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[---]Βω.τιάδης ὁ προκτός

In 1990 J.Bingen published this rupestral graffito from Thorikos which he dated to around 400 B.C.¹ The reading of the name may be in doubt,² but the form of the utterance is clear, a man's name in the nominative (note the ending in *c*) to which are appended the words ὁ προκτός.

προκτός belongs to the lower registers of the Greek language.³ It and its derivatives are found in early iambus⁴ and are very common in Old Comedy. They probably occur in mime⁵ and also appear in non-literary sources such as magic papyri and graffiti.⁶ Their occurrences in prose (including medical writings) are severely restricted.⁷

The Thorikan graffito has affinities with the kind of abusive graffito found in several parts of the Greek world which consists of a person's name followed by a sexual insult. The insult is most commonly conveyed in such graffiti by the word καταπύγων,⁸ but we possess an example (cf. note 6) where the adjective is a compound of -προκτος: Δαμόκριτος εὐρύπροκτος.⁹

¹ H.F.Mussche, J.Bingen, J.E.Jones, M.Waelkens, *Thorikos* IX. 1977-82 (Gent, 1990), 151. no. 88. (reported in *SEG* xl (1990) no. 264).

² 'La lecture du nom propre est tout à fait incertaine', Bingen.

³ See my article 'Six Greek Verbs of Sexual Congress (βινῶ, κινῶ, πυγίζω, ληκῶ, οἴφω, λαικάζω)', *CQ* n.s. 41 (1991), 51-77, 51ff. and p. 52 notes 10, 11, 12 and 13. Footnote 7 below contains a modification of what was written there.

⁴ Hipponax, 104. 32.

⁵ *Fragmenta Mimorum Papyracea* 6. 4 and 6. 17 in Herodas, *Mimiambi* ed. I.C.Cunningham (Leipzig, 1987).

⁶ *PGM* 3. 15 εὐρύπροκτος is found in a graffito from the temple of Rameses II at Abydos (see O.Masson, 'Nouveaux graffites grecs d'Abydos et de Bouhen', *CdE* 51 (1976), 305-13. λακκόπροκτος is found in a graffito from the Athenian agora (M.Lang, *Graffiti and Dipinti [The Athenian Agora xxi]* (Princeton, 1976), C23).

⁷ προκτός occurs in Artemidorus, 5. 5 (303. 8 Pack), [Lucian], *Asinus* 56, and Aeschines, *epist.* 77. 27. It is used by Galen to gloss κύσσαρος (Gal. 19. 116. 5 Kühn): the accent in the entry under προκτός in R.J.Durling, *A Dictionary of Medical Terms in Galen* (Leiden, 1993) should be corrected.

⁸ For καταπύγων (and κατάπυγος) see Bain, op. cit. 67 n. 120. Compare also for this form of sexual insult, Βότρυς πυγ[?ι]στής [πυγαίος or a passive verb is just as likely: cf. my note on *CIG* iii. 4854 in the article cited in note 3, pp. 69ff.] (P.Perdrizet-G.Lefèbvre, *Les graffites grecs du Memnonion d'Abydos* (Nancy, 1919) no. 127. 3), Καρίων οἰφώλης (*IG* XII. 5, 97) and examples of female names followed by adjectives formed by derivatives of λαικάζω (*IG* I² 921, Lang, op. cit. C 34: see H.D.Jocelyn, 'A Greek Indecency and its Students, λαικάζειν', *PCPhS* n. s. 26 (1980), 12-66, 15).

⁹ λακκόπροκτος (see note 6) is joined to a proper name in a graffito from the Athenian agora, but there it is part of a sentence containing a verb: ἔτλη λακκόπρ[ο]κτος ἡο Κυδρόμαχος.

What puts this particular graffito in a slightly different category is the fact that a noun rather than an adjective is attached to the name. *πρωκτός* must here be used *pars pro toto*, ?Botiades 'the arse-hole', 'known as arse-hole'. The use of anatomical terms *pars pro toto* to describe or characterise persons is easy to parallel in Latin and has been the subject of extensive study by J.N.Adams.¹⁰ There are plenty of examples of this form of utterance from the lower registers of Latin literature and from graffiti. People are identified with a body part or referred to by the name of a body-part, particularly that of a sexual body part. The most notable example in literature is the renaming of Mamurra as Mentula in Catullus. Likewise we find examples of an analogous use of *uerpa*, *cunnus* and other expressions. The connotations, as Adams points out, vary from instance to instance. Sometimes the sexuality of the person so identified is highlighted. On other occasions the sexual terms 'deteriorate into empty terms of abuse'.

In the Thorikon graffito I believe there can be no question of *πρωκτός* being an empty term of abuse¹¹ (as is perhaps the case with *καταπύγων* in abusive graffiti¹²). The application of the word in this inscription is different from what would be that of its English equivalent, 'arse-hole', whose abusive use is probably empty of possible sexual content and simply stresses that the person insulted is unpleasant, unpopular and a nuisance ('a pain in the neck/arse').¹³ In the context of Attica in the fifth-century B.C., if one called someone a *πρωκτός*, one intended to draw attention to his pathic homosexuality. One can parallel in Latin this kind of identification of the person with the body-part with the example of a Pompeian graffito in which someone is described as a *cunnus* (*cunnus* for *culus*) clearly because he is regarded as a passive homosexual:

*futebatur inquam futuebatur ciuium Romanorum attractis pedibus cunnus ...*¹⁴

It would be useful if someone were to follow Adams's lead and investigate the use of body terms *pars pro toto* in Greek. I have the impression that it is less common than in Latin (particularly of one excludes expressions of the form 'you are just such and such a body part', 'you are nothing but such and such a body part').¹⁵ *γακτέρες οἶον* (Hes. *Theog.* 26) is the locus classicus. The satyrs in Soph. *Ichneutae* 151 are described, among other things, as *φάλητες*. Another possible instance of such an identification is Callimachus fr.

¹⁰ See J.N.Adams, 'Anatomical Terms used *pars pro toto* in Latin', *PACA* 16 (1982), 37-45 and *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary* (London, 1982) index s. vv. *pars pro toto*.

¹¹ One can never of course determine how seriously such insults were intended. The fact that terms for sexual parts yielded proper names suggests the possibility that a graffito of this sort may be an example of affectionate mockery.

¹² See K.J.Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (London, 1978), 113f.

¹³ One should note perhaps that the connotations of 'arse-hole' are less sexually suggestive in twentieth-century Britain than those of *πρωκτός* in fifth-century B.C. Attica.

¹⁴ *CIL* IV 1261 (spelling to a certain extent regularised): cf. perhaps *salve cunnus* (nominative for vocative) in IV 10078.

¹⁵ For a MG example compare 'cup>cunnus> woman' (see G.P.Shipp, *Modern Greek Evidence for the Ancient Greek Vocabulary* (Sydney, 1979), 308f.).

689 Πάν ὁ Μαλειήτης τρύπανον αἰπολικόν. At any rate, it is clear from his annotation that Pfeiffer takes it this way. In Longus, 4. 11. 2 the parasite Gnathon is described as being nothing but γνάθος καὶ γαστήρ καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ γαστέρα. One might object to including *Antus* ψωλή (*CIL* IV. 1363) in this list (for ψωλή used *pars pro toto* cf. *CIL* 4. 4142) on the grounds that the expression is a blend of Latin and Greek and that it is a linguistic calque on phrases of the type 'so and so <est> uerpa'.

All these examples differ syntactically from the Thorikon one in that they can be interpreted as sentences taking the form 'x is a y'. In this graffito, however, ὁ πρωκτός is appended to the proper name as a kind of title or nickname, a form of locution which has plenty of literary parallels.¹⁶ It was common in the Greek world to use bodily parts including sexual ones as nicknames.¹⁷ While in most instances the name was formed from the bodily part (e. g. Posthon,¹⁸ Sathon¹⁹ Psolas²⁰ and names formed from βίλλος²¹) occasionally the word denoting the part became itself the name or nickname²² (e.g. Βίλλος found in Asia minor in the imperial period and earlier in the Hippocratic *Epidemics* (Hipp. *Epid.* 5. 96). Even closer parallels for πρωκτός as a nickname are the names Πύννος and Φόρυς.²³

It is interesting to note that this inscription presents us with the reverse of a phenomenon common in Old Comedy where we find proper names used to denote the πρωκτός.²⁴

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¹⁶ An early example is Χαίρεφών ἡ νυκτερίς (Arist. *Birds* 1564). In this connection Καλλιμέδων ὁ Κάραβος also springs to mind (note Athenaeus, 339ef which introduces Timocles fr. 29 K.-A. where both Athenaeus and Timocles add ὁ Κάραβος to Kallimedon's name). Compare also Ἡρακλείδης ὁ Λέμβος (four times referred to thus by Athenaeus: 98e, 333a, 566a, 578a). Collocations of names, one of which has the article appear also in Machon, τὸν Κόρυδον ... Εὐκράτη (1), τὴν Αἶγα Νικῶ (423), Νικῶ ... τὴν Αἶγα (456): the order with the nickname first may be determined by considerations of versification.

¹⁷ On names formed from body parts see F.Bechtel, *Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen bis zur Kaiserzeit*, Halle, 1917, 479ff. (cf. earlier the same writer's, *Die einstämmigen männlichen Personennamen des Griechischen, die aus Spitznamen hervorgegangen sind* (Berlin, 1898), 23ff.).

¹⁸ cf. Bechtel, 482. Πόρθων is attested as the proper name of an Attic citizen. See M.K.Langdon, 'The Grave of Posthon at Sounion', *Hesp.* 54 (1985), 145-48. Compare also the names Πορθύλος (*Inscr. Cret.* II, p. 264 no. 52), and Πορθάλιον (D.M.Robinson, *Hesp.* 27 (1958), 74).

¹⁹ The nickname given to Plato by Antisthenes (see Athen. 220d and D.L. 6. 14) is also found in the comic poet Teleclides fr. 71 K.-A. For dialect examples see Bechtel, 482.

²⁰ A satyr appropriately named Ψωλάς appears on a sixth century aryballus made by Nearchus (*ABV* 83 [4]: see G.M.A.Richter, *AJA* 36 (1932), 272-75 and J.D.Beazley, *BSA* 32 (1931-32), 21).

²¹ For such names see L.Robert, *Noms indigènes dans l'Asie Mineure gréco-romaine BEFAR* 239 (Paris, 1963), 16-22.

²² For 'unmovierte Namen' see Bechtel, p. 43 and 607.

²³ For πύννος see A.Rehm, 'Neue Wörter aus Didyma', *IF* 61 (1954), 170-86, 177f. (cf. *Bulletin épigraphique* 1955. 196): πύννος ὁ πρωκτός, Hesychius. For Φόρυς see Bechtel, 483.

²⁴ The names in question are Aristodemus, Batalus, Theodorus and Timesianax. See J.Taillardat, *Les images d'Aristophanes: études de langue et de style*, Paris, 1965, 70, J.Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*² (N.Y.-Oxford, 1991), 203 and Kassel-Austin on Aristophanes fr. 242, Cratinus fr. 160 and Eupolis fr. *92.

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THORIKOS. AN ADDENDUM

One could add to the examples I gave (*ZPE* 104 [1994], 35) of words denoting sexual parts becoming (via the medium of a nickname used *pars pro toto*) personal names the name Δρῖλος found on an Attic gravestone of the third century B.C. (*SEG* 32, 281). O. Masson (*MH* 43 [1986], 252ff.) is surely correct to see δρῖλος as originally meaning ‘worm’ and then developing a metaphorical sexual meaning.

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