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translations (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries)

The study of the history of translations of ARISTOPHANES serves two purposes: first, by showing when and where Aristophanes was translated, it provides a diachronic sense of his popularity beyond the connoisseurs of ancient Greek; second, different types of translation show how Aristophanes was appreciated and why.

Italy was the first country in which Aristophanes was translated and printed in Greek. Aristophanes' text in Greek was made available in the Aldine *editio princeps* of 1498 (with nine plays, without *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Lysistrata*). In 1515–16 the first complete edition in Greek appeared in Florence. The very first Latin translation appeared, in fact, before the Aldine edition, when the Florentine humanist Leonardo BRUNI translated *WEALTH* 1–269 into Latin prose ca. 1440. In 1538 Andreas DIVUS published the first Latin translation of all eleven comedies in Venice, and this became the most important vehicle

for knowing Aristophanes. In the 1500s many Latin translations appeared of Aristophanes' two most popular comedies, *CLOUDS* and *Wealth*, but Lambertus Hortensius also translated *Knights* (1561) and *Frogs* (1561) and Nicasius Ellebodus translated *Thesmophoriazusae* and *Lysistrata* (1575–77).

Italy was also the first country to translate Aristophanes into its own vernacular: in 1545 all the Aristophanic comedies were translated into Italian by Bartolomeo and Pietro ROSITINI. In other countries the first translations were mostly of *Clouds* or *Wealth*. In France Pierre de RONSARD translated and staged *Wealth* in 1549–50; only in 1784 were all the plays translated into French, partly in verse and partly in prose, by Louis Poincette de Sivry. In Spain too *Wealth* was the first play to be translated (1577), by Pedro Simón Abril; a translation of "selected plays" appeared only in 1875 by D. Federico Baráibar y Zumárraga. In England, Thomas RANDOLPH prepared an ADAPTATION of *Wealth* (1651; see below), while Thomas Stanley translated selections of *Clouds* in his *History of Philosophy* (1655). Aside from *Wealth* (by an anonymous H.H.B.) in 1659 (see below), the first translations of entire plays appeared only in 1715: Lewis THEOBALD's *Clouds* and *Wealth*. Charles Dunster's *Frogs* appeared in 1785, while other plays (*Acharnians*, *Knights*, and *Wasps* together with a new version of *Clouds*) were translated only in 1820–22 by Thomas Mitchell and Richard CUMBERLAND. After Hans SACHS' adaptation of *Wealth* in 1531, the first German translation appeared in 1613 for a performance of *Clouds* (in Greek) in Strasbourg; Isaak Fröreisen prepared a free (and "Christianized") translation to help the audience who did not know Greek. Only in 1744 did Christlob Mylius translate part of *Wealth* (1–252); afterwards, many German translations of *Clouds* and *Wealth* were prepared; GOETHE translated *Birds*, which was also performed in Weimar in 1780 (Goethe himself played the role of Treufreund, i.e. Pisthetærus (*sic*)). Translations of several other Aristophanic plays followed and by 1821 the eleven comedies had been translated into German by Johann Heinrich Voss. In other countries Aristophanes was translated only in the nineteenth century: the first Russian translation was *Clouds* by I.M. MURAVIËV-APOSTOL (1821), while the first complete translation appeared only in 1897.

In Denmark Johan Krag produced the first translations of *Frogs*, *Clouds*, *Wealth*, and *Acharnians* in 1825, and other plays followed afterwards. *Clouds* was first translated into Swedish by Johan Henrik Thomander in 1826, while Johannes Paulson published the first complete translation of all eleven comedies only in 1901–3. *Birds* was the first play to be translated into Dutch (1869), followed by *Acharnians* (1885), *Wealth* (1899), and *Ecclesiazusae* (1900), while a Norwegian translation/adaptation of *Birds* by Kristian B.R. Aars appeared in 1888. *Acharnians* was translated into a moderate Greek *katharevousa* by Ioannis Raptarchis in 1856, followed by *Clouds*, *Peace*, and *Birds* by Alexander Rizos Rangavis in 1860. Poland saw first the *Clouds* by Marcelli Motty (1866), while other translations followed in the early twentieth century; *Frogs* and *Wealth* were translated into Czech in around 1897 by Augustin Krejčí, who then published a translation of all the plays between 1910 and 1922. In Hungary the first translation was *Frogs* by Ignác Veress (1875), and all the comedies were translated into Hungarian by János Arany in 1880. With the exception of DALPATRAM's *Lakshmi* (1850), which is an adaptation of *Wealth* into Gujarati (Vasunia 2007), translations in Asia had to wait even longer: for example, *Lysistrata* was translated into Japanese by H. Kozui and K. Chigiri in 1900.

Clouds and *Wealth* thus remained the most popular comedies until the eighteenth century and often represented the first attempt at translating Aristophanes into a European language. The interest in these two plays is easily explained, as among the Aristophanic comedies *Clouds* and *Wealth* are the most “restrained” and moralistic (or at least they can easily be interpreted this way). The more “fantastic” plays, such as *Frogs* and *Birds*, started to be appreciated later, while the more political ones had to wait until after the French Revolution. Lastly, “women comedies” started to receive attention only in the nineteenth century (Giannopoulou 2007, 310).

The study of modern translations can also disclose how Aristophanes was appreciated. For example, the French translations of *Wealth* and *Clouds* by Anne DACIER (1684) were the first to divide the text into acts and scenes, with notes discussing neoclassical rules of theater, indicating for the first time that Aristophanes was considered an author to be performed rather than

read (Hall 2007a, 10–11). Other translations are important in their interpretation of Aristophanes as a political author. For example, Thomas Randolph's *Ploutophthalmia Ploutogamia* (1651), an English adaptation of *Wealth* set in Caroline London, represents the first effort to make Aristophanes contemporary (Miola 2014, 492–94); in *The World's Idol; or, Plutus the God of Wealth, a Translation from Aristophanes by H.H.B.* (London, 1659), a political interpretation of Aristophanes is achieved through the introduction and the notes rather than the translation itself (which is literal): the anonymous translator reads the comedy in light of Christian ideology and perhaps also of criticism against British policy in Ireland. At a time when the Puritans closed theaters (1642–60) and stage performances were forbidden, even a translation could become a political act (Wyles 2007; Miola 2014, 494–95). In Germany, Johann Georg Schlosser published the first German version of *Frogs* in 1783, and in the introduction Aristophanes is treated for the first time as a political and satirical author rather than a moralist (Werner 1975, 469). Christoph Martin WIELAND published German translations of *Knights*, *Birds*, *Acharnians*, and *Clouds* between 1794 and 1806; his *Knights* (1797) is subtitled *Oder die Demagogen*, thus connecting Aristophanes' CLEON to the demagogues in the Reign of Terror of the French Revolution. A less open recognition of Aristophanes' political dimension is discernible in the complete Italian translations by Domenico Capellina (1852–53), where Aristophanes' plays are divided by theme: volume one contains “political comedies” (*Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Peace*, *Lysistrata*, and *Ecclesiazusae*) while volume two contains “fantasy comedy and comedy with satire *ad personam*” (*Clouds*, *Wasps*, *Birds*, *Thesmophoriazusae*, *Wealth*, and *Frogs*). In the preface to his translation of *Clouds* (1881), Augusto Franchetti claimed that the recent popular revolutions in Europe would allow readers to better appreciate Athenian democracy and Aristophanic theater (Chirico 2014, 743).

Aristophanes, however, was not always seen as a “revolutionary” author. For example, famous English translations were carried out by conservative scholars such as John Wood Warter (*Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Wasps*, and *Birds* in 1830), John Hookham FRERE (*Frogs*, *Acharnians*, *Knights*, and *Birds* in 1839), and Thomas Mitchell, who in the

introduction and notes to his *Frogs* (1839) used Aristophanes to criticize democracy (Hall 2007b, 74–81). Similarly, some very famous Italian translations (*Birds* in 1899, *Acharnians* in 1902, *Thesmophoriazusae* in 1904, and all the comedies in 1909) were made by Ettore Romagnoli, a conservative and nationalistic scholar. In Germany, on the other hand, the political dimension of Aristophanes was at times overlooked: for example, J.G. DROYSEN, whose German translations of Aristophanes (1835–38) are still considered among the best, famously denied any serious political or moralistic agenda to Aristophanes (Holtermann 2004, 198–203).

No complete play of MENANDER, or large portion of one, was known during the period covered by this entry. However, Menander was already known from the *MONOSTICHA* or *Sententiae*, an alphabetical list of some of his lines (intermixed with spurious material and lines by other authors) with moral and educative content. In late antiquity and the Middle Ages, Arabic, Syriac, and Slavic translations were made, but they only partially coincide with the Greek version we possess (given the susceptibility of these texts to incorporate new material); the first Latin translation of these is by George Hermonymus (fifteenth–sixteenth centuries), who added it to his edition of the Greek text (Pernigotti 2008, 53–55, 153–54). Other famous Latin translations are those by Morelius (1533), Hertelius (1560), and Stephanus (1569). There is no record of any translation into a modern European language before the twentieth century.

See also TRANSLATIONS (TWENTIETH TO TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES)

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translations (twentieth to twenty-first centuries) The history of English translations of ARISTOPHANES in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries exposes both changing tastes and shifting imperatives among translators. The plays’ heady linguistic range, their sexual and scatological language, and their status as both performance texts and “classics” (potentially to be spoken or acted, as well as studied) are some of the more prominent challenges that his translators face. The relative popularity of Ar. both in the classroom and on the stage has arguably provided room for experimentation, with translators freer to seek a specific niche or market for their work than is the case for translators of MENANDER.

The early twentieth century proved to be an important period for the translation of OLD COMEDY, with the publication between 1902 and 1915 of a series of new and revised translations of Ar.’s plays by the English barrister Benjamin Bickley ROGERS (thus completing a project begun in 1852 to produce editions of all eleven plays). While certainly not free from bowdlerization, their sure-handed poetic vitality has ensured their status as something of a classic. With the restoration of certain scurrilous passages that Rogers opted to omit, his translations were to form the basis of the first Loeb volumes of Ar.