

Imitation, Variation, Exploitation : a Study in Aristaenetos

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DR OTTO MAZAL's new Teubner edition of Aristaenetos (Stuttgart 1971) is to be welcomed on several accounts. It provides a satisfactory, perhaps slightly over-conservative text with a fully detailed critical apparatus and by its side a substantial list of those passages pillaged by the author in order to trick out his own second-rate talents. Although the critical apparatus has its imperfections and the list of passages is neither complete nor differentiated according to the type of use made by Aristaenetos of his sources,¹ this edition ought to serve as a stimulus to future research on an author whose importance depends more perhaps on his use of the Greek language, his accentually regulated *clausulae*,² his exploitation of the writings of greater predecessors and a few tricks of technique than on the merits of any personal imaginative or stylistic genius. Among other *desiderata*, an exhaustive, careful study of his use of source material is very much needed. This paper investigates a few interesting and hitherto (so far as I know) uninvestigated techniques used by Aristaenetos³ in the manipulation of his sources and in the presentation of his material.

Sometimes Aristaenetos plagiarises *verbatim* or with minor amendments phrases, sentences, even paragraphs from earlier authors. These are normally prose, more rarely—for obvious reasons—verse. At 1.10.99–104 (here and elsewhere I adopt the line-numbering of Mazal's edition), for example, Aristaenetos combines two passages from Philostratus' *Imagines* (2.1.3, 1.2.5), changing only the tenses to suit his own context and writing *συμπληττόμεναι* in place of *πληττόμεναι*, *τρόπον* for *τρόπω*, if the generally corrupt Vienna manuscript,

¹ I have attempted to substantiate and exemplify these points with full detail in my review of Mazal's edition, which will appear in a forthcoming fascicule of *Gnomon*.

² Cf. W. Mayer, "Der accentuirte Satzschluss in der griechischen Prosa," *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur mittellateinischen Rhythmik* (Berlin 1905) 2.202ff; Th. Nissen, "Zur Rhythmik und Sprache der Aristainetosbriefe," *BZ* 40 (1940) 1–14.

³ For convenience I call the author of the two books of letters in a Vienna ms (*Cod. Vindob. phil. graec.* 310) by this generally accepted name. See, however, my note in *BICS* 15 (1968) 123 n.1, with bibl., for a brief discussion of the uncertainties surrounding the author's name.

the *codex unicus* of Aristaenetos, accurately preserves his text here. Or, at 1.18.20–30 Aristaenetos copies Plato, *Republic* 5.474D–475A, with tenses and persons changed to assimilate the passage to his own context, two minor transpositions (which might be the whim of Aristaenetos, or due to corruptions in his text of Plato or our text of the epistolographer), a few minor verbal omissions, additions, or replacements by a synonym: otherwise, a direct plagiarism. Or, at 2.1.24–28 Aristaenetos steals a passage of over thirty words from Alciphron 4.16.5–6 with no more alteration than one added article. Or, at 1.19.5, 2.5.35 and 2.20.11–12 Aristaenetos adopts three sentences of Menander (*Epitr.* 384, *Georg.* 85, fr.758 respectively), changing here a particle, here the person of a verb, here the verb itself, and so disguising the metrical particularity of his source.⁴

In fact, the sheer drudgery of comparing these more or less exact copies with their sources throughout the fifty letters in the Aristaenetos collection is granted only one moment of saucy relief. In 1.19 we are told the story of one Melissarion, who combined the professions of call-girl and entertainer at her theatre. Melissarion is now pregnant. To describe the consequences Aristaenetos here has recourse to an unexpected source: chapter XIII of the Hippocratic tract *Περὶ φύσιος παιδίου* (7.490 Littré= 55 Joly), in which the medical author describes the pregnancy and abortion of an entertainer who belonged to a woman of his acquaintance. Aristaenetos here (1.19.17–27) transcribes his source with fidelity, although adding now and then a word or phrase of explanation to ease the technicalities (e.g. *διὰ παιδογονίαν* 18, *κεκρατημένη τῇ φύσει* 23). Apart from the impudent extravagance of his choice of source, Aristaenetos does three things here that raise his plagiarism a little above the dull plain of his other accurate transcriptions. He translates the Hippocratic Ionic as best he can into his own pseudo-Attic, with the mistakes typical of his period (20 *ἀκηκόει* as pluperfect; 21–22 *ἐπειδάν* with present optative), and with the retained pronominal form *οἱ* (22, 26) jarring awkwardly in this fifth-century Greek. Secondly, on this occasion he fits the passage into its alien context with considerable skill. Admittedly, his story is in outline com-

⁴ A large number of these transcribed sources is cited in the editions of Mercier, Hercher and (most fully, but still not exhaustively) Mazal, and written out in full for ease of comparison in the still valuable edition of Boissonade. A large part of J. Pietzko's dissertation, *De Aristaeneti epistulis* (Breslau 1907), is devoted to the synoptic presentation of the relevant material, but that author's comments and conclusions are alike inadequate: cf. K. Münscher, *Bursian JAW* 149 (1910) 131ff.

monplace enough; his imaginary letterwriter contrasts her lot with that of a successful rival (*cf. e.g.* Alciphron 4.9). But here Aristaenetus has embroidered well. His Melissarion, like the subject of the Hippocratic case, is a *μουκουργός*; in fact there can be no doubt that Aristaenetus took over this designation of the girl's profession from his Hippocratic source; this is how he demonstrably works. However, Aristaenetus' letterwriter, who tells the story in the first person, is apparently an older rival of Melissarion, while the first-person narrator in the Hippocratic essay is the doctor himself. The experience of Aristaenetus' narrator (1.19.27) is very different from that of a doctor, and it is partly for this reason that Aristaenetus stops short the transcription of his source at Melissarion's coming to visit her older friend (1.19.28). Obviously a courtesan could not suitably go on to give the precise advice that the Hippocratic doctor did, "to jump up and down with her heels touching her buttocks; and she had already done this several times when the 'sperm' dropped to the ground with a plop, and when she saw it she stared at it in amazement" (13.2). For one thing, Aristaenetus' Melissarion did not go in for an abortion; for another, it is a characteristic of this author (as it is of Menander, one of his favourite sources) to break off a story the moment before insalubrious or lubricious detail becomes necessary.

The third of those factors which add particular interest to this instance of plagiarism is perhaps, in its illumination of Aristaenetus' techniques of composition, even more instructive than the others. It has not, I believe, been noticed that Aristaenetus does not always confine the extent of each individual borrowing to the single phrase, sentence or even longer passage he directly copies. Characteristically he will scrutinise his source's surrounding context for additional words and phrases to adorn other parts of the relevant letter. Thus in 1.19, lines 17 to 27 of the letter (from *ἦν οὐκ ἔδει το κάγω*) contain the main chunk of Aristaenetus' plagiarism from the Hippocratic essay. But his identification of Melissarion earlier in the letter as a *μουκουργός* (7-8),⁵ her description as *πολύτιμον* (16), and the expressions *παρ' ἀνδρας . . . ἐφοίτα* (17) and *ἐγκελευσαμένη* (28) also come from the surrounding context of Aristaenetus' source (13.1, *μουκουργός . . . πολύτιμος, παρ' ἀνδρας φοιτέουσα*; 13.2, *ἐκελευσάμην*). This technique can be illustrated even more vividly from Aristaenetus' other letters, and observation of it enables us sometimes to identify with certainty a

⁵ *Cf.* line 20. It is notable that this word does not occur elsewhere in Aristaenetus.

source which otherwise would, for various reasons, have been relatively uncertain or only one of several possible sources.

At 1.1.37 Aristaenetus uses the vivid phrase *κυδωνιῶντες οἱ μαστοί* (cf. 1.3.29–30: this metaphor obviously tickled his fancy). How can we be certain that this jewel is pillaged from Leonidas, Epigram 23 Gow-Page (v. 7, *καὶ μαζὸς . . . κυδωνιᾶ*), and not from—say—Aristophanes (*Ach.* 1199, *τῶν τιθίων, ὡς κκληρὰ καὶ κυδώνια*) or Cantharus (fr.6 Kock, *κυδωνίους μήλοισιν εἰς [ἴσα Meineke] τὰ τιθία*)? Partly, of course, because the verbal connection between Aristaenetus and Leonidas is rather closer, more precise; but partly also because a further idea in the Leonidas epigram (Athena and Hera's confession that their beauty was inferior to that of Leonidas' subject, vv.8–9, *Ἀθάνη καὶ Διὸς κυνευνέτις | φάσκειν, ὦ Ζεῦ, λειπόμεσθα τῇ κρίσει*) must have struck Aristaenetus' eyes as he was stealing that other jewel, for it provided him with material to be exploited later in that same letter when he inserts a parallel reference to Hera, Athena and their beauty-contest (49–50, especially the words *Ἥρας, Ἀθηναῖς οὐκ ἔκρινα*).

Similarly with Aristaenetus 1.2.5 and 13. He is very fond of vivid phrases and expressions from Menander as the repeated papyrus discoveries increasingly reveal. Some of his plagiarisms from this comedian have already been cited (p. 198); others will be discussed in their place below (pp. 202–07). Menander's *Dyskolos* alone provides an instructive handful;⁶ line 155 is the inspiration for Aristaenetus 2.6.3–4, 192f for 1.24.12, 310 perhaps for 2.18.3, 341f and 345 for 2.17.7–9. In 1.2, at line 5 Aristaenetus derives the expression *ἦθος οὐ πεπλασμένον* from *Dyskolos* 764; when, a few lines later (1.2.13), Aristaenetus writes *παύσασθε ζυγομαχίας*, can one reasonably doubt that the inspiration for this unusual, otherwise unattested noun was Menander's use of the congeneric participle *ζυγομαχῶν* at line 17 of the same play, rather than other passages of Menander (frs.177.5, 637.2 Körte) or other authors (e.g. Dem. 39.6; Hyperid. fr.245; com.adesp. fr.207 Kock; Plut. *Cato Ma.* 21.3; Liban. *Decl.* 39.9=7.300 Förster), or even Aristaenetus' own unoriginal head?

Another example of this technique is interwoven into the same letter. At lines 22 to 24 Aristaenetus writes *μεχρὶ μὲν οὖν δεῦρο τοῦ λόγου καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι καὶ πρὸς ὄντινοῦν, τὸ δὲ ἐντεῦθεν ἐν κεφαλαίῳ τοσοῦτον λεκτέον*, where the first fifteen words are copied *verbatim*

⁶ Cf. *Hermes* 96 (1968) 384.

from a favourite quarry, Plato, *Symposium* 217E.⁷ It is clearly no mere chance that two other phrases from the same work are echoed by Aristaenetus just previously in the same letter: *συμπλεκόμενοι ἀλλήλοις* 191A (cf. *συμπεπλεγμένοι* at 191E–192A) at 1.2.11, although in Plato the embrace is of lovers, in Aristaenetus of wrestlers, and the striking participle *ζηλοτυπῶν* 213D at 1.2.10.

Aristaenetus practises this technique with a wide variety of authors. At 1.1.10–11 he takes two phrases, five words in all, from Achilles Tatius 1.4.3 (*ὄφρ' ὅς μέλαινα, τὸ μέλαν ἄκρατον*), copied *verbatim*; but the same paragraph in the novelist provides the inspiration for two other of Aristaenetus' ideas in the neighbouring context of his letter: Achilles Tatius' *λευκὴ παρειά* is put into the plural (1.1.8), and his *τὸ λευκὸν . . . ἐμιμείτο πορφύραν* and *τὸ στόμα ῥόδων ἄνθος ἦν* give Aristaenetus all the hints necessary for his *τὸ φαιδρὸν ἐκμιμῶνται τῶν ῥόδων* (1.1.9), an instance of *imitatio et uariatio* worthy of Alexandrian poetry.⁸ Again, at 1.1.42–44 Aristaenetus steals two phrases from Alciphron, *Epist.* 4.11.7: *τὸν κερτὸν ὑπεζώσατο*, copied exactly, and *ὄσαι ταῖς ὀμιλίαις αὐτῆς χειρῆνες*, varied just a little; when he made his transcription, Aristaenetus clearly noticed that Alciphron referred to the Graces directly afterwards, for they too have been incorporated into Aristaenetus' picture (1.1.44), although their function is now altered. In Alciphron, however, the reference to siren sounds is rounded off by the verb *ἐνίδρυντο*, whose deliberate omission by Aristaenetus here forced him to change the case of *ταῖς ὀμιλίαις* to the genitive. And why did Aristaenetus omit *ἐνίδρυντο*? I suspect it was because earlier in the letter he had already exploited this idea in a different context when he described the Graces as *ἐγκαθιδρυμένας* at 1.1.18.

Simpler examples of this method of working are scattered all through Aristaenetus' letters, but three further illustrations must suffice. At 1.3.75 the plagiarist copies *verbatim* *καλὸς . . . ὁ στέφανος καὶ δεινὸς ἐπιπρέψαι ταῖς ἐν ὄρα* from Philostratus, *Imagines* 1.21.2, and then goes his different way; but it can hardly be coincidental that Philostratus seven words later mentions the *ἔρευθος* of flowers and women's cheeks, while Aristaenetus says in his next line that the roses make the *ἔρευθος* of his garland brighter. And in 1.6.20 the plagiarist

⁷ So exact is the transcription that one is inclined to wonder whether the *δή* which followed *μὲν οὖν* in the Plato passage was omitted not by the carelessness of Aristaenetus but by a haplographic error (before *δεῦρο*) of the copyist.

⁸ Cf. G. Giangrande, *CQ* n.s. 17 (1967) 85ff, and *Entretiens Hardt* 14 (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1969) 91ff.

copies with a slight variation to meet his context a sentence from Demosthenes' *Third Olynthiac*, § 6: τὰ μὲν δὴ τότε πραχθέντ' οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως ἔχοι. Who can doubt that a phrase one page earlier in that speech (3.1), τὰ . . . πράγματ' εἰς τοῦτο προήκοντα, supplied the hint for what Aristaenetus wrote three lines later (1.6.22–23), ἐπὶ προήκοντι τῷ πράγματι?

The third and last of this group of examples is rather more fascinating. In it Aristaenetus remains a common burglar, but at least he arranges the fruits of his theft more imaginatively. The source is once again a Platonic dialogue, but his methodology here has something in common with the one he obviously liked to employ when he was exploiting a different genre of source, Greek comedy, as we shall see directly after this final Platonic example has been discussed. At 1.27.17–18 Mercier long ago observed that with his phrase κάλλος ὑπὲρ κάλλους χαρίζεσθαι Aristaenetus seemed to be imitating Plato, *Symposium* 218E, ἀλλάζεσθαι κάλλος ἀντὶ κάλλους, but the extent of Aristaenetus' exploitation (with *imitatio et uariatio*) has not, I think, hitherto been adequately realised. Aristaenetus follows his phrase with three words of explanation, μέγιστον ἀντὶ βραχέος, where the word ἀντὶ clearly picks up the Platonic ἀντί, and the *idea* of exchanging something valuable for something small comes from two lines further on in the passage of Plato, 'χρύσεια χαλκείων' διαμείβεσθαι. But this is not all. This one half-page of Plato provides three further jewels for Aristaenetus to steal for the decoration of his context: ἐρατῆς ἀξίος (218C~ ἀξιέρατος 1.27.12), χαρίζεσθαι itself (218C~ 18), and εὐμορφία (218E~ εὐμορφία 16).

This practice, of selecting a handful of ideas, words and phrases from one passage and then redeploing them in a new order and adapted context, can be seen most effectively in Aristaenetus' exploitation of comedy as a source. His fondness for incidental Menandrian metaphors and garish phrases I have already mentioned and illustrated; less familiar perhaps is his systematic exploitation of a whole scene or more from a particular play. There are two fairly certain instances of this type of pillaging in Aristaenetus, but it is possible to suspect the existence of at least two more, where the disappearance of the original comic texts since Aristaenetus' day makes full demonstration impossible. First, the fairly certain examples: where Aristaenetus appears to be pillaging Aristophanes' *Clouds* (2.3) and Menander's *Samia* (1.5, cf. 1.7) respectively.

At first sight, admittedly, Aristaenetos 2.3 seems to owe more to New than to Old Comedy. The imaginary sender (Glykera) and addressee (Philinna) of the letter bear typical New-Comedy names, and the theme of the discontented wife is familiar enough from Menander's *Plokion* and other plays of later Greek comedy and their Roman adaptations. But Aristaenetos here betrays his main source of inspiration in a variety of ways. The name of the unsatisfactory husband is Strepsiades (2.3.1), clearly taken from that of the hero of Aristophanes' play. The main substance of Glykera's complaint against her husband is lack of sexual interest in her (2-3, 6-7, 10-11, 13-15); it seems likely that the basic idea here derives from Strepsiades' early speech in the *Clouds*, implying that his rich wife was too interested in sex (46-55, cf. Dover on 51). Aristaenetos opens his letter by describing his Strepsiades as τῶ κοφῶ ῥήτορι, and he proceeds to enlarge on his preoccupation with lawsuits. *Clouds* 1206-11 provides the basic inspiration for all this (μάκαρ ὦ Στρεψιάδες | αὐτός τ' ἔφυσ, ὡς κοφός, . . . ἤνικ' ἄν εὐ νι | καῖς λέγων τὰς δίκας). Given this general background, who will doubt that one or two instances of vivid phraseology, appearing only here in Aristaenetos, also derive from Aristophanes' play (προμνήστριαν 19~ *Nub.* 41, δικορράφος ὦν 23~ *Nub.* 1483)?

The same technique may be repeated by Aristaenetos in 1.5.20-22. Here, if my suspicion is right, his quarry is Menander's *Samia*, or, more precisely, the scene of that play in which the two old men Nikeratos and Demeas finally come to terms with reality and with Demeas' adopted son Moschion. The situation depicted in the letter, however, bears little resemblance to that of the play. Aristaenetos' subject is an adulterous intrigue and the clever ruse by which it was concealed, while in Menander a series of Feydeau-like confusions prevents Moschion for a time from marrying the girl he has seduced. Aristaenetos appears to use words and phrases from the Menandrian scene like the coloured particles of a kaleidoscope, rearranging them to suit the more limited imagination of his own picture. Each stolen particle may lack obvious significance and distinctiveness on its own, but if my theory is right the effect is cumulative as the new pattern builds up. Compare Aristaenetos' βουκολήσουσι (1.5.20) with *Samia* 530 and 596 (the line references for this play are taken from Austin's edition); it is possibly no coincidence that the Menandrian speakers are two old men, and that the object of this same vivid verb in Aristaenetos (a

verb used by him only here) is τὸν πρεσβύτην. Directly afterwards (21–22) Aristaenetus writes that οὗτος (the old man) εἰσπεπήδηκεν ἔνδον κεκραγῶς ἅμα καὶ πνέων θυμόν.⁹ These words lack the vivid colour of βουκολήσουσι, but is it pure chance that εἰσπεπήδηκεν appears in *Samia* 564, and parts of the verb κέκραγα—the Menandrian scene is a noisy, fast-moving, vividly memorable one—in *Samia* 549, 553, 580?

The cumulation of details here is perhaps significant enough for the relationship between the letter of Aristaenetus and Menander's *Samia* to be a working hypothesis. Aristaenetus, however, may betray this play's influence on him at this point in his compositions even more plausibly. Elsewhere in this and a succeeding letter (1.7) hints from the play may be detectable. At 1.5.30 Aristaenetus describes his old man as ὁ τραχὺς ἐκεῖνος, and τραχὺς is an adjective used by Demeas to characterise old Nikeratos in the play directly after he has employed the verb κεκραῖεται (*Sam.* 550). At 1.5.33 Aristaenetus' cuckolded husband begs forgiveness, συγγίγνωσκέ μοι . . . ἐξέστην, ὁμολογῶ. At *Samia* 279 Demeas describes his emotion with the words ἐξέστηχ' ὄλωσ, using the verb absolutely in the identical sense. The parallel with this particular phrase of Demeas' appears even closer at Aristaenetus 1.7.11, where the epistolographer writes ὄλωσ¹⁰ ἐξέστην. And at 1.7.15 εἰσπεπήδηκεν ἔνδον repeats what Aristaenetus has written at 1.5.21, possibly under the influence of *Samia* 564.

Careful comparison of the cluster of passages in Aristophanes' *Clouds* and Menander's *Samia* with the relevant letters of Aristaenetus begins to reveal the epistolographer's method of work. Whether it was the memory of a favourite scene that nagged him like an aching tooth as he composed the sections of 1.5, 1.7 and 2.3 discussed above, or whether he had simply jotted down in a commonplace book words and phrases that impressed him, can no longer be ascertained. But this at least is probable: Aristaenetus rearranged patterns of words in his sources, altered tenses and cases and contexts, and interlarded much extraneous material, some from his own head, some from related sources (or is it merely a casual coincidence that the ironic use of χρυσοῦς in 1.5.7 is characteristically Menandrian, cf. Handley on *Men. Dysk.* 675; that the use of ἀνέξευξε in an intransitive sense at 1.5.18 may

⁹ θυμοῦ V, but this emendation seems inescapable: see my note *ad loc.* in "Annotations to Aristaenetus," which is to appear in the first volume of the new periodical *Museum Philologicum Londiniense*.

¹⁰ ὄλωσ V (Hercher's note to the contrary, *Epistolographi Graeci*, xxiii, is mistaken), but the Menandrian parallel is an argument in favour of Boissonade's conjecture ὄλωσ.

now be paralleled at *Aspis* 79; or that the choice of Sophrone as the nurse's name in 1.6.7 repeats the nomenclature traditionally given to this character in later Greek comedy, e.g. *Epitrepontes* and *Heros*?), some from unrelated and some doubtless also from lost sources.¹¹

In fact it may be legitimate to use this evidence by a process of extrapolation. If Aristaenetus uses known comic sources in this way, and if extant comic texts are only the tip of an iceberg where most of the original material is submerged forever unless a lucky papyrus find comes to our aid, is there any possibility of detecting the occasions when Aristaenetus is likely to have been exploiting material from—say—a lost play of Menander? The answer is, I believe, a qualified yes. In certain instances, perhaps letters 1.22 and 2.12, a case may be made for Aristaenetan exploitation of material from a lost play of Menander.

In 1.22 the situation is generally reminiscent of comedy. Glykera is in love with Charisios but gains no response from him. When she pretends, however, to be in love with somebody else, immediately Charisios comes running. All the names in this hackneyed tale are Menandrian character names. Charisios is the husband in *Epitrepontes*, Glykera is in love with Polemon and he with her in *Perikeiromene*, Doris is the maid's name in *Encheiridion*, *Kolax*, and also in *Perikeiromene*, where she belongs to Glykera. At first sight it looks as if Aristaenetus has made a cento of *Perikeiromene* and *Epitrepontes*, taking hints from both plays—Charisios' confession of his errors in *Epitrepontes* 588ff, Polemon's sad outbursts in his scene with Pataikos in *Perikeiromene* 217ff, for example—but there is more to this than coincidence of names and two situations only. Several phrases in this letter have a Menandrian ring: νεώτερόν τι συμβέβηκεν (10–11: cf. Men. *Sik.* 125 Kassel, fr.774), τί δὴ . . . ἄκων . . . λελύπηκα τὸ Γλυκέριον (25–26: cf. *Pk.* 243f), and ἡμαρτον, ὁμολογῶ (30: cf. Men. fr.432); but such parallels as may be drawn here between Aristaenetus and Menander are general, rather than precise, from different plays and not from one scene in one play. Is it altogether beyond the bounds of possibility that

¹¹ The picture that emerges is incidentally rather different from that envisaged by Th. Kock (*RhM* 21 [1886] 372–410; *CAF* 3.679ff), who argued that long stretches of several letters were almost *verbatim* transcriptions of comic scenes. This theory still imposes on some scholars, despite its effective refutation by A. Nauck, *Mélanges Gréco-Romains* 6 (1894) 134ff. Aristaenetus' treatment of his comic sources in fact more nearly resembles that of Aelian in his letters (cf. I. L. Thyresson, *Eranos* 62 [1964] 7ff, and my own paper in *ProcCambPhilSoc* 196 [1970] 8ff).

Aristaenetus derived the majority of these listed details (and perhaps others too) from some play of Menander now lost?

The basic situation in 2.12 is similarly inspired by comedy. This letter describes the trials and self-pity of a husband married to a domineering scold, although Aristaenetus' picture appears to incorporate the one novelty that his harridan is not the richly dowered wife of a hundred Graeco-Roman comedies but a poor woman who had first attracted the imaginary letterwriter's pity. The language is once again a medley of comic, often precisely Menandrian commonplaces, especially in lines 10 to 25. *φρύαγμα* (10) recalls Menander fr.333.13; the wife as *δέσποινα* (12) brings to mind several passages from later Greek comedy, e.g. Menander fr.333.6–7 and Anaxandrides fr.52.5 Kock; the use of *κεκράτηκε* (12) echoes Menander fr.251.6; the metaphorical use of *προῦξ* (14) is closely parallel to that in com.anon. fr.1204.3 Kock; the complaints about the wife's extravagance (15ff) are expanded in Plautus, *Aulularia* 507ff and *Miles Gloriosus* 689ff; and the wife's threatened expulsion of a barbarian girl from the house for fear that she may be a rival (24–25) reproduces a detail also sketched in Menander fr.333.3–4 and 15–16 (for the *language* of the threat compare also Men. *Sam.* 352–54 and 370). Has Aristaenetus simply made a cento of memorable comic commonplaces here? At first sight it would appear so. The vivid illustration at 2.12.18–20, for example, partly transcribes and partly glosses Aristophanes' *Clouds* 54–55, as Mercier first indicated. If Aristaenetus plagiarises just one joke from *Clouds* in this letter, what is to prevent him from having plagiarised phrases from several other plays in the same letter, taking one citation from each play, or, for that matter, from having refurbished a series of thoroughly commonplace comic clichés in his own words? Nothing, of course. It is quite possible that Aristaenetus here did precisely one—or even both together—of these two things. And yet there are two small facts pointing away from these alternative theories and towards a third possibility: the possibility that in this letter Aristaenetus was particularly indebted to one play of Menander, now lost apart from eleven short and four moderately sizable book fragments: the *Plokion*. The first fact is that three of the Menandrian parallels just cited come from one long speech by the henpecked husband in that play (fr.333). The second is that the basic situation of the letter has much in common with what we know of *Plokion*, down even to one unusual particularity: the wife's expulsion of a slave-girl from

the house in fear of sexual rivalry. If this theory is correct, it must, however, always be interpreted in the light of Aristaenetus' habitual methodology. The epistolographer will have used one passage or area of the *Plokion* here as his main quarry, exploiting phrases and situations from it but complicating this exploitation in at least three different ways. The scraps from the *Plokion* will have been rearranged and transformed into new contexts. Material from other writers (e.g. the citation from *Ar. Nub.*), perhaps even from other scenes of *Plokion*, will have been blended in. And a few original ideas of Aristaenetus' own invention may have been interfused for the embellishment of his theme: the paradox of the poor wife behaving with the arrogance of a rich one perhaps, although even this novel twist is more likely to have been anticipated in some lost comedy.

Of course, it is not comedy alone that Aristaenetus exploits in this variety of ways. Much more researched and so more familiar is his parallel treatment of two passages from the third book of Callimachus' *Aitia* in letters 1.10 and 1.15. The former letter retells Callimachus' story of Akontios and Kydippe, following faithfully the main outlines of the original, incorporating many details of exotic Callimachean vocabulary with some repatterning, and adding extraneous material from a variety of other sources. Dilthey's pioneering study of over a century ago¹² brilliantly divined a good number of Aristaenetan plagiarisms long before papyrus discoveries laid them bare and clear. More recently Pfeiffer's full, insightful and learned apparatus to his edition (frs. 67-75) has presented all the information from papyrus and other sources for the evaluation of Aristaenetus' indebtedness and techniques.¹³ Accordingly it will be sufficient here to suggest a couple of new soundings. First, how far is it possible to infer the presence of Callimachean vocabulary in those sections of Aristaenetus 1.10 and 1.15 where there are no papyri or book fragments of the Hellenistic poet to act as control? Perhaps only when an item of vocabulary or phraseology stands out from its context in Aristaenetus by reason of a particularity characteristic especially of Callimachus. At 1.10.39-40, for example, Aristaenetus writes that after reading aloud

¹² C. Dilthey, *De Callimachi Cydippa* (Leipzig 1863).

¹³ Cf. also A. Dietzler's sensible and sensitive dissertation, *Die Akontios-Elegie des Kallimachos*, fortunately completed and published early enough (Greifswald 1933) for it to be of service to Pfeiffer's edition.

the message on the quince that bound her to Akontios, Kydippe τὸν ἐρωτικὸν λόγον ἀπέρριψεν αἰδουμένη. ἀπέρριψεν here is a teasing ambiguity; at first sight it appears to mean simply 'she uttered', but, how can one exclude the possibility that the sense intended was 'she rejected' (cf. e.g. Soph. *El.* 1018)? Such a designed ambiguity may well have been too subtle for Aristaenetos' own invention, but it could have been transcribed by him, perhaps aware, perhaps unaware of its potentiality, from the Hellenistic master of ambiguities and other word-games.¹⁴ Secondly, it is interesting to observe in his exploitation of Callimachus once again a feature to which I drew attention earlier when discussing Aristaenetos' relation to his Hippocratic source at 1.19. There the epistolographer broke off his transcription a moment before an insalubrious detail in his source. At 1.10.81–84 Aristaenetos is describing the preliminaries to Kydippe's abortively planned wedding. His basic source at this point is a section of Callimachus' *Aitia* now known from a papyrus fragment (*P.Oxy.* 1011, fr.75 Pfeiffer). Callimachus, however, describes both the prenuptial sleeping together of bride and κοῦρος (vv.1–9)¹⁵ and the reflection of the bulls' heads in the mirrorlike surface of the water in the sacrificial basin (10–11), two details which Aristaenetos omits,¹⁶ replacing them with a quotation from Sappho (fr.71.6 Lobel-Page) and a much less imaginative reference to the wedding-song before the bridal chamber—a cliché that can be paralleled from a number of literary epigrams.¹⁷ Clearly Aristaenetos preferred here the hackneyed, inoffensive detail to the recherché, more imaginative, but priggishly intolerable reference to a bride in bed with a boy before her wedding.

Here Aristaenetos' *imitatio et uariatio* are born of prudery. It would be easy enough to prolong this essay with abundant exemplification of related techniques in this fascinating author. Instead, I shall illustrate as briefly as possible two further techniques of imitation and variation which seem to me most instructive and generally least understood. The first involves the conflation of two sources. It may be as simple as the example at 2.20.23–34, ἀστρώτους καὶ χαμαιπετεῖς

¹⁴ Cf. Dietzler, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.13) 37. Dilthey, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.12) 36ff, argues for another possible instance of Callimachean word-play (on the name Ἀκόντιος and ἀκοντίζειν) which Aristaenetos (1.10.14–22) may have obscured with his embroidery; cf. Pfeiffer on fr.70.

¹⁵ On this passage see especially Dietzler, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.13) 16ff, 39.

¹⁶ Aristaenetos also omits the precise identification, in Callimachus, of Kydippe's three illnesses—epilepsy, quartan ague and a serious chill (fr.75.12–19 Pfeiffer).

¹⁷ E.g. Antipater 56, Erinna 2, Philip 24, Meleager 123 (Gow-Page).

κοιμήσεις ἐπὶ θύραις ποιείσθε, where Aristaenetus' sentence is an uncomplicated fusion of two passages of Plato, *Symposium* 183A κοιμήσεις ἐπὶ θύραις, and 203D χαμαιπετής ἀεὶ ὦν καὶ ἄστροτος, ἐπὶ θύραις . . . κοιμώμενος.¹⁸

Or it may be as complex as Aristaenetus' treatment of the story of the boy who fell in love with his father's mistress, at 1.13, where the first technique of conflation is combined with or merges into the second technique of *uariatio Hellenistica*. At 1.13 Aristaenetus fictionalises a well-known anecdote which originally perhaps goes back to Phylarchus about the allegedly historical romance of Antiochus Soter and Stratonike.¹⁹ This story is often retold as a piece of factual narrative, most fully by Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 38; Appian, *Syriaca* 59–61; and Lucian, *De Syria Dea* 17–18.²⁰ Aristaenetus clearly knew one or more of these accounts, for several significant details of incident and wording in his 1.13 demonstrably derive from them.²¹ Other versions of this story, however, are found which, like Aristaenetus', take it out of history into the imaginary world of fiction: the *Aegritudo Perdiccae* and Heliodorus 4.7. Aristaenetus exploited the Heliodorus version no less than the pseudo-historical ones.²² The fictional names given by Heliodorus to the participants in the little drama are the easily identifiable sources of Aristaenetus' transmogrifications. Heliodorus' doctor Akesinos becomes Panakeios, father Charikles becomes Polykles, ἐρωμένη Charikleia (along with the father's name) is the source of Aristaenetus' boy in love, Charikles. And at 1.13.62–63 ὁ συλλογιστικὸς ἰατρός is a deliberate variation of Heliodorus' ὁ λόγιος Ἀκεσῖνος (4.7.4). This is the most striking instance in the letter of that typically Hellenistic game of elegant variation, where dependence on an earlier source is revealed as much by careful paraphrase in the corresponding context or by deliberate transference of the expression borrowed into a novel context as by direct quotation in the relevant context. The most striking instance perhaps, but by no means the only one. Heliodorus 4.7.4 describes the action of the doctor in the words τῷ καρπῷ

¹⁸ Cf. here F. J. Bast's note *ad loc.* (first published in his *Epistola critica ad virum clariss. J. F. Boissonade super Antonino Liberali, Parthenio et Aristaeneto* [Leipzig 1809]).

¹⁹ Cf. E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*³ (Leipzig 1914) 55ff.

²⁰ Cf. also Val. Max. 5.7 ext. 1; Julian, *Mis.* 347a–348a; *Suda*, s.v. Ἐρασίετρατος and Σέλευκος.

²¹ E.g. 1.13.9–10~Lucian, Appian; 19~Plutarch; 49–50~App., Plut.; 51~Luc.; 64–65~App., Luc., Plut.

²² Cf. Korais' ed. of Heliodorus, 2.144; Rohde, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.19) 59 n.2.

τὴν χεῖρα . . . ἐπιβαλῶν; the same action is described twice by Aristaenetetus, at 1.13.13–14 and 28–29, with similar grammatical structure but different synonymous vocabulary both times: τοὺς μὲν δακτύλους τῷ σφυγμῷ προσαρμόζων and τὴν ὑποκάρπιον ἀρτηρίαν τοῖς δακτύλοις ἀρμονικῶς ἐπεσκόπει.²³ Lucian, *De Syria Dea* 17 talks of τοῦ ἰητροῦ ἐπινοίῃ; in Aristaenetetus 1.13.15–16 this becomes τῆς διανοίας. In the same chapter Lucian uses the participle ἀμηχανέων of the sick patient; at 1.13.17 Aristaenetetus describes the doctor as ἀμήχανος.

Aristaenetetus practises this particularly Alexandrian game of elegant variation in many letters and in many ways. One final illustration has the charm of revealing Aristaenetetus at his most allusive. Earlier I referred to Aristaenetetus' double use (at 1.1.37, 1.3.29–30) of a vivid phrase stolen from an epigram of Leonidas (23.7 Gow-Page). In 1.7 Aristaenetetus exploits this epigram once again, but on this occasion less explicitly, more in a manner reminiscent of the Hellenistic epigrammatists themselves.²⁴ Leonidas' epigram specifically celebrates Apelles' famous painting of Aphrodite rising out of the sea. Aristaenetetus, lines 21–23, describes an attractive human girl rising up out of the waves (τὴν κόρην ἀνίσχουσαν τῶν κυμάτων) and reminding the fisherman who saw her of those paintings of the birth of Aphrodite (οὕτω τῆς θαλάττης τὴν Ἀφροδίτην εὐπρεπῶς προΐουσαν γράφουσιν οἱ ζωγράφοι). There is no precise verbal echo here of Leonidas, not even a precise reference to Apelles' masterpiece. Why then should the careful reader suspect that Leonidas' epigram was at the back of Aristaenetetus' mind here, perhaps subconsciously, but much more probably for deliberate erudite allusion? Because in the directly preceding context of his letter Aristaenetetus echoes three of Leonidas' ideas, transferring them to his description of the bathing girl and deliberately, I think, varying their contextual reference. He describes how the girl's neck was gleaming out, ἐξέλαμπε (12), from her hair, while the sea was calm and peaceful, γαληναῖον (16), and the colour of the girl's skin was as white as the spume of the waves, τῷ ἀφρῶ (17). Each of these ideas occurs in the epigram of Leonidas, but handled differently; Aphrodite is boiling in spume (ἀφρῶ v.2), and from her eyes calm passion beams (γαληνὸς ἐκλάμπει πόθος). Because of the very allusive-

²³ Mazal here prints Mercier's conjecture ἡρμονικῶς for V's ἀρμονικῶς (sic), but it seems likely enough that ἀρμονικῶς is what Aristaenetetus wrote here, 'harmonically' in its medical sense, with reference to the theory that the pulse should be in harmony with one's physical state (cf. Galen 19.376 Kühn).

²⁴ See the works cited in n.8 *supra*.

ness of the rules of the game in this Alexandrian technique of *imitatio et uariatio*, we cannot always be sure when an author using such techniques is indeed indebted to an earlier one. The evidence here, at Aristaenetus 1.7, is not absolutely conclusive. These alleged parallels and cross-references could just be accidental. But when they are viewed in the light of Aristaenetus' proven knowledge of Leonidas' epigram and of the techniques of exploitation that he practises elsewhere, coincidence seems much the less likely explanation.²⁵

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