



Tragedy on the Comic Stage

By Matthew C. Farmer

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Aristophanes' engagement with tragedy is one of the most striking features of his comedies: Euripides appears repeatedly as a character in these plays, jokes about tragedy and tragic poets abound, and parodies of tragedy frequently underlie whole scenes and even the plots of these plays. *Tragedy on the Comic Stage* contextualizes this engagement with tragedy within Greek comedy as a genre by examining paratragedy in the fragments of Aristophanes' contemporaries and successors in the fifth and fourth centuries. Farmer organizes these fragments under two rubrics. First, he discusses fragments that show characters discussing tragedy, use tragic poets as characters, or make reference to the dramatic festivals; these fragments, Farmer argues, develop a "culture of tragedy" within Greek comedy, a consistent set of tropes and devices that depict tragedy as part of the world inhabited by the characters of these plays. Second, he assembles fragments that show tragic parody, imitations of tragedy that render tragic language humorous or ironic by juxtaposing it with the base characters and quotidian circumstances that make up Greek comedy. *Tragedy on the Comic Stage* then illustrates these features of fragmentary paratragedy within three intact Aristophanic comedies: *Wasps*, *Women at the Thesmophoria*, and *Wealth*. These new readings of Aristophanes' plays show the value of reading Aristophanes in conjunction with the comic fragments, and insist on the subtlety and complexity of Aristophanic paratragedy.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Farmer's study is a welcome addition to our understanding of the way Aristophanes and other comic playwrights engaged with Greek tragedy. ... This is really a book about *trugoidia*, comedy that emphasizes "the agonistic relationship between comedy and tragedy" (p. 153). We might call it "comedy with an attitude." ... There are, to my mind, no missteps in *Tragedy on the Comic Stage*. Farmer is respectful of the evidence, especially of the fragments, yet imaginative in teasing out ideas. ... I found [the] book to be clearly written and free of jargon, with appropriate sign-posting; the arguments flow smoothly. ... *Tragedy on the Comic Stage* is more than a synthesis; it offers a systematic new perspective on how the two genres interacted." --Kenneth S. Rothwell, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*

"Despite the difficulties posed by a crowded field and difficult source materials, Matthew C. Farmer has written a book about comedy, and comic fragments in particular, which is not only witty but important. ... The material he gathers is rich and exhilarating. We get "a sort of backstage view of the tragic competition, with tragedians, fans, and audience members arguing about their favourite poets, planning their next productions, and complaining about the state of tragic poets today". We hear complaints about weak plots and crazy producers: "why didn't he give Sophocles a chorus when he asked for one, but employed the son of Cleomachus instead, a man I would not rate worthy of a chorus even for the Adonia" (an inferior festival specifically for women). We discover that certain playwrights were a right pain when rehearsing the chorus, while others were firm favourites. "I am consumed with longing for Euripides!" --Barbara Graziosi, *TLS*

About the Author

Matthew C. Farmer is Assistant Professor in the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Missouri.

Users Review

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Mark Jones:

Reading a guide can be one of a lot of task that everyone in the world enjoys. Do you like reading book and so. There are a lot of reasons why people love it. First reading a publication will give you a lot of new details. When you read a guide you will get new information since book is one of many ways to share the information or perhaps their idea. Second, reading a book will make a person more imaginative. When you reading a book especially hype book the author will bring that you imagine the story how the characters do it anything. Third, you can share your knowledge to some others. When you read this *Tragedy on the Comic Stage*, you could tells your family, friends and soon about yours book. Your knowledge can inspire others, make them reading a book.

Kathleen Knight:

A lot of people always spent all their free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them household or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. In order to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a book. The book Tragedy on the Comic Stage it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book offers high quality.

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Jack Johnson:

That book can make you to feel relax. This kind of book Tragedy on the Comic Stage was colourful and of course has pictures on there. As we know that book Tragedy on the Comic Stage has many kinds or genre. Start from kids until young adults. For example Naruto or Investigator Conan you can read and think that you are the character on there. Therefore , not at all of book are make you bored, any it can make you feel happy, fun and chill out. Try to choose the best book for yourself and try to like reading which.

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