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TRAGEDY AND POLITICS IN ARISTOPHANES' *ACHARNIANS*[1]

ARISTOPHANES' second play, *Babylonians*, included an attack on state offices and politicians and, probably, the city's treatment of its allies.[2] According to the scholia of *Acharnians*, the play provoked Cleon to indict Aristophanes (or the play's producer Callistratus) for ἀδικία and ὕβρις towards the δῆμος and the βουλή on the grounds that he treasonably embarrassed the city before strangers at the City Dionysia.[3] Cleon may also have questioned Aristophanes' citizenship, suggesting that the poet (or Callistratus) was really a native Aiginetan, not a true Athenian.[4] Aristophanes returned fire at the Lenaia of 425 with *Acharnians*, a play that renews *Babylonians*' attack on Athens' misguided politics and politicians. Even more important, by making a separate peace with Sparta and by offering in his speech of self-defense before the chorus to defend the enemy, the comic hero Dikaiopolis commits 'crimes' equivalent to those for which Aristophanes was indicted.

In *Acharnians* Aristophanes takes the unusual step of linking his own difficulties with Cleon and his case for the justice of comedy explicitly with Dikaiopolis' speech in self-defense. A comic poet normally speaks in his own voice only in the parabasis and nowhere else in extant comedy does Aristophanes identify himself with his hero as extensively as in *Acharnians*.[5] At 377–82 when Dikaiopolis announces that he will make a speech in defense of the Lakedaimonians and at the opening of the speech itself (502–3), the comic hero refers in the first person to Cleon's attacks on himself of the previous year. Taking a cue from the scholiast, some scholars have even insisted that Aristophanes played the part of Dikaiopolis himself, perhaps wearing a portrait mask.[6] How, then, did Aristophanes persuade his audience that a play whose hero glories in being a traitor to his city in war time was in fact patriotic and beneficial to the πόλις? The question is not a trivial one. An Athenian decree of 440/39 formally restricted the freedom of the

[1] A version of this paper was first presented in 1984 at the F.I.E.C. conference in Dublin, Ireland. I would like to thank the anonymous referees and the editor of *JHS* and discerning audiences in Dublin, at Columbia University, at Swarthmore College, and at University of Cincinnati for their comments and questions.

[2] See schol. *Ach.* 378 for *Babylonians*' attack on many unnamed persons, on state offices, whether filled by lot or by vote, and on Cleon. For the attack on the allies, see the ambiguous *Ach.* 642, which makes it unclear whether the play addressed Athens' treatment of its allies or the implications of democratic rule within these states. The fragments of *Babylonians* suggest that the allies may have been represented as slaves of Athens.

[3] Schol. *Ach.* 378. Aristophanes may, of course, have invented these charges, and the scholiast may have derived his evidence from the plays; on the other hand, the poet repeatedly attacks both Cleon and his purported charges against him (see esp. *Ach.* 376–82, *Knights, Wasps* 1284–91, and *Clouds* 581–94). One can hardly suppose that the topic would continue to amuse the audience if the threat of censorship were absolutely meaningless. Debate continues on whether Aristophanes or Callistratus (or both) was the object of Cleon's charges; since I am concerned only with the nature and content of the attack, the issue is largely irrelevant. For discussion of these and other aspects of Aristophanes' early career, see esp. W. J. M. Starkie, *The Acharnians of Aristophanes* (London 1909, rep. Amsterdam 1968) Excursus v, D. M. MacDowell, 'Aristophanes and Callistratus', *CQ* n.s. xxxii (1982) 21–6, S. Halliwell, 'Aristophanes' apprenticeship', *CQ* n.s. xxx (1980) 33–45, and G. Mastromarco, 'L'esordio "segreto" di Aristofane', *Quaderni di Storia* x (1979) 153–96.

[4] See schol. *Ach.* 378 for Cleon's purported charge of γραφὴ ξενίας (it may also have occurred after *Knights*) and *Prolegomena* xxviii–xxxiib Koster for (probably comic) allegations, typical in the biographical tradition, of Aristophanes' foreign or slave extraction. Whether or not Cleon made such an attack (now or later), some explanation must be found for *Ach.* 652–4 which deliberately links the poet (or Callistratus) with Aigina; the scholiast on 654 asserts that Callistratus (not as in schol. R on 653, Aristophanes) may recently have acquired property on Aigina. See Starkie (n. 3) 139 for further possible associations between Aristophanes and Aigina.

[5] Cratinus, for example, was a character in his *Pytine*, and Aristophanes speaks for himself in *fr.* 471K.

[6] For a discussion of these issues, provoked by schol. *Ach.* 377, see C. Bailey, 'Who played Dicaeopolis?' in *Greek poetry and life*, Essays presented to Gilbert Murray on his seventieth birthday (Oxford 1936) 231–40 and K. J. Dover, 'Portrait-masks in Aristophanes', in ΚΩΜΩΙΔΟΤΡΑΓΗΜΑΤΑ, Studia Aristophanea viri Aristophanei W. J. W. Koster in honorem (Amsterdam 1967) 16–28. Bailey's thesis has not generally been accepted.

political comedian for several years before it was repealed.[7] Other legislation followed and by the fourth century Old Comedy had largely abandoned the biting political satire so popular in its formative years. This essay will examine the means that Aristophanes uses in *Acharnians* to defend his comedy against the Cleons of his audience. In particular it will investigate why the poet has his hero borrow Euripides' *Telephus* in order to do so and how he manipulates tragedy to serve the license, argument, and prestige of comedy. In a broader sense, I hope to illuminate further the political stance that Aristophanes takes in his peace plays and how tragic imitation in comedy serves a range of purposes beyond its witty exposure of Euripidean dramaturgy.

I

Even if the popular Telephus myth and, as is less likely, Euripides' play of 438 were thoroughly familiar to the audience, Aristophanes needed in *Acharnians* to establish for the first time in his career his own special relation to Euripides and to tragedy.[8] In this play Aristophanes goes out of his way to give the audience clues for recognizing his major tragic source and for interpreting his use of it,[9] and second to call attention to the way his text defines and creates what he calls τρυγῳδία, a wine-song or κωμῳδία with a tragic accent.[10]

Telephus, son of Heracles and Auge, daughter of King Aleus of Arcadia, became by a series of accidents king of barbarian Mysia. He was wounded by Achilles while resisting an attack by Achaeans who were on their way to Troy. In some versions, his disaster was brought on by Dionysus, who caught Telephus' foot in a vine because he had neglected his worship. When the wound would not heal, Telephus sought oracular advice. According to Euripides' version of the myth, he then went to the Greek mainland to seek a cure from Achilles. In disguise as a beggar, he defended himself and the Mysians by assuring the Achaeans that they too would have answered an unprovoked attack on their country. He may also have impugned the Greeks'

[7] See the possibly untrustworthy assertion of schol. *Ach.* 67. The decree was passed after the Samian revolt in the archonship of Morychides and repealed in 437/36. Schol. *Ach.* 1150 offers a possible identification of the συγγραφεύς Antimachus mentioned there with the author of a ψήφισμα which forbade κωμῳδεῖν ἐξ ὀνόματος; in *Acharnians* the chorus accuses Antimachus of being a χορηγός who denied the expected feast to the chorus of a comedy presented at the Lenaia (1154–5). We also know of a law of Syracosius in 415 BC. On comic censorship, see also [Xen.] *Ath. Pol.* ii 18, which notes that attacks on the δῆμος were not tolerated, whereas attacks on powerful individuals were acceptable (see *Ach.* 515–16). The question of comic censorship in the fifth century is too complex to address fully here; the laws probably restricted satire of the state constitution, state policies, or named individuals, not all political comedy (see Starkie [n. 3] Excursus ii).

[8] *Banqueters* and *Babylonians* apparently gave little if any attention to tragedy. K. J. Dover, *Aristophanic comedy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1972) 215, suggests that earlier comedy, at least as represented by the fragments of Cratinus, may have parodied Homer and other archaic poets, but that Aristophanes' generation was the first to exploit tragedy for comic purposes. When the Peloponnesian War led the city to reduce the number of comedies at the City Dionysia from five to three (as in the case of *Acharnians*; *cf.* the argument to the play) and, we think (see Ar. *Birds* 786–9), to produce them at the conclusion of each of three days following the production of a tragic poet, the changed structure of the festival may have sparked a new kind of confrontation and even rivalry between the genres. For the complex problem of the number and place of comedies at the City Dionysia, see A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The dramatic festivals of Athens*, rev. by J. Gould and D. M. Lewis (Oxford 1968) 82–3.

[9] For the Telephus myth, and its popularity in tragedy and art, see esp. Roscher, *Lexikon* v, 274–307, G. Brizi, 'Il mito di Telefo nei tragici greci', *A & R* n.s. ix (1928) 95–145, and L. Séchan, *Études sur la tragédie grecque* (Paris 1926) 121–7 and 503–18. For recent reconstructions of Euripides' *Telephus*, see E. Handley and J. Rea, *The Telephus of Euripides, BICS* Supp. v (London 1957), and T. B. L. Webster, *The tragedies of Euripides* (London 1967) 43–8. In my view, Aristophanes' audience would have needed to know little more than the major episodes of the plot of Euripides' *Telephus* and, preferably, the major points made in Telephus' speech before the Greeks in order to appreciate Aristophanes' parody/paratragedy. R. M. Harriott's study, 'Aristophanes' audience and the plays of Euripides', *BICS* ix (1962) 1–8, indicates that Aristophanes generally parodied tragic speeches, especially speeches of self-defense; it is likely, then, that Athenians were familiar with such speeches outside of their original context.

[10] On τρυγῳδία ('comic word [with parody on τραγῳδία] for κωμῳδία', LSJ), see P. Ghiron-Bistagne, 'Un calembour méconnu d'Aristophane, *Acharniens* 400, *Oiseaux* 787'; *REG* lxxxvi (1973) 285–91 and O. Taplin, 'Tragedy and trugedy', *CQ* n.s. xxxiii (1983) 331–3.

motives for undertaking the Trojan War, perhaps by denigrating Helen and by representing events from a Trojan perspective. After his disguise was penetrated, Telephus took refuge at an altar with the baby Orestes as hostage. By the conclusion of the play he was recognized as Greek rather than barbarian and promised a cure for his wound by Achilles; in accordance with another oracle he became guide for the expedition to Troy.

Borrowing from *Telephus* is pervasive in *Acharnians*. Although the hostage scene and the speech in self-defense proved most apt for Aristophanes' purposes, verbal allusions to the play range from a half line in the prologue (8; *Fr*. 720N²) to a possible paraphrase in a messenger's description of Lamachus' disaster in the concluding scene (1188; *Fr*. 705aSn.). Neither of these last two Euripidean references need have been recognized by the audience for it to grasp that an important allusion is being made to a tragic context. In the prologue a sprinkling of high style diction and meter and explicit references to the pleasures and pains evoked by tragic performances (9–16, immediately following the Telephean allusion in 8) link initially the comic hero's situation with the opposite genre.[11] The language of the final scene pointedly contrasts the mock tragic fall of the wounded general with the comic triumph of Dikaiopolis.

Although Aristophanes does not openly name *Telephus* as the source for Dikaiopolis' hostage scene in *Acharnians*, he repeatedly stresses a shared theme—the making of a self-defense by defending the enemy—and draws the audience into a sort of guessing game about his hero's strategem with the coal basket/'child'. The chorus says, inviting the audience to recall Telephus' seizure of the baby Orestes as hostage. 'Does he have one of our *children* confined inside?' (329–30; Dikaiopolis also swears—perhaps significantly—by Heracles, Telephus' father, at the beginning of the scene, 284). In any case, if the audience had thus far failed to notice Aristophanes' clever adaptation of this popular Euripidean scene,[12] the hero acquires the role, the costume, and the ῥῆσις of Telephus in the scene at the tragic poet's house. Dikaiopolis abandons the role of Telephus by the conclusion of his first encounter with the general Lamachus,[13] but in the final scene of the play Lamachus acquires the lameness of a Euripidean hero. Just as Telephus was wounded because he caught his foot in a vine shoot, Lamachus wounds himself with a vine prop while leaping over a ditch.

In short, Aristophanes frames and unifies the argument of his comedy through repeated references to Euripides' tragedy and makes gradually more explicit for the audience a relation, which cannot be viewed as strictly ironic or absurd, between Dikaiopolis, Telephus, and himself. For however much Aristophanes makes fun of Euripides in the scene at the poet's house, Dikaiopolis makes his tragicomic[14] Telephean ῥῆσις the basis for a set of claims for both himself and Aristophanes that are repeated by the chorus, when they speak again for the poet and the justice of comedy in the parabasis. In contrast to *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Frogs*, in *Acharnians* we find no references to Euripidean immoral heroines or new gods; here Aristophanes has no wish

[11] On the language of the prologue and its complex mixture of poetic and colloquial diction, see esp. P. Rau, *Paratragodia: Untersuchungen einer komischen Form des Aristophanes. Zetemata* 45 (Munich 1967) 185, and K. J. Dover, 'Lo stile di Aristofane', *QUCC* ix (1970) 7–23. Rau 37–8 on lines 480–8 notes the rarity of monologues in old comedy and the frequency of paratragic diction in such passages. Hence, while this passage is by no means a parody of Euripidean prologues (as argued by Starkie [n. 3] 6 and 249), and its eclectic style evokes the comic far more than the tragic, the monologue form itself may have prepared the audience for allusions to tragedy. The last scene of *Acharnians* includes lines adapted from other Euripidean plays as well.

[12] The scene appeared frequently on vase paintings. See Webster (n. 9) 302 and E. Simon, *The ancient theatre*, trans. C. E. Vafopoulou-Richardson (New York 1982) pl. 15, for an Apulian Bell Crater by the Schiller painter, *c*. 370 BC, that parodies the scene.

[13] C. Russo, *Aristofane, autore di teatro* (Florence 1962; 2nd ed. 1984 unavailable to me) 87 suggests that Dikaiopolis throws off his rags at 595. See further C. Segal's review of Russo (*AJP* lxxxvi [1965] 308) and R. M. Harriott, 'The function of the Euripides scene in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*', *G&R* xxix [1982] 39–40.

[14] Following P. Pucci, *Aristofane ed Euripide: ricerche metriche e stilistiche* (Rome 1961) 277–8, it is important to distinguish between parody, which deliberately mocks, deforms, or criticizes tragic style, and tragicomedy or paratragedy, which aims not to mock tragedy but to use high style to express comic ideas; τρυγῳδία, to use Aristophanes' own term for his hero's comic adaptations of tragedy, has a mixed style which refers to the formal structure of tragedy (monody, stichomythia and so on).

to jeopardize Dikaiopolis' case by emphasizing from the start the moral ambiguities of his tragic model.

II

Ostensibly, Dikaiopolis and Aristophanes lay claim to tragedy in order to acquire the courage to make a convincing and moving self-defense. But what particularly attracts Aristophanes to the choice of Telephus, out of all Euripides' ragged heroes? By having Dikaiopolis at Euripides' house run through a long list of alternative roles from his tragic rag bag (412–34), Aristophanes not only mocks the tragic poet's propensity for these pathetic figures, but wants his audience to consider the range of tragic models available to him and to pay special attention to the apt choice of Telephus. Dikaiopolis rejects the pathetic rags of Oineus, Phoinix, Philoctetes, and Bellerophon before accepting from Euripides the Telephean rags that perceptive members of the audience, who recognized allusions to *Telephus* in the previous scene, have already anticipated. Notice how the passage builds up to and stresses the choice of Telephus (414–34):

Δι. ἀλλ' ἀντιβολῶ πρὸς τῶν γονάτων σ' Εὐριπίδη,
δός μοι ῥάκιόν τι τοῦ παλαιοῦ δράματος.
δεῖ γάρ με λέξαι τῷ χορῷ ῥῆσιν μακράν·
αὕτη δὲ θάνατον, ἢν κακῶς λέξω, φέρει.
Ευ. τὰ ποῖα τρύχη; μῶν ἐν οἷς Οἰνεὺς ὁδὶ[15]
ὁ δύσποτμος γεραιὸς ἠγωνίζετο;
Δι. οὐκ Οἰνέως ἦν, ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἀθλιωτέρου.
Ευ. τὰ τοῦ τυφλοῦ Φοίνικος; Δι. οὐ Φοίνικος, οὔ,
ἀλλ' ἕτερος ἦν Φοίνικος ἀθλιώτερος.
Ευ. ποίας ποθ' ἀνὴρ λακίδας αἰτεῖται πέπλων;
ἀλλ' ἦ Φιλοκτήτου τὰ τοῦ πτωχοῦ λέγεις;
Δι. οὐκ ἀλλὰ τούτου πολὺ πολὺ πτωχιστέρου.
Ευ. ἀλλ' ἦ τὰ δυσπινῆ 'θέλεις πεπλώματα,
ἃ Βελλεροφόντης εἶχ' ὁ χωλὸς οὑτοσί;
Δι. οὐ Βελλεροφόντης ἀλλὰ κἀκεῖνος μὲν ἦν
χωλὸς προσαιτῶν στωμύλος δεινὸς λέγειν.
Ευ. οἶδ' ἄνδρα, Μυσὸν Τήλεφον.[16] Δι. ναὶ Τήλεφον·
τούτου δὸς ἀντιβολῶ σέ μοι τὰ σπάργανα.[17]
Ευ. ὦ παῖ δὸς αὐτῷ Τηλέφου ῥακώματα.
κεῖται δ' ἄνωθεν τῶν Θυεστείων ῥακῶν
μεταξὺ τῶν 'Ινοῦς. Κη. ἰδοὺ ταυτὶ λαβέ.

Old Oineus and blind Phoinix were unjustly exiled and justly restored to society at the conclusion of these Euripidean dramas, Ino and Thyestes experienced the pain of exile, and Philoctetes and Bellerophon suffered both lameness and social isolation. Telephus is a supposed

[15] Here Euripides points to a mask, costume, or manuscript. On the use of demonstratives for the costumes of Oineus and Bellerophon at 418 and 427, see C. Macleod, 'Euripides' rags', *ZPE* xv (1974) 221–2 and 'Euripides' rags again', *ZPE* xxxix (1980) 6, rep. in *Collected essays* (Oxford 1983). Macleod suggests that the rags are a source of words for Dikaiopolis (*Ach.* 447) because they may in fact be texts as well as costumes (see *Ach.* 415).

[16] Μυσὸν Τήλεφον, see *Telephus fr.* 74 N². The original line also apparently referred to the recognition of Telephus.

[17] H. Erbse, 'Zu Aristophanes', *Eranos* lii (1954) 8 emphasizes that σπάργανα mean swaddling clothes or tokens of recognition as well as rags. Macleod 1974 (n. 15) 222 thinks that the term makes *Telephus* the exposed 'brain child' of the tragedian (perhaps Euripides has the original of his text here as well). Pucci (n. 14) 413–14 sees here a parody of Euripides' plays of romantic intrigue, which often featured exposed children (such as the baby Telephus himself) who are finally recognized as royal. Euripides thus legitimizes Dikaiopolis as the father of Telephus/*Telephus*. Significantly, Dikaiopolis later uses the rags in his 'recognition scene' with Lamachus.

alien among Greeks, lame, and eloquent. Yet unlike the other ragged heroes, Telephus is not a helpless victim of exile, but deliberately adopts the disguise of a beggar to defend the justice of his past actions. The hero's manipulation of a humble disguise makes his role particularly attractive to a poet who aims to defend the justice of comedy through the mouth of his comic hero.

The role of Telephus has more extensive advantages for Aristophanes' self-defense than is generally realized, however. For Aristophanes, due to his recent difficulties with Cleon, has in fact even more in common with Telephus than does his comic hero. Both Telephus and Aristophanes have suffered and incurred hostility and slander (*Ach.* 630) because of a successful and, we learn, fully justified previous 'attack' on their countrymen. Telephus was wounded by Achilles and Aristophanes nearly 'perished' from Cleon's suit (381–2). Telephus defends his choice to drive off the invading Greeks from Mysia and Aristophanes deserves his prize for the offending *Babylonians*, which really did not do violence to (καθυβρίζει, 631; see Cleon's charge of ὕβρις) or mock (κωμῳδεῖ, 631) the city, but offered it justice (τὰ δίκαια, 645, 655; see Cleon's charge of ἀδικία).

Both claim to be true countrymen, despite appearances to the contrary. Telephus, although ruler of barbarian Mysia and a relation by marriage to Priam, is Greek by birth and said to be the son of Heracles most like his father (and hence a source of courage for Dikaiopolis; see *Ach.* 480–9 and *Telephus fr.* 702N^2). His true identity as Greek is recognized in the concluding scenes of Euripides' play. The reference to Aristophanes' connection with Aigina in the parabasis (652–4) makes it likely that Cleon had indeed raised the issue of Aristophanes' Athenian citizenship in 426, even if he had not, as ancient testimony suggests, formally prosecuted the poet at this time for ξενία as well as ἀδικία.[18] Through both Dikaiopolis/Telephus and the parabasis, Aristophanes asserts his value as a true citizen of Athens.

Finally, both Telephus and Aristophanes end by achieving or claiming to have achieved recognition by their countrymen. Telephus, on the strength of an oracle and in gratitude for the cure of his wound, agrees to become the guide for the Greek expedition to Troy. Aristophanes argues in the parabasis that the Persian king has confirmed to the Spartans the strategic value of the famous poet who risks telling his city awkward truths and thus leads it through his advice to *victory in war* (646–55): καὶ τῷ πολέμῳ πολὺ νικήσειν τοῦτον ξύμβουλον ἔχοντας, 'and having this man [Aristophanes] as advisor [the city] will conquer decisively in war' (651). Here Aristophanes exploits the implicit analogy between himself and Telephus—both will lead their countrymen to victory in war—and ignores the plot of his play, which aims at peace (see 626–7). In 652–4, however, the chorus claims that the Spartans are offering to make peace in order to acquire Aigina and above all the poet himself. Thus, although it is difficult to reconcile Aristophanes' insistence on his military value to the city (596, 651) with the powerful case made for peace in the play, I think that we must assume that the victory in war Aristophanes promises as Athens' adviser is an advantageous peace treaty.

The issue of recognition receives special emphasis in the Lamachus scene, which exposes the true identity of the beggar Dikaiopolis (and, by implication, of Aristophanes) as a good citizen (πολίτης χρηστός, 595) and soldier (στρατωνίδης, 596) who thoroughly warrants the public acclaim he (and the poet) receive from Athens in the concluding scenes. If the audience at first fails to catch all these implicit parallels between Telephus' and Aristophanes' situations—an unlikely possibility given Cleon's recent prosecution and Aristophanes' identification with both heroes in the defense speech—the parabasis immediately following reinforces the similarities in the two cases by reiterating issues raised in Dikaiopolis' speech and by emphasizing the justice of comedy and the value of the slandered and clever poet to his society.[19] The allies come to Athens

[18] See notes 3 and 4.

[19] On the parallels between Dikaiopolis' stance in the early scenes and Aristophanes' claims in the parabasis, see A. M. Bowie, 'The parabasis in Aristophanes: prolegomena, *Acharnians*', CQ n.s. xxxii (1982) 27–40. In both the assembly scene and the scene with Lamachus, Dikaiopolis, like Aristophanes in the parabasis, aims to expose those who wish to exploit the war for

expressly to see the great poet who dared to speak justice to the city (643–5). Comic poets are just precisely because they satirize and do not flatter (like foreigners, 634–8) or deceive (656–8). How absurd, the parabasis implies, that only Athens' enemies and allies can see the poet's virtues; has the fickle audience forgotten the reception it gave *Babylonians* (see 630–2)?[20]

III

In *Acharnians*, then, Aristophanes borrows the role of a tragic hero whose dilemma corresponds in a number of crucial respects with his own. Yet whereas Aristophanes appropriates *Telephus* to reinforce the case for the justice of his comedy, Dikaiopolis uses Telephus' speech above all to make the chorus accept his central act of injustice, the separate peace. Like Telephus and Aristophanes, Dikaiopolis needs to defend himself on a charge of ἀδικία before a hostile audience. Initially provoked to act by his failure to gain a hearing in the assembly and the stealing of his garlic, he too encounters after making his peace an attack on his person (from which, however, he escapes unscathed).[21] Yet unlike Telephus, Dikaiopolis deliberately engages in treason, and does so for purely selfish gain. Telephus' speech apparently defended himself, the Mysians, and, less certainly, the Trojans. Dikaiopolis' speech contains the promised defense of the Spartans (369, 482; 514, 541–55; in 509, he asserts that he hates the Spartans) and an exposure of Athens' dubious motives for war and its tendency to act too precipitously.[22] Dikaiopolis shares with Aristophanes the legitimate claim that his speech will protect the city from flattery and deception from both native and foreign speakers corrupted by monetary gain, and tell it unpalatable truths. Yet he does not defend his separate peace. It is only by riding on the coattails of the truly wronged Telephus and Aristophanes that he can distract his audience into recognizing his secession from society as the act of a soldier and patriot(!). We will return later to the implications of this important ambiguity in Dikaiopolis' (and to a lesser extent Aristophanes') defense. Up to this point we have seen that the relation established in *Acharnians* among Telephus, Aristophanes, and Dikaiopolis is quite complex; the closing scene of the play, however, creates an additional link between Telephus and Lamachus.

IV

Dikaiopolis finishes exploiting *Telephus* in the first Lamachus scene, where the hero resists the general.[23] Having secured a Telephean recognition as citizen and patriot, he finally abandons

monetary gain. *Acharnians* 659–64, the *pnigos* of the parabasis, may be adapting *Telephus* 918N² to bolster comedy's claim to justice. Bowie (40) sees a possible parallel between Dikaiopolis' separate peace and Aristophanes' own avenue of escape from the war in Aigina, an island described as δικαιόπολις by Pindar (*P.* 8,22).

[20] The *Babylonians* may have won first prize (see the pride in the play indicated in the parabasis of *Acharnians*, Cleon's reaction, and *IG* ii² 2325, which indicates that Aristophanes may have won a first prize at the Dionysia as early as 426). Others have contested this view, however (see C. Russo [n. 13] ch. 2).

[21] The third argument to *Peace* suggestively links *Peace, Babylonians*, and *Acharnians*. If *Babylonians* were a 'peace play', then the connections between Dikaiopolis and Aristophanes would be even stronger here.

[22] For the discrepancy between what Dikaiopolis claims he will say and what he actually delivers, see esp. C. Whitman, *Aristophanes and the comic hero* (Cambridge, Mass. 1964) 67, Dover (n. 8) 82 (on the distracting effect of the speech) and 86–7, Bowie (n. 19) 33, and Harriott (n. 13) 38. Dikaiopolis at first conducts his dialogue with the chorus on a flattering note, calling them sons of Acharneus (322) and thus attributing to them an invented heroic ancestor. He urges them to hear and judge why he made peace (294 and 306), leaving aside the Laconians (305). When this meets with no response, he offers to show in what respects the Spartans have been wronged (313–14), then to speak on their behalf (369). Hence his outrageous speech appears forced on him by the hostile chorus.

[23] Rau (n. 11) 40–2 denies that Lamachus plays the role of Euripides' Achilles here. Nevertheless, the scene continues to borrow from *Telephus* (*fr.* 712N²/*Ach.* 577 and the repeated references to the beggar disguise) and prepares for Lamachus' adoption of Telephus' lameness and his pleas for help in the final scene (see Pucci [n. 14] 342).

his tragic disguise. After the parabasis Dikaiopolis, with the exception of a mock tragic recognition of the Boeotian's eel (to be served by implication to Aristophanes' victorious chorus, 886), operates in a forthright comic mode, mocking and expelling his opposition, and revelling in the pleasures of peace, food, sex, festival, and social applause. Now, having created through tragedy the necessary audience for his comedy, Dikaiopolis seems no longer to need to borrow tragic devices to make his point. His summons to dine with the priest of Dionysus (1087) and his victorious exit to encounter the judges (1224) hint that his comic and Dionysiac victory will soon be shared by the poet.[24] The pompous Lamachus, however, whose self-presentation evokes the ethos of epic and tragedy, now suffers the consequences of his chosen style. In an absurd military encounter, Lamachus is lamed like so many Euripidean heroes. The similarity to the fate of Telephus, whom Dionysus punished by shackling him with a vine shoot as he fled from Achilles, is pointed, although the messenger speech describing Lamachus' fall borrows additional tragic pathos by echoing Euripides' dying Hippolytus.[25] Like Telephus, Lamachus is headed not for a tragic demise but a (here unheroic) cure.[26] Telephus was wounded in the thigh by Achilles; Lamachus, pretending that he was pierced by an enemy spear (1192), receives a less dignified ankle wound. As the visible transfer of lameness from Euripides and Telephus to Dikaiopolis to Lamachus makes clear, Aristophanes' comedy here insouciantly plays the double game of borrowing *Telephus* to defend itself and then allowing tragedy, in the person of Lamachus/Telephus, to take the rap that Dikaiopolis deserves for his treacherous peace.

V

Let us now consider more generally how Aristophanes' comedy exploits tragedy in its own defense. The role of hero disguised as beggar allows Aristophanes and Dikaiopolis, despite the absurd masks and lowly diction of comedy, to assimilate Telephus' heroic stature and authority. Even more important, however, Aristophanes' comedy imitates in the Telephean ῥῆσις μακρά tragedy's mode of making social criticism safely distanced and disguised through myth. Dikaiopolis is forced to turn to tragedy because, up to the hostage scene, the hero's purely comic mode of persuasion proves ineffective. The absurdity of Athenian war politics in the assembly scene is presented as visible to the hero alone—despite his exposure of the imposters—and the chorus is impervious to such comic satire and advice. By contrast, Greek audiences had for generations tolerated from serious literature extensive questioning of the origins of the Trojan

[24] On the hints that Dikaiopolis' victory in the Dionysiac drinking contest presages a comic victory for the poet in the Dionysiac theatrical festival as well, see on 886 and 1224, W. Rennie, *The Acharnians of Aristophanes* (London 1909). The celebration of a comic success would have included wine and the original prize for a comic victory was said to be figs and wine (the Marmor Parium, IG xii 5.444). Starkie (n. 3) 63 and A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, tragedy, and comedy*, rev. T. B. L. Webster (Oxford 1962) 145 ff. see in Dikaiopolis' celebration of the Rural Dionysia a reference to the origins of drama in Dionysiac phallic processions (see Aristotle *Poetics* 1449a12). L. Edmunds, 'Aristophanes' *Acharnians*', *YCS* xxvi (1980) 6, while denying this view, nevertheless sees Dikaiopolis in this procession as a proto-poet. 'Paradoxically, the political function of comedy rests on its association with wine', Edmunds argues, for Dikaiopolis' peace is wine, and 'wine is the occasion of festivals in honor of Dionysus' (11). Dikaiopolis also drinks down Euripides (484) to give himself the courage to make his speech.

[25] *Ach.* 1190–7 and *Hipp.* 1347–52 and *Ach.* 1183 and *Hipp.* 1239. See J. van Leeuwen, *Aristophanis Acharnenses* (Leiden 1901, rep. 1968) on 1178 ff. (contested by Rau [n. 11] 139 n. 5). Schol. R on *Ach.* 1190 sees here a comic adaptation of tragic θρῆνοι. In the final scene of *Hippolytus*, Theseus gloats (in ignorance of the truth) over the body of the dying Hippolytus just as Dikaiopolis gloats over the wounded Lamachus. On the messenger speech generally, see Rau (n. 11) 137–44.

[26] See Rau (n. 9) 144. See also his comments (142) on Lamachus' unheroic rise from the ditch to pursue soldiers already in flight. Lamachus and Telephus are also linked in the messenger speech by *Ach.* 1188 (*Telephus fr.* 705aSn.) Both are further linked by 'crimes' against Dionysus and their ultimate committment to war rather than peace. For Telephus ends Euripides' play by departing for Troy and a betrayal of his father-in-law Priam.

war and the notorious Helen. Lyric poetry and Aeschylus offered doubts similar to those presented in the texts that Aristophanes alludes to here, *Telephus* and, perhaps, the opening of Herodotus' *Histories*.[27] Through its imitation of serious literature, comedy makes its political satire seem comparable to what audiences traditionally accepted from tragic poets like Euripides simply because they cloaked their iconoclastic message with myth and an elevated style.[28] 'For τρυγῳδία also [or even τρυγῳδία] knows justice',[29] says Dikaiopolis (500), implying that tragedy would automatically be granted such authority.

But above all, by providing Aristophanes with opportunities to create multiple roles, audiences, and disguises, as well as to play off one style of dramaturgy against another, the borrowing from tragedy makes Cleon's prosecution of Aristophanes look like the result of a bumbling and literal-minded misinterpretation of comedy, and especially of political satire in comedy. Aristophanes, adapting a quotation from *Telephus* (*fr.* 698N², *Ach.* 440–1), stresses to his *audience* that it will *not* be fooled by Dikaiopolis' adoption of a tragic role. By contrast, the rigidly anti-Spartan chorus, who accuse Dikaiopolis (as Cleon accused Aristophanes) of being a traitor, are to be rudely humiliated (σκιμαλίσω, that is, given the finger)[30] by Dikaiopolis' Telephean rhetoric (440–4):

> δεῖ γάρ με δόξαι πτωχὸν εἶναι τήμερον,
> εἶναι μὲν ὅσπερ εἰμί, φαίνεσθαι δὲ μή·
> τοὺς μὲν θεατὰς εἰδέναι μ' ὃς εἴμ' ἐγώ,
> τοὺς δ' αὖ χορευτὰς ἠλιθίους παρεστάναι,
> ὅπως ἂν αὐτοὺς ῥηματίοις σκιμαλίσω.

The staging reinforces the verbal point. For although Dikaiopolis immediately before this passage dons the attire of Telephus, his own comic costume remains visible through the multiple holes in the rags (435)—visible to the audience if not to the chorus or to Lamachus, who both swallow the dramatic illusion produced by the tragic beggar costume (558, 578). The arbitrariness of the disguise—Dikaiopolis does not need to conceal himself as Telephus did, but simply wants to create a tragic tone—reinforces this effect. Similarly, the audience knows from the start the irony of borrowing from Euripides the role of 'Mysian Telephus' (430), since the whole point of Euripides' play is that Telephus is actually Greek. Dikaiopolis' acquisition of Telephus' revealing Mysian cap (439, immediately prior to the passage quoted above) expresses visually the same ambiguity. Aristophanes' chorus stupidly fails to grasp the implications of this clue to Dikaiopolis'/Telephus' identity, while the audience is further reminded that Dikaiopolis is simultaneously playing many incompatible roles: beggar man, nobleman, and comic hero, Greek and foreigner. (The scholiast on *Ach.* 439 implies that tragic actors once wore such a cap

[27] Recently D. M. MacDowell, 'The nature of Aristophanes' *Akharnians*', *G&R* xxx (1983) 151, has renewed the argument that Pericles' wrath over the theft of Aspasia's courtesans—the event that began the war—is not a parody of Herodotus. He cites the problem of the date of publication of the *Histories* and of the audience's familiarity with its text, as well as the lack of any Herodotean turns of phrase in the passage. Others have speculated that *Telephus* was Aristophanes' source here (see C. W. Fornara, 'Evidence for the date of Herodotus' publication', *JHS* xci [1971] 25–34). Cratinus' recent *Dionysalexandros* may also have offered a similar parody. If the audience knew any of Herodotus' text, however, they would be likely to be familiar with the opening, and the ῥῆσις does not mark all of its borrowings from *Telephus* with tragic language.

[28] See *Telephus fr.* 706N² and 918N² for the tragic hero's own claims to speak justice to the Greeks. Edmunds (n. 24), arguing that comedy can only claim justice in disguise (12), asserts that the 'paratragic play-within-the-play insulates the justification of peace with Sparta, which might otherwise be offensive, no matter how laughably presented. . . . The question of peace is transposed into a new sphere. . . . Once again Dicaeopolis, or Aristophanes, has left the hostile political milieu behind in order to make a political statement' (10–11). I would qualify these remarks by arguing that the play-within-the-play works differently for its internal and external audiences, and that tragedy as well as comedy may adopt disguise to make political statements (as in the case of Telephus himself). Mythologizing politics (associating Pericles with Zeus and Aspasia's courtesans with Helen) can remind the spectators that politics operate as well in terms of myths of another sort.

[29] On the translation, see Taplin (n. 10) 333.

[30] Holding up the middle finger implies that the objects of the insulting gesture are pathics (schol. *Peace* 549). The word can also describe feeling inside a chicken to detect the presence of an egg (schol. *Ach.* 444), a gesture that might have similar sexual connotations.

when playing Telephus. Is Aristophanes mocking Euripides for providing an absurdly imperfect Greek disguise for his hero?)[31] In addition, whereas Euripides' tragic beggar is recognized first merely as Telephus, and finally as both Greek and indispensable to the Greek cause, Aristophanes can ask his audience through Dikaiopolis to recognize his citizenship, as well as to interpret his triple disguise (see *Knights* 512–16) as Callistratus, under whose name he has produced his comedies, as Telephus, and as Dikaiopolis.

The poet's use of tragic rhetoric further serves to separate the play's internal audience from Aristophanes' Athenian audience, who are prepared to read through the tragic smokescreen to the comic truth beneath. Dikaiopolis, with the ironic self-mockery of a 'mere' comic hero, limits his ambition to borrowing for his speech Euripidean words and phrases, his diminutive ῥημάτια (444, 447). (Indeed, Aristophanes suggests, the task is made easier because the tragic poet composes by gathering and combining such delightful little phraselets [ἐπύλλια, 398].) Those in the audience who recollect the actual text of *Telephus* are thus prepared to hear exactly what will happen in the ῥῆσις μακρά. Here, as scholarly analysis has confirmed, Aristophanes interpolates into the largely comic diction of the speech occasional tragic phrases, many but not all from *Telephus*.[32] Nearly all of these phrases, which help the audience to recall at the beginning and end of the speech central points that Aristophanes has borrowed from *Telephus*, are transformed or adapted to a new context which distorts in a complex and often double-edged fashion the meaning of the original line(s).[33] For example, whereas Telephus' speech addressed the leaders of the Greeks, the play's internal audience (*fr.* 703N²), and apologized for speaking as a beggar among noblemen, Dikaiopolis borrows his lines to address—in a pointedly metatheatrical fashion—the *spectators* of *Acharnians* and defends comedy's right to speak among Athenians (by implication, a noble audience) about the city in a τρυγῳδία. Dikaiopolis/Aristophanes says, self-consciously playing on the supposed inferiority of comedy and the name of Dikaiopolis himself (496–500):[34]

> μή μοι φθονήσητ' ἄνδρες οἱ θεώμενοι,
> εἰ πτωχὸς ὢν ἔπειτ' ἐν 'Αθηναίοις λέγειν
> μέλλω περὶ τῆς πόλεως, τρυγῳδίαν ποιῶν.
> τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οἶδε καὶ τρυγῳδία.

A similar example occurs before the ῥῆσις. The Telephean passage about adopting a beggar disguise quoted earlier (440–4) must have dealt in the original with Telephus' spiritual integrity or with the simultaneous truth and falsity of his disguise—Telephus *is* Greek, though

[31] The scholiast knows of contemporary actors who did not wear the πιλίδιον. While some vase paintings of the hostage scene show Telephus bare-headed (as would fit the dramatic context, since his disguise has already been penetrated), the two vases with pilos (a Campanian bell krater in Naples, 350–25 BC, and an Attic pelike, 350–25 BC, *A.R.V.*² 1473; see Webster [n. 9] 302) confirm the strong association of the cap with the role. The cap serves to keep the issue of Telephus' identity (and thus also the citizenship of Aristophanes or Callistratus) visually before the audience. On the irony of 'Mysian Telephus', see Olympiodorus on Plato *Gorg.* 521b. I wish to thank Eric Handley for drawing my attention to this issue.

[32] See Rau (n. 11) 19–42, Webster (n. 9) 43–8, Handley and Rea (n. 9) esp. 25 and H. W. Miller, 'Euripides' *Telephus* and the *Thesmophoriazusae* of Aristophanes', *CP* xliii (1948) 174–83. On ἐπύλλια as small erotic poems as well as light verses, see C. del Grande, 'Ἐπύλλια in Aristofane', in ΚΩΜΩΙΔΟΤΡΑΓΗΜΑΤΑ, Studia Aristophanea viri Aristophanei W. J. W. Koster in honorem (Amsterdam 1967) 47–50. The text also paraphrases lines or important ideas from the speech. No one seems to have noticed, however, that Aristophanes gives his audience precise information about how the paratragic speech will work (its borrowing of little phrases) in the scene with Euripides.

[33] Many of the Telephean fragments are too short (or too distorted by Aristophanes' adaptation of them) to allow for an interpretation of how Aristophanes is reworking them. My two examples come from sections where we have enough of the original to be able to speculate (at least two lines, if the scholia give fully correct versions of *Frr.* 698 and 703, as they very probably do not).

[34] Aristophanes goes on to stress (502–7) that he is no longer, as in *Babylonians*, addressing strangers as well, since the play is being presented at the Lenaia (a festival that occurred too early in the year for outsiders to attend). *Telephus fr.* 703N² runs as follows: μή μοι φθονήσητ', ἄνδρες 'Ελλήνων ἄκροι,/ εἰ πτωχὸς ὢν τέτληκ' ἐν ἐσθλοῖσιν λέγειν.

not a beggar; appearing a beggar, he must be as he is (noble) but not appear to be so.[35] Dikaiopolis borrows Telephus' words to stress instead the issue of theatrical illusion; the chorus will accept the tragic disguise that the audience is primed to penetrate. At the same time, Aristophanes in a Telephean manner does adopt a tragic disguise while being true to himself as comic poet; for the language, argument and open political satire of the ῥῆσις remain comic—to the audience, if not to the chorus, who again view it as tragic. Dikaiopolis' ῥῆσις does not in fact transpose political questions into another realm in the tragic manner, but gains authority by borrowing phraselets from Euripides and the larger literary tradition to continue to make the kind of pointed comic criticisms of the causes of the war and of Athens' political leaders for which Cleon attacked him.[36] Finally, the role of hero disguised as beggar, although Dikaiopolis uses it to exploit and deceive the chorus, aptly describes Aristophanes in the role of Dikaiopolis and thus allows the poet to defend both himself and the noble nature of comedy;[37] Aristophanes' extravagant claims of his value to the city in the parabasis here become equivalent to the (typical) assimilation of heroic language and authority by his comic protagonist and the actual heroism of a tragic protagonist. In short, Aristophanes' treatment of Euripides' costumes sets the tone for his more subtle but comparable misuse and fragmenting of the tragedian's rhetoric. The audience laughs knowingly while the duped chorus maintains its conversion to the tragic mood by responding to Dikaiopolis' speech—as they have throughout this scene (358–571)—in dochmiacs.

In borrowing Euripides' plot Aristophanes again diffuses the Telephean tragic pathos for his audience by fragmenting and reshaping the original as he did costume and rhetoric. Current reconstructions of *Telephus* suggest that Euripides' hero opens the play in disguise, and perhaps uses the beggar role to enter the palace and gain Clytemnestra as ally; his famous speech then provokes a quarrel between Menelaus and Agamemnon.[38] After his disguise is penetrated, Telephus resorts to using the baby Orestes as hostage. Finally, he is recognized as Greek, promised a cure by Achilles, and sets off to serve a pre-destined role as guide of the troops to Troy. Aristophanes makes random selections from this plot and puts the search and exposure and the recourse to the hostage device *before* not after the ῥῆσις and thus plagiarizes from Euripides prior to the visit to the poet's house. Indeed, Dikaiopolis' deme name Χολλήδης (406) punningly establishes his natural right to Euripides' lame (χωλός) heroes, and he is προσαιτῶν στωμύλος δεινὸς λέγειν (wordy, importunate, and a clever speaker, 429) long before he pretends to acquire these attributes from Telephus. As Dikaiopolis later tells Euripides, he has no need for a πλέκος (wicker work) for which he asked (454, very possibly punning on τέκος, and recalling the coal basket that was substituted for the child),[39] because, as the audience knows, he has already used one in the hostage scene. He simply needs the tragic label in order to fool the chorus, who are to be impressed by arguments made in tragic guise that they stupidly reject in comic form. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, where he is letting Euripides run into difficulty on his own, Aristophanes apparently sticks in his parody of *Telephus* much more closely to the original order of the plot of the play.[40] But here, by putting the hostage scene before the speech, he deliberately destroys the

[35] As the scholiast on line 441 says, he changes not his nature (φύσις), but his shape (μορφή). Rau (n. 11) 33 argues that Aristophanes turns this typically Euripidean philosophizing on being and seeming into a play on theatrical illusion.

[36] MacDowell (n. 27) 151–5 makes a strong case that Aristophanes' remarks concerning the role of Pericles and the Megarian decree in causing the war have a good deal of substance beneath the absurd comic detail.

[37] See Edmunds (n. 24) 10–11 on this point.

[38] Here I follow Handley and Rea (n. 9). In his reconstruction of *Telephus*, Rau (n. 11) 22 puts the speech after a quarrel between Agamemnon and Menelaus about whether to attack Mysia; Telephus responds to the threat to Mysia with a speech that is exclusively one of self-defense. If Rau is correct, Aristophanes has further distorted the plot of the original. Yet Aristophanes expects his audience to recognize a speech 'on behalf of the enemy' as Telephean. If the enemy is Mysia rather than Troy, the richness of the allusion for the war against Sparta is considerably diminished.

[39] See the parody of this same motif at *Peace* 528 with its pun on τέκος/πλέκος and *Telephus fr.* 727N^2; ἀπέπτυσ' ἐχθροῦ φωτὸς ἔχθιστον πλέκος (τέκος in *fr.* 727N^2).

[40] See Miller (n. 32) and my note 38. Erbse (n. 17) 95–8 surprisingly thinks that Aristophanes has improved on Euripides' plot.

logic of Euripides' plot (while enhancing the impact of his own) and gets away with it; for the hostage device only makes 'dramatic sense' in a tragic context after all verbal means have failed.

Having dispensed in advance with Telephus' climactic strategem, Dikaiopolis goes on after the ῥῆσις to reveal his 'true' identity as good citizen and soldier voluntarily (595–6), thus depriving Lamachus of his chance to expose him as imposter (as Cleisthenes, apparently following Euripides' original, does in *Thesmophoriazusae*)[41] and reducing the general to feeble expostulations about Dikaiopolis' outrageous abuse of his beggar disguise (an anticlimactic conclusion to the Telephean line expectantly fed him at the opening of the scene by the chorus [577, *fr.* 712N²]). Having made Lamachus' 'tragic' role redundant, Aristophanes in this scene allows Euripides' plot to dissolve in a barrage of comic insults. Dikaiopolis not only mockingly sidesteps the tragic consequences (involuntary exposure) that should logically have come with his Telephean disguise but even turns the tables on his opponent, as the comic hero reveals both Lamachus' pretentiousness (his costume) and his mercenary motives. Again, as with costume and rhetoric, the unnecessary and improbable Aristophanic plot divides Aristophanes' spectators, who because of their knowledge of *Telephus* can observe its absurdity and are thus immune to its supposed pathetic power, from his dupes, Lamachus and the chorus. At the same time, by turning at once to Euripides' device of last resort, comedy implies that, unlike tragedy, its central problem is to acquire a proper hearing. Just as Pindar must make the discerning members of his audience understand why he must offer advice and criticism in a praise poem to those who hire him to celebrate their successes, Aristophanes must persuade an audience to see, for example, how his peace play does not in fact undermine the war effort.

VI

To summarize the argument thus far, then, Aristophanes uses Euripides' tragedy first to defend comedy's social and political criticism (even during a war). By linking his comedy and Euripidean tragedy (a link characterized in this play by the term τρυγῳδία), he claims for it the moral authority, literary prestige, and latitude that audiences have always given to more pretentious genres. Why, then, should the audience not allow to Aristophanes the kind of argument about war that it permitted to Euripides and his outrageous Telephus (see *Ach.* 555–6 and *Telephus fr.* 710N²)? Second, the poet aims to create a discerning audience for his comedies. Like Pindar, he compliments, though less directly, the perceptive members of the audience. Those who have already picked up the allusion to *Telephus* in the hostage scene do not need something as explicit as the Euripides scene to understand what is going on. He flatters—and educates—his other viewers by having his chorus and characters misread comic satire and be deceived by tragic rhetoric and dramaturgy even as he reveals so explicitly the mechanics of his paratragedy.

Above all, Aristophanes uses the contrast between genres to define his own comedy; indeed, comedy's deliberate violation of tragic limits becomes the basis of its self-defense, of its claim to free speech, truth, and justice. Aristophanes' borrowing of *Telephus* consistently flouts the dramatic illusion and pathos upon which tragedy depends.[42] For example, whereas Euripides'

[41] Rau (n. 11) 24–5 doubts that the original contained a comparable scene. Yet Telephus' disguise must have been penetrated in some fashion.

[42] Recent critics have refuted the claim of G. M. Sifakis, *Parabasis and animal choruses* (London 1971) that dramatic illusion does not exist in comedy. Especially useful are the discussions of D. Bain, *Actors and audience* (Oxford 1977), esp. 4–7 and 87–99, and F. Muecke, 'Playing with the play: theatrical self-consciousness in Aristophanes', *Antichthon* xi (1977) 52–67 and ' "I know you—by your rags"—costume and disguise in fifth-century drama', *Antichthon* xvi (1982) 17–34. Both help to distinguish precisely where in comedy the author can maintain or violate dramatic illusion. Muecke (1977) 59 suggests that the humor of breaking illusion in comedy nevertheless depends on tragedy. Bain prefers the term 'pretence' to 'dramatic illusion', since no audience fails to know that it is watching a play; comedy thus disrupts the actor's pretence to be the person he plays (6–7). See also Dover (n. 8) 56.

Telephus did not disguise himself on stage, but enters disguised, Aristophanes' audience sees Dikaiopolis begin to adopt the importunate behaviour of a beggar as he acquires each aspect of his excessively 'realistic' and hence ultimately untragic Telephean guise.[43] As in Aristophanes, Telephus' reference to his disguise gives his audience (not the other characters) privileged knowledge of his identity. Yet whereas Telephus' gesture enhances and makes visible his unjust suffering, Aristophanes' dramaturgy undercuts tragic pathos to stress the different ways that costume and dramatic identity can be read self-consciously by his audience.[44] In addition, Dikaiopolis finally uses the beggar role less to evoke pity, than to establish his heroism and good citizenship.[45]

By having Dikaiopolis call for Euripides to be rolled out from within his house on the ἐκκύκλημα (408),[46] Aristophanes not only stresses in an untragic fashion the mechanics of tragic theater, but suggests that comedy reveals the unglamorous but important truths that tragedy (drama that depends on dramatic illusion) hides behind the stage. Whereas the politicians of the first scene or the tragedians may use costume or rhetoric to deceive their audience, as the disguised Dikaiopolis does to the chorus, Aristophanes uses it to reveal the truth to his audience. In the first scene of the play, Dikaiopolis exposes the disguises of imposters in the assembly. Later he lets his audience, if not the chorus, see through his Telephean costume with double vision. He makes the mesmerizing persuasiveness of tragic dramaturgy and rhetoric, like the rhetoric of politicians, bamboozle the chorus into swallowing not only Aristophanes' defensible Telephean criticisms of his country but even Dikaiopolis' treasonable secession from Athens. By contrast comedy, by exposing all its tricks and strategems, by fragmenting tragic rhetoric and logic, by undercutting the borrowed tragic pathos, by creating absurd plots, and by making its dramaturgy depend on the unnecessary, the excessive, the inconsistent and the absurd, implicitly argues that it plays fair with its audience and hence better defends comedy's proclaimed agenda—to offer justice to its audience and to make the city examine the errors and absurdities committed by certain of its politicians.

Aristophanes' treatment of tragic dramaturgy here seems to be motivated by concerns similar to those Brecht showed in the twentieth century in choosing to present 'epic theater.'[47] For Brecht the author of epic theater tries deliberately to distance the audience from both characters and action in order to appeal to reason over emotion. Rather than implicating the spectator emotionally (through pity and fear) in a stage situation like tragedy or opera, epic theater turns the spectator into a critical observer, politicizes him, and arouses his capacity for action outside the theater. Its characters are alterable and able to alter, not caught in a net of destiny; each scene is taken for itself, rather than forming part of a linear and inevitable sequence. Brecht makes the mechanics of theater an organic part of his anti-illusionary and non-

[43] Harriott (n. 13) 36. The same effect occurs with props. Dikaiopolis staggers off from Euripides' house loaded with more props than the tragic poet could have imagined or Aristophanes' comedy can use. He even tries to borrow the herbs belonging to Euripides' mother that are in fact the product of the comic tradition itself. For comedy's illusion-breaking literalization of tragic metaphors (the axe metaphorically poised at Telephus' throat [*fr.* 706N²], an image he invents to insist that nothing will silence him, becomes a prop on stage, the chopping block on which Dikaiopolis promises to place his head while speaking) see esp. H. J. Newiger, *Metaphor und allegorie, Zetemata* 16 (Munich 1957), Rau (n. 11) 3 and Edmunds (n. 24).

[44] For a perceptive treatment of the conventions governing comic and tragic costume, see F. Muecke (n. 42). See Rau (n. 11) 36 on the contrast between comic and tragic costume in this passage. Distinguishing the conventions governing tragic and comic use of disguise is complex—such disguise has its origins in the *Odyssey* and divine disguise in epic. Aristophanes' texts do tend to associate tragedy, as here in the case of *Telephus*, with disguise with deliberate intent to deceive. In *Acharnians* Dikaiopolis first *tells* the chorus that he will get a pitiable costume in which to make his defense (383–4), and then announces that his tragic costume will deceive the chorus (443–4. See Rau [n. 11] 33, n. 38). For another interpretation of this inconsistency, see Muecke (1977) 63, n. 59.

[45] On this last point, see Harriott (n. 13) 36–41.

[46] A. M. Dale, *Collected papers* (Cambridge 1969) 288 comments that the ἐκκύκλημα allows Euripides to come out while remaining technically within. This is where as a tragic poet he belongs, since poets cannot speak for themselves in tragedy.

[47] This paragraph summarizes arguments made in Brecht's *Schriften zum theater* (Frankfurt 1957). See also Bain (n. 42) 3–7.

Aristotelian dramaturgy precisely to prevent the spectator's 'passive empathy', to 'alienate' him from the action, make him question it and wish to change it. Although his characters do at times maintain the dramatic illusion (or produce the pathos) native to serious drama, the audience is never allowed to maintain this illusion for long, an illusion often created precisely to prepare for a later dispelling of such theatrical magic. At the same time, Brecht argues, theater must never sacrifice to didactic ends its capacity to move and amuse its audience. Although Aristophanes' aims in defending his political theater were considerably less activist and revolutionary than Brecht's—and, of course, unlike Brecht he is a comic poet—each adopts or proposes a similar theatrical strategy in urging his audience to examine itself and its politics and to make changes for the better. Each takes seriously the educational role of theater, and exploits a contrast between his own dramaturgy and that of tragic style dramaturgy in order to do so (see *Ach.* 500, 645, 650, 661–2, 655–6).

VII

In *Acharnians*, after half the old men of the chorus fall victim to Dikaiopolis' paratragic arguments in the ῥῆσις μακρά, they are distracted from their hostility to Dikaiopolis into turning against each other, as Agamemnon and Menelaus apparently did in Euripides' *Telephus*.[48] Finally the whole chorus collapses into blatant admiration of the hero's newly claimed good citizenship and his outrageous and utterly selfish success. The city later follows suit; the treacherous Dikaiopolis is now invited to dinner by the priest of Dionysus (1087) and wins a public drinking contest at the Anthesteria. In short, the borrowed tragedy helps to make the gulled chorus (444) forget that Dikaiopolis failed to offer an adequate defense of his separate peace (despite his good criticism to the city of its previous errors) or to fit fully the role of Telephus (a comic hero, after all, never faces either a tragic destiny or the lawsuits of the real world), and permits him to claim the justice due to Telephus and Aristophanes. By contrast the audience to Aristophanes' τρυγῳδία, which is in on Dikaiopolis' strategy, is first primed to see through Dikaiopolis' disguise and defense and then warned again against flattery, meaningless high-style rhetoric, gullibility and misinterpretation of Aristophanes' comedy in the parabasis (633–40). Urging the city to make peace and making a separate peace are not the same thing—although presenting the delightful effects of the latter should indirectly promote the former. The poet celebrates his own value as a speaker of (often unpalatable) truths to society through his hero, but the justice of comedy and the justice of Dikaiopolis' individual peace cannot after the ῥῆσις be simplistically equated in the audience's mind.

Dikaiopolis' behavior in the scenes following the parabasis puts to the test the audience's ability to distinguish between the comic hero's outrageous behavior and the true justice of comedy. His private market ultimately displays the vices that were said to lead to or support the war in the earlier scenes: traffic in sexuality (Aspasia's whores and the Megarian's daughters), exclusion from markets (Megara; Lamachus and finally all Athenians),[49] and the exploitation of war to make individual profits (the ambassadors in the first scene and Lamachus; Dikaiopolis). His trading partners are tricked into accepting the worst of Athenian vices (sycophants, who are nevertheless not unjustified in informing against Dikaiopolis). He shows no generosity to those

[48] See note 38 above. Whitman (n. 22) 67 emphasizes this point.

[49] I cannot agree with MacDowell (n. 27) 158 that all gradually join in Dikaiopolis' peace, despite the choral passage at 971–99; the chorus can be converted to peace without sharing it, the scene with the bridegroom emphasizes the exclusion of all men from the peace, and the Anthesteria could be celebrated within the walls of a city at war. In addition, the audience knows that the chorus have been duped by Dikaiopolis (the chorus of *Birds* is similarly duped). Nevertheless, choral exclusion and misperception is certainly not emphasized in the festive final scene, and, given the inconsistencies of comic dramaturgy, I would not want to put too much weight on this point. See Whitman (n. 22) 79 for a subtle treatment of this problem.

who are victims of the war as he was once himself (Derketes),[50] or for his converts, the chorus. True, Dikaiopolis, who in his opening speech expresses a rural distaste for buying and selling (35), was forced by the chorus to abandon his initial plans to celebrate an innocent rural Dionysia in favor of the market;[51] true, Dikaiopolis no doubt pleased his audience by making the enemy as much the victim in his economic exchanges as they would have been while still at war. True, Dikaiopolis' name (if it means 'he of the just city' or 'just city') hardly seems to fit a hero who has no real claim to just behavior.[52] But in contrast to Aristophanes' later peace plays *Peace* and *Lysistrata*, the hero's countrymen are not only excluded from the benefits of peace but are foolish enough to admire and reward him for his secession as if he were still their own citizen.

Nevertheless, Dikaiopolis' practice of injustice ultimately makes Aristophanes' defense of his *Babylonians* on charges of ἀδικία more, rather than less, effective. *Babylonians*, it seems, used comic satire to expose the misguided policies of the city's politicians and, the poet claims in the parabasis, won rather than alienated the loyalty of the allies for its justice (641–5). *Acharnians* continues in the tradition of *Babylonians* to expose the city's politicians and to promote the positive cause of peace for the city. Yet it manipulates tragedy to make the stronger claim that a comedy can offer justice to its discerning audience while allowing its outrageous hero openly to advocate and pursue treason (ἀδικία). Hence Dikaiopolis' (and comedy's) language is δεινὰ μὲν δίκαια δέ (501). Literal-minded interpreters of comedy—the chorus or a Cleon—who demand from comedy pleasing deception, unthinking patriotism, literalism, and flattery, come off as the easy dupes of arguments perpetrated in tragic style. The discerning audience sees how Dikaiopolis uses tragic rhetoric to distract the chorus from his treachery and then goes on in later scenes to win their positive admiration for it. The outrageous extremes to which Dikaiopolis exploits his peace repeat more shockingly—in part because his success is so seductive—the abuses perpetrated in the Athenian assembly, where politicians in wartime 'buy and sell' (374) their audience with deceptive rhetoric, material success, and disguise. For the discerning audience, the comic injustice of the hero thus reinforces the justice of comedy—above all, Aristophanes' exposure throughout the play of the dangerous effects of high style (political and tragic) rhetoric on a gullible and volatile populace.

VIII

What can we conclude from *Acharnians* about Aristophanes' politics and Aristophanic parody of tragedy?[53] The analysis offered in this essay above all reconciles Aristophanes'

[50] Several critics have recently argued that Derketes fully deserves his rejection; Edmunds (n. 24) 21 argues that Dikaiopolis in 1019 aims to remove the misfortune brought by the unlucky Derketes, and MacDowell (n. 27) 159–60 thinks the joke has not been understood because Aristophanes is here satirizing a real person for some unknown offense.

[51] He still gets all things αὐτόματα, as in the traditional Golden Age (976), and enjoys all the delicacies provided by peace and festival, and one could argue that the market involves barter rather than buying and selling. Yet he does not in fact, as Edmunds suggests (n. 24 esp. 27 ff.), return to the simple pleasures of the country. In the Golden Age men collectively enjoyed a peaceful life; here Dikaiopolis' οἶκος alone gets the benefits. The Golden Age won by Dikaiopolis is a corrupt and perverted version of the original.

[52] On the name, see Russo (n. 13) 59–60, de Ste. Croix, *The origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London 1972) 365, Edmunds (n. 24) 1, n. 2, and MacDowell (n. 27) 160. The play also shows Athens to be a city that has been persuaded to act unjustly. Critics are divided on how to interpret Dikaiopolis' peace. For Dover (n. 8) 88 *Acharnians* is a 'fantasy of total selfishness'. Whitman (n. 22) esp. 76–8 and Bowie (n. 19) 39–40 see the peace as an expression of the Aristophanic hero's typical πονηρία or ἀλαζονεία. Edmunds (n. 24; see also Macdowell [n. 27] 158–60) has recently made the strongest case for viewing the peace as 'just'. But his argument depends on assuming that Dikaiopolis wins with his peace an ideal rural self-sufficiency; I cannot interpret as such a peace that brings festival through markets, rather than agricultural labor and close contact with the land, as in *Peace*. As in Plato's *Republic*, a 'city of pigs' has in *Acharnians* become a 'fevered city'.

[53] For the pros and cons of interpreting *Acharnians* as a serious plea for peace, see, among recent views, W. G. Forrest, 'Aristophanes' *Acharnians*', *Phoenix* xvii (1963) 1–12, H.-J. Newiger, 'War and peace in the comedy of Aristophanes', *YCS* 26 (1980) 219–37, Dover (n. 8) esp. 84–8 and the (in my view) largely convincing argument of MacDowell (n. 27). The dimensions of the problem

patriotic claims in the parabasis with the rest of the play. By separating the comic argument from the comic plot, by writing a peace play that can lead to victory, Aristophanes seems to be arguing that his comedy is far more patriotic than it might appear and that its outrageousness is more apparent than real. Of course, Aristophanes' comedy is not uncritical and it would never be so foolish as to prefer war to peace; but its attack is not aimed at the city (515–16), only at individuals, rhetoric, or policies which deflect the city from its best interests. Hence, for example, Dikaiopolis' ῥῆσις is less the promised defense of the enemy than a defense of the poet and an education of his audience concerning its motives for war.

Aristophanes' fellow comic poet Cratinus (*fr.* 307K/342K-A) mocked him for his tendency to 'euripidaristophanize'—that is, apparently, for his artistic dependence on or imitation of (μιμεῖσθαι) the tragic poet he so frequently mocked (σκώπτειν). The clever spectator, says Cratinus, could hardly miss noticing that Aristophanes himself employed the refined, epigrammatical, and overly intellectual style of Euripides: τίς δὲ σύ; κομψός τις ἔροιτο θεατής./ ὑπολεπτολόγος, γνωμιδιώκτης, εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζων. Elsewhere, Aristophanes seems to have admitted borrowing Euripides' stylistic elegance without his vulgarity.[54] While Cratinus shows his awareness that Aristophanes' parody aimed at something more than criticism of contemporary tragedy, scholars have generally given more attention to what Aristophanes says about Euripides than to how Aristophanes uses tragedy to communicate comic meaning to his audience.[55] Yet an artistic relation so symbiotic cannot be understood as merely satirical, and mockery of Euripides may in fact at times be incidental to Aristophanes' main goals. The study of tragic parody/paratragedy has remained largely isolated from an examination of the comedies as a whole; too often critics assume that the poet's imitation and travesty of Euripides is monolithic throughout his corpus. My aim in this essay has been to broaden our sense of the range of purposes for which Aristophanes drew on tragedy. Aristophanes' audience, after all, was engaged in judging comedies in relation to each other and for themselves, often in the wake of a tragic performance. Certainly the comic poet would not adopt a strategy which would make comedy appear the derivative or inferior genre. In *Acharnians* tragedy indeed serves in multiple ways to make the case for comedy at the cost of exposing tragedy's dependence on pathos and theatrical illusion. Indeed, comedy uses the authority of tragedy to bolster its claims to free speech, and goes on to use this license to accomplish what tragedy itself did not undertake—for there were only a few tragedies based on recent historical events. Indeed, it is interesting to note that Aristophanes proceeds to draw on Euripidean models to a greater or lesser degree in defending his hero's or heroine's pursuit of peace in the later *Peace* (*Bellerophon*) and *Lysistrata* (*Melanippe Desmotis*), and seems to lose interest in using paratragedy for such purposes as his plays become less internationally and politically oriented in the fourth century. Furthermore, by opening up the question of how drama represents truth, Aristophanes can raise the critical consciousness of his audience and educate it to expect from comedy a new intellectual and artistic complexity. Parody of tragedy affords to the comedian advantages not offered by parody of epic—and it may not be accidental that Aristophanes begins to parody Euripides shortly after Cratinus offered a major parody of Trojan war epic, *Dionysalexandros*—because the manipulation of dramatic technique makes possible a visual as well as verbal means of commenting on the relations among language, art, truth and reality that characterize a sophistic age.

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were earlier well stated by A. W. Gomme, 'Aristophanes and politics', *More essays in Greek history and literature* (Oxford 1962) ch. 5.

[54] *Fr.* 471 K/schol. Areth. (B) Plat. *Apology* 19c: χρῶμαι γὰρ αὐτοῦ τοῦ στόματος τῷ στρογγύλῳ,/ τοὺς νοῦς δ' ἀγοραίους ἧττον ἢ 'κεῖνος ποίω.

[55] Most recent critics of Aristophanic parody, such as Pucci (n. 14) or Rau (n. 11) esp. 182–4, are well aware that Aristophanes borrows tragedy for many purposes; yet their primary focus is either on comic mockery of Euripides or on the philological details of the paratragedy. See Muecke 1977 (n. 42) 67 for a helpful emphasis on the metatheatrical aspects of Aristophanes' use of Euripides.