

# Gendered Differences in the Recognition Plot: Menander's *Sikyonioi*

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## *Introduction*

Since its rediscovery in 1901, with additional fragments found and then published in the 1960s<sup>1</sup>, *Sikyonioi* has intrigued New Comedy scholars<sup>2</sup>. Despite frustrating lacunae, the plot of this double recognition comedy has been painstakingly pieced together: a young woman (kidnapped at an early age) finds her father, while a mercenary soldier also discovers his natal family and new role as an Athenian citizen; they marry<sup>3</sup>. This widely accepted reconstruction has prompted questions about the way Menander develops his recognition plot; the implications of gender in his identity plays; and the use of the surface-level recognition plot to symbolize internal character development.

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1 — See Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 632) and Arnott (2000: 193-195) on discovery of the *Sikyonioi* manuscripts and Handley (2011) and Blanchard (2014) on the rediscovery of Menander in general.

2 — On title *Sikyonioi* vs. *Sikionios*, see Arnott (1997a: 1-3; 2000: 196-97), Gomme and Sandbach (1973: 632-33), and R. Kassel (1965). I follow Arnott in the use of *Sikyonioi*.

3 — Arnott (1997abc, 2000); Belardinelli (1994); Blanchard & Bataille (1965); Gomme & Sandbach (1973); Handley (1965); Kassel (1965); Lloyd-Jones (1966); Merkelbach (1966).

I argue here that the design of the plot of *Sikyonioi* reveals the gendering of *anagnorisis* through the play's unique man-woman double recognition. Menander's surface-level recognitions (the literal discovery of natal identity) are symbolic of the inner development of the recognized characters<sup>4</sup>, but I suggest that while the recognition plot allows men to discover natal identity and pushes them toward character development, the recognition of a woman puts an end to her dramatic journey immediately. In plays with brother-sister recognition, or single recognition of either a man or a woman exclusively, the gendered pattern of *anagnorisis* in New Comedy is less obvious, but *Sikyonioi* highlights gendered differences in the recognition plot through the characters of Stratophanes and Philoumene<sup>5</sup>.

### *Plot Summary*<sup>6</sup>

*Sikyonioi* showcases two unrelated lost children: Stratophanes was given away by his Athenian parents to a foreign couple for unknown reasons<sup>7</sup>, while Philoumene was kidnapped (354-57) and sold to Stratophanes' adoptive family (5-15) in Caria<sup>8</sup>, then moved to their native Sikyon<sup>9</sup>. Grown up, Stratophanes brings Philoumene back to Athens to settle with him<sup>10</sup>, ἔτρεφε δὲ χωρὶς ὡς ἐλευθέρῳ πρέπει ("having raised her as suits

4 — Furley (2014).

5 — Ariana Traill (2008) has explored the effect of long-lost girl child Philoumene's recognition on all characters in *Sikyonioi* individually: she observed that Menander offers different character viewpoints of (and emotional responses to) the same dramatic conflict to add nuance to the typical recognition plot. Susan Lape (2004) considered the changing ideologies around masculinity in Hellenistic Athens, observing a shift from the citizen-soldier ideal to a morally-centered democratic manhood: thus in the character of Stratophanes of *Sikyonioi* we see a negotiation of old and new conceptions of masculinity. I will avoid covering similar ground here, focusing instead on Menander's development of the symbolic function of the recognition plot and the gendered differences in recognitions through the double recognition plot of *Sikyonioi*.

6 — Greek text from Arnott's Loeb (*Menander III*, 2000). Translations are my own.

7 — Arnott (1997b: 31-34 and 2000: 265-7) suggests that Stratophanes' mother was raped by Smikrines before their marriage and then exposed the child, or that his parents were married but poor at the time, and so gave up their child to a foreign woman who wanted children.

8 — She was purchased either by Stratophanes (who would have been quite young, Gomme & Sandbach [1973: 637]; Traill [2008: 17]), or his foster father (MacCary [1972: 286], Arnott [2000: 211, note 4]), or a third party who later sold Philoumene to Stratophanes' family (Lloyd-Jones [1966: 143]).

9 — Gomme & Sandbach (1973: 644) believe Stratophanes' foster parents lived in Sikyon, and Philoumene lived there with them until Stratophanes summoned her to Athens where he had taken up residence. Arnott (2000: 206-7) suggests instead that the Sikyonian foster parents had lived in Athens since acquiring their foster child from Smikrines and wife, and that Philoumene was bought in Caria by the mercenary and transferred to Athens directly.

10 — Or, if Arnott's reconstruction (note 9) is accurate, she was moved from his foster mother's house in Athens to his own residence.

a free woman”<sup>11</sup>, with the intention of making her a concubine<sup>12</sup>. The neighbor boy Moschion, an Athenian, in competition with Stratophanes, hopes to make Philoumene his mistress. Fearing Moschion, Stratophanes, or an unknown creditor seeking possession of all Stratophanes’ property (or some combination of the three), Philoumene flees to the sanctuary of Persephone and Demeter at Eleusis, to seek the citizens’ protection until she can locate her father and prove her own citizen status. Stratophanes discovers he is an Athenian citizen thanks to a letter written by his foster mother on her deathbed: he is Moschion’s older brother, and the son of an old man, probably the Smikrines who has been involved in the plot arguing with a democrat and listening to a messenger relate the events at Eleusis (and is perhaps an agent for the Boeotian creditor). When Philoumene’s father is found and her identity is verified, Stratophanes asks her father for permission to marry her. Moschion gains his rival for a brother and loses a love interest.

### *Menandrian Recognition Comedies*

Ancient New Comedy’s “recognition plot” is one of its most common plot types: children are lost or exposed, raised in slavery<sup>13</sup>, then identified on the brink of calamity as free citizens, typically by tokens (little items like clothing or jewelry left with the abandoned child) revealing their parentage<sup>14</sup>. In general, some misfortune will arise, threatening the wellbeing or chastity of the displaced children, forcing other characters to put their own reputations, self-interests, or wellbeing on the line to facilitate the recognition and safety of the lost children. The fractured families of lost children are dysfunctional, and their imbalance is representative of a larger society out of order: the children must be discovered and identified as citizens so that the social order may be restored and the

11 — Fr. I Kassel, Sandbach, Belardinelli = fr. 4 Arnott.

12 — Traill (2008: 18-20) argues that since Stratophanes did not free her, but also did not raise her as a slave, the education she received would have “qualified her for nothing but concubinage or marriage”.

13 — A smaller number of plots involve a child recognized while still an infant (Menander’s *Epitrepontes*, Plautus’ *Truculentus*, Terence’s *Hecyra*). This plot is perhaps less common because, while the stakes may be greater for an infant on the cusp of a life of slavery, the drama of adult misfortune and emotion was more appealing to playwrights.

14 — Despite the loss of Aristotle’s work on comedy, scholars have applied his categorization of *anagnorisis* in tragedy to Menander’s comedies. Of the six categories of *anagnorisis*, the most common (and least desirable) is the type facilitated by tokens, and the second least desirable is the unnatural sort contrived by authors with no linkage to the plot (Arist. *Poet.* 1454b, chapter 16). In *Sikyonioi*, Stratophanes’ recognition via tokens is the former type, and Philoumene’s recognition by her father who happens to show up at just the right time is the latter. Munteanu (2002) argues that other Menandrian recognition plots employ the range of Aristotle’s categories. See also MacFarlane (2000).

play can end happily<sup>15</sup>. The recognition, or *anagnorisis*, restores the child to citizen society and allows him or her to marry, and thus produce more citizen babies; citizen marriage and reproduction in turn reinforce social hierarchy, cultural norms, and appropriate gender roles<sup>16</sup>.

In Menander's plays, recognition reunites families, restores social order, and solidifies relationships<sup>17</sup>. Surface-level recognition is a precursor to the reconciliation of the family, the true goal of the Menandrian recognition plot, and these reconciliations are primarily focused on men's bonding, union, and reunion. The reunion of families and bonding between men puts the fractured society back in order and restores familial hierarchy. Furley (2014: 107) has suggested that the Menandrian recognition plot operated on two levels: the generic explicit level, the identification of a character's natal family, and the symbolic implicit level, the recognition of inner character and its development. In *Sikyonioi*, on the explicit level, Stratophanes turns out to be a citizen, the son of Smikrines and his wife. On the implicit level, Stratophanes grows as a character and learns to behave as a part of the citizen community.

I argue here, however, that character development and self-understanding in Menander are reserved for men: women show resolve, but remain largely invisible and do not develop or mature throughout the course of the play. For example, Glykera, the secret citizen girl (and one of Furley's examples) who plays a large role in *Perikeiromene*, does not develop as a character as much as the men around her do, if at all. In this play, Glykera and her brother were given away to different families as children. Glykera was told the truth while her brother remained ignorant. Given to soldier Polemon as a concubine, she flees after being mistreated by the brutish soldier, who must learn to be a better person before he can have her back. Glykera has always been assured of her identity and self worth; her self-understanding does not change when she is recognized, nor does she go on a journey of self-improvement. Such development (or the promise of it) is reserved instead for her arrogant brother Moschion, whose life is turned on its head, and Polemon, who must learn to temper his anger and trust his beloved.

15 — Later authors (Plautus, Terence) use representations of disordered and dysfunctional societies to critique the damaging ideologies espoused by them. Plautus' bawdy humor, rapid-fire dialogue, and slap-stick action are perhaps less cerebral than his fellow New Comic playwrights, but he does explore — with humor — social hypocrisies, slave torture, near-miss incest, and the sexual double standard (Henderson [2006], McCarthy [2000], Parker [1989], Stewart [2012]). Terence's comedies depict deep-seated problems that are formally resolved but remain disturbing, with endings that can hardly be called "happy", in order to critique the Roman social hierarchies and ideologies (Anderson [2002], Gellar-Goad [2013], McGarrity [1980/81], Penwill [2004]).

16 — Lowe (2007:69-72), Lape (2004, 2010).

17 — Sommerstein (1998), Heap (1998).

Reconciliations, as I noted above, occur largely between men: husbands and wives may find peace after crisis (*Epitrepontes*, *Heros*), but emotional rapprochement occurs between men (*Samia*, *Perikeiromene*, *Misoumenos*, *Dsykolos*). When a woman is recognized, she disappears (if she had any visible role in the play to begin with). The negotiation of her place in the family and her larger society then occurs between her father and the man who wants to marry her. This dramatic convention should not be chalked up to the supposed ideology that ancient Athenian women should be neither seen or heard: plenty of women characters play important parts in resolving the plot in Menander's comedy, often in speaking roles<sup>18</sup>. Menander seems instead to make a comment on the quality of character in his plays: women do not, and need not, grow or evolve, but men must go through narrative trials and develop as people, perhaps to become better citizens.

The recognition plot is thus gendered – most observably, I suggest, in *Sikyonioi*. Recognitions of men occur in *Epitrepontes* and *Hiereia*, and of women in *Misoumenos* and *Phasma*, while *Heros*, *Georgos*, and *Perikeiromene* feature double recognitions of brother and sister (see chart below). *Sikyonioi* is the only play to depict recognitions of an unrelated man and woman in the same play.

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18 — The Myrrhines of *Georgos* and *Heros* both speak on stage in defense of their children, Glykera in *Perikeiromene* defends her own honor and experiences an onstage recognition, and Chrysis (*Samia*) and Habrotonon (*Epitrepontes*) save or facilitate the marriages of the young men in their plays. Nikeratos' wife in *Samia*, though she does not appear, has considerable domestic authority: aside from managing the household in his absence, she is an important part of the decision-making process regarding her daughter Plangon's marriage.

GENDER OF CHILD	TEMPORARY FATE OF CHILD			
	ACCIDENTALLY LOST	ABANDONED	GIVEN AWAY	FATHER UNKNOWN
MAN		<i>Epitrepontes</i> <sup>19</sup> ( <i>Fabula Incerta</i> 6)	<i>Perikeiromene</i> <i>Sikyonioi</i> <i>Hiera</i> <sup>20</sup> <i>Heros</i>	<i>Georgos</i>
WOMAN	<i>Misoumenos</i> <i>Sikyonioi</i>		<i>Perikeiromene</i> <i>Phasma</i> <i>Heros</i>	<i>Georgos</i>

There are a number of clear differences in the recognitions of men and women in Menandrian New Comedy. Men are more active participants in the narrative, risk less physical danger, and have more to gain from recognition: women may marry, but men marry *and* participate in all other aspects of citizen life, while also reaffirming social norms and family dynamics through their relationships with other men. These observations can be made for any of Menander's recognition plots, but it is more difficult to gauge further differences: *Heros* and *Georgos*, plays with the recognition of siblings, are very fragmentary; *Perikeiromene* also features the recognition of siblings, but Glykera has always known her identity (and her recognition does not wildly alter her circumstances), and we see very little of Moschion's new circumstances or how he deals with them; *Epitrepontes* features a full recognition scene of a young boy child, but the play is more interested in identifying the rapist and his victim to each

19 — “Younger-generation rape victims” (the phrasing of Scafuro [1990]), are always the mothers of boy children in extant New Comedy. A rapist is more likely accept a boy child and support the mother, as a boy child provides his father with an heir and reinforces family unity in a way a girl child does not. In *Epitrepontes*, Charisios even acknowledges his responsibility for the bastard boy (νόθος), apparently born to an enslaved sex laborer he mistakenly believes he raped. Older-generation rape victims have girls (like Pheidias' stepmother in *Phasma* and possibly the Ephesian woman in *Kitharistes*, as well as Philippa in Plautus' *Epidicus* and Phanostrata in Plautus' *Cistellaria*; these girls will be recognized as adults), though more often in Menander they have twins, one boy and one girl (*Georgos* and *Heros*), or a boy child only (*Hiera* and possibly *Fabula Incerta* 6). It is not impossible that a baby girl would be recognized, but there are no recognitions of baby girls in extant New Comedy.

20 — This play is known through a papyrus containing summaries of Menander plays. Either the priestess has been raped, or she was married but her husband left her, and she gave away her son to a neighbor to be raised. Gomme & Sandbach (1973: 694-95) suggests that the former is more likely, while Körte (and Webster [1974: 149]) argues for the latter.

other. *Hiereia* and *Phasma* feature single recognitions (of a man and a woman respectively), but these plays are known only through summaries.

*Sikyonioidi*, then, offers a unique opportunity to study the recognition scenes and relationships of two unrelated characters of different genders. These two distinct recognitions suggest that the Menandrian recognition plot offers divergent patterns of recognition depending on the gender of the recognized character. Further, if the explicit recognition plot symbolizes implicit recognitions of character (as Furley suggests), then this implicit level is reserved for men alone<sup>21</sup>. Philoumene is unwavering in her belief in her identity throughout the play, and her character remains static throughout – adversity challenges, but does not change, her. Stratophanes, by contrast, undergoes trials and tribulations, emerging a better person and better citizen. His brother Moschion is also affected by the two recognitions, and must undergo trials of his own. I will explore the disparate paths of recognition in *Sikyonioidi* and examine the gendered differences as they appear in this plot.

### *Philoumene's Peril and Passivity*

Philoumene's status and desirability motivate the men around her to compete for control over her sexuality: Stratophanes, Moschion, Stratophanes' creditor (if he exists), and the Eleusinian assembly. When some event<sup>22</sup> threatens Philoumene's chastity (and thus marriageability should she prove her citizenship), she and her slave Dromon flee to the sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Eleusis. Regardless of the immediate danger, Stratophanes, because he loves her (200-66, 397-99), remains a real threat. At best, he (like the soldiers in *Perikeiromene*<sup>23</sup> and *Misoumenos*) can free her and make her his concubine. At worst, he can

21 — It is possible that with more Menander coming to light each year these observations may be contradicted, but we may conjecture some patterns from the extant material. Plautine and Terentian recognition comedies display a similar pattern: in Plautus' *Captivi* and *Menaechmi*, the men recognized develop somewhat over the course of the play, while women to be recognized are (mostly) absent altogether (*Casina*, *Epidicus*, *Eunuchus*, *Andria*, *Phormio*) or begin and end the play with unchanged resolve and character (*Curculio*, *Rudens*). The women recognized in *Cistellaria* and *Heauton Timorumenos* are resolved and staunch in their morality throughout the play, but do not know they are actually citizens.

22 — Philoumene may fear Stratophanes exclusively (Traill [2008: 21-22]; Arnott [1997a: 8], or some combination of threats, such as the arrival of the creditor, the forcefulness of Stratophanes' intentions to make her a concubine, or some attempt of Moschion's to make her his slave mistress (Merkelbach [1966: 174]).

23 — Glykera is already free, but her status is tenuous, since her father abandoned her and her mother is dead.

rape her as a slave in his household<sup>24</sup>. Since she has slave status<sup>25</sup> and cannot prove her citizenship without her father, she must find other allies; Philoumene must convince the citizens to give her refuge and time to find her father or some other proof of her claims (189-90).

Philoumene shows strong resolve up to this point, either insisting on their escape herself, or goaded into flight by her former slave Dromon. She does not waver in her belief in her citizenship, a resolve reported through Dromon to the Eleusinians (and to the viewer through the messenger's speech, 176-98). Nevertheless, her flight and her putting herself in the power of the Eleusinians remain Philoumene's only major activity in the play. She is largely passive, letting Dromon speak for her and reacting to events in the play rather than initiating change herself. Because she never questions her beliefs or grows to accept new ones<sup>26</sup>, we cannot say that Philoumene develops as a character: her growth is static throughout the play, and she ends as she began, albeit confirmed in her conviction that she is a citizen and removed from danger.

Philoumene's passivity is highlighted in the remainder of the plot involving her. Under temporary protection from the sanctuary's priestess and the Eleusinians, her status is tenuous. Her freedom and sexual safety depend on her ability to find a family member who can recognize her and validate her citizenship – she can do no more for herself. Action moves away from Eleusis (and Philoumene) and back to the vicinity of Stratophanes' Athenian home, where it remains for the rest of the play. The soldier's lackey Theron had earlier (80-96) suggested hiring someone to do something with regard to Philoumene, for which Stratophanes chastised him. Arnott (2000: 223-225) interprets this argument as an attempt by Theron to hire someone to assert Philoumene's citizenship at the assembly and a rebuke from Stratophanes over this illicit strategy.

24 — Concubines, women who were treated as wives though they did not have official status as such, could be given the privileges of wives: care of the household, servants, fine clothing and jewelry (as Krateia is given in *Misoumenos* and Chrysis in *Samia*; see Fantham [1975]). Though they were expected to provide sex, they had their own possessions and tenuous legal protection. Slaves had no such privileges, no legal status, and could be raped at any time (see Omitowaju [2002]). On the sexual desirability of slaves and concubines in Greek literature, see Agamemnon and Chryseis in Homer's *Iliad* (1.111-15) and Phoenix with Amyntor's concubine (9.447-54), as well as Laertes and Eurykleia in the *Odyssey* (1.429-33); see also Dikaiopolis and Thratta in *Acharnians* (lines 271-76). Euphiletus' wife accused him of having sexually assaulted their slave girl (Lysias 1.12). In Latin literature, see Ovid *Ars* 1.382-98, *Am.* 2.7/8, and Horace *Odes* 2.4, Plaut. *Cas.*, and Ter. *Eun.*, James (1997, 1998, 2010), Marshall (2015), and Witzke (2016).

25 — Though Philoumene was “raised separately, as suits a free woman” (ἔτρεφε δὲ χωρὶς ὡς ἐλευθέρῃ πρέπει), it is unlikely that she had been legally freed (Traill [2008: 18]). If she is free, she is only nominally so, like Krateia in *Misoumenos*. Stratophanes intends to keep her in a non-legal relationship and seeks her out when she tries to leave his household.

26 — As far as can be observed in the extant lines. Philoumene's situation is also comparable to that of similar women in Menander's plays (*Heros*, *Misoumenos*, *Perikeiromene*), from which we may extrapolate the extent of her role in *Sikyonioi*.

In Act V, Theron goes through with the plot (perhaps disregarding Stratophanes' orders because Philoumene's flight has put pressure on them), hiring Kichesias to assert Philoumene's citizenship (312-60); this plot requires neither the assistance nor even the presence of Philoumene herself<sup>27</sup>.

The recognition<sup>28</sup> occurs in part through Theron's knowledge of Philoumene's circumstances and Kichesias' memory of the events: Philoumene's father is Kichesias Skambonides, whose daughter was lost at Halai at four years old, with a slave Dromon, snatched by pirates (350-58). When Kichesias comes face to face with Dromon, he first faints, and then the fake recognition turns into a real one (370-73):

(Δρ) ἔστι σοι καὶ σφίζεται  
τὸ θυγάτριον.  
(Κι) καλῶς δὲ σφίζεται, Δρόμων,  
ἢ σφίζετ', αὐτὸ τοῦτο;  
(Δρ) παρθένος γ' ἔτι,  
ἄπειρος ἀνδρός.  
(Κι) εὖ γε.

*Dromon:* Your daughter is alive and is safe.

*Kichesias:* But is she *really* safe, Dromon, or *just* safe?

*Dromon:* She's still a virgin – she's never known a man.

*Kichesias:* Good.

Philoumene's absence cannot be overemphasized: the plot requires so little of her that she need not even be present at her own recognition. Her consent is similarly unnecessary: Kichesias immediately looks to the future, namely Philoumene's marriageability, and offers no protest when Stratophanes asks his consent to marry his long-lost daughter (380-81). While this concern is culturally understandable (Kichesias is not wealthy, so his daughter will have to marry well, and her reputation is already tarnished, as she has lived as a slave for most of her life)<sup>29</sup>, it

27 — First Theron asks the old man to pretend to have known Philoumene's father Kichesias, but when he muses about his lost daughter and the circumstances surrounding her, Theron, excited by his "acting" skills, instructs him to pretend to be Kichesias himself (see Gomme & Sandbach 1973: 663).

28 — Aristotle's type διὰ μνήμης ("from memory", see note 14).

29 — Kichesias is not wealthy (Theron had selected him for bribery, after all): when asked how he is, he says, ζῶ. τοῦτ' ἔχοιμι' ἂν αὐτὸ σοι φράσαι, Δρόμων. | τὰ δ' ἄλλ', ὅταν γέροντα καὶ πένητ' ἴδῃς | καὶ μόνον, ἀνάγκη πάντ' ἔχειν οὕτω κακῶς. ("Alive. That's all, Dromon, I can tell you. When you see a poor, old man alone, everything else must be bleak", 374-76). The exchange between Dromon and Kichesias highlights too the vulnerable status of citizen women in Greek society. Their reputations were fragile, and many factors could tarnish them irreparably. Philoumene has been living with a man as a slave for many years. Her virginity would be hard to prove to any other eligible match. Thus Kichesias thinks immediately about her marriageability. He offers no protest

nevertheless underscores Philoumene's passivity. We never learn how she feels about the long-awaited reunion with her father or her immediate transfer back into Stratophanes' power<sup>30</sup>. Does she desire the marriage as well? Was Stratophanes' citizenship the only barrier to her happiness with him? Krateia in *Misoumenos* (Arnott's lines 968-69) is allowed to speak her consent (such as it is, being three words and in reported speech), but Philoumene's words (if she were assigned any) are lost. Her agency is essentially limited to her flight to a religious sanctuary. Philoumene's adventure ended when she was rescued from Stratophanes' power and placed into the care of the Eleusinians. When the Eleusinians, and later her father and husband-to-be, take over, Philoumene regresses back into her culturally approved gender role. Any character development is severely limited: though resolved throughout the play, Philoumene is not allowed the opportunity to grow or change. She is a passive prop for the more important plot in this play, namely Stratophanes' recognition.

### *Stratophanes' Problem*

In contrast to Philoumene's feminine passivity and lack of character development, masculine Stratophanes is actively engaged with events throughout the play, and he evolves as he learns new information about himself. While Philoumene's recognition operates only on the surface level of the play, his outward quest to discover his identity dramatizes his interior growth and development as a person<sup>31</sup>. Stratophanes seems like a typical braggart soldier: we learn that he is a mercenary, in possession of an enslaved young woman, purchased either by himself or by his father (see note 8), wealthy (through inheritance from his adoptive father, and perhaps from his own wartime exploits), bossy (speaking imperiously to his lackey Theron, 52-95), and he has another woman, Malthake, at his home in Athens. From her name we suppose she is a *hetaira*<sup>32</sup>, perhaps

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to the marriage of his daughter to her former master, because it is likely the best offer for legitimate marriage he will receive for her.

30 — In a missing section, we might see them reunite, as in *Perikeiromene*.

31 — Lape (2004: 237-40), by contrast, sees the recognition plot gendered somewhat differently. She argues that the passive female body is itself a sign of identity through its very passivity and purity, while the Athenian male body is more coded: a male with manly body expresses his morals and habits, appropriate to a democratic citizen's political norms and values, through the physicality of his form. The symbolism in the recognition plot, Lape argues, is that Philoumene's sexual purity as she returns after ten years away from Athens represents the return of Athenian democracy after the oligarchy, while Stratophanes' return symbolizes the restoration of democratic ideology and re-masculinization of the state after feminizing oligarchy.

32 — Arnott (1997a: 4, note 16) collects the uses of the name Malthake associated with *hetairai* in Greek literature (Theophilus fr. 11.5, Antiphanes' Malthake fragment, Lucian, *Rhet. Praec.* 12), noting that while Malthake was a popular name in Athens, in comedy it seems to be exclusively linked with sex laborers.

the lady's maid mentioned in fr. 1 Kassel= fr. 4 Arnott. None of the above ingratiate him to the viewer/reader.

Stratophanes must undergo trying circumstances through the course of the play. By Act IV he has lost everything: the girl Philoumene (who has run away), his money (which is in danger of going to the Boeotian creditor), and even his citizenship (after a letter from his adoptive mother). Reduced to nothing, his very sense of self stripped away, Stratophanes must rebuild his life and embark on a journey of self-discovery. The surprise of his parentage sets him in contrast to Philoumene; while she was resolute in her citizenship and identity, regardless of the beliefs of others, Stratophanes is thrown into confusion, never having supposed his own identity was at risk. He must negotiate the threat to his money and his loss of self to put his identity back in order, and he must develop as a person through these trials to demonstrate his worthiness to marry Philoumene.

### Financial Woes

In general, Menander's adult men in the recognition plot are not in physical danger (in contrast to the young women, whose sexual status, and thus social status, is constantly in jeopardy); these men have some type of financial trouble most to fear<sup>33</sup>. Gorgias in *Georgos* and *Heros* is poor, and recognition will bring better financial circumstances. Moschion in *Perikeiromene* and the young man in *Hiereia* began in straightened circumstances and were given to families of means to offer them better lives than their natal circumstances allowed. Stratophanes too initially faced poverty, but was given to a wealthy Sikyonian. He will face financial danger again before his eventual recognition.

Stratophanes' adoptive father has died, in debt, sometime before the opening of the play (while Stratophanes was still in Caria, 136-37), leaving the goods inherited by his "son" under threat from a Boeotian creditor. Pyrrhias explains, ὄντ' ἀγώγιμόν σε τούτῳ πυθομένη τῶν τοῦς νόμους | εἰδόντων τὴν τ' οὐσίαν σου, τοῦτο προῦνοεῖτό σου | καὶ τελευτῶσ' ἀπεδίδου σε τοῖς σεαυτῶν γ' εὐλόγως ("Having learned from those familiar with the laws that you and your things were liable to seizure by this man, dying, she [your mother] tried to take precautions for you and tried to restore you to your family, with good reason", 138-40). If he is truly the son of his "father", then the goods he inherited (perhaps including the enslaved woman he loves, Philoumene) are subject

33 — Of the adult men with recognitions, only Gorgias in *Heros* is potentially in physical danger, as he serves in debt slavery (little better than actual slavery) for his deceased freedman adoptive father.

to confiscation by the Boeotian to whom his father owed money<sup>34</sup>. Just as Gorgias in *Heros* loses everything and goes into debt slavery for his adoptive father's debts, Stratophanes risks losing everything. His adoptive identity becomes very dangerous to his finances, status, and wellbeing in Athens. The loss of Stratophanes' Sikyonian citizenship then is both a loss (of self-identity) and a boon (for his finances). His recognition as an Athenian citizen will offer additional financial safeguards, as he will have the protection of his natal family's wealth, as well as the opportunity to participate in Athenian property-owning and business denied him as a foreigner living in the city. Stratophanes contends with his financial troubles and comes out ahead. He must undergo further tests of his character and fortitude before his development is finished.

### Identity

Stratophanes' adoptive father died sometime before the opening of the play, and Stratophanes has moved his household to Athens. He (or Theron) sent Pyrrhias, the man enslaved to him, to his mother's house (either in Athens or Sikyon)<sup>35</sup>, sometime after Stratophanes arrived in Athens. His belief in his own identity is destroyed by a letter he receives from his mother by way of Pyrrhias. The old woman has died, and to protect him from his father's creditors, she reveals shocking news: Stratophanes was not Sikyonian by birth, but was adopted (from Athenian parents, a piece of information Stratophanes initially keeps to himself)<sup>36</sup>, and she has tokens by which he can prove his true parentage (καὶ ταδὶ χωρὶς φέρω | τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐκείνοις, Στρατοφάνη, γνωρίσματα | καὶ τεκμήρι', "And besides their letters, Stratophanes, I bring proof, tokens of recognition", 141-44).

Stratophanes has now lost both parents, a misfortune even under normal circumstances, but his sense of self is further shaken by the loss of his assumed natal identity as well – he had no idea he was adopted. When Pyrrhias says, οὐ γὰρ αὐτῆς ἦς]θας ὑός, ὡς ἔοικεν ("You were not her son, apparently"), Stratophanes asks, ἀλλὰ τοῦ; ("But whose [son] am I?")

34 — Arnott (2000: 236-7, note 23) explains that Sikyon and the Boeotian's city must have had an interstate agreement, allowing the Boeotian to confiscate goods of a Sikyonian to pay an inherited debt. It is further supposed that Athens had no such agreement, which is why Stratophanes the Athenian is safe from confiscation of property.

35 — Sikyon being more likely, as Pyrrhias says the adoptive mother died πέρυσιν ("last year", 126) and Stratophanes remarks that Pyrrhias returned [καὶ διὰ σπουδῆς] βαδίζων ("going speedily", 124). If Pyrrhias hurried from her home in Athens, Stratophanes would have learned of her death much sooner. Thus he must be hurrying from Sikyon, which would take much more time. Gomme & Sandbach note (642), however, that generic convention dictates that the messenger must hurry with news, regardless of his starting point.

36 — Pyrrhias: [ ]ο τελευτώσ' ἐνθαδὶ τὸ σὸν γένος | [ ]ἔγραψεν ("Dying, she wrote down your origins", 130-31).

129). In the ancient world, loss of citizenship would be catastrophic<sup>37</sup>. Stratophanes already occupies liminal status in Athens as a foreigner, and the loss of his supposed citizenship exacerbates his alienation. But his adoptive mother has told him he is Athenian by birth. Provided he can find his true parents, he stands to gain the advantages of Athenian citizenship: political involvement, family, civic identity, and legitimate marriage<sup>38</sup>. The sudden loss of Stratophanes' adoptive family and disintegration of his supposed natal identity will make even sweeter the restoration of his true status and living family, should he discover them.

Stratophanes then becomes a detective in the mystery of his own life, a comic Oedipus<sup>39</sup>. Humbled by his loss of status, he must seek acceptance by his true natal family to gain enfranchisement and the ability to marry Philoumene, should she be able to prove her Athenian citizenship as well. The letter and tokens lead Stratophanes to Smikrines and his wife. Though the circumstances of his birth and adoption are mysterious (given the fragmentary nature of the play), Stratophanes and his evidence (the letter and tokens<sup>40</sup>) are clearly convincing, and he is accepted into his natal family's home (305-311)<sup>41</sup>.

### Character Development and Acquisition of Love Interest

When Stratophanes receives the letter from his adoptive mother, which throws his identity into question, he becomes a different person, in two senses. First, he is no longer the Sikyonian mercenary soldier, a foreigner living in Athens with liminal rights and participation; if he can prove the Athenian citizenship asserted by his Sikyonian mother, he will be able to live a different life altogether. But he also becomes a different

37 — Bettini (2011: 171-199) examines how in the ancient world the loss of identity precipitates a crisis, even for an enslaved person (Sosia in Plautus' *Amphitruo*).

38 — On identity, citizenship, and democratic society, see Lape (2004: 202-42).

39 — An anonymous reviewer suggests that Stratophanes' plot is the reverse of the tragic king's: he is brought home by his natal origins to a family and wife rather than thrust into exile.

40 — Smikrines' wife describes the tokens accompanying the letter from the Sikyonian woman: πτέρυξ χιτωνίσκου γυναικείου διπλή· | ἔ]κρυπ[τε γὰ]ρ σώμ' ἠνίκ' ἐξεπέμπομεν | πρὸς τήν] ξένην σε τήν τότε αἰτοῦσαν τέκνα. | [ ]·νεστιν ἀλλὰ τῷ βεβαμμένῳ | [ ]τ' ἔχουσα χρώματος φύσιν | πέριξ ἰώ]δους τὸν μέσῳ δὲ πορφύρας ("Half of a woman's chiton folded over; it covered your body when we were giving you away to a foreign woman looking for children... with dyed... having some color, edged in green, and purple in the middle", 280-85).

41 — Arnott (1997b and 2000: 265-67) conjectures that Smikrines raped his wife before they were married, and she gave the child away to a Sikyonian woman who lived next door who was known to want children (lines 281-82). If Smikrines raped the woman, she was not his wife at the time and only became his wife later after giving up the baby, making Stratophanes the elder son. Equally plausible is that poverty forced Smikrines and his wife to give away their first son (Stratophanes) while raising another (Moschion) when their circumstances had improved (as Pataikos in *Perikeiromene* had given up his children because of poverty). Gomme & Sandbach (1973: 661) choose not to speculate at all: "there is nothing here to indicate why Stratophanes' parents had wished, or been willing, to part with him".

person in a figurative way: the potential of this new natal identity, and its attendant benefits, reshapes his very personality. Imperious and self-possessed up to this point, he is forced by Philoumene's flight and his tenuous new identity to become humble, ask for the help and goodwill of others, and prove himself worthy of his new identity and the hand of his intended wife.

Stratophanes displays his new qualities when he goes to the assembly at Eleusis to argue his case regarding Philoumene<sup>42</sup>. The citizenry is incensed at the thought of Philoumene's being enslaved if she is in fact a citizen. They are also outraged by Moschion's attempt to manipulate them into giving the girl to him. Stratophanes must humble himself before these men and plead to be allowed to speak (as a foreigner he has no rights, and therefore may participate in the proceedings only with the express permission of the citizens). In contrast to Moschion, he comes into the Assembly ἀνδρικός πάνυ ("very manly", 215), but without presumption. When he sees Philoumene, ἐξαπίνης ποταμόν τινα | δακρῶν ἀφίησ' οἴυτος, ἐμπαθῶς τε τῶν | τριχῶν ἑαυτοῦ λαμβάνεται βρυχώμενος ("suddenly he lets out a river of tears, and, choked with emotion, he grabs at his hair, wailing", 219-21). His display of emotion moves the people, and they invite him to speak. He wishes the citizens well, flatters them, yields to them any claim he had over Philoumene, shares his hopes that he will be recognized as an Athenian citizen, and begs them to make no decision about the girl until he can look for her father and ask for her hand in marriage. Stratophanes pledges to facilitate her recognition, relinquishes his plans for concubinage, swears he raised her as befits a free girl, waives his rights to her rearing costs (τροφεῖα), and sets himself up as a upstanding and moral suitor for Philoumene – all in contrast to Moschion and his lascivious plans (226-55). His short speech to the Eleusinians demonstrates development of his character from hard foreign soldier into a sensitive Athenian, deferential to the citizen body into which he hopes to be enrolled.

Stratophanes' development continues as he searches for both his own parents and Philoumene's. He endures Moschion's attempts to arrest him for kidnapping (272-79)<sup>43</sup>, locates his parents and experiences a

42 — The speech is reported by an Eleusinian in a parody of the messenger speech in Euripides' *Orestes*, wherein the messenger recounts the Assembly's decision to condemn matricides Orestes and Electra, unlike in *Sikyoniói* where Stratophanes successfully convinces the Assembly to decide in his favor. Lape (2004: 221) asserts that the adaptation of the tragic speech "underscore[s] that comedy is the place where things work out".

43 — Either because Stratophanes was in possession of a suspected citizen girl (illegal should she turn out to be a citizen), or because Moschion's father was an agent of the Boeotian creditor, and Moschion felt that Stratophanes' goods belonged to him as the Boeotian's proxy (see Arnott [2000: 260, note 27]).

recognition scene (280-304), and suffers the blow of learning that the antagonistic Moschion is his younger brother (305-11). When he learns that Philoumene's father has been located and is currently at his home, Stratophanes quickly moves to lock down the third piece of his desired outcome (after sorting out his finances and discovering his natal identity) – marrying Philoumene (379-83):

{(Στρ)} χαῖρε, πάτερ.  
 {(Δρ)} οὗτός σοι σέσωκε τὴν κόρην.  
 {(Κι)} ἀλλ' εὐτυχῆς γένοιτο.  
 {(Στρ)} ἐάνπερ σοι δοκῆ,  
 ἔσομαι, πάτερ, καὶ μακάριός γε.  
 {(Δρ)} Στρατοφάνη,  
 πρὸς τὴν Φ[ιλουμένην βαδι]ζωμεν ταχύ,  
 πρὸς τῶν] θεῶν.

*Stratophanes:* Hello, father.

*Dromon:* This man has saved your daughter for you.

*Kichesias:* Be blessed then.

*Stratophanes:* If it's okay with you, father, I'll be that and a happy bridegroom.

*Dromon:* Stratophanes, let's head over to Philoumene, quickly, by the gods!

His identity established and the consent of Kichesias tacitly given, Stratophanes begins taking on the role of an assertive, responsible citizen man. He sends Kichesias and Dromon away to see to Philoumene, while he remains and orders his house as befits a citizen bridegroom: he orders Malthake to pack up and head off to his mother's house (it being inappropriate to house a wife and mistress under one roof<sup>44</sup>), then organizes the rest of the details of his property (385-96). He has moved from the blustery irritability of the mercenary soldier to the assertive and assured authority of an Athenian citizen, accepted by natal family and father-in-law. There are no more tears or proclamations of love; Stratophanes' character has developed through his trials into a new man, slipping comfortably into his new role as a pragmatic citizen. Given the ease with which he manages his marriage details and then the business of his household, we have little doubt of his continuing to learn to play the part of Athenian citizen man.

44 — Ancient commentators stressed that mistresses and wives could not be housed under the same roof – it was degradation to the wife, and an inappropriate advancement of the mistress, as in [Dem.] 59.22: “When they got here, Lysias did not bring them [Nicarete and Metaineira, *hetairai*] to his own house, out of regard for his wife, the daughter of Brachyllus and his own niece, and for his own mother, who was elderly and who lived in the same house”. See Hall (1997: 121-22) on this passage.

Though Philoumene's quest motivates his transformation, *Sikyonioi* is Stratophanes' story. Both young persons have tearful reunions with parents, but Stratophanes alone makes in-person, affective relationships with parents and father-in-law, while Philoumene's reunion must be extrapolated from Kichesias' interactions with Theron and Dromon<sup>45</sup>. Stratophanes' adventures will continue: having discovered his natal identity, he develops from mercenary (a transient, liminal figure) to enfranchised Athenian citizen, endearing himself to the assembly, his natal family, and his marital relations.

### Stratophanes, Soldiers, and the Recognition Plot

Throughout his plays, Menander demonstrates varying degrees of development in his men characters: silly young men, misguided or ignorant old men, and arrogant soldiers all see some kind of misfortune or adversity, acknowledge their faults, and move on to an extent. A question we must ask is, what difference do mistaken identity and the recognition plot have on masculine character development? How does Stratophanes' recognition plot set his character development apart from that of other soldier characters? I argue that Stratophanes' loss and reclamation of identity allow him to see himself in new ways through a variety of misfortunes: the very loss of self motivates significant character development, something the soldiers in *Misoumenos* and *Perikeiromene* do not experience to such a degree (if at all).

In *Misoumenos*, Thrasonides is lovesick. His concubine Krateia, mistakenly thinking Thrasonides has killed her brother, will have nothing to do with him. He is so mad with thwarted passion that his slave Getas must remove all the weapons from the house, lest he harm himself. When the obstacles are removed, he is thrilled to get the girl back. But does Thrasonides grow and change as a person? His identity, sense of self, is never threatened. He is never in any personal or financial danger. Thrasonides' only crisis is in love, and the crisis is not even of his own making. Near the end of the play, rather than soul-searching and striving to become a better person after he believes Krateia is gone forever, Thrasonides wants to make her feel bad about rejecting him – he thinks about feigning suicide to make her sorry (802f). Thrasonides develops very little as a character: his obstacles are removed, things go back to normal.

45 — It is unlikely that Philoumene would have had an in-person reunion in the original text. In *Perikeiromene*, Menander was content to feature the in-person recognition of one of the two children with their father, while leaving the other to the imagination of the audience. Moreover, Philoumene is simply unnecessary – her physical presence at this late stage in the play is not required, nor would it advance the drama.

In *Perikeiromene*, the soldier Polemon is described as somewhat unreliable (144, 185-87), but we are told by Misconception personified that the rage that inspired the titular hair-cutting is not the soldier's true nature: it has been kindled by Misconception herself (162-167). Like Kratea, Glykera has withdrawn her affections, but this time the mistaken assumption is on the soldier's part, and he goes out of his mind with passion and anger. Thwarted in love, Polemon has withdrawn to a friend's house to drink his sorrows away (471-73). When the misunderstanding is cleared up, Polemon regrets the rage, drinking, and thoughts of suicide (982-89). Like Thrasonides, Polemon faces adversity in love, not life or sense of identity. He behaves badly, and when his obstacles are removed by external means, Polemon decides to undergo some anger management (aided by Pataikos' promise of a dowry so that Polemon need not be a soldier anymore, 1016-17).

Both soldiers come off as reckless fools, petty and violent. They must learn to master their emotions (a type of development), but their efforts are limited to becoming better husbands. They are never in doubt of themselves, only of their love relationships, nor is there any guarantee that with the danger to their romantic relationships settled, they will undergo any personal development. The character development of these soldiers is thus restricted in a way that Stratophanes' is not. Stratophanes never appears a reckless fool; he is initially in command of his emotions, even when he is not in command of his identity. The soldiers uninvolved in recognition plots must master their passions before they can make efforts towards becoming better people. By contrast, Stratophanes must find his passion before he can find himself. His emotional release at the assembly meeting marks a turning point for him. He gives up his control to begin a journey of self-discovery. Moreover, although Stratophanes' romantic relationship is in jeopardy, it is not the impetus for his development. Philoumene's flight comes at the same time as Stratophanes' loss of self, so while his desire for her in part motivates Stratophanes' search for his parents, his identity is more important than this romantic relationship. When Thrasonides and Polemon win back their women, they rejoice and the play ends. Stratophanes, by contrast, declines to accompany Dromon and Kichesias in retrieving Philoumene before attending to additional business at home. Stratophanes becomes a responsible citizen, growing into his new identity, because his sense of self is called into question, not simply because of the danger to his love affair.

### *Moschion's Disappointment*

*Sikyonioi*, in addition to exhibiting gendered differences in the recognition plot, also demonstrates that not everyone wins in such plots:

when two men vie for one woman and a superior position in the family hierarchy, there must necessarily be a loser. While Stratophanes gets citizenship and a family, the safety of his finances, and the girl, his new-found brother Moschion loses his sexual object, his self assurance, and likely some of his inheritance. Like Stratophanes, Moschion also undergoes humbling trials, but unlike his brother, he does not benefit materially from them. Moschion's character, just as that of Stratophanes, is forced to develop: while Stratophanes' recognition solidifies his own identity, it also reshapes Moschion's, by putting proper limits on his arrogant privilege.

### The Arrogance of Moschions

Moschion appears briefly in the extant portions of the play: he comments (in an aside) that Philoumene is afraid of master, lover, and foreigner (97-98); he is insulted by the assembly of Eleusinians when he argues with them about Philoumene and Stratophanes (204-66); he attempts to arrest Stratophanes and Theron for kidnapping (272-79); and after Philoumene and Stratophanes are recognized, he laments that he has lost the girl (397-410). Moschion's status as (he believes) the only son of Smikrines, a wealthy citizen, has made him arrogant and entitled. He lurks around Stratophanes' house to glimpse Philoumene (often enough that he is known to Dromon and Philoumene, and he has long been helping them, or so he tells the assembly, 204-05), and his amorous intentions are clear in his dealings with the assembly and his final lament<sup>46</sup>. As a wealthy citizen, he feels entitled to Philoumene, the property of a foreigner, and he tries various tricks to possess her (lurking, chasing her to the assembly, denouncing Stratophanes, and finally attempting to have her master arrested).

The contrast made between arrogant Moschion and humble Stratophanes at the assembly underscores the inferiority of the former to the latter. While Stratophanes is *τις ἀνδρικός πάνυ* ("someone very manly" 215) and waits to be invited to speak, Moschion is *λευκόχρω[ν] | υπόλειον ἀγένειόν* ("pasty white, baby-faced, and beardless", 200-01, signs of "political and gender deviancy"<sup>47</sup>), *ἐλάλε[ι] τε τοῖς ἐγγύς συχν[ά]* ("incessantly yapping at those nearby", 213), and is at first shouted down by the citizens when he speaks without invitation (202). When he speaks again, invited, he is cut off by the citizens (209-10), who like neither

46 — Moschion appears to the assembly to have a guilty conscience, and they suspect him of dishonorable intentions. See Gomme & Sandbach (1973: 655). In his final speech, he lingers on thoughts of Philoumene's pale face, lovely eyes, and his sexual jealousy that Stratophanes will have her (399-400).

47 — As Lape (2004: 223) notes, women were supposed to be pale, but men were supposed to be ruddy from active work in the sun (as can be observed in ancient Greek vase painting); Moschion's pasty complexion is suspect.

his words nor his appearance: they call him a μοιχώδης (seducer, 210), ἐξυρημένον (shaven man, 264), and a λάσταυρε (an obscenity suggesting immorality, such as “lecherous man”, 266)<sup>48</sup>. The assembly takes offence at the pale-faced, beardless upstart pushing his way among them, speaking out, and trying to gain sexual access to a (potentially) citizen girl. His arrogance stands in contrast to Stratophanes’ humble entreaties, and Moschion is shamed by the assembly. His arrogance shaken, Moschion will suffer more humbling circumstances as he learns to check his privilege.

Lest we feel bad for him, we must understand, through textual clues, that according to the norms of the genre Moschion deserves his comeuppance. His very name indicates that he is not a kind, would-be lover to be pitied, like Daos, the kind, enslaved man in *Heros* who wants to marry the temporarily enslaved Plangon (who has been raped by the neighbor boy, and therefore must marry him by play’s end). Menander’s Moschions tend to be bumbler and callow youths<sup>49</sup>. A Moschion is a rapist in at least four plots (*Samia*, *Kitharistes*, *Koneiazomenai*, *Plokion*, and possibly also *Kekruphalos* and *Fabula Incerta IV* [Mette])<sup>50</sup> and in two plots he foolishly loves and loses (*Perikeiromene*, *Sikyonioi*)<sup>51</sup>.

The closest parallel to *Sikyonioi* is *Perikeiromene*, in which the wealthy Moschion attempts to make a mistress out of the concubine of his soldier neighbor, only to find out she is actually his sister. He visits her, flattering himself that she prefers him to her soldier, embraces her amorously (leading to the titular hair chopping), and even deludes himself into believing that his mother has installed the girl in their home as a concubine for him when she flees to their house<sup>52</sup>. His plans go awry when he learns he is not his adoptive mother’s son and is in fact the brother of his intended beloved. This Moschion, as well as the Moschion of *Sikyonioi*, suffers a loss and is humbled by his new circumstances. Both young men lose their previously conceived sense of self, their love object, and the certainty of their financial circumstances (*Perikeiromene*’s Moschion is not the son of

48 — On λάσταυρος and its meaning, see Lape (2004: 227-29).

49 — MacCary (1970: 286-89) offers a list of Moschions, and the pronouncement that Menander used the name Moschion to identify a specifically weak character, “manipulated by circumstances, slaves, and fathers”. See, contra, Brown (1987), who asserts that Menander did not use specific masks or names to convey character types (though he admits the names Moschion and Smikrines do seem to fit a pattern for their characters, pg. 198).

50 — And so he “gets the girl” thanks only to the dramatic necessity of the ancient rape plot, which dictates that raped young women must marry their rapists to ensure a “happy” ending. See Sommerstein (1998).

51 — He loves and possibly succeeds in three (*Kekruphalos*, *Hypobolimaioi*, *Fab. Inc. IV*). He also appears in *Fab. Inc. III*, but it is impossible to know his role there. His circumstances and character in all of these are opaque.

52 — On *Perikeiromene*, see May (2005).

the wealthy family who adopted him, so he may possibly lose out on his expected inheritance).

Furthermore, the conventions of Greek New Comedy condemn Moschion's attitude and behavior. As Lowe (2007: 71) remarks: "Characters are rewarded for selflessness, for putting the feelings of others before their own interests, and for readiness to admit their own moral failings in preference to judging others by harsher standards. Menander's plays are full of the virtues of forgiveness, generosity, and recognition of the importance of family and community". Moschion, on the other hand, is not selfless, does not put others before his own interests, and does not admit his own moral failings. He knows he has lost the girl and must be happy for his new brother, but he instead complains rather than accept that the situation cannot be changed. While wallowing in his disappointment, Moschion bitterly imagines the wedding that will soon occur (397-405):

(Μο) νῦν οὐδὲ προσβλέψαι σε, Μοσχίω[ν, ἔτι  
πρὸς τὴν κόρην δεῖ. Μοσχίων [κακοκαίμονεις.  
λευκὴ σφόδρ', εὐόφθαλμός ἐστιν. οὐδὲ[ν εἶ  
ἀδελφὸς ὁ γαμῶν, μακάριος κα[ὶ πλούσιος.  
οἶον γὰρ οὗτος, ἔτι λέγεις· ὄν ἄντ[ικρυς  
πρᾶγμ' ἐστ' ἐπαινεῖν χάριν ἐνο[  
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐρῶ γε. μὴ γὰρ, ὦ τᾶν, ὅσον [   
παροχήσομαι δηλονότι καὶ κ[   
τρίτος με[τ]' αὐτῶν, ἄνδρες, οὐ δὴ[νήσομαι

*Moschion:* But now, Moschion, you can't even look at the girl; Moschion, you unlucky sap. She's so pale, such pretty eyes... and you're nothing. Your brother's marrying her. He's lucky and rich, such – oh, why are you still talking about this? I'll even have to straight out sing his praises – no thanks. I won't say it. Do not, man! Obviously I'll be sitting right there in the carriage, a third wheel with them. Guys, I won't be able...

He must grit his teeth and watch his own brother with the girl he wants. Moreover, Moschion will be forced to participate in the wedding and escort Philoumene to her husband, another man<sup>53</sup>. Moschion draws out his disappointment, lingering on Philoumene's paleness and her attractive eyes (λευκὴ σφόδρ', εὐόφθαλμός ἐστ'), then chides himself (οὐδὲ[ν εἶ) before bitterly imagining himself as the unwanted third in the carriage. This is Moschion's final appearance in the extant play. Instead of reconciling himself to the situation and trying to ingratiate himself to his brother, Moschion mopes. He still has a lot of growing up to do.

53 — See Arnott (2000: 287 note 11) and Oakley and Sinos (1993: 26-34) on the accompaniment of the bride and bridegroom by the best man during the wedding procession.

### The Asymmetry of Love Triangles

The sexual contest between brothers also underscores the passivity of the woman's role in the recognition plot, and puts the focus squarely on the two men affected by gendered recognition patterns. Although Philoumene has removed herself from the physical locus of sexual competition, her body remains a figurative battleground for the two men vying for her. Eve Sedgwick, in her seminal work on homosocial desire (1985), explores at length the homosocial triangle of two men vying for one woman and the relationship it creates between them, as well as the insignificance of, and detriment to, the woman involved. In the false symmetry of the erotic triangle, she notes (pg 47), one gender is treated as the marginalized subset rather than as an equal alternative to the other. This triangle, focused on the active erotic competition between men, highlights the relative unimportance of Philoumene as a person and a character: she is not active participant but prize. Furthermore, this asymmetrical relationship brings the men into closer intimacy, as the sexual competition works to define and explore their role to one another: Stratophanes' and Moschion's relationship as brothers is inextricably linked to their relationship as sexual competitors, and Stratophanes' victory in that competition affects all other aspects of their fraternal bond. Philoumene also serves as a means of bringing Stratophanes and Kichesias into familial intimacy as well, but her role is essentially symbolic, as her physical presence is unnecessary for the creation of the father/son-in-law relationship. Philoumene may be at the center of everything, but her importance is in un-embodied name only.

### Recognition Plot Winners and Losers

While Stratophanes benefits greatly from his newfound identity, and Philoumene (regardless of her feelings) sees her status re-established and has been successfully betrothed, Moschion loses out. He no longer has any hope of making Philoumene his mistress or absconding with her. He must also now share his parents with his newfound brother, who is the older child of Smikrines<sup>54</sup>, and thus a rival for Moschion's inheritance. Even if Stratophanes does not intrude financially on Moschion's future prospects, he will become an active presence in Moschion's life. Though this callow youth's resentful character is played for comic relief, through him Menander highlights the varying consequences of the successful recognition plot: not everyone benefits from the happy ending, and the path to character development is not always easy. While Stratophanes' fortunes fluctuate, he grows from arrogant self-assurance to properly moderate,

54 — If Arnott's reconstruction of the plot is sound (see note 41).

responsible citizen. He faces adversity and ends the play in prosperity with money, family, and love. Moschion, by contrast, begins as a similarly arrogant young man, but his trials serve to humble him without the reward. Moschion is resentful of and resistant to personal development, and so his only consolation prize by play's end is the opportunity to eventually become a humbler, more considerate, and deferential person in the shadow of his older brother's superiority.

### *Conclusion*

In plots in which women are recognized, the women are betrothed and removed from stage immediately. These vulnerable women may face adversity, and they show resolve, but they never waver in their knowledge. Because they are self-assured throughout, they do not develop as characters. By contrast, in men's recognition plots (and in women's recognition plots that affect men, who are the protagonists), recognition and betrothal are only part of the journey and a continuation of character development; these men face adversity and must learn and grow throughout the course of the play. Even in *Misoumenos* and *Perikeroumene*, where the women's recognitions are the impetus for narrative action, it is the men affected by the recognition of women who are forefront in the action and plot and who undergo some type of character development.

The gendering of surface level *anagnorisis* in Menander's plots, as well as the symbolic use of *anagnorisis* to represent internal character development, merits further study. Because *Sikyonioides* highlights both gender disparity in the recognition plot and the positive and negative repercussions of the recognition plot for rival men, it is a crucial locus for anyone interested in gender relations in Menander. In the recognition plot there are winners and losers, but the competition is gendered: all is focalized through the man's viewpoint, regardless of the importance of the woman to the superficial plot.

Recognized young citizen women are passive in the plot, the impetus of action rather than actors themselves, and their characters do not evolve. The stark contrast in the gendering of the recognition plot draws attention to these ideologies and underscores the quality of character development: women are not in training to become good, responsible Athenian citizens<sup>55</sup>. They need not be humbled through adversity to test their mettle and have negative characteristics selected out. The nature of Athenian drama, as well as socio-cultural convention, simply precludes young citizen women from experiencing the type of character develop-

55 — On gender roles in Menander's Athens, see Fantham (1975), Lape (2004, 2010), Traill (2008).

ment men may undergo. These women experience hardship and demonstrate their desirability as good citizen women by showing resolve and not wavering. The men in the recognition plot, by contrast, display unattractive qualities that must be tempered, arrogance that must be checked, and privilege that must see proper limits before they can be responsible adult citizens. As additional fragments of Menander continue to be unearthed and published, we may yet see more nuance in his treatment of gender and the recognition plot, but for now we may trace the extant patterns within this underrated plot type.

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