

**ὁ νῦν ποιεῖς: Target and Textuality in Lucian's *Ignorant Book Collector***

1. καὶ μὴν ἐναντίον ἐστὶν οὐκ ἐθέλεις ὁ νῦν ποιεῖς. οἷμαι μὲν γὰρ ἐν παιδείᾳ καὶ αὐτὸς εἶναι τις δόξειν σπουδῆ συνωνούμενος τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν βιβλίων: τὸ δέ σοι περὶ τὰ κάτω χωρεῖ, καὶ ἔλεγχος γίγνεται τῆς ἀπαιδευσίας πως τοῦτο.

Truly, what you are now doing is the opposite of what you want to be doing. You expect to get a reputation for learning by zealously buying up the finest books, but the thing goes by opposites and in a way becomes proof of your ignorance. (1)

2. ἐκεῖναι γὰρ ποιμένοι μὲν οὐκ ἂν ὤκνησαν φανῆναι σκληρῷ ἀνδρὶ καὶ δασεῖ καὶ πολὺν τὸν ἥλιον ἐπὶ τῷ σώματι ἐμφαίνοντι, οἷῳ δὲ σοὶ — καὶ μοι πρὸς τῆς Λιβανίτιδος ἄφες ἐν τῷ παρόντι τὸ μὴ σύμπαντα σαφῶς εἰπεῖν — οὐδὲ ἐγγὺς γενέσθαι ποτ' ἂν εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι ἠξίωσαν, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τῆς δάφνης μυρρίνην ἂν ἢ καὶ μαλάχης φύλλοις μαστιγοῦσαι ἀπήλλαξαν ἂν τῶν τοιούτων, ὡς μὴ μιᾶναι μήτε τὸν Ὀλμειὸν μήτε τὴν τοῦ Ἴππου κρήνην, ἅπερ ἢ ποιμνίους διψῶσιν ἢ ποιμένων στόμασι καθαροὺς πότιμα.

[The Muses] would not have shrunk from showing themselves to a shepherd, a hard-bitten, hairy man displaying rich tan on his body, but as for the like of you—in the name of the lady of Lebanon dispense me for the present from giving a full description of you in plain language—they would never have deigned, I am sure, to come near you, but instead of giving you laurel they would have scourged you with myrtle or sprays of mallow and would have made you keep your distance from those regions, so as not to pollute either Olmeios or Hippocrene, whose waters only thirsty flocks or the clean lips of shepherds drink. (3)

3. ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις καὶ τὸν Ὅμηρον ἐπρίω πολλάκις, ἀναγνώτω σοὶ τις αὐτοῦ λαβὼν τὴν δευτέραν τῆς Ἰλιάδος ῥαφωδίαν, ἥς τὰ μὲν ἄλλα μὴ ἐξετάζειν οὐδὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν πρὸς σέ.

As you have often bought Homer among your other books, have someone take the second book of his *Iliad* and make it known to you. Do not bother about the rest of the book, for none of it applies to you. (7)

4. πῶς δὲ οὐ κάκεινο αἰσχρόν, εἴ τις ἐν τῇ χειρὶ ἔχοντά. σε βιβλίον ἰδὼν — ἀεὶ δέ τι πάντως ἔχεις — ἔροιτο οὐτινος ἢ ῥήτορος ἢ συγγραφέως ἢ ποιητοῦ ἐστὶ, σὺ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς εἰδὼς πράως εἴποις τοῦτό γε: εἴτα, ὡς φιλεῖ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐν συνουσίᾳ προχωρεῖν εἰς μῆκος λόγων, ὁ μὲν ἐπαινοῖ τι ἢ αἰτιῶτο τῶν ἐγγεγραμμένων, σὺ δὲ ἀποροίης καὶ μηδὲν ἔχεις εἰπεῖν; οὐκ εὔζη τότε χανεῖν σοὶ τὴν γῆν, κατὰ σεαυτοῦ ὁ Βελλεροφόντης περιφέρων τὸ βιβλίον;

Furthermore, would it not be shameful if someone, on seeing you with a book in your hand (you always have one, no matter what), should ask what orator or historian or poet it was by, and you, knowing from the title should easily answer that question; and if then—for such topics often spin themselves out to some length in conversation—he should either

commend or criticize something in its contents, and you should be at a loss and have nothing to say? Would you not then pray for the earth to open and swallow you for getting yourself into trouble like Bellerophon by carrying your book about? (18)

5. καίτοι τί ταῦτα ληρῶ; πρόδηλος γὰρ ἡ αἰτία τῆς περὶ τὰ βιβλία σπουδῆς, εἰ καὶ ὑπὸ νωθείας ἐγὼ μὴ πάλαι κατείδον

But why do I talk beside the point? The reason for your craze about books is patent, even if I in my blindness failed to see it long ago. (22)

6. εἰ γὰρ καὶ φθέγγζαιο μόνον, εἰ γὰρ καὶ λουόμενος ἀποδύσαιο, μᾶλλον δὲ μὴ ἀποδύσῃ, εἰ δοκεῖ, οἱ δ' οἰκέται μόνον ἦν ἀποδύσωνταί σου, τί οἶε; μὴ αὐτίκα ἔσεσθαι πάντα σου πρόδηλα τὰ τῆς νυκτὸς ἀπόρρητα; ... ἢ ὁ κίναϊδος Ἡμιθέων ὁ Συβαρίτης, ὃς τοὺς θαυμαστοὺς ὑμῖν νόμους συνέγραψεν, ὡς χρὴ λειάνεσθαι καὶ παρατίλλεσθαι καὶ πάσχειν καὶ ποιεῖν ἐκεῖνα —

For if you but speak, if you but bathe in public—or, if you choose, don't even do that—if your servants but bathe in public, do you not think that all your nocturnal arcana will be known at once? ... or the cinaedus Hemitheon of Sybaris, who wrote those wonderful regulations for you, which say that you must use cosmetics and depilatories and so forth— (23)

7. καὶ γὰρ κάκεῖνα: περὶ δύο ταῦτα δεινῶς ἐσπούδακας, βιβλίων τε τῶν πολυτελῶν κτήσιν καὶ μειρακίων τῶν ἐξώρων καὶ ἤδη καρτερῶν ὠνήν, καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα σοὶ πάνυ σπουδάζεται καὶ θηρεύεται.

For mark this, you have had a tremendous passion for two things, the acquisition of expensive books and the purchase of well-grown, vigorous slaves, and you are showing a great zeal and persistence in the thing. (25)

8. ταῦτα τό γε **νῦν** εἶναι ὑπὲρ μόνων τῶν βιβλίων παρρησιάζομαι πρὸς σέ, περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα κατάπτυστα καὶ ἐπονείδιστα **ποιεῖς**, αὐθις ἀκούσῃ πολλάκις.

I give myself the liberty of saying this much to you for the present, just about your books; about your other detestable and ignominious conduct you shall often be told in the future. (30)

9. ἱκανῶς πεπαιδευσαι, ἄλις σοὶ τῆς σοφίας. μόνον οὐκ ἐπ' ἄκρου τοῦ χεῖλους ἔχεις τὰ παλαιὰ πάντα. πάσαν μὲν ἱστορίαν οἶσθα, πάσας δὲ λόγων τέχνας καὶ κάλλη αὐτῶν καὶ κακίας καὶ ὀνομάτων χρήσιν τῶν Ἀττικῶν πάνσοφόν τι χρῆμα καὶ ἄκρον ἐν παιδείᾳ γεγένησαι διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν βιβλίων. κωλύει γὰρ οὐδὲν κάμῃ σοὶ ἐνδιατρίβειν, ἐπειδὴ χαίρεις ἐξαπατῶμενος.

ἠδέως δ' ἂν καὶ ἐροίμην σε, τὰ τοσαῦτα βιβλία ἔχων τί μάλιστα ἀναγιγνώσκεις αὐτῶν; τὰ Πλάτωνος; τὰ Ἀντισθένης; τὰ Ἀρχιλόχου; τὰ Ἰπώνακτος; ἢ τούτων μὲν ὑπερφρονεῖς, ῥήτορες δὲ μάλιστα σοὶ διὰ χειρός;. εἰπέ μοι, καὶ Αἰσχίνου τὸν κατὰ Τιμάρχου λόγον ἀναγιγνώσκεις; ἢ ἐκεῖνά γε πάντα οἶσθα καὶ γινώσκεις αὐτῶν ἕκαστον, τὸν δὲ Ἀριστοφάνην καὶ τὸν Εὐπόλιν ὑποδέδουκας; ἀνέγνως καὶ τοὺς Βάπτας, τὸ δράμα ὅλον; εἴτ' οὐδὲν σου τάκεῖ καθίκετο, οὐδ' ἠρυθρίασας γνωρίσας αὐτά;

You are well enough educated; you have learning to spare; you have all the works of antiquity almost at the tip of your tongue; you know not only all history but all the arts of literary composition, its merits and defects, and how to use an Attic vocabulary; your many books have made you wondrous wise, consummate in learning. There is no reason why I should not have my fun with you, since you like to be gulled! (26)

As you have so many books, I should like to ask you what you like best to read? Plato? Antisthenes? Archilochus? Hipponax? Or do you scorn them and incline to occupy yourself with the orators? Tell me, do you read the speech of Aeschines against Timarchus? No doubt you knew it all and understand everything in it, but have you dipped into Aristophanes and Eupolis? Have you read the *Baptae*, the whole play? Then did it have no effect upon you, and did you not blush when you saw the point of it? (27)

*Translations are from A.M. Harmon's Loeb edition, with modifications.*

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