PREFACE

This is a successor to the New Surveys on *Menander, Plautus, Terence* (W. G. Arnott, 1975) and *Aristophanes* (R. G. Ussher, 1979), but I hesitate to call it a replacement. Geoffrey Arnott's volume, in particular, remains a jewel of the series and a masterly overview of a golden era of scholarship on New Comedy, and has been a disheartening reminder throughout of how far his expertise exceeds my own. It has been an appallingly difficult project to let go; there is nothing like trying to take a snapshot of a moving subject to make one appreciate how fast the target is travelling. The new identification of Menander's *Titthe* in the Vatican palimpsest – itself testimony to the fundamental falseness of a truth peddled to students over a century, that there was no medieval tradition of Menander – has overthrown our assumptions about the scope of the Menandrean canon in later antiquity, just as those assumptions were beginning to settle comfortably into complacency. More surprises will undoubtedly be forthcoming.

I am particularly grateful to Emmanuela Bakola and Felix Budelmann for alerts on new and forthcoming publications, and to Mario Telò for an early copy of his major edition of Eupolis' *Demes*. John Taylor and Richard Hunter have been impossibly good-humoured about having the elastic limit of their patience tested. The Menander section has benefited from the insights of two remarkable doctoral students, Maria Troupi and Stavroula Kiritsi, with whom I have been privileged to work. Colin Fine suggested the translation of *Epidikazomenos* on page 120. More general debts are diffuse but deep: a global apology is probably due to Chris Carey, Edith Hall, Toph Marshall, Michael Silk, Alan Sommerstein, and David Wiles, who are all especially likely to have had their unguarded thoughts opportunistically pilfered and rendered unrecognizable to their own authors. Malcolm Willcock and Norma Miller were key figures in my own education in New Comedy; both cast a long shadow in London, and are greatly missed.

Aristophanic titles are mostly given in their more familiar English versions, but those of New Comedy in the original language, since English renderings of Menander's and Plautus's titles vary unrecognizably. Dates are BC unless otherwise stated.

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