

environment of a fragment, for example P.Harr. I 38 (inv. 179) + P.Fitzw.Mus. inv. Add. 109 + P.Oxy. LXVII 4550.

Generally the discussions present, where possible, a solid argument, and the editing of the text does not tend towards speculation, but, where uncertain, a reading is added in the apparatus. However, when the nature of the commentary and the condition of the papyrus do not allow for assertions of a more positive nature, this condition is accepted, and all possibilities are presented with acute caution, as in *scheda* (a), by Esposito, and in P.Oxy. LIII 3718.

In many cases the space devoted to the commentary is limited, but this is not a negative note, since the discussions of the fragments vary for several reasons: the extent of what can be read, the amount of commentary and the type of commentary, not the same as the lexical or the exegetic one, as P.Oxy. LXVII 4554 and P.Oslo inv.1662, in which cases the effort is mainly devoted to the papyrological commentary.

Some minor shortcomings can be observed. Sometimes no comment is provided on the purpose of the note, as in P.Harr. I 38, where no reference is made to the possibility that the annotations it contains may be understood as textual variants, at least those of v. 1282, as other scholars have pointed out. Some bibliographical references are missing, although these concern general works. These include: G. Messeri and R. Pintaudi, 'I lettori dei papiri: dal commento autonomo agli scolii', in: V. Fera et al. (edd.), *Talking to the Text: Marginalia from Papyri to Print* (2002); one of the few works that provides an overview of the Euripidean *commentaria*: M.L. Martínez Bermejo, 'Comentarios y marginalia al texto de Eurípides en los papiros', *Ianua Classicorum. Temas y formas del Mundo Clásico* 2 (2015), 223–30. Further, I echo other reviewers' comments about the need for indexes; in this case, I missed a list of annotated passages and cross-references, something that would make the volume easier to use. However, these are minimal objections.

The volume is of high philological quality and usefulness. The editors have filled a gap in relation to this kind of study on the Euripidean corpus and have done what was expected of this edition: they have assessed the importance and value of this type of evidence and placed it in a wider context. These are essential steps in stimulating interest in these technical and often fragmentary texts. The editors provide a good commentary, rich in possibilities for the cataloguing and understanding of the Euripidean *excerpta*.

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GREEK COMEDY AND SCHOLARSHIP

NOVOKHATKO (A.A.) *Greek Comedy and Embodied Scholarly Discourse*. Pp. x + 278. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2023. Cased, £91, €99.95, US\$114.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-108093-2.

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In what ways did ancient Greek comedy engage with scholarly discourses? N.'s revised *Habilitationsschrift* (Freiburg 2018), the bulk of which has already appeared in earlier papers, tilts at this question. The book covers a range of 'usual suspects' in ancient scholarship –

semantics, prescriptivism, style, genre, metre, dialect, Homer and the analysis of comedy. The task, to assess the evidence for fifth-century scholarly activity and then to demonstrate how comedy activates and shapes an audience's knowledge of it, is daunting. The topics are complicated, and the book is compact; the result is a rush through large amounts of detail. The book's conclusions do much to spell out the argument implicit in all these details. Scholars of comedy and ancient scholarship, the primary audience (I would hesitate to recommend the book to students), should begin by reading the conclusions before tackling the chapters; still, they will find the book promises more than it delivers.

First, the book does not always show that 'scholarship' is even at issue. Of course, Straton in the late fourth century can joke at Philitas' expense (pp. 148–51; N.'s account of the fragment's text is misleading, however). It is much less clear that anything similar applies to Aristophanes' *Daitales* or Cratinus, fr. 355 K.-A. (or, say, to the *Odyssey* parody in *Wasps*). We are told that Cratinus parodied Homer in fr. 355, but this does not imply engagement with *scholarship*. Even if $\gamma\lambda\omega\tau\tau\alpha$ in *Daitales* is a piece of proto-technical vocabulary, is this any more scholarly than the glossing of Homer undertaken by Plato's Ion (missing from consideration here)? What Ion does in Plato would fall short of 'scholarship' as N. defines it in the opening chapter (pp. 13–33). N. demonstrates that Homer was an object of thought in the fifth century (although her elision of Herodotus' reception of Homer with Pausanias' account of the 'Peisistratean recension', pp. 154–5, rather deviously makes it sound as though there is fifth-century evidence for the latter), but 'scholarship' requires a stricter test. A similar confusion enters Chapter 2: N. terms a joke about passive homosexuals having feminine names a 'grammatical double entendre' (p. 70); but how 'scholarly' does our understanding have to be in order to find this funny? It might be more fruitful to talk not of 'bringing scholarly discourses on comic stage' (p. 222, *sic*), but of increasing participation in and sophistication of intellectual life allowing more conscious exploitation of humour: roughly, jokes could become cleverer as thought became deeper (but even that will encounter problems with evidence for early comedy; and there is perhaps a risk of reigniting B. Snell's *Gedankengeschichte*). Earlier in the chapter, N. assesses the uses of the word $\delta\rho\theta\acute{o}\varsigma$ as a 'key word' of scholarly discourse, but then admits that there are no firm criteria for when it is a technical term (p. 59).

A wealth of theoretical ideas – space, environment, intertextuality, intermediality, embodiment, cognition – jostle for space in the pages of the book. In practice, these are often relegated to buzzwords without contributing much to the book's thesis; we are given plentiful references to follow up, particularly in the introduction, but N.'s own interpretation and application of the various theories is not clearly explained. One sometimes has the impression that there are simply too many competing ideas to be fruitfully integrated.

For example, according to N., ancient speculation on the analysis of names is the intellectual background to the weighing-scene in the *Frogs* (1378ff.), which tests the notion that words should somehow equal their designation (Ar. *Ra.* 1059). N. seems to take this literally: she infers that the audience, when it hears the name of a mountain, 'is challenged to share the everyday experience of living in Attica' (p. 53), presumably because hearing the name of a mountain is exactly like any other way of experiencing it. But this seems to mix up the discursive and the lexical, two of the five 'fundamental levels' of language defined (not uncontroversially) at p. 25.

In Chapter 2 Aristophanes' *Clouds* is held up as an example of an 'experiential dimension' to scholarly discussion involving 'visual and auditory perception' (p. 69). It is, however, unclear what is *uniquely* 'experiential' about comedy as opposed to real-life discussions with the sophists: those discussions presumably also depend on visual and auditory perception (even on kinesis according to Plato, *Prot.* 314e–315b). The missing link, however, is a discussion of comedy's performance practice (which only appears in the conclusion).

There is a lost opportunity here to engage with work on Presocratic philosophy's presence in Aristophanes and tragedy (work by A. Clements, W. Allan, J. Assael and F. Egli is missing); this might have opened up perspectives on *Clouds*-Socrates as an 'embodiment' of scientific theories.

'Embodiment' is a major theme of the work, but it is not always clear how it is supposed to play out. Thus comedy "'embodied" roundness on stage' (p. 86) when characters used evaluative terms such as *στρογγύλος* ('smooth'); the use of 'fish-brine' and 'blind man' to refer to Archilochus and Homer (Cratinus, fr. 6 K.-A.) is an 'environmental metaphor' (p. 87; other 'environmental spheres' include 'sport, carpentry, medicine, ship-building, cooking, or ritual practice', p. 93). According to N., metaphors embody insofar as they evoke some other experience (e.g. listening to Archilochus vs tasting brine); but this merely establishes that comedy uses metaphors (all metaphors evoke another experience). Similarly, in Chapter 6, N. argues that scholarship on Greek dialect was encouraged by the 'embodiment' of dialect speakers on stage; but is such embodiment any more relevant than the fact that dialect speakers were embodied in real life? N.'s claim that 'the morpheme *-ίζεiv* started *signifying* "speaking in the fashion of X"' (p. 136, my emphasis) is a misunderstanding (Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik* I, 736 stresses the function of *-ίζεiv* in this context only in contrast to the use of *-άζεiv*); indeed, N. herself glosses *λακωνίζω* as 'to have Spartan habits' (p. 138). These verbs are part of ethnographic, not purely linguistic, thought.

Chapter 4, on genre, claims that 'tragedy' and 'comedy' change their designation from performances to literary genres in the 420s BCE (p. 108), which is held to be evidence of the 'increasing spread of technical vocabulary' (p. 96). This is at odds with the pictorial evidence adduced by N. (based on the work of E. Hall), which would argue for a higher date for this process. Furthermore, since tragedy and comedy differ in performance context and diction, some notion that there is a distinction between them must have existed from a very early stage (N. says Alcman 'establishes his *genre*', p. 116, my emphasis). There is more at stake here than drama alone can demonstrate. In any case, is 'tragedy (genre)' really *more* technical than 'tragedy (performance)', and if so, in what context? N.'s conclusions seem to backtrack at p. 111, where she accepts S. Halliwell's argument that text and production cannot be divided: where does that leave the concept of genre adumbrated by Old Comedy?

Chapter 5, on metre, faces a particularly intractable topic. N.'s theses, that metre is 'auditory, somatic and sensory' and that 'all designations for rhythms and metres referred to somatic activities and the movements of hands, feet, head and voice' (pp. 133–4) are doubtful, the first because it does not separate metre from any other experience; the second is difficult to map onto, say, *ἔζάμετρον*. Quite often the early evidence for metrical analysis is simply very unclear, and that includes the evidence from comedy: can we trust the scholiast's idea that the reference to 'feet' in *Frogs* 1323–4 (see pp. 131–2) is a reference to metrical feet (Pindar's 'Dorian sandal', *Ol.* 3.4–6, is surely worn on a dancer's foot, not a metrical feature)? N.'s brief discussion of Euripides' *Oedipus* must now be read with E. Prodi, *ZPE* 221 (2022), 8–15: the text of the papyrus in *TrGF* is no longer citable.

Specialists will perhaps form their own views on individual chapters, but neither the theoretical apparatus nor the empirical details add up to a convincing treatment of this topic of the book as a whole.

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