

Theocritus Iambist: Reconsidering Genre in the *Idylls*

1. Theocritus Epigrams to Iambists (21 and 19 Gow)

Ἀρχίλοχον καὶ στᾶθι καὶ εἶσιδε τὸν πάλαι ποιητᾶν
τὸν τῶν ἰάμβων, οὗ τὸ μυρίον κλέος
διήλθε κήπι νύκτα καὶ ποτ' ἄω.
ἦ ῥά νιν αἱ Μοῖσαι καὶ ὁ Δάλιος ἠγάπευεν Ἀπόλλων,
ὡς ἐμμελής τ' ἐγένετο κήπιδέξιος
ἔπεά τε ποιεῖν πρὸς λύραν τ' αἰεΐδεν.

Ὁ μουσοποιὸς ἐνθάδ' Ἴππῶναξ κεῖται.
εἰ μὲν πονηρός, μὴ ποτέρχου τῷ τύμβῳ·
εἰ δ' ἐσσι κρήγυός τε καὶ παρὰ χρηστῶν,
θαρσέων καθίζου, κῆν θέλησ, ἀπόβριξον.

2. Theocritus *Idyll* 5.1-4; 41-44

ΚΟΜΑΤΑΣ

Αἴγες ἐμαί, τῆνον τὸν ποιμένα, τὸν Συβαρίταν,
φεύγετε, τὸν Λάκωνα· τό μεν νάκος ἐχθὲς ἔκλεψεν.

ΛΑΚΩΝ

οὐκ ἀπὸ τᾶς κράνας; σίττ', ἀμνίδες· οὐκ ἐσορήτε
τόν μεν τὰν σύριγγα πρὸαν κλέψαντα Κομάταν;

ΚΟ. ἀνίκ' ἐπύγισόν τυ, τὸ δ' ἄλγεες· αἱ δὲ χίμαιραι
αἶδε κατεβληχῶντο, καὶ ὁ τράγος αὐτὰς ἐτύπη.

ΛΑ. μὴ βάθιον τήνω πυγίσματος, ὕβει, ταφείης.
ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔρφ', ὧδ' ἔρπε, καὶ ὕστατα βουκολιαξῆ.

3. Theocritus *Idyll* 7.43-55

ἴταν τοι', ἔφα, ἴκορύναν δωρύττομαι, οὐνεκεν ἐσσί
πᾶν ἐπ' ἀλαθείᾳ πεπλασμένον ἐκ Διὸς ἔρνος.
ὡς μοι καὶ τέκτων μέγ' ἀπέχθεται ὅστις ἐρευνη (45)
ἴσον ὄρευσ κορυφᾷ τελέσαι δόμον Ὠρομέδοντος,

Archilochus—Stand and look at him, the poet of iamboi
from long ago, whose measureless fame
has come through the night and towards dawn.
The Muses and Delian Apollo for sure loved him,
so tuneful and dexterous was he at
composing words and singing them to the lyre.

The songwriter, Hipponax, lies here.
If you are no-good, do not approach his grave.
But if you are a good man and from good stock,
feel free to sit down, and if you wish, go to sleep.

Comatas

My goats, flee that shepherd, the Sybarite, Lacon. He stole my
goatskin yesterday.

Lacon

Geat away from the spring! Psst, lambs, don't you see Comatas who
very lately stole my syrinx?

Co. When I sodomized you and you were hurt, and these nanny goats
really bleated and the billy goat was reaming them.

La. I wish you won't be buried deeper than your sodomy, humpback,
but come, come here, and you will sing your last bucolic song.

He said, "I will give you this staff, because you are a sapling fashioned
from Zeus entirely for truth. So greatly is the builder hated by me who
seeks to complete his house equal to the peak of Mt. Oromedon and

καὶ Μοισᾶν ὄρνιχες ὅσοι ποτὶ Χίον ἀοιδὸν
ἀντία κοκκύζοντες ἐτώσια μοχθίζοντι.
ἀλλ' ἄγε βουκολικᾶς ταχέως ἀρξώμεθ' ἀοιδᾶς,
Σιμιχίδα· κηγὼ μὲν—ὄρη, φίλος, εἴ τοι ἀρέσκει
τοῦθ' ὅτι πρᾶν ἐν ὄρει τὸ μελύδριον ἐξεπόνασα.
Ἔσσειται Ἀγεάνακτι καλὸς πλόος ἐς Μιτυλήναν, (51)
χῶταν ἐφ' ἑσπερίοις Ἐρίφοις νότος ὑγρὰ διώκη
κύματα, χῶριων ὅτ' ἐπ' ὠκεανῶ πόδας ἴσχει,
αἶ κα τὸν Λυκίδαν ὀπτεύμενον ἐξ Ἀφροδίτας
ρῦσηται· θερμὸς γὰρ ἔρωσ αὐτῷ με καταίθει.

6. Sappho fr. 38 ὅπταις ἄμμε, you burn me

7. Sappho fr. 48

ἦλθες, †καὶ† ἐπόησας, ἔγω δέ σ' ἐμαιόμαν,
ὄν δ' ἔψυξας ἔμαν φρένα καιομένην πόθωι

8. Theocritus *Idyll* 7.60-61

Ἀγεάνακτι πλόον διζημένω ἐς Μιτυλήναν
ᾧρια πάντα γένοιτο, καὶ εὐπλοος ὄρμον ἴκοιτο.

hated by me are the birds of the Muses, however so many toil uselessly
crowing against the Chian bard.

But come on! Let us quickly begin a bucolic song, Simichidas! And I—
see, friend—if it is pleasing to you, (will sing) this little song that I
worked out recently on the hill.

*There will be a lovely voyage to Mytilene for Ageanax,
both when the south wind chases the wet waves in the evening when the
Kids rise,
and also when Orion holds his feet on the ocean,
if he saves roasting Lycidas from Aphrodite;
for a hot love for him burns me.*

You came and you did it, and I desired you,
and you cooled my heart burning with desire

May everything be prosperous for Ageanax seeking a voyage
to Mytilene, and may he arrive fair-voyaged at his haven.

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