INTRODUCTION
I

MACHON

Outside the Deipnosophistae of Athenaeus there are only one or perhaps two references¹ to Machon in Greek literature; inside it are the substantial body of fragments with which this book is concerned and two statements about their author. In 14.664.A Aemilianus, one of the interlocutors in the discussion, previous to quoting fr. xix, says: Μάχων δ’ ὁ Σικυώνος τῶν μὲν κατ’ Ἀπολλόδωρον τῶν Κερύστιος κομιδιστικοῖς εἰς ἱστι καὶ αὐτός· εὖν ἐπιβασον δ’ Ἀθήνης τὰς κομιδίας τὰς ἔσωτον ἄλλην ἐν Ἀλεξανδρεία. Ἔην δ’ ἄγαθός ποιητής εἰς τὸν ἄλλον τῶν μετὰ τοῦτο ἐπτά, διότερ ὁ γραμματικός Ἀριστοφάνης ἐστίν διότι συσχετίζε τοὺς νέους ὑπό. In 6.241.F Plutarchus, another interlocutor, about to quote fr. 1, says: μνημονεύει δ’ αὐτός [sc. Φιλοξένου τοῦ Περικοπίδος] καὶ Μάχων ὁ κομιδιστικός ὁ Κερύστιος μὲν ὁ Σικυώνος γενόμενος ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ δὴ τῇ ίμῃ καταφυσικῷ καὶ διδάσκαλος γενόμενος τῶν κατὰ κομιδίαν μερῶν Ἀριστοφάνους τὸν γραμματικόν· ἐς καὶ ἐπιθανεν ἐν τῇ Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ. καὶ ἐπιγράφεται αὐτός τῷ μνήματι… and he appends the epitaph, to which I shall come back. Plutarchus says ‘in my Alexandria’, as he does also in 276A,² since he is cast in the dialogue as an Alexandrian γραμματικός. Aemilianus Maurus is also a γραμματικός as is Myrtilus, a Thessalian, who quotes Machon (fr. xii-xviii). The others who do so are Democritus, a philosopher of Nicomedia (fr. xix.), and Cynulus, the nickname of a Cynic philosopher named Theodorus (fr. xi). Since however one and all are merely

¹ The epigram of Dioscorides discussed below and fr. xxi.
² And probably in 12.541.A where the speaker is not identified. Cf. also Kibbel 1, p. xxi.
INTRODUCTION

mouthpieces for the erudition of Athenaeus himself they need trouble us no more, but it is worth remembering that Athenaeus, a native of Naukratis, was well placed for researches into the literary history of Alexandria, and if, as he claims (8.336D), he had read and excerpted more than eight hundred plays of the Middle Comedy, it must surely have been in its library that he found them. When therefore ‘Plutarchus’ continues ἐπιγεγράψαυν αὐτὸν τὸ μνήματι and quotes the lines, though he is probably drawing an inference from them, it is just possible that Athenaeus despite the long lapse of time had read them on the tomb.

The epitaph is preserved not only in Athenaeus but also in the Palatine Anthology (7.708), where it constitutes the chief and perhaps the only mention of Machon outside Athenaeus. Its author, there named, is Dioscorides, an epigrammatist whose known connexions are all Alexandrian, and the text constructed from the two sources is:

Τῷ κοιμηθηκόρῳ κοῦφῳ κόνι τὸν φιλάγκονα
καστὸν ὑπὲρ τῆςμβου ζῶντα Μάχωνοι φόροι,
οὐ γὰρ ἔχεις κόφωνα πολλομελύττον ἄλλα τὰ τέχνης
δὲ διὰ άρχαίστας λείψανον ἡμιφύτος·
τοῦτο δ᾽ ὡς πρόερχε ἐρεῖ. Κέκρυπτος πόλις, καὶ παρὰ Νείλῳ
δοτὼν ὅτι᾽ ἐν Μούσαις δριμῶν πέρικεθι θύμοι. 1

2 ζῶντι Α 3 κόφωνα Gow κηρήνα Α λ.α.ρ. 4 ἡμιφύτος Α 6 θύμοιν
Bouhier -ως λ.α.ρ. φυτόν Α

If, then, we put together the information derived from this with that contained in the passages quoted above we learn that

1 I have commented on this epigram elsewhere (Cik Anth.: Hellenistic Epigrams 2.257 and Misc. Alex. in hon. A. Rostagni 527). It will probably suffice to say here that ἐπιγεγράψαυν in Hellenistic verse is often the symbol of success in the theatre, and that though πολλομελύττον, much-watched, in the sense of faded, washed out, is possibly defensible of persons it is evidently incompatible with κηρήν, drome. The noun required should denote a garment, and κόφωνον is defined by Phoebus as χτύπους ἐφτον but also (from Archil. fr. 178) as ὁ κόψκηλος δικρίτης.
MACHON

Machon (who bears a rare but uninformative name) was a native of Corinth or Sicyon who spent most of his life, and lived to some age (ὀ πέραςβος), at Alexandria. His comedies were produced there and not in Athens, and though he was less esteemed than the Pleiad, he enjoyed a considerable reputation. Dioscorides, whether his noun was ϑυμόν or φυτόν, speaks of the ‘Attic thyme’ exhaled by the plays, using a figure which elsewhere connotes elegance. His adjective δριμό however makes it plain that that it is primarily Machon’s pungency rather than his polish which he is commending, and his second couplet implies that he looks on him rather as a survival from the Old Comedy than as a representative of the New. The two fragments of the plays quoted by Athenaeus (xix, xx) are both gastronomic and might come from almost any dramatist of the Middle or New Comedy, but it is perhaps significant that though Athenaeus too praises Machon as a dramatist, he quotes only two passages (compared with a round forty from Diphilus) as relevant to the themes of the Deipnosophistae. The contents of the Χρίστω cannot be taken as evidence for the Comedies but, with due caution, it may be noted that their frequent and extreme coarseness is much more reminiscent of Aristophanes than of Menander.

There remain for consideration the sentences in Athenaeus which throw light on the date of Machon. He was, we are told, στὰ τῶν κατὰ Ἀπολλόδορου τῶν Καρύττων κομωδιστῶν. 'About the time of Apollodorus', which seems to be the meaning,

---

1 Athenaeus’s phrase τῶν κομωδιστῶν τῶν Καρύττων taken at its face value would seem to imply that he had nevertheless been connected with the Athenian theatre though not as a playwright.
2 Nothing is known of a Comic Pleiad and this perhaps means only that among dramatists the poets of the Tragic Pleiad stood highest in estimation. 
4 For coarseness in the New Comedy see Legrand Deae 612. Rostagni (Rev. Fil. 44.293 = Scr. Min. 2.2.19) suggested that Machon embellished plots of New Comedy type cantu et musicis numeris lexilogice notis, but there is no evidence to suggest that he was in these respects a precursor of Plautus.
introduction

would not be very precise even if it referred to Machon alone and not, as it does, to a group of dramatists, and even if Apollodorus of Carystus were easier to date.\(^1\) Webster, on the strength of a reference in the Phormio, a version of Apollodorus’s Ἐπιθυμόβιος, placed the original in the decade 280–270 B.C. and thought that its author, who was much indebted to Menander, ‘started to produce not long before 280’.\(^2\) Even however if this date were precise for Apollodorus it would not be so for Machon, and οἱ κατὰ Ἀπολλόδωρον may not mean much more than the generation of dramatists following Menander, who died according to a lost inscription (I.G. 14. \(1184\) ἐπ’ ἀρχοντος Φιλίππου (293/2 B.C.)). However, a date for Machon towards the middle of the century which may perhaps be inferred from the reference to Apollodorus would tally well enough with the implications of the reference to Aristophanes of Byzantium. It appears that Machon, like Callimachus and other Alexandrian literary men, was a scholar as well as a poet and that Aristophanes in his youth was glad to be instructed by him in matters pertaining to Comedy.\(^3\) In Suidas some sentences relating to this Aristophanes have seemingly been transferred by accident to the comic Aristophanes, where we read προκέπτη τῆς τοῦ βιβλιοθήκης μετὰ Ἀπολλόδωρον ἔτος ἔγινον 86. The implied sequence of librarians is wrong, for it appears from \(p.Ox.\) 1241 that between Apollonius and Aristophanes the librarianship was held by

\(^{1}\) On the dating of later Greek comedies and their authors (a precarious enterprise) see Webster C.Q. 46.13, Studies in Later Greek Comedy 239, and passim, Schässer in Riv. Fil. 79.217, Capps in A.J.P. 21.38. Capps has shown that Apollodorus of Gela, with whom Kaibel (RE 1.2852) wished to identify Λ. of Carystus, was an earlier poet, but that Λ. of Athens may be so identified. The statement of Suidas that Λ. of Gela was σὺγχρονος Μενάνδρου is therefore irrelevant here.

\(^{2}\) Studies 206.

\(^{3}\) The phrase τῶν κατὰ κοιμηθέντα μερῶν is obscure. In later life Aristophanes was to edit the text of his namesake and perhaps to compose a commentary on him. See J. W. White Scholia on the Ares χιν. The μέρη of the Old Comedy may be Parodos, Parabasis, and so on.
MACHON

Eratosthenes. Eratosthenes died about 195 B.C., and if, despite the detected mistake, we accept from Suidas the statement that Aristophanes was 62 when he was appointed, he will have been born about 257 B.C. and may have sat at Machon’s feet in the late forties of that century. According to Suidas Aristophanes was as a boy the pupil of Zenodotus and as a young man of Callimachus. 2 The phrase νόος ὁν used both by Athenaeus and by Suidas is imprecise but it suggests that Machon and Callimachus were teaching in Alexandria at about the same time and may warrant a cautious conclusion that they were not far from contemporaries. Callimachus was born perhaps in the closing years of the fourth century and lived into the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes, and a floruit in the decade 260–250 B.C. would seem a reasonable guess for Machon. Beyond this there is little to go upon. The date of Dioscorides depends on that of Machon, for except that the epitaph was presumably written shortly after Machon’s death there is no other evidence. The dates of people mentioned in the Χρεία may help a little to establish a terminus post quem, and the most promising seem to be the hetaerae Gnathaea 3 and her daughter Gnathaeium, though it is important to stress at the outset that anecdotes attaching to such people may be devoid of historical truth and that in Greece as in England jokes tend to attach themselves to ‘characters’ whom they seem to fit, and are often ascribed to more than one. 3

1 The entry continues πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο καὶ Διονυσίου τοῦ Ὑλίμου καὶ Εὐφρονίδου τοῦ Κορινθίου ή Σικυωνίου. Nauck, accepting the view that Euphronidas was the Aristophanic scholar Euphranor, wished from Ath. 6.241 f.(above) to read Εὐφρονίδου τοῦ (Χρησμοστήρου καὶ Μαχαῦος) τοῦ Κ. Η. Σ.
2 It is somewhat surprising that Gnathaea should be unknown to RE which devotes substantial space to each of two Laises and no less than 13 columns to Phryne.
3 Thus a story told of Zeno in Ath. 5.1860 is attached in 8.344.4 to Bion, and in 14.631 Athenaeus recording an apophthegm of Asopodorus adds that it is ascribed also to Antigoneas. The proposition that a way to Hades is open from anywhere is variously ascribed to Anaxagoras, Anaximenes, Aristotle, Bias, and Diogenes (see Cornel. Pat. 113). Other examples will be found below.
INTRODUCTION

The name Γνάθανα is akin to other masculine and feminine names known from inscriptions (Γνάθος, -ος; -ών; -ης, -ολ-λας) and perhaps occurs in an Attic inscription. It may therefore have been given by her parents to the woman with whom we are concerned. When however Timocles in his Ὀρέσταυτο-κλείδης (fr. 25) writes, apparently of the paederast Autocleides of Aeschin., 1.52: περὶ δὲ τὸν παυάτλον | εὐδοκεῖ γράδας, Νάννον, Πλάγγον, Λύκα, | Γνάθανα, Φρύνη, Πλυθωνίκη, Μυρρίνη, | Χρυσίς, Κοινολίς, Ἰερόκλεια, Λαπάδιον, there would be a chronological difficulty, particularly if γράδας is pressed, in identifying his Gnathaena with Machon’s. She might be a predecessor in the same trade, but the names are perhaps rather typical hetaera-names without reference to individuals. The same is true of Anaxilas fr. 22, where again the name is one of a long list of hetaerae; and it is plain that Γνάθαναν in Eubul. fr. 89, if a real person, cannot be the descendant of Machon’s Gnathaena. I disregard therefore these Middle Comedy passages as irrelevant to the present enquiry.

Gnathaena and Gnathaenium are the subjects of many anecdotes in frs. xvi and xvii and the former appears again in 211 ff., 433 ff. Other examples of Gnathaena’s wit are recorded by Athenaeus from Lyceus of Samos (13.584b) and from Aristodorus (13.585a), and she is no doubt the Gnathaena pilloried for her immodest gluttony by Philippides, who calls

1 See Bechtel Hist. Personennamen 481, Attische Frauennamen 40. Γνάθανα is a parasite in Menander’s Kólos and Gnatho thence in the Eunuchus. So is Gnathenides in Luc. Frag. 19.
2 I.C. 25.1134b 247.
3 Meinecke very plausibly suggested that Autocleides was here represented as ringed by antiquated prostitutes as Orestes by Furies in the Ilenenides.
4 Webster (C.Q. 46.31), supposing all references to concern the same Gnathaena, is obliged to assign her a date impossibly early for Machon’s hetaerae.
5 Possibly to be identified with the Alexandrian scholar who was a pupil of Aristarchus (RE 2.921).
MACHON

her, in his "Ἀνασύνσεως (fr. 5), ἀνδροφόνος. The date of the play is unknown but its author was victorious with a comedy in 311 B.C. and in 285\textsuperscript{4} was the subject of an honorific decree for his good offices with Lysimachus and for other public services. From Machon we learn (fr. xvi) that Gnathaea was mistress of the dramatist Diphilus, who survived the death of Menander in 293 B.C.;\textsuperscript{2} and she is (in 211 ff.) the victim of a sharp riposte from Mania, mistress at some time of Demetrius Poliorcetes,\textsuperscript{3} who died in 283 B.C. The data are imprecise but suggest as Gnathaea’s heyday the years around 310 B.C.\textsuperscript{4} Machon however pursues her far past her heyday; in v. 382 she is ἡ γυναῖκα and in 301 ἡ νεῖτα τελέως ὑμοσυμμένως σοφός. Her relationship to Gnathaeum is not clear. She is addressed by her as μήτηρ (184) and herself calls the younger woman ἡ γυναῖκα (348); Andronicus calls her Gnathaeum’s ἡ γυναῖκα (381), and Gnathaeum is presumably the daughter mentioned in an anecdote of Lynceus (Ath. 13.583 A). Athenaeus however twice calls her ἡ γυναῖκα, grandaughter (13.581 A, 583 B), and Dindorf’s, Kaibel’s, and Gulick’s indexes accept that view. It is hard to guess on what grounds Athenaeus, with Machon and Lynceus before his eyes, should have placed Gnathaeum a generation later than they do, and it will be safer to assume, with suitable reservations, that the pair were mother and daughter. They followed the same profession, and Gnathaeum, who had a son by Andronicus (354), lived in some state in Athens (387 ff.). Gnathaea therefore, if not a great-grandmother, was at least a grandmother and it is reasonable to guess that the anecdotal history of the pair stops little or not at all short of 250 B.C. I

\begin{itemize}
\item Dated, apparently wrongly, two years earlier in Ditt. Syll.\textsuperscript{5} 374, RE 19.2204.
\item See 12 n.
\item See 227. The liaison may have started in 307 B.C. when Demetrius spent some time in Athens.
\item This conclusion, reached independently, agrees with that of Schiassi (Riv. Fil. 79-244), who says nata circa 326, finit post 310.
\end{itemize}
INTRODUCTION

shall not attempt to guess further how long it took for gossip about Gnathaenum to reach Alexandria from Athens, or how long thereafter Machon incorporated it in the Χρόνια, but it seems unlikely that this part of the book at least can have been written before the middle of the century.

This is perhaps the most convenient place to consider the Ptolemy who is mentioned in fr. 1, v, xviii (439 ff.). It is not self-evident that the same Ptolemy is meant in all these passages for fr. 1 stands somewhat apart from the other two. Ptolemy is not there called king; Corydus, the parasite with whom he is in contact, rather disclaims close acquaintance, nor is it implied in the anecdote of Corydus at Ptolemy’s table recorded from Lyceus in Ath. 6.245F. Corydus seems to belong mainly at any rate to the fourth century¹ and this Ptolemy may perhaps therefore be Ptolemy I Soter. In fr. v and xviii however Ptolemy is called βασιλεύς; the date is therefore later than 305 B.C. when Ptolemy Soter assumed that title, and we must choose between him and his successors.

Ptolemy, though he makes a joke in fr. xviii (448 f.), is not the hero of these anecdotes but the host with whom they are concerned. In v he is entertaining a parasite, having seemingly lost no time in inviting him to dinner on his arrival in Egypt. In xviii a courtesan and frequent boon-companion of the king drops in on him for a late drink and addresses him as ‘Daddy’ (παππάς). We do not know enough of the private lives either of Ptolemy I Soter or of Ptolemy III Euergetes to say that such behaviour was impossible in either, but it does not sound very probable; moreover Ptolemy Soter, born before 360 B.C., was in advanced middle age before he assumed the title of βασιλεύς and Euergetes, who did not succeed his father until 246 B.C., is perhaps too late to be probable. The picture however fits well enough the unwarlike and pleasure-loving Ptolemy II Phila-

¹ See p. 59 and C.R. 68.199.
MACHON

delphus, whose many mistresses are enumerated by Athenaeus (13.576e) and whom Theocritus (14.61) describes as εὐγνώμων, φιλόμουσος, ἱρωτικὸς, εἶς ἄκρον ἀδύσ. His reign extended from 283 B.C. (or, if two years of joint kingship with his father are counted, from 285) until his death in 246, and that period accords suitably with the tentative dating extracted from the anecdotes of Gnathaena and Gnathienium and with the indications of Machon’s date discussed above.