

CONTEXTUALISING DIKAIOPOLIS' PERSONA
URBAN LIFE, RURAL SPACE, AND RURAL PERCEPTIONS OF URBANITY
IN ARISTOPHANES' *ACHARNIANS*

To Professor K. Tsantsanoglou

1. Introduction

Recent scholarship on Aristophanes' *Acharnians* supports the evolutionary dynamics of the play's main character, Dikaiopolis (henceforth D.). According to this view,¹ expressed almost a decade ago in Compton-Engle's comprehensive doctoral Thesis «Sudden Glory: *Acharnians* and the First Comic Hero»,² and subsequently in an article³ derived from her overall study, D. starts off as a helpless victim at the assembly and, through the assumption of many roles such as Euripidean hero, rhetorician, trader, and cook, finishes as a triumphant victor at the end of the play. This contention is based on the premise that D.'s increasingly masterly manipulation of his vicissitudes during the course of the play parallels his progression from his country persona, outlined in detail in the prologue, toward a predominantly urban persona which is most clearly marked as the play concludes.⁴ Nevertheless, this gradual evolution from country bumpkin to a triumphant civic persona cannot be interpreted as a mere initiation of the peasant into the civic way of life, since rural and urban elements of reality are always present in the Aristophanic fiction and since, according to Silk, «the Aristophanic mode of

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1. G. Compton-Engle, «From Country to City: The Persona of Dicaeopolis in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», *CJ* 94.4 (1999) 359-373, esp. 359, based on the third chapter, entitled «The Citification of Dicaeopolis», of her doctoral Thesis «Sudden Glory: *Acharnians* and the First Comic Hero», Cornell University, August 1997, pp. 38-63.

2. Compton-Engle (1997), op.cit., pp. 38-63.

3. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 359-373.

4. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 359.

representation (of characters) involves, at its extreme, a binary principle: instead of development, it permits inversion or reversal». ⁵ Hence, Silk calls the characters of Aristophanes «recreative», since «they have the power to switch, to be transformed», i.e. «when they change, they change abruptly». ⁶ As a corollary of this recreative representation of character Silk stresses the non-unified and non-processive plot structure (mythos), ⁷ but goes on to observe that «the sections, incidents, and details of an Aristophanic play, if not connected processively, are associated thematically». ⁸ He argues for the existence of a schematic tendency in the organization of the plays, and specifies as the most obvious and familiar pattern of this tendency that of antithesis, which tends to be articulated in the concrete metonymic form of conflicting individuals or groups. ⁹

Following this train of thought, since it is also commonly accepted that during the play a recurrent confrontation takes place between the urban space of the city and the rural space of the countryside, it will be argued that *Acharnians* is actually constructed around the ideological interaction between these two spaces. ¹⁰ Based on that premise, our reading of the play will maintain that city and countryside do not remain impermeable to one another. Rather, it will be suggested that there is a fluid shift from one space to the other, with actual effect on the main hero's character. As a result, the view of *Acharnians* proposed here, exemplified through detailed consideration of specific passages, is, then, less anchored in variously rigid dichotomies and more sensitive to dynamic interaction than is common in discussions of Aristophanic comedy. Moreover, our discussion profits from M. Habasch's study, ¹¹ which examined the portrayal of the celebration of Rural Dionysia and Anthesteria in *Acharnians* as metonymic symbols of the comic hero's return to the countryside, and considered how these two festivals complement one another in the wider framework of the play.

5. M. S. Silk, *Aristophanes and the Definition of Comedy*, Oxford 2000, p. 224. After M. Croiset, *Aristophanes and the Political Parties at Athens*, transl. J. Loeb, London 1909, pp. 9-10, 52-60, and L. L. Forman (comm.), *Aristophanes Clouds*, New York 1915, pp. 239-244, H. L. Crosby, «Aristophanes and the Country», *CW* 20 (1927) 180-184 elaborated further on Aristophanes' acquaintance with country life and country people.

6. Silk, *op.cit.*, p. 223.

7. Silk, *op.cit.*, p. 256.

8. Silk, *op.cit.*, p. 277.

9. Silk, *op.cit.*, p. 289.

10. N. W. Slater, «Space, Character, and apatê: Transformation and transvaluation in the *Acharnians*», in A. H. Sommerstein - S. Halliwell - J. Henderson - B. Zimmermann (eds.), *Tragedy, Comedy and the Polis*, Bari 1993, pp. 397-415.

11. M. Habasch, «Two Complementary Festivals in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», *AJPh* 116 (1995) 559-577.

2. *Acharnians 1-42: A peasant's soliloquy in the civic space of the People's Assembly*

The opening scene of the *Acharnians* (vv. 1-42) straightaway introduces one of the many incongruities upon which the play is built: an anonymous¹² solitary male figure sits on stage awaiting the arrival of others who are late for a meeting of the assembly.¹³ The hero's loneliness and isolation are underlined by the form of the discourse, the soliloquy, and reverberate in the use of first person singular verbs throughout the monologue (vv. 1-42), but they are also stressed by the designation of the scenic space, within which the hero is situated, as empty (v. 20 ἔρημος ἢ Πνὸξ αὐτῆί). The scenic space represents the place (v. 20 Πνὸξ) of the Assembly (v. 19 ἐκκλησίας): the Pnyx, the civic space *par excellence*, along with the Athenian Agora, which stood at the centre of Athenian political life and where the *ekklesia* of the sovereign demos, the most important political institution of Athenian democracy, convenes.¹⁴ Due to the delayed arrival of other participants in the imminent Assembly (v. 19 οὔσης κυρίας ἐκκλησίας), the emptiness of the Pnyx, a place which by definition requires the attendance of many, is stressed by its being occupied by a single person, i.e. the hero of the play, an ordinary Athenian citizen, who sits and waits for the beginning of the proceedings.¹⁵

The reverberation of the hero's loneliness, through the use of the first person singular in vv. 28-31 (28 ἐγὼ δ' αἰεὶ πρότιςτος εἰς ἐκκλησίαν / 29 νοστῶν κάθημαι· κἄτ', ἐπειδὴν ὦ μόνος, / 30 στένω, κέχρηνα, σκορδινῶμαι, πέρδομαι, / 31 ἀπορῶ, γράφω, παρατίλλομαι, λογιζομαι), culminates in v. 30,¹⁶ where lies the first explicit indication of the main character's depiction as a crude rustic.¹⁷ And it is precisely this which manifests for the

12. The hero remains anonymous up until a later stage (v. 406) in the play: Δικαιοπόλις καλεῖ σε Χολλήθης ἐγώ.

13. S. Douglas-Olson, *Aristophanes: Acharnians*, edited with introduction and commentary, Oxford 2002, p. 64. The same motif is also used in other comedies, e.g. *Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazusae*.

14. It is notable that in their lengthy article K. Kourouniotes and H. A. Thompson, «The Pnyx in Athens», *Hesperia* 1 (1932) 109-111, esp. 109, consider this scene, i.e. vv. 19-33 and 37-42, as «an inescapable touchstone for the correctness of any proposed restoration of the assembly place at this time».

15. A. Kavoulaki, «Re-introducing the festival in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», in S. Tsitsiridis (ed.), *Parachoregema: Studies on Ancient Theatre in Honour of Professor Gregory M. Sifakis*, Heraklion 2010, pp. 231-261, esp. 234.

16. The culmination, or according to Silk, op.cit., p. 137, «the sudden explosive unacceptable», is also underlined metrically by the breach of Porson's law (υ̇ υ̇ υ̇ υ̇ υ̇ υ̇ | υ̇ υ̇ υ̇ 30).

17. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 360-361. Nonetheless, D.'s old-fashioned literary tastes in vv. 9-11 give us a first insight of his being a man from the country, since old age and old-fashioned tastes (both intellectual and artistic) are usually linked with *personae* of rural identity in

first time the play's inherent conflict between rural and urban, since the hero's explicit statement of his loathing of the city (vv. 32-33 ἀποβλέπων εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν¹⁸ εἰρήνης ἔρων, / στυγῶν μὲν ἄστου, τὸν δ' ἐμὸν δῆμον ποθῶν) immediately follows the description of his rude and boorish public conduct, which mainly focuses on bodily functions.¹⁹

Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that all this boorish public conduct takes place in a typically civic setting, the Pnyx (v. 20). The urban setting of the Pnyx sets off the representation of the *ekklesia*, which, comic as it may be, amounts also to a quasi-realistic representation of civic *ethos* (vv. 43-174).²⁰ This means that the spectators can actually watch the weaknesses of their premier democratic institution at first hand; they see citizens arriving late, including even their elected officials, they see special interest groups blatantly helping themselves to public funds, they see attempts to deceive the civic body, the demos (that is, the spectators themselves), while broader and urgent questions of war and peace are deliberately suppressed, while those who are willing do what they are expected to do are ejected from the meeting, and while the interests of the countryside are ignored in favour of the city.²¹ The closing lines add one final detail accentuating the rustic persona of the hero: he is robbed of his garlic by the Odomantians and cries out (v. 174) οἴμοι τάλας, μυττωτὸν ὄσον ἀπώλεσα. Garlic was the basic ingredient (along with cheese, leeks, and honey) of μυττωτός, a «mashed», spicy sauce usually prepared and consumed by citizens of low class.²² Therefore, D.'s soliloquy invites the audience to see the *ekklesia* through «rural» eyes, in particular, through the eyes of one who is a – here, the only – supporter of democratic institutions (cf. v. 28) in the face of lethargy and corruption.

Aristophanic comedy: compare Strepsiades in the *Clouds* vv. 1353-1358, 1361-1376. In other words, rural identity represents the common denominator between old age and old-fashioned tastes. On this subject see I. M. Konstantakos, «Antiphanes' Agroikos-plays: an examination of the ancient evidence and fragments», *RCCM* 46.1 (2004) 9-40, esp. 32. On the age of γέρον see further M. S. Silk, «Nestor, Amphitryon, Philocleon, Cephalus: the language of old men in Greek literature from Homer to Menander», in F. D. Martino – A. H. Sommestein (eds.), *Lo spettacolo delle voci*, 2nd pt., Bari 1995, pp. 165-214, esp. p. 166.

18. The coincidence between D.'s fictional and physical eye contact with his farm is endorsed firstly by Kourouniotes – Thompson, op.cit., 90-217, esp. 111 and later by Olson (2002), op.cit., p. 77.

19. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 361, and ib. 360 n.3.

20. J. Whitehorne, «O City of Kranaos! Athenian Identity in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», *G&R*, 52.1 (2005) 34-44, esp. 36; R. Kannicht, «Aristophanes redivivus: über die Aktualität der *Acharner*», *Dioniso* 5 (1971) 573-591, esp. 579; Slater, op.cit., pp. 398-402; G. A. H. van Steen, «Aspects of "public performance" in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», *AC* 63 (1994) 211-224.

21. Whitehorne, op.cit., 36.

22. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., p. 363; A. Dalby, *Food in the ancient world from A-Z*, London 2003, p. 227.

3. Acharnians 179-185: *the description of another rural landscape*

Immediately after the assembly scene (vv. 43-174) comes the confrontation between D. and the fierce Acharnians (vv. 204-625), which, it has been argued,²³ causes the abandonment of the hero's rural identity. The term «abandonment» denotes the change in his persona, signaled in vv. 377-378 and made explicit a few lines later.²⁴ The term «abandonment» is, in my view, unhelpful, since it refers to an absolute and irrevocable alteration of Dikaiopolis' persona, which, I will suggest, is not the case here. I prefer to designate his shift into a persona less rustic than at first as a «suspension», a word describing more accurately the outcome and the temporary effects of a process illustrated in the play. The term «process» also denotes the hero's gradual shift into a less rustic persona: this shift is launched as soon as Amphitheos delivers his description of the fierce chorus members, which actually forms a foil to D.'s crude public conduct (v. 30) in the Pnyx.²⁵

Ἄχαρνῆς 179-185

[AM.] [...]· οἱ δ' ὄσφροντο πρεσβυταί τινες
 Ἄχαρνικοί, στιπτοὶ γέροντες, πρίνινοι, [180]
 ἀτεράμονες, Μαραθωνομάχαι, σφενδάμνινοι.
 ἔπειτ' ἀνέκραγον πάντες, «ὦ μιαρῶτατε,
 σπονδᾶς φέρεις, τῶν ἀμπέλων τετμημένων;»
 κᾶς τοὺς τρίβωνας ξυνελέγοντο τῶν λίθων·
 ἐγὼ δ' ἔφευγον· οἱ δ' ἐδίωκον κᾶβρόων.²⁶ [185]

Amphitheos' diction sets out a foil of extreme rusticity, an illustrative image of Pindar's claim (N. 2.16-17 Ἄχάρναι δὲ παλαίφατον / εὐάνορες· [...]) that the Acharnians had a long-standing reputation for valour.²⁷ This description serves as Amphitheos' answer to D.'s question in v. 178 (τί δ' ἐστίν;), as an explanation of his first mention of the Acharnians in v. 177 (δεῖ γάρ με φεύγοντ' ἐκφυγεῖν Ἄχαρνέας.) – illustrating the circumstances that have caused him to be on the run and reserved for the final position in the line as a surprise²⁸ – and most importantly as an announcement of the

23. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 364.

24. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 366.

25. J. Pickard, «The Relative Position of Actors and Chorus in the Greek Theatre of the V Century B.C. III. The Period of Euripides and Aristophanes», *AJPh* 14.3 (1893) 273-304, 287-289, esp. 288.

26. In all Aristophanic passages I follow the text as edited by N. G. Wilson (ed.), *Aristophanis Fabulae*, vol. I-II, OCT, Oxford 2007.

27. Olson, op.cit., p. 126.

28. Op.cit.

entrance of the chorus (*parodos*, v. 204 onwards). The chain of epithets (vv. 180-181), tied to a framework of nouns, such as *πρεσβῦται* (v. 179) and *γέροντες* (v. 180), makes for a peerless rustic identity, dense in quantity and quality, since the epithets confirm an identity based on the rustic connotations latent in the «possessive» surrogate²⁹ (*Ἀχαρνικοί*) for the standard *ethnicon*, *Ἀχαρνῆς*. The substitution can be construed either as a colloquial substantive acting as a surrogate demotic³⁰ or as an adjective.³¹ In either case, and due to its position at the beginning of the iambic trimeter, *Ἀχαρνικοί* works as a foil to the formal demotic *Ἀχαρνῆς*, already mentioned at the end of v. 177,³² as a probable reminder of the proverbial phrase *Ἀχαρνικοί ὄνοι*,³³ and thus as a qualitative designation of the chorus members, glossed by the following string of epithets. In addition, the epithets sound, on the one hand, like an echo of Pindar's claim and on the other as further intensification of the extreme rusticity involved in the term *Ἀχαρνικοί*. D.'s un-civic public conduct exemplifies one aspect of rural ethos as presented in the play, while the fierce, and the ultra-rustic old men, as described by Amphitheos and presented later on, provide a comprehensive and extreme paradigm of the rustic *ethos*, opposite³⁴ to that represented by D. While he embodies the pleasures of rustic life, apparently without the work required for their acquisition, the chorus represents the difficulties and hardships attendant of life in the countryside. The difference between them, then, is not exclusively a quantitative one, but rather a qualitative one. *Μαραθωνομάχαι* literally designates the chorus-members as Marathon veterans, an actual, though slight possibility in 425 B.C.E. (when surviving veterans of Marathon would

29. I owe the term «possessive» surrogate to S. Levin, «The Significance in Ethnic Classes in Greek and English», *TAPA* 81 (1950) 130-152, esp. 146.

30. M. Billerbeck (ed.), *Steph. Byz. Gramm., Ethnica (Libri A-I)*, A 565.

31. Olson, *op.cit.*, p. 127.

32. This placing might be in direct response to the formal demotic *Ἀχαρνέας*, only three lines earlier (v. 177), reserved for the final position in the line as a surprise.

33. Diogenianus 1.26 *CPG* vol. 1 p. 185 L.-S.; s.v. *Ἀντρώνιος ὄνος: ἐπὶ τῶν μεγάλων καὶ ἀγρίων καὶ ἀνεργῶν. ἐν Ἀντρῶνι γὰρ, ὡς φησι Φερεκράτης, μεγάλοι ὄνοι ἐγένοντο. Ἀχαρνικοί ὄνοι: ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν.*; Diogenianus 1.90 *CPG* vol. 2 p. 16 L.; s.v. *Ἀχαρνικοί ὄνοι: ἐπὶ τῶν νωθῶν καὶ μεγάλων*; Michael Apostolius 2.90, *CPG* vol. 2 p. 285 L.; s.v. *Ἀντρώνιος ὄνος: καὶ Ἀχαρνικοί ἵπποι: ἐπὶ τῶν μεγάλων καὶ ἀγρίων καὶ ἀνεργῶν. τοιοῦτοι γὰρ οἱ ὄνοι ἐν Ἀντρῶνι καὶ οἱ ἵπποι ἐν Ἀχαρνῶν, ὡς Φερεκῦδης φησί*; Hesychius α 8832 Latte s.v. *Ἀχαρνικοί ὄνοι: ἐπὶ τῶν μεγάλων οὕτως ἔλεγον*. Cf. *Suda* μ 195 Adler s.v. *Μαριλάδης: ὄνομα. τοιτέστι γέρον Ἀχαρνικός*. Cf. also Sch. vet. et rec. in Ar. *Ach.* 609, p. 81 Koster: *ὁ Μαριλάδης: παρεποίησε τὸ ὄνομα ἀπὸ τῆς μαρίλης, ὅτι τὸ ἀμαυρὸν πῦρ δηλοῖ. τοιτέστιν ὁ γέρον Ἀχαρνικέ*.

34. The notion of contrast between the Acharnians and D. with respect to the rustic life which both of them represent was introduced by Whitehorne, *op.cit.*, 42. I refer to this contrast with the term «difference», but I have changed its focus.

have been in their 80s). But the word may also be used quasi-proverbially for the oldest living generation of Athenians or for long-lived war-veterans in general.³⁵

The rest of the epithets and nouns attributed to the Acharnians (vv. 180-181) also contribute to notion of extreme rusticity.³⁶ Through this chain of attributes, Aristophanes constructs a second and more extreme vision of the rustic *ethos* which gives us a succinct but dense insight into rurality as an ethical dimension. The absolute genitive τῶν ἀμπέλων τετμημένων (v. 183) not only confirms what has already been suggested in the Assembly-scene, namely that the interests of the countryside are ignored in favour of the city, but also recalls a bitter reality: the invasion of the Spartan king Archidamos, who ravaged the Attic countryside, after settling down in Acharnai in 431 B.C.E. According to Thucydides (2.19.1-2, 2.20.4-5, 2.21.3), the Acharnians were, for obvious reasons, outspoken in their eagerness to march out and confront the enemy (Thuc. 2.21.3); it was, after all, their own land the Spartan army was destroying.³⁷

Moreover, vines were most important to the Athenian rural economy, since they produced one of the five crops (along with wheat, barley, olives, and figs) by which ephebes in the fourth century swore to defend the land [SEG 21 (1965) 629.19-20 = Tod # 204.19-20].³⁸ Additionally, the root sense of σπονδάς = libations = draughts of wine (v. 186) helps explain the Acharnians' particular interest in the damage done to their plants.³⁹ Thus, Amphitheos' depiction of the members of the chorus as old, ultra-rustic members of the ultra-rural demos of Attica⁴⁰, also provides a foil to D.'s rural conduct in a civic environment. It is exactly the depiction of this foil with terms denoting ultra-rusticity (στιπτοί, πρίνινοι, ἀτεράμονες, σφενδάμνινοι)

35. J. Henderson (ed.), *Aristophanes: Acharnians, Knights, edited and translated*, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 178, Cambridge, Mass. 1998, p. 81, n. 33; Olson, op.cit., p. 128.

36. Olson, op.cit., pp. 127-128; cf. v. 612 Πρίνιδος = the name of one member of the chorus, 667 ἀνθρώπων πρίνιων, adesp. com. fr. 498 K.-A. Δρουαχαρνέυ, glossed by Phot. *Lex.* δ762 Theod. = *EM* p. 288,15 = Sud. δ1515 ἐκωμωδοῦντο γὰρ οἱ Ἀχαρνεῖς ὡς ἄγριοι καὶ σκληροί, and by Hesychius δοκοῦσι γὰρ οἱ Ἀχαρνεῖς σκληροὶ τὴν γνώμην εἶναι καὶ ἄτεγχοι.

37. Olson, op.cit., p. 126; although A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides, vol. II: Books II-III: The Ten Years' War*, Oxford 1969, p. 74 stresses that οὐχ ὁμοίως προθύμους is «an expectation singularly falsified; for six years later the Acharnians were as warlike and as hostile to any compromise with the Spartans as ever, and this too after the ravages of the plague».

38. Olson, op.cit., pp. 128-129.

39. Olson, op.cit., p. 129.

40. According to Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 364, «[F]or the first part of the play, the identity of the chorus with this rustic deme is repeatedly emphasized», and 364, n. 16: «Ach. 177, 180, 200, 203, 286, 322, 329, 666. The rustic character of the deme is reinforced at 674, when the chorus invokes the Acharnian Muse and asks her to sing a μέλος ἔντονον ἀγροικότερον».

and prowess (*Μαραθωνομάχαι*) that causes a suspension of D.'s rural ethos and also fuels his switch to an urban one.⁴¹

4. Acharnians 719 ff.: from peasant to a successful businessman

In vv. 1-203, the rustic *ethos* of D. has been presented in the distinctively civic space of the Pnyx. From v. 237 onwards the dramatic space is D.s' deme, according to the hero's own statement in v. 267. Some 126 lines later, in v. 393 the action takes place at Euripides' house. From v. 719 and onwards, according to D.s' own words, the dramatic space is that of an agora.

Ἀχαρνῆς 719-730

[ΔΙ.] ὄροι μὲν ἀγορᾶς εἰσιν οἷδε τῆς ἐμῆς.
 ἐνταῦθ' ἀγοράζειν πᾶσι Πελοποννησίους [720]
 ἔξεστι καὶ Μεγαρεῦσι καὶ Βοιωτίοις,
 ἐφ' ὧτε πωλεῖν πρὸς ἐμέ, Λαμάχῳ δὲ μή.
 ἀγορανόμους δὲ τῆς ἀγορᾶς καθίσταμαι
 τρεῖς τοὺς λαχόντας τούσδ' ἱμάντας ἐκ Λεπρῶν.
 ἐνταῦθα μήτε συκοφάντης εἰσίτω [725]
 μήτ' ἄλλος ὅστις Φασιανός ἐστ' ἀνὴρ.
 ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν στήλην καθ' ἣν ἐσπείσάμην
 μέτειμ', ἵνα στήσω φανεράν ἐν τᾷγορᾷ.
 [ΜΕΓ.] ἀγορὰ ἔν' Ἀθάναις, χαῖρε, Μεγαρεῦσιν φίλα.
 ἐπόθουν τυ, ναὶ τὸν φίλιον, ἄπερ ματέρα. [730]

In v. 719 the hero defines the dramatic space as «these boundaries of my market»⁴² a redefinition confirmed by the Megarian who enters in v. 729, although he gives an extra clue by specifying that the agora is in Athens. It has been argued that the agora greeted by the Megarian is located in the city of Athens and not in a rural space.⁴³ The identification of D.s' market with the Athenian agora is, however, doubtful, since the possessive pronoun (v. 719 τῆς ἐμῆς), placed emphatically at the end of the line,⁴⁴ strongly implies

41. I found Compton-Engle's (1999), *op.cit.*, 364, remark very shrewd: «It is the confrontation with the Acharnians that first causes Dicaeopolis to abandon his rustic identity». However, I would prefer to identify this shift somewhat earlier, since Amphitheos' imposing depiction of the Acharnians foreshadows and, one might say, causes it. Whitehorne, *op.cit.*, 42 also refers to «a grim contrast» between the members of the chorus as representing «the reality [sic] of rustic life» and «the happy fantasy of Dikaiopolis' dreams of the countryside».

42. According to J. Henderson's translation in the Loeb Classical Library (1998).

43. Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 367-369.

44. Olson, *op.cit.*, p. 257.

D.'s new and personal creation, marked by ὄροι which have only just been established. In addition, the distinctiveness of his market is underscored later in the play by its description in 836 ff., which assumes that it is different from the urban agora.⁴⁵ Even though the Megarian identifies D.'s market with the Athenian one, a distinction between the former and the latter is further necessitated by four major factors. The first lies in a historical fact implied by D. before the parabasis (vv. 623-625) and during the establishment of the boundaries of his own market (vv. 720-723), namely the Megarian Decree which barred the Megarians from the common Agora of the polis; the second is D.'s hostility to the urban cash-economy already implied in his introductory monologue (vv. 33-36); the third is the play's inherent tendency towards the creation of a counter-world; the fourth and most important is that the Megarian's salutation, identifying D.'s new private market with the old one in the city, may well entail a joke. Following immediately after D.'s institution of the new market, the Megarian's greeting sounds like a hasty, if not deliberate, misconception of the identity of the new market. This misunderstanding gives away most eloquently to the Megarian's desperate need to trade with an Athenian citizen within the space of the Athenian Agora. Hence, as Olson has already noted, the distinction between the new and the old agora is of vital importance to D., but to the Megarian any place to trade in the city is simply «the agora of Athens».⁴⁶ Due to this desperate need, he is ready to identify any space where this much desired transaction could take place as the civic space for trade *par excellence*, i.e. the Athenian Agora, from which he was barred due to the Megarian decree. Therefore, the Megarian's salutation cannot be used as an indication for defining the setting of the play's conclusion.⁴⁷ (Ε) / (ἐ)᾽ Ἀθήναις is very vague and could denote any place in the wider civic area of Athens. Moreover, despite the almost formulaic phrase – twice attested in Thucydides –⁴⁸ Ἀττικὴ ἀγορὰ, ἀγορὰ ᾽ Ἀθήναις is not necessarily to be regarded as an exact parallel to it, since there are greetings with similar typology, especially in tragedy⁴⁹ and fre-

45. For the exact topography of the Athenian Agora see R. E. Wycherley, «The Market of Athens: Topography and Monuments», *G&R* 3.1 (1956) 2-23, and for information about its regulations see P. V. Stanley, *Ancient Greek Market Regulations and Controls*, unpublished doctoral Thesis, University of California, Berkeley 1976, *passim*.

46. Olson, *op.cit.*, p. 259.

47. Pace Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 367.

48. Thuc. 1.67.4 τῆς Ἀττικῆς ἀγορᾶς, 1.139.1 τῆ Ἀττικῆ ἀγορᾶ.

49. E. Dickey, «Forms of Address and Conversational Language in Aristophanes and Menander», *Mnemosyne* 48.3 (1995) 257-271, esp. 264-265, notes as a general rule of thumb the elaboration of Aristophanic vocatives and their affinity to the practice of tragedy.

quently addressed to favoured places.⁵⁰

Immediately after the parabasis (vv. 626-718), the so-called «world of fulfillment»⁵¹ is implemented as soon as the boundaries of D.s' new market are defined (v. 719 ὄροι μὲν ἀγορᾶς εἰσιν οἷδε τῆς ἐμῆς). The articulation of this definition signals an immediate start of trade. Throughout the first three episodes (vv. 729-1068) D. focuses exclusively on trade through buying (πρίασθαι) and selling (πωλεῖν) goods. This activity is underlined by the recurrent use of words and verbs denoting «buying», «selling» and «profit».⁵² The figures with whom these transactions of «buying» and «selling» are carried out are of two kinds. The first could be called «regional»,⁵³ since it involves figures such as the Megarian (vv. 729-835) and the Boeotian⁵⁴ (vv. 860-958), whereas the second may be called «social», since it includes the Athenian informer, Nikarchos, Lamachos' slave, D.'s fellow-farmer Dercetes, and the bridegroom's best man. Notably, the transactions with the «regional figures» are by means of barter rather than money and overall successfully completed, whereas transactions with the «social figures» are uncompromisingly turned down by D. Although in the prologue (vv. 34-36) he proclaimed his disgust at the commerce in the city as the urban activity *par excellence*, while longing for his self-sufficient country *demos*, he now abandons his rural identity, which usually in drama bears connotations of good sense and decency,⁵⁵ and proves to be a successful and shrewd

50. For parallels see Olson, op.cit., p. 259.

51. The phrase is coined by Silk, op.cit., p. 295; for a structural pattern of Aristophanic Old Comedy; see also Silk, op.cit., p. 263. A. H. Sommerstein, *Aristophanes: Acharnians, edited with translation and notes*, Warminster³1992, pp. 12-13, distinguishes between two stages, i.e. between what he calls the *Realization* of a Great Idea, and the *Consequences*, usually displayed in the final phase of the play. In *Acharnians* these stages are merged, since we can watch the instant Realization of Dikaiopolis' wishful thinking expressed in the prefatory monologue and the immediate consequences of this realization. For the narrative structure of comedy and its constituent parts see G. M. Sifakis, «The Structure of Aristophanic Comedy», *JHS* 112 (1992) 123-142.

52. See *Index Aristophaneus*, O. J. Todd (ed.), Cantabrigiae 1932, repr. Hildesheim 1962. Cf. also vv. 719 ἀγορᾶς, 720 ἀγοράζειν, 722 πωλεῖν, 728 ἐν τᾶγορᾷ, 734 πεπρᾶσθαι, 735 πεπρᾶσθαι (bis), 737 πρίατο, 749 πρίασθαι, 750 ἀγορασοῦντες, 758 ὄνιος, 812 πρίωμαι, 815 ὀνήσομαι, 816 Ἐρμᾶ ἔμπολαίε, 817 ἀποδόσθαι, 818 χοιροπόλας, 824 ἀγορανόμοι, 830-831 ἀπεδίδους τιμῆς, 838 ἐν τᾶγορᾷ, 842 ὑποψωνῶν, 848 ἐν τᾶγορᾷ, 855 ἐν τᾶγορᾷ, 870 πρίασο, 895 τιμά, 896 ἀγορᾶς τέλος, 897 πωλεῖς, 898 πόσου, 901 πριάμενος, 906 κέρδος, 957 κερδάνης, 960 ταυτησι δραχμῆς, 962 τριῶν δραχμῶν, 968 ἀγορανόμους καλῶ, 973 ἐμπορικὰ χρήματα διεμπολᾶν, 976 αὐτόματα πάντ' ἀγαθὰ ... πορίζεται, 1055 χιλίων δραχμῶν.

53. The phrase is found in Silk, op.cit., p. 295.

54. I preserve the denotation «Boeotian» pace Wilson's strong argumentation in the *apparatus criticus* of his edition, v. 860 ad loc.

55. S. Murnaghan, «Farming, Authority, and Truth-telling», in R. M. Rosen – I. Sluiter (eds.)

businessman in the scenes with the Megarian and the Boeotian.⁵⁶ It is true that the acts of *πρίασθαι* and *πωλεῖν* are preponderant during these scenes. Nevertheless, the suggestion that in these scenes «a movement toward the city» and a «transition from rural agriculture to urban commerce» take place, disregards the fact that all this trading activity unfolds in D.s' newly-established market and not in the Athenian one.⁵⁷ Moreover, if urban commerce is characterized especially by trade through monetary exchange, D. thrives in trading with regional figures through barter.⁵⁸ To understand the extent of his shrewdness and success we should take into account the fact that in the prologue he has accused urban commerce of forcing him to buy all the goods he needs, whereas in his country *demos* all things were produced by rural agriculture (v. 36). In his newly-established agora there is an inversion of this accusation, since now all things come to him of their own accord through trade with foreigners.⁵⁹ As a result, it should be noted that since the transactions are by means of barter rather than money, D.'s market is in a sense an «international» version of the means of exchange in rural economies, but conducted with «urban» shrewdness. This success is underlined by the chorus' later statement in 976 (*αὐτόματα πάντ' ἀγαθὰ τῷδέ γε πορίζεται*) recalling the archetypical image of the Golden Age, already cited in Hesiod's *Op.* 117-118 (*καρπῶν δ' ἔφερε ζεῖδωρος ἄρουρα / αὐτομάτη πολλόν τε καὶ ἄφθονον*).⁶⁰ In addition, the chorus' statement, uttered almost in the middle of D.s' trading activity with both «regional» and «social» figures, sounds like a retrospective evaluation and corroborative conclusion of his

City, Countryside, and the Spatial Organization of Value in Classical Antiquity, Leiden 2006, pp. 93-118, esp. p. 110.

56. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 367-369, esp. 369 with n. 31.

57. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 368/369.

58. Olson, op.cit., p. 276: «Despite the occasional talk of “buying” and “selling” in this section of the play (812, 815, 895, 897-8, 901), Dik. and his visitors engage exclusively in barter (cf. 899-905), so that the hero's new market place includes an implicit rejection of the cash-economy denounced so pointedly in 34-36».

59. Compton-Engle (1999), op.cit., 367-369, especially 369; see also Nicholas F. Jones, *Rural Athens under Democracy*, Philadelphia 2004, pp. 196-197, 199-200.

60. For parallels in Greek literature see Olson, op.cit., p. 312 with sch. ad loc. For the use of the Golden Age as a common time setting for comic portrayals of Utopias see W. F. Hansen, *Ariadne's Thread: a guide to international tales found in classical literature*, Ithaca/ London 2002, 380-389; I. Ruffell, «The world turned upside down: Utopia and Utopianism in the fragments of Old Comedy», in D. Harvey – J. Wilkins (eds.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes: Studies in Athenian Old Comedy*, Swansea 2000, pp. 473-506, and H. C. Baldry, «The Idler's Paradise in Attic Comedy», *G&R* 22 (1953) 49-60; for comic portrayals of Utopias in Aristophanes see B. Zimmermann, «Utopisches und Utopie in den Komödien des Aristophanes», *WJA* n.F. 9 (1983) 57-77; E.-R. Schwinge, «Aristophanes und die Utopie», *WJA* n.F. 3 (1977) 43-67; W. Fauth, «Kulinarisches und Utopisches in der griechischen Komödie», *WS* 86 (1973) 39-62.

façon de faire up to this point. The hero is credited with the successful establishment of an economy based on barter and similar to that of the Hesiodic Golden Era,⁶¹ as far as the acquisition of goods is concerned. D. also proves to be a successful businessman, since he takes up commercial dealings, disrupted long ago, with the Megarian, through a cunning circumvention of the Megarian Decree, due to his newly-established market. Therefore, the result of D.'s commercial conduct cannot be interpreted merely as a fulfillment of the wish uttered in his prefatory monologue (vv. 33-36) or an inversion of v. 36, but as an unmistakable, almost triumphant resumption of an activity disrupted long ago due to the war: that of trading with foreigners and especially with other Greek city states and regions previously hostile to Athens, such as Megara and Boeotia .

5. Acharnians 971 and 1000 ff.: *from peasant to chef*

Having acquired delicacies such as Megarian piglets, Copaic eel, fowl and birds through barter and mercantile shrewdness, D. announces his entrance into his house with his *embarras de richesses*, the happy outcome of his economic transactions with the «regional» figures (vv. 969-970 ἐγὼ δ' ἐμαυτῷ τόδε λαβὼν τὸ φορτίον / εἴσειμι' ὑπαὶ πτερύγων κιχλᾶν καὶ κοψίχων). His entrance also marks the official end of his transactions and even the end of his agora. Immediately after D.'s entrance, the chorus praises the hero's sagacity (vv. 971-974) and foreshadows the shift of D.'s activity to another level, that of cooking the delicacies (v. 975 τὰ δ' αὖ πρόπει χλιαρὰ κατεσθίειν, 986 ἐπτέρωταί τ' ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον), which begins (1003-1007) almost as soon as the chorus finishes its epirrhematic syzygy (971-999).

Thus, after the role of successful businessman, D. assumes a new one, that of chef. This last occupation was seen as having resulted felicitously from his close connection with the agora, the civic space *par excellence*, and therefore the city.⁶² This implied aetiological association (established by the chorus in vv. 971-976, especially in vv. 974-975) between the agora and cooking is underlined by the observation that D. has acquired ἐμπορικὰ χρήματα, some of which are useful in the household, others suitable to eat hot (χλιαρὰ κατεσθίειν). Hence, this last observation acts as an anticipation of the subsequent cooking activity into which D. throws himself with élan – underlined by the chain of direct questions followed by the imperatives (vv. 1003-1007)

61. For D. as a «Golden Era figure» cf. Olson, *op.cit.*, pp. 311-312, although Olson's comment is associated with the chorus' remark in vv. 973-976.

62. Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 370.

– as soon as the chorus finishes. Nevertheless, before the connection between agora and cooking is accepted, it should be qualified by the observation that the agora where all these delicacies came from is D.'s private and self-sufficient marketplace. The notion of privacy and self-sufficiency is reinforced by the chorus' comment on D.'s zealous cooking activity in vv. 1015-1017 ὡς [...] αὐτῷ διακονεῖται. Moreover, D.'s fervour is described as μαγειρικῶς (1015), further expanded by κομψῶς τε καὶ δειπνητικῶς (1016),⁶³ which stress the hero's self-indulgence and his newly self-sufficient state of private blessedness, a point reiterated throughout vv. 1018-1055.⁶⁴ Therefore, the common denominator between agora and cooking is self-sufficiency and personal control of one's own affairs.

In addition, D. may be viewed as the prototype of one of the most enduring dramatic figures in Middle and New Comedy,⁶⁵ since both literary genres are distinctive for their civic characters and space. More specifically, he resembles later comic chefs in a most notable way: by uttering successive orders to members of his household with regard to the preparation of food in an imperative and hasty manner.⁶⁶ Further social associations might be detected in D.'s newly acquired status, since the connection between a chef and the marketplace is not limited to mere shopping, but also extends to the attributes of a chef as butcher, purveyor of meat, cook in the modern sense of the word and, above all, conductor of sacrifices.⁶⁷ Among these delicacies, fishes feature in particular as the favourite dish of urban taste.⁶⁸ This element is to be considered particularly indicative of D.'s close association with the city, since fish in general had to be obtained in the city market⁶⁹ and are registered, in particular, as an urban dish.⁷⁰ Moreover, all this cooking activity provides a richly suggestive basis for D.'s final juxtaposition with further «social» figures such as his fellow-farmer Dercetes and the bridegroom's best

63. Olson, *op.cit.*, p. 322 sch. ad loc.

64. Olson, *op.cit.*, p. 322 sch. ad loc.

65. J. Wilkins, *The Boastful Chef: The Discourse of Food in Ancient Greek Comedy*, Oxford 2000, p. 87.

66. Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 370.

67. Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 370-371; for the role of *mageiros* see also H. Dohm, *Mageiros, Zetemata* [Heft 32], München 1964, pp. 1-10, 67-84, and G. Berthiaume, *Les rôles du mageiros: Étude sur la boucherie, la cuisine et le sacrifice dans la Grèce ancienne*, Leiden 1982, *passim*; for a recent discussion see Wilkins, *op.cit.*, *passim*.

68. Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 371. For fish as expensive food and the social implications of specific food consumption see N. R. E. Fisher, «Symposiasts, Fish-Eaters and Flatterers», in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (eds.), *op.cit.*, pp. 355-396.

69. Cf. Ar. *fr.* 402 K.-A.

70. Cf. Sotades *fr.* 1.15-16 K.-A.; Antiphanes *fr.* 68 K.-A. with Konstantakos' discussion, *op.cit.*, 9-40.

man, and, further, serves as a culinary preamble of the Pitcher Feast, already anticipated in Lamachos' request in vv. 960-962, and relevant to the quasi-hymeneal ending of the play.⁷¹

All this activity should be seen within the temporal frame in which this part of the play falls, and that is the Choes, the middle (second) day of the Antheateria Festival on the twelfth day of the month Anthesterion (February/March).⁷² The Antheateria was a festival inclusive of all strata of Athenian society and involving women, children (over three years old) and even slaves.⁷³ The all-encompassing character of the Antheateria is contrasted with the Choes drinking contest, which occurs almost at the end of the play, since the all-inclusiveness of the former contrasts with the solitude of each participant in the latter exclusively male event.⁷⁴ For this reason, the Choes festival has been regarded as highlighting the non-communal experience of D.'s private peace.⁷⁵ To this we should add that this private peace is established and enacted through D.'s private market. All the delicacies that come to the main hero of their own accord through his private market and end up being cooked in his kitchen derive from his private peace and offer a refined, synaesthetic and imagistic attestation of the improvement of his initial position from the suffering victim of collective war to the triumphant comic hero due to his private peace. Therefore, the obvious evolution and refinement that D. undergoes in his culinary choices is reflected in the contrast between the poor food he mentions in his prefatory soliloquy and the lavish dishes of the gourmards in the concluding part of the play. This contrast is set within the wider frame of that between war and peace: during the war and as long as the hero's peace remains uncertain and fragile, his food remains poor, whereas, as soon as peace is secured, there is abundance of lavish delicacies.

It has been claimed that D. starts off as a consummate «rustic», but during his sojourn within the city walls of Athens, he proves to have developed some

71. Henderson, *op.cit.*, p. 180 n. 119.

72. I consider Habasch's contribution, *op.cit.*, 569-577, very informative, since it combines both literary and epigraphic evidence; see also G. Ham, «Dionysiac Festivals in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», in Sinclair Bell and Glenys Davies (eds.), *Games and Festivals in Classical Antiquity: Proceedings of the Conference held in Edinburgh 10-12 July 2000*, BAR International Series, 1220, Oxford 2004, pp. 55-63, esp. 60; A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of the Athenians*, rev. by J. Gould and D. M. Lewis, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968, corr. edn. 1988, pp. 1-25; for the combination of iconographic evidence and ritual practice cf. R. Hamilton, *Choes and Antheateria: Athenian Iconography and Ritual*, Ann Arbor 1992, pp. 42-50, and G. van Hoorn, *Choes and Antheateria: with 540 figures*, Leiden 1951, pp. 15-57.

73. Habasch, *op.cit.*, 568 n. 31; Ham, *op.cit.*, 61.

74. Ham, *op.cit.*, p. 61.

75. Compton-Engle (1999), *op.cit.*, 62.

decidedly urban tastes.⁷⁶ But has he after all? If «rustic» is equated with «solitary» and «urban» with «integrated», D.'s presence in the Choes banquet, which echoes the hosting of Orestes, the polluted matricide, in its solitary and silent consumption of wine and food, maintains his preferred isolation from the Athenian community,⁷⁷ an isolation already illustrated in his soliloquy in the prologue. But still, there are elements in the portrayal of the Choes festival that challenge this equation. For instance, in *Acharnians*, silence as a major marker during the ritual celebration of Choes has disappeared.⁷⁸ Apart from the isolation implied by the private eating and drinking during the Choes, only the merry elements, i.e. a drinking contest, a luxurious banquet and *πρόρνοι*, survive in the fictional portrayal of the feast,⁷⁹ almost torn from their ritual context. From this point of view, the celebration of Choes, the second day of Anthesteria, could be seen as the complementary end of the celebration of Rural Dionysia earlier interrupted by the chorus (v. 280).⁸⁰

6. *Acharnians* 247-269: *The Rural Dionysia and the convergence of civic and rural elements*

Lastly, our discussion will focus on D.'s celebration of Rural Dionysia, since as Albert Henrichs puts it: «The Dionysus of the country reorients the city toward its rural roots and thus toward peace ... It is this Aristophanic vision of the country Dionysus as the wine-god, the peace-maker, the cultivating force and even the matchmaker bringing the sexes together that prevailed in postclassical antiquity».⁸¹ Thus, according to Polinskaya, the distinct cultic identity of the Attic countryside is that of peaceful Dionysus, or – vice versa – the Dionysus of the Athenian countryside is predominantly colored by the perception of the countryside as the locus of peace and stability.⁸² On these

76. H. Cullyer, «*Agroikia* and Pleasure in Aristotle», in R. M. Rosen – I. Sluiter (eds.), *City, Countryside, and the Spatial Organization of Value in Classical Antiquity*, Leiden 2006, pp. 181-217, esp. 194.

77. Fisher, op.cit., pp. 41-44, esp. 44; Ham, op.cit., p. 61.

78. Habasch, op.cit., 568-569.

79. Habasch, op.cit., 569.

80. Habasch, op.cit., 559-577, has argued convincingly on this point. Our point of divergence lies in her initial statement, op.cit., 559, where she focuses on Aristophanes' plays as a valuable source of information concerning ancient religion, whereas my priority is to examine how ritual elements are manipulated by Aristophanes as a comic poet and how they fit into his fiction. For Aristophanes' focus on the happy aspects of the Choes-day see B. Pütz, *The Symposium and Komos in Aristophanes*, Warminster - Oxford ²2007, pp. 13-19.

81. A. Henrichs, «Between country and city: cultic dimensions of Dionysus in Athens and Attica», in M. Griffith – D. Mastronarde (eds.), *Cabinet of the Muses: Essays on Classical and Comparative Literature in Honor of Thomas Rosenmeyer*, Atlanta 1990, pp. 257-277, esp. p. 259.

82. I. Polinskaya, «Lack of boundaries, absence of oppositions», in R. M. Rosen – I. Sluiter

two statements we base our argument for the reconciliatory aim, that is, of convergence between city and countryside in the representation of D.'s celebration. Moreover, it should be noted that the *Acharnians* provides us with the earliest attestation and unambiguous literary depiction of the Διονύσια τὰ κατ' Ἄγρους.⁸³ It is also a modern scholarly consensus, based on textual evidence, to regard the designation Διονύσια τὰ κατ' Ἄγρους as revealing «the festival's primarily cultural orientation»,⁸⁴ rather than «the city versus country dichotomy, which underlies virtually every modern discussion of the subject, and is accordingly only of secondary significance».⁸⁵ In general, the dramatic celebration of the Rural Dionysia recalls the longed-for peaceful life in the deme, as witnessed not only by D.'s opening monologue, but also in Thucydides' *Histories* (2.14-16), in which the historian relates the Athenians' distress at having to move from their rural demes and households into the city at the start of the Peloponnesian war.⁸⁶ The Rural Dionysia is the second festival featuring in *Acharnians*, after Apaturia (v. 146), and was celebrated locally in the demes during Poseideon, roughly December. Thus, the dramatic action has shifted spatially from the Pnyx to D.'s own rural estate and demos⁸⁷ and temporally from October (i.e. Pyanepsion and the Apatouria) to December.⁸⁸ D.'s private celebration of Rural Dionysia (vv. 247-269) includes a song in honor of the god Phales, which D. calls a *phallikon* (v. 261), a term recalling Aristotle's *phallika* (*Poet.* 1449a11-12).

(eds.), op.cit., pp. 61-92, esp. pp. 68-69.

83. Jones, op.cit., p. 126; Polinskaya, op.cit., p. 68. Thucydides (2.15.4) names them τὰ ἀρχαιότερα Διονύσια; see also Gomme, op.cit., p. 52.

84. Jones, op.cit., p. 127; he also stresses that «since [...] the phrase kat' agron (agron) is never found in a source emanating from the demes for which the festival is attested, it may be suggested that the phrase reflects the point of view of our literary writers – namely, the town of Athens»; for the same view see also Henrichs, op.cit., p. 272, n. 8, who suggests that: «Διονύσια τὰ κατ' ἄγρους, the collective name for the sum total of rural Dionysia as seen from the viewpoint of the city rather than the demes, occurs in Aristophanes (*Ach.* 202, 250), Aeschines (1.157) and Theophrastus (*Char.* 3.5); cf. Isaeus 8.15 Διονύσια εἰς ἄγρον. For Dionysia τὰ ἐν ἄστει see, e.g., ἐκ Διονυσίων εὐθὺς τῶν ἀστικῶν. Plato (*Rep.* 475d) differentiates between Διονύσια κατὰ πόλεις (a difficult plural, unless he was looking beyond Athens) and κατὰ κώμας ... Διονύσια tout court ... the usual designation in inscriptions can refer to either festival ... The rural Dionysia of Piraeus ... acquired a special status Διονύσια τὰ ἐν Πειραιεῖ ... The Διονύσια τὰ ἐπὶ Ληναίῳι, or Lenaia, are distinct from both the City and Country Dionysia».

85. Jones, op.cit., p. 127.

86. Ham, op.cit., pp. 55-63, esp. 57.

87. Although Jones, op.cit., p. 197 designates the celebration of the «rural» Dionysia as «not clearly placed»; for the location of D.'s house in his own rural demos in v. 267 see Silk, op.cit., p. 272.

88. Ham, op.cit., p. 57; see also K. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy*, Berkeley 1972, p. 79; Henrichs, op.cit., 270; N. R. E. Fisher, «Multiple Personalities and Dionysiac Festivals: Dicaeopolis in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*», *G&R* 40 (1993) 31-47, esp. 34.

The song featured a huge phallus as a prop and much mildly obscene discourse, leaving a clear impression that aischrology was felt to be a phenomenon of the simple, relaxed country life.⁸⁹ More importantly, the Hymn to Phales, with which the abbreviated celebration of the Rural Dionysia by D. comes to its abrupt conclusion, artfully blends components such as wine-induced drunkenness, plentiful, delicious food, and unrestrained sex (again, of the acceptable country variety), and pointedly places the ensemble in the country *demos*.⁹⁰ As for the festival's⁹¹ cultural orientation, it should be stressed that what is played out is its processional ritualistic dimension.⁹² As Kavoulaki puts it, «the ceremony that Dikaiopolis organizes is publicly orientated with a strong emphasis on the pompic ritual which advertises the hero's achievement and stands as an open call to the community (both human and divine)».⁹³ Although it has been noted that «for one family to arrogate the whole festival to itself was a denial of the nature of festival and an act of excluding all others from the rites»,⁹⁴ the fact that D.'s main interest and provision is to carry out the procession and the sacrifice *κεχαρισμένως*,⁹⁵ prompts him to reestablish generally a new public space and order in which he can exert some power, especially over relations and communication, after being brutally marginalized at the assembly in the first part of the play.⁹⁶

The element that acts as the common denominator between this fictional representation of the Rural Dionysia and the Choes features in the concluding Song to Phales which emphasizes the joys of the symposium (277-278).⁹⁷ The same element is picked up almost at the end of the play (1142 *συμποτικὰ τὰ πράγματα*), where D. deems the nature of his preparation as sympotic and mocks Lamachus' war preparations by stating that he will arm himself by means of this juglet in the presence of his fellow-revellers (1135 *πρὸς τοὺς συμπότας*).⁹⁸

89. R. M. Rosen, «Comic Aischrology and the Urbanization of *Agroikia*», in Rosen – Sluiter, op.cit., pp. 219-238, esp. p. 223.

90. Jones, op.cit., pp. 198-199; however, I wouldn't agree with Jones, op.cit., p. 199 that «[...] in contrast with the ostensibly urban setting of the remainder of the action, this scene transpires in «my demos» (266-267, ?Cholleidai = v. 406)».

91. That of Rural (Agrarian) Dionysia.

92. Kavoulaki, op.cit., p. 237.

93. Op.cit., p. 243.

94. A. M. Bowie, *Aristophanes: Myth, Ritual and Comedy*, Cambridge 1993, p. 36. The same is noted by Habasch, op.cit., 561.

95. Habasch, op.cit., 563, stresses D.'s preoccupation in conducting the procession and the sacrifice *κεχαρισμένως* and interprets the adverb as a *do ut des* plea.

96. Kavoulaki, op.cit., p. 243.

97. Habasch, op.cit., 566.

98. Op.cit., 573. For the translation see Olson, op.cit., p. 345 sch. ad loc.

7. Conclusion

In Aristophanes' *Acharnians* the contrast between «rural» and «urban», whether as spatial dimension, or as an agenda of social conduct, or finally as a cultic temporal and spatial dimension is ubiquitous and omnipresent. «Rural» takes the form of a solitary and lonesome peasant sitting in the heart of civic space, or the form of fearless, furious and fierce personages like the members of the chorus, the Acharnians. «Urban» is presented in the form of shrewd bargain and successful trade or as adept mastery of cooking. Nevertheless, «rural» always coexists with urban in an urban space like the assembly or the agora and «urban-like», cunning social conduct in achieving personal profit is acted out against a cultic background which underlines the «rural-like» isolation of the hero. Additionally, the celebration of the Rural/Agrarian Dionysia by a single family turns out to be an open call to the community, the civic body as a whole, due to its attentive implementation. This celebration is also complemented by the Choes festival, the representation of which focuses on D.'s enjoyment of the rewards of peace in the form of new wine, food and sex. The fertility represented in the latter is the causal implementation of the former. Thus, fertility forms the wider substratum of the play and takes shape as the desired peace treaty, expressed in the metonymic symbol of wine (σπονδαί). As a result, rural elements are omnipresent in the greatest part of the play, enacted sometimes in an urban context. Therefore, city and countryside space do not remain impermeable to one another, but rather inform one another, providing the background upon which the agenda of each is acted and implemented.