

The Comic and Ethical Function of the Monkey in Aristophanes

Aristophanes is the only comic poet of the 5th century BCE whose complete works, rather than just fragments, have been preserved. His works are, therefore, an invaluable reference point for understanding the techniques used by playwrights in classical times to elicit laughter from their audiences. Several devices can be found in Aristophanes' texts, from ὀνομαστί κωμῶδεν to scatology, but one of the most recurring is the use of animal similes. Aristophanes often compares prominent contemporary figures in Athens to animal species with particular characteristics. For example, in line 591 of the *Clouds*, Cleon is compared to a seagull because he has a habit of bribing anyone in order to enrich himself.¹ Seagulls, indeed, were famous for their rapacity.² Even the demagogue Cleophon is criticized through a comparison with the animal world: in lines 678-82 of the *Frogs*, in fact, his behavior is compared to that of swallows.³ The ancient Greeks, indeed, considered the song of these animals shrill and, for this reason, it was frequently used to describe a crude way of expressing oneself.⁴ These comparisons are intended to provoke the hilarity of the audience while simultaneously striking at political

¹ Aristophanes, *Nubes* 591: ἦν Κλέωνα τὸν λάρων δῶρων ἐλόντες καὶ κλοπῆς ("If we accuse that seagull Cleon of corruption and theft"). All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

² Cf. e.g., Artemidorus II.17.

³ Aristophanes, *Ranae* 678-82: φιλοτιμότεραι Κλεοφώντος, ἐφ' οὗ δὴ / χεῖλεσιν ἀμφιλάλοισ δεινὸν ἐπιβρέμεται / Ὀρηκία χελιδῶν / ἐπὶ βάρβαρον ἐζομένη πέταλον ("More ambitious than Cleophon, on whose / loquacious lips the Thracian swallow trembles terribly / sitting on a barbarian leaf").

⁴ Cf. e.g., Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1050-1.

Philomathes

opponents, rivals on the stage, and also ordinary citizens who have become famous for some misadventure. In this way, the entire city is exposed to the comedy's mockery.

Comparisons with animals also allow us to understand the attitude of the Greeks towards individual species: monkeys are frequently associated with petty and grotesque characters, so we can deduce that this animal was judged negatively both for its appearance and its behavior. Confirmation of this association can be found, for example, in Plato's *Republic* (10.16. 620c): Er, in fact, recounts having seen Thersites reincarnated as a monkey. The mechanism of metempsychosis worked according to an analogical process: after the death of the body that housed them, souls would be reincarnated in a being that respected their conduct in their previous life. The fact that Thersites, a deformed and grim man, is associated with the monkey confirms that the Greeks had a negative opinion of this animal. Aristophanes' passages also suggest this association.⁵

In the Greek mindset, outward appearance corresponded to inner qualities: those who are handsome are also good, while those who are ugly are necessarily wicked. An example can be found in Pindar's *Olympian* 8: the poet associates Alcimedon's unrivaled skill in combat with his physical beauty and moral integrity. Monkeys, therefore, are considered despicable because of their deformed appearance, as confirmed by references in Aristotle's *Historia animalium* and Galen's *De usu partium*.⁶

⁵ *Iliad* 2.216-9: αἴσχιστος δὲ ἀνὴρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε· / φορκὸς ἔην, χωλὸς δ' ἔτερον πόδα· τῷ δὲ οἱ ὦμω / κυρτῷ ἐπὶ στήθος συνοχωκότε· αὐτὰρ ὑπερθε / φοξὸς ἔην κεφαλὴν, πεδνὴ δ' ἐπενήνοθε λάχνη ("He was the ugliest man who came to Ilion; / he was one-eyed, lame in one foot, his shoulders / were hunched and recessed into his chest, moreover, the head was pointed at the top, sparse hair flourished").

⁶ Galen. *De usu partium* 1.22: βραχύς ὑμῖν ἐφάνη δῆπου καὶ λεπτός καὶ κολοβός καὶ πάντῃ γελοῖος, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ὅλον ζῶον ὁ πίθηκος ("it

Philomathes

Hence, they represent one of the most commonly used comparisons to describe men with petty behavior who did not fit into the canon of *καλοκαγαθία*, one of the pillars of the Greek world's value system. This concept emerges strongly in the figure of Achilles: in the *Iliad*, in fact, the correspondence between his inner beauty and his inner virtues is emphasized. His adherence to this ideal is emphasized by the comparison with Thersites: he is, in fact, deformed and petty.⁷ The importance of *καλοκαγαθία* is also confirmed by Plato: in the *Symposium*, the philosopher describes how our soul, by contemplating physical beauty, is able to ascend to moral beauty.⁸

Aristophanes' works are an important source for observing how comparisons with monkeys were used to mock and insult someone. The passages examined in this essay will attempt to highlight how Aristophanes' comedies contribute to understanding the ancient Greeks' perception of monkeys and how they used it for comic effect, especially to mock those who did not fit the standards established by the *καλοκαγαθία*.

An example of this mechanism is found in lines 120-1 of the *Acharnians*. Here, the protagonist Dikaiopolis compares the impostor Cleisthenes to a monkey: "τοιόνδε γ', ὃ πίθηκε, τὸν πώγων' ἔχων | εὐνοῦχος ἡμῖν ἦλθες ἐσκευασμένος."⁹ The man had tried to pass himself off as one of the Persian ambassadors. The clothing, the orientalising ornaments and finally some anatomical details like his preposterous beard, prove to be ineffective in masking his true identity. It is precisely the perfect

seemed short and skimpy and truncated and completely ridiculous, as did the monkey as a whole").

⁷ Cf. e.g., *Iliad* 2.212-42.

⁸ Cf. Plato, *Symposium* 195-215.

⁹ Aristophanes, *Acharneis* 120-1: "You, monkey, with that beard, you came dressed as a eunuch?"

Philomathes

scenic devices used by the actor-impostor Cleisthenes to play the role of the eunuch from the court of the Great King that prove to be his undoing and the very clues that Dikaiopolis uses to expose the false identity, causing the failure of the *mise-en-scène*. The staging is ruined and Dikaiopolis can indicate precisely in the false beard of the fake eunuch Cleisthenes the discrepancy with what the public expects from a real stage eunuch. In Dikaiopolis' insult to Cleisthenes, calling him 'monkey', there is a clear reference to his innate inability to go through with a role. But, at the same time, Dikaiopolis denounces the trick by which the Athenian politician Cleisthenes had tried to pass himself off to the public as someone he was not. With his deceitful behavior, therefore, Cleigenes demonstrated that he did not respect the values of *καλοκαγαθία* and, for this reason, deserved to be debased by comparison to a monkey. Dikaiopolis' joke seems to echo a verse by Archilochus (fr. 187 West): τοιγόνδε δ', ὧ πίθηκε, τὴν πυγὴν ἔχων.¹⁰ This verse tells a fable featuring a fox and a monkey, reproduced in full by Aesop (fab. 81 Hausrath-Hunger). The meaning of the joke is unclear: the fox may be implying that the monkey's tail is less pretty than his own, so despite his rival's reputation for intelligence, he has overcome him in at least one area. Similarly, Cleisthenes in Athens managed to gain a leading role within the democratic faction. However, the reference to the monkey could simply allude to its grotesque appearance and its ability to devise cunning tricks.¹¹ Cleisthenes, in fact, must have looked rather repulsive dressed as a eunuch, and his intention was to deceive his fellow citizens.

¹⁰ Archilochus, fr. 187 West: "You, monkey, with an ass like that."

¹¹ S. Douglas Olson, *Aristophanes' Acharnians*. (Oxford: University Press, 2002), 110-1.

Philomathes

Like the comparison to a monkey analyzed in the lines 120-1, another passage aims to attack a character who does not fit the mold of καλοκαγαθία. At lines 905-7, the use of the monkey as an insulting comparison returns. Here, Dikaiopolis is trying to sell a sycophant, packed like a vase, to a Theban, but the buyer refuses to close the deal because he believes that this man is too similar to a monkey: “νεῖ τῷ σιώ, | λάβοιμι μέντ᾽ ἄν κέρδος ἀγαγὼν καὶ πολὺ, | ἄπερ πίθακον ἀλιτρίας πολλὰς πλέων.”¹² In Attic comedy, the monkey is often a symbol of deception and is evoked to insult and mock.¹³ Here, the sense of this confrontation is emphasized by ἀλιτρία, “malignancy,” a noun used to indicate a contamination in the sacred sphere that poses a threat to the entire community.¹⁴ The reference to the monkey, therefore, is used by Aristophanes to emphasize the danger that sycophants represent for Athens. The context evoked refers to collective impurity derived from sacrilege or actions contrary to the will of the gods.

The reason for comic criticism is the same in lines 708-9 of the *Frogs*: here, the chorus attacks Cleigenes, a little-known individual who probably persecuted compromised citizens after the fall of the Four Hundred, as Cleophon did.¹⁵ Cleigenes was probably the secretary of the Boule in office during the first prytany of 410-409 BCE, when Demophantus' decree was passed.¹⁶ This measure authorized the killing with impunity of anyone who attempted to subvert the recently restored democracy after the fall of the oligarchic regime. Cleigenes also

¹² Aristophanes, *Archaneis* 905-7: “By the Two Gods, / I would make a great profit by taking him / full of malice like a monkey.”

¹³ Cf. e.g., Phrynichus *Com. fr.* 21.1-2.

¹⁴ Cf. e.g., Aeschines, *In Ctesiphonta* 157; Lucian, *Iupp. trag.* 36.

¹⁵ Cf. e.g., Andocides 1.96.

¹⁶ Cf. IG I³ 375.

Philomathes

played an active role in persecuting those who had taken part in the coup. To hit their target, the chorus calls him a monkey: "ὁ πίθηκος οὗτος ὁ νῦν ἐνοχλῶν, | Κλειγένης ὁ μικρός."¹⁷ The chorus members have been initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, but as they deliver this attack on Cleigenes, they are no longer wearing their costumes. The line is part of the *parabasis*, the section of ancient comedies in which the chorus temporarily stopped playing their characters to address current issues.¹⁸ The *Frogs* was staged in 405 BCE, when political life was in the hands of upstarts unfamiliar with the traditions of the polis. Indeed, the various factions were willing to do anything to win votes, even fiercely persecuting their opponents with severe decrees such as that of Demophantus. The comparison is likely due to the character's petulant and brazen nature, as well as his repulsive appearance.¹⁹ Aristophanes disapproved of Cleigenes' attitude, as he believed it was not conducive to ensuring Athens' return to prosperity. We can find Aristophanes' opinion in lines 340-70, where the chorus explicitly criticizes those who do not appease the hatred between opposing factions but, on the contrary, stir it up for their own gain. This is why he attacks Cleigenes so harshly.

Aristophanes used monkeys even to underline the unpleasant appearance of a character without any political meaning: in the *Birds*, lines 438-42, Pisthetaerus compares a well known figure from 5th century BCE Athens to a monkey:

μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω ἄγῳ μὲν οὔ,
ἦν μὴ διάθωνταί γ' οἷδε διαθήκην ἐμοῖ

¹⁷ Aristophanes, *Ranae* 708-9: "This monkey that now bothers us / Cleigenes the dwarf."

¹⁸ Cf. e.g., Dario Del Corno, *Dario, Aristofane: Le Rane*. (Milano: Mondadori, 1992), 195-6.

¹⁹ Giuseppe Zanetto and Dario Del Corno, *Aristofane: Gli Uccelli*. (Milano: Mondadori, 1992), 198-9.

Philomathes

ἤνπερ ὁ πίθηκος τῇ γυναικὶ διέθετο,
ὁ μαχαιροποιός, μήτε δάκνειν τούτους ἐμὲ.²⁰

The μαχαιροποιός may be a certain Panaetius whom Aristophanes also mocks as a monkey in *The Islands*: καταλιπὼν Παναίτιον πίθηκον (fr. 409 Kassel-Austin). The man was said to have been particularly ugly, which is why he is compared to a monkey.²¹ The reference to the pact with the woman may be due to the fact that Panaetius agreed with his wife not to hit or bite each other during their exchanges of affection.²²

The monkey was also considered a cunning animal, particularly skilled at plotting deceit, as evidenced, for example, by the verses of Eubulus quoted by Athenaeus (cf. Eub. fr. 115 Hunter = 114 K.-A. *apud Ath.* XII, 16, 519a). The poet, in fact, urges men to be wary of monkeys because they represent a complete disaster due to their treacherous and scheming nature. For this reason, in line 887 of the *Knights*, the Paphlagonian defines as πιθηκισμοί, “monkey tricks,” the tricks used by Sausage-Seller to convince Demos to elect him as leader of the city. The association was so well-established that even five hundred years later, in the 2nd century CE, Emperor Marcus Aurelius used it in his collection of thoughts (cf. M. Aur. *Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτὸν* 9.37: ἄλις τοῦ ἀθλίου βίου καὶ γογγυσμοῦ καὶ πιθηκισμοῦ. τι ταράσση).²³ The *Suda* lexicon reports that πιθηκισμός was used as a synonym for deception, but also for μίμημα, “imitation,” since there was a domestic monkey so named for its mimetic

²⁰ Aristophanes, *Ornithes* 438-42: “No, by Apollo, I will not / unless they make a pact with me / like the monkey, the knife maker, made with the woman, / let them not bite me.”

²¹ Alessandro Grilli, *Aristofane: Gli Uccelli*. (Milano: Rizzoli, 2006), 231.

²² Zanetto, Del Corno, *Aristofane: Gli Uccelli*, 220.

²³ Marcus Aurelius, *Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτὸν* 9.37: “Stop it with this hectic life, with this complaining, with these monkey tricks. Why are you getting so worked up?”

Philomathes

abilities.²⁴ This demonstrates that in the 11th century CE the image used by Aristophanes was still used. According to the Greeks, this simian species seems to have a particularly high capacity for mimicry. For example, in the 2nd century CE, Aelian describes it as μιμηλότατος ("the most mimetic"), because it is capable of carefully observing human behavior and reproducing it faithfully (cf. Ael. *N.A.*, 5.26). The monkey's ability is particularly well developed, as it can copy very different activities with equal effectiveness.²⁵ In this scene, the Sausage-Seller demonstrates the same imitative abilities. In fact, he adopts the same behavior as the politicians active in Athens during those years. Just as they crafted elaborate speeches to deceive their fellow citizens and gain control of the polis, so he promises countless benefits to Demos if he appoints him as leader of the city. The two meanings of πιθηκισμός, therefore, are both exploited by Aristophanes, since Sausage-Seller uses his mimetic talents to deceive Demos.

The Greeks' interest in the behavior of monkeys is also evident in line 1290 of the *Wasps*: the chorus speaks on behalf of Aristophanes and laments the fact that no one defended him from Cleon's attacks against the poet after he criticized the politician for the good of the city. To describe Aristophanes' decision to abandon serious comic poetry and devote himself to lowbrow farce, the chorus speaks in first person as if it were Aristophanes and compares his behavior to that of a monkey:

²⁴ Robert Alexander Neil, *The Knights of Aristophanes*. (Cambridge: University Press, 1901), 127.

²⁵ Marco Vespa, *Geloion Mimema. Studi sulla rappresentazione culturale della scimmia nei testi greci e greco-romani*. (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2021), 80-1.

Philomathes

“ταῦτα κατιδὼν ὑπό τι μικρὸν ἐπιθήκισα.”²⁶ The monkey, in fact, was the animal *par excellence* known for its clownish behavior and was often used to describe those who played trivial pranks.²⁷

The association between Aristophanes' behavior and that of monkeys is particularly apt. In fact, despite rumors that he had come to terms with Cleon, he never intended to stop writing politically engaged comedies.²⁸ Aristophanes led people to believe that he had begun to produce light entertainment shows using the language and scenes typical of low comedy, but in reality he never stopped criticizing the political class of his time. His behavior, therefore, was the same as that of monkeys: he perfectly imitated his colleagues in order to deceive his accusers with the same mimetic and deceptive skills as monkeys.

The verb καθοράω (“observe”), as found in line 1290, occurs in tragedy contemporary to Aristophanes to indicate the discernment of a reality that was obscure until recently but which, following careful observation, begins to take on clear contours and becomes recognizable. This is demonstrated by passages from Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannos* (cf. e.g., Soph., *OT*, vv. 340-1) and Plato's *Euthyphron* (cf. e.g., Pl. *Euthphr.* 2.c). The verb ἐπιθήκισα, then, seems to allude to behavior that voluntarily lends itself to the expectations of the public, well known to the monkey for having observed them carefully. In fact, due to the rumors circulating, it was natural for audiences to expect a comedy completely detached from political reality and focused solely on the comic devices typical of farce. Aristophanes, however, continued to attack Cleon in his verses.

²⁶ Aristophanes, *Vespae* 1290: “Having seen these things, I behaved a little like a monkey.”

²⁷ Cf. Eub. fr. 114.4.

²⁸ Cf. Aristophanes, *Vespae* 1265-91.

Philomathes

The comic passage, indeed, ends with the popular expression ἐξηπάτησεν ἡ χάραξ τὴν ἄμπελον ("the stake has deceived the vine"), causing a sudden change of perspective on the story. The proverb, in fact, was used to allude to those who are deceived by the very people they had trusted.²⁹ This would mean that Aristophanes would fail to meet the legitimate expectations of an audience ready to watch a performance without any surprises. The anecdote about the vine seems to play on the animal's fickleness, which by its very nature is inclined not to follow the instructions of the human διδάσκαλος. The disobedient nature of monkeys was known to the ancient Greeks, as demonstrated, for example, by Lucian in *Piscator*. In this work, a group of monkeys is described destroying masks and costumes instead of performing the comedy they had learned.³⁰ It is precisely this seemingly unconditional submission to the expectations of the public, and even more so to the directives of the "master trainer," that may constitute the link between simian nature and κόλαξ behavior. If he had really come to terms with Cleon, Aristophanes would have behaved like a sycophant, just like all the politicians he criticized for bringing Athens to ruin.

Significantly, part of the scholastic tradition translates the expression used by Aristophanes in the *Wasps* as "behaving like a κόλαξ with someone," seeking to ingratiate oneself with those who are in a position of superiority at that moment, on whom one's survival depends.³¹ The association of the behavior of πῖθηκος, understood as a submissive entertainer with κόλαξ attitudes, with the notion of ἀπάτη ("deception") — but also

²⁹ Cf. e.g., *Schol. in Ar. Vespaе* 1291 a-b Koster; *Suda* ε 1740, χ97 Adler.

³⁰ Cf. Lucian, *Piscator* 36.

³¹ Cf. *Schol. in Ar. Vespaе* 1290b.

Philomathes

“hypocrisy” and “falseness in attitudes” — can be seen as confirmation of the metaphorical mechanism set in motion by Aristophanes. It is already found in the name of the animal itself. The Alexandrian grammarian Philoxenus, in fact, derived the term πίθηκος from the future tense πιθήσω (“I will make you believe”) because this animal is able to convince others to listen to it despite its repulsive appearance.³² The comparison between Aristophanes and the monkey, therefore, is justified by their persuasive abilities. Just as the monkey manages to gain the trust of humans despite its repulsive appearance, so the poet manages to deceive his accusers in order to continue conveying his criticism through his comedies. Aristophanes exploits the negative representation of the monkey to praise himself through the verb πιθηκίζω. The poet considers it praiseworthy that his attitude toward Cleon is similar to that of monkeys. This is the only instance in Aristophanes’ comedies where monkey-like behavior is viewed positively.

The verb πιθηκίζω is used also in the line 1133 of the *Thesmophoriazusae*: after the threatening words spoken by Euripides’ fictitious character playing Perseus in order to free the in-law Andromeda, the Scythian Archer replies: “μιαρὸς ἀλώπηξ, οἷόν ἐπιτήκιζι μοι.”³³ In this way the archer sanctions the failure of the theatrical illusion that Euripides recreates on stage by pretending to be Perseus. Most commentators understand the reference to the verb πιθηκίζω as a synonym for “deceiving,” also believing that it could have the same meaning as ἀλωπεκίζω (“playing the fox”), in turn translated as “deceiving,” precisely because of the close sequence of the two animals in the verse

³² Cf. Philoxenus *Gramm. fr.* 17 Theodoridis.

³³ Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 1133: “Damned fox, what kind of monkey-tricks he played on me!”

Philomathes

pronounced by the archer.³⁴ Considering, however, the fact that the term *πιθηκίζω* was probably a neologism, it is more likely that Aristophanes used this term to maximize some emphatic effects that the verbs *άλωπεκίζω* or *ἀπιστάω* could not guarantee. The reference to the fox would suggest a fraudulent action designed to deceive someone. But, it is unlikely also to allude to the fictional aspects of theatrical performance because the fox was not traditionally associated with high imitative abilities. The evocation of monkey behaviour seems to involve Euripides' attempt to create a peculiar form of deception, created through the somewhat illusionistic instruments of theatrical fiction, from the voice to the disguise and dramatic gestures. In the preceding verses (1098-132), Euripides attempted to imitate Perseus' behavior in the same way that monkeys attempt to reproduce human behavior. Euripides wears shoes that he describes as being as fast as those of the mythological hero and uses elevated language particularly suited to a character such as Perseus. The verb *πιθηκίζω* precisely indicates the fictional dimension that only mimetic staging could embody. Only imitations that are as close to reality as possible are able to engage viewers and transport them into the fictional space they portray. "Making foxes, playing foxes" could certainly evoke a scenario of fraud and deception, but it would be far less effective in suggesting the fictional aspect of acting and even disguise. Moreover, from what we have considered, the mimetic-dramatic capacity of the animal is inseparable from an equally natural tendency to fail to meet expectations, which often raises laughs in an audience. Monkeys

³⁴ Cf. e.g., Jean Taillardat, *Les Images d'Aristophane* (Paris: Société d'Édition Les Belles Lettres, 1965), 228; C. Prato – D. Del Corno, *Aristofane. Le donne alle Tesmoforie*. (Milano: Ed. Mondadori, 2001), 328.

Philomathes

are disobedient animals, as attested to by the passage from Lucian cited above,³⁵ and therefore their imitations often fail to meet the audience's expectations. Spectators are thus inclined to laugh because they do not see what they expected to see. Aristophanes may have chosen this animal metaphor, a complex communicative tool, to build on folk knowledge that considered monkeys bad and laughable actors, ready at the first opportunity to dismantle the scenic fiction in which they were engaged.

In conclusion, the passages from Aristophanes analyzed here allow us to observe how the Greeks used comparisons with monkeys to denigrate a person on the basis of unpleasant physical appearance associated with petty behavior. The monkey, in fact, confirmed the belief that a repulsive exterior corresponded to an equally despicable character. For this reason, it is the ideal animal to target those who do not respect the standards of *καλοκαγαθία*. From here, it seems reasonable to deduce that for the poet, and more generally for the Greek man, the monkey represents a negative comparison, but if this animal's pettiness is taken up for a just cause, then imitating it is a reason for praise, as in line 1290 of the *Wasps*. Just so, the primate can be exploited as a tool of self-justification for one's own conduct. It is an example of how it is normal for Greeks, but perhaps for *homo sapiens* in general, to "disparage deception by their enemies, but use it happily, even proudly, themselves."³⁶

Sara Gualandi
Università degli Studi di Genova
saragualandi10@gmail.com

³⁵ Cf. Lucian, *Piscator* 36.

³⁶ Peter Krentz, "Deception in archaic and classical Greek warfare." In *War and Violence in Ancient Greece*, ed. Hans Van Wees. (London: Duckworth, 2000), 167-200.

Philomathes

Works Cited

- Biles, Zachary P., and S. Douglas Olson, editors. *Aristophanes: Wasps*. Oxford: University Press, 2015.
- Dunbar, Nan, editor. *Aristophanes: Birds*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.
- Grilli, Alessandro, editor. *Aristofane: Gli Uccelli*. Milano: Rizzoli, 2006.
- Krentz, Peter. "Deception in archaic and classical Greek warfare." In: *War and violence in ancient Greece*, edited by Hans van Wees, 167-200. London: Duckworth Classical Press of Wales, 2000.
- Lanza, Diego, editor. *Aristofane: Acarnesi*. Roma: Carocci editore, 2012.
- Mastromarco, Giuseppe, editor. *Commedie di Aristofane*. Torino: UTET, 1983.
- MacDowell, Douglas Maurice, editor. *Aristophanes: Wasps*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Neil, Robert Alexander, editor. *The Knights of Aristophanes*. Cambridge: University Press, 1901.
- Olson, S. Douglas, editor. *Aristophanes' Acharnians*. Oxford: University Press, 2002.
- Paduano, G. editor. *Aristofane: I Cavalieri*. Milano: Rizzoli, 2009.
- _____. *Aristofane: Le Vespe. Gli Uccelli*. Milano: Garzanti Editore, 1990.
- Paduano, Guido and Alessandro Grilli, editors. *Aristofane: Le Rane*. Milano: Rizzoli, 1996.
- Paduano, Guido and Rosanna Lauriola, editors. *Aristofane: Gli Acarnesi*. Milano: Rizzoli, 2008.
- Sifakis, Gregory Michael, *Parabasis and Animal Choues. A Contribution to the History of Attic Comedy*. London: The Athlone Press, 1971.
- Sommerstein, Alan H., editor. *Aristophanes: The Acharnians*. Warminster: Ars and Phillips Ltd, 1992.
- Starkie, William Joseph Myles, editor. *The Acharnians of Aristophanes*. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1968.
- Taillardat, Jean, *Les Images d'Aristophane*. Paris: Société d'Édition Les Belles Lettres, 1965.

Philomathes

Vespa, Marco, *Geloion Mimema. Studi sulla rappresentazione culturale della scimmia nei testi greci e greco-romani*. Turnhout: Brepols Publishers n. v., 2021.

_____, "Animal Metaphors and Metadrama. A Cultural Insight into the Verb πιθηκίζειν". In *Theatre and Metatheatre. Definitions, Problems, Limits*, edited by Elodie Paillard and Silvia Milanezi, 193-212. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021.

Zanetto, Giuseppe, and Dario Del Corno, editors. *Aristofane: Gli Uccelli*. Milano: Mondadori, 1992.