The Beloved Disciple of John 13:23 and Greek Pederasty
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Ταῦτα εἶπὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐταράχθη τῷ πνεύματι καὶ ἐμαυτοῦσεν καὶ ἔπεσεν, ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι εἰς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με. ἐβλέπον εἰς αὐτᾶς λόγως οἱ μαθηταὶ ἀπορούμενοι περὶ τούτου λέγει. ἄν ἀνακειμένος εἰς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐν ἡράσα αὐτὸς οὕτως ἐπὶ τὸ στήθος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ λέγει αὐτῷ. Κύριε, τίς ἐστίν;

After he said this Jesus was disturbed in his spirit and he bore witness and said, “Amen, amen, I say to you that one of you will betray me.” His students looked at one another, confused about who he meant. One of his students, whom Jesus loved, was reclining in the lap of Jesus; so Simon Peter signals to him to ask who he meant. So that one, falling back thus on the breast of Jesus says to him, “Lord, who is it?” (my translation)

2. Aristophanes Assemblywomen 964

δεῦρο δή, δεῦρο δή, 
<φιλὸν ἐμὸν> καὶ σοὶ μου 
καταδραμοῦσα τὴν θύραν 
τὴν ἄνοιξον· εἰ δὲ μὴ, 
καταπεσοῦν κεῖσομαι. 
ἀλλ’ ἐν σῷ βούλομι ἐγὼ κόλπῳ 
πληκτιζομαι μετὰ τῆς πυγῆς. 
Κύριε, τί μ’ ἐκμαίνεις ἐπὶ ταῦτῃ; 
μέθες, ἰσνοῦμαι ο’, Ἐρως, 
καὶ ποίησον τὴν ἔργον ἐς εὐνήν 
τὴν ἐμὴν ἰκέσθαι.

Hither now, hither now, you too, my dear one, 
run down to this door for me 
and open it wide; if you don’t, 
I’ll fall flat on the doorstep! 
But I’d rather lie in your lap 
and swap strokes with your butt. 
Aphrodite, why drive me mad for this girl? 
Release me, Eros, I beg you! 
Please make this girl 
come to my very own bed.

3. Herodas Mime 6.102 ed. Cunningham

τὴν θύρην κλείσον, 
αὐτήν ἕξως [...] ὥστε, καθὼς θηρίον 
αἱ ἄλκτυ[...] ἑως ἐστὶ, τῶν τῆς κόλπους 
αὐτῆσα[...] σοὶ· οὗ γὰρ ἄλλα πορθεῖν[...] ὑπὲρν[...] τοῦ ἐστὶ κλείσεῖ [...] κἀγεὶ τρέφομαι τῷ κόλπῳ.

Shut the door, you there, [chicken]-seller, and 
count if the hens are safe, and [throw] some darnel 
to them; for undeniably the bird-thieves raid them, 
even if one rears them in one’s bosom.


οἱ οἱ ὁ ἐν θηρίῳ ἐξεταμόν ὑπῆρ ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ ἔχουσα κρύπτη καὶ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ τέρπηται, 
μοιχευταίως ὡς εἰπ’ τοῦ πολὺ ὑπὸ <του> ἐχθροῦ 
tοῦ ἄνδρος· ἐὰν δὲ φοβηθῇ ἢ ἀνίαται νοσήσει: 
καὶ ἐὰν ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξῃ, φθερεῖ καὶ οὐ διασώσει 
tὸ ἐμβρύον.

If [someone’s] wife has some slithery creature 
in her lap, hides it, and takes pleasure in it, 
generally she is committing adultery with the 
enemy of the dreamer; but if she is afraid or 
distressed, she will get sick, and if she has [it] 
on her belly, she will have a miscarriage and 
will not preserve her fetus. (my translation)
5. Longus Daphnis and Chloe 1.26.3

As he went on with these pronouncements a cicada, on the run from a swallow looking to capture it, dropped into Chloe’s shirt. The swallow followed and could not catch it, but in its pursuit came close enough to touch her cheeks with its wings. Unaware of what had happened, she started from her slumber with a loud scream, but when she saw the swallow flying near and Daphnis laughing at her fear, she stopped being afraid and rubbed her eyes, which still wanted to sleep. The cicada chirped from her shirt like a supplicant giving thanks for its life. So Chloe screamed loudly again, but Daphnis laughed and, seizing this pretext, put his hands down around her breasts and retrieved that trusty cicada, which did not fall silent even in his hand. She was delighted to see it, took and kissed it, and tossed it back into her shirt still chirping.

6. Meleager, Greek Anthology 5.165.5

Mother of all the gods, dear Night, this one thing I beg of you—yes, I beg, queen Night, fellow wanderer in my revels. If someone keeps warm wrapped up beneath Heliodora’s blanket, heated by the touch of her skin that cheats him of sleep, let the lamp close its eyes, and let him, after tossing and turning, lie in her lap a second Endymion.

7. Plutarchus Dialogue on Love 751a

But that other lax and housebound love, that spends its time in the bosoms and beds of women, ever pursuing a soft life, enervated amid pleasure devoid of manliness and friendship and inspiration—it should be proscribed, as in fact Solon did proscribe it.

8. Cassius Dio Roman History 79.16.6, ed. Boissevain

Seeing him, [the emperor] leapt up gracefully, and when [Aurelius] had addressed him appropriately, “Master, emperor, greetings,” the emperor—amazing to say—bent his neck in a coquettish way, and, turning his eyes to him, answered and said without hesitation, “Do not call me master. For I am your mistress.” They immediately bathed together and afterwards the emperor, even more excited by the sight of Aurelius’ naked body, since he had found him to be equal to his reputation, reclined on his breast and ate dinner lying in his lap just like some beloved woman. (my translation)
οσίνθες ὑπὲρ κεφαλῆς τῆς δεῖνα ἀφέλε-οθε αὐτῆς τοὺς γλυκὰς ὕπνον, μιθᾶστε βλέφαρον βλέφαρῳ κυλ-λητὸν ἐπέλθοι, τετράσθοι δὲ ἐπὶ ἔ-μας φιλαγχύνοις μερίμναις.

ei δὲ τὴν ἄλλον ἔχουσιν έν κόλποις κατάειται, κείνον ἀπώφασαί, ἐμὲ δὲ ἐν φρεῦιν ἐν-καταθέσθαν καὶ προλυπούσας τάχιστα ἐπὶ ἐμοῖς προθύροις παρέστω, δαμινο-μένη πυγῇ ἐπὶ ἐμῆ φιλότητι καὶ εὐήνη.

10. Iliad 6.483

"Ὡς εἰτῶν ἀλόχοιο φίλης ἐν χερωί ἔθηκε παῖδ' ἐόν· ἡ δ' ἀρά μιν καθώδει δέξατο κόλπῳ διακρυόν γελάσασα· πόσις δ' ἐλήμη νοῆσας...

11. Homeric Hymn to Demeter 1.285

άγης δ' ἐπλήθη τυχινός δόμος άστεροπής ὅς. βή δείκη μεγάρον, τῆς δ' αὐτίκα γούνατ' ἐλυτο, δηρόν δ' ἄρθυγχος γένετο χρόνον, οὐδὲ τι παιδός μνήσατο τηλυγέτου ἀπὸ δαπέδου ἀνέλεσθαι. τοῦ δὲ κατακόμματα φωνὴν εὐάκουσαν ἑλεινήν, καδ' ἁ' ἀπ' εὐστρώτον λεχέον θόρων· ἢ μὲν ἐπείτα παῖδ' ἀνα χερωὶν ἐλώσα· ὦ γὰρ ἐγκάθετο κόλποι, ἡ δ' ἀρά ποὺ ἀνέκατε, ἡ δ' ἐσούτο πόσῳ ἀπαλλότιον μητρὶ ἀναστήσοντα θυώδες ἐκ θαλάμου. ἀγρόμενα δὲ μιν άμφις ἐλλούσεν ἀστάριοντα ἀμφαγαπαζόμενα· τοῦ δ' οὔ μελίσσοτεο θυμός· χειρότερα γὰρ δὴ μιν ἔχον τρόφοι ἦδε τιθήναι.

Standing over the head of so-and-so, rob her of sweet sleep, and let eyelid never come together with eyelid, but let it be oppressed with sleepless thoughts about me. And if she has someone else and reclines in his lap/arms, let her drive that one away, and let her take me into her heart and abandoning [her other lover] let her come immediately to my doorstep, conquered in her soul by love for me and the desire for my bed. (my translation)

The sturdy house was filled with a brilliance as of lightning as she [Demeter] went out through the hall. The queen at once gave way at the knees, and remained speechless for a long time, not thinking to pick her darling child up from the floor. His sisters heard his piteous crying, and jumped down from their well-bedecked beds: one of them picked the child up in her arms and took him to her bosom, another stoked up the fire, while another dashed on tender young feet to help her mother up from the scented chamber. Then, gathering round him, they cuddled him and washed him as he squirmed, but he was not to be comforted: these were inferior rearers and nurses that held him now.

ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ in the Septuagint

Ἤκιν δὲ παρακαλέσῃ σε ὃ ἀδελφός σου ἐκ πατρός σου ή ἐκ μητρός σου ή ὁ υἱός σου ή ἡ θυγάτηρ σου ή ἡ γυνὴ ἐν κόλπῳ σου ή ὁ φίλος ὁ ἴος τῆς ψυχῆς σου λάθρα λέγων Βαδίσουμεν καὶ λατρεύουσαι θεοῖς ἐπέρρουσας οὕς οὗς ἤδεις εἰ καὶ οἱ πατέρες σου, ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν τῶν ἑθῶν τῶν περικυκλῶν ὑμῶν τῶν ἐγγίζων οὐ ή τῶν μαχῶν ἀπὸ σοῦ ἀς ἄκου φίλος τῆς γῆς ἔως ἄκου τῆς γῆς, οὕς συνεκλήσαις αὐτῷ καὶ οὕς εἰσακούσῃ αὐτοῦ. (Deut. 13:7; cf. 28:54, 28:56; 2 Kings 12:3, 12:8; Gen. 16:5)

Now if your brother from your father or from your mother or your own son or daughter or the wife in your bosom or the friend who is like your own soul secretly entertreats you, saying, “Let us go and serve other gods,” whom you do not know, you nor your father, from the gods of the nations that are around you, those near you or far way from you, from an end of the earth up to an end of the earth, you shall not yield to him and listen to him. (NETS)
μή σε νικήσῃ κάλλους ἐπιθυμία,
μηδὲ ἀγρευθήσῃ σοίς ὅφθαλμοῖς
μηδὲ συναρπασθῆς ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῆς βλεφάρων·
τιμὴ γὰρ πόρνης ὅση καὶ ἕνος ἁρτοῦ,
γυνὴ δὲ ἄνδρων τημίας ψυχὰς ἀγρεύει.

Ἀποδῆσει τίς πῦρ ἐν κόλπῳ,
tά δὲ ιμάτια οὐ κατακαύσει,
ἡ περιπατήσσει τις ἐπ’ ἄνθρακων πυρῶν,
tοὺς δὲ πόδας οὐ κατακαύσει;
οὕτως οἱ εἰσελθόν πρὸς γυναῖκα ὑπανδρὼν. (Prov. 6:27)

Let not desire for beauty conquer you,
and don’t be captured by your eyes;
neither be captivated by her eyelashes,
for the price of a prostitute is just about as much as a loaf of bread
and a men’s lady hunts for precious souls.
Can anyone put fire in his lap
and not burn his clothes?
Or can anyone walk on coals of fire
and not scorch his feet?
So is he who goes in to a married woman.

ἐγὼ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὕτη οἰκούμεν ἐν οίκῳ ἕνι καὶ
ἐτέκομεν ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ καὶ ἐγενήθη ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ
τρίτῃ τεκούσης μου καὶ ἐτεκεν καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὕτη καὶ
ἡμεῖς κατὰ τὸ αὐτό καὶ οὐκ ἐστὶ οὐθεὶς μεθ’ ἡμῶν
πάρεξ ἀμφοτέρους ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ καὶ ἀπέθανον ὁ
ψῦχος τῆς γυναικὸς ταύτης τῆς νύκτας ὡς ἐπεκοιμήθη ἐπ’ αὐτῶν καὶ ἀνέστη μέσῃ τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ἔλαβεν
τὸν ψῦχον μου ἐκ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων μου καὶ ἐκοίμησεν
αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ αὐτῆς καὶ τὸν ψῦχον αὐτῆς τὸν
tεθνηκότα ἐκοίμησεν ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ μου. (3 Kings
3:20; cf. Isaiah 49:22; Numbers 11:12; Ruth 4:16;
Lamentations 2:12)

This woman and I, we live in one house, and
we gave birth in the house, and it happened, on
the third day after I gave birth, that this woman
also gave birth, and we were together, and
there was no one else with us besides both of
us in the house. And this woman’s son died in
the night, as she lay on him, and she got up in
the middle of the night and took my son from
my arms and laid him in her bosom and laid
her dead son in my bosom.