approaching the problem. It is, at the best of times, awkward to construct an approach to fragmentary plays, and it is near-impossible to translate fragments without making hypotheses and supplements about either sense or context. The rather curious format appears to be an understandable hedge—to provide both a minimalistic text and an easy-to-read translation for non-specialists. I would have liked to see the editors take a slightly braver line with the Greek and produce something closer to a reading text in the original, including probable supplements wherever possible. Given the existence of *TrGF*, there was scope in this volume to make something far more user-friendly. The editors acknowledge that it is a difficult balancing act to provide an in-depth guide to the field while maintaining accessibility for the student or scholar interested in Greek drama as a whole. I am not sure, on this evidence, that they have quite managed the feat.

Despite the quirks of design, the volume has a lot going for it, and I am personally delighted to have my hands on a copy. It is attractively presented, with clear font and generous supply of margins and other white space, and as such it is a pleasure to use. For researchers on satyr drama, it will save a lot of orthodox bibliographic legwork, as long as they are not looking for anything too radical. And to have a decent text of satyr plays in one volume will be convenient. Nonetheless, for the larger fragments of satyr play, not least in the hurly-burly of teaching, I already find myself plumping for the much more totable if far less comprehensive collections such as the Aeschylus and Sophocles Loebs (Weir Smyth, rev. Lloyd-Jones; Lloyd-Jones) or Diggle's select tragic fragments. This is, I think, one for the library, not the everyday bookshelf.

*University of Glasgow* IAN RUFFELL

## *PLUTUS*

M. C. Torchio (ed.): *Aristofane:* Pluto. Turin: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2001. Paper, €22.66. ISBN: 88-7694-539-3.

Aristophanes' *Plutus* is often regarded, even by specialists, as something of an afterthought in the poet's career, despite its intrinsic significance as Aristophanes' last surviving play (produced in 388 B.C.). Scholars, after all, tend to conceptualize Aristophanes as a poet of Old Comedy and Athenian society of the fifth century, and *Plutus* certainly feels a little alienated, generically and culturally, from that world. No longer really Old Comedy, not quite New Comedy, it has the feel more of a transitional form that reflected the changing literary tastes of the fourth century. One sign of the relative indifference with which modern scholars have treated *Plutus* is the fact that until a few years ago there had not been a complete edition of the play, with text and full commentary, for almost a century. The year 2001, however, brought an embarrassment of *ploutoi*, with the publication of two such editions, Alan Sommerstein's final installment in his series of commentaries on all the plays, *Wealth* (Warminster, 2001), and the volume by Maria Cristina Torchio under review here.

As one might expect, there is a good deal of overlap between the two editions, especially in matters of basic information, history, and bibliography, but in other respects they complement each other in useful ways, not so much by offering markedly

© The Classical Association, 2003

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.2.290 Published online by Cambridge University Press

divergent approaches to the play, but rather by the different emphases each commentator brings to bear on individual passages and their evidently different literary sensibilities. For her part, T. has produced an impressively comprehensive edition: one of its most enduring features may well be its exhaustive forty-page bibliography (Sommerstein's was, by design, only selective), which she cites generously in her front material and textual commentary. The edition opens with short sections on standard topics (structure of the play, historical background, the figure of Plutus in myth and art, etc.) and a few less conventional ones that reflect more recent literary trends (e.g. the play's 'teatralità', utopian and carnivalesque elements). There is a workmanlike quality about this introductory material, which is not altogether unwelcome, though T. does not really break much new ground, and a few of her more adventurous forays are too truncated to be of great interpretive import. Her attempt, for example, to combine Barthes's and Pagnini's semiotics in her discussion of the play's narratological strategies is tantalizing, but poorly developed, and so seems to me more distracting than illuminating. Likewise, her discussion of the 'carnivalesque' in the play is somewhat disengaged from current scholarship on the subject, both within classics and in such fields as folklore and anthropology.

In other respects, however, T.'s edition is exemplary: its expansive commentary runs conveniently at the foot of the page, and is consistently rich in philological and historical detail. Comparison with Sommerstein's edition is revealing. One of Sommerstein's great strengths—a function of his deep immersion in Aristophanes for some three decades—is his willingness to take strong, often original, stands on controversial points of interpretation. T. offers less originality, but her format allows her somewhat more luxury than Sommerstein's to cite all the scholarly players in the history of a given problem. The question of the two versions of *Plutus* is a case in point: Sommerstein devotes an entire section of his introduction to a detailed repudiation of MacDowell's argument that our *Plutus* was essentially a reworking of an earlier version from two decades earlier. T. too segregates her discussion of this problem (in an appendix), but it reads more like a bibliographical compendium than a polemic. Scholars wishing to delve into the history of the problem themselves, therefore, will probably find T.'s discussion of more immediate practical utility than Sommerstein's. T.'s text is essentially Coulon's, but one misses some sort of *apparatus criticus* (even Sommerstein is able to offer a sparse one of his own). She compensates for this omission, however, with a very useful section of 'nota al testo' at the end of her introduction in which she lucidly describes her divergences from Coulon. Her textual instincts are generally conservative, and her disagreements with Coulon often take the form of attempts to preserve manuscript readings over against a tradition of emendation. Her arguments may not persuade in every case, but I found this section admirably reflective and, all in all, quite lively reading.

Like Sommerstein, T. also offers a facing prose translation of the play (hers in Italian, of course), to which the lemmata in the commentary are keyed. This is perhaps a mild annoyance to readers who are mainly using the Greek text, but is consistent with the edition's apparent goal of remaining accessible to a wider audience. Plenty of Greek, on the other hand, is discussed within the commentary itself, which will surely be a challenge for a truly Greekless reader, though most of these passages are translated in parentheses, and I suspect that few readers of this edition will be complete novices anyway. This is, in short, a serious scholarly edition of *Plutus* which lavishes on the play the systematic, detailed attention it has long deserved.

*University of Pennsylvania* RALPH M. ROSEN

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.2.290 Published online by Cambridge University Press