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A READING OF THE INTRODUCTORY SCENE OF TERENCE'S
HEAUTONTIMOROUMENOS

Chremes' whole opening scene in the first act of the *Hautontimoroumenos* seems a very carefully rehearsed excuse for his interfering in the personal affairs of a perfect stranger, his neighbour Menedemus¹. He characteristically says:

*Quamquam haec inter nos nuper notitia admodum est
(inde adeo quod agrum in proximo his mercatus es)
nec rei fere sane amplius quicquam fuit,
tamen vel vitrus tua me vel vicinitas,
quod ego in propinqua parte amicitiae puto,
facit ut te audacter moneam et familiariter
quod mihi videre praeter aetatem tuam
facere et praeter quam res te adhortatur tua*

Chremes' words show that though he had little to do with his new neighbour (55) and can only guess at his age (62-3) he has been closely observing him working on his land day after day instead of employing his slaves, as other land-holders of his age and wealth do, and that he has been thinking replies to Menedemus' imagined expla-

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1. Goldberg, S. M., (1986), *Understanding Terence*, Princeton, 170-1, has observed the rhetorical colour of the scene with the correlation of *quamquam... tamen*, the casual interruption of the parenthesis, the manipulation of the clauses, especially the explanatory *quod*-sentences, and the rhetorical stylistic devices, such as alliteration and parallelisms which appear in concentration here.

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nations. In this introductory speech, Chremes uses the notions of *virtus* and *vicinitas*, both associated, as I shall show later on, with the notion of *amicitia*, friendship. He points out the fact that Menedemus has good qualities (*virtus*) which, along with his living close by (this is considered by Chremes the nearest thing to friendship, in *propinqua parte amicitiae*) allow him give Menedemus a bold yet friendly warning (*audacter et familiariter*), because the self-tormentor is active beyond his years and beyond the circumstances ask of him.

Why does Chremes need to make such an extended introduction to his speech and why does he have to justify the advice he wants to give to Menedemus? What is the importance of notions such as *virtus* or *vicinitas* in relation to friendship and why does Chremes refer to them? What is the social impact of Menedemus' behaviour which makes Chremes intervene? The aim of the present paper is to address all these questions and give an answer, taking into account the social data of the fourth and second century BC, in other words what people in Greece and Rome of New Comedy thought about privacy, neighbourhood, virtue, and what is more important about friendship, its features and its requirements.

Chremes accepts the fact that he and Menedemus know each other very little (v. 53 *haec inter nos nuper notitia admodum est*) and that they have no contact at all (v. 55 *nec rei fere sane amplius quicquam fuit*). In other words, they are perfect strangers. However, Chremes does not hesitate to interfere with the private life of his neighbour and to comment on Menedemus' behaving unseemly, trespassing in this way on the privacy of Menedemus' *oikos*. In a Greek context this would be reprehensible. The Greek family has to protect the house not only from physical intrusion (thieves, adulterers) but also from abstract intrusion of knowledge of things that take place within the *oikos*. In this context, Chremes' behavior could have been seen as a sign of *πολυπραγμοσύνη*, that is meddling officiously with other's affairs, considered to be a kind of disease and therefore often censured in Greek literature (cf. Pl. *Gorg.* 526c, *Rep.* iv 433a, Plut. *Mor.* 515b-23b)¹. Furthermore, in a Roman context, such a surveillance, especially of a wealthier's man behaviour (cf. Chremes' remarks on Menedemus' wealth, vv. 63-4 *agrum in his regionibus meliorem neque preti maioris nemo habet: servos compluris*) could, in addition, incur the charge of

1. *Πολυπραγμοσύνη* is contrasted to *ἡσυχία*, that is 'attending exclusively to one's own concerns', 'doing one's own things', *τὰ τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν* which was considered a characteristic of a *σώφρων* and *κόσμιος*.



invidia and *malivolentia*. In justification Chremes employs two important notions, *virtus* and *vicinitas*, as well as their relation to friendship.

The necessity of good relations between neighbours (proximity of place is of course what makes a neighbour) is often commented upon in Greek literature. From Hesiod onwards neighbours along with relatives are seen as a source of help in a time of trouble. Apart from several instances in the orators (cf. Lysias 3 for example), comedy as well, as a popular literary genre, offer several scenes of appeal for help from neighbours. One would mention Strepsiades in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (1322), calling for his neighbours' help, when beaten up by his son, as is also the case with Mnesilochus in the *Thesmophoriazousae* (241)¹.

Proximity due to neighbourhood can often lead to friendship. Neighbours should offer each other mutual support. In Demosthenes' 'Against Callicles' (23) for example, the speaker accuses Callicles of not being in good terms with his neighbours as well as of not giving them his support as he should have done. According to Aristotle (*E.N.* 1166a 1), neighbours can count as *φίλοι*. As far as the relation of *vicinitas* with friendship is concerned, one should take into account the Aristotelian notion which is repeated in Cicero's *De amicitia* (5.19):

'it seems clear to me that we are born into the world with a certain natural bond of association between all of us (*ut inter omnes esset societas quaedam*), but a greater one according as we are placed nearer to each other (*maior autem, ut quisque proxime accederet*). Fellow-countrymen are closer than foreigners, and relatives closer than strangers (*itaque cives potiores quam peregrini, propinqui quam alieni*).

All these, however, do not mean of course that it is proximity *per se* which is the foundation of friendship. Neighbours are represented throughout the ancient literature as a resource in time of need, but also as those who do not hesitate to observe, gossip and often those who are inclined to a negatively coloured social control. Isaeus, for example,

1. Cf. also Ar. *Pax* 79 where the slave calls out in alarm to his neighbours when his master takes off on a dung-beetle, Men *Dysc.* 594 where, when a bucket is lost down the well, the slave's immediate reaction is to get help from next door. In all these cases the word used is some part of *γείτων*. What is more, in crisis in the country as well, neighbours and demesmen regularly offer support (cf. e.g. Aristoph. *Eccles.* 1115, *Clouds* 1322, *Knights* 320, *Plutus* 254). See also Lysias *On olive stamp* viii 18. Cf. also Cohen, D. (1991), *Law sexuality and society. The enforcement of morals in classical Athens*, Cambridge, 70 ff.



(III 13) negatively comments on neighbours violating the privacy of other's *oikos* when reporting quarrels, love affairs and immorality. Neighbours do not become friends automatically, because of proximity. Proximity can of course lead to friendship and it usually does so. It is possible, however, that neighbours can occupy themselves with impermissible intrusions upon their neighbour's privacy. This is not a feature of friendship and can lead to hostility. As the speaker in Lysias's *On the olive stump* says, he is in friendly terms with some of his neighbours but he considers others as enemies. Therefore, it is not proximity itself that backs up friendship, but the consequent every-day social contact and the intimacy that develops, as a result of this contact, in the course of the time.

In other words, not only *vicinitas*, but also long-term contact is a prerequisite for a true friendship and this is pointed out several times in ancient literature. Aristotle, for example, emphasizes on the point that time spent together is the most characteristic feature of friendship (1157b 17-19, 1158a 8-10, 1171a 2). Cf. a characteristic quotation at *E.N.* 1156b 25-30:

'Friends need time to grow accustomed to each other; for, as the proverb says, they cannot accept each other *before they have shared the traditional peck of salt*¹. And they cannot accept each other or be friends until each appears loveable to the other and gains the other's confidence. These who are quick to treat each other in a friendly way, wish to be friends, but are not friends. . . For though the wish for friendship comes quickly, friendship does not».

On the other hand, *φιλα*, based on utility, is an inferior type of *φιλα*, since it lacks one of the features most commonly associated with friendship, that is time spent together. This basic prerequisite, long-term contact, does not appear in the case of the Chremes - Menedemus relationship. Chremes admits himself, as I have already said, that his acquaintance with Menedemus is quite recent. Therefore, he moves on to another notion, closely associated with friendship, *virtus*.

Aristotle again often points out the relation of *virtus* with friendship, especially with the best form of *φιλα*. In *E.N.* 1155a 3-4, he remarks

1. This is a proverbial expression which proves the popular origin of the belief under question. Cf. also Otto, A., (1965), *Die Sprichwörter und Sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer*, Hildesheim 19-20. Similarly Cicero remarks at *Amic.* 1967 *verumque illud est, quod dicitur, multos modios salis simul edendos esse, ut amicitiae munus expletum sit.*



'Friendship...is virtue, or involves virtue and is most necessary for our life». Friends must be good people, similar in virtue (*E.N.*1156b 7-8) and in case there is a gap in virtue, friends come to be separated (*E.N.* 1159a 33 ff.). Cicero later on (21) also associates virtue with friendship in claiming that virtue itself produces and maintains friendship, nor can friendship exist by any means without virtue. What is more, he moves on to claim (28), possibly influenced by Stoic beliefs, that in account of virtue and good character one may even in certain cases love those who has never seen. The idea is also repeated in the *De Natura Deorum* (1. 121), where Cicero cites again the Stoic belief that all good or wise men are friends with each other, owing to natural and inevitable attraction, because of virtue, of one virtuous man for another¹. In this sense Chremes would be considered Menedemus' friend because of their being virtuous men (what their virtue consists of, is not elaborated in the text), even though they do not know each other very well.

Chremes tries at all costs to present himself as Menedemus' potential friend. He admits that he does not meet all the socially acceptable requirements of a true friend (mainly time spent together), but his use of special terminology connected with the semantic field of friendship (*vicinitas in propinqua parte amicitiae*, *virtus* and later the expression *audacter et familiariter*) aims at the representation of his relation to Menedemus as approaching, at least, friendship. Chremes tries to do so because in this way, being considered as Menedemus' friend, his interference into his neighbour's affairs would not seem so unseemly and could not be considered so much socially reprehensible, because friends must help each other in time of need. This is evident again throughout ancient literature on friendship. Cicero, for example, in the *De Amicitia*, influenced according to Aulus Gellius (1.3) by Theophrastus' treatise on friendship is very revealing: Friends are frank to each other, loyal and unsuspecting (13. 65-9). They share, and ought to share each other's sorrows and joys (6. 22, 13. 45-8). What is more, they should do well to each other without waiting until they are asked, but they should always show keenness, never hesitation. In other words, there must

1. Cf. similar remarks by Lucilius in his eleven-long line definition on *virtus* (1196-1208). He claims that people who live a virtuous life are opposing evil men and manners on the one hand and on the other they are defending good men and manners, wishing them well and living on friendly terms with them. Cf. also in Horace *Sat.* 2.1.70.



be confidence among friends to give advice freely (13. 44, cf. also Att. 111. 15. 4 where Cicero claims that it is a friend's duty to give advice). In this sense, Chremes' interference into Menedemus' affairs, even though Menedemus has not asked Chremes to do so, would seem justified, since Chremes shows his interest for his friend as true friends ought to do.

Being considered as Menedemus' friend, Chremes would not have violated, by means of his behaviour, Menedemus' privacy. He would not have been considered as trespassing Menedemus' *oikos*, for intimate friends belong to the most private sphere of the household. Linguistic practice lends support to this view, if we take into account that friends are called *oikeioi* (cf. Isaeus 2.3, 3.19. Isocrates *Antidosis* 99, Dem. 53.4). As I have already mentioned before, the members of an *oikos* must protect the house both from physical intrusion and from abstract intrusion of knowledge of things that take place within the household. With friendship, however, these barriers of privacy are relaxed and friends, especially close ones, become intimate members of a family, share its secrets and are accepted in the more important events of the household (*κοινὰ τὰ τῶν φίλων*)¹.

Closely related to the notion of friendship and its prerequisites are two terms used by Chremes in the course of his introductory speech, namely *audacter moneam et familiariter*. First of all frankness, *παρρησία*, among friends is considered, by the philosophical tradition, as an indispensable prerequisite for a true friendship. Plutarch for example (*Moralia* 5 c) frequently claims that frankness is the primary indicator of sincerity and honesty, characteristics of a true friend, and similar remarks can also be found in the Epicureans, in Horace and Cicero (*Amic.* 23.89).

Friends must be frank to each other. Even in the case of a friend, however, admonition is a difficult task. This is evident, for example, from the entrance monologue of Megaronides in Plautus' *Trinummus*. Megaronides comes on stage in order to reprimand Callicles, because

1. Aristotle's discussion on friendship lends support to this view. Thus he repeatedly points out the intimacy between friends, e.g. friends share all things, possessions, joys, sorrows etc (cf. *E.E.* 1235a, *E.N.* 1162a, 16b 35, *Rhetoric* 1374a). What is more, various passages in the orators back up this Aristotelian claim. Friends participate in the most important events in the life of the *oikos*, family festivities, sacrifices, funerals, weddings etc. (cf. Dem. 58.40, Isaeus 2. 8. 10, cf. also Aristoph. *Acharnians* 1056, 1067-8). For a thorough analysis of the requirements and the features of friendship in ancient world, see especially Konstan, D. (1996), *Friendship in the classical world*, Cambridge.



he thinks that his friend deceived Lesbonicus, the son of another friend of their, Charmides, and bought their house at a low price. He characteristically says (23-5) *Amicum castigare ob meritam noxiam / immo-ene est facinus, verum in aetate utile / et conducibile*. Megaronides points out several times in his introductory speech that castigating a friend is a hard task but the sense of loyalty, that he is driven by, obliges him to do so. At the very end, a friend has to be frank and must try to admonish his friend.

Hence, it is evident that friendship requires frankness, on the condition of course that frankness is characterised by tact, the advice is given without sharpness and the reproof is administered without being insulting (cf. also Cic. *Amic.* 23. 89). Therefore Chremes, since he is trying to present himself as a friend of Menedemus, has, according to the requirements of a friend, to be frank with him. Therefore he characteristically says: *audacter moneam et familiariter*, that is 'with license of speech' (cf. OLD 207), that is *παρρησία*, and 'as it is appropriate to a friend' (cf. OLD 675). In this case his admonition to Menedemus would not seem an intervention of a curious person but evidence of frankness, so indispensable in terms of friendship.

Menedemus, however, does not seem persuaded by Chremes' eloquent and rhetorical attempt to present himself as a friend and accuses him of being curious. He remarks (vv. 75-6): *Chremes, tantumme ab re tuast oti tibi aliena ut cures ea quae nil ad te attinent?* Menedemus openly accuses Chremes of *curiositas*¹. Chremes then turns to some philosophical argumentation when he says *Homo sum: humani nil alienum a me puto*. The expression can be related to Aristotelian notions about the relationship between human beings. In *E.N.* 1155a 19-21 we read.

'Members of the same race, and human beings most of all, have a natural friendship for each other; this is why we praise friends of humanity'.

This line reminds us of Theophrastus' ideas on *οἰκείωσις*. Menander, who according to Diogenes Laertius was a student of Theophrastus and was influenced by him, says in fr. 475 that the opposite of *οἰκεῖος* is *ἀλλότριος*. In fr. 616 the two terms are also juxtaposed, *τὸν τῇ φύσει οἰκεῖον καιρὸς ἀλλότριον ποιεῖ*. Menedemus says to Chremes

1. Similar expressions in connection to *curiositas* can also be found elsewhere in New Comedy. The expression *aliena curare* in connection with *curiositas* is found, for example, in Plaut. *Stich.* 188-200.



aliena — that is *ἀλλότρια* — *cures*. Chremes, on the other hand, using peripatetic terminology, replies *homo sum; humani nil alienum a me puto* which means that since Menedemus and he are both human beings, they are by nature *οἰκεῖοι τε καὶ συγγενεῖς*. This entails that Menedemus' affairs are not *aliena*, that is *ἀλλότρια*. Therefore Chremes' intervention cannot be considered as *curiositas* but as a true human interest of a man towards another fellow-man.

Furthermore, friendship is considered as a manifestation of this natural bond between human beings (cf. e.g. Cic. *Leg.* 1. 33-5. 1. 49). In this sense Chremes and Menedemus, because of their natural association as human beings, could be considered again as friends. Aristotle claims that the actions of one's friends are to be seen as one's own (*οἰκεῖαι*), since a friend is another self and as Cicero repeats a friend is an image of oneself (7.23), or at least a kind of a second half, *tamquam alter idem* (21.80). Since friends are considered to be other selves to each other, this entails that their actions are practically *οἰκεῖαι* to both parties. In other words, Chremes here points out the natural bond that exists between him and Menedemus, since they are fellow human beings which also leads to friendship, as friendship is the manifestation of this kind of physical bond. Therefore, since Chremes is a friend of Menedemus and since friends are other selves to each other, Menedemus' actions are not *ἀλλότρια* that is *alienae* to him but *οἰκεῖαι*. Thus his intervention is justified.

Due to the persistent questions of Chremes, Menedemus at the end gives his neighbour an explanation of his situation and an account of what happened to his son Clinia. Menedemus' narrative begins with Clinia's falling desperately in love with the daughter of a foreign woman from Corinth. He characteristically says *amare coepit perdite*, an expression which emphasizes Clinia's strong passion for his beloved¹. Apart from being *perdite* in love with her, Clinia's severe infatuation with Antiphila is also proved by the fact that he was almost as good as married to her; as Menedemus puts it *prope iam ut pro uxore haberet*. But what consequences would this situation entail for Clinia, in terms of the city-state ideals for marriage?

1. The combination of the verb *amare* with the adverb *perdite* is commonly used for lovers, indicating strong passion and affection, as in Ter. *Phorm.* 82, for example, where Geta informs Davus that his master saw a girl and at once *hanc amare coepit perdite*. Cf. also Catullus, 45. 3; 104. 3. The expression evokes the commonly used imagery of love and disaster, also evident from the frequent use of *deperire* for *amare*, a colloquialism, common in Plautus (cf. *Amph.* 517, *Bacch.* 470, *Cas.* 107).



Clinia is in love with a girl who a) is alone in the world apart from her mother, an old woman of small means (*anus paupercola*) and b) worse still, is not an Athenian citizen (*est e Corintho*). On the other hand, Clinia is an Athenian citizen, the son of an Athenian rich citizen as well, who earned a lot of money because of his military service in Asia. Clinia is a well to do young man, brought up with a silver spoon in his mouth. His house is full of slaves, a clear sign of wealth (*tot servos, ancillae tot, sumptus domi tantos*). His father owns the best estate in the region (vv. 63-4, *in his regionibus meliorem agrum neque preti maioris nemo habet*) and Chremes (193ff.) claims that Clinia has all that are accounted blessings in a man's case, i.e., parents, a prosperous country, friends, family, relatives and what is more riches (*ditias*). A long-term relationship with a girl like Antiphila would be socially inappropriate for Clinia and his class. Taking into account the social background of Athens in the fourth century B.C, but also of Rome in time of Plautus and Terence, Clinia's being *perdite* in love with a girl like Antiphila, and in particular to the extent of considering her as his wife, would also mean his ending up socially and financially *perditus*.

First of all Antiphila could not have provided the appropriate dowry, which would be socially reprehensible in Greece and Rome. In both Athenian and Roman terms, dowry is a very important marriage-prerequisite in cases where the husband, as is the case with Clinia, came of a wealthy family. Iseaus for example (XI 40) frequently comments on the appropriateness of dowries given to rich husbands. In Rome also, a wife's dowry was expected to bring essential capital to an upper class man, as is Clinia, and to play an important part in his career (cf. for example, Sen. *Contr.* 7. 6. 18). Therefore it is to be inferred that a wealthy man, like Clinia, would expect an appropriate dowry, something that he could not have from Antiphila¹.

1. In New Comedy one finds instances of a marriage between rich and poor people. These cases, however, are the exceptions and not the rule. What is more, the poet tries to give a justification or at least displays the negative reactions that one should expect from the social environment. In the *Adelphoe*, for example, Aeschinus is married at the end to a poor girl. However, one should pay attention to the comments of Demea rather than to the magnanimity of Micio. When the marriage is confirmed, Demea is not happy with the match and complains that the girl is penniless (728) and will have to be taken without a dowry (729). In *Dyscolus*, where the rich Sostratos is married to the poor daughter of Cnemon, though



Furthermore Antiphila is not a citizen. Even though in Roman terms, a big dowry, which, in any case, Antiphila cannot offer to Clinia, could compensate her lack of citizenship, for a Roman citizen could have a valid marriage with a non citizen, on whose the city, however, the right of *conubium* was conferred, in Attic terms this marriage between a citizen man and a non citizen woman would have been out of the question¹. The law forbade a young man to treat as his wife a non citizen, no matter her wealth or the social status of her family in the their own community. Children, from such a marriage, could not be Athenian citizens nor legitimate heirs². Antiphila's apparent non citizen — status, combined with the idea that Menedemus has of her as an *ἑταῖρα*, prevents her from entering into the system of social reproduction defined by the household, considered of course within the context of the city-state ideology. The only possible arrangement would be *παλακεία*³. A *παλακῆ* could not be a citizen, and could not have the right for conjugal union with an Athenian citizen. Therefore such a liaison could have existed between Clinia and Antiphila. But again this would not have been appropriate for a young man who had to beget legitimate children for the sake of his *oikos*⁴, since in the case of *παλακεία*

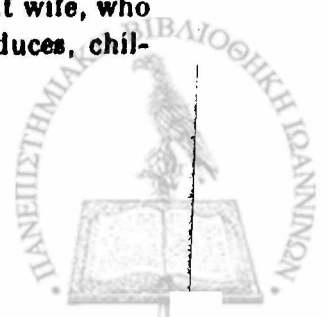
she is given a dowry, it is Pan's intervention which alleviates the image of an upper class youth marrying a poor girl. Plautus often confirms the feeling that marriage without dowry was disreputable and that the acceptance of a *dos* indicated a liaison as a marriage and not as a simple *παλακεία* e.g. *Trin.* 691.

1. In 451/50 a law was introduced by Pericles according to which, only children whose parents were both Athenians, could become Athenian citizens. A further step was taken later before the date of Demosthenes' *Neaira* (340) and Menander's works.

2. Even the possibility of legitimising their children by adoption (in order to create an heir) was not possible, because only those born of a legal marriage could be adopted.

3. In New Comedy one finds instances of *παλακεία*. In Menander's *Samia*, for example, Demea is in a long-term partnership of this sort with the Samian Chrysis. Both his situation and hers, however, are congenial to a relationship of this kind. Chrysis is an *ἑταῖρα* whereas Demea an old man who has already an adult son and therefore is not in need of legitimate children. This would not be, however, the case with Clinia who would have been expected to produce legitimate children. Cf. also Konstan, D. (1995), *Greek Comedy and Ideology*, Oxford, 129.

4. The idea that one of the purposes of a marriage was the begetting of legitimate children is also proved by the formula of betrothal *γνησιων παιδων ἐπ' ἀφότηρι*. Cf. also Men. fr. 276 where it is stated that even an extravagant wife, who is a pain on her husband, is worth because there is one thing she produces, children.



again, no legitimate children are born, having rights of succession, of participation to family religious observances and of enjoying civic rights. Attempts were made to present children from such liaisons as legitimate, but if there *was* any property, the kin would refuse the children of non-citizen women as non legitimate, as is evidenced in the Attic orators (cf. Dem. 49, Isaeus III, 6). There was always a risk and this could not secure the safety of Clinia's household.

For all these reasons, Menedemus would have to put an end to his son's love affair with such an inappropriate girl. He, therefore, followed some of the commonly used methods, described in Plutarch's *Περὶ παιδῶν ἀγωγῆς* in order to make his son leave Antiphila. According to this treatise, which has several features in common with the plays of New Comedy and therefore reflects an ancient *consensus* about the attitude of the older generation to the younger, fathers should in their lifestyle let an example for their sons (14a). And this is what Menedemus does in bringing forward the example of his own youth, so that Clinia may look at his father life and turn away from his misdeeds, caused by his *otium*, cf. vv. 110-12 *ego istuc aetatis non amori operam dabam, sed in Asiam hinc abii propter pauperiem atque ibi simul rem et gloriam armis belli repperi*.

In his youth, Menedemus did not busy himself with love, the result of *nimis otium*. Instead, he went off to Asia, due to his lack of means, and there on active service acquired both money (*res*) and glory (*gloria*). Thus, Menedemus is presented as preaching the ideas of the Roman moralists, especially those of Cato. A disgust for *otium*¹, combined with praising virtue and glory acquired by means of military expeditions. Menedemus' attitude towards his son at the beginning of the play alludes to instructions given by Cato in his *Ad filium Marcum*. What is wrong with the love affairs of an *adulescens* in Comedy is their

1. Romans often negatively commented upon *otium* (cf. e.g. Cic. *Planc.* 27.66, Plin. *Ep.* 9.32, Ov. *Pont.* 1.5. 43-4 etc.). Among the old Roman moralists, Cato is perhaps the most typical representative of this attitude, the most fervent supporter of *industria* and the strongest enemy of leisure and *otium*. The notion of *industria* closely associated with *duritia* and *parsimonia* occupy a central place in Cato's treatises on virtue. Livy, Nepos and Cicero do not fail, in their representation of Cato, to point out the close relation between these ideas in his thought. Cf. for example, the account of his life *ego iam a principio in parsimonia atque industria omnem adolescentiam meam abstitui, agro colendo, saxis Sabinis, sici- libus repastionandis atque conserandis* (fr. 128 Malcovati). For *otium*, cf. especially André, J. M., (1996), *L'otium dans la vie morale et intellectuelle romaine, des origines à l'époque républicaine*, Paris.

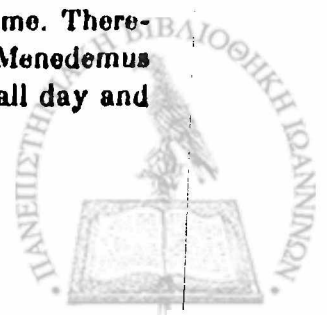


financial consequences. Young men do not usually have income and therefore take the money for the mistresses from their fathers (cf. e.g. Chremes' fear in the *Hautontimoroumenos*, vv. 928-29, and *Trinum-mus*, vv. 838-9). The antithesis of this impoverishing love is the *negotium* of a mercenary, which will distract a young man from financially ruinous love affairs, and which could help him raise money and consolidate his social position into the ranks of the upper class. This is what Roman moralists praise, mainly the *negotium* of a military service as a remedy for the ruinous *otium* of love for a woman; this is what Menedemus says to his son.

According to the pseudo-Plutarchan treatise mentioned above, fathers should express their anger and then cool off quickly without being always hostile and suspicious towards their son. Menedemus, however, failed to do so. He was always reproaching Clinia, as is clearly implied from his narrative (*cottidie accusabam* v. 102, *adulescentulus saepe eadem at graviter audiendo victus est* vv. 113-4), attitude that eventually undermined the result of his efforts and made his son leave him. His son's flight, however, made him change his view and is ready to accept his son's relationship to an inappropriate girl, according to social standards, if only he could see his son back again. Therefore he decides to punish himself all the time for Clinia's sake, toiling, pinching, accumulating, slaving. He scraped everything in the house together (*conrasi omnia*) and put up to auction all slaves and sold them. Hence, Menedemus sells or lets his house, goes back to country in order to occupy himself with farming and this is considered as a means of self-inflicting.

As far as agriculture is concerned, one should observe that the Roman gentleman in retirement (*in otio*), permanent or temporary, in the country, could keep an eye on his property and his servants, he could write or read, he might ride or even work his land with his hands if he derives pleasure from this occupation. This is an ideal warmly supported by Cato who points out the appropriateness of agriculture for the leisure of old age¹ which can also help old people avoid

1. Old people are more legitimate than the younger people to indulge in *otium*. As Cicero remarks, (*Off.* 1.34.122), every age has its duties and old age has a right for leisure. *Otium* is a natural prize for people around fifties (cf. the *lex* mentioned in Seneca's *De Brevitate Vitae* 3.5 and 20.5). Alcesimarchus' remark in the *Casina* (v. 215) implies that old people are more free to use their time. Therefore, according to these social standards, a Roman gentleman like Menedemus should have been enjoying his *otium* in his old days rather than toiling all day and punishing himself.



a kind of senile debauchery, caused by a sudden imbalance between *otium* and *negotium*. C. f. for example Cic. *De Officiis* l. 123 *Nihil autem magis cavendum est senectuti quam ne languori se desidiaequae dedat; luxuria vero cum omni aetate turpis, tum senectuti foedissima est* (see also Cato XI 36). Cato speaks about the pleasures of the farmer (*voluptates agricoliarum*), the secret of what gives his old age repose and amusement (*satiari delectatione non possum, meae senectutis quietem oblectamentumque noscatis*). He also gives examples of famous men of Rome that spent their last days in their farms, about Manius Curtius and L. Quinctius Cincinnatus for example, who found their pleasure in the cultivation of their land (*permulta oblectatione rerum rusticarum. Nam igitur haec senectus miserabilis fuit, qui se agricultione oblectabant*). He also presents as an example of this ideal Laertes who softens his regret for his son by cultivating and working on his farm.

This ideal of returning back to the country-side and farming as a means for softening pain and regret in old age is here inverted by Menedemus. He is over sixty years old and being an old man it would be appropriate for his *otium* to return back to the country-side. What is more, it would be a means for him to alleviate, according to this mainly Catonian ideal, his pain because of his son's leaving. This ideal is here inverted, since Menedemus presents his return to the country-side and farming not as an occupation from which he could derive pleasure and calm his pain but as a means for torturing and punishing himself for making his son leave and join the army, an *illiberalis labor* according to Cicero (*Fin.* 1.3), inappropriate for both a Greek and a Roman gentleman who would have been justified in taking part himself in the work of the farm, otherwise a slavish occupation (cf. *Men. fr.* 560), only when deriving pleasure from doing so (cf. *Xen. Oec.* ivff., *Colum. praef.* 20)¹.

1. In *Oeconomicus* we find a panegyric of agriculture in the sense of gentleman-farming, owing a farm and taking a merely supervisory interest in it. Sometimes it is understood that a gentleman would actually take part in the work of the farm, but if a gentleman does so, he does it only for pleasure and for the sake of the physical and moral benefits such exercise can give. The irregularity, however, of such an attitude on the part of a gentleman is proved by Lysander's astonishment at the idea that the Persian prince, Cyrus, could himself have done some of the planting with his own hands. Cyrus at the end, however, tells him that it was his principle never to dine until he had exerted himself strenuously in some activity of agriculture (*Oec.* iv 20-5). What is more, Antoninus Pius and

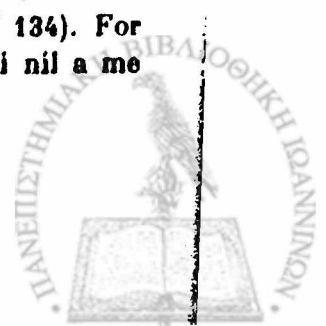


The Catonian depicted Menedemus does not keep his emotional stability when faced with his son's going away but punishes himself by means of a way of life which, on the contrary, was praised and recommended by Cato, the life of a frugal farmer, the ascetic life of Cato himself. What is more, Menedemus ends up having the opinion that his Catonian attitude towards his son is *inhumane*, that is a very severe attitude against the notion of *humanitas*¹, a virtue praised by the circle of Scipio which is also applied to the relationship between father-son (Cf. also *si esses homo* (107). This inhumane behaviour is the reason for his pain and, what is more, he uses the Catonian ideals which according to Cato can bring pleasure even to old age, as a means of punishing himself. A real inversion.

Menedemus' behaviour is also in sharp contrast to his financial situation. Chremes informs us that in their region nobody has a better estate or one worth more. Moreover, in the Greek original (Körte II 56, fr. 127) we find that Menedemus has acquired the finest piece of land in the deme of Halae, and best of all unmortgaged, (*καὶ τῶν Ἀθησίων χωρίον κεκτημένος κάλλιστος εἶ, καὶ τὸ μακαριώτατον ἄστικτον*). What is more, he has many slaves to work his land (*compluris servos*). The fact that he has a large estate and *compluris* servants makes him a typical wealthy Athenian citizen (cf. Arist. *Eccl.* 590 ff.). Even though farming is accepted by Greek and Roman societies as suitable for a free citizen,

Marcus Aurelius found pleasure in helping to gather in the grapes. Xenophon's view is that of an aristocrat who like the Persian king works only when he chooses and who expects to reap a reward from the land and to enjoy himself while doing so.

1. Among the qualities comprehended in the idea of *humanitas* are kindness, helpfulness and consideration for others. *Humanitas* is joined with *clementia* and *mansuetudo* and is contrasted to *severitas*. (Cic. *Fam.* XIII. 65 1). The word also implies tolerance, politeness, easy manners and the socially graces generally; witty and polished conversation, belong essentially to *humanitas* (*De Or.* I 32) *Humanitas* also means what Gellius called «learning and education in the liberal arts». The liberal arts, ἡ ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία of the Greeks, are described as the arts devised to enable the minds of the young to be formed to *humanitas* and *virtus* (*De Or.* III. 48). We meet with such phrases as *doctrina aliqua et humanitate digna scientia, communes litterae et politior humanitas* and *studia humanitatis ac litterarum*. Scipio Aemilianus and the men of his circle, who associated with cultured Greeks, are described as *humanitate politi* (*De Or.* III 94,- II 72, *Arch.* 3, *De Or.* II 154). Cicero, for example, regarded education as having an effect on the character; the liberal arts civilized a man and made him into a true man. Even the most evil man could be humanised by education (*Q.F.* I 134). For the notion of *humanitas*, cf. also Jocelyn, H. D., «Homo sum; humani nil a me alienum puton», *Antichthon* 7 (1973), 14-46.



Menedemus should not work his extensive land on his own but just as every Greek and Roman gentleman he should supervise, inspect and keep his slaves to their work. Chremes says that clearly to this neighbour (72-74) *At enim me quantum hic operis fiat paenitet. quod in opere faciundo operae consumis tuae, si sumas in illis exercendis, plus agas*. Menedemus however strains himself doing all the work on his own. He, therefore, downgrades himself to the level of a very poor man¹ who is obliged to work his land by himself because he cannot afford slaves². Menedemus' behaviour would have been justified only to the extent he derived pleasure from this manual labour. However, Menedemus' behaviour cannot be justified since Chremes clearly asserts that this work is no pleasure for the sixty-year-old Menedemus, (71) *haec non voluptati tibi esse satis certo scio*. Chremes, who reflects the public opinion, points out his neighbour's misconduct and social slip. He also faces this inversion of the Roman / Catonian ideals and intervenes, using all the appropriate terminology of friendship, so that he could not be considered as trespassing on the privacy of Menedemus' *oikos*.

1. Varro as well points out that only very poor people work their land on their own, with their offspring, without the help of slaves (xvii, *aut cum ipsi colunt, ut plerique pauperculi cum sua progenie*). In this way, he gives us a representation of the two different conditions of agriculture: In the first there is the smallholder working his own land himself with his family. The second represents large landowner's attitude to those who work his land but with whom he himself does not work. Aristotle as well characteristically remarks (*Pol.* 1330 a). «If I am to state my own preference, the people who cultivate the land should be slaves». If this ideal cannot be realized, then serfs should be used, but never free men. In stating so, Aristotle follows Plato who in his *Laws* thinks that agriculture as well as industry and commerce is strictly forbidden to citizens.

2. Menedemus works his land by himself without the help of any slaves. This socially reprehensible situation is to some extent similar to Knemon's in Menander's *Dyscolus*. Knemon always farms his land himself alone, with no one to work with him, 1) not a slave of his own, 2) not a hired man, 3) not a neighbour, but all by himself 328-31. If he was a very poor man this conduct of his would have been justified, as in the case of Menedemus, since he could not afford a hired man or a slave. However, Knemon has a property worth two talents (327), but because of his misanthropy lives like the poorest farmer with an old slave woman for the house and his daughter keeping him company in the fields (333). His misanthropic attitude leads him to a social misconduct. He works his land by himself, with no slaves, downgrading, in this way, himself to the social level of a very poor man who cannot afford even one male slave. (cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1323 a). For ancient Greek and Roman attitude towards gentleman-farming see especially de Ste Croix, G. E. M., (1981), *The class struggle in the Ancient Greek world: From the archaic age to the Arab conquests*, London, 179 ff.



CONCLUSIONS

The present paper has explored the social data of both Athens and Rome in order to explain the negative attitude of Menedemus towards his son's infatuation with a young woman of a low social status as Antiphila is. His son's flight, however, made Menedemus retire in the country and toil in the fields, punishing himself for his misdeed but inverting at the same time traditional Roman ideals of the Roman gentleman. Faced with that, Chremes, the neighbour *senex*, intervenes. His intervention, however, might have been seen as a sign of *πολυπραγμοσύνη* or *curiositas*. Therefore he uses language closely associated, in both Greek and Roman mind, with friendship. Passing himself as Menedemus' friend could save him from accusations of indiscretion. And this is what Chremes tries to do, not sparing even peripatetic ideas of *οἰκείωσις*.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

ΜΙΑ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΥΤΙΚΗ ΠΡΟΣΕΓΓΙΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΙΚΗΣ
ΣΚΗΝΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΚΩΜΩΔΙΑΣ ΤΟΥ ΤΕΡΕΝΤΙΟΥ*HEAUTONTIMORUMENOS*

Η εργασία αυτή προσπαθεί, χρησιμοποιώντας τα κοινωνικά δεδομένα των Αθηνών και της Ρώμης, να ερμηνεύσει την αρνητική στάση του Menedemus απέναντι στην ερωτική περιπέτεια του γιου του με την Antiphila. Η στάση αυτή του Menedemus είχε ως αποτέλεσμα την φυγή του γιού του. Έτσι ο Menedemus, για να τιμωρήσει τον εαυτό του, καταφεύγει στην εξοχή και ασχολείται μόνος του με τις αγροτικές εργασίες του οίκου του. Αυτή η συμπεριφορά του όμως αποτελεί ταυτόχρονα και ανατροπή των παραδοσιακών αξιών. Αντιμέτωπος με αυτήν την πραγματικότητα ο Chremes παρεμβαίνει. Η παρέμβασή του όμως αυτή θα μπορούσε να χαρακτηριστεί ως σημάδι *πολυπραγμοσύνης* ή *curiositas*. Για τον λόγο αυτό, ο Chremes χρησιμοποιεί όρους οι οποίοι σχετίζονται, τόσο στην Ελληνική όσο και στην Ρωμαϊκή σκέψη, με την έννοια της φιλίας. Το να παρουσιάσει δηλαδή τον εαυτό του, ως πραγματικό φίλο του Μενέδημου, θα μπορούσε να τον απαλλάξει από τις παραπάνω κατηγορίες. Και αυτό είναι που προσπαθεί να πετύχει ο Chremes, δίχως να διστάσει να χρησιμοποιήσει ακόμη και περιπατητικές αντιλήψεις.

