

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF GREEK MYTHOLOGICAL COMEDY FROM EPICHARMUS TO ALEXIS

### I. Mythological Comedies in Sicily

Epicharmus: *Alcyoneus, Amycus, Antenor, Atalantas, Bacchae, Busiris, Earth and Sea, Dexamenus, Dictyus, Dionysoi, Dionysus* <?>, *Hope or Wealth, Marriage of Hebe, Heracles and the Belt, Heracles at Pholos, Heracles* <?>, *Cyclops, Revelers or Hephaestus, Logos and Logina, Medea, Muses, Odysseus the Deserter, Odysseus Shipwrecked, Odysseus* <?>, *Hip joint, Pyrrha and Prometheus, Sirens, Sciron, Sphinx, Trojans, and Philoctetes.*

Phormus: *Admetus, Alcinous, Alcyones, Atalantas, The Sack of Troy or Horse, and Kepheus or Headache or Perseus.*

Dinolochus: *Althaea, Amazons, Circe or Odysseus, Leucarion, Meleager, Medea, Oeneus, Orestes, Telephus, and Pholus.*

### II. Careers of Representative Comic Poets and the Production of Mythological Comedies

Poet	Myth Plays	450s	440s	430s	420s	410s	400s	390s	380s
Cratinus	17/29 (59%)	—	—	—	—				
Pherecrates	4/19 (21%)			—	—	—			
Hermippus	6/10 (60%)			—	—	—			
Cantharus	2/5 (40%)				—				
Phrynichus	3/10 (30%)				—	—			
Eupolis	1/16 (6%)				—	—			
Aristophanes	14/40 (35%)				—	—	—	—	—
Platon	10/31 (32%)				—	—	—	—	—
Archippus	2/6 (33%)					—	—		
Polyzelus	5/5 (100%)						—	—	—
Sanyrion	2/3 (67%)						—	—	—
Theopompus	10/20 (50%)						—	—	—
Strattis	9/19 (47%)						—	—	—

### III. Aristophanes' *Acharnians* 497-500

μή μοι φθονήσῃτ', ἄνδρες οἱ θεώμενοι,  
εἰ πτωχὸς ὦν ἔπειτ' ἐν Ἀθηναίοις λέγειν  
μέλλω περὶ τῆς πόλεως, τραγωιδίαν ποιῶν.  
τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οἶδε καὶ τραγωιδία.

Do not despise me, gentlemen of the audience, if I, though a beggar, intend to speak among the Athenians about the city while I perform a tragedy. For tragedy, too, knows the just.

#### IV. Affairs of Zeus in Attic Comedy

Fifth century: Crates' *Lamia*; Cratinus' *Nemesis*; Hermippus' *Europa*

Late-fifth or early-fourth century: Aristophanes' *Daedalus*; Platon's *Daedalus*, *Europa*, *Long Night*, *Io*; Archippus' *Amphitryon*; Polyzelus' *Demos-Tyndareus*; Sannyrion's *Danaë*, *Io*

Fourth century: Alcaeus' *Callisto*, *Ganymede*; Alexis' *Tyndareus*, Amphis' *Callisto*; Anaxandrides' *Io*; Anaxilas' *Io*; Antiphanes' *Ganymede*; Apollophanes' *Danaë*; Eubulus' *Antiope*, *Danaë*, *Europa*, *Ganymede*, *Spartans or Leda*, *Semele or Dionysus*; Sophilus' *Tyndareus or Leda*

#### V. Alexis' *Linos* fr. 140

(Λίνος) βιβλίον

ἐντεῦθεν ὅ τι βούλει προσελθὼν γὰρ λαβέ,  
ἔπειτ' ἀναγνώσει πάνυ γε διασκοπῶν  
ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπιγραμμάτων ἀτρέμα τε καὶ σχολῆι.  
Ὅρφεὺς ἔνεστιν, Ἡσιόδος, τραγωιδίαι, 5  
Χοιρίλος, Ὅμηρος, † Ἐπίχαρμος, συγγράμματα  
παντοδαπά. δηλώσεις γὰρ οὕτω τὴν φύσιν  
ἐπὶ τί μάλισθ' ὄρμηκε. (Ἡρακλῆς) τουτί λαμβάνω.  
(Λι.) δεῖξον τί ἐστὶ πρῶτον. (Ἡρ.) ὀψαρτυσία,  
ὡς φησι τοῦπίγραμμα. (Λι.) φιλόσοφος τις εἶ, 10  
εὐδηλον, ὅς παρὲς τοσαῦτα γράμματα  
Cίμου τέχνην ἔλαβες. (Ἡρ.) ὁ Cίμος δ' ἐστὶ τίς;  
(Λι.) μάλ' εὐφυῆς ἄνθρωπος. ἐπὶ τραγωιδίαν  
ὄρμηκε νῦν καὶ τῶν μὲν ὑποκριτῶν πολὺ  
κράτις ἐστὶν ὀψοποιός, ὡς δοκεῖ 15  
τοῖς χρωμένοις, τῶν δ' ὀψοποιῶν ὑποκριτῆς

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(Λι.) βούλιμός ἐσθ' ἄνθρωπος. (Ἡρ.) ὅ τι βούλει λέγε·  
πεινῶ γὰρ, εὖ τοῦτ' ἴσθι

(Linos) Go there, take whatever book you want, and then thoroughly read and peruse the titles in quiet at your own leisurely pace. There's Orpheus, Hesiod, tragedies, Choerilus, Homer, Epicharmus, all kinds of treatises. You'll thus reveal your nature by what moves you most. (Heracles) I choose this one here. (Li.) Show me what it is first. (Her.) The title says it's a cook book. (Li.) You're obviously some philosopher since you've passed over these kinds of works and chose the art of Simos. (Her.) Who's Simos? (Li.) An especially good natured person. Now he's moved on to tragedy. Of the actors, he is by far the best cook, as it seems to those who employ him, and of the cooks, the best actor. ... (Li.) You are a ravenous individual. (Her.) Say what you want. I'm famished, obviously.

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