

of the dead in the wider terrain of fifth-century drama. Though Aristophanes' *Frogs* is mentioned in Martin's discussion of the Eleusinian mysteries in the first two chapters, there is no mention of the dead in comedy (or satyr play), a consideration which, in my view, would have strengthened Martin's arguments on tragedy. Nonetheless, the book will prove useful to scholars and students of Greek tragedy and indeed to anyone seeking to understand the complex beliefs and customs concerning the dead in antiquity.

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CHEPEL (E.) **Laughter for the Gods: Ritual in Old Comedy** (Kernos Supplement 35). Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2020. Pp. 230. €30. 9782875622365.
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This volume begins impressively with acute and largely fair criticism of earlier theories on Old Comedy and ritual, followed by a lucid discussion of recent theories about 'ritualization'. A first comprehensive study of rituals will offer a new answer to the 'nothing to do with Dionysus' problem' (17). Major topics are how plays contribute to the cultic worship of festivals and how the rituals enacted are part of the fictional reality of the plays rather than reflexes of non-theatrical rituals: 'The representations of cult ritualise the theatrical performance by imbuing it with elements of real religious practices.' For instance, 'through the ritualisation in the parabolic hymns, the comic performances are revealed as important events in the religious life of the polis' (31). Comedy thus plays an active part in city religious life and so is fitting for the festival of Dionysus.

There follow chapters on: the use of hymns, prayers, shouts, oracles and exegesis; the techniques of making the stage into a 'ritual space', especially through the use of altars and the evocation of sanctuaries; the religious calendar, the festivals put on stage and the play with ritual cycles; and, finally, sacrifice, how it is conducted, what is omitted, the relationship to tragic representations and the way that comedy reverses the normal power hierarchy between gods and men.

These chapters offer very full and useful collections and discussions of the relevant material from Aristophanes and other poets. They are liberally annotated (though many references are to a mere page or two of a particular work, while fuller treatments that readers would have found helpful are absent). There is a good bibliography, but one is surprised that in the 'space' chapter there is no mention of the treatments of dramatic space in I.J.F. de Jong's *Space in Ancient Greek Literature* (Leiden 2012): the relationship between tragedy and comedy is an important topic. The book therefore covers a great deal of ground and tackles a commendably wide range of topics, with intriguing suggestions along the way.

There is a problem however in the balance between the proposals that come from the theoretical sections and the analytical discussions that they introduce. Interesting theories are set out at the start of the chapters, but the keenness to provide as much evidence as possible means that (paradoxically) it can be hard to assess the proposals, as they can be obscured by the large amount of detail offered. The proposals duly reappear at the end, but come almost as a surprise, the discussions having taken on a life of their own.

One could complain, say, that the section on hymns etc. (33–87) is too much of an extended demonstration that comic ritual is close to every-day practice, a point that could have been made more briefly and clearly. This concern to find similarities is central also to the discussion of space, but one wonders if looking at the differences might have been

more productive: Nick Lowe's seminal 'Aristophanic spacecraft' (in L. Kozak and J. Rich (eds.), *Playing around Aristophanes* (Oxford 2004), 48–64) is briefly mentioned but very little used. There is an interesting suggestion about the temporally separated Rural Dionysia, Lenaea and Anthesteria in *Acharnians*: 'the fictional festivals celebrated on stage can be interpreted as being incorporated into ... the Lenaia. Different festivals are united into one chronotope of the Dionysiac celebration' (127). But, as Elena Chepel shows, comedy plays fast and loose with time, and blurring together the different festivals thus misses the point that Dicaeopolis moves from an isolationist celebrant of a normally communal festival to reintegration into the city: the temporal dislocation comments on the problematic nature of Dicaeopolis' behaviour. Indeed, Chepel could usefully have said more about how her ideas relate to general interpretations of the plays. In the chapter on sacrifice, for example, the idea that in comedy the men sacrificing have the gods under their control rather than vice versa, so that 'the reversed sacrificial hierarchy allows comic poets ... to alleviate the fear that the gods will not accept the offering' (173), is interesting, but one would have liked more evidence that such a fear was a major feature of sacrificial practice (and were comic audiences worried about this?).

All in all, I am not sure that we have a completely new answer to the 'Dionysus problem', but there is plenty to ponder here. What we have ultimately is a very good doctoral thesis that could have benefitted from more revision. Ideally, Chepel would have reversed the dominance of detailed analysis over theory and recast the whole by picking out the main novelties, expounding them with carefully chosen examples and exploring the wider implications of them for Greek comedy, society and religion. But in a crazy world where publication is all, what young scholar can afford the time for such radical restructuring?

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JENDZA (C.) **Paracomedy: Appropriations of Comedy in Greek Tragedy**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xi + 341. £58. 9780190090937.
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Several studies of note have recently explored 'paratragedy' (comedy humorously exploiting tragedy), but Craig Jendza reverses the relationship, seeking instances from tragedy where the dramatist (usually Euripides) interacts with an earlier comic scene. This he calls 'paracomedy'. Many would object that a comic moment is foreign to the accepted seriousness (*spoudaios*) of tragedy and that tragedy calling attention to another drama breaks the theatrical 'fourth wall'. Jendza would argue that the 'lightheartedness of comedy' in a tragedy, such as Pentheus' dressing scene, intensifies the coming horror, just as Dicaeopolis masquerading as the tragic Telephos 'makes the audience laugh' (39). He takes Cratinus' marvellous coinage, 'a Euripidaristophanizer' (*fr.* 342), to mean first that both dramatists could be viewed as doing similar things, but also that they are engaging in a conscious professional rivalry (32–35). Jendza traces one such interaction from Euripides' *Telephus* (438) through *Acharnians*, *Helen*, *Andromeda* and *Thesmophoriazusae* (a crucial text), to *Orestes* and *Bacchae*. For Jendza, 'the heyday of paracomedy' is the decade 415–405 (37). In the first chapter he lays down three criteria for 'paracomedy': (i) 'distinctive correspondences' between tragic and comic elements, (ii) priority of the comic elements, and (iii) authorial motivation and effect upon the spectators (17). In his conclusion he makes the good point that more than intertextuality is involved, that 'intertheatricality' might be a better term (165).