

The Blessed Afterlife in Old Comedy
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1. Telecleides, fr. 1 KA

λέξω τοίνυν βίον ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὃν ἐγὼ θνητοῖσι παρεῖχον.
εἰρήνη μὲν πρῶτον ἀπάντων ὥσπερ ὕδωρ κατὰ χειρός.
ἢ γῆ δ' ἔφερ' οὐ δέος οὐδὲ νόσους, ἀλλ' αὐτόματ' ἦν τὰ δέοντα·
οἴνωι γὰρ ἅπασ' ἔρρει χαράδρα, μᾶζαι δ' ἄρτοις ἐμάχοντο
περὶ τοῖς στόμασιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἰκετεύουσαι καταπίνειν,
εἴ τι φιλοῖεν, τὰς λευκοτάτας. οἱ δ' ἰχθύες οἴκαδ' ἰόντες
ἐξοπτῶντες σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἂν παρέκειντ' ἐπὶ ταῖσι τραπέζαις.
ζωμοῦ δ' ἔρρει παρὰ τὰς κλῖνας ποταμὸς κρέα θερμὰ κυλίνδων,
ὑποτριμματίων δ' ὀχετοὶ τούτων τοῖς βουλομένοισι παρῆσαν,
ὥστ' ἀφθονία τὴν ἔνθεσιν ἦν ἄρδονθ' ἀπαλὴν καταπίνειν.
λεκανίσκασιν δ' † ἀνάπαιστα † παρῆν ἡδυσματίοις κατάπαστα.
ὀπταὶ δὲ κίχλαι μετ' ἀμητίσκων εἰς τὸν φάρυγ' εἰσεπέτοντο·
τῶν δὲ πλακούντων ὥστιζομένων περὶ τὴν γνάθον ἦν ἀλαλητός.
μήτρας δὲ τόμοις καὶ χναυματίοις οἱ παῖδες ἂν ἡστραγάλιζον.
οἱ δ' ἄνθρωποι πίνονες ἦσαν τότε καὶ μέγα χρῆμα Γιγάντων.

Well, I will describe the life I provided for mortals in the olden days. First of all, peace was just like water poured over one's hands. The earth produced nothing dangerous or poisonous, but all needs were produced of their own accord. Every torrent gully flowed with wine and barley cakes fought with bread loaves about men's mouths pleading that the whitest of them be eaten, if they would be so kind. Fish would go home and after cooking themselves would spread out beside the guests. And a river of broth rolling chunks of warm meat flowed beside the couches and channels of little sauces were available for those who wanted some, so that there was no reason to begrudge one soaking his mouthful to make it soft and gulping it down. And in basins...were served sprinkled with seasonings. Stewed thrushes with little cakes flew down gullets. There was an uproar from cakes jostling about the jaws of men. Children played knucklebones with slices of sow's womb and little trimmings of meat. And people were fat and as big as Giants.

2. Pherecrates, fr. 113 KA

Α. πλούτῳ δ' ἐκεῖν' ἦν πάντα συμπεφυρμένα,
ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς πάντα τρόπον εἰργασμένα·
ποταμοὶ μὲν ἀθάρης καὶ μέλανος ζωμοῦ πλέω
διὰ τῶν στενωπῶν πομοφυγοῦντες ἔρρεον
αὐταῖσι μυστίλαισι, καὶ ναστῶν τρύφη,
ὥστ' εὐμαρῆ γε καὶ αυτομάτην τὴν ἔνθεσιν
χωρεῖν λιπαρὰν κατὰ τοῦ λάρυγγος τοῖς νεκροῖς.
φύσκαί δὲ καὶ ζέοντες ἀλλάντων τόμοι
παρὰ τοῖς ποταμοῖς σίζοντ' ἐκέχυτ' ἄντ' ὀστράκων.
καὶ μὴν παρῆν τεμάχη μὲν ἐξωπτημένα
καταχυσματίοισι παντοδαποῖσιν εὐπρεπῆ,
τεύτλοισί τ' ἐγγέλεια συγκεκαλυμμένα.
σχελίδες δ' ὀλόκνημοι πλησίον τακερώταται
ἐπὶ πινακίσκοις, καὶ διεφθ' ἀκροκώλια

A. Those things were there, all mixed up with treasures, and made from all good things in every way. And rivers full of porridge and black broth pass bubbling through channels, even with bread-sops and bites of cake, so that mouthfuls pass easily and by themselves go smoothly down the throats of the dead. And tripe and piping-hot cuts of sausage are piled along the rivers, sizzling in place of shards. And indeed there are also baked fillets, marinated in sauces of all kinds, and eel cuts smothered in beets and tender sides of beef with nearly the whole leg on platters, and fragrant boiled trotters, and beef

ἥδιστον ἀπατμίζοντα, καὶ χόλικες βοός,
καὶ πλευρὰ δελφάκει' ἐπεξανθισμένα
χναυρότατα παρέκειτ' ἐπ' ἀμύλοις καθήμενα.
παρῆν δὲ χόνδρος γάλατι κατανεμιμμένος
ἐν καταχύτλοις λεκάναισι καὶ πνοῦ τόμοι.
B. οἶμ' ὡς ἀπολεῖς μ' ἐνταῦθα διατρίβουσ' ἔτι,
παρὸν κολυμβᾶν ὡς ἔχειτ' εἰς τὸν Τάρταρον.
A. τί δῆτα λέξεις, τὰπίλοιπ' ἦνπερ πύθῃ;
ὄπται κίχλαι γὰρ εἰς ἀνάβραστ' ἠρτυμένα
περὶ τὸ στόμ' ἐπέτοντ' ἀντιβολοῦσαι καταπιεῖν,
ὑπὸ μυρρίναισι κἀνεμώναις κεχυμένα.
τὰ δὲ μῆλ' ἐκρέματο τὰ καλὰ τῶν καλῶν ἰδεῖν
ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς, ἐξ οὐδενὸς πεφυκότα.
κόραι δ' ἐν ἀμπεχόναις τριχάπτοις ἀρτίως
ἠβυλλιώσαι τὰ ρόδα καὶ κεκαρμένα
πλήρεις κύλικας οἴνου μέλανος ἀνθοσμίου
ἦντλουν διὰ χώνης τοῖσι βουλομένοις πιεῖν.
καὶ τῶνδ' ἐκάστοτ' εἰ φάγοι τις ἢ πίοι,
διπλάσι' ἐγίγνετ' εὐθὺς ἐξ ἀρχῆς πάλιν.

3. Metagenes, fr. 6.1-4 (*Thuriopians*)

ὁ μὲν ποταμὸς ὁ Κραῆθις ἡμῖν καταφέρει
μάζας μεγίστας αὐτομάτας μεμαγμένας,
ὁ δ' ἕτερος ὠθεῖ κῶμα ναστῶν καὶ κρεῶν
ἐφθῶν τε βατίδων εἰλυομένων αὐτόσε.

sausage and pork-ribs, browned and set out
deliciously on wheat rolls. And there were groats
in tubs sprinkled with cream and slices of curd.

B. Jesus, you're killing me, frittering your time
away here, when you can dive back into Tartarus!

A. What'll you say when you hear the rest! Stewed
thrushes ready for boiling were flying around
peoples' mouths, pleading to be eaten, pouring out
under myrtle and anemones, and fine apples, the
fairest of the fair to see, dangled overhead
spouting from nothing. And girls in plaited shawls
and recently come to womanhood, with their
"roses" trimmed, were ladling out full cups of
fragrant dark wine down a funnel for those
wishing to drink. And each time one (of the dead)
ate or drank, immediately the original amount
doubled in quantity.

And the river Krathis brings downstream
great barley loaves self-kneaded to us,
and the other river pushes swells of cake and
meats and boiled skates wiggling along there.

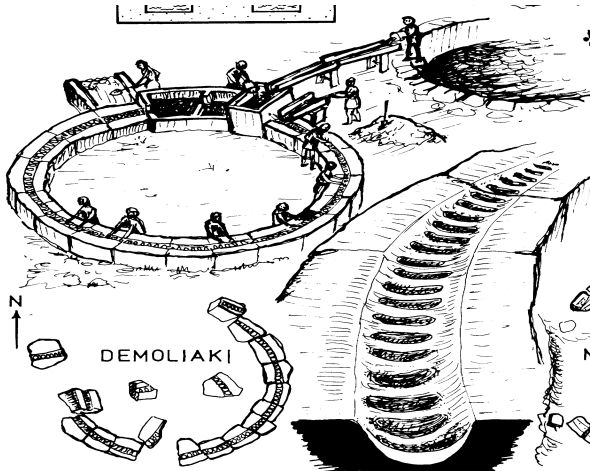
4. Diodorus Siculus 3.12.3-3.13.3

οἱ δὲ παραδοθέντες, πολλοὶ μὲν τὸ πλῆθος ὄντες, πάντες δὲ πέδαις δεδεμένοι, προσκαρτεροῦσι τοῖς ἔργοις
συνεχῶς καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν καὶ δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτός, ἀνάπαισιν μὲν οὐδεμίαν λαμβάνοντες, δρασμοῦ δὲ
παντὸς φιλοτίμως εἰργόμενοι...οὔτοι μὲν οὖν διὰ τὰς ἐν ταῖς διώρυξι καμπὰς καὶ σκολιότητος ἐν σκοτει
διατρίβοντες λύχνους ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων πεπραγματευμένους περιφέρουσι...καὶ τοῦτο ἀδιαλείπτως ἐνεργοῦσι
πρὸς ἐπιστάτου βαρύτητα καὶ πληγὰς...προσοῦσης δ' ἅπασιν ἀθεραπευσίας σώματος καὶ τῆς τὴν αἰδῶ
περιστελλούσης ἐσθῆτος μὴ προσοῦσης, οὐκ ἔστιν ὅς ἰδὼν οὐκ ἂν ἐλεήσειε τοὺς ἀκληροῦντας διὰ τὴν
ὑπερβολὴν τῆς ταλαιπωρίας. οὐ γὰρ τυγχάνει συγγνώμης οὐδ' ἀνέσεως ἀπλῶς οὐκ ἄρρωστος, οὐ
πεπηρωμένος, οὐ γεγηρακῶς, οὐ γυναικὸς ἀσθένεια, πάντες δὲ πληγαῖς ἀναγκάζονται προσκαρτερεῖν τοῖς
ἔργοις, μέχρι ἂν κακουχούμενοι τελευτήσωσιν ἐν ταῖς ἀνάγκαις. διόπερ οἱ δυστυχεῖς φοβερώτερον αἰεὶ τὸ
μέλλον τοῦ παρόντος ἡγοῦνται διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς τιμωπαρόντος ἡγοῦνται διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς
τιμωρίας, ποθεινότερον δὲ τοῦ ζῆν τὸν θάνατον προσδέχονται.

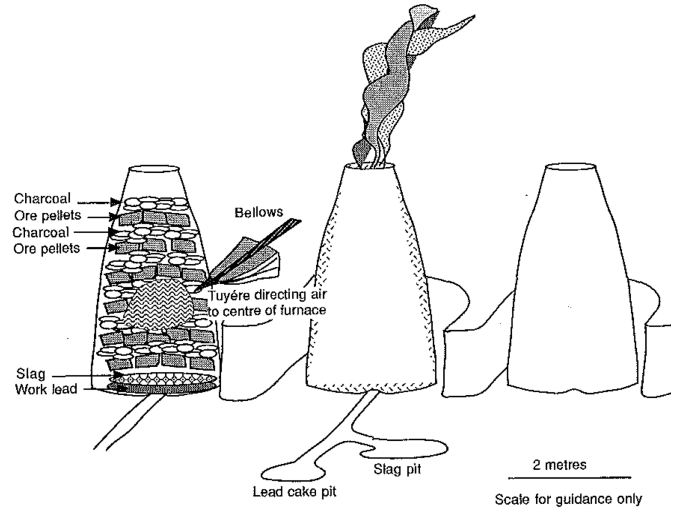
...those who have been condemned in this way – and they are a great multitude and bound in chains – work
at their task unceasingly both by day and throughout the entire night, enjoying no respite and being carefully
cut off from any means of escape...these men, working in darkness as they do because of the bending and
winding of the passages, carry lamps bound on their foreheads...and at this task they labor without ceasing
beneath the sternness and blows of an overseer...and since no opportunity is afforded any of them to care for
his body and they have no garment to cover their shame, no man can look upon the unfortunate wretches
without feeling pity for them because of the exceeding hardships they suffer. For no leniency or respite of
any kind is given to any man who is sick, or maimed, or aged, or in the case of a woman for her weakness,
but all without exception are compelled by blows to persevere in their labors, until through ill-treatment they
die in the midst of their tortures. Consequently, the poor unfortunates believe, because their punishment is so

exceedingly severe, that the future will always be more terrible than the present and therefore look forward to death as more to be desired than life.

4. Washery (from Jones 1982)



5. Smelting Furnace (from Rihll 2001)



6. Theognis 467-496

Μηδένα τῶνδ' ἀέκοντα μένειν κατέρυκε παρ' ἡμῖν,
 μηδὲ θύραζε κέλευ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντ' ἰέναι,
 μηδ' εὐδοντ' ἐπέγειρε, Σιμωνίδη, ὄντιν' ἂν ἡμῶν
 θωρηχθέντ' οἴνῳι μαλθακὸς ὕπνος ἔλλι,
 μηδὲ τὸν ἀγρυπνέοντα κέλευ' ἀέκοντα καθεύδειν.

‘πάν γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον χρῆμ' ἀνηρὸν ἔφου.’
 τῶι πίνειν δ' ἐθέλοντι παρασταδὸν οἰνοχοεῖτω·
 οὐ πάσας νύκτας γίνεται ἀβρὰ παθεῖν.
 αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ—μέτρον γὰρ ἔχω μελιηδέος οἴνου—
 ὕπνου λυσικάκου μνήσομαι οἴκαδ' ἰών.
ἦξω δ' ὡς οἴνος χαριέστατος ἀνδρὶ πεπόσθαι·
οὔτε τι γὰρ νήφω οὔτε λίην μεθύω.
 ὃς δ' ἂν ὑπερβάλλῃ πόσιος μέτρον, οὐκέτι κείνος
τῆς αὐτοῦ γλώσσης καρτερὸς οὐδὲ νόου·
 μυθεῖται δ' ἀπάλαμνα, τὰ νήφοσι γίνεται αἰσχρά,
 αἰδεῖται δ' ἔρδων οὐδέν, ὅταν μεθύῃ,
 τὸ πρὶν ἐὼν σώφρων, τότε νήπιος. **ἀλλὰ σὺ ταῦτα**
γινώσκων μὴ πῖν' οἴνον ὑπερβολάδην,
ἀλλ' ἢ πρὶν μεθύειν ὑπανίστασο—μὴ σε βιάσθω
γαστήρ ὥστε κακὸν λάτρην ἐφημέριον—
ἦ παρεὼν μὴ πῖνε. σὺ δ' ἔγχεε' τοῦτο μάταιον
 κωτίλλεις αἰεὶ· τοῦνεκά τοι μεθύεις·
 ἦ μὲν γὰρ ‘φέρεται φιλοτήσιος’, ἦ δὲ ‘πρόκειται’,
 τὴν δὲ ‘θεοῖς σπένδεις’, τὴν δ' ‘ἐπὶ χειρὸς ἔχεις’·
 αἰνεῖσθαι δ' οὐκ οἶδας. ἀνίκητος δέ τοι οὔτος,
 ὃς πολλὰς πίνων μὴ τι μάταιον ἐρεῖ·
 ὑμεῖς δ' εὖ μυθεῖσθε παρὰ κρητῆρι μένοντες,
 ἀλλήλων ἔριδος δὴν ἀπερυκόμενοι,

εἰς τὸ μέσον φωνεῦντες ὁμῶς ἐνὶ καὶ συνάπασιν·
χοῦτως συμπόσιον γίνεται οὐκ ἄχαρι.

Don't hold back anyone of these so that he remain with us against his will, don't tell anyone to depart who does not want to, don't waken from his sleep, Simonides, anyone of us who, fortified with wine, has been overcome by gentle sleep, and don't tell one who's wide awake to sleep against his will. **All force is disagreeable.** And let (a slave) stand by and pour wine for him who wants to drink; it's not possible to have a good time every night. But I'll go home—I've had my limit of honey-sweet wine—and I'll take thought for sleep that brings release from ills. **I've reached the stage where the consumption of wine is most pleasant for a man, since I am neither sober nor too drunk. Whoever exceeds his limit of drink is no longer in command of his tongue or his mind;** he says wild things that are disgraceful in the eyes of the sober, and he's not ashamed of anything he does when he's drunk. Formerly he was sensible, but then he's a fool. **Aware of this, don't drink wine to excess, but either rise before you're drunk—don't let your belly overpower you as if you were a wretched hired help for the day—or stay without drinking.** But you say "fill it up!" This is always your idle chatter; that's why you get drunk. **One cup is a toast to friendship, another is set before you, another you offer as a libation to the gods, another you have as a penalty, and you don't know how to say no.** That man is truly the champion who after drinking many cups will say nothing foolish. If you stay by the mixing bowl, make good conversation, long avoiding quarrels with one another and speaking openly to one and all alike. In this way a symposium turns out to be not half bad. (Trans. Gerber)

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