

LOVE AND MARRIAGE IN GREEK NEW COMEDY¹

1(a) Writing of Terence's *Andria* ('The Girl from Andros') in 1952, Duckworth said: 'In the *Andria* the second love affair is unusual; Charinus' love for a respectable girl whose virtue is still intact has been considered an anticipation of a more modern attitude towards love and sex. More frequently in Plautus and Terence the heroine, if of respectable parentage, has been violated before the opening of the drama (*Aulularia*, *Adelphoe*), or she is a foreigner, a courtesan, or a slave girl' (Duckworth (1952), p. 158). Perhaps in 1993 it does not seem quite so 'modern' that Charinus is not only in love with a respectable virgin but wishes to marry her.

The plays of Plautus and Terence are generally agreed to be (at least in very nearly all cases) adaptations of Greek plays by Menander and his contemporaries, the authors of Greek 'New Comedy'; we know from Terence's own Prologue to *Andria* (9–14) that it is a conflation of two plays by Menander, and it is quite possible that Charinus' love for the girl is an element reproduced from at least one of them. At any rate, since 1952 we have learnt at first hand of two plays by Menander which include precisely this element of a young man (an Athenian citizen) in love with and hoping to marry a respectable citizen girl who has not been violated. They are *Dyskolos* ('The Bad-tempered Man', published in 1959) and *Aspis* ('The Shield', published in 1969). (By law, marriage for an Athenian citizen was possible only with another Athenian citizen; by 'a respectable girl' Duckworth means 'a citizen girl'.)

Duckworth mentions two cases where the girl *has* been violated, Plautus' *Aulularia* ('The Pot of Gold') and Terence's *Adelphoe* ('The Brothers'); *Aulularia* is perhaps based on a play by Menander, but perhaps not;² *Adelphoe* certainly is. In both cases the young man who deflowered the girl loves her and is keen to marry her; there is no suggestion that he agrees to marry her reluctantly because he has to. The same is true in two further plays by Menander which were already known in 1952, *Georgos* ('The Farmer') and *Samia* ('The Girl from Samos').

In *Dyskolos*, the young man's father is not surprised that he wishes to marry for love (*eros* – I shall discuss the translation of this word in section 2(c)), and he claims to regard *eros* as the foundation for a secure marriage (786ff.: 'I not only *want* you to marry the girl you're in love with (*erai*s), but I say you *ought* to... (788) I realize that a young man's marriage will be secure if he is persuaded to enter on it by *eros*').³

¹ Drafts of this paper were delivered at the University of Poznan in June 1989, at the 'Women in Antiquity' seminar at Oxford in April 1990, and at St Andrews in February 1992; I am very grateful for the comments of Profs. Jerzy Danielewicz and Sylwester Dworacki and others who attended on these occasions. I have also been much helped by Ewen Bowie, Nick Fisher, Sally Humphreys, Oswyn Murray, Robin Osborne, Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, Oliver Taplin and an anonymous referee. Some bibliographical references are given in abbreviated form; full details of these are provided in the Bibliography at the end of the paper. I do not record the many points of overlap between this paper and the surveys of love-plots in Webster (1974), pp. 14ff., 36–7 (worth consulting in spite of some speculative details) or on pp. 52ff. of Fantham (1975), which remains the classic study of women in New Comedy.

² See W. G. Arnott, 'The Greek Original of Plautus' *Aulularia*', *WS* 101 (1988), 181–91, suggesting that it is based on Alexis' *Lebes* ('The Pot') (cf. also W. G. Arnott, 'A Study in Relationships: Alexis' *Lebes*, Menander's *Dyskolos*, Plautus' *Aulularia*', *QUCC* 62 [= n.s. 33, 3] (1989), 27–38). Arnott makes a good case, while acknowledging that it remains speculative. The surviving fragments of *Lebes* are certainly compatible with *Aulularia*, but they provide no distinctive link with its plot; there is no hint that the pot was used to store money in Alexis' play.

³ ἥς ἐραῖς σε λαμβάνειν
καὶ βούλομαι καὶ φημι δεῖν.

786

Similarly in Act II of *Samia*, though the surviving text is too fragmentary for us to reconstruct every detail of the dialogue, it seems that the father accepts without surprise (165–6)⁴ that his son has fallen in love with the girl next door and that he is for this reason keen to marry her as soon as possible. He certainly does not regard such a love as a *necessary* basis for marriage, since he was planning to marry his son to the girl next door in any case. But he accepts it as natural that the boy has fallen in love with a citizen girl and wants to marry her (and he does not know at this stage that he has got the girl pregnant). This is also accepted at *Fabula Incerta* (a play by Menander whose title is unknown) 14–17,⁵ where a young man who is inventing a story says of another young man: ‘He was in love with the girl all the time and caused me a lot of trouble; and since he was getting absolutely nowhere by trying to *persuade* me to let him marry her, look – he just did the deed!’ The pretence is that he got the girl pregnant and then had to marry her, but that he was already in love with her and already wanted to marry her. Some of these details are fictitious, but they are part of a fiction designed to sound plausible to the boy’s own father.

Other plays too show unmarried Athenian men in love with women who are known or believed to be of citizen birth: Menander’s *Hiereia* (‘The Priestess’ – the young man in love with the priestess’s daughter); P. Ghôran II (from a play of uncertain authorship whose title is unknown, included in the Oxford Classical Text of Menander, pp. 331–5; cf. Gomme–Sandbach (1973), pp. 730–1, drawing attention to lines 145–9). (In Terence’s *Phormio* (based on a Greek original by Apollodorus, later than Menander), love has driven Antipho to marry a citizen girl before the start of the play; her true parentage is established at the end of the play, but there had never been any doubt that she was of citizen birth.)

1(b) What do these plays tell us about Athenian society in the time of Menander? Préaux (1957), in an important article written shortly before *Dyskolos* was rediscovered, argued that Menander’s comedies show us the *dreams* of the middle-class male Athenian citizens who went to watch them. If she was right, the comedies at least tell us *something* about Menander’s audience, even if we cannot guess how often their dreams came true. But does Sostratos (the young man in *Dyskolos*) in any way represent even what male Athenians would have *liked* their young men to be? Arnott (1981), p. 226, has suggested that he is deliberately characterized to contrast with the audience’s normal expectation that a young man of his type in comedy will try to seduce a girl with whom he has fallen in love (cf. the end of n. 32 below on Chaireas in *Aspis*); on this view, the fact that Sostratos honourably approaches the girl’s father to seek her hand in marriage is a contrived dramatic effect, and perhaps it is evidence for nothing more than Menander’s skill in taking his audience by

(Cw.) οὐ μοι δοκεῖς.
(Ka.) νῆ τοὺς θεοὺς ἔγωγε, γινώσκων ὅτι
νέωι γάμος βέβαιος οὕτως γίνεται
ἐὰν δι’ ἔρωτα τοῦτο συμπεκθῇ ποεῖν.

790

⁴ *Samia* 163–6: ταῦτόματόν ἐστιν ὡς οἰκὲ που θεὸς
κωίζει τε πολλὰ τῶν ἀοράτων πραγμάτων·
ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ εἰδὼς ἔχον[τα] τουτονὶ
ἐρωτικῶς, ταῦτ’...

‘It looks as if Chance must be a god and makes sure many of the things we cannot see. I didn’t realize that he had fallen in love...’

⁵ ἦρα μὲν αἰεὶ τῆς κόρης καὶ πολλὰ μοι
πράγματα παρείχεν, ὡς δ’ ἐπέραιεν οὐδὲ ἐν
αὐτῷ παραδοῦναι τὸν [γάμο]ν πείθων, ἰδοῦ,
ἐξεργάσατο.

surprise.⁶ More recently, Walcot (1987) takes it for granted that Sostratos' behaviour is comically absurd, since 'the purpose of marriage for a Greek was to have and to rear legitimate children... rather than to gratify the emotional needs of either husband or wife' (p. 6), and Athens was 'a society which denied the validity of love as the basis for a happily married life' (p. 8). Walcot does not discuss the father's remark about *eros* (n. 3 above); Arnott paraphrases it curtly as 'sexual attraction does help (*Dysk.* 790)' (p. 219; I do not find 'sexual attraction' an adequate translation of *eros*; see below, section 2(c)). Gomme-Sandbach (1973), comment on v. 788 'The sentiment would be more striking to a fourth-century audience than it is today.' (Presumably they mean us to understand that they have in mind fourth-century *Athens* and (perhaps) the *Western world* today.) Are they right? And, if they are, what did the audience make of it? Did they treat it as the sort of absurd sentiment that you might expect to hear from a character in a comedy, particularly towards the end of the play (where several scholars have stressed that elements of traditional comic revelry are to be found)?⁷ If not, is it relevant that Sostratos' father is a man of considerable wealth? Would it have been an absurd thing for *most* Athenians to say, while conforming to the audience's beliefs about – and perhaps also the realities of – the attitudes and behaviour of the richest among them? Or (returning to Préaux's view) did the audience rather accept the sentiment as the striking expression of an ideal shared by more than one class which they knew was not often realized in everyday life?

I shall try to suggest that the notion of marrying for love was not seen as a comic absurdity in the time of Menander, and I shall argue that New Comedy supports my suggestion. This leaves open the possibility that it remained an unrealized dream, at least for most of the audience – we simply cannot tell. But we cannot tell *either way*; we cannot confidently assert that it was exceptional to marry for love, although Walcot is by no means alone among recent scholars in suggesting that it was. This is an area of particular difficulty; cf. (for example) Cohen (1987): 'As Malinowski discovered in his work on the incest taboo, the conflict between social practices and cultural ideals and norms is perhaps nowhere so dramatic as in the realm of sexuality' (p. 4); 'there may be disagreement within a culture as to what is practice, what is ideal, and how each is to be valued... The widely differing attitudes and conflicting norms and practices which have been discussed above represent the disagreements, contradictions and anxieties which make up the patterned chaos of a complex culture. They should not be rationalized away' (pp. 20–1) (reproduced almost verbatim in Cohen (1991), pp. 174 and 201–2). On the relationship between love and marriage, I have no doubt that both attitudes and practices in ancient Athens were complex and varied (not only in Menander's lifetime), and that people's behaviour did not always correspond even with the account that they themselves would have given of it (cf. Cohen (1990) and (1991) for a forceful reminder of these points). This makes it very difficult to assess the sociological significance of a few scattered remarks and story-lines, and would do so even if they came from a source more obviously close to real life than a comic text. All our evidence for Athenian society is partial (in one sense or another of that word), and it all has to be interpreted with care. But New Comedy is part of the evidence; I shall argue that the remarks to which I draw attention are

⁶ Sylwester Dworacki reminds me that a literary genre can create its own conventions and expectations as it evolves, and that Menander's audience will have demanded novelty as part of its entertainment. Cf. also Dover (1974), p. 37: 'conventions of standpoint can, to a certain extent, be accepted in an artistic genre on the same basis as conventions of form and language.'

⁷ E.g. W. Süss, 'Der Komödienschluss', *Rh. Mus.* 65 (1910), 450–60; Holzberg (1974), pp. 121–73; L. Nicastrì, 'Sul problema del V atto in Menandro', *Vichiana* 7 (1978), 168–78; H. Lloyd-Jones, 'The Structure of Menander's Comedies', *Dioniso* 57 (1987), 313–21.

true to life in the sense that they could plausibly have been uttered by a real-life Athenian who found himself in the situation depicted in the play, and that that situation itself was one in which a real-life Athenian could plausibly have been found (in essence, if not always in all its details). I shall also suggest that we can sometimes identify remarks of which the audience would have approved and predicaments with which they would have sympathized; in other words, I shall try to show not only that these elements are realistic (in the sense just defined) but also that we can reconstruct the audience's reaction to them with some confidence. (I do not really mean to imply that I believe all members of the audience reacted in exactly the same way, but I think it is legitimate to generalize about the audience's reaction to the extent that I shall do so.)

I shall not discuss the possibility that Menander provides evidence for a *change* in Athenian attitudes at the end of the fourth century. The social history of Athens is far too large a subject to be tackled here, and all I can hope to do in this context is provide evidence which others may find useful in tracing larger patterns.

2(a) In discussing the attitudes of Athenian men to love and marriage, I risk seeming naïve in at least two different ways, first by trying to use comic drama as evidence for everyday reality, and secondly by talking as if we can hope to enter into the feelings of members of an alien society, or as if *eros* meant the same thing in ancient Athens as 'love' in modern Oxford. It is generally acknowledged nowadays that 'everyday reality' is difficult to grasp, that the relationship between literature and life is complex, and that any attempt to interpret the attitudes of one culture in the language of another (not least in the area of amatory behaviour) is bound to be inadequate and likely to be misleading. Realization of these points requires us to be suitably cautious in approaching the sort of questions I discuss here, but it need not lead us to be defeatist about discussing them at all.

2(b) It is possible to distinguish some elements of realism from some elements of fantasy in *Dyskolos*. The play is set at Phyle in Attika, and Menander has gone to some trouble in the prologue (and elsewhere in the play) to give an impression of the roughness of the land in that region and of the harsh life of those who had to farm it. He also takes for granted certain details of Athenian family law which would be relevant in real life to the relationships between some of the characters in the play;⁸ and we can learn something about normal Athenian expectations of behaviour by observing the assumptions behind some of the things that are said. Thus at 327–31 it is thought worthy of comment that Knemon (the 'Bad-tempered Man' of the title) works his land without assistance: 'This man's property here is worth perhaps two talents. He persists in farming it all on his own; he doesn't have anyone to help him, no slave from his own household, no hired labourer from the area, no neighbour – just himself alone.'⁹ Clearly farmers normally used slave or hired labour on a property of this size, and Osborne (1985), pp. 144–5, has cited this passage as the best

⁸ Cf. C. Préaux, 'Les Fonctions du droit dans la comédie nouvelle', *Chronique d'Égypte* 35 (1960), 222–39; Paoli (1961); J. E. Karnezis, "Παραποίησης Ἀττικῶν θεσμῶν εἰς τὸν Δύσκολον τοῦ Μενάνδρου" *Athena* 76 (1977), 155–65. I do not mean to imply that we can in all cases use Menander as a reliable source of detailed information about Athenian law; cf. Brown (1983).

⁹ 327
 τούτῳι ταλάντων ἔστ' ἵσως τοῦτ'ι δυνεῖν
 τὸ κτήμα. τοῦτ' αὐτὸς γεωργῶν διατελεῖ
 μόνος, συνεργὸν δ' οὐδέν' ἀνθρώπων ἔχων,
 οὐκ οἰκέτην οἰκεῖον, οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ τόπου 330
 μισθωτόν, οὐχὶ γείτον', ἀλλ' αὐτὸς μόνος.

surviving evidence that neighbourhood groups would normally be expected to help each other (note 331, οὐχὶ γείτονα). On the other hand, Menander is selective in what he chooses to portray: you would never guess from *Dyskolos* that there was a military garrison stationed at Phyle at the time.¹⁰ He is also completely unrealistic in one central detail which must have been familiar to some at least in his audience: the precise setting of the play is at the shrine of Pan and the Nymphs, a well-known shrine which was in fact a cave in a steep rock-face in the side of a gorge; Menander portrays this cave as having houses on either side of it.¹¹ In these ways the play is clearly a mixture of realistic and unrealistic elements.

But how far can we go along this line? In particular, can we ever hope to show that a view expressed by one of Menander's characters was generally acceptable to his audience? The difficulties are discussed by Dover (1974) in the opening chapter of his book, called 'Interpretation of the Sources'. He regards New Comedy as a less problematical source than Old Comedy and, without offering a detailed methodology, suggests the following: 'When moralising in the course of a persuasive speech uttered by an eventually successful character actually helps to bring about the happy ending, as is the case with Sostratos's speech in *Dyskolos* 797–812 on the right use of money, we can be reasonably sure that the morality of the argument had popular approval' (p. 20). But this example is debatable, since there are comic effects in this speech which might be thought to dilute the seriousness of its content.¹² Perhaps a better example would be *Aspis* 256–67; it is not an example of exactly the same thing, but it is more relevant to the theme of this paper. In this play young Chaireas is in love with and has been hoping to marry a girl who has recently been living in his house in the care of his mother and stepfather (his stepfather, Chairestratos, is her uncle; he has arranged to marry his niece to Chaireas because her brother is abroad and he (Chairestratos) is responsible for her in her brother's absence). A complication arises when Chairestratos' elder brother (Smikrines) decides that he will marry the girl, as he believes himself to be legally entitled to do (as her closest male relative). Chairestratos is shocked by this, first of all because Smikrines is so much older than the girl (258), and also because (262–3) 'Chaireas here, who is planning to marry her, has been brought up together with her'; it would be inhumane of Smikrines to disturb this plan (260–1), and he should allow the girl to marry a bridegroom from her own age-group (266–7).¹³ The emphasis here is on the *girl's* future happiness; it looks as

¹⁰ Cf. Gomme–Sandbach (1973), p. 135.

¹¹ Cf. Handley (1965), pp. 24–5.

¹² Cf. Holzberg (1974), pp. 128–9, and n. 7 above on the fifth act in Menander.

¹³

(Χα.)	οὐδὲν μέλει σοι μετρίότητος;	Σμικρῖνη,	256
(Σμ.)	διὰ τί, παῖ;		
(Χα.)	ὡν τηλικούτος παῖδα μέλλεις λαμβάνειν;		
(Σμ.)	πηλίκος;		
(Χα.)	ἐμοὶ μὲν παντελῶς δοκεῖς γέρων.		
(Σμ.)	μόνος γεγάμηκα πρεσβύτερος;		260
(Χα.)	ἀνθρωπίνως τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἐνεγκε, Σμικρῖνη, πρὸς τῶν θεῶν. τῇ παιδί ταύτην γέγονε Χαιρέας ὁδὶ σύντροφος ὁ μέλλων λαμβάνειν αὐτήν. τί οὖν λέγω; σὺ μὴδὲν ζημιού'· τὰ μὲν ὄντα γὰρ ταῦθ' ὅσαπέρ ἐστι λαβὲς σὺ πάντα, κύριος γενοῦ, δίδομέν σοι· τὴν δὲ παιδίσκην τυχεῖν καθ' ἡλικίαν ἔασον αὐτὴν νυμφίου.		265

Chairestratos: 'Smikrines, don't you care at all what's reasonable?' *Smikrines*: 'What? Why?' *Ch.* 'Are you planning to marry a child at your age?' *Sm.* 'What age?' *Ch.* 'You seem to me to be altogether an old man.' *Sm.* 'Am I the only bridegroom to be getting on a bit?' *Ch.* 'Treat

if her guardian expects and wants her to derive some satisfaction from her marriage to Chaireas, and the fact that she and Chaireas already know each other (262–3) is seen as relevant to this. A character involved in an argument in drama does not necessarily present a fully rounded account of the matter in dispute, but we may note that this is the argument with which he tries (in vain) to persuade Smikrines, and that Smikrines has been presented to us in the prologue as the most wicked man on earth (116–17), while Chairestratos' character was said to be very good (125). That suggests that his argument would have been generally accepted as admirable and humane. I believe that this passage contains arguments which must, because of their dramatic context, be seen as representing views of which the audience would have approved.

We are likely to learn most from particular passages of this kind. But it may sometimes also be possible to learn something from the entire structure of a play; it is worth quoting a remark from later in Dover's book which is relevant to my subject: 'Although there is much inconsequentiality in the plot of *Lysistrata*, as in all Aristophanic comedy, the whole idea of the play...could hardly have taken shape except in a society in which the marital relationship was central to sexuality, and the development of the plot in detail makes this more explicit' (p. 211).¹⁴ (Perhaps 'was central to sexuality' should be rephrased as 'was seen as central to a man's sexual activity and enjoyment'.) There will be disagreement in particular cases over what can reasonably be deduced both from short passages and from whole plots; this is a matter for individual judgement. But Comedy remains a possible source of evidence for the views of Athenian men in general.

2(c) 'Eros is a "sickness", a "madness"..., a cruel god who robs us of our wits... Eros was normally regarded by the Greeks as an exceptionally strong response to stimuli, i.e. a very strong and obsessive desire' (Dover (1974), pp. 210–12). In translating *eros* as 'love' I do not wish to obscure the fact that in most contexts many people would find 'desire' a better translation. Those who feel that 'love' in English necessarily conveys some element of reciprocity, or of 'consulting another's interest at the expense of one's own',¹⁵ or of 'personal fulfilment',¹⁶ will normally not wish to use the word to translate *eros*. I do so only in the belief that it is in fact the least inadequate translation for the purposes of this discussion; it is not my aim to offer a full account of *eros* in ancient Athens.¹⁷ The first two definitions of 'love' offered by the 1990 edition of the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* are '1. an intense feeling of deep affection or fondness for a person or thing; great liking. 2. sexual passion', and it is particularly in the second of these senses that I believe 'love' is often an appropriate translation of *eros*. In contexts where it is unfulfilled, or where it has led to disaster,

the matter like a human being, Smikrines, for heaven's sake. Chaireas here, who is planning to marry her, has been brought up together with this girl. So what am I suggesting? You needn't suffer any loss. Take all this property, however much there is. It's yours to keep; we give it to you. But let the girl marry a bridegroom from her own age-group.'

¹⁴ Cf. R. Cameranesi, 'L'attrazione sessuale nella commedia attica antica', *QUCC* 55 [= n.s. 26, 2] (1987), 37–47.

¹⁵ W. S. Barrett on Euripides, *Hippolytus* 441–2 (in his commentary on that play, Oxford, 1964). 'ἐρώει: here above all the translation "love" is misleading: the word denotes simply desire, with no thought of wishing the beloved well, so that there is no suggestion (which "love" would give) of consulting another's interest at the expense of one's own.'

¹⁶ S. Goldhill, in C. B. R. Pelling (ed.), *Characterization and Individuality in Greek Literature* (Oxford, 1990), p. 102.

¹⁷ Dover (1978), pp. 42–54, has helpful sections called 'Eros and desire' and 'Eros and love'.

eros is seen as a destructive force, just as 'love' can be in such contexts in English. But *eros* can act as a force for reconciliation (cf. *Samia* 81–3, n. 23 below), and a young married couple can be said to feel it for each other (cf. n. 24 below). However, rather than fussing about how to translate the word, it will be better to give some examples of what we find in Menander.

In *Dyskolos*, Sostratos has fallen for Knemon's daughter at sight (52). Seeing her again, he goes into ecstatic exclamations about her beauty (191–4), and he declares himself to be under the control of a god (347) – which is true, though not quite in the sense that he means it; he presumably has *Eros* in mind, whereas we know that it is *Pan* who controls him (*Pan* told us so in the prologue, lines 39–44). He does at one point show some interest in the girl's character, when he declares it at 384–9¹⁸ to be a positive advantage that she has been brought up by a stern father, free from the influence of women.¹⁹ But we cannot say that he loves her *for* her character, since he is already determined to marry her before he has learnt anything about her upbringing.²⁰ It is repeatedly her beauty that catches his attention; at 677–8 he calls her 'an exceptional work of art', and at 686–9 he describes how he could scarcely restrain himself from kissing her when he found himself next to her. This is clearly 'sexual passion' or infatuation.

There is more substance, perhaps, in the *eros* of Moschion, the young man in *Samia*. When he declares that *eros* is now 'master of his mind' (632),²¹ he sums up his feelings for the girl next door whom he has promised to marry and who has recently given birth to his child; he has just told us (at 624–5) that he is enslaved by his oath to her, his desire for her, and the length and intimacy of their relationship.²² There are several comic effects in his speech here; Gomme–Sandbach (1973) on 616ff. comment on the 'elevated tone' of much of it and suggest that 632 'might well come from a tragedy' – a sign of Moschion's absurdity in taking himself so seriously. But it does not follow that there is anything intrinsically absurd in what he says about his feelings for the girl. It seems reasonable to say that he is 'in love' with her, and similarly to translate *eran* as 'be in love' when his father is said to *eran* his mistress (81–3),²³ and when a young married couple are said to *eran* each other in Xenophon's *Symposion*.²⁴ In these contexts (where their desires are fulfilled) there is nothing destructive about their *eros*. Unfortunately we do not have the part of Moschion's monologue at the beginning of *Samia* in which he must have first mentioned the girl and presumably said something about his feelings for her before the night on which

¹⁸ Cf. 201–2.

¹⁹ Cf. Handley (1965), ad loc.; also Jarcho (1983), p. 368.

²⁰ Cf. 302.

²¹ ὁ τῆς ἐμῆς νῦν κύριος γνώμης ἔρωσ.

²²

ὄρκος, πόθος,

χρόνος, συνήθει', οἷς ἐδουλούμην ἐγώ.

In view of *συνήθεια* here, it is odd of Gomme–Sandbach (1973) on *Samia* 350 to claim that 'πόθος is longing for a person from whom one is separated' ('495' in that note is presumably a misprint for '624'). Their note on 625 is helpful; add Alciphron 4.10.5: τοῦ παρελθόντος χρόνου καὶ τῆς συνηθείας.

²³

ἐραὶ γάρ, ὦ βέλτιστε, κακείνος κακός,
οὐχ ἥττον ἢ σύ· τοῦτο δ' εἰς διαλλαγὰς
ἄγει τάχιστα καὶ τὸν ὀργιλώτατον.

'For he too, my dear fellow, is dreadfully in love, no less than you; and that speedily leads even the most irascible man to be reconciled.'

Cf. the father's injunction to himself at 350: ἐπιλαθοῦ τοῦ πόθου, πέπαυσ' ἐρών ('Forget your desire; stop loving her').

²⁴ Xen. *Symp.* 8.3: ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ ὁ Νικῆρατος, ὡς ἐγὼ ἀκούω, ἐρών τῆς γυναικὸς ἀντεράται ('And Nikeratos too, so I gather, is in love – with his wife; and she loves him'). *Symp.* 2.3 shows that they are newly-weds.

he got her pregnant (in the gap after line 29). But he does tell us that the women of the two households see a great deal of each other (35ff.), and we learn that the two fathers have been away for some time; Moschion and the girl have thus been able to have something more of an affair than was often possible for unmarried young citizen couples at Athens.

2(d) Walcot (1987) uses the term 'romantic love'; he declares it as part of his purpose 'to consider romantic love as it manifested itself in Greek New Comedy' (p. 5) – although he in fact discusses only a small proportion of the evidence from New Comedy. It may not seem very romantic that Sostratos in *Dyskolos* nowhere appears to give any thought to the feelings of Knemon's daughter herself; his infatuation is entirely one-sided. But perhaps that does not make it inappropriate to talk of 'romantic love' in his case, depending on what we mean by it. There is a wide-ranging discussion of romantic love by Rudd (1981), in which he insists that it was not invented by medieval troubadours but can be shown to have existed in antiquity. He finds it in plays by Plautus and Terence (where it 'is at least *sometimes* associated with marriage', p. 151), as well as other types of literature, and he thinks that Sostratos 'has at least the makings of a romantic hero' (pp. 144–5).²⁵ Among his criteria for romantic love are love at first sight, idealization of the beloved, emotional preoccupation, and the desire for a long-term attachment. Sostratos certainly satisfies most of these criteria,²⁶ and he is totally absorbed in the task of persuading the girl's father to let him marry her.

2(e) A less attractive feature is the element of rape or forceful seduction in the background to some of the plots of New Comedy (or even in the foreground in the case of Terence's *Eunuchus* ('The Eunuch'), based on a Greek original by Menander). We have already noted in section **1(a)** its absence from *Andria*, *Aspis* and *Dyskolos*, but clearly there is a lurking suspicion that any young man given half a chance will deflower a girl that he fancies. At *Aspis* 290 (see n. 32 below), Chaereas assures us that he 'did nothing hasty or unworthy or wrong, but begged for her hand in marriage in accordance with the laws'. At *Dyskolos* 289–93 the immediate suspicion of Gorgias (the girl's half-brother) on seeing Sostratos is expressed as follows: 'You seem to me to have set your heart on a wicked action, thinking to persuade a free-born girl to do wrong, or watching for an opportunity to accomplish a deed deserving many deaths',²⁷ a charge which Sostratos emphatically denies at 309–14. In cases where a girl has been deflowered, of course we cannot quantify the degree of force used. It is often claimed that Moschion in *Samia* has raped the girl next door, but in fact he is too embarrassed to go into details when he himself describes how he got her pregnant (47–50); in some other cases too little of the play survives for us to say anything about the circumstances. But sometimes it is quite explicit that the deflowering was an act of violence (cf. Fantham (1975), pp. 53–6). This was not regarded as a trivial matter;

²⁵ J. Werner, 'Keine "individuelle Geschlechtsliebe" in der Antike?', *Klio* 71 (1989), 528–38 comes to a similar conclusion to Rudd's and includes New Comedy in his examples of 'individuelle Geschlechtsliebe' in antiquity. But he devotes much space to the views of Engels and is relatively brief in discussing the ancient evidence. ²⁶ Cf. Walcot (1987), p. 6.

²⁷ ἔργον δοκεῖς μοι φαῦλον ἐξηλωκέναι,
 πείσειν νομίζων ἑξαμαρτεῖν παρθένον
 ἐλευθέραν, ἥ καιρὸν ἐπιτηρῶν τινα
 κατεργάσασθαι πρᾶγμα θανάτων ἄξιον
 πολλῶν.

Gorgias at *Dysk.* 292–3 (n. 27) describes it as ‘a deed deserving many deaths’,²⁸ and the playwright draws attention to the girl’s weeping and torn clothes at Men. *Epitr.* 487ff. and Ter. *Eun.* 646, 659, 820. But cf. Cohen (1990), p. 148 n. 3: ‘Rape of young, unmarried women at festivals plays a prominent rôle in the plots of several comedies of Menander, but it is often not clear whether the sexual transaction really was based upon force or is simply referred to as such in order to help preserve the reputation of the girl.’ In real life there would be room for debate about the implications of weeping and torn clothes, but it is likely that one reason for mentioning them in these plays is to make it clear that the sexual initiative was taken entirely by the young man and to give the impression that it was entirely unwelcome to the young woman. The audience would not have thought well of a citizen girl who willingly consented to her seduction, and there is evidence that in their eyes ‘although rape was regarded as a disgraceful act, it was by no means an unpardonable or unthinkable one’ (Gomme–Sandbach (1973), p. 33) – particularly since it was accepted that *eros* was an overwhelming force, and there were not many opportunities for the leisurely seduction of citizen girls.²⁹ (Also, in the case of *Eunuchus*, the young man who commits the rape believes the girl to be a foreign prostitute; for the ancient audience this would almost certainly have diminished the seriousness of his offence, although the girl turns out to be an Athenian citizen by birth.) From this perspective, the rape is symptomatic of the young man’s infatuation. In Terence’s *Adelphoe* (‘The Brothers’) we are told clearly that Aeschinus’ rape of the girl next door was a violent act (308, ‘the poor girl he’d wronged, raping her by force’),³⁰ but we are also told that he desperately wants to marry her (698) and that he ‘never lets a day go by without visiting her’ (293–4). We are not told anything about his feelings for her before the rape, but he (like Moschion) has promised to stand by the girl and to marry her; and in both cases they have at least come to love their future wives, if they did not already do so before they made them pregnant. Whether the girls have come to love their future husbands we cannot say. They have good reason to want to marry them in any case (since their chances of finding any other husband cannot be great), but it does

²⁸ Cf. P. G. McC. Brown, ‘Athenian Attitudes to Rape and Seduction: The Evidence of Menander, *Dyskolos* 289–293’, *CQ* n.s. 41 (1991), 533–4.

²⁹ On attitudes to rape, see Dover (1974), p. 147 (and p. 209 on ‘Effects of Segregation’); Fantham (1975), pp. 53–4; S. G. Cole, ‘Greek Sanctions against Sexual Assault’, *Class. Phil.* 79 (1984), 97–113; J. Griffin, *Latin Poets and Roman Life* (London, 1985), pp. 126–7; Just (1989), pp. 68–9. (But on the value of Lysias 1.30–5 as evidence, see E. M. Harris, ‘Did the Athenians Regard Seduction as a Worse Crime than Rape?’, *CQ* n.s. 40 (1990), 370–7.) Cf. also J. Evans-Grubbs, *JRS* 79 (1989), p. 62 on abduction marriage: ‘The disguising as an abduction of what is in fact a mutual agreement serves two useful purposes: it obscures any indication of sexual initiative on the girl’s part, which would be regarded with horror by her parents and by the rest of the community, and it preserves the male’s honour and demonstrates convincingly his courage and manliness.’

On the lack of opportunities for leisurely seduction of citizen girls, see Dover (1978), pp. 149–51; Cohen (1991), p. 186.

As Harry Hine points out to me, it would be interesting to know how often young men did in fact get unmarried citizen girls pregnant; cf. Cohen (1991), p. 134 n. 1: ‘Although in modern Western society it is rape which has become the pre-eminent or paradigmatic sexual crime, in Athens this was not the case. The Athenian orators, for example, frequently refer to adultery, but do not mention a single case of rape involving an Athenian woman of citizen-standing’ (cf. p. 128 n. 92). But on p. 83 Cohen observes (referring to Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.1373a34–5) that this is the sort of offence that the girl’s family would want to cover up if possible. Marriage with the young man was likely to be seen as the most satisfactory outcome in the circumstances, with consequent silence about what had taken place. (On rape, now see also D. Cohen, ‘Sexuality, Violence, and the Athenian Law of *Hubris*’, *Greece & Rome*, 2nd series, 38 (1991), 171–88.)

³⁰ *quoi miserae indigne per vim vitium obtulerat.*

look as if some sort of steady relationship has already developed, even after (in *Adelphoe*) a violent act of rape.

2(f) Modern Western readers probably have an ideal of *reciprocal* love, which is not something we can claim to find in the plays I have so far discussed. No more in *Dyskolos* than in *Samia* or *Adelphoe* do we learn anything about the feelings of the girl in question towards the young man. (Cf. Vatin (1970), pp. 45, 50–1, on the absence of reciprocal love from Hellenistic literature in general.) Chairestratos at *Aspis* 262–3 (cf. n. 13) perhaps hints at something when he says that Chaireas and the girl have been brought up together and should be allowed to marry for that reason; but it is no more than a hint. On the whole, reciprocal love is something that we find in New Comedy among couples who are already married (as with the couple from Xenophon's *Symposion* mentioned above). I shall say more about this later, but for the time being I shall continue to focus on the feelings of young men who have not yet married.

3(a) In *Aspis*, Chaireas hopes to marry the girl he loves. When we first hear about this marriage, nothing is said about Chaireas' love for the girl; we are told in the prologue (130–7)³¹ that his stepfather (Chairestratos), seeing that the girl's brother was staying away for a long time, and that her family property was quite moderate, was intending to marry her to his stepson and to provide a dowry of two talents himself. At 256ff., when Chairestratos is arguing with Smikrines, he puts the emphasis on the girl's future happiness. We first meet Chaireas himself at 284–98, in a speech in which he declares himself to be exceptionally ill-starred because he seems about to lose on their very wedding day the girl with whom he is in love.³² He describes his love as

³¹ ὦν δ', ὅπερ ὑπέπα, χρηστὸς οὗτος μακροτέραν
 ὁρῶν ἐκείνῳ τὴν ἀποδημίαν τὰ τε
 οἰκεία μέτρια παντελῶς, τὴν παρθένον
 αὐτὸς συνοικίζειν νεανίσκῳ τινὶ
 ἐμῶν, ὡς τῆς γυναικὸς ἣς ἔχει,
 ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ἑτέρου, προῖκα τ' ἐπεδίδου δύο
 τάλαντα· καὶ ποιεῖν ἐμέλλε τοὺς γάμους
 νυνί. 135

'As I said, Chairestratos is a good man; seeing that her brother was staying away for a long time, and that her family property was quite moderate, he himself was planning to marry the girl to a certain young man, the son by a previous husband of the woman he's married, and he was going to give a dowry of two talents – and he was planning to hold the wedding today.'

³² 286–97: οὐδέ εἰς
 τούτων γὰρ οὕτως ἡτύχηκεν ὡς ἐγώ.
 ἔρωτι περιπεσὼν γὰρ οὐκ αὐθαιρέτῳ
 τῆς σῆς ἀδελφῆς, φίλτατ' ἀνθρώπων ἐμοί,
 οὐθὲν ποῆσας προπετέες οὐδ' ἀνάξιον 290
 οὐδ' ἄδικον ἐδεήθην ἐμαυτῷ κατὰ νόμον
 συνοικίσαι τὸν θεῖον ὡς σὺ κατέλιπες
 καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν μητέρα παρ' ἣι παιδεύεται.
 ὡμῶν δὲ μακάριός τις εἶναι τῷ βίῳ,
 ἐλθεῖν δ' ἐπ' αὐτὸ τὸ πέρασ οἰηθεὶς σφόδρα 295
 καὶ προσδοκῆσας οὐδ' ἰδεῖν δυνήσομαι
 τὸ λοιπόν.

'Not one of these is as unlucky as I am. Having fallen victim involuntarily to *eros* for your sister – yours, dearest of all men to me – I did nothing hasty or unworthy or wrong, but begged for her hand in marriage in accordance with the laws from the uncle in whose charge you left her and from my mother who is responsible for her upbringing. And I thought I had struck it lucky; I was quite sure that I had reached the very goal of my life – I expected that. But from now on I shan't even be able to see her.'

something involuntary to which he fell victim (288; he uses the noun *eros*), and tells us that he did not rape or seduce the girl but begged to be allowed to marry her and thought himself a lucky man when his request was granted (291–4). It is interesting to note that we are given different perspectives on the proposed marriage at different stages of the play; the prologue did not bother to tell us that Chaireas had begged to marry the girl, nor did Chairestratos think it appropriate to use *Chaireas*' feelings as an argument in his dispute with Smikrines. The marriage turns out to have a more complicated background, one which we should perhaps not have guessed if the Bodmer codex (which preserves the first half of the play) had stopped before line 284. It is also interesting that Chaireas regards it as a personal tragedy that he will be unable to marry the girl he loves; can we believe that his plight was one which the audience would have found unusual or unfamiliar? Only, I think, if we are determined to believe that Athenian society was different from our own in as many respects as possible. (In *Dyskolos* it is Pan who has made Sostratos fall in love; it is hard to assess how unusual (if at all) that would make his behaviour seem to the audience.³³ This complication does not arise in *Aspis*, where we are not told of any such divine intervention causing Chaireas' love.)

3(b) I do not wish to conceal the fact that we do also in New Comedy find marriages which are arranged for young men without consulting their desires. In *Samia*, Moschion's father had already arranged for him to marry the girl next door without knowing that Moschion was in love with her (cf. 113ff.). Even the romantic Sostratos, who is so passionately in love himself, proposes marrying his sister to his new friend Gorgias in Act V of *Dyskolos*, clearly without expecting Gorgias to have any antecedent love for his bride. The far more fragmentary *Georgos* ('The Farmer') serves to bring out the variety of possible attitudes. Here an old man has reason to be grateful to a young man who is very poor, and as a sign of his gratitude he plans to marry the young man's sister. The slave who announces this news³⁴ clearly regards it as good news for the family and takes it for granted that the offer will immediately be accepted (76ff.). There is no question of any romantic attachment here. But unfortunately this girl is already pregnant by another young man, and he in his turn is horrified to discover that his father has arranged for him to marry someone else³⁵

Professor I. G. Kidd suggested in discussion at St Andrews that the participle *περιπεσών* in 288 might be concessive ('Although I was the victim of *eros*, I didn't try to rape or seduce her'). This could be right; cf. Arnott on Sostratos in the first paragraph of section **1(b)** above. But it remains true that *eros* was the force motivating Chaireas to seek the girl's hand in marriage.

³³ Cf. N. Zagagi, 'Divine Interventions and Human Agents in Menander', in E. Handley and A. Hurst (eds.), *Relire Ménandre* (Geneva, 1990), pp. 63–91.

³⁴ 71–7:

ἔπαθέ τι κοινὸν καὶ χάριν
τῆς ἐπιμελείας ὧι ἐκ παντὸς λόγῳ
δεῖν αὐτὸν ἀποδοῦναι, μόνος τ' ὢν καὶ γέρω
νοῦν ἔσχε· τὴν γὰρ παῖδ' ὑπέσχηται γαμεῖν.
κεφάλαιόν ἐστι τοῦτο τοῦ παντὸς λόγου.
ἤξουσιν ἤδη δεῦρ', ἄπειν εἰς ἀγρόν
αὐτῇν λαβών. παύσεσθε πενίαι μαχόμενοι...

75

'He felt the way people do and thought that he ought on all accounts to repay your son for looking after him. Being on his own, and an old man, he showed sense: he's promised to marry your daughter. That is the sum total of my whole story. They'll be here soon, and he'll take her off to his farm. No more struggles with poverty for you ...!'

³⁵ 7–9:

κατιῶν ὑπὸ νύκτα γινομένους ἐτέρους γάμους
καταλαμ]βάνω μοι, τοὺς θεοὺς στεφανουμένους,
τὸν πατέρα θύοντ' ἔνδον.

'I came back in the evening and found a different marriage was being organized for me; the gods had garlands on, and my father was indoors sacrificing.'

– another unromantic marriage in prospect, and one which he calls a ‘dreadful predicament’ (δυσφεύκτωι κακῶι) in line 12. But he is determined not to wrong his darling (τὴν φιλάττην) – it would not be right to do so (15–16)³⁶; and in frag. 4, where his nerve is clearly failing, someone criticizes him on the grounds that, ‘having fallen in love with a free-born girl’, he is allowing a marriage with another girl to be arranged for him.³⁷ So once again we have a young man in love with a citizen girl whom he has made pregnant. No doubt if everyone knew she was pregnant by him they would have little hesitation in saying that he ought to marry her in any case. But – yet again – the playwright has chosen to make him *in love* with her. The arranged marriages which others try to bring about in this play must have been a familiar part of the audience’s experience. But they clearly found it more satisfying to see a love match being brought about – and I hope it is clear by now that I think experience must also have made them familiar with such love matches, or at least with young men who *wanted* to marry for love.

4(a) How provocative is my insistence on this point? I suspect many people will feel that Walcot (1987), p. 8, goes too far when he says that Athens ‘denied the validity of love as the basis for a happily married life’. Even Athenians who did not marry *as a result of* love may well have hoped to find love *in* marriage, and it is a commonplace about arranged marriages that love can grow in them over the years. No doubt in most cases this is something calmer than the obsessive desire I have been discussing; it is *philia* rather than *eros*, and *philia* can only be found in an established relationship. Sostratos can feel only *eros* for his beloved, and *eros* is the only noun used of the young man’s feelings in what survives of *Aspis* and *Georgos* (for *Samia*, see the end of section 2(c)); Moschion does have something of a relationship with his beloved and is bound to her by other things besides *eros* (624–5)). But the two states are not always so easy to disentangle (cf. Dover (1974), pp. 211–12; (1978), p. 50), and we have at least found a reference in Xenophon to a couple of newly-weds who feel *eros* for each other (cf. n. 24). Several discussions of Athenian married life have drawn attention to cases where husbands express devotion to their wives and wives to their husbands, some of them from New Comedy.³⁸ Thus, in the prologue to a New Comedy (P. Antin. 15)³⁹ a young man who married in obedience to his father (line 3) has within five months come to love his wife (10–12) because of her character – and she loves him too (he uses three different verbs for ‘love’, one of which (applied to his own

36

τὴν φιλάττην

...[αν ἀδικήσαιμ’ ἂν· οὐ γὰρ εὐσεβές.

37

ἐμβεβρόντηται; γελοῖον, ὃς κόρης ἐλευθέρας
εἰς ἔρωθ’ ἤκων σιωπαῖς καὶ μάτην ποιοιμένους
περιοραῖς γάμους σεαντῶι.

‘Are you out of your mind? It’s ridiculous! You’ve fallen in love (*eros*) with a free-born girl, but you don’t open your mouth; you sit by and allow a marriage to be arranged for you.’

³⁸ E.g. Cohen (1991), pp. 167–8; Jarcho (1983); Just (1989), pp. 102, 129, 133–4; Lefkowitz (1983), pp. 36–7; Vatin (1970), pp. 53–5. (Cf. also Hunter (1985), p. 87 (with p. 165 n. 5) on the concept of marriage as a partnership.

³⁹ P. Antin, 15, 3: πέμπτον γεγάμηκα μῆνα πεισθείς τῶι πατρί. (‘I married four months ago in obedience to my father.’)

10–12: δίκαιον ἥρων· καὶ ὅτ...[
αὐτῆς ἐλευθέρῳ γὰρ ἦθει καὶ βίωι
δεθείς ἀπλάστῳ τὴν φιλοῦσαν ἡγάπων.

‘[?] As was right, I fell in love with her...I became bound to her by her noble character and unaffected manner; she loved me, and I came to love her too.’

feelings) is *eran*).⁴⁰ There is also little doubt that Menander's *Epitrepontes* ('The Arbitration') portrayed a young husband in love with his wife, unable to console himself with another woman when he thinks he ought to put an end to his marriage (431–41),⁴¹ while his wife is determined to stand by him in spite of his mistreatment of her and resists her father's attempts to make her leave him.⁴² Similarly, the wife who speaks in *P. Didot I* (which may or may not be from New Comedy; cf. Gomme–Sandbach (1973), pp. 723–4) has married a man chosen by her father (34–5)⁴³ and is now resisting her father's efforts to separate them, because she is happy with the relationship which has developed (14–18).⁴⁴ It was pleasing for a male audience to see wifely devotion portrayed in this way,⁴⁵ but at least in the first two instances we also see a husband who is devoted to his wife; and the same is true of Terence's *Hecyra* ('The Mother-in-Law', based on a Greek original by Apollodorus), where the young husband has come to love his wife although he had been very reluctant to marry her only a few months previously (114–75, 293–8, 325–6, 404, 841–80). Jarcho (1983), in a paper which has several points of overlap with this one and also discusses some plays by Euripides, concludes that there was in fifth- and fourth-century Athens at least an *ideal* of mutual satisfaction in marriage which we can recognize as being similar to our own ideal. He is quite certain that the ideal did not always correspond with the reality, but that too (as he observes) is not unparalleled in the modern world. Needless to say, there was also a link between marriage and sexual attraction in ancient Greek thinking.⁴⁶

4(b) It may be more controversial to suggest that romantic or sexual attraction was likely to guide a man in his choice of a woman to marry in the first place, at least

⁴⁰ Cf. Lefkowitz (1983), p. 37; I suspect that it may be artificial to distinguish as she does between the nuances of *philein* and *agapan* (the other two verbs) in a context like this – but perhaps in saying that I beg too many questions. (For these two verbs together cf. Men. *Misoumenos* 308: ἀγαπῶ, φιλῶ, Κράτεια φιλάττη ('I love you, I adore you, Krateia darling'), said by Thrasonides to his mistress. Flury (1968), p. 51 n. 54, suggests that Menander does not make Thrasonides say ἐρῶ because that would too clearly express physical desire.)

⁴¹ Cf. also his reactions in 954–8.

⁴² See the 2nd edition of Sandbach's Oxford Text of Menander (1990), pp. 348–50 for what is now known of her argument with her father on this point in lines 714–835. Her father knows less than she does about the background to her marital problems; but I do not think this background would itself be enough to make her feel she had to remain loyal to her husband if she did not want to do so.

⁴³ ὅτ' ἦν ἐγὼ παῖς, τότε σ' ἐχρῆν ζητεῖν ἐμοὶ
ἀνδρ' ὡς με δώσεις· σὴ γὰρ ἦν τόθ' αἰρεῖς.

'When I was a child, then it was right for you to look for a husband for me; it was your job to make the choice at that time.'

⁴⁴ ἔστ' ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ κειμένος νόμος,
τῷ μὲν διὰ τέλους ἦν ἔχει στέργειν αἰεί,
τῇ δ' ὅς' ἂν ἀρέσκει τάνδρ' αὐτ' αὐτὴν ποεῖν.
γέγονεν ἐκεῖνος εἰς ἔμ' οἶον ἡξίουν
ἐμοί τ' ἀρέσκει πάνθ' ἃ κακέινωι, πάτερ.

'There is a rule laid down for man and wife: he must always cherish to the end the woman he has married, and she herself must do whatever pleases her husband. He has been the sort of man to me that I thought he should be, and everything that pleases him pleases me too, father.'

⁴⁵ Cf. Hunter (1985), p. 84.

⁴⁶ See (for example) Dover (1974), p. 211, quoted at the end of section 2(b) above; J. Redfield, 'Notes on the Greek Wedding', *Arethusa* 15 (1982), 181–201; G. Arrigoni, 'Amore sotto il manto e iniziazione nuziale', *QUCC* 44 [= n.s. 15, 3] (1983), 7–56; R. A. S. Seaford, *JHS* 107 (1987), 108, 116–17; C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *JHS* 107 (1987), 140 = 'Reading' *Greek Culture* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 68–9 (on the erotic iconography of wedding scenes and other relevant scenes on vases); also Brown (1990), p. 263 n. 35 on misinterpretations of Ps.-Demosthenes 59.122.

in the case of those who were reasonably well off. For the less well-to-do it would perhaps not be very controversial. Dover (1974), p. 211, talking of married couples in love with each other, says: 'There were no doubt many more of them than we are encouraged to suppose by the view commonly taken nowadays of the Greek tendency to treat marriage as a mechanism for the inheritance of property'; and he also suggests, talking of the motives which led couples to marry, that 'in the middle and lower classes young men and girls knew more about each other, had definite ideas about whom they wanted to marry, and had a habit of getting their own way (often with their mothers as pertinacious allies) despite the formal authority of their fathers. If that is so, the love-match was more common than has generally been imagined.'⁴⁷ In support of this, we may note the frequency of marriage between extremely close kin at Athens;⁴⁸ cousins no doubt got to know each other on numerous family occasions, and even if family gatherings do not inevitably lead to romantic love, they do at least provide opportunities.⁴⁹ More generally, we should not be misled by talk of the 'seclusion' of women in the upper classes into supposing even of these classes that boys and girls never had a chance to set eyes on each other or to find out anything about each other. This has been well discussed by Just (1989), ch. 6 ('Freedom and Seclusion').⁵⁰ No doubt girls of marriageable age were more closely guarded than the very young and the very old, and no doubt this was particularly so in the upper classes; but there were, above all, religious activities that regularly took them out of doors.

In other words, there were chances for both boys and girls to form preferences (however inadequately based) about possible marriage partners, and perhaps also to communicate these preferences to their parents. Sometimes, perhaps, the preference was so strong as to amount to 'romantic love' (in the sense of an obsessive desire); and it is not inconceivable that the parents sometimes took note of an expressed preference – even perhaps of a daughter's preference (cf. n. 47). I do not want to exaggerate the significance of the opportunities for premarital contact between the sexes in Athens, but to suggest that a social framework did exist within which it is not absurd to believe that something like the love-plots of New Comedy (those, that is, which concern love for a citizen girl) could find a place. New Comedy thrives (in some cases) on a conflict between the plans of the parents and the desires of the children. In real life, for all we know, these plans and desires may have tended to coincide more often than not. If so, it may not be so much the happy endings which represent the dreams of middle-class Athenians as the preceding complications which represent their nightmares.

But we cannot know what the balance normally was (or was expected to be) between considerations of wealth, status and influence on the one hand, and the wishes of one or both of the young couple on the other hand, in the planning of Athenian marriages. Doubtless there were families where the former considerations

⁴⁷ Cf. also Osborne (1985), p. 136 n. 28, qualifying his claim that 'parental calculation continued to be of paramount importance': 'This is not to deny the considerable informal rôle of women, as in Arab societies today, nor the importance of the decision of the daughter'; cf. the exceptionally clear article by E. Friedl, 'The Position of Women: Appearance and Reality', *Anthropological Quarterly* 40 (1967), 97–108 (reprinted in J. Dubisch (ed.), *Gender and Power in Rural Greece* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 42–52).

⁴⁸ Cf. Lacey (1968), p. 106; Just (1989), pp. 76, 79–82.

⁴⁹ Cf. Just (1989), p. 80: 'inasmuch as there might have been "love matches" in Athens it could be hazarded that they occurred within the confines of the extended family' – though Just does not believe that romantic love was often a factor in marriage between close kin.

⁵⁰ Cf. Cohen (1989), Cohen (1990) or Cohen (1991), pp. 133–70, to a great extent recycling the same material.

were all-important, but we do not know how many. As I remarked in section 1(b), even explicit statements by those directly involved are suspect in this area.

Walcot (1987) clearly believes that most Athenians did not marry for love. But he suggests that both the poor and 'the really wealthy or powerful' (p. 12) might be more likely to do so and to ignore the conventional rules which governed the lives of those who were moderately well off. This gives a different emphasis from Dover's, and it reminds us how much we are forced to rely on our own intuitions in discussing such matters. But it also brings us back to some questions which I have so far left hanging in the air. How wealthy are Menander's citizen families? How wealthy were the members of his audience? Does he portray millionaire playboys marrying for love because that was what millionaire playboys were expected to do by an audience who themselves had no such luck? My discussion of these questions will be brief and largely inconclusive, but they cannot be altogether avoided in this context.

5 No one doubts that most of the citizens in Menander's plays are at least comfortably off; one sign of this is the fact that Sostratos in *Dyskolos* has the leisure to devote himself to furthering his plans of marriage. But on the face of it his father (Kallippides) is a man of considerable wealth: he is said to farm land worth many talents (40–1), and he gives his daughter a dowry of three talents (843–4); this makes him as rich as some of the wealthiest men in Athens. Similarly, Chairestratos (the good uncle in *Aspis*) is said to be worth 60 talents (350), a large sum of money.

It has been debated whether the sums of money referred to in Greek New Comedy are exaggerated 'for stage effect'⁵¹ or whether they are realistic for the class of society being portrayed. There has also been some discussion of what class that is, though sometimes the answer to this question seems to have been assumed from the start. Casson (1976) argued that the figures are to be accepted as realistic and that they show the characters of New Comedy to have been drawn overwhelmingly from the class of the 300 richest Athenians (even the 'poor' being only 'some cuts below' the 'very, very rich', p. 57), a conclusion also reached two years earlier by Webster.⁵² I do not know of any reason to reject this conclusion. It at least seems clear (if we can trust the figures given in the orators) that the sums of money referred to in Comedy are not fantastic and incredible for all Athenians.⁵³

On the other hand, if Menander's characters were perceived as being exceptionally wealthy, it is not at all clear how much of a barrier that created between them and his audience. Two alternative reasons have been given for thinking that he may have been writing for a relatively prosperous audience for at least part of his career: 1. it is possible that the state subsidy for theatre attendance from the theoric fund had been abolished in 322/321,⁵⁴ at about the time when Menander started producing plays;⁵⁵ 2. even if it had not been abolished, the property qualification introduced to

⁵¹ So Ferguson (1911), p. 68; M. I. Finley, *Studies in Land and Credit in Ancient Athens, 500–200 B.C.* (New Brunswick, 1952), p. 267 n. 29.

⁵² Casson (1976), esp. pp. 53–9; Webster (1974), p. 26. Contrast (e.g.) Gomme (1937), p. 264: 'these families all belong to the same social class, the leisured class. They are not particularly wealthy, nor aristocratic; they are not specially persons of rank and fashion; but they have plenty of time and plenty of servants.'

⁵³ I am not convinced by the attempt of Schaps (1985/8) to show that the dowries mentioned in Menander's plays are unrealistically large; in any case he does not deny that the characters are extremely wealthy overall. (On the dowries in New Comedy see also Golden (1990), pp. 174–80.)

⁵⁴ Ferguson (1911), p. 23; J. J. Buchanan, *Theorika* (New York, 1962), pp. 81–2.

⁵⁵ See W. G. Arnott, *Menander*, i (Loeb Classical Library, Harvard and London, 1979), pp. xiv–xv.

restrict entitlement to full citizen rights at that time (and reintroduced in modified form in 317) may have deprived many citizens of the right to receive it. If either is true, as Gomme-Sandbach say (1973, p. 22 n. 1), '[i]t may be guessed that the poorer part of the population, no longer receiving a theoric payment, did not attend the theatre in great number and that this had some effect on the nature of the plays written.'⁵⁶ However, Webster (1970), p. 101, pointed out that neither is quite certain, and Blanchard (1983), pp. 387–8, has attacked the notion of a limited audience for Menander's plays. I think we have to accept that we just do not know the answer to this important question. (It is also not easy to establish exactly what property qualifications were in force at what time during the latter part of Menander's career; cf. Ferguson (1911), pp. 73, 130, 135.)

Even if Menander's audience was more predominantly prosperous for much of his career, that still leaves open the possibility of a significant difference between the ultra-rich characters on stage and the merely prosperous audience who watched them. But stating this possibility does not get us very far, not least because there is no way to tell whether the notion of marrying for love can plausibly be labelled as a peculiarity of the multi-millionaires of ancient Athens.

6 Love manifested itself in New Comedy in more ways than I have examined here. I have not examined love affairs with prostitutes (on which I said something in Brown (1990)), nor have I discussed two plays to which Jarcho (1983) devotes particular attention, Menander's *Misoumenos* ('The Man She Hated') and *Perikeiromene* ('The Rape of the Locks'), plays in which a soldier eventually marries a woman who has been living with him as his concubine, and with whom he is very much in love. My concern has been with plays in which a young citizen has set his heart on marrying his girl from the start; as far as we know, none of the parties at the beginning of *Misoumenos* or *Perikeiromene* envisaged that their relationship would ever change from one of concubinage. Konstan (1987), p. 125, remarks of *Perikeiromene* that 'Polemon has neither the wish nor the need to alter the basis of his association with Glykera'; and the same must be true of Thrasonides and his association with Krateia in *Misoumenos*. In both cases, the wedding at the end is a bonus which seals the restoration of a relationship which had gone wrong.

My aim has been to use the evidence of New Comedy to support those who argue for the possibility of links between love and marriage in ancient Athens; I have not discussed the evidence (which certainly exists, at least for earlier in the fourth century) which points in a different direction. It is always possible that drama represented a fantasy world remote from most citizens' experience, similar to the love songs sung by the Sarakatsani of north-western Greece, according to Campbell: 'Despite the contrary testimony of love songs, romantic courtship is impossible. "The songs tell lies," the Sarakatsani say' (Campbell (1964), p. 124, quoted by Walcot (1987), p. 8). But it is also possible that drama portrayed something closer to reality than the official ideology allowed for (if indeed there was an official ideology that denied a place to romantic passion as a reason for marrying at Athens). Bates reports that, among the Yörük of south-eastern Turkey, bride-theft and elopement are rather commoner than the Yörük themselves like to admit. Officially, marriages are arranged by the families: 'romantic love is a paramount theme in Yörük oral narrative (*destan*), but is explicitly denied a role in the arrangement of marriages'; but Bates's informants, when pressed to admit and account for the fact that young men

⁵⁶ Cf. also Arnott (1981), p. 215.

sometimes kidnap the girl they want to marry, are liable to say 'he fell in love' (Bates (1974), p. 276). It is hard to arrive at the truth in such matters.

Trinity College, Oxford

P. G. McC. BROWN

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This is not a complete bibliography of the subject, nor of all the books and articles referred to above, but simply a list of those which I have found it convenient to refer to in abbreviated form. In particular, works referred to once in a footnote are normally cited in full at that point and do not come in this list.

- Arnott, W. G. (1981), 'Moral Values in Menander', *Philologus* 125, 215–27.
- Bates, D. G. (1974), 'Normative and Alternative Systems of Marriage among the Yörük of Southeastern Turkey', *Anthropological Quarterly* 47, 270–87.
- Blanchard, A. (1983), *Essai sur la composition des comédies de Ménandre* (Paris).
- Brown, P. G. McC. (1983), 'Menander's Dramatic Technique and the Law of Athens', *CQ* n.s. 33, 412–20.
- Brown, P. G. McC. (1990), 'Plots and Prostitutes in Greek New Comedy', *PLLS* 6, 241–66.
- Campbell, J. K. (1964), *Honour, Family and Patronage* (Oxford).
- Casson, L. (1976), 'The Athenian Upper Class and New Comedy', *TAPA* 106, 29–59.
- Cohen, D. (1987), 'Law, Society and Homosexuality in Classical Athens', *Past and Present* 117, 3–21.
- Cohen, D. (1989), 'Seclusion, Separation and the Status of Women in Classical Athens', *Greece & Rome*, 2nd series, 36, 3–15.
- Cohen, D. (1990), 'The Social Context of Adultery at Athens', in P. Cartledge, P. Millett and S. Todd (eds.), *Nomos: Essays in Athenian Law, Politics and Society* (Cambridge), pp. 147–65.
- Cohen, D. (1991), *Law, Sexuality, and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens* (Cambridge).
- Dover, K. J. (1974), *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford).
- Dover, K. J. (1978), *Greek Homosexuality* (London).
- Duckworth, G. (1952), *The Nature of Roman Comedy* (Princeton).
- Fantham, E. (1975), 'Sex, Status and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy', *Phoenix* 29, 44–74.
- Ferguson, W. S. (1911), *Hellenistic Athens* (London).
- Flury, P. (1968), *Liebe und Liebessprache bei Menander, Plautus und Terenz* (Heidelberg).
- Golden, M. (1990), *Children and Childhood in Classical Athens* (Baltimore and London).
- Gomme, A. W. (1937), 'Menander', in *Essays in Greek History and Literature* (Oxford), pp. 249–95.
- Gomme, A. W. and Sandbach, F. H. (1973), *Menander: A Commentary* (Oxford).
- Handley, E. W. (1965), (ed.), *The Dyskolos of Menander* (London).
- Holzberg, N. (1974), *Menander. Untersuchungen zur dramatischen Technik* (Nürnberg).
- Hunter, R. L. (1985), *The New Comedy of Greece and Rome* (Cambridge).
- Jarcho, V. (1983), 'Pflicht und Genuss in den ehelichen Beziehungen der alten Athener (nach Euripides und Menander)', *Actes du VIIe Congrès de la F.I.E.C.* (Budapest), ii.357–73.
- Just, R. (1989), *Women in Athenian Law and Life* (London and New York).
- Konstan, D. (1987), 'Between Courtesan and Wife: Menander's *Perikeiromene*', *Phoenix* 41, 122–39.
- Lacey, W. K. (1968), *The Family in Classical Greece* (London).
- Leffkowitz, M. (1983), 'Wives and Husbands', *Greece & Rome*, 2nd series, 30, 31–47.
- Osborne, R. G. (1985), *Demos: The Discovery of Classical Attika* (Cambridge).
- Paoli, U. E. (1961), 'Note giuridiche sul Δύσκολος di Menandro', *Mus. Helv.* 18, 53–62 (reprinted in *Alberi Studi di Diritto Greco e Romano* (Milan, 1976), 559–70).
- Préaux, C. (1957), 'Ménandre et la société athénienne', *Chronique d'Égypte* 32, no. 63, 84–100.
- Rudd, N. (1981), 'Romantic Love in Classical Times?', *Ramus* 10, 140–58.
- Schaps, D. M. (1985/8), 'Comic Inflation in the Marketplace', *SCI* 8–9, 66–73.
- Vatin, C. (1970), *Recherches sur le mariage et la condition de la femme mariée à l'époque hellénistique* (Paris).
- Walcot, P. (1987), 'Romantic Love and True Love: Greek Attitudes to Marriage', *Ancient Society* 18, 5–33.
- Webster, T. B. L. (1970), *Studies in Later Greek Comedy* (2nd ed. Manchester).
- Webster, T. B. L. (1974), *An Introduction to Menander* (Manchester).