

QUADERNI URBINATI
DI CULTURA CLASSICA

Direttore: Carmine Catenacci.

Coordinatrice editoriale e di redazione: Maria Colantonio.

Condirettori: Paola Bernardini, Maurizio Bettini, Giovanni Cerri, Franca Perusino.

Comitato scientifico: Giampiera Arrigoni, Lucia Athanassaki, Anton Bierl, Carlo Brillante, Marcel Detienne, Pietro Giannini, Antonietta Gostoli, Barbara Graziosi, E. Christian Kopff, Liana Lomiento, Nino Luraghi, Herwig Maehler, Agostino Masaracchia.

Corrispondenti stranieri: Christopher Brown (University of Western Ontario, London, Canada), Francis Cairns (Florida State University), Claude Calame (École de Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris), Michel Fartzoff (Université de Franche-Comté, Besançon), Michael W. Haslam (University of California, Los Angeles), Gregory Nagy (Harvard University, Cambridge Mass.), Hélène Perdicoyianni-Paléologou (Brookline Mass.), Laurent Pernot (Université de Strasbourg), Ignacio Rodríguez Alfageme (Universidad Complutense de Madrid), Joseph A. Russo (Haverford), Emilio Suarez de la Torre (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona), John Van Sickle (Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York), Gustavo Veneciano (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina).

*

Gli autori che desiderano collaborare ai «Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica» sono pregati di inviare i manoscritti, redatti *in forma definitiva*, alla redazione, presso Fabrizio Serra editore, Via Carlo Emanuele I 48, 1 00185 Roma, maria.colantonio@uniurb.it.

Per la migliore riuscita delle pubblicazioni, si invitano gli autori ad attenersi, nel predisporre i materiali da consegnare alla Redazione ed alla Casa editrice, alle norme specificate nel volume

FABRIZIO SERRA, *Regole editoriali, tipografiche & redazionali*, Pisa · Roma, Serra, 2009²
(Euro 34,00, ordini a: fse@libraweb.net).

*

«Quaderni urbinati di cultura classica» is an International Peer-Reviewed Journal. The Journal is Indexed and Abstracted in *Scopus* (Elsevier), in *Arts and Humanities Citation Index* and in *Current Contents/Arts & Humanities* (1st Thomson - Reuters). It has been Released in the *JSTOR Archive* and the eContent is Archived with *Clockss* and *Portico*.
ERIH Rank in Classical Studies International Journals: INT1.

ANVUR: A.

QUADERNI URBINATI DI CULTURA CLASSICA

NUOVA SERIE 107 · N. 2 · 2014

(VOL. 136 DELLA SERIE CONTINUA)

FONDATORE: BRUNO GENTILI



PISA · ROMA

FABRIZIO SERRA EDITORE

MMXIV

Rivista quadrimestrale

*

Abbonamenti e acquisti:

FABRIZIO SERRA EDITORE®

PISA · ROMA

Casella postale n. 1, succursale 8, I 56123 Pisa,
tel. +39 050 542332, fax +39 050 574888, fse@libraweb.net

Uffici di Pisa: Via Santa Bibbiana 28, I 56127 Pisa
Uffici di Roma: Via Carlo Emanuele I 48, I 00185 Roma,
tel. +39 06 70493456, fax +39 06 70476605, fse.roma@libraweb.net

www.libraweb.net

I prezzi ufficiali di abbonamento cartaceo e/o *Online* sono consultabili
presso il sito Internet della casa editrice www.libraweb.net.

*Print and/or Online official subscription rates are available
at Publisher's web-site www.libraweb.net.*

Modalità di pagamento: su c/c postale n. 17154550 intestato a *Fabrizio Serra editore*®;
mediante carta di credito American Express, Eurocard, Mastercard, Visa.

Richiesta di scambi:

Dipartimento di Scienze del testo e del Patrimonio culturale,
Università di Urbino Carlo Bo, Via Sant'Andrea 34, I 61029 Urbino, tel. +39 0722 303550

*

Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Urbino n. 1998/189.

Direttore responsabile: Lucia Corsi.

A norma del codice civile italiano, è vietata la riproduzione, totale o parziale
(compresi estratti, ecc.), di questa pubblicazione in qualsiasi forma e versione
(comprese bozze, ecc.), originale o derivata, e con qualsiasi mezzo a stampa o internet
(compresi siti web personali e istituzionali, academia.edu, ecc.), elettronico, digitale,
meccanico, per mezzo di fotocopie, pdf, microfilm, film, scanner o altro,
senza il permesso scritto della casa editrice.

Under Italian civil law this publication cannot be reproduced, wholly or in part
(included offprints, etc.), in any form (included proofs, etc.), original or derived, or by any
means: print, internet (included personal and institutional web sites, academia.edu, etc.),
electronic, digital, mechanical, including photocopy, pdf, microfilm, film, scanner
or any other medium, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Proprietà riservata · All rights reserved

© Copyright 2014 by *Fabrizio Serra editore*®, Pisa · Roma.

Fabrizio Serra editore incorporates the Imprints *Accademia editoriale*,
Edizioni dell'Ateneo, *Fabrizio Serra editore*, *Giardini editori e stampatori in Pisa*,
Gruppo editoriale internazionale and *Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali*.

Stampato in Italia · Printed in Italy

ISSN 0033-4987

ISSN ELETTRONICO 1724-1901

SOMMARIO

POESIA GRECA

- JACQUELINE ASSAËL, *L'espoir maléfique chez Hésiode* 11
ROBERTO VELARDI, *Presente, futuro, passato: il sapere del mantis e il sapere dell'aedo (Hes. Theog. 38; Hom. Il. 1, 70)* 27
ELISABETTA PITOTTO, *Invidia, moderazione e status sociopolitico del laudandus. Note prosopografiche sugli "epinici siracusani" di Pindaro* 45

TEATRO GRECO

- ELSA RODRÍGUEZ CIDRE, *Duplicidades peligrosas: realidad y apariencia en la rhesis de Helena de Eurípides* 67
ALAN SUMLER, *Myth Rationalization in Ancient Greek Comedy, a Short Survey* 81

STORIA DELLA TRADIZIONE METRICA

- GIAMPAOLO GALVANI, LIANA LOMIENTO, *Note al POxy 5159* 101

ANTROPOLOGIA DEL MONDO ANTICO

- MIKA RISSANEN, *Was There a Taboo on Killing Wolves in Rome?* 125

NOTE DI LETTURA E RECENSIONI

- MARCO TENTORI MONTALTO, *Problemi metrici ed errori del lapicida nell'epigramma di Agathon (IG XIV 1320)* 151
PAOLA GAGLIARDI, *Le ecloghe 'elegiache' di Virgilio* 159
MARIA VITTORIA TOZZI, *Menandro nell'antichità* 173
BERNHARD ZIMMERMANN, ANDREA TESSIER, *Riflessioni sugli Scritti di metrica di R. Pretagostini* 181

(IN)ATTUALITÀ DELL'ANTICO

- ERRI DE LUCA, *Il mio debito greco* 205

NOTIZIE

- FRANCA PERUSINO, *Notizie dalla scuola di metrica* 211

MYTH RATIONALIZATION
IN ANCIENT GREEK COMEDY,
A SHORT SURVEY*

ALAN SUMLER

ABSTRACT

Ancient Greek comedy takes interesting approaches to mythological narrative. This article analyzes one excerpt and eight fragments of ancient Greek Old, Middle, and New Comedy. It attempts to show a comic rationalizing approach to mythology. Poets analyzed include Aristophanes, Cratinus, Anaxilas, Timocles, Antiphanes, Anaxandrides, Philemon, Athenion, and Comic Papyrus. Comparisons are made to known rationalizing approaches as found in the mythographers Palaephatus and Heraclitus the Paradoxographer. Ancient comedy tends to make jokes about the ludicrous aspects of myth. Early Greek myth rationalization and mythography share a similar approach to comedy in that they attempt to rationalize the improbable parts of myth narrative.

Hecataeus of Miletus tells this: I write these things,
as they seem true to me; for the many stories of the
Greeks are *laughable*, ...

(tr. Sumler)

THIS article analyzes one excerpt and eight fragments from ancient Greek comedy with respect to their rationalizing approach. It covers all periods (Old, Middle, and New) of ancient Greek comedy. We expect to see comic parody of myth rationalization beginning in Old Comedy because of the rise and predominance of rationalism in Athens during the 5th century BC. This trend may be seen in the works of poets, philosophers, sophists, historiographers, and tragedians. The rationalistic approaches most important for my analysis are those also found in the later genre mythography. These approaches include aitiological, etymological, metaphoric, allegorical, and Euhemeristic.

According to Fowler (2000, xxvii) in 5th c. BC mythography was not a recognized genre, but its different approaches and topics were becoming

* Research for this article spanned five years. I wish to thank the scholars who read and gave input on early versions – J. Henderson, H.-G. Nesselrath, J. Stern, D. Clayman, J. Lidov, J. Rusten, J. Roberts, and L. Fratantuono. I also thank M. Colantonio and the anonymous reader at *Quaderni Urbinati*.

popular. We find loose references to its method in Aristotle (*Met.* 1, 3, 983b 27-33), Plato (*Phaedr.* 229c-230a), and Heraclitus (Polybius 4, 40, 2-4). There are anticipations of mythography in the fragments of the early Greek historiographers – namely Hecataeus, Hellanicus, Pherecydes, Herodorus, and Ion of Chios.

Topics in mythography are vast. They include aitiological narratives, narratives of city foundation, etymological explanations, allegorical interpretations, and metaphoric interpretations. Not all mythography is a blatant questioning of myth (the earliest writers merely collected and reformulated myth). Early historians rationalized myth by giving their own genealogies and mythologies. The philosophers gave their own rationalized account of natural phenomena. Some approaches, later used by mythographers, began in non-rationalizing narratives found in Hesiod, Homer, and other poets.

Bowie (2007, 192) writes that Old Comedy “seized upon” any “ludicrous aspect” of a myth. Ludicrous can mean unreasonable, so unreasonable that something is funny or ridiculous. The genre of mythography and early myth rationalization seized upon the impossible and improbable aspects of myth narrative. In this way the approach of ancient Greek comedy to myth narrative is similar to the mythographic and rationalistic traditions.

Consider this scene from Aristophanes’ *Frogs* (vv. 108-115) where Dionysus disguised as Heracles addresses Heracles before his decent to the underworld.

Δι. ἀλλ’ ὦνπερ ἔνεκα τήνδε τήν σκευήν ἔχων
 ἦλθον κατὰ σὴν μίμησιν, ἵνα μοι τοὺς ξένους
 τοὺς σοὺς φράσειας, εἰ δεοίμην, οἷσι σὺ
 110 ἔχρῶ τόθ’, ἦνίκ’ ἦλθες ἐπὶ τὸν Κέρβερον,
 τούτους φράσον μοι, λιμένας, ἀρτοπώλια,
 πορνεῖ’, ἀναπαύλας, ἐκτροπάς, κρήνας, ὁδοὺς,
 πόλεις, διαίτας, πανδοκευτείας, ὅπου
 115 κόρεις ὀλίγιστοι.

Dionysus: Well, the reason I’ve come wearing this outfit in imitation of you is so you’ll tell me about those friends of yours who put you up when you went after Cerberus, in case I need them. Tell me about them, about the harbors, bakeries, warehouses, rest areas, directions, springs, roads, cities, places to stay, the landladies with the fewest bedbugs.

(tr. Henderson 1998, IV 33)

The *Frogs*, a burlesque rendering of Dionysus, won 1st place at the Lenaea in 405 BC. It features Dionysus’ *katabasis*, i.e. typically a hero’s decent to Hades, where he hopes to save his favorite tragic poet from the underworld. In the scene above he asks Heracles for directions to the underworld and general advice for his travels. The question mirrors travel concerns in the real world and has been superimposed into the mythical. These details repre-

sent a humanized approach to the typical myths about one's descent to Hades. It focuses on details not mentioned in other similar narratives like those found in tragedy. It may apply another understanding of the descent to Hades, i.e. a harsh journey in general.

A mythographer, Heraclitus the Paradoxographer, rationalized the idea that heroes descended and returned from Hades. He writes that the myth narrative refers to surviving a hard and hellish journey, in a similar manner as Aristophanes' approach.

(21.) Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἄιδου.

Λέγεται ὡς Ἡρακλῆς κατελθὼν <εἰς Ἄιδου> ἀνήλθεν ἀνάγων τὸν Κέρβερον, καὶ Ὀρφεὺς ὡσαύτως Εὐρυδίκην τὴν γυναῖκα. τὸ δ' ἀληθές, ὅτι ὅπηνίκα τις ἐκ μακρᾶς ἀποδημίας καὶ ἐπικινδύνου δια<ν>τλήσας ἐσώθη, ἔφασκον ἐξ Ἄιδου αὐτὸν διασεῶσθαι. ἔθεν ἔτι καὶ νῦν τοὺς μακροὺς πόνους καὶ παραβόλους ὁδοὺς καὶ ἐπισφαλεῖς νόσους <δια>φεύγοντας φάσκομεν ἐξ Ἄιδου σεῶσθαι.

It is said that Heracles descended [into Hades] and that he came back up bringing Cerberus with him, and that Orpheus did the same with his wife Eurydice. But the truth is that whenever a person endured a long and dangerous journey and came through it unharmed, people said that he had been delivered from Hell. Even today we say that people who survive great hardships or hazardous voyages or dangerous illnesses have been rescued from Hell.

(tr. Stern 2003, 82)

Hercules' descent into Hades to bring back the hell hound Cerberus is rationalized by different writers in antiquity. Paleaphatus, Heraclitus, and Plutarch have their versions. Hecataeus (*FGrHist* 1 F 27) is the first extant rationalization of Cerberus. Aristophanes' makes fun of the idea that a descent to Hades is more like a horrible travel experience. The scene exhibits a rationalistic and humanizing approach, but it does not parody any specific writer or genre.

The following examples of the comic rationalistic approach deal with misunderstood metaphors. The mythographer Palaephatus serves as an example of how it works. When Palaephatus declares a myth impossible and attempts to explain the misunderstanding, his argument typically surrounds a misunderstood name or phrase, which he indicates was used metaphorically. Some examples will help: in Palaephatus 4 the riddle of the Sphinx is rationalized to be a misunderstanding of the word for ambush (ἐνέδρας, ambush means ἀνιγμα, riddle) and the Sphinx is just the name of Cadmus' wife. In Palaephatus 15 the myth of Europa's abduction by Zeus having turned into a bull is rationalized into a man named Taurus (bull) abducting Europa and several other women from Tyre. In Palaephatus 42 Io is not turned into a cow and pursued by Zeus, but she was said to flee like a cow and was fleeing because she became pregnant out of wedlock. Palaephatus

usually claims that because of some misunderstanding with a metaphor (a saying, what people said) or some name the myth was invented.

In the comic fragments the surrounding narrative (rationalizing or not) is almost never present. Without any narrative, we cannot know if the metaphor was understood or misunderstood. In comic outcome it seems possible that they would render something understood or misunderstood metaphorically in a literal fashion.

These two examples of comically misunderstood metaphors indicate that myth rationalization was at play in Old Comedy. Cratinus, *Thracian Women* fr. 75 K.-A. offers an interesting mythological rationalization. The comedy was likely produced sometime in the 430s BC.¹ It comes from a scholiast on Euripides (*Hec.* 838) which contains the fragment:

περὶ τῶν Δαιδάλου ἔργων ὅτι ἐκινεῖτο καὶ προῖει φωνήν ...
καὶ Κρατῖνος ἐν Θράτταις
(A.) †πανὶ κακὸν† δεῦρο μαστεύων τινά.
(B.) πότερα χαλκοῦν ἢ ξύλινον; <ἦ> καὶ <τι> χρύσειον προσῆν;
(A.) οὐδαμῶς ξύλινος ἐκεῖνος *** ἀλλὰ χαλκοῦς ὢν ἀπέδρα.
(B.) πότερα Δαιδάλειος ἦν ἢ τις ἐξέκλεψεν αὐτόν;

That the productions of Daedalus moved and spoke ...

Cratinus too says in *Thracian Women*:

(A) I've come looking for a statue of Pan.

(B) A Bronze or a wooden one? Or with a little gold?

(A) That one wasn't wood at all [corrupt] It was a solid brass one that got away.

(B) Do you mean it was made by Daedalus? Or did someone just steal it?

(tr. Henderson in Rusten 2011, 187)

There is no narration concerning the myth or its misunderstanding, but the dialogue suggests that something or someone was misunderstood. Instead of the Daedaleian statue walking away, it was stolen. Daedalus' statues were said to be so real that they actually walked and talked. Here they are so valuable that people steal them and are thus mythologized to walk and talk. The last line presents the myth first as real and then as rationalized.

Daedalus was a popular topic for comedy and mythography. Palaephatus (21) wrote a rationalization of Daedalus' walking statues where he says that it comes from a misunderstood phrase and that he actually invented the first statues stepping forward with un-fused feet causing people to say his statues walked. Diodorus Siculus (4, 76, 2-3) had a similar rationalization where he innovated statues so that they had open eyes and feet apart, thus being real and walking.² Even though a narrative offering criticism of the myth is not

¹ See Storey 2011, 1 306-308 for dating.

² See Stern 1996, 52 for analysis.

present, the joke between the two speakers reveals the rationalizing approach.

The next example contains a comic mythological rationalization using a misunderstood metaphor. It presents the rationalized version without any explanation of the original. It comes from papyrus dated to the first-century A.D., fr. 1062 K.-A. = *CGFP* 215, and scholars debate under which period of comedy it occurs, although there is consensus that it comes from Old Comedy.

'τί οὖν ἐμοὶ τῶν σ[ῶν μέ]λει; φαίη τις ἂν
 ὑμῶν. ἐγὼ δ' ἐρῶ [τ]ὸ Σοφοκλέους ἔπος·
 'πέπονθα δεινά'. πάντα μοι γέρων Κρ[όνος]
 τὰ παιδί' ἐκπίνει τε καὶ κατεσθίει,
 ἐμοὶ δὲ τούτων προσδίδωσιν οὐδὲ ἓν, 5
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἔρδει χειρὶ καὶ Μεγαράδ' ἄγων
 ὅ τι ἂν τέκω 'γὼ τοῦτο πωλῶν ἐσθίει.
 δέδοικε γάρ τὸν χρησμὸν ὡσπερ κυν[
 ἔχρησε γὰρ Κρόνῳ ποθ' Ἀπόλλων δραχ[μὴν,
 κἄντ' οὐκ ἀπέλαβε. ταῦτα δὴ θυμὸν πνέ[ων 10
 ἐτέραν ἔχρησε[ν οὐκέτι] δρα[χ]μῶ[ν ἀ]ξ[ίαν,
 οὐ σκευάρια, μὰ τὸν Δί', οὐδὲ χρήματα,
 ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας δ' ἐκπεσεῖν ὑπὸ π[αιδίου].
 τοῦ]τ' οὖν δεδοικῶς πάντα καταπί[νει τέκνα.

(Rhea) “Why should I care about your problems?”, one of you might ask. I’ll quote the Sophoclean line: “I have suffered terrible things”. For old Cronus gulps down and gobbles up all my children, and he doesn’t let me have one single part of them. But gives me the finger, goes straight off to Megara, sells the child that I have borne, and gobbles up the money. He’s afraid you see, of the prophecy, as <a hare fears> a dog (?), for Apollo once **loaned** (ἔχρησε) Cronus a drachma and didn’t get it back. He was seething angry about this and no longer loaned him anything valuable, or any household items, by Zeus, or any money. Instead, he **prophesized** (ἔχρησεν) that Cronus would be expelled from his kingship by a child. So since he’s afraid of this, he swallows down all his children.

(tr. combination of Storey 2011, III 395-397,
Olson 2007, 430, and Nesselrath 1995, 23)

The first two lines reveal a parody on Sophocles. Storey (2011, III 395) writes that it may parody *OC* 892 and, if so, the date of the comedy would be after 401 BC. Oedipus speaks the passage to Theseus in Sophocles.

Οἰδίπους: ὦ φίλτατ', ἔγνω γὰρ τὸ προσφώνημά σου,
 πέπονθα δεινά τοῦδ' ὑπ' ἀνδρὸς ἀρτίως.

O friend, for I know your voice, I’ve suffered terrible things at the hands of that man just now.

(tr. Sumler)

Storey (2011, III 395) sets the context of the fragment:

But it is very much in the Old Comic manner that Rhea can swear “by Zeus” (l. 12) and mention a prophecy by Apollo (ll. 9-13) when neither has yet been born. This will have come from the prologue, when Rhea informs the spectators of the play’s subject.¹

Scholars analyze the fragment as a myth rationalization.² Olson (2007, 125-126) writes,

A rationalization of the myth presented in a more traditional form ... Cronos does not swallow the children themselves, as Hesiod would have it, but sells them and uses the money to buy food, which he eats.

Nesselrath (1995, 23-24) analyzes this scene as a rationalistic parody of child-eating in Hesiod:

... an almost depressingly rationalistic, but nevertheless ingenious reinterpretation of Cronos’ disgusting τεκνοφαγία.

Kassel and Austin (1983, VIII 355) also concur:

similem mythorum ex metaphora κατασθίειν explicationem ap. Palaeph. 6 et 7 ...

Cronos eats up the profits from selling his children which follows a Palaephatean – like rationalization – a misunderstood phraseology in the narration. Here are the parallels in Palaephatus 6 (Actaeon):

Φασιν Ἀκταίωνα ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων κυνῶν καταβρωθῆναι. τοῦτο δὲ ψευδές· κύων γὰρ δεσπότην καὶ τροφέα μάλιστα φιλεῖ, ἄλλως τε καὶ αἱ θηρευτικαὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους σαίνουσιν. ἔνιοι δὲ φασιν ὡς Ἄρτεμις μὲν <εἰς ἔλαφον μετέβαλεν> αὐτόν, ἔλαφον δὲ ἀνεῖλον αἱ κύνες. ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖ Ἄρτεμιν μὲν δύνασθαι ὅ τι θέλοι ποιῆσαι· οὐ μόντοι ἐστὶν ἀληθὲς ἔλαφον ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ἢ ἐξ ἐλάφου ἀνδρα γενέσθαι· τοὺς δὲ μύθους τούτους συνέθεσαν οἱ ποιηταί, ἵνα οἱ ἀκροώμενοι μὴ ὑβρίζοιεν εἰς τὸ θεῖον. τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς ἔχει ὧδε. Ἀκταίων ἦν ἀνὴρ τὸ γένος Ἀρκάς, φιλοκύνητος. οὗτος ἔτρεφεν αἰεὶ κύνας πολλὰς καὶ ἐθήρευεν ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν, τῶν δὲ αὐτοῦ πραγμάτων ἡμέλει. οἱ δὲ τότε ἄνθρωποι αὐτουργοὶ πάντες ἦσαν οἰκέτας τε οὐκ εἶχον[, ἀλλ’ ἐαυτοῖς ἐγεώργουν], καὶ οὗτος ἦν πλουσιώτατος ὅς [αὐτὸς ἐγεώργει καὶ] ἐργατικώτατος ὑπῆρχε. τῷ οὖν Ἀκταίῳ ἀμελοῦντι τῶν οἰκείων, μᾶλλον δὲ κυνηγετοῦντι, διεφθάρη ὁ βίος. ὅτε δὲ οὐκέτι εἶχεν οὐδέν, ἔλεγον οἱ ἄνθρωποι “δείλαιος Ἀκταίων, ὅς ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων κυνῶν καταβρώθη”, ὡσπερ καὶ νῦν ἐάν τις πορνοβοσκῶν ἀτυχήσῃ, λέγειν εἰώθαμεν “ὑπὸ τῶν πορνῶν καταβρώθη”. τοιοῦτον δὴ τι καὶ τὸ περὶ τὸν Ἀκταίωνα γέγονεν.

¹ He continues “Phrynichus wrote a Cronos and Philiscus a Birth of Zeus, the latter of which Austin (CGFP 215) and others have suggested as the source of the fragment”.

² See Konstantakos 2014, 168-167 for recent analysis.

They say that Actaeon was devoured by his own dogs. But the story is false, for a dog is most affectionate towards its master and provider, and hunting dogs in particular fawn on everyone. ... [lines omitted]

The truth is as follows. Actaeon was an Arcadian who was especially fond of hunting. He always kept a large pack of dogs and hunted with them in the mountains, disregarding his own affairs. Now all the people of those days were dependent on their own labor. They had no servant to do their work and whoever was the most industrious became the wealthiest. But in the case of Actaeon, his preference for hunting and his lack of attention to his own circumstances caused his livelihood to waste away. When he no longer had anything left, people said: "Alas for Actaeon, who has been devoured by his own hunting dogs". So even today, if a man is unlucky enough to waste his fortune on prostitutes, we are in the habit of saying that he has been "devoured by whores". And this is what happened in the case of Actaeon.

(tr. Stern 1996, 38)

Another example in Palaephatus 7 (Horses of Diomedes) follows:

Περὶ τῶν Διομήδους ἵππων φασὶν ὅτι ἀνδροφάγοι ἦσαν, γελοιῶς· τὸ γὰρ ζῶον τοῦτο μᾶλλον χόρτω καὶ κριθῇ ἤδεταί ἢ κρέασιν ἀνθρωπίνους. τὸ δ' ἀληθὲς ὧδε ἔχει. τῶν παλαιῶν ἀνθρώπων ὄντων αὐτουργῶν, καὶ τὴν τροφήν καὶ τὴν περιουσίαν οὕτως κτωμένων, ἄτε τὴν γῆν ἐργαζομένων, ἵπποτροφεῖν τις ἐπελάβετο, καὶ μέχρι τούτου ἵπποις ἤδετο, ἕως οὗ τὰ αὐτοῦ ἀπώλεσε καὶ πάντα πωλῶν κατανάλωσεν εἰς τὴν τῶν ἵππων τροφήν. οἱ οὖν φίλοι ἀνδροφάγους τοὺς ἵππους ὠνόμασαν. ὧν γενομένων προήχθη ὁ μῦθος.

They say that Diomedes' horses ate men. Ridiculous! Horses enjoy barley and oats rather than human flesh.

Here is the truth: men of long ago made their living with their own hands, and it was by tilling the ground that they acquired food and abundant resources. But a certain Diomedes became preoccupied with the breeding of horses. His delight in them reached the point that he lost his property: he sold everything he had and squandered it on the raising of horses. So his friends called the horses "man-eaters" – and that is how the myth began.

(tr. Stern 1996, 39)

Stern (*ibid.*) writes that Euripides, *Alc.* 495 has Heracles making the same "objection" to man-eating horses. Palaephatus 25 applies the same analysis to Glaucus (son of Sisyphus) who was said to be devoured by his own horses but actually wasted away his livelihood on breeding horses.

The comic fragment is both rationalized and un-rationalized. The gods and their behaviors are presented in a literal sense (taken at face value), but the traditional stories about them are interpreted metaphorically. In a rational mode "eating one's children" means selling them for profit. There is no myth rationalization narrative, i.e. someone questioning the original myth, but parts of it are presented in a rational mode.

Other rationalistic themes are at play. There is a word play on ἔχρησε from χράω in line 9 and 11, where it means to borrow money and to give a prophecy. It indicates another misunderstood phrase and exhibits the etymological approach.¹ In Hesiod's *Theogony* Cronos receives a prophecy about his children overthrowing his rule, but the poet never explains who gave the prophecy. In the comic fragment the prophecy is mentioned and rationalized into borrowing money. Since the Greek verb is used twice and it holds both meanings, the poet implies that the prophecy was a misunderstanding of the loan and part of Apollo's payback for not getting back his money. The fragment also presents the myth in a humanized manner, showing the gods doing mundane everyday human behaviors.

These next examples from Middle Comedy confuse the boundary between myth and reality in different ways. The first comes from Anaxilas (22 K.-A.) in *Chick* and originates from Athenaeus 13, 558a in a discussion about women.

ὅστις ἀνθρώπων ἑταίραν ἠγάπησε πρόποτε,
οὐ γένος τίς ἂν δύναίτο παρανομώτερον φράσαι;
τίς γὰρ ἢ δράκαιν' ἄμικτος, ἢ Χίμαιρα πύρπνοος,
ἢ Χάρυβδις, ἢ τρίκρανος Σκύλλα, ποντία κύων,
Σφίγξ, ὕδρα, λέαινα, ἔχιδνα, πτηνά θ' Ἄρπυιῶν γένη,
εἰς ὑπερβολὴν ἀφίικται τοῦ καταπτύστου γένους;
οὐκ ἔνεσθ', αὐταὶ δ' ἀπάντων ὑπερέχουσι τῶν κακῶν.
ἔστι δὲ σκοπεῖν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς πρῶτα μὲν τὴν Πλαγγόνα,
ἣτις ὡσπερ ἢ Χίμαιρα πυρπολεῖ τοὺς βαρβάρους.
εἷς μόνος δ' ἵππεύς τις αὐτῆς τὸν βίον παρείλετο·
πάντα τὰ σκευὴ γὰρ ἔλκων ὄχετ' ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας.
οἱ Σινώπη δ' αὖ συνόντες οὐχ ὕδρα σύνεισι νῦν;
γραῦς μὲν αὐτῆ, παραπέφυκε δ' ἢ Γνάθαινα πλησίον·
ὥστ' ἀπαλλαγεῖσιν ταύτης ἔστι διπλάσιον κακόν.
ἢ δὲ Νάννιον τί νυνὶ διαφέρειν Σκύλλης δοκεῖ;
οὐ δὲ ἀποπνίξασ' ἑταίρους τὸν τρίτον θηρεύεται
ἔτι λαβεῖν; ἀλλ' ἠέξεπεσετ' πορθμῆς ἐλατίνῳ πλάτῃ.
ἢ δὲ Φρόνη τὴν Χάρυβδιν οὐχὶ πόρρω που ποιεῖ,
τόν τε ναύκληρον λαβοῦσα καταπέπωκ' αὐτῷ σκάφει;
ἢ Θεανῶ δ' οὐχὶ Σειρήν ἔστιν ἀποτετιλιμένη;
βλέμμα καὶ φωνὴ γυναικός, τὰ σκέλη δὲ κοψίχου.
Σφίγγα Ἰθθαίαν δὲ πάσας ἔστι τὰς πόρνας καλεῖν,
αἱ λαλοῦσ' ἀπλῶς μὲν οὐδέν, ἀλλ' ἐν αἰνιγμοῖς τισιν,
ὡς ἔρωσι καὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ σύνεισιν ἠδέως.
εἶτα “τετράπους μοι γένοιτο”, φησί, “ἠτήνηρος ἢ θρόνος”,
εἶτα δὴ “τρίπους τις”, εἶτα, φησί, “παιδίσκη δίπους”.

¹ See Storey 2011, III 397 for more analysis.

εἴθ' ὁ μὲν γνούς ταῦτ' ἀπῆλθεν εὐθύς ὥσπερ Οἰδίπους,
 οὐδ' ἰδεῖν δόξας ἐκείνην, σῶζεται δ' ἄκων μόνος.
 οἱ δ' ἐρᾶσθαι προσδοκῶντες εὐθύς εἰσιν ἡρμένοι,
 καὶ φέρονθ' ὑψοῦ πρὸς αἴθρα. συντεμόντι δ' οὐδὲ ἔν
 ἐσθ' ἑταίρας ὅσα περ ἔστι θηρί' ἐξωλέστερον. 30

If any man has ever loved a prostitute, who couldn't fail to name a more lawless form of life? What fire-breathing Chimaera, or Charybdis, or three-headed Scylla, dog of the sea, Hydra, lioness, viper, winged race of Harpies, or plain old dragoness, has ever topped this detestable species? It's inadmissible. These women surpass all evils. We can start our review with Plangon first, who sets foreigners alight like Chimaera. Only a single horseman robbed her of her life, who left after tearing all her furnishings out of her house. And those who keep company with Sinope, aren't they with a present-day Hydra? She is a hag, and Gnathaena is close by, so that those who escape the one face a second danger. Or Nannion, how is she any different from Scylla? After choking the life out of two companions, isn't she on the trail of the third? But the †passage with a pine oar failed† and Phryne, doesn't she act close to Charybdis, seizing the sea captain and drowning him boat and all? And isn't Theano like a plucked Siren? The voice and face of a woman, the legs of a crow. And you could call all these whores Theban Sphinxes, since they never say anything straight but talk of lovemaking and kissing and sex in sort of riddles.

(7 lines omitted)

(tr. Slater in Rusten 2011, 561)

The comic fragment compares prostitutes to mythological creatures. Heraclitus the Paradoxographer rationalized the same mythical monsters – Scylla, the Harpies, the Sirens, and Circe – as all being prostitutes. Here are the relevant passages in Heraclitus. Each example shows the myth coming from a metaphoric interpretation of some real situation.

(2.) Περὶ Σκύλλης

Λέγεται περὶ ταύτης ὅτι κατήσθιε τοὺς παραπλέοντας. ἦν δὲ αὕτη νησιῶτις καλὴ ἑταίρα καὶ εἶχε παρασίτους λαιμούς τε καὶ κυνώδεις, μεθ' ὧν τοὺς ξένους κατήσθιεν, ἐν οἷς καὶ τοὺς Ὀδυσσέως ἑταίρους. αὐτὸν δὲ ὡς φρόνιμον οὐκ ἠδυνήθη.

They say that Scylla devoured passing sailors. But Scylla was a beautiful prostitute who lived on an island with her gluttonous and cur-like hangers-on. Together with these she would devour her clients – and among them Odysseus' companions. But with Odysseus himself she failed: he was too sensible.

(tr. Stern 2003, 74)

(8.) Περὶ Ἀρπυιῶν.

Ταύτας ὁ μῦθος παραδέδωκε γυναικίας ὑποπτέρους τὸ τοῦ Φινέως δεῖπνον ἀρπαζούσας. ὑπολάβοι δ' ἂν τις ταύτας ἑταίρας καταφαγούσας τὴν τοῦ Φινέως οἰκίαν εἶναι, καὶ καταλιπούσας αὐτὸν καὶ τῆς ἀναγκαίας τροφῆς ἐνδεῆ κεχωρίσθαι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, αἰεὶ δὲ ὅσα ἀνακτῆσαιτο παραγινομένας ἐσθίειν καὶ αὔθις χωρίζεσθαι, ὃ σύνηθες ποιεῖν ταῖς ἑταίραις.

The myth has been handed down that the Harpies were winged women who used to snatch away Phineus' dinner. One may suppose that they were prostitutes who devoured Phineus' estate and then went off and left him without even the bare minimum of food. But if he ever got anything else, they always returned and devoured it, and then they departed again – which is typical of prostitutes.

(tr. Stern 2003, 77)

(14.) Περὶ Σειρήνων

Ταύτας διφυεῖς μυθολογοῦσι τὰ μὲν σκέλη ὀρνίθων, τὸ δὲ <λοιπὸν> σῶμα γυναικῶν ἐχούσας, ἀπολλύειν δὲ τοὺς παραπλέοντας. ἦσαν δὲ ἑταῖραι ἐκπρεπεῖς τῇ τε δι' ὀργάνων μούσῃ καὶ γλυκυφωνία, κάλλισται, αἷς οἱ προσερχόμενοι κατησθίοντο τὰς οὐσίας. ὀρνίθων δὲ σκέλη ἐλέγοντο ἔχειν, ὅτι ταχέως ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποβαλόντων τὰς οὐσίας ἐχωρίζοντο.

The myth is that the Sirens were of double form – with the legs of birds, but [for the rest] the bodies of women – and that they destroyed those who sailed past them.

But the Sirens were prostitutes, remarkable for their playing of musical instruments and for their sweet voices. They were also most beautiful, and any man who visited them soon found his wealth eaten away. They were said to have the legs of birds because they departed speedily from those who thus cast away their own property.

(tr. Stern 2003, 79)

(16.) Περὶ Κίρκης

Ταύτην ὁ μῦθος παρ<αδ>έδωκε ποτῶ μεταμορφοῦσαν ἀνθρώπους. ἦν δὲ ἑταῖρα, καὶ κατακηλοῦσα τοὺς ζένους τὸ πρῶτον ἀρεσκεία παντοδαπῇ ἐπεσπᾶτο πρὸς εὐνοιαν, γενομένους δὲ ἐν προσπαθείᾳ κατεῖχε ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις ἀλογίστως φερομένους πρὸς τὰς ἡδονάς. ἤτησε δὲ καὶ ταύτην Ὀδυσσεύς.

The myth has been handed down that Circe transformed men with a potion.

Circe, however, was a prostitute who bewitched her clients at first with every sort of willingness to please and led them on to be well-disposed toward her. But when their passion for her grew, she controlled them through their lust, as they were mindlessly carried along in their pleasures. Odysseus got the better of her also.

(tr. Stern 2003, 80)

Anaxilas makes the prostitutes act in the same way metaphorically as the mythological monsters. The known stories about the monsters become metaphors for how the prostitutes treat their customers. The narration may be construed as a play on some misunderstood phrase in the original myth. Anaxilas' approach is the opposite of Heraclitus. Heraclitus rationalizes each monster; he explains in each passage that the prostitute became mythical because of her actions. Anaxilas simply compares the two while interpreting the monsters' actions metaphorically.

Plangon the prostitute breaths fire, here meaning passion, just as Chimera, and the prostitute is killed by a man on a horse which is meant to invoke Bellerophon and Pegasus. A prostitute is compared to Scylla since they both take in and devour sailors. And the part about the Sphinx implies a metaphoric understanding – speaking in riddles as a reference to their erotic speech. Mythical monsters were common subjects for comic poets and mythographers alike.¹

The next example from Middle Comedy is attributed to Timocles (6 K.-A.) in *Women at the Dionysia*. The fragment consists of tragic parody and contains a *topos* found in other comic fragments which I call “how tragedy works”.² It originates from Athenaeus 6, 223b in a discussion about inventing (εὐρίσκειν) stories. The speaker answers to the hypothetical accusation that the group might be making up stories and responds that the tragic and comic poets tell the stories to make us feel better. The speaker first cites Antiphanes (189 K.-A.) and then a few sections later he cites Timocles:

ὦ τάν, ἄκουσον ἦν τί σοι δοκῶ λέγειν.
 ἄνθρωπός ἐστι ζῶον ἐπίπονον φύσει,
 καὶ πολλὰ λυπῆρ' ὁ βίος ἐν ἑαυτῷ φέρει.
 παραψυχὰς οὖν φροντίδων ἀνεύρετο
 ταύτας· ὁ γὰρ νοῦς τῶν ἰδίων λήθην λαβῶν 5
 πρὸς ἄλλοτρίῳ τε ψυχαγωγηθεὶς πάθει,
 μεθ' ἡδονῆς ἀπῆλθε παιδευθεὶς ἄμα.
 τοὺς γὰρ τραγωδοὺς πρῶτον, εἰ βούλει, σκόπει,
 ὡς ὠφελοῦσι πάντας. ὁ μὲν ὦν γὰρ πένης
 πτωχότερον αὐτοῦ καταμαθῶν τὸν Τήλεφον 10
 γενόμενον ἤδη τὴν πενίαν ῥᾶον φέρει.
 ὁ νοσῶν τι μανικὸν Ἀλκιμέων' ἐσκέψατο.
 ὀφθαλμιᾶ τις, εἰσὶ Φινεΐδαι τυφλοί.
 τέθνηκέ τῳ παῖς, ἡ Νιόβη κεκούφικεν.
 χωλός τις ἐστι, τὸν Φιλοκτῆτην ὄρᾳ. 15
 γέρον τις ἀτυχεῖ, κατέμαθεν τὸν Οἰνέα.
 ἅπαντα γὰρ τὰ μείζον' ἢ πέπονθέ τις
 ἀτυχήματ' ἄλλοις γεγονότ' ἐννοούμενος
 τὰς αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ συμφορὰς ἤττον στένει.

Listen, good sire, and see if I speak the truth. Man is by nature a creature born to suffer, and his life must endure many sorrows. And so, he has discovered these

¹ Palaephatus rationalized many of the same myths, although differently. In particular he covered the Sphinx (4) (a misunderstood phrase), Scylla (20) (name of a boat), Bellerophon (28) (a man in a ship named Pegasus who burns down a mountain named Chimera), Hydra (38) (the name of a fort).

² See Olson 2007, 169 for analysis.

comforting distractions from his anxieties. For the mind, forgetting its own cares and entertained at someone else's suffering, ends up pleased, and learning something to boot. Now, consider first, if you will, how tragic poets benefit everyone. For someone who's poor, once he's learned that Telephus was a greater beggar than himself can them endure his own poverty more easily. Someone who's sick looks at Alcmeon stark-raving mad. Let's say you've got eye disease – well, Phineus was blind! Someone's child has died? Niobe can console him, if someone's a cripple, he can look at Philoctetes. If an old man falls on hard times, he learns of Oineus. The person, then, who understands that all the misfortunes that seems so monumental to him also happened to others will then groan less under the weight of his own calamities.

(tr. Rosen in Rusten 2011, 518-519)

The speaker encourages the audience to compare their own suffering to those of mythological characters. He claims that humans invent (*ἀνέυρετο*) these stories in order to feel better about their own misfortunes. The idea that myths are invented is a myth rationalization. Credit is given to the tragic poets for sharing these myths. The audience is asked to realize that their misfortunes are less troublesome. The mythological characters are reduced to their known defect and the narratives surrounding them are less important. The line between the real and mythological worlds is blurred.

The next fragment from Middle Comedy contains the theme of high priced fish. Antiphanes (164 K.-A.) *Boys* comes from Athenaeus 6, 224c.

ἐγὼ τέως μὲν ὥόμην τὰς Γοργόνας
εἶναι τι λογοποίημα, πρὸς ἀγορὰν δ' ὅταν
ἔλθω, πεπίστευκ'· ἐμβλέπων γὰρ αὐτόθι
τοῖς ἰχθυοπώλαις, λίθινος εὐθὺς γίνομαι,
θερμὴν παρέθηκε κάμηλον.

I used to think the Gorgons were a fiction, but now, whenever I go to the market, I'm a believer; when I look at the fish sellers there, I turn right to stone! With averted eyes; if my eyes behold the smallness of the fish, and the hugeness of the price, I grow quite stiff.

(tr. Rusten 2011, 503)

It is interesting that the poet indicates whether the myth was true or not. Once he admits it, he proceeds to interpret and rationalize the myth. The myth of the Gorgons was made-up (*λογοποίημα*), but then the speaker understands the myth as a metaphor. The Gorgons destroy their victims by ruining them financially at the fish market. The joke concerns the idea that he used to disbelieve the myth, but now believes it, although only in its metaphoric interpretation. Gorgons are not sea monsters which represents another part of the joke. Heraclitus the Paradoxographer (1) rationalized

Medusa, a Gorgon, as a prostitute who metaphorically turned people to stone who looked at her. Perseus did not literally cut off her head, rather Medusa went broke trying to win him over, thus being financially ruined.¹ In Palaephatus (31) the Gorgon is actually a golden statue which Perseus steals.

The comic metaphoric approach has unexpected outcomes and bizarre misunderstandings. This example comes from Anaxandrides (46 K.-A.) *Tereus*, Middle Comedy. It can be found in Athenaeus 3, 166d in a discussion about spendthrifts and those who squander their fortunes.

{A.} ὄρνις κεκλήσει.

{B.} διὰ τί, πρὸς τῆς Ἑστίας; πότερον καταφαγὼν τὴν πατρῶαν οὐσίαν ὥσπερ Πολύευκτος ὁ καλός;

{A.} οὐ δῆτ', ἀλλ' ὅτι ἄρρην ὑπὸ θηλειῶν κατεκόπησ.

(A) You'll be called "Bird".

(B) Why by Hestia? Because I gobbled up the property I inherited from my father, like the noble Polyuectus?

(A) Not at all, but because you're a male who's been reduced to mincemeat by females.

(tr. Olson 2006, II 301)

Speaker A calls speaker B a bird as a metaphor. Speaker B tries to understand how he means it. He interprets the name bird as meaning that he devoured his inheritance. Speaker A corrects him and shares his interpretation that he meant bird as a metaphor for him being defeated by a female. Speaker B could be Tereus and a rationalization is at play. Instead of turning into a bird, Tereus was called bird for some reason and the joke plays on that reason. In the myth two sisters, Philomela and Procne (his wife), get the better of Tereus, thus him defeated by females. Speaker B also implies that he devoured his inheritance and not his son Itys. Nesselrath (1990, 216-218) and Millis (2001, 228) analyze this fragment as a myth rationalization with a metaphoric approach.²

This next example from New Comedy echoes the Palaephatean mode. Philemon writes about Niobe (102 K.-A.) in this fragment which comes from *Scholia* (bT) on Homer, *Il.* 24, 617.

ἐγὼ λίθον μὲν τὴν Νιόβην, μὰ τοὺς θεοὺς,
οὐδέποτ' ἐπέισθην, οὐδὲ νῦν πεισθήσομαι
ὡς τοῦτ' ἐγένετ' ἄνθρωπος· ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν κακῶν
[τῶν συμπεσόντων τοῦ τε συμβάντος πάθους]

¹ See Stern 2003, 73 for analysis.

² Nesselrath thinks the title Tereus refers to an ordinary Athenian man and not the Thracian king of the myth. See Konstantakos 2014, 196 for recent analysis.

οὐδὲν λαλῆσαι δυναμένη πρὸς οὐδένα,
προσηγορεύθη διὰ τὸ μὴ φωνεῖν λίθος.

5

That Niobe was a stone, by the gods,
I never believed, nor will I now believe
that a human being turned into that: but under the troubles
that befell and the catastrophe that occurred
she was unable to say anything to anyone and
for not speaking she was called a stone.

(trans. Konstan in Rusten 2011, 616)

The speaker is not convinced (οὐδέποτ' ἐπείσθη, οὐδὲ νῦν πεισθήσομαι) of the myth that Niobe was turned to stone because people cannot be turned to stone. That people thought she was turned into stone was a misunderstanding of her merely being called "stone". This fragment represents a near perfect fit to the comic myth rationalization approach and as an example of mythographic parody. The fragment follows Palaephatus 8, although it is not possible to establish which writer came first or wrote such a rationalization first. Palaephatus 8 (Niobe) follows:

Φασιν ὡς Νιόβη γυνὴ ζῶσα λίθος ἐγένετο ἐπὶ τῷ τύμβῳ τῶν παιδῶν· ὅστις δὲ πείθεται ἐξ ἀνθρώπου λίθον γενέσθαι ἢ ἐκ λίθου ἄνθρωπον, εὐήθης ἐστὶ. τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς ἔχει ὧδε. Νιόβης ἀποθανόντων τῶν παιδῶν, ποιήσας τις εἰκόνα λιθίνην ἔστησεν ἐπὶ τῷ τύμβῳ [τῶν παιδῶν]. ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ παριόντες "Νιόβη λιθίνη ἔστηκεν ἐπὶ τῷ τύμβῳ· ἐθεασάμεθα ἡμεῖς αὐτήν", ὥσπερ καὶ νῦν λέγεται "παρὰ τὸν χαλκοῦν Ἡρακλέα ἐκαθήμην" καὶ "παρὰ τὸν Πάριον Ἑρμῆν ὦν". τοιοῦτον ἦν κακεῖνο, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ Νιόβη αὐτὴ λιθίνη ἐγένετο.

They say that Niobe, a living woman, turned into stone on the tomb of her children. Anyone who believes that a human being turned into a stone or a stone into a human being is a fool. The truth is as follows:

When Niobe's children died, someone made a statue of Niobe out of stone and set it on the tomb. Passersby would say: "A stone Niobe is standing on the tomb. We saw her ourselves". Similarly, one might say nowadays: "I was sitting by the bronze Heracles"; or "I was at the marble Herm". That is how it was, but Niobe herself did not turn into stone.

(tr. Stern 1996, 40)

Palaephatus comes to the conclusion that people in the past have misunderstood the story and that Niobe being turned to stone was misconstrued from a statue of Niobe which people visited. The Philemon passage states that the myth is impossible, but with a different conclusion. The comic poet also makes the myth based on a misunderstanding – one where Niobe refuses to speak and people say she's been turned into a stone. It's similar to the comic rationalizations already seen of the Sirens and Gorgons. Nesselrath (1990, 217, 231) notes that Philemon wrote myth rationalization (*der*

Mythenrationalisierung) in his comic poetry and that it was a popular device of ancient comedy, especially New Comedy. He cites Euhemerus and Hecataeus whose approach comic poets also parodied.

Athenion (1 K.-A. *Samo-thracians*), New Comedy, makes a Palaephatean parody. It comes from Athenaeus 14, 660e in a discussion about the importance of cooks. According to the speaker this example highlights a cook speaking about natural phenomena (*φυσιολογοῦντα*). The cook is boasting about his art to a slave who belittles him. It represents a rationalization of the art of cooking.

οὐκ οἶσθ' ὅτι πάντων ἡ μαγειρικὴ τέχνη
 πρὸς εὐσέβειαν πλεῖστα προενήνεχθ' ὅλως;
 {B.} τοιοῦτόν ἐστι τοῦτο; {A.} πάνυ γε, βάρβαρε.
 τοῦ θηριώδους καὶ παρασπόνδου βίου
 ἡμᾶς γὰρ ἀπολύσασα καὶ τῆς δυσχεροῦς
 ἀλληλοφαγίας, ἤγαγ' εἰς τάξιν τινά, 5
 καὶ τουτονὶ περιῆψεν ὃν νυνὶ βίον
 ζῶμεν. {B.} τίνα τρόπον; {A.} πρόσσεχε, καὶ γὰρ σοὶ φράσω.
 ἀλληλοφαγίας καὶ κακῶν ὄντων συχῶν,
 γενόμενος ἀνθρωπός τις οὐκ ἀβέλτερος 10
 θύσας ἱερεῖον πρῶτος ὥπτησεν κρέας.
 ὡς δ' ἦν τὸ κρέας ἡδίων ἀνθρώπου κρεῶν,
 αὐτοὺς μὲν οὐκ ἐμασῶντο, τὰ δὲ βοσκήματα
 θύοντες ὥπτων. ὡς δ' ἄπαξ τῆς ἡδονῆς
 ἐμπειρίαν τιν' ἔλαβον, ἀρχῆς γενομένης, 15
 ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἠὔξον τὴν μαγειρικὴν τέχνην.
 ὅθεν ἔτι καὶ νῦν τῶν πρότερον μεμνημένοι
 τὰ σπλάγχχνα τοῖς θεοῖσιν ὀπτῶσιν φλογί
 ἄλλας οὐ προσάγοντες· οὐ γὰρ ἦσαν οὐδέπω
 εἰς τὴν τοιαύτην χρῆσιν ἐξηυρημένοι. 20
 ὡς δ' ἤρεσ' αὐτοῖς ὕστερον, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλας
 προσάγουσιν ἤδη τῶν ἱερῶν γεγραμμένων
 τὰ πάτρια διατηροῦντες, ἅπερ ἡμῖν μόνα
 ἄπασι ἀρχὴ γέγονε τῆς σωτηρίας,
 τὸ προσφιλοτεχνεῖν διὰ τε τῶν ἡδυσμάτων 25
 ἐπὶ πλεῖον αὔξειν τὴν μαγειρικὴν τέχνην.
 {B.} καινὸς πάρεστιν οὗτοςὶ Παλαίφατος.
 {A.} μετὰ ταῦτα γαστρίον τις ὠνθυλευμένον
 προϊόντος εἰσηνέγκατ' ἤδη τοῦ χρόνου·
 ἐρίφιον ἐτακέρωσε, πνικτῶ διέλαβεν 30
 περικομματίῳ, διεγίγγρασ' ὑποκρούσας γλυκεῖ,
 ἰχθὺν παρεισεκύκλησεν οὐδ' ὀρώμενον,
 λάχανον, τάριχος, πουλύποδας, χόνδρον, μέλι.
 ὡς πολὺ δὲ διὰ τὰς ἡδονὰς ἀς νῦν λέγω

ἀπειχ' ἕκαστος τοῦ φαγεῖν ἂν ἔτι νεκροῦ, 35
 αὐτοῖς ἅπαντες ἠζίζιον συζῆν, ὄχλος
 ἠθροίζετ', ἐγένονθ' αἱ πόλεις, οἰκούμεναι
 διὰ τὴν τέχνην, ὅπερ εἶπα, τὴν μαγειρικὴν.
 {B.} ἄνθρωπε, χαῖρε· περὶ πόδ' εἶ τῷ δεσπότη.
 {A.} καταρχόμεθ' ἡμεῖς οἱ μάγειροι, θύομεν, 40
 σπονδὰς ποιούμεν, τῷ μάλιστα τοὺς θεοὺς
 ἡμῖν ὑπακούειν διὰ τὸ ταῦθ' εὐρηκέναι
 τὰ μάλιστα συντείνοντα πρὸς τὸ ζῆν καλῶς.
 {B.} ὑπὲρ εὐσεβείας οὖν ἀφείς παῦσαι λέγων,
 ἤμαρτον· ἀλλὰ δεῦρο σὺ ξυνείσιθι 45
 ἐμοί, τὰ τ' ἔνδον εὐτρεπῆ ποιεῖ λαβῶν.

(A) Don't you know that it is to religion that the art of cooking has made the very greatest contribution of all?

(B) Is that so? (A) Absolutely, my foreign friend.

It liberated us from the savage and lawless life and horrible cannibalism, and led us to order and bestowed on us the life we live today.

(B) How? (A) Listen and I'll tell you.

In the days of cannibalism and a host of evils, there came a man who was not so uncouth, the first to offer a sacrificial victim – and roast the meat. Since the meat was tastier than human flesh, they stopped chewing on each other, and fattened up animals to sacrifice and cook. Once they experienced this pleasure and made a start of it, they greatly expanded the art of cooking.

(That's why to this day, to commemorate the past, when they roast innards over an open fire to the gods they add no salt – you see, they hadn't discovered yet they could use it this way. Because they grew fond of it later, they now add salt, keeping the old ways only for sacrifices.) The only things that were the key to the survival of the human race were constant innovation and the constant growth, sauce by sauce, of the art of cooking.

(B) This man's a regular Palaephatus!

(A) Next, as time went on, someone introduced stuffing a gut for sausage, boiling a kid till it melted in the mouth; he set the intervals for stewed meats, with an accompanying wine to set the tempo, then brought in a fish smothered in sauces, greens, high-priced salt fish, porridge, honey. Because of the delights I've mentioned,

everyone abstained from eating dead bodies.
 They decided to get along with each other,
 formed into groups, and so there were populated cities;
 all, as I've said, because of the art of cooking.
 (B) Good day, Sir! My master will be glad to see you!
 (A) It is we cooks who do the opening honors,
 who perform libations, because the gods listen to us most
 since we invented the things that contribute most
 to the food life. (B) Enough! Stop talking about religion!
 I was wrong, I admit it. Quick now, come with me
 and lend a hand getting things ready inside.

(tr. Konstan in Rusten 2011, 703-704)

The speaker describes the first (πρῶτος) invention of cooking animal meat for the sacrifice and the discovery of salt. In the mythological past people are eating each other's flesh. A lawless society becomes more civilized with each new cooking innovation. He gives an aitiology for the lack of salt at religious sacrifices. Speaker B calls speaker A a Palaephatus.¹ Speaker A's narrative does not parallel any known Palaephatus passage, but the fragment exhibits multiple mythographic approaches – first inventions, human innovations, a distant mythological past, the rationalization of an art, and some use of a mythographer's name. Palaephatus usually assumes that the myth arose from some misunderstanding in the past which surrounds a first invention. In Palaephatus 1 Centaurs are explained as a group of people who invented riding on horseback. Since people had never seen the behavior before, they thought they were a mythological creature – a mixture between a man and a horse.

The comic approach in this fragment is mythographic parody. Speaker B calls speaker A a Palaephatus because his attempt at making a rationalization of cooking is comparable to the mythographer's work. The slave, who has belittled his art, is placating the speaker by calling him such a name. The cook continues to defend his beneficial art. It led to the establishment of peace on earth and the people living in cities. It modernized and improved life for mortals. The cook and his art are elevated to the status of divinity. Cooks perform libations because the gods recognize them, because cooks invented (εὐρηκέναι) the best benefit for mankind. In rationalizing the art of cooking the cook elevates his importance as slightly less than the gods. Speaker B, the slave, apologizes for belittling the cook's art. He relates the subject of the speech to "religion" (εὐσεβείας – reverence towards the gods) and demands that they put the topic down.

¹ See Stern 1996, 20 and Nesselrath 1990, 217.

In conclusion I have shown that ancient Greek comedy (Old, Middle, and New) takes a rationalizing approach to mythological narrative, an approach shared by early Greek myth rationalization and later Greek mythography. There are more examples to be found in the collection of ancient Greek comedy fragments, the extant work of Aristophanes, and of Menander. This article barely scratches the surface of comic rationalizing examples. Aristophanes makes different parodies of Prodicus in the *Birds* and *Clouds*. He parodies Herodotus' rationalization of the Trojan War in the *Acharnians* and Ion of Chios' theory of the afterlife in the *Peace*. Menander as well makes interesting rationalizations of myth in the *Dyskolos*, *Samia*, *Epitrepontes*, and other comedies. The number of instances found in *Poetae Comici Graeci* is vast. A full analysis will be forthcoming.

City University of New York Graduate Center

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Austin, C. (ed.) 1973. *Comicorum Graecorum fragmenta in papyris reperta* (CGFP), Berlin.
- Bowie, A. M. 2007. 'Myth in Aristophanes', in R. D. Woodward (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Mythology*, Cambridge, 190-209.
- Fowler, R. 2000. *Early Greek Mythography I*, Oxford.
- Henderson, J. (ed.) 2002. *Aristophanes. Frogs IV*, Cambridge MA.
- Kassel, R. - Austin, C. (eds.) 1983-2001. *Poetae Comici Graeci I-VIII*, Berlin.
- Konstantakos, I. 2014. 'Fourth Century Mythological Burlesques', in M. Fontaine - A. Scafuro (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Comedy*, Oxford, 160-180.
- Millis, B. W. 2001. *A Commentary on the Fragments of Anaxandrides*, Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation.
- Nesselrath, H.-G. 1995. 'Myth, Parody, and Comic Plots: The Birth of Gods and Middle Comedy', in G. W. Dobrov (ed.), *Beyond Aristophanes*, Atlanta.
- 1990. *Die attische Mittlere Komödie*, Berlin.
- Olson, D. S. (ed.) 2006-10. *Athenaeus. Deipnosophistae*, Cambridge MA.
- 2007. *Broken Laughter: Select Fragments of Greek Comedy*, Oxford.
- Rusten, J. et al. (eds.), 2011. *The Birth of Comedy*, Baltimore.
- Stern, J. 1996. *Palaephatus: On Unbelievable Tales*, Wauconda.
- 2003. 'Heraclitus the Paradoxographer: On Unbelievable Tales', *Trans. Am. Philol. Ass.* 133, 51-97.
- Storey, I. C. 2011. *Fragments of Old Comedy I-III*, Cambridge MA.

STORIA DELLA TRADIZIONE METRICA

COMPOSTO IN CARATTERE DANTE MONOTYPE DALLA
FABRIZIO SERRA EDITORE, PISA · ROMA.
STAMPATO E RILEGATO NELLA
TIPOGRAFIA DI AGNANO, AGNANO PISANO (PISA).

★

Dicembre 2014

(CZ 2 · FG 21)

