthenes uses the term only once, in disavowal of how he will approach Philip (οὐκ ἀδολέσχω, 6.32).

¹⁴⁶ Plato’s insider’s joke is borrowed from comedy; cf. *Ar. Nub.* 331–34, 1480, 1485, fr. 490 K; *Eup.* fr. 352, 353 K. In this seemingly denigrating usage, *adoleschēs* has been transformed into a term that those in the know will recognize as positive. Cf. Steinmetz 1962: 54–55.

(τοιαύτην ἀπαιδευσίαν καὶ κολακείας αἰσχυρᾶς ὑπερβολήν) he displays when trying to make up to Philip for his bad performance (2.113). Demosthenes' difficulties complicate the picture of the twittering idler, however; his oral weaknesses are so pronounced that he cannot even chatter properly. We might recognize that this characterization stands in interesting contrast to Callicles' depiction of Socrates in the *Gorgias*: when Aeschines represents Demosthenes as mumbling and chattering, he suggests that he (unlike Socrates) possesses the training to perform the duties of a public servant but misuses it.¹⁴⁷ As Theophrastus' portrait of the *lalos* suggests (*Char.* 7), the chatterer is not only someone who talks all the time about trivial matters; in his obsession with mastery he may also fail to communicate well and clearly.¹⁴⁸ In Demosthenes' case, this failure is compounded by his vocal weakness. The unpleasantly high-pitched voice that he squeaks out in court (τὴν ὀξεῖαν καὶ ἀνόσιον φωνήν, 2.157) further underscores this image of an unmanly, fearful, indistinct speaker.

Aeschines also claims that one of the primary characteristics of this awkward, squeaky panderer is that of effeminizing deceit. Both orators accuse each other of verbal trickery, but Aeschines makes the most colorful use of the charge. At one point he depicts the fawning Demosthenes as a "Sisyphus" who claps his hands at another's witticisms (ἀνακροτήσας ὁ Σίσυφος ὄδε τὰς χεῖρας, 2.42), while scheming for his own good reputation.¹⁴⁹ This deportment in itself broadcasts his lack of manly restraint, while also making him seem fatuous, like the open-mouthed, applauding audiences in Aristophanes.¹⁵⁰ In addition, it suggests that Demosthenes is a flapping, ridiculous presence on the *bēma*, an insult on which Aeschines will elaborate some years later in his speech against Ctesiphon (see further below). If Demosthenes scorns Aeschines' imitation of Solon's formal, manly deportment as a misplaced emphasis on surface effect, Aeschines lampoons Demosthenes' more mobile style as indicating his effeminacy and lack of control.¹⁵¹

This unmanly deportment does not, however, diminish Demosthenes' capacity for deceiving his audience. Aeschines calls his opponent a "wizard" who forges deceptions (Τίνες οὖν ἦσαν αἱ ἀπάται, ταῦτα γὰρ τοῦ γόητος

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Pl. *Gorg.* 485a7–486b1 and the discussion in ch. 4.

¹⁴⁸ See further discussion in ch. 6.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. Odysseus in Eur. *Cyc.* 106. ¹⁵⁰ See ch. 2 for an analysis of this imagery.

¹⁵¹ Contrast Aeschines' controlled deportment and his athletic metaphors. Cf. Harris 1995: 19–21 on the importance of appearing to be a tanned, athletic *kaloskagathos*; on Aeschines' use of sporting analogies, see Ober 1989: 283 and the objections of Fox 1994: 138–39.

ἀνθρώπου, 2.124) about the actions of others.¹⁵² Socrates is also accused by flirtatious elites of being a magician – an allegation that seems to be aimed at showing how his understated style may rival those grander performances of the sophists, whose techniques are frequently depicted as spellbinding. Something similar may be at work here, since in this speech Aeschines wants to claim that Demosthenes is both a chatterer whose weak voice betrays other deficiencies and a clever sophist who misleads audiences with his lies. Aeschines may also be exploiting the famous set speech of Gorgias, in which Palamedes defends himself against Odysseus' clever fabrications. Like Palamedes, Aeschines denies that he received any letters or bribes from the king, and emphasizes that eyewitnesses refute such claims.¹⁵³

Aeschines' depiction thus invokes an association common in Greek poetry between deception and feminine or slavish behavior.¹⁵⁴ Indeed, as I argue in the introduction to this book, this connection is only one aspect of a larger range of scorned behaviors associated with women and slaves and used as a central underpinning for the defamation of public speakers. We may reflect that some interlocutors of Socrates also impugn him as unmanly and slavish, although in a more indirect manner than here.¹⁵⁵ In Aeschines' speech the insult could not be more pointed. After bringing some slaves to the *bēma* as witnesses that Demosthenes is lying, Aeschines challenges him to declare himself a "womanly man and un-free" (ἀνδρόγυνος εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἐλεύθερος) if he is found to have committed perjury (2.127; cf. 148, 179). The juxtaposition suggests that Demosthenes, like any craven, weak type, might easily lie to save his hide, while even slaves might bravely tell the truth.

Demosthenes' dissembling tactics, moreover, are particularly elaborate and rehearsed. Without batting an eye (κατὰ τῶν ἀναισχύτων ὀφθαλμῶν), Aeschines claims, this effeminate liar concocts his tales in a precise imitation of the truth (μιμούμενος τοὺς τάληθῆ λέγοντας, 2.153; cf. 3.99), his careful casuistries standing in sharp contrast to Aeschines' own manly verbiage. Sophocles' *Philoctetes* indicates how important to the successful lie facial expression can be, as well as why a manly type might disdain it. When Odysseus convinces Neoptolemus to deceive the wounded and exiled Philoctetes in order to lay hold of his famous bow, the young man signals his grudging capitulation by asking how he should look (or what expression he should use, πῶς οὖν βλέπων τις ταῦτα τολμήσει λακεῖν,

¹⁵² Cf. Aeschin. 3.137, 207; also Dinarchus, whose speech against Demosthenes echoes this portrait (see the discussion above).

¹⁵³ Cf. Worman 2002a: 171–82. ¹⁵⁴ See Zeitlin 1982; Bergren 1983.

¹⁵⁵ E.g., Pl. *Gorg.* 485c2–d and see further discussion in ch. 4.

110) when uttering such bold lies.¹⁵⁶ The deceiver is depicted as a brazen type, whose indirection is nevertheless opposed to the muscular straight talk of a “real man.”

In summary, then, Aeschines accuses Demosthenes of an oral weakness associated with his thin voice and effeminate oral behaviors, including the unspeakable uses to which he puts his mouth. Demosthenes accuses Aeschines of an oral extravagance associated with his powerful voice and the debased selling of his mouth’s talents; for such a man, only truth impedes his usual volubility, twisting his tongue and choking him. Aeschines’ splendid voice also has a parallel effect on his enemy: Demosthenes’ throat is stoppered with fear and choked with indignation, and when he opens his mouth he can only squeak and flap about. Both orators depict each other as imitators and fabricators, of indulging in grand pronouncements (*semnologueō*; cf. Aeschin. 2.93) and of being sophistic wordsmiths. But clear distinctions emerge in the imagery of and associations with vocalizing and the mouth, to which the dispute over whether Demosthenes should be crowned in the Theater of Dionysus contributes some important details.

The dispute over the crown

In the years that intervened between the speeches on the embassy to Philip and Aeschines’ prosecution of Ctesiphon for proposing that Demosthenes receive the benefactor’s crown, the policies promoted by Demosthenes had been only temporarily successful. Macedonian power and control of territory continued to burgeon. In part because of alliances advocated by Demosthenes, Athens and the surrounding city-states held off Philip for a time and then suffered grave losses to him and to his son Alexander. The Athenians nevertheless continued to support Demosthenes’ more bellicose strategies, even after the disastrous defeat of the Athenian army at Chaeronea (338 BC). When Demosthenes’ ally Ctesiphon brought forward a proposal two years later that Demosthenes be crowned in the Theater of Dionysus, Aeschines immediately opposed it. The delay until 330 of the case that Aeschines brought against Ctesiphon has caused some puzzlement among commentators, but it is likely that the terrible events of the next six years left little opportunity for such measures.¹⁵⁷ By 330, however, it had

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Aeschin. 1.162; Thphr. Fr. 713 Fortenbaugh; see Hall 1995 on the importance of this aspect of delivery.

¹⁵⁷ E.g., the assassination of Philip (336), which led to the assumption of power by the more brutal Alexander, who razed Thebes for trying to revolt (335) and during 334 subdued all of Persia, to the great shock of Athens. Cf. Sealey 1993: 202–08; Yunis 2001: 10.

become clear that Athens was facing permanent subjugation to Macedonian rule, and Aeschines chose this moment to question in court the real benefits to Athens of Demosthenes' policies.

Aeschines' prosecution

The honor of being crowned in public forum falls to those who have substantially aided the city by their military and/or political services. Aeschines' prosecution aimed at proving that Ctesiphon's proposal constituted an illegal measure (*graphē paranomōn*), because his assessment of Demosthenes' actions was manifestly inaccurate.¹⁵⁸ Aeschines seeks to demonstrate that Demosthenes was not in a position to accept such an honor, his primary charge being that Ctesiphon made false statements in official documents claiming that Demosthenes' actions bolstered Athens against Philip's aggressions. Again, since during this period arguments about policy are so closely tied to those about character, Aeschines' speech is an attack on Demosthenes' civic persona as a whole. In a manner similar to the prosecution of Timarchus, this speech seeks to represent the visible, public performances of Demosthenes as proof of his inbred weaknesses. The lover of luxury with the effeminate deportment, strange locutions, and piping voice turns out to be a depraved sort with oligarchic tendencies who has brought ruin to Athens.

A moment in the middle of the speech provides a fitting point of entrance. Aeschines breaks off from a rehearsal of recent Macedonian advances in order to draw a connection between Demosthenes' harsh style and his despicable type. He first derides the "repulsive and incredible" metaphors (τὰ μισρὰ καὶ ἀπίθανα ῥήματα) that this louche "fag" (κίναϊδος) employs, which he calls "monstrosities" (θαύματα, 3.166–67). He thus impugns Demosthenes' lexicon in terms that parallel his moral stature, since both are figured as grotesque and depraved. As mentioned above, both orators repeatedly employ the label *miaros* in this late contest, a move that signals the increasing pitch of their hostilities as they approach the end of their careers. In Aeschines' speech, *miaros* seems clearly attached (as with the example above) to Demosthenes' speaking style. When, for instance, he depicts him falsely accusing others of wrongdoing, he calls him a "repulsive man" (ὁ μισρὸς ἄνθρωπος, 3.79); elsewhere Demosthenes' "bluster and triremes and boasting" (τὸν κόμπον καὶ τὰς τρήρεις καὶ τὴν ἀλαζονείαν¹⁵⁹) earn

¹⁵⁸ On the *graphē paranomōn* see Yunis 1988; Hansen 1991: 205–10.

¹⁵⁹ For similarly comic zeugmas that seek to point up the excesses of one's opponent, cf. Pl. *Gorg.* 490c8–d1, 491a1–2, 519a1–4.

him the insulting tags of “repulsive and impious” (ὁ μισαρός καὶ ἀνόσιος ἄνθρωπος) (3.101).

In the central passage Aeschines then assembles a list of features that make up the man of good democratic character, as opposed to the “oligarchic and depraved” man (ὀλιγαρχικὸν ἄνθρωπον καὶ φαῦλον) (3.168).¹⁶⁰ The democrat is, among other things, prudent and moderate (σώφρονα καὶ μέτριον) and possessed of oratorical ability (δυνατὸν εἰπεῖν) (170). Demosthenes fails in these regards. Never mind that his mother is a Scythian (172); he is also a speechwriter (λογογράφος) who squandered his patrimony in a contemptible (καταγελάστως) manner and now lives a life governed by greed (173). Aeschines succinctly sums up Demosthenes’ problem as “clever at talking, debased at living” (δεινὸς λέγειν, κακὸς βιώναι). He even claims that Demosthenes has made use of his body and his “child-producing capacity” (κέχρηται καὶ τῷ ἑαυτοῦ σώματι καὶ παιδοποιίᾳ) in a manner that he, Aeschines, is loathe to detail (174).¹⁶¹

This depraved orator deports himself in an equally contemptible manner. Aeschines describes Demosthenes as “pirouetting” around the *bēma* (κύκλω περιδιδῶν . . . ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος, 3.167) during an Assembly speech on Macedonian policy.¹⁶² Since Aeschines also charged the self-prostituting Timarchus with an overly energetic delivery style, this image may be meant to indicate Demosthenes’ general debasement as well. As the abuses mount, Aeschines ridicules Demosthenes for his shrill and emotional response to the prosecution of Ctesiphon: “Why the tears? Why the shouting? Why the screeching voice?” (τί τὰ δάκρυα: τίς ἡ κραυγή: τίς ὁ τόνος τῆς φωνῆς; 3.210). Demosthenes, he argues, did not respond as he ought (i.e., by rejecting the crown as untimely); instead he merely imitates virtue like the “trash” that he is (κάθαρμα ζηλοτυποῦν ἀρετῆς, 211¹⁶³). While Ctesiphon proposed that a crown be placed on “this repulsive head”

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Fox 1994: 151–53. Cohen 1995: 80 remarks that Demosthenes’ characterization of Aeschines in *On the Crown* is noteworthy for its “blatant anti-egalitarian” stance, which Aeschines’ implications here point to as well.

¹⁶¹ Cf. again Barthes 1974: 109–14 and Bakhtin 1984: 316–20 for the literary effects of this imagery.

¹⁶² The speech referred to was delivered after Macedonia put down a Spartan uprising, which occurred just before Aeschines brought his case (cf. 3.163–65). The image may be a joking reference to Demosthenes’ hiring of Andronicus (see above, n. 8), since it suggests dramatic performance. Cf. also Aeschines’ later description of Demosthenes as “leaping to the *bēma*” (ἀναπήδησεν ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα, 3.173) as a physical analogy for the latter’s quick and presumptuous ascent from the law courts to the Assembly platform. See Pearson 1976: 8; and cf. Hall 1995: 53, who also adduces Aeschin. 1.71 as a derisive image for disorderly conduct in court.

¹⁶³ Demosthenes responds to this insult in kind (ὦ κάθαρμα, 18.128); see further below. Cf. Kurke (forthcoming, ch. 7), who emphasizes the connection of this “trash talk” to the lowly figure of Aesop (e.g., *Vita G*, chs. 30, 31, 69) in her analysis of Plato’s characterization of Socrates in *Hippias Major*. Cf. ch. 4.

(τὴν μιὰρὰν κεφαλὴν ταύτην), Demosthenes himself was busy trying to win suits by faking its injury (212).¹⁶⁴ This picture of a shrill, repulsive public speaker whose body is also threatened with abuse recalls the figure of Thersites in the *Iliad* (2.211–77). Aeschines later indicates how ridiculous it would be to crown someone like Demosthenes by remarking wryly that no tragic poet would represent the Greeks crowning Thersites, since Homer depicts him as “unmanly and a panderer” (ἄνανδρον καὶ συκοφάντην, 3.231).¹⁶⁵

When taking further measure of his opponent’s venality, Aeschines contrasts Demosthenes’ illiberal behavior with his own democratic ways. While he acknowledges that Demosthenes has attacked him for keeping quiet in response to his challenges,¹⁶⁶ in fact, Aeschines claims, it is his own moderate mode of living that shapes his silences (τὴν δ’ ἐμὴν σιωπὴν . . . ἢ τοῦ βίου μετριότης παρεσκεύασεν). That is, he only speaks when he wishes to, rather than out of the necessity that comes from inborn extravagance (ὑπὸ τῆς ἐν τῇ φύσει δαπάνης) (3.218). Demosthenes, in contrast, only keeps quiet when his purse is full, and “clamors” (κέκραγας) when he needs money (3.218). Aeschines then connects his self-portrait as a moderate man who chooses his silences freely to the proper functioning of democracy: only in an oligarchy would one be forced to speak when one did not choose to do so (3.220).¹⁶⁷ According to Aeschines, Demosthenes is the one who behaves venally and coarsely – speaking for pay, committing sacrilege, taking bribes, indulging in dangerous invective (διαβολή), and even drinking and dining with a man he then put to death (3.223). As Demosthenes had earlier in his story about the Olynthian woman, Aeschines now attempts to project onto his timid opponent the violent characteristics of the intemperate, corrupt symposiast. While this profile may appear to suit his own aggressive type, Aeschines suggests that it is in fact the naturally craven character of the weak and unmanly man that fosters such depravities.

¹⁶⁴ Although Demosthenes’ suit against Meidias occurred 15 years earlier (348–46), this is probably a reference to it; cf. the discussion above.

¹⁶⁵ On Thersites’ type, cf. Kirk 1985; Rose 1988; Thalmann 1988; Martin 1989: 110–13; Seibel 1999; Worman 2002a: 66–67, 91–94; Marks 2005.

¹⁶⁶ This is apparently most specific to the first time the crown was proposed (cf. Dem. 18.83, 117, 124–25) but it may refer also to earlier charges (cf. Dem. 18.13, 23, 188–91, 222–26, 273). Note that this is a purposeful misunderstanding of what Demosthenes claims Aeschines’ silences suggest: that he only speaks up when doing so will result in some concrete gain, not when he perceives a wrong being committed.

¹⁶⁷ Although anti-oligarchic statements are not uncommon in speeches, there may have been increased anxiety around the issue, as is suggested by the passage of the law of Eucrates against tyranny (in 330, the year Demosthenes received his crown). I owe this observation to Alastair Blanshard (oral communication, March 2003).

In Plato's *Republic* greed and timidity are also associated with the oligarchic man (553b7–c7). Extravagance arises in the transition from oligarchy to democracy, when a youth reacts against the illiberality of his fearful parent and is tempted by life's sweet and variegated pleasures (παντοδαπὰς ἡδονὰς καὶ ποικίλας) (559d7–e2). Socrates depicts the democratic city as “thirsty for freedom” (ἐλευθερίας διψήσασσα); with bad “cupbearers” (οἶνοχόων, i.e., archons) it becomes “drunk” (μεθυσθῆ) on this heady liberty and regards its leaders as “despicable and oligarchic” (μιαροὺς καὶ ὀλιγαρχοὺς) if they do not indulge its thirst (562c8–d4). We might remember that Demosthenes is generally depicted as a teetotaler, a convention in keeping with his careful, prim persona. While his extravagance does not comport with Plato's scheme, Aeschines portrays it as in keeping with his greed, which does. Plato's oligarchic man seems to be both self-indulgent and repressive of others; in this regard Demosthenes – in Aeschines' depiction, at least – resembles him. Thus Aeschines' representation of Demosthenes as a depraved, timorous type loosely recalls Socrates' explanations of the transition from oligarchy to democracy.¹⁶⁸ And although the democratic man does not fare much better in Plato, he does exhibit the kind of gleeful voracity that Aeschines embodies in Demosthenes' defaming descriptions of him.

Aeschines also counters Demosthenes' impugning of his oratorical skills by fixing on an analogy that is prominent in the tradition of iambic insult. He declares that Demosthenes has characterized him as a kind of dangerous enchanter, by comparing him to the deadly Sirens (τὴν φύσιν τοῖς Σειρήσιν, 3.228). This analogy does not appear in any extant speech of Demosthenes, although it may well have been in some original version.¹⁶⁹ Since, as mentioned above, some scholars of these speeches are quite convinced that they were heavily edited with an eye to publication, this discrepancy should not be surprising.¹⁷⁰ The familiarity of the analogy may

¹⁶⁸ Since Demosthenes was one of the wealthiest Athenians, presumably he did not need to take bribes. But Aeschines presents him as one weaned on luxurious living and thus incapable of restraint in this regard. Note also Demosthenes' love of luxurious clothes (Aeschin. 1.131); and cf. Theophrastus' oligarchic man, who parades around in the middle of the day decked out in fancy clothes and declaiming in tragic style (26.4).

¹⁶⁹ But cf. DH *Dem.* 35, where Dionysius seems to think that it is Aeschines who likened Demosthenes to the Sirens (τοῖς σειρήσιν ἀπεικάζων).

¹⁷⁰ See Worthington 1991 and Gagarin 1999 on the relationship between a speech's delivery and the surviving text. This issue does not make much material difference to the claims of this discussion, for the purposes of which it is enough that these images end up predominating in the final versions of the speeches, which indicates their ongoing centrality during text production. Nevertheless, it is clearly an important issue for historicizing accurately the process by which the oral imagery came to the fore in these speeches. It would be nice, for instance, if it could be demonstrated that the

well have encouraged Aeschines to take it up, even if its implications are deeply ambiguous. Recall that in Euripides' *Andromache*, Hermione blames her bad behavior on the fancy chattering of clever, unscrupulous Sirens in the house (τούσδε Σειρήνων λόγους/ σοφῶν πανούργων ποικίλων λαλημάτων, 936–37). In the *Symposium*, Alcibiades fashions Socrates as a Siren, complete with dire effects on the ears (βίᾳ οὖν ὥσπερ ἀπὸ τῶν Σειρήνων ἐπισχόμενος τὰ ὦτα, 216a6–7).¹⁷¹ Although, given the glib cast of the metaphor, we might not expect it to be used of the booming Aeschines, this is one of many moments in these speeches where the refined quality of the defamation is evident. Aeschines may be a voluble type, but he is also a polished, practiced charmer, a seasoned deployer of artifice, which makes him more like the gossips that Hermione blames or the chatterers in Aristophanes. And while Socrates famously defines his own style as offhand, Plato's depiction of it strategically belies the claim. In this particular respect, then, Aeschines shares features with glib idlers.

Further, the image provides Aeschines with an opportunity to draw a sharp contrast between his style and that of his opponent. He declares that Demosthenes is all tongue and no proof – an overly prepared and precise speaker who only pretends to base his arguments on fact. A man of action with few rhetorical skills might be justified in depicting his opponent as a Siren, Aeschines says, but not a man who is “cobbled together out of words” (ἐξ ὀνομάτων συγκείμενος ἄνθρωπος).¹⁷² He maintains that, like an *aulos* robbed of its reed, if one were to take away Demosthenes' tongue, there would be nothing left (οὐ τὴν γλωτταν ὥσπερ τῶν αὐλῶν ἐάν τις ἀφέλη, τὸ λοιπὸν οὐδέν ἐστιν, 3.229).¹⁷³ As with the comparison of

majority of the passages that focus on the voice were responses to interference (*thorubos*) from the audience; but this seems unlikely as well as impossible to determine. As mentioned, the speeches appear to have been honed during subsequent editing, since they are remarkably consistent in details and build quite precisely on each other. In any event, the discrepancy regarding the Sirens analogy would suggest as much.

¹⁷¹ Cf. also Ar. fr. 676b K: ἀλλ' ὅ τι γράψαι, τοῦτ' ἂν μέλιτος καὶ Σειρήνων ἐτετεύχῃ.

¹⁷² Cf. Ps.-Demades *Dodek.* 51. Aeschines dwells repeatedly on Demosthenes' purported cowardice in battle (3.159–61 and *passim*), as well as his general effeminacy. Ober 1989: 283 has argued that Aeschines sought to present himself as a gentlemanly denizen of the gymnasium, pointing to his use of sports metaphors; Demosthenes would then by contrast appear not only weak but also ignoble. See also Fox 1994: 138–39; Golden 2000: 171–74.

¹⁷³ The *aulos* was a narrow, tubular wind instrument fitted with a reed or “tongue” (*glōssa*). It was usually played in pairs of pipes held to the face with straps and was widely used, especially at Athenian festivals; cf. Wilson 1999 (also 2000). Aristotle identifies this figure as analogy (*ἀνάλογον*, *Poet.* 1457b9), in which one metonymic item is traded for another. As noted, it is very common in Aristophanes, as well as Euripides' *Cyclops*, and constitutes a central means of reconfiguring the body in grotesque representation (cf. chs. 2 and 3). See also Demades fr. 57 on the chattering Athenians, an image familiar from comedy: Δημάδης τοὺς Ἀθηναίους εἰκάζεν αὐλοῖς, ὧν εἴ τις ἀφέλοι τὴν γλωτταν, τὸ λοιπὸν οὐδέν ἐστιν.

Aeschines to the Sirens, this is an unexpected and interesting simile. As discussed in chapter 4 (pp. 170–71), Peter Wilson has shown that the *aulos* is associated with things originally wild that have been domesticated. The figure of the piping satyr Marsyas indicates that it is particularly linked with these randy and ambiguous creatures, whose untamed sexual appetites match their barely controlled *auloi*, but whose music and instruments were fully integrated into the civic rituals of the polis. The instrument can drive the mouth wild (cf. στόμα λάβρον, Sem. 115 E), distorting the face so that straps (*phorbeia*) are needed to rein it in.¹⁷⁴

That said, the association of the *aulos* with wildness and sexuality traces a metaphorical scheme that does not appear to fit very well with Demosthenes' style, at least as he himself portrays it. But the image does recall Aeschines' depiction of Demosthenes as a harsh and strange speaker, whose extravagant gestures betray his inbred excesses. It may also be significant that Aeschines aims to depict Demosthenes as an *Ausländer* by claiming that his mother was a Scythian (3.172), a charge that comports with allegations of “unfamiliar” excesses.¹⁷⁵ Further, the comparison of Demosthenes to the *aulos* may draw attention to its typical sound, implying that a piping and shrill quality characterizes his opponent's voice.¹⁷⁶ Thus Demosthenes' high-pitched tones and harsh verbiage (and possibly also his “outlandish” sexuality) would stand in contrast to the epic fullness, enchanting flow, and masterful control of the Siren speaker.

Demosthenes' defense

Although Aeschines brought suit against Ctesiphon, his speech clearly aimed at defaming Demosthenes, both his character and his political career. Ctesiphon thus gave up his time for response to Demosthenes, who delivered such a successful defense of his public persona and role in Macedonian

¹⁷⁴ Wilson 1999: 72. Wilson points to the playful analogies in visual and literary representation between the *aulos* and the erect phalluses of satyrs. Thus the instrument in Aeschines' simile, like a number of his other cloaked references to Demosthenes' penis, would seem to hint at the same kind of crude connections among body parts familiar from old comedy. Cf. as well the figure of Procne in Aristophanes' *Birds*; from the reactions of Peisthetaerus and Euelpides, she would seem to be a hybrid character with a woman's body, a bird's head, and *auloi* (cf. Dunbar 1995 *ad loc.*). It seems relevant that her looks incite a prurient desire to dismantle: cf. again διαμηρίζοιμ' ἄν αὐτήν, 669; ἄλλ' ὡσπερ ὄν νῆ Δί' ἀπολέψαντα χρῆ/ ἀπὸ πῆς κεφαλῆς τὸ λέμμα, 673–74.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. n. 191 below on “mother-jokes” as a common topos.

¹⁷⁶ O'Sullivan (1992: 142–43) argues that the birdlike sounds of the *aulos* were associated with the “thin” style from early on. Although he does not mention this passage, he does compare Aristophanes' *Birds*, where the Bird chorus is described as singing a delicate song (λεπτόν/ ἠδομένον φωνῶν, 235), and the high sounds of the bucolic *aulos*. But Wilson's (1999) discussion suggests that the *aulos* was unlikely to have been used symbolically to represent such delicacy.

policy that more than four-fifths of the jurors voted in his favor and Aeschines left Athens in disgrace.¹⁷⁷ As suggested above, Aeschines had a number of events to point to in defense of his claim that the policies that Demosthenes promoted had not been in Athens' best interests, most notably the disastrous defeat of Thebes and Athens by Philip's army at Chaeronea in 338.¹⁷⁸ It is indeed remarkable that during a period of steady decline in Athens' power and influence, the city's most prominent policy maker could escape blame for as long as he did. But Demosthenes mounted a vicious attack of his opponent's character and a stirring depiction of his own heroic role in the face of the Macedonian threat.¹⁷⁹ Aeschines' allegations about Demosthenes' craven behavior and his lampooning of his ineffectual voice are met with equal and opposite insults: Aeschines is so loud, voracious, and vulgar that his mouth is always open, lapping up bribes and bellowing in the agora. Indeed, in a telling image that falls early in the speech, Demosthenes depicts his opponent "as if spattering him with the wine dregs of his craven acts and injustices" (ὡσπερ ἔωλοκρασίαν τινὰ μου τῆς πονηρίας τῆς ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀδικημάτων κατασκεδάσας, 18.50) – as if, that is, Aeschines had indulged to excess and tossed his dregs (or indeed vomited?) all over Demosthenes.¹⁸⁰

In defending his right to the benefactor's crown, Demosthenes thus reiterates his characterization of Aeschines' oral excesses as a theatrical extravagance that indicates his despicable type. After addressing Aeschines' legal argument and defending his own record of public service, Demosthenes launches into direct invective, deploying slanderous labels that scorn Aeschines' verbal abilities as the trash-heap scroungings of a third-rate writer and performer. Aeschines bawls out "cart language" (βοῶς ῥητὰ καὶ ἄρρητ' ὀνομάζων, ὡσπερ ἀμάξης, 18.122) like a slinger of *aischrologia*.¹⁸¹ He is always ready to initiate slander, ridicule his (Demosthenes') usage, and say things that a moderate man would shrink from uttering (ἄρχει τοῦ κακῶς λέγειν, καὶ λόγους τινὰς διασύρει, αὐτὸς εἰρηκῶς ἂ τίς οὐκ ἂν ὄκησεν τῶν μετρίων ἀνθρώπων φθέγξασθαι, 18.126; cf. λοιδορούμενος καὶ διασύρων, 18.180). In one supremely insulting string of images, Demosthenes refers to his voluble enemy as "a crumb-snatcher,

¹⁷⁷ On this last stage of Aeschines' political career, see Harris 1995: 138–48.

¹⁷⁸ See Griffith 1979: 596–603; Sealey 1993: 196–201. ¹⁷⁹ Cf. Yunis 2000.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Cic. *Phil.* 2.63, where Cicero claims that Antony actually vomited on the rostrum; see Wooten 1983: 50–58 and further in the Epilogue.

¹⁸¹ These are the ritual insults uttered by women during the procession to Eleusis and by men during the procession in the Anthesteria, a festival celebrating Dionysus. Cf. Usher 1993: 212; Yunis 2001: 181.

a marketplace hack, a ruinous clerk” (σπερμολόγος, περίτριμμ’ ἀγορᾶς, ὄλεθρος γραμματεὺς, 18.127). Not only is Aeschines a scrounger and a scribbler, he is also a loafer in the agora – the venue for brash, vulgar sorts from old comedy to Plato.¹⁸² Add to this his penchant for strident melodrama: Demosthenes derides Aeschines’ ponderous oratorical style (ἐπαχθεῖς λόγους), which is so suggestive of tragic performance (ὥσπερ ἐν τραγωδίᾳ βοῶντα) (127). Demosthenes’ language recalls Euripides’ depiction of Aeschylus’ weighty effect on tragedy in Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (οἰδοῦσαν ὑπὸ κομπασμάτων καὶ ῥημάτων ἐπαχθῶν, 940), an echo that underscores the idea that Aeschines’ style is not only grandiose but also old news. Demosthenes himself, as his connections with glib chatters suggest, is more like Euripides: a purveyor of refined, newfangled verbiage.

Demosthenes encapsulates this portrait of a tedious, commonplace hack by addressing Aeschines as “trash” (ὦ κάθαρμα, 18.128). In this he echoes Aeschines’ own slur (cf. κάθαρμα, 3.211), but while Aeschines derided Demosthenes as a *katharma* who imitates virtue, Demosthenes considers Aeschines one who is not even fit to speak of it. After insulting his parentage, Demosthenes denigrates him as an unscrupulous slanderer (ὁ βᾶσκανος¹⁸³) who shouts out (βοῶν . . . καὶ κεκραγῶς) his objections and seeks to get criminals off with his pompous talk (σεμνολόγου) (132–33). He also refers to him as “this [young] swaggerer” (τοῦ νεανίου τούτου, 136), an insult that points not so much to age as to bold attitude.¹⁸⁴ In the speech on the embassy, Demosthenes apes Aeschines describing his opponent’s deportment in trial as “swaggering” (νεανιεύσεται, 19.242), the *oratio obliqua* indicating that he, Demosthenes, is hardly the type to deport himself in this brash manner. Elsewhere Demosthenes highlights this swaggering as characteristic of Meidias, another overbold loud-mouth;¹⁸⁵ in a similar manner here, this deportment constitutes a visible mark of Aeschines’ theatrical, brazen type and conforms to his voluble speaking style.

¹⁸² The conceit of the moderate man’s verbal restraint is aimed at proscribing the “coarse” (*mīaros*) language of the marketplace. Cf. again Bourdieu’s (1991: 86–87) contrast between the *gueule* of the loud-mouthed, manly speaker versus the prim, feminized *bouche* of polite, upper-class discourse. Demosthenes’ characterization of Aeschines’ verbal brazenness may thus signal both class and gender distinctions between himself and his opponent. Cf. especially Paphlagon in Aristophanes’ *Knights*, also Callicles in Plato’s *Gorgias*; and see the discussions in chs. 2 and 4.

¹⁸³ Demosthenes calls Aeschines a slanderer (*baskanos*) repeatedly: cf. 18.108, 119, 139, 242, 318. He also deems Meidias a *baskanos* (21.209).

¹⁸⁴ Note that Aeschines is about 40 at the time of the trial. Cf. Callicles’ insulting of Socrates’ methods as “swaggering talk” (νεανιεύσεται, 482c4), which is really what he, Callicles, indulges in (cf. 527d6–e1).

¹⁸⁵ Dem. 21.18, 69, 131, 201.

This focus on Aeschines' overly active mouth moves Demosthenes to deem Aeschines an "iamb-eater" (ἰαμβειοφάγος, 18.139), since his theatrical training encourages him to interlard his speeches with poetic quotations. Some manuscripts show an alternate reading of this neologism as "iamb-writer" (ἰαμβειογράφος), which would point more to Aeschines' dramatic usage than to his "chewing on his words," as one commentator puts it.¹⁸⁶ But if we take this image together with that of the crumb-snatching shouter and compare it to the traits that dominate the depiction, we can see that Demosthenes' portrait of his enemy leans toward emphasizing his oral excesses. And while he clearly derides Aeschines as a writer for hire and a clerk (*logographos*, *grammateus*), this slur (like that of *sophistēs*) is too closely connected to his own activities as a speechwriter to be very useful for distinguishing his enemy as a particular kind of villain.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, the label *iambeiophagos* suggests the same sort of analogy to eating as *spermologos*, and thus highlights a similar type: an indiscriminate scrounger after fancy words and favors, a cheap actor who gobbles *iamboi*.

As in the speech on the embassy, Demosthenes also makes repeated references to Aeschines' loud voice (e.g., βοῤξ, 18.82; βοῶν καὶ κεκραγῶς, 18.132, 199) and overly emotional style (γεγηθῶς καὶ λαρυγγίζων, 18.292; cf. 278), again relating both to his experience as an actor. The labels that forge this connection are often colorfully abusive, as when he terms him a "tragic ape" (e.g., αὐτοτραγικός πίθηκος, 242). Later Demosthenes is more ironic: toward the end of the speech, he claims that Aeschines is only an effective actor in the high tragic mode (ὑποκρίτης ἄριστος, τραγικός Θεοκρίνης, 313) when defending those in whose interests he toils.¹⁸⁸ Such a speaker chews up the scenery, in effect, indulging in the kind of tonal excesses (e.g., shouting, groaning) that are better suited to ponderous tragedy. The apparently weak-voiced Demosthenes is again at pains to represent his opponent's powerful vocal cords and dramatic delivery as indicative of dangerous intemperance, suggesting that such a practiced and overblown style is directly related to Aeschines' shady upbringing and his profligate life.¹⁸⁹ Demosthenes responds to Aeschines' charge that he only speaks for

¹⁸⁶ Usher 1993 *ad loc.* Usher prefers the latter reading, while most earlier commentators prefer the former (cf. Butcher 1903; Mathieu 1948; Wankel 1976).

¹⁸⁷ The label *grammateus*, on the other hand, is a jab at Aeschines' class status; cf. Ober 1989: 272–73; Harris 1995: 29–30.

¹⁸⁸ I.e., Aeschines is only "the best actor" in the worst circumstances (cf. 18.242–43, 259–60; also 19.199, 206–09). Theocrines may be the sycophant of Ps.-Dem. 58, which would further impugn Aeschines as a panderer; see Usher 1993 *ad loc.*

¹⁸⁹ Again, this conflation of verbal technique and moral type that has a long history in Greek literary culture. See Winkler 1990: 66–67; O'Sullivan 1992: 145–50.

gain by declaring that Aeschines shouts on without stopping (ἀλλὰ βοῶς μὲν ἔχων, παύσει δ' οὐδέποτε, 18.82), no matter what he may have in hand.

Demosthenes also highlights this loud-mouthed, dramatic style in metaphorical language that points to Aeschines' violent tendencies. He claims, for example, that Aeschines "murdered" the part of Oenomaus (κακῶς ἐπέτριψας, 18.180) in a performance at Collytus; and he depicts Aeschines' acting with the "Heavy Groaners" (βαρυστόνοις) as a "war" (πόλεμος) with the audience (18.262). This violent theatricality is later matched in Demosthenes' metaphorical scheme by voracious verbiage: he attributes a general coarseness and rapacity to Aeschines and his associates. They are all "repulsive men, panderers, and braggarts" (ἄνθρωποι μιαιροὶ καὶ κόλακες καὶ ἀλάστορες), who have "maimed" (ἠκρωτηριασμένοι) their country and "drunk up" (προπεπωκότες) their freedom, "measuring happiness by their bellies" (τῇ γαστρὶ μετροῦντες . . . τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν) (296). Demosthenes' prim distaste for such men clearly recalls comic parodies of lowbrow, loud-mouthed, greedy demagogues.¹⁹⁰

In keeping with this comic tone, Demosthenes further denigrates Aeschines' family background, now indulging in ridicule without fear of response and using vocabulary that can only be intended to rouse scornful laughter. For instance, Demosthenes claims that Aeschines' mother was really named Empousa, the licentious, child-eating monster who frightens Xanthias and Dionysus in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (285–93). This bogey appellation, he further declares, comes from the fact that his mother "does everything" (πάντα ποιεῖν, 18.130).¹⁹¹ The son of a hellish monster, himself a tragic ape, Aeschines appears to be barely human in Demosthenes' depiction. And since he is a natural born ape of an actor, by parallel logic he is a "counterfeit orator" (παράσημος ῥήτωρ, 242). Compare a later passage, in which Aeschines turns up like a gust of wind (ὥσπερ πνεῦμ' ἐφάνη), and delivers a torrent of words (συνειλοχῶς ῥήματα) that are all practice and production (πεφωνασκηκῶς, 308) but devoid of any true

¹⁹⁰ Cf. also Socrates' description of the democratic city drunk on freedom (Pl. *Resp.* 562c8–d4) and the discussion in ch. 4.

¹⁹¹ Like Mormo and the Lamiai, Empousa is a changeable chthonic monster. She may appear as an erotic lure or as a bereft mother who eats the children of others; see Johnston 1995. Yunis (*ad* 18.130) points out that such nicknames are common to prostitutes and argues that the phrase indicates that Aeschines' mother has the prostitute's sexual versatility. We might also note that the *panourgos* label ("doing everything") connotes a general profligacy and lack of scruples; cf. Worman 1999. Most commentators regard this attack as utilizing a common topos, what Harding (1987: 30) refers to as "mother-jokes" (cf. Dover 1974b: 30–32; Pearson 1976: 81; Hunter 1990: 317–18).

benefit to the polis. Toward the end of his speech Demosthenes relates a tale about Aeschines' early involvement in the Dionysian rituals that his mother oversaw, drawing attention to the servile quality of his activities and the ear-splitting vocal talents that were put to use in reading the ritual texts and shouting for the god (18.257–60).¹⁹² Such activities, Demosthenes manages to suggest, were only pale precursors to Aeschines' development as a mercenary virtuoso of many public arenas. From helping his mother ply her trade in the women's circles, the full-throated Aeschines went on to perform in the theater – where, again, his excessively emotional style relegated him to the rank of third actor (262).

Pat Easterling has discussed whether this connection with the theater is meant to raise questions about Aeschines' trustworthiness, since this is the realm of simulation.¹⁹³ Although she concludes that this is not necessarily the case, it is important to emphasize again that Aeschines' connections with the theater underscore his theatrical style, which Demosthenes depicts as one of both simulation and excess. And like the jobs Aeschines performed for his mother, his acting involved selling his body's talents (particularly those of his mouth), bringing him perilously close to the behaviors of a common laborer or a slave.¹⁹⁴

One further element contributes to this general picture. Demosthenes, like Aeschines, uses the abusive label *miaros* (“repulsive”) repeatedly, most often of Aeschines alone and once of him and his associates (18.296; cf. above). And again, both men only make liberal use of the term in this final confrontation. Demosthenes, however, employs it less in connection to Aeschines' speaking style than in bitter imprecation – that

¹⁹² Harris 1995: 26–28 contends that such rituals suggest that Glaucothea was the priestess of a private cult, and are therefore not evidence of her being from of priestly family (i.e., not upper-class).

¹⁹³ Easterling 1999. Harris 1995: 30–31 argues that acting was not necessarily so denigrated a profession as Demosthenes' insults seem to suggest, and Easterling agrees. Demosthenes is on somewhat dangerous ground here, as Easterling points out: he must emphasize the bombast and ersatz emotionalism associated with the tragic actor to denigrate Aeschines, but he must do this without somehow denigrating tragedy itself. Easterling also remarks (1999: 158–61) that Demosthenes emphasizes the less prestigious kind of acting (that of the traveling troupe), and that he suggests that such acting involves a kind of deceit. This in itself implies that tragedy is deceptive, although Demosthenes utters no such direct condemnation of this important civic ritual. Aristotle attempts something similar in the *Rhetoric*, when he distinguishes the role of the orator from that of the actor in the introduction to his discussion about style (1403b–1404b). The tension and delicacy of this differentiation is clearly perceptible there, since the orator (as Aristotle admits) borrows certain key techniques from the actor that have an ambiguous moral coloring (e.g., character impersonation). Cf. further discussion in ch. 6.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. again Aeschin. 2.127 regarding Demosthenes: ἀνδρόγυνος εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἐλεύθερος. Unlike Demosthenes, Aeschines emphasizes the sexual aspects of his enemy's oral activities.

is, as a generalized curse. An exception suggests the rule. In the middle of his speech Demosthenes notes that, given Aeschines' "pompous talk" (σεμνολόγου, 18.133), no one voted for "this repulsive man" (τῷ μισρῷ τούτῳ, 134–35) as spokesman in a dispute brought before the Amphictyonic Council over control of the Delian temple (cf. 18.141, 153, 289, 296).¹⁹⁵ While the setting for the insult concerns public speaking, the aim of the label is more general, suggesting that Aeschines is so entirely depraved that his only proper appellation is a curse. No citizen so defiled by his own excesses could possibly promote policies that would safeguard Athens.

The orator may exploit his verbal powers in his role as public citizen, but his mouth also serves as a crucial metonymy in denigrating the mercenary and intemperate uses to which he may put his body. The penetrable apertures of the *kinaidos* and the marketable voice of the orator become associated in ways that, as in comic imagery, reconfigure the body in rude form. In the case of Aeschines, the selling of his vocal talents in cultic revelry, in the theater, and most crucially in the courts and Assembly, belies the invulnerability that should characterize the powerful, aggressive speaker. In the case of Demosthenes, his choking frustration and stage fright, and prim, unmanly attitudes conform with his other oral weaknesses – both the thinness of his voice and his supposed penchant for using his mouth in less noble ways.¹⁹⁶ Demosthenes' problem is not so much excess as weakness (the choked or squeaky mouth) and the suggestion of submissive sexual tendencies, while Aeschines tends to be a word-gobbler, making lavish use of and openly marketing his booming voice.

While these portraits align only somewhat with the linguistic styles of the orators (the case of Demosthenes is especially complicated), they do provide important data for the interaction of character and style in speech performance.¹⁹⁷ And although other visible elements function as indicators of character in these portraits, the mouth and its activities play a special

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Usher 1993: 218–19; Harris 1995: 121–22; Yunis 2001: 188–89.

¹⁹⁶ According to Plutarch (*Dem.* 29.3–4), Demosthenes died in a manner strangely befitting his writerly type, by ingesting the poison in his pen. The story may be apocryphal, but Plutarch's description emphasizes the aptness of this conflation of his characteristics: the *logographos* effectively eats his words.

¹⁹⁷ Demosthenes is sometimes characterized as Lysianic (i.e., polished and concise), Aeschines as grand and forceful (cf. Cic. *Brut.* 35, *Orat.* 110; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 12.10.23). As mentioned, delivery styles contribute to this distinction between the two: Demosthenes is depicted as practicing assiduously to offset his weaknesses, Aeschines as naturally gifted with a sonorous voice (Demetr. frs. 165–168; Plut. *Dem.* 6.4–5, 8.3, 10.1, 11.1; Cic. *de Orat.* 3.28; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 11.3.6). There

role. As derisive metonymies for the problems of intemperance particular to the democratic context, they debase a speaker's characteristic usage and delivery and thereby threaten his public career. Although clearly influenced by the abusive discourse that developed around professional speakers in the late fifth and early fourth centuries, these images are singular for their direct impact on public debate. They reflect concerns that were central to Athens during a period of increasing menace from a monarch famous for choking off freedom of speech, as well as from his brutal son. This mockery of the public speaker's very ability to speak in such circumstances thus throws into sharp relief the power of insult to affect democratic decision-making and policy.

Theoretical reflection on oratorical technique, to which the chapter that follows returns, reveals so little indication of these momentous concerns that one is tempted to charge the philosophers with subterfuge. If Plato's dialogues admire most of all the man who (supposedly) keeps an ironic distance from the council chamber and courts, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* all but ignores the oratorical practitioners of his day, most notably Demosthenes, and focuses largely on literary exempla. The concertedly inconsequential atmosphere of Theophrastus' *Characters*, for its part, seems to be so far removed from the courts and Assembly that scholars have doubted that it was intended for rhetorical instruction. *Characters* remains a text rife with imagery centered on the mouth and its appetites while fully masking its relation to larger concerns (e.g., politics, public speaking). Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is, however, another matter, and I would suggest that its silence in this regard is pointed and polemical. Like his teacher but for somewhat different reasons, Aristotle was unhappy with oratory as it was practiced by his contemporaries and sought to encourage in his students a more literate, literary, and intellectual *technē* that depended less on performative dash and more on argument.

For all that Demosthenes claimed that this was the province of his most determined opponent, both Aeschines' image of Demosthenes "pirouetting around the *bēma*" and the claims of later theorists indicate that he was

is a complication with the characterization of Demosthenes, who is later associated with the "grand" style" as well, in part because of his use of amplification, neologisms, and figurative language (e.g., Demetr. *Eloc.* 246–53; DH *Dem.* 22; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 10.1.76; Herm. *Is.* 20). This reflects the increasing tendency among writers on rhetoric to canonize Demosthenes as the greatest of Athens' orators, who masterfully deploys whatever style best suits his purpose. On particular features of these orators' styles, see Blass 1877 (3.1): 63–70, 161–66; Julien and de Péréra 1902; Ronnet 1951; Delaunay 1959; Rowe 1966; Pearson 1976; McCabe 1981; Wooten 1989; Yunis 1996.

himself famous for his theatrical delivery. What we may have in Aristotle's lectures on rhetoric if not in Theophrastus' portraits, then, is an implicit critique of the kind of oratorical excesses that Demosthenes claimed to be critiquing, while in reality using them to reinforce his self-depiction as a man apart, alone in his moral restraint and concern for the health of the polis.

The intemperate mouth in Aristotle and Theophrastus

Θεόφραστῆς ἐρωτηθεὶς, τί τῶν ἐν βίῳ ἀγαθὸν ὑπάρχει ἢ κακόν,
ἔφη· γλῶσσα.
When Theophrastus was asked, “What in life is good or bad?”
he responded, “The tongue.”¹

If in classical Athens abusive talk centering on the mouth usually targets politicians and intellectuals, Theophrastus’ character sketches are something of a departure. A famously prolific student of Aristotle, Theophrastus wrote treatises on nature and human behavior as well as on aspects of public speaking.² He probably composed the sketches between 330 and 320, while he was studying at Aristotle’s Lyceum; although commentators are eager to point to Aristotelian influence, *Characters* more obviously reflects a shift toward the comically pedestrian that is especially evident in Demosthenes’ final portrait of Aeschines (in *On the Crown*, 330) as well as a number of speeches from this period by other orators.³ While these portraits depict the mouths of average citizens as laughably grotesque apertures whose owners gabble and whine, or stuff food and money indiscriminately into their busy maws, they share features with contemporaneous speeches and iambic discourse more generally. Indeed, the sketches operate within a familiar ethical framework and draw familiar connections among the various immoderate behaviors that converge around the mouth. But they also extend the imagery discussed in this study in a new direction, fleshing out the broader categories that distinguish public figures with the details of life in downtown Athens. Theophrastus’ *Characters* thus has much to contribute to our understanding of Athenian ideas about how moral features manifest themselves in the citizen’s physical behavior, particularly in relation to that most important of Athenian organs: the talkative mouth.

¹ Florilegium Ἀριστον καὶ πρῶτον μᾶθημα, no. 64.

² DL 5.42–50. See Fortenbaugh 1992.

³ E.g., Hyp. frs. 8, B 19.80; Demad. frs. 75, 89; Din. *Dem.* On the dating debate, see now Diggle 2004; the Lyceum was founded by Aristotle in 335.

Scholars have recognized the connections between Theophrastus' *Characters* and ancient comedy, as well as the sketches' later importance for rhetorical training.⁴ Although Theophrastus' vocabulary echoes that of characterizations from Attic old comedy, Fortenbaugh and others have tended to emphasize instead comparisons to middle and new comedy.⁵ And while Furley (following Immisch) argued for the sketches' rhetorical uses, their contribution to an iambic tradition of type-casting public speakers has gone largely unnoticed.⁶ I would argue, however, that we ought to worry less about what genre(s) these sketches make use of or themselves inhabit and consider instead how they respond to the discursive patterns that organize iambic talk. Focusing on genre may, in any event, reflect a modern preoccupation with literary categories that were just beginning to be recognized in the classical period. More important, assessing how Theophrastus' sketches fit into an iambic discourse reveals a shared vocabulary and traces of the familiar oppositions between speaker's types on the one hand, and a shift in focus on the other. The *agroikos* man, for instance, is no longer so much impervious to the blandishments of demagogues as to the reactions of his fellow citizens.

In this regard at least Theophrastus' depictions may indeed bear more similarity to character portrayals in middle and new comedy, which center on upper- and middle-class private citizens' dilemmas. One further revelation emerges from analyzing shared imagery and vocabulary: a number of plays of fourth-century comic poets bear titles that match characters from Theophrastus (e.g., the *agroikos* and the *kolax*). The fragmentary remains of this comedy suggest, however, that while it sometimes participates in a similar defamation of speakers' styles and typical habits, especially in the figure of the "boastful chef," its vocabulary is politer and its imagery more restrained.⁷ The plays of middle and new comedy increasingly break from old comedy in their turn toward private life and largely avoid the insulting vocabulary (especially sexual metaphors)

⁴ E.g., Furley 1953; Webster 1956: 132–34; Fortenbaugh 1981; Ussher 1960: 4–9.

⁵ Fortenbaugh 1981; also Steinmetz 1960, Gaiser 1967. Contrast Ussher 1960, 1977.

⁶ Furley's argument (1953) is inspired in part by the *ēthopoia* that became so essential to oratory in later periods, which clearly draws on a system of character typing that has its roots in sketches like those of the *Characters*. Diggle 2004: 9–10, 25–27 points to the fact that late Peripatetics wrote similar sketches, but he doubts claims of broad influence in antiquity. Cf. also Lane Fox 1996, who argues for a connection to the writing of histories.

⁷ For instance, while Menander does appear to echo the Aristophanic association of *lalia* with women's talk (e.g., *Sam.* 261; fr. 592; fr. 164 K), other terms to which it might be compared or opposed do not occur. Moreover, *lalia* becomes an increasingly general term for talk, which might also account for its presence in Menander.

that tie oral activities to other bodily functions in old comedy and in oratory.⁸

Theophrastus' portraits also tend to avoid detailing sexual behaviors, but in contrast to new comedy this does not entail a lack of attention to oral activities. Again, one comic figure in particular continues the convention of matching speaking style to other mouth imagery: the "boastful chef" (*mageiros*) who dominates middle and new comedy.⁹ Fuller consideration of this word-proud figure in relation to Theophrastus' text occupies the introduction to the discussion of the *alazōn*. Here let me merely note again that the figure of the *mageiros* elaborates insultingly on that of the grandiose sophist, and as such offers further proof of the pervasive denigration of professional speakers in comic, oratorical, and philosophical settings.

While Theophrastus' portraits may avoid sexual imagery, they tell us a lot about Athenian attitudes toward the body and its appetites, a fact that has gone largely unnoticed by commentators. Some have, however, argued that Aristotle's ideas about intemperance influenced *Characters*, pointing to his organization of vices as failures of weakness or excess (*NE* 1107a33–1108b7). Given that the sketches were written while Theophrastus was studying with Aristotle at the Lyceum, *Characters* may well have been informed by Aristotelian ethical ideas; but Theophrastus' portraits only point explicitly to this scheme in some of their introductions, which are later interpolations.¹⁰ Instead the bodies of the sketches exhibit concerns more evident in public performance (and anticipate those of modern sociologists such as Bourdieu): how the discrete details of one's behavior visibly and audibly delineate certain excesses and thereby social place. The sketches thus elaborate upon categories of character type central to earlier dramatic depiction and contemporaneous oratory – the public arenas in which perceptible traits were most influential and thus frequently used to defame one's enemies and opponents. They also intersect in revealing ways with the Platonic depiction of Socrates.

Although it is generally acknowledged that *Characters* may have served some purpose in the training of orators, discussions of Theophrastus' ideas about style and delivery are usually limited to fragments of his rhetorical studies, which orients the analysis toward prescriptive explanations.¹¹ These discussions seek to explain how Theophrastus thinks one ought to deliver

⁸ Cf. Hunter 1985:12, 148–49; also Fantuzzi and Hunter 2004.

⁹ See Giannini 1960; Berthiaume 1982; Wilkins 2000a; and the discussions in chs. 2 and 3.

¹⁰ See discussions of particular sketches in Ussher 1960; Steinmetz 1962; Rusten 1993. Stein 1992 clinches the argument that they are interpolations; cf. Diggle 2004: 17–19.

¹¹ E.g., Kennedy 1957; Innes 1985.

a formal speech, rather than how he describes one informally engaging with others.¹² From this perspective the portraits in *Characters* would be of little use for understanding of Theophrastus' ideas about the suitable vocabulary, tone, or gestures for a given speech. That is, although scholars recognize that *Characters* may offer details for use in formal speeches (especially in character assassination),¹³ they have not considered what the sketches might contribute to discussions of style and delivery. This oversight may reflect Aristotle's weighty influence (through the dissemination of Peripatetic ideas) on ancient rhetorical theory and especially its modern elucidation.¹⁴ Aristotle dismisses the importance of delivery in the *Rhetoric* (1404a1–8), and later Greek theorists such as Demetrius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus either treat it separately from speaking style or fail to address it at all. This means that in formal theoretical discussions, stylistic concerns came to be restricted to the use of written language, and not thought of as related to or bound up in aspects of speech performance (i.e., delivery). But this restricted way of thinking about style has little to do with earlier ways of understanding the integrated impact of speeches, especially in an emphatically oral culture like Athens.¹⁵

In any event, it is fairly clear that Aristotle's dismissive attitude toward delivery is intended as a corrective, since orators of the mid fourth century seem to have paid quite a lot of attention to delivery techniques. Demosthenes, for instance, is said to have emphasized delivery over all, and Theophrastus himself was known to have written a treatise on the topic.¹⁶ Both would thus seem to be interested in the perceptible techniques that exceed those found in the written speech – elements like deportment, tone, facial expression, and so on. This whole-body approach to language usage would have promoted more awareness of, say, the vocal quality (e.g., booming, whiney) of a speaker who uses elaborate figures of speech, or the gestures of the plainspoken man.

¹² See Fortenbaugh's 1985 discussion of Theophrastus on delivery, e.g.; and see further below.

¹³ Furlley 1953; Fortenbaugh 1994.

¹⁴ While Aristotle's texts that are still extant (perhaps as opposed to his more popular works) may have been at least partially lost for some of the Hellenistic period and only recovered in the first century BC by Andronicus of Rhodes, it is likely that both other works of his and those of his followers were widely circulated. Demetrius' writings (3rd–2nd century BC?) show familiarity with Aristotle's terminology and systems of analysis, as do those of Cicero and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. See Lloyd 1968: 13–14; Wehrli 1968 for the Peripatos and its reception more generally.

¹⁵ As is clear, ironically, from the Roman critics; Cicero emphasizes the importance of both style and delivery, as does Quintilian. Cf. Gleason 1995; Gunderson 2000; Worman 2002a; and see Bourdieu 1991: 81–89.

¹⁶ The anecdote about Demosthenes is possibly apocryphal but very telling, given his own troubles, which themselves indicate the stress placed on delivery (Cic. *Brut.* 142, *Orat.* 56; Quint. *Inst. Or.* 11.3.6). On Theophrastus' treatise, see Fortenbaugh 1992.

Theophrastus' *Characters* can help us in this regard. Many of the sketches offer significant details about the phrasing and delivery styles of average citizens, and systematically relate these details to other behaviors that delineate particular character types. They thus provide raw material for the molding of style to suit audience and occasion – a technique that Aristotle reluctantly admits is central to a speaker's success (*Rhet.* 1390a25–27). This is not to claim that Theophrastus composed these sketches for this purpose; there is no way of determining this, nor is such a concern important to the focus of this discussion. But the sketches do seem to bear some relation to oratorical invective (*diabolē*) on the one hand and the shaping of visible speech performance on the other. Theophrastus was certainly not the first rhetorical theorist to write a manual entitled *Characteres*, and even if we are not sure exactly what earlier versions of these manuals contained, it is likely that they included some instruction by example of how to construct a believable type.¹⁷ Moreover, the second book of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* itself exhibits a similar ambiguity in its analysis of character; the schematic differentiations by age and circumstance are apparently meant to suggest both how the orator might present himself to certain audiences and how he might construct believable types (especially negative ones) within his narrative.

That said, there is no question that Theophrastus' sketches offer a distinctly pedestrian window on the typical behaviors of the Athenian citizen, and in this sense they stand in sharp contrast to Aristotle's discussions about the need for the orator to present himself as a trustworthy, beneficent leader.¹⁸ Fortenbaugh and others have argued that Theophrastus' portraits seem most useful for devising slanderous depictions of one's opponents. Thus they would appear to bear a closer relation to the defamation of opponents that orators use in their actual speeches, than they do to theories about how orators' speeches ought to be formulated. But I would not for this reason dismiss any connection between the stylistic theory and the portraits; rather, we need a more informed understanding of where these portraits fit into discussions not only of speakers' styles but also of their visible habits more generally.

Given the emphasis on daily life that frames the observations of Theophrastus' portraits, it should come as little surprise that their details include visible habits and dispositions of the body in relation to typical

¹⁷ According to Diogenes Laertius (6.15) Antisthenes wrote such manuals; according to Plato, so did Thrasymachus (*Phdr.* 266c).

¹⁸ As we find in the *Rhetoric*, and probably would have found in Theophrastus' discussions of oratorical style and delivery (cf. Fortenbaugh 1985).

activities of the Athenian citizen. Thus we see men talking in the street, on the way to the marketplace or the courts, at dinner, in drinking parties; and we see their eating habits, their verbal proclivities, how they sit, how they wear their cloaks, what they do when they drink. Each portrait contains a particular set of behaviors that delineates a particular form of immoderation, and the loose interconnections among such seemingly disparate habits form the outline of these intemperate types. Certain kinds of behavior turn up more often than others, and some are especially interesting for the ways in which they forge connections among oral activities. These connections suggest that an understanding of distinctions among types was already prevalent in Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries, and that rhetorical theorists of the fourth century developed this in a more detailed and varied form. Fourth-century orators, like the comic poets before them, most often employ such distinctions in order to fashion effective character assassinations. The range among speakers' types that I identify in the larger discussion – which extends from the voluble shouters to gabbling idlers – can also be detected in Theophrastus' *Characters*, but as part of a more variegated scheme that captures the particularities of daily life. In this it parallels Theophrastus' development of a more refined set of stylistic categories. Scholars credit his work with influencing later theories based on the division of speaker's styles into three (rather than two) main types, which are then articulated in relation to four stylistic "virtues" (*aretai*).¹⁹

For the purposes of this discussion, Theophrastus' ideas about oratorical style are important only insofar as they can be seen to contribute to the shaping of his ideas about oral intemperance – that is, weak or otherwise excessive uses of the mouth. Nevertheless, the interesting gap between the texts analyzed in earlier chapters, which focus primarily on how prominent Athenians ought to behave, and these sketches of average citizens demands an attempt to establish some connection between depictions of professional speakers' styles and these portraits. Perhaps we can look to Aristophanes for some instruction in this regard, since his plays so frequently set up a typical old citizen in some fatuous relationship to prominent politicians, writers, or teachers. While the old men exhibit a variety of behaviors that indicate their places in the dramatic scheme, the leaders who manipulate them usually fall into the polarized, caricaturing categories outlined in earlier chapters. Indeed, they often seem to be all the same type: verbally aggressive, politically greedy panderers. If portrayals of civic leaders and

¹⁹ Again, Theophrastus' writings on style are not extant, but commentators have made use of fragments and later works to hypothesize this influence (see Innes 1985).

their relation to ideas about oratorical style thus follow a quite schematic pattern, depictions of average citizens offer a more variegated picture of types and their typical behaviors.

In this chapter I concentrate primarily on the sketches that highlight the types of oral excesses familiar from other settings. *Characters* as a whole is organized around the ways in which appetitive behaviors broadcast one's character, and these often involve the mouth. Many of them also make use of the same vocabulary that shapes iambic discourse quite generally. For example, the depictions of the idle talker (ἄδολέσχης, 3), the boor (ἄγροικος, 4), the thoughtless man (ἔπνονημένος, 6), and the chatterer (λάλος, 7) hold up for ridicule features that isolate characters familiar from old comedy, Platonic dialogue, and oratory, as do others such as those of the dissembler (εἴρων, 1), the flatterer (κόλαξ, 2), and the obnoxious man (βδελυρός, 11), although in a less consistent manner. As mentioned above, a few reveal important ties to middle and new comedy, as well as to Aristotle's ideas about intemperance, especially those treating flattery (κολακεία, 2), crudeness (ἄγροικία, 4), and boasting (ἀλαζονεία, 23). The mouth, moreover, dominates the sketches that detail various kinds of volubility, rapacity, and rudeness; but this does not exhaust those that offer ways of using it as evidence of intemperance. In fact, a surprising number of the other portraits also revolve around speech behavior (e.g., tale-telling [λογοποιία, 8], grouchiness [αὐθάδεια, 15], griping [μεμψιμοιρία, 17], slander [κακολογία, 28]), while many others include eating and drinking habits as important aspects of their depictions (e.g., pennypinching [μικρολογία, 10], overzealousness [περιεργία, 13], absent-mindedness [ἀναισθησία, 14], squalor [δυσχέρια, 19], tastelessness [ἀηδία, 20]). This last group provides an essential frame for understanding how the sketches I focus on here merely serve as the most extreme examples of a pervasive emphasis on uses of the mouth.

Theophrastus' portraits have consternated scholars because of their off-hand, casual listing of behaviors and apparent lack of organizing principles. Various problems that they have detected in the framing of many of the types delineated suggest that ancient commentators were also concerned to highlight definitions that might help to clarify how Theophrastus was distinguishing each character. For instance, there is evidence that in the Hellenistic period efforts were made to shape the portraits in conformity with various contemporaneous philosophical discussions. These later additions tend to offer more schematized definitions, most often with an eye to a particular notion of what must be motivating the inclusion of certain behaviors. Frequently they bear little or no relation to the behaviors described in Theophrastus' text and import operating rubrics such as what

the depicted type thinks he will gain by his behavior.²⁰ The presence of such additions indicates an ongoing concern that the portraits are too disparate and disorganized, that the details of behaviors lack the proper framing that might lend them a theoretical coherence. This anxiety has remained among modern scholars, who frequently either applaud their pedestrian feel and thus relegate them to some para-comic category or treat them as too loosely and casually constructed to be of much literary or theoretical interest.

A number of the characters mentioned above have occasioned this kind of concern and confusion, because they appear to designate the same kind of immoderate behavior: for example, the idle talker (ὁ ἄδολεσχος) and the babbler (ὁ λάλος) seem very close in type, as do the grouch (ὁ αὐθάδης) and the griper (ὁ μεψίμορος), and the flatterer (ὁ κόλαξ) and the fawner (ὁ ἄρεσκος). Each of these, however, exhibits an emphasis on distinct behaviors, which often flesh out the larger categories familiar from earlier poetry and oratory. Thus we could start by noting that certain of these portraits delineate various kinds of weak, soft, passive, and/or chattering behaviors (e.g., the idle talker, the babbler, the flatterer, and the fawner), while others seem to fall somewhere in between the poles of voracious excess and gabbling weakness (e.g., the grouch and the griper). Still others mentioned above clearly follow the familiar isolation of certain types as aggressive, violent, crude, and/or greedy (e.g., the boor, the thoughtless man, the slanderer).

Before turning to *Characters*, however, some consideration must be given to Aristotle. As I note above, scholars have somewhat erroneously claimed that these portraits were influenced by Aristotle's ethical analyses. Nevertheless, Theophrastus' focus on particulars does reflect Aristotle's ideas about the importance of empirical data as much as it does the turn toward portraiture that T. B. L. Webster famously argued marks Hellenistic aesthetics.²¹ And yet the teacher's discussions are quite different from the student's. This difference is discursive as well as stylistic: Theophrastus clearly echoes iambic language, while Aristotle merely references it as a necessary but regrettable feature of character assessment and therefore as a potential oratorical tool. That said, since a number of Aristotle's discussions in the *Rhetoric* tend to disparage the ways in which character, the appetites, and speech performance intersect for both orator and audience, they offer a perspective on oral behaviors that furnishes a link between the orators of chapter 5 and the common citizens in Theophrastus' portraits.

²⁰ For specific examples, see the discussions of individual sketches in Ussher 1960; Steinmetz 1962; Rusten 1993.

²¹ Webster 1956.

ARISTOTLE ON CHARACTER AND STYLE

In antiquity Aristotle was traditionally described as having a sharp and mocking wit that showed itself in his facial expression. He is said to have been fond of fancy dress and generally indulgent in his tastes, though this mild slander may be the result of chauvinism, since he was a non-Athenian who spent some years in the east.²² Once he established the Lyceum (in 335), he instituted a monthly symposium for which he supplied the rules. He was also famous for his fulsome and polished writing style, which Cicero characterized as a “golden river of prose” (*flumen orationis aureum*).²³ The extant lectures do not, of course, exhibit this gleaming profusion; nor would one be likely to detect in them the apparently urbane and luxury-loving character of the writer. This cluster of details, whatever it is worth, forms a curious frame for a discussion of insult and appetite in Aristotle’s rhetorical and ethical lectures. The mocking symposiast of extravagant tastes whose own writing style was regarded as ample and artful is deeply critical in these lectures of the use of character lampoon, ornate verbal styles, and dramatic delivery – all of which indulge both speaker and audience.

Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, like all of his extant writings, is of indeterminate date. It and the *Nicomachean Ethics* probably belong to the period when he founded the Lyceum and was in residence there (335–322); while some commentators have hypothesized that they were composed earlier (particularly the *Rhetoric*), when he was still at Plato’s Academy or at Mysis (to which he emigrated after the fall of Olynthus in 348), most consider this unlikely.²⁴ It is thus safe to say at least that his treatises on public speaking, on civic ethics, and also on drama (i.e., the *Poetics*) respond to attitudes about these topics current in the middle of the fourth century; they are generally contemporaneous with the speeches studied in chapter 5 and predate (though perhaps just slightly) Theophrastus’ sketches. Aristotle’s assessments of character adduce some typical behaviors of average mid-century Athenians at least in part as a corrective, I think, to dominant trends in oratory, while his schematic approaches to the topic reify characterological categories but avoid the cataloguing of detail in which Theophrastus’ sketches engage.

²² Aristotle was born in Stagira in Chalcidice and spent time in Mysis on the Black Sea, on Lesbos (where he met Theophrastus, who was from Eresus), and in Macedonia, where he famously tutored Alexander (DL 5.1–6).

²³ Cic. *Acad.* 2.38.119; cf. also Quintilian (*eloquendi suavitas*, 10.1.83).

²⁴ E.g., Ross 1923: 22–24; Dufour 1967: I. 14–16; Lloyd 1968: 14–17. Philip sacked Olynthus as part of his campaign of aggression toward Greek city-state alliances; this may have made things uncomfortable for a resident alien in Athens.

Between orator and audience

Aristotle's discussion of character in the *Rhetoric* is a rather piecemeal and unsatisfying affair. This may be in part because he considers the speaker's self-presentation together with the character of the audience, regarding the one as more important for deliberative rhetoric and the other for forensic. This in itself is an assumption that begs a number of questions, and indeed Aristotle approaches the character of the speaker from a number of different angles. While he argues that speakers must work to represent themselves as "some sort" (τὸ ποιὸν τινὰ φαίνεσθαι, 1377a26), he only names three positive traits as guides: prudence, virtue, and goodwill (φρόνησις καὶ ἀρετὴ καὶ εὐνοία, 1378a8). This beneficent orator is a keystone of deliberative rhetoric for Aristotle; it is both distinct from and connected to ideas about the characters and emotional states of audience members. Thus Aristotle also takes up different emotions in these sections (2.2–11), since he regards their strategic arousal in the audience as central to forensic speeches (cf. 1377b20–30).²⁵

When he returns to the topic of character, he distinguishes traits of people of different ages and walks of life (2.12–17). In the discussion of the characters typical to different ages, he offers the following justification for detailing the temperaments of these groups:

ὥστ' ἐπεὶ ἀποδέχονται πάντες τοὺς τῷ σφετέρῳ ἦθει λεγομένους λόγους καὶ τοὺς ὁμοίους, οὐκ ἄδηλον πῶς χρώμενοι τοῖς λόγοις τοιοῦτοι φανοῦνται καὶ αὐτοὶ καὶ οἱ λόγοι.

Thus, since all people welcome speeches composed for their own characters and like them, it is not unclear how those giving speeches will appear to be certain sorts – both themselves and their speeches. (*Rhet.* 1390a25–27)

This illuminating statement indicates that the oratorical motivation for exploring the typical traits of people of different ages and walks of life lies neither in ideas about a speaker's self-representation nor in concern with the general profile of the audience, but rather in both. That is, the speaker forges a bridge between himself and the audience members by matching his type to theirs, or at the least by de-emphasizing differences and playing to their prejudices and inclinations.²⁶ This would seem to say something quite distinct from the earlier notion of the speaker's beneficence, since the

²⁵ Cf. Fortenbaugh 1974; Cooper 1996; Striker 1996; and see further below.

²⁶ On matching speech to audience, cf. *Phdr.* 272a, 277c; Antisth. fr. 51 Caizzi.

crowd he addresses may not be especially well disposed to him and thus would not match him in his goodwill.²⁷ It suggests instead that the speaker will have to undertake some careful molding of his persona and subject matter, in order to make both palatable to his audience.

The section that addresses ages, where the above quotation occurs (2.12–14), offers the most details about how to represent (and presumably appeal to) different characters. Here Aristotle depicts the young as impassioned (ἐπιθυμητικοί, 1389a3), competitive (φιλόνοικοί, 1389a12), “heated, like wine-drinkers” (ὥσπερ γὰρ οἱ οἰνωμένοι, οὕτω διάθερμοι εἰσιν, 1389a18–19), and big-hearted (μεγαλόψυχοι, 1389a30). Among many other noble features such as bravery and less noble ones such as insolent wrongdoing, the young are also lovers of laughter and therefore of wit (φιλογέλωτες, διὸ καὶ φιλευτράπελοι). This Aristotle explains as a result of the fact that wit is a kind of educated insolence (ἡ γὰρ εὐτραπεία πεπαιδευμένη ὕβρις ἐστίν, 1389b11–12). The young, then, inhabit an expansive, grand-intentioned, and manly sphere. Their insolence and love of urbane wit recalls the fine talkers from other genres, perhaps particularly Platonic dialogue. They do not, however, resemble the loud-mouthed, bold types from old comedy, perhaps because (in Aristotle’s conception) they have yet to be touched by the rough world of the agora.

Old men, as one might expect, are exactly the opposite of these exuberant, if sometimes excessive, youths. The old are characterized by lack: they are mean-hearted (μικρόψυχοι, 1389b25), cowardly (δειλοί, 1389b29), and thus chilled (κατεψυγμένοι), because fear is “some sort of chill” (καὶ γὰρ ὁ φόβος κατάψυξις τίς ἐστίν, 1389b31–32). Since most of their life is behind them, they indulge in idle chatter (ἀδολεσχίας, 1390a9), like weak talkers in other settings. And they do not love laughter or wit but tend rather to lamentation (ὀδυρτικοί, 1390a21). They are thus shivering, twittering, and querulous, marked by qualities that are not only ignoble but possibly also feminine. As we have seen in other contexts, those who exhibit oral weaknesses run the risk of being allied with lowly types, and perhaps especially with women. Unlike the young, who are manly and self-contained, the old are gloomy, gibbering grannies.

In between these two extremes is middle age, the age of moderation. The characteristics that mark these men represent the means of behavior, and

²⁷ Perhaps it is only in relation to these positive traits that the speaker’s character is more important in deliberative oratory, where politicians strive to indicate that they always have the city’s best interest in mind. But this tactic surfaces in “public” forensic speeches as well, as those of Demosthenes and Aeschines indicate (cf. ch. 5).

so this is the perfect age.²⁸ This scheme is a less rigorously applied form of that developed in Aristotle's lectures on ethics, when he addresses virtue as seeking the mean (τὸ μέσον) between excess (τὴν ὑπερβολήν) and lack (τὴν ἔλλειψιν) (*NE* 1106b5–6; cf. 1106b23–24). This, he argues, is a relative mean; as with food consumption, the same amount would seem little to the athlete Milo but a great deal to the sports novice (1106b2–3). While the comparison may seem a crude one, like so many other moments in genres more clearly participating in iambic discourse, it seeks to determine proper behavior by analogy with an oral activity. If, for example, the distaste displayed by Socrates' interlocutors constitutes a typical reaction to such analogies, at least within Plato's fictional frame, we might guess that his student's use of a similar one is not random or unimportant.²⁹

Indeed, since many of the virtues subsequently identified represent ways of measuring the appetites, the comparison would seem to anticipate this focus. However, means may also be found in verbal activities, which Aristotle later distinguishes from the appetites.³⁰ Thus the comparison is not meant to elide the differences between bodily appetites (cf. σωματικά, 1117b33) and other oral effects so much as to emphasize their parallel qualities. For instance, in respect to pleasure and pain, the mean is prudence (σωφροσύνη), the excess intemperance (ἀκολασία), and the lack something like numbness (ἔστωσαν δὲ ἀναίσθητοι) (1107b4–8). In respect to truth, the mean is truthfulness (ἀλήθεια), the excess boastfulness (ἀλαζονεία), and the lack mock-modesty (εἰρωνεία) (1108a19–23). In respect to amusing talk (παιδιά), the mean is wittiness (εὐτραπεία), the excess buffoonery (βωμολοχία), and the lack boorishness (ἀγροικία) (1108a23–26).

Many of these terms differentiate oral habits in other settings. While Aristotle's schematic assessment of behaviors does not always conform to those that organize types in other genres, many aspects of it do indicate an awareness of the earlier distinctions. The boastful type, for instance, is clearly a creature of excess in old comedy as well as in Plato and oratory; and the *agroikos* man lacks social graces in Aristophanes and Plato. The *eirōn* is an important type for Aristotle, since Socrates was famously categorized

²⁸ We are even given an exact year at which the mind reaches the peak of its development: forty-nine. See Cope *ad loc.* on the significance of the fact that this age, like that of the body's peak (35), is a multiple of seven. He also compares a fragment attributed to Solon that divides human time on earth into ten periods of seven years (fr. 27 W). Students are often convinced that this is little more than a self-serving gesture – i.e., that Aristotle himself was forty-nine when he wrote these lectures.

²⁹ Cf. Socrates' example of the athlete's consumption of beefsteak at *Rep.* 338c7–d2.

³⁰ *NE* 1117b33–35: τοὺς γὰρ φιλομήτους καὶ διηγητικούς καὶ περὶ τῶν τυχόντων κατατρίβοντας τὰς ἡμέρας ἀδολεσχᾶς, ἀκολάστους δ' οὐ λέγομεν.

as such. Later, when Aristotle addresses the mean of truth in more detail, he defends the deficiency that marks mock-modest types, noting that they seem to talk not for the sake of gain but rather to avoid pretension (οὐ γὰρ κέρδους ἕνεκα δοκοῦσι λέγειν, ἀλλὰ φεύγοντες τὸ ὀγκηρόν, 1127b23–24). Most of all, they disavow traits commonly held in high esteem (τὰ ἔνδοξα), which is what Socrates does (1127b25–26).³¹

The two treatments of character in the *Rhetoric* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* have different aims, of course. The details adduced in book 2 of the *Rhetoric* forge pragmatic guidelines for how to tweak one's persona and subject to appeal to different audiences. The analysis of the *Ethics*, in contrast, introduces the doctrine of the mean as a way of determining at what behaviors virtue aims. Both, however, show some exposure to the behavioral patterns that shape other critiques of public speaking. Turning back to the *Rhetoric*, we can now consider how these behaviors and character types intersect with formal speech performance, and assess whether any of their familiar schemes are brought into play in Aristotle's discussion of the orator's style. Like the speaker's use of character, and for similar reasons, this is a difficult topic for Aristotle. It raises troubling questions about the extent to which oratory may involve the decorative techniques of the grandiose speaker or the dissembling that marks the understated type.

Vulgar arts

Aristotle repeatedly insults both performer and audience when addressing aspects of speechmaking that he considers extraneous to the subject at hand, a curious feature of his lectures on rhetoric that has received little attention from scholars.³² Much of his disapproving lexicon revolves around style and especially delivery. He dismisses the importance of delivery, regretting the weight that perceptible character traits carry in speech performance: delivery (or, more literally, “acting,” ὑπόκρισιν) only matters, he claims, because of the “corruption” (μοχθηρίαν, 1403b34) of politics. Indeed, although the voice possesses great power in communicating emotions, the study of both delivery and style more generally is a “vulgar” activity (φορτικόν, 1403b36) borrowed from theater and better left to one's students.³³ The very fact that these surface effects must be attended to exposes the potentially fictional quality of the orator's self-presentation (1403b22–26; cf. 1404b18–25).

³¹ Cf. *EE* 1234a1–2; 1221a6, 1233b39.

³² To my knowledge only Lossau (1971) has given proper consideration to these elements, treating them as evidence of Aristotle's disdain for radical democracy (but cf. also Diels 1886: 30–34; Sonkowsky 1959; Moran 1996: 388–90).

³³ Cf. DL 5.48 on Theophrastus; and see Fortenbaugh 1985; Innes 1985.

A similarly dismissive attitude toward the audience marks Aristotle's discussion of abusive speech. As mentioned in chapter 5, he thinks that character defamation (διαβολή), a technique in the process of being perfected by Demosthenes, is persuasive only for the "uncultivated hearer" (πρὸς φαῦλον γὰρ ἀκροατήν, *Rhet.* 1415b5–6). These two concerns (i.e., insult talk and embodied speech) form the groundwork of iambic discourse, and indeed establish its parameters. Both concerns are, apparently, lowbrow, which conforms to the nature of the discourse. If insult primarily aims at the exposure of intemperance, we see again and again that writers regard character flaws as written on the body – that is, as visible in the deportment of speakers and thus as having to do with style and delivery. Both aid in the manufacture of emotions and play on the weaknesses of the audience.

In the course of his discussion in book 2 on the negative emotions, Aristotle adduces some familiar attitudes toward excessive behaviors. He notes, for instance, that anger is often roused by "those who ridicule, scoff, and mock, since they are insolent" (καταγελῶσι καὶ χλευάζουσι καὶ σκώπτουσιν· ὑβρίζουσι γάρ, 1379a31–32). The vocabulary is very reminiscent not only of Socrates' confrontations with haughty, big-talking sophists, but also of Demosthenes' abusive portraits of his loud-mouthed opponents.³⁴ Unsurprisingly, the analysis of shame also touches on issues that surface in relation to public speakers, since so many of them are depicted as lacking in this capacity. Its details are also particularly interesting for this discussion, because a number of them turn up in Theophrastus' *Characters* as well. Aristotle remarks, for example, that it is shameful to make money off the powerless, such as beggars or the dead, since this indicates illiberality and base gain (ἀπὸ αἰσχροκερδείας γὰρ καὶ ἀνελευθερίας, 1383b24–25). These are traits commonly charged of orators, of Socrates, and of Theophrastus' more prepossessing denizens. Socrates, for his part, regards the entire oratorical enterprise as pandering (or "grubbing," *kolakeia*), a derisive description that the poets of old comedy also endorse and that the orators use against each other.³⁵ Aristotle defines pandering (κολακείας, 1383b30) as praising people to their faces, as well as engaging in excessive compliments or empathy. In iambic discourse, this is the path that public speakers often take to persuade their audiences.

The discussion of shameful activities includes other familiar failings such as showing "signs of softness" (μαλακίας σημεῖα, 1384a2), of baseness (ταπεινότητος, 1384a4), and boastfulness (ἀλαζονείας, 1384a6). References

³⁴ See variations on this type in chs. 2, 4, and 5.

³⁵ Pl. *Gorg.* 463b1; Eup. *Kolakes* (frs.172, 178, 180); Arist. fr. 127 E; Aeschin. 2.113; Din. *Dem.* 31; Thphr. *Char.* 2. On rhetoric and *kolakeia* see further below.

to intemperance (*akolasia*) also bracket the most negative traits. The one involves heterosexual excesses (1383b21–22), the other intemperate acts that are “willing or unwilling, unwilling being by force” (ἐκόντα καὶ ἄκοντα, τὰ δ’ εἰς βίαν ἄκοντα, 1384a19). To fail to defend oneself is a sign, Aristotle says, of “unmanliness or cowardice” (ἀνανδρίας γὰρ ἢ δειλίας, 1384a20). The phraseology intimates that this lack of defensiveness may not only include the kind of helplessness in the lawcourt for which Callicles mocks Socrates in the *Gorgias* (486b1), but perhaps also homosexual activities. This association of intemperance with weakness and effeminacy recalls charges in old comedy and in oratory that public speakers are not only grubbers but also prostitutes – that is, they gape open at both ends.³⁶ While much of this section of book 2 is devoted to positive emotions that forge bonds between people, when Aristotle addresses the negative emotions, he echoes the vocabulary and correspondences that dominate iambic discourse.

Aristotle’s attitude toward style and delivery is thus shaped in important ways by ideas about character excesses as they are embodied in speech performance. And although he mentions Demosthenes only once – a silence as notable, E. M. Cope declares, as Bacon’s regarding Shakespeare³⁷ – it is likely that his arguments aim at least in part at correcting that powerful orator’s emphasis on character assassination on the one hand (i.e., abuse) and dramatic delivery (i.e., embodied speech) on the other. Both of these techniques Aristotle regards as fundamentally “outside of the subject matter” (ἔξω τοῦ πράγματος).³⁸ Indeed, he is disinclined to place much emphasis on any topics that address character and appetite as they are enacted in speech performance. Perhaps his discomfort with such topics contributes to his tendency to conflate or intermix character and emotion, emotion and voice, voice and style, and style and delivery.

An important and telling instance of this occurs at the outset of Aristotle’s discussion of style, when in the course of claiming that no one has studied either delivery or style until recently (1403b35–36), he seems to conflate the two. He declares that “it” is vulgar (φόρτικον, 1403b34), the neuter adjective apparently encompassing the study of both elements (which are, in any event, feminine in gender [ἡ λέξις, ἡ ὑπόκρισις]). Scholars usually treat φορτικόν as predicated of delivery (τὴν ὑπόκρισιν, 1403b22), even though an explicit reference to style (τὴν λέξιν, 1403b36) directly precedes this statement.³⁹ It seems, in any case, that φόρτικον may apply equally well to any element that shapes the effect of the speech on the audience,

³⁶ Esp. Ar. *Eq.*; Aeschin. 1; and see the discussion in ch. 2.

³⁷ Cope *ad Rhet.* 1407a7 (1877: 52). ³⁸ Arist. *Rhet.* 1354a26 and *passim*.

³⁹ Cf. Cope 1877; Lossau 1971; Roberts 1984.

and that it in fact designates the study of all such “superficial” elements. In book 2, for instance, Aristotle says that maxims are persuasive because of the “vulgarity” (φορτικότητα) of the hearers (1395b1–2), which suggests that this problem with the audience can extend to *topoi* as well, since these may satisfy the audience’s taste for snappy utterances rather than syllogistic truths.⁴⁰ Similarly, slander only persuades the *phaulos* hearer (1415b5–6) because of a susceptibility to pleasurable effects (τοῖς ἡδέσιν, 1415b2) – in this case, ridicule. Compare Demosthenes’ opening remarks in *On the Crown* (18.3–4), where he “ruefully” acknowledges that his task (self-praise) is less appealing than Aeschines’ (slander). Thus a speaker’s perceptible effects (i.e., vocal tone and rhythm) as well as his engaging usage appeal to the baser appetites of the audience.

The corrupting voice

Aristotle aligns perceptible aspects of performance with conspicuous stylistic effects and treats these as appealing to lowbrow or ignorant tastes. While his discussion largely avoids the abusive vocabulary that marks other depictions of oral performances, his focus reflects the fact that elsewhere in the tradition insulting depictions of public speakers treat the mouth and its related organs as literal and figurative zeugmas between vulgar performer and potentially corrupt audience.⁴¹ In Aristotle’s conception, the mouth and vocal cords together highlight the problems with this base pleasure, because they are both mimetic and given to chicanery. In the tradition more generally, these organs are susceptible to so many forms of excess that they constitute a central metonymy for the debased proclivities of the body politic.

Aristotle notes the centrality of the voice to delivery and the success of those who use their voices to good effect in both oratorical and theatrical arenas (1403b23–34). Although elsewhere he indicates his awareness of other aspects of delivery (1386a31–33), here it seems that the topic, were it to be considered worth addressing, would only concern the voice (cf. 1403b26–32). He treats the voice (ἡ φωνή) as the primary vehicle for communicating emotion (πρὸς ἕκαστον πάθος) (1403b27–28), but argues that the speaker ought to avoid paining or pleasing his audience (1404a4–5). Aristotle maintains that one ought to consider volume (πότε μεγάλη καὶ πότε μικρὰ καὶ μέση) as well as tone (δξεία καὶ βαρεία καὶ μέση) and

⁴⁰ Cf. Aristotle’s remarks regarding sophistic tricks, *Rhet.* 1404b37–38.

⁴¹ E.g., Ar. *Eq.* 51, *Nub.* 445, *Vesp.* 596; Pl. *Gorg.* 522e3–4; Dem. 18.139, 19.208–09, 22.175.

rhythm (1403b28–30). Again, we might expect that other aspects of delivery such as gesture and facial expression should be considered as well, but Aristotle ignores these completely.⁴² The voice, with its debasing, distracting connections to the emotions, would seem to offer enough proof that delivery is a lowbrow affair.⁴³

If such aspects of performance have great power (μέγα δύνανται, 1404a7), this is because of the corruption not only of politics in general but also of the hearer himself (τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ μοχθηρίαν, 1404a8). The bond between politician and citizens, then, is forged by the ersatz emotionalism of the orator's tones, which flow from his deceptive mouth to their uncultivated ears. Voice has this power because it is the most mimetic of all the bodily organs (ἡ φωνὴ πάντων μιμητικώτατον τῶν μορίων) (1404a21–22; cf. *Poet.* 1447a10–15). People are enthralled by such artfulness, as they are by the overblown poetic language of orators such as Gorgias (1404a26), whose style appeals to the uneducated masses (οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀπαιδεύτων). And yet, Aristotle scoffs, to imitate a style the poets themselves no longer use is “laughable” (γελοῖον, 1404a35), his mockery implying that the nature of such effects is by and large jejune.

These are, again, the typical techniques of the orator who plays on audience susceptibility to dramatic impact (1408b11–15). Aristotle declares that delivery, when fully developed, will have the same effect on the oratorical platform as acting does on the dramatic stage (ταῦτο ποιήσει τῆ ὑποκριτικῆ). He notes further that Thrasymachus wrote a treatise on *pathos*, and in it he (as well as a few others) “attempted to say a little about [delivery]” (ἐγχεχειρήκασι δὲ ἐπ’ ὀλίγον περὶ αὐτῆς εἰπεῖν τινές) (1404a13–14). The phrase suggests that Thrasymachus and his fellow emotion-mongers addressed the intersection of delivery and the emotions in an unsuccessful manner, and perhaps also that this topic, being vulgar, deserves such treatment. We might remember that in the *Phaedrus* Plato similarly identifies Thrasymachus with a powerful, emotionally stirring style, describing his talents for dramatic effect and associating him with Gorgias (267c9–d1). For Aristotle it is not so much acting as its stylization in this kind of emotive oratory that lends that performance its artificiality (1404a15–16). The orator crafts his voice and usage to project whatever

⁴² Cf. Sifakis 2002.

⁴³ The focus on the voice may also serve as the impetus for one strand of the ideas expressed in Aristotle's *Poetics* about imitation (1447a18–b29, 1448b4–19); while these passages acknowledge that *mimēsis* embraces aural and visual forms of imitation, linguistic aspects dominate the discussion. The *Poetics* is generally thought to be of a later date than the *Rhetoric*; see Halliwell 1986, 2002; Golden 1992.

emotions will persuade, and then attempts to obscure the fabricated quality of those emotions by inhabiting a natural-seeming persona.

Two figures emerge as those who best represent this deceptive mode: the actor Theodorus and the poet Euripides. Theodorus, Aristotle says, used his voice in such a malleable manner that it seemed to be that of the character he was impersonating (ἡ μὲν γὰρ [φωνῆ] τοῦ λέγοντος ἔοικεν εἶναι, 1404b23). In respect to delivery, then, he was the most adept, insofar as he was the most dissembling. In respect to style, if someone composes by choosing words from ordinary speech, he “conceals [artifice] well” (κλέπταται εὔ, 1404b24; cf. 1408b5–6). Among poets the master of this covert style is Euripides, who first demonstrated how it should be done (1404b25). When Aristotle addresses the issue of “propriety” (τὸ δὲ πρέπον, 1408a10) later in the discussion, he again indicates the importance of molding one’s style to suit the occasion and the character represented. Such fitting usage misleads the mind (παρραλογίζεταί τε γὰρ ἡ ψυχὴ) into thinking that the speaker is telling the truth even when he is not (1408a20–23).

Thus both delivery and style involve distracting, simulated effects. While delivery may literally center on the voice, however, style is figured as analogous to a deceptive drink. It is necessary, Aristotle maintains, to mask the artificiality of the oratorical endeavor (δεῖ λανθάνειν ποιούντας καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν λέγειν πεπλασμένως ἀλλὰ πεφυκότως), lest the listeners take offense as if the speaker were “plotting” (ἐπιβουλεύοντα) against them – like with wine that has been mixed (τοὺς οἴνους τοὺς μεμιγμένους) (1404b18–21). Cope compares a passage from Plutarch’s *Symposium* that spells out the analogy: “For those who are drinking avoid mixed wine; and those doing the mixing try to deceive, like plotters” (διὸ φεύγουσι τὸν μεμιγμένον οἶνον οἱ πίνοντες· οἱ δὲ μιγνύοντες πειρῶνται λανθάνειν, ὡς ἐπιβουλεύοντες, 4.661d).⁴⁴ Aristotle’s simile suggests a parallelism between the philosophical symposium and perhaps especially the forensic arena, which Plutarch’s explanation reinforces. The orator must conceal that his medium is a treacherous device, a mingling of effects akin to adulterating the wine at symposium, or run the risk of incurring the animosity of his hearers. As in the discussion of delivery, Aristotle treats the oral capacity as the link between speaker and hearer and as the vehicle of deception. There the voice imitates emotion and possesses an illegitimate power; here the

⁴⁴ Cope 1877 *ad loc.* Demetrius describes those who overuse periodic style as “light-headed, like wine-drinkers” (οὐδ’ αἱ κεφαλαὶ ῥαδίως ἔστᾶσιν, ὡς ἴτι τῶν οἰνωμένων), while those who listen to them are rendered seasick (ναυτιῶσι) (*de Eloc.* 15). See also Dufour and Wartelle 2003: III.43 n. 1; and Barthes 1974: 109–10 on connections between the voice and sensual pleasure.

orator offers up a laced potion as the real thing, and the audience drinks it down.

Aristotle's emphasis on the voice as the primary conveyor of dramatic effect in oratory and on its debasing effects thus critiques both the baroque stylings of a Gorgias and the slick deceptions of a Euripides, treating grandiose and refined modes as if they participated (though in different ways) in this drama. Perhaps an additional but more implicit target can be seen in the fact that Aristotle's focus on the voice as an instrument of dramatic power resembles Demosthenes' denigration of his enemy Aeschines' vocal virtuosity. By relying on his sonorous voice to sway his audience, Aeschines (according to Demosthenes) cheapens the democratic process, turning debates about the pressing issues facing Athens into a contest between rhetors (e.g., 19.216–17). For all that Demosthenes may be a master of character defamation and a reputed polisher of both his words and his delivery techniques, he is no Aeschines – that is, no trained actor who uses his natural talents on “stage” to distract and play to his audience.⁴⁵ Although Aristotle may prefer to cite Gorgias (rather than Aeschines) as the purveyor of dramatic stylistic techniques, this conforms to the generally conservative and writing-focused nature of his discussion. He tends to quote poets and orators from earlier eras, or those known primarily for their techniques in writing (e.g., Isocrates, Alcidamas).⁴⁶ Especially in his treatment of style and delivery, however, Aristotle's arguments seem implicitly poised against popular speakers of his day. Thus when he indicates the power of and problems with famous vocalizers and emphasizes that such modulations are imported from the theater, it is hard to imagine that his audience would not have thought of Aeschines.⁴⁷

Problems with pleasure

As I note above, Aristotle downplays the importance of perceptible effects as extraneous to the subject at hand (cf. τᾶλλα ἕξω τοῦ ἀποδείξαι περίεργα, *Rhet.* 1404a6). Elaborate usage, in some contrast, turns out to be not so much irrelevant as ineffectual, since it fails to achieve an impact apposite to sensory elements. Aristotle roundly criticizes not only Gorgias but also his student Alcidamas for their ornate compounds, obscure words, epithets, and metaphors. When speakers use such poetic language, they take

⁴⁵ Cf. further discussion of these orators' techniques and reputations in ch. 5.

⁴⁶ Aristotle cites with particular frequency Isocrates, a teacher of rhetoric who never spoke in public.

⁴⁷ Such was the reputation of Aeschines that even Cicero identifies his sonorous voice as his signature strength (*de Orat.* 3.28).

ornament as substance; Alcidas, for instance, uses epithets “not as seasoning but as a proper dish” (οὐ γὰρ ἡδύσματι χρῆται ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐδέσματι, *Rhet.* 1406a18–19). Excessive embellishment such as this indicates a lack of taste and renders speeches ridiculous, frigid, and obscure through frivolous usage (διὸ ποιητικῶς λέγοντες τῇ ἀπρειαίᾳ τὸ γελοῖον καὶ τὸ ψυχρὸν καὶ τὸ ἀσαφὲς διὰ τὴν ἀδολεσχίαν) (1406a32–34). This kind of idle interlarding of unnecessary words (i.e., *adoleschia*) is not a trait usually applied to grandiose speakers like Gorgias and Alcidas; elsewhere, as we have seen, it primarily describes purveyors of understatement and chatter such as Socrates. But when Aristotle associates this frivolous style with lack of clarity (cf. also 1414a25), he would seem to be recognizing that ornate or exotic usage shares with idle chatter a useless profusion and dilation.⁴⁸

Let us consider this intertwined set of issues in more detail. First, it is clear that, although Aristotle takes a pragmatic approach to stylistic issues, he regards with suspicion the pleasure that oral performances afford. In this he is, of course, following Plato. Compare again the *Gorgias*, where Socrates considers both oratory and drama to be forms of flattery (*kolakeia*) (502c–d), since they aim at pleasure and audience gratification (πρὸς τὴν ἡδονὴν μᾶλλον ὠρμηται καὶ τὸ χαρίζεσθαι τοῖς θεαταῖς, 502b9–c1) and involve playing to the crowd (οὐκοῦν πρὸς πολὺν ὄχλον καὶ δῆμον οὔτοι λέγονται οἱ λόγοι, 502c9–10). The *Protagoras* reveals a similar concern with activities that satisfy base pleasures, as explored in chapter 4. A few details are helpful to recall here: Socrates represents the typical sophist as a “huckster of portable goods” (κάπηλος τῶν ἀγωγίμων) who might deceive (ἐξαπατήσῃ) buyers like purveyors of food and drink (*Prot.* 313c5–d2). Such hucksters praise what they sell to the ever-desirous buyer (καπηλεύοντες τῷ αἰεὶ ἐπιθυμοῦντι ἐπαινοῦσιν μὲν πάντα ἃ πωλοῦσιν, 313d7–8), even though they are themselves ignorant of whether their products are beneficial or detrimental to the soul (ἀγνοοῖεν ὧν πωλοῦσιν ὃ τι χρηστὸν ἢ πονηρὸν πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν, 313d9–10).

Indiscriminate praise is closely connected to flattery; as the hungry poets of the archaic period and Theophrastus’ portrait of the *kolax* make equally clear, the grubber will say anything to fill his empty belly. Theophrastus describes the flatterer praising his target in his hearing (ἐπαινέσαι ἀκούοντος) and behaving as if he cannot contain his laughter (οὐ δυνάμενος κατασχεῖν τὸν γέλωτα) when the man tells a bad joke (2.4). Aristotle, for his part, conceives of *kolakeia* as excessive praise of people to

⁴⁸ Elsewhere in the *Rhetoric* Aristotle uses the term in the more familiar sense of idle chat: old men indulge in *adoleschia* (1390a9), as do those who state the obvious (1395b26).

their faces (τὸ δ' ἐπαινεῖν παρόντας κολακείας, *Rhet.* 1383b30). While he does not explicitly label rhetoric a form of flattery, he does associate flattery with pleasure (καὶ τὸ κολακεύεσθαι . . . ἡδύ, *Rhet.* 1371a23). And pleasure is what ought to but cannot be avoided in oratory owing to audience corruption, which is why style and delivery must be addressed in the first place (cf. 1404a1–8).

But in what, exactly, does the pleasure of oratorical spectatorship consist, and why does Aristotle, with his reputation for appetitive indulgences, consider it so corrupt? When composing a list of motivations for wrongdoing in *Rhetoric* 2, Aristotle identifies a primary one as pleasure, which may be satisfied by fulfilling bodily desires such as those for food, drink, and sex – that is, those involving the senses (τὰ ἅπτά, καὶ περὶ ὄσμην καὶ ἀκοήν καὶ ὄψιν, 1370a24–25). Other desires that drive people to commit vicious acts are what Aristotle terms “rational” (μετὰ λόγου, 1370a19) and have to do with persuasion (ὄσας ἐκ τοῦ πεισθῆναι ἐπιθυμοῦσιν, 1370a25). As it turns out, however, even these may involve the senses: “There are many things,” Aristotle says, “that people desire to see and acquire when they have heard about them and been persuaded” (πόλλα γὰρ καὶ θεάσασθαι καὶ κτήσασθαι ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἀκούσαντες καὶ πεισθέντες, 1370a26–27). Thus persuasion provides the link between bodily appetite and the conviction that comes through the senses. The audience listens to vivid descriptions of things they then desire to see and possess (i.e., touch, hold, etc.).

In his ethical writings Aristotle represents the intemperate person (ἀκόλαστος) as pursuing pleasures excessively (ὁ μὲν πάσης ἡδονῆς ἀπολαύων, *NE* 1104a22–24), especially those involving the senses (1104b5–6). Since pleasures are concerned with the virtues, they may be noble or base (*NE* 1104b10–15); and the pursuit of base pleasures springs from bodily appetites.⁴⁹ We can see why Aristotle might associate oratorical style and delivery with vulgarity and corruption: the pleasures satisfied by perceptible effects are, from this perspective, both correlative to bodily appetite and achieved through physical and imagistic tricks that take advantage of the spectator’s intemperance and self-indulgence. It is not merely that the orator may use his voice to enchant and distract, like some rhapsode or actor (1404a20–26); his words themselves may also achieve effects analogous to such sensory pleasures, as with metaphors that set things “before the

⁴⁹ Nussbaum 1986: 295 stresses that for Aristotle pleasures “differ in kind”; cf. Foucault 1985: 40, who notices that in the *NE* Aristotle relates *akolasia* (and more importantly *akrasia*, though Foucault does not distinguish these) only to the pleasures of the body, excluding those of sight, smell, and hearing (1118a–b). Cf. as well Annas 1980: 294–97, who calls this distinction among pleasures “extremely artificial” (294); also Rorty 1980: 275–77.

eyes” (πρὸ τῶν ὀμμάτων, 1411b23; cf. 1411a26–35 *passim*). Indeed, as Aristotle declares at the outset of his discussion, style, delivery, and everything they entail are all “outward display aimed at pleasing the hearer” (φαντασία ταῦτ’ ἐστὶ καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀκροατήν, 1404a11). This is why poetic usage, such as that of Gorgias, is suspect: it achieves its impact through high-blown images rather than argument, satisfying the mind’s eye as a delicacy might the louché symposiast.

Aristotle thus considers the covert tactics of such dissemblers as Euripides and Theodorus regrettably necessary, and distances proper oratorical usage from the excesses of grand stylists like Gorgias, Alcidas, and Thrasy-machus. While his rejection of grandiose or deceptive effects recalls Plato’s critiques of these famous talkers, his tone does not. The language with which he characterizes their tactics avoids direct insult, which he reserves for the hearers susceptible to their grandiose or deluding performances. This is a curious and striking reversal.⁵⁰ Aristotle’s understanding that the persuasive performance depends on forging an emotional and ethical bond between speaker and audience motivates the recognition that the speaker necessarily deceives and the audience members, being corrupt and fatuous, participate eagerly in the deception. Further, his denigration of the audience turns the abusive focus from imposing professional talkers to their commonplace listeners, and in this he anticipates (and perhaps informs) Theophrastus’ interest in the behaviors of average citizens.

THEOPHRASTUS ON WEAK TYPES WITH TALKING PROBLEMS

Although a number of Theophrastus’ sketches seem to fill out various distinct aspects of what Aristotle considered failures of weakness, their details indicate that this is far too broad a category to capture properly the combinations of behaviors that distinguish these as types. For one thing, many of these characters show an overuse of the mouth but do so in a manner that suggests their weakness and lack of control, just as many portraits of bold, brutish types also reveal a lack of control, but due to some overshooting of the mean. Indeed, almost all of these portraits could be said to exhibit excessive behaviors: whatever it is that most of these types do they do too much. It is, therefore, less the case that the “weak” characters are marked only by Aristotelian lacks of one sort or another; rather, they share a tendency to

⁵⁰ Its implications may seem politically reprehensible, insofar as it promotes blaming the victims rather than the perpetrators of such verbal “excess.” But the apathy and cultivated ignorance of citizens in modern democracies encourages a similar critique, though one may still wonder what is wrong with dramatic techniques if they can induce the public to support good policies.

behave in ways that make them appear foolish, vulnerable, and/or effeminate. They usually like to talk and they talk too much or about silly things; they fall over themselves to please others, even in circumstances where this will to please is unpleasant to its target. They are so little interested in their own sustenance that they risk missing out on eating and drinking altogether, since they are more concerned with wagging their tongues or leaping to serve another. Thus none of them are greedy, except in more indirect ways than we would associate with grabbing, gluttonous types.

Further, all of these glib talkers exhibit behaviors that have some associations with teachers and writers. Recall that in Attic old comedy, the two figures that turn up most in connection with these traits are Euripides and Socrates. Aristophanes repeatedly lampoons certain verbal styles as too polished (*kompsoi*) or gossipy (*stōmuloi*) and often attributes them to pallid, effeminized speakers.⁵¹ Socrates claims that his metrical instruction will accomplish such polish in *Clouds* (κομψόν, 649); and *lalia* constitutes the signature style of the Weaker Argument, who apparently embodies Socrates' teachings (931, 1003). In *Frogs* Aristophanes assigns Socrates to the group of chatterers that includes both his students and Euripides (1492). The sophistic Euripides is exposed as a "mouth-worker" (στοματουργός, 826), a label that implies sexual servicing as well as a style too glib and finely wrought. Demosthenes' character fits a similar profile, as Aeschines' remarks about his tale-polishing and effeminate love of soft clothes indicate (1.131–33). In comedy and oratory such types are manifestly the opposite of those whose loud, voracious mouths dominate speechmaking and dinner tables alike. Theophrastus' imagery follows a pattern that clearly participates in this traditional scheme while elaborating on the details that fill it out.

The idler versus the babbler

I begin with the two talkers who have occasioned some comment, because they seem to overlap to such a great extent. The man who indulges in idle chatter (ὁ ἄδολέσχης) comes third in the parade of characters, following the ironist and the flatterer. All three of these exhibit distinctly different forms of weakness, so that while the chatterer appears to be merely the most extreme in a trio of unmanly types, he is in fact quite unique in his verbal indulgence. If the ironist relentlessly understates his own stature and abilities, and the flatterer constantly mouths platitudes to his interlocutor,

⁵¹ E.g., *Nub.* 260, 1003; *Ran.* 91, 815, 841, 943, 1069, 1071, 1160, 1492. Cf. *Lysis.* 356, 442, 627; *Thesm.* 138, 393.

the idle chatterer engages in talk that is so copious and insistently pointless (μακρᾶν καὶ ἀπροβουλεύτων, 3.1) that he is impossible either to engage or to avoid. Thus he plops himself down beside strangers (ὄν μὴ γινώσκει, τούτῳ παρακαθεζόμενος πλησίον, 3.2), and chats in an entirely random and trivial manner. (His wife is great, he had this dream, his dinner consisted of such and such . . .) He mouths fatuous generalizations about people, social events, or the weather (3.3). One moment he asks how many pillars the Odeion has (“πόσοι εἰσὶ κίονες τοῦ Ὀδείου:”), next he says he threw up yesterday (“χθὲς ἤμεσα”), then he asks what day it is (“τίς ἐστὶν ἡμέρα τήμερον:”) (3.3). Although the sketch does not make the judgment explicit, it is clear that the chatterer not only appears foolish and shallow; he is also impervious to this fact.

The portrait of the babbler (ὁ λάλος, 7) follows on those of the fawner and the reckless type. The fawner will say anything to abase himself, the reckless man will say anything, period. The babbler, in some contrast, has an uncontrollable urge to talk nonstop (ἀκρασία τοῦ λόγου, 7.1). He demeans his would-be interlocutor as someone who is saying nothing (εἰπεῖν . . . ὅτι οὐθὲν λέγει, 7.1), an ironic reflection of his loquacity of which he seems unaware. He himself knows everything (αὐτὸς πάντα οἶδεν), but he cannot let anyone else weigh in on this judgment because he is incapable of shutting up long enough for them to make any sort of statement whatsoever. He interlards his soliloquy with encouraging statements regarding his interlocutor’s attempts to speak (e.g., “σύ μὴ ἐπιλάθῃ ὃ μέλλεις λέγειν,” 7.3). He renders him breathless (ὥστε μῆδὲ ἀπαπνεῦσαι, 7.2), presumably because the latter keeps opening and closing his mouth in abortive attempts to speak.

Unlike the idle chatterer, the babbling man shows an unusual amount of energy in his pursuit of endless talk. He interrupts the progress of more manly and upstanding activities by gabbling away in the midst of schools and wrestling rings (7.4). He follows men home, and is similarly undeterred by his interlocutors talking over him, falling asleep, or leaving (τοὺς ἀκούοντας ἤτοι ἐπιλαβέσθαι ἢ νυστάξαι ἢ μεταξὺ καταλιπόντας ἀπαλλάττεσθαι, 7.6). Theophrastus emphasizes the babbler’s self-referential attitude: he includes in his continuous flow that he cannot shut up, that the tongue is a fluid thing (ὕγρῳ ἐστὶν ἡ γλῶττα), and that he cannot be silent even if he seems to be more of a babbler (λαλίστερος) than the sparrows (7.7). His children mock him, telling him to babble to them (“λαλεῖν τι ἡμῖν”) so that they might fall asleep.

The remarks of various commentators reveal that the differentiation between these types has not been clearly understood by scholars. R. C. Jebb labels the *adoleschēs* garrulous, and maintains that the characterization

of this character's talk as "ill-considered" (ἀπροβουλεύτων) supports a distinction between garrulity and loquacity (i.e., λαλιό).⁵² He considers the loquacious man a "possibly able" type, while the garrulous man he dismisses as "necessarily weak." R. G. Ussher emphasizes the similarity between the two portraits, although he distinguishes *adoleschia* as random talk and *lalia* as continuous talk, citing Horace's garrulous pest (*Sat.* 1.9.12, *garrivet*) as an example of *adoleschia*.⁵³ Jeffrey Rusten equates *lalia* (rather than *adoleschia*) with garrulity and seems to consider the two types as essentially identical.⁵⁴

Peter Steinmetz offers the most illuminating discussion, emphasizing the complexities of the word's semantic range. Like Ussher, he points out that Socrates is often characterized as an *adoleschēs* man; not only Aristophanes (*Nub.* 1478ff.) and Eupolis (fr. 352 K) but also Plato's Socrates himself (*Phd.* 70b) define him as such.⁵⁵ Although he considers the possibility that the *adoleschēs* might be a "kind of chatterbox" (*Art Schwätzer*), he also notes that in philosophical and sophistic discourse the word may imply either a reproach (regarding lack of clarity, direction, etc.) or, conversely, a compliment – even coming to be used by Plato in the sense of "clear-sighted investigation" (*scharfsinige Untersuchung*). This Platonic usage is, however, tongue-in-cheek: when Socrates pairs *adoleschia* with *meteōrologia*, he transforms a normally negative word into one that will be recognized as positive by those with understanding.⁵⁶ Most often the word points to the speaker's lack of direction and triviality, with the additional sense that he has all the time in the world to carry on in this tedious manner.⁵⁷ Steinmetz also agrees with other commentators that it is very difficult to distinguish between the idle talker and the babbler, but nevertheless argues that the *adoleschēs* man is a composer of overlong, endless, empty speech, while the *lalos* man exercises his mastery of the conversation, effectively grabbing all the talk for himself.⁵⁸ This contrast itself conforms to the ironic portrayals of Socrates in Aristophanes and Plato as an idler whose conversation appears random, pointless, and often vulgar to his interlocutors.

All of these commentators, however, abstract from Theophrastus' text in the effort to find definitions for these words that will help to elucidate

⁵² Jebb 1870: 100–01. I have translated ἀπροβουλεύτων as "pointless" above; cf. Steinmetz 1962, who offers the German synonym *planlos*. But this word is in any case part of a later addition.

⁵³ Ussher 1960: 51–52. ⁵⁴ Rusten 1993 [2002]: 171. ⁵⁵ Steinmetz 1962: 54–55.

⁵⁶ This may also be the case when it is used alone – e.g., Pl. *Th.* 195b10; cf. *Parm.* 135d3–5, *Phdr.* 269e4–270d1; and further in ch. 4.

⁵⁷ Cf. Steinmetz 1962: 55; he cites Arist. *Rhet.* 1390a6 regarding the expatiating tendencies of old men.

⁵⁸ Steinmetz 1962: 104. Diggle 2004: 199, 266 follows Steinmetz in this basic distinction (although without citing him); Diggle also notes that the *lalos* has many interlocutors, while the *adoleschēs* has only one.

his particular meaning. This approach is certainly useful, although it fails to account sufficiently for the distinctions Theophrastus does make, since these scholars each come to somewhat different conclusions. If, however, we look more closely at the details of Theophrastus' own descriptions and examine the speaking styles of these characters in connection to their other typical behaviors, the differences between them become clearer. Consider, for instance, their attitudes toward eating. The idle talker (*adoleschēs*) fills his speech with a jumble of trivia, including what he had for dinner the night before (3.2), and the fact that he vomited yesterday (3.4). For him food (or its expulsion) is merely a source for conversation, undifferentiated from details of dreams or meteorological conjectures. The babbler (*lalos*), in contrast, never ceases to talk, and thus hinders the intake of food altogether – not only his own, but also that of others (*Char.* 7.7). He talks continuously, repeatedly commenting on his own wagging tongue. Although the definition cited above of *lalia* as “incontinence of speech” (ἄκρασία τοῦ λόγου, 7.2) may be a later addition, it does invoke an Aristotelian term that reveals what this self-commentary indicates. In the *Nichomachean Ethics*, *akrasia* (incontinence) is differentiated from *akolasia* (intemperance) as the state of behaving immoderately in full awareness that one is doing so (*NE* 1145b, 1149b). This is indeed true of the *lalos*, as opposed to the chatterer (*adoleschēs*). So self-consciously unrelenting is the babble of the former that he even adds to it by talking about it.

As mentioned, both of these types find parallels in comic portraits of intellectuals, where such talkers tend to be similarly differentiated as idle good-for-nothings who blab on to no point versus glib, smooth-tongued types who turn others away from more virtuous pursuits: Eupolis (fr. 352 K), for instance, calls Socrates a “chattering beggar” (τὸν πτωχὸν ἀδολέσχην) who thinks about everything but where he will get his meals (ὀπόθεν δὲ καταφάγειν). Recall as well that Aristophanes depicts Euripides as one who can teach young men how to polish their babble (λαλιὰν ἐπιτηδεῦσαι . . . ἐδίδαξας, *Ran.* 1069) while they languish in the agora and the wrestling schools lie empty. Thus neither type is very interested in eating, although for somewhat different reasons: the *adoleschēs* because he enjoys idling away his time (and that of others) with empty talk; the *lalos* because he is too busy exercising his verbal mastery and imposing it on others.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Steinmetz (1962: 104) emphasizes the empty talk of the one and the interest in mastery of the other, but he also places much emphasis on length in relation to the talk of the *adoleschēs*, which is only mentioned in the lines at the beginning of the sketch that some (though not Steinmetz) consider spurious. It is the *lalos* who cannot stop talking, who speaks at such length that he puts his interlocutors to sleep.

The tale-teller and the dissembler

Other types who exhibit weak-mouthed tendencies are similarly more inclined to chatter than to eat. The tale-teller (ὁ λογοποιός) is happy to make a “feast of new stories” (εὐωχήσειν καινῶν λόγων, 8.3) for his interlocutor, most of which are neither accurate nor true. As discussed in chapter 4, this “feast of talk” metaphor is one that Plato depicts Socrates and his interlocutors as employing in a rather mocking manner; its use suggests that the feast might be an empty one. Its echo here indicates that this talker has little to offer, no matter how enthusiastically he promotes his tales. Jebb argues that this type is a newsmaker rather than a gossip, since he seems himself to compose most of what he reports.⁶⁰ His eager reportage, however, suggests that he shares some traits with gossips. Like the idle chatterer and the babbler, the tale-teller cannot wait to speak, interrupting any replies with the gleeful gossip’s favorite question: “You haven’t heard?” (οὐθὲν ἀκήκοας;, 8.3). He makes an interesting pair with the ironist (with whom I am most concerned here), because he is only interested in tales that concern others, while the ironist primarily tells tales about himself. Both types are word-mongers, quick to use language – the one to cover his actions (or the lack thereof), the other apparently to satisfy the infamous Athenian hunger for stories.⁶¹

I would emphasize instead that the *logopoios* fabricates for his own pleasure, and that as in denigrating portraits of writers, he is ready to fill in any gap in knowledge with a creative lie (cf. ψευδῶν λόγων καὶ πράξεων ὧν βούλεται ὁ λογοποιῶν, 8.1). Steinmetz points out that Herodotus calls his forerunner Hekataeus a *logopoios* (2.143, 5.36, 125) and that *logopoios* was an earlier synonym for *logographos*, the name Thucydides gives to his forerunners (1.21).⁶² We may note, then, that the word began its life as a label for a particular kind of writing (mythographic, story-collecting), but was used by early historians to denigrate (however gently) their forerunners as “myth-makers” (cf. also μυθοποιός). Theophrastus’ use of the term signals the artifice that underlies the tale-teller’s news, and lampoons the effort to which the historian goes to check his sources and ascertain the accuracy of his stories. Thucydides famously complained that the logographers told stories that they thought would most please their audiences, rather than those they thought were true (1.21). The *logopoios* similarly relates what he thinks sounds best, imitating both the historian’s identification of eye-witnesses and the dramatist’s use of pathos (cf. his exclamation, “Poor

⁶⁰ Jebb 1870: 106–07.⁶¹ So Jebb 1870: 106–07.⁶² Steinmetz 1962: 113.

Casander! Wretched man!” [δυστυχῆς Κάσανδρος ὠ τάλαιπῶρος], 8.8). Thus this character, like the chatterer and the babbler, falls into the category of the idle, glib, gossipy word-crafter, whether he is a talker like Socrates or a writer like Euripides and the logographers.

We can recall here as well that Dinarchus depicts Demosthenes as a tale-teller who promenades around the agora making up stories (περιῶν οὗτος κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐλογοποιεῖ, *Dem.* 32) and suborns other tale-tellers (κατασκευάζων λογοποιούς, 35). Dinarchus also connects Demosthenes’ talent for telling tales to his effeminate and luxurious ways (36). And as should be clear from chapter 5, Aeschines similarly regards Demosthenes as a fabricator in this chattering mode. While writers often depict the liar as a bold, aggressive type, the tale-teller appears to be a decadent idler who talks for the pleasure of it rather than with any particular aim in mind. Thucydides may have scorned his predecessors for molding stories to charm their audiences rather than seeking to tell the truth, but the *logopoiōs* happily sacrifices truth for a story that he himself enjoys.

In some contrast to tale-tellers, the ironic man (ὁ εἴρων) is an indirect, dissembling type who reveals his weakness through his need to use words to avoid committing himself to anything. His dissembling is focused especially on his own feelings: he is willing to chat with his enemies (τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἐθέλειν λαλεῖν); he praises people to their faces whom he has spoken against in private (ἐπαινεῖν παρόντας οἷς ἐπέθετο λάθρα); and he forgives those who slander him (συγγνώμην δὲ ἔχειν τοῖς αὐτὸν κακῶς λέγοισι, 1.1). He cannot speak without misrepresenting, but he is not merely a liar. Rather, he uses language to replace action; he never admits that he is doing anything, saying rather that he is “thinking about it” (φῆσαι βουλευέσθαι) or pretending he has just arrived (προσποιήσασθαι ἄρτι παραγεγονέναι) (1.4), so that he can remain noncommittal. Thus his words throw up a blind that he can hide behind. He is, as Theophrastus says, a “softie”; his effacing words display his weakness (μαλακισθῆναι, 1.4). Most often he says precisely the opposite of what is the case, unless to do so would expose him in some way. As a *malakos* man, he avoids conflict and is incapable of making any positive statement about anything, let alone acting rather than talking.

The ironic man recalls, of course, the Socrates of Attic old comedy. Indeed, in Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, Strepsiades declares that Socrates’ training will make him, among other things, an εἴρων (449). A scholiast on the passage clarifies the word as indicating “a thorough-going joker and mocker, a dissembling, rogue actor” (ὁ πάντα παίζων καὶ διαχλευάζων, εἴρωνευόμενος, ἄπατεῶν ὑποκριτής). As noted above, Aristotle makes reference

to Socrates when defining irony in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1127b22–26), acknowledging that although, by his definition, irony falls short of the mean (in this case truthfulness), it often indicates humility, a disavowal of attributes that commonly receive approbation.⁶³ But Theophrastus' depiction of the ironic man is much more insulting – and thus much more like comic caricatures – than one would expect the philosophical tradition to countenance as an accurate description of Socrates' famously self-deprecating style.

Jebb, for example, is very disturbed by the sketch, complaining that Theophrastus has participated in rendering the term *eirōn* debased by popular usage.⁶⁴ His disappointment highlights the fact that Aristophanes employed it in just this manner, and in relation to Socrates, which indicates the comic origins of such “debased” usage. Aristotle attempts some rehabilitation of the term, at least in relation to the favorite techniques of his teacher. Theophrastus chooses to depart from his own teacher on this point, constructing a portrait of a man whose senseless nay-saying is more irritating than instructive. In a discussion of references to Socrates in Aristophanes' *Birds*, R. Stark translates the label εἶρων as *Schwindler*, the negative force of which underscores the connection between the comic Socrates and the type depicted by Theophrastus.⁶⁵

Why would Theophrastus paint such a negative picture of the trait supposedly most characteristic of Socrates, whose intellectual offspring he is? It does not seem sufficient merely to note, once again, that these sketches do not overtly participate in any philosophical (or perhaps even rhetorical) discourse, and thus should be understood to be free from constraints of this kind. On the other hand, it is difficult to imagine that Theophrastus could compose his sketch without thinking of Socrates, and indeed without recognizing some continuity between his depiction and those of the writers of old comedy. As I argue above, this continuity is essential to the sketches as a whole, not the least because it affords the later writer a discursive pattern to appropriate and adapt. Thus Socrates can still be regarded as an idler in the agora, and a later audience would understand the tongue-in-cheek quality of this implication, since it was precisely this marketplace style that irritated his opponents.

Indeed, as discussed in chapter 4, the term usually turns up in Plato as an insulting characterization of Socrates' style of speaking, which means

⁶³ See Dover 1968 *ad Nub.* 449.

⁶⁴ Jebb 1870: 52–53. Cf. Bergson 1971, who demonstrates that *eirōn/eironeia* had a prehistory in the rhetorical tradition that associated it with *prospoiēsis*.

⁶⁵ Stark 1953: 77.

that Theophrastus' abusive portrait of the *eirōn* reflects more closely how Socrates' hostile interlocutors viewed his style than sympathetic representations of his tactics. Theophrastus thus echoes the derisive treatment of this character forged in both comedy and Platonic dialogue. And even though it would seem to be therefore hostile to Socrates, it is more likely that it follows Plato in participating in the joke of calling Socrates an *eirōn*. Thus the sketch bears a complex resemblance to the Socrates of Plato and Xenophon. Like Socrates' angry opponents, he highlights the dissembler's exaggerated understatement, fleshing out Aristotle's conception of *eirōneia* as a lack and molding a type that conforms to the broad categories familiar from comic insult and oratorical invective. But the portrait also reveals the purposeful self-protection of a man who agilely deploys understatement and verbal camouflage, and gives a sly nod to the delight that Socrates took in irritating his haughty interlocutors with his small-talking manner. When, for instance, Theophrastus describes the *eirōn* as a man who "forgives those insulting him and the things said against him" (καὶ συγγνώμην δὲ ἔχειν τοῖς αὐτὸν κακῶς λέγουσι καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς καθ' ἑαυτοῦ λεγομένοις, 1.2), it is difficult *not* to think of the exaggerated politeness and agile deflection with which Socrates handles his more irascible interlocutors.⁶⁶

Flatterers and fawners

A third set of talkers raises concerns similar to those of the chatterer and the babbler, since their traits seem to overlap to some extent. The flatterer (ὁ κόλαξ) and the fawner (ὁ ἄρεσκος) are both busy-tongued, pandering types who cannot open their mouths without uttering compliments. The flatterer is painted in some detail; in contrast, many earlier editors have thought that the fawner's portrait was truncated, arguing that its second half was mistakenly appended to it at some point in its transmission and in fact belongs to another sketch. Although this is the arrangement even in the earliest manuscripts, editors and commentators from Casaubon in the seventeenth century to James Diggle in 2004 have found reasons to treat it as belonging elsewhere.⁶⁷ This supposition has led to a sense of the fawner's type as very much like that of the flatterer, since many of the details in the

⁶⁶ As Ribbeck (1876: 392) noted.

⁶⁷ Cf. P. Herc. 1457, 1st century BC. See the comments of Steinmetz 1962: 75–88, who follows Immisch and others in arguing that the text clearly belongs where it is (rightly, I think). This is versus Jebb 1870 (who assigns sections 6–10 to the *mikrophilotimos*, following many earlier editors). Rusten 1993 leaves the text in place, but considers it part of another sketch, as does Diggle 2004: 222, who thinks that sections 6–10 describe either Aristotle's *banauos* (vulgar) man (*NE* 1123a19–27) or the *chaunos* (vain) man (*NE* 1125a27–32).

first section of the fawner's sketch resemble those of the flatterer. But if, following Steinmetz (and others), we take sections 6–10 as belonging to the portrait of the *areskos* man and look at their details, we can see not only that they do fit his type but also that they help to distinguish between it and that of the *kolax*. Since the latter portrait focuses more on oral activities and echoes the abusive language formulated in other settings around the “grubber,” I begin with it.

The *kolax* is a very familiar type in Greek literature, especially in comedy and oratory.⁶⁸ In Aristophanes *kolax* may either designate a hanger-on of a prominent political leader or that leader himself, insofar as he panders to the citizens he wants to persuade to follow his policies. In *Wasps*, for instance, the violent, loud-mouthed politician Cleon has a “crown of flatterers” that licks around his head like the snaky strands of Medusa’s hair (ἐκατὸν δὲ κύκλω κεφαλαί κολάκων οἰμωξομένων ἐλιχμῶντο/ περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν, 1031–32⁶⁹). In *Knights* Cleon himself is designated a *kolax* (cf. ἐκολάκευ’, *Eq.* 48), but this occurs only once and carries less force in relation to his aggressive character. Flatterers are more often described as soft, pandering, submissive types, who will do anything to please the targets of their attention. There is something inherently shameful about such activities, a judgment that turns up repeatedly in the literature; we find it in the definition appended to the opening of Theophrastus’ sketch as well (ὁμίλιαν αἰσχρὰν εἶναι, 2.1). The flatterer exhibits a debasing weakness, along with and perhaps to an even greater extent than other idling, glib talkers.

In Theophrastus’ sketch, the *kolax* trots along beside his target and peppers him with statements that make him appear to be the center of everybody’s attention. Theophrastus both gives direct quotes of this kind, and describes how the flatterer tells stories to support these statements (2.2). While talking in this pandering way, he fusses over the man’s cloak and hair, finding any excuse to turn a passing speck of dirt or fluff into a compliment about the man’s appearance (2.3). The mouth of the *kolax* is an especially versatile and active organ. He shushes others who might interrupt his man (λέγοντος δὲ αὐτοῦ τι τοὺς ἄλλους σιωπᾶν κελεύσαι) and, again, praises him in his hearing (ἐπαινέσαι ἀκούοντος), interjecting approving phrases whenever he pauses (εἰ παύεται, “ὀρθῶς”). When the man tells a terrible joke, he stuffs his cloak in his mouth to indicate that he cannot contain his laughter (σκόψαντι ψυχρῶς ἐπιγελᾶσαι τό τε

⁶⁸ Cf. Connor [1971] 1992; Konstan 1997; Ober 1998; Whitmarsh 2000.

⁶⁹ The passage recurs at *Pax* 752–59, which suggests its value for lampooning Cleon’s public character.

ἰμάτιον ὤσαι εἰς τὸ στόμα ὡς δὴ οὐ δυνάμενος κατασχεῖν τὸν γέλωτα) (2.4). Moreover, the flatterer brings edibles to his target's children (τοῖς παιδίοις μῆλα καὶ ἀπίους) and distributes them in his presence, covering them with kisses and calling them "nestlings of a noble father" (φιλήσας δὲ εἶπεῖν· "χρηστοῦ πατρὸς νεόττια") (2.6). He does not even mind panting around the women's market on errands for his man (ἀμέλει δὲ καὶ τὰ ἐκ γυναικείας ἀγορᾶς διακονῆσαι δυνατὸς ἀπνευστί) (2.9). At dinner he is the first to praise the wine and food (τῶν ἐστιωμένων πρῶτος ἐπαινέσαι τὸν οἶνον καὶ παραμένων εἶπεῖν· "ὡς μαλακῶς ἐσθίεις");⁷⁰ he is overly attentive to his host, leaning toward him and whispering constantly into his ear (πρὸς τὸ οὖς προσκύπτων διαψιθυρίζειν) and keeping an eye on him when he chats with others (2.10).

We should take particular note of the slavish, mobile, even effeminate behaviors of Theophrastus' *kolax*, although scholars do not make much of these details. Such behaviors, however, flesh out what the interpolator might have meant by calling such flattery "shameful" (αἰσχράν). Not only does the flatterer abase himself verbally, but he chokes off a laugh and fawns over children as might a woman or a pandering slave; he likes that his host dines in a soft, fancy manner (μαλακῶς) and spends time running around the women's market. While commentators have dismissed this detail as probably indicating some market where furniture or the like was sold (since freeborn women did not shop), it is nonetheless noteworthy that Theophrastus pointedly places his flatterer in this feminized, house-related space rather than in the male agora.

Moreover, the focus on the mouth and its various uses (e.g., stuffing, kissing, panting, whispering) also calls attention to its servile and vulnerable qualities. The *kolax* effectively flatters for his supper, which makes all the more clear why Socrates' interlocutors in the *Gorgias* would be so insulted by the comparison of oratory to *kolakeia*. The demagogues of old comedy show this same involvement with "feeding" of different sorts: not only do they gobble away while they shout each other down; they also supplicate the demos with select tidbits in order to gain its favor.⁷¹

The obsequious or fawning man (ὁ ἄρεσκος) also spends a lot of his time attempting to gratify others, but his mouth is less the overly active, versatile thing that it is for the flatterer. Although the obsequious man does engage in a bit of verbal flattery, Theophrastus emphasizes far more his bodily actions: how he grabs the hands of his target and walks along with him (ἀμφοτέραις

⁷⁰ Steinmetz 1962: 51 notes that this is the profile of the parasite.

⁷¹ E.g., Ar. *Eq.* 50–54, 676–82, 904–06, 1167–92; *Vesp.* 508–11, 670–78.

ταῖς χερσὶν ἀψάμενος μὴ ἀφιέναι καὶ μικρὸν προπέμψας, 5.2), how he not only kisses his host's children but also hugs them and has them sit down with him (προσαγόμενος φιλήσας καὶ παρ' αὐτὸν καθίσασθαι), entering into games with some (τοῖς μὲν συμπαίξειν) and letting others fall asleep on his stomach (τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γαστρὸς ἔαν καθεύδειν) (5.5). The sections that editors have sought to remove (6–10) offer in great detail the meticulous lengths to which the fawner will go to curry the favor of others. He keeps his hair well cut, his teeth white, and frequently buys new cloaks, presumably so that his appearance will be as pleasing as possible (5.6). He buys things for others so that they will think him a fine man and praise him accordingly (5.8–10). While these behaviors may suit equally well the character of the man of petty ambition (ὁ μικροφιλότιμος, 21), it is worth considering why Theophrastus might have included such details here, since (again) this is where they show up in the earliest manuscripts. The obsequious man is so concerned to please others that he not only shapes his behaviors but also channels his physical resources – his body and his money – into the zealous gratification of others. In this way he becomes a slave to others' desires, since he does nothing and purchases nothing for his own pleasure. His traits thus bear some resemblance to the slavish tendencies of the flatterer, but revolve around bodily deportment in general rather than strictly oral activities.

THEOPHRASTUS ON EXCESSIVE TYPES WITH
IMMODERATE APPETITES

The characters most different from the weak types share traits that expose their basic brutality. These are the men who run roughshod over social distinctions and feelings alike, exhibiting voraciously aggressive traits that are in many ways the oral opposites of the behaviors described above. Their excesses often revolve around consumption and a tendency to greedily mingle activities that are kept carefully separate in polite society (e.g., walking and talking, walking and eating, talking and eating). Some are particularly grasping, but most instead exhibit a rollicking indifference to propriety; they are shouters and gobblers who bound about the city snatching up and tossing aside everything in their paths. In this category I include generally indecorous types like the boor (ὁ ἄγροικος, 4) and the thoughtless man (ὁ ἀπρονενοημένος, 6), as well as those more clearly centered around speaking styles, such as the bad-mouther (ὁ κακολόγος, 28) and the griper (ὁ μεμφίμοιρος, 17). Others like the squalid man (ὁ δυσχερής, 15) and the obnoxious man (ὁ βδελυρός, 11) intersect with the foregoing

categories in ways that expose how central oral activities are to all of these characters.

The boor versus the thoughtless man

One of the more curious features of the *Characters* is that there is no single entry for greed, no greedy man who displays the kind of rapacity that so often distinguishes the prominent politicians of old comedy. This absence does not stem from a lack of greed in the average Athenian citizen; rather, Theophrastus' portraits differentiate more finely among types, so that different kinds of greed may be seen as incidental to particular versions of this generally appetitive group. The one type whom Jebb thinks fills this role, the *aischrokerdēs* (Diggle's "shabby profiteer," 30), is really more of a chiseler (cf. the sponger, ὁ ἀνοίσχυντος, 9), as Rusten and Diggle make clear. Since this kind of money-grubber does not in fact share many traits with more voracious types, he is not of as much interest to us here.⁷²

The boor (ὁ ἄγροικος, 4), however, is a central member of this group. He embodies Bakhtin's notion of the open-mouthed and rambunctious character: he is apt to slurp down his rustic gruel (κυκεῶνα) on the way to Assembly (4.2) and drink his wine too strong (καὶ ζωρότερον πιεῖν, 4.9⁷³), both of which suggest unbridled appetites. This voraciousness is a symptom of the boor's tendency to overshoot the mean: he also wears his sandals too big (καὶ μείζω τοῦ ποδὸς τὰ ὑποδήματα φορεῖν, 4.4), speaks in too loud a voice (καὶ μεγάλη τῆ φωνῆ λαλεῖν, 4.5), and hitches his cloak too high when he sits, exposing himself (ὥστε τὰ γυμνὰ αὐτοῦ φαίνεσθαι, 4.7). Indeed, he has no sense of proportion whatsoever, which leads him to mistrust his friends and family but ask advice from his servants (4.6), and to be more struck by the sight of animals in the street than by anything else (4.8). In keeping with this crude, unsuitable behavior is the boor's failure to adhere to distinctions among activities, especially those involving eating: he consumes what he is in the process of carrying from the storeroom (προαιρῶν δέ τι ἐκ τοῦ ταμείου δεινὸς φαγεῖν, 4.9),⁷⁴ and takes his breakfast while feeding the animals (ἀριστῶν δέ ἅμα τοῖς ὑποζυγίοις ἐμβαλεῖν, 4.11). Nor does he recognize distinctions among

⁷² Cf. also the griper, who has to do with greed, and so intersects with sponger/chisler; his speech is not particularly voluble, but he is grasping in his aims. See Rusten 1993 and Diggle 2004 *ad loc.*

⁷³ Cf. Theophrastus on drunkenness (fr. 574). On the character type delineated more generally by the term *agroikos*, see Ribbeck 1885.

⁷⁴ The *agroikos* is clearly a comic type: e.g. δεινὸς φαγεῖν is nearly a direct quote of Ar. *Nub.* 243 (δεινὴ φαγεῖν).

social roles, seducing the cook and then handling the food along with her (4.10), and answering the door himself (4.12). He is likewise apt to accost his roadside interlocutors with an indecorous jumble of questions and desires. He blurts out (εἰπεῖν εὐθύς) that he wants to get his hair cut, to sing in the baths, to hammer nails into his shoes, and grab a piece of salt cod along the way (τῆς αὐτῆς ὁδοῦ) (4.15).

The boor is thus the embodiment of inappropriateness; his ignorance is “ungraceful” (ἀσχήμων, 4.1), an adjective that suggests that this uncouth quality is visible in his deportment (*schēma*). His lack of decorum extends especially to his mouth. This he engages to excess, yelling, eating, and singing his way through town. Further, his insensitivity to fitting proportion may stem from his lack of education (ἀμαθία, 4.1). Steinmetz points to Socrates’ argument in the *Republic* that without a “harmonious” education the soul becomes both cowardly and boorish (τοῦ δὲ ἀναρμόστου δειλὴ καὶ ἄγροικος, 411a3).⁷⁵ He notes further that in Plato *agroikos* is the opposite of “prudent” (σώφρων, 410e10), but not in the sense of “intemperate and dissolute” (*unmässig und ausschweifend*); rather, it indicates a lack of feeling (*Gefühlskälte*).

This callous quality is in itself a kind of intemperance, but one quite opposite from those that characterize the gabbling, weak types. These latter tend to be overly sensitive to social distinctions and to encourage weakening indulgences in others (cf. Ar. *Ran.* 1069–71; Theophr. *Char.* 7.4); in Socrates’ terms they are overexposed to the arts and underexposed to physical training (*Rep.* 410d–e). One becomes a boor with the opposite training, when the soul lacks the refinement that comes from artistic pursuits. Compare as well Aristotle’s situating of *agroikia* as a lack in relation to amusing talk (παιδιὰ), the mean of which is wittiness (εὐτροπελία) (1108a23–26). Thus the boor may be the kind of thick-skinned, rude countryman that populates Aristophanes’ comedies, the old citizen who is the ignorant target of sophists and demagogues. Recall that in *Knights*, for example, old Demos is called *agroikos* by his slaves because of his harsh temper and “bean-chewing” ways (ἄγροικος ὀργήν, κυαμότρως, ἀκράχολος, 41; cf. 808); in *Clouds* Socrates also labels the rough-and-ready Strepsiades *agroikos* (628, 646; cf. 43); in *Wasps* Philocleon ruins the elite atmosphere of the symposium to which his son has dragged him by “sporting rustically” (σκώπτων ἄγροίκως, 1320). The old citizen usually stands in contrast to his son, who embodies the overly refined urbanity that his father scorns.

⁷⁵ Steinmetz 1962: 63–64.

This picture is somewhat complicated, however, by the indications in Plato and Aristotle that Socrates himself was associated with such crude types. As is discussed in chapter 4, Plato often uses the comparative *agroikoteron* adverbially with some form of *legein* to mean to speak “crudely”; it highlights the ironic, self-deprecating way in which Socrates frames something that he knows will sound shocking.⁷⁶ The word thus seems particularly associated with his speaking style, and conforms to the kind of insulting labels that irritated interlocutors apply to him when he offers lowbrow examples to make a point. Moreover, in the third book of the *Rhetoric*, when Aristotle argues that an orator can give his narration a moral cast (ἠθικὴν, 1417a15–16) by describing the traits that attach to the particular character (ἄλλα ἠθικὰ τὰ ἐπόμενα ἐκάστω ἦθει, 1417a21–22), he offers the example of walking and talking simultaneously (ἄμα λέγων ἐβᾶδιζεν), a combination of activities he considers a clear indication of audacity and boorishness (δηλοῖ γὰρ θρασύτητα καὶ ἀγροικίαν ἦθους, 1417a22–24).⁷⁷ Audacity is a trait also associated with Socrates.⁷⁸ And according to ancient lore, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle himself employed this “crude” mode in discussion (whence the label *Peripatos*), so that Aristotle’s example would seem to be a wry appraisal of his own deportment, of Plato’s, and perhaps especially of the famously ambulatory Socrates.⁷⁹

While the thoughtless man (ὁ ἀπρονενημένος) may also seem to exhibit similarly thick-skinned traits, his signature habits reveal that he is quite a different sort. In his reordering of the sketches Jebb groups both the boor and the thoughtless man together with the shamelessly grasping type (ὁ ἀναίσχυτος, 9). Other commentators have regarded the thoughtless man as the embodiment of shamelessness, since he is initially defined as one with a “tolerance of shameful deeds and speeches” (αἰσχρῶν ἔργων καὶ λόγων, 6.1).⁸⁰ But unlike the shameless grabber, who is clearly primarily a sponger, the thoughtless man is a distinctly urban and talkative sort, which positions him interestingly in relation to the boor. Theophrastus

⁷⁶ E.g., *Ap.* 32c; *Phdr.* 229e, 260d, 268d; *Gorg.* 462e, 486c, 508e.

⁷⁷ The indexing of character from “signs” (ἐκ τῶν σημείων) such as age and type proves persuasive, since, as Aristotle notes, “the boor and the educated man do not speak in the same manner” (οὐ γὰρ ταῦτ’ αὐτῶν ὡσαύτως ἀγροϊκὸς ἐν καὶ πεπαιδευμένος εἴπειν, 1408a31–32). On signs of character, see Furley 1953.

⁷⁸ E.g., *Ar. Nub.* 448; *Pl. Tht.* 196d3 and cf. 197a4–6.

⁷⁹ DL 5.2, attributed to the peripatetic biographer Hermippus, famous for his apocryphal details. Cf., e.g., the opening of the *Protagoras*, in which Socrates discourses about the definition of the sophist with Hippocrates while they are walking in the garden and on their way to visit Protagoras.

⁸⁰ E.g., Rusten 1993; Ussher 1960. Diggle 2004: 250 labels him “The Man Who Has Lost All Sense,” which I think misses the point of the sketch, since the *aponenomenos* man is not mad or addled but rather careless, aggressive, and rude.

immediately characterizes him as “some marketplace huckster in type” (τῷ ἦθει ἀγοραῖός τις), an exhibitionist (ἀνεσεσυρμένος) and a profligate (παντοποιός) who will do anything to maintain his place at the center of the *agora* (6.2). The boor is also an exhibitionist, but only out of carelessness. The huckster, in contrast, purposefully draws attention to himself as an unscrupulous wrangler.⁸¹

This type shows his imperviousness to social niceties in both language and deportment. He readily gives and takes abuse (κακῶς ἀκοῦσαι, λοιδορηθῆναι δυναμένοις, 6.1), and dances the *kordax* (the lewd dance of comedy) even when sober (νήφων, 6.3).⁸² We know from the orators that the ways in which citizens engaged in certain kinds of public processions and dances could be treated as a measure of their moral statures.⁸³ In the rhetoric formulated by orators around the notion of the proper citizen, dancing without the correct implements (e.g., a mask), at the wrong times (e.g., during the daytime), or in the wrong state (e.g., sober) indicated any number of excessive or shameful attitudes and behaviors. Dancing the *kordax* in one or more of these ways seems to have constituted particularly dangerous moral ground. Aristophanes applauds himself for never introducing it into his plays (*Nub.* 540); and Demosthenes pairs it with drunkenness as an indication of Philip’s debauchery.⁸⁴ In his discussion of rhythm in oratory, Aristotle remarks that the troche is inappropriate because it is “rather *kordax*-like” (ὁ δὲ κορδακικώτερος, 1408b36). Later Roman theorists would treat this judgment about the troche as pointing to the abrupt or “running” (*currens*) quality of the meter and its lack of dignity.⁸⁵ Athenaeus compares the pantomime (ὑπορχηματική) to the *kordax* and deems them both “playful” (παιγνιώδεις, 630e). Thus Theophrastus’ huckster may participate in a dance that is not only playful and lowbrow but also used as a metonymic index of debasing activities – what Cope refers to as the “grossest indecencies.”⁸⁶

In keeping with this debauched demeanor, the thoughtless man may also take up all kinds of shameless occupations such as auctioneer, butcher, and gambler (κηρύττειν, μαγειρεῦειν, κυβεῦειν, 6.5). The fragments of

⁸¹ On the term *agoraios* cf. Millet 1998: 218–19; on the character of the *agora* more generally, see Wycherly 1956; Wilkins 2000a.

⁸² Cf. Suidas κορδακίζει· αἰσχρὰ ὄρχεῖται.

⁸³ Cf. Lysias 14.25, Dem. 19.287 on dancing the *kōmos*, another comic dance that should only be performed at night with a mask.

⁸⁴ Dem. *Olynth.* 2.18: εἰ δὲ τις σώφρων ἢ δίκαιος ἄλλως τὴν καθ’ ἡμέραν ἀκρασίαν τοῦ βίου καὶ μέθην καὶ κορδακισμούς οὐ δυνάμενος φέρειν; cf. discussion in ch. 5.

⁸⁵ Cf. Cic. *Orat.* 57, *Trochaem* . . . *cordacem appellat* . . . *quia contractio et brevis dignitatem non habeat*; Quint. 9.4.88, *ut nimis currentem* (τροχερόν) *damnet*.

⁸⁶ Cope 1877 *ad Rhet.* 1408b36.

middle and new comedy indicate that the butcher or cook (*mageiros*) was regarded as a particularly lowbrow, boastful sort. Indeed, as is discussed in chapter 2, Aristophanes' *Knights* anticipates the development of the cook as a central comic role.⁸⁷ A fragment from Cratinus' *Odysseuses* (fr. 150 K) has the Cyclops playing this role, although he is not called a *mageiros*; and a late play of Aristophanes may well have had a Sicilian cook as its protagonist.⁸⁸ As I discuss in chapter 3, Euripides' satyr play clearly borrows this role from comedy for use in developing the Cyclops into a sophist whose verbal parring matches his skill with the butcher's knife.

We might recall as well that the *mageiros* of classical Athens was a seller of meats in the agora as well as a general cook for hire, for either private dinners or civic functions.⁸⁹ In comedy he is precursor to the parasites and clever slaves of Plautus, which indicates his low social status. Since, like Euripides' monstrous talker, he is also a braggart who indulges in fancy rhetorical techniques, he serves as yet another insulting analogy for the sophist. And since his job is to feed the demos (or elite dinner guests), he indulges the gaping mouths of citizens as demagogues do. Sicon, the *mageiros* of Menander's *Dyscolus*, for example, brags that he has thousands of customers in Athens and stands ready with flattering talk (cf. κολακικόν, 492). In Hegesippus' *Brothers* the cook claims he possesses the skills of the Sirens (ἐπὶ τῶν ἔμπροσθε Σειρήνων, fr. 1.20), since any passer-by will immediately stop "open-mouthed, fixed to the spot, and speechless" at his door (ὁ δὲ παριῶν πᾶς εὐθέως πρὸς τὴν θύραν/ ἐστήξετ' ἀχανῆς προσπεπατταλευμένος/ ἄφωνος, 1.24–26). This is, of course, a familiar comparison; if analogies to the Sirens from other settings are any indication, this cook overwhelms and distracts his audience like a magician.⁹⁰ Compare also the *mageiros* of Antiphanes' *Pro-Theban* (fr. 216), who cooks up edibles like a magician (cf. εἶτ' οὐκ ἐπωδούς φασιν ἰσχύειν τινές, 15–17). In Antiphanes' *Aphrodisios*, the chef offers riddling metaphors for his foodstuffs to his employer (fr. 55); and in Strato's *Phoinikides* we find the cook called a "Sphinx man" (σφίγγ' ἄρρεν') because of his riddling diction (οὐδε ἐν . . . / ὅσ' ἂν λέγη συνήμι) (fr. 1.1–3).⁹¹ Thus the comic cook is a wizard of a talker, a trait

⁸⁷ Again, Wilkins 2000a argues that in lost plays from old comedy the cook may have occupied a more central role, since extant plays and fragments often include a cook or main characters engaging in cooking activities.

⁸⁸ Ar. *Aeolosicon*; cf. Wilkins 2000a: 373–74; against Nesselrath 1990: 301–02.

⁸⁹ Wilkins 2000a: 370; see also Rankin 1907: 48–66; Berthiaume 1982: 62–78.

⁹⁰ Cf. E. *Andr.* 936–37; Pl. *Symp.* 216a6–7; Aeschin. 3.228.

⁹¹ These are only a few of many fragments preserved in Athenaeus that show the *mageiros* as a riddling, fancy talker. Cf. Wilkins 2000a: 396–408; Dobrov 2002.

that Attic orators routinely attribute to each other.⁹² Further, the analogies that this figure forges between hawking fancy fare and fine locutions recall Plato's portrait of sophists in the *Protagoras*. While Theophrastus' marketplace huckster is not so much a fancy talker as an aggressive and skillful one, insofar as the sophistic *mageiros* is a lowbrow, big-mouthed type, he would appear to inform the prose portrait.

According to some commentators, the sketch of the thoughtless man is interrupted twice (6.7 and 6.10) by later (possibly Byzantine) insertions, but their arguments depend on details of grammar and syntax that do not necessarily indicate different authorship, at least for the first section.⁹³ More important for this discussion is the fact that both sections emphasize an aspect of the thoughtless man that develops features merely suggested by the *agoraios* traits of the type. In section 7 in particular, it becomes clear that this marketplace huckster is in fact a demagogue, who expends much of his energy yelling (προσκαλούντων) in the agora, engaging with a loud, cracking voice in abusive language and arguing with his audience (μεγάλη τῆ φωνῆ καὶ παρερρωγυῖα λοιδορουμένων καὶ διαλεγομένων πρὸς αὐτούς) (6.7). Ussher compares the "coarse voice" (φωνὴ μιὰρά) of the Sausage Seller in Aristophanes' *Knights*; this is the voice of a man from the marketplace (ἀγόραιος) (*Eq.* 218).⁹⁴ While the boor may talk too loudly in any setting because he is unrefined, the *agoraios* raises his voice in the agora to gain attention and to overwhelm his opposition. Indeed, he never puts on a show unless he is in public (πανήγυρις, 6.7), and his followers are usually low hucksters like him (cf. πολλῶν ἀγοραίων στρατηγεῖν, 6.9). He may even set himself up as the leader of street vendors, loaning them money and stuffing his cheek with the interest from sellers of hot food and fish (τοὺς τόκους ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐμπολήματος εἰς τὴν γνάθον ἐκλέγειν, 6.9). The epilogue (which does seem to be a later insertion) makes the point very forcefully: demagogues have a "mouth loosened for abuse" (τὸ στόμα εὐλυτον ἔχοντες πρὸς λοιδορίαν) and their loud voices ring out through the agora and workshops (καὶ φθεγγόμενοι μεγάλη φωνῆ, ὡς συνηχεῖν αὐτοῖς τὴν ἀγορὰν καὶ τὰ ἐργαστήρια, 6.10).

The thoughtless huckster is thus very like the *panourgos* politician of drama and oratory: shameless, greedy, verbally abusive, and booming-voiced. Like the Sausage Seller and his loud-mouthed opponent Paphlagon in *Knights*, his profligate ways mark him clearly as belonging to the marketplace, as does his unscrupulousness (cf. ἤρρε δ' ὁ πανοῦργος ἔτε-/ρον

⁹² E.g., Aeschin. 2.124, 3.137, 3.207; Dem. 18. 276; 22.70; Din. *Dem.* 66, 92, 95, 110; Demad. fr. 75.

⁹³ As Steinmetz has shown (1962: 96–99).

⁹⁴ Ussher 1960 *ad loc.* Cf. *Ar. Eq.* 45, 246–49, 683–85; *Ran.* 1015.

πολὸν πανουργίας *Eq.* 683–85). We might compare as well Odysseus in tragedy, who repeatedly earns the label *panourgos* for his mercenary behavior and aggressive verbal style.⁹⁵ Odysseus' enemies also sometimes emphasize the piercing qualities of his voice. Philoctetes indicates Odysseus' loud, demagogic style when he calls the uproar his enemy is causing a *thorubos* (*S. Phil.* 1263); the word analogizes Odysseus' style to the shouting down of opponents in Assembly.⁹⁶ Ajax similarly fears abuse from Odysseus and calls him an "irritant" (ἄλημα, *Soph. Aj.* 381, 389). In Euripides' *Cyclops*, Silenus immediately confronts Odysseus with his reputation as a "shrill clatterer" (κρόταλον δριμύ, 104⁹⁷). Demosthenes uses the label *panourgos* of his opponent, the voluble, booming Aeschines (19.98), whom he also repeatedly casts as a salesman and slanderer (19.121; 18.126; 18.180). Theophrastus' loud-mouthed *agoraios* quite clearly embraces less the fancy skills of the comic *mageiros* than his voluble, slavish ways. These marketplace manners themselves echo insults aimed at professional orators by iambic speakers in other settings.

The evil-speaker

In Theophrastus' scheme, the bad-mouther (ὁ κακολόγος, 28) differs distinctly from the reckless type in that his abuse is all of a private nature. He is not a political man, being content to puff up his rhetoric (ὀγκοῦσθαι, 28.2) like the genealogists (οἱ γενεαλογοῦντες, 28.2) in order to cast aspersions on his target's origins. He especially likes to talk about the lasciviousness of women (28.3) and to relate trivial items as if they were of great importance (28.4). He fails to differentiate between the world at large and his own friends and family, submitting them and even the dead to his defamation (λοιδορῆσαι, 28.5). He claims that his abuse of others is merely frankness, democracy, and freedom (παρρησίαν καὶ δημοκρατίαν καὶ ἐλευθερίαν, 28.6).

The word ὀγκοῦσθαι denotes pompous or inflated speech, of the sort that a grandiose sophist might use. Genealogies are a *topos* of the encomium, the kind of display speech for which ornate speakers like Gorgias were famous.⁹⁸ We know that orators who speak in the grand style are often also abusive types who may claim freedom of speech as an excuse for their

⁹⁵ Cf. again Philoctetes' claim that Odysseus' tongue "touches all evil speech and mischief" (ἔχοιδα γάρ νιν παντός ἄν λόγου κακοῦ/ γλώσση θιγόντα καὶ πανουργίας, *S. Phil.* 407–08). Cf. *Phil.* 448; 927, *Aj.* 445.

⁹⁶ Demosthenes claims something similar of Aeschines and Philocrates (19.23); cf. also Pl. *Euthyd.* 276b6.

⁹⁷ Cf. πάνσοφον κρότημα, *S. fr.* 913; αἰμυλώτατον κρότημ', *E. Rhes.* 498.

⁹⁸ Cf. *Gorg. Hel.* 3; *Isoc.* 15.180; Pl. *Menex.* 237a–c.

excesses. For instance, the aggressive Callicles in Plato's *Gorgias* declares that he will "speak freely" (παρρησιαζόμενος, 491e6; cf. 492d4) when he is arguing haughtily for the right of the stronger. He deems Socrates, in contrast, a "mob orator" (δημηγόρος, 494d1). Recall as well that earlier Callicles declares that Socrates speaks of "vulgar and mass-market subjects" (φορτικά καὶ δημηγορικά, *Rep.* 338d3–4), and suggests that those who philosophize on into old age are like "mumblers and jokers" (ψελλιζομένους καὶ παίζοντας, 485b2, cf. 485c1⁹⁹) as well as slavish (δουλοπρεπές, 485b7). We might compare here Aeschines, who claims that his democratic spirit drives his oratorical style (3.220), and that Demosthenes, on the other hand, is "womanly and unfree" (ἀνδρόγυνος . . . καὶ μὴ ἐλεύθερος, 2.127). Demosthenes repeatedly accuses Aeschines of engaging in slander and defamation, which further associates this kind of abuse with arrogant, voluble types. Although he has no public forum for his abuse, Theophrastus' evil-speaker engages in the bold slander typical of such speakers as Callicles and Aeschines, and indulges freely in the kind of defamation that could even be subject to fines.¹⁰⁰ Speaking ill of the dead in particular was actionable, but the evil-speaker is so ready to spout abusive talk that he is impervious to these distinctions.

The offensive joker and the squalid man

If the evil-speaker can be seen as adjacent to the reckless man, the obnoxious type (ὁ βδελυρός, 11) and the squalid man (ὁ δυσχερής, 19) together form a subset of boorish behavior. Both have more to do with bodily function than do the traits that identify the boor, but like him they use their mouths in excessive ways. The obnoxious man is defined as someone who indulges in obvious and offensive joking (παιδιὰ ἐπιφανῆς καὶ ἐπονείδιστος, 11.1), from flashing respectable women (γυναῖξιν ἐλευθέραις ἀνασυράμενος δεῖξαι τὸ αἰδοῖον, 11.2) to misbehaving at the theater. There he claps too much (ἐν θεάτρῳ κροτεῖν ὅταν οἱ ἄλλοι παύωνται), hisses at well-liked actors (συρίπτειν, οὓς ἠδέως θεωροῦσιν οἱ λοιποὶ), and belches (ἐρυγεῖν) to get attention during silences (11.3). Like the boor, he combines activities rudely and tactlessly, such as nibbling on tidbits from a busy vendor in the agora while chatting with him (τραγηματίζεσθαι ἅμα τῷ πωλοῦντι προσλαῶν, 11.4). His verbal tactics themselves leave a lot to be

⁹⁹ Note also that Callicles had entered the conversation by asking whether Socrates is joking (παίζει, 481b6) in his argument with Polus.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Steinmetz 1962: 319.

desired: he verbally accosts (καλέσαι) people he does not know, orders others to wait for him (περιμεῖναι κελεῦσαι), and congratulates (συνησθῆναι) a loser as he leaves court (11.4–5). He also indulges his appetites in a lowbrow and voluble fashion, doing his own shopping (ὄψωνεῖν ἑαυτῷ), hiring flute girls, offering his purchases around, and declaring publicly that he means to get drunk (διηγείσθαι . . . ὅτι μεθύσκεσθαι μέλλει, 11.7).

The squalid man engages in even ruder bodily habits and deportment, neglecting his body to the extent that it pains others (ἀθεραπευσία σώματος λύπης παρασκευαστική, 19.1). Most interesting for this discussion, however, is the fact that he too intermingles activities in a crude and impervious manner, blowing his nose while eating (ἐσθίων ἀπορρίπτειν), scratching while sacrificing (θύων ἄμ' ἀδαξῶσθαι), spitting while talking (προσλαλῶν ἀπορρίπτειν ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματος), and burping while drinking (ἄμα πιῶν ἐρυγγάνειν) (19.4). In contrast to the obnoxious (*bdeluros*) man, Theophrastus conceives of the squalid type as only physically repulsive, even though it is clear from oratory that the term has much broader application.¹⁰¹

We might recall here Aeschines' slanderous speech against Timarchus, who is the embodiment of obnoxiousness. His outrageously gymnastic deportment on the *bēma* is in keeping with his aggressive manner and self-prostituting ways.¹⁰² But the excessive rudeness and thick-skinned quality of these rough types is most reminiscent of Aristophanes' portraits of Socrates. In *Clouds* Socrates is shoeless and impervious to physical need. The Cloud chorus declares that it listens to Socrates because he "swaggers in the streets" (βρενθύει τ' ἐν ταῖσιν ὁδοῖς) with dirty feet and a serious expression (362–63). He exhibits a toughness that thrills the trenchant old Athenian Strepsiades and horrifies his more urbane son. As mentioned above, indications of Socrates' tough and even crude demeanor turn up in Plato as well, although in a more nuanced form. As is discussed in chapter 4, both Callicles and Thrasymachus recoil when Socrates introduces food into the argument and both associate this offensiveness with a "mischief-making in the argument" (κακουργήσεις . . . τὸν λόγον, *Rep.* 338d4; cf. *Gorg.* 482e6–483a3).

Once again, then, the comic Socrates surfaces as an implicit analogy for Theophrastus' intemperate men. Not only is he a ready talker and an idler in the agora; he also turns out to share traits with the bold, crude types who tend to be loud rabble-rousers impervious to social niceties. Interestingly

¹⁰¹ Cf., e.g., Dem. 19.308–09, where *δυσχερεῖς ἀνθρώπους* are "surly" types and *εἰπεῖν . . . δυσχερές* refers to slander.

¹⁰² Steinmetz 1962: 141–42 notes the label's association with prostitution, which fits the portrait of Timarchus. See also the discussion in ch. 5.

enough, we find this same singular combination in Aristophanes' *Clouds*. There Strepsiades applauds the idea that through Socrates' training he will become impervious to all sorts of physical outrages, including hunger, thirst, squalor, cold, beatings, and being flayed alive (441–42). This imperviousness will make him, he declares, bold and smooth-talking (θρασύς, εὐγλωττός, 445), as well as a clatterer (κρόταλον), and a scraps-licker (ματιολοιχός) (446–51). If in drama and oratory politicians tend to fall into one or the other category (i.e., weakness or excess), Socrates would seem to exceed such caricatures, embodying negative traits from both ends of the spectrum. Theophrastus' sketches do not, of course, overtly suggest that Socrates was such a rude wrangler. Rather, they continue a tradition of characterization that wittily assimilates to intemperate types a teacher who used his famous recalcitrance to disparage and tease haughty, boastful elites. The sketches also contribute the day-to-day minutiae that narrow the focus from the public performances of teachers and professional speakers to the members of the “vulgar” crowd.

What can we conclude about Athenian ideas of visible deportment from these portraits? Once again, the mouth and its activities serve as a pervasive common element in Theophrastus' depictions, suggesting that this organ endures as a means to demarcate different types, to stitch together seemingly isolated traits into a recognizably abusive profile. In addition, the portraits that most emphasize oral intemperance refine distinctions among prominent characters familiar from the oratorical and dramatic arenas, and manifestly participate in the iambic discourse that developed around public speaking. Thus verbally aggressive sophists and demagogues like Cleon and Aeschines share traits with reckless men, slanderers, and obnoxious jokers, while glib, careful writers like Euripides and Demosthenes resemble babblers, flatterers, and tale-tellers. Socrates' type turns out to be the most hilariously inclusive, embracing traits not only of the chattering idler and the ironist but also of the boor, the reckless demagogue, the obnoxious man, and the man of squalor. If, as Webster once claimed, Theophrastus' sketches set the parameters for Hellenistic portraiture, they also reorient the broadly drawn categories that differentiate sophists and demagogues, and expose the private citizen Socrates as a repository of marketplace manners. The sketches thus effectively lower the gaze from the speaker's platform to take in the “rabble” that crowd it, reflecting in demeaning detail the variety of foibles that mark the typical denizens of downtown Athens.

The move reflects what we might call the privatization of character familiar from middle and new comedy, as much as it conforms to Aristotle's emphasis on the observation and recording of empirical data. Whatever

the motivation for their cataloguing style, the sketches offer unique information about the ways in which visible habits were understood to communicate type. Aristotle's contention that successful persuasion involves a devil's deal with a corrupt audience may well have inspired Theophrastus' taxonomy of its members. Further, if Aristotle regarded the appetites as failing or exceeding proper measure, Theophrastus reveals how an inventory of oral activities can communicate the multiplicity of ways in which average Athenians fail to inhabit the golden mean.

Epilogue

“The endless fascination of those apertures and openings!”

Portnoy's Complaint

Many centuries after the waxing of the abusive lexicon that this study explores, the Byzantine commentator Eustathius extrapolated a connection to Hipponax from an incident in book 23 of the *Iliad*. There Ajax the son of Oileus loses a foot race to Odysseus and ends up on the ground with a mouth full of cow dung (ἐν δ' ὄνθου βοέου πλήτο στόμα τε ῥίνας τε, 23.777). Upon receiving second prize (an ox, fittingly enough), he spits the dung from his mouth (ὄνθων ἀποπτύων) and says, “Damn, the goddess tripped me up; she always stands like a mother by Odysseus and cares for him” (ὦ πόποι, ἦ μ' ἔβλαψε θεὰ πόδας, ἦ τὸ πάρος περ/ μήτηρ ὡς Ὀδυσῆι παρίσταται ἢ δ' ἐπαρήγει). His audience of fellow warriors laughs happily (ἦ δὺ γέλασσαν) at his remark, and the potential for shaming and conflict ends there (780–84).

Eustathius remarks, “. . . a mouth spitting like this might be called an opening of dung and filth (ὄνθου . . . καὶ βορβόρου ὀπή), a combination that . . . the harsh-tongued Hipponax used in insulting a woman as a ‘crap hole’ [βορβορόπην], mocking her for her unclean child-bearing” (iv.835.13 Valk).¹ This chain of associations points to the continuation of an awareness about the nature of insult that extended from Homer and the iambic poets into late antiquity. The mocking and often self-mocking interlocutor, his mouth (sometimes literally) full of bullshit, reduces lofty relations to base

¹ Cf. Ar. *Lys.* 720, where τὴν ὀπήν makes double reference to a grotto opening and Lysistrata’s “opening”; as Henderson (1975 [1991]: 141) notes, ὀπή can mean “mouse hole,” which further domesticates it. Plutarch cites the slander of Theocritus of Chios, who claimed of Aristotle that “since he loved the dinners of Philip and Alexander, he chose to live at the openings of the Borborus, instead of at the Academy” (τὴν παρὰ Φιλίππῳ καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ δίαιταν ἀγαπήσας εἶλετο ναίειν, ἀντ’ Ἀκαδημείας, Βορβόρου ἐν προχοαῖς, *De exilio* 603c5–10). While Plutarch claims that this is the name of a river in Macedonia, the name suggests a life next to the sewers (i.e., where the indulger could shit or vomit readily). Cf. DL 5.11, who glosses this as “on account of the incontinent nature of his belly” (διὰ τὴν ἀκρατῆ γαστρὸς φύσιν).

needs and the body to its rude organs. If the speaker is suitably noble in stature and the setting suitably jovial, his mockery may be well received, as it is in the scene from the *Iliad*. More frequently, abusive speech, even if it possesses a witty edge, signals the fractious and potentially violent quality of the exchange, so that physical debasement may succeed a verbal focus on the body's vulnerabilities. As chapter 1 discusses, here too the *Iliad* offers a very telling example, in the confrontation between the hideous, abusive Thersites and Odysseus, who operates in the scene as an agent of social control.

Further, Eustathius' comment sustains an association of the mouth with the language of abuse, not in the banal sense as the organ of articulation, but rather as itself a site – perhaps even *the* site – that catalyzes bodily insult and obscene conflation. The commentator's extension of Ajax's mouthful to the abusive "hole" of Hipponax's target and thence to her lower apertures (by implication both the anus and the vagina) indicates the means by which the mouth can motivate a mocking reassemblage of parts that effectively collapses the body on its holes. As the reference to Hipponax indicates, iambic poetry initiates this treatment of the body as a clutch of organs and appetites, the gaping needs of which render it vulnerable to mockery and abuse. The rich confluences of Aristophanes explored in chapter 2 elaborate on this iambic scheme; the targets of his and his characters' rampant abuse are loud-mouths or chattering fools, whose mouths flap as much as their overused asses. In Attic comedy the most abusive and abused speakers tend to be the demagogues, sophists, and poets of the democratic polis whose foibles – verbal and otherwise – debase the citizen body. This sets the tone, and indeed much of the vocabulary, for the range of oral excesses lampooned in oratory and Platonic dialogue.

As the chapters that discuss the development of oral imagery in rhetorical theory and oratory demonstrate, a consistent set of associations between professional speaking and the body's appetites play upon the mouth's troubling versatility. Witness Socrates' rude critique of the alacrity with which his sophistic interlocutors serve the audience's shallow taste for "delicacies" (i.e., rhetorical tricks) in Plato's dialogues; or Demosthenes' and Aeschines' suggestions that their opponents use their mouths in ways that debase their arguments (e.g., for sex, excessive drinking, etc.); or Aristotle's disdain for the vulgar crafting of the voice so that it pleases a corrupt, pleasure-craving audience; or Theophrastus' treatment of typical characters whose failings are best revealed through the ways in which their crude or craven locutions match up with other oral habits (e.g., slurping, spitting, kissing).

The deployment of oral imagery in each setting is quite distinct, of course, and not merely because of differences in genre. Rather, insulting vocabulary and tropes centered on the mouth take distinct forms as part of a larger argument – and one that would be sustained over centuries – about the place of pleasure in persuasion. As *iambos* demonstrates, scornful humor in these contexts serves as a chastener as well as itself affording the surreptitious pleasure of “getting the joke” (i.e., being an insider) and seeing the target of abuse denigrated and dismantled. The oral imagery in these texts initiates awareness of and itself indexes the body in performance as a low, disruptive, potentially obscene object of abuse. While most of these writers suggest in one way or another that the mouth is inherently tainted by the multiple uses to which it may be put, what can be done about this remains in contention. For Plato and perhaps for Aristotle, the delights that attend oral performances (whether dramatic or oratorical) are inherently troubling and the mouth serves as the sign of this indulgence. For Demosthenes and perhaps for Aeschines, the difficulty lies more in how one ought to discipline the orator’s mouth (and by extension his body) so that it might be rendered an unassailably chaste tool for democratic practice.

This association of oral excesses with oratorical skill is sustained in later ancient tradition. While Cicero includes pleasure in his trio of goals for the orator (*ut delectaret/ delectet*, *Brut.* 80; *Orat.* 69), the imagery with which he glosses the persuasive experience reveals the restraint that should characterize both the ideal orator and his audience.² In the third book of *de Oratore*, for example, Cicero draws contrasts between a manly ornamentation reminiscent of an athletic style and one either overly sweet or theatrical. Ornament must be “weighty” (*gravis*) and “gentlemanly” (*liberalis*) (3.96) rather than soft and delicate (*molliores . . . et delicatiores*), like the use of trills and falsettos in song (3.98). As with the overindulgence of any of the senses, the “curls and rouge” (*cincinnati ac fuco*) of the orator or poet who indulges in such charming devices lead quickly to disgust in the audience (3.100). Indeed, ornament itself must be like a manly body: austere and solid (*austeram et solidam*) rather than sweet and over-cooked (*dulcem et decoctam*) (3.103).

Many of Cicero’s most effective character assassinations rely on demonstrating that his opponents fail miserably in this bodily restraint. His extravagant portrait in the *Philippics* of Antony’s appetitive outrages echoes in much more extreme form the excesses (explored in chapter 5) that

² Cf. Keith 1999; Gunderson 2000: esp. 131–35; Dugan 2005: esp. 155–63.

Demosthenes attributes to his opponents, most particularly Aeschines but also Meidias, Androtion and, of course, Philip. Cicero claims that Antony's excesses even extended to vomiting while conducting public business (*Romani negotium publicum gerens*), after overindulgence at a wedding celebration (2.63). Given Cicero's focus on such details, Antony's oral type would seem to fall clearly on the loud, greedy end of the appetitive continuum that I have traced in this study. Like Cleon in Aristophanes, he is a Charybdis of the appetites (*Charybdis tam vorax*, 2.66; cf. Χάρυβδιν ἄρπυγῆς, Ar. Eq. 248). In a later speech it emerges that Antony's monstrous behaviors render him not only a whirlpool or abyss (*quem gurgitem, quam voraginem!*), but also – by mythic extension – a cannibal or vampire (*Quid eum non sorbere animo, quid non haurire conitatione, cuius sanguinem non bibere censetis?*, Phil. 11.10).³ But like many public figures in Attic comedy, Antony is also sybaritic and equally indulgent of his sexual proclivities, which themselves run the gamut from younger men to actresses (e.g., Phil. 2.44, 61–62).⁴ Although, as scholars have argued, Cicero seems largely to reserve imputations of oral turpitude for his less powerful targets, the implications of the *os impurum* (i.e., the mouth when used especially for sex and/or excessive drinking) clearly underlies his characterization of Antony.⁵

Roman oratorical invective, particularly when focused on character assassination, was not alone in taking up such equations; as noted in the Introduction, poets such as Catullus, Horace, and Martial similarly deploy oral imagery to denigrate speakers, although they tend not to concentrate their efforts on public speakers.⁶ Some of the ancient novels also indicate their awareness of this form of mockery, as well as giving it a source in literary tradition. While Petronius' students of rhetoric exhibit a nostalgic but

³ Note that Odysseus associates Polyphemus' cannibalism with the earth's drinking of blood during war (γαῖ' . . . πιόυσα . . . φόνον, Eur. Cyc. 304–05). Cf. an image from the second set of Cicero's speeches against Verres, in which he calls his henchman Apronius' mouth "an immense abyss or whirlpool" (*immensa aliqua vorago est aut gurges*, Verr. 2.3.23; also Pis. 41). See Corbeill 1996: 109–110, 133–34.

⁴ Cf. Cic. *Catil.* 1.6, 1.10, 2.4–5, 2.10.

⁵ Cf., e.g., Cic. *Dom.* 26: *ex ore impurissimo*. See Richlin 1983 [1992]: 99; Corbeill 1996: 105.

⁶ Martial, for instance, is most outraged by the sexual uses to which the mouth may be put, and particularly by cunnilingus (e.g., 2.84, 3.73, 3.81, 4.43). But his outrage seems largely social rather than political; oral sex and excessive drink lead to bad breath rather than posing some threat to the empire. The tongue also often comes into play in these poems, which, taken together with imagery from oratory (e.g., Cic. *Dom.* 25, 47), may indicate that *lingua* (and perhaps also *os*) has more obscene coloration than *glōssa* or *stoma*. Cf. Corbeill 1996: 114–19. But Henderson (1975 [1991]: 119, 184–86) notes that in comedy references to the mouth often imply oral sex. Regarding the tongue (and thus cunnilingus) he cites γλωττοποιεῖν (Ar. Eq. 1281 [of Ariphrades]; cf. Pax 883, *Ecl.* 129, fr. 63); also γλωττοκομεῖον, "tongue case" (i.e., *twat*); licking is referred to at Ar. Eq. 1285, *Ecl.* 847, fr. 409; Eup. 52.2. Adams has no entry for *os*, though he does address the semantic range of *lingo* (1982: 134–35).

debased relation to the literary efforts of the past, some second-century texts make this relation more pointed. In his novel *Leucippe and Cleitophon* Achilles Tatius introduces a priest whose oratorical abilities are attributed to his being a zealous reader of Aristophanes (ἦν δὲ εἰπεῖν οὐκ ἄδύνατος, μάλιστα δὲ τὴν Ἀριστοφάνους ἐξηλωκῶς κωμωδίαν, 8.9.1). Because of this eager perusal, the priest (one Nicostratus, who is protecting Leucippe and defending Cleitophon from the aggressions of Thersandros) speaks “wittily and comically” (ἀστείως καὶ κωμωδικῶς) on a suitably Aristophanic subject: the prostitution of self that in the oratorical arena necessarily centers on the mouth. Indeed, like the worthy Cicero, he depicts Thersandros as abusing others in a disorderly fashion due to his “unclean mouth” (στόματός ἐστιν οὐ καθαρῷ), since he has a tongue “stuffed with hubris” (τὴν γλῶτταν μεστήν ὑβρεως ἔχει) (8.9.1–2).

Many of the proclivities charged of Thersandros sound familiar, echoing as they do not only some of Cicero’s vitriolic portraits of his opponents but perhaps even more precisely the character assassinations traded by Demosthenes and Aeschines. In fact, as Aeschines does of Timarchus, the priest depicts Thersandros as prostituting himself when young (8.9.2–4) and subsequently relinquishing these pleasures for those of oratory in his maturity. The imagery is quite pointed and the vocabulary quite familiar. The priest claims, for instance, that Thersandros “honed his tongue for dissolution and used his mouth for shamelessness” (τὴν γλῶτταν εἰς ἀσέλγειαν ἀκονᾶ καὶ τῷ στόματι χρῆται πρὸς ἀναισχυντίαν, 8.9.5).

If Plato was said to have kept a text of Aristophanes’ plays under his pillow, an apocryphal detail that some of his more wicked comic depictions would seem to support, Achilles Tatius’ student of Aristophanes suggests that it had become commonplace to assume the influence of old comedy on character abuse in prose, whether dialogic or oratorical.⁷ The contemporaneous prose writer Athenaeus furthers the sense that comic lampoon was as crucial to prose discourse as argument. His voluminous dialogue *Deipnosophistes* depicts wise men of the day conversing largely about dinner over dinner and thereby preserves the vast majority of the extant fragments of fourth-century comedy. It is the comic poets, after all, who offer a zeugma central to the connection between loquacity or bragging and greed, referring repeatedly, as Athenaeus notes, to “crumb-flattery” or “grubbing” (cf. ψωμοκολακεία⁸). Since politicians are forever flatterers and whores,

⁷ Note as well that *Leucippe and Cleitophon* appears to have been a popular novel, if the papyrus finds are a trustworthy measure (seven versions are extant, compared to one for most of the other novels).

⁸ Ar. fr. 1.432 K; Sannyr. fr. 1.795 K; Philem. fr. 2.480 K. See further in chs. 2 and 4.

this insulting compound likely points to the mere edge of a vast set of similar associations.

Ancient literary tradition, when considered from this angle, reveals a consistent focus on oral imagery as the catalyst for mocking depictions of speakers, especially those who speak in public and/or for pay. In Greek and Roman prose this mockery sustains a sense of the mouth and its disturbing potential as the key to comic deflation of the powerful and especially the manly body. This obnoxious (and often anxious) emphasis on bodily appetites and urges has one of its important continuations, as noted in the Introduction, in the prose and poetry of male writers of the mid twentieth century. Poets like Allan Ginsburg and Charles Bukowski (perhaps following Catullus and Martial⁹) reintroduced the rude comedy of the body into the lyric form, while novelists like Henry Miller, Philip Roth, and Kurt Vonnegut offer extravagant deflations of latter-day sophists and their critics.¹⁰ In these settings, as distinct from ancient comedy but somewhat reminiscent of the *eirōn* Socrates, the mocking voice often finds its favorite target in the self. The open mouth threatens to devolve at any moment into an “unclean” aperture, stuffed with obscenities, hungering after food, drink, and bodies alike. The appetite for talk thus merges again and again with that for other substances or body parts, so that in these novels, as in Aristophanic comedy, the powerful speaker is still just as likely to “eat” in the spaces normally reserved for polite consumption.¹¹ Here and elsewhere at the cruder edges of literature, the mouth and its activities, trailing a remarkably sustained set of obscene conflation and explosive tropes, serves as the central metonymy for the gloriously profane body on the one hand and the appetites of the chatters, ranters, and bawlers on the other.

And indeed, as Portnoy would have it, “Eat! And so be it!”¹²

⁹ Bukowski wrote a poem (still unpublished) addressed to Catullus that is rife with bodily protrusions and orifices.

¹⁰ Think, for instance, of Vonnegut’s *Breakfast of Champions*, which famously features renderings of an anus (5, 72), a vagina (23), and various items of fast food (128, 161–62), all illustrations of “life on earth.”

¹¹ Cf. ἐν πρυτανείῳ λαϊκάσεις, *Ar. Eq.* 167. ¹² Roth 1967 [1994]: 270.

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