

Painting, Mimesis, and Nothing to do with Dionysus

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1. SUDA O 806 [A. Adler] (10th CENTURY CE)

= PHOTIUS 618, [Theodoridis] (c. CE 810 - c. CE 893)

= PAUSANIAS (Lex.) 32 [H. Erbse] (Beginning of 2nd century CE)

οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον: Ἐπιγένους τοῦ Σικυωνίου τραγωδίαν εἰς τὸν Διόνυσον ποιήσαντος ἐπεφώνησάν τινες τοῦτο· ὄθεν ἡ παροιμία, βέλτιον δὲ οὕτως, τὸ πρόσθεν εἰς τὸν Διόνυσον γράφοντες τοῦτους ἡγωνίζοντο, ἄπερ καὶ Σατυρική μεταβάντες εἰς τὴν τραγωδίαν γράφειν κατὰ μικρὸν εἰς μύθους καὶ ἱστορίας ἐτρέψαν, μηκέτι τοῦ Διονύσου μνημονεύοντες· ὄθεν τοῦτο καὶ ἐπεφώνησαν, καὶ Χαμαιλέον ἐν τῷ περὶ Θεσπίδος τὰ παραπλήσια ἱστορεῖ. Θεαίτητος δὲ ἐν τῷ Παρρᾶσιόν φησιν τὸν Λογράφων ἀγωνιζόμενον παρὰ Κορινθίους ποιῆσαι Διόνυσον κάλλιστον· τοὺς δὲ ὀρόντας τὰ τε τὸν ἀνταγωνιστῶν ἔργα, ἃ κατὰ πολὺ ἐλείπετο, καὶ τὸν τὸν Παρρᾶσιου Διόνυσον, ἐπιφωνεῖν, τί πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον; ἢ προσήκοντα τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις φλυαροῦντων.

2. PAROEMIOGRAPHUS COISLINIANUS (in Zenob. Gotting. ad 5.40) (Wilamowitz, *Aeschyli Tragoedia*, 18.)

τῆς ποιήσεως τὸ πρῶτον ἐκ διθυράμβου τὴν καταρχὴν εἰληφύας καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον ἀνήκοντα πραγματευομένης Ἐπιγένους ὁ Σικυώσιος οὐχ οὕτω ποιήσας ἤκουσε τοῦτον τὸν λόγον 'οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον'.

3. ZENOBIUS [Schneidewin and Leutsch] (Beginning of 2nd century CE)

(5.40) Οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον: ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ μὴ προσήκοντα τοῖς ὑποκειμένοις λεγόντων ἡ παροιμία εἰρηται. Ἐπειδὴ τῶν χορῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἰθισμένον διθυράμβον ᾄδειν εἰς τὸν Διόνυσον, οἱ ποιητὰ ὑστερον ἐκβάντες τὴν συνήθειαν Κενταύρους γράφειν ἐπεχείρουν. Ὅθεν οἱ θεόμενοι σκοπιότες ἔλεγον, Οὐδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον. Διὰ γοῦν τοῦτο τοὺς Σατύρους ὑστερον ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς προεσιάζειν, ἵνα μὴ δοκοῖεν ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι τοῦ θεοῦ.

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

(30) τὰ μὴδὲν πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον: τὴν κωμῳδίαν καὶ τὴν τραγωδίαν ἀπὸ γέλοτος εἰς τὸν ἦβιον φασὶ παρελθεῖν, καὶ <γάρ> κατὰ καιρὸν τῆς συγκομιδῆς τῶν γεννημάτων παραγενομένουσιν τινὰς ἐπὶ τὰς ληνοὺς καὶ τοῦ γλευκοῦσιν πίνοντασ [σκόπτειν· <ὑστερον δὲ σκοπτικὰ> ποιημάτων τινα καὶ γράφειν, <ᾧ> διὰ τὸ πρότερον ἐν <κόμιας ᾄδεσθαι> κωμῳδίαν καλεῖσθαι, ἤρχοντο δὲ καὶ συνεχέστερον εἰς τὰς κόμιας τὰς Ἀττικὰς γύφουσ ἄνευ χειρισμένουσ καὶ ἐσκοπτοσ. *** τ <ἐπὶ τῷ> αὐστηρότερον μετῆλθον *** ταῦτα οὐν καὶ ἐπεὶ τῷ Διονύσῳ πολέμιον ἔστιν ὁ τράγος ἐπισκοπιότες τινεσ ἔλεγον. *** ἐπὶ τῶν τὰ ἀνοικεῖα τισὶ προσφερόντων.

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

(6.5-6.10) καὶ τὴν τραγωδίαν δὲ καὶ τὴν κωμῳδίαν ἀνεῖσθαι φασὶ τῷ Διονύσῳ, τὴν μὲν κωμῳδίαν παῖγνον οὖσαν τοῦ βίου, τὴν δὲ τραγωδίαν διὰ τὰ πάθη καὶ τὴν τελευτήν. οὐκ ἄρα καλῶσ οἱ κωμικοὶ τοῖσ τραγικοῖσ ἐγκαλοῦσιν ὡσ μὴ Διὸ λέγοντεσ ὅτι 'οὐδὲν ταῦτα πρὸσ τὸν Διόνυσον'.

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

Πολύβιος δὲ τὰ συμβάντα περὶ τὴν ἄλωσιν ἐν οἴκῳ μέρει λέγονσ προστίθεισ καὶ τὴν στρατιωτικὴν ὀλιγοφρίαν τὴν περὶ τὰ τῶν τεχνῶν ἔργα καὶ τὰ ἀναθήματα, φησὶ γάρ ἰδεῖν παρὸν ἐρριμμένους πίνακασ ἐπὶ ἐδάφουσ, πεττεῶντα δὲ τοῖσ τοῦτον, ὀνομάζει δ' αὐτῶν Ἀριστείδου γραφὴν τοῦ Διονύσου, ἐφ' οὗ τινεσ εἰρήσθαι φασὶ τὸ «οὐδὲν πρὸσ τὸν Διόνυσον», καὶ τὸν Ἡρακλεῖα τὸν καταπονοῦμενον τῷ τῆσ Δημειραῖασ χιτῶνι, τοῦτον μὲν οὐχ ἐωράκαμεν ἡμεῖσ, τὸν δὲ Διὸ Δημητρεῖφ τῷ ἐν Ρόμῃ κάλλιστον ἔργον ἐωρῶμεν· ἐμπρησθέντεσ δὲ τοῦ νεῶσ συνηφανίσθησ καὶ ἡ γραφὴ νεοστί.

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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 were known as transitioned into writing tragedies and little by little turned to myths and histories, no longer made mention of Dionysus. Whence they shouted this. And Chamaeleon relates similar things in his book on Thespis. But Theaetetus in his book Parrhasius the painter painted a superlative Dionysus for a competition in Corinth. And those who saw the works of his competitors, which he left far behind, and the Dionysus of Parrhasius, cried out, "What has this to do with Dionysus nonsensically saying things that do not pertain to the subject.

2. PAROEMIOGRAPHUS COISLINIANUS (in Zenob. Gotting. ad 5.40) (Wilamowitz, *Aeschyli Tragoedia*, 18.)

Though poetry in the beginning took its starting point from dithyramb and treated things that befitted Dionysus, Epigenes the Sicyonian, since he did not do so, heard the expression "Nothing to do with Dionysus."

3. ZENOBIUS [Schneidewin and Leutsch] (Beginning of 2nd century CE)

(5.40) Nothing to do with Dionysus: The proverb is spoken about things said that do not pertain to the subject. Because choruses, in the beginning, usually sang dithyrambs for Dionysus, but later poets departed from this practice Ajaxes and Centaurs. For which reason, those watching said, "Nothing to do with Dionysus. Therefore, it seemed a good idea for them to produce satyr plays, so they would not appear to have forgotten the god.

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

(30) Nothing to do with Dionysus: 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 winevats drinking the sweet new wine jested [some poem down the jesting poems, which they first sang in the villages, and called them 'comedies'. And in Attic villages they started to smear their faces ith gypsum and jest. ***Introducing tragic subject, they became more serious. *** Some said because the goat is inimical to Dionysus. *** For things exhibiting an incongruousness with other things.

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

(6.5-6.10) They say that both tragedy and comedy both sprang from Dionysus, comedy by being a game of life and tragedy through emotions and death. Therefore, the comic poets are wrong to accuse tragedians of not being Dionysiac tragedians have 'nothing to do with Dionysus.'

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 with Among the paintings, he mentions the Dionysus of Aristides, to which some say the proverb "nothing to do with Dionysus" refers. And also *Heracles Exhausted by the Chiton of Deianeira*. I have never seen that one, but I did see the Dionysus work, hanging in the temple of Ceres in Rome. But the painting was lost when the temple recently burned.

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