ABSTRACT

After the success of the Persian Wars and the development of Athenian nationalism the image of the barbarian changed. The word βαρβάρος, a barbarian, was originally a label for a non-Greek speaker, but as a result of the Persian Wars this label took on negative qualities: cowardice, stupidity, and the inability to communicate. In the fifth century language was a defining characteristic, and the ability to speak Greek was exclusive; those who could speak Greek were participants in all facets of the Greek world, while those who could not were shut out. The same extends to comedy. In three plays Aristophanes represents the speech of barbarians, an activity unique to Greek literature. His predecessors do not represent barbarian speech either due to a different ideological perspective, or due to genre conventions. Aristophanes’ representation of barbarian language, then, offers an exclusive reflection of the new Athenian ideology.

INDEX WORDS: Aristophanes--Language, Greek Drama (Comedy)--History and Criticism, Greek language--Political Aspects--Greece, Language and Culture--Greece.
BARBARIANS AND LANGUAGE IN ARISTOPHANES

by

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In Aristophanes’ *Birds*, Peisetaerus and Tereus discuss how they will announce to the other birds their plan to build a new city. Peisetaerus, assuming that birds will not be able to understand the plan, asks Tereus who will explain the plan and how he will go about it. Tereus replies:

εγὼ γὰρ αὐτοὺς βαρβάρους ὄντας πρὸ τοῦ
ἐδίδαξα τὴν φωνὴν ξυνών πολὺν χρόνον. (199-200).

For I, having lived with them for a long time, taught them language, being barbarians before.

Tereus’ distinction between Greek and barbarian is axiomatic for the fifth century. This distinction is the product of the Persian Wars and the development of Panhellenism by the Athenians through the foundation of the Delian league. As a result the barbarian changed from simply a non-Greek speaker, as in Homer and the epic tradition, to a foolish, uncivilized, unintelligible, and cowardly outsider. For Athenians, language stood as the primary dividing line between the barbarian world and civilization; it was perhaps their most defining, unifying, and, at the same time, differentiating characteristic. In the fifth century the ability to speak Greek was exclusive; those who could speak Greek were able to be participants in all facets of the Greek world, while those who could not were shut out and labeled by the same term: βάρβαρος. The same attitude extends to comedy. In three of his plays Aristophanes reproduces barbarian speech, and in each one the inability to speak Greek properly is met with derision and contempt. The Aristophanic attitude to, and representation of, the barbarian is based on a broad historical
process that develops over time from strictly linguistic to political. Because Aristophanes and his comedies are a product of this new notion, it is important to determine not only where they fit in the ideology of the fifth century but also how Aristophanes’ barbarians reflect this new attitude specifically through their language.

In order to understand the Aristophanic examples, we must examine Greek literature’s treatment of the barbarian prior to and contemporary with Aristophanes. The first chapter of this thesis will discuss this shift in order to set the stage for the barbarians in Aristophanes, beginning with Homer and ending with the tragic poets. I will also examine the works of the iambographers and the *Histories* of Herodotus. The objective of this chapter is to show how, when, and for what reason the shift occurred; then we can see in what ways Aristophanes’ treatment of barbarians and their language reflects the shift in Athenian attitudes towards foreign language.

In the second chapter I examine barbarians and their language in the plays of Aristophanes mentioned above. Three barbarians, a Persian, a Triballian, and a Scythian have individual speaking parts and discourse with their Attic-speaking interlocutors. It is my goal in this chapter to examine both their speech and their interactions with other characters in order to determine how the other characters (and tangentially Aristophanes) view foreign language. The Aristophanic examples provide a wealth of sociolinguistic and linguistic information about the status of barbarian language in fifth-century Athens. This information will reveal prevailing attitudes at the time the plays were written and allow us to see how thoughts about language changed over time.
The final discussion of this thesis involves Aristophanes’ use of Greek dialect. While dialects of Greek are neither foreign languages nor regarded as such by the characters, their use is relevant to the topic as a whole and thus will be included in an appendix. In two plays Aristophanes includes non-Attic Greek speakers who have substantially larger roles than the barbarians. The discourse of these dialect speakers, a Laconian, a Megarian, and a Boeotian, opposes that of the barbarians, and, as a result, we can draw conclusions about barbarian language in the fifth century that would otherwise be impossible to draw. The goal of this examination is to ascertain what the attitude of Aristophanes and the audience was towards non-Attic speakers in fifth-century Athens and to compare the results with those of the second chapter.
CHAPTER 2

BARBARIANS AND LANGUAGE IN NON-COMEDIC GREEK LITERATURE

Aristophanes represents the speech of barbarians in three plays. Each barbarian has particular linguistic features unique to himself as well as different manners of dress and discourse with Greek speakers; the barbarians themselves are individuals. They come from different parts of the known world, yet are labeled by the same term: βαρβάρος. This term came to represent all things not Greek and occurs throughout fifth-century literature. Since his predecessors did not attempt to represent barbarian speech, Aristophanes engages in an activity unique in Greek literature in his representation of it and provides rare insight into the fifth-century Athenian attitude towards the barbarian. While Aristophanes’ activity is unique in Greek literature, the Aristophanic attitude towards and representation of the barbarian is not isolated and develops over time from being strictly linguistic to political. In order to analyze the Aristophanic material, it will be necessary to examine the development of the representation of the barbarian from the Homeric texts up to Aristophanes and his contemporaries. This chapter, then, will consist of an in-depth analysis of the development of the attitude towards the barbarian and the treatment of barbarian language in Greek literature. Understanding why and when the ethnocentric shift occurred will be essential for discussing the Aristophanic examples and for placing them in the right context. This chapter will examine the works of Homer, the iambographers, Herodotus, and the tragic poets. By looking at these authors it will be possible to see when and how the shift occurred.
The word βάρβαρος did not always have a negative meaning: it began as an onomatopoetic expression for someone who could not speak Greek correctly.¹ Prior to the advance of the Persians against the Greeks, the Hellenic world had no sizeable cultural differences between itself and its foreign neighbors and the political overtones of the fifth century did not exist. Strabo discusses the ideological shift of the term, albeit in the late first century BCE and early first century CE, in his etymological discussion of βάρβαρος and its later development to encompass the idea of the ‘other’: “Accordingly, when all who pronounced words thickly were being called ‘barbarians’ onomatopoetically, it appeared that the pronunciations of all alien races were likewise thick, I mean of those that were not Greek. Those, therefore, they called barbarians in the special sense of the term, at first derisively, meaning that they pronounced words thickly or harshly; and then we misused the word as a general ethnic term, thus making a logical distinction between the Greeks and all other races” (14.2.28). It is clear then that the term βάρβαρος was not always a negative marker and that when it did become one it was the result of the ethnocentric attitude of the Greeks.

**Homer**

It is necessary, then, to look back to the beginning of Greek literature in order to see the development of the barbarian from simply a non-Greek speaker to someone considered wholly opposite to what it meant to be Greek. In the Homeric period, the distinction between Greek and non-Greek was not stark; although their languages were different, the way of life for both barbarian and Greek was similar.² Thucydides suggests that in the Homeric period ‘all the Hellenes…in their everyday life went unarmed just as the barbarians did. And the fact that these

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² Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 4
districts of Hellas still retain this custom is evidence that at one time similar modes of life prevailed everywhere’ (1.6.1.6).³ In addition, unlike in the fifth century, language was not a criterion for distinguishing between groups of people; instead, the Homeric world was divided between the aristocrats and the common people.⁴ In fact, Trojan and Greek heroes alike are labeled with the same term, βασιλεύς, and there is ample evidence in the texts that the same conventions are used for civic debates and gatherings and that alliances and guest friendships exist between Greeks and non-Greeks.⁵ For example, Diomedes, a Greek, and Glaucus, a Lycian, decided not to fight one another because of an ancestral guest-friendship (ll. 6.226-31).

In Talking Trojan, Mackie discusses the differences between the language of the Trojans and of the Achaeans. There are no linguistic differences between the Trojans and Achaeans, and mutual intelligibility is assumed. In fact, the Iliad represents the Trojans as speaking Greek. For example, in Book 3 during the teichoskopeia Antenor speaks of the virtues of Odysseus and Menelaus, specifically their speaking abilities. When describing Menelaus, Antenor says “but whenever they weaved their speech and plans to all, Menelaus spoke fluently, few words, but very clearly.” Antenor clearly has no trouble understanding Menelaus. He later says of Odysseus “but whenever he uttered a great voice from his chest, and words similar to winter snowflakes, then no other mortal could rival Odysseus” (3. 203-224). These examples not only presuppose mutual intelligibility between the Greeks and Trojans but also even suggest that the words of the Trojans are aesthetically pleasing to Greek ears because of Antenor’s complimentary words. A second example occurs during the meeting of Priam and Achilles in Book 24. There are no

⁴ Hall, Inventing the Barbarian, 14.
⁵ At 2.53-54 the Achaeans hold a council session before the ship of Nestor; at 2.788 the Trojans hold assembly in front of the doors of Priam; at 3.146-53 the “chief men of the Trojans” are collected; at 7.325-44 Nestor addresses the Achaeans; and at 7.345-79 the Trojans were assembled before the doors of Priam. In each of these cases, both Trojan and Achaean, a civic debate or gathering occurs.
interpreters present for the Trojan king and Greek warrior, and both Priam and Achilles understand one another without any problems. According to Mackie, however, there are stylistic differences that create a chasm between the Trojans and Achaeans, although it is important to note that the distinction in Homeric literature is much more neutral than the antithesis of the fifth century. Mackie divides the Trojans and Greeks based on the diction, theme, and length of their speeches and concludes that the Achaean style is more aggressive and outwardly directed than the reflective and introspective Trojan style, and that the Achaean language is political and public, contrasted with the private and poetic Trojan language. Finally, she contrasts the two by analyzing each side’s employment of praise and blame in speech, and reveals that the Achaeans use blame primarily whereas the Trojans avoid blame and instead utilize praise language.  

These distinctions, however, do not show that one group is genetically superior to the other, but instead are indicative of the types of speech preferred by Trojan and Achaean speakers and the ways each community uses speech.

In agreement with Edith Hall’s *Inventing the Barbarian*, Mackie believes that Greek and non-Greek are not two absolute groups and that the Trojans of the *Iliad* are in no way similar to the barbarians of fifth-century drama. Whether or not one can label the representation of the Homeric Trojans as positive or negative is uncertain, but it is clear that their ‘otherness’ is not a reflection of a Homeric ethnocentric attitude and that there was a certain level of uniformity of status among the Trojans and Greeks. The ancient scholia, however, say otherwise: “Hector is always characterized as self-aggrandizing, boastful, and barbarian in personality” (Scholia Beta, 7.90). Later readers of the *Iliad* anachronistically attempted to read the Greek/barbarian

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antithesis back into the *Iliad*. Their arguments, however, are not convincing. The scholia collectively agree that the actions of the Trojans were barbaric and those of the Greeks were worthy of praise, but when one examines more closely the actions of both sides, the contrast again is not as austere as in the fifth century. For example, mutilation of corpses was considered by Pausanias, a Spartan king, in Herodotus’ *Histories* to be “a practice more suited for barbarians to do than for Greeks” but the occurrence of mutilation is as frequent among the Greeks as the Trojans. Furthermore, it is Hector who suggests to Achilles that they respect each other’s body and agree to give the other a proper funeral. Achilles refuses and defiles Hector’s body (22.256-9). Cannibalism, an activity sometimes associated with barbarians in the fifth century, finds its place not among the Trojan heroes (although Hecuba does at one point desire to eat Achilles raw 24.212-13) but instead among the non-human characters in the *Odyssey*. The actions of the Trojans are no more objectionable than those of the Greeks, and, furthermore, the actions of Achilles stand alone with no direct parallel for the Trojans. In fact, Achilles is likened to a raging lion: ‘just as a lion…who, when having given in to his great force and bold pride, goes upon the flocks of men to seize savage feasts” (24. 41-3). The description here lists several characteristics associated with the barbarians of the fifth century, pride, violence, and lack of restraint. Finally, the Trojans have just as much reverence for the gods as the Achaeans. Hall even suggests that they had *more* than the Achaeans, and Zeus says of Hector: “But Hector was most dear to the gods of mortals who are in Ilium. So was he to me at least, since he did not fail at all of acceptable gifts. For never did my altar lack equal feast, libations, and the savor of

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11 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 27.
12 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 27
offerings” (24.66-70). At 4.44-9, Zeus speaks the same sentiment about the Trojans in general: “Of these sacred Ilium is honored in my heart and Priam and the men of Priam good at the ashen spear. For never did my altar lack equal feast, libation, and the savor of offerings.” We see the piety of Hector again when he commands his mother to pray to and offer sacrifices to Athena, having been bid to do so by Helenus. It is clear, then, that the behavior of the Trojans is treated just as the behavior of the Greeks, and the poet does not choose sides or show the Greeks in a better light than the Trojans.

The Homeric treatment of barbarians differs significantly from the treatment of barbarians in the fifth century in other ways. To begin with, the term βαρβαρός appears only in the form of the compound βαρβαρόφωνος and we learn from Thucydides that Homer “does not even use the term barbarian, probably because the Hellenes had not yet been marked off from the rest of the world by one distinctive name” (I.3). The compounds that do appear, however, provide evidence that there was an awareness of foreign languages, even if not as distinct as in the fifth century, and there are specific references to non-Greeks speaking in a different language. For example, at Il. 2.804 Iris advises Hector to let each ally of the Trojans lead his own men, saying “Inasmuch as there are many allies throughout the great city of Priam, and tongue differs from tongue of wide-spread men ….” There is at the very least a recognition that people living in different regions spoke different languages, and, perhaps more importantly, there is no negative attitude in the statement. Likewise at Il. 4. 436, when the clamor of the Trojans results from the discordant sound of their various tongues: “for they did not have all the same

13 Hall, Inventing the Barbarian, 29.
14 Gomme, A Historical Commentary on Thucydides, Vol. 1, 98. Gomme notes that ‘the absence of a generic term barbaros is not due to the absence of the one generic term Hellen, but of any generic term for the Greeks; yet he has just said that Homer calls them Danaoi, Argeioi, and Achaioi.” The tragic poets utilized the term to a much greater extent: Aeschylus, 18; Sophocles, 11; and Euripides, 110 (Bacon, Helen H., Barbarians in Greek Tragedy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 10, footnote 7.
speech or one language, but their tongues were mixed--they were gathered together from many lands.” One could consider this passage by comparing the loud noise of the barbarians to later characterizations of barbarians as noisy and uncivilized. Here rather the noise of the Trojans stands in contrast to the silence of the Achaeans entering battle (Ili. 3.1-6); this characterization is in no way a judgment on whether or not the Trojans are a civilized people or not. Finally, at 19.75 Odysseus uses the adjective ἀλλόβροος (speaking a strange language) to describe the inhabitants of Crete. Again, while the adjective does reveal an awareness of foreign language, it does not suggest any racism or negativity. We can see from these examples, then, that the Homeric text does not consider the foreigner in the same manner as the authors of the fifth century consider the barbarian and that the Homeric texts were not making negative judgments on ethnicity.

The non-human creatures of the Homeric world offer a different perspective from the Greek/barbarian antithesis of the fifth century concerning civilized life. Some passages of the Iliad and many passages of the Odyssey show a marked contrast between the Greeks’ way of life and the anarchy, lawlessness, and sacrilege of the non-human barbarians, such as the Cyclopes, the Giants, the Centaurs, and the Amazons. The ‘superhuman barbarians’ of the Homeric texts exist outside the boundaries of what it meant to be Greek and stand in contrast to the civilized life of real cities familiar to Odysseus, like Ithaca and Pylos. These non-humans possess some of the same qualities attributed to the barbarians of fifth-century literature. The Cyclopes of the Odyssey are a prime example of beings that reverse the social customs of ‘reality’. In Odyssey Book 9 the Cyclopes are described as Odysseus and his crew come upon the island:

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15 Hall, Inventing the Barbarian, 52.
From there we sailed on, our spirits now at a low ebb, and reached the land of the high and mighty Cyclops, lawless brutes, who trust so to the everlasting gods they never plant with their own hands or plow the soil…they have no meeting place for council, no laws either, no, up on the mountain peaks they live in arching caverns—each a law to himself, ruling his wives and children, not a care in the world for any neighbor.

The Cyclopes do not rely on agricultural labor, have no form of assembly, no laws, and each man lives for himself; we learn later that they have no ships (9.126-9). Polyphemus mistreats the Greeks, breaks the laws of xenia, and engages in cannibalism, eating one of Odysseus’ men. They also have little respect for the gods: “We Cyclopes never blink at Zeus and Zeus’ shield of storm and thunder, or any other blessed god—we’ve got more force by far” (275-276). The Cyclopes, like the other non-humans, live on the edges of the world and deviate from the norms of social life as do the barbarians of the fifth century, and, consequently, the non-humans of the Homeric world became the prototype for barbarians for the authors of the fifth century.

**Iambic Poetry**

The barbarian also appears in the iambographers of the seventh and sixth centuries. Iambic poetry had a social function and was performed at festivals for entertainment; its subject matter included the condemnation of individuals and commentary on current events. Iambic poetry, then, more closely reflects the ‘here and now’ mindset of fifth-century Athenian comedy (as opposed to the ‘there and then’ outlook of the Homeric texts and fifth-century tragedy). With
invective as one of its main characteristics the ties with comedy are undeniable, and like the works of Aristophanes, it deals with contemporary events, people, and attitudes.\textsuperscript{16} Iambographic poetry persisted into the fifth century. Of the few known iambographers of the fifth century, Hermippus and Diphilus were also comic poets.\textsuperscript{17} Furthermore, it is clear that the poets of Old Comedy were familiar with the invective of the iambographers, like Archilochus and Hipponax, as there are allusions to and quotations of both poets in the works of Aristophanes.\textsuperscript{18} The status of Hipponax is not well documented in the fifth century, but he was reputed as a bitter poet of the ψόγος and Aristophanes often alludes to him.\textsuperscript{19}

Unlike his predecessors and his contemporaries known to us Hipponax (in fragment 92) uses foreign language in his poetry:

\begin{quote}
\textit{η\upsilon\acute{\iota}δα \d\acute{e} \lambdaυ\upsilon\deltaι\zeta\omicronςα: “βασκ…κρόλεα”.
Πυγιστί: “τόν πυγεώνα παρ [ .”}
\end{quote}

She muttered in Lydian, ‘bask…in the manner of a pederast…your backside.’\textsuperscript{20}

The participle \textit{λυ\upsilon\deltaι\zeta\omicronςα is clearly evidence for reference to and awareness of foreign languages. Perhaps Hipponax, who lived on the borders of the Persian empire in Asia Minor, knew enough Lydian to create a genuine grammatical phrase. It is also possible that he was simply writing garbled foreign speech; part of her speech, however, is in Greek mixed with

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{16} Hall, Inventing the Barbarian, 17.
\footnote{18} Rosen, Old Comedy and the Iambographic Tradition, 16.
\footnote{19} Aristophanes, Lysistrata, 360ff; Aristophanes, Ranae, 659ff; Rosen, Old Comedy and the Iambographic Tradition, 14-15.
\end{footnotes}
Lydian and Phoenician words. Hipponax appears to be the speaker of this fragment and is discussing a Lydian woman, whose vocation is not clear, who treats impotence by chanting some sort of Lydian phrase. This fragment does not reveal any attitude towards barbarians and their foreign language, but it brings us a step closer from the Homeric period’s complete lack of an attempt to reproduce a foreign language to what Aristophanes does. Hall suggests that the woman of Hipponax’s fragment is the direct literary ancestor of the three foreign speakers of Aristophanes because Hipponax attempts to reproduce Lydian, whether we can decipher it or not. We do not know much about the audience of Hipponax and therefore cannot know whether his audience would have been able to understand Lydian or even to recognize it.

Hipponax also includes a great number of foreign words such as βεκός ‘bread’ and καυής ‘priest’ that do add a foreign coloring and colloquialism to his works, although not used for any exotic purpose like the foreign words in Aeschylus’ *Persae*.

Hall suggests that Hipponax’s use of non-hexameter in this poem displays a rejection of the Homeric world and emphasizes the contrast between Greeks and non-Greeks by setting the poetry in the ‘here and now,’ rather than the mythical past. Although Hipponax is the only iambographer to attempt to reproduce a foreign language, the other lyric poets do mention foreigners in their poetry. Archilochus writes about the Saians, a Thracian tribe (fragment 5 IEG), and in another fragment (42 IEG) he uses the drinking habits of Thracians and Phrygians.

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21 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 18. West says that “our knowledge of the language is insufficient to elucidate it” (*Greek Lyric Poetry*, 206).
23 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 18.
24 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 52; West, xviii. Anacreon also refers to foreign language in his work at fragment 122 κοίμησαν S, ὁ Ζεὺς, σόλικον φθόγγον (Silence, O Zeus, the barbarian clamor) and fragment 92 μὴ πως ἄφημα βαρβαρά βαρβαρα (lest you speak the language of barbarians). Although these two examples are merely fragments and it is impossible to place them in their linguistic context, it does seem that they are pejorative.
to describe an obscenity. Sappho says that her girlfriends dress in Lydian style and associate with the Lydian elite (39. 2-3; 98a. 10-11 PLF). Alcman mentions a Lydian headband in his *Partheneia*. These poems with their positive representation of Lydian attire give evidence of the high and respected cultural status of Lydia. Anacreon mentions the Thracians in fragments 417.I and 422 PMG. Ethnographic observation and an awareness of foreign neighbors increase dramatically in the archaic poetry of the seventh and sixth centuries, but without the obvious negative attitude of the fifth century.²⁶

The conclusion of the Persian Wars saw a new attitude concerning the antithesis of Greek and barbarian and Greek culture began to be defined by what it was not, that is, not barbarian. The literature of the fifth century reflects the new attitude. The tragedians utilized the term βαρβαρός to a much greater extent than their predecessors: Aeschylus, 18 times; Sophocles, 11; and Euripides, 110.²⁷ The threatening advance of the Persians was the main impetus for the antithesis, and it created a Panhellenic sentiment that brought all Greeks together against everyone else. All who were not Greek were considered barbarian. The Greeks saw in these barbarians despotism, luxury, tyranny, cowardice, and stupidity and several defining characteristics emerged to distinguish Greek from barbarian, including language.²⁸ Because the Greek world was so large, or at any rate because communication became much better, and included many diverse traditions, religions, and peoples, language became a significant feature to separate the barbarian from the Greeks; if a person did not speak a dialect of Greek, he did not belong. Athenian identity also helped to create the Panhellenic attitude of the mid-fifth century,

²⁷ Bacon, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy*, 10 n.7.
²⁸ Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 17.
especially with the creation of the Delian League. Finally, the sentiment that Greek is to barbarian as freedom is to slavery prevailed and certainly encouraged the antithesis in the fifth century.

**Herodotus**

Herodotus’ representation of the barbarian marginally complicates the antithesis. Because he was an ethnographer, Herodotus clearly had a more avid interest in foreign language and foreign peoples than his predecessors. Throughout his *Histories* he presents the culture and history of both Greeks and barbarians, giving each equal attention, and he relates his stories through several different discourses, such as first-hand knowledge, second-hand knowledge, and so forth. His methodology allows for more consideration of language because of his diversity of sources (e.g. “the Egyptians say…”) and Herodotus often signals to the reader, or listener, that a foreign language was used, through such devices as the presence of an interpreter. Like the tragedians, Herodotus did not reproduce any foreign language in his text, although he did include some foreign words. Colvin believes that it is unlikely that Herodotus could speak any language other than Greek, and thus we should not expect Herodotus to represent a character speaking a foreign language.

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29 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 16-17.
30 Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought*, 23.
31 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 57.
33 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 59.
It is, however, difficult to ascertain where Herodotus stands in the Greek/barbarian antithesis. Because of the attention he gives to non-Greeks, he has been named \( \text{φιλοβάρβαρος} \). \(^{34}\) Furthermore, we should consider the introduction to his work:

\[
\text{‘Ηροδότου Ἀλικαρνησσέως ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε, ὡς μὴ τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῶν ἐξ ἔτη ἱστορῖαι, μὴ ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θομαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἔλλησι τὰ δὲ βαρβάροις ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλεᾶ γένηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι’ ἓν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἄλληλοισι.}
\]

This is the publication of the history of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that neither the things having happened by men become faded by time, nor that the deeds, both great and wondrous, the deeds displayed by Greeks and the deeds displayed by barbarians, become without fame, both the other things and for what reason they fought with each other.

On the one hand, one could view Herodotus as simply laying out the purpose and objectivity of his work with no other motive in mind. On the other hand, perhaps Herodotus is reacting to the Greek jingoism of the fifth century, and his motive is not simply to act as an objective historian, but instead to rebel against the prevailing attitudes of Greece. The first sentence displays quite clearly that the antithesis does exist and that Herodotus was aware of it. \(^{35}\) The question remains, then, whether Herodotus maintains an objective perspective throughout his *Histories* or not.

Some historians believe that Herodotus utilizes the Ionian tradition of objective description, while others liken Herodotus’ treatment of the barbarians to the negative portrayal of barbarians in Aeschylus’ *Persae*. \(^{36}\) Munson is very clear concerning the beliefs of Herodotus: “He displays equal competence among men and the equality of all men concerning religious beliefs, and one of his goals is to show respect for the equal worth of non-Greeks.” Georges believes that “Barbarian failure is an essential historical theme of the *Histories*.” \(^{37}\)

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\(^{34}\) Munson, *Black Doves Speak*, 4; Plu. 2.857a.

\(^{35}\) Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought*, 21.


\(^{37}\) Georges, *Barbarian Asia and the Greek Experience*, 181.
middle, Baldry believes that Herodotus “pays some foreign peoples an almost exaggerated
respect, and sometimes makes comparisons to the disadvantage of the Greeks.” Herodotus
seems to sit somewhere on the fence of the Greek/barbarian antithesis.

Herodotus viewed language as a characteristic custom of a people (6.138) and in the
ethnography he recognizes different languages, not just one universal barbarian language. For
example, the Indians do not all speak the same language (3.98.3), and the Argippaei have their
own language as well (4.23.2). Herodotus gives further evidence of awareness of foreign
language by providing native terms, such as at 2.69: ‘They are not called “crocodiles,” but
“champsae” by the Egyptians (καλέονται δὲ οὐ κροκόδειλοι ἄλλα χάμψαι); at 4.27, ‘For the
Scythians call “one” arima and an “eye” spou’ (ἀρίμα γὰρ ἐν καλέουσι Σκύθαι, σποῦ δὲ
ὀφθαλμὸν.); at 4.106, ‘The Man-Eaters…are nomads, wear clothing like that of the Scythians,
have their own language’ (Ἀνδροφάγοι…νομάδες δὲ εἰσί, ἐσθητά τε φορέουσι τῇ Σκυθικῇ
όμοιῃ, γλῶσσαν δὲ ἰδίῃ…); and, finally, at 4.110 ‘The Scythians call the Amazons Oiorpata,
a name which in the Greek language means ‘man-slayers,’ for the Scythians use oior for “man”
and pata for “kill” (τὰς δὲ Ἀμαζόνας καλέουσι Σκύθαι Οιόρπατα, δύναται δὲ τὸ οὖνομα
tοῦτο κατὰ Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν ἀνδροκτόνοι: οἰόρ γὰρ καλέουσι ἀνδρα, τὸ δὲ πατὰ
kτείνειν). Numerous examples make the same point: Herodotus recognizes the existence of
languages other than Greek and acknowledges them in his narrative, thereby giving them equal
status. We can also view these references, however, as highlighting the differences between
Greek and non-Greek, and, as Munson says, increasing the space between them.¹??

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³⁸ Baldry, The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought, 21.
³⁹ Munson, Black Doves Speak, 23.
⁴⁰ This phenomenon occurs in the Iliad as well: ‘the one the gods call Briareus, but all men Aigaion” (ὢν Βριαρέως
καλέουσι θεοί, ἄνδρες δὲ τε πάντες Αἰγαῖον) (1.403-4) or “that gods call Xanthus, and men Seamander” (ὢν
Σάυθων καλέουσι θεοί, ἄνδρες δὲ Σκαμανδρόν) (20.74). The distinction is, however, between humans and gods.
⁴¹ Munson, Black Doves Speak, 32.
The Pelasgians of Book 1 present an example of the correlation between speaking Greek and being Greek. In this passage Herodotus describes the separate origins of the Spartans and Athenians; the Spartans are descended from the Dorians and the Athenians from the Pelasgians (1.56). He goes on to say that the Pelasgians originally spoke a barbarian language, but, once they changed their language to Greek, they became Greeks:

Εἰ τοίνυν ἦν καὶ πᾶν τοιοῦτο τὸ Πελασγικὸν, τὸ Ἀττικὸν ἔθνος ἐὼν Πελασγικὸν ἄμα τῇ μεταβολῇ τῇ ἔς Ἐλλήνας καὶ τὴν γλώσσαν μετέμειθε.

If all this stock was truly Pelasgian, the Attic race, being Pelasgian, must also have changed its language at their becoming Greeks. (1.57)

Here we clearly see the relationship between language and being Greek; once a group of people acquires the Greek language, they become Greek. It is worth noting that the barbarian origin of the Athenians complicates the validity of the Greek/barbarian antithesis. The attitude that language makes one civilized is also reflected in Aristophanes’ *Birds* 198-200, when Tereus explains to Peisetaerus that the birds will understand their plan to found Cloudcooooland because he taught them language, ‘…For I, having lived with them for a long time, taught them language, being barbarians before’ (ἐγὼ γὰρ αὐτοῦς βαρβάρους ὠντας πρὸ τοῦ / ἐδίδαξα τὴν φωνὴν ἐννοών πολὺν χρόνον). Language was consistently a defining factor between Greek and barbarian. As far as Herodotus was concerned, this defining factor was not limited strictly to Greeks. At 2.158.5, while explaining an oracle, Herodotus says that ‘the Egyptians call all those who do not speak the same tongue barbarians’ (βαρβάρους δὲ πάντας οἱ Αἰγυπτιοὶ καλέουσι τοὺς μὴ ὁφίσθι όμογλώσσους). The fact that the Egyptians have their own Egyptian/barbarian antithesis undermines the Greek/barbarian antithesis.
There is also a range of reactions among Greeks themselves concerning the Greek/barbarian antithesis. We learn from Herodotus that the Spartans ‘called the barbarians “foreigners” (ξέινους γὰρ ἐκάλεον τοὺς βαρβάρους) (9.11.3). One can deduce, then, that for the Spartans there was no distinction between xenoi and barbaroi near the end of the Persian Wars. Although Herodotus does make this claim, he makes the Spartans call foreigners barbaroi at other parts of the narrative. The Spartans, then, seem to have used the terms interchangeably. On the one hand, this strengthens the idea that the Greek/barbarian antithesis was an Athenian invention and did not exist among non-Athenians, like the Spartans who did not see the distinction as cut and dried. On the other hand, one could argue that Herodotus’ statement reflects the attitudes towards barbarians before the Persian Wars and the Spartans’ use of xenoi would be evidence of this. The fact that Herodotus points out the distinction, however, seems to strengthen the case for the Athenian origin of the antithesis.\textsuperscript{42} Regardless of the interpretation, it is clear that Herodotus’ stance is not consistent on the issue.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{42} Munson, \textit{Black Doves Speak}, 16-17.

\textsuperscript{43} Although his history concerns itself with Greek against Greek, Thucydides offers minimal but nonetheless useful information about the relationship between language and being Greek. Like Herodotus’ Pelasgians of Book 1 and the birds of Aristophanes, Thucydides shows how learning to speak Greek is synonymous with being Greek (2.68.5):

\begin{quote}
ήλληνισθήσασιν τὴν νῦν γλώσσαν πρῶτον ἀπὸ Ἀμφρακιωτῶν ξυνοικησάντων. Οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι Ἀμφιλοχοὶ βάρβαροι εἰσίν.
\end{quote}

These people were Hellenized with regard to the language they now speak as a result of their union with the Ambracions. But the rest of the Amphiklochians are still barbarians.

This is, however, the only direct reference of this kind, and nowhere does Thucydides quote Persian like Herodotus. (Colvin, \textit{Dialect in Aristophanes}, 61).
Tragedy

The first extant indication of the antithesis in literature appears in Aeschylus’ *Persae* of 472 BCE, in which he relates the aftermath of the Battle of Salamis. In 494, Phrynicus staged *The Capture of Miletus*, which was the first known historical tragedy and later banned from the stage. Phrynicus was fined 1000 drachmas because the tragedy was too close to the actual capture of Miletus and reminded Greeks of their own downfall. Phrynicus’ *The Capture of Miletus*, his later *Phoenissae*, and Aeschylus’ *Persae* are unusual in that they are about recent events, and, more specifically, about the Persian Wars. We know little about *The Capture of Miletus* and even less about *Phoenissae*, but from the hypothesis of the *Persae* we learn that Aeschylus modeled his historical tragedy on the *Phoenissae*. While the historical aspect of the plays seems to be an abnormality in the genre of tragedy, Hall suggests that we view the plays as part of the process of the invention of the barbarian and the new ideology of the Hellene against the barbarian.

In addition to being the first extant tragedy, the *Persae* is also a new benchmark in literature for linguistic differentiation. The conventions of the tragic stage, with its high decorum, elevated vocabulary, and rigid metrical formulations did not encourage the sort of linguistic innovation that Aristophanes employed. Therefore, while no Persian is actually recreated, Aeschylus uses some foreign words and other techniques to signal to the audience that non-Greeks are on the stage. The play begins with the Chorus of Old Men discussing the state of affairs in Susa; there has been no word about how the Persians are faring in the battle of

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44 Herodotus, 6.21: “They fined Phrynichus a thousand drachmas for bringing to mind a calamity that affected them so personally, and forbade the performance of that play forever” (...καὶ ἐξήμισαν μὴν ὡς ἀναμισσότα οἰκήσας κακὰ χιλίης δραχμῆς, καὶ ἐπέταξαν μηδένα χράσθαι τούτω τῷ δράματι).
45 Aesch. *Pers.* 1-7 (cited by Hall, 64).
46 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 76.
47 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 76.
Salamis. In its description of the generals, the Chorus lists the names of the commanders:

'Αμίστρης, Αρταφρένης, Μεγαβάτης, Αστάσπης... Αρτεμβάρης, Μασίστρης, Ιμαῖος, Φαρανδάκης, Σοσθάνης, Σουσικάνης, Πηγασταγών, and so on. The list serves to insert into the play from the beginning an exotic tone and setting. Similar lists occur later at 958-61 and 966-72, and in these lists no Greek is inserted in between the names, thus emphasizing the exoticism. Aeschylus also utilizes many foreign words without translating them, such as calling Darius βαλήν (658), which Hall suggests is a Phrygian equivalent of βασιλεύς, referring to a Persian trireme with βάρις (554 and 1076), and the accusative Δαριάνα (651) and the vocative Δαριάν (672) for Darius. There are also numerous exclamations and cries of grief: oα (οᾶ, 117, 122), otototoi (ότοτοτο, 268, 274, 1043, 1051), aiai (αίαί, 283, 331, 433, 673, 928, 1039), oι (οῖ, 445, 517, 672), io (ιό, 908, 974, 1004-5, 1070, 1074), ototoi (ότοτο, 918), oioi (οίοι, 932, 1068), oioioi (οίοιοι, 955, 967), ee (εῆ, 977, 1075-6), ioa (ίωά, 1071-2). These interjections serve two purposes. On the one hand, they have an exotic effect, and, on the other hand, the frequency of the exclamations highlights the excessiveness of the Persians. Scholia Σ says that these exclamations were a “Persian lament” and Hall suggests that the repetition and frequency of the threnodic exclamations were “designed to suggest barbarian diction.” Finally, there are some Ionicisms (13, 61, 556, 761) in the speech of the Persians which also create an Eastern atmosphere, although in an indirect way. The Persians would have been most familiar with and would have had the most contact with the Ionic dialect, and often in

49 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 77.
50 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 78; Bacon, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy*, 19-21.
51 See Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, 1072, 1076, 1100, 1114, 1125, 1136, 1146, and 1214 for similar exclamations of grief.
52 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 77; Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 79.
53 Hall, 78-9, n101.
Greek literature Persians refer to Greeks as Ionians. In sum, although Aeschylus did not recreate the Persian tongue in his *Persae*, he uses several devices to create an exotic environment for the audience. Aeschylus essentially set the stage for linguistic characterization of the barbarian. Both Aeschylus in later tragedies and Sophocles and Euripides in their own tragic plays use these same devices.

Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* presents its non-Greeks in a way similar to the presentation of the barbarians of the *Persae*, but the barbarian features of the Danaids are fewer and less conspicuous than those of the Persians. The Greek heritage of the daughters of Danaus is a consistent thread throughout the play, which prevents them from being characterized as exotically as the Persians, who have no claim to Greek origins. There are references to the appearance of the Danaids (234ff), and the chorus of Danaids itself is aware of its own foreignness. At 118, they say ‘O land, you know well my barbaric speech’ (**καρβάνα δ’ αὐδὰν / ἕ, γὰ, κοννεῖσ**). This awareness of one’s own otherness is present throughout the genre and occurs again at 972-4: ‘everyone is ready to cast slander against those who speak another language’ (**πᾶς τις ἐπειπεῖν / ψόγον ἄλλοθρόοις / εὔτυκος**). The Egyptians, who are cognizant that their barbarian status will ensure different treatment, express this sentiment. This provides a glimpse into the fifth-century attitude towards language and supports the notion that language was a defining characteristic between barbarian and Greek. Aeschylus also uses foreign words to add an exotic element to the setting: **βάρις** (836, 873, 882) and **βοῦν** (117, 129, 776).

54 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 79; Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 77.
55 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 78.
56 Ποδαπόν ὁμίλου τῶν’ ἄνελληνόστολον πέπλοισι βαρβάροισι καὶ πυκνώμαις χλίοντα προσφωνούμεν; οὐ γὰρ Ἀργολίς ἐσθής γυναικῶν οὐδ’ ἀφ’ Ἑλλάδος τόπων.
57 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, 118.
58 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 78.
The most barbarian feature of the entire drama, however, is the Egyptian herald, who makes his debut at line 825. In the herald’s discourse throughout the play, Aeschylus uses alliteration, repetition, and cries in order to imitate barbarian speech.\textsuperscript{59} His first utterances are “ό ό ό, α α α” (825), followed by “βαθυχαῖος / βαθρείας βαθρείας…ναί ναί βάση / τάχα θέλες αθέλες / βία βία…βάτεαι βαθυμιτροκακά…” (858-64), and finally “μᾶ Γᾶ μᾶ Γᾶ βοᾶν /…ῶ πᾶ Γᾶ” (890-2, 900-2). These words would have sounded strange and foreign to the Greek listener, who would have quickly characterized the herald as a barbarian.\textsuperscript{60}

Aeschylus’ \textit{Agamemnon} also offers evidence for the attitude towards foreign speakers in fifth-century Athens. In this case it is not the actual language that is criticized but rather a foreigner who cannot communicate with a Greek speaker. This most note worthy linguistic scene of Aeschylus’ \textit{Agamemnon} occurs between Clytemnestra and Cassandra (1060-1), in which Clytemnestra assumes that Cassandra, being a Trojan, will not understand her instructions:\textsuperscript{61}

\begin{quote}
εἰ δ’ ἀξυνήμων οὖσα μὴ δέχει λόγον,
sὺ δ’ ἀντὶ φωνῆς φράζε καρβάνῳ χερί.
\end{quote}

But if you, being not able to understand, do not take in my word,
Then, instead of speech, show with barbarian hand.

\textsuperscript{59} Hall, \textit{Inventing the Barbarians}, 118. The tragedians preferred to portray their barbarians as heterophones, and accomplished this by using particular linguistic devices.

\textsuperscript{60} Similar repetitions and cries are found in Euripides’ \textit{Troades} (1310, 1312) and in the chorus of Phoenician Women in \textit{Phoenissae} (679-81, 818-19).

\textsuperscript{61} A common characterization of barbarian speech is the comparison to the sound of birds. At Ag. 1050, Clytemnestra compares the speech of Cassandra to the twittering of a swallow; ‘Well, if her speech be not strange and outlandish, even as a swallow’s’ (ἀλλ’ ἐπερ ἐστὶ μὴ χελιδόνος δίκην / ἄγνωτα φωνὴν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη) This description also occurs at Herodotus 2.57, Aristophanes’ \textit{Birds} 1680, and Sophocles’ \textit{Antigone} 1001f.
We see again Aeschylus’ attention to foreigners and foreign language, and we can compare this passage to the interaction between Greek and Trojan in the *Iliad*. There both narrator and audience assume mutual intelligibility between Greeks and Trojans, as there are neither any interpreters nor any references to one group not understanding the other. In Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, however, mutual intelligibility is no longer assumed, as we see in the interaction between Clytemnestra and Cassandra. As the tragic poets began to shift mythical characters from the world of the heroic past to the barbarian edges of the world, the Trojans began to be represented as barbarians in the fifth century. The ideological shift of the attitude towards non-Greeks from the Homeric period to the fifth century is clear here.

Of the seven extant plays of Sophocles, not one has a non-Greek setting, and there is only one non-Greek character, the Phrygian Tecmessa of *Ajax*. The extant plays represent no foreign language, and there are only two direct references to foreign language. At *Ajax* 1262-3, Agamemnon says to Teucer: “I could not understand you speaking, for I do not understand the barbarian language’ (σοῦ γὰρ λέγοντος οὐκέτ’ ἂν μάθοιμ’ ἐγὼ· τὴν βάρβαρον γὰρ γλῶσσαν οὐκ ἐπέίμω). At *Trach.* 1060, Heracles says that ‘neither Greece nor any tongueless land’ ever did such a thing to him as Deianeira has done (οὐθ’ Ἑλλάς, οὕτ’ ἠγλώσσος). Here we see the linguistic gulf between Greek and barbarian. The remainder of references to foreign speech lies in the fragments, where a wealth of foreign words appears. Because of the boundaries of tragic diction, however, there are no linguistic differences, such as differences in morphology and phonology, between Greek and barbarian.

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62 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 79
63 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 81
64 Bacon, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy*, 64
65 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 82
66 Bacon, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy*, 68-70. Some examples are: βάκκαρις (incense, fr. 929, a Lydian word), κάνναβις (hemp, fr. 222, a loan word of uncertain origin), ὅρωσάγασι (king’s benefactors, fr. 552, a Persian word), μαγιάς (a cake or table, fr. 668, an Egyptian word), and τιτάρα (a traditional Persian headdress, fr. 379).
Of the tragedians, Euripides most frequently uses the word βάρβαρος, and his plays have the most situations involving Greeks and barbarians; yet he has the fewest instances of foreign words (6), and most of the references to barbarian speech occur in the context of music. Nonetheless, the plays of Euripides do present some interesting items. First, a scholiast on Phoenissae 301 says that the chorus of Phoenician women spoke with a foreign accent, but there is nothing to confirm this in the text and we do not know what source the scholiast used.

Second, Hall compares the lyric diction of the Phrygian in Orestes with the repetitions and exclamations of grief of the Egyptian herald in Aeschylus’ Supplices (1373, 1381, and 1426-8).

Some have suggested that the Phrygian speaks the same broken Greek as the barbarians of Aristophanes, but the text does not support this, and nowhere in his plays does Euripides overstep the boundaries of tragic diction. Nevertheless, he is the only character in Euripides’ plays represented as speaking in a foreign style.

There are several other references to foreign language, which generally occur in lyric sections of the plays and often refer to mourning or song. Colvin points out that the references are to foreign types of song rather than actual foreign language. In addition, the references tend to be formulaic: three of the references contain the phrase ‘βαρβάρῳ βοῶ’ (Orestes, 1385, Phoenissae, 1302-3, 679), and two others use ‘Φρυγίασι βοῶ’ (Bacch, 158-9) and ‘Φοινίκαν βοῶ’ (Phoenissae, 301). Bacon suggests that Euripides is merely adding a colorful and exotic quality to his songs, rather than identifying a person with a particular nationality or


68 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 84; Hall, Inventing the Barbarian, 118

69 Hall, Inventing the Barbarian, 119

70 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 84

71 Bacon, Barbarians in Greek Tragedy, 118

72 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 85; Bacon, Barbarians in Greek Tragedy, 115-9. See Euripides’ Iphigenia at Aulis 576-8, Phoenissae 301ff, 679ff, Bacchae, 124, 156, 160, 1034, Orestes, 1385, 1395-7, Heracles 172.
‘barbarizing’ their character, as Aeschylus did with Cassandra.\textsuperscript{73} Saïd suggests that the antithesis between Greek and barbarian in Euripides was not as clear as it was during the time of Aeschylus and Sophocles, and that the references to barbarian speech in Euripides reflects the era in which he was writing.\textsuperscript{74} Euripides, then, uses other aspects of the barbarian to insert an exotic flair into his plays rather than the alliteration and repetitious cries that represented barbarian speech in the plays of Aeschylus and Sophocles.

The development of the barbarian, then, did not happen overnight. The Homeric texts present a neutral attitude towards the barbarian, who was distinguished simply by his language. Greeks and Trojans alike were kings and the Greek and the barbarian lifestyles were similar; only their language was different. It is rather in the non-human characters that we can see hints of the fifth-century barbarian. Furthermore, it is not until the poetry of Hipponax that an author does something similar to what Aristophanes did by reproducing a foreign language. The close ties between iambic poetry and comedy suggest that Aristophanes knew of Hipponax’s Lydian woman and thought of her when reproducing the speech of the Persian, Triballian, and Scythian in his own plays. The \textit{Histories} of Herodotus, while problematic, nonetheless offer interesting information concerning the recognition of foreign peoples and their language. Once the fifth century began, however, changes in the attitude towards the barbarian manifested themselves specifically in the literature of the tragedians. The tragedians most clearly show the attitude towards the barbarian in the fifth century. The barbarian is consistently portrayed in a negative manner and language became a defining factor in distinguishing the barbarian from the Greek. While no foreign language is represented, the tragedians, particularly Aeschylus, used certain devices, other than obvious indications like costume and props, to signal to the reader that a

\textsuperscript{73} Bacon, \textit{Barbarians in Greek Tragedy}, 119-20

\textsuperscript{74} See Said's article “Greeks and Barbarians in Euripides’ Tragedies: The End of Differences?” for the complete argument on the blurring of the division between Greek and barbarian.
barbarian was speaking. Alliteration, repetition, and frequent threnodic cries typified the tragic barbarian. The stage, then, has been set for the comedic barbarian and the way Aristophanes treats his barbarians.
CHAPTER 3

BARBARIANS AND THEIR LANGUAGE IN ARISTOPHANES

The stage has been set for Aristophanes and his barbarians. Fifth-century Athens saw the development of the barbarian into more than just a linguistic barbarian: in addition to speaking a different tongue the barbarian was foolish, cowardly, brutish, and uncivilized. The barbarians of fifth-century literature possessed negative qualities manifested in their behavior, their manner of dress, and, above all, their language. The same attitude applies to comedy. The comic plays of the fifth century address and mock all these areas of the barbarian. The comedic genre enabled Aristophanes to manipulate language in ways that his literary predecessors could not. In three plays Aristophanes represents barbarian language and gives each barbarian his own distinct linguistic features, some of which are consistent with the barbarian’s ethnic identity. This chapter will examine both the language of the barbarians and its cultural implications in order to determine what Aristophanes’ purpose was in representing barbarian language and what the representation of barbarian language means not only for the image of the barbarian but also for the Athenian attitude towards foreign language. This chapter will first examine the representation of barbarian speech in the fragments of Attic comedy, then the Persian official of Acharnians, the Triballian god of Birds, and finally the Scythian archer of Thesmophoriazusae. From an analysis of their language it will be possible to discern Aristophanes’ attitude towards barbarian language, and perhaps even the Athenian attitude in the fifth century.
Dover claims that there are two classes of scenes of foreign speakers: 1) those in which the language is the point of the joke and 2) those in which language seems to function only as a naturalistic element. He includes the scenes from *Acharnians* and *Birds* in class one, and the scenes from *Thesmophoriazusae* in class two.\(^1\) We will see that the Persian ambassador and Triballian god are necessary for the comic effect of the scene while the Scythian’s language is not essential for the comic effect of the scene. He speaks significantly more lines than the Persian and Triballian, whose garbled Greek results in miscommunication. We will see that Aristophanes uses the language of the Scythian more for realism than a quick joke. These sections, then, will be treated differently.

**The Fragments**

The fragments of the rivals of Aristophanes are hard to navigate. First, the context of a fragment is often difficult to establish, making it is nearly impossible to determine whether or not a foreigner is on the stage. Second, without context, a character’s role in the play is hard to figure out. Finally, the representation of barbarian language is not standard, i.e. presumably not something familiar to copyists. Consequently, there is always the risk of corruption of the text, making it more problematic to decide what the original text was and what a scribe had changed.\(^2\) As Colvin suggests, the fragments that we do have survived more than likely because of the nature of the quotations; because later writers probably did not have an interest in barbarized Greek, no examples parallel to the barbarized Greek of Aristophanes’ three plays appear in the fragments of other comic poets.\(^3\) The only fragments containing anything that one might

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3 Colvin, “The Language of Non-Athenians in Old Comedy,” 287.
perceive as barbarian usually do not refer to a character whose language was consistently barbarian; instead, they generally refer to a character who is being mocked or referred to as a cultural rather than linguistic barbarian.\(^4\) A Phrygian gloss occurs in Philyllius fr. 19.1, but it appears to be the insertion of a foreign word for the purpose of adding an exotic tone to an Attic-speaking character rather than an example of barbarized Greek.\(^5\) Other remaining references to foreign speech occur in fragments in which the poet attacks someone’s heritage or upbringing; the victim is usually a politician. A scholiast on Aristophanes’ *Frogs* 679-83 says that Plato Comicus in his *Cleophon* represented Cleophon’s mother speaking barbarized Greek to him ($\beta_\alpha\rho_\beta_\alpha\rho_\iota\varsigma\omicron\upsilon\alpha\omicron\pi\omicron\delta\omicron\varsigma\alpha\omicron \pi\omicron\delta\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\nu\varsigma$).\(^6\) Similarly, the grammarian Herodian quotes the same author’s play *Hyperbolus* (frag. 183): “Plato however in his *Hyperbolus* mocked the dropping of $g$ as barbarous, as follows: “He didn’t speak Attic…and when he had to say $\omicron\lambda\iota\omicron\sigma$ he came out with $\omicron\lambda\iota\omicron\sigma\iota$…”\(^7\) Colvin suggests that the Greek looks more like a lower-class dialect than barbarized Greek.\(^8\) Other examples show solecisms in the text instead of a direct reference to barbarian speech. For example, Hesychius notes that Hermippus in his *Breadsellers* has $\delta\omicron\kappa\iota\kappa\omega$ instead of $\delta\omicron\kappa\omega$ (frag. 12).\(^9\) Likewise Apollonius on Plato Comicus’ *Metics* (fr. 78) ($\epsilon\iota\varsigma \alpha\pi\omicron\omicron\lambda\iota\alpha\nu \omicron\iota\chi\iota\sigma\omicron\omega\omicron\alpha \iota$) cites that the nominative $\epsilon\iota\varsigma \alpha\pi\omicron\omicron\lambda\iota\alpha\nu$ occurs only here and is used

\(^4\) Colvin, “The Language of Non-Athenians in Old Comedy,” 289.
\(^5\) Colvin, “The Language of Non-Athenians in Old Comedy,” 288, “$\epsilon\iota\varsigma \epsilon\iota\varsigma \alpha\pi\omicron\omicron\lambda\iota\alpha\nu$ $\pi\omicron\delta\omicron\upsilon\chi\omicron\omicron\alpha\omicron$” “I pray that I may breathe deep the healing air”, where $\beta\omicron\delta\omicron\upsilon$ is a Phrygian gloss used to give an exotic tone to the Attic-speaking character.
\(^7\) Πλάτων μέντοι ἐν ᾿Ὑπερβόλῳ διέπαιξε τὴν ἄνευ τοῦ γ χρήματι ὡς βαρβαρον, λέγων οὕτως: ὁ δ’ οὐ γὰρ ἠττικιζέν…όπωτε δ’ ἐπειν δει “ ὀλιγον”, < “ὀλιγον” ᾧ ἔλεγεν.”
\(^8\) Colvin, “The Language of Non-Athenians in Old Comedy,” 289. He also suggests that this form of Greek is similar to that of the Scythian archer in Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazusae*.
probably for a joke.\textsuperscript{10} Unfortunately we do not know the speakers of these lines and therefore cannot determine if they are barbaric or not. Nevertheless, we can see from them that the comic poets did manipulate language for comic effects, unlike their literary predecessors. While Aristophanes is the only poet to create barbarian language in his extant dramas, it is not inconceivable that other poets did the same.

**The Persian of *Acharnians***

Aristophanes’ *Acharnians* offers a rather complicated example of garbled Greek. A Persian official, the King’s Eye, Pseudartabas, appears on the stage with an ambassador who has just returned from Persia presumably having asked for money from the King of Persia to aid the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War. The main function of Pseudartabas’ strange language is to make the audience laugh. However, we can still make observations about the attitude towards foreign language in Aristophanes. The name Pseudartabas literally means “false *artabe*”; according to Herodotus an *artabe* was “a Persian dry measure of about five bushels, exceeding the Attic *medimnus* by three *choinikes*, or about five pints.”\textsuperscript{11} Thus our first impression of the Persian official is that he is a cheat. Artabes was also the name of a Baktrian commander in Aeschylus’ *Persae* (317), so perhaps Aristophanes was evoking Aeschylus’ play. Olson, however, believes that Aristophanes was trying to bring to mind genuine Persian names that begin with ‘Arte-,’ such as Artaphrenes (Aeschylus *Persae* 21; Herodotus 5.25.1) and Artabazos (Thucydides 1.29.1).\textsuperscript{12} Olson’s suggestion seems the more plausible when we consider the language and dress of Pseudartabas in addition to the fact that Aristophanes was probably not

\begin{footnotes}
\item[10] Edmonds, *The Fragments of Old Comedy*, vol. 1, 515: ἐν Μετοίκοις Φερεχράτους ἀπαξ ἐστὶν εἰρημένη (ἡ ἑμαυτός) καὶ ἰσος ἐνεκα τοῦ γελοίου. A similar example is recorded by the Suda on an unknown play of Cratinus (fr. 421): βοδίζου ἀντὶ τοῦ βοδίζε.
\end{footnotes}
purposefully alluding to Aeschylus’ *Persae* but was instead attempting to evoke Persian names in general with the modifying Pseud- added on. Aristophanes also introduces the Persian official as the King’s Eye, ὁ βασιλεύς ὁ φθοραμός, which was an official title within the Persian court. Pseudartabas, as the King’s Eye, would have been one of the officers “given an army and sent out on annual tours of inspection of various satrapies with authority to correct any administrative problems or abuses they discovered; any troubles they could not deal with were reported to the King on their return so that he could take action himself” (Xenophon, *Cyropaideia* viii.6.16). These officials, then, became literally the “eyes and ears” of the king. The way he dresses also shows further literalizing of his title: Pseudartabas is dressed in fancy Persian clothing with a great eye painted on his mask (95-7).\(^\text{13}\) Henderson and Olson establish this based on the Dikaiopolis’ remarks comparing Pseudartabas to a ship and making references to eyes, and, although the text does not explicitly state this as his costume, it is nonetheless an interesting observation. It is also possible that the remarks are referring to pairs of eyes painted on the prows of Greek ships.\(^\text{14}\) There have been debates about whether or not Pseudartabas and his two attendants are actually Persian or Athenian imposters, and this is relevant for determining whether Pseudartabas was speaking actual Persian, a mixture of Persian and Greek, or simply garbled sounds that sounded like Persian.\(^\text{15}\) The reactions of Dikaiopolis to the ambassadors, the attendants of Pseudartabas, and Pseudartabas himself reveal an increasing suspicion on the part of Dikaiopolis that Pseudartabas and his eunuchs are not Persian but Athenian. After Dikaiopolis sends the Athenian ambassadors away, he asks Pseudartabas and his attendants if the

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\(^{13}\) Olson, *Aristophanes’ Acharnians*, 102; Henderson, 27 n94.  
\(^{14}\) Olson, *Aristophanes’ Acharnians*, 103.  
\(^{15}\) Colvin disagrees and says “this is a useless question, however, owing to the inconsequentiality of comic plots; and for the purposes of linguistic analysis of this passage it does not matter, since at the time of his entry on to the stage, Pseudartabas is clearly believed to be Persian” (p. 288). See also Francis, “Oedipus Achaemenides,” *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 113, No. 3 (1992), pp. 333-357.
Great King will send gold. The men appear to shake their heads ‘no’ (113). Dikaiopolis then asks if they are being deceived by the ambassadors, to which Pseudartabas and his attendants nod ‘yes’ (114). Dikaiopolis says that the two attendants have a Greek way of nodding and compares one of them to Cleisthenes, although this may have been an easy opportunity for Aristophanes to ridicule one of his favorite targets (115-122). We can see from the above that confusion could easily arise concerning the nationality of Pseudartabas and his attendants. The identity of Pseudartabas, then, is important, especially when considering Dover’s insightful comment that “language belongs to a character in the sense that it must be coherent with the thoughts, feelings, and acts of that character.”16

In addition to his nationality, scholars have fervently debated the language of Pseudartabas. His first utterance is:

\[ \text{ιαρταμάν ἔξαρξαν ἀπισσόνα(1) σάτρα (100).} \]

Scholars have broken down this line in numerous ways all resulting in interesting interpretations. To the reader of Greek this line is clearly unintelligible; the same is presumably true for the Greek-speaking audience. The scholia offer little help for solving the line, stating only “he speaks in the Persian tongue.” Starkie suggests that Pseudartabas’ words are genuine Persian and mean “The magnificent Xerxes writes to your government.”17 Rogers, in turn, states that the line is “generally supposed to mean ‘I have just begun to repair what is rotten.’”18 Neither scholar makes clear the basis of his translation. Dover offers the translation “Iarta by name, son of Xerxes, satrap” and, assuming a great deal of corruption in the text, suggests that the Greek is actually:

Iarta nama Ξαρχα πυσα σατρα

He bases his translation on the hypothesis that both Aristophanes and the Athenian audience would have recognized certain elements of Persian: the sounds, specifically the use of the vowel -a, the unit -arta, which is ordinary in proper names (e.g. Artaphrenes, Artaxerxes), the name Xerxes, and the supposed word for satrap. The word for satrap in Old Persian, though, is xsaçapāvan-, while in Greek it is σατράπης. It seems strange that Aristophanes would have juxtaposed the Old Persian word for boy, πυσα (Old Persian puça), and the Greek word for a Persian title. Dover unconvincingly suggests as a solution that the Greeks would have assumed that σατρά was the Persian original of the word. Furthermore, he suggests that Pseudartabas’ line contains elements found in greetings in Old Persian documents. Darius’ Behistun inscription, for example, includes: “Intaphernes (by) name, Vayaspara’s son, a Persian” (DB IV 83) and “Vivana (by) name, a Persian, my subject, satrap of Arachosia” (DB III 55). While Dover’s proposal is seductive and makes sense in the context of the play, it is hard to accept simply because it relies so heavily on the assumption that a good deal of corruption occurred.

In response to Dover M.L. West argues that the initial ϊ-, which Dover explained as similar to Persian word initial ya-, is unrealistic because, although the element arta- was common in compounds, it was a word-initial element and thus would not have a word-initial ϊ-. He also maintains that while it was a common enough feature in Greek, it is in no way one of the elements Athenians would have found memorable. He disagrees that “Iarta” is a name, and asserts that “nama” is generally found in third person contexts rather than when the speaker is introducing himself. Finally, he finds fault with the idea of a Persian official simply referring to himself as a ‘satrap’ and, furthermore, finds it hard to believe that Aristophanes had ever heard

19 Kent, Roland G., *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1953), pp. 126, 130. This is also reminiscent of “nalo nāma” (Nala by name) from the Sanskrit story of Nala and Damayantī.
such an individual as “satrap son of Xerxes” previously.\textsuperscript{20} West suggests that the line is not Persian at all, but instead nonsense with Persian noises interspersed, and breaks up the text in the following way:

\[ i-\alpha r\tau a-\nu a\mu e-\xi a\rho \xi a\nu a\, \pi o\sigma o\nu a\, \sigma a\tau a \]

He bases this suggestion on the idea that Aristophanes and his audience had probably heard letters or messages from the Great King read out in Persian and then translated into Greek, and that Aristophanes recalled parts of these messages. He offers this phrase in support of his assertion:\textsuperscript{21}

\[ \theta atiy\, A r t a x s a \alpha \alpha,\, x s a y a \theta i y a\, u a z r a k a\, x s a y a \theta i y a\, x s a y a \theta i y a n a m,\]
\[ x s a y a \theta i y a\, d a h y u n a m,\, X s a y a r s a h y a\, x s a y a \theta i y a h y a\, \pi u c a.\]

‘Says Artaxerxes, great king, king of kings, king of provinces, son of Xerxes the king.’

If the opening phrase of the lines above was generally the same in every message every time it was read, and if Aristophanes heard this phrase more than once, West suggests that the phrase would have been ingrained a little deeper than otherwise. He suggests that the names, Artaxerxes and Xerxes, would have been the most memorable, and, as a result, these are the elements that make up the first half of the line. West’s argument depends on the idea of an “adjacency effect” by which he means that “the probability of recalling a given item from a list of words is significantly increased if it is adjacent to an item already learned.” Thus Aristophanes would have made -i \( \alpha r\tau a \) from the ‘y Artaxsaça’ and \( \nu a\mu e\xi a\rho \xi a\nu a \) from ‘dahyunam Xsayarsahya’ (with the -\( \epsilon \) in \( \nu a\mu e\xi a\rho \xi a\nu a \) as an anaptyctic vowel breaking up the cluster -\( \mu \xi \)). Aristophanes, then, picked up on the syllables that precede the names as he was listening to a similar message being read. The final two words, \( \pi o\sigma o\nu a\, \sigma a\tau a \), are also explained by associations

\textsuperscript{21} Kent, Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon, 2nd ed., A\textsuperscript{1}I, p. 153.
Aristophanes might have had in mind. Pissouthnes, a satrap in Sardis, had been in the public eye a year and a half before the production of *Acharnians* (Thucydides 3.31, 34). West assumes that Aristophanes both knew of him and was thinking of him when he wrote the line. West’s main argument, then, for line 100 is that the line is gibberish made from Persian noises with which Aristophanes and presumably the audience were both familiar.\(^{22}\) His interpretation, then, is untranslatable.

In contrast, Francis puts forth the suggestion that the line is in fact Old Persian according to Brandenstein’s interpretation of the manuscripts as “*hya artamana xsayarsa napaisuv yaunam xsacham.*”\(^{23}\) The translation of this line is “Xerxes the devout one greets the Ionian realm that dwells by the waters.” Francis wholeheartedly agrees with this interpretation, and suggests that the Greek (without too much manipulation of the text) says “*hia artamana Xarxa nap(a)iss (l)ona xatra.*”\(^{24}\) He believes that the Athenian audience would have understood at least a few Persian phrases and therefore the proposed line would not be problematic for them. It seems risky to presume to know what the Athenian audience was capable of understanding and what it was not. A safer assumption, in accordance with West’s interpretation, might be that the audience recognized the sounds of Persian, but could not fully understand what was being said.

One of the most recent interpretations and translations is rather interesting, if only because it is so different. Aveline suggests that the line is:

\[\text{ιαρταμανεξαρξαναπίσσονα σάτρα}\]

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\(^{22}\) West, “Two Passages of Aristophanes,” 5-7.


Rather than assuming the audience would understand some basic elements of Persian that have no meaning, he believes the line is Greek made to sound Persian. Furthermore, he thinks that the line should have some sort of comic element to it, such as a pun, which is lacking in the interpretations of his predecessors. With that in mind, he says that ιαρταμαν is some form of ἀρτέομαι, “to be ready” or “to be prepared.” He proposes that ἔξαρχαν is the first person singular aorist active form of (ἐ)ἀρχω, which can mean “to begin” or “to rule,” while πίσσονα might be a variation of πίσσινος, “covered in pitch.” This suggestion, however, does not account for the ἀ- of ἀπίσσονα. Finally, he thinks that σάτρα is, as everyone else but Starkie says, the term for a satrap. Aveline’s translation, then, is “I, the satrap, am covered with pitch and am ready to begin,” or “I, the satrap, am covered with pitch and am fitted out to rule.”

Clearly, no one really knows what this line says. Most of the suggestions, though, are strong possibilities and any one of them could be correct. Consulting an Old Persian lexicon demonstrates that the majority of sounds that in Aristophanes’ line are sounds found in Old Persian. At the very least Aristophanes was knowledgeable about the noises of Old Persian. The rest, unfortunately, is conjecture.

Regardless of what Pseudartabas first says, though, it is important that Dikaiopolis not understand him, so that the Athenian ambassador can give his interpretation of the Persian’s message. The ambassador manipulates the Persian’s words for his own advantage. He asks Dikaiopolis if he understands to which he replies μα τόν Ἀπόλλων, γώ μεν οὐ (By Apollo, I do not); this allows the ambassador to put his own spin on the Pseudartabas’ words. The Athenian ambassador then tells Dikaiopolis and the assembly that the king is going to send gold and orders

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26 Kent, Old Persian. Arta-, meaning law or justice, also appears in many names. If textual corruption produced -μανε and the original reading was νομε, “name” would be a correct translation. Υαώνα is the Persian word for Ionian.
Pseudartabas to repeat his statement more clearly and loudly. The Persian’s response is clearer and more comprehensible than his first line:

οὐ λῆψι χρύσο, χαυνόπρωκτ’ ἴλοναῦ.

As he speaks his Greek becomes more intelligible. This translates to something like “You will not get gold, loose-assed Ionian.” The message here is clearer, and it is apparent that the Athenian ambassador was deceiving Dikaiopolis who questions the ambassador’s interpretation. Dikaiopolis is correct, making the ambassador the fool.

The last two words of the Persian’s response are worthy of comment. χαυνόπρωκτ’ literally means “loose-assed” or “with a gaping asshole.” Sommerstein suggests that the meaning has to do with anal incontinence and, therefore, the Athenians are incapable of controlling their bowels.27 More probable, however, is that the “gaping” is the result of anal sex and Pseudartabas is suggesting effeminate submission.28 The eye may also be suggestive of a displaced anus. Finally, the “gaping” might refer not only to an asshole, but also to the eye of Pseudartabas’ costume.

The last word of Pseudartabas’ utterance, ἴλοναῦ, is also noteworthy. The Old Persian word for Greek was Yauna, which was a Persian rendering of “Ionian.” The label “Ionian” had associations of effeminacy and cowardice, and both Athenians and Ionians resented being called the name.29 In this context it agrees with the negative tone of Pseudartabas towards the Athenians. When Dikaiopolis speaks a few lines later, his utterance emphasizes the relationship between Greek and non-Greek. Dikaiopolis says “he says the Ionians have gaping assholes if they’re expecting any gold from the barbarian” (χαυνοπρωκτοσ τούς ἴλονας λέγει, εἶ)

27 Olson, *Arisophanes’ Acharnians*, 106.
29 Olson, Aristophanes’ *Acharnians*, 106; see also Herodotus’ *Histories*, 1.143.3 “οἱ μὲν υἱὲν ἄλλοι ἱωνεὶς καὶ οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι ἐφυγόν τὸ ϊόμα, οὐ βουλόμενοι ἱωνεὶς κεκλήσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ύπνον φαίνονται μοι οἱ πολλοὶ αὐτῶν ἔπαισιχύνεσθαι τῷ οὐνόματι.”
Here there is a stark juxtaposition of Ionian and barbarian. While the Persian seems to have the upper hand in the present circumstance, in the end the “Ionians” are still superior because they are not “barbarians.”

In this passage of the *Acharnians* Aristophanes uses the Persian not only to produce a laugh but also to create a scene dependent upon misinterpretation and then clarification. His first utterance is incomprehensible, and his last is closer to genuine Greek and more intelligible. Although the goal of this scene was in all probability to generate a laugh from the audience, we can nevertheless make observations about his and perhaps even the Athenian attitude towards foreign language. First, Aristophanes allows the Persian to speak in his native language (or a language that at least sounds Persian), and thus the Athenians must attempt to understand him. This shows at the very least an acknowledgement of foreign language. While the Pseudartabas’ language is not mocked directly, however, the ambassador still thinks he can abuse the fact that no one understands Pseudartabas. The ambassador uses Pseudartabas’ inability to communicate against him, and convinces all the other characters in the play except Dikaiopolis, the protagonist, that the ambassador’s interpretation is correct. From this discourse we can deduce that Dikaiopolis is alone in his attempt to understand Pseudartabas; the other characters, specifically the ambassador, do not take him seriously and manipulate his words for their own benefit. Perhaps the ambassador’s attitude towards Pseudartabas was the norm in fifth-century Athens. Furthermore, although Pseudartabas insults the Athenians by calling them Ionians, our first impression of him is that he is a cheat. Because comedy has a realistic element that other genres, especially tragedy, do not, we can deduce evidence of current attitudes from the material. In the case of Pseudartabas, the Athenian characters, aside from Dikaiopolis, make no attempt to
genuinely understand his statements. They believe they can manipulate him because of his inability to communicate, and this, perhaps more than anything, leads to the conclusion that foreign language was not highly respected.

The Triballian God in *Birds*

In *Birds*, the Triballian god epitomizes the foolish, uncivilized barbarian. The Triballoi were a real ethnos from Thrace known for their brutality. The Triballian god in *Birds* is a member of a three-god embassy including Poseidon and Heracles. Prometheus introduces the Triballian in line 1520 when he tells Peisetaerus how the sacrifices from humans are not reaching the gods because Νέφελοκοκκυγία lies in between. He says “the barbarian gods, starving and shrieking like Illyrians, say they will march down against Zeus, unless he provides open markets, so that they might import their share of innards” (1520-24). Prometheus likens the barbarians to Illyrians, a Thracian tribe known for its savagery and warlike character. Furthermore, they are slaves to their appetites, an uncivilized characteristic according to the Athenian characters of the play. Later in the discourse between Peisetaerus and Prometheus, Peisetaerus discovers that there are in fact barbarian gods who exist and live ‘upcountry’ from the Olympian gods. The ἄνωθεν in line 1526 and the ἄνω of line 1532 are important; these adverbs place the barbarian gods in a spatial relationship to the Olympian gods. They reside “upcountry,” which implies that they live in a foreign, rustic location. In addition to the fact that Peisetaerus was unaware of their existence, the place where they live is contrasted to the location of the conventional Olympian gods. The Triballian thus is spatially associated with the ‘other’ before he even utters a word.

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Aristophanes also differentiates the Triballian from his co-ambassadors through his clothing. Poseidon announces the arrival of the group and promptly rebukes the Triballian for the manner in which he wears his cloak (θοιμότιον), apparently backwards (1565-1574). When he does fix it, Poseidon is still unsatisfied and likens the Triballian to Laespodias. According to the scholia for 1569 of the *Birds*, Laespodias was a candidate for the *strategia* who, because of some leg deformity wore his cloak unusually low; Poseidon’s comparison suggests not only that the Triballian is incapable of dressing himself, but, more importantly, of dressing himself in the correct, gentlemanly ways of Athens.\(^{32}\) Thus, the Triballian is clearly a foreigner unaware of the norms and customs of Athens. To solidify this comparison, Poseidon says at the end of his speech: πολὺ γὰρ δὴ σ’ ἔγ’ ἔορακα πάντων βαρβαρώτατον θεῶν (You are by far the most barbarian of all the gods I have seen) (1572-73). This statement foreshadows the dialogue between the Triballian and the other characters, as the audience already has an idea of how barbaric and uncivilized the Triballian is before he utters a word. Rather than focusing on his speech, Aristophanes has pinpointed other aspects of the Triballian that emphasize his barbarianism. In a way, Aristophanes has conditioned the audience to expect barbaric behavior (including speech) from the Triballian and perhaps the audience perceives the solecism of the Triballian even more strongly.

νὰ βαισσατρεύ (1615)

When he is first allowed to speak at 1615, the other ambassadors from the gods, Poseidon and Heracles, are discussing with Peisetaerus a possible solution to the conflict between the birds and gods. Peisetaerus asks the opinion of the Triballian who responds: νὰ βαισσατρεύ. What he

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\(^{32}\) Dunbar, *Aristophanes’ Birds*, 490.
says is unclear. The scholia on the line state that ‘the outlandish god assents in outlandish language.’ We can surmise from the scholia’s statement that the scholiast did not know what the Triballian was saying, and that the language was unrecognizable. Also calling both the Triballian and his language ‘outlandish’ increases his negative depiction. Dunbar suggests that νὰ = ναί, and βασιστρέου the vocative Πεισεταιρέ (Yes, Peisetaerus!). She also suggests that the line may be some sort of oath where νὰ = νῆ, making the phrase the barbarian equivalent of νῆ Δία. Translators have tended to throw their hands up in defeat. Henderson obscurely offers little more than the translation ‘Yeah Bubba.’ Sommerstein provides no translation and believes that there is no Greek in this phrase. Friedrich asserts that there is not enough Triballic left to determine whether or not this line contains any real Thracian or not. Finally, Whatmough suggests that his is the ‘correct reading’ and states that Βασιστρέου is the Thracian epithet of Zeus Belsoudros. Regardless of what the Triballian “meant to say” (or what Aristophanes thought the audience would hear), Heracles interprets his response as an affirmative answer in keeping with his own tactic, and subsequently that of Peisetaerus, to manipulate what the Triballian says to suit their own agenda. Heracles’ response, ὁρᾶ, ἔπαινει χοῦτος (See? He agrees, too), does not depend on whether or not he understood the Triballian,

33 Dunbar, Aristophanes’ Birds, 496.
34 Henderson, Jeffrey, Aristophanes’ Birds, Lysistrata, Women at the Thesmophoria, 233.
37 Whatmough, Joshua, “On “Triballic” in Aristophanes (Birds 1615)” Classical Philology, Vol. 47, No.1 (Jan., 1952), 26. Whatmough claims that the meaning is “Campestris” and provides an etymological explanation, stating that it may be a derivative of the pre-Keltic belsa (campus). Whatmough’s This explanation, however, seems unlikely, because he is assuming that not only is Aristophanes knowledgeable about Thracian but also aware of historical linguistics. If Aristophanes knew more Thracian, it seems that the Triballian god would 1) have more lines and 2) we would be able to discern what he is saying. Also, no other scholars agree with Whatmough’s explanation. He also states that the alternation τρ: Δπ between Greek and Thracian is normal. Again, this explanation does not help in elucidating the meaning and Whatmough neglects to explain why the Triballian god would give such a response.
but rather on whether or not he can convince those around him that he understood what they did not. A similar exchange occurs earlier in *Birds* between Peisetaerus and the Oracle Collector where each provides an oracular response to his advantage. We never learn what the oracle actually says, nor does it matter. The effect of the scene, which includes both sense and nonsense, is comedy. Likewise, what the Triballian says, in turn, is essentially pure gibberish and unintelligible, and consequently produces a humorous scene. He is unintelligible and for a good reason. The other characters need to manipulate his answers in order for the scene to end in Peisetaerus’ favor.

σαῦ νάκα βακτάρι κροῦσα. (1627)

As the Triballian continues to speak, his statements become easier to understand and more closely resemble Greek than his first statement. The ambassadors and Peisetaerus continue to discuss how to resolve the conflict, and, as in the previous passage, the Triballian does not participate until the other ambassadors directly address him. It seems that either he cannot understand what they are saying or that he has nothing wise or useful to add. Either situation accords with the Greek view of the barbarian; he is too foolish to understand Greek, or too dull-minded to devise his own solution to the problem. Poseidon nevertheless invites him back to the discussion by telling Heracles to ask the Triballian. Rather than simply asking him what he thinks, Heracles instead threatens him with violence. The Triballian’s response is σαῦ νάκα βακτάρι κροῦσα. The interpretation of this line could take a few paths. It would not be difficult to understand σαῦ as σύ, νάκα as νάκος or νάκην (hairy skin), βακτάρι as βάκτηριον (stick), and κροῦσα - from κρούειν (to hit). The translation of this line, then, could

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be something like “you strike my hide with your stick?” (Dunbar), or “I’ll hit your hide with my stick!” (Dunbar), or “Yo basha hide wit steek?” (Sommerstein), or even “No hittum hide wit bat” (Henderson). These translations incorporate the image of the barbarian as a cowardly brute who may be cowering down before Heracles’ stick (aside from Dunbar’s suggestion of “I’ll hit your hide with my stick!”). As with the first statement of the Triballian, Heracles interprets his words for his own benefit. In neither case does anyone question Heracles’ interpretation; thus it appears that either no one could understand what the Triballian was saying, or that Heracles was quite convincing in his response, or both. Up to this point in the scene, then, the important point is not what the Triballian actually says, but how Heracles interprets it. Aristophanes, then, still portrays the Triballian as a foolish, dull-witted barbarian. The Triballian god does not seem to be concerned with whether or not Heracles interprets what he is saying correctly, and, in reality, it does not matter if what he says is intelligible or not. The comic effect produced by this scene is the fact that no one understands what he says, and that Heracles manipulates him for his own use. He is the simplest form of barbarian; in the scene neither he nor his words pose a threat, and, as far as the debate between the birds and the gods goes, his role is of little consequence. Up to this point, the Triballian’s utterances are nothing more than an opportunity for humor.

καλανε κορανα και μεγαλα βασιλιναυ όρνιτο παραδέδωμι (1679)

In his final utterance, however, Aristophanes finally allows the Triballian to be an active participant in the debate with the ambassadors. The discussion turns to whether or not Peisetaerus should be given Basilea. Heracles and Poseidon are pitted against one another; Peisetaerus then says ἐν τῷ Τριβαλλῷ πᾶν τὸ πράγμα. τί σὺ λέγεις; (The whole matter is, the Triballian. What do you say?) (1678). Here again the Triballian has remained quiet until
directly addressed. His response is the most intelligible and closest resemblance to Greek thus far: καλανί κοραυνα και μεγαλα βασιλιναυ όρνιτο παραδίδωμι (I hand over the beautiful girl and great queen to the birds). This is the first definitive answer the Triballian has given and the only one where he speaks using a first-person singular verb. He actively answers Peisetaerus and gives a comprehensible vote. Heracles once again interprets the Triballian’s answer for his own benefit, but, unlike the previous instances, this time Poseidon questions the validity of Heracles’ response. He says μα τον Δι' ουχ ουτος γε παραδουναι λεγει, ει μη βαβαζει γ’ εδωπερ αι χειδονες (No, by Zeus, he is not saying to hand her over; he’s merely jabbering like the swallows).

We need to examine Poseidon’s response for a several reasons. To begin, it is ridiculous that Poseidon does not understand the Triballian’s answer. It is the most intelligible thing he has said and Poseidon should have been able to comprehend at least parts of it; instead, Poseidon claims that the Triballian is simply twittering like a bird. The Triballian’s response is crucial for the climax of the play; here his answer does matter. Long suggests that it is a desperate attempt on Poseidon’s part to have things turn his way; this seems plausible, seeing that Poseidon gives up easily in the next few lines. Furthermore, Poseidon’s response recalls a line from Aeschylus’ Agamemnon. The audience perhaps would have recognized from Aeschylus: άλλα επερ μη χελιδόνος δίκην / ἀγνώτα φωνήν βάρβαρον κεκτημένη, / ἔσω φρενών λέγουσα πείθω νυν λόγῳ” (Well, if she is not using speech strange and barbaric, just as a swallow’s, I, speaking within her wits, persuade her with speech) (Agamemnon, 1050-52). Perhaps Aristophanes wanted his audience to think of Cassandra and Clytemnestra; in this case, the Triballian is likened to Cassandra and Poseidon to Clytemnestra. If we grant the comparison,

this presents an interesting example of the feminized barbarian. While each scene contains a foreigner who cannot be understood, the circumstances are different: the Triballian, although unintelligible for the majority of his appearance, in the end is the crucial character, while Cassandra, had she been able to communicate with Clytemnestra, would have had a more powerful effect on the outcome of the play but was instead dismissed by Clytemnestra. A more plausible explanation, however, is that Poseidon is attempting to ignore what the Triballian has said and dismiss it as garbled foreign speech.

We have seen that most of the Triballian’s lines are unintelligible. There are, however, some consistent features in his speech: the addition of -αυ to the end of words, a lack of proper inflectional endings, -α for -η, and the inability to pronounce aspirated consonants.\textsuperscript{40} Like his representation of the Persian, Aristophanes’ portrayal of the Triballian god reveals certain opinions that Athenians might have had about barbarians in general: they do not speak correctly, they are slaves to their appetites, they cannot dress properly, and they can be manipulated because of their inability to communicate and their lack of intelligence. When compared to the Persian, though, there are differences between the two, and from these differences we can conclude that, although they are labeled by the same term, each has his own language and characteristics. For example, the Triballian god is mocked much more than the Persian; this may have something to do with Pseudartabas’ status as an ambassador. Furthermore, Pseudartabas manages to insult the Athenians, whereas the Triballian makes no attempt at slander. The focus of Aristophanes’ attack on the Triballian is clearly his language, however, and because of this,

\textsuperscript{40} Colvin, \textit{Dialect in Aristophanes}, 209.
we can again surmise that both Aristophanes and Athenians did not think highly of barbarian language (on the assumption that the view of Aristophanes are in line with those of the general public because of the realistic quality of comedy).

The Scythian Archer of *Thesmophoriazusae*

In contrast to the Persian and the Triballian, the Scythian is a more prominent character. He has significantly more lines than both the Persian and the Triballian combined, and his language is closer than theirs to pidgin Greek. As mentioned above, Dover claims that there are two classes of scenes of foreign speakers: 1) those in which the language is the point of the joke and 2) those in which language seems to function only as a naturalistic element. As will be shown, because the Scythian’s language is not essential for the comic effect of the play, he belongs in the second class. Mutual intelligibility occurs throughout his discourse. The use of pidgin Greek for the Scythian makes his role in the play that much more believable, and the form of pidgin Greek he speaks is thought to be an actual imitation of the Attic Greek a Scythian archer in fifth-century Athens would have spoken.

The realistic portrayal of the Scythian is important for several reasons. To begin, Aristophanes’ character is one of our main sources on Scythian archers in fifth-century Athens. It is unclear when the Scythian archers arrived in Athens and how many there were in Athens during the fifth century. Our main source for their arrival in Athens is Andocides’ *On the Peace with Sparta*, which dates from 392/391 BCE, and is, according to more than one scholar, “notoriously inaccurate.” Regardless of their exact date of arrival and their precise number, the

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41 Dover, “Language and Character in Aristophanes,” p. 239; See page 2.
Scythian archers had enough of a presence for Aristophanes to include them in three of his plays. We can deduce from the plays that their main duties as state slaves were to assist in the direction of public places and the courts, to rope loiters into the Assembly, and to serve on a regular basis in the Athenian army. Ehrenberg claims that the presence of the archers “was generally accepted without grumbling, and without any feeling of humiliation.” The basis for his claim is unclear, and, although he does mention the fact that “their uncouth behavior, their broken Greek and their general stupidity were open to derision, and so provided the poet with a useful and easy target for fun,” he cites only one passage from Lysistrata (discussed below) and it negates his original statement. In Lysistrata the Magistrate brings with him two slaves and four Scythian archers to arrest the women. Upon being arrested, Lysistrata exclaims: “By Artemis if he so much as touches me with his fingertip, being a public servant, he’ll be weeping!” (ei τοῦ θεοῦ τιν’ Ἀρτεμίδος τίν’ χείρα μοι ἄκραν προσοίσει δημόσιος οὖν, κλαίεται, (435). The Magistrate sends in other Scythians, but the women have a backup force waiting which eventually defeats the Scythians. Likewise in Acharnians, Dikaiopolis protests the removal of Amphitheus by the Scythian archers and is outraged about their treatment of Amphitheus (56-7). The evidence from Aristophanes, then, suggests that the Scythians were not generally kindly received in fifth-century Athens.

Andocides lists benefits to Athens from the Thirty Years Peace negotiated with Sparta in 446 that included the purchase of 300 Scythian archers, the fortification of the Peiraeus, the building of the Long Walls, and the addition of 100 triremes (3.5). The Peiraeus was not fortified in 446, however, but instead more than thirty years earlier in the 480s, and the Long Walls were built around ten years earlier than Andocides says. The number of Scythians is also problematic. While Andocides says in 3.5 that 300 were purchased, he says in 3.7 that there were 1,200. A scholiast on Acharnians 54 declares that the number was 1,000, and Thucydides (2.13) mentions 1,600 toxotoi (unspecified archers).

44 Hall, The Theatrical Cast of Athens, 233.
46 Ehrenberg, The People of Aristophanes, 175
The second reason the Scythian is so important is his language. Of the three foreigners he has the most lines by far. Among many other treatments Andreas Willi’s *The Languages of Aristophanes* thoroughly analyzes the speech of the Scythian. His predecessors, Friedrich and Brixhe, approached the language of the Scythian as evidence for lower-class native Greek in general. Willi accepts their linguistic results but rejects the cultural implications of their analysis. The Scythian archer presumably was not a native Greek, and so learned Greek upon his arrival in Athens, perhaps in the barracks in which he lived. There is no evidence that his pidgin Greek reveals features of lower-class native Greek. It seems quite reckless, then, to suggest that the language of the Scythian is representative of all lower-class native Greeks in fifth-century Athens. Nevertheless, his speech, for the most part, does show consistent features. Because he has so many lines and Aristophanes consistently represents his speech, it will be beneficial simply to discuss the main phonological, morphological, syntactic, and lexical features of his language. To begin, the Scythian replaces voiceless aspirates with voiceless stops, so θ, χ, and φ are substituted with τ, κ, and π. For example, rather than ἐνταυθα, the Scythian says ἐνταυτα (1001), rather than φωνη, πωνη (1086), and κεφαλη rather than κεφαλη (1128). He consistently deaspirates initial aspiration. For example, ἵνα becomes ἵνα (1007), ἥ becomes ἥ (1091/2), and ἵκετευσι becomes ἴκετευσι (1002). The final characteristic of his phonology is the lack of final -ν and -ζ. We see the loss of final -ν where τῆ μισρά should have been τῆν μισράν (1096), and the loss of final -ζ with πανούργο (1112) and κόμο (1176). In his morphology, he iotacizes the endings of verbs in the present active indicative in the first- (1104 λέγι), second- (1102 λέγι), and third-person singular (1176 ἄνεγειρι); the future active indicative of the first- (1003 δρᾶσι) and second-person singular (1187 κλαύσ(ι)), the aorist active

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47 Willi, *The Languages of Aristophanes*, 201, 205-206.
subjunctive of the first- (1007 ἦξινιγκι) and second-person singular (1002 ἱκετευσι), the present active imperative of the second-person singular (1001 οἶμωξι), the aorist active and passive imperatives of the third-person singular (1179 μελετήσι and ὄρκησι), and the perfect and future perfect passive indicatives of the third-person singular (1215 καταβήμησι; 1127 ἀποκεκοψι).

Sometimes -ις does appear in the second-person present active indicative (1083 and 1087 λαλις, 1089 (ἐ)κάσκις), but this is not consistent. There are places where the endings -ει/-εις appear, but Willi attributes them to later scribal corrections and assumes that in the original text all verb endings were a simple -ι.\(^{49}\) The Scythian by and large ignores gender (1097 λόλο και κατάρατο γυναῖко, 1123 and 1199 τῇ γέροντο, 1188 καλῇ τὸ σκῆμα). He is also marked by his inability to inflect nouns and sometimes giving them a passepartout -ο (1103 gen. sg. το γραμματέο, 1112 nom. sg. κλέπτο, 1123 acc. sg. γέροντο). He uses incorrect cases for pronouns (1007 σοι for σε, 1126 σ(ε) for σου, 1176 μοι for με, 1193 ἐμε for ἐμοί). He impressively uses parataxis, conditionals, and imperatives. His vocabulary, especially his vulgar vocabulary, is quite extensive, and he uses diminutives.\(^{50}\) Aristophanes, then, has produced the language of a Scythian archer, even in iambic trimeter. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know definitively whether or not Aristophanes imitates or creates the Scythian’s language since Aristophanes is considered a primary source for the corps of Scythian archers in Athens. We can say, though, that the simplicity of his speech was presumably similar to the speech of non-native slaves.\(^{51}\)

\(^{49}\) Willi, The Languages of Aristophanes, 204-205.

\(^{50}\) Hall, The Theatrical Cast of Athens, 230; Willi, The Languages of Aristophanes, 219-220.

\(^{51}\) Hall, The Theatrical Cast of Athens, 229.
Now we must consider why Aristophanes chose to represent the Scythian’s broken Greek rather than simply writing in Attic Greek. First and foremost, the Scythian’s language would have been a source of much humor. Aristophanes’ primary intent was more than likely to give the audience a laugh. Clearly manipulation of language was for Aristophanes an opportunity for a joke, as evidenced by his treatment of the Triballian and the Persian. The Scythian’s language, however, does more than simply give the audience an easy laugh. The Scythian’s broken language serves to set him even further apart from his Greek interlocutors. Throughout the final scene of *Thesmophoriazusae* Aristophanes shows the many ways in which the Scythian is different from his Athenian counterparts; his language is the most obvious difference and serves to emphasize the other differences. His language immediately lets the audience know that they are listening to and watching a foreigner, not an Athenian, and this recognition will enable the audience to make other assumptions about him, perhaps even stereotypical ones. The odds are against him as soon as he utters his first line and creates an immediate contrast between himself, on the one hand, and Euripides and the kinsman, on the other.

In the final lines of the play Aristophanes parodies three of Euripides’ escape dramas: *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, *Helen*, and *Andromeda*. There are also similarities with Euripides’ *Cyclops*. In these escape dramas Greek heroes and heroines outsmart barbarians and escape because of their superior intelligence. All these plays share certain plot features: exotic location, an *anagnorisis* by the rescuer, and a barbarian male tricked by the superiority of the Greek mind. The final scene of the *Thesmophoriazusae* mirrors the features of Euripides’

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escape plays. In *Thesmophoriazusae* the kinsman is being held in a foreign place (an all-women’s festival), Euripides is his rescuer, and a barbarian, the Scythian archer, later outwitted by Euripides, watches over the kinsman.

The mirror imagery between Euripides’ escape plays and Aristophanes’ *Thesmophoriazusae* also serves to alienate the Scythian from his Athenian interlocuters. In the escape plays the barbarian is generally outwitted by means of a *mechane*, but usually not until the very end of the play. In *Thesmophoriazusae* Euripides and his kinsman try all sorts of methods to trick the Scythian into letting the kinsman go, mainly through the parody of Euripides’ plays, but none works. The first attempt to deceive the Scythian occurs right after he appears with the Kinsman tied to a plank. The Kinsman notices that Euripides has disguised himself as Perseus, and therefore the Kinsman takes on the persona of Andromeda. Here begins the parody of Euripides’ *Andromeda*. The Kinsman (as Andromeda) begins a long lyric passage with “How might I get away and escape the Scythian?” The Kinsman continues on until Echo, who in Euripides’ play lived in the cave where Andromeda was chained, enters the scene and at first repeats the laments of the Kinsman but shortly thereafter repeats everything the Scythian mispronounces.\(^54\) This scene allows Aristophanes to emphasize even more the linguistic chasm between the Scythian and everyone else. As Euripides continues the *Andromeda* parody it becomes more and more clear that the parody eludes the Scythian. He says of the Kinsman, “that’s no maiden! That’s a sinful old man, a thief and a villain!” (1111). When Euripides (Perseus) expresses his love for Andromeda, the Scythian replies, “I’m not jealous of you. But if his asshole were turned around this way, I wouldn’t be annoyed that you take him and screw him!” and later offers the suggestion that Euripides “bore a hole in the plank and screw him from

behind.” The Scythian is completely unaware of the tragic allusion. Euripides realizes this and in an aside says “Ah me, what shall I do? Towards what arguments shall I turn? But his barbarian nature is not receptive. For, I say, apply a novel, wise plan to fools and you would squander in vain. But a different device, fitting for him, must be applied” (1128-32). Tragedy, the art of the Athenians, is impenetrable to the Scythian; he is unable to recognize tragic diction and as a result cannot participate in the paratragic experience. The real victim of the scene is not the Kinsman but rather the Scythian, excluded from the experience in which the audience as well as all the actors on the stage are able to participate because they recognize the tragic references. Since the Scythian is unable to recognize Euripides’ devices, Euripides resorts to a physical mechane that will surely work on the Scythian: lust. Euripides brings in a dancer to lure away the Scythian giving the Kinsman a chance to escape. This final attempt to trick the Scythian is successful and the Kinsman sneaks out before the Scythian can catch him. The escape-play parodies, then, serve to alienate the Scythian further from his Athenian interlocutors. He neither speaks their language nor does he participate in the paratragic experience open to everyone else (including the audience).

The language of the Scythian, then, is just another way in which Aristophanes makes him the “other.” According to MacDowell, the Athenians considered those who could not speak Greek incompetent, and this sentiment, while extreme, does capture Aristophanes’ attitude towards the barbarians in his plays. The Scythian can speak intelligible Greek, but it is not Attic Greek and he does not participate in the paratragic experience in which the other characters and audience participate, that is, he is not intelligent enough to participate.


Through an analysis of the language of the Scythian we can also make observations about the Triballian and Persian. Because the Scythian’s language is so consistent and apparently not corrupted by later scribes, we can say something about the transmission of the texts of *Birds* and *Acharnians*: the strangeness of their languages goes back all the way to Aristophanes, and Aristophanes meant for them to sound the way they do. He is responsible for the way their words are represented. This statement solidifies the argument that Aristophanes did something unique in Greek literature and represented his barbarians and their language in a way that none of his predecessors either thought to do or had the freedom to do because of the genre in which they were working.

**Conclusion**

We must now ask what the point is in evaluating the speech of Aristophanes’ barbarians. First and foremost, the barbarians are present for comic effect, and Aristophanes uses their speech to generate a laugh from the audience. There is also, however, a significant amount of sociolinguistic and linguistic information that we can glean from these passages which provides interesting and useful knowledge about the fifth-century attitude towards foreign language as a result of the Persian Wars. After the Persian Wars the fifth century saw a new barbarian, one who not only spoke differently but also was considered genetically inferior to his Greek counterpart. While the ideological shift of the attitude towards their language cannot be detected in other genres, it is clear in comedy thanks to its foundation in dramatic realism and, as a result, Aristophanes offers a unique perspective that does not exist elsewhere in Greek literature up to the fifth century.
From the Aristophanic evidence, we can conclude that fifth-century Athenians did not regard barbarians or their language highly. Misinterpretation and misunderstanding abound, and mutual intelligibility is virtually non-existent. The speech of Aristophanes’ barbarians functions as part of their identities, and, because of the negative way in which Aristophanes portrays them, it stands to reason that Aristophanes was making some sort of social comment about the way he and fifth-century Athenians view language, and, by extension, the way he and fifth-century Athenians view foreign peoples. Aristophanes excludes them from participating in Greek culture, and mocks their language, their appearance, and their intelligence; he attacks them from all sides. His representation of the barbarian and his language, then, is wholly negative, and, because of the nature of comedy, can be applied to the perception of the barbarian in fifth-century Athens.
CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

Aristophanes’ treatment of the barbarian and foreign language is a reflection of the ethnocentricity of fifth-century Greece after the Persian Wars and the increasing Panhellenic attitude. This attitude was not always present, as our survey of Homeric literature has shown, and did not present itself until the production of Aeschylus’ *Persae*.¹ Aeschylus and the other tragic poets, however, did not portray the barbarian and his language in the same way that Aristophanes did. The tragic poets did use certain devices in their plays to alert the audience that a barbarian was on stage; not once, however, did a tragic poet in the fifth century put a non-Greek language into the mouth of a barbarian as Aristophanes did. The same is true of the Greek historians. Herodotus makes mention of foreign languages, but never represents a foreign language in his text other than to demonstrate when a certain group uses a different word, such as the Scythians calling the Amazons *Oiorpata*, or man-killers (4.110). Not until the comedies of Aristophanes do we see barbarians speak a language other than Attic Greek, and, as a result, we have a unique perspective on the Athenian attitude towards foreign language.

The Aristophanic examples offer clear evidence of the changed attitude towards barbarians and their language in the fifth century, and, while some of their utterances are untranslatable, that incomprehensibility seems to be the point. If we, the reader and audience, can understand their words, then Aristophanes has not done his job. The barbarians need to be manipulated in order for the joke to work, but they also must be mistreated in order for

¹ As was shown in Chapter 1, Hipponax comes the closest to Aristophanes’ representation of foreign language.
Aristophanes’ plays to be consistent with the prevailing attitude during the time of composition.

As a result Aristophanes employs humor and reflects the mind-set of fifth-century Athens.

I turn now to other areas of interest relevant to this topic which did not quite fit the thematic schema of the thesis. My questions will illuminate the representation of the barbarian in ways not addressed in the previous chapters and will be useful for looking beyond Aristophanes and more closely at other aspects of the fifth and later centuries.

For a different perspective on the barbarian prior to and after the Persian Wars the art of the fifth century is an appealing place to begin. One only has to think of the metopes of the Parthenon to know that the opportunity to study this representation of the barbarian would be a worthwhile endeavor. Furthermore, through an exploration of the development of the barbarian in Greek art it would be interesting to see if a similar ideological shift in the Athenian attitude after the Persian Wars occurred just as we see in the literature of the fifth century. A simultaneous shift in the literature and art of the fifth century would further strengthen the suggestion that the success of the Persian Wars was the true catalyst for the new image of the barbarian.

An investigation of the barbarian in New and Roman Comedy would be a useful exercise to highlight Aristophanes’ representation of the barbarian and his attitude towards foreign language. The comedies of Menander, Terence, and Plautus, particularly his Poenulus in which he represents some form of the Carthaginian language, could show the influence of Aristophanes on his successors and the way they treat foreign language and barbarians. It would also be interesting to ask if the later comic poets’ treatment of the barbarian reflects the actual attitude of the time or if the treatment is a result of Aristophanes’ influence. This examination may also reveal later attitude shifts comparable to the shift in the fifth century.
The discussion of Aristophanes’ treatment of barbarians and their language also leads to questions about other cultures’ ethnocentric attitudes and thoughts about language. For example, the statement in Herodotus’ *Histories* that “the Egyptians call all those who do not speak the same tongue barbarians” suggests that this attitude towards language was not restricted to Greeks (2.158.5). Furthermore, whether some historic event occurred that caused this attitude of language superiority would also be important to investigate. While this activity may be difficult to complete because of the lack of extant literature from other cultures’ literary corpora, an examination of the portrayal of the barbarian in Latin literature and Roman culture would be feasible. Finally, it would be most beneficial to learn if there is an equivalent term for ‘barbarian’ in other ancient languages and what its derivation is. The Greek term βαρβαρός was an onomatopoetic expression for someone who could not speak Greek correctly. It would be exciting to explore other languages for a corresponding term.

In sum, there are many directions in which Aristophanes’ handling of barbarians and foreign language can send us. An analysis of his Persian ambassador, Triballian god, and Scythian archer serves not only to illuminate the ethnocentricity of the fifth century, but also to put us on other courses of analysis to examine the topic more deeply and from a different viewpoint.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

ARISTOPHANES’ USE OF GREEK DIALECT

In contrast to his treatment of barbarian characters, Aristophanes handles non-Athenian Greek characters neutrally. In two plays he reproduces the speech of non-Athenian Greeks and has them speak in their own native dialects: Megarian, Boeotian, and Laconian. These non-Athenian speakers consistently display mutual intelligibility with Attic speakers, and their language is not mocked.

Realism was a feature of Old Comedy, and Aristophanes uses dialect in order to enhance the realistic element in the plays. If we again consider Kenneth Dover’s formulation that a character’s language must be in line with his behavior, emotions, and thoughts, we see that this is the case for both barbarians and non-Athenian Greeks.¹ The non-Athenians’ language is a part of their character; in their case, Aristophanes’ presentation of their language has no obvious negative connotations. This appendix will look specifically at the language of the Megarian and Boeotian in Acharnians and the Spartan Lampito, the Spartan herald, and the Spartan delegate in Lysistrata with eventual goal of showing in what ways Aristophanes treats barbarian language differently. First, however, I propose to examine Greeks’ attitudes towards dialect in general in order to set the stage for the remainder of the appendix.

The status of dialect in fifth century Greece was much different from the status of barbarian languages. We can again reflect on the statement from Herodotus that Greeks were united by common language (ὅμογλωσσον), blood, religion, and way of life (8.144). The word

ομόγλωσσόν, meaning ‘same language’ implies that Greeks (or at least Athenians, since the
speaker is an Athenian) consider all Greek dialects equal. In the fifth century there was no
standard Greek language, such as the later koine, and no hierarchy of dialects, partly, no doubt
due to the fact that some dialects then appeared prominently in literary genres.\(^2\) Pindar, for
example, wrote his epinician odes not in Boeotian, although he was from Thebes, but in literary
Doric, Hippocrates wrote in Ionic, although he was from Cos, and Athenian tragic poets wrote in
Attic with Doric choruses. Inscriptions, however, show that certain regions did use certain
dialects, and very little dialect switching occurred. A dedicator generally wrote in his own
dialect, regardless of whether he made the dedication abroad or at home; and if the dedication
was a sculpture, the artist signed his name in his own dialect even if it differed from the dialect
of the dedicator.\(^3\) We can also assume that dialects were accepted in other regions in light of
Socrates’ statement near the beginning of the Apology (17D-18A):

\text{
\begin{quote}
\textit{\textit{α}τεχνως \textit{ο}υν \textit{xενως \textit{ε}χω της \textit{ενθάδε λεξεως. \ωσπερ \ο\nuν \α\ν, \ει \tau\ω \ο\υνι \ε\νως
\ε\τυγχανον \ων, \σ\υ\ν\ε\γ\ι\γ\υ\ς\ω\κ\ε\κ\ε\τε δ\η\π\ου \α\ν \μ\οι \ε\ι \ε\κ\ε\ι\νη \τ\η \φ\ω\νη \τ\ε \κ\αι \τ\ω \tau\ρ\ό\π\ω\ρ
\ε\λ\ε\γ\ου \ε\ν \ο\υ\σ\πε\ρ \ε\τε\β\ρ\άμ\ι\μ\η\ν, \κ\α\ι \\nu\\nu \\tau\ο\υ\τ\ο\ \\u\m\o\w \\d\ε\ο\m\a\i \d\ι\κ\αι\ο\υ\n, \ω\ς \γε \\m\o\i \\d\o\κ\w\, \tau\ο\\nu \\m\e\n \tau\ρ\ό\π\ω\ρ \τ\η\ς \l\ε\x\e\w\o\ς \\e\a\n…}
\end{quote}

Therefore I am simply a stranger to the manner of speech here. Then, just as you would
surely pardon me, if I happened truly to be a foreigner, if I spoke in that dialect and
manner in which I was raised, just so now I require this just thing from you, as I see it
anyway, to allow this manner of speech.

This passage suggests that it was commonplace to accept a speaker’s native language rather than
punishing him for not using the Attic dialect. This situation must have been fairly common in the
late fifth century when citizens of allied states had to plead cases in Athens. One dialect, then,
presumably did not have a higher status than another, and dialects other than Attic were accepted

\(^3\) Mickey, K., “Dialect Consciousness and Literary Language,” 36.
without negative judgment. Dialect can also be worthy of remark, however, even if accepted, as at *Phaedo* 62A where the Boeotian Cebes exclaims "Ἰττῶ Ζεύς and we learn that he does so τῇ αὐτῷ φωνῇ εἶπόμου ("speaking in his own dialect").

The use of dialect in Greek literature is similar to the use of barbarian language. Authors generally did not use dialect as a way to color the text. In the Homeric texts there is no dialect coloring, and all speakers, Greek and barbarian alike, speak in the same artificial Homeric dialect. Moreover, little mention is made of the existence of dialect. The historians Herodotus and Thucydides rarely make use of dialect other than the dialect in which they write, and, when they do, it is generally for realism in the text. Herodotus, for example, does not recognize the dialects of speakers in the text, but he sometimes adds dialect glosses. Thucydides also does not represent the dialect of non-Attic speakers, nor would we expect him to based on what he tells us in 1.22.1, that his speeches are not eye-witness accounts but that instead he aims to provide a general sense of the things said. Thucydides himself does not write in pure Attic, but rather he adds an Ionic style to his text by using -σσ- instead of -ττ-, and -ρσ- rather than -ρρ-. A few dialect glosses do occur in the text, but, as with Herodotus, the historical prose genre generally did not utilize dialect switching in the texts. There are, however, two treaties between the Spartans and Argives in Thucydides’ text. One is written in Laconian and the other

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4 According to Colvin (41-42), the only reference occurs at *Od*. 19.172ff: “There is a land called Crete, in the middle of the wine-dark sea, lovely and fertile, surrounded by waters. The people of this land are many, past counting, and there are ninety cities—many languages are mixed together. There are Achaeans, proud Eteocretans ['true Cretans'], Cydonians, the triply-divided Doriants, and the godlike Pelasgians...” Homer may be referring to the fact that the Achaeans and Doriants spoke different dialects.

5 See Herodotus 7.231 where he uses the Spartan technical term for deserter, ό τρέσσαξ.

6 See Thucydides 5.63.3, 5.16.3.
in some sort of Argive composition (Thucydides 5.77, 5.79), but it is unknown whether Thucydides intended for the highly corrupt treaties to be a part of his *Histories* or whether he intended to edit them out of the text.  

The tragic poets faced a similar situation as the genre of tragedy did not accommodate dialects other than Attic and the dialect of choruses, Doric. As far as references to foreign language go, one of the more famous examples occurs in Aeschylus’ *Choephoroe* when Orestes suggests that he and Pylades imitate the Phocian dialect: “ἀμφω δὲ φωνήν ἡσομεν Πωρνησίδα, γλώσσης ἀυτήν Φωκίδος μιμομένω.” We cannot tell from the text whether or not Orestes actually adopted a foreign accent or not, but the most reasonable explanation of whether or not he spoke with a foreign accent is that Orestes maintained ‘normal tragic Attic.’ He would have gone outside the bounds of tragic diction, so perhaps merely stating that he was taking on a Phocian accent, rather than actually doing it, was enough for the dramatic effect.

Sophocles and Euripides likewise stay within the conventions of tragic diction and do not allow for dialect coloring in their texts. Aristophanes’ predecessors and non-comedic contemporaries, then, approach dialect just as they do barbarian language; they do not make use of non-Athenian dialects in their texts.

The playwrights whose works are preserved in the fragments of Old Comedy represent dialect as Aristophanes does, so we know that the representation of non-Athenian dialect was a convention of comedy and not unique to Aristophanes.  

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7 It is unclear which alphabet the treatises were originally in, and if transcription into Ionic occurred. The texts, however, clearly suffered during recopying because of their strange dialect coloring. See Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 65-67 and Gomme, A.W., Andrews, A., and Dover, K.J. *A Historical Commentary on Thucydidest* iv (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970).

8 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 76.

9 Laconian is also used in Epilicus’ *Coraliscus* and Eupolis’ *Helots*; other Doric dialects are used in a fragment of Crates (PCG 46), Philyllius’ *The Cities*, Apollophanes’ *The Cretans*, and unknown plays by Teleclides and Callias; Boeotian is used in Eubulus’ *Antiope*, Strattis’ *Phoinissai*, and an unknown play by Aristonymus.
fragments appear to be accurate and not literary dialects made up specifically for comedy.\textsuperscript{10} Like the few fragments that include barbarian language or even references to barbarian language, the fragments with non-Athenian dialects are difficult to interpret because the context is missing and we do not know who is speaking the lines. Nevertheless, we do know that the representation of non-Athenian dialect was customary in Old Comedy and there are numerous examples of dialects including Ionic, Laconian, and Boeotian. In addition to fragments presumably spoken by non-Athenians, we have a fragment from Strattis’ \textit{Phoenissae} in which the speaker rails against the differences between Attic and Theban (\textit{Phoenissae}, fr. 47)\textsuperscript{11}:

\begin{quote}
\begin{align*}
\text{ευνιετ’ οὐδὲν, πᾶσα Θηβαίων πόλις,} \\
\text{οὐδὲν ποτ’ ἄλλο, οἱ πρῶτα μὲν τὴν σημέαν} \\
\text{ὀπίτσοτίλαν, ὡς λέγουσα ὀνομάζετε,} \\
\text{τὸν ἀλεκτρούνα δ’ ὀρτάλιχα, τὸν δ’ ἵατρον < αὖ>} \\
\text{σάκταν, βέφυραν τὴν γέφυραν, τύκα δὲ} \\
\text{τὰ σῦκα, κατιλάδας δὲ τὰς χελιδόνας,} \\
\text{τὴν δ’ ἐνθεσίν δ’ ἀκόλου, τὸ γελάν δὲ κριδέμεν,} \\
\text{νεασπάτωτον δ’, ἦν τι νεοκάττυτον ἦ.}
\end{align*}
\end{quote}

You understand nothing, whole city of Thebes, nothing at all: first, you call σημέαν (cuttlefish) ὀπίτσοτίλαν, as they say, ἀλεκτρούνα (cock) ὀρτάλιχα, ἵατρον (doctor) σάκταν, γέφυραν (bridge) βέφυραν, σῦκα (figs) τύκα, χελιδόνας (swallows) κατιλάδας, ἐνθεσίν (a mouthful) ἀκόλου, γελάν (a laugh) κριδέμεν, and if something was νεοκάττυτον (freshly sewn), νεασπάτωτον.

While this quote does appear to make fun of the Boeotian dialect, it nevertheless shows that the comic playwrights were knowledgeable about non-Attic dialects. Non-Attic dialects in some of the other fragments seem to function in the same way as the non-Attic dialects of Aristophanes’ plays; that is, they are rendered quite accurately and seem to be used for realism rather than for

\textsuperscript{10} Colvin, “The Rivals of Aristophanes,” 292.
\textsuperscript{11} Edmonds’ Fragments of Old Comedy Vol.1, 829.
mockery. For example, the longest fragment in Laconian comes from Epilcus’ *Coraliscus* and matches the accuracy of Aristophanes’ Laconian (*PCG* 4):

\[
\begin{align*}
\pi\omicron\tau\tau\acute{\alpha} \varphi \omicron \iota \delta', \ \omega, \ \sigma \omega \mu \alpha i. \\
\epsilon\nu \ ' \ \alpha \mu \kappa \lambda \alpha \iota \iota \iota \nu \ \pi \omicron \rho \iota \ ' \ \Lambda \pi \acute{\epsilon} \lambda \lambda \omega \\
\beta \acute{\alpha} \acute{r} \acute{a} \acute{k} \acute{e} \acute{s} \ \pi \omicron \lambda \lambda \iota \iota \ \kappa \acute{a} \tau \iota \iota \iota \\
kai \ \delta \omega \mu \acute{o} \acute{s} \ \tau \iota \ \mu \acute{a} \lambda \ \alpha \ddot{\acute{d}} \acute{u} \acute{s}.
\end{align*}
\]

I’ll hurry, I guess, to the Kopis. At Amyclae in Apollo’s place there are many cakes, loaves, and really sweet soup. There are many Laconic features in this fragment, including syncope (\(\pi\omicron\tau\tau\acute{\alpha}\)), long \(\alpha\) for Attic \(\eta\) (\(\beta\acute{\alpha} \acute{r} \acute{a} \acute{k} \acute{e}\), \(\alpha \ddot{\acute{d}} \acute{u} \acute{s}\), and the \(\tau \acute{a} \nu\) of \(\pi\omicron\tau\tau\acute{\alpha}\)), \(\pi \omicron \tau \iota\) for \(\pi \rho \acute{\omicron} \acute{\acute{\acute{s}}}\), \(\sigma \omega \mu \alpha i\) rather than Attic \(\sigma \omicron \uacute{\omicron} \mu \alpha i\) (\(\sigma \acute{\epsilon} \acute{\omicron} \omicron\)), parenthetic \(\omega\ \omicron\) in the place of Attic \(\omicron \omega \mu \alpha i\), ablaut grade \(e\) instead of \(o\) in \(\Lambda \pi \acute{\epsilon} \lambda \lambda \omega\), and \(\delta\)- for Attic \(\zeta\)- in \(\delta \omega \mu \acute{o} \acute{s}\).\(^{12}\) Other fragments, however, are too short to determine whether the dialect is spoken by a non-Athenian or an Attic speaker imitating the dialect.

Unlike his treatment of barbarian language, Aristophanes recreates the Megarian, Boeotian, and Laconian dialects with a considerable degree of accuracy and executes the dialects consistently. Colvin’s methodology for analyzing Aristophanes’ treatment of dialects is useful especially in comparison with Aristophanes’ treatment of barbarian language. He sets out to answer certain questions about Aristophanes’ handling of dialect: a) was his representation superficial? b) Was the treatment of the different linguistic categories even? c) Was his treatment of the dialects themselves even?, and d) was his treatment at the level of words or did he apply blanket rules to the Attic dialect?\(^{13}\) By considering Colvin’s answers to these questions it will be possible to see the differences between Aristophanes’ handling of barbarian language and his handling of non-Athenian dialect.

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\(^{12}\) Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 271.

\(^{13}\) Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 120.
There are many similarities between the three dialect speakers, and it is necessary to discuss them before moving on to their differences in dialect. First, there is consistent mutual intelligibility between the non-Attic speakers and Attic speakers; in fact, the only reference to the fact that one of the characters speaks non-Attic occurs in *Acharnians* when an Informer says to the Megarian (822): κλάων μεγαρίζεις (you’ll be sorry if you speak Megarian!). This single mention is a testament to the degree to which the audience and Aristophanes were familiar with non-Attic dialects (at least to the degree to which they are presented in the plays), that is, the audience did not need to be made aware of the new dialect.\(^{14}\) While we cannot infer any attitude towards the dialect from this statement we can conclude that this is the sole reference to use of a non-Attic dialect in the play. We can also assume that familiarity with the dialects on the part of Aristophanes and the audience is the result of the close proximity of Megara to Athens and the regular contact that must have occurred between Athenians and Megarians. We can perhaps say the same for speakers of Laconian and Boeotian. In addition to the intimacy of the audience and Aristophanes with the dialects, the fact that there is only one mention of their dialects by Attic speakers shows that there were no misunderstandings or mockeries based on the language alone: the introduction of non-Attic dialects was not cause for reaction by Attic speaking characters.

There are of course references to Lampito’s sturdy figure in the *Lysistrata*, and to the fact that the Megarians are starving because of the Megarian Decree, but the laughter intended seems based on cultural stereotypes and political realities, rather than any oddity of dialect. All of these

\(^{14}\) The verb μεγαρίζειν can also have the sense of siding with Megara. The translation would then be ‘you’ll regret siding with Megara,’ with humor arising out of the absurdity of a Megarian siding with Megara. The scholia offer the translations ‘you will perish with hunger,’ which is an obvious reference to the Megarian Decree, and ‘you shall go back to Megara.’ Regardless of the variety of offered translations, the Informer makes the remark out of frustration with the Megarian. This type of verb, that is, a verb made from a noun, can take on all sorts of meanings. As Platter points out in *Aristophanes and the Carnival of Genres*, ‘by “Megarizing” in one way...he was “Megarizing” in the other as well.’ The verb, then, begins to reflect a degree of ambivalence. Platter, Charles. *Aristophanes and the Carnival of Genres* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) 88-89.
features show a stark contrast between Aristophanes’ treatment of and attitude towards non-Attic dialect and his attitude towards and treatment of barbarian language, where mutual intelligibility was lacking and the language was open to mockery.

**Laconian**

Three characters in *Lysistrata* speak Laconian: Lampito (81-249), the Spartan herald (980-1013), and the Spartan ambassador (1076-1188, 1242-5, 1248-1273, 1296-1321). Laconian, a Doric dialect, has the following common West Greek characteristics: 1) long α, retained where Attic shows η, 2) -τι in verbal endings, 3) the articles τοί, ταί as opposed to Attic οί, αί), 4) ἵφρος (= Attic ἱφρος), 5) modal particle κα, 6) temporal adverbs in -κα (instead of -τέ): ποκα, τοκα, 7) first plural active in -μες, 8) future suffix -σε-, 9) athematic infinitive in -μεν, 10) τυ = συ, 11) pronouns ᾧμές, ὑμές, 12) αί for conditional conjunction εί, 13) apocope of prepositions, 14) aorist -ξ- as opposed to Attic -σ-, 15) retained digamma, 16) η and ω for Attic ει and ου when these vowels are the result of compensatory lengthening or contraction, 17) δ for θ, 18) intervocalic s > h. Colvin uses inscriptional evidence to determine the correctness of a form in *Lysistrata*, and when inscriptional evidence does not exist for particular forms he resorts to comparison with literary evidence including Alcman, the two Laconian treaties from Thucydides, glosses and short phrases from Greek literature, literature written in non-Laconian Doric dialect by the dramatic authors Sophron and Epicharmus and Theocritus, and finally the literary Doric used by Pindar. From this evidence, Colvin and others have concluded that Aristophanes represents the Laconian dialect quite accurately and without mockery.

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15 This list is compiled from Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 127; Buck, *The Greek Dialects*, 154, 161; Palmer, *The Greek Language*, 60.
16 Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 126.
The extent to which Aristophanes integrated features of Laconian into his text is evident in any number of places. For the sake of brevity, I will analyze two lines of Laconian that illustrate what Aristophanes appeared to know about the non-Attic dialect (105-106):

ο δ’ ἐμός γα, καὶ κ’ ἐκ τῶς ταγάς ἔλοη ποκά,
πορπακίσαμενος φρούδος ἀμπτάμενος ἔβα.

This line roughly translates to “And my [husband], when he came from his post, having taken up his shield flew away.” These lines spoken by Lampito contain many Laconisms. To begin, γα was the normal Doric equivalent of Attic γε. Ταγάς, the genitive singular of the noun ταγά, shows the alternation long α for η, and may be associated with the word ταγό, the name of an official in Thessaly. The argument, then, is whether the word is a genuine Attic word or is borrowed by Attic. The next word ἔλοη shows the characteristic -σ- (for Attic -θ-), which begins to appear on Laconian inscriptions at the beginning of the fourth century. This appears in a number of other places in the text, although there are exceptions where the -θ- remains. ἔλοη also shows inherited long ε, which continues into Laconian as η. Ποκά shows the Laconian feature of ending temporal adverbs with -κα rather than the Attic -τε. Πορπακίσαμενος in form is not authentic Laconian. Laconian should show an Attic intervocalic –σ- as [h] / which would make the form πορπακίσαμενος. The intervocalic sigma, however, remains here.

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18 Fraenkel suggests that ‘ταγός and ταγά were alien to Ionic and Attic; apart, perhaps, from Cyprus, these words were part of the spoken language only in Thessaly.’ Ταγά is also found in a Thessalian inscription. Fraenkel, Eduard, Aeschylus Agamemnon, 3 vols. (Oxford: 1950).
19 The alternation demands further attention. Elliott states that Laconian inscriptions do not show the alternation and write -θ-. In order to explain Aristophanes’ use of -σ- for -θ-, Elliott believes (as does Colvin to an extent) that at the time Aristophanes was writing the sound θ was changing in Laconian from an aspirate into a spirant, and that to the Athenian ear the spirant θ sounded more like σ than θ. The alternation σ for θ appears in the poetry of Alcman, but Elliott and Colvin both state that the poems had been edited and adapted to a later spelling. Thus the poetry of Alcman would not have been a model for Aristophanes. Some of the exceptions in Lysistrata are guaranteed by the meter, but others may very well be the result of corruption of the text. Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 169-179; Elliott, The Acharnians of Aristophanes, 238-239.
20 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 171-172.
suggests that it is a substitute for -ξ-, which a Laconian aorist of a verb in -ιξω would show, because of the meter.21 The word, however, may be of Laconian origin. It is a denominative of the word for ‘handle of a shield’, πόρπαξ, and we see in both Critias and Aristophanes an association between the word and Spartans.22 Aristophanes at the very least may have been aware of this linguistic tie. φρούδος is simply προ ὀδοῦ and is common in tragedy and paratragedy.23 It does not, as may have appeared at first, follow the Laconian/Attic alternation of Laconian ω = Attic ου. άμπτάμενος shows the Laconian feature of apocope of prepositions. Prepositions which were disyllabic in Attic were commonly monosyllabic in many dialects, with the final syllable or vowel dropping off. In other instances of West Greek dialect in the plays Aristophanes seems to have known which prepositions were shortened and which were not and thus appears to have had a decent grasp of the dialect.24 Finally, ἐβα shows the phonological feature that Attic η = Laconian long α. We can see, then, from just two lines to what extent Aristophanes integrated the Laconian dialect into his play. This applies to all the Laconian speakers of the play except the last lines of the Spartan ambassador (1248-1273, 1296-1321) which are in lyric meter. Lyric passages in drama were generally full of Doric vocabulary, and thus it is difficult to determine whether his lines are Doric because of his dialect, because they are part of lyric song, or because they are paratragic. Nevertheless, we can see that Aristophanes incorporated Laconian into his text for the most part correctly.

22 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 247-248; Critias (88 B 37??) states that ἀποστιάζειν ἔινεκα τής πρός τοὺς εἰλῶτας τοῦτοις ἔξαρεν μὲν Σπαρτιάτης οἶκοι τῆς ἀσπίδος τοῦ πόρπακα (on account of their distrust of these Helots each Spartan removes the handle of his shield when he is at home) (translation by Colvin).
23 Aristophanes Knights 848ff: οὐ γὰρ σ’ ἔχρην, εἰπὲρ φίλεις τὸν δήμον, ἢ προσφιάζεις ταῦτας ἕως αὐτοῖσι τοῖσ πόρπαξίν ἀνατεθήναι (It was necessary that you, if you really cherish the people, not deliberately allow them [the shields] to be displayed with their handles on); this use of the word is in connection with the Spartan shields taken from Sphacteria.
24 Other examples are: for ἀνά: ἀμπείσειν (171); ποτί: σπονδᾶς ποιησάμεθα ποττάν Ἑλλάδα (1006); παρά: πάρφαιου μᾶν (183).
Megarian

There is one Megarian speaker in *Acharnians* (729-835) who visits Dikaiopolis’ marketplace with his two daughters. Megarian was also a Doric dialect and therefore has features similar to Laconian. Because of these similarities, it is not necessary to repeat the features. The characteristics that Aristophanes shows in his text that are different from those listed in the Laconian section above, however, are: medial -δθ- for Attic -ζ-; medial -σσ- for Attic -ττ-; personal pronouns: 1st person singular ἔγων; ποτί for πρός; etc. There is very little epigraphic evidence and no other Megarian literary work except Theognis’ poetry. His Greek, however, was a mixture of literary dialect forms instead of pure Megarian; consequently we must take evidence for Megarian from epigraphic evidence of other West Greek dialects. Consequently, we cannot determine whether Aristophanes knew the linguistic intricacies of Megarian, but we can say that he was aware that it was related to the Doric dialect group and applied its features to his Megarian character. Like the speakers of Laconian, the Megarian engages in mutual intelligibility with his interlocutors without misinterpretation or mockery. In order to see the extent to which Aristophanes includes Doric dialect features, I will again analyze two lines spoken by the Megarian and discuss the Doric dialect elements (731-732):

\[\alpha\lambda \lambda', \omega \pi\nu\eta\rho\alpha \kappa\omicron\upsilon\kappa\iota\iota' \alpha\theta\lambda\iota\omicron \pi\alpha\tau\omicron\omicron\omicron, \alpha\mu\beta\alpha\tau\epsilon \pi\omicron\tau\tau\aupsilon \mu\alpha\ddot{\delta}\delta\alpha\nu, \alpha' \chi' \epsilon\iota\upsilon\rho\iota\tau\epsilon \pi\alpha.\]

In these two lines, particularly the second, there are many West Greek Doric characteristics. The first line does not reflect many morphological features of Megarian, but there are phonological characteristics on which to comment. πόνηρα displays inherited long e maintained in Megarian.

26 Olson, however, includes a comprehensive list: lxxi-lxxiii.
as η, and thus here corresponds to the Attic form. The texts of Aristophanes do not show orthographic existence of digamma in any of the dialects, but we know from epigraphic evidence that digamma was retained in certain positions. In Megarian there is no evidence of initial digamma being retained except from epigraphic evidence from the colony of Selinous (which is 250-300 years prior to the date of *Acharnians*), and it is possible that digamma dropped completely from Megarian by the time Aristophanes was writing his plays. As far as the loss of postconsonantal digamma goes, the preceding vowel was not lengthened, according to the epigraphic evidence. With an original form κορέ-, κουρίκ’ does not work. We would expect a short ο in accordance with the epigraphic evidence. The circumstances for ἀθλίου are similar. In Megarian the contraction of α and ε should result in η. West Greek inscriptions attest the form ὁ(Ω)θλ.; consequently we would expect ηθλίου. In the second line, ἄμβατε shows apocope of ἀνά, which was common in Doric. ποτάν shows two items: the use of ποτί for πρός and apocope of ποτί. μᾶδδαν reveals the alternation of medial -δδ- for Attic -ζ-. Also, the alternation of the conditional conjunction West Greek αἴ for Attic εἰ is seen in 732. χ is the modal particle κα for Attic ἀν. Finally, in Doric constructions of place, time, and manner were different from the same constructions in Attic. We see an example of this in the last word: πα. In these constructions, there is an alternation between West Greek πα and Attic –η. For more evidence that Aristophanes was aware of the Doric dialect, we can look to line 758:

πάρ ἀμὲ πολυτίματος ἀπερ τοὶ θεοί.

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29 See Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 177.
30 Colvin calls this “Bad Dialect.” Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 135.
In this line we can see the characteristic form for the first person accusative pronoun, ἐμὲ, which is equivalent to the Attic form ἔμοι. ἐπεφρ stands again the alternation -α for Attic -η. Finally, the definite article τοῖ shows the common West Greek form instead of Attic οί. It is clear from the above evidence that Aristophanes was aware of the Doric dialect group (although obviously not characterized by him in that term) and, although not every form is undoubtedly Doric, the manner in which he incorporated the features of Doric into his text is again generally correct.

Boeotian

The final non-Athenian speaker in the extant plays of Aristophanes is the Boeotian of Acharnians (860-954). Boeotian is an Aeolic dialect, but it also has strong associations with North-West Greek. The features unique to all the dialects of Aeolic are: *kʷ > π even before a front vowel: πέσσας, πέμπε, πῆλε; the perfect participle active in -ων, -οντως; ἵα = μία, dative plural of the third declension in -σω; and thematic and athematic infinitives with the ending -μεν. Features unique to Lesbian and Boeotian are: στροτός for στρατός; -σω- in future and aorist verb stems ending in a short vowel; πέδα for μετά. The elements that Boeotian shares with North-West Greek are: the retention of -τι in verbal endings; (f)ίκατι; τοῖ/ταί for οί/αί; ιαρός for ιερός; -ξ- aorists of -ξω- verbs; and the modal particle κα. The main features that the Boeotian in Acharnians shows are: inherited long α was retained where Attic substituted η; ω for Attic ου; a weakening of γ between vowels where the first is a front vowel (870, ἰω for Attic ἐγω, ἰώγο 898); -δδ- for Attic -ζ- (911, 947); -ττ- for Attic -σ- (867, 884); -ττ- for Attic -ςτ- (860, 911); personal pronouns: 2nd sg. nom. τῷ (861), 1st pl. dat. ἀμίν (903), and 2nd pl. nom.

32 Colvin, 130, Olson, lxxiii, Buck, 152.
The features that the Boeotian in *Acharnians* shows are attested epigraphically. Unfortunately, the most important source for Boeotian, aside from inscriptions, is the poet Corinna whose date is uncertain (perhaps even the 3rd c. BCE), and who consequently cannot be trusted as a model for Aristophanes.\(^3^4\) Most of the evidence, then, comes from inscriptions.

In order to see the degree to which Aristophanes incorporated Boeotian into his text I will now analyze four lines from *Acharnians* (860-863):

> Ίττω Ἡρακλῆς, ἕκαμόν γὰ τὰν τύλαν κακῶς.
> κατάθυ τὰν γλάχων’ ἀτρέμας’, ἰσμηνία.
> ὑμές δ’, ὁσοι Θείβαθεν αὑληταὶ πάρα,
> τοῖς ὀστίνοις φοινεῖτο τὸν πρωκτὸν κυνός.

Heracles be witness, I have badly worn a callous.
You put the pennyroyal down gently, Ismenias.
But you all, as many fluteplayers are nearby from Thebes,
Blow [play] the dog’s ass with bone pipes.

First, Ίττω Ἡρακλῆς is evidence of a consistent feature of the dialects seen in Aristophanes: oaths. Oaths are spoken by all three non-Attic speakers, and they can be viewed as an easy way both to mark and identify dialects.\(^3^5\) In this instance, Ίττω is a Boeotian word that shows the alternation of Boeotian -ττ- with Attic -στ-; ἰστω appears in both Homer and tragedy, but not in conversational Attic. Furthermore, initial digamma in Boeotian is well attested, and thus we would expect Ήττω Δεῦς. Like the appearance of digamma in other dialects, however, the

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\(^3^5\) Colvin, *Dialect in Aristophanes*, 142, 255. See also Plato *Phaedo* 62A, where the Theban Cebes says “ἵττω Ζεῦς” and according to Plato is speaking in his own dialect (ἐφη, τῇ αὐτῶ φωνῇ εἰπών).
texts of Aristophanes do not reveal the existence of digamma orthographically. Also, the association between Heracles and Thebes would have been obvious and presumably the audience would have recognized the name quickly. Later in the dialogue between the Boeotian and Dicaeopolis, the Boeotian lets out another oath: νεὶ τῶ θεῶ. Other editions write νεὶ τῶ σιω, which incorrectly shows the Laconian dual for θεός, not the Boeotian. As Colvin points out, the alternation of σ for θ does not occur in Boeotian, with the result that it was not written by Aristophanes but instead by scribe who was either familiar with Lysistrata (where the oath occurs) or with Laconian (see Lysistrata 81, 86, 90, 142, 983, 1095, 1105, 1171, 1174, 1180). We see again the use of γα for Attic γε which occurs four other times in the text. τὰν τύλαν shows the original long α maintained in Boeotian. Colvin suspects that this word may be a Boeotian gloss or a dialect gloss at least as far as its meaning is concerned. κατάθου is not Boeotian but Attic and shows that Aristophanes is not always consistent in his representation of non-Attic dialect. The pennyroyal plant, however, is thought to be associated with Boeotia (Lys. 86-9). τ analsex乖乖 is the true Boeotian form for the second person singular pronoun equivalent to Attic συ. τὰν γλάξων’ is of interest because its Attic equivalent is βλήξων and thus we know that Aristophanes was aware of lexical differences. ατρέμως shows nothing special, but there is some debate about ισημνία. To begin, it does not show the expected Boeotian vowel -ει rather

36 Dover suggests that we read Θείβεθε and understand ἵττω as Φίττω. Dover, “Notes on Aristophanes’ Acharnians,” 301.
37 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 169 n.43.
39 The word has an interesting history. See Rutherford, W.G. The New Phrynichus (London: 1881), 256 and Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 269. Rutherford believes that the word is of Ionic origin based on a statement by Pollux. Pollux says that Eupolis in his Flatterers uses the word τυλεία in the Ionic dialect (καὶ τυλεία παρ’ Εὐπόλιδι ἐστὶν ἱαζοντι ἐν τοῖς Κόλασι) (7.191). Edmond’s The Fragments of Attic Comedy, however, uses τύλη instead of τυλεία based on the quote from Eupolis ‘κεκρυφάλοι τε καὶ τύλη’ (p. 378). In the same passage, though, Pollux says ‘τύλην, εἰ καὶ εὕροις ποὺ, σὺ κνεφάλου λέγε’ (you should say knephalon rather than tule, even if you find it somewhere). We can conclude, then, that this particular meaning of the word, that is a porter’s hump, was not originally Attic. Rutherford says that the other meaning, knot or hump, was well-established in Attic.
than -η, and the reason for the -η is unclear. Colvin suggests that perhaps the words were common Attic words and that thus Aristophanes did not mark them, or that later scribes changed them. 40 There is no manuscript evidence for -ει. The name, however, comes from a river in Thebes, which lends it authenticity as a Theban name. There is a dispute concerning the breathing mark, whether it ought to be rough or smooth. 41 ύμες equals Attic 2nd-person nominative ύμεις, but there is no epigraphic evidence to confirm the form. 42 Buck, however, says that all dialects except Attic-Ionic show -ες in the nominative plural. Θείβαθεν is equal to Attic θήβαθεν. There exists between Boeotian and Attic an alternation of -ει with -η respectively. The manuscripts vary a good deal: Θείβαθεν Γ, Θείαθεν ΑΓ Ε, θήβαθεν R. Aristophanes seems to use -ει instead of -η in three places only: 1) in the forms of the word for Thebes, 2) in the word νεί as opposed to Attic νη, and 3) in words in which Boeotian ει is not equivalent to Attic η. 43 In the present case, his reason for using ει for η in the word for Thebes is obvious: to imitate Theban dialect in the place it was spoken. 44 Unlike Θείβαθεν, αὐληταί retains the η. Colvin calls this “bad dialect” and suggests that this may have been an everyday Attic word and consequently was not marked, or later scribes may have Atticized the familiar

40 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 143.
41 Most of the manuscripts show a soft breathing mark, but Olson maintains that the mark is rough. There is inscriptive evidence for ἴομηνίο, but Elliott says that “At the date of the play the Ionic alphabet, in which’ was not written, was becoming more common in Athens every year than the old Attic, in which it was, so that, even if Aristophanes omitted the aspirate, it does not necessarily follow that he did not intend its pronunciation...the Athenians from the sixth to fourth centuries had no tendency to omit h, but rather to insert it, so that it is quite possible that Aristophanes pronounced h in what we should write ἴομηνίο and similar forms. On the other hand there is no positive evidence that he did so in the MSS., which give the spiritus lenis, or the scholia...Hence, while thinking it possible that h was intended by Aristophanes to be pronounced in these words, as written in old Boeotian inscriptions, I have thought it safest in the absence of positive evidence to adhere to the MSS" (208). Olson, however, seems to think that Aristophanes was following the tradition of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in omitting the rough breathing mark but intending it to be pronounced, hence his inclusion of the rough breathing mark in his edition of Acharnians. Perhaps he is also considering the inscriptive evidence. Also, the river in Thebes from which the slave gets his name is, according to Colvin, the Ismenos River but according to Olson it is the Hismenos River, which shows the uncertainty of the rough breathing mark.
43 Olson, Aristophanes’ Acharnians, 288.
44 Colvin, Dialect in Aristophanes, 142; Olson, Aristophanes’ Acharnians, 288.
word if Aristophanes had in fact used €ι originally.\textsuperscript{45} \(φυσε\text{ί}τε\) reveals the use of €ι in places where it is not equivalent to Attic η. While not every word has been subjected to the Boeotian dialect, Aristophanes nonetheless integrated Boeotian into his text to a rather large degree.

Two oaths were briefly mentioned earlier: \(\text{νεί τω σιώ}\) and \(\text{ιττω Ήρσκλής}\). Oaths were an easy way for Aristophanes to mark the dialects; for example, Laconian speakers in \textit{Lysistrata} utter an oath 15 times, the Megarian 8 times, and the Boeotian 4 times. The frequent occurrence of these oaths strengthens the claim that Aristophanes knew and imported non-Attic dialect in his texts. If nothing else, the presence of the oaths shows that Aristophanes intended some dialect coloring in the plays.

\textbf{Conclusions}

As the level of dialect integration into the plays shows, Aristophanes was at the very least aware of non-Attic dialects. He incorporated features of the dialects at the levels of phonology, morphology, and lexicon, rather than on a word-by-word basis. Furthermore, he is generally consistent in his reproduction of the dialects. Although there are places where Aristophanes seems to have lapsed into Atticisms in their speeches in dialect, nevertheless the degree to which he accurately incorporated the dialects overshadows those lapses. Colvin provides a hierarchy of Aristophanes’ accuracy in the dialects, beginning with Laconian and ending with Boeotian. He defines accuracy by the level to which the use of dialects in the plays corresponds with epigraphic evidence, and, if necessary, with literary dialects. For the most part, the forms Aristophanes provides align with the epigraphic evidence and we can say with certainty that Aristophanes represents the dialects with a good deal of accuracy.

\textsuperscript{45} Colvin, \textit{Dialect in Aristophanes}, 143.
It is necessary to question why Aristophanes chose to portray the non-Athenian Greeks with their epichoric dialects rather than having them speak Attic as well. Halliwell believes that we are to approach the dialects as if they are farcical; he thinks that the juxtaposition of Attic with non-Attic dialects would have sounded ridiculous to the audience (with the caveat that it is not the dialects themselves that are funny, but the context that produces the comic effect).\textsuperscript{46}

Especially in the case of \textit{Lysistrata}, the context is funny not because of the language and the sound of an Athenian conversing with a Spartan, but because the women deny their husbands sex until they put an end to the Peloponnesian War. Furthermore, since Aristophanes included non-Athenian dialect into his plays, presumably with the hope that the audience would understand, we can assume that by the end of the fifth century the audience either had spoken with non-Attic speakers or had heard Athenians speaking with speakers of other major Greek dialects. The situation seems not out of the ordinary and rather realistic. We can conclude, then, that Aristophanes put non-Attic dialect into the mouths of non-Attic characters because the genre of comedy is in part grounded in realism, and having non-Athenian characters speak in their native dialects adds to that realism.

In comparison with Aristophanes’ treatment of barbarian language, he treats dialects neutrally. Although his reproduction of non-Attic dialect is not always correct, nevertheless the degree to which his representation of dialect is consistent with epigraphic evidence is much greater than his accuracy with barbarian language. We can view his use of barbarian language, then, against his handling of non-Attic dialect and see that he represented barbarian language much more negatively. If we consider Dover’s ‘one thing at a time’ principle and apply it to Aristophanes’ use of language in his plays, we can conclude that he used dialect not for the

\textsuperscript{46} Halliwell, “The Sounds of Voice in Old Comedy,” 73. He says “Given an ethos of farce or fantasy, I submit that the very immediacy with which the sounds of different dialects are juxtaposed, the automatic ease with which the cross-dialectal conversations occur in such scenes, constitutes in itself a humorous contrivance.”
purpose of mockery, but instead for the purpose of realism. Because barbarian language is a source of humor, because there is little mutual intelligibility, and because the interlocutors become frustrated and irritated with the speakers of barbarian language in the plays, one can surmise that barbarian language was little respected and little tolerated in fifth-century Athens in comparison with non-Attic dialect.

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