

ON PERSIAN *TRYPHĒ* IN ATHENAEUS

*Dominique Lenfant*

As is well known, *Deipnosophistae* is a text in which Athenaeus affects to provide his friend Timocrates with an account of a banquet attended by some extremely learned guests whose conversation is largely made up of quotations from literary authors.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, Athenaeus is best known as an author who transmits *verbatim* material from lost works of Greek literature: in fact, in its present – incomplete – state, *Deipnosophistae* mentions some 800 writers and 2500 works.<sup>2</sup> Every kind of Greek author is represented, from Homer to the Hellenistic period: some are well known, some less so, and others not at all. Athenaeus is thus a source of information about the reception of all sorts of writings but more specifically about the contents of works that are not preserved in a manuscript tradition. Of course, the interpretation of *Deipnosophistae* and its relation to its sources is not an easy matter: Athenaeus' purpose was not to give us a digest of 2500 pieces of Greek literature, and this fact is not without its effect upon his way of selecting, cutting and even interpreting the texts that he seems to quote or paraphrase. In other words, when reading about Persians in Athenaeus, we have to ask whether we are learning the opinion of Greeks who were contemporary with the Achaemenid Empire or that of a writer who lived more than 500 years later.

With some 130 allusions and citations distributed through almost all of the 15 books of his *Deipnosophistae*,<sup>3</sup> Athenaeus is one of the richest Greek sources on Achaemenid Persia, especially where details about life at court are concerned – the luxuries that surrounded the Great King and the staff that served him, the customs of the Royal Table, and the Greeks who visited the Empire as envoys or lived within its confines as refugees. *Deipnosophistae* is thus a text of more than passing interest for students of Greek relations with Persia.<sup>4</sup>

A particularly striking feature of its allusions to Persia is the vivid illustrations that it provides of Persian so-called *tryphē*. The term of *tryphē* is notoriously difficult to translate, but it generally designates an immoderate

and enfeebling addiction to sensual pleasures. Unlike the English term 'luxury', it is nearly always disparaging<sup>5</sup> and moralistic, although those who use it may not be immune to a degree of fascination with that which they are condemning.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, since it can relate to various sorts of practices and since the type of pleasure involved can be erotic or gastronomic or the result of drunkenness, luxury, material comfort or plain indolence, there is no universal translation for it.<sup>7</sup> The task of finding one is not made any easier by the changes that have occurred in western moral values, not just between antiquity and the end of the twentieth century but even between the first half and the end of the twentieth century: a notion such as 'debauchery', for example, may now seem rather old-fashioned. But, even when such a term was still in common use, it would probably not have been applied to someone who had a taste for gastronomic variety or to people who, like the Sybarites, forbade the establishment of noise-producing crafts (such as those of blacksmiths, carpenters and the like) within the city, their object being to avoid having their sleep disturbed in any way: in some contemporary societies, indeed, the latter might perhaps be seen as a legitimate ecological stand against sound pollution.<sup>8</sup> It will be readily understood that the word *tryphē*, whether applied to the Persians or not, had a strong affective value, but a very low descriptive one.

Because of these two features (a work based on supposed quotation and problems about the semantics of *tryphē*), one may wonder whether Athenaeus' illustrations of Persian *tryphē* can be treated as actual evidence by a modern historian and, if so, as evidence about what.

### **Deipnosophistae and Greek ideas on *tryphē***

*Tryphē* is a polemical theme that goes back to classical times, that is to those Greeks who were contemporary with the Persian Empire: the word is well represented in Aristophanes and Plato, but was also to be found in lost historians of the fourth century and the Hellenistic period such as Theopompus,<sup>9</sup> Ephorus, Phylarchus, Posidonius, Timaeus and Aristoxenus.<sup>10</sup> Some components of the *topos* already existed before the end of the fifth century BC, but with the invention and spread of the word *tryphē* that *topos* took on new dimensions.

As an author who quotes many lost historians, Athenaeus provides us with a copious collection of examples of *tryphē* – it is, in fact, the largest preserved anthology on the subject<sup>11</sup> – and by studying it one can get a better understanding of the associations of in the minds of Greeks of the classical and post-classical era, especially as applied to whole nations.

First of all, *tryphē* was conceived as a possible element of affinity between nations and consequently as a cause of political alliance. For instance,

Athenaeus, whose source here seems to be Critias,<sup>12</sup> says:

Now the Thessalians are generally admitted to have been the most extravagant (πολυτελέστατοι) of all the Greeks in the matter both of clothing and food; this in fact was their reason for bringing the Persians into Greece, since they emulated Persian luxury (*tryphē*) and extravagance (πολυτέλεια).

In other words, a common taste for *tryphē* was the cause of Thessalian collusion with the Persians in the second Persian war. One is bound to say that the assumptions about historical causality implicit in this proposition are simplistic and intellectually impoverished (not to say simply irrational) by comparison with Herodotus' explanation of the situation in terms of the ambitions of a Thessalian aristocratic family in a context of internal political rivalries.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, *tryphē* appears to be infectious, since it can be transmitted from one nation to another through imitation: for example, the *tryphē* of Colophon was imitated by Miletus, whose was in turn imported into other neighbouring cities.<sup>14</sup> Last but not least, *tryphē* leads to the weakening and destruction of the nations or kings who indulge in it: this well known process was exemplified in the cases of Sybaris, Miletus, Persia and Sardanapalus' Assyria.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Tryphē* and Persians in Athenaeus**

Rules of this sort about ethnic *tryphē* are by no means confined to Persians or even to barbarians in general: the Deipnosophists also consider as *tryphē* the behaviour of people who are culturally speaking much closer to home, e.g. various figures in the *Odyssey* (not only Penelope's suitors but also Odysseus' companions and the Phaeacians<sup>16</sup>), Spartans<sup>17</sup> and contemporary Romans.<sup>18</sup> In other words, in the eyes of Athenaeus, *tryphē* was something that could occur at any time and in any society. This being so, the Persians were no longer locked into a Greek-barbarian dichotomy,<sup>19</sup> as had been the case for some of the classical writers who painted a picture of Persian *tryphē* and decadence.<sup>20</sup>

Nonetheless, the Persians do occupy a significant place in the roll-call of dissolute (τροφεροί) nations, as is clear from three facts. First, there are some fifteen passages about Persian *tryphē*.<sup>21</sup> Secondly, the Persians are mentioned in each of the thematic sections of Book 12 (the one devoted to *tryphē*)<sup>22</sup> and are the only nation of which this is true. Lastly, they head the catalogue of nations who became famous for *tryphē* (12.513e)<sup>23</sup> – a position that Athenaeus justifies by virtue of their chronological priority.<sup>24</sup>

Illustrations of Persian *tryphē* in Athenaeus' work are of various sorts.<sup>25</sup> They include the numerous staff that attend to the king's food and drink or to his sleeping arrangements,<sup>26</sup> the king's eternal search for new pleasures<sup>27</sup> – especially pleasures provided by new foods<sup>28</sup> – and the rewards offered by the

king to those who discover them; one may also mention the so-called golden water that is specially reserved for the king.<sup>29</sup> Then there is the fragrant ‘badge of rank which the Persian kings placed on their heads’,<sup>30</sup> the golden stool (*diphros*) on which the king steps to dismount from his chariot and the stool-bearer (*diphrophoros*) who follows him for this purpose,<sup>31</sup> the luxurious throne<sup>32</sup> and the huge quantity of precious metals in the royal bedroom,<sup>33</sup> the seasonal migrations of the king,<sup>34</sup> and the 300 concubines and music-players who ‘sleep throughout the day in order to stay awake at night’.<sup>35</sup>

These illustrations all have a point in common: they concern the Great King, even in the section of Book 12 that is supposed to deal with the Persian *ethnos* (528e). In fact, the shift from Persians in general to their king and the tendency for interest to be directed exclusively at the king are quite normal in Greek literature: the *tryphē* of the Persians is really the *tryphē* of their king. This seems to be something of a novelty: it is not the same for other peoples in Athenaeus’ catalogue, including those who have a monarch, such as the Lydians. No doubt this can be explained by the fact that Greek ideas about the contrast between Greeks and Persians had a substantial political component.

There are two exceptions in *Deipnosophistae* to this concentration on the of the King. The first concerns the wives of Artabazus and Mentor, who are taxed with *tryphē* because they were attended by Cypriote women who

in their desire to please the women who summoned them, made ladders of themselves so that the women riding in carts could mount or dismount on their backs.<sup>36</sup>

But, this is arguably only a partial exception: the wives of the king’s generals who use other women as the king uses a *diphros* are doing just what he does and simply represent the reproduction of royal behaviour in aristocratic circles.

The second case is more surprising. In a brief section of Book 12 devoted to different views about pleasure, Athenaeus provides a long quotation from Heraclides of Pontus’ *On Pleasure* which presents pleasure as a good thing, and the Persians and Medes as a model:

All persons, at any rate, who pay court to pleasure and choose a life of luxury (*tryphē*) are lordly and magnificent, like the Persians and the Medes. For more than any other men in the world they court pleasure and luxury, yet they are the bravest and most lordly of the barbarians.

The philosopher goes on to describe the Athenians as having achieved greatness as long as they enjoyed luxury and had slaves carrying

folding stools for them so that they should not sit as chance might have it. Such, then, were the men who won the battle of Marathon.<sup>37</sup>

Such outright praise of Persians and their in a fourth-century author<sup>38</sup> is eccentric, even in a philosophical context: in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, by contrast, Persians only serve as a positive model so long as they do not exclusively indulge in pleasure and luxury.

### *Tryphē* and the historical critic

In the light of this description and analysis of the features of Persian *tryphē* as viewed by Greek writers, one may wonder whether their presentation of the topic can enlighten us about anything other than Greek views. This question is especially relevant when *tryphē* is offered as an explanation.

For example, the seasonal migration of the Persian court from one royal residence to another (winter in Susa, summer in Ecbatana, autumn in Persepolis and the remaining portion of the year in Babylon) is mentioned as the first illustration of Persian *tryphē*.<sup>39</sup> Quite apart from the fact that the term *tryphē* implies a non-historical moral judgment, it has been argued that, although climatic considerations could have played a part, political reasons are likely to have been at least as decisive a motivation for the practice, in so far as the king reaffirmed his power by regular journeys of this sort through his domains.<sup>40</sup> In a case like this modern historians may choose to disregard the explanation while accepting the description as valid and interesting evidence<sup>41</sup> – what Pierre Briant usually describes as a distinction between ‘le noyau informatif achéménide’ and ‘l’interprétation grecque’.<sup>42</sup>

Unfortunately, it is sometimes impossible to draw this distinction, because there are cases where it is obvious that a supposedly historical proposition has actually been prompted by the notion of *tryphē* and its association with ruin. For instance, according to Clearchus, Darius III brought his kingdom to defeat because of his unrestrained search for pleasure.<sup>43</sup> This is certainly an explanation frequently encountered in Greek writings,<sup>44</sup> but it is not a very convincing one. In a second example, Artaxerxes III Ochus is said to have had a frugal life-style and to have ruled for a long time because he practised justice.<sup>45</sup> Such a statement may come as a surprise to readers of other sources such as Plutarch's *Artaxerxes*, which recounts the fratricides committed by Ochus and reports that he ‘outdid all his predecessors in blood-thirstiness and cruelty’.<sup>46</sup> The explanation may be that we are dealing with an *exemplum*: Ochus' frugality was perhaps invented (by Athenaeus' source?) precisely in order to provide a contrast with the luxurious tastes of his eventual successor Darius III and an explanation of the fact that he reigned for a longer period.<sup>47</sup> In a case like this one clearly has to be rather wary of the comments about *tryphē* and it may seem that they have little of interest to offer to the modern historian of Persia.

### The verdict of *tryphē*: Athenaeus or his sources?

Qualification of certain types of behaviour as *tryphē* might nevertheless be considered as evidence about Greek perception and representation of Persian kings. But whose perception? In other words, is Athenaeus merely reproducing his sources' opinion and reflecting an old tradition dating back to the times of the Achaemenid Empire or is he sometimes the author of that verdict? I shall argue that *Deipnosophistae* is not just providing a compilation of his sources.

First, Athenaeus has a personal, explicit and negative opinion of *tryphē*. There are allusions to *tryphē* in nearly every book, but they appear especially in Books 4 (on the meals of different peoples), 6 (on flatterers: flattery by subordinates is closely tied to their superiors' *tryphē*) and above all in Book 12, the subject of which is explicitly and exclusively 'those persons who made themselves notorious for their *tryphē*'.<sup>48</sup> In fact, Book 12 is one of the few that is exclusively devoted from one end to the other to a single theme, and this fact already suggests that it was an important theme in Athenaeus' mind.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Book 12 has another distinctive feature: it is an anthology that is directly presented by Athenaeus to Timocrates without any claim that it reproduces the conversation of the deipnosophists.<sup>50</sup> Now, Athenaeus explicitly reproves *tryphē*, not only at the beginning, where he contrasts pleasure with virtue and affirms that 'to pursue pleasures recklessly is to hunt pain',<sup>51</sup> but also later on in the book, where he argues that it is better to be thin than to put on weight through indulging in *tryphē* (552f) and that the Romans 'did a good job when they banished the Epicureans Alcaeus and Philiscus from the city' (547a), and where Gorgias' mode of life, which was diametrically opposed to *tryphē*, is clearly valued (547f–548a).

Of course, Athenaeus also reproduces divergent opinions on pleasure,<sup>52</sup> and, as most of his sources on Persian *tryphē* are now lost, one might suppose that he is simply preserving Greek reactions dating back to the Achaemenid period or not very much later than Alexander's conquest – the reactions, that is, of writers of *Persika* such as Dinon and Heracleides of Cumae, Alexander historians such as Aristobulus, Chares of Mytilene and Amyntas, and fourth-century philosophers such as Clearchus of Soli, Heraclides of Pontus, Theophrastus and Aristoxenus.

But it might also be the case that Athenaeus' own views are not without effect on the way he selects, quotes and presents his sources, and that his method of work does not always do justice to the real meaning of the original text. This can be exemplified by the passage of Heraclides of Pontus quoted above.<sup>53</sup> That passage presents the Persians as a positive model of hedonism – or that, at least, is the impression given by the way in which Athenaeus excerpts Heraclides' words without providing even a few introductory

words to enlighten the reader about its original context. But it has been convincingly argued that, in the light of Heraclides' general philosophical position and known aversion from hedonism, the passage in question must be ironical and depend on a 'shocking inversion of established commonplaces':<sup>54</sup> the Persians, who are usually taxed with cowardice, are called 'the bravest and most lordly of the barbarians'; the slaves who carry stools (*diphroi*) for Athenians are like a parody of the stool-bearer (*diphrophoros*) of the Persian king;<sup>55</sup> and the idea that such men would have won at Marathon is contrary to the usual view that *tryphē* leads to military weakness.<sup>56</sup> What we have in Heraclides' *On Pleasure* is, in fact, the sort of paradoxical and ironical praise that was practised by sophists, a provocative reversal of common assumptions and a demonstration *e contrario*.

From an historical point of view, the most that one can conclude from the text is that the Persian *diphros* and *diphrophoros* were well known among educated Greeks in the middle of the fourth century BC and could be considered by them as an illustration of *tryphē*. But we also see how much caution is needed when dealing with a text seen through Athenaeus' eyes: in this case, the latter was not aware of any irony and consequently gave a misleading impression of the transmitted text and of the sort of feelings Greeks might have toward Persians. We are dealing with a bad case of decontextualization – something of which Athenaeus may have been himself a victim, if he either read only this passage of Heraclides' work or extracted it from a pre-existing anthology.

Conversely, instead of an absence (of the original context), it may be an addition – that of the new context into which the quotation is inserted – that has a misleading effect. In fact, qualification of a piece of behaviour as evidence on *tryphē* is sometimes Athenaeus' interpretation, and not that of his source. A clear example, in a non-Persian context, is provided by a quotation from Homer: Athenaeus writes in Book 1 that, because of their *tryphē*, 'the suitors' arms were so flabby (*or*: delicate) that they could not even begin to stretch the bow'.<sup>57</sup> But the epic only mentions the failure of the delicate arms of the first suitor and does not link it with his dissolute life. Strictly speaking, the appearance of *tryphē* here results from Athenaeus' interpretation.<sup>58</sup>

Returning to Persian *tryphē*, it is clear that description of behaviour as did already occur in some of Athenaeus' sources: it appeared frequently in the text of Clearchus' *On Modes of Life*,<sup>59</sup> and appears also in a quotation from Chares of Mytilene (514e–f).<sup>60</sup> However, such description was also sometimes lacking – as far as we can tell – in his source. There is, for instance, no proof that Dinon considered the golden stool (*diphros*) of the king or his fragrant badge of rank to be manifestations of *tryphē*,<sup>61</sup> and the same may be said about Agathocles' reference to the water reserved for the king.

In other words, when we are dealing with writers such as the *Persica*-authors Dinon and Heraclides of Cumae who are scarcely known to us outside the pages of Athenaeus, we cannot infer from Athenaeus' interpretation that their work focused on, or even included polemic about, Persian *tryphē*.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, in the case of Heraclides of Cumae, Athenaeus himself gives us a piece of evidence that points in the opposite direction, when he transmits his description and explanation of the king's dinner as an occasion of parsimonious and well-calculated food-distribution: it appears that in providing this account Heracleides was actually contesting commonplaces about Persian *tryphē* and arguing that they rested on a misunderstanding.<sup>63</sup> Even when dealing with an author such as Clearchus who undoubtedly denounced *tryphē*, great care is required in reconstructing his work, as has been convincingly demonstrated by Jan Bollansée, because Athenaeus' selection of material is uneven and misleading.<sup>64</sup>

This sort of selective reproduction is one of the reasons why Athenaeus' testimony about earlier writings is simply biased, and his propensity for reproducing selectively can even operate within a single excerpt. This can be seen in his quotation of the final chapter of *Cyropaedia* (8.8):<sup>65</sup> whereas Xenophon's original chapter is distinguished by an alternation between *tóte* and *vūv* (then and now) – that is, between the virtuous Persians of old times and the voluptuous ones of today – in Athenaeus' truncated quotation, this alternation has disappeared and there is almost nothing about virtuous Persians *tryphē*.<sup>66</sup> Of course, that selection fits very well with Athenaeus' purpose, which is to illustrate Persian *tryphē*,<sup>67</sup> but it involves cuts that could not be suspected if Xenophon's text had not been independently preserved.<sup>68</sup> It might be added that this extract appears in *Deipnosophistae* as the last of a series of quotations on Persian *tryphē*, is the harshest and most unambiguous of the set, and – as an apparent climactic conclusion – may (unduly) colour the reader's reaction to the quotations that precede.

We may conclude, then, that Athenaeus' obsession about *tryphē* was not necessarily that of his sources, and such a conclusion should influence our understanding of Greek writings about Persians in the fourth and third centuries BC.

## Conclusion

Examination of Athenaeus' treatment of Persian might be expected to provide information about at least three different topics: Greco-Roman ideas on the Persian Empire, Greek feelings during the Achaemenid era, and (perhaps) life in Achaemenid Persia. In fact, seen from a Roman imperial vantage-point, the notion of Persian was a long-established commonplace, already attested in classical times, and its alleged debilitating effects had apparently



been confirmed by the fall of the Empire. Yet, in Athenaeus' time, *tryphē* was no longer considered to be an especially Persian feature – on the contrary, it seemed to be a rather widespread phenomenon. It was no longer something with which to berate an enemy, but a potentially universal disease that could even threaten Roman society.<sup>69</sup> Athenaeus was certainly concerned about the preservation of literary patrimony but, beyond that, his purpose probably had less to do with history than with ethics. Within a framework of this sort, *tryphē* has turned from a polemic and political theme into a moralistic one.

On the face of it *Deipnosophistae* seems to be a valuable source of evidence about Greek perceptions of the Persian world during classical and Hellenistic times. It shows the success of the *tryphē* theme in Greek historiography and there is no doubt that this success had consequences that a modern historian might deplore: for moralism often leads to a paucity of political, economical, military or social analysis and provides over-simple explanations for political decline and interstate alliances.<sup>70</sup> If we consider that Book 12 is not only the book on *tryphē* but also the most 'historical' of the books of *Deipnosophistae*,<sup>71</sup> *tryphē* seems to have damaged historiography more surely than it damaged the moral and political state of nations.

Yet such a picture is in turn over-simple, because Athenaeus is not a pure copyist: he has his own personal negative opinion of *tryphē*, and his method of quotation gives a biased idea of the contents of his sources, sometimes because he himself only had an indirect and very partial knowledge of the quoted texts, sometime because his personal interpretation may distort or even caricature the meaning of the original. *Tryphē* was probably a far less prevalent theme in earlier historiography than one assumes from a reading of Athenaeus, and in some cases (e.g. Dinon or Heraclides of Cumae) one may even suspect that the theme was absent, despite the misleading contrary impression created by Athenaeus. Yet these writers of *Persica* are an important source of evidence about the Greek perception of the Persian Empire in fourth-century BC Asia Minor. In short: before taking information from Athenaeus about the Persian Empire and the way it was perceived by its Greek contemporaries, it is essential to conduct a thorough critical analysis of the available text, of the author's views and of his method of working.<sup>72</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The standard edition of Athenaeus is still that of Kaibel (1887–90). The English translations quoted below are those of Gulick (1927–41). On Athenaeus in general, see the introduction of Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén 1998, Braund and Wilkins 2000 and the introduction of Jacob 2001. On Athenaeus' working methods, see Jacob 2000 and 2004. On historians in Athenaeus, see Zecchini 1989 and Lenfant (forthcoming a), with earlier bibliography. On *tryphē*, see Passerini 1934, Tondriau 1948, Bonamente 1980, Cozzoli

1980, Heinen 1983, Nenci 1983, Wilkins 2000 (chap. 6), Gambato 2000. On *tryphē* in certain lost historians mainly known through Athenaeus, see Bollansée (forthcoming) on Clearchus, Schepens (forthcoming) on Phylarchus.

<sup>2</sup> According to the cover-page of Gulick's translation. See also Jacob 2004, 148.

<sup>3</sup> Book VII is the only one without a word about Persians. References to Persia in the *Deipnosophistae* are listed by Lenfant (forthcoming b).

<sup>4</sup> See the index of Briant 2002 s.v. Athenaeus and Lenfant (forthcoming b).

<sup>5</sup> The case of the Lagids who chose for themselves the epithet *Tryphon* (see Tondriau 1948; Heinen 1983, 119–20) seems to be exceptional (see Bollansée [forthcoming]), and it concerns political practice, rather than historiography and moralizing writings. Azoulay 2004 claims that a virtuous *tryphē* appears in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*; it is, however, striking that the precise term *tryphē* never occurs in the *Cyropaedia*. That does not weaken Azoulay's analysis as a whole, but it does make his use of the term *tryphē* questionable. On the connotation of *tryphē* and related words, see Wilkins 2000, 272–5 and Bollansée (forthcoming).

<sup>6</sup> It is nevertheless striking and significant that the term *tryphē* is never used by Athenaeus about the most ostentatious displays of luxury that he describes: first, Caranus' banquet, 'a Macedonian dinner surpassing in sumptuousness (πολυτέλεια) any that had ever been given anywhere' (3.126e), which is described at length in Book 4 (128c–130d) and is probably the one that displays most material luxury (copious food, luxurious vessels and sumptuous gifts to the guests); second, the sumptuous and extraordinary procession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, the description of which occupies no fewer than 17 pages of the Loeb edition (5.196a–203b).

<sup>7</sup> In her Italian translation of Athenaeus' Book 12, Maria L. Gambato used the neologism 'voluttuosità' (Gambato 2001, 1267 n. 3, comments on the difficulty in translating the Greek word) or, in her 2000 paper, 'voluptuousness', which is a very attractive solution, although it may not clearly capture the disparaging connotation. But, even Gambato did not always feel able to translate *tryphē* with that term.

<sup>8</sup> 12.518c–d.

<sup>9</sup> 'L'autore che ha fatto l'uso maggiore [del topos della *tryphē*] è stato senza dubbio Teopompo il quale lo ha applicato a quasi tutti i protagonisti delle sue storie, a partire da Filippo II di Macedonia' (Bonamente 1980, 150). Cf. Passerini 1934, 45–51.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Bonamente 1980; Passerini 1934; Bollansée (forthcoming) n. 32.

<sup>11</sup> Athenaeus' collection is in fact without competitor, since we have lost the *Peri Bion* (*On Modes of Life*) of Clearchus of Soli, a disciple of Aristotle who wrote in the first half of the 3rd century BC: this treatise was, according to Jan Bollansée, an 'investigation into the different manners in which a person can shape his life, or a society can go about its business' and every mode of life was illustrated with historical (or at least historiographical) *exempla*. As has been convincingly argued by Bollansée (forthcoming), the treatise was probably far from being exclusively devoted to *tryphē*, but it nevertheless contained a number of illustrations – which we know precisely because Athenaeus quoted them in Book 12.

<sup>12</sup> That is at least true for the basic affirmation, which is connected with Critias in 12.527b. The present text (14.663a) lacks any indication of source.

<sup>13</sup> Another example, based on Phylarchus, concerns the people of Colophon who 'were in the beginning rigid in their discipline, but after they had drifted into luxury they contracted friendship and alliance with the Lydians' (12.526a).

<sup>14</sup> 12.524b (after Clearchus of Soli). See also 12.540f (on Polycrates of Samos, who was supposed to have emulated ‘the effeminate practices of the Lydians’), 4.141f–142b (on Spartans, whose luxury supposedly began ‘in imitation of court pomp’ [Gulick translates ‘the regal court of *Persia*’, although there is no reference to Persia in the Greek text and there were other Hellenistic models in the 3rd century BC, the era of Areus and Cleomenes], maybe also 12.522a (on the people of Croton who, according to Timaeus, ‘drifted into luxury after the destruction of the Sybarites’, although the causal relation is not clearly expressed). Nenci 1983, 1027–8, putting together all of the allusions, thinks that we can even track the epidemic – from Persians to Lydians and then both to Greeks and to Etruscans, Samnites, Messapii, Greeks in Italy, and among them Sybarites and lastly Croton.

<sup>15</sup> 12.520c, 523e–f, 539b, 528e–529d.

<sup>16</sup> 1.17b, 10f, 14c.

<sup>17</sup> 4.141f.

<sup>18</sup> At the end of Book 6, Larensis gives a long speech in which he contrasts the ‘moderate and highly virtuous’ Romans of early times with those of his own day, who indulge in luxury (272d–275b), and says that Lucullus was the first to have introduced *tryphē* into Rome (274f).

<sup>19</sup> That in selecting items Athenaeus is far from systematically contrasting Greeks with Barbarians can be seen in many cases. See, e.g., Lenfant 2002, 71.

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Briant 1989; Tuplin 1989, esp. 161–3; Hutzfeldt 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Excluding the allusions to Sardanapalus.

<sup>22</sup> These successive sections are on: different opinions about pleasure (ἡδονή) (510b–513e); catalogue of voluptuous (τροφεροί) nations and cities (513e–528e); catalogue of voluptuous individuals (528e–544a); schools of philosophers claiming the pursuit of a life of pleasure (*tryphē*) (544a–548c); *exempla* of sobriety as opposed to *tryphē* (548c–f).

<sup>23</sup> In a way, they might be considered as also heading the catalogue of τροφεροί individuals (12.528e), which alludes to ‘all the rulers of Asia’. It is true that Ninyas and Sardanapalus are mentioned first, but these rulers were described in Ctesias’ *Persica* and might have been assimilated to Persians, as the king of Persia is mentioned, in 529d, between two descriptions of Sardanapalus.

<sup>24</sup> Athenaeus provides a way of contesting that priority when he alludes to Lydians (515d) or to Sardanapalus, but in fact Lydians and Assyrians, as oriental subjects of the Achaemenid Empire, were in a way assimilated to Persians. The latter became the first and most notorious paradigm of *tryphē*, perhaps because of works such as Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* and *Agesilaus*, or Plato’s *Laws* (1.637e, cited by Athenaeus 10.432a–b; cf. 3.693a–695e, on the education of Cyrus’ and Darius’ sons).

<sup>25</sup> I take into account only explicit references to *tryphē*, as it would beg the question to presuppose a negative meaning in other cases.

<sup>26</sup> 4.144b (after Xenophon’s *Agesilaus*). Cf. 12.515a–d (after Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*).

<sup>27</sup> 4.144e–f (after Theophrastus), 12.539b (after Clearchus), 12.545a–546c (after Aristoxenus).

<sup>28</sup> 12.514e and 529d–e (after Clearchus). Cf. 12.515a–d (after Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*), on inventive cooks who attend to the king.

<sup>29</sup> 12.515a (after Agathocles).

<sup>30</sup> 12.514a (after Dinon).

<sup>31</sup> 12.514a–b (after Dinon). On the royal *diphros*, see Lenfant (forthcoming c).

<sup>32</sup> 12.514c (after Heracleides of Cumae).

<sup>33</sup> 12.514e–f (after Chares of Mytilene and Amyntas).

<sup>34</sup> 12.513e.

<sup>35</sup> 12.514b (after Heracleides of Cumae).

<sup>36</sup> 6.256c–f. A similar account is told in Plutarch, *Moralia* 50d, and appears as an *exemplum* in moralistic literature on flatterers – the very theme of Athenaeus' Book 6.

<sup>37</sup> 12.512a–d.

<sup>38</sup> Heraclides lived from c. 390 to after 322 BC: *Der Neue Pauly* 5.374; Gottschalk 1980, 2–5.

<sup>39</sup> 12.513a.

<sup>40</sup> Briant 1988 and 1996, 199–204 (= 2002, 186–92).

<sup>41</sup> Of course, that does not mean that such evidence is necessarily truthful. For a general treatment of the topic see Tuplin 1998.

<sup>42</sup> Briant 1996, 16 (= 2002, 7: 'kernel of Achaemenid facts' and 'Greek interpretation').

<sup>43</sup> 12.539b.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Briant 2003, 133–59.

<sup>45</sup> 12.548e.

<sup>46</sup> §30, 9. Ael. *VH* 2.17, also speaks of the bloody cruelty of Ochus towards his subjects, and according to Val. Max. 9.2.7 he murdered a hundred relatives when he came to the throne (cf. Just. 10.3.1).

<sup>47</sup> The source on Ochus might be Clearchus, whom Athenaeus has mentioned not long before when talking about Gorgias and who is given as the source of the contrary *exemplum* of Darius III.

<sup>48</sup> 12.510b.

<sup>49</sup> That *tryphē* and *κολακεία*, considered as bringing about decadence, are among Athenaeus' privileged themes and criteria of selection for political historiography has been stressed by Zecchini 1989, 121 and *passim*.

<sup>50</sup> This anthology is announced by Athenaeus to Timocrates at the end of Book 11 (509e) and, at the start of Book 12, Athenaeus affects to regret having made a promise that, at Timocrates' insistence, he must now keep (12.510b). It is the only book where there is no allusion to a *deipnosophist* speaking and producing citations. It is true that there is certainly a gap at the end of the introduction, just after the announcement of the theme (510b), and Kaibel tried to fill it by supplying the words 'hear then what the *Deipnosophists* said on this subject' (I, xxiv). But, as Gulick rightly says, Athenaeus 'drops the banquet and discourses in his own name' (p. 293 n. a). In fact, within Book 12, the speaker who refers to 'his Alexandrians' could be Athenaeus (541a), and there are also direct addresses from Athenaeus to Timocrates (550f–551a, 552f).

<sup>51</sup> 510c, 511a.

<sup>52</sup> For instance, the views of hedonistic philosophers who recommend the pursuit of *tryphē* (544a–546c) or conversely that of Clearchus, who warned his readers of the danger generated by *tryphē* and *hybris* (541e).

<sup>53</sup> 12.512a–d.

<sup>54</sup> Gambato 2001, 1272 n. 1. The fragment had already been treated in a similar way by Wehrli 1969, 21–2 (text = fr. 55), 77–8 (commentary); but in his view, rather than being ironical, the quotation must be part of a dialogue in which two persons presented

opposed views, as in fr. 50 of Aristoxenus: ‘Das Plädoyer zu Gunsten von ἡδονή und τροφή gibt sicher nicht Herakleides eigene Meinung wieder, in einer anschließenden Gegenrede muss es darum widerlegt worden sein (fr. 57–61 oder Teile davon)’.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. 12.514a–b (after Dinon).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Gambato 2001, *ibidem*.

<sup>57</sup> 1.17b, where the term ἀπαλός (‘flabby’) refers to *Odyssey* 21.151.

<sup>58</sup> On Homer in *Deipnosophistae*, see Bouvier (forthcoming) and Bréchet (forthcoming).

<sup>59</sup> See Bollansée (forthcoming).

<sup>60</sup> It also occurs in a quotation from Heraclides of Cumae’s *Persica*, but not about a Persian (517b).

<sup>61</sup> On these fragments of Dinon and the attention that should be paid to the introductory words and the cutting of the fragment, see Lenfant (forthcoming a), especially the contribution on Herodotus’ quotations in *Deipnosophistae*.

<sup>62</sup> Each case should be assessed by considering Athenaeus’ methods of quotation, which often makes it possible to know whether a fragment is paraphrase, summary, or literal quotation and to identify Athenaeus’ own words. See Lenfant (forthcoming a). For this assessment of Dinon’s and Heraclides’ fragments, see Lenfant (forthcoming c).

<sup>63</sup> Cf. 4.145a–146a = *FGrHist* 689 F 2, text and commentary in Lenfant (forthcoming c).

<sup>64</sup> Bollansée (forthcoming). The same has been argued about Phylarchus: see Schepens (forthcoming).

<sup>65</sup> 12.515a–d, quoting some parts of *Cyropaedia* 8.8.15–17, 19–20.

<sup>66</sup> More precisely: Athenaeus has dropped the τότε of §§ 19 and 20.

<sup>67</sup> Athenaeus’, and not Xenophon’s word, as has been seen above.

<sup>68</sup> On Xenophon’s citations by Athenaeus in general, see Maisonneuve (forthcoming).

<sup>69</sup> Zecchini (forthcoming).

<sup>70</sup> See the general statements of Bonamente 1980.

<sup>71</sup> Zecchini 1989, 205.

<sup>72</sup> Lenfant (forthcoming a).

## Bibliography

Azoulay, V.

2004 ‘The Medo-Persian ceremonial: Xenophon, Cyrus and the king’s body’, in C.J. Tuplin (ed.) *Xenophon and his World*, Stuttgart, 147–73.

Bollansée, J.

forthcoming ‘Clearchus’ treatise *On Modes of Life* and the theme of *Tryphē*, *Ktèma* 32.

Bonamente, G.

1980 ‘Criteri moralistici nella storiografia del IV secolo a. C.’, in *Tra Grecia e Roma. Temi antichi e metodologie moderne*, Rome, 147–54.

Bouvier, D.

forthcoming ‘Usage et autorité de l’épopée homérique chez Athénée’, in Lenfant forthcoming a.

*Dominique Lenfant*

- Braund, D. and Wilkins, J. (eds.)  
2000 *Athenaeus and his World. Reading Greek culture in the Roman Empire*, Exeter.
- Bréchet, C.  
forthcoming 'Du "grand livre" homérique aux *Deipnosophistes*: exploration d'un continuum', in D. Lenfant, *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens*.
- Briant, P.  
1988 'Le nomadisme du Grand Roi', *IrAnt* 23, 253–73.  
1989 'Histoire et idéologie. Les Grecs et la "décadence perse"', in M.-M. Mactoux and E. Geny, *Mélanges P. Lévêque* II, Paris, 33–47.  
1996 *Histoire de l'empire perse*, Paris.  
2002 *From Cyrus to Alexander. A history of the Persian Empire*, Winona Lake. Translation by P.T. Daniels of Briant, *Histoire de l'empire perse*.  
2003 *Darius dans l'ombre d'Alexandre*, Paris.
- Cozzoli, U.  
1980 'La τρυφή nella interpretazione delle crisi politiche', in *Tra Grecia e Roma. Temi antichi e metodologie moderne*, Roma, 133–45.
- Gambato, M.L.  
2000 'The female-kings. Some aspects of the representation of eastern kings in the *Deipnosophistae*', in D. Braund and J. Wilkins (eds.) *Athenaeus and his World. Reading Greek culture in the Roman Empire*, Exeter, 227–30.  
2001 *Ateneo. I deipnosofisti. I dotti a banchetto*, vol. 3, Rome.
- Gottschalk, H.B.  
1980 *Heraclides of Pontus*, Oxford.
- Gulick, C.B.  
1927–41 *Athenaeus. The Deipnosophists*, Cambridge, Mass. and London.
- Heinen, H.  
1983 'Die tryphè des Ptolemaios VIII. Euergetes II. Beobachtungen zum ptolemäischen Herrscherideal und einer römischen Gesandtschaft in Ägypten (140/39 v.Chr.)', in H. Heinen (ed.) *Althistorische Studien H. Bengtson*, Stuttgart, 116–28.
- Hutzfeldt, B.  
1999 *Das Bild der Perser in der griechischen Dichtung des 5. vorchristlichen Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden.
- Jacob, C.  
2000 'Athenaeus the librarian', in D. Braund and J. Wilkins (eds.) *Athenaeus and his World. Reading Greek culture in the Roman Empire*, Exeter, 85–110.  
2001 'Ateneo o il dedalo delle parole', in *Ateneo. I deipnosofisti. I dotti a banchetto*, I, Rome, XI–CXVI.  
2004 'La citation comme performance dans les *Deipnosophistes* d'Athénée', in C. Darbo-Peschanski (ed.) *La citation dans l'Antiquité*, Grenoble, 147–74.
- Kaibel, G.  
1887–90 *Athenaei Naucraticae Dipnosophistarum libri XV*, Leipzig.
- Lenfant, D.  
2002 'Le vin dans les stéréotypes ethniques des Grecs (Du rôle de la norme en ethnographie)', in J. Jouanna and L. Villard (eds.) *Vin et santé en Grèce ancienne*, Paris, 67–84.

- forthcoming a *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens* (Actes du colloque de Strasbourg, 16–18 juin 2005), Paris.
- forthcoming b 'Athénée de Naucratis', in D. Lenfant (ed.) *Sources grecques et latines sur l'empire perse*, Paris.
- forthcoming c *Les Persica d'Héraclide de Kymè et de Dinon de Colophon*, Paris.
- Maisonneuve, C.  
forthcoming 'Les "fragments" de Xénophon dans les *Deipnosophistes*', in Lenfant, *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens*.
- Nenci, G.  
1983 'Tryphē e colonizzazione', in G. Nenci (ed.) *Modes de contact et processus de transformation dans les sociétés anciennes*, Pisa and Rome, 1019–31.
- Passerini, A.  
1934 'La τρυφή nella storiografia ellenistica', *SIFC* n.s. 11, 35–56.
- Rodríguez-Noriega Guillén, L.  
1998 *Banquete de los eruditos*, vol. 1, Madrid.
- Schepens, G.  
forthcoming 'Les fragments de Phylarque chez Athénée', in D. Lenfant, *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens*.
- Tondriau, J.  
1948 'La Tryphē, philosophie royale ptolémaïque', *REA* 50, 49–54.
- Tuplin, C.J.  
1996 *Achaemenid Studies*, Stuttgart.  
1998 'The seasonal migration of Achaemenid kings: a report on old and new evidence', in M. Brosius and A.T. Kuhrt (eds.) *Studies in Persian History: Essays in memory of David M. Lewis* [= *Achaemenid History XI*], Leiden, 63–114.
- Wehrli, F.  
1969 *Die Schule des Aristoteles VII: Herakleides Pontikos*, Basel.
- Wilkins, J.  
2000 *The Boastful Chef. The discourse of food in ancient Greek comedy*, Oxford.
- Zecchini, G.  
1989 *La cultura storica di Ateneo*, Milan.  
forthcoming 'Athénée et les historiens: un rapport indirect', in D. Lenfant, *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens*.

