

Ploutos, The God of the Oligarchs*

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The year is 388 B.C. In Athens things are not as they should have been; honest and pious citizens are poor, while the base and the impious are dishonestly enriched. Moreover, reciprocal (*charis*) relations, both between people and between gods and man, have been ruptured. Chremylos, an Athenian citizen, tries to reestablish the correct order of life by curing the blind god of wealth, Ploutos. After encountering Penia — Poverty — and driving her away, he takes the old, filthy and miserable god to the temple of Asklepios. His sight restored, Ploutos grants wealth only to just and pious citizens, and eventually to all the citizens. So runs the plot of Aristophanes' *Ploutos*.

According to a scholiast to the extant *Ploutos*, an earlier version of the play was produced in 408 B.C.¹ The scholiast's comments imply that he had read both versions, but it also looks as if he had confused them.² Judging solely by the *scholia* and the lexicographers, differences between the two versions amounted to a few variants and some changes of word order.³ Yet the second version also manifests some deviations from the

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¹ See *scholia* to lines 115, 119, 173 (ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ — 'in the second [version]'), 1146 (ἐκ τοῦ δευτέρου — 'from the second [version]'); the scholiast to *Frogs*, line 1093, who quotes a passage which he says is Πλούτῳ πρώτῳ ('in the first [version] of *Ploutos*'); Athen., 9.6; *P. Oxy* 33 (1968), no. 2659, fr. 2 verso I, line 14. Cf. B.B. Rogers, *The Plutus of Aristophanes* (London 1907), vii. The existence of a first version was rejected by J. van Leeuwen, in his 1904 edition of *Ploutos*, and by M. Dillon, 'Topicality in Aristophanes' *Ploutos*', *Cl. Ant.* 6 (1987), 156 n. 1, who comments that the evidence of a first version does not add up 'to anything substantial'; yet despite the confused evidence (see below, n. 2), it seems safe to accept a previous version of the play, all the more since Aristophanes wrote two versions for other comedies as well (see *P. Oxy* 33, 1968, no. 2659, fr. 2 verso I, line 17); see below, n. 3.

² The scholiast is confused by lines 173, 179, and 1146, which he assigns to the first version, although events and persons of a later date are mentioned. He also remarks on line 115 that the word ὀφθαλμία, 'eye sickness' (which is actually in the version of 388 B.C.), was changed in the second version to συμφορά ('misfortune'). Rogers (n. 1), ix-xii, judging by the author of the *Life of Aristophanes* and by Argument III, assumed that the scholiast had seen the version of 388 and a revised version made by Aristophanes for his son Ararus. See also G. Hertel, *Die Allegorie von Reichtum und Armut. Ein Aristophanisches Motiv und seine Abwandlungen in der abendländischen Literatur* (Nürnberg 1969), 28-32; K.J. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1972), 202; D. MacDowell, *Aristophanes and Athens* (Oxford 1995), 324.

³ See *scholia* to lines 115, 119; *scholion* to *Frogs*, line 1093. For words assigned to the first version which are not in the second, see Bekker, *An.* 78.11, 84.6, 88.8, 95.29, 113.11; Pollux, 7.115, 9.139. For the testimonies and fragments of the first *Ploutos*, see now K-A, Vol. III.2, fr. 458-465. The question of the exact contents and features of 'second versions' is

pattern of comedies written by Aristophanes in the last quarter of the fifth century B.C.: the role of the chorus is reduced to a minimum and the plot, although situated in Athens, is not necessarily connected with Athenian economics, society or politics.⁴ The unusual structure and the universal, almost apolitical, tone of the play are generally attributed either to a change in the audience's taste or to a general change in the role of comedy in society, and the play is often defined as marking the transition point to Middle Comedy.⁵

After a long period of 'ironic' interpretations of *Ploutos*, which focused mainly on the themes of the unjust distribution of wealth and the breach of *charis*-relations, a reaction is noticeable in some recent studies which explore the political, utopian and poetic implications of the play. *Ploutos* has thus been explained in various ways: as an escapist fantasy, as an ironic response by Aristophanes to current views and solutions, as revealing the poet's concern with asserting the distinctive and superior character of the comic genre, or as a true reflection of economic, political and social conditions in Athens.⁶ This last explanation in particular has run into difficulties since, according to the general view, at least in the last few decades, the economic situation in Athens in 388 B.C. had much improved compared to the last years of the Peloponnesian War.⁷ It

difficult. According to the ancient testimonies Aristophanes had also two *Aiolosikon*, *Frogs*, *Peace*, *Thesmophoriazousai*, and *Clouds* (together with *Dramata 1* or *Niobos* and *Dramata 2* or *Kentauros*); see now the Biographical Appendix and the General Bibliography, section II (b), in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (eds.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes. Studies in Athenian Old Comedy* (London 2000). As in the case of *Ploutos*, the extant *Clouds* is the revised play. According to the *scholia* Aristophanes made substantial changes in *Clouds*, probably as a result of his complete failure in 423 B.C. We do not know the outcome of the dramatic competition of 408 B.C., yet it seems that Aristophanes saw no need to make a thorough revision of *Ploutos*.

- ⁴ The *Ploutos* lacks the *parabasis* and, except for the *parodos*, no lyrical songs were written for the chorus particularly for this play. Allusions to contemporary persons and events are very few and most of them are concentrated in lines 170-180. See Rogers (n. 1), ix, xiii-xiv, xxiii; Dover (n. 2), 223; M. Dillon (n. 1), 155-7, 170, 174-83; K.J. Reckford, *Aristophanes' Old-and-New Comedy* (Chapel Hill and London 1987), 359-63; MacDowell (n. 2), 324-6.
- ⁵ See Dillon (n. 1), 156-7; A. Sommerstein, 'Aristophanes and the Demon Poverty', *CQ* 34 (1984), 314.
- ⁶ For the 'ironic' interpretation, see especially D. Konstan and M. Dillon, 'The Ideology of Aristophanes' *Wealth*', *AJPh* 102 (1981), 372, 378 and n. 10; D. Konstan, *Greek Comedy and Ideology* (Oxford 1995), 75; E. David, *Aristophanes and Athenian Society of the Early Fourth Century B.C.* (Leiden 1984), 3-4. Against this approach: Sommerstein (n. 5), 315-6, who also summarizes the current views, and S.D. Olson, 'Economics and Ideology in Aristophanes' *Wealth*', *HSCP* 93 (1990), 223-42. A recent political reading of the play is J. McGlew, 'After Irony: Aristophanes' *Wealth* and its Modern Interpreters', *AJP* 118 (1997), 35-52, who interprets *Ploutos* as an assertion of the democratic spirit. For a different interpretation, which analyses the Dionysiac dimensions of *Ploutos* and the play's affinities with Old Comedy and the theatrical festival, see P. Sfyroeras, 'What Wealth Has to Do with Dionysus: From Economy to Poetics in Aristophanes' *Plutus*', *GRBS* 36 (1995), 231-61.
- ⁷ See C. Mossé, 'La vie économique d'Athènes au IV^e siècle: crise ou renouveau?', in F. Sartori (ed.), *Praelectiones Pataviniae* (Rome 1972), 135-44 (revising her conclusions in *La fin de la démocratie athénienne*, Paris 1962); J. Pečírka, 'The Crisis of the Athenian Polis in

seems that despite the structural and thematic variations this comedy may in fact have been no less suited to the economic and even political situation of 408 than to that of 388 B.C. In that case, and if the textual difference between the two versions is indeed small (something for which there is, admittedly, not enough evidence to enable us to make any sort of pronouncement), it is very possible that the extant version of *Ploutos* is not very different from the version produced in 408 B.C.

It must be stressed at the outset that it is not my intention in this paper to analyse the evidence for and the fragments of the first version of *Ploutos*, or to resolve the ancient dilemma over which of the two versions has come down to us. But since the extant play, as I hope to show, seems to reflect late fifth-century concerns and tensions, we should consider the possibility that the version we have is, at least, not much unlike the one assigned to the year 408 B.C. In order to explore this line of inquiry, I propose to discuss two interlocking themes in the play, whose relevance to the political and social circumstances of late fifth-century Athens has been overlooked in modern scholarship. It is these very themes, when analysed against the background of the poetic tradition and the political and philosophical ideas of late fifth-century Athens, that may shed some light upon the first version of the play and place this comedy in a political context characteristic of Aristophanes' fifth-century comedies.

The first of these themes is the positive/negative effects of wealth upon society. Aristophanes had a long tradition to draw upon, as this theme was popular with many poets, dramatists and philosophers. Thus already Hesiod asserts that: πλοῦτῳ δ' ἀρετὴ καὶ κῦδος ὀπηδεῖ ('virtue and glory accompany wealth'; *Op.*, 313). Theognis praises Ploutos as θεῶν κάλλιστε καὶ ἡμεροέστατε πάντων, / σὺν σοὶ καὶ κακὸς ὢν γίνεται ἔσθλος ἀνὴρ ('the most beautiful and desired of all gods, / with you, even an evil man becomes good'; 1117-1118); but elsewhere he says: οὐ σέ μάρτην, ᾧ Πλοῦτε, βροτοὶ τιμῶσι μάλιστα / ἧ γὰρ ῥηϊδίως τὴν κακότητα φέρεις ('not without reason, Ploutos, men respect mostly you; for in truth you readily endure vice'; 523-524 West).⁸

The other theme, tightly connected to the first, is the contrast between a peaceful and idle life, far from political activity and devoid of *charis*-relations, and a life full of toil, politics, and wealth attained through work. In Greek tradition, the idea of peaceful and

the 4th Century B.C.', *Eirene* 14 (1976), 5-29; B.S. Strauss, *Athens after the Peloponnesian War. Class, Faction and Policy, 403-386 B.C.* (London and Sydney 1986), 42-69; E.M. Burke, 'Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Restoration Efforts and the Role of Maritime Commerce', *Cl. Ant.* 9 (1990), 1-13; P. Cartledge, *Aristophanes and his Theatre of the Absurd* (Bristol 1990), 64-5. Dillon (n. 1), 157-63, gives a detailed analysis of Athens' political and economic conditions at the time of the production of the second version, yet he too acknowledges an economic recovery.

⁸ Cf. Theognis, 145-146; 1155-1156, and see also, e. g., Bacchyl., 1.49-54; 9.49-51 Jebb; Eur., *Alexandros*, fr. 55; *Aeolos*, fr. 20; *Alkmene*, fr. 95; *Archelaos*, fr. 235; *Ino*, fr. 420 Nauck; Karkinos, fr. 9-10 Nauck; Demokritos, 68 B fr. 185, 284 Diels-Kranz; Anonym. Iambl., 89 fr. 3.4, 4.4 Diels-Kranz; Kritias, 88 B fr. 29 Diels-Kranz. Here, and in the following notes, I refer only to works earlier than Aristophanes' comedies and contemporary with him, or to such works as reflect prior and contemporary ideas.

idle life (ἡσυχία), made possible by spontaneously produced (αὐτόματος) wealth, was depicted in the myth of the Golden Age, or 'the life under Kronos', and from Hesiod onwards, if not earlier, also developed as one of the theories of human degeneration — what modern scholars term 'primitivism'.⁹ The longing for the Golden Age, which ended in the Titanomachy and the dethronement of Kronos by Zeus,¹⁰ is also represented in the myth of the Gigantomachy, the giants' attempt to depose Zeus and to re-establish the Titans whom Zeus had cast out to Tartarus or, in other versions, to the Islands of the Blessed.¹¹ This description of the earliest stage in human progress was eventually connected with the term *physis*, the significance of which became more and

⁹ Hes., *Op.*, 109-201. 'Cultural primitivism' was conceived as 'soft' (e.g., Empedokles, 31 B fr. 128, 130 Diels-Kranz; Hippias, according to Pl., *Hipp. Min.*, 285d), or 'hard' (e.g., Prodikos, in the Xenophontic version of his teachings in *Mem.*, 2.1.21ff.; cf. Pl., *Symp.*, 177b). On these myths and theories prior to and later than Aristophanes, see R. von Pöhlmann, *Geschichte der sozialen Frage und des Sozialismus in der antiken Welt* (München 1925), I, 303ff., 322ff.; A.O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity*² (Baltimore 1997); Th. Cole, *Democritus and the Sources of Greek Anthropology* (American Philological Association 1967); L. Edelstein, *The Idea of Progress in Classical Antiquity* (Baltimore 1967); E.R. Dodds, *The Ancient Concept of Progress and Other Essays on Greek Literature* (Oxford 1973). Although the relevant dialogues of Plato are later in date than Aristophanes' first and second *Ploutos*, they reflect theories held by fifth-century thinkers such as Empedokles, Demokritos, Kritias, Protagoras and Socrates (see Cole, 50-51, 105; Dodds, 10ff.), and therefore are worth mentioning here: *Rep.*, 372e-373a; *Pol.*, 269-274; *Ti.*, 20e-25e; *Criti.*, 108-110d; *Leg.*, 713a-e. On *automatos* as an epithet describing things that occur of their own accord, see *Il.*, 5.749; 18.376; as describing the Golden Age, see Hes., *Op.*, 116-118; Pl., *Pol.*, 271e; and cf. A., *Prom. Lyom.*, fr. 196 Nauck.

¹⁰ Or, according to various philosophical theories, when some *kataklysmos* occurred. For the myth of the Titanomachy, see Hes., *Theog.*, 617-731; A., *PV*, 199-221. For theories of recurring catastrophes, see Pl., *Pol.*, 269-274; *Ti.*, 22b-25d; *Criti.*, 109b-110d; *Leg.*, 677e-678a. See also Dodds (n. 9), 14-5; P. Vidal-Naquet, 'Land and Sacrifice in the Odyssey: A Study of Religious and Mythical Meanings', in R.L. Gordon (ed.), *Myth, Religion and Society* (Cambridge 1981), 80-94.

¹¹ The fullest accounts of the myth of the Gigantomachy are much later (e.g., Ov., *Met.*, 1.150ff.; Apollod., *Bibl.*, 1.6), but since it was a very popular theme in archaic art and alluded to by Xenophanes, 21 B fr. 1.21-24 Diels-Kranz, and the *Batrachomyomachia*, 170a, 171, 283, a seventh-century epic has been postulated by F. Vian, *La guerre des Géants: le mythe avant l'époque hellénistique* (Paris 1952), 221ff. See also H. Hofmann, *Mythos und Komödie* (Hildesheim 1976), 81-2. For the motive of this war there are several versions (Ap. Rhod., 2.40, with schol.; Apollod., *Bibl.*, 1.34; Diod. Sic., 3.70.3ff.). For Tartarus as the place of exile of the Titans, see Hes., *Theog.*, 712-735; Apollod., *Bibl.*, 1.2.1; the Islands of the Blessed: Pind., *Ol.*, 2.77ff.; Plut., *de Def. Orac.*, 420a.

more prominent in philosophical writings.¹² The sophists may have been the first to link the Golden Age with life lived according to *physis*.¹³

Alongside and contrary to these myths and theories there developed the myth of the culture hero, who brought humanity out of cultural darkness by teaching men crafts (τέχναι), language and laws (νόμοι). In Hesiod it is Prometheus, who by the fifth century B.C. had become a symbol of human intelligence and resourcefulness, but other writers propounded other divine and semi-divine beings.¹⁴ This myth led to the development of a theory contrary to that of 'primitivism', according to which human society evolved through the growth of technology and social organisation.¹⁵

There were, of course, different versions of these myths and theories, in which human progress was ascribed to a variety of agents, or groups of agents, or to certain *technai*, and even combinations of apparently contradictory ideas and theories that opposed progress.¹⁶ But it should be noted that by the late fifth century B.C. discussions of these themes already formed a long tradition. Moreover, they were popular in comedy, as implied by Athenaeus (*Deipnosophistai*, 6.267e-270a) who quotes extracts from comedies dating from the fifth to the third centuries B.C., all of which contain variants of the theme of the Golden Age: descriptions of *automatos* wealth, of abundant delicacies, and of slaves playing with dice made of ivory or gold.¹⁷

¹² For the development of the conception of *physis* as a norm (and opposed to *nomoi*), see Lovejoy and Boas (n. 9), 103-13. The antithesis between *physis* as the intrinsic, or permanent, qualities of a matter, and the qualities as they appear to us, was developed by pre-Socratic thinkers, and in a fuller form was first defined by Demokritos (Arist., *Ph.*, 8.265b 24; 68 B fr. 125, 168 Diels-Kranz). An example of how this antithesis penetrated other fields of thought is Kallikles' words in Pl., *Grg.*, 482ff.

¹³ See Lovejoy and Boas (n. 9), 113-16, who discuss the place of Prodikos and Hippias of Elis as the protagonists of the kind of primitivism that appealed to *physis* for criteria of living.

¹⁴ Prometheus: Hes., *Op.*, 42-53; *Theog.*, 535-569; A., *PV*, 447-506; Hermes: *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, 111, 491-494; Palamedes: Gorg., *Pal.*, 30; Orpheus: Ar., *Ran.*, 1032; Hephaestus: *Homeric Hymn to Hephaestus*, 1-7; Athena: *Homeric Hymn to Hephaestus*, 2; Apollo., *Bibl.*, 3.10.3; 14.1; Paus., 1.24.3; Zeus: Hes., *Op.*, 35-36; *Theog.*, 96; A., *Agam.*, 176-183. Cf. also Eur., *Suppl.*, 201-213. On the symbolism of the Prometheus myth, see Dodds (n. 9), 6.

¹⁵ See Xenophanes, 21 B fr. 4 Diels-Kranz; Anaxagoras, 59 B fr. 21b Diels-Kranz; Archelaos, 60 A 4.6 Diels-Kranz; Demokritos, 68 B fr. 144, 154 Diels-Kranz; Protagoras, in Pl., *Prt.*, 320c-323a (cf. Diog. Laert., 9.55); Kritias, *Sisyphus* 88 B fr. 25 Diels-Kranz; Anon. Iambli., 89 fr. 6 Diels-Kranz.

¹⁶ For a mixed conception of human history see, e.g., Pl., *Leg.*, 677e-682a. For anti-primitivism see id., *Prt.*, 320c-323a; Dio Chrys., 6. 25-30.

¹⁷ Comic parodies, contemporary with Aristophanes, are: Kratinos, *Ploutoi*, fr. 171-176, 363 K-A; Krates, *Theria*, fr. 16-17 K-A; Telekleides, *Amphiktyones*, fr. 1 K-A; Pherekrates, *Metalles*, fr. 113 (depicting the life of the dead, but still in the tradition of a lost paradise); *Persai*, fr. 137 K-A; Metagenes, *Thouripersai*, fr. 6 K-A. Athenaeus (269e) also mentions the lost comedy *Tagenistai* by Aristophanes (fr. 502-504 K-A). Cf. Hertel (n. 2), 33-40. For an attempt to reconstruct Kratinos' *Ploutoi* and its comparison with Aristophanes' *Ploutos*, see R. Goossens, "'Ploutoi'" de Kratinos', *REA* 37 (1935), 405-34. For the concept of utopianism in Old Comedy, see P. Ceccarelli, 'L'Athènes de Périclès: un "pays de cocagne"? L'idéologie démocratique et l'αὐτόματος βίος dans la comédie ancienne', *Quaderni*

We may now turn to Aristophanes' use of these themes. The first theme — the effects of wealth — is presented in the *Ploutos* in both its negative and its positive aspects. First, in Ploutos' words about the corrupting effect of wealth (his own merchandise!): ἡνίκ' ἂν δέ μου/ τύχῳσ' ἀληθῶς καὶ γένωνται πλούσιοι,/ ἀτεχνῶς ὑπερβάλλουσι τῇ μοχθηρίᾳ ('whenever [people] chance to get hold of me and really become rich, they simply overflow with wickedness'; 107-109).¹⁸ Second, in the attempt to convince Ploutos to agree to be cured of his blindness, the supposed blessings and evils of wealth are alternately presented by Chremylos and the slave Karion (128-192). Thus, for instance, Chremylos claims that everything is dependent on wealth, to which Karion rejoins that the absence of wealth was the reason he had become a slave (145-146). Finally, in the *agon* — in the dispute between Chremylos and Penia (415-619). According to Chremylos, wealth advances society and technology, and is the cause of all that is good in human life.¹⁹ Moreover, should righteous people attain it, they will be all the more pious. Chremylos' realistic description of the life of the poor (535-546) closely resembles Hesiod's description of the Iron Age (*Op.*, 174-179). Penia, however, warns Chremylos against the likely negative results of his plan: if everybody is rich, no one will work; if no one works, there will be none of the luxuries that Chremylos is striving to attain for all. Furthermore, there will be no slaves to do the work, since no one will need to sell slaves. Thus, wealth will cause society and technology to deteriorate, not only materially but also morally: since poverty and necessity will no longer exist, the citizens will no longer be slim, sturdy and brave. Only poverty, claims Penia, advances society.²⁰

Urbiniati di Cultura Classica 83 (1996), 109-59; *id.*, 'Life Among the Savages and Escape from the City', in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (n. 3), 453-71; I. Ruffell, 'The World Turned Upside Down: Utopia and Utopianism in the Fragments of Old Comedy', *ibid.*, 473-506; T.K. Hubbard, 'Utopianism and the Sophistic City in Aristophanes', in G.W. Dobrov (ed.), *The City as Comedy. Society and Representation in Athenian Drama* (Chapel Hill and London 1997), 23-50. See also the interpretation of the passages quoted in Athenaeus by H.C. Baldry, 'The Idler's Paradise in Attic Comedy', *G&R* 22 (1953), 49-60, as satirising present society by means of ridicule of the myth of the Golden Age. L. Edelstein (n. 9), 42 n. 43, suggests that these comic descriptions were due in part to the wish to simulate the visions characteristic of the worshippers of Dionysos.

¹⁸ Cf. Theognis, 315-318, 683-684, 746-752, 1061-1062, 1155-1156; Kratinos, *Ploutoi*, fr. 171.5-6 K-A; and the texts cited above, n. 8.

¹⁹ The idea that work and craftsmen are not needed in such a Golden Age appears also in Pherekrates, *Persai*, fr. 137.1-2 K-A.

²⁰ The idea that toil and want make people good, both physically and morally, is fully expounded in Hellenistic and Roman texts, but the association of virtue with toil is already found in Hes., *Op.*, 311-318. See also Her., 9.122; Pl., *Rep.*, 422a-c; 556b-e, and cf. Hertel (n. 2). Aristophanes may have based Penia's arguments on theories that ignored the myth of Prometheus and regarded necessity and man himself as the driving forces of progress. See, e.g., Archelaos, 60 A 4.6 Diels-Kranz; Demokritos, 68 B fr. 144, 154 Diels-Kranz; Kritias, *Sisyphus*, 88 B fr. 25 Diels-Kranz. Cf. Soph., *Ant.*, 332-375. See also Ar., *Ekkli.*, 650, where slaves are to work and produce instead of the citizens, and Krates, *Theria*, fr. 16-17 K-A, where slaves are not needed and every task is made αὐτομάτως. Cf. H.J. Newiger,

In the play this theme is closely connected to the myths of the Golden Age and of Prometheus: through Ploutos, who becomes a culture hero of a kind, Chremylos strives to reestablish the Golden Age. This is exemplified in several scenes and situations in *Ploutos*.

1) According to Chremylos, Ploutos is the cause of all the *technai*. The language he uses in lines 160-161 (τέχνηαι δὲ πᾶσαι διὰ σὲ καὶ σοφίσματα/ ἐν τοῖσιν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔσθ' ἠύρημένα) is a close reminiscence of that of Aeschylus in describing Prometheus (πᾶσαι τέχνηαι βροτοῖσιν ἐκ Προμηθέως; *PV*, 506).²¹ Ploutos is also the cause of all sacrifices to the gods, of commerce, of politics and of war (133-192). The association with Prometheus is also implicit in Ploutos' explanation of his blindness: Zeus was jealous of his distribution of wealth to honest citizens and therefore punished him (87-92); benefiting humans was also the reason why Zeus had punished Prometheus, and also men themselves.²²

2) Following Chremylos' plan, Ploutos rises against the rule of Zeus and deposes him. The mind behind the plan is the god Apollon who, in answer to Chremylos' question as to the right conduct of his son, has instructed him to follow the first person he sees when going out of the temple and to persuade him to come to his house (41-43). This person happens to be Ploutos, whom Chremylos persuades to come with him and be cured in the shrine of Asklepios, Apollon's son.²³ Now Apollon and Asklepios too had encountered Zeus' wrath: Apollon for killing Python and Asklepios for bringing persons back from Hades.²⁴ Thus, two opponents of Zeus are to help Chremylos and Ploutos in their seditious plan.

3) Ploutos is aware of the consequences of this plan and at first is apprehensive of a revolt against Zeus and fears his thunderbolts (116-117, 119-120, 122, 199-201), but Chremylos convinces him that his power is far greater than the *tyrannis* of Zeus and his

Metapher und Allegorie. Studien zu Aristophanes (München 1957), 177; F. Heberlein, *Plutychieia. Zur Gegenwelt bei Aristophanes* (Frankfurt am Main 1980), 171-6. It should also be noted that according to Diotima's version of the birth of Eros in *Pl.*, *Sym.*, 201d ff., his parents were Penia and Poros. Desire is thus ascribed to conditions of poverty and resources alike. Penia is interpreted as the tragic force of necessity by McGlew (n. 6), 38-41, and as representative of the tragic genre by Sfyroeras (n. 6), 241-8.

²¹ The cause of human progress was also parodied in *Samothraikes*, a late fourth- or early third-century comedy by Athenion, where it is ascribed to the art of cooking (*Athen.*, 14.660-661 = fr. 1 K-A). For Ploutos as a Prometheus, see also Newiger (n. 20), 176; Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 383-4; A.M. Bowie, *Aristophanes: Myth, Ritual and Comedy* (Cambridge 1993), 279-82; Sfyroeras (n. 6), 235.

²² Hes., *Theog.*, 521-525; 570-616; *Op.*, 54-105; A., *PV*, 88-113. The scholiast to *Ploutos*, 87, identifies the outcomes of Ploutos' punishment with those of Prometheus' punishment. This 'biographical' detail may have been Aristophanes' invention; see Bowie (n. 21), 271f., Sfyroeras (n. 6), 235. According to Hes., *Op.*, 121-126, the men of the Golden Race became δαίμονες ... ἔσθλοί, ἐπιχθόνιοι, φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων ... πλουτοδοταί ('good, chthonic spirits, guardians of mortal men, givers of wealth'). Ploutos in Aristophanes' comedy fits this description, as do the wealth-gods in Kratinos, *Ploutoi* (fr. 171-176, 363 K-A).

²³ See Bowie (n. 21), 278-9, and MacDowell (n. 2), 335-9, for the role of Apollon and Asklepios in the play.

²⁴ Pind., *Pyth.*, 3.55-58; Apollod., *Bibl.*, 3.10.3-4; Diod. Sic., 4.71.

thunderbolts (123-126).²⁵ Penia too defines this plan as θερμόν, ἀνόσιον, and παράνομον ('hasty, profane and unlawful'; 415), and associates Ploutos with *hybris* (564).²⁶ She also claims that they have 'Kronian sore-eyes' (Κρονικαὶ λῆμαι) which obscure their mind (581). The adjective *kronikos*, derived from the name Kronos, had become a synonym for old, senile and old-fashioned (e.g., *Nub.*, 398, 1070), but Aristophanes' use of it in *Ploutos* seems to me also to refer to the intention of bringing back the Golden Age of Kronos by means of a blind god.²⁷

4) This intention is also implied by the results brought about by the realisation of Chremylos' plan. First, after Ploutos has been cured, all sacrifices to the Olympian gods cease, and Hermes, the priest of Zeus, and finally Zeus himself, are left with no choice but to submit to the rule of Ploutos (1112-1190). The interpretation of lines 1189-1190 (ὁ Ζεὺς ὁ σωτὴρ γὰρ πάρεστιν ἐνθάδε, / αὐτόματος ἦκων — 'for Zeus the saviour is present here, having come of his own accord') is controversial: is Zeus himself meant, or Ploutos?²⁸ Since the single use of the adjective *automatos* in this play comes here, in depicting the coming of 'Zeus the Saviour', it might indicate that Ploutos, the new Zeus of the new Golden Age, is meant. Yet these lines should be read in context. The priest of Zeus is the second to desert the divine realm. Like Hermes, he complains of hunger, caused by the cessation of sacrifices to the Olympian gods (1171-1184). The priest announces his intention of abandoning Zeus the Saviour and staying in Chremylos' house (1186-1187), to which Chremylos answers that everything will be all right since Zeus the Saviour has come of his own accord and is present in the house (1188-1190). It seems, therefore, that Zeus himself, recognising his desperate situation, yields his power and joins his rival.

Second, curing Ploutos brings about a special kind of wealth. Although Aristophanes does not use the adjective *automatos*, the slave Karion's description of what has just

²⁵ For the comparison of Chremylos' plan to the dethronement of Zeus and the reestablishment of the Golden Age, cf. Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 377-8, 382, 385, 392-3; Sommerstein (n. 5), 325, 327; Reckford (n. 4), 361-3; Bowie (n. 21), 272.

²⁶ κοσμιότης οἰκεῖ μετ' ἐμοῦ, τοῦ Πλούτου δ' ἐστὶν ὑβρίζειν. Cf. Bacchyl., 15.57-63: ἄ δ' αἰόλοις κέρδεσσι καὶ ἀφροσύναις / ἐξαισίσις θάλλουσ' ἀθαμβῆς / Ὑβρις, ἃ πλ[ούτου] δύναμιν τε θεῶς / ἀλλότριον ὤπασεν, αὐτίς / δ' ἐς βαθὺν πέμπει φθόρον, / κείνα καὶ ὑπερφιάλους / Γᾶς παῖδας ὤλεσεν Γίγαντας ('but fearless Hybris, abounding with shifting gains and lawless folly, who swiftly grants to man someone else's wealth and power, and then sends him to deep ruin, she also destroyed the arrogant sons of Earth, the Giants'); Eur., *Hipp.* II, fr. 438 Nauck: ὕβριν τε τίκτει πλούτος ἢ φειδῶ βίου... ('and wealth begets *hybris* or thrifty life').

²⁷ The *Suda*, s.v. κρονικός, collects the relevant examples. My interpretation of the use of this adjective here, independently arrived at, agrees with the view of Konstan (1995, n. 6), 83. For a similar idea to that expressed by Penia, see Eur., *Phaeton*, fr. 776 Nauck: δεινόν γε, τοῖς πλουτοῦσι τοῦτο δ' ἐμφυτον, / σκαιόσιν εἶναι / τί ποτε τοῦτο ταῖτιον; / ἄρ' ὄλβος αὐτοῖς ὅτι τυφλὸς συνηρετεῖ, / τυφλὰς ἔχουσι τὰς φρένας καὶ τῆς τύχης; ('it's awful, but it is in the nature of the rich to be stupid; whatever is the reason for this? Is it because blind wealth assists them that they have blind minds and some luck?').

²⁸ Interpreting the newcomer as Zeus: Rogers (n. 1), *ad loc.*; Sommerstein (n. 5), 325; Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 383 and n. 16; as Ploutos: F.M. Cornford, *The Origin of Attic Comedy*, Illinois [1961] 1993, 70; Reckford (n. 4), 362-3.

happened in the house of Chremylos is in accord with the traditional comic parody of the theme of the Golden Age. Simple vessels are turned into bronze, silver, and ivory vessels, and are filled with food, silver and gold, and the slaves play with gold coins (802ff.). This self-produced wealth means that nothing needs to be taken out of the house (μηδὲν ἐξενεγκόντ' οἴκοθεν; 803), i.e., Chremylos' household becomes self-sufficient; this self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) indeed characterizes the Golden Age as it is born of idleness, and not of want and toil.²⁹

5) From the moment the cured Ploutos arrives, he does not leave the house until the *exodus*. His cure and his coming to the house of Chremylos are the cause of strange and marvellous things. Indeed, when Chremylos' wife offers Ploutos the welcoming gifts (τὰ καταχύσματα) he agrees to receive them only inside the house by the fire (ἔστιά), for it is not appropriate, he says, to carry out (ἐκφέρειν) things on his first visit to the house, and, moreover, when he can see; it is more appropriate to bring things in (ἐσφέρειν; 788-795).³⁰ From that moment on, the house of Chremylos becomes a sacred precinct of a kind, enshrining the rejuvenated god. As related above, miraculous wealth has befallen the house (ἐπεσπέπαικεν; 805). The gates of Chremylos' house, like the gates of a shrine, become the destination of the fortunate newly enriched persons who come to dedicate gifts to the god (844, 1088-1089), as well as of the unfortunate who come to complain (856-859, 967-969). These same gates are guarded by the slave Karion and by Chremylos, who fend off the supplicants or mediate between them and the god inside. Moreover, to celebrate the success of his plan Chremylos sacrifices to Ploutos inside the *oikos* (819-820). It seems as though Chremylos has become a priest in a shrine of Ploutos.

The fact that there is no mention of an altar anywhere in the sacrificing act in *Ploutos*, together with the fact that sacrifice is made to the newly crowned god and not to the traditional ones, can be seen as another expression of the revolt against the Olympian gods and indeed as an act of impiety (ἀσεβεία). It is true that dramatic convention prevented sacrificing on stage, as can be seen from *Peace*, 922-1022, and *Birds*, 859-1057, where the actual slaughtering and cooking of the victims take place offstage. Furthermore, the gods sacrificed to in *Birds* are not the Olympian, but καινοί ('new'; 848), and

²⁹ Cf. Reckford (n. 4), 361; Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 381. See also Bowie (n. 21), 289-90. The *autarkeia* of Chremylos' household is of the kind denounced by Aristotle (*Pol.*, 1253a 27-29): a man who does not share with others because he is totally self-sufficient is either a beast or a god and cannot be a part of the *polis*. By contrast, the *autarkeia* commended by Penia (532-534, 553-554) is of the kind that rejects luxuries. The word *autarkeia* first appears in Demokritos (68 B fr. 209, 246 Diels-Kranz), but the idea expressed in Penia's words is probably related to the Socratic and early cynic *autarkeia*, as found in Antisthenes' speech in Xen., *Symp.*, 4.34-44, and in Prodikos' ideas, as formulated by Xen., *Mem.*, 2.1.21ff., and *ibid.*, 1.2.14; 4.7.1; 8.11. On *automatos* wealth see also Ar., *Ach.*, 978, where the chorus admires the affluent *automatos* merchandise of Dikaiopolis, whose private peace had also brought about a kind of lost paradise.

³⁰ Ploutos' insistence on receiving the *katachysmata* (dried fruits and such like showered upon the newcomer) inside the house is explained in the play by a comic reference to the tricks used by other comic playwrights to win the audience. But it also seems ironic that this welcome was usually given to a newly purchased slave (see the comment of Rogers, n. 1, to line 768), whereas Ploutos is now the new lord of the universe.

are, in fact, very much like the god Ploutos, in that they are presented as ancient divinities, preceding the Olympian gods and mightier than Zeus. Yet there is a significant difference between the plays, since both Trygaios in *Peace* (938) and, most probably, Peisetairos in *Birds* (978) perform the ceremony upon the altar. Furthermore, when later in the play Hermes asks Karion to give him some of the meat sacrificed in the house (ὧν θύεθ' ὑμεῖς ἔνδον), Karion answers: ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκφορά ('it must not be carried out'; 1138). Now phrases like οὐκ ἐκφορά/ἀποφορά, μὴ εἶναι ἐκφορῆν were typical of religious regulations which disallowed the otherwise customary tradition of taking away, or even selling, part of the sacrificial meat from the shrine. By using what seems to be the technical language of sacral laws, Karion presents his master's house as a precinct sacred to Ploutos. The private *oikos* thus becomes a public holy place.³¹

6) The dethronement of Zeus and the rejection of his and the other gods' rule are also presented in Hermes' defection and in the arrival of Zeus himself in Chremylos' house as a result of their hunger after the abolition of sacrifices to the Olympian gods. Hermes declares that the fatherland is wherever one prospers (1151), words that seem to deny the identity of the citizen with his *polis* and proclaim individualism.³² Hermes also discovers that his traditional functions are no longer needed: there is no need for a god of commerce if commerce no longer exists, and there is no need for a god who guards the gates if there are no thieves. Since the recovery of Ploutos has made commerce, theft, and cunning superfluous, the only role Karion concedes to him is organising

³¹ For the assumed presence of an altar in the theatre, see P. Arnott, *Greek Scenic Conventions in the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford 1962), 43-9. For the rules of sacrificial ceremony, see W. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, Eng. transl. by J. Raffan (Oxford 1985), 56-9, 87. Sacrificial ceremonies in the house consisted of libations of wine, small dedications of gifts or small portions of food (*ibid.*, 170, 255), and not of sacrifices of whole animals such as we find in the case of Chremylos (819-820). In *Peace*, 938, Trygaios provides an altar (which, according to Arnott, *op. cit.*, 49, was a regular accessory in the theatre, placed in front of the *skene* doors), and in *Birds*, 848ff., the whole ceremony presumes an altar (see N. Dunbar, *Aristophanes, Birds* [Oxford 1995], *ad loc.*). See also Aristophanes, *Danaids*, fr. 256 K-A. For regulations that interdict the carrying away of the sacrificial meat, see F.T. van Straten, *Hiera Kala. Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Leiden, New York and Köln 1995), 145 with n. 93. See also the *scholion* to *Ploutos*, line 227, explaining the fact that Karion is carrying meat from the sacrifice his master made in Delphi: ὁ ἔρχεται ἀπὸ τῆς θυσίας ἔχων ἐκ τῶν Δελφῶν· οἱ γὰρ ἐκ θυσίας ἰόντες, ἔφερον ἐξ αὐτῆς τοῖς οἰκείοις κατὰ νόμον τινά ('[the portion of meat] which he carries, going away from the sacrifice in Delphi; for those going away from the sacrifice used to carry with them [meat] from it for their family members, according to some custom'). That not sacrificing upon an altar could be regarded as impiety can be inferred from Hesych., ἀποβώμιος· ἄθεος. καὶ θυσία ἀποβώμιος· αἱ μὴ ἐν τοῖς βωμοῖς ('away from the altar: godless; and away-from-the-altar sacrifices: those [sacrificed] not upon altars'). On Chremylos' house as the center of a new universe and the typical obscuring of the dividing line between the public and the private in Old Comedy, see McGlew (n. 6), 42-3.

³² Cf. *Lys.*, 31.5-6, where the speaker says that only those who feel obliged to share in the troubles of their *polis* as much as in her fortunes are entitled to be councillors; and that those who think that any land in which they have provisions is a fatherland to them (πάσα γῆ πατρὶς αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν ἐν ἣ ἂν τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἔχωσι) would clearly cast away the common good of their *polis* for personal gain.

games for Ploutos and acting as his servant (1161-1170).³³ Moreover, the coming of the gods to Chremylos' house to satisfy their hunger evokes the tradition of the Golden Age when gods used to live amongst men and dine at their table.³⁴

7) In the final scene of the play (1191-1209) Ploutos is conducted in a joyous procession to his new abode in the back chamber of Athena's shrine on the Acropolis (1191-1193). It seems that a cult to Ploutos is being established, or reestablished, in Athens. The plot of the play now moves from the sphere of the private *oikos* to that of the whole *polis*; instead of enriching only the honest citizens, Ploutos now enriches everybody, and the treasury of Athens, which was probably this very back chamber of Athena's shrine, is full once more.³⁵ Yet surely it is also significant that Aristophanes places Ploutos in the shrine of the city-goddess, whom his audience knew to be the killer of Giants, and on whose *peplos* were embroidered scenes of the Gigantomachy. Furthermore, one of the pediments of the older Parthenon bore a relief of the Gigantomachy, and this very theme also appeared on the eastern metopes of the new Parthenon.³⁶ Moreover, according to Pliny the Elder (36.4.18), this was the decorative theme on the inside of the shield of Athena's statue by Pheidias. It seems therefore that the installation of Ploutos in the shrine of Athena also symbolizes the inverse outcome of the myth of the Gigantomachy.

Ploutos can therefore be read as an Aristophanic version of the myths of the Golden Age, of Prometheus and of the Gigantomachy. Ploutos is presented in various roles: the culture hero, the deposed Titan who revolts against Zeus with the aid of the human Giant Chremylos, and the re-founder of the Golden Age.³⁷

The role of the culture hero would seem to contradict the reestablishment of Kronos' reign. Such contradictions, however, were typical of the comic use of current ideas and

³³ See Rogers (n. 1), *ad loc.*; Bowie (n. 21), 275, who explains this scene as a comic debate on reciprocity; McGlew (n. 6), 47, who interprets the scene as a comic inversion of the roles of humans and gods.

³⁴ See Hes., fr. 82 (216) Rzach. The theme was also common in later literature: Arat., *Phaen.*, 96-136 Maas; Ps.-Eratosth., *Katast.*, 1.244 Olivieri; Hygin., *Poet. Astr.*, 2.25. See also Burkert (n. 31), 57.

³⁵ See Rogers (n. 1), *ad loc.*; Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 383; Reckford (n. 4), 361; Bowie (n. 21), 290-1; MacDowell (n. 2), 344. Cornford (n. 28), 70-1, who claims that 'Zeus *Soter*' in line 1189 is Ploutos himself, argues that the installation of Ploutos in the back chamber of the Parthenon points to the relation between Zeus *Soter* and Athena *Soteria*. On the identification of the shrine mentioned in this scene with the Parthenon, see Rogers' comment on line 1193.

³⁶ See Eur., *Ion*, 205, 210, 987-997; Apollod., 2.7.1; Paus., 1.25.2; and Pl., *Soph.*, 246a-b, where the Gigantomachy is interpreted as the war between philosophers and those who regard as existing only tangible things. Cf. Vian (n. 11), 115ff., 131-60, 198, 246-61; Bowie (n. 21), 58-9.

³⁷ The relevance of these themes to *Ploutos* is recognized by Goossens (n. 17), 406; Cornford (n. 28), 76; Heberlein (n. 20), 131-3; Reckford (n. 4), 361-3; Bowie (n. 21), 272, 279-83; Konstan (1995, n. 6), 80-9. The relation of this comedy, however, to late fifth-century political ideas and events is missing from their discussions. On the political aspect see below. For similarities with *Birds*, see Bowie, *loc. cit.*; cf. Hofmann (n. 11), 79-90; Heberlein (n. 20), 130; Dunbar (n. 31), 7-9.

are already present in Hesiod (*Theog.*, 42-105, 109-201).³⁸ As noted above, Aristophanes relied heavily upon a long poetical and philosophical tradition and his use of these myths and theories in a comic plot was not original. His contribution is rather in the way he combined these ideas and associated them with the political reality in Athens. *Ploutos* as a political comedy has already been discussed in recent studies, but these are generally concerned with the particular circumstances of the year 388 B.C., or interpret the play as asserting the collective democratic identity of the Athenians. In what follows I analyse the way Aristophanes uses the themes discussed above rather to satirize oligarchic and sophistic ideology and ideas of late fifth-century Athens, thus linking *Ploutos* to Aristophanes' fifth-century comedies.

The first theme — the effects of wealth — is associated with politics already in the prologue, where Chremylos asserts that wealth, in these upturned times, is in the hands of all temple-robbers, rhetors, sycophants and villains (30-31). Later, in the *agon*, Penia argues that as long as the rhetors are poor they are righteous (δίκαιοι) in their dealings with the *demos* and the *polis*, but whenever they become dishonestly rich they become wicked (ἄδικοι), plot against the *demos*, and fight it (567-570). According to Penia, then, wealth does not accord with a democratic system and even undermines its existence.³⁹

This same idea may be inferred from the appearance of Chremylos' friend, Blepsidemus, and their conversation (335-414). Blepsidemus, as his name suggests, is the 'seeing *demos*', always suspicious of newly enriched citizens and ready to believe the worst of them. Blepsidemus is even willing to help his friend escape prosecution in exchange for a sum of money (377-379). The minute he is convinced that Ploutos is indeed inside Chremylos' house, however, he relinquishes his duty and stops 'seeing'; from now on he becomes Chremylos' ally. Thus, while Ploutos regains his sight, the *demos* loses his.⁴⁰

The political aspect is highlighted in two later scenes. In the first of these the slave Karion relates the details of the cure of Ploutos in Asklepios' shrine (649-747). As opposed to Ploutos, whose eyes have been cured so that he can enrich all the *sophoi* and *chrestoi*, Neokleides the demagogue has received harsh treatment: the mixture prepared for his sore eye has sent him away in pain (716-725). The aim of this treatment, says Karion, is to prevent Neokleides from going to the Assembly; to which Chremylos' wife reacts with the exclamation that Asklepios is φιλόπολις, a lover of the *polis* (726). This

³⁸ See Lovejoy and Boas (n. 9), 25, 196-9.

³⁹ Cf. Demokritos, 68 B fr. 251 Diels-Kranz: ἡ ἐν δημοκρατίῃ πενίη τῆς παρὰ τοῖς δυναστίησι καλεομένης εὐδαιμονίης τοσοῦτόν ἐστι αἰρετωτέρη, ὅσον ἐλευθερίῃ δουλείης ('the poverty in democracy is preferred to the so-called good luck of the rulers, as much as freedom is preferred to slavery'). A similar idea is expressed by Arist., *Pol.*, 1279b 8; 1317b 7-8.

⁴⁰ It is also interesting to note the change that the slave Karion undergoes: prior to the cure of Ploutos, Karion plays the all-seeing buffoon, seeing through Chremylos' pretended honesty and reducing his master's high speech to everyday trivialities. Yet when Chremylos sacrifices to the cured Ploutos, Karion is blinded by the smoke and has to go out (821-822).

political term, used by Aristophanes in a comic context, and likewise φιλόδημος (a lover of the *demos*) and their antonyms μισόπολις and μισόδημος, were in late fifth-century Athens protean words, used both by supporters of democracy and by its enemies to denote, according to their political conviction, a supporter of the *demos*' cause and a benefactor of the *polis* or their enemy.⁴¹ By using the word *philopolis* in describing Asklepios' hostile treatment of Neokleides, Aristophanes presents the demagogue as the enemy of Asklepios and of all decent citizens, and as the antithesis of Ploutos. It should also be remembered that the same Neokleides is ridiculed in *Ekklesi-azousai* (398-406) for his eye-disease and political aspirations.

In the second scene the slave Karion and the Just Man confront a sycophant; the Just Man has been rewarded by the cured Ploutos, while the sycophant has been deprived of his subsistence (900ff.). Here politics is interwoven with the theme of the Golden Age. The pivot of this confrontation is the antithesis between *automatos* wealth, *ameleia* (indifference), and *hesychia* on the one hand, and political involvement and democratic ideology on the other hand. The Just Man repudiates the way of life of the sycophant, who does not work the land, is not engaged in a trade, and has no *techne*, but gets rich through interfering in other citizens' lives (903-918). He is amazed that the sycophant prefers πολυπραγμοσύνη (excessive activity and interference) to *hesychia* and idleness (921-922) — the kind of life that after Ploutos' cure is associated with *automatos* wealth. The sycophant justifies his way of life, using arguments that express the democratic ideology: he takes upon himself the function of ὁ βουλόμενος ('whoever wishes') in bringing wrongdoers to court, advocates active involvement in the life of the *polis* and the individual citizen, and helps the existing *nomoi* (907-919).⁴² Moreover, he declares himself to be *chrestos* and *philopolis* (900), attributes claimed also by his rivals, and he likens the life of *hesychia* proposed to him by the Just Man to the life of a sheep (922-923).

These two ideological outlooks are wide apart. The sycophant claims that neither Ploutos himself nor the *sylyphium* of Cyrene will make him change his ways (924-925); in other words, he tries to convince his rivals that he acts out of political conviction and not out of greed.⁴³ He also accuses Ploutos and his supporters of subverting the

⁴¹ A typical Aristophanic presentation of the ambiguous use and meaning of these terms is found in *Wasps* where Bdelykleon is accused of being *misodemos* (473) and *misopolis* (411) just because he prevents his old father Philokleon from going to the law court and fulfilling his duty as a juror; but when the chorus is convinced by Bdelykleon's arguments, he is defined as a *philopolis* (887-888). Cf. *Eq.*, 787; *Nub.*, 1187; *Lys.*, 547; *Thuc.*, 2.60.5; 6.92.2-4; and see W.R. Connor, *The New Politicians of Fifth-Century Athens* (Princeton 1971), 99-105.

⁴² ὁ βουλόμενος was a key phrase in Athenian democratic ideology which emphasized active involvement. See *Aesch.*, 1.23; *Dem.*, 18.169-170; and cf. *Ar.*, *Ach.*, 45; *Ekk.*, 129; *Thuc.*, 2.40.2. The opposed ideal of being ἀπράγμων and minding one's own business is manifested in Kritias' words (88 B fr. 41a Diels-Kranz): σωφροσύνη ἂν εἴη τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν ('temperance might be doing one's own business'). On helping the laws, cf. the role of the *rhetor* as a 'helper' in *Pl.*, *Epin.*, 975e-976b.

⁴³ For recent interpretations of this scene, usually emphasising the role of the sycophant as the typical villain punished through Ploutos' healing, or as the symbol of the resented *polypragmosyne*, see Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 374-8; Sommerstein (n. 5), 324; David (n. 6),

democracy and of acting without the assent of the Council and the Assembly (948-950). The sycophant thus appears as the representative of the existing democratic order, embodied in laws and ideology. Karion and the Just Man, the supporters of the new and subversive order, treat the sycophant in the same way as Chremylos has treated Penia: since they cannot overcome him by logical arguments they use force and aggression to drive him away (926-943).⁴⁴ For Ploutos, according to Chremylos, is the most powerful — κράτιστος — of all gods (230), while the sycophant himself admits to being ἥττω (‘weaker’) than both Karion and the Just Man (944-945). The recourse to force and the emphasis on the advantage of the strong clearly relate to the conception of *physis* and its laws, which are conceived as opposed and superior to the human *nomoi*.⁴⁵

The sycophant’s comparison of *hesychia* and *automatos* wealth to the life of a sheep is reinforced by the sole chorus song in the play (290-315). The song, an expression of joy for the coming of the cured Ploutos, is a dialogue between the slave Karion and the chorus of farmers who imitate the Cyclops Polyphemos and his goats, Odysseus and his friends, and the witch Circe. Bowie has already observed the reliance of this song on the traditional portrayal of the Cyclopes as anti-social creatures, lacking *nomoi* and political institutions (as in *Od.* 9.105ff.),⁴⁶ and on the description of Circe’s world as not wholly human either (as in *Od.* 10.133ff.).⁴⁷ In analogy to the Homeric Cyclopes, society in *Ploutos* after the realisation of Chremylos’ plan might be said to be uncivilised, utterly self-sufficient, lacking reciprocal and exchange relations, and living on the benefits of a god instead of on the profits of labour.⁴⁸

A scholiast tells us that a word in line 290, the whole of line 292, and two words in line 298 in the chorus song in *Ploutos* were taken from Philoxenos of Cythera’s *Cyclops*, a dithyramb which itself was meant to satirize the tyrant Dionysios I of Syracuse.⁴⁹ Philoxenos wrote this song after 406 B.C. (the year of Dionysios’ accession to power), and if Aristophanes did indeed use it, the chorus’ song in *Ploutos*, or at least the part that is thought to be a parody of Philoxenos’ *Cyclops*, could not have been included

36-8; Bowie (n. 21), 277-8. A slightly different interpretation is that of D. MacDowell, *The Law in Classical Athens* (New York 1978), 63, who recognizes that the sycophant is hostile to the new order of Ploutos and is unsuited to the god’s new Golden Age; and McGlew (n. 6), 46-7, who emphasizes the exclusion of the sycophant (as well as that of Penia) against the inclusion of the whole citizenry in Chremylos’ fantastic new world. On *polypragmosyne* in Athens, see V. Ehrenberg, ‘Polypragmosyne: A Study in Greek Politics’, *JHS* 67 (1947), 46-67.

⁴⁴ In lines 598-612 Penia is driven away, apparently with force. Cf. Rogers (n. 1), on line 598. See also the interpretation of Bowie (n. 21), 290, of the role of Penia. This ending of the *agon* is sometimes interpreted as a sign of Aristophanes’ ironic attitude to solutions suggested by contemporaries to the problem of the unjust distribution of wealth, an interpretation accepted by Reckford (n. 4), 361, and rejected by Sommerstein (n. 5), 319, 330.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Nub.*, 1331-1429. See also Thuc., 5.89; 105; Pl., *Grg.*, 483d; *Rep.*, 338c.

⁴⁶ Bowie (n. 21), 286-7. Cf. Vidal-Naquet (n. 10).

⁴⁷ Bowie (n. 21), 287-8.

⁴⁸ See above, n. 29, on Aristotle’s definition of self-sufficiency. See also Konstan and Dillon (n. 6), 381.

⁴⁹ See Rogers (n. 1), to line 290. Cf. Bowie (n. 21), 287 and n. 83.

in the first version of the play.⁵⁰ Yet was this parody the sole reason for the song? It seems that besides expressing immense delight the imitation of the Cyclops and his goats was meant as a comment on Chremylos' plan and as a portrayal of his new world. As I have argued above, the success of Chremylos' plan brings about a new Golden Age, *automatos* wealth and idleness. The Cyclopes and Circe were well-known symbols of such a world, and to remind the Athenian audience of that world, or even for the purpose of parody, Aristophanes could have used a text much more familiar than Philoxenos'. In addition to Homer's *Odyssey*,⁵¹ another text was available, which he could also have used for the first version of *Ploutos* — Euripides' satyr-play *Cyclops*, written sometime between 424 and 408 B.C.⁵²

As Paganelli has convincingly shown, Euripides' *Cyclops*, and especially Polyphemos' monologue in it (316-346), abounds with phrases and ideas taken from sophistic discussions and oligarchic ideology.⁵³ The world of Polyphemos is a world without *poleis*, exchange and *charis*, and lacking political institutions and agriculture (115-128); instead, it is a world where the earth of necessity (ἀνάγκη) produces all his needs (332-333).⁵⁴ Polyphemos declares that the god of the *sophoi* is Ploutos (ὁ πλοῦτος, ἀνθρωπίσκε, τοῖς σοφοῖς θεός; 316).⁵⁵ He lives an idle and carefree life, satisfying his basic physical desires (323-331). Indeed he is a shepherd and has no gold or silver (53, 120), but his Ploutos is natural spontaneous wealth, a deification of matter. He fears neither Zeus nor his thunderbolts and refuses to recognize that Zeus is stronger (κρείσσων) than he (318-321).⁵⁶ He claims that worship is due to him and his belly, and not to the Olympian gods (334-335), and that the *sophrones* live a life of eating and drinking every day without any suffering (336-337).⁵⁷ Moreover, he calls himself a god (231, 345) and is called by others a beast (442, 602, 658). He renounces the *nomoi* (338-340) and emphasizes *ameleia* (322, 331) as the principle of life.⁵⁸ Polyphemos, then, lives in a kind of Golden Age; he has renounced the traditional gods and replaced Zeus with drinking and devouring (336-338);⁵⁹ he regards himself as *sophos* and *sophron* — terms often associated with the oligarchs;⁶⁰ he has renounced the man-made

⁵⁰ Thus, e.g., MacDowell (n. 2), 326.

⁵¹ Bowie (n. 21), 287 and n. 83.

⁵² Several dates have been suggested for this play. The most recent discussion of the date of the play is that of R. Seaford, *Euripides: Cyclops* (Oxford 1984), 48-51, who suggests the year 408 B.C.

⁵³ L. Paganelli, *Echi storico-politici nel 'Ciclope' Euripideo* (Padova 1979). Cf. Seaford (n. 52), 53.

⁵⁴ Cf. Paganelli (n. 53), 36-7. Cf. D. Konstan, 'An Anthropology of Euripides' *Kyklops*', in J.J. Winkler and F.I. Zeitlin (eds.), *Nothing to do with Dionysos?* (Princeton 1990), 209-22.

⁵⁵ Cf. Paganelli (n. 53), 23-6.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 26-33. Paganelli suggests that in describing Polyphemos' *asebeia* Euripides had in mind the models of Typhoeus and Capaneus.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 38-41.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 32-4, 43-7. Aristotle's words (see above, n. 29), that total *autarkeia* means being a god or a beast, seem to fit Polyphemos' condition.

⁵⁹ Cf. Ar., *Nub.*, 367, 377, 405, where Socrates replaces Zeus with necessity (ἀνάγκη).

⁶⁰ E.g., Kritias, 88 B fr. 25, line 12 Diels-Kranz; Ar., *Ran.*, 727-729; Ps.-Xen., *Ath. Rep.*, 1.7. Cf. Paganelli (n. 53), 25, 41-7, who associates *sophrosyne* with the oligarchic ideal of

laws and champions a life lived according to nature and necessity; and he believes in non-involvement in social affairs.

The Cyclops in Euripides' play can thus be interpreted as a caricature of contemporary sophists and oligarchs,⁶¹ and in this respect he resembles the protagonists of Aristophanes' comedy. Like Euripides' Polyphemos, Chremylos in *Ploutos* of Aristophanes associates himself with the *sophoi*, *chrestoi*, and *sophrones*, who are his first chosen group for benefiting from Ploutos' cure (*Ploutos*, 386-388). Like Polyphemos, Ploutos of Aristophanes is persuaded not to fear Zeus and his thunderbolts (123-126), to show *ameleia* (208, 507, 557), which in the play is opposed to the democratic principles of activity and involvement represented by the sycophant, and to champion a way of life which contradicts the democratic values of equality and labour advocated by Penia. The newly healed Ploutos brings spontaneous wealth to the *oikos* of Chremylos, wealth that cancels any need for labour and exchange. Furthermore, Ploutos, the god of material wealth, takes the place of Zeus, the giver of law and order, as the highest god. It therefore seems plausible that Aristophanes (together with other comic playwrights) made use of Euripides' *Cyclops* rather than of Philoxenos' play. If this assumption is correct, the song of the chorus in *Ploutos* may also have been included in the first version of the play (performed two years before Philoxenos' dithyramb), either in a similar or in a slightly different formulation.

Attacks on sophistic and oligarchic theories and slogans can be found in other Aristophanic comedies. *Clouds* is one of them, but so also are *Birds* and *Ekklesiazousai*, where utopian plans are realized with negative results.⁶² Thus both Peisetairos and Praxagora are presented as *sophoi* and able rhetors;⁶³ and both abandon the existing democratic system in favour of a revolutionary one (and in the case of *Birds* also in favour of new gods) and advocate life according to *physis*. In the same way, Chremylos' plan to enrich all the *sophoi* and *sophrones* (or to make all citizens *sophrones* by enriching all), to cancel labour and to crown the god of wealth as the highest divinity, while abandoning the traditional gods, can be seen as a satirical attack on sophistic and oligarchic ideas. Although in the *agon* Penia also claims to have *sophrosyne* (563), it is Chremylos' *sophrosyne* that wins: the *sophrosyne* that means avoidance of (democratic) politics and prescribes life according to *physis* or necessity. In 408 these ideas were still very much in the air, with only four years to go before another oligarchic revolution.

hesychia and with criticism of *polypragmosyne*. See also McGlew (n. 6), 41 (although he ascribes this oligarchic trait to Penia); Hubbard (n. 17), 26-7. In Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, 971-978, where the sudden abundance in Dikaiopolis' house is also termed *automata* (cf. n. 29), the chorus describes Dikaiopolis as *phronimos* and *hypersophon*; when interpreted in the context of this dramatic person's individualism and rhetoric skill, Dikaiopolis too could be regarded as representing the sophistic views.

⁶¹ Paganelli (n. 53), 21; Seaford (n. 52), 53-5. Cf. the words of Kallikles in Pl., *Grg.*, 482-484.

⁶² See Hubbard (n. 17), who also reviews the tradition of sophistic and philosophical thought. Hubbard distinguishes between 'Arcadian' fantasies, where a vision of bounty and individual freedom in the past (the Golden Age) is recreated, and utopian comedies, where a new state is created; yet the satirical elements he finds in utopian comedies such as *Birds* and *Ekklesiazousai* certainly exist in *Ploutos*.

⁶³ See Ar., *Av.*, e.g. 318, 362-363; *Ekkl.*, 204, 245.

Thus, *Ploutos* of Aristophanes interweaves in a comic and parodic way the universal human nostalgia for a carefree and happy past with current political and philosophical ideas: the diverse theories of the development of humanity; the opposing theories of the effects of technology and social progress upon humanity; the controversial role of *nomoi*, *physis* and the gods in human society; and the polemics concerning the best regime. Aristophanes presents all these themes by installing Ploutos in the combined roles of a deposed Titan, a culture agent, a rebel aided by the human Giant Chremylos, a sophist and an oligarch.⁶⁴ This perhaps was Aristophanes' originality, though mention should be made of Kratinos' *Ploutoi*, which preceded Aristophanes' comedy by some years and has many similarities with it. In this play (fr. 171-176, 363 K-A), the chorus of the titanic wealth-gods, apparently released from their confinement by Zeus, comments that the tyranny of Zeus is over and recounts all the *automata* goods of the rule of Kronos, which seems in some way to have returned. The Ploutoi are looking for their 'brother' (perhaps Prometheus) and examine the distribution of wealth in democratic Athens. It is probably in this later context that they come before an Athenian law court, where a suit is heard against the politician Hagnon, a son of a porter, who had become rich dishonestly.⁶⁵

The association of wealth with sophistic and oligarchic theories is also prominent in Plato's *Republic* which, although it was written much later, reflects ideas that were in the air already in the last years of the fifth century B.C.⁶⁶ Thus, for instance, Chremylos' question to Apollon at Delphoi (should his son change his ways and become dishonest in order to enrich himself, 36-38) resembles Socrates' question to Thrasymachos (1.344d).⁶⁷ Later, when Socrates is defining the oligarchic man (553-554) he says: '...for it seems that this man does not give heed to education ... for had he done so, he would not have appointed a blind leader to his chorus and respect him most' (... οὐ γὰρ ἂν τυφλὸν ἡγεμόνα τοῦ χοροῦ ἐστήσατο καὶ ἐτίμα μάλιστα; 554b).

In 408 B.C. the memory of the first oligarchic revolution was still fresh and the political debates, as well as the Peloponnesian War, were still in progress. The combination in

⁶⁴ Contra Vian (n. 11), 289, who suggests that the artistic expressions of the Gigantomachy symbolized the victory of the reign of the law over its enemies, who threaten *hesychia*.

⁶⁵ See Goossens (n. 17), 409-30, who suggests that the reign of Zeus is compared to the democratic regime which made possible *nouveaux riches*. It is strange that although Goossens finds many similarities between this play and Aristophanes' *Ploutos*, he denies the latter's political character and defines it as a fantastic and folkloristic comedy (406). See also Hertel (n. 2), 34-5. According to Baldry (n. 17), 52 and n. 2, the Ploutoi are probably Zeus' servants. Yet in fr. 171.15ff K-A., the Ploutoi explicitly refer to their imprisonment by Zeus and their secret escape, and lines 46-48 (where it seems that a delegation of fish is sent to Kronos) state that Zeus is 'upsetting the whole earth'. On the contents of Kratinos' *Ploutoi* and its utopianism, see also Ceccarelli (n. 17, 1996), 112-19; Ruffell (n. 17), 475-81, who links the Golden Age critical Utopia of the play with dominant Athenian ideology. On the connection of the Ploutoi with Kronos and the Golden Age, see above, n. 22.

⁶⁶ On the close resemblance of Aristophanes' *Ekklesiazousai* and *Ploutos* to ideas expressed in Plato's *Republic*, see, e.g., David (n. 6), 21-3.

⁶⁷ Cf. Hes., *Op.*, 270-272.

Ploutos of the themes discussed above and their association with contemporary philosophical and political debates seem much more suited to a comedy of the late fifth century than to the political, social and even economic conditions of 388 B.C. It may therefore tentatively be concluded that the first *Ploutos* was a satirical attack on oligarchic schemes and sophistic theories, and that the plot of the extant version was to a large extent identical to the first version, except for structural changes and some allusions to contemporary events and persons.

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