They say that comedy and tragedy passed from the laughable into life. And in fact at the time of the harvest of the crops those who were at the wine vats drinking the sweet new wine jested some poems. And in Attic villages they started to smear their faces with gypsum and jest. Introducting tragic subject, they became more serious.

1. SUDA O 806 [A. Adler] (10th CENTURY CE)
   = PHOTIUS 618, [Theodorida] (c. CE 810 - c. CE 893)
   = PAUSANIAS (Lex.) 32 [H. Erbe] (Beginning of 2nd century CE)

They say that both tragedy and comedy passed from the laughable into life. And in fact at the time of the harvest of the crops those who were at the wine vats drinking the sweet new wine jested some poems. And in Attic villages they started to smear their faces with gypsum and jest. Introducting tragic subject, they became more serious.

2. PAROEMIOGRAPHUS COSLINGSANUS (in Zenob. Gotting. ad 5.40) (Wilamowitz, 2. 32)

3. ZENOBUS [Schenkelin and Letusch] (Beginning of 2nd century CE)

4. [PLUTARCH], [Crusius] De proverbibus Alexandrinorum

5. OLYMPIODORUS, In Platonic Phaedonem commentaria [L. G. Westerink] (495-505 - 517-526 CE)

6. STRABO, Geographica 8.6.23 [C 381] [Meineke] (ca. 62 BCE-24 CE) = POLYBIUS 39.2.13

Nothing to do with Dionysus: Some people shouted this at Epigenes of Sicyon when he produced a tragedy for Dionysus. Whence the saying. But this is better: At first, those who wrote for Dionysus competed with what treated things that befitted Dionysus.

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Polybius, when he talks so pitifully about the events at the capture of Corinth appends a description of the army’s contempt for works of art and statues. He says he saw in person panel paintings lying on the ground, and soldiers playing draughts on them. Among the paintings, he mentions the Dionysus of Aristides, to which some say the proverb “nothing to do with Dionysus” refers. And also Heraclès Exhaused by the Chiton of Deianeira. I have never seen that one, but I did see the Dionysus, a most beautiful work, hanging in the temple of Ceres in Rome. But the painting was lost when the temple recently burned.

Bibliography


