plausible trajectory of historical progress from problems to equations, even if it appears too neat in many places.

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MENANDER AND DEMOCRACY

S. LAPE: *Reproducing Athens. Menander's Comedy, Democratic Culture, and the Hellenistic City*. Pp. xvi + 294. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004. Cased, £26.95. ISBN: 0-691-11583-4.

The contexts and causes of Pericles' citizenship law have always occasioned plenty of comment; few works make as much of its impact as this. For Susan Lape, the restriction of citizenship to those born of the formal union of two Athenian parents was essential to the replication of democratic ideology, 'the set of beliefs and practices that sustained the identity of Athenian citizens as specifically democratic citizens' (p. 3). This, in turn, played a central part a century and a half later, in the comedies of Menander. His plays assert the ideology of the democracy in a period marked by oligarchy, despotism and foreign domination, but also by democratic resistance and renewal; their failure to mention Macedonian rule is not escapism or acquiescence but performative, a denial of Athens' subordination. At the same time, however, 'comedy's family romances are often subversive of the democratic cultural order they instantiate' (p. 12). Far from apolitical, Menander's marriage plots not only reflect the new realities of the early Hellenistic period but shape responses to them in this time of transition. Some plays (*Aspis*, *Dys.*, *Epit.*, *Sam.*, *Sik.*) reward suitors and other lovers who demonstrate the egalitarian attitude this ideology demanded, others (*Mis.*, *Pk.*) mix in such stock figures as the braggart mercenary in order to exalt the civic virtues of the *polis* in a world of transnational monarchies. Throughout, slaves, prostitutes, foreigners, and women turn out to share in the moral qualities once thought male citizens' alone. So in *Sik.*, the democratic Stratophanes prevails over a white-skinned oligarchic rival who tries to take the girl for himself. *Samia*'s Demeas, the only sexually successful *senex* in New Comedy, earns the *hetaira* he lives with (another exception) only by displaying his civic credentials when he rejects her in favour of his son. The soldiers of *Mis.* and *Pk.* stand in for the Hellenistic monarchs who hired them, and their taming within the conventions of citizen marriage acts as an analogy for the way their masters ought to respect the traditions of the *poleis* they have overpowered. Young men fall in love at first sight and always choose a citizen girl (even when her identity is unknown). This naturalization of Pericles' law not only neutralizes the normal hierarchy of status reinforced by the dowry but ascribes to women a certain passive power. But Menander's women can also act outside their normal social constraints—most strikingly in the case of the *hetairai* Chrysis and Habrotonon—and this calls into question distinctions of gender no less than those of class and citizenship.

Bits of this will be hard going for those who think of Balibar (pp. 98–9) as a well-dressed elephant king, and some sentences cry out for commutation. ('That the play authorizes Glykera to act in advance of her cultural possibilities results in a certain underdetermination on the level of narrative logic' [p. 178].) In general, however, L. is a most considerate guide, supplying frequent summaries of the

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argument as it develops, informative and often witty subheads for chapter sections, both Greek texts and excellent translations, and an index of ancient sources. The book is full of insights and imagination, from the reconstruction of Philemon's lost *Adelphoe* (pp. 78–80) and the argument that the adulterer Eratosthenes is (after all) the tyrant (pp. 87–8) to the linkage between the return of Philoumene, the heroine of *Sik*., with the restoration of democracy after a ten-year hiatus in 307 (p. 217). But unfailingly perceptive and intelligent as it is, L.'s book put me in mind of the doggerel about the philosopher Hegel: he pursued truth like a beagle/But he ran so much faster/That he ran right past her. Questions arise at many points. Were the Athenians really so concerned that citizens marry and reproduce? Those who did not faced no legal sanctions (as they did at Sparta). Did Menander really intend his plays to perform 'the reproduction of democratic national culture and Greek transnational polis culture before it had actually occurred' (p. 243)? Our only evidence for Menander's political leanings, the tradition that he was almost put on trial after the expulsion of Demetrius of Phaleron on the grounds that he had been the tyrant's friend (p. 47 n. 29), hardly portrays him as a committed democrat. Would an Athenian audience have noticed if he did? As L. notes, Plautus uses names such as Therapontigonus to make clear the connection between his soldiers and Hellenistic rulers (p. 62 n. 89), but Menander's are less explicit. And how about the rulers themselves? How would they react if they caught on to the fact that 'the sterility of comedy's braggart soldiers presage[d] the mortality and transience of the Hellenistic ruler and kingdom' (p. 65)? The comic poet Philippides went into exile after attacking one of Demetrius's toadies (pp. 58–9). Finally, could any plays (let alone such a 'polyvalent poetics' [p. 243]) have had the effect on internal politics and interstate relations that L. suggests (pp. 11, 197, 252)?

L. is too gifted a scholar to be unaware of the risks of anachronistic readings (note the caveats at pp. 165, 198), but she may not have succeeded in avoiding them nonetheless. If it took the twentieth century to rediscover these texts, her understanding of them belongs very much to the twenty-first; their ideal audience is made up of academics—progressive, feminist, and eager to believe that intellectual work can make a difference in a troubled democracy. It is very pretty, certainly, but I am less sure that we must call it Menander.

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NARRATIVE IN THE *ARGONAUTICA*

G. BERKOWITZ: *Semi-Public Narration in Apollonius'* Argonautica. (Hellenistica Groningana 8.) Pp. viii + 162. Louvain, Paris, and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2004. Paper, €40. ISBN: 90-429-1432-7.

In 1992, the Department of Classics at the University of Groningen initiated a series of biennial conferences on Hellenistic literature, the proceedings of which have been (and will be) published. To date, they have produced volumes on Callimachus (1993 and 2004), Theocritus (1996), Genre in Hellenistic Poetry (1998), Apollonius Rhodius (2000), and Hellenistic Epigrams (2002); a new collection of papers dealing with authors whose works lie 'Beyond the Canon' should appear in 2006. Moving beyond the publication of conference papers, editors and organizers Annette Harder, Remco Regtuit, and Gerry Wakker have recently added monographs to their

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