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Tragico e comico nel dramma attico e oltre: intersezioni e sviluppi parateatrali. Atti dell'Incontro di studi, Cagliari 4-5 febbraio 2009. Supplementi di Lexis, 58

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Review by

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Preview

This book is a collection of essays presented during the conference on Greek tragedy and comedy, organized by the University of Cagliari. Scholars from several Italian universities deal with fifth-century Attic drama and its influence on Platonic dialogues or on later works in the Hellenistic Period and Late Antiquity.

Antonio Martina (“Il mito di Elettra e l’ideazione drammatica nell’ *Elettra* di Euripide”) traces step by step the development of Electra’s mythical figure from archaic epos (Homeric poems and the epic cycle) to Euripides’ *Electra* and *Orestes*, going through earlier lyric and tragic poetry (Xanthus, Stesichorus, Aeschylus, Sophocles). He mainly focuses on Euripides and his innovative approach to the mythical subject in comparison with Stesichorus and Aeschylus.

Giuseppina Basta Donzelli (“La parodo dello *Ione* di Euripide”) offers an analysis of the parodos in Euripides’ *Ion* and investigates its relationship with the sculptural decoration of the pediment on the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Tales about Heracles, Bellerophon and the Gigantomachy are quickly evoked by the chorus, probably because spectators knew them well. Basta Donzelli notes some inaccuracies in the description of the actual Delphi pediment and deals with the dramaturgical meaning of such a parodos within this tragedy. She supports her text with an iconographical appendix of 11 figures.

Paolo Cipolla (“Due *testimonia* relative a Pratina di Fliunte (Dioscoride, *AP* 7.707; *Pap. Petrie* 2.49.B.20-24)”) gives a detailed reading of a fictional epigram for Sositheus in order to derive information about the works of Pratinas and the development of satyric

drama, from Sophocles to the Hellenistic Age. Cipolla then suggests that the lacuna in *Pap. Petrie* 2.49.B.20 could be filled simply by an allusion to the genre of Pratinas' works (satyric plays) instead of a single title. Finally he adds additional arguments ("post scriptum") against the famous Pratinas' *hyporchema* as a part of a satyric drama:¹ lyric poetry was at least an influence on this choral song.

Patrizia Mureddu ("Il processo a Socrate nell' *Apologia* di Platone") deals with Plato's skilful way of presenting Socrates' character within his *Apology*: Mureddu argues that this dialogue gives the appearance of artlessness, while in fact nothing was said by chance and Plato looks like a wise playwright who mixed tragic and comic tones. Finally, she marks important differences between *Apology of Socrates* by Plato and *Apology of Palamedes* by Gorgias regarding the choices of the speaking character and their effects on the hearers.

Gian Franco Nieddu ("Un medico per commensale: il discorso di Erissimaco nel *Simposio* di Platone") focuses on Eryximachus' speech in Plato's *Symposium*. This character was portrayed by the ancient philosopher as a young, self-confident *iatrosophistes*, who promoted medicine as the most important science but misunderstood both Heraclitus' theory about the opposite elements and Aristophanes' tragicomic asking for help against hiccup. As a result, Plato presented his well-read and well-defined speech as at the same time emphatic and forced.

Antonino Milazzo ("Aristofane nella retorica tardo-antica") investigates the relationship between Aristophanic comedy and rhetorical handbooks in Late Antiquity (II-VI centuries) along three lines: interpretations of ancient texts, links between poetry and eloquence, ways of quotation. Aristophanes was often compared with Menander and rhetoricians were interested in different aspects: language, style and meaning or rhetorical effectiveness. Different points of view led to different evaluations.

Luigi Leurini ("Βοῦς Κύπριος εἶ. Gli animali nei proverbi delle commedie di Menandro") collects a wide range of proverbs taken from Menander's comedy, gathered by animal. Leurini also tries both to examine their range and the evolution in their meaning and to suggest the contexts in which they were inserted and their dramaturgical function.

Adele Teresa Cozzoli ("L' *Ecale* di Callimaco e la poesia 'di nuovo stile'") considers the narrative technique in Callimachus' *Ecale*, finds some theatrical reminiscences and investigates their functions in epic poetry. She mainly focuses on the two speaking birds and points out the features of Hellenistic epic poetry in comparison with archaic epic, such as realism and contamination among different traditional genres. Cozzoli analyses this 'new style' looking at both content and language.

Maria Pia Pattoni ("Riusi epico-tragici e distanziazioni parodiche nei *Pastoralia* di Longo") deals with the influence of tragedy on Longus' *Pastoralia*: such a contamination between tragic and bucolic tones usually produced comic effects. The novelist also took the Homeric epos as a model for his work: in any case, the different context and genre implied a shift in pathos.

Tristano Gargiulo (“Un caso di intertestualità nel *Romanzo di Alessandro* : i fraintendimenti di β e γ rispetto ad A”) focuses on both the textual discrepancies between the several versions of the *Alexander Romance* and the differences in meaning they implied: the main character, for example, is not presented everywhere in the same way. So Gargiulo argues that one version is not more correct than the others and that editors of the *Alexander Romance* should keep this matter in mind.

Finally, Vittorio Citti (“Conclusioni”) sums up the content of each paper and underlines the wide range of topics on Attic drama and its later echoes that this book offers to its readers.

All in all, this book is a complex and rich study on the relationship between different genres and works from different ages and an important contribution in the field of intertextuality, where Attic drama plays a major role. According to Friedrich Nietzsche, quoted by Nieddu (p. 101), tragedy took up elements from all the earlier poetic genres, and the Platonic dialogues had the same attitude vis-à-vis narration, poetry and drama. According to these collected papers, in Late Antiquity rhetoric handbooks and novels seem to proceed in much the same way.

Notes

1. Cipolla contests the arguments supported by Giovan Battista D’Alessio, “Ἦν ἰδοῦ: *Ecce Satyri* (Pratina, *PMG* 708 = *TrGF* 4 F 3). *Alcune considerazioni sull’uso della deissi nei testi lirici e teatrali*, in Franca Perusino, Maria Colantonio (eds.), *Dalla lirica corale alla poesia drammatica: forme e funzioni del canto corale nella tragedia e nella commedia greca*, Edizioni ETS, Pisa, 2007, pp. 95-128.