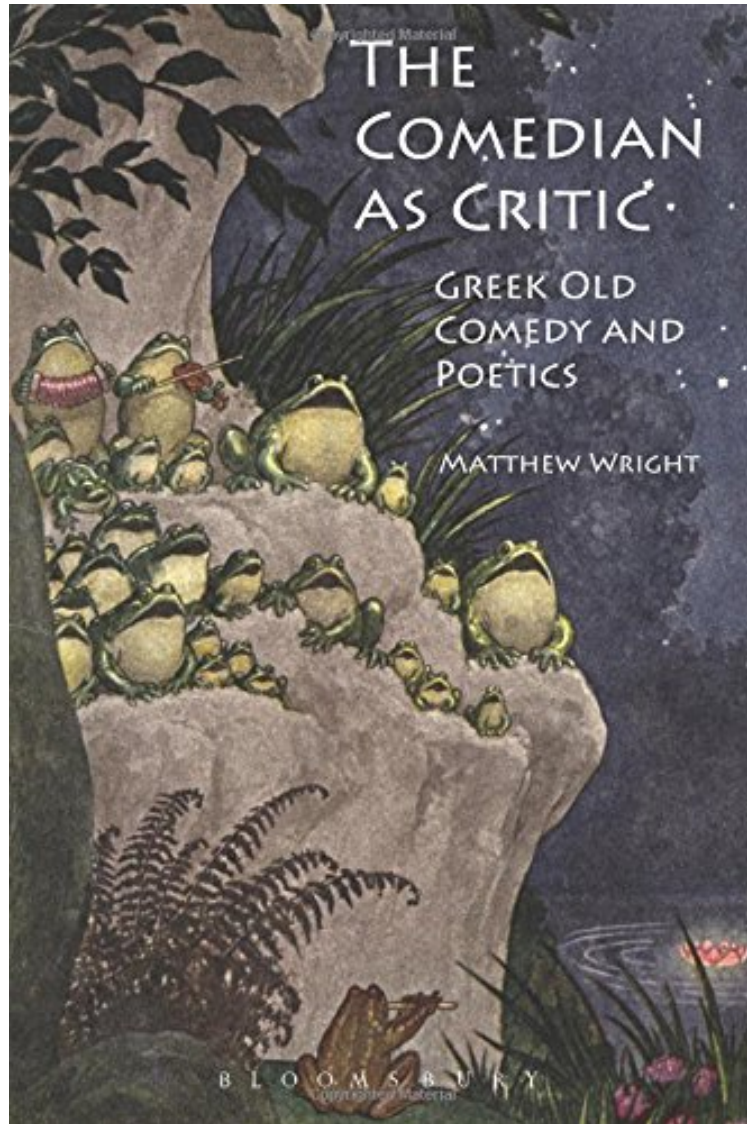


The Comedian as Critic: Greek Old Comedy and Poetics

Matthew Wright

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Matthew Wright : The Comedian as Critic: Greek Old Comedy and Poetics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Comedian as Critic: Greek Old Comedy and Poetics:

Some of the best evidence for the early development of literary criticism before Plato and Aristotle comes from Athenian Old Comedy. Playwrights such as Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes and others wrote numerous comedies on

literary themes, commented on their own poetry and that of their rivals, and played around with ideas and theories from the contemporary intellectual scene. How can we make use of the evidence of comedy? Why were the comic poets so preoccupied with questions of poetics? What criteria emerge from comedy for the evaluation of literature? What do the ancient comedians' jokes say about their own literary tastes and those of their audience? How do different types of readers in antiquity evaluate texts, and what are the similarities and differences between 'popular' and 'professional' literary criticism? Does Greek comedy have anything serious to say about the authors and texts it criticizes? How can the comedians be related to the later literary-critical tradition represented by Plato, Aristotle and subsequent writers? This book attempts to answer these questions by examining comedy in its social and intellectual context, and by using approaches from modern literary theory to cast light on the ancient material.

This is a book full of interesting ideas, one that scholars and students should consult often. -- Charles Platter *The New England Classical Journal* This book will be of interest to all scholars of ancient Greek drama, but it is also accessible to a broader scholarly audience... I recommend this intelligent and thought-provoking book to any scholar interested in the possibility of a bookish culture of readers and literary critics in classical Athens. -- Judith Fletcher, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* Das Buch wird die Diskussion um die Alte Komödie in begrüssenswerter Weise befruchten, nicht zuletzt weil die fragmentarische Überlieferung durchgängig in grosstem Umfang miteinbezogen wird. Dass die Titel der Stücke grundsätzlich in englischer Version gegeben werden, tut provinziell an. -- Ernst-Richard Schwinge *GNOMON* About the Author Matthew Wright is Senior Lecturer in Classics at the University of Exeter and Blegen Research Fellow at Vassar College. His other publications include *Euripides: Orestes* (2008) and *Euripides' Escape-Tragedies* (2005).