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THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE COMOEDIA DUKIANA

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## The Authorship of the Comoedia Dukiana

Earlier this spring, William Willis published fifty continuous lines excerpted from a Greek comedy and copied onto a sheet of papyrus in the late 3rd or early 2nd c. B.C.<sup>1</sup> Willis feels that the fragment is from Old Comedy but does not argue for any particular author or play. I believe there are good reasons to support a tentative attribution of the excerpt to Archippus' *Fishes*.<sup>2</sup>

The *Comoedia Dukiana* makes reference to Isocrates' *Helen* (17f.) and so cannot have been written much before the beginning of the fourth century B.C.<sup>3</sup> Nor does the *Comoedia Dukiana* appear to have been composed much later than the first decade of the fourth century B.C.: theme, language, content and form reveal characteristics typical of Old Comedy. It is a fantasy piece which describes a social hierarchy of anthropomorphized fish. The language is colourful and often highly poetic. It has a literary *komodoumenos* (17, Isocrates). Its trochaic tetrameters show an irregularity of median diaeresis (84%) which would place the composition closer to Old than Middle or New Comedy.<sup>4</sup>

But the passage also has certain characteristics more closely associated with Middle Comedy. As a dialogue in which the main speaker eloquently praises the virtues of an edible species of fish, it shows the deipnological bias which we have come to regard as stereotypical of Middle Comedy, thanks in large part to the selection of Hellenistic scholarship. Speaker B, especially in lines 24-44, indulges in the dithyrambicizing speech patterns characteristic of Attic comedy in the first half of the fourth century B.C.<sup>5</sup> According to Hunter (*op. cit.* [n. 5] 166f.) the paradithyrambic style is characterized by "riddling circumlocutory phraseology",<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> W.H. Willis, "Comoedia Dukiana", *GRBS* 32 (1991 [1993]) 331-353; references to the preface and commentary are abbreviated as "Willis". I would like to thank W.L. McCarty, G. Schwendner, and W.J. Slater for advice.

<sup>2</sup> Most of the following arguments were communicated to Willis in a letter of late December, 1984. In the *editio princeps* Willis does mention Archippus as a possible author and he refers to my support for this attribution, but the evidence for this case needs still to be fully presented.

<sup>3</sup> According to Willis, "Allusion to it (the *Helen*) could of course be made at any time thereafter (sc. after 385, the death of Aristophanes), but in comedy one would expect a fresh topical reference" (p. 335)—not necessarily so: see A.C. Schlesinger, "Indications of Parody in Aristophanes", *TAPA* 67 (1936) 296-314, esp. 313 with nn. 12 and 13.

<sup>4</sup> Willis 333f. and n. 5. On Willis' calculation Old Comic authors average 84%, Middle Comic authors 98%, and New Comic authors virtually 100%.

<sup>5</sup> R.L. Hunter, *Eubulus: The Fragments* (Cambridge 1983) 19f., 166f.; H.-G. Nesselrath, *Die attische Mittlere Komödie, Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte* 36 (Berlin/N.Y. 1990) 241-266, esp. 253.

<sup>6</sup> As in eg. lines 24f. λεπτοῖς ἁλῶν ἀθύρμασι, / λεπτὰ σωλῆνος περιζῶν αἵματος μελαγχίμου / πεντενίκου πεντεκρήνης πεντεπακτωτοῖς ῥοαίς; lines 35ff. ἄνθεσιν θρ{ο}ίου τε νεαρῶν τε λ[ε]κίδων ἄδυσμάτων, / πολυλεπιετῶν κρομμύων σκόρδων <τ>ε ὀρειγάνου κλάδ(ῶ)ν / Νηρέως <τ>ε χῦμα πηγὸν καὶ ἀπὸ κρήνης μέλα(ν ὕδωρ) (so Austin in Willis); and line 39 ἐγ δὲ ληκύθου βαθείης παρθένου ταυρώπιδος.

by an "indifference to verbal repetition",<sup>7</sup> and by a general looseness in the connection of sentences, clauses and subclauses.<sup>8</sup> Also characteristic of the dithyrambic style are *hapax legomena*, rarities, and epic *glossai*.<sup>9</sup> Towards the end of the passage his language is paratragic and Euripidean.<sup>10</sup> The mixture of Old and Middle Comic characteristics supports a date somewhere around the first decade of the fourth century B.C.

Considerations of date and theme alone suffice to make Archippus' *Fishes* an obvious candidate for the source of the *Comedia Dukiana*. Archippus' play mentions, in the aorist, the archon of 403/2 B.C. (*PCG* [II] 27), Εὐκλείδην τὸν ἄρξαντα, and could not have been performed before 401 B.C. But not much later either, as shown by the *komodoumenoi* Anytos (*PCG* 31), Batrachos (*PCG* 29) and the tragic poet Melanthius (*PCG* 28, see below).<sup>11</sup> Since Kaibel it has generally been assumed that Archippus' *Fishes* was very close in plot to Aristophanes' *Birds*.<sup>12</sup> It involves a *polis* of fishes whose social roles are determined by a series of verbal puns upon their names: the γαλεός is a seer, like the Sicilian clan of the Galeotai (*PCG* 15), the βόαξ a herald and the κάλπης a trumpeter (*PCG* 16), the ὀρφός (pun-

<sup>7</sup> Rather than "indifference" one should say "parody or comic stylization of verbal repetition". This is especially evident in line 23-26: δεῖ ... πλύειν ... δεῖ ... πλυνεῖς ... λεπτοῖς ... λεπτά ... πεντεκρήνης πεντεπακτωτοῖς ....

<sup>8</sup> Hunter (above, n. 4) 167: "participial and appositional style, the use of simple δέ as a connective and the λέξις εἰρομένη which was a hallmark of the dithyramb (Arist. *Rhet.* 3, 1409a24)." See esp. lines 23-31. An appreciation of dithyrambic style, its repetitions, and the looseness of its connections may lead to attributing lines 7-16 entirely to speaker B. Lines 10 and 14 are both in B's style. For the anaphora and asyndeton, compare lines 9-10 and 14-15 with 49-50 (lines 15 and 16 should perhaps be a question like line 14). Dithyrambicizing is normally associated with a single (domineering) speaker in a dialogue: see Nesselrath (above, n. 4) 255-265. A's function is only to ask questions and give praise.

<sup>9</sup> Unusual compounds: 15 πετρηρικοῦ; 16 ααηνηκοῦ; κίλουροθραιζί, the more likely reading of line 22 (Austin and Reeve in Willis 346); 25 μελαγχίμου; 26 πεντεκρήνης πεντεπακτωτοῖς; 30 λευκομηρίδος; 36 πολυλεπιτων; 46 κατάζηλον; 49 ἀχαλκῶν. Cf. Nesselrath (above, n. 4) 243f. — Rare words: 16 μάτευμα; 25 περρίζων — Rare forms: 15 ἐντετεύχαιεν (-τέτευχα becomes more frequent in hellenistic times; see B.G. Mandilaras, *The Verb in the Greek Non-Literary Papyri* [Athens 1973] 206 § 434; E. Mayser, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit* I 2 [Berlin and Leipzig 1938] 199); and 48 ἔθειν (see further below). — Rare meaning: πλήρω. — Epic glossai: 37 πηγόν in χῦμα πηγόν that evidently puns upon the *Odyssey's* κύμα πηγόν (5.388, 23.235).

<sup>10</sup> 47 τερά(μν)ων κλεῖε λαΐνων μοχλοῦς is unmistakably Euripidean. Cf. esp. E. *inc. fab. fr.* 1003 N<sup>2</sup> λῦε πακτὰ δομάτων, parodied by Aristophanes in the Euripides scene of the *Acharnians* (*Ach.* 479 κλήιε πηκτὰ δομάτων) and adesp. fr. 44 N<sup>2</sup> ἄπελθε λαΐνων σταθμῶν, parodied in the same passage (*Ach.* 449). See also LSJ s.v. τέραμνον "a word used esp. by E., but only in pl. and always (except once...) in lyr. passages;" and P. Rau, *Paratragodia* (*Zetemata* 45, Munich 1967) 31. Compare Archippus' Euripidaristophanizing *PCG* (II) 47 and n. 16 below.

<sup>11</sup> P. Geissler, *Chronologie der altattischen Komödie* (Dublin/Zurich 1969) 66f. Batrachos, referred to as *paredros* in *PCG* 28, was a notorious informer at the time of the Thirty (Lys. 12.48), went into exile soon after their fall (Lys. 6.45), and was apparently murdered sometime during the next two decades, if we can trust Harpokration's Λυσίας ἐν τῷ ὑπὲρ τοῦ Βατράχου φόνου (Φ 13, Keaney). This is the latest comedy in which Melanthius was ridiculed; his career as a *komodoumenos* begins by 421 B.C. at the latest: see I.C. Storey, "The Date of Kallias' 'Pedetai,'" *Hermes* 116 (1988) 379-383, 380f. However, such scoffs could easily become a literary topos and, hence, be less helpful for the precise dating of plays; L. Koenen refers me to the case of Chaerephon in Menander's *Samia* (line 603; cf. Gomme-Sandbach *ad loc.*)

<sup>12</sup> G. Kaibel, "Zur attischen Komödie", *Hermes* 24 (1889) 35-66, 42ff.; G. Kaibel, "Archippos", *RE* 2 (1895) col. 542f.; S. Kann, *De iteratis apud poetas antiquae et mediae comoediae Atticae* (diss. Giessen 1909) 36f.; W. Schmid, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* I 4 (Munich 1946) 156f.; Geissler (above, n. 11) 66; L.B. Lawler, "ΙΧΘΥΕC ΧΟΡΕΥΤΑΙ", *CP* 36 (1941) 142-155, 142; Raines (below, n. 16). Rightly skeptical of Kaibel's view of Archippus as a passive imitator: L. Radermacher, "Aristophanes' Frösche", *SBWien* 198.4 (1921) 44.

ning on "Orpheus") is a priest of Dionysos (*PCG* 17), the χρύσοφρυς the priest of golden Aphrodite (*PCG* 18), just as in *Birds* the τρόχιλος is a gofer (79), the Κουνιέρακος Poseidon (868), φρυγίλος Καβάζιος puns on Phrygian Sabazios (875), Artemis Κολαινίς is renamed Ἀκαλανθίς (874), and the πελεκῶντες act as carpenters, hewing wood with an axe (1157). The fish express their hostility towards Hermaios the fishmonger (*PCG* 23), just as the birds put a price on the head of the birdseller Philokrates (1077ff.). Athenaeus 329b reveals that the *polis* of fish goes to war with Athens, as the birds with the gods:

ΘΡΑΙΤΤΑΙ. ἐπεὶ δ' ἐνταῦθα τοῦ λόγου ἐκμὲν προδιειλέγεσθαι τε περὶ θρισκῶν, φέρε εἴπομεν τίνες εἰσι αἱ παρὰ Ἀρχίππῳ ἐν Ἰχθύσι τῷ δράματι θράιτται. κατὰ τὰς συγγραφὰς γὰρ τῶν ἰχθύων καὶ Ἀθηναίων ταυτὶ πεποίηκεν·

ἀποδοῦναι δ' ὅσα ἔχομεν ἀλλήλων, ἡμᾶς μὲν τὰς θράιττας καὶ Ἀθερίνην τὴν αὐλητρίδα καὶ Σηπίαν τὴν θύρσου καὶ τοὺς Τριγλίας καὶ Εὐκλείδην τὸν ἄρξαντα καὶ Ἀναγυρουντόθεν τοὺς Κορακίωνα καὶ Κωβιοῦ τοῦ Καλαμίνιου τὸν τόκον καὶ Βάτραχον τὸν πάρεδρον τὸν ἐξ Ὀρεοῦ (*PCG* 27).

Athenaeus' words following this excerpt (cited below) show that the ἡμᾶς μὲν refers to the fishes. The following δέ clause must have listed specific enemies of the fishes, like Hermaios, to be handed over by the Athenians. We are told that the tragedian Melanthius was delivered up to be devoured by the fish (*PCG* 28).<sup>13</sup> The language of the sources suggests that the delivery of Melanthius was part of the stage action.<sup>14</sup>

It takes little imagination to find a place for a dialogue about the sensual and gustatory excellences of an anthropomorphized fish in the context of Archippus' plot. Indeed the poetic-gastronomical flights of *Comoedia Dukiana*'s speaker B would not be inappropriate in the mouth of the one character we have reason to think made a stage-appearance in the *Fishes*, Melanthius, tragedian and ὀψοφάγος/ ἰχθυολύμης *par excellence*.<sup>15</sup> Willis identifies speaker B as a cook. While there are abundant parallels for Middle Comic cooks eulogizing fish in the dithyrambic style (Nesselrath [above, n. 5] 257ff.), not all dithyrambicizing and deipnological flights in Middle Comedy necessarily belong to cooks (Nesselrath pp. 254ff., pp. 262f., gives examples of other characters speaking in dithyrambic style, some fixated on fish and food: e.g. Anaxandrides *PCG* [II] 31, Xenarchus *PCG* [VII] 1). In Old Comedy the dithyrambicizing is characteristic of literary *komodoumenoi* and especially dithyrambists and tragedians (Nesselrath pp. 245-250). In the *Comoedia Dukiana* there is nothing to suggest that the speaker is actually engaged in the preparation of a meal or that he boasts of his culinary prowess; on the contrary, speaker A refers not to his interlocutor's culinary, but to his interlocutor's verbal art in singing the praises of the *silouros* (*Comoedia Dukiana* 6, 16). It is

<sup>13</sup> T. Bergk, *Commentationum de reliquiis comoediae Atticae antiquae libri duo*, (Leipzig 1838) 379, first suggested that the surrender of Melanthius was one of the conditions of the peace. Kaibel ([above, n. 12] 52), who wishes to see Archippus as a mechanical imitator, would rather see this as part of an *epirrhema*, like the complaint against Philokrates in *Birds*.

<sup>14</sup> Athenaeus 343c: ἐν δὲ τοῖς Ἰχθύσι "Αρχίππος τῷ δράματι ὡς ὀψοφάγον δῆσας παραδίδωσι τοῖς ἰχθύσι ἀντιβρωθησόμενον (sc. Μελάνθιον). Eustathius, *Il.* 1201.3: ἰστέον δὲ ὅτι παίζων ὁ ποιητὴς "Αρχίππος εἰς τὸν κατὰ τὴν Ἡσιόνην μῦθον, ὃς αὐτὴν βορὰν τῷ κῆτει ἐκτίθεται, πλάττει Μελάνθιον τὸν τραγωιδὸν ἐν τινὶ αὐτοῦ δράματι δεθῆναι, καὶ οὕτω παραδίδωσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἰχθύσι.

<sup>15</sup> Pherekrates, *PCG* (VII) 148; Ar. *Pax* 810ff., 1009ff.; Leukon, *PCG* (V) 3; Eupolis, *PCG* (V) 43; Melanthius *TrGF* I 23 T 7. There is no reason to think with Willis (353) that the appearance of the word κωμάσει in the last line of the *Comoedia Dukiana* signals the beginning of the *komos* and the end of the play.

possible that *Comoedia Dukiana* line 33 (ἡ λοπαῖς γῶν εἰσφερέσθωι πέντ' ἐφήβων ὠλέναις) indicates the actual presentation of a meal on stage, but this is not a necessary conclusion; the command may represent the speaker's fanciful creation of an imaginary presentation of the eulogized fish, in much the same way as he imagines the anxious conversation taking place in front of the *silouros'* door in lines 14-16 (see n. 8 above).

B's highly poetic and innovative language has ample parallels in Archippus' fragments: Schmid found his "sprachliche Neubildungen ... formell bemerkenswert" (*op. cit.* [above, n. 12] 157). B's dithyrambicizing eulogy of the fish has a counterpart in Archippus *PCG* 18 (ἱερεὺς Ἀφροδίτης χρύσοφρυς Κυθηρίας) and *PCG* 25 (κῆρυξ θαλάσσης τρώφιμος, υἷος πορφύρας) easily comparable in form and content with lines like *Comoedia Dukiana* 7 (ἦ κύλιουρος ὄνομ' ἔχων Ἄδωνίς ἐστιν ποτάμιος). The style is also known from another play by Archippus, *The Wedding of Herakles* (*PCG* 10.2 τὰύρου τ' ἀυξίκερω φλογίδες; more probably a cook this time). With the speaker's paratragic finale (*Comoedia Dukiana* 47), one can compare Archippus, *PCG* 47 (cf. Eur. fr. 170 N<sup>2</sup>).<sup>16</sup>

Date, theme and style of the new fragment are all at least consistent with an attribution to the *Fishes* of Archippus. Specific details of the *Comoedia Dukiana* yield some positive reasons for treating Archippus' candidacy seriously. Chief among these is the close verbal similarity of *Comoedia Dukiana* 1-2:

- A. τί σὺ λέγεις; γλαῦκο(ν) σιλούρου κρείττον' εἶναι νενόμικας;  
 B. τῶν μὲν οὖν ὅλωσ ἀπάντων ἰχθύων σοφώτατον  
 φημὶ τὸν κύλιουρον εἶναι...

and Archippus' *Fishes*, *PCG* 15:

- (A.) τί λέγεις σὺ; μάντεις εἰςὶ γὰρ θαλάττιοι;  
 (B.) γαλεοί γε, πάντων μάντεων σοφώτατοι.

At the very least this fragment shows that *Fishes* contained a scene in which a speaker was interrogated about the specific accomplishments of various species of fish and responded with hyperbolic praise. Despite the difference in metre one might be tempted to suppose that the lines come from the very same scene—an *agon* in which a pair of fishlovers compete in eulogizing the fishes, similar in style to the second *agon* in *Knights* where the Paphlagonian and Sausage-seller compete in flattering and fawning upon Demos (Ar. *Eg.* 756-941). A contest between two speakers would seem most likely, unless a single speaker is inconsistent about which species is wisest. As in *Knights* (1253), *Comoedia Dukiana*'s line 32, σὺν γὰρ τὸ νικητήριον, seems to acknowledge a victory, not for any culinary accomplishment, but on the basis of verbal technique and the brilliance of B's turn of phrase. Yet surely Archippus fragment 15 shows more than a mere similarity of situation: the wording is so close to the wording of *Comoedia Dukiana* lines 1-2, that one would be tempted to assign the *Comoedia Dukiana* to *Fishes* on this basis alone, were it not for the frequency with which Old Comic poets borrowed from one another. The danger is well illustrated by Athenaeus' attribution of a similar line to Aristophanes, *PCG* (III.2) 612: λάβραξ ὁ πάντων ἰχθύων σοφώτατος.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See J.M. Raines, "Critical Notes on Archippus, Phrynichus, Callias, and Aristophanes", *CP* 29 (1934) 338-341, 338.

<sup>17</sup> Willis (342) notes that this could be converted into a trochaic tetrameter by prefixing a cretic such as τί σὺ λέγεις;

The *Comoedia Dukiana* also shares a morphological idiosyncrasy with Archippus' *Fishes*. At line 48 the unusual form ἔθειν for ἐθείν appears. The form is relatively rare before the Hellenistic age: occurring in Homer, Hesiod, once in elegy (Critias 6.25 West), once in lyric (Alcman 17.6 Page) and dithyramb (Philoxenus 836 b 35 Page), once in prose (*Dissoi Logoi* 5.2), three times in tragedy (A. Ag. 1597; S. *TrGF* IV F 449; Philocles, *TrGF* I 24 F 5), and once in satyr play (Python, *TrGF* I 91 F 1.13). In comedy it occurs four times: once in Epicharmus (42/43.6 Kaibel), once in New Comedy (Philippides, *PCG* 9.5) but, apart from the present passage, only twice in Old Comedy, in Aristophanes (*PCG* 714) and in Archippus' *Fishes* (*PCG* 20).<sup>18</sup>

Finally, the humour of the *Dukiana* is of a piece with Archippus' *Fishes*. Though punning is ubiquitous in Old Comedy, Archippus' puns gained special notoriety. In commenting upon τῶν τριχονίκων ἐπῶν in Aristophanes' *Wasps* 481, the scholiast remarks: ἀντὶ τοῦ τῶν εὐτελῶν. τὰ τοιαῦτα παρὰ τὰς φωνὰς παίζει, φορτικῶ ὄντος ἀγοραίοις, ἐφ' οἷς μάλιστα τῶν ποιητῶν σκόπτουσι Ἄρχιππον.

The charge is borne out by *Fishes* where we find sixteen likely or suspected puns in the thirteen short fragments substantial enough to receive large type in *PCG* (14-19, 21-27): in addition to the five puns on fish species and human professions mentioned above, παλιναίρετος (*PCG* 14) puns on candidates who gain magistracies after being first rejected in the *dokimasia* and fish caught after getting away the first time (Kaibel [above, n. 12] 50); in *PCG* 19 ἔψητὸς met and gobbled up ἀφύη, the first word means "small fish for boiling" and possibly some slang meaning, perhaps "lecher",<sup>19</sup> while ἀφύη "small fry" is widely attested as a hetaira's nickname;<sup>20</sup> *PCG* 27 (above) contains no less than eight puns on fish species and ethnic or personal names.

The verbal humour of the *Comoedia Dukiana* consists in precisely the same sort of puns: it exploits terms (or paronomastic pairs) which have one meaning in the ichthyological domain and another meaning in the human domain, to capitalize (*ad nauseam*) on the comic conceit of fish anthropomorphized and socially organized in a *polis*. Willis (342) suggests that δόρατα in line 5 plays on spears and the spines of the catfish; ἀρτύματα in line 9 means "spices" in the domain of fish, and "scents" in the human domain; Willis (343) suggests that line 10's πέτακος refers to a "casserole lid" and the hat worn by epebes; ἔψειν in line 10 means "to boil" in the domain of fish, but almost certainly contains some sort of pun in its epebic context, like ἔψητὸς in Archippus fragment 19 (cf. *Comoedia Dukiana* 22); line 14 puns on the fish species μαλώτης and the ethnic;<sup>21</sup> Willis (345) thinks line 20 may possibly pun on the

<sup>18</sup> Willis (352) compares Archippus' omission of stem iota in ἐωθός, a feature the ancient grammarians noted as particularly characteristic of Archippus: Suda s.v. ἐωθός; Archippus, *PCG* 55; Araros, *PCG* (II) 15.

<sup>19</sup> Bergk (above, n. 13) 378: "Etiam in voce ἔψητὸς iocum poeta quaesivisse videtur; nam ea videtur etiam de hominibus lascivis usurpata fuisse, ut conici licet ex Nicophonte [= *PCG* (VII) 8] apud Athenaeum IX, p. 389 A, ubi de perdice loquitur: Τὸ δὲ ζῶν ἐπὶ λαγνείας συμβολικῶς παρείληπται. Νικοφῶν ἐν χειρογράφῳ. Τοὺς ἔψητὸς καὶ τοὺς πέρδικας ἐκείνους." Cf. Kock *ad loc.*

<sup>20</sup> Bergk (above, n. 13) 378, Meineke *ad loc.*, Kock *ad loc.*, Kassel-Austin *ad loc.* W.J. Slater points out to me that the nickname may play upon the terms of endearment ἀπφά and ἀπφία; cf. L. Robert, *Noms indigènes dans l'Asie-Mineure gréco-romaine* (Paris 1963) 154, 348.

<sup>21</sup> *Maiotai* appear in the fragments of Archippus' *Fishes* (*PCG* 26) as do two other species mentioned in the *Comoedia Dukiana*, *glaukoi* (*Comoedia Dukiana* 1, *PCG* 15, 23) and *thraitai* (*Comoedia Dukiana* 2, *PCG* 27).

κύλουρος and a Rhodian toponym; line 22 compounds two species in κυλουροθραιζί to pun on the double ethnic Samothracian (Austin and Reeve in Willis 346) and in lines 23f. πλύσις and πλύνειν refer both to washing fish and to ritual ablution.

As we have seen there is substantial agreement in date, theme, form, content, style, language and humour between the *Comoedia Dukiana* and Archippus' *Fishes*. Yet Willis gives only one reason for dismissing Archippus' *Fishes* as a possible source for the *Comoedia Dukiana* (337):

Against such an attribution is a strong *argumentum ex silentio*, namely that Athenaeus—who otherwise cites *Ichthyes* several times and claims to have written a treatise, now lost, on the play (Ath. 7 329c)—obviously did not know our scene. If he had, he could scarcely have resisted quoting some of its lines that are eminently appropriate at a number of points in his *Deipnosophistae*. Apparently our play was no longer extant in his lifetime.

Like most of its congeners, this argument from silence is anything but convincing. It makes untenable assumptions about Athenaeus' methods. While it cannot be proved that Athenaeus never used original sources, it is certain that he very frequently copied his citations directly from grammatical treatises and lexicographical compilations. The most recent discussion of the problem, by Nesselrath, concludes that Athenaeus depended on the grammatical and lexicographical tradition for all citations that he explicitly characterized as "Middle Comedy" (*op. cit.* [above, n. 5] 65-79). This applies in particular to Athenaeus' discussion of Archippus' use of θράιτται in Ἰχθυε; (see Nesselrath [above, n. 5] 72f.). Moreover, Willis certainly goes beyond the evidence in stating that Athenaeus claimed to have written a treatise on the *Fishes*. Following from the quotation of Archippus' *Fishes* fragment 27 (cited above) Athenaeus writes (329b):

ἐν τούτοις ἂν τις ζητήσῃ ποίας θράιττας παρὰ τοῖς ἰχθύσιν εἶναι συμβέβηκεν, ἅς ἀποδοῦναι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις συντίθενται. ἐπεὶ οὖν ἰδίαι μοι συγγέγραπται τι περὶ τούτου, αὐτὰ τὰ καιριώτατα νῦν λέξω. ἰχθύδιον οὖν ἐστὶν ἀληθῶς ἢ θράιττα θαλάττιον.

The passage need mean no more than that Athenaeus wrote a piece on the species of fish named θράιτται or on the treaty between the Athenians and the fishes in Archippus' play or only on the meaning of θράιτται in that passage. In either case the assumption that Athenaeus did original research on the question is unwarranted. It certainly does not indicate that Athenaeus ever read or excerpted directly from the text of *Fishes*. Nesselrath gives good reasons for thinking that Athenaeus' discussion of the θράιτται in the *Deipnosophistai* is itself drawn from lexicographical sources, and, if this is so, we could hardly expect things to be otherwise in his lost treatise.<sup>22</sup>

In sum, then, the possibility that the *Comoedia Dukiana* is an excerpt from Archippus' *Fishes* deserves more careful consideration than it has received in its *editio princeps*.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. J. Schoenemann, *De lexicographis antiquis, qui rerum ordinem secuti sunt, quaestiones praecursoriae* (diss. Bonn, printed in Hannover 1886) 81; M. Wellmann, "Dorion", *Hermes* 23 (1888) 179-193, 179.