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MACHON, FR. 5, 44–5, GOW: A FISH WITH A *ΨΗΦΟΣ*[*]

Machon is a difficult author. Gow's masterly 1965 edition of the fragments has done very much in the way of clearing the field, but points of contention still remain. Fragment 5, 44–45 Gow (=Athenaeus, 6.244b–d) is paramount among the latter. I quote Gow's text with non-continuous line numeration. Gow's line numbers are given in parentheses. I also append a critical apparatus reporting the readings of codex E, which Kaibel's edition of Athenaeus, upon which Gow is based, did not take into account for Book 6:[1]

Κληθεὶς ἐπὶ δεῖπνον ὁ παράσιτος Ἀρχεφῶν 1 (25)
ὑπὸ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ βασιλέως ἡνίκα
κατέπλευσεν εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐκ τῆς Ἀττικῆς
ὄψου πετραίου παρατεθέντος ποικίλου
ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης καράβων τ' ἀληθινῶν, 5
ἐπὶ πᾶσι λοπάδος τ' εἰσενεχθείσης ἁδρᾶς (30)
ἐν ᾗ τεμαχιστοὶ τρεῖς ἐνῆσαν κωβιοί,
οὓς κατεπλάγησαν πάντες οἱ κεκλημένοι,
τῶν μὲν σκάρων ἀπέλαυε τῶν τριγλῶν θ' ἅμα
καὶ φυκίδων ἐπὶ πλεῖον Ἀρχεφῶν πάνυ, 10
ἄνθρωπος ὑπὸ τῶν μαινίδων καὶ μεμβράδων (35)
Φαληρικῆς ἀφύης τε διασεσαγμένος,
τῶν κωβιῶν δ' ἀπέσχετ' ἐγκρατέστατα.
πάνυ δὴ παραδόξου γενομένου τοῦ πράγματος
καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως πυθομένου τἀλκήνορος, 15
Μὴ παρεόρακεν Ἀρχεφῶν τοὺς κωβιούς; (40)
ὁ κυρτὸς εἶπε, Πάνυ μὲν οὖν τοὐναντίον,
Πτολεμαῖ, ἑόρακε πρῶτος, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἅπτεται,
τοὔψον δὲ σέβεται τοῦτο καὶ δέδοικέ πως,
οὐδ' ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πάτριον ὄντ' ἀσύμβολον 20
ἰχθὺν ἔχοντα ψῆφον ἀδικεῖν οὐδένα. (45)

1, 10, 16 *ἀρχαιφῶν* A: corr. CE (moving v.1's name forward into the fragment's introduction). 4 *παρατιθέντος* A: corr. CE. 7 *τεμαχίσκοι* ACE: corr. Casaubon. 16, 18 *παρεώρακεν* and *ἑώρακε* ACE: corr. Tyrwhitt. 20–21 om. CE. 21 *ἔχοντ' ἄψηφον* A: corr. Casaubon.

When the parasite Archephon arrived in[2] Egypt from Attica, he was invited to dinner by Ptolemy the king. A variety of rock fish were served on the table, not least among which

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[1] I am most grateful to Professor W. G. Arnott for compiling the apparatus, as well as for a number of other most helpful comments. For the apparatus, cf. I. Casaubon ad loc. and *Animadversionum in Athenaei Dipnosophistas libri XV* (Paris, 1600[1], 1621[2]), Editio Noua appendice aucta, V.II (Leipzig, 1843), 45ff. (=Lib. VI, Cap. XI, p. 429); T. Tyrwhitt, *apud* R. Dawes, *Miscellanea Critica iterum edita*, curauit et appendicem adnotationis addidit Thomas Burgess (Oxford, 1781), 454.

[2] Or simply 'sailed to', cf. LSJ s.v. The sense 'return home' was preferred by C. B. Gulick, *Athenaeus III*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA and London, 1929), who took Ptolemy as the subject, and by M. T. Capone, 'Le *Crie* di Macone', *Kleos* 2 (1997), 407–38, at 420, for whom the subject is the parasite. The first possibility can safely be discarded: Ptolemy Soter did not visit Athens in his expedition of 308 B.C., so he cannot be 'returning' from there. The subject of *κατέπλευσεν* is Archephon: in what sense can he, an Athenian, 'return' to Egypt?

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were crayfish[3] of premium quality[4]. On top of everything, a sizeable earthenware dish[5] was brought in carrying three sliced gobies that made all guests cry out in amazement. Archephon delighted mostly[6] in the parrot wrasse, the red mullet and the wrasse[7], stuffed as the man was already with picarel[8] and anchovies[9] and whitebait from Phaleron. As far as the gobies were concerned, however, he was showing the utmost self-control. As the issue was most paradoxical, the king inquired of Alcenor: 'Archephon hasn't overlooked the gobies, has he?' The Hunchback then replied: 'Not at all, Ptolemy, quite the contrary. He was the first to catch sight of them, but he won't touch them. He feels some kind of awe and fear for this kind of fish. It is not traditional where he comes from for somebody who is ἀσύμβολος to wrong a fish that has a ψῆφος.'

Scholars are by and large agreed as to what happens in the anecdote, in broad terms: a parasite behaves markedly out of character by abstaining from what was apparently intended to be the 'show-stopper' of this royal banquet. The reason he abstains from the gobies is a feeling of fear or respect, the respect of an inferior towards a superior. In the context of the symposium, Archephon's inferiority is measured in terms of not having paid his *contribution* to the dinner (συμβολή), which the fish somehow has. The κωβιός, unlike Archephon (and presumably all the other guests, since no one would be expected to pay his way into one of Ptolemy's banquets), can be said to have contributed to the dinner because, for some reason or another, the goby can be said to have ψῆφος. In the context of the symposium, again, this ψῆφος is the ψῆφος συμβολική,[10] a token or pledge guaranteeing that the guest will submit his contribution at the time of reckoning after the event. The problems, of course, simply begin here: in what sense can a fish be said to have ψῆφος, what sort of ψῆφος is that and what is the point of the joke anyway?

For some time, scholars looked for a naturalistic explanation that had something to do with the nature of κωβιός as a fish and with some peculiarity the fish might have on its body that might explain the joking reference to a ψῆφος, a pebble. The fact that the κωβιός is said to be a πετραῖος ἰχθύς, a rock-fish, rendered this route an obvious one to take. In this respect, three different possibilities were put forth:

1. That the goby is of a species in whose stomachs pebbles are found (Dutheil).[11]
2. That the fish was supposed to carry a jewel in his belly (Gulick).
3. That the goby bore a special kind of sucker whereby he attached himself to the rocks, near which he lived (Boegehold).

That some of those explanations may be true, adding extra poignancy to the joke, is possible if not entirely convincing, but in any case it does not do much in the way of clarifying Archephon's quip. Scholars soon realized that the key is to look for a *double entendre*. The joke is based on a double level of reference, one sympotic and the other most likely legal and political.

[3] Cf. Arnott on Alexis, fr. 57 K.-A.

[4] On this difficult point in the text, see A. Lorenzoni, 'Pesci ἀληθινοί', *GFF* 7 (1984), 19–23.

[5] On λοπάς, cf. Arnott on Alexis, fr. 115, 21–3 K.-A.

[6] Cf. A. S. F. Gow, *Machon: The Fragments*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 1 (Cambridge, 1965), 67: 'ἐπὶ πλεῖον: perhaps *more and more*, but the phrase is often used with little idea of progression'.

[7] On φυκίς, see Arnott on Alexis, fr. 115, 12–13 K.-A.

[8] On μαίνη or μαινίς, 'picarel' or 'sprat', see D. W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Fishes* (London, 1947), 153–5.

[9] On μεμβράς, see Arnott on Alexis, fr. 200, 3 K.-A.

[10] A. Momigliano, 'Machon and the σύμβολα', *Athenaeum* 53 (1975), 171–2.

[11] See Gow (n. 6), 69.

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The key, as we said, lies in the terms ἀσύμβολον and ψῆφον, but as Khan noticed,[12] the whole language of lines 42–5 can apply to the legal sphere: ἀδικεῖν suggests legal wrongdoing; and ἅπτεσθαι can have the sense 'to assault'. That ψῆφος is a legal/political term meaning 'vote' (literally, the pebble used as a vote) is obvious. Σύμβολον, however, as Rossi added,[13] can also belong to the dicastic register: it can denote the token that *authorizes a judge to vote.* In this sense, then, Archephon's inferiority to the κωβιός comes down to the fact that the κωβιός has σύμβολον and Archephon does not; the κωβιός is entitled to go to court and participate in a trial (this is perhaps how we should understand Casaubon's exegesis of ψῆφον ἔχειν as *ius veniendi in comitia*:[14] the right to participate in assembly and court, which the κωβιός alone has, not simply to attend the symposium, which all other fish can do), whereas Archephon cannot. The point then, according to Boegehold,[15] would be that an Athenian who does not have a token, and therefore cannot vote in court, out of the characteristically Athenian deference shown to jurors and trials, is not going to do any harm to anybody who has a ψῆφος, that is, a vote or something that looks like a vote, a pebble in his stomach, not even if that were a fish. This would be then a pun against Athenian φιλοδικία in the spirit of Aristophanes' *Wasps*.

The problem, of course, lies in the fact that we simply cannot know whether the κωβιός was indeed one of those fishes in whose stomachs pebbles were found (Thompson's glossary contains no such information).[16] And Boegehold's idea that the goby has a ψῆφος because he attaches himself to a rock by means of a sucker is not cogent. There must be some hidden reference here that we miss. Kannicht's[17] idea that ἰχθύν (=κωβιόν) might actually be disguising *a person* was not properly developed or exploited (not even by Kannicht himself): in my view, κωβιός is indeed masking a *real* κωμῳδούμενος, whom we are in a position to identify to a certain extent based on parallel sources.

In fact, Middle Comedy instructs us that, like Κάραβος, Κωβιός was *the nickname (or even the real name) of a particular Athenian politician.* In Alexis' Ἰσοστάσιον, fr.102 K.-A.,[18] this Κωβιός, who, unlike his colleague Callimedon ὁ Κάραβος[19] (*PA* 8032), cannot be identified further, is one of the pretentious συμπόται who enjoy themselves in a party ἀπὸ συμβολῶν, using nicknames derived from foodstuffs:

> (A.) ἀπὸ συμβολῶν ἔπινον, ὀρχεῖσθαι μόνον
> βλέποντες, ἄλλο δ' οὐδέν, ὄψων ὀνόματα
> καὶ σιτίων ἔχοντες, Ὄψων, Κάραβος
> καὶ Κωβιός, Σεμίδαλις.[20]

[12] H. A. Khan, 'An elucidation of Machon, fr. 5 Gow', *RhM* 95 (1972), 19–24.

[13] L. E. Rossi, 'I pesci di Tolemeo e il costume dicastico ateniese', *PP* 22 (1967), 213–26.

[14] Cf. Casaubon, *Animadversiones* II.46 (=Lib. VI, Cap. XI, p. 429).

[15] A. L. Boegehold, 'Machon, fr. 5 Gow', *AJA* 90 (1986), 43–4.

[16] Cf. Thompson (n. 8), 137–41. Generally on the goby, see also A. Grilli, 'Cyrenaica', *SIFC* 32 (1960), 200–14, and F. A. Wood, 'Greek fish names', *AJPh* 48 (1927), 297–325. The latter is concerned exclusively with issues of etymology. Two fishes of the goby variety are connected with rocks: the rock goby (*Gobius paganellus*) living in rock pools, and the leopard-spotted goby (*Thorogobius ephippiatus*) with a habitat among rocks.

[17] R. Kannicht, review of Gow in *Gnomon* 39 (1966), 551–4.

[18] I cite Bergk's text, accepted by *PCG.* For a different punctuation and a supplement aimed at making the text more dramatic, see W. G. Arnott, 'Two notes on Alexis' *Isostasion*', *LCM* 10.7 (1985), 98–101, and W. G. Arnott, *Alexis: The Fragments*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 31 (Cambridge, 1996), 272.

[19] On Callimedon ὁ Κάραβος, see Arnott (n. 18, 1996), 178–81. Speculation on the provenance of these nicknames is unhelpful.

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Κωβιός seems to be also one of the 'fish-men' of Archippus (fr. 30 K.-A.), the *ἄνδρες ἰχθύες* that populated the play under that name (*Ἰχθύες*), cf. fr. 27 K.-A.:

ἀποδοῦναι δ' ὅσα ἔχομεν ἀλλήλων, ἡμᾶς μὲν τὰς Θράττας καὶ Ἀθερίνην τὴν αὐλητρίδα καὶ Σηπίαν τὴν Θύρσου καὶ τοὺς Τριγλίας καὶ Εὐκλείδην τὸν ἄρξαντα καὶ Ἀναγυρουντόθεν τοὺς Κορακίωνας καὶ Κωβιοῦ τοῦ Σαλαμινίου τόκον καὶ Βάτραχον τὸν πάρεδρον τὸν ἐξ Ὠρεοῦ.

There is little doubt, in my view, that, at least in the case of Alexis,[21] *Κωβιός* is a nickname. In Archippus, however, the fact that a real name pops up in the fragment, that of *Εὐκλείδης*, the famous archon of 403/402, complicates matters a little. In fact, most commentators, including the editors of the first three volumes of the new *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, would take Archippus' *Κωβιὸς ὁ Σαλαμίνιος*[22] as well as practically all other instances of *Κωβιός*, including Pythionice's lover in Antiphanes, fr. 27 K.-A., to be names of real persons. In his recent commentary on Antiphanes, Konstantakos[23] grounds his judgement on Athenaeus' naming practices: Athenaeus uses the formula *proper name* + *ὄνομα* to designate real names (for *Κωβιός*, cf. Athen. 8.339e); for nicknames, he resorts to the type *nickname* + *ἐπικαλεῖσθαι/ἐπίκλην*. Konstantakos also adduces an inscription from Leucas (*IG* ix(i).563), in which *Κωβιός* appears as a proper name. Be that as it may, *Κάραβος*, too, undeniably a *nickname* in the case of Callimedon, appears as a proper name in an inscription from Chaeronea (*IG* VII.3300, 25), in a private letter from Egypt (*POxy.* 1761, line 13, late third or second century), and elsewhere.[24] *Κάραβος*, as well as, we may concede, *Κωβιός*, is among those '*einstämmigen männlichen Personnennamen des Griechischen: die aus Spitznamen hervorgegangen sind*'.[25] In Comedy, however, as probable *nomina propria* like *Κωβιός* mingle indiscriminately with unequivocal nicknames like *Ἀθερίνη*, *Τριγλία*,[26] or *Κάραβος* (in Comedy *always* a nickname); and, most importantly, as theatre manipulates their semantic duality on stage in hilarious episodes like that in Antiphanes, fr.27 K.-A., their etymology becomes so transparent, that the barrier between real name and nickname crumbles

[20] In the same note, cf. also Alexis, fr. 173 K.-A.: *πρῶτον μὲν ἦν σοι Καλλιμέδων ὁ Κάραβος/ ἔπειτα Κόρυδος, Κωβίων* [*Κωβιός* C of Epit.], *Κυρηβίων,/ ὁ Σκόμβρος, ἡ Σεμίδαλις*. (B.) *Ἡράκλεις φίλε, ἀγοράσματ', οὐ συμπόσιον εἴρηκας, γύναι.*

[21] In fr. 173 K.-A., all other foodstuffs are nicknames no doubt. *Κόρυδος* was the nickname of both the fourth-century politician Eucrates and the fifth-century tragedian Philocles (an important instance of a 'travelling' nickname), cf. Arnott (n. 18, 1996), 167. *Κυρηβίων* was the nickname of Epicrates, a relative of Aeschines, cf. Arnott (n. 18, 1996), 511. In Timocles, fr. 15 K.-A., *σκόμβροι* is the shared nickname of the sons of the *ταριχοπώλης* Chaerephilus that Pythionice had as lovers after *Κωβιός* (referred to, differently, as *τὸ τάριχος* by Antiphanes, fr. 27 K.-A.). On *Σεμίδαλις*, cf. Arnott (n. 18, 1996), 272.

[22] See *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, vol. 2, ed. M. J. Osborne and S. G. Byrne (Oxford, 1994), 277 (Attica); and vol. 3.A, ed. P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews, 263 (Leucas).

[23] I. M. Konstantakos, 'A commentary on the fragments of eight plays of Antiphanes', Ph.D. dissertation (Cambridge, 2000), 87.

[24] The inscription is cited by F. Bechtel, *Die einstämmigen männlichen Personnennamen des Griechischen: die aus Spitznamen hervorgegangen sind*, Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse, Neue Folge, Band 2., no. 5 (Berlin, 1898), 23, who, though, ignores the papyrus. See also Bechtel, 23, n. 2, for another possible instance. These instances have not yet been catalogued in the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names.*

[25] Ibid. 23.

[26] The case of *Βάτραχος* (if a nickname, designating, perhaps, not the frog, but again a kind of fish, a *σέλαχος*, cf. Aristotle, *HA* 540b17, *Part. An.* 695b14, 696a27, *Gen. An.* 747a23, etc.) is less straightforward: see Bechtel's index in Bechtel (n. 24), 84.

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to the ground. Real name to some people or not, in Comedy *Κωβιός functions* as a *Spitzname*.[27]

To be sure, in Antiphanes' play,[28] the speaker is contemplating the fishes and the politicians they metonymize together, to the effect of treating the fish as the politician and the politician as the fish. The fishes involved are again, as in Archippus, *σηπίαι*, *τρίγλαι*, the 'necessary' *κάραβος*, a *γόγγρος* and of course the *κωβιός*, the *ἄριστος ἀνήρ*, who is still so fresh as to be writhing (*πηδῶντ'*), apparently a metaphor for 'leaping with lust'.[29] This *κωβιός* will be given as a present to Pythionice, a courtesan who left Athens in 330/329[30] (and, unlike the *τρίγλη* of line 11, seems not to have had a 'fishy' nickname). Pythionice, however, as the speaker predicts, will definitely shun *Κωβιός*, as she is now shifting her attentions to other *ἄνδρες ἰχθύες*, the sons of a *ταριχοπώλης*[31] known from Timocles, fr. 15 K.-A., as Chaerephilus (cf. Athen. VIII.339d):

Τὰς σηπίας δὸς πρῶτον. Ἡράκλεις ἄναξ,
ἅπαντα τεθολώκασιν. οὐ βαλεῖς πάλιν
εἰς τὴν θάλατταν καὶ πλυνεῖς; Μὴ φώσί σου,
†Δωριάς, ἀλούτους[32] *σηπίας εἰληφέναι.*
Τὸν κάραβον δὲ τόνδε πρὸς τὰς μαινίδας
ἀπόθες· παχύς γε, νὴ Δί. ὦ Ζεῦ, τίς ποτε,
ὦ Καλλιμέδων, σὲ κατέδετ' ἄρτι τῶν φίλων;
Οὐδεὶς ὃς ἂν μὴ κατατιθῇ τὰς συμβολάς.
ὑμᾶς δ' ἔταξα δεῦρο πρὸς τὰ δεξιά,
τρίγλας, ἔδεσμα τοῦ καλοῦ Καλλισθένους·
κατεσθίει γοῦν ἐπὶ μιᾷ τὴν οὐσίαν.
Καὶ τὸν Σινώπης γόγγρον ἤδη παχυτέρας
ἔχοντ' ἀκάνθας τουτονὶ τίς λήψεται
πρῶτος προσελθών; Μισγόλας γὰρ οὐ πάνυ
τούτων ἐδεστής. ἀλλὰ κίθαρος οὑτοσί,
ὃν ἂν ἴδῃ τὰς χεῖρας οὐκ ἀφέξεται.
Καὶ μὴν ἀληθῶς τοῖς κιθαρῳδοῖς ὡς σφόδρα
ἅπασιν οὗτος ἐπιπεφυκὼς λανθάνει.
ἀνδρῶν δ' ἄριστον κωβιὸν[33] *πηδῶντ' ἔτι*
πρὸς Πυθιονίκην τὴν καλὴν πέμψαι με δεῖ.
ἁδρὸς γάρ ἐστιν. ἀλλ' ὅμως οὐ γεύσεται·
ἐπὶ τὸ τάριχός ἐστιν ὡρμηκυῖα γάρ.
ἀφύας δὲ λεπτὰς τάσδε καὶ τὴν τρυγόνα
χωρὶς Θεανοῖ δεῦρ' ἔθηκ' ἀντιρρόπους.

These examples, then, render it, in my view, quite possible that Archephon's pun may be directed to a politician nicknamed *Κωβιός*, possibly the same as Alexis' and Antiphanes' *Κωβιός*. That Archephon, a parasite whose very survival depends on the goodwill of those in power, reveres or is afraid of this politician does not require any special explanation. The reason why Archephon is afraid of *Κωβιός* particularly and not of the other fish-men may well be irrevocably lost; one fact, however,

[27] Notice also that *κωβιός* does not appear as a real name in Alexandria.
[28] For a full commentary on fr. 27, see Konstantakos (n. 23), 66ff.
[29] Ibid. 88.
[30] Cf. Arnott on Alexis, fr. 143 K.-A.
[31] Some sort of irony may be intended here, if indeed the goby, too, was one of the fishes used *εἰς ταριχείαν*, cf. Athen. 7.301d. However, *pace* Grilli (n. 16), 201, Athenaeus' reference here may well apply solely to the *ἠλακατῆνες*. The goby, a fish of moderate size, was certainly not *κητώδης*.
[32] *ἀλούτους* is a conjecture by Jacobs, which the *PCG* are favourable to, but do not print.
[33] *PCG* print *Κωβιόν*, apparently accepting that here it is a real name rather than a nickname.

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may give us a clue. What makes Archephon so afraid of Cobius in this particular context is something very specific: Cobius has something that Archephon does not. We have every reason to believe that Archephon is a free Athenian, presumably a poor one (parasites complain about their poverty as much as they are distinctly proud of it, cf. Plaut. *Stich.* 176ff.), but nevertheless one whom we would expect, like all parasites known to us, to have fully fledged citizen rights. Nevertheless, *Cobius has a vote and Archephon does not*: and if Archephon does not have a vote, thus the right to appear and vote in court as a juror, the quintessence of Athenian citizenship, this can mean only one thing, that he, a freeborn but poor Athenian, *does not enjoy those fully fledged citizen rights.* He is respected at the court of Ptolemy in Alexandria, but in Athens he is vulnerable to politicians like Cobius.

There was, in fact, a period in Athenian history in which poor people like Archephon might have found themselves in such a predicament: that was in the years following Athens' defeat in the Lamian War (322 B.C.), during which the Macedonians attenuated the democratic citizen body by practically *disfranchising* a very significant number of Athenians who could not meet their new criteria of wealth. Plutarch, *Phoc.* 28.7, uses for these people the term ἀποψηφίζεσθαι, literally, 'to be deprived of their ψῆφος'. These second-class citizens, on a level with the ἄτιμοι, 'could neither vote nor hold elective office'.[34] The oligarchs tried to push some of those disfranchised Athenians out of Athens by offering land in Thrace. According to some, rather exaggerated, estimations, one-third of Athenians fled the city at that point of time,[35] some, we might assume, to destinations other than Thrace.

The Macedonians had a number of Athenian straw men, who managed their affairs. Cobios could well have been one of those pro-Macedonian politicians, as Callimedon the Crayfish certainly was.[36] The last we hear of Callimedon is in 318 B.C., when he flees to Macedon to save his life after the democrats sentence him to death *in absentia.* We do not know whether Callimedon ever returned to Athens,[37] but if we can trust Pseudo-Aeschines, *Epist.* 12.8, he settled down to a happy life in Macedonia and never looked back. If this is true, this would go some way towards explaining why Archephon is especially afraid of the Goby and not the Crayfish, and also why the crayfish is treated so fleetingly in the fragment (no particular mention of Archephon's enjoying the κάραβοι is made).

Issues of dating and chronology need not come in the way of such an interpretation. If Cobius was active with Pythionice in Athens before 330, he could well have continued his career in the 310s. The Ptolemy of the fragment can well be either Ptolemy Soter (ruled 323–283 B.C., but took the title βασιλεύς only in 305) or Ptolemy II

[34] C. Habicht, *Athens from Alexander to Anthony*, trans. D. L. Schneider (Cambridge, MA and London, 1997), 44ff., esp. 44, n. 21 for bibliography.

[35] Diodorus, 18.18.5 puts the number of the disfranchised at over 22,000 (πλείους τῶν δισμυρίων καὶ δισχιλίων), a number that meets with Hansen's agreement, cf. M. H. Hansen, *Demography and Democracy. The Number of Athenian Citizens in the Fourth Century* (Herning, 1986), 36, although it might just be a simple error of tradition. In fact, the Teubner edition of Diodorus by C. Th. Fischer brackets the δισ- in δισμυρίων (probably a dittography), to bring Diodorus' information into line with Plutarch, *Phoc.* 28.7, who estimates the disfranchised even under Antipater's first, harsher oligarchy (in which the wealth cap was 2,000 drachmas, not just 1,000 as under Demetrius, cf. Diod. 18.18.4, 18.74.3) at over 12,000 (ὑπὲρ μυρίους καὶ δισχιλίους). If the *paradosis*, however, is sound, the fact that there were two successive franchises with different criteria may account for part of this confusion.

[36] Cf. Habicht (n. 34), 37.

[37] All we know of Callimedon is summarized in Swoboda 'Kallimedon', *RE* X.2 (1919), cc. 1647–8.

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Philadelphus (reigned 283–46 B.C.). The second Ptolemy would probably match better Machon's own *floruit* (estimated by Gow to have been around the middle of the third century B.C.),[38] but there is no reason, I presume, to suppose that Machon is not here recounting *earlier* events. Machon's comic χρεῖαι are termed by Athenaeus, 13.579d, as ἀπομνημονεύματα, a term that can mean 'memorable and morally constructive anecdotes' (πρᾶξις … ἢ λόγος βιωφελής, according to Theon),[39] but the word contains clear connotations of a *reminiscence.* These anecdotes may well have been historical or quasi-historical events, but there is no apparent reason to exclude *a priori* the possibility that their sources might be literary, in fact even Comedy itself.[40]

Even living and writing in a period much later than the Macedonian rule of Athens (322–307 B.C.), Machon could well have expected a joke related to events in that period to be intelligible, at least among the circle of the erudite dilettantes that most probably formed his readership[41]—and, perhaps, also to have intended it to have some sort of political purchase. We can accept that the supposed dramatic date of the anecdote may fall within that period of Macedonian rule (the Macedonian census classes were abolished by Demetrius Poliorcetes in 307 B.C.),[42] only by inferring a minor anachronism in the use of the title βασιλεύς for Ptolemy Soter (retrospectively, such an anachronism would be tolerable). A wry witticism at the expense (albeit indirectly) of Demetrius of Phalerum in particular (although Demetrius had actually lightened the new oligarchic regime) would be far from out of place in an Alexandria ruled by Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Demetrius was on excellent terms with Ptolemy I Soter (who gave him shelter in Alexandria after Cassander died in 298/7 B.C.), but Demetrius' suggestion that Soter appoint as his successor Ptolemy Ceraunus (Soter's son from his legitimate wife, Eurydice, sister of Cassander) rather than Philadelphus (his son from Berenice, who became Ptolemy's wife only after Eurydice left him) did not go down well with the new king. Demetrius died under Ptolemy II Philadelphus in disgrace.[43] 'In contrast to Demetrius Poliorketes and King Antigonos', a modern authority notes, 'who in the year 307/6 had been satisfied with a program of outrageous slander against Demetrius, the second Ptolemy appears to have been sufficiently angered by Demetrius' opposition to his succession that he ordered, to indulge an anachronism, systematic *damnatio memoriae*',[44] a defamation that played an important part in the judgement history passed on Demetrius. Tolerating, if not promoting, such texts as

[38] On Machon's date, see Gow (n. 6), 3–7.

[39] Spengel, *Rhet.Gr.*, II, 5, 96, line 23.

[40] On the issue of Machon's sources, see Gow (n. 6), 19–23. On stories most probably derived from *books*, see p. 20.

[41] On Machon's audience and the significance of the term ἀκροαταί used by Machon to describe them (188), see Gow (n. 6), 23–4.

[42] Cf. Habicht (n. 34), 67.

[43] D.L. 5.78, 79, cf. Habicht (n. 34), 59–60. Diogenes reports, on the authority of Hermippus, that Ptolemy II kept Demetrius under guard in the countryside pending a judgement about him (παραφυλάττεσθαι ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ μέχρι τι δόξει περὶ αὐτοῦ), but Demetrius died of a snake bite before that judgement was passed. Diogenes apparently considered Demetrius' death an accident; Jacoby, however (*FGrH* IIB, 643), based on a rather ambiguous statement by Cicero, *Pro Rabirio Postumo*, 9.23, inferred that Ptolemy assassinated Demetrius. Suicide is perhaps the likeliest possibility, given the distribution of the ἀθυμία-motif in relation to the deaths of famous individuals in Diogenes and Hermippus, cf. M. G. Sollenberg, 'Diogenes' Laertius' life of Demetrius of Phalerum', in W. W. Fortenbaugh and E. Schütrumpf (edd.), *Demetrius of Phalerum. Text, Translation and Discussion*, Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities 9 (New Brunswick and London, 2000), 311–29, at 326, n. 47.

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Machon, fr. 5 Gow, might well have been part of Philadelphus' programme. The fact that Ptolemy II 'was a key member of the alliance that attempted to liberate the Greek cities from Macedonian domination in the Chremonidean War (267–262 B.C.)'[45]—a date very close to Machon's supposed *floruit*—shows how such a political reading of Machon, fr. 5 Gow, would enter into the complex politics of the struggles between the Diadochi.

Such a reading would also square well with Kurke's overall attempt to read Machon's χρεῖαι as tongue-in-cheek, politically subversive allegories. With special reference to fr. 5, Kurke deserves acknowledgement as the first scholar to recognize the importance of the issue of franchise for the fragment's interpretation. She may have gone a step too far, however, when she saw in the goby-reference a 'fish-burlesque'[46] of Aristotle's πάτριος πολιτεία. In terms of value and size, qualities supposedly symbolic of status in reference to their consumers, Kurke, partly following others, recognized in the fragment three classes of fish: 'high-class' fishes like the κάραβος, the σκάροι, and the τρίγλαι; 'low-class' ones like the μαινίδες, μεμβράδες, and ἀφύη; and 'middle-class' fishes like the goby. Archephon has no qualms in doing away with the high- and low-class fishes, but spares the 'middling' goby out of fear and respect. Kurke wants to see in this Aristotle's preference of the middle class as the bastion of πάτριος πολιτεία, itself reflected in Demetrius' distribution of franchise.

That this does not explain why Archephon would be also somewhat *afraid*, apart from respectful, of this 'middle-class' goby[47] in the same time that he was more than willing to destroy the 'high-class' κάραβος is, I think, in all fairness to Kurke's astute analysis, evident. Although one may, with due caution, sympathize with Kurke's political reading of Machon, for which Machon's courtesans and parasites are stand-ins for Athenian democracy under foreign rule, it seems to me much more economical to read fr. 5 as a joke *ad hominem* in the spirit of the Middle and Old Comedy parallels cited above. In this sense, designating Machon as τέχνης ἀρχαίης λείψανον (*AP* 7.708, 3–4 = Dioscorides xxiv Gow-Page) would be even more spot-on.

If κωβιός is understood as the nickname (or the real name) of one particular politician ridiculed here, then the joke makes perfect sense as a double entendre with two levels of reference (one sympotic, one dicastic and political) without our having to recur to unfounded speculation regarding the nature of the fish (the Goby has ψῆφος because he, unlike Archephon, is an entitled politician). The joke also becomes much more precise and focused than what comes out of Kurke's exegesis: the goby does not stand generally for Aristotle's 'middle class', but more specifically for an Athenian individual, who has damaged the interests of people like Archephon. The Goby's association with Callimedon the Crayfish makes plausible the inference

[44] S. V. Tracy, 'Demetrius of Phalerum: who was he and who was he not?', in Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf (n. 43), 331–45, at 345.

[45] L. Kurke, 'Gender, politics and subversion in the *Chreiai* of Machon', *PCPS* 48 (2002), 20–65, at 32. Kurke cites Habicht (n. 34), 127–9, 142–9, to provide evidence for a general Ptolemaic policy of supporting Athens' independence against both the Macedonians and Demetrius Poliorcetes.

[46] Kurke (n. 45), 55.

[47] Ibid. 55, n. 103, toys with but wisely dismisses the idea that the goby might be Demetrius of Phalerum himself, because the best gobies come from Phalerum, cf. Antiphanes, fr. 204 K.-A. We cannot, and need not, identify the κωβιός with one particular person: all we need to infer for my conjecture to be valid is that the goby, like his mate the κάραβος, stands for a pro-Macedonian politician.

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that the Goby, too, belonged to Callimedon's circle of pro-Macedonians, in which case any take on the Goby would reflect back on his political allegiances. Why this politician would be nicknamed κωβιός, we cannot truly know, but this should not diminish the thrust of this interpretation any more that it impedes our understanding of the κάραβος-jokes.[48] ἀδικεῖν, in this context, would acquire a double sense: (i) deliberately wrong somebody in the face of the law (cf. Arist. *Rh.* 1368b6: τὸ βλάπτειν ἑκόντα παρὰ τὸν νόμον), that is, commit something actionable against somebody (an injured Goby can take Archephon to court where the parasite would be helpless); but also (ii) cause somebody physical harm (cf. Hipp. *Nat. Hom.* 9, line 42), in which case the action of Archephon's voracious teeth on the flesh of the goby would metaphorize the unimaginable possibility of his launching a physical assault against the Goby.

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[48] We do not know why Callimedon was nicknamed κάραβος. Apparently, Athenaeus was not sure, either. The explanations Athenaeus provides are (i) that the crayfish was Callimedon's favourite fish and/or (ii) that Callimedon had some sort of perceived physical likeness with the fish such as a nasty case of squinting (ὅτι καὶ φίλιχθυς ἦν καὶ διάστροφος τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, Athen. 8.339–40). For a full modern doxography, see R. L. Hunter, *Eubulus: The Fragments*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 24 (Cambridge, 1983), 95–6; Arnott (n. 18, 1996), 178–81.

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