

1.3 Post-task: the 4 musketeers

Now we have presented the tool, let's go back to the 4 musketeers. Read the passage again, and characterize each musketeer by using the 4 dimensions. Is there any difference in your characterization? Here is my answer:



Aramis is clearly imagined in **metaphysical** terms. He is trying to “pray”, and praying is a religious activity. Everything which is related to religion is initially metaphysical in nature.

Porthos only thinks about women and sex: he prefers “tits” to praying. Now being so interested in women has to do with sexuality, and sexuality is a drive / instinct, which belong to the natural domain. Porthos also farts, which shows that he lets his natural urges take over whenever necessary. He represents **nature**.



As head of the musketeers, **D'Artagnan** has a social function. He also “serves his king loyally”, and although he is apparently happy to see his friends, the duties the king has entrusted him with have to be carried out “immediately”. This adherence to the rules, and the acceptance of hierarchy make him represent **society**



Alone at home, **Athos** plays the violin and “feels sorry for [him]self”. He was once a musketeer – “I belong to the past” – but now he has retired and feels lonely. Separation from the social group and the feeling of loneliness place him close to **individuality**.



Do you agree with this evaluation of the task? Using the four dimensions relates each character with all other characters. Before we may just have seen them as independent individuals. We may of course choose whether we prefer to see them as individuals who could be this or that, or whether we want them to represent a meaningful world.

If you want to know more

Sex and farting:

My students tend to have difficulties with Porthos: Porthos ‘qualifies’ as natural, but the traits which so identify him are two. The most prominent is sex, and my students tend to see that sexuality here indicates nature.

They find it more difficult to identify Porthos’s farting as natural, and for the following reasons:

1. they have already found one piece of evidence of nature (sex), and so they just stop looking
2. Porthos expressly compares sexuality, but not farting, with praying
3. my students tend to see nature with benevolent eyes, and farting does not entirely match that picture.

Excerpt vs whole movie:

My approach here is of course only preliminary. Further analysis would show that

1. **Aramis’** prayer is motivated by the need of “forgiveness”. The movie shows that forgiveness alludes to something Aramis did in the past for the king, so Aramis is asking for ‘social’ forgiveness.
2. **D’Artagnan’s** social function hides love for a queen and an unworthy son.
3. **Athos’** self-enforced individuality hides the loss of his wife.
4. Only **Porthos** has nothing to hide. He is nature through and through