κατέχω to be an equivalent of *μέμνημαι*, Latte as a periphrastic present perfect (*κατέχω* = *ἔχω*). For C. the verb 'si referisce alle cene consummate da Sileno in altri occasioni, cene che egli non può più affermare di "avere dentro la pancia" '. C.'s interpretation sounds over-literal. In fact, *κατέχω* here seems to mean plainly 'know perfectly well', 'I am well aware that'. Lycophron's usage may well be one of the earliest attestations of a sense that became very common in medieval Greek, cf. Kriaras, *Λεξικὸ τῆς Μεσαιωνικῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Δημώδους Γραμματείας 1100–1169*, Vol. VIII, *s.v.* *κατέχω* 9*β*.

But this is small print. Overall, C.'s work successfully fills a gap and should become a standard reference on the 'minor' satyrographers, even if the quality of the publishing detracts something from its value.

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TRAVESTIES OF MYTH

F. Casolari: *Die Mythentravestie in der griechischen Komödie.* (Orbis Antiquus 37.) Pp. xiv + 333. Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2003. Paper, €48. ISBN: 3-402-05416-7.

'Eine vollständige Abhandlung über das Phänomen der Mythentravestie im allgemeinen liegt nicht vor', writes C. (p. 12) at the beginning of her discussion of previous work on the subject. Unfortunately this is as true after the publication of this book, a slightly revised version (p. xiii) of the author's doctoral dissertation, as it was before. C. aims to trace the development of mythical travesty—defined (pp. 7–10), following Rau, as a comic imitation of a mythical story in which the mythical characters retain their names and identities but their personalities and actions are distorted and degraded—through all the chronological and regional varieties of Greek comedy (and, in certain chapters, satyr-drama too); she does not, however, attempt to cover every play or every mythical theme, but proceeds 'anhand bedeutender Beispiele' (p. xiii). These examples comprise about a dozen plays, from Epicharmos to Alexis (with a notable concentration on Kratinos, specifically *Odyssês*, *Nemesis*, and *Dionysalexandros*), and four key mythical characters, Dionysos, the Cyclops, Odysseus, and Herakles. In the last three cases an attempt is made to set comedy's portrayal of these characters against the background of the whole history of their presentation since Homer or even earlier. What is not attempted anywhere is to use the selected plays and themes as a framework to aid the understanding of *all* our evidence about mythical travesty in comedy: between two-thirds and three-quarters of the hundreds of known comedies of this type are not so much as mentioned, and astonishingly, no significant use is made of our most extensive single item of evidence for mythical travesty in ancient comedy, the *Amphitruo* of Plautus.

The overall conclusion is unsurprising and unexciting: that travesty gives 'human traits' to gods and heroes and reduces them to a 'human level' (p. 297)—or more precisely, it exploits and exaggerates 'human weaknesses' which were already detectable in their traditional and/or epic personae, while downplaying or altogether ignoring their more elevated characteristics. This tendency reaches its fullest development in Middle Comedy, but is already strong in Epicharmos and Kratinos; the latter, however, and some other Old Comedians, can also use mythical travesty to attack Perikles and

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other contemporary public figures. In New Comedy mythical travesty disappears; C. argues—without much cogent evidence, so far as I can see—that such plays as Diphilos' *Herakles, Theseus*, and *Peliades* were not about Herakles, Theseus, or Medeia, but about figures from contemporary life who behaved in ways reminiscent of these characters.

In most respects this book does not carry us beyond the point reached, for Middle and New Comedy by Webster and Nesselrath, for Old Comedy by Angus Bowie's valuable discussion in F. D. Harvey, J. Wilkins (edd). *The Rivals of Aristophanes* (London and Swansea, 2000), pp. 317–39. However, there are some worthwhile ideas in the fairly extensive treatment of Epicharmos' *Odysseus Automolos* (pp. 47–55) and of the three above-mentioned plays of Kratinos (pp. 61–112). C.'s suggestion (pp. 51–2) that in Epicharmos' play Odysseus had been sent on a spying mission to the Trojan 'Feldlager' is ruled out by fr. 97.14 K-A, which shows that the mission which Odysseus is pretending to have discharged successfully had been a mission to infiltrate the city—and if he sought, and was given, a job as a swineherd (p. 51, cf. fr. 99), that suggests that the mission was meant to be an extended one. But she makes at least four good suggestions about the Kratinos plays: that to the extent that *Nemesis* was political allegory, Leda and Nemesis (the goddess of Rhamnous) represented Sparta and Athens respectively (p. 86); that fr. 42 is part of Hera's offer of τυραννὶς ἀκίνητος to the supposed Paris, and fr. 43 is Dionysos' reply to it (pp. 101–2); that, *pace* Luppe, it is quite in order for Aphrodite to promise 'Paris' that he will be κάλλιστόν τε καὶ ἐπέραστον (*POxy.* 663 i.16–19) because, though Paris by tradition had these qualities anyway (as indeed did Dionysos), Perikles did not (pp. 102–4); and that frr. 44, 46, 47 relate to the wedding banquet of Paris and Helen (thus far C. is reviving an old idea of G. Thieme's) and, furthermore, that frr. 46 and 47 are addressed [by the loyal satyrs?] to a Dionysos who, shamelessly standing on his head, is trying (in vain, as we know) to ingratiate himself with (the real) Paris, get invited to the feast, and avoid being handed over to the Achaians (pp. 108–9).

Overall, though, this book, which I began with high hopes, must be rated a disappointment. The 'vollständige Abhandlung' is yet to be written.

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ARISTOPHANIC LANGUAGE

A. WILLI: *The Languages of Aristophanes. Aspects of Linguistic Variation in Classical Attic Greek*. Pp. xiv + 361. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Cased, £55. ISBN: 0-19-926264-0.

This revision of a prize-winning Oxford dissertation offers a detailed and nuanced examination of the way Aristophanes varied his language to fit different contexts. Though there is considerable truth in Plutarch's statement that Aristophanes did not adapt his language to suit different characters as did Menander, modern scholars have found Aristophanes' language to be far from homogeneous. Willi provides a close look at a few types of variation: religious registers, technical language, scientific discourse, sophistic innovations, female speech, and foreigner talk. Each topic is treated in the light both of previous work on Aristophanes and other Greek authors, and of relevant linguistic theories. As the title suggests, the conclusions go beyond Aristophanes to shed light on Attic Greek in general.

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