

Peace, by Aristophanes

"Peace" was first presented in 421 BC. Aristophanes wrote this comedy during the negotiations between Athens and Sparta, which led to the Peace of Nicias, with which the peoples of the two opponents had hoped that the Peloponnesian war will end.

The story

The case of the comedy is the following: the winegrower Trygaios, a simple and honest farmer, not withstanding other calamities of war, decides to ascend to heaven riding a beetle, he has brought up for this purpose. His goal is to make his complaints to Zeus and ask peace for the good of the Greeks. Arriving in heaven, he learns from Hermes that the gods have withdrawn at the highest point, resentful of the continuing hostilities of the opponents. In their place they have left the God War, who imprisoned Peace in a cave and is preparing to put all cities in a mortar to destroy them. Trygaios calls all Greeks and especially ordinary citizens to help, so they can all move the rock that blocks the entrance to the cave to free Peace. The effort is crowned with success. Peace emerges from the cave. The rest of the comedy is an ode to peace, a feast for the release of the goddess. The joy of life and of creation dominate. After the triumph and amid general merriment, Aristophanes finds a chance to ridicule the warmongers and the merchants of weapons.