This little piggy had roast beef
(Catullus 47)

Porci et Socratian, duae sinistrae
Pisonis, scabies famesque mundi,
uos Veraniolo meo et Fabullo
uerpus praeposuit Priapus ille?
uos conuiuia lauta sumptuose
de die facitis, mei sodales
quaerunt in triuio uocationes?

Porcius and Socratian, Piso's left-hand men,
you scurvy crew and famine of the world,
did that horny Priapus prefer you to
my own Veranius, and to Fabullus?
Do you spend the day stuffing yourselves
at his trendy dinner parties, while my pals
go begging for invitations in the streets?

R. G. M. Nisbet treated the connections between Piso and Catullus
in an appendix to his commentary on the In Pisonem, and in spite of
some difficulties he finds it most likely (as do others) that the Piso of
Catullus 47 (as of Poem 28) is the same man against whom Cicero
wrote his speech, L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus,1 the patron and
frequent dinner companion of the philosopher Philodemus – if we are

(with bibliography). T. P. Wiseman has argued against the identification
('Catullus, his Life and Times' JRS 69 [1979] 162-3; briefly recapitulated in
Catullus and his World: A Reappraisal [Cambridge, 1985] 2), arguing that this
Piso is not known to have had a post in Hispania Citerior, where Fabullus
and Veranius seem to be serving together in Poem 12 — though Piso is not
there mentioned. We know only of a proconsulship for him in Macedonia
in 57-55 BC, in the course of which time Catullus was probably serving
with Memmius in Bithynia (the context of Poem 28, in which Fabullus and
Veranius are now specified as on Piso's staff). Wiseman therefore posits a
to believe Cicero.\textsuperscript{2} He also allowed the possibility of the suggestion of G. Friedrich, that in Catullus 47 the ‘Socration’ whom (along with ‘Toricus’) Piso has invited to dinner in unfair preference to Veranius and Fabullus is in fact Philodemus.\textsuperscript{3} If this is so, then the name ‘Socration’, whether a diminutive,\textsuperscript{4} or a variant for ‘Socratio’,\textsuperscript{5} will have been for Catullus and his group a fine coterie nickname. The level of humor would be parallel to the joke at the expense of Arrius (Poem 84), or Clodius (Lesbius) Pulcher (Poem 79). We could even see a parallel with ‘Lesbia’ herself – who is first addressed in Sapphic stanzas, via a translation of Sappho (Poem 51).

\textsuperscript{2} Cicero does not actually name Philodemus (\textit{In Pis. 68 est quidam Græcus}), but there are no grounds for doubting the identification, first made by Asconius (\textit{ad loc. Philodemum significat, qui fuit Epicureus illa aetate nobilissimus, cuius et poemata sunt lasciuæ}), and not subject to debate. W. Allen, Jr. and P. H. DeLacy ‘The Patrons of Philodemus’ CP 34 (1939) 59-65 resisted seeing Piso as a ‘patron’ to Philodemus, on the level of, say, the Luculli to Archias, but unless we assume Cicero is inventing everything out of whole cloth (rather than embellishing a reality of some sort) there seems little doubt that there existed a relationship which at least involved entertainment and social contact in general.

\textsuperscript{3} G. Friedrich (ed.) \textit{Catulli Veronensis Liber} (Leipzig and Berlin, 1908) 228 ‘Wir haben nach dem Wortlaut unseres Gedichtes keinen Grund, uns den
The chief objection to taking 'Socration' as a nickname for Philodemus has been that Catullus includes him with Porcius, and it is unlikely that a nickname would be found side by side with a real name. One tentative suggestion of Nisbet was to suggest 'as Porcius is a real name, Socration is perhaps a real name also'. But let us turn this around: why does 'Porcius' have to be a real name, as everyone has simply assumed? In Sat. 2.8.23-4, in a context similar to that of Catullus 47, Horace introduces a dinner-guest 'Porcius' purely, it would seem, for the sake of a joke on his name: Porcius infra/ ridiculus totas simul absorbere placentas, 'Placed below [Nasidienus] the buffoon Socrates anders vorzustellen als den Philodemus von Gadara, der auch bei Piso in Macedonien war, Graecus facilis et ualde uenustus (Cic. in Pis. 70)'.

4 I have suggested elsewhere that the diminutive, if that is what it is, may in part be a response to Philodemus' penchant, apparent from the epigrams, for diminutives in -ion: 'Little Socrates who was fond of names in -ion'; see R. F. Thomas, "Death", Doxography and the "Termerian evil" (Philodemus, Epigr. 27 Page = A.P. 11.30) CQ 41 (1991) 130-7. There are problems with taking 'Socration' as a diminutive. First, such forms generally refer to women; but there are exceptions: Aristoph., Nub. 80 Φειδιτιπίδιον; Ach. 404-5 Εὐριπίδιον (it might be claimed that these are perceived as -ίδιον diminutives, but they are formed, as would be 'Socration', on second declension -ης nouns); Ach. 1206 Δαμαχίτιτος; TSchol. II. 2.235 (on Thersites' taunting of the Greeks — Αχαίδεσ, οὐκέτ 'Αχαίοι: 'Αχαίδεσ. παρονομασία, οία "ού φιλίτις, ἄλλα φιλίππου κεκράτηκεν δις Ἐλλάδος." In each of these there is a suggestion of weakness or effeminacy, and most of the women who receive -ion suffixes, for instance in the Greek Anthology, are hetaerae or quasi-hetaerae. Could this be part of the joke with 'Socration', who is similarly 'prostituting' himself (this would be supported by 3-4 uos . . . praeposuit Priapus illus? Philodemus himself has Τρυγόντον at Epigr. 26.2 Page, referring to a priest of Gallus who still however retained some maleness (see Gow-Page, ad loc.). It also looks from Lucian, Menipp. 21 (where Menippus replies to Teiresias' ὁ τέκνον with the greeting ὁ πατέριον) as if these diminutives could be formed ad libitum with no special connotations other than informality. The second objection is that this would be the only such Latin diminutive in -ion (rather than regular -ium). Although this constitutes some evidence against a diminutive 'Socration', such a form is, I think, possible in the case of an audacious neoteric who might conceivably have been trying a) to avoid forms redolent of comedy, and b) to preserve the original Greek form in the case of an actual Greek, whose nickname would never, presumably,
"Porky" engulfed entire cakes in a single gulp.\(^8\) And Varro, who in the *Res Rusticae* gives his characters names appropriate to their roles in the dialogue ("Agrius", "Scrofa", etc.), shows in a discussion pertinent to the present one to what extent the derivation of ‘Porcius’ was still felt: *nomina multa habemus ab utroque pecore, a maiore et a minore — a minore Porcius, Quinius, Caprilus* (*Res Rust.* 2.1.10).\(^9\) Finally, look at Symphosius, *Aenig.* 86 (*Anth. Lat.* 281.270-2 SB):

\[
\text{nobile duco genus magni de gente Catonis.}
\]
\[
\text{una mihi soror est, plures licet esse putentur.}
\]
\[
\text{de fumo facies, sapientia de mare nata est.}
\]

have been ‘Socratium’. The dative *Callisto (=Καλλιστώι)* at 66.66 is similarly virtually unique (Neue I 458 tries to make it nom. or acc.), and cf. Fordyce on 64.3 for the freedom with which Catullus uses Greek terminations. Could Catullus have actually written the name as it was doubtless spoken, if it was a diminutive, namely *Σωκράτιον*? Cicero could pepper his letters with Greek words, not to mention Lucilius, and in both cases the transmission ‘Latinizes’, sensibly or otherwise (e.g. Lucilius: fr.829M *ἐπίτευμα*: "epiteuma" vel "epitagma" codd.; 908 M *ἐπίφωνει*: "epifoni" codd.; Cicero: *Att.* 9.9.1 *σοφιστεύω* enim simul ut rus decurro: festino enim simul uiris codd.; 13.19.4 όριστοτέλειον uulg.: "aristoteliiori" vel sim. codd.; 13.27.1 κολακεία: "collacia" codd.; 14.3.2 πραγματικόν: "pragmacon" codd.). Finally, we might note that diminutives, by their very nature, will have been much more abundant in colloquial Greek and Latin than would appear from the texts (literary or epigraphical) that we have.

5 Cf. Nisbet, *op. cit.* 182 for discussion of the name, which could conceivably be a form of *Σωκράτιων ὄνος* (a name known to Galen), although the Latin for that (*CIL III*, p.948 [bis]) would normally (though not universally, see Neue I 246-60) be ‘Socratio’. Professor Badian warns me against taking inscriptive evidence (chiefly based on slave names) as indicating the names of elite people; his example is the name ‘Archia’ — form invariable, or virtually so, in inscriptions, while the name of the poet defended by Cicero is unquestionably ‘Archias’.

6 Nisbet, *op. cit.* 182.

My line is noble and I trace it back to great Cato's family.
I have just one sister, though people think there are more.
My looks are born of smoke, my taste of the brine.

The answer (and the title) of the riddle is 'Perna' (cured 'porcus',
alluding to 'Porcius'). If, then, we see 'Porcius' as a nickname, both it
and 'Socration' are apt titles for grasping and undeserving dinner-
guests, the former etymologically, the latter perhaps through the fact
that, as Aristippus claims (FPG II. 29), Socrates accepted food and
wine from prominent Athenians.  

But 'Porcius' suggests more than simple gluttony. Is it not
suspicious that here in Catullus we seem to have such a name
referring to the dinner-guest of Rome's most notorious Epicurean
(Epicure noster, Cic. In Pis. 37) a figure who, in Cicero's rhetoric in the
same passage, was ex hāra ('pigsty') product[us] non ex schola? Nor that
Cicero pilloried Piso (and Philodemus, mildly) for precisely the

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8 Cf. N. Rudd, The Satires of Horace (Cambridge, 1966) 143, who notes that
Porcius is a name 'certainly or probably chosen solely on account of [its]
derivation'.

9 Cf. also Plutarch reporting Fenestella (ap. Plut. Quaest. Rom. 41 (Mor. 274 f)
= Ann. fr. 5 Peter), on the fact that early Roman prosperity came from
ownership of livestock: δι ψ α ιν ὑ τί' λ λ α ? τ ήσαν, ώ θ ύ τ η ς ουτών ὁ ς χ άρα σι σι και Β ουβο γί κους και Π ορκί ους και Κ α ταρά τί υ σ ουτών και Π α λ ι ὀ ς, ή σαν, ώ θ Φ αινεστέλλας είρρηκεν; also
Vit. Publ. 11 (103b) ετίθεντο δὲ καὶ παίσιν αὐτῶν Σωκλως
καὶ Βουβώλικως καὶ Καπράριος ἀνομάτα καὶ Πορκίος. κάπρας μὲν τὰς
αῖγας πόρκους δὲ τοὺς χοροὺς ἀνομάζοντες. Plutarch seems to have been
amused at the Roman custom.

10 Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum ed. F.W.A. Mullach. Aristippus is not
being hostile, merely justifying his own practice, and he states that
Socrates returned what he did not need; cf. K. J. Dover, Aristophanes Clouds
(Oxford, 1968) xlviii. Xenophon's defence of Socrates' moderation in this
respect (Mem. 1.3.5-8) suggests an anti-Socratic distortion along these lines,
and the seeds of the distortion are possibly even in Plato, in the very
setting of the Symposium, and in the ironic proposal of Socrates himself, at
Apol. 36d 5-7 ω κ ἐ σθ' ὃ τι μάλ λον, ὃ άνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πρέπει οὕτως ὡς
tὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα ἐν πρωτανείᾳ εἰτεσθαι. . . . The pejorative term
παράσιτος is associated with dining at the Prytaneia at least by the mid-
to late fourth century (cf. Timocles fr. 8 Kock, ap. Athen. 6.237d).
debased Epicurean activity that is going on in Catullus 47 (In Pis. 70 omnia cenarum genera conuiuitorumque)? More specifically, as Nisbet notes, 'Epicureans were often compared with animals, especially pigs'.

I include just two of his examples: Hor. Epist. 1.4.16 Epicuri de grege porcum; Aug. enarr. psalm. 73.25 [Epicurus] quem etiam philosophi porcum nominauerunt. If even philosophers called Epicurus 'porcus' (or perhaps better 'Porcus'), I would suggest that someone like Catullus might well have taken the opportunity to call one of his followers 'Porcius'. If the name is a nickname, then, the follower must be Roman, most aptly a Roman Epicurean, so linked with his Greek counterpart 'Socration' (Philodemus). I shall confine speculation about the actual identity of 'Porcius' to the following quotation, concerning another contemporary in Rome:

'It is not, however, necessary to suppose with Munro that he had visited Athens in order to get his knowledge of Greek philosophy, for there had been Epicureans in Rome for a long while, not the least famous of whom was Lucretius' famous contemporary Philodemus, probably the intimate friend of L. Piso.'

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11 Nisbet, op. cit. 98.

12 C. Bailey, Titi Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex I (Oxford, 1947) 6. Professor Badian (to whom I offer thanks for useful comments on this paper) offers a less dramatic suggestion, Piso's legate Q. Marcius (prob. Crispus), whose name (rather than philosophy) would easily fit the pun.