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Some thoughts on humor and music in Aristophanes' plays*

Loredana DI VIRGILIO

Introduction

Whoever deals with ancient Greek dramatic texts should never neglect that what we face today as “text” was actually a “360° performance” for the “collective experience” of the theatre, in which several means of expressions were used to captivate the audience’s emotional involvement.

In particular, it is possible to approach ancient Greek comedy focusing on some elements that are illustrative of the important role performed by music, intended as both a comic work instrument and an expressive modality. It should be worth bearing in mind that music and laughter, as natural forms of expression belonging to all human beings, go beyond time and space, and some of their modes of operation could be considered “universal” indeed.

Greek comedy provides a large variety of techniques conceived for making people laugh: the so-called *onomasti komōidein* (“mocking someone directly, by name”), parody, obscenities, puns, funny accidents, masks, gestures, and so on, many of which can be used in different ways,¹ not least from a musical point of view. In fact, just as the text, gesture, costumes – and alongside them – also music could be variously used by the poet (or better, “composer”) in order to express humor. Even if nowadays we lack the melodies, the study of the metrical structures of the songs can provide us a good amount of information about the comic scene. Furthermore, by observing the different uses of musical instruments into comedy, some particular figures of speech, special characters, and so on, it is possible to become aware of the important role played by music in ancient Greek comedy. Aristophanes’ comedies represent an excellent opportunity for an investigation of this kind; in this sense, this paper contains, as food for thought, a brief

* This paper represents a revised and extended edition of the one entitled *Laughing with Ancient Greeks. Examples of Comic Use of Metres and Sounds in Aristophanes*, presented at the Workshop *The Mediterranean as a Plaza* – co-organized by the Mediterranean Studies Group (Tokyo) and the University of Urbino “Carlo Bo” and that took place Urbino, 22-23 March 2018 – and published in Hiroshi Kato, Liana Lomiento (eds.), *The Mediterranean as a Plaza. Japanese and Italian Insights on the Great Sea*, EPHESO, vol. 6, Cisalpino Istituto Editoriale Universitario, 2018, pp. 27-47.

1 Cfr. for example SOMMERSTEIN 1996b; SOMMERSTEIN 2009; ZIMMERMANN 2014, pp. 149-156.

selection of passages from Aristophanes' *Birds*, *Thesmophoriazusae*, and *Frogs*, in which it is possible to identify different models of "musical strategies" used by the playwright for making his audience laugh.

It seems useful to keep in mind that the comic text can be approached with special regard to music thanks to some "universal" techniques – all analyzable – that are common to literature and music. A remarkable and easily understandable support can be found in the very interesting lesson entitled *Humor in Music*, held by the famous chief-orchestra Leonard Bernstein in 1959 within the series of *Young People's Concerts*.² In that lesson, Bernstein made clear that *music can be funny* – it is something we all know – but it has to be so for some *specific reasons*. He explained, then, several techniques of humoristic music, just as we could analyze a literary text and say why it is funny by identifying, for example, its specific figures of speech.³

The aim of these following pages is to analyze the text and the scene of Aristophanes, remembering also the teachings of Bernstein, in the attempt to present the musical techniques of comedy in a simple but – I hope – captivating way, trying to image how ancient Greeks had fun from music in theatre.

Before starting the review of the Aristophanic passages to be analyzed, it is worth warning the reader that the Greek texts of the *solo* songs (*Av.* 227-262; *Th.* 776-784 and 1015-1055; *Ra.* 1284-1295 and 1264-1277;) are going to be presented in the colometry edited by me after an in-depth study on Aristophanes' manuscript tradition;⁴ also critical apparatus and colometric apparatus are edited by me.⁵ Greek text of the other passages, instead, reproduce Wilson's edition. For *Ra.* 1284-1295, 1264-1277 and *Th.* 1015-1055 an apparatus of the sources is also provided,

2 The transcript of the lesson can be found at <https://leonardbernstein.com/lectures/television-scripts/young-peoples-concerts/humor-in-music>. Other bibliography on this subject can be easily found, for example GILBERT 1926.

3 Bernstein made use of masterpieces by great composers from different times, such as Gershwin, Haydn, Prokofiev, Mahler, Strauss, Mozart, Dukas, and many more. It seems meaningful that almost all of the types of humoristic music selected and presented by Bernstein to his young audience exist also in other kinds of art, including literature: surprise, incongruity, imitation, satire, pun, parody, caricature, burlesque, etc.

4 Manuscripts consulted are listed below. **II** *P.Oxy.* LXXIII 4935 (*Th.* 1043-1051), *saec.* II; **R** *Ravennas* 429, *saec.* X *med.*; **V** *Venetus Marcianus* gr. 474, *saec.* XI *vel* XII; **M4** *Ambrosianus* C 222 *inf.*, *saec.* XII *ex.*; **A** *Parisinus Regius* gr. 2712, *c.* 1300; **Γ** *Laurentianus Plut.* XXXI 15, *saec.* XIV; **M** *Ambrosianus* L 39 *sup.*, *saec.* XIV *in.*; **P20** *Parisinus suppl.* gr. 463, *saec.* XIV *in.*; **Vs1** *Vaticanus Reg.* gr. 147, *saec.* XIV *in.*; **P8** *Parisinus* gr. 2821, *saec.* XIV; **U** *Vaticanus Urbinas* gr. 141, *saec.* XIV; **Vv17** *Vaticanus* gr. 2181, *saec.* XIV *ex.*; **E** *Estensis* gr. 127 (α.U.5.10), *saec.* XIV *ex. vel* XV; **L** *Holkhamensis* gr. 88 *saec.* XV *in.*; **M9** *Ambrosianus* L 41 *sup.*, *saec.* XV; **Mu2** *Monacensis* 492, *saec.* XV; **Vp2** *Vaticanus Palatinus* gr. 67, *saec.* XV; **H** *Hautiensiensis* 1980, *saec.* XV; **B** *Parisinus Regius* gr. 2715, *saec.* XV; **C** *Parisinus Regius* gr. 2717, *saec.* XVI; **Ald** *editio princeps Aldina*, 1498; **Suid.** *Suida*, *saec.* X. Also note: **codd.**=*consensus codicum*; **p**=*consensus codicum* Vp2HC; **t**=*consensus codicum* Vv17LB; **q**=*consensus codicum* Vp2HCLVv17B. For further metrical analyses (yet not based on ancient colometries) and discussions, see ZIMMERMANN 1985 and PARKER 1997.

5 More technical analyses and extensive comments on the songs are contained in my doctoral thesis entitled *Le monodie di Aristofane. Metro musica drammaturgia*, discussed in March 2019 at the University of Urbino "Carlo Bo".

in order to let the reader easily individuate the tragic quotations (from different Aeschylus' dramas for *Frogs*; from Euripides' *Andromeda* for *Thesmophoriazusae*) contained in the songs. All English translations are taken from Alan Sommerstein's single editions of the plays.

I. Incongruity

In his *Humor in Music*, Bernstein highlighted that one of the most important features of humor is to be found in the "incongruity", the lack of sense of two or more things taken together. Incongruity produces laughter and, for this reason, has to be considered a comedy technique, even from a musical point of view. Aristophanes' plays provide a very large amount of examples in which a "contrast" is realized through the discrepancy between the singing characters and the metre used, or between the metre and the scene in general.

It is very interesting to look at this elementary – but indeed functioning technique – as used in *Thesmophoriazusae*, a comedy based on the parody of Euripidean tragedies. In particular, the successful use of this strategy appears clear in the first of the In-law's monodies of the play (*Th.* 776-784).

- 776 ὦ χεῖρες ἐμαί,
 777 ἐγχειρεῖν χρῆν ἔργῳ πορίμῳ.
 778 ³ ἄγε δῆ, πινάκων ξεστῶν δέλτοι,
 779 δέξασθε σμίλης ὀλκούς,
 780 κήρυκας ἐμῶν μόχθων. οἴμοι,
 781 ⁶ τουτὶ τὸ ῥῶ μοχθηρόν.
 782 χώρει, χώρει. ποίαν αὐλακά·
 783 βάσκειτ', ἐπείγετε πάσας καθ' ὁδούς,
 784 ⁹ κείνα, ταῦτα· ταχέως χρή.

[R]

777 χρῆν Bentley : χρῆ R, Suid. π 2064 783 καθ' ὁδούς Biset : καθόδους R 784 κείνα Mu2 ταῦτα Grynaeus (*hac* Divus) : ταῦτα R

| | | |
|-----|-------------------------|------------------|
| 776 | —υ— ^H | an |
| 777 | —————υ— ^H | 2an |
| 778 | ³ υ—υ— | 2an |
| 779 | ————— | 2an _Λ |
| 780 | —υ— | 2an |
| 781 | ⁶ ————— | 2an _Λ |
| 782 | —————υ | 2an |

783 ————
 784 9 ———— ||| 2an_Λ

Oh my hands,
 you should be setting to work at a task that demands
 resourcefulness.

Come now, you smooth tablet-sheets,
 receive the chisel-cut tracks
 780 that will proclaim my troubles (dammit,
 this letter *rho* is giving trouble!)
 [*To the knife*] Go on, go on. What a furrow!
 [*As he throws the tables as far as he can in all directions*]
 Hie you, hasten by every road,
 this way, that way; you must be quick!

Euripides' In-law has been captured by the women because he had just entered, disguised as a woman, the exclusive female assembly during the Thesmophoria in order to defend the tragedian from the charge of misogyny. The poor prisoner thinks out a way to escape, recalling an episode from Euripidean *Palamedes*, where Oeax wrote a message to his father on his oar-blades, and then he entrusted them to the waves of the sea. The similarity between the two scenes – the tragic original and the comic one – is explained by the In-law himself in the lines that precede the monody (*Th.* 765-775).

765 ἄγε δὴ, τίς ἔσται μηχανὴ σωτηρίας;
 τίς πείρα, τίς ἐπίνοι'; ὁ μὲν γὰρ αἴτιος
 καὶ μ' εἰσκυλίσας εἰς τοιαυτὰ πράγματα
 οὐ φαίνεται', οὐπω. φέρε, τίν' οὖν <ἄν> ἄγγελον
 πέμψαιμι' ἐπ' αὐτόν; οἶδ' ἐγὼ καὶ δὴ πόρον
 770 ἐκ τοῦ Παλαμήδους· ὥς ἐκεῖνος, τὰς πλάτας
 ῥίψω γράφων. ἀλλ' οὐ πάρεισιν αἱ πλάται.
 πόθεν οὖν γένοιτ' ἄν μοι πλάται; πόθεν <πλάται;>
 τί δ' ἄν, εἰ ταδὶ τὰγάλαματ' ἀντὶ τῶν πλατῶν
 γράφων διαρρίπτοιμι; βέλτιον πολὺ.
 775 ξύλον γέ τοι καὶ ταῦτα, κάκεῖν' ἦν ξύλον.

INLAW [*to himself*]: Come now, what device will be able to save me? what experiment, what idea? Because the man who's responsible for this, the man who pitched me into all this trouble, hasn't put in an appearance – [*looking hopefully off to the side to see if*

Euripides is approaching] no, he still hasn't. Now then, what messenger could I send to fetch him? Ah yes, I know a trick from his *Palamedes*. I'll do what that man did, write on those oar-blades and throw them in the sea. Only the oar-blades aren't here. Now where could I get oar-blades from? where, oh where? Hey, what if I was to write on these votive tablets instead of the oar-blades, and throw them around in all directions? That's much better. After all, these are wood, and the other were wood too. [*He takes some votive tablets from under the altar, and begins to carve messages on them with the sacrificial knife.*]

The whole scene is established on paratragedy and based on many contrasts: everything here – the metre too – is “perfectly incongruous”, and for this reason “perfectly comic”.

As highlighted by the Italian scholar Enrico Medda, in this monologue is already possible to recognize an “Aristophanic reinterpretation of tragic monologue”,⁶ in particular of the type that regards a decision to be hold. While this kind of monologue in tragedy takes generally place *ad spectatores*, here Aristophanes makes the In-law plan his escape while many women do surround him.⁷ Furthermore, the comic character is dressed as a woman and now is prisoner in the sanctuary Thesmophoreion, trying to act as a tragic hero but actually speaking to wooden tablets, and having some problems in writing the letters of his savior's name “Euripides”, as we learn from l. 781.

From a musical point of view, the “contrast” is to be found in the rhythm used for the In-law's song. In line with the tragic scene the character is re-interpreting, the monody is composed in the so-called “lamentation anapaests”, whose many examples are in tragedy.⁸ In this scene, a simple man dressed as a woman and in the act of trying to catch Euripides' attention, throwing on the ground wooden tablets stolen from the sanctuary, uses a rhythm of tragic lamentation: in other words, *the rhythm is the basic tragic element, while the context is comic*. Anapaests with long syllables in tragedy are generally associated with grief and sorrow, but here the slow rhythm emphasizes instead the carving, and expresses the difficulty of the operation. Particular effort is comically expressed when the In-law has to carve the round line of the Greek letter *rho* (P) of the name ΕΥΡΙΠΙΔΕΣ – the metre underlines Mnesilochus' strain, since ρ makes long the previous syllable. All this composition is “incongruous”, and if we analyze the text paying specific attention to metrics, it is possible to understand how music was in contrast with text, scene and character, perhaps imagining people laughing while hearing this song.

6 MEDDA 2006, p. 100 («rilettura aristofanea del monologo tragico»).

7 Cfr. MEDDA 2006, p. 101.

8 Cfr. GENTILI – LOMIENTO 2008, pp. 129-130.

II. Imitation

“Imitation” can be considered the opposite technique of contrast. As Bernstein declares in his lesson, «the first and simplest way that music can be amusing is by simply imitating nature. It’s one of the oldest ways of making you laugh – by imitating things or people». As just in the previous example of *Thesmophoriazousae* part of comedy was created by the fact that the In-law was imitating Oeax – and we must not forget that another actor is playing the part of Euripides and then, on a second level, of Euripides acting as several tragedian heroes – also music can imitate something in a comic way. We are dealing with a sort of “universal law”: if we come back again to Bernstein’s words, the similarity between modern and ancient times, together with modern and ancient basic principles of music, appears really striking: «it’s like comedians who do impersonations of famous stars: like impersonating Greta Garbo... or impersonating Katherine Hepburn... But the way music does this is by imitating sounds, sounds we all know, like mosquitos, or trains, or ox-carts, or little chickens, or a big sneeze».

2.1. Vocal imitation of sounds. From a literary point of view, imitation of sounds is known under the name of “onomatopoeia”, a very common figure of speech so strictly related with music – technically, and not by chance, it is a figure of sound. As regards sounds of nature, the renowned Hoopoe’s second song in Aristophanes’ *Birds* (Av. 227-262) – a comedy where the concept of *mimēsis* is used by the dramatist in every sense and single possibility – represents the most enlightening example we can consider.

- 227 ἐπο ποι πόι πο πο πο ποι πο ποί.
 228 ιώ ιώ ιτώ ιτώ ιτώ ιτώ
 229 ³ ἴτω τις ὄδε τῶν ἐμῶν ὁμοπτέρων·
 230 ὅσοι τ’ εὐσπόρους ἀγροίκων γύας
 231 νέμεσθε, φῦλα μυρία κριθοτράγων
 232 ⁶ σπερμολόγων τε γένη,
 233^a ταχὺ πετόμενα,
 233^b μαλθακὴν ἰέντα γῆρυν.
 234 ⁹ ὅσα τ’ ἐν ἄλοκι θαμὰ βῶλον ἀμφι-
 235 τιττυβίζεθ’ ὥδε λεπτὸν
 236 ἡδομένα φωνᾷ.
 237 ¹² τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο.
 238 ὅσα θ’ ὑμῶν κατὰ κήπους
 239 ἐπὶ κισσοῦ κλάδεσι νομὸν ἔχει,
 240^a ¹⁵ τά τε κατ’ ὄρεα τά τε
 240^b κοτινοτράγα τά τε κομαροφάγα,

- 241 ἀνύσατε πετόμενα
 242 ¹⁸ πρὸς ἐμὴν αὐδάν·
 243 τριοτό· τριοτό· τοτοβρίξ.
 244 οἱ θ' ἐλείας παρ' αὐλῶνας ὄξυστόμους
 245 ²¹ ἐμπίδας κάπτεθ', ὅσα τ' εὐδρόσους
 246 γῆς τόπους ἔχετε λει-
 247 μῶνά τ' ἐρόεντα Μαραθῶνος,
 248 ²⁴ ὄρνις πτεροποίκιλος
 249 ἀτταγᾶς ἀτταγᾶς.
 250 ὦν τ' ἐπὶ πόντιον οἶδμα θαλάσσης
 251 ²⁷ φῦλα μετ' ἀλκυόνεσσι ποτᾶται,
 252 δεῦρ' ἵτε πευσόμενοι τὰ νεώτερα,
 253 πάντα γὰρ ἐνθάδε φῦλ' ἀθροίζομεν
 254 ³⁰ οἰωνῶν ταναοδείρων.
 255 ἥκει γάρ τις δριμύς πρέσβυς
 256 καινὸς γνώμην
 257 ³³ καινῶν ἔργων τ' ἐγχειρητής.
 258 ἀλλ' ἴτ' ἐς λόγους ἅπαντα
 259 δεῦρο δεῦρο δεῦρο δεῦρο
 260 ³⁶ τοροτοροτοροτοροτίξ
 261 κικκαβαῦ κικκαβαῦ
 262 τοροτοροτοροτορολιλίξ.

[RVAMUΓM9Vp2HCVv17LBAld]

- 232-233^a** coniung. AUVp2HVv17LAlD **233^a-233^b** coniung. M **233^b-234** θαμὰ | U **234**
 βῶλον | qAld **234-235** βῶλον – λεπτόν | U ἀμφιτιτυβίζεθ' ὧδε | qAld **235-236** coniung. A
 λεπτόν – φωνῆ | qAld **238-239** κλάδεσι | A ἐπὶ κισ- | qAld **239-240^a** νομόν – τε (alterum) |
 A -σου – ὄρεα | qAld **240^a-240^b** κοτινοτράγα | M τε (tertium) | U τά (alterum) – κομαροφάγα
 | qAld **240^a** spatium atque punctum inter ὄρεα et τά ponit M9 **240^b** spatium atque punctum
 in alto inter κοτινοτράγα et τά ponit M9 τε | RVΓM9 τά – κομαροφάγα | M **240^b-241** spatium
 inter κομαροφάγα et ἀνύσατε ponit M9 κομαροφάγα – πετομένα RVUΓM9 **241-242** coniung.
 AMpLBAld **243-244** βρίξ – ὄξυστόμους | U **244** ὅσα – αὐλῶνας | qAld **244-245** ἐμπίδας |
 A τὰς ὄξυστόμους ἐμπίδας | qAld **245** κάπτεθ' – εὐδρόσους τε | qAld **245-246** κάπτεθ' – ἔχετε
 | A **246-247** λειμῶνα – Μαραθῶνος | A Μαραθῶνος | U γῆς (vel γᾶς) – καὶ λειμῶ- | qAld **247**
 -να – Μαραθῶνος | qAld **248-249** coniung. AUG **255-257** coniung. A **256-257** coniung.
 U **256** om. A

227 ἐπο ποι πόι πο πο πο ποι πο ποί R : ἐπό· ποί· πό· πό· πό· πό· πο· πο· ποί V ἐπόποι· πόπό· πόπό· πόπό· ποποι A ἐποποι· πό· πό· πό· πό· πό· πό· πό· ποί M ἐποποι· ποποποποποποι ποποι U ἐπό ποι (ἐπό ποι Γ²) · πό· πό· πό· πό· ποί (ποί Γ¹) ποποι (πόποι Γ²) Γ¹ ἐ πο πο πο πο πο πο πο ποί M9 ἐποποιποποποι· ποπὸν· ποπὸν· Vp2 ἐποποι· ποποπό· ποποι· ποποι· Vv17 εποποι· ποποπό· ποποι· ποποι· LAld ἐποποι· πό· πό· πό· ποποι· ποποι B ἐποποι ποποποι ποποι ποποι HC, ἐποποι ποί ποποι ποποι ποποι Suid. ε 2807 228 ἰτὼ (vel ἰτὼ) quater RVAMM9pVv17LAld : quinquies Suid. ε 2807, semel Σ^V, ἴτὼ quater Γ, ἴτὼ quater U^{ac}B, bis Σ^R, ἴτὼ ἴτὼ ἰτὼ ἰτὼ U^{pc} 229 ἰτὼ A ἐμῶν om. A 230 ἀγρῶν q (ἀγροίκων s.l. B) γύας MΓ^{pc} : γύας RVAUΓ^{ac}M9qAld 234-235 ἀμφιτιτυβίζεσθ' (-τιτzy- U) AU 237 τιο octies RVMUΓM9Vp2CtAld, Suid. ε 2807 : septies H decies AM9^{ac} 239 κλάδεσσι R κλάδεσιν Γ^{pc} 242 αὐδάν RAΓ^{ac}UMpVv17LAld v.l. Σ^M: αὐιδάν VMΓ^{pc}M9B² 243 τριοτό· τριοτό· τοτοβρίζ R, Suid. ε 2807 : τριοττό· τριοττό· τοβρίζ V τριοτό τροτιό τότοβρίζ (-βρύξ B^{ac}) AB^{ac} τριοτό· τροτιοτό· τοβρίζ MΓ¹ τροττό· τροτιοττό· τοβρίζ (-βρύξ B^{pc}) Γ^{pc}M9B^{pc} τριοτυτροτιστροτριβρίζ U τριοτό· τριοτό· τροτιοτό (τοτρι- Vp2C τρι- H) τοβρίζ pVv17LAld 244 οἱ RVAMUΓM9B^{pc} : ὅσα q(B^{ac})Ald εὐλείας A ἐλείους Γ^{pc} 245 τὰς ἐμπίδας CLBAld ὅσαι R κάμπτεθ' pVv17L, Suid. ε 1020 (κάμπτετε) post εὐδρόσους add. τε pVv17L 246 post ἔχετε add. καὶ qAld 247 τὸν ἐρόεντα qAld 248 τε post ὄρνις add. qAld 251 ποτῦτε R^{ac}Ald 254 post οἰωνῶν add. τῶν Vp2Vv17Ald 256 καινὸς γνώμην om. A 257 ἔργων τ' RVUΓM9Vv17LAld : τ' ἔργων ABp ἔργων M, Suid. κ 1175 259 δεῦρο quater AUVp2CVv17L : ter H quinquies RVMΓM9B, Suid. τ 2807 260 τορο- quater (τοροτοροτοροτο- Vv17) RUGHVv17, Suid. τ 2807 : quinquies MVp2CLBAld sexies VM9 septies A -τίξ RVM9 : -τίγξ AMUΓq, Suid. τ 2807 261 κικκαβαῦ bis RVΓM9qAld, Suid. τ 2807 : κικκαβᾶν bis M κικκαβᾶν κικκιβαβᾶ A κικκαζαῦ κικκαβαῦ U 262 τορο- ter V^{pc}UΓqAld : quater RA bis Suid. τ 2807, τοτοτοτορο M τριοτο M9 v.l. Γ -λιλιλιξ RAL : τολιλιλιξ VMpVv17LAld τολιλίγξ UΓB, Suid. τ 2807 τολιλιλιλιξ M9 v.l. Γ

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 227 | extra metrum | |
| 228 | — — — — — | 3ia |
| 229 | ³ — — — — — | 3ia |
| 230 | — — — — — | ba ia cr |
| 231 | — — — — — | ia ^{penth} 3da _^ ^ (iambel) |
| 232 | ⁶ — — — — — | 3da _^ ^ |
| 233 ^a | — — — — — | tr vel ia |
| 233 ^b | — — — — — | 2tr |
| 234 | ⁹ — — — — — | 2ia hypercat |
| 235 | — — — — — | 2tr |
| 236 | — — — — — | 3da _^ ^ |
| 237 | ¹² extra metrum | |
| 238 | — — — — — | 2ion ^{mi} |
| 239 | — — — — — | ion ^{mi} tr hypercat vel ion ^{mi} ia hypercat (2ion ^{mi} hypercat) |

| | | | |
|------------------|----|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 240 ^a | 15 | ~~~~~ | an |
| 240 ^b | | ~~~~~ ^H | 2an _^ _^ |
| 241 | | ~~~~~ | an |
| 242 | 18 | ~~~~ | an |
| 243 | | extra metrum | |
| 244 | | ~--~--~--~-- | 4cr |
| 245 | 21 | ~--~--~--~-- | 3cr |
| 246 | | ~--~--~-- | 2cr |
| 247 | | ~--~--~--~-- | 3cr _^ <i>vel</i> 2cr sp |
| 248 | 24 | ~--~--~-- | tel |
| 249 | | ~--~--~-- | 2cr |
| 250 | | ~--~--~--~-- | 4da (alcm) |
| 251 | 27 | ~--~--~--~-- | 4da (alcm) |
| 252 | | ~--~--~--~-- | 4da (alcm) |
| 253 | | ~--~--~--~-- | 4da (alcm) |
| 254 | 30 | ~--~--~-- | 2an _^ |
| 255 | | ~--~--~-- | 2an |
| 256 | | ~--~--~-- | an |
| 257 | 33 | ~--~--~-- | 2an |
| 258 | | ~--~--~-- | 2tr |
| 259 | | ~--~--~-- | 2tr |
| 260 | 36 | extra metrum | |
| 261 | | ~--~--~-- | 2cr |
| 262 | | extra metrum | |

Epopoi, popopopopoi, popoi!
 Io, io, ito, ito, hither, hither,
 hither let all my feathered fellows come!
 230 All who dwell in the country plough-lands
 rich in seed, the myriad tribes of barleycorn-eaters
 and the races of seed-gatherers
 that fly swiftly and utter soft notes,
 and all who in the furrows often
 235 gently twitter over the turned soil
 with joyful voices, like this,
 tio tio tio tio tio tio tio!
 And all of you who find their food
 in gardens on the ivy branches,

- 240 and you of the hills, the oleaster-eaters and the arbutus-eaters,
hurry, come flying to my call:
triotto triotto totobrix!
- And you who in the marshy valleys swallow
- 245 the sharp-biting gnats, and all you who inhabit
the well-watered regions of the land and the lovely meads of Marathon,
and the bird of patterned plumage, francolin, francolin!
- 250 And you whose tribes fly with the halcyons
over the swell of the open sea,
come hither to learn the news;
for we are assembling here all the tribes
of long-necked fowls.
- 255 For a sharp-witted old man has come here,
novel in his ideas
and an attempter of novel deeds.
Come to the meeting, all of you,
hither, hither, hither, hither!
- 270 Torotorotorotorotix!
Kikkabau, kikkabau!
Torotorotorolililix!

This song arises from the mouth of the Hoopoe, king of the birds, to call and gather every kind of bird, as the Hoopoe is going to explain a new political project. At the beginning of the comedy, in fact, Peisetaerus and Euelpides, two Athenians disappointed by their city, have reached the Hoopoe, asking for advice on some new towns in which eventually live free from any annoyance (*Av.* 39-48).

- οἱ μὲν γὰρ οὖν τέττιγες ἓνα μῆν' ἢ δύο
- 40 ἐπὶ τῶν κραδῶν ᾄδουσ', Ἀθηναῖοι δ' αἰεὶ
ἐπὶ τῶν δικῶν ᾄδουσι πάντα τὸν βίον.
διὰ ταῦτα τόνδε τὸν βάδον βαδίζομεν,
κανοῦν δ' ἔχοντε καὶ χύτραν καὶ μυρρίνας
πλανώμεθα ζητοῦντε τόπον ἀπράγμονα,
- 45 ὅποι καθιδρυθέντε διαγενοίμεθ' ἄν.
ὁ δὲ στόλος νῶν ἐστι παρὰ τὸν Τηρέα,
τὸν ἔποπα, παρ' ἐκείνου πυθέσθαι δεομένω,
εἷ που τοιαύτην εἶδε πόλιν ἧ' πέπτατο.

That's the thing: the cicadas chirp on the branches for a month or two, the Athenians chirp away at lawsuits continually all their lives long. That's why we're trekking this trek; with a basket, a pot and some myrtle-wreaths, we're wandering in search of a trouble-free place where we can settle and pass our lives. Our journey now is to see Tereus the hoopoe, wanting to find out from him if he's seen a city of that kind anywhere he's flown over.

After evaluating the possibilities shown by the Hoopoe, Peisetaerus gets to an eccentric idea: he wants the Hoopoe himself to establish a new city, the city of birds, located in the air, where they could finally live in peace. The Hoopoe is excited: he is ready to found the new city, but first he has to summon the community of the birds in order to have a complete approval. Thus, he calls his companions by singing this long monody, which is really a masterpiece of music.

We shall later come back on the extraordinary metrical-rhythmical mimesis, but for the moment, it will be sufficient to list the onomatopoeias created by Aristophanes to reproduce birds' different voices:

- l. 227 ἔπο ποι πόι πο πο πο ποι πο ποί;
- l. 228 ιώ ιώ ίτώ ίτώ ίτώ ίτώ;
- l. 237 τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο τιο;
- l. 243 τριοτό· τριοτό· τοτοβρίξ;
- l. 249 ἀτταγᾶς ἀτταγᾶς (francolin's Greek name is onomatopoeic);
- l. 259 δεῦρο δεῦρο δεῦρο δεῦρο (the adverb "here" is used as a sort of onomatopoeia, with a repetition leading to the real onomatopoeias of ll. 260-262);
- l. 260 τοροτοροτοροτοροτίξ;
- l. 261 κικκαβαῦ κικκαβαῦ (as for the francolin, owl's Greek name is onomatopoeic too);
- l. 262 τοροτοροτοροτορολιλιλίξ.

Apart from sounds of nature, voice can also imitate sounds produced by objects, with comic effects.

In *Frogs*, for example, Euripides blames Aeschylus for the monotony of his compositions. After having sung a first monody, composed of Aeschylean tragedy quotations whose every second line presents the same rhythm (*Ra.* 1264-1277, see forward), Euripides' aim is to demonstrate that Aeschylus' songs, as long as one tries to vary the way of composing, yet are sounding always the same. It is for this reason that Euripides introduces a second monody, this time composed "in the manner of *kitharodic nomoi*" (ll. 1278-1282):

- ΔΙ. ὦ Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τὸ χρῆμα τῶν κόπων ὅσον.
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν εἰς τὸ βαλανεῖον βούλομαι
 1280 ὑπὸ τῶν κόπων γὰρ τῷ νεφρῷ βουβωνιῶ.
 ΕΥ. μὴ πρὶν γ' ἀκούσης χᾶτέραν στάσιν μελῶν
 ἐκ τῶν κιθαρωδικῶν νόμων εἰργασμένην.

DIONYSUS: Lord Zeus, what an orgy of striking! [*Making as if to depart*] As far as I'm concerned, I want to go to the bath-house; all these strokes have given me swellings in the ... kidneys.

EURIPIDES: Not before you've heard another series of songs, made out of lyre tunes.

Arranged as a little *nomos*, the following monody is a combination of several Aeschylean lyric quotations, again with a recurrent anapaestic line (on metrical-rhythmical comedy see forward), but also with a recurrent onomatopoeic line created to imitate the sound of a *kithara*. In fact, in order to reproduce a typical Aeschylus' song, Euripides would really need a *kithara*, but he does not have it. Therefore, after every two lines, he reproduces by himself, by using his own voice, the sound of the *kithara*, by singing *tophlattothrattophlattothrat*.⁹

- 1284 ὅπως Ἀχαιῶν
 1285 δίθρονον κράτος Ἑλλάδος ἦβας
 1286 ³ τοφλαττοθραττοφλαττοθρατ

 1287^a Σφίγγα δυσαμεριᾶν
 1287^b πρύτανιν κύνα πέμπει
 1288 ⁶ τοφλαττοθραττοφλαττοθρατ
 1289^a σύν δορὶ καὶ χερὶ πρᾶκ-
 1289^b τορι θούριος ὄρνις
 1290 ⁹ τοφλαττοθραττοφλαττοθρατ

 1291 κυρεῖν παρασχῶν
 1292 ἰταμαῖς κυσὶν ἀεροφοίοις
 1293 ¹² τοφλαττοθραττοφλαττοθρατ

 1294 τὸ συγκλινές τ' ἐπ' Αἴαντι

9 In his edition, Sommerstein accepts Fritzsche's emendation of the text. For other vocal imitations of strings consider, for example, Ar. *Pl.* 290 θρεττανελο θρεττανελο, or Archil. fr. 324 West, whose onomatopoeia τήνελλα has been interpreted, since the antiquity, as imitation of the sound of *kithara* (cfr. *Schol. vet. Pi. O.* 9. 1c, vol. I p. 266 Drachmann: Ἀρχίλοχος τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ ὕμνον ... ἀπορήσας κιθαρωδοῦ διὰ τινος λέξεως τὸ μέλος ἐμιμήσατο). Cfr. ROCCONI 2003, pp. 81, 91.

1295 τοφλαττοθραττοφλαττοθρατ

1284-1285 A. *Ag.* 108-109 **1287^a-1287^b** *TrGF* A. *Sphinx* F 236 **1289^a-1289^b** A. *Ag.* 111-112
1291-1292 *TrGF* A. *inc.fab.* F 282 **12924** *TrGF* A. *Thressai* F 84

[RVM4AUEP20P8Vs1LAld]

1284-1285 coniung. UP20P8 **1287^a-1287^b** coniung. AUVs1 **1289^a-1289^b** πράκτορι | VM4ELALd
coniung. RAUP20P8Vs1 **1289^b** θούριος ὄρνις | VM4ELVs1Ald **1291-1292** coniung. AUVs1
1292 ἰταμαῖς κυσὶν | ἀεροφοίταις | P8 **1293** om. U

1285 ἦβαν LAld **1286, 1288, 1290, 1293, 1285** τὸ φλαττο- vel sim. codd., φλαττο- Fritzsche, cfr.
v. 1296 **1287^a** δυσαμεριᾶν Dindorf : -ίαν codd. **1291** κουρεῖν V **1292** ἀεροφοίταις AP8
-φύτοις V **1294** τ' om. LAld hunc v. in quibusdam exemplaribus defuisse testatur Timachidas ap. Σ

1284 υ—υ— ia^{penth}

1285 υ—υ—υ—υ— 2an_^

1286 ³ υ—υ—υ— 2ia

1287^a —υ—υ— 3da_{^ ^}

1287^b υ—υ—υ— an^{penth}

1288 ⁶ υ—υ—υ— 2ia

1289^a —υ—υ— 3da_{^ ^}

1289^b υ—υ—υ— an^{penth}

1290 ⁹ υ—υ—υ— 2ia

1291 υ—υ— ia^{penth}

1292 υ—υ—υ—υ— 2an_^

1293 ¹² υ—υ—υ— 2ia

1294 υ—υ—υ—υ 2ia_^

1295 υ—υ—υ— 2ia

1284/5 How two Achaean kings united in power, of Hellas' young manhood
(phlattothrattophlattothrat)
Sphinx, the bitch that presided o'er days of ill-fortune, were sped with
(phlattothrattophlattothrat)
spear and avenging hand by a bird of martial omen

- 1290 (phlattothrattophlattothrat)
 which handed them over to be the brutal air-roaming hounds' prey
 (phlattothrattophlattothrat)
 and those who gathered around Ajax
 1295 (phlattothrattophlattothrat)

It seems not an improbable suggestion that Euripides, every time in the act of singing the onomatopoeia, pretends to play the imaginary musical instrument, comically moving his arms on an invisible *kithara*.

2.2. Rhythm imitating content. As it has been said at the beginning of paragraph 2, imitation may act in many different ways, even from the musical point of view. Looking again Hoopoe's second monody in *Birds*, we are provided of one of the most striking examples of the mimetic use of metres-rhythms. As already highlighted by the Italian scholar Roberto Pretagostini, both the first and the second songs of Hoopoe in this comedy are established on the concept of metrical mimesis.¹⁰ At ll. 209-222, in fact, the Hoopoe sings a high-refined song to his wife the Nightingale: this monody is composed in "lamentation anapaests", as the Nightingale's human past (*i.e.* when she was Prokne) is marked by the murder of her own son Itys and by dramatic events involving his husband Tereus (then become the Hoopoe). At the same time, the second Hoopoe's monody, the call of the community of the birds category by category, is characterized by the evocation of each kind of birds by a constantly new specific metrical choice. It is possible to summarize the seven big "sections" created by the strong relationship between the text and the metrical structure, while we shall focus in detail only on two particularly interesting passages, two prime examples of metrical mimesis.

- I) ll. 227-229 (c. 1-3): calling all the birds – iambs;
 II) ll. 230-237 (c. 4-12): birds dwelling in the country plough-lands – iambs, trochees, dactyls;
 III) ll. 238-243 (c. 13-19): birds from gardens – ionics *a minore*; birds from the hills – anapaests;
 IV) ll. 244-249 (c. 20-25): birds dwelling in places full of humidity – cretics; the single francolin is distinguished by a telesilleian, but the section is recomposed in cretics with the last line/*colon*, which contains the name of the francolin;
 V) ll. 250-254 (c. 26-30): birds from the sea – dactyls;
 VI) ll. 255-257 (c. 31-33): Peisetaerus – anapaests;
 VII) ll. 258-262 (c. 34-38): conclusion – trochees, cretics and *extra metrum*.

Here I would like to take into special consideration ll. 240-243, referring to the small birds picking olives with their beaks, invited to hurry up and come to the Hoopoe. Except for the

10 Cfr. PRETAGOSTINI 1988.

extra metrum of l. 243, this section is composed entirely of anapaests. The exclusive use of short syllables is to imitate the smallness and the speedy of those birds, in what could be imagined as a musical *accelerando* or *vivace*. This sense of vivacity is realized by the combination of this particular metrical form and the high number of alliterations: so, imitation of birds is realized by metre and voice, and the exaggeration of the speedy is cause of comedy too – the global effect is similar to that of a tong-twister. Using again Bernstein's words, «speed has been one of the main things about wit always; “fast and funny” – that's the rule for jokes».

| | | | |
|------------------|----|-------------------------------|---------|
| 240 ^a | 15 | τά τε κατ' ὄρεα τά τε | |
| 240 ^b | | κοτινοτράγα τά τε κομαροφάγα, | |
| 241 | | ἀνύσατε πετόμενα | |
| 242 | 18 | πρὸς ἐμὴν αὐδάν· | |
| 243 | | τριοτό· τριοτό· τοτοβρίζ. | |
| 240 ^a | 15 | ~~~~~ | an |
| 240 ^b | | ~~~~~ ^H | 2an ^ ^ |
| 241 | | ~~~~~ | an |
| 242 | 18 | ~~~~ | an |
| 243 | | extra metrum | |

The contrary happens, with an effective comic result, at ll. 255-257, when the Hoopoe has to explain the meaning of the call: an old man has come with a new political project, which involves the birds. Anapaests again characterize this section, but now with a very different form if compared with those of the previous example. Here the anapaests present only long syllables, because the intent now is to evoke the slow dragging-on typical of old people like Peisetaerus. The musical effect is that of a *rallentando*, in comic contrast with the general lively variety of the rest of the monody dedicated to birds.

| | | | |
|-----|----|-----------------------------|-----|
| 255 | | ἦκει γάρ τις δριμύς πρέσβυς | |
| 256 | | καινὸς γνώμην | |
| 257 | 33 | καινῶν ἔργων τ' ἐγχειρητής. | |
| 255 | | ----- | 2an |
| 256 | | ----- | an |
| 257 | 33 | ----- | 2an |

The power of rhythms to produce a special effect on the audience and to induce some particular perception on people is testified also by Aristides Quintilianus, *de Mus.* II 15, 15-17

“Winnington-Ingram”:

Τῶν δ' ἐν ἴσῳ λόγῳ οἱ μὲν διὰ βραχειῶν γινόμενοι μόνων τάχιστοι καὶ θερμότεροι,
<οἱ δὲ διὰ μακρῶν μόνων βραδύτεροι> καὶ κατεσταλμένοι ...

Of the rhythms in equal ratio, those composed only of short syllables are most swift and more passionate [*thermoteroi*, lit. “hotter”], those composed only of long syllables are slower and calm. (transl. Barker).

III. *Parody of music, musicians and musical instruments*

For making people laugh, music can also be used – and so it was by ancient comedy playwrights – as a parody of itself, and even thanks to the comic and parodic use of a musician. Well-known are, for example, the personification of the Music in Pherecrates' *Chiron*, or the use of (more or less) technical musical terms with reference to sexuality, like *χιάζειν* and *σιφινάζειν* in Aristophanes' fr. 930 Kassel-Austin, and even the sexual mockery directed to poets and musicians.¹¹ Here I shall focus on the figure of the *auletēs* in *Birds*, a play in which, actually, there are even *two* pipers, with different dramaturgical roles.

At the beginning of the comedy, the Hoopoe goes behind the *skēnē* and sings a sweet serenade whose text, full of musical references, is an invitation for his wife the Nightingale to wake up and raise her wonderful song with her voice (Av. 209-222). Only at the end of this actor's *solo*, the audience hears the voice of the Nightingale, reproduced by the sound of the *aulos*, as it is testified in medieval manuscripts by the *parepigraphē* αὐλεῖ (or αὐλεῖ τις) collocated after l. 222, and also by the ancient *scholium* 222c Holwerda.¹² Everything happens behind the *skēnē*, which reproduces the wood, as several stage directions identifiable from the text itself inform us.¹³ The Nightingale herself will not appear before l. 667, when she is finally invited to enter the stage in order to reach her companions from the Chorus. In fact, she is revealed to be not only a bird – the Nightingale indeed – but the real *auletēs*, as she is provided of a strange beak similar to a pair of skewers and of a sort of belt on her head (ll. 672 ῥυγχος ὀβελίσκοιν ἔχει; 674 ἀπὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς τὸ λέμμα). As we were already informed that the voice of the Nightingale was the voice of the *aulos*, now in these two objects we can identify the two canes of the *aulos* and

11 Apart from the classical study of TAILLARDAT 1965, with specific reference to pp. 458-459, an accurate summary is provided in RECCHIA 2017, p. 64 n. 2, in a study of Aristophanes' fr. 930 Kassel-Austin.

12 αὐλεῖ RV: τοῦτο παρεπιγέγραπται δηλοῦν, ὅτι μιμεῖται τις τὴν ἀηδόνα RVΓ2M ὡς ἔτι ἔνδον οὖσαν ἐν τῇ λόχμῃ VM9Γ2M.

13 Cfr. ll. 202-203 (Hoopoe) δευρὶ γὰρ ἐμβὰς αὐτίκα μάλ' εἰς τὴν λόχμην, / ἔπειτ' ἀνεγείρας τὴν ἐμὴν ἀηδόνα; 207-208 (Peisetaerus) ἄγ' ὡς τάχιστ' εἰς τὴν λόχμην / εἴσβαινε κάνεγειρε τὴν ἀηδόνα; 223-224 (Euelpides) ὦ Ζεῦ βασιλεῦ, τοῦ φθέγματος τοῦρνηθίου· / οἷον κατεμελίτωσε τὴν λόχμην ὅλην. 265-266 (Peisetaerus) ἄλλως ἄρ' οὔποψ, ὡς ἔοικ', εἰς τὴν λόχμην / ἐμβὰς ἐπῶξε χαραδριὸν μιμούμενος

the *phorbeia*, respectively.¹⁴ As a result, we can conclude that the *auletēs* of the play is used as a *real character* of the play, surprising the audience. We can also add that, as Euelpides is seized with sexual passion towards the Nightingale, Aristophanes' spectators would have laughed at this amazing whole scene. The Nightingale-*auletēs* reaches then the Chorus for the *parabasis* (ll. 676-800), as it is confirmed by the text of the *kommation* (ll. 676-684):

680 ὦ φίλη, ὦ ξουθή,
 ὦ φίλτατον ὀρνέων,
 πάντων ζύννομε τῶν ἐμῶν
 ὕμνων, ζύντροφ' ἀηδοῖ,
 ἦλθες, ἦλθες, ὦφθης,
 ἡδὺν φθόγγον ἐμοὶ φέρουσ'·
 ἀλλ', ὦ καλλιβόαν κρέκουσ'
 αὐλὸν φθέγμασιν ἡρινοῖς,
 ἄρχου τῶν ἀναπαίστων.

680 O beloved one, O vibrant-throated one,
 O dearest of birds,
 partner of all my songs,
 Nightingale my companion,
 you have come, you have come, you have appeared,
 bringing your sweet voice to me!
 Now, you who play the notes of springtime
 on the fair-sounding pipe,
 introduce our anapaests.

But just few lines after the *parabasis*, around l. 848 a religious procession enters the stage, in order to sustain the Priest in the foundation of the new city. The Chorus, as we said, has its own *auletēs*, the Nightingale, but for this special circumstance invites Chaeris, a real *auletēs*, to accompany its song for the religious moment. It seems that Chaeris, in fact, was a musician being used to take part in city rites playing his *aulos*, and more than once he is mocked by Aristophanes or by other comedians for his bad playing of for his habit to take advantage of circumstances. In Ar. *Ach.* 16, in fact, Dikaiopolis narrates how he once got upset when Charis appeared in theatre for playing the *Orthios*; at l. 866 of the same comedy, then, some annoying pipe-players are depicted as “offspring of Chaeris” (Χαιριδῆς βομβάυλιοι). In Ar. *Pax* 951, while Trygaeos and his Servant are preparing the sacrifice, the Chorus exhorts to be quicker, because if Chaeris sees them, “he’ll come up uninvited to play the pipes” and then “he’ll puff

14 Cfr. ROMER 1983; BARKER 2004.

and labour” for getting something.¹⁵ *Schol. (vet.Tr.) Av.* 858a Holwerda reports that Charis became *auletes* after having been a “cold” *kitharōidos* (ὁ Χαῖρις οὗτος κιθαρωδὸς ψυχρὸς καὶ γέγονεν αὐλητῆς) and, in this sense, in Pherecr. fr. 6 Kassel-Austin, from *Agrioi*, Chaeris is expected to be mentioned in a list of the worst *kitharōidoi*.¹⁶

From the text of *Av.* 848-861 it is possible to understand that Charis appears on the scene, he plays something on his *aulos*, and then he is sent away badly. His playing, in fact, is immediately stopped by Peisetaerus, who reproaches him as “raven” (l. 861), notoriously the most unmusical of the birds.

PEISETAERUS:

[...] As for myself, I'll summon the priest to organize the procession, so that I can sacrifice to the new gods. [...]

CHORUS:

I agree, I concur,
I hereby join in recommending
that great and solemn processional hymns should rise
to the gods, and at the same time as well, to win
their favour, we should sacrifice a sheep or so.
Let it rise, rise, rise, the Pythian cry,
and let Chaeris pipe an accompaniment to our song.
[*The piper plays on, solo, but untunefully. ...*]

PEISETAERUS [*calling angrily to the piper*]:

You, stop your blowing! [*Coming closer to him*] Heracles,
what's this? By Zeus, I've seen plenty of strange things, but
this I've never seen, a raven in a piper's muzzle!

People, then, does not laugh just because an actor-character is moved away from the scene, but because they hear something terrible, possibly out-of-tune. It is a pure comic moment, inserted by Aristophanes just when concentration and solemnity are expected: an accident in the fluidity of the plot, realized by using music and musicians, and even playing with their identities at the same time. Parody and surprising are working together for comic intention.

Strictly related with the comic use and abuse of music and musicians is also the parody of musical instruments, as it happens in *Frogs*. During the scene of the poetic agon between Aeschylus and Euripides, the older poet introduces the first Aeschylus' parodic song (ll. 1309-

15 *Pax* 950-955 οὐκ οὐκ ἀμύλλησεσθον; ὥς / ὁ Χαῖρις ὑμᾶς ἴδῃ, / πρόσσεισιν αὐλήσων ἄκκλη- / τος, κᾶτα τοῦδ' εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι / φουσῶντι καὶ πονομένῳ / προσδώσετε δῆπον.

16 (A.) φέρ' ἴδω, κιθαρωιδὸς τί κάκιστος ἐγένετο; / (B.) <ὁ> Πεισίου Μέλῃς. μετὰ <τὸν> Μέλῃτα <δ>' ἦν / (A.) ἔχ' ἀτρέμ', ἐγώϊδα, Χαῖρις.

1328) against Euripides with these words (ll. 1304-1308):

1305 ἐνεγκάτω τις τὸ λύριον. καίτοι τί δεῖ
 λύρας ἐπὶ τοῦτο; ποῦ ἴσθιν ἢ τοῖς ὀστράκοις
 αὕτη κροτοῦσα; δεῦρο, Μοῦς' Εὐριπίδου,
 πρὸς ἥνπερ ἐπιτήδεια ταῦτ' ἔδδιν μέλη.
 ΔΙ. αὕτη ποθ' ἢ Μοῦς' οὐκ ἐλεσβίαζεν, οὔ.

AESCHYLUS: Bring me my lyre, someone – but on second thoughts, who needs a lyre for this job? Where's that girl who plays percussion with broken bits of pot? [*Calling within*] Come here, Muse of Euripides; you're the proper accompaniment for these songs to be sung to.

[*The "Muse of Euripides" comes out; she is an old and ugly woman, heavily made up, and dressed like a prostitute. She holds a pair of pots/herds, which she will clash together to provide an accompaniment to the ensuing songs*].

DIONYSUS: This Muse used to be – well, she certainly wasn't part of the Lesbian tradition!

A sequence of rapid *coupes-de théâtre* characterizes this scene. In order to start singing, at l. 1304 Aeschylus requires a lyre, but immediately he corrects himself: they lyre is a too noble instrument to perform Euripides' poetry... some clappers will be sufficient! A comic joke is realized by the substitution of the musical instrument, but we are also dealing with a parody of a second level. In fact, these same clappers are not invoked with their proper name, κρόταλα, but with ὄστρακα, earthenware. Furthermore, a freakish Muse is invited on the scene: she is not a proper Muse, but a prostitute dancing in a lascivious way while playing the earthenware. This example is indicative of the wide scope of parody, involving also music in it. The whole Aristophanic scene, in fact, contains continuous parodic references to the Euripidean *Hypsipyle*, thanks to a continuous interaction of literal quotations or echoes within the monody,¹⁷ allusion to some scenes,¹⁸ the call of the Muse that in tragedy pushed the queen Hypsipyle, by now slave to Nemea, to play the rattles to accompany Opheltes' sleep,¹⁹ etc.

IV. Parody of a style

Parody of a poetical style, with reference to some precise verses, can be often connected

17 Cfr. l. 1312 δροσιζόμεναι and fr. 7, 4 Cockle = TrGF E. *Hypsipyle* F 753c, 4; l. 1329 and fr. 57+81, pp. 110-111 Cockle = TrGF F 765; l. 1322 and p. 137 Cockle, TrGF F 765.

18 Line 1322 could refer to Hypsipyle embracing one of his sons; cfr. SOMMERSTEIN 1996a, p. 276.

19 Cfr. fr. 1, II, 7-14 Cockle = TrGF E. *Hypsipyle* F 742f, 7-14.

with musical parody. Aristophanes in *Ra.* 1264-1277 provides a very enlightening example: Euripides' first monody is meant to imitate Aeschylus poetry, in order to make clear to Dionysus that Aeschylus is always repeating himself, producing boring lyric. At ll. 1249-1250, and then 1261-1262, Euripides introduces his parodic song with these words:

ΕΥ. καὶ μὴν ἔχω γ' οἷς αὐτὸν ἀποδείξω κακὸν
 μελοποιὸν ὄντα καὶ ποιοῦντα ταῦτ' αἰεὶ.

...

πάνυ γε μέλη θαυμαστά· δείξει δὴ τάχα.
εἰς ἓν γὰρ αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ μέλη ξυντεμῶ.

EURIPIDES: All right then, I've got material with which I shall prove that he's a bad lyric writer and that what he composed was always the same thing.

...

[*sarcastically*] Oh, *very* marvelous *indeed*! We shall see presently. I'm going to cut down all his lyrics to a single measure.

The monody Euripides is going to perform is made of fragments from different Aeschylus' tragedies, and it is characterized by the repetition of a *refrain* consisting in the line *ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἀρωγάν*, extrapolated from Aeschylus' *Myrmidons* (fr. 132 Radt). Actually, if we consider the ancient colometry of the song, the sense of repetition is even rhythmic, thanks to the recurrence of a *2an_Λ* (or *paroemiac*), always with the same aspect, in given positions of the whole piece. In fact, being the monody a cento of Aeschylus' verses, for each quotation every first line is always metrically different, while the second one is always a *2an_Λ*. Euripides' intent is to show, from a musical point of view, that as long as Aeschylus tries to change metres and rhythms – and even trying to pass from one play to another – he always falls back into the same one. The comic “hypnotic” effect of this musical choice is such “hammering”²⁰ and “effective” that even Dionysus, performing his duties as judge of the poetic competition, is dragged along by this repetitive anapaestic rhythm and, when he interrupts Euripides by commenting on the song, he unconsciously uses the same anapaests.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| 1264 ^a | Φθιῶτ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, |
| 1264 ^b | τί ποτ' ἀνδροδάϊκτον ἀκούων |
| 1265 | ³ ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἀρωγάν; |
| 1266 ^a | Ἑρμῶν μὲν πρόγονον |

20 Cfr. also Dionysus' ll. 1278-1280 (“Lord Zeus, what an orgy of striking!” etc.)

- 1266^b τίομεν γένος οἱ περὶ λίμιναν.
 1267 ⁶ ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἄρωγάν;
 1268 Δι. δύο σοι κόπω, Αἰσχύλε, τούτω.
 1269 κῦδιστ' Ἀχαιῶν Ἀτρέως
 1270 ΕΥ. ⁹ πολυκοίρανε μάνθανέ μου παῖ.
 1271 ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἄρωγάν;
 1272 Δι. τρίτος, ὦσχύλε, σοι κόπος οὗτος.
 1273 ΕΥ. ¹² εὐφαιμεῖτε· μελισσονόμοι
 1274 δόμον Ἀρτέμιδος πέλας οἶγιν.
 1275 ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἄρωγάν;
 1276^a ¹⁵ κύριός εἰμι θροεῖν
 1276^b ὄδιον κράτος αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν.
 1277 ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἄρωγάν;

1264^a-1264^b *TrGF* A. *Myrmidones* F 132 **1265, 1267, 1271, 1275, 1277** *TrGF* A. *Myrmidones* F 132
1266^a-1266^b *TrGF* A. *Psychagogoi* F 273 **1269-1270** *TrGF* A. *Telephus* F *238 **1273-1274** *TrGF*
A. Hiereai F 87 **1276^a-1276^b** A. *Ag.* 104

[RVM4AUEP20P8Vs1LAld]

1264^a-1264^b coniung. VAM4UEP20P8Vs1LAld spatio inter Ἀχιλλεῦ et τί relicto coniung. R
1266^a-1266^b coniung. AUP8Vs1 **1266^a-1267** om. E **1269** Ἀτρέως τε | L **1269-1270** coniung.
 U **1276^a-1276^b** coniung. AUVs1 κράτος | L **1276^b** αἴσιον ἀνδρῶν | L

post 1263 parepigrapham διαύλιον (vel -ειον) προσυλεῖ τις praebent plerique codd., Suid. δ 804, διαύλιον
 προσυλεῖ Ald, om. A Ἀχιλλεῦ RVAUEVs1, Σ^{ME}: Ἀχιλλεῦ M4P20P8LAld, Σ^V **1265** ἰὴ κόπον Heath
 (cfr. Σ): ἰήκοπον codd. **1266^a-1267** om. E **1268** δύω UP8Vs1 **1269** Ἀτρέως τε L **1270**
 μου om. A **1272** ὦ Αἰσχύλε L Αἰσχύλε Ald **1273** εὐφημεῖτε VE **1276^b** ὄδιον P20L, cfr. A.
Ag. 104: ὅς δ' ἴον R ὅσιον VM4AUEP8Vs1Ald

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1264 ^a | — — — — | ia ^{penth} |
| 1264 ^b | — — — — — — — — | 2an _^ |
| 1265 | ³ — — — — — — — — | — extra metrum 2an _^ |
| 1266 ^a | — — — — | 3da _{^ ^} |
| 1266 ^b | — — — — — — — — | 2an _^ |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| 1267 | ⁶ — — — — — — — — — — | — — <i>extra metrum</i> 2an _Λ |
| 1268 | — — — — — — — — — — | 2an _Λ |
| 1269 | — — — — — — — — — — | ia cho |
| 1270 | ⁹ — — — — — — — — ^H | 2an _Λ |
| 1271 | — — — — — — — — — — | — — <i>extra metrum</i> 2an _Λ |
| 1272 | — — — — — — — — | 2an _Λ |
| 1273 | ¹² — — — — — — — — — — | 4da _{ΛΛ} |
| 1274 | — — — — — — — — — — | 2an _Λ |
| 1275 | — — — — — — — — — — | — — <i>extra metrum</i> 2an _Λ |
| 1276 ^a | ¹⁵ — — — — — — — — — — | 3da _{ΛΛ} |
| 1276 ^b | — — — — — — — — — — | 2an _Λ |
| 1277 | — — — — — — — — — — | — — <i>extra metrum</i> 2an _Λ |

EURIPIDES [*to pipe accompaniment*]:

Phthian Achilles, O why, when thou hearest the sound of men dying –

1265 Ai, ai – stricken, advancest thou not to their succour?

We, the folk of the lake-shore, do honour to Hermes our forebear –

Ai, ai – stricken, advancest thou not to their succour?

DIONYSUS [*setting two pebbles aside*]: That's two strikes against you, Aeschylus.

EURIPIDES:

1270 O most glorious of the Achaeans, great ruler and son of Atreus, mark what I tell thee –

Ai, ai – stricken, advancest thou not to their succour?

DIONYSUS [*setting aside a third pebble*]: Aeschylus, that's your third strike.

EURIPIDES:

Keep ye silence: the Bee-wards approach, to open Artemis' temple –

1275 Ai, ai – stricken, advancest thou not to their succour?

Strong am I yet to declare that sign that sped men on their journey –

Ai, ai – stricken, advancest thou not to their succour?

V. *Aprosdoketon*

Finally, we are going to consider a particular form of surprise, the so-called *aprosdoketon*, which could be defined as the «disappointment of the spectators' expectation».²¹ *Asprosdoketa*

21 ZIMMERMANN 2014, p. 155.

may regard many aspects of the text and the stagecraft, for example puns, *paragrammastismoi*, jokes or the appearance of an unforeseen character or a character acting or dressing in an unexpected way. Musical *aprodoketa* are nowadays traceable from metrics, so that we are able to have an idea of what surprising effects could happen from a rhythmic point of view, always connected with the semantic aspects of the text itself.

The conclusion of this paper follows a sort of *Ringkomposition*, because among Aristophanes' songs, a very appropriate example can be found in the second monody of the In-law, in *Th.* 1015-1055. The context of this song is the same of the first one analyzed in these pages, as the In-law is still prisoner of the women, since every attempt to escape reveals itself to be unsuccessful. The man is still complaining to himself because he is enchained. If at ll. 777-784 he compared himself to Oeax, this time he considers his fate to be very similar to that of Andromeda, Euripidean character from the namesake tragedy represented just the year before. He decides, then, to sing a complaint made of quotations of Andromeda's original tragic complaint. The parody is complete, and involves *opsis*, *lēxis* and *mousikē*.

Within the monody are condensed many lexical *aprodoketa*, like the continuous switching from the use of the feminine (In-law acting as Andromeda) to the masculine (In-law speaking as himself), as at ll. 1020-1021 and 1022-1023; the *paragrammatimos* κημόν for κῶμον at l. 1031, with reference to the unwholesome passion of Athenians for voting; at l. 1033 the substitution of the marine monster supposed to devour Andromeda with Glaucetes, a well-known glutton in Athens, often mocked by comedy playwrights.²² Lexical *aprodoketa* are realized with – or better, strengthened by – metrical *aprodoketa*. Since the song is composed of tragic quotations, it shows text and metrics belonging to the relative tragedy. But the In-law is not able to carry on with his fiction from the very beginning until the end, and each time, after few lines of quotation, he speaks as himself, as a man, interrupting the (para)tragic performance and obtaining a hilarious effect. Every time the register of the In-law swifts from tragic to comic, from high to low, also the metre changes, generally – and significantly – with a rhythmic upturning (note the use of the *epiplokē* for stressing the passages from tragic to comic register, for example at ll. 1055-1051 with the upturning of the dactyls into anapaests; also the passage from a quotation to a proper comic line or section is often marked by the change of metre). It is possible to acknowledge to metre (and music) a guiding function for the understanding of the scene and the song: with these rhythmic surprising “seesaws” fitting the text, comic passages are amplified, and the audience has more fun.

Both dramaturgical and musical parody count on the fame of the model: Andromeda's tragic complain must have been very popular for the audience that had listened to it just the year

22 Cfr. *schol. ad Th.* 1033 Regtuit ἐπεὶ ὀψοφάγος καὶ γαστρίμαργος ὁ Γλαυκέτης, ὡς ἐν Εἰρήνῃ δηλοῦται; *Ar. Pax* 1008 Μορύχῳ Τελέῃ Γλαυκέτῃ κτλ.; *Pl.Com.* fr. 114 K.-A. ὦ θεῖε Μόρυχε· πῶς γὰρ οὐ δαίμων ἔφυς; / καὶ Γλαυκέτης ἡ ψῆττα, καὶ Λεωγόρας, / οἱ ζῆτε τερπνῶς οὐδὲν ἐνθουμούμενοι. Parody is enhanced by the sounding wordplay between κῆτει and Γλαυκέτῃ.

before.²³ Aristophanes uses that lyric complaint two times in *Thesmophoriazusae*: in the monody, we are telling about and in the one just following in the play, at ll. 1065-1072. Unfortunately, we are not able to recover the melody of the songs, but it seems probable that the *solo* of ll. 1015-1055 had recalled the music of the Euripidean model. Translating Fraenkel's words, we have to admit that "the Athenian audience must have had more fun than us, because often it was able to distinguish parodies from original already from the melodies".²⁴

Here is the text of *Th.* 1015-1055, provided with its English translation and metrical analysis: indicated in bold type, it is possible to identify the specific passages in which metrical *aprosdoketa* accompany verbal *aprosdoketa*.

| | |
|------|--|
| 1015 | φίλοι παρθένοι φίλοι, |
| 1016 | πῶς ἂν ἀπέλθοιμι καὶ |
| 1017 | ³ τὸν Σκύθην λάθοιμι; |
| 1018 | κλύεις, ὦ |
| 1019 | προσάδουσ' αὐταῖς ἐν ἄντροις; |
| 1020 | ⁶ κατάνευσον, ἔασον ὥς |
| 1021 | τὴν γυναῖκά μ' ἐλθεῖν. |
| 1022 | ἄνοικτος ὅς μ' ἔδησε τὸν |
| 1023 | ⁹ πολυπονώτατον βροτῶν. |
| 1024 | μόλις δὲ γραῖαν ἀποφυγὼν |
| 1025 | σαπρὰν ἀπωλόμην ὅμως. |
| 1026 | ¹² ὅδε γὰρ ὁ Σκύθης φύλαξ |
| 1027 | πάλοι ἐφέστηκ' ὅλοδον ἄφιλον |
| 1028 | ἐκρέμασέ <με> κόραξι δεῖπνον. |
| 1029 | ¹⁵ ὀρᾷς; οὐ χοροῖσιν οὐδ' |
| 1030 | ὕφ' ἡλίκων νεανίδων |
| 1031 | [ψῆφον] κημὸν ἔστηκ' ἔχουσ' |
| 1032 | ¹⁸ ἀλλ' ἐν πυκνοῖς δεσμοῖσιν ἐμπεπλεγμένη |
| 1033 | κῆτει βορὰ Γλαυκέτη πρόκειμαι. |
| 1034 | γαμηλίῳ μὲν οὐ ξὺν |
| 1035 | ²¹ παιῶνι, δεσμίῳ δέ, |
| 1036 | γοᾷσθε μ', ὦ γυναῖκες, ὥς |
| 1037 | μέλεα μὲν πέπονθα μέλεος, |
| 1038 | ²⁴ ὦ τάλας ἐγὼ τάλας, |
| 1039 | ἀπὸ δὲ συγγόνων ἄλλ' |

23 Arist. *Pr.* XIX 40 contains an interesting consideration about the "natural" phenomenon of "going after" a well-known melody, as it produces in the "captured" listener a feeling of pleasure.

24 Cfr. FRAENKEL 1962, p. 178.

1040 ἄνομα πάθεα, φῶτα λιτομένα
 1041 ²⁷ πολυδάκρυτον Αἶδα γόνον φλέγουσα,
 1042 αἰαῖ αἰαῖ ἔ ἔ,
 1043 ὃς ἔμ' ἀπεξύρησε πρῶτον,
 1044 ³⁰ ὃς ἐμὲ κροκόεντ' ἀμφέδυσεν,
 1045 ἐπὶ δὲ τοῖσδε τόδ' ἀνέπεμψεν
 1046 ἱερόν ἔνθα γυναῖκες.
 1047 ³³ ἰὼ μοι μοίρας ἄν ἔτικτε δαίμων,
 1048 ὦ κατάρατος ἐγώ. τίς ἐμὸν οὐκ ἐπόνεσται
 1049 πάθος ἀμέγαρτον ἐπὶ κακῶν παρουσία;
 1050 ³⁶ εἴθε με πυρφόρος αἰθέρος ἀστήρ
 1051 τὸν βάρβαρον ἐξολέσειεν.
 1052 οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἀθανάταν φλόγα λεύσσειν
 1053 ³⁹ ἐστὶν ἐμοὶ φίλον, ὥς ἐκρεμάσθην,
 1054 λαιμότμητ' ἄχῃ δαιμόνι', αἰόλαν
 1055 νέκυσιν ἐπὶ πορείαν.

1015-1016 TrGF E. *Andromeda* F 117 1018-1020 TrGF E. *Andromeda* F 118 1022-1023 TrGF E. *Andromeda* F 119 1029-1032 TrGF E. *Andromeda* F 122 1034-1041 TrGF E. *Andromeda* F 122

[RΠ]

1027 ὅλοδον | R 1027-1028 ἄφιλον – κόραξι | R 1028-1029 δεῖπνον – χοροῖσιν | R 1029-1030 οὐδ' – νεανίδων | R

1017 λάθοιμι Ellebodus : λάβοιμι RMu2 1019 προσάδουσ' ἀϋταῖς Sommerstein : προσαδοῦσσαι R² (ex -ουσαι, quod habet Σ) Mu2 1028 με suppl. Mehler 1031 ψῆφον del. Hermann 1032 ἐμπεπλεγμένη Mu2 : ἐνπεπλεγμένη R 1034-1035 ξὺν παιῶνι Zanetti (*cum carmine* Divus) : ξυμπαιῶνι RMu2 1039: ἄλλ' Scaliger : ἄλλαν RMu2, ἄνομ' Blaydes 1040 λιτομένα Enger (cf. Σ^R δεομένη) : λιτομέναν RMu2, ἀντομένα et -μέναν Σ^{Rv.l.} 1041 φλέγουσα Enger : φεύγουσαν RMu2 1044 ἀμφέδυσεν Σ^R : ἐνέδυσεν RMu2 1047 ἄν ἔτικτε Casaubon : ἄνετικτε RMu2 1052 λεύσσειν Biset : λεύσειν RMu2 1054 δαιμόνι' Bachmann ap. Fritzsche : δαιμόνων RMu2

| | | |
|------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1015 | — — — — — | ba ia |
| 1016 | — — — — — | cho cr |
| 1017 | ³ — — — — — | 2tr _{^^} |
| 1018 | — — — — — | ba |
| 1019 | — — — — — | 3ba |
| 1020 | ⁶ — — — — — | glyc |

| | | |
|------|--|--|
| 1021 | —u—u— | 2tr_{^^} |
| 1022 | u—u—u— | 2ia |
| 1023 | ⁹ u—u—u— | 2tr _^ |
| 1024 | u—u—u— | 2ia |
| 1025 | u—u—u— | 2ia |
| 1026 | ¹² u—u—u— | 2tr _^ <i>vel</i> cr ia |
| 1027 | u—u—u— | 2tr |
| 1028 | u—u—u—u—u— | 2tr |
| 1029 | ¹⁵ u—u—u— | ba ia |
| 1030 | u—u—u— | 2ia |
| 1031 | —u—u— | 2cr |
| 1032 | ¹⁸ —u—u—u—u— | 3ia |
| 1033 | —u—u—u— | ia 2tr_{^^} |
| 1034 | u—u—u— | 2ia _^ (ia ba) |
| 1035 | ²¹ u—u—u— | 2ia _^ (ia ba) |
| 1036 | u—u—u— | 2ia |
| 1037 | u—u—u—u—u— | 2tr |
| 1038 | ²⁴ —u—u— | 2tr _^ |
| 1039 | u—u—u— | cr ba |
| 1040 | u—u—u—u—u— | do ia |
| 1041 | ²⁷ u—u—u—u—u— ^H | do 2tr _{^^} |
| 1042 | extra metrum | |
| 1043 | u—u—u— | 2tr |
| 1044 | ³⁰ u—u—u—u— | 2tr |
| 1045 | u—u—u—u— | 2tr |
| 1046 | u—u—u— | 2tr _{^^} <i>vel</i> pher |
| 1047 | ³³ —u—u—u— | do 2tr_{^^} |
| 1048 | —u—u—u—u—u— | do 2tr _^ <i>vel</i> hem ^m 2tr _^ |
| 1049 | u—u—u—u—u— ^H | 3ia |
| 1050 | ³⁶ —u—u—u— | 4da _^ |
| 1051 | —u—u—u— | 2an_^ |
| 1052 | —u—u—u— | 4da _^ |
| 1053 | ³⁹ —u—u—u— | 4da _^ |
| 1054 | —u—u—u— | 2do |
| 1055 | u—u—u— | tr _^ |

1015 Maidens, beloved maidens,
how can I get away and

escape unseen by that Scythian?²⁵

Dost thou hear, O thou in the caves
that singest in response to my cries?

1020 Grant my prayer and let me

go home to my wife!²⁶

Pitiless he who bound me,
me the most afflicted of men:²⁷
having just escaped from that decayed

1025 old woman, I'm done for just the same.

For this Scythian, long since
posted to guard me, has hung me up,
doomed, friendless, to make a meal for the ravens.

Seest thou this? Not now in choral dances, nor

1030 among the young woman of my own age

do I stand, holding a voting-urn by the funnel,²⁸

but enmeshed in numerous bonds

I am cast forth **to be food for the monster... Glaucetes.**²⁹

Not with a hymn for a bride

1035 but with one for a captive

lament me, you women,

for I am wretched and have suffered wretchedly –

O unhappy, unhappy man that I am! –

and treatment, moreover, at kindred hands, against all right,

though I besought the man,

1040 kindling a tearful

lament of death –

ah me, ah me! [*sobbing*] –

he who began by shaving me,

he who garbed me in a saffron robe,

25 The In-law swifts from the tragic role of Andromeda to himself, referring to the Scythian guard placed next to him.

26 The In-law surprises the audience by praying for the possibility for him to come back to his wife, thus abandoning the role of Andromeda.

27 Even if, within the tragic quotation, the use of the masculine in place of the feminine is cause of comedy, the passage from *2ia* to *2tr*_Λ is already witnessed in Andromeda's respective fragment of *P.Oxy.* 2628.

28 The *scholium* to this passage simply notes that these words are taken again from *Andromeda* (πάλιν ἐξ Ἀνδρομέδας), but does not specify the “boundaries” of the quotation. VAN LEEUWEN 1904, p. 30, supposes that, for Aristophanes' l. 1031, the respective Euripidean text could be κῶμον ἔστηκ' ἄγουσ', modified by Aristophanes in κημὸν ἔστηκ' ἔχουσ' in order to mock In-law's *philodikia*.

29 See p. 23 and e note 22.

- 1045 and moreover sent me up
to this sanctuary, where the women are.
Alack for my fate
which a god engendered!³⁰
Accursed that I am!
Who will not behold
my unenviable sufferings, in which such sorrows are present?
- 1050 Would that the fiery meteor of the sky –
might utterly destroy that barbarian!
For no longer does it please me to look
on the immortal flame of day, since I have been hung up here
in a god-sent torment to make one slit one's throat,
- 1055 on a darkling journey to the land of the dead.

Many more examples of musical comedy strategies can be traced in Aristophanes' plays. What has been provided here is just a selection presented as food for thought and intended to show, in a hopefully sufficient and simple way, how ancient Greek comedy used all kinds of resources for making the audience laugh.

It is worth to specify that, when we speak of "Aristophanes", we actually deal with the *paradosis* of his text. Nevertheless, by making a deep investigation into the colometry of the songs, as transmitted by ancient manuscripts and papyri – as for the examples proposed in this paper – it is possible to notice a very strong relationship between colometry and dramaturgy, as between the text, its metrics and its meaning, and even with other poetic texts (as we have seen). Coherence and meaning are so strong, from both a musical and dramaturgical point of view, that appears impossible to consider the ancient colometries only a mechanical work of some late grammarian. On the contrary, in every case – as it is demonstrable through concrete examples – into the *paradosis* we seem able to recognize the poet's touch and will.

As regards the main issue of these pages, we may conclude that, on one hand, investigating in depth metrical structures, by putting them in relationship with the text and the scene, allows the modern reader of Aristophanes to enter the poet's laboratory and understand his way of composing. On the other hand, we are able to recognize that the mechanisms of humor in music are not so far from our mentality and way of composing/understanding music and its messages.

30 This passage could be considered a comic *aprosdoketon* if we think that the *daimōn*, for the In-law, is actually Euripides, the cause of all of his troubles.

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