Jendza (C.) *Paracomedy. Appropriations of Comedy in Greek Tragedy*. Pp. xii + 341. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. Cased, £47.99, US$74. ISBN: 978-0-19-009093-7.

In this monograph Craig Jendza focuses on a phenomena that many of us recognise in the study of Greek drama, but all too often pass over: *paracomedy*, the way that the dramatic form of tragedy engages with comic drama. According to Jendza, paracomedy is on the face of it the obverse side of *paratragedy* – where paratragedy refers to the way that Greek comedy actively engages with tragedy. Jendza's definition of paracomedy draws on E. Scharffenberger 1996 in seeing paracomedy function as an alter-ego to paratragedy. Jendza's work provides a broader study of paracomedy that: 'contributes to our understanding of generic interactions in Greek drama and literature more broadly' (4). The interest here is not in looking for comic humour in tragedy, but rather the way that tragedy appropriates various aspects of comic drama (a distinction drawn by B. Seidensticker 1978).

Paratragedy has been much studied by scholars from: P. Rau *Paratragodia* 1967, through to: M. Silk 'Aristophanic Paratragedy' in *Tragedy, Comedy and the Polis* 1993, expanded with M. Farmer *Tragedy on the Comic Stage* 2017, and numerous other publications. Paratragedy has earnt its place in A.H. Sommerstein's *Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Greek Comedy* (S. Miles 'Paratragedy' 2019), but paracomedy receives no direct mention there or, more tellingly, in H.M. Roisman's *The Encyclopedia of Greek Tragedy* 2013. In short, paratragedy is an established and recurrent part of scholarship, but the same cannot be said for paracomedy in Greek drama. This is where Jendza's work comes in. This monograph is a significant step forward because it provides the first wider treatment of how tragedy can engage with

comedy. As such it is a very welcome and overdue addition to scholarship on intergeneric play within Greek drama. H. Foley 'Generic boundaries in late fifth-century Athens' 2008 had already drawn attention to the cross-fertilisation between dramatic genres, but Jendza emphasises rivalry as opposed to a merging of genres by focusing on his interpretation of the relationship between Euripidean tragedy and Aristophanic comedy.

Chapter 1 presents Jendza's methodology for: 'establishing and interpreting paracomedy' (10), noting paracomedy is lacking in Sophocles, present in Aeschylus, and prevalent between Euripides and Aristophanes. Jendza emphasises the idea of rivalry between these two dramatists, calling on the well-used Cratinus fr. 342 with its hybrid: εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων in support. Indeed, the core of this monograph, Chapters 3-5, are taken up with the interactions of Euripides and Aristophanes. These chapters discuss a mixture of paratragedy and paracomedy, and presumably the collective term should be paradrama, but this is not deployed. Jendza's focus on Euripides and Aristophanes means that the focus is mainly on *Euripidean* paracomedy, rather than paracomedy in general.

For Jendza, there are: 'three criteria in developing an argument for paracomedy: (1) detecting *distinctive correspondences* between tragic and comic elements, (2) establishing the *priority of the comic element*, and (3) ascertaining the *motivation* for adopting features from outside the genre and the *effects* such adoptions produce in the audience.' (10, 17 where, for some reason, it is repeated *verbatim*). The last of

three is the most subjective, both in terms of identifying the motivation of an author, and in assuming the effects on an audience, as if it were a homogenous unit.

Chapter 2 presents a chronological exploration of paracomedy, focusing on *Oresteia, Alcestis* and *Heracles.* The chapter makes ready use of comic fragments, which is encouraging for broadening the interpretative frame for Greek drama. Aeschylean paracomedy is identified as distinct from Euripidean, because Aeschylus calls on generalised tropes of comedy, rather than any specific comic models. In the case of Euripides, the level of engagement with comedy is higher and directed at Aristophanes. This is unsurprising as Euripides and Aristophanes were direct contemporaries, whereas in the case of Aeschylus we have only remnants of his comic contemporaries. On these grounds, I think it odd to conclude that Aeschylus: 'fails to engage deeply with any specific comedy' (80) when compared to Euripides. We just do not have the evidence to judge this.

Jendza interprets the use of paracomedy in *Oresteia* and *Heracles* as drawing out the female threat of the Erinyes (50) and deep emotion of Heracles (60), which is intriguing. I would add that when pushing towards portrayals of fear and madness, comedy is a natural place to go for transgressing boundaries from the perspective of dramatists and audiences. It would have been interesting to revisit this when tackling *Bacchae*, which holds potential as the most macabre horror movie never made (S. Miles 'Euripidean stagecraft' 2020). In this chapter Foley's merging of generic boundaries feels particularly evident and relevant.

Chapters 3-5 contain the heart of the book (pp. 82-215), focusing on Euripides and paracomedy with reference to Aristophanes alone for the period: 415 – 405 BCE. Jendza traces a dialogue between *Acharnians, Helen, Thesmophoriazusae* and *Bacchae*, with a particularly engaging analysis of how controlling costume in these plays reflects intergeneric tussles. At the chapter's close Jendza remarks that: 'Aristophanes and Euripides spent some twenty years of their lives staging a rivalry that only ended when Euripides died' (118). Surprisingly, Jendza makes no mention here to *Frogs*, or the way that Aristophanes continues to persecute, elevate and emulate Euripidean tragedy even after the tragedian's death. Euripides -*finally*- has no 'right of reply', and he is immortalised by none other than Aristophanes. Nobody ever said comedy was pretty.

Chapter 6 explores difficult cases in the chronology of tragedies and comedies, evaluating possibilities about whether a comedy pre-dates a tragedy, or the reverse. This chapter is openly more subjective in its approach, e.g. it includes an argument against S. Beta 1999 that *Wasps* comes before *Heracles* (225-7). I for one would like to have heard Jendza's response to Scharffenberger 1995 with its proposal that *Lysistrata* predates *Phoenissae*, particularly as this argument relies on chronology. Given that both Strattis and Aristophanes went on to compose a comic *Phoenissae* in response to Euripides, this would seem another opportunity to explore paradramatic games. Jendza's book provides superb groundwork for this, and I hope a next step from Jendza's work will be to incorporate more fragments in expanding intergeneric explorations.

Chapter 7 looks at paracomedy beyond the 5th c. BCE, opening up possibilities for further exploration, and it raises many possibilities for expansion beyond those proposed by Jendza into Hellenistic poetry, e.g. the *Mimiambs* of Herodas, the work of Theocritus or Apollonius for the way that they receive and respond to comic and tragic drama. The monograph's conclusion briefly situates paracomedy within other theatrical and literary theories, drawing on intertheatricality as well as intertextuality, noting scholarship on early modern drama. I would have welcomed this from the start, particularly given Jendza's focus on costume in the latter stages of the monograph. I find convincing Jendza's point that by acknowledging paracomedy in our understanding of tragedy we can: 'cast Athenian drama as a dynamic world filled with mutual literary influence' (14). I would only wish to amend this to "literary and *performative*" influence.

Jendza's book provides the most detailed and wide-ranging analysis of the relationship between Aristophanes and Euripides, who were contemporary dramatists, colleagues and co-competitors in the performative art of drama. Therefore, the question becomes to what extent are we looking at paracomedy, or rather, as Cratinus put it so ably 2500 years ago: εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων? The lack of paracomedy in Sophocles should give pause for thought as to whether this was: 'a productive historical phenomena in Greek tragedy' (3), or rather a creative, stylistic choice of certain dramatists. When considering the lack of paracomedy in Sophocles, it is worthwhile to bring in comic fragments alongside Aristophanes. For, here the same pattern is observed where Sophocles is rarely named as a comic target, and never brought on-stage as one, unlike Aeschylus and Euripides, both of whom feature in Jendza's book as paracomedians.

As is evident from the above I found Jendza's work stimulating to think with, providing refreshed perspectives on familiar plays, and room for much debate besides. Given my own work on paratragedy, the latter is hardly surprising, and I see this monograph as a real step forward for exploring intergeneric interactions and the ongoing process of stimulus and response that shaped the development of both comic and tragic drama.

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