

# Satyrus: Peripatetic or Alexandrian?

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THE SIGNIFICANCE of Satyrus the Peripatetic for the development of ancient biography was a point on which all students of the subject were agreed even before the publication in 1911 of *P.Oxy.* 1176, which preserves a substantial part of his *Life of Euripides*.<sup>1</sup> The outlines of Satyrus' portrait had been memorably sketched by Wilamowitz in 1899;<sup>2</sup> some further colouring was added by Leo in his fundamental book on ancient biography.<sup>3</sup> Wilamowitz, working with the scanty and second-hand materials then available—a score of citations of Satyrus in Diogenes Laertius, Athenaeus and a few other authors—clothed the dry bones with flesh. Under his hands Satyrus took on the aspect of a scholar, a learned Alexandrian strongly influenced by Callimachus:<sup>4</sup> clearly an authority deserving serious attention.

The publication of the remains of the *Life of Euripides* did no good to Satyrus' reputation. Gilbert Murray, not usually a captious or

<sup>1</sup> *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* IX, ed. A. S. Hunt (London 1912) no.1176; Pack<sup>2</sup> 1456. The most important item to be added to the bibliography in Pack is the commentary by G. Arrighetti, *Satiro: Vita di Euripide* (Pisa 1964). For a complete collection of the fragments of Satyrus, together with a commentary, see C. F. Kumaniecki, *De Satyro Peripatetico* (Cracow 1929).

<sup>2</sup> *Hermes* 34 (1899) 633ff = *Kleine Schriften* IV (Berlin 1962) 103ff.

<sup>3</sup> F. Leo, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer literarischen Form* (Leipzig 1901) 118ff. For an interesting critique of Leo's work, see A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1971) 18ff.

<sup>4</sup> "Aber wenn die Tendenz der Lebensbeschreibung auch die echt peripatetische ist, nicht die Taten und Erlebnisse zu erzählen, sondern die charakteristischen Züge der Lebensführung zur Darstellung zu bringen . . . , so ist in der Behandlung doch die gelehrte Art der kallimacheischen Schule unverkennbar: es werden ältere Bücher aller Art nicht nur benutzt, sondern auch zitiert. (Z.B. Antisthenes, Lysias, Gorgias, Hieronymos von Rhodos . . .) Es ist ein gelehrtes Werk nicht minder als ein philosophisches im aristotelischen Sinne." Wilamowitz's catalogue of Satyrus' sources should be treated with caution. For Antisthenes, see Athen. 534c (Satyrus fr.20 K.), for Gorgias, Diog.Laert. 8.58 (Satyrus fr.6 K.), but it is by no means certain that Gorgias' own works were Satyrus' source here: see H. Diels, *SBBerlin* 1884, 343ff; B.A. van Groningen, *ClMed* 17 (1956) 47ff. For Hieronymus of Rhodes, see Diog.Laert. 2.26 (Satyrus fr.10 K., Hieronymus fr.45 Wehrli); however, it is not clear that Satyrus got this story about Socrates the bigamist from Hieronymus. Lysias is not mentioned in the extant fragments of Satyrus, as far as I know, and his inclusion in this list is mysterious.

unsympathetic critic, wrote: "Evidently anecdotes amused Satyrus and facts, as such, did not. He cared about literary style, but he neither knew nor cared about history."<sup>5</sup> Satyrus has not lacked defenders, who have reminded us that the papyrus is mutilated and may not fairly represent the work as a whole. But his most earnest advocates are clearly aware that the *Life of Euripides* does not, at first glance, look like a work of scholarship.

Satyrus' stock has certainly not fallen as much as might have been expected, but it is not my primary purpose to explode his pretensions to scholarship. A writer may be influential and important without being learned or even particularly reliable; Satyrus was clearly influential, and though the details of his personal history do not matter much, it is clearly desirable to set him in the right historical and literary context, or, at any rate, to avoid dogmatically assigning him to the wrong one. I shall argue that there is no particular reason to associate the biographer with Alexandria, and that his date cannot be as precisely established as Wilamowitz thought.

Athenaeus, who cites Satyrus' *Bíoi* in several places, three times calls him *ὁ Περιπατητικός* (248D, 541C, 556A). This might be expected to mean that he had some connection with the Peripatos, but there is a strange consensus among modern writers that it does not, or, at least, not in any ordinary sense. This doctrine derives from Leo:<sup>6</sup> "Von den drei Männern, die in Alexandria selbst den Uebergang von der peripatetischen zur alexandrinischen Biographie vermitteln, heissen zwei Peripatetiker, dem dritten hat man den Namen geben wollen. Vom Peripatos zeigen sie nichts, als den Typus der litterarhistorischen Studien: diese verbunden mit kunstmässig populärer Darstellung geben in dieser Zeit das Recht auf den Namen. Hätten Philochoros Idomeneus Neanthes in Alexandria gesessen, so trügen sie ihn vielleicht so gut wie Satyros Hermippos und auch Sotion."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Euripides and his Age*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford 1946) 13.

<sup>6</sup> *op.cit.* (*supra* n.3) 118.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. K. O. Brink, "Callimachus and Aristotle: an inquiry into Callimachus' ΠΡΟΣ ΠΡΑΣΙΦΑΝΗΝ," *CQ* 40 (1946) 11f: "The name *Περιπατητικός*, which by the middle of the third century B.C. denoted a member of the Peripatetic School in Athens, changed its significance about that time. With the wider influence of Peripatetic studies, it is not only used for the Athenian School but can also denote any writer of biography or literary history connected with Alexandria. The two non-Peripatetics to whom the name appears to have been applied first are two pupils of Callimachus, Hermippus and Satyrus. I think F. Leo (*Gr.Röm.Biogr.* 118) was right in saying that two conditions constitute this new usage of an older name, viz. connexion with Alexandria on the one hand, and the refined form which

It is interesting that Leo's theory (for it is no more) of this rather subtle change in connotation has won such widespread acceptance; on the assumption that any actual connection with the Peripatos was excluded it would have been simpler to argue that Athenaeus and St Jerome, to whom we owe these designations of Satyrus and Hermippus respectively, used *peripateticus* rather imprecisely, as a more interesting synonym for *grammaticus*, or even that they were simply wrong.

Yet there is obviously something strange about this alleged change of meaning. Athenaeus gives no hint that he is using the term 'Peripatetic' in anything less than the literal sense: what did he understand by it? As one leafs through the fragments collected by Wehrli it becomes increasingly difficult to define the interests and methods of a typical Peripatetic. Undoubtedly, certain members of the school of Aristotle had some interests in common. But the Peripatos does not seem, at least in any area of learning relevant to Satyrus, to have been marked by intellectual trends so peculiarly characteristic that an outsider who shared them might be regarded by the rest of the world as, in some sense, an honorary member.

On the other hand, there is no reason why Satyrus should not have lived for a time in Athens and claimed a connection with the Peripatos; though not what it had once been, it continued to function for many generations after the foundation of the Alexandrian Museum. Satyrus undoubtedly had much in common with writers whose claim to membership of the Peripatos is unimpeachable. The *Life of Euripides* itself has obvious affinities with the literary *problemata* popular with Aristotle and his pupils,<sup>8</sup> and the surviving fragment of his work

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Alexandria had bestowed on the literary and biographical studies of the Peripatos"; cf. *id.* *RE s.v. PERIPATOS* (Suppl. 7 [1940] 904); R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship* (Oxford 1968) 150f; J. P. Lynch, *Aristotle's School* (Berkeley 1972) 136f. F. R. Wehrli's decision to exclude Satyrus and Hermippus from *Die Schule des Aristoteles*<sup>2</sup> (Basel 1967-69) reflects the same view.

<sup>8</sup> The question whether Satyrus' work was closer to *problemata*-literature than to biography proper was raised by K. Latte (*ap. A. Dihle, Studien zur griech. Biographie* [Abh Göttingen 1956] 105 Anm.1). Even if we had much more material, it might be hard to decide. Librarians are constantly faced with problems in classifying books with titles like *Shakespeare: the Man and his Work* (biography or English literature?), and the boundary between the two is often vague. The title preserved on the papyrus (*Βίων ἀναγραφῆς σ' Ἀισχύλου Σοφοκλέους Εὐριπίδου*) cannot be taken as reflecting the author's own conception of his work, since there is no guarantee that it goes back to Satyrus himself (*pace Momigliano, op.cit.* [supra n.3] 80). But though the affinities with *problemata*-literature are obvious in the

*Περὶ χαρακτήρων*, quoted by Athenaeus (168c) is well in line with Peripatetic interests, as can be seen from the material assembled by Wehrli in his commentary on Clearchus, *Περὶ βίων* (frs.37–62).

The main reason why it is generally supposed that Satyrus was not a Peripatetic in the strict sense is the assumption that he was an Alexandrian and a pupil of Callimachus. This is not wholly logical, and indeed is seldom stated so bluntly. Even if his Alexandrian connections were well established, they would not automatically exclude an association with the Peripatos at some stage in his life: travel between Athens and Alexandria was not particularly difficult. This may be the explanation to be invoked in the case of Hermippus ‘the Callimachean’ (Athen. 58F, 213F, 696F), if St Jerome’s reference to him as Peripateticus (*De script. eccles.* 1) may be trusted.

But no ancient authority connects Satyrus the biographer with Alexandria, and it cannot be seriously maintained that his researches were so recondite that he would have been unable to prosecute them without the vast resources of the Museum library. Wilamowitz’s picture of Satyrus emphasises the biographer’s scholarly use of his sources, supposedly a reflection of the pinacographical methods of Callimachus. It is therefore worth scrutinizing briefly what the *Life of Euripides* reveals on this point. We look in vain for any reference to Philochorus’ fundamental work on the poet’s life (*FGrHist* 328 F 217–21); still, it may be unfair to press this point, given the lacunose condition of the papyrus. Satyrus’ method of exploiting the evidence of comedy fails to inspire confidence, as does his habit of imposing an autobiographical interpretation on the text of Euripides. In his account of Euripides’ death he reproduces, he tells us, what οἱ λόγοι τε καὶ γεραίτατοι μυθολογοῦσι Μακεδόνων (fr.39 col.xx). The technique of this rather portentous reference to local tradition is reminiscent of a somewhat suspect Herodotean mannerism,<sup>9</sup> and is evidently meant to suggest fieldwork on the spot: it is surely bogus. (If it were genuine, it would of course be highly creditable to Satyrus, but scarcely what we should expect of a pupil of Callimachus.) Admittedly, some scholars have interpreted the references in terms of serious reading in histories

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*Life of Euripides*, the strictly biographical element was presumably more prominent in his treatment of those whose claims on the attention of posterity were not based primarily on their writings—Alcibiades, for instance, or Philip of Macedon.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. D. Fehling, *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot* (Berlin 1971), especially 67ff. For a particularly suspect example of this technique in Herodotus, see 2.75.

of Macedon, but this is obviously not the impression which Satyrus intended to convey; if he in fact derived his information from such works, it would be more scholarly to name them. It is hard to see signs of Callimachean influence here. The fact that Satyrus shared with Hermippus the dubious honour of epitomisation at the hands of Heracleides Lembus is no argument for regarding Satyrus himself as a Callimachean, as some have thought. On the contrary: Heracleides evidently had a taste for epitomising Peripatetic works, most notably Aristotle's *Constitutions*.<sup>10</sup>

More significant is Wilamowitz's argument that the biographer is to be identified with the Satyrus whose work *On the Demes of Alexandria*<sup>11</sup> is cited by the apologist Theophilus of Antioch (*Autol.* 2.94) in the course of a polemic against the absurdity of Greek mythology; the passage which he quotes consists of a genealogy tracing the descent of the Ptolemies from Dionysus, and a list, with brief explanations, of the Dionysiac deme-names introduced by Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–203 B.C.). This revision of the deme-names *ad maiorem Dionysi gloriam* was, in Wilamowitz's view, a short-lived gimmick, and the scholar who recorded them must, he inferred, have been a contemporary: "Die dionysischen Demen sind in den ägyptischen Dokumenten nicht nachweisbar. Es ist eine tolle Spielerei, die freilich dem lüderlichen Philopator zu Gesicht steht. Man kann der Institution nur den Werth einer ephemeren Laune beilegen, den Gelehrten nur am Hofe des Philopator suchen." For Wilamowitz this was exactly the right date and place for the biographer, and he regarded the identification as established.

This argument now looks very shaky; it never commanded universal assent. The name itself is common, as Wilamowitz himself ad-

<sup>10</sup> See H. Bloch *TAPA* 71 (1940) 27–39, cf. M. Dilts, *GRBM* 5 (1971) 8.

<sup>11</sup> *FGrHist* 631: on the text of this passage, see appendix. It does not much matter whether this was a monograph on the demes, or whether Theophilus' phrase *ἱστορῶν τοὺς δήμους τῶν Ἀλεξανδρέων* merely indicates the context within a work of wider scope; I suspect that Theophilus intended the former, though he may not have known the book at first hand. He takes over from Josephus, without acknowledgement, a list of the kings of Tyre as recorded by Menander of Ephesus (3.22) and a list of Pharaohs derived from Manetho (3.20); he has a remarkable *penchant* for genealogical lists, but, as Bardy observes in his introduction (*Théophile d'Antioche: Trois livres à Autolycus* [Paris 1948] 53), "on ne peut pas s'empêcher de remarquer que, dans tous ces calculs, le Sauveur ne tient aucune place," and the *Old Testament* balance of his work is striking. I suspect that he exploited the labours of Jewish apologists wherever possible; the Alexandrian Jews, at least, had good reason to remember Philopator's Dionysiac enthusiasm.

mitted, and many scholars have therefore remained sceptical; from Egypt alone we now have more than fifty instances of the name, many of them Ptolemaic.<sup>12</sup> We have seen that there is no objective evidence to associate Satyrus the biographer with Alexandria, so that even if the two namesakes could be shewn to have been writing at the same date, there is no reason to think they were working in the same place, and, even if they were, the name is so common that the coincidence does not provide an adequate basis for further argument.

It is not easy to establish the date of either writer securely. There is no useful *terminus post quem* for the biographer if we cannot argue from Callimachean influence. A *terminus ante quem* is provided by the date of his epitomator, Heracleides Lembus, who flourished under Ptolemy VI Philometor (181/0–145),<sup>13</sup> but it is hard to say what would be a reasonable interval between composition and epitomisation. Satyrus' error about the name of Empedocles' father (Diog. Laert. 8.53) suggested to Wilamowitz that he must have written before Eratosthenes drew up his list of Olympic victors, since Satyrus would have had no difficulty on this point if he had consulted Eratosthenes' work. Eratosthenes' own dates are somewhat problematic, but it seems most likely that he died early in the reign of Ptolemy V, in the closing years of the third century.<sup>14</sup> However, this slight clue was more useful to Wilamowitz than it is to me, because, while it goes without saying that his scholarly Alexandrian Satyrus would have consulted Eratosthenes' list had it existed, I can scarcely claim as much for the Athenian-based dilettante whom I have been describing. As for the historian's date, we now know that some at least of the Dionysiac demotics outlasted Philopator's reign and are attested in documents of the second century B.C. or later;<sup>15</sup> a serious researcher could no doubt have extracted this information some time after the event, and there is no real reason to suppose that the historian was himself contemporary with their introduction.

Since 1962 interest in the question has revived with the publication of *P.Oxy.* 2465,<sup>16</sup> which preserves the genealogy quoted by Theophilus,

<sup>12</sup> See F. Preisigke, *Namenbuch* (Heidelberg 1922), and D. Foraboschi, *Onomasticon alterum papyrologicum* (Milan 1967) s.v. Σάτυρος.

<sup>13</sup> See *RE* 8 (1912) 488ff.

<sup>14</sup> See Pfeiffer, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.7) 153f.

<sup>15</sup> See P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria* (Oxford 1972) I 44, II 121.

<sup>16</sup> *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* XXVII, ed. Turner, Rea, Koenen and Pomar (London 1962) pp.118ff; Pack<sup>2</sup> 1457. So far as I know, no one has questioned the identification of *P.Oxy.*

some information about demotics, and interesting extracts from regulations for the cult of Arsinoe Philadelphus.<sup>17</sup> However, nothing in the new fragments argues for identifying historian and biographer; they are austere and factual, and no concessions, either in style or in content, are made to the casual reader. There is a great gulf between this text and the chatty dialogue of the *Life of Euripides* with its manifest indifference to historical fact.

It is surprising that, though many scholars have expressed some scepticism about Wilamowitz's identification of the Alexandrian historian with the biographer, no one has raised the question whether there is anything to connect the latter with Alexandria; Wilamowitz's conclusions were accepted even though half the supporting argument was not, partly, I suspect, because the common habit of using 'Alexandrian' as a synonym for 'Hellenistic' has confused the issue. At all events, alleged Callimachean influence seems a precarious basis for further deduction.

There is, then, no objective evidence to associate the biographer with Alexandria, or indeed with any part of Egypt.<sup>18</sup> Satyrus, as we learn from the unknown author of *P.Herc.* 558,<sup>19</sup> came from Callatis

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2465 with the work cited by Theophilus, and so long as we distinguish the historian from the biographer, the point is unimportant; the difference between a further fragment of an author who is only a name to us and a fragment by an unknown author with similar interests is negligible. But the coincidence with Theophilus' citation proves less than has generally been supposed. There is no reason to think Satyrus enjoyed a monopoly of this information; he did not invent the genealogy which made Dionysus the ancestor of the Ptolemies, nor its connection with the deme-names; this was, for a time, the official line and a fact in the history of Alexandria relevant not only to the study of constitutional antiquities but to the wider topic of Philopator's peculiar devotion to Dionysus. A genealogy offers little scope for stylistic variation; if the facts are agreed its course is predictable, except that some writers may be more generous than others in giving details of marriages. The papyrus is certainly fuller in this respect than the extract in Theophilus.

<sup>17</sup> See the discussion by L. Robert, "Un décret d'Ilion et un papyrus concernant des cultes nouveaux," *Essays in Honor of C. Bradford Welles* (*AmStudPap* I, New Haven 1966) 175ff.

<sup>18</sup> I relegate to a footnote the very odd argument of A. Gudeman (*RE* sv. SATYROS 16) that he may have lived in Oxyrhynchus, "wo das grosse Bruchstück seines Hauptwerkes gefunden wurde und wo auch dessen Epitomator Herakleides Lembos lebte (Suidas s.v. nennt ihn Ὁξυρρυγχίτης), ein seltsames Zusammentreffen, auf das schon Hunt aufmerksam machte und das noch merkwürdiger sich gestaltet, wenn Herakleides (nach Diog.Laert. v 94 Καλλαστιανός ἢ Ἀλεξανδρεὺς) obendrein ein Landsman des S. war." None of this creates any probability that Satyrus himself had anything to do with Oxyrhynchus.

<sup>19</sup> W. Crönert, "Herculanensische Bruchstücke einer Geschichte des Sokrates u. seiner Schule," *RhM* 57 (1902) 295: fr.11 K.; Satyrus ὁ Καλλαστιανός is cited for a detail concerning Socrates' death and his disciple Apollodorus. The writer from Callatis is not explicitly identified with the Peripatetic, but we know that the latter wrote a life of Socrates (Diog.

on the Black Sea. No doubt this was no place for a man with literary ambitions. But there is no reason to suppose that the attraction of Alexandria was irresistible, and Satyrus shared many interests with writers whose association with the Peripatos is beyond suspicion: the burden of proof surely lies with those who would remove him from their company.

### APPENDIX: ON THE TEXT OF *FGrHist* 631

Jacoby's text leaves room for improvement. The genealogy begins *Διονύκου καὶ Ἀλθαίας τῆς Θεστίου γεγενῆσθαι Δηιάνειραν· τῆς δὲ καὶ Ἡρακλέους τοῦ Διὸς οἶμαι Ὑλλον.* οἶμαι has no business here; it is absent from V, the primary ms., and editors of Theophilus (Otto [1861], Bardy [1948], Grant [1970]) omit (or bracket) the word; it is obviously a sarcastic Christian comment, and it is reassuring to find that Theophilus was not responsible for its insertion.

The second part of the extract calls for more thoroughgoing revision. The oddity of the feminine forms of the deme-names (*Ἀλθηίς, Δηιανειρίς, Ἀριαδνηίς* etc.) was noted by Dittenberger in connection with the demotic *Μαρωνεύς* (OGIS I p.167f); he proposed a simple solution: "Quod et hic et reliqui omnes demi a Satyro enumerati nomina feminini generis in *-ίς* cadentia habere videntur, sine dubio ad vocalium confusionem Byzantinam redit; restitue igitur *Μαρωνεῖς* itemque *Ἀλθαίεῖς Δηιανειρεῖς Ἀριαδνεῖς Θεστιεῖς Θεοαντεῖς Σταφυλεῖς Εὐανθεῖς.*" Several of these forms in *-ίς* are in fact the product of emendation where the mss. give endings in *-εῖς* or *-ης*. The clause *παιδὸς πατροφίλας τῆς μιχθείσης Διονύω ἐν μορφῇ πρυμνίδι* is an old crux, to which *P.Oxy.* 2465 has provided a solution. Müller realised that this clause must refer to another deme, and that there was a lacuna in the text of Theophilus; the attempts of more conservative scholars to take the words as a description of Ariadne are more ingenious than convincing. The papyrus mentions (fr.3 col.ii 13) Bacchis, the founder of the Bacchiad house of Corinth, as son of Prymnis, and the context suggests that this is part of an explanation of the (otherwise unattested) demotic *Βακχιεύς*. H. Lloyd-Jones (*Gnomon* 35 [1963] 454) accordingly proposed reading here <*Βακχηίς* (better *Βακχιεῖς*) ἀπὸ *Βακχίδος τοῦ*> *παιδὸς Πατροφίλας τῆς μιχθείσης Διονύω ἐν μορφῇ Πρυμνίδος* (Pape gives two instances of the name Patrophila, *Anth.Pal.* 7.221, IG XIV 1350; the persistence of the Doric form is interesting). Between Staphylus and

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Laert. 2.26, Athen. 555D–556A: fr.9 K.), and the identification is surely beyond reasonable doubt; very likely this information came from the opening of Satyrus' work. I am indebted to Professor F. Sbordone for an excellent photograph of the papyrus.



Maron stood the name of another son of Dionysus, badly corrupted in the MSS (*Εὐανις ἀπὸ Εὐνοός*, *Εὐαινις ἀπὸ Εὐνόωε*); Müller was surely right to see here a reference to Euanthes, who, like Thoas and Staphylus, was a son of Ariadne and Dionysus (schol. *ad* Ap.Rhod. 3.997).

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