If it is right to attribute to Carion the mentions of criminal activities, l. 166b probably alludes not just to washing fleeces (a respectable, though menial, task) but to selling them wet in order to cheat the customer; cf. *Frogs* 1386–7. Then the whole of 167 should be attributed to Chremylus (for onion-selling is not criminal, and γε does not necessarily mark a change of speaker) and 168 to Carion. **550** S. provides a long note full of information about Dionysius and Thrasybulus, and yet fails to make clear the point of the line. I take it that someone (a politician in a recent speech) has said 'Thrasybulus is no better than Dionysius!', which Aristophanes regards as an absurd thing to say. **578** δίκαιον, obelized by S., can be retained, for βελτίους (576) shows that morality is in question. It is just for naughty children to be punished by their fathers, and likewise it is just for lazy men to be punished by Poverty. **689** The manuscripts' reading ὑφῄρει is not 'unintelligible in context'; it means 'she took out her hand from under <the blanket>'. **802–18** 'Well-informed spectators', even if they remembered Sophocles' *Inachus*, will not have been expecting a comedy to end with misfortune for the principal character. **917** S.'s attempt to drive a wedge between ἀρχή and ἄρχειν, as applied to jurors, seems unconvincing. If one is informally possible, surely so is the other. **1037** S. sets out very clearly the various meanings of τηλία, but the one which he then chooses is less satisfactory than the traditional 'hoop of a sieve'. A sieve can be of any size, and there is no reason to say that here it would be 'far too small'.

The volume ends with 103 pages of addenda to the previous ten volumes. An additional index volume is promised.

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COMIC GASTRONOMY

J. WILKINS: *The Boastful Chef: The Discourse of Food in Ancient Greek Comedy*. Pp. xxviii + 465. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Cased, £55. ISBN: 0-19-924068-X.

After gender and sex, the discourse of food and drink is becoming as fashionable a topic for ancient historians as it is for television, and in this area Wilkins has already been highly prominent; see, for example, his and Shaun Hill's translation and discussion of Archestratus of Gela (who can now also boast a full Oxford edition from Douglas Olsen and Alexander Sens), and his editing (with David Braund) of the proceedings of the excellent 1998 Exeter conference on Athenaeus' work and world. The social settings and moral debates concerned with consumption, pleasure, and sociability among philosophers, orators, comic dramatists, inscriptions, and the material record have been the subject of a number of major discussions, notably by Oswyn Murray, Pauline Schmidt-Pantel, and James Davidson (whose *Courtesans and Fishcakes* was reviewed by me in *CR* 50 [2000], 507–9). This book is focused on Greek Comedy's treatment of all aspects of food and commensality; thus, despite its title, it covers much more than the emblematic figure of the comic *mageiros*, already the subject of monographs by Dohm and Bertiaume.

This large-scale exploration of many of the riches in this material, often held to be indigestible or surfeiting, will be found to be extremely valuable. Wilkins has relentlessly scoured the plays and the fragments, and organized and analysed the material sensibly under broad (if often overlapping) categories, such as agricultural processes, the social order, marketing and the agora, drink and the symposion, luxury foods, the Sicilian contribution to food literature, and (last but not least) the butcher/cook/chef. Throughout, persistent moral concerns and changing patterns of comic targets and characters are identified and discussed. Wilkins claims on the whole to be concerned with illuminating comic discourse and its debates rather than social realities; hence perhaps one should not regret too much the lack of more extensive analysis of how the

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constant jokes and debates about overeating, shopping, cooks, and parasites may illuminate Athenian society or may be interpreted in terms of its fundamental needs and values. At times, however, Wilkins does defend positions on Athenian social realities, and often very sensibly (or so it seems to me). He argues throughout, in opposition to the views of Murray, Davidson, Ruffell, and others, that the treatment of sympotic themes in comedy presupposes a much wider range of attitudes among the popular audience than resentment at the exclusive rituals and extravagance of the few; it supports the view that many middling citizens understood well enough and tried to imitate many aspects of the formalized dining and drinking experience (thus strengthening the provisional statement of such a case made by me in J. Wilkins, David Harvey (edd.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes* [London and Swansea, 2000], pp. 355–96). Wilkins develops this into a well-argued case that many plays present shared feasting as a major human good, from which the enemies of proper order, such as generals, politicians, and sycophants, and the prime offenders against the values of commensality, such as the parasites, should be seen to be excluded. Secondly, he is generally resistant to the recourse to see significant social change in attitudes to the ritual and social aspects of feasting and drinking between Old and later forms of Comedy, preferring to see changes in comedic fashions and themes; in this spirit, for example, he casts doubts (which I share) on Sitta van Reden's attempts to discern a new moral concern in New Comedy at a supposed commodification of shared sacrifice and feasts through an extension of the money economy.

Often, on the other hand, Wilkins's discussions, almost like those in Athenaeus, seem to get rather bogged down in a mass of less well digested quotations; the text can become repetitive, while leaving the reader uncertain where the main arguments may be heading. In part (but only in part) this results from Wilkins's proper respect for the complex and usually contradictory nature of comic debates, and the problems of dealing with fragments; but there seems also a reluctance to press passages in detail, to develop complex arguments, or to consider the overall effects of scenes or (where we have them) whole plays. It does not help that little explicit guidance is provided to the development of an argument either along the way or in the conclusions to each chapter (which tend rather to slide elegantly towards the next chapter). An example of this indeterminacy is Wilkins's treatment of the similarities and differences between Greek Comedy and later Carnival; he claims first that Old Comedy did not challenge political authority, because it sided with the demos's authority, only immediately to qualify this by emphasizing its isolation of authority figures, such as elected officials and politicians, and their repeated exclusion from comically reconstituted civic festivities. His final position is sensible enough in outline, but fails to bring out the variations and contradictions in political standpoints evident at least in Aristophanes, which have produced the unresolvable debates on his supposed 'political views', and are clearly relevant to his comic treatment of e.g. *symposia* or parasites. Again, the lengthy discussion of luxury foods in Chapter 6 seems rather confused. The discussion is initially organized in terms of five 'ancient approaches'—absence of control over desire, luxury as a sign of social decline, absence of control of private expenditure through the 'rituals' of sacrifice and commensality, resort to artificial foods, and—contrastingly positive—access to luxury as a 'democratic' right; but it is not made quite explicit what these are approaches *to*. At times they seem to be criteria used by ancient writers for distinguishing luxurious from non-luxurious food, and at others, grounds for moral concern. These distinctions then seem to become submerged in a debate on which types of ancient food should be termed by us 'luxuries', where Wilkins's preference would be to restrict the term to more expensive foodstuffs (above

all, fresh fish, where he essentially follows Davidson's analysis of the tensions excited by fluctuating prices); but what is at stake in these shifting discussions is not really made clear.

Wilkins is properly alive to issues of gender in comic treatments of consumption, but again some points perhaps elude him. On pp. 59–61, in an interesting discussion of passages on domestic feasting at or related to marriages (Men. *Samia* 287–8, fr. 186 and Euangelos fr. 1), he fails to distinguish segregated dining in the sense of women eating (if at all) quite separately from the men, from the wedding banquet where there may be separate tables at a shared feast for males and females (who may then presumably exchange in collective exchanges). He discusses on p. 375 Pherekrates fr. 70 ('no one ever saw a cookess, nor indeed a fish-wife—*ichthyopolaina*') as evidence for cooks, but the issue of why women might be selling bread or vegetables in the agora, but not fish, arguably to be related to the extra tensions and possibilities of violence around those stalls, is not taken up by him (nor, I think, by Davidson). I also missed, on p. 62, any discussion of whether the Athenian *gynaikonomoi* were created by the democracy or (as I prefer) by Demetrios of Phaleron, or what their purpose was exactly.

Finally, there are many signs of haste in the composition and completion of the book. Texts in footnotes may not support the argument (e.g. p. 370 n.4, the inscriptions cited for use of a *mageir-* word—dated to *c.* 400 and 335/4—scarcely support the suggestion of an expansion in 'Hellenistic and Roman times', *LSS* 10 is not a deme calendar, and the intrusive question mark at the end of this note suggests that anyway it lacked a final check). It is not always clear why some texts are given in Greek as well as in English, or why and where certain Greek terms are discussed; there a good many typos (of which *barely* for *barley* on p. 16 is perhaps the tastiest); and references to secondary literature can lack the precision of page numbers (e.g. p. 62, Ogden 1996 on *gynaikonomoi*).

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ISOCRATES, *BUSIRIS*

N. LIVINGSTONE: *A Commentary on Isocrates'* Busiris. (*Mnemosyne* Supplement 223.) Pp. xi + 225. Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2001. Cased. ISBN: 90-04-12143-9.

When an Athenian named Polycrates decided to become a sophist and teach rhetoric in order to earn some money, probably between 395 and 375 B.C., he advertised his skill by writing speeches arguing for views which appeared to be indefensible. Just as Gorgias before him had written an encomium of the adulterous Helen and a defence of the trickster Palamedes, so Polycrates wrote an encomium of Clytemnestra, an encomium of mice, and probably other similar pieces; also an accusation of Socrates (at a time when remorse had swung Athenian opinion in Socrates' favour). Among the rest he composed a defence of Busiris, a mythical king of Egypt who was said to have killed and eaten any foreigners visiting his country, until he was himself killed by Heracles, who was passing through on his way to find the apples of the Hesperides. Isocrates, who was some years younger, probably saw Polycrates as a potential rival. So he wrote a letter purporting to give him a little friendly advice in confidence (but, of course, he published the letter) by pointing out what was wrong with his defence of Busiris and demonstrating how that character could be praised more effectively. His

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