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The *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* by Constantine Manasses: Introduction, Text and Translation*

Charis Messis & Ingela Nilsson

Constantine Manasses (ca 1115–after 1175) appears to have had a certain predilection for birds – at least that is what his extant works indicate. In Manasses’ texts, birds appear not only in gardens or in rhetorical turns of phrases, but as a recurring imagery associated primarily with reading, writing and learning. Sometimes described in great detail, at other occasions fluttering by more or less in passing, birds function as a kind of literary mascot or trademark intrinsic to the Manassean voice.¹ Moreover, he dedicated a series of texts more or less exclusively to birds: the *Description of a crane hunt*, the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches*, and the *Monody on the death of his goldfinch*. The two hunting ekphraseis are unique in their detail and offer the most elaborate descriptions of such procedures that have come down to us. We have previously translated and discussed in detail the *Description of a crane hunt*;² here we will focus on the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* by offering a new edition and translation, along with a discussion of its place within the literary production of Manasses.

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¹ Nilsson 2021, esp. 45 and 106.

² Messis & Nilsson 2019; see also Nilsson 2021, 35-46.

A pleasure trip to a literary topos

The *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* offers a bucolic scene of countryside hunting, experienced and depicted by a city scholar who relishes in the delights of nature. The author-narrator has crossed the Bosphorus in order to enjoy the hot baths of the other side, where he encounters a friend who invites him to spend the night in a tent and then, early the next morning, take part in, or rather witness the hunting of small bird by means of glue traps (ἰξευτικὴ).³ The setting has all the characteristics of a *locus amoenus* – the grass is soft, the herbs fragrant and the air fresh – but the beauty of nature is contrasted with the clever artificiality of the traps aimed at the birds, prepared by a troupe of boys under the leadership of an old man. The different techniques of glue-hunting are described in great detail along with the hunt itself (3-7, 9) and the reactions of the beholder. The purpose of the hunt is to capture pretty and singing birds, presumably to sell them, but there is also a ‘spontaneous meal’ consisting of the birds that could not be sold, roasted over an open fire (10). A series of small ekphraseis of birds are inserted into the larger text: a goldfinch (4), a falcon (8) and another unspecified song-bird (11).

The protagonist of the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* is, however, no bird, but the old man in charge of the young boys. He is a ridiculous character who provokes the laughter of the beholder-narrator (esp. 8), and presumably also the reader-listener: he is a vain and stubborn perfectionist, angry and easily provoked, who aims for rigorous discipline but fails and falls on his face twice. When his hat flies off, his bald head is revealed and he becomes the subject of ridicule without even noticing, absorbed as he is with his own pride. The comical characterization is obtained not only through slap-stick actions and the iconographical features of Silenos, but also by the ironizing choice of

³ On glue-hunting in antiquity and Byzantium, see Vendries 2009; more recently, and with a greater focus on the literary depictions of glue-hunting in Byzantium, see Messis & Nilsson 2021.

mythological and historical exempla, underlining the old man's vanity and failure (4, 6, 8).⁴

The ekphrasis accordingly takes the beholder-narrator to a literary place, a bucolic topos known from ancient authors like Theocritus and Longus. *Daphnis and Chloe* may be seen as a subtle hypertext to Manasses' ekphrasis, containing both scenes of glue-hunting and numerous comical characters drawn from New Comedy.⁵ The motif of glue-hunting is prevalent in several ancient texts, especially in the later periods, with examples ranging from the Meleager poems included in the *Greek Anthology* to the fictional letters of Alciphron.⁶ This probably explains the motif's presence not only in this ekphrasis by Manasses, but also in twelfth-century texts such as Eumathios Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias* and other depictions of the months.⁷ Similar scenes also appeared in mosaics, decorating the Great Palace and probably other buildings in Constantinople. We shall return to this literary and iconographical setting below; suffice it to note here that the scene depicted by Manasses was well-known to a learned twelfth-century audience, who was invited to revisit a familiar place drawn from ancient texts and images: "for what prevents me from enjoying the spectacle through writing as well?" (2).

The significance of glue-hunting in Manasses' texts

The two ekphraseis of bird hunts by Manasses are often associated with each other because of their similar motifs, but they are very different

⁴ On this character, see Chrysosgelos 2016, 149-151.

⁵ On glue-hunting, see Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 3.5-6 and 3.10; for the influence from New Comedy, esp. in book 4, see e.g. Zeitlin 1990, 427-428. In Longus, glue-hunting is used as a pretext for desire (see Messis & Nilsson 2021, 91-92); cf. Manasses, *Aristrandros and Kallithea* fr. 116.9 (Mazal): ἰξός ἐστι καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ὡς περὶ τὰς συνέχει.

⁶ Messis & Nilsson 2021, 91-98.

⁷ Eumathios Makrembolites, *Hysmine and Hysminias* 4.12 (Marcovich). On depictions of the months (in the case of bird-hunting, usually October), see Messis & Nilsson 2021, 99-100; on the function of these descriptions in *Hysmine and Hysminias*, see Nilsson 2001, 126-130.

when it comes to both content and form. The crane hunt, undertaken with the use of falcons, is marked by the presence of Manuel I Komnenos – it is an imperial hunt. The catching of small birds, using glue and other traps, is of a socially baser kind – hunting for ordinary people in the countryside.⁸ In this particular case, the ‘common people’ are represented by the young boys under the direction of the comical old man, that is, people with no clear role in society. The grandiosity of the participants in the first hunt gives way to the irony and condescension that marks the characterization of those involved in the hunt for small birds – the imperial yields to the bucolic.

One passage in the *Description of a crane hunt* points directly at this difference in status between the two situations: a small ekphrasis of glue-hunting inserted within the longer description, the aim of which is to show that crane hunting is by far superior to the catching of small birds:

εἶδον δὲ καὶ ἀκανθυλλίδας ἀλισκομένας καὶ σπίνους καὶ ἀστρογλήνους καὶ ὄσους ὄλοις μικρὰ τὰ πτερύγια καὶ οἷς δαφνοστοίβαστοι ῥᾶβδοι τὸν δόλον ἀρτύνουσι, φυλλάδας ἀλλοτρίας προβεβλημέναι καὶ προϊσχύμεναι λύγους ἀηλιμμένους ἰξῶ. ἔτερπé με ποτὲ καὶ μελάμπτερος ψᾶρ καὶ λάλος ἀκανθυλλίς καὶ ὁ στωμυλώτατος σπίνος καὶ ἄλλ’ ἅττα στρουθάρια, δόναξιν ἰξῶ κεκαλυμμένοις σχεθέντα καὶ θέλοντα μὲν φυγγάνειν καὶ πτερυγίζοντα, εἰργόμενα δὲ τοῖς ἐνύγροις ἐκείνοις δεσμοῖς καὶ πυκνὰ πυκνὰ τὰ στέρνα πατάσσοντα, οἷα τρέχοντα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς, ἀλισκόμενά τε καὶ μαχαιρίδι κεντούμενα καὶ κατὰ βόθρου ἀκοντιζόμενα, ἔνια δὲ ζωγρούμενα καὶ τηρούμενα, ὅποσους δηλαδὴ δαψιλεστέρου κάλλους ἢ κομμώτρια φύσις μετέδωκεν. ἀλλὰ μοι τὸ χρῆμα τῆς τῶν γεράνων ἄγρας τοσοῦτον ἐκείνων ἐπιτερέστερον, ὅσον ἀκανθυλλίδων καὶ σπίνων αἱ μακραύχενες ὑπερέχουσι γέρανοι καὶ λύγων ἰξοφόρων ἰέρακες δραστικώτεροι καὶ ὅσον γυμνασίων ἀνδρικωτέρων παιδαριώδη ἀθύρματα λείπεται· καὶ ὁ γε θήραν ταύτης ὑπερτιθεῖς ταυτόν τι νομισθήσεται δρᾶν, ὡς εἴ τις τῶν ἀργυρέων προκρίνοι τὰ καττιτέρια καὶ τῶν χρυσέων τὰ χολοβάφια.

⁸ See Messis & Nilsson 2021 and forthcoming.

I have also seen captured goldfinches and siskins and chaffinches and all those shortwinged birds for which twigs covered in sweet bay prepare a trap, projecting unnatural branches and holding out twigs smeared with glue. Once I also rejoiced at a starling with black wings and a singing goldfinch and the chattering siskin and other such birds, held by twigs covered in glue, wanting to escape and fluttering their wings, but prevented by those fluid bonds and with hearts beating in their chests, as if fighting for their lives, they were caught and pierced by a small knife and thrown in a basket, but some were kept alive, those to whom embellishing nature had given more abundant beauty.

But for me, the crane hunt is so much more pleasurable than all those other hunts as much the cranes with their long necks are superior to goldfinches and siskins, as much the falcons are more efficient than the twigs covered in glue, and as much children's plays are inferior to men's sports. And whoever would think another hunt to be superior will be viewed as doing the same thing as the one who prefers copper coins to silver coins and plated coins to golden ones.⁹

In this passage, which offers a kind of summary of the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* and indeed creates a textual connection between the two ekphraseis, the issue is not the size of the birds or the way in which they are captured; it is above all the idea that glue-hunting is for children (παιδαριώδη ἀθύρματα), while crane-hunting is reserved for the masculine nobility of the Komnenian court (γυμνασίων ἀνδρικοτέρων).¹⁰

One more text is closely related to these two in a manner that is often ignored: the *Monody on the death of his goldfinch*. This is a playful lament of a writer-rhetorician who has lost his inspirational companion, a key text for any investigation of Manasses' use of bird imagery and recently interpreted as a representation of the complex relationship between writer and patron.¹¹ But the monody also includes an interesting reference to glue-hunting, revealing the fact that the diseased goldfinch was once caught by means of glue in a scene of the kind that the author

⁹ Manasses, *Description of a crane hunt* 45-56 (Messis & Nilsson), pp. 46 and 67-68.

¹⁰ Messis & Nilsson 2019, 12-17; Nilsson 2021, 45-46

¹¹ Nilsson 2021, 76-82.

depicts at differing length in the two ekphraseis. The author-narrator is sad not only for having lost his pet and muse, but also because his bird now cannot be used as a decoy for the capture of birds of the same kind:

Τοιοῦτόν με χρῆμα καλόν ὁ κατάρατος χειμῶν ἐζημίωσε, τηλικόν με παραμύθιον ἀπεσύλησε· κάγω μὲν ὠνειροπόλουν τὸν τρυγητὸν καὶ τὸν περι φθίνουσιν τὴν ὀπώραν ἐκαραδόκουν καιρὸν καὶ ὡς ἐπὶ πλέον γυμνάσω καὶ ἐς τὸ στάδιον ἄξων, ἔνθα τῶν στρουθῶν οἱ πρεσβυγενέστεροι τοὺς ὁμοφύλους παλεύουσι· ἐξ οὗ γάρ μοι τὸ δῶρον ἠνέχθη τὸ τηλικούτον, οὐπω καὶ νῦν ἐξεγένετο στρουθιοθήραν στήσασθαι ἄεθλον κάκεϊνον εἰς τὸν ἀγῶνα καταγαγεῖν καὶ ἀποπειράσασθαι τῶν μελῶν καὶ ἀπολαῦσαι τῆς λαλιᾶς.

The accursed winter has deprived me of such a fine creature, it has robbed me of such a great consolation. I dreamed of the harvest period and I waited impatiently for the end of autumn so that I could train it and take it to the stadium, where the oldest birds entrap their kins. Now, the place from which such an important gift was brought to me will not be the place where I erect a bird-hunting feat and bring my goldfinch into battle to try out its singing and rejoice in its voice.¹²

The author-narrator has accordingly been deprived of a potentially useful tool for a successful bird hunt – his loss is not only metaphorical, but quite literal. And through this detail, the three texts become transtextually connected or perhaps one should rather say that they share the same storyworld: the *locus amoenus* that is described in such detail in the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches*. If the song-bird is partly metaphorical in the *Monody on the death of his goldfinch*, the connection to a topos in the sense of a ‘real’, potentially lived place and experience remains.¹³

The imagery of glue-hunting is pursued along different lines in two other texts by Manasses, most notably in the *Encomium of Michael*

¹² Manasses, *Monody on the death of his goldfinch* 7.4-10 (Horna).

¹³ See Nilsson 2021, 4-13, on the occasionality and potential referentiality of this ekphrasis, and 25-27 on the significance of space and place for the understanding of Manasses ekphraseis.

Hagiotheodorites. Hagiotheodorites, logothete of the drome in the 1160s and one of Manasses' powerful patrons, is here depicted as responsible for a grammar exam in the presence of the emperor.¹⁴ The exam is, somewhat surprisingly, depicted as a glue-hunt:

ἴσταται ποτε καὶ παισὶ τροφίμοις γραμματικῆς ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς βασιλέως ἀγών· καὶ κρύπτονται τούτοις παγίδες νόας θηρεύουσαι καὶ ὑπορύττονται θήρατρα φρενῶν δολωτήρια, καθάπερ ἀεροπόροις ὀρνέοις ἐπιβουλαί, ἃς τεχνάζονται ἰξευταὶ καὶ παλευταὶ καὶ βροχοποιοί. Τότε δὴ τότε τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τέχνην ὁ λογοθέτης παραγυμνοὶ καὶ περιλαλεῖ τὰ ἀνάκτορα καὶ ἐτοιμάζει βρόχους τοῖς μεύραξιν. ἴδοι τις ἂν τότε σοφιστικῆς δεξιότητα καὶ ἐπαινέσεται τὸ εὐσύνετον καὶ θαυμάσεται τὸ εὐμήχανον· ὁ μὲν τῶν μειράκων ἄκρας ἑάλω τῆς πτέρυγος, ὃ δ' ἐκ μέσης ἐζωγρήθη δειρής, τοῦ δὲ νῶτον δέσμη περιέσχε πικρά, ὁ δὲ πτερύσσεται μὲν ὡς ὑπερπετασθησόμενος, ἠγρεύθη δὲ καὶ αὐτός· καὶ παντελῶς οὐδεὶς τὴν παγίδα ἐξήλυξεν.

At one occasion a contest is arranged for the foster children of grammar in the presence of the emperor; and traps preying on their minds are hidden for them and treacherous nets for their intellects are disguised, like the traps for airborne birds, which bird-catchers contrive with lime and decoy birds and snares. Then indeed the logothete discloses his art and fills all around the palace with his voice and prepares snares for the young boys. One would then see his skill in the sophistic art and praise his intelligence and admire his skilful contrivance. One of the young boys was caught by the tip of his wing, another was captured by the neck, one had bitter fetters bound around his back, another yet was fluttering his wings as if to fly away but was also caught; no one could get entirely out of the trap.¹⁵

Hagiotheodorites – the logothete – acts as bird-catcher, aiming to trap the pupils who behave like frightened birds. None of them emerges unscathed from the ordeal: education is a deadly path. And the situation

¹⁴ On this passage, see Nilsson 2021, 113-115; on Hagiotheodorites and his assumed relation to Manasses, see 91-106.

¹⁵ Manasses, *Encomium of Michael Hagiotheodorites* 265-274 (Horna). Tr. Nilsson 2021, 113-114.

is reversed in comparison to the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches*: the boys were happy and playful hunters in the description, but in the contest they are hunted preys.¹⁶ The focus here is on the skills of the bird-catcher – clearly an intellectually, grammatically and rhetorically able patron – whose performance impresses the rhetor.

A similar scene, marked by the same rather sinister tone of agony and war, appears in the *Funerary oration on the death of Nikephoros Komnenos*, probably written a few years later (*ca* 1173).¹⁷ Nikephoros Komnenos was another powerful man at the court, perhaps a former student of Manasses who had eventually become one of his patrons.¹⁸ In the oration, Manasses describes again a grammar exam or contest and praises the skills of Komnenos as a game-leader and bird-catcher:

Ἐνειστήκει καιρός, καθ' ὃν συνίασι παῖδες ἀλλήλοις συμπλακησόμενοι, οὓς ἡ πρ . . . γραμματικῆ ὠδινήσασα καὶ σχεδικῆς προνοίας οὐθαρ θηλάσαι ποιήσασα εἰς τὰ βασιλεια πέμπει γενναίους ἀθλευτὰς λογικῶς ἀγωνιουμένους ὑπὸ βραβευτῆ καὶ γυμνασιάρχῃ τῷ αὐτοκράτορι. καὶ τηνικαῦτα τὸ νεῦμα τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπὶ τὸν Κομνηνόν· καὶ οἱ τοῦ λόγου πυγμάχοι παιδίσκοι πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνου γλῶτταν ἐώρων ὡς τῆς αὐτῶν ἰσχύος χρηματίζουσαν βασανίστριαν. ἀλλὰ τῆς σοφίας ἐκείνου, ἀλλὰ τῆς μελιχρότητος, ἀλλὰ τοῦ λαβυρίνθου τῶν δόλων τῶν λογικῶν. ὡς καλὸν ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ ἐπιπόλαιον, ὡς εὐφυὲς ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ κατὰ βάθους, καὶ τὸ κατ' ὄψιν δέλεαρ ἑλκτικὸν καὶ τὸ λανθάνον ἄγκιστρον κραταιόν. ἐπέχαινε μὲν ὁ παιδίσκος τῷ φαινομένῳ θελγόμενος, ἡ δὲ παγὶς εὐθέως συνεῖχεν αὐτόν. οὕτως ἦν ταχὺς λογικὴν πλεκτάνην εὖ διαθέσθαι καὶ τεχνικῶν ἀρκύων ὑπορύξαι πλοκὴν ἐπαινούμενόν τε ψεῦδος ... καὶ θήρατρα μηχανήσασθαι δεξιότατα.

The moment had come when boys gather to wrestle with each other, those whom the ... grammar has bred and made suckle the breast of schedographic foresight and now sends to the palace to fight like

¹⁶ Nilsson 2021, 129.

¹⁷ For an analysis of these two descriptions of grammar contests, together with a series of schedes, see Polemis 1996.

¹⁸ On the oration and Manasses' assumed relationship with Komnenos, see Nilsson 2021, 71-76.

brave athletes in speechmaking before the emperor, who is acting as prize giver and game master. And then the command of the emperor to Komnenos – the child soldiers of words were watching his tongue, as though it were the judge of their strength. But what wisdom, what sweetness, what labyrinth of word-traps! How beautiful was there the surface, how cunning was there the depth; the bait was attractive to the eye and the hidden hook strong! The child was gaping, bewitched by what he saw, the trap immediately caught him. So capable was he [Nikephoros] of skilfully arranging a web of words and sneakily hiding a combination of industrious nets, and the praised fallacy ... and devising the most efficient hunting implements.¹⁹

In light of this, there is a clear connection between glue-hunting and learning, most clearly in the depictions of the grammar exams, but also in the *Monody on the death of his goldfinch* and the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches*. While this latter ekphrasis can indeed be read as a depiction of a pleasure trip to the other side of the Bosphorus,²⁰ the bucolic topos with its parodical features presents a storyworld known from and through ancient learning. The beautiful and melodious birds are the sought-after products of *paideia*, the group of boys and adolescents are the pupils, the author and his friend are the spectators of the competition, and the comic figure of the old man with his obsession with results, his wan character and rigorous discipline, is a satirical portrait of a schoolmaster. According to such a reading, the ekphrasis is constructed as a metonymy or a mirror game between hunting and education.

Glue-hunting as a depiction of the process of learning

As already noted above, Manasses is not the only author to employ the imagery of glue-hunting in the twelfth century. We have collected and discussed the literary representations of glue-hunting elsewhere and do

¹⁹ Manasses, *Funerary oration on the death of Nikephoros Komnenos* 453-466 (Kurtz). Tr. Nilsson 2021, 74-75; cf. tr. in Polemis 1996, 280.

²⁰ Nilsson 2021, 138-139.

not wish to repeat everything here,²¹ but it is worth noting once more that the Komnenian fondness of such an imagery does not necessarily reflect an intensification of the practice of this kind of hunt.²² Rather, it might be the result of an educational system that values texts such as those attributed to Oppian (hunting treatises)²³ and the literary-poetic compositions of the Second Sophistic, together with the new significance of hunting (of larger animals) at the Komnenian court (of which the *Description of a crane hunt* is a central expression).²⁴ The presence of bird-hunters in the depictions of the months – as in *Hysmine and Hysminias*, the most elaborate of such depictions – indicate this, as does other descriptions of glue-hunting in epistolography.²⁵ The imagery is also used figuratively in various other texts, by Manasses and others.²⁶ The connection between glue-hunting and learning is also shared by other authors of the same period,²⁷ but in the thought of Manasses it is a constant: the detailed descriptions of the hunts themselves, the prevalent use of bird imagery, his interest in and use of Oppian, and the casting of himself as a song-bird in the service of his patrons.

Among all these texts, the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* holds a central place, not only because it offers the most

²¹ Messis & Nilsson 2021, 91-102.

²² Messis & Nilsson 2021, 99.

²³ See Nilsson 2021, 124-130 on Manasses and Oppian; also Messis and Nilsson 2021, 82 on Oppian and glue-hunting.

²⁴ Messis & Nilsson 2019, 29-37, especially on falconry.

²⁵ Messis & Nilsson 2021, 101. See also Nilsson 2001, 127, n. 284.

²⁶ To offer but one example from Manasses, see *Consolation for John Kontostephanos* 184-190 (Kurtz), speaking of the death of a woman who has escaped the trap of an evil bird-catcher (the devil): ἡ περιστερὰ ἢ παγκάλῃ τῆς γαλεάγρας τῆς πηλίνης ἐξέπητῃ καὶ ἐλευθερίας ἐλάβετο, οὐ μετέσχε τῶν τοῦ γήρωσ κακῶν, οὐ συνεσάπη ταῖς ἀσθνεύειαις, ἀπῆρε πρὸς ἄλλον βίον ἐν ἀκεραίῳ τῷ σώματι· ἠρπάγη, ἵνα μὴ κακία ἀλλάξῃ σύνεσιν αὐτῆς (τὸ Σολομῶντος ἀποφαίνεται στόμα), διέδρα τὰς πάγας τοῦ πονηροῦ ἰξευτοῦ, ὑπερεπετάσθη πάσης μηχανῆς παλευτοῦ, αἷς ἐκεῖνος καθ' ἡμέραν βροχίζει πολλούς. See also above, n. 5, on erotic imagery.

²⁷ See e.g. Nicephoros Chrysoberges, *Oration to Patriarch John X Kamateros* 5.8-12 (Browning): ἀλλ' ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς αὕτη ρητορικὴ τὸν ἑαυτῆς γραμματέα κάλαμον παροξύνουσα, καὶ ὥσπερ εἰ τοὺς λύγους οἱ ἰξευταί, τῷ ἑαυτῆς αὐτὸν θερμῷ ἐπιβάνασα, ἰξεύει παραντικά τὴν τοῦ λόγου μοι πτέρυγα, καὶ περιέλκει τοῦτον εἰς τὸ προπέτασμα καὶ εἰς τὰ πρόθυρα περιήστησιν.

elaborate description of glue-hunting, but because – as we have seen above – it connects so many other texts and offers a kind of key to the metonymy between glue-hunting and education. The ekphrasis is a suitable form for such a mirror game for several reasons. First, it is a text form with a basically didactic function: it is central among the preliminary exercises in rhetoric (*progymnasmata*). Second, it has the power to bring life to a literary or iconographical topos: the author-narrator creates a space into which the reader-listener can step – a kind of virtual reality based on joint references. Third, the ekphrasis captures an occasion, actual or fictional, and preserves it for the future: “And so, I devoted myself to this task, as a favour offered to my host, and for myself as a way of preserving the memory of the spectacle” (11).²⁸

It is possible that Manasses took the boat to the other side of the Bosphorus and spent a lovely day or two in the company of his friend; if not, it is still possible that his audience would have experienced such outings and that they were a popular pastime with the aristocracy of Komnenian Constantinople. It is also possible that he was inspired by one of the mosaics of the Great Palace, as in the case of his *Description of the Earth*.²⁹ Among the preserved material are hunting scenes, animals, children (or little people) playing with birds, and bucolic scenes (Fig. 1–2). Among the figures there is even that of a bald old man who is resting and who seems to be a simple peasant (Fig. 3).³⁰ Fragmentarily preserved, we do not know what the mosaic looked like in its entirety, nor if it was visible to visitors in the twelfth century, but the prominent place of ekphraseis in twelfth-century literature and especially those inserted in *Hysmine and Hysminias* and the independent ekphraseis by Manasses, makes it likely that ekphrases of actual objects were part of a literary game between authors and their audience.³¹ Not only mosaics might have served as inspiration for such games, but also

²⁸ See above, n. 13.

²⁹ Text and discussion in Lampsidis 1991; see also Bazaiou-Barabas 1994; Nilsson 2005 and 2021, 135-138; Foskolou 2018.

³⁰ Trilling 1989, fig. 22.

³¹ On the depiction of real objects, see Nilsson 2011. On the function and use of ekphrasis in the twelfth century, see Nilsson 2022.

manuscript illuminations: for the particular case of bird hunting, there are several representations that are close to Manasses' ekphrasis.³² It is, of course, also possible that Manasses conjured up the ekphrasis based on his ancient learning and iconographical experience, with no clear connection to the palace mosaics or any specific mosaic of the capital, but his audience would still have responded with memories of images and texts they had seen or read – this was, as already underlined, a description of a very familiar storyworld.

Regardless of which, the relationship between the old man and the children depicted in the *Description of the catching of siskins and chaffinches* is, in our reading, the relationship between teacher and students, represented in the transtextual language and imagery that was taught in schools in an educational system which was becoming more and more competitive.

Note on the edition and translation

The text is preserved in two manuscripts: Escorial Ypsilon II.10 (Andrés 265) of the 13th century (E, ff. 294v-296v)³³ and Vaticanus Urbinas graecus 134 of the 15th century (U, ff. 217-221).³⁴ U is a copy of E and has a considerable number of mistakes. The text has been edited twice: in 1902 Leo Sternbach edited U and in 1905 Konstantin Horna produced a critical edition based primarily on E. Our edition does not change the text proposed by Horna radically, but aims rather at restoring the readings of E and avoid some of Horna's 'purist' corrections. As regards the accentuation and punctuation of the edited text, we have respected modern expectations and aimed for an accentuation that supports our understanding of the text. There is a partial translation into German by Hans-Georg Beck,³⁵ based on the edition by Sternbach, but what we present here is the first full translation into a modern language.

³² Most notably the illumination to Pseudo-Oppians' *Cynegetica* in Marc. Gr. 479, f. 2v, depicting a scene of bird catching with a tent, in turn decorated with scenes of a hunt; see Spatharakis 2004, fig. 4 (and also the cover of Nilsson 2021).

³³ de Andrés 1965, 121-131.

³⁴ Stornajolo 1895, 248-255.

³⁵ Beck 1978, 325-328.



Fig.1: *Various scenes from the Great Palace Mosaic Museum.*
Photo: David Hendrix.

E : Escorial Ypsilon II.10 (Andrès 265), 294v-296v, XIII s.

U : Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Urb. gr. 134, 217-221, XV s.

H : Horna

S : Sternbach

Τοῦ Μανασσῆ κυροῦ Κωνσταντίνου ἔκφρασις ἀλώσεως σπίνων καὶ ἀκανθίδων¹

1. Ἑσπάνισέ ποτε καὶ ἡ Κωνσταντίνου² λουτηρίων θερμῶν καὶ τὸ ἀναπλεόμενον μέρος τῆς Προποντίδος³ ἐστενοχώρητο⁴ τοῖς περαιουμένοις ἐπὶ λουτρά· χαρίεις δὲ ὁ χῶρος καὶ διατριβῶν ἀνεσίμων κατάξιος· παράδεισοί τε γὰρ⁵ πανταχοῦ κατάδενδροι καὶ ἀμφιλαφεῖς καὶ ναμάτων διειδῶν ἀφθονία. Θάλασσα ταῖς⁶ ἡϊόσιν ἡρέμα προσπαίζει καὶ ταῖς ἡπείροις ἡμέρῳ κύματι προσγελαῖ· καὶ γίνεται ταῦτα πανήγυρις ὀφθαλμῶν, ἑορτὴ τῶν αἰσθήσεων.

Fontes et loci paralleli

1. τὸ ἀναπλεόμενον μέρος τῆς Προποντίδος: Choniatas, *Historia*, 344, 8 ἀλλ' ἐς τὸ ἔϋον μέρος τοῦ ἀναπλεομένου τῆς Προποντίδος πορθμοῦ περὶ τὰ τοῦ Μηλουδίου κεκλημένα διατρίβειν βασιλεια; **ἀνεσίμων**: Manasses, *Historia*, 5843 καὶ βίον τὸν ἀνέσιμον ἀπέστυξε καὶ χαῦνον; **κατάδενδροι**: Manasses, *Monodia in Theodoram*, 35 ὁ κήπος ὁ περιάλλητος ὁ πᾶσι κατάδενδρος ἀγαθοῖς; **ἀμφιλαφεῖς**: Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 338 ἀμφιλαφῆς ἡ κόμη καὶ οὖλη; Manasses, *Ecphrasis hominis*, 32 ἀμφιλαφῆς ἡ κόμη; **θάλασσα ... προσπαίζει**: Gregorius Nazianzenus, *In laudem Cypriani*, PG 35, 1176 καὶ θάλασσα ἠπλωμένη, καὶ ταῖς ἀκταῖς προσπαίζουσα μετὰ πνευμάτων στάσιν; Psellus, *Epistulae*, 127.53-54 θάλασσα ἡρέμα κυμαίνουσα, καὶ οἶον προσπαίζουσα ταῖς ἀκταῖς; **ἡπείροις**: Manasses, *Historia*, 1222 καὶ δὴ πολλοὶ συντρέχουσιν ἐκ νήσων, ἐξ ἡπείρων et 2324 ἦν ἡπειρος προσπτύσσεται, θάλασσα δεξιούται; **προσγελαῖ**: Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, 1.31 καὶ τοῦ πελάγους προσγελῶντος τῷ σκάφει; Manasses, *Oratio ad Michaellem*, 314 ἀκτίνες ἡλίου προσεγέλων τῇ γῆ et Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 64; **πανήγυρις ὀφθαλμῶν**: Aelianus, *Varia Historia*, 3.1.23 καὶ ἔστιν ὀφθαλμῶν πανήγυρις.

¹ Ἐκφρασις σπίνων καὶ ἀκανθίδων τοῦ σοφωτάτου κυροῦ Μανασσῆ U, Γοργίας ὁ ῥήτωρ ἔλεγε τοὺς φιλοσοφίας μὲν ἀμελοῦντας, περὶ δὲ τὰ ἐγκύκλια μαθήματα γινομένους ὁμοίους εἶναι τοῖς μνηστῆρσιν, οἱ τὴν Πηνελόπην θέλοντες ταῖς θεραπαίνισιν αὐτῆς ἐμίγνυτο, in marg. U ² Κωνσταντινούπολις U ³ Προπομπίδος U ⁴ ἐστενοχωρεῖτο U S ⁵ γὰρ om. U S ⁶ καὶ ante ταῖς delevit U post θάλασσα sustul. καὶ U

Constantine Manasses, *Description of catching siskins and chaffinches*¹

1. Once, in Constantinople, hot baths became a rarity and the upper side of the Propontis was crowded with people who came there to bathe. That area is pleasurable and well worth idle stays: there are gardens everywhere, thickly wooded and wide-spreading, and an abundance of clear streams; the sea plays gently with the shore and smiles with light waves at the mainland; and all this becomes a festival for the eyes, a feast for the senses.

¹ Manuscript U has in the margin Γοργίας ὁ ῥήτωρ ἔλεγε τοὺς φιλοσοφίας μὲν ἀμελοῦντας, περὶ δὲ τὰ ἐγκύκλια μαθήματα γινομένους, ὁμοίους εἶναι τοῖς μνηστῆρσιν, οἱ τὴν Πηνελόπην θέλοντες ταῖς θεραπαίνισιν αὐτῆς ἐμίγνυντο (Gorgias the rhetor said that he who neglects philosophy and devotes himself to general studies resembles the suitors who, desiring Penelope, slept with her slave girls). The phrase, which appears in Diogenes Laertius (*Vitae philosophorum* 2.79.7-9) and Plutarch (*De liberis educandis* 7D.3-4), has a proverbial character; cf. e.g. *Gnomologium Vaticanum e codice Vaticano graeco 743*, n. 166 (Sternbach). Its presence here could be seen as a critique, on the part of the copyist or a later reader, of the futility of this ekphrasis.

Ανήειν τοίνυν⁷ κάγώ (τῆς γὰρ σαρκὸς ὁ κνησμός οὕτως ἐκέλευεν), ἦν δὲ καιρὸς ὁ μετὰ τὴν τρύγην εὐθύς. Καὶ ἄρτι τε τῆς σκάφης ἀπέβαινον⁸ καὶ περὶ αὐτὰ τοῦ λουτροῦ ἤμεν τὰ πρόθυρα, καὶ μοί τις τῶν φίλων ἀντιμέτωπος⁹ ὑπαντᾷ, καὶ φίλων ὁ χαριέστατος. Καὶ ἀσπασάμενος τὰ εικότα καὶ προσειπών, «Σὺ μὲν» ἔφη «τὴν σάρκα τῷ λουτρῷ παραμύθησαι, ἐγὼ δέ σοι ἐτοιμάσω καταγωγὴν καὶ ξενιῶ σε ἐν ἑμαυτῷ καὶ δειπνίσω· κἄν, εἰ βουλητόν σοι, ἐλεύση καὶ στήση καὶ ὄψει γλύκιον θέαμα· καὶ εἰ μὴ τι σοι προὔργον¹⁰, παραμενεῖς ἐφ’ ἡμέρας καὶ ἀπολαύση ψυχαγωγίας σωφρονικῆς». Ὁ μὲν ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἀπηλλάττετο καὶ μικρὸν ὥρας μέρος¹¹ διαλιπὼν ἐπανῆκε καὶ (ἔτυχον γὰρ¹² τότε κάγώ σὺν¹³ τοῖς λουτηρίοις ἀμφίοις κατακλινεῖς¹⁴) πολλήν μοι¹⁵ βίαν προσῆγεν¹⁶ ἔλκων εἰς τὴν ξενίαν· καὶ τέλος ἐνίκησε.

2. Τότε μὲν οὖν (ἦν γὰρ καὶ τῆς ὥρας ὄψε καὶ τὸ λουτρὸν οὕτως ἐπέταπτεν) αὐτοῦ κατεμείναμεν. Ἄρτι δὲ μικρὸν ἢ νῆξ διηυγάετο καὶ ἦν ἀμφιλύκη, καὶ θροῦς τὴν σκηνὴν κατελάμβανε¹⁷ καὶ ἦν οὐκ ἀγεννῆς¹⁸ παρακελευσμός, ἀλλήλους ἀφυπνιζόντων καὶ διανιστώντων

φίλων ὁ χαριέστατος: Eustathius Thess., *Comm. Ad. Hom. Iliadem*, II.251.13-14 οὐχ’ ἀπλῶς χαρίεντα καὶ μέγαν καὶ φίλον, ἀλλὰ χαριέστατον καὶ μέγιστον καὶ φίλτατον; **ξενιῶ σε ἐν ἑμαυτῷ** : Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 2.21.7 ξενιῶ δε σε οὐκ ἐν ἑμαυτοῦ; **εἰ μὴ τι σοι προὔργον:** Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 2.21.6 εἰ μὴ σέ τι προὔργαιτερον ἀπασχολεῖ; **ψυχαγωγίας σωφρονικῆς:** Manasses, *Monodia in Theodoram*, 28 σωφρονικοῖς κατάφυτον κάλλεσι et 145 ἦθος σωφρονικόν; **εἰς τὴν ξενίαν:** *Acta Apostolorum*, 28.23 ἦλθον πρὸς αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ξενίαν πλείονες.

2. ἡ νῆξ διηυγάετο: cf. Psellus, *Epistulae*, 45, 17 ἡμέρας ὅλας διαυγάζων καὶ νύκτας; **ἀμφιλύκη:** Homerus, *Il.*, 7.433 ἔτι δ’ ἀμφιλύκη νύξ; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 224-225 οὔτε μὴν βαθεῖα νῆξ ἀφεργῆς, ἀλλ’ ὅποιαν τὴν ἀμφιλύκην φασὶ ποιηταί; **παρακελευσμός:** Thucydides, *Historia*, 4.11.3.5 προθυμία τε πάση χρώμενοι καὶ παρακελευσμοῖ; Cinnamus, *Historia*, 224.14-15 παρακελευσμοί τε συγχοὶ καὶ παραινήσεις ἐκατέρων ἠκούοντο; Manasses, *Historia*, 5916 καὶ θροῦς καὶ παρακελευσμός ἀμφοῖν τοῖν στρατευμάτοι.

⁷ τοίνυν om. U S ⁸ ἀπέβαινον E H: ἐπέβαινον U S ⁹ ἀντιμέτωπον U ¹⁰ ποῦργον U τοῦργον S ¹¹ μέρος om. U S ¹² γὰρ E H: ἄρτι U S ¹³ κάγώ σὺν om. U S ¹⁴ κατακλινῆς U S ¹⁵ μοι E H: δὲ U S ¹⁶ προσῆγεν E H: ἐπεισῆγεν U S ¹⁷ κατελάμβανεν U ¹⁸ ἀγεννῆς U

I too went there, for the itching of my flesh demanded so; it was the time right after the vintage.² As soon as I got out of the boat and we approached the entrance of the baths, one of my friends – indeed the most gracious of friends – ran into me. After embracing and exchanging appropriate greetings, he said: “Off you go to comfort your flesh with the bath! I will prepare your lodging and host you in my quarters and treat you dinner; and if you wish, you shall come and set up your tent and witness a sweet spectacle! And if you are not in a hurry, you can stay a few days and enjoy a virtuous pastime.”³ Saying this he left but came back some time later – I was then reclining wrapped in bath towels – and pressed me forcefully to accept his hospitality; finally, he won.

2. We thus then stayed there (it was late, after all, and the bath required it).⁴ Now night was lit up by the first rays of twilight, a noise invaded the tent⁵ and there were noble exhortations all around to wake up, to get ready for the action, denouncing sluggishness; this great was the zeal for

² That is, no later than the end of October. On vintage in the region of Bithynia, see Anagnostakis 2008, 44-48 et passim.

³ This passage vaguely recalls Heliodorus, *Aithiopika* 2.21.7, where Calasiris invites Cnemon for dinner.

⁴ The bath lasted an entire day; see Koukoules 1948-57, vol. 4, 442-443 and 455.

⁵ The bathers spent the night in tents. It is assumed that there were tents available for visitors, who would not bring their own. The narrator speaks of one tent, but it is not clear whether he shares it with others or not. On tents in Byzantine culture and literature, see Mullett 2013, 2018 and 2022.

ἐπὶ τὰ ἔργα καὶ μεμφομένων τῆς βραδυτήτος· τοσοῦτος¹⁹ αὐτοῖς ζῆλος τῆς ἱξευτικῆς ἐπετρέφετο²⁰. Ἦσαν δὲ καὶ παιδίσκοι συγχνοί²¹ καὶ μείρακες οὐκ ὀλίγοι καὶ ἀνὴρ πρεσβυτικὸς καὶ παλαιγενὴς καὶ πολλῶν ἱξευτικῶν²² ὀλυμπιάδων μεστός, μυρίοις τε τοιοῦτοις ἀγῶσιν ἐνηθληκῶς καὶ παιδοτριβῶν ἐκείνους τοὺς μείρακας ἐπὶ τοιάδε παγκράτια. Ταχὺ μὲν οὖν ἠμφιέσαντό²³ τε καὶ ὑπεδήσαντο²⁴ (ὁ γὰρ ἐπιστάτης γέρων κατήπειγε), πτηνοῖς δὲ ποσὶν ἔσπευδον τὸ χωρίον καταλαβεῖν, ἔνθα τοῖς στρουθαρίοις ἦσαν²⁵ ἐπιβουλεύοντες²⁶. Εἰδόμην δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς τὸ τέλος τῆς τηλικαύτης σπουδῆς ἐποψόμενος καὶ συνδιήλθον²⁷ καὶ εἶδον τὸ πρᾶγμα· καὶ ἦν ἀληθῶς χάριεν καὶ ἡδονὴν μου²⁸ τῇ ψυχῇ ἐνεστάλαξεν. Ἔσχε²⁹ δὲ ὧδε τὰ κατ' αὐτό· τί γὰρ κωλύει κἂν³⁰ τῇ γραφῇ κατατρυφήσαι με τοῦ θεάματος;

μεμφομένων τῆς βραδυτήτος: Gregorius Naz., *In sanctum pascha*, PG 35, 396 εἰ τί μοι μέφοισθε τῆς βραδυτήτος; **παλαιγενής:** Manasses, *Historia*, 6569 ὁ γέρων ὁ παλαιγενής οὗτος ὁ Νικηφόρος; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 163-164 ἡ παλαιγενής καὶ τῶ πλείονι λευκοπτέρωτος ἰέραξ ἐκείνη; **ὀλυμπιάδων μεστός:** Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii*, 4.44.15 τοιοῦτων Ὀλυμπιάδων μεστός; Manasses, *Historia*, 6559 καὶ γεγονὸς ἀρεϊκῶν μεστός Ὀλυμπιάδων ; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 202-203 πολλῶν τοιοῦτων ὀλυμπιάδων μεστός, πρεσβυτικὸς (ἂν εἴπε τις) Νέστωρ; Manasses, *Oratio ad Michaellem*, 146 πολλῶν λογικῶν ὀλυμπιάδων μεστοί; **ἀγῶσιν ἐνηθληκῶς:** Eustathius Thess., *Orationes*, 6.15.6 νῦν βασιλεία ἐναθλεῖν τοιοῦτοις ἀγῶσι κατήρξατο; **παιδοτριβῶν:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum* 204 ἐς τὰ γερανοφόνια τοὺς ὁμοφύλους παιδοτριβῶν; **ἠμφιέσαντό τε καὶ ὑπεδήσαντο:** Plutarchus, *De fortuna*, 98 D6 τὰ δ' ὑποδέδεται καὶ ἠμφιέσται φολίσι καὶ λάχλαις ; **πτηνοῖς δὲ ποσίν:** Philostratus, *Heroicus*, 26.15.7 πτηνὸν τῷ πόδε καὶ ταχὺν τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὄπλοις κίνησιν; Basilaces, *Progymnasmata*, 27.83-84 καὶ τοὺς πόδας πτηνοῦς et 28.109; *Anthologia graeca*, 16.275.9 Τὸν γὰρ ἅπαξ πτηνοῖσι παραθρέξαντά με ποσσὶν et 9.557.3; **κατατρυφήσαι με τοῦ θεάματος:** Gregorius Naz., *In Machabaeorum laudem*, PG 35,917 ἐνετρώφα γὰρ τῷ θεάματι; Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, 1.88 κατετρώφισα ναμάτων Κασταλίας; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 39-40 ταῖς εἰκόσιν ἐνατενίσας καὶ κατατρυφήσας τῶν μορφομάτων.

¹⁹ τοιοῦτος S ²⁰ ἐπετύφετο S ²¹ συγγνοί U ²² ἱξευτῶν U S ²³ ἠμφιάσαντό S ²⁴ ὑπεδήσαντο E post corr. H: ὑπεδέσαντο E ante corr. ἐνεδύσαντο U S ²⁵ ἦσαν om. U S ²⁶ ἐπιβουλεύσοντες U S ²⁷ συνανήλθον U S ²⁸ ἡδονή μοι U ἡδονάς μοι S ²⁹ ἔσχε E U S: εἶχε H ³⁰ κἂν E H: καὶ U S

glue hunt that burgeoned in them. There were also many boys and quite a few young men there, as well as a very old man, born long ago and brimming with several Olympics of glue hunting – he was experienced in thousands such contests and was training those young men in such pancratic struggles. Quickly, they put on clothes and shoes (for the old man who presided over them hurried them on), and they rushed on swift feet to go to the place where they would set traps for the birds. I too followed in order to see the purpose of this great precipitation, I crossed the road with them and caught sight of their quest – it was really charming and poured pleasure into my soul. Here is how it went; for what prevents me from enjoying the spectacle through writing as well?



Fig. 2: *Various scenes from the Great Palace Mosaic Museum.*
Photo: David Hendrix.

3. Χῶρος τις³¹ ἦν ὀλίγον³² ἄποθεν τῆς σκιηῆς, ἐν ἧ κατελύομεν· καὶ ὁ χῶρος οὔτε παντελῶς ἠνεμόεις καὶ ὑπερύψηλος οὔτε τις ταπεινὸς καὶ χαμαίζηλος, ἀλλὰ τῆς μὲν καταγωγῆς³³ ὑψηλότερος, εὐήνεμος δέ τις καὶ εὐπνοὺς³⁴ καὶ αὔρας ἠπίας ὑποδεχόμενος· καὶ βοτάνη δὲ ἦν εὐώδης ἐν τούτῳ παντοδαπῇ³⁵ καὶ τοῖς ποσὶν ὑποκινουμένη τῶν ἰξευτῶν, ἀμβροσίαν³⁶ οἶαν³⁷ ὁσμὴν ἐπὶ τὰς ρίνας ἀνέπεμπεν ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀρωματοφόρον, ὑπὲρ τὴν κιναμωμοφόρον³⁸, ὑπὲρ τὴν Ἰνδικὴν τοσοῦτον αὐτῷ³⁹ τῆς εὐωδίας τὸ περιόν. Ὑπέστρωτο δὲ καὶ πόα πρασίζουσα δαψιλῆς, καλὴ μὲν ὑποπίπτειν ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ ἀφῆ⁴⁰,

3. ταπεινὸς καὶ χαμαίζηλος: Cf. e.g. Gregorius Nyssenus, *De vita Mosis*, 2.149.6-7 τὸ δὲ εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐπικλίνειν τὴν ταπεινὴν τε καὶ χαμαίζηλον; **καταγωγῆς:** Manasses, *Historia*, 4593 ἀνηρευνῶντο σπήλαια, καταγωγαὶ σεμνείων; **εὐήνεμος δέ τις καὶ εὐπνοὺς καὶ αὔρας ἠπίας ὑποδεχόμενος:** Julius Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 5, 108 χωρίον ἐρεῖς ὑγιεινόν, ἄνοσον, ἀκίηρατον, καθαρὸν, εὐκρατον εὐκραεὺς εὐκέραστον ταῖς ὥραις, εὐφεγγές, εὐήνεμον, εὐ ὥρας ἔχον, ἄριστα κεκραμένον, ἀναπνοῦς ἔχον, ἀναπνεόμενον, πνεύματα διαρρέοντα ἔχον, ἀνέμους διαθέοντας, εὐπνοῦν, ἀναψῦχον, αὔραις διαπνεόμενον; **εὐπνοὺς:** Manasses, *Historia*, 4905 ὡς αὔραις κυμαινόμενον εὐπνοῖς, ζεφυρίαῖς; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 6 ἐντεῦθεν καὶ τὸ αὐτόφυτον εὐπνοῦν καὶ τὸ κηπευόμενον ἀρωματίζον εὐρίσκεται; Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, 1.323 ὡς οἶνος εὐπνοὺς, ὡς μύρον συγκλείεται; **αὔρας ἠπίας:** Cf. *Anthologia graeca*, 10.17.1 Ἀρχέλεω, λιμενῖτα, σὺ μὲν, μάκαρ, ἠπίω αὔρη; **βοτάνη δὲ ἦν εὐώδης ... παντοδαπῇ:** Manasses, *Historia*, 66 παντοδαπὴν ἐκέλευσε βοτάνην ἐκφυῆσαι; **ἀμβροσίαν ὁσμὴν:** Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*, 4.430 τοῦ δὲ καὶ ἀμβροσίη ὁμῆ πῆλιν ἐξέτι κεινοῦ; Philostratus, *Heroicus*, 3.5.2-3 ὡς ἀμβροσία ἡ ὁσμὴ τοῦ χωρίου; **ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀρωματοφόρον:** Psellus, *Epistulae*, 3.5-6 κατὰ τοῦτον οὖν τὸν τρόπον, ἐγκρατῆς εἰμι τῆς ἀρωματοφόρου καὶ εὐδαίμονος Ἀραβία; Stephanus Byzantius, *Ethnica*, 1. 367 Ἀραβία· ἡ χώρα, ὡς Αἰθιοπία. δύο δ' εἰσὶν, ἡ μὲν ἀρωματοφόρος μεταξὺ Περσικῆς καὶ Ἀραβικῆς θαλάσσης, ἡ δὲ μᾶλλον δυτικὴ συνάπτουσα πρὸς μὲν τὴν δόσιν Αἰγύπτῳ, πρὸς ἄρκτον δὲ Συρία; Cataphloron, *Oratio ad praefectum Athenarum*, 13.7 καὶ ὑπὲρ τὴν ἀρωματοφόρον; **κιναμωμοφόρον:** Strabonis *Chrestomathia* 2.24.2 διὰ τῆς Κιναμωμοφόρου καὶ Μερῶς καὶ Σοῆνης et 2.26.3; **πόα πρασίζουσα:** Manasses, *Historia*, 205 ὅδε τῆς γῆς τὸ πρόσωπον ἐπράσιζε ταῖς πόαις; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 90 Ἦν ἐκεῖ καὶ κρόκεον ἄνθος καὶ φύλλον ἐξέρυθρον καὶ πόα πρασίζουσα.

³¹ τις om. U S ³² ὀλίγος U S ³³ κατατρύγης U κατατρυγῆς S ³⁴ ἔμπνοους U ³⁵ παντοδαπῆς U S ³⁶ ἀμβροσίας U S ³⁷ οἶαν U οἶον S ³⁸ ὑπὲρ τὴν κιναμωμοφόρον om. U S ³⁹ αὐτῆ U S ⁴⁰ ὀφθαλμὸν U S ἀφῆν U S

3. There was a place not far from the tent where we were staying. This place was neither completely exposed to the wind nor extremely high, nor flat and low-set, but it was higher than where we were staying, airy and fresh with gentle breezes. All over this place there were various kinds of fragrant herbs and when they were trodden by the feet of the glue hunters, they dispersed to the nose a divine scent, better than the scent of the country producing aromatic plants, better than that of the country producing cinnamon, better than that of India⁶ – so exquisite was the scent of this area! It was covered by abundant green grass,

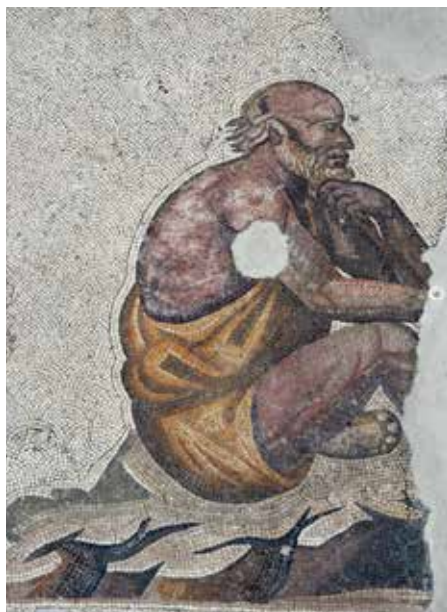


Fig. 3: *Scene from the Great Palace Mosaic Museum: old man sitting on a rock.*
Photo: David Hendrix.

⁶ It is not clear whether the narrator refers to three different countries (Arabia Felix, Ceylan and the Indian peninsula) or if one and the same country is presented as a climax. For the ancient authors on whom Manasses drew, India was a country of imprecise contours, from the Indian peninsula to Ethiopia, via the Arabic peninsula; see Muckensturm-Poule 2015. On the confusion between India and Ethiopia, see also Schneider 2004 and 2016.

μαλακή δέ τις ἀνακλιθῆναι καὶ ἀπαλὸν σχεδιάσαι χαμεύνιον. Ἐνταῦθα τὰ ἐν χερσὶν ἀποφορτισάμενοι (ἔφερον δὲ ἄλλος ἄλλό τι τῶν ἐπιτηδεῖων εἰς⁴¹ ἄγραν), ἔργου⁴² τὲ εἶχοντο (πῶς ἂν εἴποις;) ἐπιμελῶς. Καὶ ῥάβδους ἀφύλλους ἐπήγγυον κατὰ γῆς· αἱ δὲ ῥάβδοι καθ' ἑαυτὰς μὲν ἄνοξοι⁴³ τινες ἦσαν καὶ ἄχλοοι, (προελέπισε γὰρ⁴⁴ αὐτὰς ὁ χαλκός⁴⁵), κλώνας⁴⁶ δὲ δάφνης εἶχον συμβεβλημένους καὶ ἄλλοτριαν φυλλάδα περιεβέβληντο καὶ ὀθνεῖοις ἐχλόαζον ὄρηξι. Στοιχηδὸν δὲ κατετάττοντο⁴⁷ (εἶκασεν⁴⁸ ἂν τις, ὡς φυτῶν εἰσὶν ὄρχατοι) καὶ αἱ μὲν σχῆμα ἔσφωζον ἐτερόμηκες καὶ δάφνη πολλή καὶ ἀμφιλαφῆς ἐκείνας περιεπύκαζεν, αἱ δὲ κυκλικῶς ἐτορνεύοντο, πᾶσαι δὲ ὁμως κόμας δαφνῶν περιέκειντο. Ἐπὶ τούτοις λύγους ποθὲν ἐξενεγκόντες λεπτοὺς⁴⁹ ἰξῶ κατεκάλυπτον καὶ ταῖς ἐκδαφνωθείσαις ἐκείναις δάφναις⁵⁰ προσέφυον καὶ τεχνηέντως ἄγαν τὴν παιδιὰν⁵¹ διετίθεντο. Κατέταττε δὲ πάντα ὁ πολιοῦριξ ἐκεῖνος ὁ πέμπελος στρατιάρχης (ἂν⁵² εἴποι τις), πολλοῖς πολέμοις ἐγγυμνασθεῖς.

σχεδιάσαι χαμεύνιον: Eutecnius, *Paraphrasis in Opp. Cyneg.*, (Paparhthomopoulos) 188,12 καὶ σχεδιάσαι χαμεύνιον καὶ ὑπὸ σκιὰν ἀναπαύσασθαι; **ῥάβδους ἀφύλλους:** Dioscurides, *De materia medica* 4.154 σπαρτίον· θάμνος ἐστὶ φέρων ῥάβδους μακράς, ἀφύλλους; **ἄνοξοι καὶ ἄχλοοι:** Manasses, *Historia*, 6137 ἄχλοος ἐκινδύνευεν, ἄφυλλος, αὐὸς μένειν; **δάφνης εἶχον συμβεβλημένους καὶ ἄλλοτριαν φυλλάδα περιεβέβληντο:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 47-49 μικρὰ τὰ πτερύγια καὶ οἷς δαφνοστοιβαστοὶ ῥάβδοι τὸν δόλον ἀρτύνουσι, φυλλάδας ἄλλοτριας προβεβλημένα καὶ προῖσχομενα λύγους ἀληλιμμένους ἰξῶ; **ὄρηξι:** Manasses, *Historia*, 90 ἦν καὶ μηλέας εὐανθῆς ὄρηξι ἀγλαοκάρπου et 5455; **ὄρχατοι:** Homerus, *Il.*, 14.123 πολλοὶ δὲ φυτῶν ἔσαν ὄρχατοι ἀμφίς; Tatius, *Leucippe*, 5.17.3 διεβαδίζομεν τοὺς ὄρχατους τῶν φυτῶν; Manasses, *Historia*, 96 βοτρυομήτωρ ἄμπελος, ὄρχατοι κληματίδων et 188, 215, 5629; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum* 328-329 οἷον κλῆμα νοτίσι λόγου προεμοσχευέτο, τῆς ἐκφυτείας καὶ τῶν ὄρχάτων ἐπάξιον; **περιεπύκαζεν:** Basilaces, *Progyrnasmata* 24.29-30 γῆν χλοηφόρον μυρίοις περιπυκαζομένην τοῖς ἄνθεσι ; **λύγους ... ἰξῶ :** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 49 λύγους ἀληλιμμένους ἰξῶ; **πέμπελος:** Manasses, *Historia*, 5959 καὶ ταῦτα παλαιόχρονος πέμπελος ὄν τριγέρον et 6571; Manasses, *Carmen morale*, 638 Ὡσπερ γὰρ οἶνος πέμπελος τριγέρον ἄνθοσμίαις; **πολέμοις ἐγγυμνασθεῖς:** Plutarchus, *Caesar*, 28.3 ὡσπερ ἀθλητῆς ἑαυτὸν ἀποστήσας μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς Κελτικοῖς ἐγγυμνασάμενος πολέμοις; Basilaces, *Orationes* 1.451 ἐκεῖνος μὲν οὖν ἄτε πολλοῖς 'πολέμοις' ἐγγεγυμνασμένος.

⁴¹ εἰς E H: πρὸς U S ⁴² ἔργων U S ⁴³ ἄλοξοί U ἄλοποι S ⁴⁴ γὰρ E H: δὲ U S ⁴⁵ χαλκός U post corr. χορηγός S ⁴⁶ κλώνας U ⁴⁷ κατετάσσοντο U S ⁴⁸ εἰκάσειεν U S ⁴⁹ λεπτάς S ⁵⁰ ἐνδαφνωθείσαις U S // δάφναις E H: ῥάβδοις U S ⁵¹ παιδιὰν U ⁵² στρατιάρχης U S // ante ἂν add. δ' U [δ'] S

beautiful to the eye and to the touch, soft for anyone who would like to lay down on an improvised bed. Here, after unloading their burdens (they each carried a different tool needed for hunting), they set to work (how can you put it?) diligently. They drove into the earth rods without leaves; these rods had no branches or leaves (for they had been polished by iron), but small twigs of sweet bay were attached to them so that they were surrounded by foreign foliage and sprouted heterogeneous shoots. These rods were placed in orderly rows (some would say it looked like an orchard): some formed a rectangular pattern and were surrounded by thick and abundant laurel, others were placed in a circle, but all of them had laurel locks. Thereafter, thin sticks coated with glue were brought out and they attached them to the detached branches of sweet bay and arranged the game with great skill. That greyhaired old man organized it all, quite like a general one would say, experienced in many wars.

4. Οἱ δὲ παιδίσκοι παρέφερον φρουρίοις πλεκτοῖς ἐγκεκλεισμένα χειροῖθι στρουθάρια· αἰγιθῆλαι δὲ ἦσαν καὶ σπῖνοι καὶ ἀκανθίδες καὶ τινα⁵³ ἕτερα, μείζονα μὲν ἢ κατὰ σπίνους, βαρυφωνότερα δέ⁵⁴ (οὐκ οἶδα τούτων τὸ ὄνομα)· παρέφερον⁵⁵ δὲ καὶ ἄλλο στρουθίον περικαλλές, ὠραῖον τὴν ὄψιν, καλὸν ιδέσθαι, λάλον ἀκοῦσαι, ἐπιτερπέες ὁμοῦ καὶ πολύφωνον· ἡ κεφαλὴ φοινικέω⁵⁶ περιήνθιστο βάμματι, τὸ δὲ πτερὸν ποικίλως ἐχρῶζετο· ἀγλαόπτερον ἦν, περιπόρφυρον ἦν, κατάστερον, χρυσεόπτερον. Ἀστρογλήνον⁵⁷ ὁ γέρον ἐκάλει τὸ στρουθίον ἐκεῖνο τὸ ἐρυθρόκρανον, καὶ ἐνεκαυχᾶτο τῆ τοῦ ζῴου καλλιγλωττία καὶ

4. αἰγιθῆλαι: Aristoteles, *Historia animalium*, 618b Ὁ δὲ καλούμενος αἰγοθήλας ἐστὶ μὲν ὀρεινός, τὸ δὲ μέγεθος κοττύφου μὲν μικρῷ μείζω; Aelianus, *De natura animalium*, 3.39.1 τολμηρότερος ἄρα ζῴων ὁ αἰγιθήλας ἦν; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 116 αἰγιθήλας, οἶμαι, τὸ ζῴον; **σπῖνοι:** Dionysius, *Ixeuticon paraphrasis*, 3.4.1 Οἱ δὲ σπῖνοι καὶ αἱ τρυγόνες ὑπὸ δένδρων θηρῶνται; Aelianus, *De natura animalium*, 4.61.1 σπῖνοι δὲ ἄρα σοφώτεροι καὶ ἀνθρώπων τὸ μέλλον προεγνωκέναι; Manasses, *Historia* 165 ἀκανθυλλίδες μουσουργοί, κόρυδοι, σπῖνοι, ψᾶρες; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum* 45-46 εἶδον δὲ καὶ ἀκανθυλλίδας ἀλισκομένας καὶ σπίνους καὶ ἀστρογλήνους; Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, p. 4.5 σπίνων ἐπιτερπέστερον, ἀκανθυλλίδων ὑπερφερέστερον et p. 5.30, 6.9, 6.23, 6.26; **ἀκανθίδες:** Aristoteles, *Historia animalium*, 616b αἱ δ' ἀκανθίδες κακόβιοι καὶ κακόχροι, φωνὴν μέντοι λιγυρὰν ἔχουσιν; Callicles, *Carmina*, 29.84 παίζουσιν ἀκανθίδες ἀμφὶ τοῖς ρόδοις; Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 4.7/889 αἱ ποτιστρίδες πᾶσαι τε ὀρνέων ἀκανθίδων; **ἐπιτερπέες:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 315-316 τοιοῦτον τὸ χρῆμα ταύτης τῆς θήρας, ἐπιτερπέες ὁμοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἔγκοπον; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 334 ἦν μὲν γὰρ καὶ τὴν ὥραν καλὸς καὶ τὴν ιδεὰν ἐπιτερπής; **φοινικέω βάμματι:** Eustathius, *Thess. Comm. Ad. Hom. Odys.*, 2.304.4 φοινικῷ βάμματι φαινόν; **περιπόρφυρον:** Manasses, *De Aristandro*, fr. 101.14 τὸ μέλαν δὲ μεταβαρὴν περιπορφύροις ἴοις; Manasses, *Historia*, 75 τινὰ μὲν περιπόρφυρα τῶν ρόδων ἐωρᾶτο et 125, 203, 2187, 4926; Manasses, *Epistulae*, 3.6-7 καὶ τὸ ἄνθος οὐκ ἐξέρυθρον οὐδὲ περιπόρφυρον; **κατάστερον:** Manasses, *Monodia in Theodorum*, 54 καὶ ἦν κατάστερος καλλοναῖς; Manasses, *Consolatio ad Joannem*, 297 τὴν κατάστερον ἀγαθοῖς, τὴν κατάχρυσον ἀρεταῖς.

⁵³ τινα om. U S ⁵⁴ μὲν om. U S δὲ om. U S ⁵⁵ παρέφερον U S ⁵⁶ φοινικῷ U φοινικῷ S

⁵⁷ ἀστρογλήνον U

4. The boys brought woven cages in which small tame birds were locked up: there were nightjars⁷ and siskins⁸ and goldfinches⁹ and some others, larger than the siskins but with deeper voices (I do not know their names). They also brought another very pretty bird, pleasant to the eye, beautiful to look at, loquacious to hear, as charming as multiloquent. Its head was dyed scarlet red and its wings were many-colored: the wings were splendid, they were purple, starry, sparkling with gold. The old man called this red-headed bird ‘finch’ and he praised the animal’s pretty voice and he called the owner of such a bird more fortunate than

⁷ αἰγιθῆλαι: nightjars (La. *parra, parus*). This bird is also called αἰγιθαλ(λ)ος. See Arnott 2007, 9.

⁸ σπῖνοι: siskins. One of several kinds of sparrows, carrying the scientific name *fringilla coelebs* and being motley. On the different kinds of birds in the works of Manasses, see Petit 1898, 597-598; see also Arnott 2007, 323-324 (who calls the same species chaffinch; cf. below).

⁹ ἀκανθίς or ἀκανθυλλίς are two forms for the same bird (*Etymologicon magnum* 45.9 ἀκανθίς ἢ ἀκανθυλλίς: στρουθίον ἐν ταῖς ἀκάνθαις καθήμενον). It should be noted that Manasses in other texts prefers the form ἀκανθυλλίς. The terminological problem does not end here, because according to several Byzantine authors (e.g. Tzetzes, *Scholia et glossemata in Chiliades* 4.889.1 (Leone): ἀκανθίς ὁ στραγαλῖνος παρὰ τὸ ἐν ἀκάνθαις διάγειν), this bird is also called ἀστρογαλῖνος, ἀστογαλῖνος, στραγαλῖνος or ἀστρογλήνος, which appears further below. The official terminology indicates *carduelis cannabina* for ἀκανθίς (greenfinch or chaffinch) and *carduelis carduelis* for ἀστρογλήνος (goldfinch); see also Arnott 2007 14-15 and 31. According to Koukoules 1948-57, vol. 5, 399-400, n. 7, ἀστρογλήνος is *fringilla cannabina* or *carduellis*. The ἀστρογλήνος depicted by Manasses as having a scarlet head, we translate as goldfinch. Manasses wrote a monody on the death of his own goldfinch (Horna) on which see Nilsson 2021, 76-85 and 193.

ὀλβιοδαίμονα ἐκάλει τὸν ἔχοντα, ὑπὲρ Κροῖσον, ὑπὲρ Ἀντίοχον. Τὰ τοίνυν λάλα στρουθία μακρὰν ἀλλήλων ἀπαγαγόντες⁵⁸, οὗτο κρίναντος⁵⁹ τοῦ τῆς παιδιᾶς προάρχου⁶⁰, τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἐκάθηοντο καὶ περιέχασκον τὸν ἀέρα καὶ τὰς νεφέλας περιεσκόπουν. Ἄμα τὲ οὖν πᾶσαν συνεσκευάσαντο⁶¹ τὴν ἐπιβουλήν, καὶ τὰ χειροῖθη στρουθάρια⁶² τὸν ἀέρα περιεβόμβει καὶ κατήχει τῆς χειροποιήτου λόχμης ἐκεῖνης⁶³ καὶ ὁ ἀὴρ μικρὸν ὑπεψέκασε⁶⁴ καὶ λεπτὴν ὀμίχλην κατέχευε καὶ ἀγέλαι μικροπτερύγων στρουθίων⁶⁵ περιέπτησαν⁶⁶.

5. Καὶ ὁ γέρον, πρῶτος ὡς ἦσθετο τῆς βοῆς, σιγὴν⁶⁷ τοῖς παιδαρίοις παρεκελεύετο· ἤλθον ἔπειθ' ὅσα τε φύλλα⁶⁸ καὶ ἄνθηα, ὑπὲρ⁶⁹ τὰς ἐν

ὀλβιοδαίμονα: Homerus, *Il* 3.182 ὃ μάκαρ Ἀτρεΐδῃ μοιρηγενὲς ὀλβιόδαμον; Manasses, *Historia*, 3847 καὶ τὴν ὀλβιοδαίμονα πόλιν Καρχηδονίων et 4071; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 40 καὶ ὀλβιοδαίμονα κρίνας τῆς εὐτεκνίας et 436; **προάρχου:** Manasses, *Historia*, 6077 πρῶτα μὲν οὖν τοὺς τῆς ἀρχῆς προάρχους καὶ προβούλους; **περιέχασκον τὸν ἀέρα:** Tatius, *Leucippe*, 2.22.4 ὁ δὲ λέων ἠγριαίνετο καὶ μετεστρέφετο πάντῃ καὶ τὸν ἀέρα περιέχασκεν; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum* 181 καὶ περιέχασκον τὸν ἀέρα et 327; **ἀέρα περιεβόμβει:** Stethatus, *Vita Symeonis Novi Theologici*, 77.33 καὶ φωνῆ διακένω περιβομβῶν τὸν ἀέρα.

5. ὅσα τε φύλλα καὶ ἄνθηα: Homerus, *Il*. 2.468 ὅσά τε φύλλα καὶ ἄνθηα γίνετα ὄρη et 9.51; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 473 ἄνθεσι τε καὶ φύλλοις νεοδρεπέσιν οἱ συμπατριῶται κατέπαττον; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 90 Ἦν ἐκεῖ καὶ κρόκεον ἄνθος καὶ φύλλον ἐξέερυθρον; **ἔαρι μυίας:** Homerus, *Il.*, 2.469-471 Ἦυτε μυιάων ἀδινάων ἔθνεα πολλὰ/ αἶ τε κατὰ σταθμὸν ποιμνήϊον ἠλάσκουσιν/ ὄρη ἐν εἰαρινῇ ὅτε τε γλάγος ἄγγεα δευεῖ; Libanius, *Orationes*, 18.130.6 ὑπὲρ τὰς μυίας παρὰ τοῖς ποιμέσιν ἐν ἤρι.

⁵⁸ ἀπάγοντες U S ⁵⁹ κρίνοντος U S ⁶⁰ πρωτοάρχου H ⁶¹ ἐσκευάσαντο U S ⁶² στρουθία U S ⁶³ post λόχμης semicolon H ⁶⁴ ὑπεψέκασε E H: ὑπεμάλλαξε ante corr. U ὑπεψάλλαξε post corr. U ὑπεψάλαξε S ⁶⁵ στρουθίων om. U S ⁶⁶ περιέπτησαν E U: παρέπτησαν H περιώφθησαν S ⁶⁷ πρῶτος ὡς ἦσθετο τῆς βοῆς, σιγὴν E H: πρῶτος ἦσθάνετο τῆς βοῆς καὶ σιγὴν U S ⁶⁸ post φύλλα transp. τε U H S ⁶⁹ ante ὑπὲρ add. καὶ U S

Croesus¹⁰, more fortunate than Antiochus.¹¹ So they placed the chattering birds with some distance between them, for that was the decision of the game leader, and then they stationed themselves, eagerly scanning the sky and observing the clouds. As they prepared the entire trap, and the tame birds were humming in the air, and their voices echoed in that artificial thicket, the air became a little humid and spread a fine mist¹² and flocks of short-winged birds flew all around.

5. And the old man, when he first heard the sound of them, ordered the children to be silent. The birds then appeared, as numerous as the leaves and the flowers, more numerous than the flies in spring, more

¹⁰ Croesus: king of Lydia in the 6th century BCE, conquered by Cyrus the Great and famous for his wealth and fortune. On the use of Croesus in ancient literature, see e.g. Duploux 1999).

¹¹ This is probably Antiochus III (241-187 BCE), who according to the Suda was first considered fortunate, but who later had his hopes thwarted (alpha 2693: Ἀντίοχος, βασιλεύς· οὗτος ἐδόκει κατὰ τὰς ἀρχὰς γεγονέναι μεγαλεπήβολος καὶ τολμηρὸς καὶ τοῦ προτεθέντος ἐξεργαστικὸς, προβαίνων δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν ἐφάνη πολὺ καταδεέστερος αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς τῶν ἐκτὸς προσδοκίας); for a general account, see Grainger 2015. Manasses' reference to these two historical figures is ironic, because they both proved to be unfortunate in the end. In fact, all references to ancient mythology and history in this ekphrasis concern the old man and serve a comic aim, constituting paradoxical comparisons (τὸ ἐναντίας ποιεῖσθαι τὰς εἰκόνας τῆ φύσει τῶν πραγμάτων in Ps.-Hermogenes, *On the Method of Speaking Effectively* 86-87 (Patillon). On Manasses' use of such paradoxical comparisons for comic effect, including the portrayal of the old man in this text, see Chrissyogelos 2016, 148-151.

¹² Beck 1978, 326, understands this passage differently: "Als alle Fallen gestellt waren und die zahmen Vögel in der Luft umherschwirrten und das künstliche Dickicht, das ich beschrieben habe, umflogen, da machte sich in der Luft ein leises Schwirren bemerkbar, wie wenn Nebel fiel; eine ganze Schar kleiner Vögel kam im Sicht."

ἔαρι μυίας⁷⁰, ὑπὲρ τὰς λειμωνίους βοτάνας· καὶ βοή κατεῖχε τὸ πᾶν καὶ ἐπευφήμησαν οἱ παιδίσκοι τῷ γινομένῳ· καὶ ὁ τριγέρων⁷¹ αὐτοῖς ἐχάλειπνε⁷², μικροῦ δ' ἂν καὶ πληγὰς προσετρίψατο τοῖς ἀθλοῖσι. Τὰ δὲ χειροῖθη στρουθάρια⁷³ διερρήγγυτο⁷⁴ ταῖς βοαῖς· καὶ τὰ ὑπερπετόμενα τοῖς ἰξοφόροις δόναξιν⁷⁵ ἐπεκάθισαν⁷⁶, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐαλώκεσαν, τὰ δ' ὑπεξέφυγον· ὁ γὰρ ἰξὸς νοτισθεὶς⁷⁷ οὐκ ἔσωξε τὸ ἐχέκολλον. Καὶ ὁ σταδιάρχης γέρων ἐκεῖνος τοῖς μεираκίσκοις⁷⁸ ἐνεβριμᾶτο⁷⁹ καὶ ἄγριον ἔβλεπε, καὶ τῆς ἀμελείας ἐμέμεφετο, συχνᾶς⁸⁰ τὲ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ μηρῶν κατηγε⁸¹ πληγὰς καὶ τὰς χεῖρας πυκνὰ περιέτριβε καὶ ὡσπέρ τι παθῶν βαρυσύμορον ἀπωδύρετο⁸² καὶ κατηύχετο τῶν παιδίσκων καὶ

λειμωνίους βοτάνας: Psellus, *Orationes funebres*, 3.16.55-56 Βοτάνη τε γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ λειμωνία πολλή καὶ δροσερά; Manasses, *Oratio ad Manuelem*, 141 τὸ τε γὰρ πλήθος αὐτοῖς ὑπὲρ τὰς λειμωνίους βοτάνας; **τριγέρων:** Suda, tau 969 τριγέρων: τρεῖς γενεᾶς βιούς· τουτέστι ἐνενηκοντούτης. Νέστωρ ἐν Πύλῳ ἠγαθέη τύμβον ἔχει τριγέρων; Prodrromus, *Carmina historica*, 18.44 καὶ πέμπελοι τριγέροντες ὀδεύουσι καὶ βρέφη; Manasses, *Historia*, 988 τὰ μετὰ τοῦτο τίνα δέ; θνήσκει μὲν ὁ τριγέρων et 1635, 2229, 3279; Manasses, *Monodia in Nicephorum*, 333 τριγέροντες ἄνδρες τὸ βεβηκὸς ἠγάσαντο τοῦ φρονήματος; **διερρήγγυτο ταῖς βοαῖς:** Psellus, *Epistulae*, 141.105 βοῶν μέγα καὶ διαρρηγγύμενος; Choniates, *Historia*, 306 καὶ ταῖς ἀσήμοις βοαῖς διαρρηγγύμενοι; **ἰξοφόροις δόναξιν:** Oppianus, *Halieutica* 1.32 τοὺς δὲ δόναξιν ὑπέσπασαν ἰξοφόροισιν; Eustathius, *Comm. In Hom. Iliad.*, 4.264-265 Ὀππιανὸς δὲ ἰξοφόρους εἰπὼν δόνακας ἔοικε λεπτοὺς λύγους οὕτω καλεῖν; **ἐχέκολλον:** Plutarchus, *Quaestiones conviviales*, 735 E 10 οὐ γὰρ παραμένει τὸ ἐχέκολλον καὶ συνεκτικόν, ἢ πυκνουμένης ψυχρότητι τῆς ἰκμάδος ἢ ξηραιομένης; **ἀπωδύρετο:** Manasses, *Historia*, 5716 καὶ πάντες ἀπωδύροντο τὸ τῆς ἐνδείας βέλος; Manasses, *Monodia in Theodorum*, 105 ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί σου πρότερον ἀποδύροιτο; Manasses, *Consolatio ad Joannem*, 107 οἶδεν ἢ φύσις τὸ πάθος καὶ ἀποδύρεται πᾶς τὸ γινόμενον; **ὑπήγεν ἀραῖς:** Photius, *Epistulae*, 162.88 ἀραῖς τετολμηκὸς ὑπάγειν et 162.77.

⁷⁰ ἑναερίους μύας U S ⁷¹ τρι- supra lin. U γέρων S ⁷² ἐχάλειπαινε U S ⁷³ στρουθία U S ⁷⁴ διερρήγγυτο U S ⁷⁵ δονάξιν post corr. U δονάκεσιν ? ante corr. U ⁷⁶ ἐπεκάθησαν U ⁷⁷ νοτισθεὶς U ⁷⁸ τοῖς μεираκίσκοις om. U S ⁷⁹ ἐνεβριμᾶτο U ⁸⁰ συχνᾶς U ⁸¹ κατεπήγε U H S ⁸² ἐπωδύρετο U H S

numerous than the herbs of the meadow. A noise filled the entire space and the boys applauded what was happening; the very old man¹³ got angry with them and almost started beating those wretches. The tame birds burst into loud singing; those that came flying sat down on the gluey sticks and some of them were captured, others fled because the glue lost its stickiness due to the humidity. And that old man, the master of the stadium, was irritated with the boys, threw at them fierce looks, blamed their negligence, kept hitting his thighs and wringing his hands, lamented as if he had suffered a severe injury, cursed the boys and threw the worst curses at them, calling as witnesses the earth and the sun, and

¹³ τριγέρων: according to the Suda (tau 969 τριγέρων: τρεῖς γενεὰς βιούς· τουτέστι ἐνενηκοντούτης. Νέστωρ ἐν Πύλῳ ἡγαθέη τύμβον ἔχει τριγέρων), this adjective signifies a man aged ninety and most often characterizes Nestor, the Homeric king of Pylos; see also Anagnostakis 2004, 80, n. 20.

παλαμναιοτάταις ὑπήγεν⁸³ ἀραῖς καὶ γῆν καὶ ἥλιον ἐμαρτύρετο⁸⁴ καὶ τὰς τῆς ἄγρας ἐφόρους δυνάμεις ἐπεβοῶτο.

6. Τὰ τοίνυν ἐαλωκότα συλλέξαντες ἐφυλλοκρύνουν⁸⁵ τὸ θήραμα. Καὶ τὸ μὲν θῆλυ πᾶν τῷ φόνῳ ὑπήγετο⁸⁶ καὶ κατὰ βόθρου τινὸς ἠκοντίζετο· ἦσαν γὰρ καὶ τάφρον τοῖς⁸⁷ ταλαιπώροις ὑπονομεύσαντες⁸⁸, Ἄιδην (ἂν εἶπέ τις) ἢ τάφρον⁸⁹ πολυχανδῆ. Τὰ δὲ ἄρρενα διελόντες⁹⁰, τὰ μὲν ἐξώγρουν καὶ φυλακῆ παρεδίδοσαν, τῶν δὲ ἀπέδουν τὰ πετὰ καὶ ὧπτων πυρὶ καὶ αὐτοῖς⁹¹ ὀστέοις κατέπινον· ἔτυχον γὰρ καὶ πῦρ αὐτοῦ που προαποθησαυρίσαντες⁹².

Ὁ δὲ καθηγητῆς ἐκεῖνος, ὁ ταξιάρχης, παρακληθῆναι οὐκ ἤθελεν, ἀλλὰ⁹³ ἐδυσφόρει καὶ ἤλυε καὶ ἀπὸ καρδίας ἐστέναζεν· οὐχ οὕτως

ἥλιον ἐμαρτύρετο: Manasses, *Aristandro*, fr.9.2 καὶ μὴ μάρτυρα τὸν ἥλιον αἰσχύνης; cf. Eur. Herc. 858 Ἥλιον μαρτυρόμεσθα; **τῆς ἄγρας ἐφόρους:** *Scholia in Orprianum Halieutica* 3.27.5 καὶ σε σὺν τοῖς τῆς ἀλιευτικῆς ἀγρευτικῆς ἄγρας ἐφόροις θεοῖς βοήσας et 2.27.2.

6. κατὰ βόθρου ἠκοντίζετο: Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 54 κατὰ βόθρου ἠκοντιζόμενα; **ὑπονομεύσαντες:** Manasses, *De Aristandro*, fr. 32 Οὕτως ὁ βόθρον τοῖς ἐγγύς ὑπονομεύων φόνου et fr. 63 ὁ δὲ θανάτου βάραθρον ἄλλοις ὑπονομεύων; Manasses, *Oratio ad Michaelem*, 111 τί δεῖ καὶ ὑποσκάπτειν τὴν ρίζαν καὶ μέχρι πυθμένων ὑπονομεύειν et 396; **τάφρον πολυχανδῆ:** Manasses, *Historia*, 3957-58 καὶ γέγονε πολυχανδῆς Ἄδου γαστήρ πανδόχου καὶ τάφος μυριόνεκρος καὶ τοῦ θανάτου πύλη; **ὀστέοις κατέπινον:** Dionysius, *Ixeuticon paraphrasis*, 1.4.13-14 τοῖς τῶν πάλαι τεθνηκότων θηρίων ὀστέοις, εἰ μὲν καταπιεῖν δύναιτο; Daphnopates, *Epistulae*, 25.4 ὑπὸ τινος Χαρύβδεως σὺν αὐτοῖς ὀστ[έ]οις καταποθέντες; **πῦρ προαποθησαυρίσαντες:** cf. Psellus, *Theologica*, 76.153 τὸ τῶν ἡδονῶν ἀποτεθησαύρισαι πῦρ; **παρακληθῆναι οὐκ ἤθελεν:** NT, *Evangelium secundum Matthaenum*, 2.18 Ῥαχὴλ κλαίουσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς, καὶ οὐκ ἤθελεν παρακληθῆναι; **ἐδυσφόρει καὶ ἤλυε:** Anonymus Professor, *Epistulae*, 100.5 ἀλῆειν εἰς ἅπαντά σε καὶ δυσφορεῖν καὶ ζῆν οὐκ ἐθέλειν; Choniates, *Historia*, 548 ἤλυέ τε καὶ ἐδυσφόρει καὶ ἤχθετο.

⁸³ ἐπῆγεν U S ⁸⁴ ἐμαρτύριστο U S ⁸⁵ ἐφυλλοκρύνουν U S ⁸⁶ ἠπέγετο U S ⁸⁷ τοῖς E U H: ταῖς S ⁸⁸ ἐπινομεύσαντες U S ⁸⁹ τάφρον U ⁹⁰ ἄρρενα διελθόντες U ⁹¹ αὐτοῖς E H: τοῖς U S ⁹² καὶ πῦρ αὐτοῦ που E H: αὐτοῦ που καὶ πῦρ U S προαποθησαυρίσαντες E H: ἀποθησαυρίζοντες U S ⁹³ ἀλλ' U S

invoking the powers that watch over the hunt.¹⁴

6. After collecting the captured birds, they sorted out the game. All female birds were killed and thrown into a pit; they had even prepared for these poor creatures a trench that one could call Hades or capacious tomb.¹⁵ As for the male birds, they divided them and made some prisoners, plucked the others, roasted them and devoured them whole without sparing even the bones, because they had also prepared a fire for them in advance.¹⁶

That teacher of theirs, however, the master of ceremony, did not want to be comforted, but grew impatient, was beside himself and kept

¹⁴ That is the gods in charged of the successful hunt (Artemis and Apollo?).

¹⁵ To our knowledge, this treatment of male and female birds is not attested in any other text, but Manasses does not seem to make it up because this practice is common in modern bird hunting.

¹⁶ Cf. the similar attitude of Arab bird hunters, who “quand ils s’en vont assez loin pour chasser à la glu, emportent tout le nécessaire au repas, y compris la marmite, mais ne se chargent d’aucune viande. Pour tout volatile que leur ou leurs compagnons désirent goûter, ils leur disent simplement : ‘Préparez la marmite !’ et ils les régale de tout ce qu’ils ont pu souhaiter.” (All ibn Hasan al-Asadi, author of the 13th century, cited and translated in Viré 1973, 8).

Ἰωνᾶς ἐπὶ τῷ μαρασμῷ⁹⁴ τῆς κολοκύντης ἐβαρυθύμησε. Καὶ πάλιν ἰξῶ τοὺς λύγους⁹⁵ ὑπήλειφε⁹⁶ καὶ τὸν κατὰ τῶν στρουθίων ἤρτυε⁹⁷ δόλον. Καὶ ἀγέλη πολυπληθῆς διαπτᾶσά ποθεν τὴν κατήφειαν ἔλυσεν⁹⁸. ἅπανα γὰρ ἄρδην ἐάλω καὶ πέπτωκεν, ὡς μηδ' ἄγγελον τῆς ἀπωλείας⁹⁹ ὑπολειφθῆναι¹⁰⁰. Τότε πρῶτον καὶ τὸν παλαιάτατον ἐκεῖνον χοράρχην τὸ νέφος τοῦ προσώπου λύσαντα ἔβλεψα, καὶ ἰλαρὸν ὑπομειδιάσαντα. Ἀλλὰ τῆς ὀφρύος!¹⁰¹ ἐβρενθύετο γὰρ¹⁰² καὶ ἐμεγαλαύχει καὶ περιεφρόνει τὸν ἥλιον, καὶ ἐπ' ἄκρων ἔβαινε τῶν δακτύλων καὶ τὴν ἐπιτυχίαν τοῦ θηράματος ἐμακάριζε. Καὶ οὐκέτι φορητὸς ἦν κομπάζων καὶ μεγαλοφρονῶν· οὐχ οὕτως ἐπ' Αἰγύπτῳ¹⁰³ Καμβύσης, οὐχ οὕτως¹⁰⁴ ἐπὶ Βαβυλῶνι Μεγάβυζος.

Ἰωνᾶς ἐπὶ τῷ μαρασμῷ τῆς κολοκύντης: AT, Jon 4.6-9; **ἤρτυε δόλον**: Homerus, *Odys.*, 11.439 σοὶ δὲ Κλυταιμνήστρη δόλον ἤρτυε τηλόθ' ἐόντι; Manasses, *Historia*, 1003 καὶ δυσμεναίων κατ' αὐτῶν ἤρτυε τούτοις δόλους et 1298; Manasses, *Oratio ad Manuelem*, 63-64 ἐτέκταινε μηχανάς, ἤρτυε δόλους ὁ ἀλάστωρ ὁ δύστροπος; **τὴν κατήφειαν ἔλυσεν**: Basilus Caesar, *Epistulae*, 90.1.10 ἠϋφρανεν ἡμᾶς τοσοῦτον ὥστε λῦσαι ἡμῶν τὴν κατήφειαν; **ἄγγελον τῆς ἀπωλείας ὑπολειφθῆναι**: *De legationibus*, 518.24 κτεῖνον ἅπαντας ὁμαλῶς μηδ' ἄγγελον ὑπολιπῶν; Flavius Josephus, *Antiquitates Judaicae*, 2.344.5-6 ἄγγελον τῆς συμφορᾶς τοῖς ὑπολειμμένοις ὑποστρέψαι; **ἐβρενθύετο**: *De legationibus*, 467.19 καὶ τοῖνυν αὐθις ὁ βάρβαρος θρασὺς τε καὶ ὑψαύχην ἦν, καὶ μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τοῖς ζυνενεχθεῖσιν ἐβρενθύετο μέγα ἠπειλήσέ; Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum (lib. 13-18)*, 407.1 καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις ὡς μέγα τι κατορθῶν ἐβρενθύετο; **περιεφρόνει τὸν ἥλιον**: Aristophanes, *Nubes*, 225 ἀεροβατῶ καὶ περιφρονῶ τὸν ἥλιον et 1503; **ἐπ' ἄκρων ἔβαινε τῶν δακτύλων**: cf. Soph. Ajax, 1230 ὑψήλ' ἐφρόνεις κάπ' ἄκρων ὠδοιπόροις; Psellus, *Epistulae*, 174.7-8 καὶ ἐπ' ἄκρων δακτύλων τὰ κατὰ πάντων λαβῶν νικητήρια et 189.46-47, 190.30; *Suda*, ypsilon 747 τουτέστιν ἐπ' ἄκρων δακτύλων ἔβαινες γαυριῶν; **Αἰγύπτῳ Καμβύσης**: Herodotus, *Historia*, 2.181.20-21 ὡς ἐπεκράτησε Καμβύσης Αἰγύπτου; Ctesias, *Fragmenta*, 13a.2 ἢ ἐπ' Αἰγύπτου δὲ Καμβύσου στρατεία; **Βαβυλῶνι Μεγάβυζος**: Ctesias, *Fragmenta*, 13.115 οὕτω μὲν ἦλω διὰ Μεγαβύζου Βαβυλῶν.

⁹⁴ μαρασμῷ E post corr. U H S: βρασμῷ E ante corr. ⁹⁵ ἰξῶ τοὺς E U H: ἰξωτὰς S λυγούς U ⁹⁶ ὑπήλειφον U S ⁹⁷ ἤρτυον U S ⁹⁸ ἔλυεν U S ⁹⁹ ἀγγελίας U S ¹⁰⁰ ἀπολειφθῆναι U S ¹⁰¹ ἀλλὰ τῆς ὀφρύος· ἐβρενθύετο E H: ἀλλ' ἦν τὰς ὀφρύας ἀνεσπακῶς U S ¹⁰² γὰρ om. U S ¹⁰³ Αἰγύπτου U ¹⁰⁴ οὕτω E

groaning with all his heart; not even Jonah was this sad for the withering of his pumpkin plant.¹⁷ Once more he coated the sticks with glue and arranged a trap against the birds. A large flock of birds flying in from somewhere dissolved his dejection, for this flock was caught in its entirety and all succumbed, so that not even a messenger of the disaster survived. Then for the first time I saw also that very old conductor chase the cloud from his face and joyfully smile. But with what arrogance! For he was proud, he boasted, he belittled the sun, he was tiptoeing around and declared himself happy with the outcome of the hunt. And he was truly unbearable because of his boasting and pride, exceeding that of Cambyses for the capture of Egypt and that of Megabyzes for the capture of Babylon.¹⁸

¹⁷ Reference to the biblical Jonah (Jon 4.6-9): “And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.”

¹⁸ These two historical figures are known from the accounts of Herodotus and Ctesias. Cambyses II was king of Persians 529-522 BCE and conqueror of Egypt, for the Greeks a prototype of a mad, cruel and tyrannical king; on his madness, see Vignolo Munson 1991 and Sauzeau 2007. Megabyzes, married to the mad daughter of Xerxes and thus his son-in-law, is a more obscure historical figure, but his connection to the devious capture of Babylon, usually attributed to his father Zopyros, makes us suspect that Manasses knew the version proposed by Ctesias (*Fragmenta* 13.113-115: ἃ δὲ περὶ Ζωπύρου ἐκεῖνος [ὁ Ἡρόδοτος] ... Μεγάβυζον οὗτος λέγει διαπράξασθαι ... οὕτω μὲν ἦλθον διὰ Μεγαβύζου Βαβυλῶν); Auburger 1995, 69-71. Manasses continues to use historical and mythological exempla in a subversive manner in order to portray the old man in an ironic manner.

7. Συμπεφόρητο τοίνυν τὰ ἡγρευμένα καὶ ἦν ἀστεῖον τὸ θέαμα. Τὸ μὲν ἐβέβλητο κατὰ κεφαλῆς, τοῦ δὲ κατίζωντο¹⁰⁵ τὰ πτερύγια, ἐτέρω¹⁰⁶ γαστήρ καὶ πόδες ἐσπίλωντο, τὰ δὲ στήθη τούτων ἐσφάδαζε¹⁰⁷ καὶ τὰ ράμφη ἠνοίγετο καὶ ἤσθμαινον ἔσχατα καὶ ἔπνεον λοίσθια. Ἐσεμνηγόρει τοίνυν ὁ γέρων καὶ πολλὴν εὐθηρίαν προεμαντεύετο· καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις τοὺς λύγους¹⁰⁸ τοὺς¹⁰⁹ κατίξους τῶν στρουθαρῶν¹¹⁰ ἀπέσπα καὶ χεῖλεσι καὶ δακτύλοις ἀπεκάθαιρε τῶν πετρῶν· καὶ ὁ ἰξὸς προσέφω τῷ πάγωνι, καὶ εἶχετο ἀπρὶξ τῶν τριχῶν. Ὁ δ' οὐ¹¹¹ προσεποιεῖτο οὐδ' ἐπεστρέφετο, ἀλλ' ἐμαίνετο ἔσχατα¹¹² καὶ ἐλύσσα ἀκάθεκτα.

8. Ἦν ταῦτα καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις ἕτερόν τι συνέπεσε χαριέστερον¹¹³. Τανυσίπτερος ἴρηξ¹¹⁴ ἀκανθίδα ἐδίωκε· καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐφέρετο μετὰ ροίζου, ἡ δ' ὑπεξέφυγεν¹¹⁵. ὁ μὲν¹¹⁶ ἐδίψα καταλαβεῖν, ἡ δ' ἐμμηχανᾶτο διαφυγεῖν καὶ πολλοῖς ἐκέχρητο ἐλιγμοῖς, καὶ τὴν πόαν ἐπήρηχετο, καὶ παντοδαπῆ¹¹⁷ τις

7. ἐβέβλητο κατὰ κεφαλῆς: Homerus, *Il.* 5.72 βεβλήκει κεφαλῆς κατὰ ἰνίον ὀξεί δουρί; **ἤσθμαινον ἔσχατα:** Psellus, *Chronographia*, 4.54.8 ἄσθμαινων ἤδη καὶ τὰς ἐσχάτας ἀναπέμπων ἀναπνοάς; **ἔπνεον λοίσθια:** Manasses, *Historia*, 3417 ἔτι καὶ ζῶν καὶ περιῶν καὶ μὴ τὰ λοίσθια πνέων et 5215; **εἶχετο ἀπρὶξ:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 224 ἀπρὶξ τε εἶχετο τοῦ γεράνου; **ἐμαίνετο ἔσχατα:** Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum*, PG 57, 246.51 καὶ τὴν ἐσχάτην μαινομένων μανίαν; **ἐλύσσα ἀκάθεκτα:** Philo, *De Josepho*, 40.4 καὶ ἀκαθέκτως περὶ τὸ πάθος λυτῶσα; Manasses, *Aristandro*, fr. 96.10 καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ λυτῆσας ἀκαθέκτως.

8. τανυσίπτερος ἴρηξ: Homerus, *Odyss.*, 5.65-66 ἔνθα δὲ τ' ὄρνιθες τανυσίπτεροι εὐνάζοντο, σκῶπές τ' ἴρηκές τε τανύγλωσσοί τε κορῶναι; Hesiodus, *Opera et dies*, 212 ὡς ἔφατ' ὠκυπέτης ἴρηξ, τανυσίπτερος ὄρνις; Manasses, *Historia*, 2757 ὄρνιν δὲ τανυσίπτερον, ὄρνεοκράτην ὄρνιν; **ἐκέχρητο ἐλιγμοῖς:** Dionysius, *Ixeuticon paraphrasis*, 1.31.41 τὸν ὄρνιν ἠπείγετο, μάτην πλείστοις χρώμενος ἐλιγμοῖς; Manasses, *Historia*, 398 μυρίους ἔνδον ἐλιγμοὺς λαβυρινθῶδεις φέρον.

¹⁰⁵ κατίζωνται U ¹⁰⁶ ἐτέρου U S ¹⁰⁷ τούτων E H: πᾶσι U S ἐσφάδαζε om. U S ¹⁰⁸ εὐθηρίαν προεμαντεύετο E H: εὐθηρίαν κατεμαντεύετο U S τοὺς λύγους E H: τὰς λύγας U τὰς λύγους S ¹⁰⁹ τὰς U S ¹¹⁰ στρουθῶν U S ¹¹¹ ὁ δ' οὐ E U H: Ὁ δ' οὐτι S ¹¹² ἄσχατα U H ¹¹³ χαριέστατον U S ¹¹⁴ τανυσίπτερος ἴρηξ E: τανυσίπτερος ὄρνις U S ἴρηξ τανυσίπτερος ὄρνις H ¹¹⁵ ὑπεξέφευγεν U S H ¹¹⁶ μὲν E H: δὲ U S ¹¹⁷ παντοδαπός S

7. The captured birds were then collected and the spectacle was amusing. Some had their head hit [by glue] from below, some had glue all over their wings, others had their stomach and legs stained [by the glue], their breasts were shivering, their beaks were opening, they were breathing heavily one last time and died. Now the old man spoke solemnly and predicted a good and abundant hunt. And he tore off the gluey sticks from the birds and cleaned their wings with his lips and fingers; the glue clung to his beard and stuck firmly to his body hair. He did not seem to notice, nor did he pay attention – he just acted like a madman and was carried away beyond any control.

8. This was the situation and then something even more graceful happened: a swift-winged falcon was chasing a chaffinch.¹⁹ The falcon attacked with a whizzing sound while the chaffinch fled; the one was thirsting for the catch, the other contrived to escape and resorted to

¹⁹ On this kind of glue-hunting with the presence of a falcon, see Messis and Nilsson 2021, 87-88 with n. 23, noting that Manasses/the narrator of this ekphrasis does not seem to understand the use of the falcon, which is not to catch the birds but to paralyze them with fear and thus making them easier to catch. It is worth noting the gendered aspect of the following scene: he (the falcon) against her (the chaffinch), which does not quite come out in the translation but is a notable feature in hunting scenes; see Goldwyn 2018, 39-84, and (on Manasses) Nilsson 2021, 37 with n. 37.

ἐγίνετο, οἷα τρέχουσα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς¹¹⁸. Ὡς δὲ <ἐκεῖνος> ἀπειροκάλως ἐποίητο τὸν πετασμὸν καὶ ἐνικᾶτο θυμῷ (ἢ γὰρ βελτίστη γαστήρ ἤπειγε), λανθάνει τοῖς λύγοις τοῖς¹¹⁹ κατίξοις περιπαρεῖς καὶ παθὼν μᾶλλον ἢ δράσας καὶ τῆς ἄγρας ἀποτυχῶν καὶ ἀγρευσιμος γεγινώς· καὶ ὁ μικροῦ ὑπερνέφελος, παιδαρίσκων¹²⁰ ἐψηλαφᾶτο χερσί.

Τὰ δ' ἐπὶ τούτοις τίς ἂν γραφῆ παραστήσειεν; Ἀλαλαγμὸς ἐγίνετο, καὶ βοή καὶ θροῦς τὸν ἀέρα ἐγέμισεν¹²¹. εἶπεν ἂν τις, ὡς κατεῖληπται φρούριον ἢ πύργων στεφάναι¹²² πεπτώκεσαν¹²³. τοσοῦτος βόμβος ἐγίνετο, τοσοῦτος γέλως ἀνέβαινε· καὶ ἦν δρόμος οὐκ ἀγεννῆς καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλον προφθάνειν ἠπείγετο. Τότε δὴ καὶ ὁ γέρων ἐκεῖνος¹²⁴, ὁ τῆς τελετῆς ταύτης πρωτόαρχος, τοῖς μειρακίσκοις ἀντηγωνίζετο, καὶ συνέτρεχε καὶ

τρέχουσα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς: Aristophanes, *Vespae*, 376 καὶ τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς δρόμον δραμεῖν; Manasses *Historia*, 2924 περὶ ψυχῆς γὰρ ἔτρεχεν; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 53 τρέχοντα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς; **ἢ γὰρ βελτίστη γαστήρ ἤπειγε:** Tattius, Leucippe, 2.23.1 ὡς δὲ ἡ βελτίστη γαστήρ κατηνάγκασε, πείθεται; cf. Psellus, *Epistulae* 104,20-21 ἔλξει γὰρ με, εὐ οἶδα, ἡ βελτίστη πρὸς τὸ βρῶμα γαστήρ; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 158-9 ἡ μὲν γαστήρ ἤπειγε πρὸς τροφήν; **περιπαρεῖς:** Aesopus *Fabulae*, 19.5-6 καὶ περιπαρεῖς τοῖς ἐρίοις τοὺς ὄνυχας ἐάλω μᾶλλον ἢ θηρᾶσαι δεδύνηται; Eutecnius, *Paraphrasis*, p. 9.15 ἄθλιος τῷ χαλκῷ περιπαρεῖς ἀλωτὸς ἐκ τῆς γένους ἔλκεται et 22.12; **παθὼν μᾶλλον ἢ δράσας:** Plato, *Leges*, 834a1 παθὼν ἢ δράσας; **μικροῦ ὑπερνέφελος:** Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 9.20.7 μικροῦ ὑπερνέφελον; **ἐψηλαφᾶτο χερσί:** NT *Epistula Joannis* 1.1.2 Ἐθεασάμεθα καὶ αἱ χεῖρες ἡμῶν ἐψηλάφησαν; **γραφῆ παραστήσειεν:** Philostratus Major, *Imagines*, 1.28.2 γραφῆ γὰρ παρεστήκαμεν; Sophronius, *Miracula Cyri et Joannis*, no 44.47 ἄς οὐκ ἂν τις γραφῆ παραστήσειεν; **ἀλαλαγμὸς καὶ βοή καὶ θροῦς:** Herodotus, *Historia*, 8.37.16-17 ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ἱοῦ τῆς Προνηΐης βοή τε καὶ ἀλαλαγμὸς ἐγίνετο; Anna Comnena, *Alexias*, 1.5.4 τοῦμοῦ πατρὸς Ἀλεξίου μετὰ βοῆς καὶ ἀλαλαγμοῦ ἐμπεδησαν τὸ περὶ τὴν ἔνεδραν στράτευμα et passim; Cinnamus, *Historia*, 244.15-16 καὶ βοή καὶ ἀλαλαγμὸς ἦν, καὶ θροῦς ἠγείρετο ἄσημος; **πύργων στεφάναι:** Euripides, *Troades*, 784 πύργων ἐπ' ἄκρας στεφάνας et *Hecuba*, 910.

¹¹⁸ οἷα τρέχουσα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς E H: σπεύδουσα καταλαβεῖν τὸν στρουθόν U σπεύδων καταλαβεῖν τὸν στρουθόν S ¹¹⁹ ταῖς λύγαις ταῖς U ταῖς λύγοις ταῖς S ¹²⁰ παιδαρίων U S ¹²¹ ἐγέμιζεν H ¹²² στέφανα, U, S ¹²³ πεπτώκασι U S H ¹²⁴ ἐκεῖνος om. U S

numerous serpentine movements, flying over the grass and doing whatever she could, as she was running for her life.²⁰ As the falcon was rashly flying to and fro, conquered by his urges (that excellent belly of his was spurring him on), he was accidentally caught by the gluey twigs; becoming an object rather than a subject, he failed in the hunt and was himself now the prey – he who not long ago had risen above the clouds was now being touched by the hands of little boys.²¹

Who could describe in words what happened next? Battle cries erupted, and the air was filled with shouting and confused noises; one would say that a fortress was being captured or fortifying towers were being knocked down – so great was the intensity of the din, so great was the rise of the laughter, and there were serious running, each one rushing to come first. And at this point, that very old man, the leader of this ritual,

²⁰ The text has a problem here since the two manuscripts offer different readings: E has the text that we propose (καὶ τὴν πόαν ἐπήρχετο καὶ παντοδαπὴ τις ἐγένετο οἷα τρέχουσα τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς), while U has καὶ τὴν πόαν ἐπήρχετο καὶ παντοδαπὴ τις ἐγένετο σπεύδουσα καταλαβεῖν τὸν στρουθόν, which means that the copyist understands the sentence as referring to ὄρνις, considered as feminine. Sternbach corrects παντοδαπὴ and σπεύδουσα into παντοδαπός and σπεύδων and the sense of the phrase becomes “[the falcon] approached the grass and did everything it could. . .” Below, in the sentence that opens ὡς δὲ ἀπειροκάλως, E lacks the subject that we understand as different from the subject of the preceding sentence, that is, no longer the chaffinch but the falcon.

²¹ There is a similar image in Manasses, *Description of a crane hunt* 13 (Messis and Nilsson): ὁ δὲ τάλας ἐκεῖνος ὁ γέρανός εἰς ἄθρομα πᾶσι καὶ χλεῦν προέκειτο καθάπερ τις στρατιώτης τὰς χεῖρας περιεγκωνισθεὶς καὶ τὰ ὄπλα ἀποδυσθεὶς καὶ βρεφυλλίους προβεβλημένος εἰς παίγιον.

ἀντέτρεχε, τὴν πολιὰν θέμενος παρ' οὐδέν, κἀνταῦθα μόνον ἀγνοήσας αὐτόν¹²⁵. ὑπὸ γὰρ τῆς ἡδονῆς ἐξεφέρετο¹²⁶, καὶ ἐνεθουσία καὶ οὐχ οἶος τε ἦν κατέχειν αὐτόν¹²⁷, ἀλλ' ἐξήνιος ἐγίνετο¹²⁸ καὶ ἀχάλινος.

Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἦν ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικε, τῶν γινομένων οὐδὲν ἀνεκδίκητον ἐνεμέσησεν ἢ Δίκη τῷ γέροντι, καὶ ἀπεριμερίμωτος¹²⁹ φερόμενος ἀρρίχῳ προσκόπτει καὶ καταπίπτει ἄθλιος ἐπὶ στόμα. Καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐπὶ κρανὸν ὡς ἐκ μηχανῆς ἀπεδισκεύθη πορρώτερον¹³⁰, καὶ ὑγροπήλῳ τέλματι¹³¹ ἐπεκάθισεν (ἦν γὰρ τι τῆς γῆς ἐκείνης μέρος ὑπόπηλον), αἱ δὲ παλάμαι ἐδρῦφθησαν. Καὶ τὸ μὲν¹³² στόμα κόνεως ὁμοῦ καὶ χόρτου πεπλήρωτο, καὶ τῷ φορυτῷ ἐπιβέβυστο. Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἔμελε¹³³ τοῦτου¹³⁴ τῷ γέροντι· ἀλλ' ὀρθιάσας αὐτόν πάλιν δρομικωτέρως ἐφέρετο. Τότε πρώτως ἔγνω ὡς προθυμία καὶ γῆρας νικᾷ καὶ πόθος ὑπερθερμαίνει¹³⁵ τῆς ἡλικίας

τὴν πολιὰν θέμενος παρ' οὐδέν: Eustathius Thess., *Comm. In Hom. Il.*, II, 767.18 τοῦτον ὁ μαθητὴς Ἀχιλλεὺς ἐν τοιαύτῃ πολιᾷ παρ' οὐδὲν θήσει; **ἐξήνιος καὶ ἀχάλινος:** Manasses, *Monodia in Theodoram*, 148 ὅσαι περικροταλίζουσι τὰς παλάμας ὡς ἀχάλινοι καὶ ἐξήνιοι; Manasses, *Oratio ad Michaelem*, 186 οὐδ' ἐξήνιον οὐδὲ ὑπέρφρον οὐδὲ ἀχάλινον; **ἐνεμέσησεν ἢ Δίκη:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 321 καί, τῆς ἀγραίας Δίκης νεμεσησάσης; **καταπίπτει ... ἐπὶ στόμα:** Lucianus, *Adversus indoctum*, 7.16 ἐπὶ στόμα καταπίπτων ὑπὸ τοῦ βάρους; Manasses, *Historia*, 5214 καὶ κινδυνεύουσαν πεσεῖν ἀθλίως ἐπὶ στόμα et 5269, 6552; **ἐπὶ κρανὸν:** Manasses, *De Aristandro*, fr. 177.5 οὐ χρῶνται πύλοις, οὐ τισιν ἐτέροις ἐπικράνοις; Manasses, *Ecphrasis hominis parvi*, 27 περιέκειτο μὲν ἐπὶ κρανὸν ἰκανῶς ἔχον μεγέθους et 29; **ἀπεδισκεύθη:** Manasses, *Historia*, 6463 ὑψόθεν ἀποδισκευθεῖς, ἀπορραγεῖς ἐκ νέφους; Manasses *Oratio ad Manuelem*, 73 κατὰ τῆς αὐτοῦ κεφαλῆς ἀποδισκευόμενον; Manasses, *Monodia in Theodoram*, 67-68 ὑπὸ πρηστήρος ἄνωθεν ἀποδισκευθέντος μεμελάνωται; **ὑπόπηλον:** Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, p. 4. 16 τὴν ἰλὸν ἀποσμύχοντι καὶ τὸ ὑπόπηλον ἐκκαθαίροντι; **τῷ φορυτῷ ἐπιβέβυστο:** Aristophanes, *Plutus*, 379 τὸ στόμ' ἐπιβύσας κέρμασιν τῶν ῥητόρων; **προθυμία καὶ γῆρας:** Gregorius Naz., *Oratio funebris in Basilium*, 37.4.3 προθυμία νεκροῦς ἀνίστησι, καὶ πηδᾷ γῆρας.

¹²⁵ αὐτόν E U H ¹²⁶ κατεφέρετο U S¹²⁷ ἑαυτὸν κατέχειν U S : κατέχειν αὐτόν E κατέχειν αὐτόν H ¹²⁸ ἐγένετο U S ¹²⁹ ἀμερίμωτος U S ¹³⁰ πορρωτέρω U S ¹³¹ πέλματι U S ¹³² μὲν om. U S ¹³³ ἔμελλε U ¹³⁴ τοῦτο U S ¹³⁵ ὑποθερμαίνει U S

was competing against the young boys, he ran with them, he run against them, not caring about his white hair and in this situation alone he ignored himself. For he was carried away by pleasure, he was in ecstasy, and could not hold himself back, but was becoming uncontrolled and unbridled.

But nothing that happened went, as it seems, unavenged. Dike was annoyed with the old man and he, running without paying attention, bumped into a basket and fell, the wretch, face down on the ground. His hat flew off, as if *ex machina*, like a disc thrown, and settled on a muddy spot (some of that land was marshy), while his palms were scratched. His mouth was filled with dust as well as grass, and saturated with filth. But the old man did not care – he stood up and started running even faster. It was then that for the first time I realized that ardor conquers elderliness,

τὸ παρειμένον καὶ ἀκμαιότερον τίθησι. Καίτοι¹³⁶ δαίμονι τοιοῦτω παλαίσας καὶ κινδυνεύσας ἐκκρουσθῆναι καὶ τοὺς ὀδόντας, ὅμως ὑπερπεπήδηκε¹³⁷ καὶ¹³⁸ ὑπερέδραμε τὰ μειράκια, καὶ πρῶτος¹³⁹ ἐπὶ τὸν ὀρνιθοφόντην ἦλθεν ἰέρακα καὶ τῆς εὐαγρίας πρωτάγγελος γέγονε. Τοῦ δὲ¹⁴⁰ ἐπικράνου καὶ τῶν χειλέων καὶ τῆς τῶν παλαμῶν ὑποδρύψεως οὐδ' ὄναρ ἐμέμνητο.

Ἐγὼ δὲ γέλω¹⁴¹ ἐξέθανον, ὡς εἶδον ἀκαλυφῆς τὸ κρανίον καὶ ἀπολάμπον τῆ φαλακρώσει· καὶ ἐώκει¹⁴² μοι τοιοῦτος εἶναι τις ἄνθρωπος, οἷον τὸν μετὰ¹⁴³ τοῦ¹⁴⁴ Διονύσου γέροντα τὸν ναρθηκοφόρον Ἑλλήνων παῖδες ἰστόρησαν· ἐψίλωτο¹⁴⁵ τὸ κρανίον τῷ γέροντι, κόμη τῆς κορυφῆς οὐδαμοῦ· αἱ ὀφρύες καθεῖντο¹⁴⁶ ἐπὶ τὰ βλέφαρα, λάσιαί τινες καὶ κατάλευκοι· ἢ ρίς ἀδροτέρα πρὸς τῷ τέλει καὶ δίκην κορύνης ὀγκουμένη καὶ ἀποσφαιρουμένη· δασὺ τὸ γένειον, κατάλευκον καὶ αὐτό. Τῶν δὲ ἱματίων τὸ κάτω τὸ¹⁴⁷ πρὸς τῆ γῆ¹⁴⁸ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄνω ἀνέζωστο· ἐμβάδες εὐρεῖαι, πολυχανδεῖς αἱ ἐμβάδες¹⁴⁹. εἶπες ἄν¹⁵⁰, ὡς τραγικοί τινες κόθορνοι καὶ γίγαντος ἄν πόδας ἠδύναντο¹⁵¹ δέξασθαι. Καὶ τοιοῦτός τις ὢν τὴν μορφήν ἐπανήρχετο καὶ ὑπόπηλος· καὶ τοῖς μὲν πολλοῖς γέλωσ ἐπήει¹⁵²,

ἐκκρουσθῆναι καὶ τοὺς ὀδόντας: Manasses, *Historia*, 4845 καὶ τοὺς ὀδόντας ἐκκρουσθεῖς καὶ συνθλασθεῖς τὰς γνάθους; **γέλω ἐξέθανον:** Homerus, *Odys.*, 18.100 χειῖρας ἀνασχόμενοι γέλω ἐκθανον; **φαλακρώσει:** Manasses, *De Aristandro*, fr. 177.11 ἐκ φαλακρώσεώς τισι τὰς τρίχας ἐκρυσείσας; **Διονύσου γέροντα τὸν ναρθηκοφόρον:** Philostratus Major, *Imagines*, 1.19.2 καὶ Σάτυροι [καὶ] αὐληταὶ καὶ ναρθηκοφόρος γέρον καὶ οἶνος Μαρώνειος; **ὀφρύες καθεῖντο:** Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 4.146.7 καθεμιένος τὰς ὀφρῦς, πεπαιδευμένῳ ἢ φιλογυμναστῆ ἔοικώς; **ρίς ἀδροτέρα:** Pseudo-Polemon, *Physiognomonica*, 29.3-5 ρίνος τὸ ἄκρον ἀδρὸν καὶ ἀμβλὺ καὶ στρογγύλον καὶ καρτερὸν ἀνδρείου καὶ μεγαλοψύχου ἀνδρὸς τὸ σημεῖον; **γέλωσ ἐπήει:** Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 9.2.1.4 καὶ γέλωσ ἐπήει τῷ Θεαγένει; Stobaeus, *Anthologium*, 3.20.53 Τοῖς δὲ σοφοῖς ἀντὶ ὀργῆς Ἑρακλείτω μὲν δάκρυα, Δημοκρίτῳ δὲ γέλωσ ἐπήει.

¹³⁶ post καίτοι add. γὰρ U H S ¹³⁷ ὑπερπεπήδηκεν U S ¹³⁸ καὶ om. U S ¹³⁹ πρῶτος U in mar. πρῶτος U ¹⁴⁰ δ' U S ¹⁴¹ γέλω H: γελῶν E γέλωτι U S ¹⁴² ἐδόκει U ante corr. ¹⁴³ κατὰ S ¹⁴⁴ τοῦ om. U S ¹⁴⁵ ἐψίλωτο τὸ E H: ἐψίλω τὸ U ἐψίλωτο S om. τὸ S ¹⁴⁶ καθῆντο U S ¹⁴⁷ τὸ om. U S ¹⁴⁸ τὴν γῆν U S ¹⁴⁹ ἐμβάδες εὐρεῖαι, πολυχανδεῖς αἱ ἐμβάδες E H: αἱ ἐμβάδες εὐρεῖαι πολυχανδεῖς U S ¹⁵⁰ εἶπεν ἄν U εἶπεν ἄν τις S ¹⁵¹ ἠδύνατο U ¹⁵² γέλωτα ἐποίει S

that desire heats up the numbness of old age and transforms it into vigor. Indeed, despite struggling against such a demon²² and almost having lost his teeth from the jolt, he outleaped and outran the young boys, and was the first to reach the bird-killing falcon and the first to announce the good hunt. As for his hat, his lips, and his scratched palms, he did not think of them, not even in his dreams.

Me, I was dying of laughter, seeing his skull exposed and shiny from the baldness; he seemed to me like the old man carrying a wand, the one that the Greeks portrayed in the company of Dionysos.²³ The old man's skull was bald and there was no hair whatsoever at the top; the eyebrows, bushy and all white, sat well above the eyelashes; the nose was larger at the tip, bulky and rounded like a club; the beard was dense and that too was all white. The lower part of his garments, the one covering the body toward the ground, was attached at the top by his belt; his shoes were flat, very wide were his shoes – one would say like the costume boots of tragedy which could accommodate the feet of a giant.²⁴ And while he

²² That is, the mishaps caused by Dike.

²³ This is Silenos, carrying the thyrsus; for a similar image, see Philostratus, *Images* I.19.2. Silenos is the teacher of Dionysos and the personification of drunkenness. On representations in ancient art, see e.g. Hedreen 1992 and Tison 2018.

²⁴ Ancient and Byzantine lexicographers understood the term ἐμβάδες as a “shoe in comedy” in contrast to ἐμβάται, a “shoe in tragedy” (see e.g. Ptolemaeus 392.1 [Heylbut]: ἐμβαδες μὲν κωμικὰ ὑποδήματα· ἐμβάται δὲ τραγικά), but Manasses uses it in a general meaning as a “male shoe” (see also Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon* 1582.11 (Tittman): ἐμβάδες δὲ εἰσιν ἀνδρῶα ὑποδήματα), or of a shoe of little value (Eustathius, *Commentary in Dionysius Periegetes*, 1959.20-21 [Müller]: ὅπουγε καὶ αἱ παρονομαζόμενα αὐτοῖς Περσικαὶ ἐμβάδες, ὧς τινὲς φασιν, ὑπόδημα εὐτελὲς ἦν).

ἐδεδίασαν δὲ ὡς φόβητρον τὸ γερόντιον, καὶ ὑπ' ὀδόντα ἐγέλων.

Καὶ πάλιν ψεκὰς ἀδροτέρα καὶ τὰ στρουθία συμφύλων στρουθίων ἐφόδους¹⁵³ ἐμήνουν. Καὶ ἐκαρτέρει ὁ γέρων ἀκαλυφῆς καὶ ἐσκιαμάχει τῆδε κάκεισε στρεφόμενος· καὶ παιδίσκος ὑπενηθύρησεν ἀπαλός, καὶ δριμεία χολῆ ἐπὶ τὰς ρίνας ἦλθε τῶ γέροντι καὶ ῥάβδου βαρείας λαβόμενος ἐξήλαυνε τοῦ χώρου τὸν δύστηνον. Καὶ ὁ μὲν ἦ τάχους εἶχεν ἐξέφυγεν, ὁ δ' ἀνακράτος¹⁵⁴ ἐδίωκε. Καὶ πάλιν ὄμμα Δίκης τῶν γινομένων ἐπίσκοπον· καὶ ἐπὶ στόμα πάλιν ὁ τάλας¹⁵⁵ καὶ ἐξεκρούσθη (οἶμαι) τῶν ὀδόντων συχνούς, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ τι προσεποιήσατο. Τί γὰρ¹⁵⁶ πρὸς ταῦτα ὁ Λάκων ἐκεῖνος ὁ¹⁵⁷ σκύμον ἀλώπεκος ὑφελόμενος¹⁵⁸ καὶ φέρων ἐπικολπίδιον καὶ ἀμυσσόμενος ὑπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ φερεπόνως¹⁵⁹ τοὺς σπαραγμοὺς καρτερῶν; Τί πρὸς ταῦτα Εὐρυδάμας ἐκεῖνος ὁ πυγμάχος ὁ Κυρηναῖος, ὃς ὑπὸ τινος ἀντιπάλου τοὺς ὀδόντας κατασεισθεῖς¹⁶⁰ παρέπεμψεν αὐτοὺς¹⁶¹ τῇ γαστρὶ;

φόβητρον: Manasses, *Historia*, 1123 φοβήτροις ἐκτεθρόητο νυκτέρων ὄνειράτων et 5041; Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, 1.211 τρικυμίας φόβητρα, ναυτίας ζάλας et 4.73; Manasses, *Oratio ad Manuelem*, 82 ολλοῖς πρότερον μετριωτέροις φοβήτροις τὸν Φαραῶ σοφρονίσας; **δριμεία χολή:** Theocritus, *Idyllia*, 1.18 καὶ οἱ αἰεὶ δριμεία χολὰ ποτὶ ρίνι κάθηται; **ὄμμα Δίκης:** *Orphica*, no 62.1 Ὅμμα Δίκης μέλω πανδερκέος, ἀγλαομόρφου; Gregorius Naz., *De vita sua*, 828 ἄκουε, Χριστέ, καὶ Δίκης ὄμμ' ἀπλανές; Manasses, *De Aristandro*, fr. 37.4 ὄμμα δὲ Δίκης πανδερκὲς κυνηγετοῦν ἰχνεύει et fr. 179.1; **σκύμον ἀλώπεκος ὑφελόμενος:** Plutarchus, *Lycurgus*, 18.1 ὥστε λέγεται τις ἦδη σκύμον ἀλώπεκος κεκλοφῶς καὶ τῷ τριβωνίῳ περιστέλλων, σπαρασσόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ θηρίου τὴν γαστέρα τοῖς ὄνουσι καὶ τοῖς ὀδοῦσιν, ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαθεῖν ἐγκαρτερῶν ἀποθανεῖ; **ἐπικολπίδιον:** Manasses, *Historia*, 1973 φέρων ἐπικολπίδιον et 2006; **ἀμυσσόμενος:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 160-161 καὶ βουβαλίδων ἐπιδερμίδας ἀμύσσειν καὶ διαπερονᾶν et τοῖς ὄνουσιν ἤμυσε; **Εὐρυδάμας ὁ Κυρηναῖος:** Aelianus, *Varia historia*, 10.19 Εὐρυδάμας ὁ Κυρηναῖος πυγμὴν ἐνίκησεν, ἐκκρουσθεῖς μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνταγωνιστοῦ τοὺς ὀδόντας, καταπιῶν δὲ αὐτοῦς, ἵνα μὴ αἰσθηταὶ ὁ ἀντίπαλος.

¹⁵³ ἐφόδους στρουθίων U S ¹⁵⁴ ἀνα κράτος S ¹⁵⁵ γέρων U S ¹⁵⁶ γὰρ om. U S ¹⁵⁷ ὃς U S

¹⁵⁸ ὑφελόμενος U ¹⁵⁹ φερεπόνους U S ¹⁶⁰ τί – κατασεισθεῖς om. U S ¹⁶¹ αὐτὸν U S

was like this in appearance, he was also covered in mud. This provoked laughter from most of those present, but they feared the old man like a scarecrow and were laughing in secret.²⁵

Again, a more abundant drizzle and the small birds announced the invasion of birds of the same species. The old man was waiting without his hat, fighting the shadows by turning this way and that. A little boy whispered softly and a dark anger rose up the nose of the old man who, taking a heavy wand, chased the poor boy away from there. The latter escaped at full speed, while the old man chased him with all his ardour. Again, Dike's eye saw what was happening: once more the wretch fell on his face and knocked out, I believe, several teeth, but he did not care even a bit. For what was this compared to the Lacedaemonian who patiently endured the scratches of a young fox he had stolen, hiding it in his garments and being torn to pieces by it?²⁶ What was this compared to that Eurydamas, the boxer of Cyrene who, losing his teeth after a blow from his adversary, simply swallowed them?²⁷

²⁵ ὑπ' ὀδόντα ἐγέλων: an expression that indicates discrete laughter.

²⁶ An episode indicating the endurance of young Spartans in Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 18.1.

²⁷ This story is narrated in e.g. Aelian, *Varia Historia* 10.19. The exempla continues to contribute to the comical characterization of the old man.

9. Μετ' οὐ πολὺ καὶ σπῖνοι ὑπερπετόμενοι¹⁶² ὄφθησαν, καὶ εἶδον ἄγρας τρόπον καινότερον ἕτερον. Μήρινθος ἦν τετανὴ καὶ λεπτὴ· ταύτης τὸ ἄκρον τῆ τῶν καταδάφνων ἐκείνων ράβδων¹⁶³ φυτεία προσδέδετο. Ἐξήρητο τῆς μηνίθου καὶ ζῶσα σπίνος καὶ ἦν ἡ σπίνος παλεύτρια¹⁶⁴· τὸ δὲ ἕτερον ἄκρον τὸ¹⁶⁵ τῆς μηνίθου παιδαρίσκος πεπίστευτο. Ἄμα τὲ οὖν κατὰ πολλοὺς οἱ σπῖνοι προσήεσαν, στρατὸς (ἂν εἴποι¹⁶⁶ τις) μυριοπληθῆς, καὶ ὁ παιδαρίσκος ἡρέμα τὴν μηνίθον ἀνεσόβει καὶ τὴν ταλαίπωρον σπῖνον ὑπανεμίμησκε¹⁶⁷ πετασμοῦ. Ἡ δὲ οὐχ ἐκοῦσα μὲν, ἐπερυγίζε δ' οὖν¹⁶⁸ καὶ ἐπεχείρει πετάζεσθαι καὶ ἐπάλευε τὸ ὁμόφυλον. Τότε ἄφθονος ἄγρα ἐγένετο¹⁶⁹, καὶ ὃ τε βόθρος πεπλήρωτο καὶ τὰ πλεκτὰ ἐστενοχώρητο φρούρια, πρὸς ἃ παρέπεμπον¹⁷⁰ τὰ ζωογρούμενα.

9. ὑπερπετόμενοι: Manasses, *Consolatio ad Joannem*, 188-189 διέδρα τὰς πάγας τοῦ πονηροῦ ἰζευτοῦ, ὑπερεπετάσθη πάσης μηχανῆς παλευτοῦ; Manasses *Oratio ad Michaellem*, 273 ὁ δὲ περύσσεται μὲν ὡς ὑπερπετασθησόμενος, ἡγρεύθη δὲ καὶ αὐτός; **παλεύτρια:** Phrynichus, *Preparatio sophistica*, 102 παλεύτρια (Eubul. fr. 84): ἡ ἐξαπατῶσα. τίθεται ἐπὶ τῶν ὀρνίθων τῶν ἐξαπατώντων τὰ ἄλλα ὄρνεα καὶ μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῶν περιστερῶν; Photius, *Lexicon*, p. 371.26-27 καὶ τὰς περιστεράς τὰς θηρευούσας, παλευτρίας καλοῦσιν et p. 372.3-4; Hesychius, *Lexicon*, p. 161, 3-4; *Suda*, p. 75; **στρατὸς ... μυριοπληθῆς:** Heliodorus, *Aethiopia*, 9.3.2 ἐπὶ μυριοπληθῆ στρατῶν οὐ θαρσῶν.

¹⁶² ὑπερπετόμενοι U S ¹⁶³ ραύδων U ράβδων post ἐκείνων transp. U S ¹⁶⁴ καὶ ἦν ἡ σπίνος om. U S παλεύτρια E H: παλαιτέρα U S ¹⁶⁵ ἄκρον τὸ om. U S ¹⁶⁶ εἶπη U S ¹⁶⁷ οὐκ ἀνεμίμησκε U ante corr sed ὑπ supra οὐκ ¹⁶⁸ δὲ U S οὖν om. U S ¹⁶⁹ ἄγρα E H: αἶθη U ἄνθη S ἐγένετο E H: ἐγένετο U S ¹⁷⁰ παρέπεμπεν S

9. Not long after, siskins were seen flying above, and I saw another, stranger kind of hunt. There was a fine and light string; the end of this had been tied to the arrangement of those twigs of sweet bay. Attached to the string was also a live siskin and the siskin was a decoy;²⁸ the other end of the string had been entrusted to a youngster. As then the siskins approached in large numbers – a countless army, one could say – so the young man gently moved the string and thus reminded the poor siskin of flying. While it did not wish to do so, it still fluttered its wings and tried to fly and lured its kin. That is when the hunt became abundant: the trench was filled and the woven cages where the captive birds were put were full.

²⁸ The term *παλευτής* is a technical term that indicates a bird used as a decoy; see Hesychius, *Lexicon* pi 161: λέγονται γὰρ παλεύτριοι αὐταὶ αἱ ἐξαπατῶσαι καὶ ὑπάγουσαι πρὸς ἑαυτὰ ἡγουν ἐνεδρεύουσαι (Hansen).

10. Ἐπὶ τούτοις ὁ ξεναγὸς¹⁷¹ δεῖπνον ἠτοίμαζε καὶ αὐτοσχέδιον παρέφερε τράπεζαν. Καὶ οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι καὶ τροφῆς ἐνεπίμπλαντο καὶ τὰς ὄψεις εἰστίων συχνὰ γὰρ κατέπιπτε τὰ στρουθία¹⁷². Ὁ δὲ γέρων ἄσιτος ἐκαρτέρει καὶ ἄποτος καὶ μόνη τῇ θεᾷ τῶν ἰξευομένων ἐβόσκειτο. Εἰ δὲ μῦθος τὸ κατὰ τὸν¹⁷³ ζωγράφον Νικίαν, ὡς ἄρα τῇ γραφικῇ¹⁷⁴ προσταλαιπωρούμενος ἐλάνθανετὸ ποτε¹⁷⁵ καὶ τροφῆς, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τέως¹⁷⁶ τοῦτον τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἔβλεπα τὴν ἀτροφίαν καὶ ἐς βουλυτὸν παρατείνοντα¹⁷⁷, δροσοφάγον (ἂν εἴποι τις) ἢ ἀερότροφον¹⁷⁸ τέττιγα. Ἦδη δὲ καὶ τοῖς παιδαρίοις πῦρ ὑπανεκάετο¹⁷⁹ ζήλου καὶ τὰ θεραπόντια ἐπλυνον ὕβρεσι καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἐλοιδοροῦντο· ἕτερος¹⁸⁰ ἑτέρῳ προσήγεν αἰτίαν (ἂν γὰρ χολῶ, φησί, παροικήσης, ὑποσκάζειν μαθήσει) καὶ ἕκαστος ἐφιλοτιμεῖτο τὸν ἕτερον ὑπερβάλλειν. Οὕτως ἦν ὁ ζῆλος δαιμόνιος, οὕτως ὁ ἔρωσ ἐλάνθανεν¹⁸¹, εἰς μανίαν περιτρεπόμενος.

10. αὐτοσχέδιον παρέφερε τράπεζαν: Cf. Barlaam et Ioasaph 18,82-83 αὐτοσχέδιος τράπεζα cum Bas. Caes. Homilia in feriam v et in prodicionem Judae 6 (1049,54-55) τὰς αὐτοσχεδίους ἐν ἐρήμῳ τραπέζας; **τροφῆς ἐνεπίμπλαντο:** *Acta Apostolorum*, 14.17 ἐμπιπλῶν τροφῆς καὶ εὐφροσύνης τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν; Aelianus, *Varia historia*, 12.1.57 ἐμπλησθῆναι τροφῆς οἱ Πέρσαι; **ὄψεις εἰστίων:** Aelianus, *De natura animalium*, 17.23.12 καὶ οἱ ὀρῶντες ἐστιᾶν τὴν ὄψιν δύνονται; Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon*, 361.5-6 ὁ Χριστὸς τὸν ἀκολάστως ἐστιῶντα τὰς ὄψεις μοιχὸν ἔκρινεν; **ζωγράφον Νικίαν:** Aelianus, *Varia historia*, 3.31 Νικίας ὁ ζωγράφος τοσαύτην περὶ τὸ γράφειν σπουδὴν εἶχεν, ὡς ἐπιλαθέσθαι πολλακίς αὐτὸν τροφὴν προσενέγκασθαι προστετηκότα τῇ τέχνῃ; **βουλυτὸν:** Homerus, *Il.*, 16.779 ἦμος δ' Ἡέλιος μετενίσετο βουλυτὸν δέ; **δροσοφάγον τέττιγα:** Manasses, *Hodoeporicon*, 2.219 ὁ τέττιγες πάσχουσιν οἱ δροσοφάγοι; **πῦρ ὑπανεκάετο ζήλου:** *Psalmi*, 7.5.2 ἐκκαυθήσεται ὡς πῦρ ὁ ζῆλός σου; Manasses, *De Aristandro*, fr. 11.8 ἄλλην δὲ πάλιν κάμινον καὶ πῦρ ὑπανακαίει; **ἂν γὰρ χολῶ ... μαθήσει:** Plutarchus, *De liberis educandis*, 4A.6 ἂν χολῶ παροικήσης, ὑποσκάζειν μαθήσει; Aesopus, *Proverbia*, 2.1 Χολῶ παροικήσας ὑποσκάζειν μάθοις; **ζῆλος δαιμόνιος:** Eustathius Thess., *Orationes*, 2.36.13-14 δαιμονίου ζήλου ἐρεθίζοντος καὶ ὑποκινουόντος; **ὁ ἔρωσ ἐλάνθανεν εἰς μανίαν περιτρεπόμενος:** Heliodorus, *Aethiopica*, 7.9.4 ἀπλῶς εἰς μανίαν λοιπὸν ἐλάνθανεν ὁ ἔρωσ ὑποφερόμενος.

¹⁷¹ ξεναγωγός U S ¹⁷² στρουθάρια U S H ¹⁷³ τὸν om. U S ¹⁷⁴ γραφῆ U S ¹⁷⁵ ποτε om. U S ¹⁷⁶ τέως om. U S ¹⁷⁷ post βουλυτὸν spatium vacuo U S τείνοντα U S ¹⁷⁸ δροσοφάγον U εἴτη U S ἀερότροφον E H S: ἀδροτρόφον U ¹⁷⁹ ὑπανεκαίετο U S ¹⁸⁰ post ἐλοιδοροῦντο add. καὶ U S ¹⁸¹ ἐμάνθανεν U

10. Meanwhile, my host was preparing dinner and he offered us an improvised table. The others were gorging on food and feasting their eyes (for the birds were falling in large numbers), but the old man waited without eating or drinking anything and fed²⁹ merely at the sight of the birds being captured by the glue. Perhaps it is a myth that the painter Nikias, devoting himself to painting until he suffered from it, forgot to eat,³⁰ but I saw this man staying without food until late, until the end of the day when the oxen are unhitched; one could say he was like a cikada feeding on dew and air. The fire of zeal also burned the young boys who were insulting the servants and insulting each other; one accused the other (they say that if you live with a lame person, you will learn to limp a little³¹) and they all were trying to overtake one another. So demonic was the zeal, so did desire turn into madness!³²

²⁹ The author uses the verb ἐβόσκετο which indicates grazing (of cattle), insisting on the comical representation of the old man as the main character of the hunt.

³⁰ The story of Nikias, an Athenian painter of the 4th century who forgot to eat because of his devotion to painting, is narrated by Aelian, *Historia Varia* 3.31: Νικίας ὁ ζωγράφος τοσαύτην περὶ τὸ γράφειν σπουδὴν εἶχεν, ὡς ἐπιλαθέσθαι πολλάκις αὐτὸν τροφὴν προσενέγκασθαι προστετηκότα τῇ τέχνῃ.

³¹ Very common proverb in Antiquity and Byzantium; see e.g. Plutarch, *The Education of Children* 4A.6: ἂν χωλῶ παροικήσης, ὑποσκάζειν μαθήσει.

³² On the image of desire that turns into madness, common in erotic literature, see Messis & Nilsson 2018.

Καὶ πάλιν ἀγέλαι συχναὶ τὸν ἀέρα περιεσύριζον, καὶ τὰ στρουθάρια¹⁸² προφθάνειν ἄλληλα πρὸς τὴν ἀπώλειαν ἔσπευδον¹⁸³. Καὶ ἅμα ἐν ἐξηπάτητο καὶ τῷ κατίξω λύγῳ προσίζανε, καὶ τὸ νέφος ἅπαν ἐφείπετο¹⁸⁴ καὶ ταῖς χειροκμήτοις¹⁸⁵ δενδράσιν ἐπέρριπτον¹⁸⁶ ἑαυτά· καὶ ἐπληροῦτο τὸ δάπεδον, καὶ οἱ μειρακίσκοι πάντες ἐν ἔργοις καὶ οὐδεις ἦν ἀεργός. Οἱ μὲν τὰ ἐάλωκότα συνέλεγον, οἱ δὲ τοὺς λύγους ἐκάθαιρον, ἄλλοι νέον ἰξὸν περιέχριον, ἕτεροι στρουθοφόνται ἐγίνοντο¹⁸⁷. Τοῖς μὲν χεῖρες ἦσαν λυθροσταγεῖς, τῶν δὲ κατάπτεροι δάκτυλοι, τῶν δὲ¹⁸⁸ παλάμαι κατίξωντο¹⁸⁹. τῷ¹⁹⁰ μὲν ἀνέζωστο¹⁹¹ τὸ χιτώνιον, τῷ¹⁹² δὲ ἀνεδέδετο βόστρυχος· νό μὲν ἔτρεχεν, ὃ δ' ἔμελλεν¹⁹³, ὃ δ' ἀνθυπέστρεφε. Καὶ ἦν ἡ ἄγρα ἐπιτυχής· εἰ δέ που τι καὶ ἐξέφυγεν, ἄλλος ἄλλον ἐποιεῖτο ὑπαίτιον καὶ ἐπαθαίνετο ἕκαστος καὶ ἕτερος ἕτερον πλημμελείας ἐγράφετο.

11. Εἶδον ἐγὼ τότε στρουθίον ἐν χερσὶν ἰξευτοῦ καὶ τὴν τῆς φύσεως φιλοτιμίαν ἐθαύμασα, καὶ ὅσον αὐτῷ¹⁹⁴ πλοῦτον κάλλους ἐδαψιλεύσατο. Τὸ ράμφος ὀξὺ καὶ λεπτὸν· μέλαινα κεφαλὴ· τὸ ἐπινώτιον ἅπαν ὑπόκιρρον·

χεῖρες ἦσαν λυθροσταγεῖς: Manasses, *Historia*, 1447 αἱ χεῖρες λυθροστάλακτοι, φονόβαπτα τὰ ξίφη.-

11. φύσεως φιλοτιμίαν: Gregorius Naz., *Oratio funebris in laudem Basilii*, 60.2.8 Ὁ δὲ οὕτω διὰ πάντων ἀφίκετο, ὡς εἶναι φιλοτιμία τις φύσεως; Psel-lus, *Orationes funebres*, 2.6.6-7 αἰδοῖ νενικηκῶς τῆς φύσεως τὴν φιλοτιμίαν; Manasses, *Monodia in Theodoram*, 111 ὃ λύγνε τοῦ θήλεος, φιλοτιμία τῆς φύσεως; **ράμφος ὀξὺ:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 298-299 ὀξὺ τὸ ράμφος, ὅτι καὶ σπερμοφάγον ἄλλ' οὐ σαρκοβόρον τὸ ζῶον et καὶ τὰ ράμφη ὀξύτερα ἦσαν καὶ ἔπακμα; **ὑπόκιρρον:** Manasses, *Historia*, 74 κυαναυγής, πορφύρεος, ὑπόκιρρος ἑτέρα; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 144 ὃ περὶ τὰς βλεφαρίδας κύκλος ὑπόκιρρος et ἐκάτερον σκέλος ὑπόκιρρον; Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, 7.25 τῆς κεφαλῆς τὸ μὲν ὑπόκιρρον ἦν καὶ τὸ κερρὸν ὑπεχρῦσιζε et 8.7; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 130 τὸ λέπος ὑπόκιρροι.

¹⁸² στρουθία U S ¹⁸³ ἔσπευδε U S ¹⁸⁴ καὶ τῷ κατίξω λύγῳ προσίζανε, καὶ τὸ νέφος ἅπαν ἐφείπετο om. S ¹⁸⁵ χειροτμήτοις U S ¹⁸⁶ ἀπέριπτον U S ¹⁸⁷ ἐγίνοντο U ¹⁸⁸ ante παλάμαι add. τότε S ¹⁸⁹ κατίξοντο U S ¹⁹⁰ τῷ E H: τῶν U S ¹⁹¹ ἀνέζωτο U S ¹⁹² τῷ E H: τῶν U S ¹⁹³ ὃ μὲν ἔτρεχεν, ὃ δ' ἔμελλεν E H: ὃ μὲν ἔμελεν, ὃ δ' ἔτρεχεν U S ¹⁹⁴ αὐτῷ post κάλλους transp. U S

Again, several flocks of birds were whizzing through the air all around and the birds were outrunning each other to reach their doom. And if one of them made a mistake and sat on the gluey twig, the entire cloud followed and threw itself on the fabricated trees. The ground was full of them and the youngsters were all busy and no one was idle. Some picked up the captured birds, others cleaned the twigs, others covered them again with glue, others yet became bird killers. The hands of some were covered in blood, the fingers of others were filled with feathers, the palms of others yet were covered with glue; one had girded up his tunic, another had tied up his hair; one was running, another was about to, yet another was returning. And the hunt was a success! If a bird managed to escape somewhere, one considered the other responsible and each got excited and accused one another for negligence.

11. I then saw a bird in the hands of a glue-hunter and I admired the bounty of nature and the richness of beauty with which it had abundantly provided the bird. Its beak was sharp and thin, the head black, the back was all yellowish, the lower parts were the colour of saffron and looked

μελάμπερον¹⁹⁵ τὸ πτερύγιον¹⁹⁶. ὑπέλαμπε δὲ¹⁹⁷ κάτωθεν¹⁹⁸ κρόκεον βάμμα καὶ ἐφκει τοιοῦτον, ὡς εἶ τις βύσσω συνανυφαίνει χρυσόν· καὶ ἦν τῷ πτερώματι κόσμος ἀνεπιτήδευτος· δειρὴ καὶ στῆθος ὑπόχρυσα· ὅσον ὑποπύγιον, κεχίονωτο· εἶχε μὲν ἐνιαχοῦ καὶ στίγματα¹⁹⁹ μελανώματος· γοργόν ἦν, εὐκίνητον²⁰⁰ ἦν· εἶπες²⁰¹ ἄν, ὡς πυρρίχην²⁰² ὀρχεῖται· μέλος δὲ ἀπὸ στήθους ἀνέπεμπε γλύκιον. Οὕτως ἦν χάριεν ιδέσθαι, οὕτως ἀκοῦσαι καλόν.

μελάμπερον: Manasses, *Historia*, 258 οἱ ψᾶρες οἱ μελάμπεροι τὸ πτίλον ἐπεσόβουν; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 49 ἕτερψέ με ποτὲ καὶ μελάμπερος ψᾶρ; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 188-189 ἦν δὲ τὸ μὲν πλέον μελάμπερος; **βύσσω συνανυφαίνει χρυσόν:** Philo, *De vita Mosis*, 2.11.3 καὶ πορφύρα καὶ βύσσω καὶ κοκκίνω, συγκαταπλεκομένου χρυσοῦ; Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, 7.33-34 εἶπεν ἄν τις βύσσον ὄραν συνυφασμένην χρυσοῦ; **δειρή:** Manasses, *Historia*, 1166 δειρὴ μακρά, κατάλευκος, ὅθεν ἐμυθουργήθη; Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 266 ἐπικλινῆ τὴν τετανὴν ἐποίει δειρὴν; Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, 4.19-20 αἰ τῆς δειρῆς κατορχοῦμενος τῆς καλλιμελοῦς et 6.8 et 7.28; **κεχίονωτο:** Manasses, *Ecphrasis venationis gruum*, 139 Ὁ ἱέραξ οὔτε παντελοῦς κεχίονωτο οὔτε ἀκριβῶς μεμελάνωτο; Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, 7.24 Κεχίονωτό οἱ τὸ ράμφος et 8.9; **γοργόν:** Manasses, *Historia*, 1521 ὡς μὴ τοῦ δρόμου τῷ γοργῷ θορυβηθὲν τὸ ζῶον; *Hodoeporicon*, 3.86 ὁ ποὺς δ' ὁ γοργός, ἡ ταχυπέτης πτέρυξ; Manasses *Oratio ad Michaelem*, 29-30 ὁ βλέμμα γοργόν, ἀρρενωπὸν καὶ αὐτό; Manasses, *Ecphrasis terrae*, 173-174 καὶ κίνησις γοργοτέρα καὶ ἐναγώνιος; **πυρρίχην ὀρχεῖται:** Xenophon, *Anabasis* 6.1.12 ἡ δὲ ὠρχήσατο πυρρίχην ἐλαφρῶς; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 14.28.23-24 ἡ πυρρίχη· ἔνοπλοι γὰρ αὐτὴν παῖδες ὀρχοῦνται; Manasses, *Monodia in passerem suum*, 8.20 καὶ ἄντικρυς πυρρίχην ὠρχεῖτο.

¹⁹⁵ μελανόμπερον U S ¹⁹⁶ τὸ πτερύγιον om. U S ¹⁹⁷ post δὲ add. καὶ U S H ¹⁹⁸ πρότερον ante κάτωθεν del. U ¹⁹⁹ στίγματα U ²⁰⁰ ἀεικίνητον U S ²⁰¹ εἶπης U S ²⁰² πυρρίχιον U S

as if someone had woven gold on very thin linen; all of its plumage was of a natural beauty, the neck and chest were gilded, the rear parts were white as snow with black spots in a few places. The bird was impetuous, it was agile; you would say that he was dancing a warlike dance.³³ From his chest rose a soft song. It was so graceful to see, so pleasant to hear.

³³ πτορίχην: on this military dance, attested since antiquity, see Poursat 1968.

Ἐμοὶ δὲ ἀσπαστὸν ἐδόκει τὸ χρῆμα ταύτης τῆς ἄγρας²⁰³ καὶ²⁰⁴ ἐπιτερπὲς ὁμοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἔγκοπον, καὶ πυκνὰ τοῦτο²⁰⁵ τῷ ξεναγῶ ἐπεσήμαινον²⁰⁶. Καὶ ὅς ‘Τοιάνδε σοι’ ἔφη ‘προπίνω φιλοτησίαν, οὕτως ἐπέραστον, οὕτως²⁰⁷ τερψίθυμον! Ἄλλ’ εἰ βουληθείης, ἀντιφιλοτιμήση καὶ σὺ καὶ ἀντεπιδείξῃ καὶ ἀντιξεναγήσεις ἡμᾶς καὶ τὰ ὀραθέντα παραδώσεις γραφῆ καὶ ἐσεῖται ἡμῖν ἀεὶ²⁰⁸ τὰ τῆς ἄγρας ταύτης ἐπόψια’. ‘Ἔσται ταῦτα’ ἔφην ‘καὶ ἀντιπύωμαι²⁰⁹ σοι γραφῆς φιλοτησίαν²¹⁰ ἐγὼ²¹¹ καὶ ὑποτυπώσομαί σοι τήνδε τὴν καλὴν τελετήν, ἐπειδὴν καιροῦ εὐθέτου λάβωμαι’. Καὶ τοῖνυν ἐμαυτὸν τῷ πράγματι δέδωκα, καὶ τῷ ξεναγῶ χαριζόμενος, καὶ ἐμαυτῷ περισφύζων τὴν τῶν θεαμάτων ἀνάμνησιν.

προπίνω φιλοτησίαν: Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 3.95.22 προπίνω σοι, ἔφη, φιλοτησίαν et passim ; Lucianus, *Gallus*, 12.19-20 ἐν τούτῳ ὄντα με καὶ φιλοτησίας προπίνοντα et *Pseudologista*, 36.6 καὶ φιλοτησίας προπίνειν καὶ ὄψων τῶν αὐτῶν ἄπτεσθαί; Gregorius Naz. *Epistulae*, 32.11.7 ἀλλὰ φιλοτησίας προπινόμενος.

²⁰³ ἄγρας post ταύτης transp. U S ²⁰⁴ καὶ om. U S ²⁰⁵ τούτου U S ²⁰⁶ ὑπεσήμανον U S ²⁰⁷ οὕτω U S H ²⁰⁸ σὺ καὶ ἀντεπιδείξῃ καὶ – ἔσεται ἡμῖν E H : σὺ καὶ τὰ ὀραθέντα παραδώσεις γραφῆ· οὕτω γὰρ ἀντιξεναγήσεις ἡμᾶς (ἡμῶν S) καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ἐσεῖται ἡμῖν U S ²⁰⁹ ἀντιπύωμαι E: ἀντιπύωμαι U S H ²¹⁰ φιλοτησίαν U ²¹¹ ἐγὼ ante ἔφην in ras. U

To me this hunt seemed entertaining and at the same time pleasant and without fatigue, and I often pointed this out to my host. And he said: “Such a pleasant, such an amiable cup of friendship I raise to your health! But if you want to, you can reciprocate and compete in performance and host us in return and render what you have witnessed in writing – in this way, the sight of this hunt will remain with us forever.”³⁴ “Will do!”, I replied, “And I too shall raise, in return, to your health a cup with my writing and I will sketch for your friendship this beautiful ritual when I find a suitable occasion.” And so, I devoted myself to this task, as a favour offered to my host, and for myself as a way of preserving the memory of the spectacle.

³⁴ Beck associates the word ἐπόψια with ὄψος and he translates it as dessert (*Nachtisch*). We have found no occurrence of such a meaning and have translated as sight (what has been seen) Perhaps the word should be corrected into ὑπόψια, indicating a direct reference to Oppian, *Halieutica* I.30 (ὑπόψιος ἄγρη), but ἐπόψια is employed by Manasses elsewhere in the ekphrasis (e.g. Ch. 2: τῆς τηλικαύτης σπουδῆς ἐποψόμενος).

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