

Sotades on kings*

1. There is a mouse crouching and a lion hiding in one of the many anecdotes that Athenaeus collected for anyone who cares to listen. I hope to show that these two animals can tell us an intriguing tale – more and more so the further it proceeds – about powerful kings, a forgotten poet, and a lost book. Here is where the story begins (XIV 616d-e):

καὶ Ταχῶς δ' ὁ Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεὺς Ἀγησίλαον σκώψας τὸν Λακεδαιμονίων βασιλέα, ὅτ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ συμμαχήσων (ἦν γὰρ βραχὺς τὸ σῶμα), ιδιότης ἐγένετο, ἀποστάντος ἐκείνου τῆς συμμαχίας. τὸ δὲ σκῶμμα τοῦτ' ἦν·

“ὄδινεν ὄρος, Ζεὺς δ' ἐφοβεῖτο, τὸ δ' ἔτεκεν μῦν” (Sotad. fr. 22 Pow.). ὅπερ ἀκούσας ὁ Ἀγησίλαος καὶ ὀργισθεὶς ἔφη “φανήσομαί σοί ποτε καὶ λέων”. ὕστερον γὰρ ἀφισταμένων τῶν Αἰγυπτίων, ὡς φησι Θεόπομπος (*FGrHist* 115 F 108) καὶ Λυκέας ὁ Ναυκρατίτης ἐν τοῖς Αἰγυπτιακοῖς (*FGrHist* 613 F 2), οὐδὲν αὐτῷ συμπράξας ἐποίησεν ἐκπεσόντα τῆς ἀρχῆς φυγεῖν εἰς Πέρσας.

«So too when the Egyptian king Tachos mocked Agesilaus, the king of Sparta, when Agesilaus visited him in the hope of forming an alliance, because Agesilaus was not very tall, he was reduced to a private citizen when Agesilaus abandoned the alliance. The mocking remark was as follows:

“A mountain was in labour, and Zeus was terrified; but what it bore was a mouse”. When Agesilaus heard this, he became angry and said: “Someday I’ll look like a lion to you!”; for later on, when the Egyptians revolted, according to Theopompus and Lyceas of Naucratis in his *History of Egypt*, he refused to cooperate with Tachos, and deposed him and drove him into exile in Persia»¹.

If this passage is well known then it is only because it captures the attention of those scholars who have been looking for the source of the famous proverb as immortalized by Horace at *Ars* 139²:

* I am grateful to Mikołaj Szymański and to the editors and referees of «Eikasmós» for shrewd comments and helpful criticisms.

¹ Transl. Olson 2011, 115-117, slightly altered.

² For an extensive account of the history of the proverb and its mutations, see Tosi, *DSL*² no. 1507.

parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

It is difficult to overlook the resemblance of this verse to how King Tachos commented, according to Athenaeus, on Agesilaus' unimpressive stature:

ὄδινεν ὄρος, Ζεὺς δ' ἐφοβεῖτο, τὸ δ' ἔτεκεν μῦν.

The Sotadean structure of this proverb – the verse is a catalectic Ionic tetrameter *a maiore*, with a resolution in the third foot – was recognized as early as by Crusius (1887, 23), and probably much earlier. West (1982, 144) believes that this is «the oldest example» of the Sotadean, although he adds more cautiously that it «is ascribed to the Egyptian king Tachos», not that it was actually conceived by Tachos, which is, as a matter of fact, rather unlikely. For whereas the short-lived, unconsummated alliance of Tachos and Agesilaus is to be placed *c.* 360 BC, the Σωτάδειον (i.e. Sotadean verse), as its name suggests (cf. Dion. Hal. *Comp. verb.* 17,1-5 U.-R. and Heph. 36,6-12 Consbr.), was probably a later invention. It was named after the poet Sotades of Maroneia, who was active under the reign of Ptolemy II (the main source for his *floruit* is the famous passage in Athenaeus which I will discuss below). In view of the lack of other evidence, the fact that a solitary Sotadean is put in the mouth of King Tachos in an anecdote told by Athenaeus – an anecdote whose exact historicity may be well doubted – is a poor reason to deprive Sotades of the title of the πρῶτος εὐρετής of the catalectic Ionic tetrameter *a maiore*, used stichically, even if in some cases it is uncertain whether the poet after whom a verse is named was its inventor³.

Who was he, then, that gave Tachos' mocking remark its present form of a Sotadean? Immisch (1932, 25) was ready to attribute this skit to the poet Sotades of Maroneia himself. Although this attribution has recently been accepted by Calboli (2002) in his discussion of the possible sources of Hor. *Ars* 139, those scholars who have been interested in Sotades rather than in Horace were not eager to accept the Sotadean authorship. Powell in the *Collectanea Alexandrina* places this verse among the *incerta* (Sotad. fr. 22 Pow.), and Magnelli (2008, 299 n. 3) thinks that its place is undoubtedly among the *spuria*. Magnelli, as it seems, is inclined to assume, with Gallavotti (1982, 78 n. 6), that the proverb received the metrical shape at some point after Sotades had composed his poems, since the Sotadean verse was widespread in the Hellenistic age, and especially in Egypt in the first centuries AD.

Before I offer my own answer to the question about the authorship of Sotad. fr. 22 Pow., let us have a careful look at the lion whose mention in the anecdote quoted above has, until now, not attracted much attention. As a matter of fact,

³ Cf. Gow-Page 1965, 459 on Phalaecus and the Phalaecian hendecasyllable, and Sens 2011, XXXIII on Asclepiades and the Asclepiadean verse.

there is something historically unfair in the fact that – thanks to Horace – the Egyptian king’s comment on his Greek colleague’s stature has become much more famous than Agesilaus’ witty response to the childishly rude remark. The point of the anecdote is, after all, that even despite being short, Agesilaus proved to be no weaker in words than his Egyptian counterpart, and even stronger in deeds, for without Agesilaus’ help Tachos was forced to flee from his kingdom. However, Tachos might be thought to have beaten Agesilaus in one respect – his words form an elegant Sotadean, whereas Agesilaus’ response is apparently unmetrical:

φανήσομαί σοί ποτε καὶ λέων
 ∪ – ∪ – – ∪ ∪ – ∪ –

But is it true that no metrical pattern can be detected here? To my knowledge, only one attempt has been made to recognize in this saying a verse: Gentili and Lomiento (2008, 177) suggested that this is *ia hemiascl II*. Although I think that Gentili and Lomiento take us in the right direction when they make us consider the possibility that the response to Tachos’ metrical skit also has a metrical form, it must be said that it is difficult to think of a context within which a Sotadean verse might be followed by a lyric colon, and on the whole this interpretation fails to be convincing. Yet one question leads to another – if Agesilaus’ retort can have a metrical form, then perhaps this can be fitted into a Sotadean? The answer is yes, it actually can, although a prerequisite is the assumption that these words were rather unceremoniously wrenched out of the verse to which they originally belonged. One possibility is that a long monosyllable is missing at the beginning of the verse (unless the missing word consisted of two shorts), and that there are three more syllables missing at its end⁴.

∞ φανήσομαί σοί ποτε καὶ λέων ∪ – ∞

Although there is no exact parallel for the unresolved Sotadean with anaclases in the first and third foot among the twelve extant verses that are commonly believed to have been composed by Sotades himself (frs. 1-4 and 16 Pow.), there are parallels among the Sotadean *spuria* (e.g. fr. 6,4 Pow. εὐσεβῆς τίς ἐστιν; πενίαν δέδωκεν αὐτῶι), and, on the whole, it is not inconceivable that Sotades allowed such a pattern in his poetry. The undoubtedly genuine fr. 2 Pow. is rich in anaclases (and resolutions), and the only difference between its third line and what we are looking for is one resolution in the first *metron*:

ὁ δ’ ἀποστεγάσας τὸ τρῆμα τῆς ὀπισθε λαύρης

⁴ On the Sotadean metre, see West 1982, 144f.

διὰ δεινδοφόρου φάραγγος ἐξέωσε βροντὴν
ἠλέματον, ὀκοίην ἄροτῆρ γέρον χαλαῖ βοῦς.

υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-
υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-
-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-υ-

«He opened up the hole of his back alley
and expelled an idle blast through his bushy
crack, the type an old plow-ox lets loose»⁵.

Alternatively, we could assume that Tachos' words were once the second part of the verse of which the five initial syllables are lacking, if we agreed to regard λέων as monosyllabic by synizesis⁶:

--υ-υ- φανήσομαί σοί ποτε καὶ λέων

For an instance of synizesis in Sotades' poetry, cf. fr. 4b,2 Pow. Of course, resolutions and anaclasis in the missing part of the verse are a possibility.

Additionally, either of these proposals would conform to the tendency of Sotadeans in that both avoid, or could easily avoid, word breaks that would coincide with the end of the first *metron* (this is well illustrated by the just quoted fr. 2; fr. 6,4 offends against this rule)⁷. All in all, there seems to be no reason to prevent us from assuming that Agesilaus' riposte to Tachos as quoted by Athenaeus is part of a Sotadean verse⁸.

The next step in our argument is, inevitably, to ask ourselves why Tachos and Agesilaus would have spoken in Sotadeans. The most obvious answer to this question is that their conversation, as related by Athenaeus, consists of two fragments of a longer poem, composed in Sotadeans, which told the anecdote about the encounter between the two kings that had disastrous consequences for the Egyptian ruler. At the same time this assumption provides a possible answer to the question as to why Agesilaus' utterance does not form a full verse – perhaps what is missing from this fragment is the narrative frame by which the response

⁵ Transl. Olson 2011, 139.

⁶ For suggesting this solution, which is perhaps preferable to my own proposal, I am much indebted to Marco Ercoles.

⁷ This tendency was noticed by Koch 1926, 75.

⁸ The authorship of this arguably Sotadean fragment will be discussed below, but we can note at this point that there is no linguistic reason to assume that these words could not have been written by Sotades himself. For the form ποτε (instead of the Ionic ποτε), cf. fr. 16 Pow. It is curious that Call. *Aet.* III fr. 174,4f. Mass. = 75,4f. Harder has the Ionic form ποτε, although Sotad. fr. 16 Pow., to which Callimachus probably alludes (see n. 13 below), has ποτε – it is unclear, at least to me, whether the paradoses should be trusted or not.

to Tachos was introduced⁹. The question that persists, however, is who might have been the author of this poem.

2. We know very well a poet who was famous for composing poetry on kings in the Sotadean metre – Sotades himself was such a poet. His most notorious poem is the invective against King Ptolemy II and his wife-sister Arsinoe II, about which we learn from Athenaeus (XIV 620e-621b) and Ps.-Plutarch (*Lib. ed.* 11a). Since Pretagostini's ingenious and insightful discussion of what he recognized as two fragments of that lost poem¹⁰, it is usually accepted that Hephaestion (36,12 Consbr.) preserves the poem's *incipit* (fr. 16 Pow.):

Ἦρον ποτέ φασιν Δία τὸν τερπικέραυνον

According to Pretagostini's proposal, the famous fr. 1 Pow., which we have owing to Athenaeus and Ps.-Plutarch, was a part of the same invective, and probably its climactic ending¹¹:

εἰς οὐχ ὀσίην τρουμαλὴν τὸ κέντρον ὠθεῖς¹².

The notoriety of this verbal attack upon the king, which allegedly led to Sotades' death (according to Athenaeus) or life imprisonment (according to Ps.-Plutarch), has put in the shade everything else that Sotades wrote: his other invectives, such as fr. 2 Pow. (quoted above), his *Iliad* rewritten in Sotadeans (frr. 4a-c Pow.), and

⁹ If one or two syllables are missing at the beginning of the verse, then the first word may have been ὄτι or perhaps ὡς (the latter is rarely used to introduce indirect discourse, yet note that this is how Agesilaus' retort is introduced in the *Epitome* of Athenaeus; see my apparatus to fr. 1 in the appendix).

¹⁰ See Pretagostini 1984, 139-147; cf. e.g. Fantuzzi-Hunter 2004, 62. Further literature in Magnelli 2008, 308 n. 45.

¹¹ Cf. Cameron 1995, 20.

¹² Pretagostini (1984, 146f.) persuasively developed an old suggestion made by Escher (1913, 23 n. 1) that Call. *Aet.* III fr. 174,4f. Mass. = 75,4f. Harder alludes to fr. 16. For an alternative (and on the whole implausible) reading of fr. 16 as an allusion to an act of divine *fellatio*, see White 2000 and Giangrande 2004 (this interpretation had some appeal for Durbec 2005 and Prioux 2009, 115-125). For the reasons for dismissing this reading, see Magnelli 2008, 307-309 and Kwapisz 2009, 91 n. 19. The editors usually print at the end of fr. 1 ὠθεῖς, which is the variant offered by the text of Ps.-Plutarch, whereas the mss. of Athenaeus have either ὄθει or ὠθεῖ (for a detailed discussion of these variants, see Lorenzoni 2001, 220). Pretagostini preferred ὄθει, the unaugmented third-person imperfect, with which the line would have spoken of Zeus and could have referred to Ptolemy only indirectly (similarly, Cameron thinks of ὠθεῖ). Note that ὄθει as the second-person imperative would not be impossible in a sort of mock advice to King Ptolemy; cf. Kwapisz 2009, 92. It is difficult to choose between these variants, but see below for my reasons for printing ὠθεῖς.

poems on mythological themes from which we have only the *incipit* of an *Adonis* (fr. 3 Pow.) and several titles given by the *Suda* (fr. 5 Pow.). From our point of view, however, what deserves special attention is the overlooked evidence that Sotades' poems on kings were not limited to the invective against the Ptolemies. For, before Athenaeus quotes fr. 1 Pow., he mentions an intriguing document – a treatise on Sotades' poetry written by his son Apollonius (Ath. XIV 620f):

ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ οὗτος περὶ τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς ποιημάτων σύγγραμμα,
ἐξ οὗ ἔστι κατιδεῖν τὴν ἄκαιρον παρρησίαν τοῦ Σωτάδου, κακῶς
μὲν εἰπόντος Λυσίμαχον τὸν βασιλέα ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ, Πτολεμαῖον
δὲ τὸν Φιλάδελλον παρὰ Λυσιμάχῳ, καὶ ἄλλους τῶν βασιλέων ἐν
ἄλλαις τῶν πόλεων.

«The latter also wrote a treatise on his father's poems, which allows one to catch a glimpse of Sotades' tendency to open his mouth at the wrong moment, as when he criticized King Lysimachus in Alexandria, Ptolemy Philadelphus in Lysimachus' court, and other kings in other cities»¹³.

This important testimony should have a place in editions of Sotades' poetry, as it explicitly testifies to the existence of a whole series of poems criticizing Hellenistic rulers, including, but not limited to, Ptolemy and Lysimachus. There is also more indirect evidence that perhaps may be taken to confirm Sotades' reputation as a teacher of kings. A certain number of Sotadean verses which clearly manifest Cynic themes are preserved by Stobaeus (frr. 6-15 Pow.)¹⁴. Stobaeus ascribes these to Sotades, but the attribution is commonly rejected on the ground of their liberal, Roman-flavoured treatment of metre and their linguistic features, and also because their overtly moralizing content is different from the themes which are believed to characterize Sotades' poetry¹⁵. However, Pretagostini (2007, 147) suggested – convincingly, to my mind – that the fact that Sotades' poem became famous as an expression of *parrhesia* aimed at criticizing the *hybris* of the Ptolemaic royal couple in a way which resembled the political stance of Cynic philosophers facilitated attribution of didactic verses with a Cynic tinge to the inventor of the Sotadean verse. Pretagostini's suggestion gains in attractiveness when we realize that Sotades' poems probably addressed various Hellenistic rulers besides Philadelphus, and therefore had a more general application. Perhaps the tone of the late Ps.-Sotadean verses, however remote from Sotades' genuine poetry, was not as remote from it as is usually believed.

As a matter of fact, Pretagostini pointed out that one of the moralizing verses preserved by Stobaeus is an admonishment to monarchs (Sotad. fr. 9,1 Pow.):

¹³ Transl. Olson 2011, 137.

¹⁴ The fullest discussion of these Sotadeans is provided by Pretagostini 2007, 139-147.

¹⁵ See esp. Bettini 1982, 65-70.

εἰ καὶ βασιλεὺς πέφυκας, ὡς θνητὸς ἄκουσον.

A possibility that deserves serious consideration, I think, is that this may be a genuine fragment of one of Sotades' poems on kings¹⁶. As far as the metre of this verse is concerned, this is a regular Sotadean with a single anaclassis. In Stobaeus this is the first verse in a cluster of eight Sotadeans grouped under the caption Σωτάδου, of which the six that follow begin with ἄν and the last begins with ἦ, and therefore O. Hense may have been right in conjecturing that this was a part of the same *gnomologion*, undoubtedly of a late date, consisting of alphabetically arranged Sotadeans whose fragment we find elsewhere in Stobaeus (Sotad. fr. 7 Pow.)¹⁷. Yet the first verse that addresses a king begins with εἰ, and thus breaks the alphabetical order. A possible explanation is that this is Stobaeus' addition to the fragment of the *gnomologion*, and that this verse was extracted from a genuine poem by Sotades – as such it was given a prominent place before evidently later verses.

After this digression, let us now return to Athenaeus' account. What it suggests is that Sotades was a sort of court jester travelling from one kingdom to another and making a living from poking fun at Hellenistic rulers. Although we know that some amount of *parrhesia* was cherished at Hellenistic royal symposia¹⁸, there is something fantastic in the story of the humble poet whose calling was to travel around the Mediterranean world in order to teach haughty monarchs lessons on Greek democratic principles. A similar tinge of romance may be detected in the story of Sotades' death as told by Athenaeus after Hegesander, whose reputation today is of «an unreliable gossip-writer»¹⁹. According to that account, after insulting the royal couple, Sotades escaped from Alexandria, but was hunted down by Ptolemy's powerful commander Patroclus, who put the poet in a lead coffin (as Seth did with Osiris!), which he threw into the sea²⁰. We may note that this would imply, incidentally, that Sotades broke the rule of not insulting the king at whose court he was staying. All in all, the credibility of these accounts about Sotades' life is doubtful, even if we are willing to take a more optimistic stance towards the possibility of discerning fact from fiction in what our sources tell us about the lives of Hellenistic poets²¹.

¹⁶ For this suggestion, I am grateful to Mikołaj Szymański.

¹⁷ See Hense 1894, 590.

¹⁸ See Cameron 1995, 98f.

¹⁹ Wycherley 1957, 105; cf. Pelling 1996.

²⁰ Hegesander's account was first described as «reichlich novellistisch» by Aly 1927, 1207. Cf. Hunter 1996, 79, who speaks of «the real or alleged fate of Sotades».

²¹ For a pessimistic view on the factual value of the biographical accounts of the lives of Hellenistic poets, see Lefkowitz 2012, 113-127 (esp. 127); in her study of biographical accounts of earlier poets, Kivilo 2010, esp. 223-226, cautiously defends a more optimistic position. It is perhaps best to underscore, with Hägg 2012, 94, the diversity in practice of Hellenistic biography

We certainly cannot exclude the possibility that Sotades delivered his poems on kings orally, either in front of the kings themselves – at symposia, as Cameron (1995, 98) suggested – or otherwise. However, in the light of what we know about the practices of poetic communication in the Hellenistic epoch, mentioning a series of poems on the same theme inevitably brings to mind another possibility: that the poems were from the very beginning intended to be included in a poetry book (of course these possibilities do not exclude each other). It is noteworthy, in this context, that Sotades' attempt to rewrite the *Iliad* in Ionic metre was probably an emphatically bookish project, as its mere scale suggests²². A strong indication that Sotades' poetry had a firm place in Hellenistic book culture is the fact that Athenaeus (XIV 620f) attests the existence of two treatises on his poetry – besides the work by Sotades' son Apollonius, Athenaeus mentions a *syngramma* written by the second-century BC grammarian Carystius of Pergamum²³. If the aim of these works was to comment on Sotades' poetry, as can be inferred from Athenaeus' mention that Apollonius also (i.e. besides Carystius) wrote *περὶ τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς ποιημάτων*, then we perhaps should envisage books that had a form similar to the commentaries on Hellenistic poetry as preserved in third-century papyri – such as, for instance, the commentary to the *Riddle of the Oyster* (SH 983s.). A book of Sotades' *ποιήματα* would have been the basis for commentaries by Apollonius and Carystius. Yet, perhaps the clearest indication that Sotades was a bookish poet is the fact that we now seem to have the fragments of two poems on the same theme, both composed in Sotadeans, which appear to be interconnected in various ways²⁴.

3. A *caveat* is in place here. 'Book' and 'poem' are imprecise terms when we speak of Hellenistic poetry. It is certainly possible that Sotades' postulated *Περὶ βασιλέων* took the form of a longer collective poem in which passages on different monarchs were embedded and ordered by some sort of frame – Callimachus' *Aetia* or Hermesianax' *Leontion* might provide parallels. It is no less likely, however, that Sotades formatted his collection as a book of separate poems, either

and, accordingly, to avoid generalizations. Erler-Schorn (2007), a recent collection of essays, illustrates the richness of Hellenistic biographical tradition.

²² For an assessment of Sotades' *Iliad* as a typical product of playful Alexandrian virtuosity, see Pretagostini 2007, 142. See, however, Magnelli 2008, 305f., who attractively suggests the possibility of a more nuanced view of this poem as differing from Homer in *ethos* and as reflecting on the historical context of the first half of the third century BC.

²³ On Carystius, see Jacoby 1919. It is perhaps not by accident that a work on the poet whose anti-Ptolemaic stance is famous can be associated with Pergamum.

²⁴ Analogously, cf. e.g. the cluster of three epigrams on gluttons at Ath. VIII 344f-345b, which must have been excerpted by Athenaeus from Hedylus' epigram book; see Gutzwiller 1998, 173f. Of course, the publication of the Milan Posidippus has considerably increased our awareness of the strategies used to maintain thematic coherence within Hellenistic poetry books – see Gutzwiller 2005.

longer, like Theocritus' *Idylls* or Cercidas' *Meliambes*, or shorter, like epigrams. The question of the form must remain unanswered, but perhaps the problem is of secondary concern to the present argument – what one should keep in mind is that in the time of Sotades, the distinction between the two types of poetry books was not as sharp as we might tend to see it today. It was the time, after all, when in poetry books containing short poems, as for instance epigrammatic collections, the standard visual indication as to where one poem ended and another began was a short horizontal line in the left margin (*paragraphos*)²⁵. Below I will speak of Sotades' two poems on kings, yet it is not my intention to suggest that these postulated pieces were clearly separate wholes; in fact, it is quite the opposite – it is remarkable how they resonate with and shed light on each other.

First, however, a rather obvious difference between the two poems has to be noted – the invective against Philadelphus focused on a ruler who was a contemporary of Sotades, whereas in the poem on the encounter between Tachos and Agesilaus, Sotades would have been dealing with an event from the past. Yet, this past is, in more than a chronological sense, intriguingly not distant from Sotades. Sotades' audience, especially the Greeks in Egypt, must have been able to appreciate the topicality of the poem which highlighted the catastrophic arrogance of an Egyptian monarch. I believe that the moral of end of the old pharaohs' rule had a special ring to the inhabitants of newly founded Hellenistic kingdoms. Yet, we should be careful not to overemphasize the possible political undertones of Sotades' poem on Tachos and Agesilaus. For, essentially, this story can be read as a variant of a paradigmatic tale of how a wise Greek advises, teaches or even outwits a powerful (often foreign) tyrant – the tale whose most famous incarnations in literary tradition are the meetings between Croesus and Solon as narrated by Herodotus (I 29-34) and, from a strictly Athenian perspective, between Hiero and Simonides as narrated in Xenophon's dialogue²⁶. It would not be surprising if more poems in Sotades' collection *Περὶ βασιλέων*, now lost, had conformed to this paradigm. Modern scholars have perhaps too readily followed Athenaeus' and Ps.-Plutarch's suggestion that

²⁵ A possible example of how a Hellenistic poet took advantage of this indefiniteness may be found among the series of epigrams on stones in the Milan Papyrus of Posidippus – were it not for the *paragraphos* to separate two poems, it would be difficult to decide whether epp. 19f. A.-B. were intended by the poet to be companion poems (both poems are a part of the section of epigrams on stones, but the latter has no mention of a stone) or rather one continuous poem. Cf. Bastianini-Gallazzi 2001, 133. For another example, see Philitt. fr. 13 Sbard. = 23 Span. = 7 Lightf. (with the apparatus in any of the editions) – one poem or two?

²⁶ On the literary tradition of such meetings and on its recognition already in antiquity, see Grey 1986, esp. 119-122. The manifestations of the motif of 'wise adviser' are numerous in Herodotus; cf. Lattimore 1939. The motif of the instruction of a king by a sage finds many parallels, and is rooted, in oriental wisdom literature; see Reinhardt 1960, 170; West 1997, 78, 306f.; Adrados 1999, 665-673.

Sotades' verbal attack on Philadelphus was an act of political nonconformism²⁷. If my proposal that Sotades composed the poem on Tachos and Agesilaus, which was structured as a dialogue, can be accepted, then this would open the door for speculation that the poem on the incestuous marriage of Ptolemy and Arsinoe may have had a similar form. Fr. 1 Pow., which addresses Ptolemy, is on this reading an equivalent of Agesilaus' response to Tachos – a rebuke spoken by a wise one to a powerful one. Whose voice is it? Certainty is beyond reach, but it is tempting to picture that, as in the paradigmatic encounter between Hiero and Simonides, it was a poet that Sotades cast in the role of the wise one – perhaps this person was Sotades himself. The form ὄθεϊς would be preferable to other textual variants, since a direct address to the king is expected in such a dialogue. Note that this finds an additional parallel in Sotad. fr. 9,1 Pow. as quoted above, which is another instance of addressing a monarch by a sage. It is still possible that Sotades' poem ended with fr. 1; and that fr. 16 Pow., which evokes the *hieros gamos* of Zeus and Hera, was this poem's beginning remains our best guess. We cannot be sure, however, whether the latter fragment was a part of the narrative frame in which the dialogue was embedded or if these words were spoken by one of the dialogue's speakers – either by Ptolemy, in an effort to legitimize his marriage by comparing it to the *hieros gamos*, which would have parroted the praises Ptolemy heard from the poets of his court²⁸, or by his interlocutor, who was to point out the absurdity of such a comparison. It is natural to assume that in Sotades' collection of poems on kings, the poem on Philadelphus was preceded by the poem on Tachos and Agesilaus, which narrated chronologically prior events.

There was yet another reminiscence of Greek literary tradition that Sotades' poems resonated with – a feature which the fragments of these poems share is their Aesopic tone. This is particularly appropriate in poems influenced by the tradition of the dialogue between a mighty one and a wise one, as the role of the wise one sent on an embassy to a powerful ruler was not alien to Aesop (cf. *Vit. Aesop.* 98-100). It has long been suggested that the Horatian proverb which we first find in Sotad. fr. 22 Pow. had a source in an Aesopic fable²⁹. The cleverness of Agesilaus' response to the insult can be fully appreciated only after we realize that he recognized the Aesopic tone in Tachos' words and used it against his adversary by alluding in his riposte to one of the most emblematic of Aesopic fables, namely, the fable in which a lion learns about the power of a mouse (for two instances of this motif, see Aesop. 146 and 150 Perry). In the case of Sotades' poem on Ptolemy

²⁷ E.g. Pretagostini 2007, 138. Pretagostini makes an attempt to uncover the political undertones of fr. 1 Pow. by observing that the word κέντρον may have been used by Sotades not only because of its obvious sexual suggestiveness, but also because κέντρον was one of royal attributes (cf. Lorenzoni 2001, 221f.).

²⁸ Cf. esp. Theocr. 17,131-134 with Hunter 2003, 192f.; see also Hazzard 2000, 89-93.

²⁹ See Calboli 2002, 72f. (with further references).

and Arsinoe's marriage, the link with the tradition of the Aesopic fable is slightly less obvious, but clear enough. If, as it seems, fr. 16 Pow. was this poem's first verse, then the poem began with the generic ποτέ, "once upon a time". This was used to introduce an illustrative mythical tale – the fable-like story of Zeus' and Hera's *hieros gamos*. This Aesopic colour is noteworthy not only because both postulated poems probably shared it. It may have characterized Sotades' other poems on kings as well, as it corresponds with his poems' supposedly moralizing character as well as with the fact that his poetry manifestly located itself within the tradition of Ionian literature – the generic name for Sotades' poems, composed in Ionic, was, as Athenaeus informs us (XIV 620e), Ἴωνικὰ ποιήματα (cf. VII 293a, where he is said to have authored τὰ Ἴωνικὰ ἄσματα). Like Callimachus as the author of the *Iambi*, Sotades clearly looked toward two «prominent figures in the Alexandrian cultural memory of archaic Ionia»³⁰: Hipponax, whose influence we recognize in the para-iambic form of Sotades' poems and especially in their aggressive tone and obscene language³¹, and Aesop.

4. Recognizing the two verses (one incomplete) which are preserved in Athenaeus' anecdote as possible Sotadean fragments has taken us rather far into the more general speculation on the shape and contents of Sotades' poems. This is perhaps not very surprising – whereas two verses must have been but a small particle of the *corpus* of Sotades' poetry as a whole, I have already mentioned that the number of genuinely Sotadean verses amounts to just twelve, and therefore each new find, even the smallest, considerably increases our knowledge of what poetry composed by Sotades looked like.

One final problem remains to be addressed – if the two fragments in Athenaeus' anecdote on the encounter between Tachos and Agesilaus were once a part of a poem written by Sotades, why does Athenaeus not introduce them as such? There may be several explanations; for instance, Athenaeus might have preferred to give the impression that the anecdote described actual events and was not based on a poet's account (the sources for the conflict between Tachos and Agesilaus that he mentions are Theopompus and the historian Lyceas of Naucratis), or perhaps he was unwilling to mention at this point a poet whom he properly introduced slightly later in the same book. Most likely, however, Athenaeus was not aware that he had put in the mouths of Tachos and Agesilaus words written by Sotades, because the originally Sotadean dialogue between the two kings had at some point

³⁰ Acosta-Hughes–Scodel 2004, 1.

³¹ Cf. Hose 2005, 997. On Sotades' poetry as a continuation of the iambic tradition, see Lennartz 2000, 248, esp. n. 73, which lists the fragments of Hipponax to whose style Sotad. fr. 1f. Pow. exhibit a certain resemblance in tone. As *comparanda* for Sotad. fr. 1f. Pow., Lennartz adduces Hippon. fr. 51, 56f. W.² = 54, 58f. Dg.² for the former and 10, 29a, 92 W.² = 30, 118, 95 Dg.² for the latter.

started living its own independent life by circulating in the oral tradition, and the original context of the two Sotadeans was forgotten. Athenaeus' concern was evidently with preserving a noteworthy anecdote, and not with the fact that the two kings' utterances had a metrical form and as such could have been composed by an individual whose name might deserve mention. The proverbial character of both fragments and their literary attractiveness probably facilitated their passage into the realm of oral anecdotal history, which, as a rule, has little respect for questions of authorship of the accounts it has embraced. If this line of reasoning is correct, then the fact that Sotades' authorship of the two fragments ceased to be remembered should be viewed, paradoxically, as a measure of their literary accomplishment.

Appendix:

Sotadis Maronitae libri uel poematis de regibus reliquiae³²

Testimonium

1

Ath. XIV 620f ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ οὗτος (*scil.* ὁ τοῦ Σωτάδου υἱὸς Ἀπολλώνιος) περὶ τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς ποιημάτων σύγγραμμα, ἐξ οὗ ἔστι κατιδεῖν τὴν ἄκαιρον παρορησίαν τοῦ Σωτάδου, κακῶς μὲν εἰπόντος Λυσίμαχον τὸν βασιλέα ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι, Πτολεμαῖον δὲ τὸν Φιλάδελφον παρὰ Λυσιμάχῳ, καὶ ἄλλους τῶν βασιλέων ἐν ἄλλαις τῶν πόλεων.

Fragmenta

De Agesilao Lacedaemonio et Tacho Aegyptiorum rege

*1

(Sotad. fr. 22 Pow.)

Tachos ad Agesilaum

ᾧδινεν ὄρος, Ζεὺς δ' ἐφοβεῖτο, τὸ δ' ἔτεκεν μῦν

Ath. XIV 616d καὶ Ταχὸς δ' ὁ Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεὺς Ἀγησίλαον σκώψας τὸν Λακεδαιμονίων βασιλέα, ὅτ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ συμμαχήσων (ἦν γὰρ βραχὺς τὸ σῶμα), ιδιότης ἐγένετο, ἀποστάντος ἐκείνου τῆς συμμαχίας. τὸ δὲ σκῶμμα τοῦτ' ἦν· “ᾧδινεν ... μῦν”. ὅπερ ἀκούσας ὁ Ἀγησίλαος καὶ ὀργισθεὶς ἔφη “φανήσομαι σοὶ κτλ.” [fr. 2 *infra*]; cf. *Epit.* (II 126,5-9 Peppink) Ταχὸς δ' ὁ Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεὺς Ἀγησίλαον σκώψας τὸν Λακεδαιμονίων βασιλέα, ὅτ' ἦλθεν αὐτῷ συμμαχήσων, ἦν γὰρ βραχὺς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ

³² Asterisco notantur fragmenta coniectura Sotadi adscripta.

εἰπών· “ὄδινεν ... μῦν”, ἤκουσεν ὡς “φανήσομαί σοί κτλ.” [fr. 2 *infra*]. Cf. prouerbium ὄδινεν ὄρος, εἶτα μῦν ἀπέτεκεν ap. Luc. *Hist. conscr.* 23 (tantum ὄ. ὄ.), Plut. *Ages.* 36,8, Gal. *In Hippocr. Prorrh. I* (XVI 702,2 K. ὄ. ὄ. καὶ ἔτεκε μ.), Diogenian. 8,75 (*CPG* I 320,7f.), Greg. *Cypr.* 4,5 (*CPG* I 378,5f.), Greg. *Cypr. cod. Leid.* 3,43 (*CPG* II 92,22f.), Macar. 8,94 (*CPG* II 227,7f.), Apostol. 18,57 (*CPG* II 733,3f.); uersio autem Latina ap. Hor. *Ars* 139 *parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus* postque eum apud multos (cf. Tosi, *DSL^G* no. 1507)

*2

Agesilaus ad Tacho

φανήσομαί σοί ποτε καὶ λέων

Ath. XIV 616d (u. adn. ad fr. 1)

conicias ∞ φανήσομαί ... λέων ∪--∪ aut --∪∪-- φανήσομαί ... λέων

In regem Ptolemaeum Philadelphum

*3

(Sotad. fr. 16 Pow.)

Ἦρην ποτέ φασιν Δία τὸν τερπικέραυνον

Heph. 36,6-12 Consbr. τῶν δὲ τετραμέτρων ἐπισημότατον ἐστὶ βραχυκατάληκτον τὸ καλούμενον Σωτάδειον ... οἷον “Ἦρην κτλ.” *P. Oxy.* 220 c. VII 17 (anon. commentarius de metris, saec. I) = 404,20 Consbr. παρ[α]πλησίως [de metro Anacreonteo loquitur] ἐκείνοις | [τοῖ]ς μέρεσι τῶν ἰωνι[κῶν] τοῖς τοιο[ύ]τοις· | [“Δία τὸ]ν τερπικ[έραυ]- ν[ο]ν”. Cf. Call. *Aet.* III fr. 174,4f. Mass. = 75,4f. Harder Ἦρην γάρ κοτέ φασι – κύον, κύον, ἴσχεο, λαιδρὲ / θυμέ, σύ γ’ ἀείση καὶ τά περ οὐχ ὅσιη

Initium carminis esse coniecit Pretagostini (1984, 145)

4

(Sotad. fr. 1 Pow.)

εἰς οὐχ ὀσίην τρυμαλιῆν τὸ κέντρον ὠθεῖς.

Ath. XIV 621a (cf. test. 1 *supra*) εἰρήκει γὰρ [*scil.* Σωτάδης] εἰς τὸν βασιλέα Πτολεμαῖον πολλὰ δεινά, ἀτὰρ καὶ τόδε, ὅτε τὴν ἀδελφὴν Ἀρσινόην ἐγεγαμήκει “εἰς οὐχ κτλ.” [Plut.] *Lib. ed.* 11a τοῦ γὰρ Φιλαδέλφου γήμαντος τὴν ἀδελφὴν Ἀρσινόην Σωτάδης εἰπών “εἰς οὐχ ... ὠθεῖς” ἐν δεσμοτηρίῳ πολλοὺς κατεσάπη χρόνους κτλ. Cf. etiam Eust. *Il.* 1069,15, *Od.* 1565,1, Apostol. 6,53 (*CPG* II 378,5-7)

ὠθεῖς codd. Plut. et Apostol. ὄθει (-εῖ) codd. Ath. et Eust.

Carminis ultimus uersus putatur; cf. Cameron 1995, 20

Incertum

5

(Sotad. fr. 9,1 Pow.)

εἰ καὶ βασιλεὺς πέφυκας, ὡς θνητὸς ἄκουσον

Stob. III 22,26 sub lemmate Σωτάδου (Σωτᾶ coni. Buecheler ap. Hense 1894, 590)

Institute of Classical Studies

JAN KWAPISZ

Ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 1, PL – 00-047 Warsaw

jan.kwapisz@uw.edu.pl

Bibliographical abbreviations

- Acosta-Hughes–Scodel 2004 = B. A.-H.–R. S., *Aesop poeta: Aesop and the fable in Callimachus' Iambi*, in M.A. Harder-R.F. Regtuit-G.C. Wakker (edd.), *Callimachus II*, Leuven-Paris-Sterling 2004, 1-21.
- Adrados 1999 = F.R. A., *History of the Graeco-Latin Fable*, I. *Introduction and from the Origins to the Hellenistic Age*, transl. L.A. Ray, Leiden-Boston-Köln 1999.
- Aly 1927 = W. A., *Sotades (2)*, in *RE III/A* (1927) 1207-1209.
- Bastianini-Gallazzi 2001 = G. B.-C. G., *Posidippo di Pella. Epigrammi (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309)*, con la collab. di C. Austin, Milano 2001.
- Bettini 1982 = M. B., *A proposito dei versi sotadei, greci e romani: con alcuni capitoli di 'analisi metrica lineare'*, «MD» IX (1982) 59-105.
- Calboli 2002 = G. C., *On Horace's Ars poetica 139 parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus*, in L. Sawicki-D. Shalev (edd.), *Donum grammaticum. «Studies in Latin and Celtic Linguistics in Honour of Hannah Rosén»*, Leuven-Paris-Sterling 2002, 65-76.
- Cameron 1995 = A. C., *Callimachus and His Critics*, Princeton 1995.
- Crusius 1887 = O. C., *Plutarchi de proverbii Alexandrinorum libellus ineditus*, Lipsiae 1887 (= K. Latte, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum: Supplementum*, Hildesheim-Zürich-New York 1991).
- Durbec 2005 = Y. D., «Κύον, χύον»: *lectures métopéique d'une apostrophe (Callimaque, Aitia, fr. 75, 4 Pfeiffer et Hymne à Déméter 63)*, «REG» CXVIII (2005) 600-604.
- Erler-Schorn 2007 = M. E.-S. S. (ed.), *Die griechische Biographie in hellenistischer Zeit. «Akten des internationalen Kongresses vom 26.-29. Juli 2006 in Würzburg»*, Berlin-New York 2007.
- Escher 1913 = L. E., *De Sotadis Maronitae reliquiis*, Darmstadtiae 1913.

- Fantuzzi-Hunter 2004 = M. F.-R. H., *Tradition and Innovation in Hellenistic Poetry*, Cambridge 2004.
- Gallavotti 1982 = C. G., *Planudea IV*, «BollClass» s. 3 III (1982) 63-86.
- Gentili-Lomiento 2008 = B. G.-L. L., *Metrics and Rhythmics: History of Poetic Forms in Ancient Greece*, transl. E.C. Kopff, Pisa 2008.
- Giangrande 2004 = G. G., *Sotades, fragmento 16 Powell, y Calímaco, fragmento 75.4 ss. Pfeiffer*, «Habis» XXXV (2004) 105-108.
- Gow-Page 1965 = A.S.F. G.-D.L. P., *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams*, II, Cambridge 1965.
- Grey 1986 = V.J. G., *Xenophon's Hiero and the meeting of the wise man and tyrant in Greek literature*, «CQ» n.s. XXXVI (1986) 115-123.
- Gutzwiller 1998 = K. G., *Poetic Garlands: Hellenistic Epigrams in Context*, Berkeley 1998.
- Gutzwiller 2005 = K. G., *The literariness of the Milan Papyrus or 'What difference a book?'*, in Ead. (ed.) *The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book*, Oxford 2005, 287-319.
- Hägg 2012 = T. H., *The Art of Biography in Antiquity*, Cambridge 2012.
- Hazzard 2000 = R.A. H., *Imagination of a Monarchy. Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda*, Toronto 2000.
- Hense 1894 = O. H., *Ioannis Stobaei Anthologium*, III, Berolini 1894.
- Hose 2005 = M. H., *Sotades*, in H.H. Schmitt-E. Vogt (edd.), *Lexikon des Hellenismus*, Wiesbaden 2005, 996f.
- Hunter 1996 = R. H., *Theocritus and the Archaeology of Greek Poetry*, Cambridge 1996.
- Hunter 2003 = R. H., *Theocritus: Encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus*, Berkeley 2003.
- Immisch 1932 = O. I., *Horazens Epistel über die Dichtkunst*, Leipzig 1932.
- Jacoby 1919 = F. J., *Karystios*, in *RE* X (1919) 2254f.
- Kivilo 2010 = M. K., *Early Greek Poets' Lives: The Shaping of the Tradition*, Leiden-Boston 2010.
- Koch 1926 = F. K., *Ionicorum a maiore historia*, Diss. Bonn 1926.
- Kwapisz 2009 = J. K., *A lesson for the king: Sotades' invective against Ptolemy (fr. 1 and 16 Powell) and Callimachus' Epigram 1 Pfeiffer*, «Symbolae Philologorum Posnanien-sium» XIX (2009) 85-94.
- Lattimore 1939 = F. L., *The wise adviser in Herodotus*, «CPh» XXXIV (1939) 24-35.
- Lefkowitz 2012 = M.R. L., *The Lives of the Greek Poets*, Baltimore 2012².
- Lennartz 2000 = K. L., *Zum ,erweiterten' Jambusbegriff*, «RhM» n.F. CXLIII (2000) 225-250.
- Lorenzoni 2001 = A. L., *Eust. 1068,60-1069,23 (su un comico e qualche alessandrino)*, «Eikasmós» XII (2001) 205-227.
- Magnelli 2008 = E. M., *Note a frammenti di Sotade*, «SemRom» XI (2008) 299-313.
- Olson 2011 = S.D. O., *Athenaeus: The Learned Banqueters. Books 13.594b-14*, Cambridge, Mass. 2011.
- Pelling 1996 = C.B.R. P., *Hegesander*, in *OCD*³ (1996) 674.
- Pretagostini 1984 = R. P., *Ricerche sulla poesia alessandrina: Teocrito, Callimaco, Sotade*, Roma 1984.
- Pretagostini 2007 = R. P., *Ricerche sulla poesia alessandrina II. Forme allusive e contenuti nuovi*, Roma 2007.
- Prioux 2009 = E. P., *Machon et Sotadès, figures de l'irrévérence alexandrine*, in B. Delignon-Y. Roman-S. Laborie (edd.), *Le poète irrévérencieux. Modèles hellénistiques et réalités romaines*, Paris 2009, 115-131.

- Reinhardt 1960 = K. R., *Herodots Persergeschichten. Östliches und Westliches im Übergang von Sage zu Geschichte*, in Id., *Vermächtnis der Antike. Gesammelte Essays zur Philosophie und Geschichtsschreibung*, Göttingen 1960, 133-174 (= W. Marg [ed.], *Herodot. Eine Auswahl aus der neueren Forschung*, München 1962, 320-369).
- Sens 2011 = A. S., *Asclepiades of Samos. Epigrams and Fragments*, Oxford 2011.
- West 1982 = M.L. W., *Greek Metre*, Oxford 1982.
- West 1997 = M.L. W., *The East Face of Helicon. West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth*, Oxford 1997.
- White 2000 = H. W., *Further textual problems in Greek poetry*, «Orpheus» XXI (2000) 175-188.
- Wycherley 1957 = R.E. W., *The Athenian Agora, III. Literary and Epigraphical Testimonia*, Princeton 1957.

Abstract

The present discussion draws attention to an unnoticed fragment of Sotades of Maroneia in the anecdote about the encounter of Tachos and Agesilaus in Ath. XIV 616d-e. It is further argued that this fragment was a part, alongside the invective against Ptolemy II as attested by frr. 1 and 16 Pow., of Sotades' series of poems (or one longer poem) on monarchs, the context for which was probably provided by the literary tradition of the dialogue between a ruler and a sage. The appendix contains an edition of the fragments that may be ascribed to this lost poetic work.