

Aristophanes, *Birds*

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Plot

Both Athens Euepides and Pisthetaerus are tired of all the judicial procedures in their homeland. That's why they want, together with the birds, to found a new city between the earth and the sky. Yet, in the end, the plan of a liberal and democratic „cloud-cuckoo-town“ fails, because Pisthetaerus gets exclusive control and dictates now as a new god—having Basilea, the former maid of Zeus, who will now make the lightnings and other powers for him, as his bride and wife

Animals and their characters

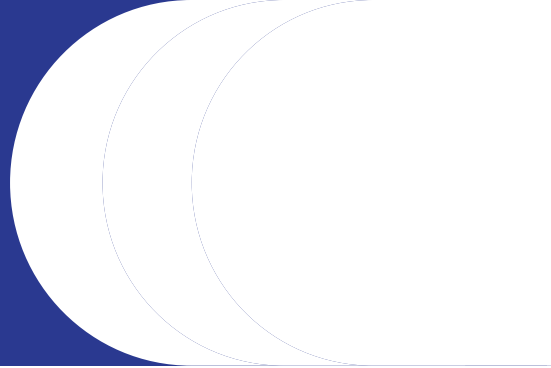
- Jay

- Symbolizes intelligence and courage but also have a lot of different knowledge
- Also discreet and have the utmost patience in timing

- Crow

- As a talking bird, crows can represent prophecy, wisdom or good luck
- A crow has observed the world for thousands of years so this bird is rich in knowledge and experience. Listening to the Crow, you will become wiser and you will also be able to share your knowledge and wisdom with other people
- It is known that a crow's nest is always located in tall trees, which gives crows the opportunity to see clearly all that is happening in their surrounding

Idea behind the story



- birds-eye perspective gives a philosophical and questioning view on driving forces of men and gods in general
- covers the crisis, during which Aristophanes has lived, yet can rather be seen as a political utopia
- On one hand play with words and use of parody, on the other critical on society, coarse and direct language—questions the power of the gods, the poets and philosophers

Funny moments of the story/would people today consider it funny

- Cloud-cuckoo-town: symbol of over-the-top utopian thinking
- building a town in the sky, between gods and earth—the birds did it in one day and used bricks
- Not one day passed and there were already people from the administration, philosophers and geographers coming, “helping” out with making everything right in this new city
- Heracles was depicted as a dumb guy - in general, the representatives of the gods at the end were shown as silly: Heracles just thinking about eating, Triballus saying nonsense and Poseidon having no plan at all