STRANGE TALK

S. COLVIN: *Dialect in Aristophanes. The Politics of Language in Ancient Greek Literature.* Pp. xii + 347. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999. Cased, £48. ISBN: 0-19-815249-3.

Two of Aristophanes' extant plays, *Acharnians* and *Lysistrata*, contain extensive dialect-passages in which a Megarian, a Boeotian, and several Spartans express themselves in an Aristophanic version of their own tongue, and elsewhere in Aristophanes and in the fragments of Old, Middle, and New Comedy actors occasionally launch into dialect (note particularly the Ionicisms found in *Peace*). Surprisingly perhaps, apart from treatments in the handbooks on particular dialects and in grammars, up to now there could scarcely be said to have existed a comprehensive study of dialect in Aristophanes. The nearest thing to it is the somewhat rag-bag treatment of Megarian and Boeotian by R. H. Elliot in his edition of *Acharnians* (Oxford, 1914). (Important methodological discussion, however, is to be found in a set of *aduersaria* on the *Acharnians* by K. J. Dover which appeared in 1963 [*Maia* n.s. 15 (1963), 6ff.] and was reprinted in his *Greek and the Greeks* [Oxford, 1987].) Hence Colvin's is a most necessary and timely book, which amply fits the bill. It is an impressive study in a series that has already produced an important linguistic work in the shape of Eleanor Dickey's *Greek Forms of Address* (Oxford, 1996), which also prominently features sociolinguistics, a topic which is at last entering the bloodstream of the subject.

Apart from some doubts about the relevance of 'code-switching' to the matter in hand (is this a concept that can be sensibly applied to literature as distinct from the spoken language?) and disagreement on a few matters of detail, my sole negative reaction to this work is to the use, all-too-common nowadays, of that over-worked word 'politics' in the subtitle.

The introductory section 'Investigating Language' is wide-ranging and stimulating. It deals with the engagement between literature and dialect and provides many illuminating illustrations from other literatures. C. presents a general survey of sociolinguistic approaches to dialect. After this he moves on to more traditional topics. He provides a collection—with comment—of passages which provide evidence about the language of non-Athenians and non-Greeks in all genres of the Archaic and Classical periods (this also takes into account Attic).

Then C. establishes methodological principles for dealing with dialect as it is preserved in the manuscripts of Aristophanes. C. is excessively modest about the core of the book, which is essentially a comparative grammar based on the data provided by the dialect passages in Aristophanes. This is an immense achievement whose outcome future editors and commentators will plunder. Past commentators will regret that they did not have the opportunity to do the same.

I end with some quibbles on detail (there are rather more misprints and trivial errors than one would have expected so that I feel it would be helpful to go into detail in the hope that a revised edition of the book may appear). P. x: Rennie's initial is W and in the list of editions and bibliography the second half of Wilamowitz's name is misspelled; p. 2: is this really Hardy's voice as a novelist? Surely this is a kind, but perhaps heavy-handed, narrator orienting his readership; p. 29: for *ἡμίκ'* read *ἡνίκ'*; p. 44: in the *Odyssey*-quotation read *ἀγριοφώνους*; p. 51: *ηὔδα* in the Hipponax-passage is hardly 'mutter'; p. 52: *χρειοῦς φυγόντας*: 'to escape debt' (Solon 36.10) is misleading since it suggests that *χρειοῦς* is the direct object; p. 56: on *πάτερ* see now

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Dickey, 78ff.; pp. 61f.: on interpreters I miss a reference to the first chapter of D. M. Lewis's *Sparta and Persia* (Leiden, 1977); p. 78: καρβᾶνα is cited as though it were the nominative, and elsewhere in both the text and the index words tend to be listed as lemmata rather than under their primary form (e. g. ὀδελόν, p. 259); p. 78: Headlam's view of Aesch. *Pers.* 634 is confusingly reported: he certainly did not equate βάρβαρα σαφηνῆ with 'unintelligible jargon'; p. 79: in Aesch. *Ag.* 1060–1 it is not Aeschylus' notions, but Clytemestra's which are in question; p. 99: read 'Dicaeopolis'; p. 104 n. 4: the article referred to as Young (1965) does not feature in the bibliography: it is by D. C. C. Young and is entitled 'Some Types of Scribal Error in Manuscripts of Pindar' (*GRBS* 6 [1965], 247–74); p. 113: Cortsen (1899) does not figure in the bibliography; p. 137: the date of the edition of the Selinous *Lex Sacra* is here and at 202, 214, 229, and 243 wrongly given as 1983; p. 156: the Ap. Dysc. reference is incomplete (cf. 194); p. 195: νιν is not confined in tragedy to lyrics; p. 229: the *OC* line-reference is missing—it should be to 182; p. 230: cf. also Doric ναί in Plautine oaths; p. 243: cf. Plautine *tarpezita*; p. 243 on κάρτα see now Dover, *The Evolution of Greek Prose Style* (Oxford, 1997), 81ff.; p. 245: the discussion of μογίομες and μολεῖν would have benefited from a knowledge of G. P. Shipp, *Modern Greek Evidence for the Ancient Greek Vocabulary* (Sydney, 1979), pp. 391 and 392; p. 246: in the *Lysistrata*-quotation read μάν; p. 247: πελλάνας· see now Degani in P. Thiercy, M. Menu, *Aristophane. La langue, la scène, la cité: actes du colloque de Toulouse* (Bari, 1997), pp. 107ff.; p. 249: on θιγγάνω see Wackernagel, *Sprachliche Untersuchungen zu Homer* (Göttingen, 1916), p. 222; p. 251: the name of Lysistrata's companion is Calonike, not Cleonike; p. 256: C. seems not to know F. De Martino, A. H. Sommerstein, *Lo spettacolo delle voce* (Bari, 1995), which contains Sommerstein's essay 'The Language of Athenian Women'; p. 268: the sea-hare is notoriously poisonous and there are many antidotes to its bite given in medical and magical writers. In the fragment of Ameipsias it seems to me that τὸν θαλάσσιον comes παρὰ προσοδοκίαν, the land-hare, or parts of it, being often prescribed by doctors because of its alleged curative powers; p. 276 n. 16: on the sex industry at Athens being Doric dominated see W. Schulze, *Kleine Schriften* (Göttingen, 1933), p. 707 n. 2; p. 270: see Olson on *Peace* 214: p. 279: on Macedonian see now L. Dubois, *REG* (1995), 790ff. and E. Voutiras, *ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΦΩΝΤΟΥ ΓΑΜΟΙ* (Amsterdam, 1998), pp. 29f.; p. 320: the page references to Dover's *Acharnians*-article and to its reprint are both incorrect; p. 315: recharacterized 'yous' is not confined to the US and Ireland: note Scotch 'yous yins'; p. 326: two Massons (Emilia and Olivier) are conflated; p. 328: the title of Radt's paper is 'The Importance of the Context'. The paper by Richardson appears in a volume edited by M. White, not 'M. While'. Saville-Troike should be hyphenated throughout. I miss a discussion of πέρναται in Ar. *Kn.* 176 and a reference to L. Gautier's *La langue de Xénophon* (Geneva, 1911).

C. rejects the idea that Aristophanes when he writes dialect is ridiculing non-Attic speakers. In principle I accept this, but it ought to be borne in mind that it is a universal principle of comedy that 'foreigners are funny'. This is perhaps not a linguistic issue.

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