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# AN ARISTOPHANIC SLAVE: *PEACE* 819–1126

When discussing Aristophanic slaves, it is usual to observe that Xanthias in *Frogs* and Carion in *Wealth* are exceptional in the extant plays, and that they occupy a place transitional between the slaves of Old Comedy and those who would develop later. While conceding that there is a fundamentally new (as far as we can tell) approach to the characterization of the slave in Aristophanes' treatment of Xanthias in 405 B.C.E., I would like to explore in depth one of the forerunners of these characters, the οἰκέτης in *Peace* 819–1126, who appeared on the stage sixteen years prior in 421 B.C.E. and shares many characteristics with Xanthias. I will examine how he often acts not as a slave but as an equal of his master, how he tries to attract attention while on stage by volunteering his humour, his preoccupation with the sexual, his possible use of asides, the dynamics of his unruliness and why his master never threatens or punishes him, and finally what it means that the audience never learns his name.

*Peace* begins with a pair of slaves kneading cakes for a giant dung beetle,[1] on which the hero of the play, Trygaeus, plans to fly up to heaven – in a parody of the flight of Bellerophon on Pegasus (cf. *Pax* 76, 135–9) humorously influenced by the Aesopic fable of the beetle and the eagle (cf. *Pax* 129–34; Aesop, *Fab.* 3) – to ask Zeus what he intends to do with the Greeks. When the hero arrives, however, he learns from Hermes that the Olympian gods, frustrated because the Greeks refuse to accept Peace, have left Greece at the mercy of War, who intends to grind up all the cities of Greece in his mortar but is prevented by lack of a pestle.[2] This affords Trygaeus the opportunity of summoning a panhellenic chorus to help him rescue Peace from the cave where she is imprisoned. Trygaeus must make an ally of Hermes by bribing him with a golden cup and promising all the rites formerly given to the other gods. After a great deal of effort, the chorus rescues Peace and her handmaidens, Opora (Harvest), who is to be the bride of Trygaeus, and Theoria (Festival), who will be given to the βουλή. As Trygaeus returns to earth with these two women, he encounters one of his slaves, who operates for the moment as a straight man for his master by asking him questions about his travels that provide an opportunity for a series of jokes (824–41).[3]

[1] It is possible that one of these slaves is the same character as the οἰκέτης at 819–1126. Sommerstein (1985), 172 and Olson (1998), xliii, 231 suspect that this character may be identical with the second slave from the prologue (i.e. the more dominant one, who remains on stage to speak the prologue when the first has gone inside to feed the beetle, and who engages Trygaeus in dialogue as he is flying away to heaven). Olson goes so far as to label as οἰκέτης β' both the prologue slave and the one at 819–1126. If we accept this identification (and there is no compelling reason why we should not), it only magnifies the role of this slave, which would strengthen the arguments I make here. It would also give the slave a more metatheatrical role, because he would speak to or about the audience not only at his appearance late in the play (as at 883–4 and 963–73) but also at the beginning. An increased metatheatrical role, in turn, would make it more likely that he does speak in asides (see below). The audience would have known one way or the other by the mask and dress of the character(s).

[2] The lost pestles are Cleon and Brasidas, the most ardent war-hawks of each side. Both perished at Amphipolis in 422 B.C.E. Cf. Thuc. 5.10.

[3] Trygaeus and this slave are partners in humour. They take turns performing the role of straight man and telling the jokes, so that now one, now the other is dominant on stage (inasmuch as control of the jokes is control of the play).

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Trygaeus abruptly ends the string of jokes about his travels by ordering his slave to take Opora inside and prepare her ritual bath and the wedding bed, while he himself takes Theoria to the *βουλή* (which despite this line he does not do until after his slave has returned). Apparently noticing the women for the first time, the slave asks his master where he got them. When he finds out, he expresses some surprise that even the gods keep prostitutes (*οὐκ ἂν ἔτι δοίην τῶν θεῶν τριώβολον, / εἰ πορνοβοσκοῦσ' ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς οἱ βροτοί*, 848–9) – a comment that we might expect to offend his master, who after all is about to marry one of these girls.[4] But Trygaeus takes the comment in his stride and even seems to affirm that these symbolic women are prostitutes (*οὐκ, ἀλλὰ κἀκεῖ ζῶσιν ἀπὸ τούτων τινές*, 850).[5] This is the first of many examples of the tolerance and leniency of Trygaeus as a master, a trait that arguably explains and/or induces the presumption of his slave.

The slave next asks a seemingly innocuous question: should he give Opora anything to eat? With his response Trygaeus (whether intentionally or not) sets up a joke for his slave:

{*OI.*} *ἄγε νυν, ἴωμεν. εἰπέ μοι, δῶ καταφαγεῖν ταύτῃ τι;*
{*TP.*} *μηδέν. οὐ γὰρ ἐθελήσει φαγεῖν οὔτ' ἄρτον οὔτε μᾶζαν, εἰωθυῖ' ἀεὶ παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖσιν ἀμβροσίαν λείχειν ἄνω.*
{*OI.*} *λείχειν ἄρ' αὐτῇ κἀνθάδε σκευαστέον.*[6] (*Pax* 851–5)

{Sl.} Come on, let's go. Tell me, should I give her something to eat up?
{Tr.} No. She won't want bread or barley-cake, when with the gods above she's used to licking ambrosia.
{Sl.} She'll have to prepare herself to do some licking here, too!

The joke here revolves around the range of meanings of *λείχειν* ('to lick'), which can apparently indicate either eating or fellatio.[7] There are several important things to note here. First, the slave has for a moment become the primary speaker of a joke; his master's role of setting up the joke is secondary. We shall see more of this later. Second, the slave has spoken what may be an aside at 855.[8] Immediately after 855 the

[4] Stefanis (1980), 157 classifies the slave's comment here with other such passages under the heading 'the slave as appraiser of gods and men' (*ὁ δοῦλος τιμητὴς θεῶν καί ἀνθρώπων*). The phrasing of the Greek does suggest the translation 'keep prostitutes', if not something more suggestive of an analogy with the keeping of cattle. One *βόσκει* various kinds of domesticated animal, though the metaphorical use of the word is by no means confined to this passage. The chorus of old men in *Lys.* uses the term both of ordinary women (i.e. wives) at 256–65 and of their slaves (*οἰκέτας*, which could refer more broadly to their dependents in general) and children (*σμικρὰ…παιδία*) at 1203–4.

[5] The whoredom or adultery of female symbolic figures seems to be conventional in extant comedy. For another example in this play, cf. *Pax* 978–90 (discussed in depth below). Whether the nude female mute in Old Comedy was played by real naked (or scantily clad) prostitutes or by padded male actors is an inveterate controversy, for a useful discussion of which see B. Zweig, 'The mute nude female characters in Aristophanes' plays', in A. Richlin (ed.), *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome* (Oxford, 1992), 73–89. If Opora and Theoria are being represented by actual courtesans, the slave's comment is quite metatheatrical (though in any case the slave's comparison of the goddess Peace to an adulterous woman in his prayer at 978–90 is not metatheatre, for she would have been represented by a statue).

[6] I print the Greek text of *Pax* as in Olson (1998). Translations are my own.

[7] Cf. Olson (1998), 235.

[8] K.J. Dover, *Aristophanes' Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), 44–5 rightly notes Xanthias' ability to speak in asides, an ability which helps to characterize him as an entity independent of (even better than)

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slave and Opora leave the stage, and a choral ode begins, so that there is no verbal response to his remark. The key question is whom the audience is meant to envisage as the recipient of Opora's attentions. If it is the master, he may have no reason to react to the statement – although we should still take note of the slave's interest in the details of the sexual relationship between his master and Opora and the master's acceptance of that interest – but if it is the slave, we should perhaps expect some reaction from Trygaeus (provided that he hears). Action on stage could have made clear to the audience both whom the slave intended and any nonverbal reaction on the part of Trygaeus.[9] Because we have only a written text, we cannot know for sure how the scene played out. But I think that the lasciviousness of this slave as expressed elsewhere – his willingness openly to scrutinize and fondle the women his master brings home – makes it likely that he does mean himself, especially when he speaks this line as he and Opora enter the house, away from the eyes of Trygaeus.[10] He could also be implying that Opora will bestow her favours on both of them, which would be in the spirit of their shared sexual experience of Theoria, alleged by the slave at *Peace* 871–6 (see below).

It is certainly true that Opora and Theoria are broadly conceived of in this play as respectively the private and public benefits of peace, the former the prize of Trygaeus, the latter that of the βουλή. Hence it is possible to suspect an interpretation in which the sexual benefits of Opora do not belong solely to Trygaeus on the grounds that it would undermine this dichotomy. But I argue that moments of βωμολοχία are not subject to the generalizations that apply to the play as a whole. In such a moment humorous effect is paramount, and disruption or subversion of what the play is otherwise trying to accomplish should not be unexpected. After all, Aristophanic comedy is full of gag-scenes that go nowhere and only serve the exigencies of humour. So if the slave does imply that he wants to or will have sex with Opora, he does so because (presumably) it is funny. This does not need to affect much our interpretation of what Opora and Theoria mean for the play as a whole.

In his recent book *Humour, Obscenity, and Aristophanes* James Robson attempts to understand better Aristophanic humour in part through the application of a theory of the 'frame', by which he means 'a generalized context of experience which we subconsciously organize by a system of unwritten rules'.[11] In the detailed analysis of *Peace* 819–921, which comprises his final chapter, he observes the substantial interval between the (probable) appearance on stage of Opora and Theoria with Trygaeus at 819 and the first reference to them in the dialogue at 842, noting that elsewhere in Aristophanes male characters respond lasciviously to the presence of mute nude female characters. He argues that the mere presence of such characters establishes a

his master. He observes three lines (88, 107 and 115) where we as readers can discern with confidence that Xanthias is speaking in asides. Other lines (33–4, 41, 51, 308, 311) may or may not be asides.

[9] I think the probability that Trygaeus hears but reacts only non-verbally is slim. Certainly we might expect that, if this were the case, he would make some comment later on, for instance when the slave admires Opora's rump at 868.

[10] For other instances of the lasciviousness of this οἰκέτης, cf. *Pax* 868–80, 891–3 and the discussions below. But he and his master are a team in dirty jokes as much as in other things (*Pax* 874), such that this characteristic cannot really serve to distinguish him from his master (cf. *Pax* 884–5, 894–904).

[11] J. Robson, *Humour, Obscenity, and Aristophanes* (Tübingen, 2006), 17. He illuminates the concept by the example of the frame 'buying a train ticket', in which certain linguistic sequences (e.g. 'What time does the train leave?' or 'How much does it cost?') are expected while others are not (e.g. a discussion of 'aubergine farming in Malaysia').

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certain 'frame' in which the audience is led to expect lascivious comments, so that the whole time the women are on stage the audience is unusually attuned to the possibility of *double entendre*. It is concluded that the postponement of true obscenity to the last line of the scene (λείχειν ἄρ' αὐτῇ κἀνθάδε σκευαστέον, 855) tantalizes the audience.[12] This argument lends weight to the slave as a character, for it posits an audience which anticipates sex jokes the entire time Trygaeus is responsible for the humour, all the while not knowing that what they are really waiting for is a transfer of comedic agency from the master to the slave, for it is in exploiting the comic potential of Opora and Theoria that the slave will find his first outlet for a joke of his own. As we shall see, he continues to find in these women (and later, as I argue, in their mistress) a rich source of material.

If the slave communicates a desire to have oral sex with Opora to the audience in an aside, and does so immediately before the two of them leave the stage together, so that it is unclear whether this desire will come to fruition during the time allotted for her bath, it contributes considerably to the slave's power over the drama and displays a rivalry with or dominance over his master that approaches that of Xanthias in *Frogs*. In this case the choral ode which immediately follows may admit of an ironic interpretation: the chorus says that Trygaeus is faring well as far as can be *seen* (εὐδαιμονικῶς γ' ὁ πρε- / σβύτης, ὅσα γ' ὧδ' ἰδεῖν, / τὰ νῦν τάδε πράττει, 856–8) and emphasizes his old age twice (πρεσβύτης, 856–7; γέρον, 860),[13] thus playing on the possibility that he is being cuckolded as they speak. When Trygaeus imagines himself as a shining bridegroom fondling Opora's breasts (859–64), the audience may think of the slave really doing offstage what his master is then imagining; and again there would be an element of irony when Trygaeus says that he has saved Greece so that everybody can screw and sleep safely (ὥστ' ἐν τοῖς ἀγροῖσιν αὐτοὺς / ἅπαντας ὄντας ἀσφαλῶς κινεῖν τε καὶ καθεύδειν, 866–7).[14]

What can be said with certainty is that the slave both leaves (855) and reenters (868) the stage with a sexual remark about Opora, his master's intended. He returns with the following locution:

{*OI.*} ἡ παῖς λέλουται καὶ τὰ τῆς πυγῆς καλά.[15]
ὁ πλακοῦς πέπεπται, σησαμὴ ξυμπλάττεται,
καὶ τἄλλ' ἁπαξάπαντα· τοῦ πέους δὲ δεῖ. (*Pax* 868–70)

{Sl.} The girl's been bathed, and her arse is doing fine.
The cake's been baked, the sesame is being shaped,
and all the rest. But she does need a dick!

The slave's frank admiration of Opora's arse, unlike his reference to fellatio at 855, is probably not an aside, for it is part of the same line in which he reports to his master that his order that she be bathed has been obeyed. We must assume that Trygaeus hears this remark, but for whatever reason he does not seem to mind. The remark about the need for a penis (870) does not in itself refer to the penis of any one person in particular, so that we may expect that Trygaeus will take it as applying to himself,

[12] Ibid. 157–62.

[13] Old men with young, attractive brides are natural targets for cuckoldry.

[14] My anonymous reader makes a legitimate objection: the tone of parallel choral odes in Aristophanes is generally similar, and there are clearly no such shenanigans going on at 909–21. But a general rule is precisely that and may be violated on occasion.

[15] Apparently πυγῆς here is παρὰ προσδοκίαν for τύχης. Olson (1998), 237.

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while the audience's interpretation would have been influenced by whatever clues in staging there may or may not have been.

Trygaeus' lack of reaction to the lascivious comments of his slave could be explained by an excessive (to the Athenian audience) degree of leniency and a way of regarding the master–slave relationship as a partnership, exemplified in the fact that the two have shared a sex partner before in Theoria:

{*TP.*} ἴθι νυν, ἀποδῶμεν τήνδε τὴν Θεωρίαν
ἀνύσαντέ τι τῇ βουλῇ.
{*OI.*} τίς αὕτηί; τί φῄς;
αὕτη Θεωρία 'στιν, ἣν ἡμεῖς ποτε
ἐπαίομεν Βραυρωνάδ' ὑποπεπωκότες;
{*TP.*} σάφ' ἴσθι· καλήφθη γε μόλις.[16]
{*OI.*} ὦ δέσποτα,
ὅσην ἔχει τὴν πρωκτοπεντετηρίδα. (*Pax* 871–6)

{Tr.} Come then, let's hurry up, you and I, and give Theoria here to the Council.
{Sl.} Who's this? What are you saying? This is Theoria, whom we used to bang to Brauron when we were a bit drunk?
{Tr.} It sure is – and catching her was quite a task!
{Sl.} Master, what a quadrennial arse she has!

Trygaeus clearly hears the slave, for he responds at 875. If we read the passage literally, Trygaeus and his slave were banging Theoria 'to Brauron'; the easiest interpretation of this phrasing, in my opinion, is that the force of their sexual activity was so great that Theoria ended up in eastern Attica.[17] $\Sigma^{RV}$ recognize *παίειν* as a (potentially) sexual word, glossing *ἐπαίομεν* as *συνουσιάζομεν, ἠλαύνομεν*. There is also a reference to the quadrennial festival of Artemis at Brauron, which may have been a ritual of maturation for Athenian girls and therefore perhaps a prime opportunity for sex.[18] As Sommerstein and others have noted, the real meaning of this passage seems to be that Trygaeus and his slave used to frequent this festival, and that their experience there was marked by sexual activity.[19] The slave's comment exploits the difference between the female character on stage – who though mute is real enough as far as characters in a comedy go – and the travel to and attendance at festivals that she symbolizes. Getting laid at festivals becomes getting laid with Festival. *ἐπαίομεν* is apparently *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* for some word such as *ἐποιούμεθα* or *ἐπέμπομεν*.[20] The change to *ἐπαίομεν* stresses sex, (presumably) one of the most pleasant aspects of the festival, and allows for a joke based on the double identity of Theoria.[21] The slave's

[16] The anonymous reader suggests that Trygaeus means Theoria is an exclusive prostitute. I think it is ambiguous whether Trygaeus (1) means that his struggles to free Peace and her handmaidens were arduous or (2) refers in some way to what has just been said by the slave. In the latter case there are several possibilities: Theoria could be envisaged as an exclusive prostitute, a rape victim, or a willing sexual partner who was scarcely 'taken' because of sexual impotence induced by drunkenness (*ὑποπεπωκότες*).

[17] For this use of *παίειν*, cf. Olson (1998), 238; J. Henderson, *The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy*[2] (Oxford, 1991), 171 (§308). Henderson discusses the use of violent words as sexual slang under the heading 'Hitting and Piercing', 170–3 (§§298–316).

[18] Olson (1998), 238.

[19] Sommerstein (1985), 174.

[20] Sommerstein (1985), 174; Olson (1998), 238.

[21] Platnauer (1964), 142 denies (against $\Sigma^{RV}$ and the more recent editions) that *ἐπαίομεν* has a sexual sense, suggesting instead Kock's emendation *ἐπέμπομεν*, which (I think) is more likely the expected word displaced by a *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* joke than what one should actually read here.

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line about her 'quadrennial' arse is fairly typical for Aristophanic comedy; the female body on stage often becomes a prop for jokes.[22] I think that the metatheatre here should be a warning not to read too much into the fact that, according to a strict interpretation of the text, the master and slave have had their way with the same woman, either simultaneously or in close succession.[23] ἡμεῖς at 873 is ambiguous: the slave, as the speaker, is necessarily included, but he could make a sweeping gesture to include not only his master and himself but also the entire audience, and in so doing he would become for that moment not a slave in comedy but an Athenian citizen, an actor appealing to the desirability of the communal experience of festivals as an incentive for peace.[24] But however one reads it, the slave is playing a dominant role in the humour at this point.

The slave continues to use Theoria as a prop for humour, not only with words but even with actions. As his master is trying to decide to whom out of the whole audience he should entrust Theoria – and implying that whoever can be trusted to guard her for the βουλή is δίκαιος (877–8) – the slave is proving his lack of δικαιοσύνη by groping her:

{*TP.*} οὗτος, τί περιγράφεις;
{*OI.*} τὸ δεῖν', εἰς Ἴσθμια
σκηνὴν ἐμαυτοῦ τῷ πέει καταλαμβάνω. (*Pax* 879–80)

{Tr.} You! Just what are you circumscribing?
{Sl.} Umm … hmm … for the Isthmian Games I'm claiming a campground for my dick!

The groping prompts a question from Trygaeus, which in turn sets up a joke for the slave (the use of the verb περιγράφειν – not necessarily the most natural word for Trygaeus in this context – is clearly for the sake of the joke that follows).[25] The reference to the Isthmian Games – particularly in a year (421 B.C.E.) in which there were none – is a joke; as Sommerstein puts it, 'the "isthmus" [the slave] is thinking of is the narrow strip of territory between the two broad expanses of [Theoria's] thighs'.[26] The 'tent' (σκηνήν, 880) in which the slave plans to rest his penis is obvious. Trygaeus, however, ignores these remarks – as he has done, in what begins to be a pattern, with 868–70 and 876.[27]

Possible explanations for Trygaeus' lack of reaction to his slave's lascivious comments so far have been (1) that the master is uncommonly lenient (which he certainly is, for he never threatens violence to his slave and does without doubt sometimes treat him, if only for a moment, as a partner) and (2) that the meta-

[22] For other examples (by no means a comprehensive list), cf. *Pax* 879–80, 887–93; *Lys.* 87–9, 91–2 and 1112–88. The first two examples from *Lys.* are interesting in that it is the women who use the bodies of other women for sexual humour. But the male body is also the object of humour, and it is perhaps safest to make no distinction and say merely that it is quite common in comedy to point at someone else's body parts and make humorous comments.

[23] But the slave and Trygaeus may also be imagined as sharing the goddess Peace as a mistress at 978–90.

[24] Aristophanes often promotes peace by emphasizing the many good things that come from it and reminding the audience of the hardships of war.

[25] Cf. Olson (1998), 238.

[26] Sommerstein (1985), 175. For this sense of the word 'isthmus' he refers the reader to Aesch. fr. 17.29–31M = F 78a 29–31 Radt, from a satyr play called *Theoroi* or *Isthmiastai.*

[27] 855 too, if we assume that it is not an aside and that Trygaeus hears it, is probably ignored.

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theatrical nature of some of the slave's comments (for example, the ambiguous treatment of Theoria as both festival and woman) inclines both characters and audience to consider them apart from the flow of the play, so that the master's response (essentially 'yes, this is that same girl we used to screw') is partly the response of Trygaeus, partly that of the actor who plays him.[28] But there is another consideration best illustrated by adducing a passage from *Wasps*:

{Ξα.} κἀμέ γ' ἡ πόρνη χθὲς εἰσελθόντα τῆς μεσημβρίας,
ὅτι κελητίσαι 'κέλευον, ὀξυθυμηθεῖσά μοι
ἤρετ' εἰ τὴν Ἱππίου καθίσταμαι τυραννίδα. (*Vesp.* 500–2)

{Xa.} Yesterday my whore got mad at me too, when I came in to her at noon, because I ordered her to ride me. She asked if I was setting up a tyranny in the style of Hippias!

In what immediately precedes, Bdelucleon remarks on how easily the term 'tyrant' is bandied about, using as an example the talk in the market. It is his slave that introduces sexuality to the passage in these three lines. Though the remarks of the slave are not necessarily an aside – three lines do seem rather long for that – they are at any rate ignored. Perhaps one of the roles of the slave character – visible here and throughout the part of *Peace* in which we are engaged – is to be a source for jokes that are funny enough, but do not really advance the plot or the main character's purpose at the time, so that it is better for them to be spoken by someone other than him or her. If the Athenian audience expects a slave to be making occasional wisecracks – certainly it would later, when it had become accustomed to such figures as Xanthias and Carion, but we are speaking of the early comedies – then it becomes too much a drag on the plot (and not very funny) for the comments of the slave always to require a response. In this view it would have become a convention that slaves do not always get the rebuke they might have received in real life (when is Old Comedy ever truly realistic?), and when they are rebuked or beaten it is because beating slaves is in itself (apparently) funny, and much funnier when it is for no good reason. A slave who makes wisecracks would be unlikely to be punished, because if the punishment is of any consequence the result would be to shut him up, eliminating the role of clown that he had been occupying. A slave who is not really involved in the drama and who has not done or said anything (good or bad) is more likely to be beaten, on whatever pretext can be found or for no reason at all.[29]

One final possible explanation for why the slave at *Peace* 819–1126 is treated so laxly is that his appearance coincides with the resumption of action after a choral sequence in which it is claimed that Aristophanes, in addition to discontinuing other brands of lowbrow humour, such as ridiculing the poor (εἰς τὰ ῥάκια σκώπτοντας ἀεὶ καὶ τοῖς φθειρσὶν πολεμοῦντας, *Pax* 740) or depicting a Heracles frustrated in his gluttony (τούς θ' Ἡρακλέας τοὺς μάττοντας καὶ τοὺς πεινῶντας ἐκείνους, *Pax* 741), has 'freed' the slave characters whom his rivals allegedly brought on stage for the

[28] In other words Trygaeus and the slave are talking about Theoria the 'character' at the same time, and with the same words, as their actors are talking about the pleasures of the festivals she represents. The master and slave jointly enjoying the sexual benefits of Theoria could represent the domestic reunification of the fractured πόλις in the same way that the Athenian and Spartan simultaneous attraction to (respectively the vagina and anus of) the mute female nude Diallage ('Reconciliation') represents their reconciliation at *Lys.* 1148, 57–8.

[29] Cf. *Nub.* 56–9; *Vesp.* 1291–7, 1307; *Av.* 1311, 1316, 1323–9, 1334–5; *Lys.* 1215–23.

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sake of abuse (*Pax* 743–7).[30] As a consequence of the poet's recent self-awareness, we encounter a slave who is treated by his master in an unusually indulgent manner.[31]

Trygaeus and his slave continue to play jokes off one another. The slave, who has been the primary joker since he re-emerged on stage at 868, sets up one for his master by pointing out (metatheatrically) that Ariphrades (whom Aristophanes attacks on several occasions as overly enthusiastic about cunnilingus) seems to want to be the one to receive Theoria.[32] The master can then make the conventional joke about Ariphrades (cf. *Eq*. 1280–7; *Vesp.* 1280–3). But the slave is back in charge of the humour again at 891–3:

{*TP.*} τουτὶ δ' ὁρᾶτ', ὀπτάνιον ὑμῖν.
{*OI.*} ὡς καλόν.
διὰ ταῦτα καὶ κεκάπνικεν ἆρ'· ἐνταῦθα γὰρ
πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου τὰ λάσανα τῇ βουλῇ ποτ' ἦν. (*Pax* 891–3)

{Tr.} Look at this oven all your own.
{Sl.} How fine it is!
And here's why it's so smoky: that's where
the council's pot-props were before the war.

Trygaeus once again prepares the way for his slave by calling Theoria's vagina an oven,[33] adapting his diction better to set up the joke, as he did a few lines before with περιγράφειν. The slave gets a laugh by explaining Theoria's pubic hair as soot. After these lines the slave suffers a temporarily diminished role; Trygaeus monopolizes the humorous discourse, not even needing his slave to assist him, for ten lines (894–904), in which he exploits the dual role of Theoria, as woman and symbol of festival, to produce a number of *double entendres*. He describes either athletics in extremely sexual language or (what comes to the same thing) sex with metaphors from athletics.[34] Trygaeus then converses with the chorus, and the slave has no speaking role until 922.[35]

[30] παραλύειν can mean simply to 'put an end to' (*LSJ* s.v. I.2) and may well have that meaning here (so Sommerstein and Henderson in their translations 'got rid of' and 'cashier' respectively – and certainly to use the term 'freed' in a translation could conjure up for the modern reader thoughts of abolitionism that we have no reason to suspect in Aristophanes). But it can also mean 'to free' (apparently often in a metaphorical sense, *LSJ* s.v. II), and it is interesting to think about the possibility of that sense here.

[31] This explanation should not be pushed very far, for Aristophanes' claims not to resort to the crude methods of his rivals are sometimes tongue-in-cheek.

[32] For Ariphrades, cf. Olson (1998), 239 or Sommerstein (1985), 175.

[33] 'Oven' is the translation of Sommerstein. Henderson translates ὀπτάνιον as 'cooker', while Olson (1998), 240 translates 'bake-house'. There appears to be some disagreement over whether this is the place or means (or both) of roasting (ὀπτᾶν).

[34] An interesting discussion of this passage is to be found in F. García Romero, 'Ἔρως Ἀθλητής: les métaphores érotico-sportives dans les comédies d'Aristophane', *Nikephoros* 8 (1995), 57–76, at 67–76.

[35] It has been suggested to me that the brief silence of the slave at 894–921, after so many lines of verbal banter between slave and master, may be imputed to the fact that here we have interaction between Trygaeus as citizen and the βουλή, and that the slave as a non-citizen is therefore excluded. But this neglects the slave's conspicuous presence earlier in the βουλή scene (877–94) and the fact that the text becomes (if possible) even more graphically sexual and comic, not more serious, after the slave becomes silent. We should not let our understanding of the limitations of slaves in real Athenian society affect our conception of the roles of *comic* slaves (not *the* comic slave, for there is more than one distinct type) too much. I am more inclined to attribute to Trygaeus a kind of comic ἀριστεία: he emits a stream of jokes so amusing and so tightly bound

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The slave shows a certain leadership by beginning the discourse about what should be done next (ἄγε δὴ, τί νῷν ἐντευθενὶ ποιητέον, 922).[36] His phrasing of this line ('what should we two do') emphasizes how he and his master are acting as partners. He does not ask 'what are my orders' or 'what would you have me do next'. When Trygaeus suggests that the goddess be established with pots, someone (whether the slave or the chorus is disputed) takes issue with this idea, implying that the goddess Peace deserves a better offering than one would give to some grumbling (or contemptible) little herm.[37] Trygaeus' suggestion that they use a fatted ox (λαρινῷ βοΐ, 925) is rejected with a pun, lest they have to βοηθεῖν, or go to the aid of anyone. Likewise his idea that they use a pig – fat and large – is turned down by way of a passing reference to the piggishness of someone called Theagenes.[38] A frustrated Trygaeus finally asks his interlocutor what they should sacrifice, and it is answered ὀΐ – the Ionic form of the Attic dative οἰΐ, meaning 'sheep' – so that when someone advocates war in the ἐκκλησία, those present will say ὀΐ in the Ionic fashion. Apparently this is a pun in which ὀΐ is said for οἴ, or 'alas' (ὑπὸ τοῦ δέους λέγωσ' Ἰωνικῶς 'ὀΐ', 933). There is more humour in that the Ionians had a reputation for being somewhat soft; by causing the assembly to speak in Ionic fashion, the speaker imagines that they will act like Ionians as well, being mild in everything else, as lambs toward each other, and much gentler toward their allies (934–6).

We must now ask ourselves who Trygaeus' interlocutor is in this passage. *RVΓPCH* assign 922 to the slave, while *L* and the Aldine *editio princeps* attribute it to the chorus.[39] The labelling of the speaker in the MSS should be treated as of no more value than the opinion of a modern scholar, for it is probably derived from the text itself: it is extremely unlikely that such identifications go back to the late fifth century.[40] But the use of νῷν in 922 makes it clear that the speaker must be the slave: it seems incredible that the *coryphaeus* would distinguish himself from the chorus so completely. Trygaeus does, however, use a plural verb of his interlocutor at 925 (βούλεσθε), which would appear to be evidence that he is speaking to a group of people (though an unmetrical βούλεσθαι is read in *RVΓ*).[41] Olson uses this reading as evidence for a change of speaker from the slave in 922 to the chorus in 924. In Olson's text the chorus is Trygaeus' interlocutor from this point until the sacrifice begins at 956, despite the fact that Trygaeus uses a singular pronoun (σοι, 929) a few lines later.[42] Sommerstein, who keeps the slave as Trygaeus' interlocutor, explains βούλεσθε

together that his slave is awed into silence. After his monologue (894–908) ends, the slave remains in awe for the duration of his master's brief dialogue with the chorus (909–21). This fits nicely with my argument below that Trygaeus' forceful appropriation of his name and demotic at 919 (Τρυγαῖος Ἀθμονεὺς ἐγώ) shows that he feels threatened by the competition from his slave.

[36] Though the attribution of the lines following this one is disputed, 922 itself is safely given to the slave because of its use of the dual form νῷν. Cf. Olson (1998), 245. One recalls this line a little later, when Trygaeus too strikes a resumptive note with ἄγε δή at 956.

[37] For the interpretation of μεμφόμενον here, cf. Olson (1998), 245.

[38] For a discussion of this person, cf. Olson (1998), 246.

[39] Olson (1998), 245.

[40] J.C.B. Lowe, 'The manuscript evidence for changes of speaker in Aristophanes', *BICS* 9 (1962), 27–42 examines the evidence and reaches the conclusion that while it is possible that changes of speaker could have been indicated by a system resembling that of the parabolus and double dot, there were probably very few or no identifications of speakers.

[41] βούλεσθαι cannot be kept because it is unmetrical. But it is the reading of our oldest MSS, so that βούλεσθε may be nothing more than a correction of the received text, in which case there would be a slim possibility that something different from both readings was original.

[42] Olson (1998), 245 does take note of the σοι and for this reason qualifies his attribution as to either the chorus or the *coryphaeus*.

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by saying that Trygaeus speaks 924 to both the slave and the chorus.[43] He could also address the audience, or at least the officials in the front row, who, it could be assumed for the sake of a joke, would be eager at the prospect of sharing the feast that might be expected to follow the sacrifice of an ox. Either of these explanations of βούλεσθε seems preferable to a situation in which the slave, who has already established himself as quite an eager clown, initiates a discussion only to fall silent immediately, allowing the chorus and/or *coryphaeus* to exploit its comic possibilities.

Olson's other justification for attributing the dialogue to the chorus or *coryphaeus* is that the chorus, unlike the slave, 'can reasonably speak about what goes on in the Assembly (931–3) and what ought to be "our" attitude toward the allies (935–6)'.[44] This last consideration, I think, is of little value as evidence, for comedy is not reasonable, and a slave who cuckolded the βουλή for sure (874) and possibly his master (855), and who has felt comfortable making all manner of jokes, obscene and otherwise, and occasionally showing up his master on stage, certainly seems bold enough to speak about politics in an offhand way.[45] It is undisputed that it is this slave who saves the sheep for the *chorêgos* by claiming that the altar of Peace is bloodless (1018–22). In the process he shows himself to be more cognizant of the proper religious usages than his master (though piety on stage, as is made clear to everyone in the audience, is only a pretext for the real-world thrift of saving a sheep). If he has better judgement about religious matters there and is not afraid to express it, can he not also speak about politics? Lysistrata speaks about politics at length, as do the women of *Ecclesiazusae*, and as women they were no less disenfranchised than a slave.

If we follow Platnauer, Sommerstein and Henderson in attributing the dialogue at 922–36 to Trygaeus and the slave, we have a passage in which the slave is in control of the dialogue. He initiates the conversation at 922, rejects three of his master's proposals – twice with a joke – and finally makes his own suggestion, which is also the grounds for several jokes. He persuades his master easily (εὖ τοι λέγεις, 934). The passage would therefore add to the slave's dramatic dominance; in it he is in control of the humour and the plot development (insofar as there is plot development in deciding what sort of animal will be sacrificed).

But even if this passage is assigned to the chorus, the characteristics that the slave displays here may be found elsewhere. For instance, the slave shows the same sort of leadership and independence from his master at 1017–22, discussed in passing above, where he rejects his master's (rather polite) order to slaughter the sheep (εἶθ' ὅπως μαγειρικῶς / σφάξεις τὸν οἶν, 1017–18), saying that it is not right (θέμις) and explaining, when asked, that Peace does not delight in slaughters, for hers is a bloodless altar (1019–20). Trygaeus accepts this advice from his slave and acts on it. Something similar happens at *Peace* 1122–4, where the slave responds to Trygaeus' order that he strike the oracle-monger Hierocles (παῖ' αὐτὸν ἐπέχων τῷ ξύλῳ τὸν ἀλαζόνα, 1121) by saying 'you do it' (σὺ μὲν οὖν, 1122). The slave then explains that his master should do the striking because he wants to do something else, namely to strip him of his (dishonestly earned) sheepskins (κώδια).

The slave also corrects his master at 1050. They have just noticed the approach of the oracle-monger Hierocles, and they are guessing why he is coming and what he will say. Trygaeus supposes that he has come to oppose the peace (δῆλός ἐσθ' οὗτός

[43] Sommerstein (1985), 177.
[44] Olson (1998), 245.
[45] At *Ran*. 738–813, Xanthias and an οἰκέτης of the house of Pluto chat about the tragedians and the Athenian citizens.

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γ' ὅτι / ἐναντιώσεταί τι ταῖς διαλλαγαῖς, 1048–9), but his slave disagrees, claiming that he has been attracted by the smell of the sacrifice (οὐκ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν κνῖσαν εἰσελήλυθεν, 1050). Both turn out to be right, though the slave more so, for he has rightly guessed the oracle-monger's reason for coming, while Trygaeus has guessed about something that will only happen once they have revealed to whom they are sacrificing (and after they have resisted, for some time, giving him any portion of the offering).

Even if we were to give no role at all to the slave at 922–36, his role in what follows that scene and its choral interlude is substantial:

{*TP.*} καὶ τοῖς θεαταῖς ῥίπτε τῶν κριθῶν.
{*OI.*} ἰδοῦ.
{*TP.*} ἔδωκας ἤδη;
{*OI.*} νὴ τὸν Ἑρμῆν, ὥστε γε
τούτων ὅσοιπέρ εἰσι τῶν θεωμένων
οὔκ ἐστιν οὐδεὶς ὅστις οὐ κριθὴν ἔχει.
{*TP.*} οὐχ αἱ γυναῖκές γ' ἔλαβον.
{*OI.*} ἀλλ' εἰς ἑσπέραν
δώσουσιν αὐταῖς ἄνδρες. ἀλλ' εὐχώμεθα.
{*TP.*} τίς τῇδε; ποῦ πότ' εἰσι πολλοὶ κἀγαθοί;
{*OI.*} τοισδὶ φέρε δῶ· πολλοὶ γὰρ εἰσι κἀγαθοί.
{*TP.*} τούτους ἀγαθοὺς ἐνόμισας;
{*OI.*} οὐ γὰρ, οἵτινες
ἡμῶν καταχεόντων ὕδωρ τοσουτονὶ
εἰς ταὐτὸ τουθ' ἑστᾶσ' ἰόντες χωρίον;
ἀλλ' ὡς τάχιστ' εὐχώμεθ'.
{*TP.*} εὐχώμεσθα δή. (*Pax* 962–73)

{Tr.} And to the spectators throw some of the barley seed.
{Sl.} There.
{Tr.} You already gave them out?
{Sl.} Yes, by Hermes; there isn't one person who has no seed.[46]
{Tr.} The women didn't get any.
{Sl.} But tonight they'll get some from their husbands. Now let us pray.
{Tr.} Who's here? Where are the many and good?
{Sl.} Let me give it to these guys, for they're many and good.
{Tr.} You thought them good?
{Sl.} How not? When I poured out so much water, they went to this same place and stood there. But let's pray ASAP.
{Tr.} Yes, let's pray.

The slave is comically quick in complying with the order (cf. 958, 1042). Continuing his long tradition of sexual humour, he makes a joke out of the word κριθή ('a grain of barley'), which is a slang term for the penis.[47] By Olson's division of the lines, it is the slave who urges that they pray at both 967 and 973.[48] If we accept this attribution, the slave is once more trying to take control of the action, perhaps eager to get to the prayer, in which he may (depending on whether one believes the attribution of the MSS) have a joke up his sleeve. Another joke is apparently based on a ritual formula, by which, when the sacrificer asked τίς τῇδε, those present were to respond πολλοὶ

[46] For the translation 'seed', which gives some sense of *double entendre* to the English, I am indebted to the anonymous reader.
[47] Olson (1998), 254. $\Sigma^{R}$ explains that πρὸς τὴν κριθὴν παίζει, ὅτι τὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν αἰδοῖον κριθὴν ἔλεγον.
[48] Henderson, Platnauer, and Sommerstein give both of these urgings to Trygaeus.

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κἀγαθοί.[49] The chorus are many and good, according to the slave, because they have allowed themselves to be sprinkled with water and did not run away. We should note that the slave has made two jokes, one of which is about the audience and therefore has a metatheatrical element.

Trygaeus begins the prayer in a suitably reverent tone, expending three lines on titles of the goddess and finally asking her to accept the sacrifice. At this point someone – either the chorus or the slave – interrupts his prayer:

δέξαι δῆτ', ὦ πολυτιμήτη,
νὴ Δία, καὶ μὴ ποίει γ' ἅπερ αἱ
μοιχευόμεναι δρῶσι γυναῖκες·
καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖναι παρακλίνασαι
τῆς αὐλείας παρακύπτουσιν.
κἄν τις προσέχῃ τὸν νοῦν αὐταῖς,
ἀναχωροῦσιν.
κἆτ' ἢν ἀπίῃ, παρακύπτουσιν.
τούτων σὺ πόει μηδὲν ἔθ' ἡμῖν.[50] (*Pax* 978–86)

Yes, accept it, much-honoured goddess, by Zeus, and don't do what women in the act of adultery do. For they too open the door a little and peer out, and if someone notices them, they retreat; then, if he goes away, they do it again. Don't do any of these things to us anymore.

If the slave speaks these lines – as he does in the MSS – he is once again introducing a scandalous joke, for he compares the goddess to an adulterous woman. I think that this passage is fitting from a character who, as we have seen from many passages, is preoccupied with the sexual. But Olson (following Brunck) assigns the lines to the chorus or *coryphaeus*. He gives two reasons, both of which have to do with what is appropriate for a slave to do. He quotes van Leeuwen's assertion that it is not a slave's place to pray for the safety of the city ('non est serui pro ciuitatis salute precari') and argues that 'a description of the sexual pursuit of a free married woman is more acceptable coming from [the chorus] than from a servile character'.[51] Neither of these arguments can hold much water in my opinion. Despite the desire of everyone, including myself, to establish firm conventions – what can and cannot happen in comedy – eleven plays are not really enough to do it. We do not know the limits of what a slave could do. What if *Frogs* had not survived? Would any scholar have imagined a Xanthias? The paucity of our evidence deprives the *non est serui* argument of its strength. Rather than asking whether a slave can do *x*, we should ask whether *this* slave might do *x*. And I think that nothing in this passage crosses some line that the slave of *Peace* 819–1126 had not already crossed. It is fitting that the slave who called Theoria and Opora whores (848–9) would cast their mistress in the role of an adulterous woman. If he does cuckold his master at 855 and the βουλή at 873–4, it is in his character to portray the goddess as yet another married woman whom he wants.

It is interesting to note Trygaeus' response to this interruption in his prayer. Despite his reverent tone before the interruption, when he resumes he takes up the metaphor begun by the slave (or chorus). The goddess is not urged, as one thinks at first, to be unlike an adulterous woman by being a chaste woman; rather, she is urged to commit adultery brazenly and without the (affected or real) modesty of an

[49] Cf. $\Sigma^{RV}$.

[50] Because who speaks these lines is at issue here, I have not labelled the speaker, though I am using Olson's text and Olson attributes this passage to the chorus.

[51] Olson (1998), 256.

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ordinary adulteress. She should quit trying to be secret, just open the door already, and let her lovers have her. This is the implication of what Trygaeus says at 987–90 (*μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἀπόφηνον ὅλην σαυτὴν / γενναιοπρεπῶς τοῖσιν ἐρασταῖς / ἡμῖν, οἵ σου τρυχόμεθ' ἤδη / τρία καὶ δέκ' ἔτη*). Once again the master and slave are a team in wooing, as was implied at 873–4. This time, the *ἡμῖν* probably is meant to include the whole audience (since presumably everyone wants peace), so that all the men in the theatre that day were, in a metaphorical sort of way, invited to share a mistress.

In his dissertation on slaves in Aristophanic comedy, Stefanis observes:

*Στήν Εἰρήνη ὁ Οἰκέτης, πού συνεργάζεται γιά ἕνα μεγαλύτερο χρονικό διάστημα μέ τόν Τρυγαῖο, προεικονίζει τὸν Ξανθία καί τόν Καρίωνα καί ὡς πρός τήν ἔκταση τοῦ ρόλου του καί ὡς πρός τή διαγωγή.*[52]

In *Peace* the slave, who cooperates with Trygaeus for quite a while, prefigures Xanthias and Carion both in the extent of his role and in his behaviour.

He notes that the slave occasionally opposes his master and acts as if he were his equal – both of which are traits of Xanthias and Carion – and cites some specific examples in which he speaks back to his master lightly ('*ἐλαφρά αὐθαδιάζει*') at lines 958 and 1041.[53] The first, while it may seem mildly impertinent (*ἰδού. λέγοις ἂν ἄλλο· περιελήλυθα*, 958), is nothing compared with other actions and speeches of this slave, and it is strange that Stefanis chooses it as his first example. The second is not much different:

{*OI.*} *ταυτὶ δέδραται. τίθεσο τὼ μηρὼ λαβών·*
*ἐγὼ ἐπὶ σπλάγχν' εἶμι καὶ θυλήματα.*
{*TP.*} *ἐμοὶ μελήσει ταῦτά γ'. ἀλλ' ἥκειν ἐχρῆν.*
{*OI.*} *ἰδού, πάρειμι. μῶν ἐπισχεῖν σοι δοκῶ;* (*Pax* 1039–42)

{Sl.} That's done. Pick up and arrange the thighs. I'll go after the guts and cakes.
{Tr.} I'll do it. But you should be back already!
{Sl.} Look, I'm here. Surely you don't think I'm dawdling?

The distribution of these lines is disputed. What I have printed is the distribution of the MSS, which is advocated by Lowe against the altered arrangements of Beer and van Leeuwen.[54] Arguing that the slave should not give the master an order, Beer inserts a change of speaker before *τίθεσο*, so that the master speaks the second half of line 1039 and all of 1040. The slave then would speak 1041a (through *ταῦτά γ'*), and the master 1041b. The distribution of van Leeuwen is the same, except that he gives *ταυτὶ δέδραται* to Trygaeus as well.

All of this explains why, when one goes to check Stefanis' reference to an impertinent remark by the slave (1041), one will find instead a line attributed to Trygaeus, as

[52] Stefanis (1980), 151.

[53] To the examples of this slave's impudence cited by Stefanis should be added, I think, *Pax* 1122–4, where the slave responds to Trygaeus' order that he strike the oracle-monger Hierocles (*παί' αὐτὸν ἐπέχων τῷ ξύλῳ τὸν ἀλαζόνα*, 1121) by saying 'you do it' (*σὺ μὲν οὖν*, 1122). The slave then explains that his master should do the striking because he wants to do something else, namely to strip him of his (dishonestly earned) sheepskins (*κῴδια*).

[54] J.C.B. Lowe, 'Some questions of attribution in Aristophanes', *Hermes* 95 (1967), 53–71, at 63–4. The arguments of Lowe and the reading of the MSS seem to have prevailed. While Coulon, Cantarella and Platnauer follow van Leeuwen, the more recent editions (Olson, Sommerstein, Henderson) follow the MSS distribution.

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in the MSS, in the more recent English editions. Stefanis apparently means to call 'talking back lightly' the half-line of the slave as in Platnauer (ἐμοὶ μελήσει ταῦτά γ'). I cannot agree that we should necessarily read any level of impudence into such a remark, but I do agree with Stefanis that if we accept the MSS distribution, there is a certain feeling that Trygaeus and the slave are equals.[55] In this case the slave comes on stage, reports that the sheep has been slaughtered, and orders his master to take the thigh bones so that he himself may fetch the rest of the necessary parts of the animal from offstage. Technically he is giving his master a command, though he is not so much assuming the role of the master as that of a comrade. One recalls the partnership of Chremylus and Carion in *Wealth*.[56] The slave is indignant at his master's fault-finding at 1041 and expresses himself in 1042. This also reminds one of Carion, who resents the old men who make assumptions about his character (presumably because of his slave status) at *Wealth* 273–4.

But I find this evidence much less interesting than the constant interjections, comments and jokes of the slave in previous lines (855, 868–70, 875–6, 879–80, 891–3, all discussed above). For whatever reason, Stefanis does not seem to discuss these.[57] There is no substantial comment on this slave's frequent attempts to gain the sympathy of the audience through initiating, while not being the object of, (often sexual) humour.[58]

In an interesting study of names and naming in Aristophanes, Olson observes that comedy and tragedy are fundamentally different in their presentations of the names of their characters,[59] because tragedy is based on universally recognized myths, so that to introduce a character by name is to let the audience know everything about him or her,[60] while in comedy a name means little, since the audience must discern the nature of each character through his or her actions on stage.[61] He points out that when one watches a comedy on stage, one does not have a list of πρόσωπα or any labelling of characters with a name whenever they speak. Instead, except for certain traditional figures that would have been recognizable, such as Heracles, Hades or Hermes (and perhaps, because of his lack of a beard, Cleisthenes), the characters on stage would

[55] Stefanis (1980), 151, n. 36.

[56] K.J. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (Berkeley, 1972), 205 observes that Chremylus and Carion 'act more like a pair of friends than slave and master'.

[57] Stefanis (1980), 115, n. 17 does briefly discuss 873–4 (where the slave mentions that he and his master have screwed Theoria), but he says only that these lines are characterized by βωμολοχία ('βωμολοχικό χαρακτήρα ἔχει') and that they should be attributed to the slave. He directs the reader to Platnauer (1964), 142, who denies that παίειν can have a sexual meaning.

[58] The caveat 'while not being the object of' is quite important, for slaves in Aristophanes often generate humour at their own expense, so much so that K.J. Dover, *Aristophanes' Frogs* (Oxford, 1993), 43–4 assigns to slaves in the plays before *Ran.* only two basic roles (with the exception of the handling of props): narrating the prologue and eliciting 'laughter by being hurt, threatened, or frightened'. One can (and Dover does) adduce many examples of this phenomenon in the earlier plays, such as the slave who is beaten by Philocleon at a party (offstage) and then emerges on stage to tell the audience about his experience and lament that he does not have the hard shell of a turtle (*Vesp.* 1291–7, 1307), or the silent slaves who are abused for executing orders too slowly or for being in the way (*Av.* 1311, 1316, 1323–9, 1334–5 and *Lys.* 1215–23 respectively). But the slave at *Pax* 819–1126 does not fit into any of Dover's pre-Xanthian categories.

[59] S.D. Olson, 'Names and naming in Aristophanic comedy', *CQ* 42 (1992), 304–19, at 304–6.

[60] Cf. Antiphanes fr. 191.5–8 K: *Οἰδίπουν γὰρ ἂν φράσω, / τά γ' ἄλλα πάντ' ἴσασιν· ὁ πατὴρ Λάιος, / μήτηρ Ἰοκάστη, θυγατέρες, παῖδες τίνες, / τί πείσεθ' οὗτος, τί πεποίηκεν.*

[61] Cf. Antiphanes fr. 191.18–20 K: *ἡμὶν δὲ ταῦτ' οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλὰ πάντα δεῖ / εὑρεῖν, ὀνόματα καινά, τὰ διῳκημένα / πρότερον, τὰ νῦν παρόντα, τὴν καταστροφήν, / τὴν εἰσβολήν.*

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have been differentiated only by their dress until they happened to be named (which did not always happen).

Olson's study of slaves in particular yields results interesting for our purposes. He comes to the conclusion that, generally speaking, mute slaves are more likely to be named than those that have substantial speaking parts. He argues that speaking slaves are denied names in order to prevent them 'from wielding their names in potentially subversive ways', while those few substantial actors and speakers who happen to be given names (for example, Carion in *Wealth*, Sosias and Xanthias in *Wasps*) are always named by their masters in a direct command, and their names do not help them to dominate the stage.[62] The only exception is Xanthias in *Frogs*. If one accepts Olson's arguments, it would appear that the slave at *Peace* 819–1126 is not named lest he be a serious threat to the dramatic dominance of his master during that part of the play in which they act as partners. It should be noted that Trygaeus' name, which has already been disclosed in his confrontation with Hermes earlier in the play (190), is repeated again quite emphatically in this section (*Τρυγαῖος Ἀθμονεὺς ἐγώ*, 919). Does he do this to be sure that no one can mistake who the hero of the play really is, perhaps including his demotic to assert his citizenship in contrast to the slave's lack thereof? If so, this in itself is evidence of how much the slave has been giving Trygaeus a run for his money in the competition to dominate the stage. That the slave stops short of actually becoming the hero and must eventually be put down is hardly worth saying; the same could be said of our most conspicuous example of this kind of slave, Xanthias in *Frogs*.[63]

If Olson's theory is correct, then, this slave's lack of a name indicates that he is a potential threat or rival. Alternatively, the naming of slaves in comedy is for the most part mere chance – the masters themselves, as Olson recognizes, often go for hundreds of lines without a name, and this slave (unless he is the same as one of the slaves earlier in the comedy) has only a few hundred lines to exist. I do not think that a name would necessarily make him much more powerful, unless he were to use it himself with a strong sense of self-identity, as Xanthias does with his coinage, *Ἡρακλειοξανθίαν* (*Frogs* 499), which Olson (oddly) does not mention. If he were named in the course of one of Trygaeus' commands, the name would be no more his than the names of Carion, Sosias and Xanthias (the one in *Wasps*) are theirs; to be named in an order is to be given a name, to receive even that from the master. Xanthias at *Frogs* 499 and Trygaeus at *Peace* 919 proudly and with a fully-formed ego *take* their names and use them to draw attention to themselves and the identity that lies behind (better, *in*) their masks. The slave in *Peace* certainly does not do this; but neither does his lack of name preclude him from being a significant forerunner of Xanthias. Because of the difference between reading a play and seeing it staged in a time before programmes, his lack of a name is far more likely to prejudice modern scholarship than to have affected the thinking of the original audience.

## CONCLUSIONS

The slave of *Peace* 819–1126, though nameless, proves to be quite a strong character. He vies with his master for the audience's attention by volunteering all types of jokes, many of them sexual, one (855) perhaps in an aside. He frequently treats that same

[62] Olson (n. 59), 309–12.

[63] Xanthias is, of course, the most independent, dominant and interesting slave in Aristophanic comedy. But even he disappears from the play roughly halfway through at 814.

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master, and to some extent that master treats him, as an equal and a partner. Often enough he is temporarily in charge of the action, even if we concede 922–36 to Trygaeus and the chorus. As far as the humour goes, he and his master frequently take turns setting up one another's jokes. The slave frankly admires, even fondles, women who are to be betrothed to either his master or the *βουλή*; it is evident from the dialogue that he has slept with the latter, and it is possible that he sleeps with the former during the play. If the line distribution of the MSS is to be trusted, he also casts the goddess Peace in the role of his adulterous beloved in a prayer to her. There are many ways that one could try to explain this slave – in terms of the self-consciousness of the poet after what is said at *Peace* 743–7, the leniency of this particular master, the exigencies of humour on the comic stage, or the necessity of reacting 'out of character' to metatheatrical statements. But ultimately, like Xanthias in *Frogs*, we are compelled to accept his existence and alter our preconceived notions accordingly.

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