MENANDER'S *PERIKEIROMENE*: MISFORTUNE, VEHEMENCE, AND POLEMON

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IT IS A WELL KNOWN AND WELL RECEIVED VIEW that Menander's *Perikeiromene* revolves around a misfortune (*atychema*) in the sense spelled out by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1135b16–19.[1] Polemon, we are told, cuts off Glykera's hair in a fit of anger caused by ignorance for which he is not responsible. His action, therefore, falls into Aristotle's first category of harms and is not to be classified as either an error (*hamartema*) or an injustice (*adikema*). This view is by no means foolish, but it seems to me at best a half truth, which can lead to a mistaken or inadequate interpretation of Polemon's character and of the *Perikeiromene* in general. Accordingly I want to offer here a correction or clarification in four steps. First, I want to make clear that there is no necessity to opt for a single Aristotelian classification. Polemon's violent deed admits different descriptions and therefore can be classified both as an injustice and as a misfortune or error. This is not only of some philosophical interest but also of some dramatic importance, for the possibility of various descriptions and classifications helps to create an interesting play. Secondly I shall argue that the sole reason for classifying Polemon's act as a misfortune is that Polemon cannot be expected to know of the brother-sister relationship existing between Glykera and Moschion. External causation, natural or divine, is not a reason. The Goddess sets up a situation which arouses Polemon's innate vehemence, but such divine involvement is entirely compatible with full human agency and responsibility. Thirdly, I shall point out that the idea of a misfortune is not in play when Pataikos defends Polemon against the charge of wanton action. For an Aristotelian the proper defense is an appeal to vehement anger. Fourthly and finally I want to suggest that while misfortune and vehement temperament are often grounds for forgiveness, they are not the grounds on which Polemon ultimately receives forgiveness. It is simply the happy consequence of his violent deed which justifies forgiveness, and in the *Perikeiromene* this is dramatically correct.

1. Actions can be described in more than one way. This is not a new observation, but it is an observation of some importance both for classifying harms and for appreciating the dramatic possibilities of a particular

[1] M. Tierney, "Aristotle and Menander," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 43 (1935–1937) C.249, T. B. L. Webster, *Studies in Menander*[2] (Manchester 1960) 7, 204–205, E. Handley, *The Dyskolos of Menander* (London 1965) 186, W. T. MacCary, "Menander's Soldiers: Their Names, Roles and Masks," *AJP* 93 (1972) 283.

PHOENIX, Vol. 28 (1974) 4.

harmful act. What we must be clear about is that under one description an action may be an injustice, while under another it may be a misfortune or mistake.[2] Under one description it may be correct to say that an agent knows (εἰδώς 1135b20) what he is doing and therefore commits an injustice, while under another description it may be correct to say that an agent acts with ignorance (μετ' ἀγνοίας 1135b12) and therefore errs or suffers a misfortune. Consider an Aristotelian example (1135a28–30). I strike a man who is my father, knowing that it is a man but not that it is my father. If I am hauled into court and charged with striking my father (if my action is described as father-striking), I can plead ignorance and my action will not be classified as an injustice. But if I am charged with striking a man (if my action is described as man-striking), I cannot plead ignorance. Assuming that I cannot justify my action as, say, part of my duty as a soldier, the charge will stick and I shall be convicted of an injustice in striking a man.

The same sort of distinction works on the comic stage. Suppose we are dealing with a play of recognition in which a son has been separated from his father since birth. They meet, an altercation develops, son strikes father and a series of events ensues terminating in the mutual recognition of father and son. If we focus on the father-son relationship, we shall say that the son acted with ignorance and therefore did not commit an injustice. We shall also say that the action has special dramatic importance in so far as it begins a process of discovery. But we would be making a serious mistake, were we to confine our attention to the father-son relationship and to think of the son's violent act only under the description of son striking father. The reason is that all or most of the characters in the play may be ignorant of this relationship and therefore apt to think of the violent act under a different description. Indeed, their feelings may be determined entirely by the belief that a man has struck a man and in so doing committed injustice. Moreover, even a character who is aware of the father-son relationship may be governed primarily by thoughts of injustice. Of course such a character recognizes that the act is a misfortune or error when it is described as an instance of son striking father. But for one reason or another the character may be interested in the act as an instance of man striking man. He views the act as an injustice and behaves accordingly. All this makes for an interesting play. A single act of violence may be both an injustice inviting censure and a misfortune or error leading to reunion. This is not confusion but rather the sort of complexity which enriches comedy.

The application to Menander's *Perikeiromene* should be obvious. Polemon's violent deed admits more than one correct description and

[2] I am especially indebted to Richard Sorabji (Kings College, London) for calling to my attention this point.

therefore more than one classification. If we describe Polemon's act in such a way that we mention or imply the sibling relationship existing between Glykera and Moschion, then Polemon can plead ignorance and his act is either a misfortune or an error. We shall say that Polemon's act is dramatically important in that it sets in motion a chain of events leading to recognition and reunion, and we shall insist that it is not an injustice because it does not satisfy the knowledge-criterion (1135b20). However, if we describe Polemon's action in another way, if we say, for example, that Polemon treats Glykera in a manner unworthy even of a slave girl (cf. 725 OCT = 318 Teubner), then we shall say that Polemon commits an injustice.[3] We shall also understand why Polemon ends up in tearful repentance (174 = 54) and why Glykera is hostile to the idea of further interaction with Polemon (722–723 = 315–316). Polemon breaks down in tears because he thinks he has committed an act of unjustified violence. He knows nothing of Glykera's relationship to Moschion and so cannot be upset by the thought of having acted against a girl in the embrace of her brother. His tearful regret is grounded entirely upon the correct belief that he has seriously mistreated another person. Glykera, of course, knows that Polemon is ignorant of her relationship to Moschion and therefore should be prepared to say that Polemon erred or experienced misfortune in taking action against a sister in the embrace of her brother. But she is asked to live with Polemon and so is interested in his action under a different description. She sees it as outrageous, even contumelious treatment unworthy of anyone, including slave girls (723–725 = 316–318). She would agree with Doris in speaking of injustice (188 = 68) and understandably refuses reconciliation.

2. In the preceding section I have said that when Polemon's action is described in such a way as to mention or imply that Glykera is the sister of Moschion, then it is to be classified as a misfortune or error. I have avoided saying outright that it is a misfortune, because this needs to be shown. Aristotle's remarks concerning misfortune are exceedingly brief, but when they are combined with remarks concerning involuntary action (1109b30–1111b3) a fairly clear picture emerges. Aristotle recognizes two independent reasons for classifying a piece of behaviour as a misfortune: (1) it has a consequence beyond reasonable expectation and

[3]The text at 725 = 318 is fragmentary and difficult to restore. I prefer a restoration like that of van Leeuwen (*Menandri Fabularum Reliquiae* [Leiden 1919] 85). Polemon is said to have treated Glykera in a way that no one would treat a slave girl. However, it is possible to restore the text so that Polemon is said to have treated Glykera as though she were a slave girl (F. Allinson, *Menander, The Principal Fragments* = Loeb ed. [London 1921] 256). Still, neither restoration describes Polemon's deed in such a way that ignorance and misfortune are possible pleas. Glykera knows the extent of Polemon's ignorance and yet can properly call his deed *ἀνόσιον* (724 = 317).

(2) it has an external cause outside the agent's control. In my opinion only the first reason can plausibly justify classifying Polemon's deed as a misfortune. Polemon does not know that Glykera is the sister of Moschion and it may be that he could not be expected to know about this relationship. But here there is difficulty in that Polemon seems to have responded straightway (988 = 410) without making an effort to learn whether or not Glykera could explain her behaviour. We may compare the *Misoumenos* where Krateia is discovered in the embrace of her newly found father. Suspicion is immediate but punishment is not, so that an adequate excuse can be offered and injustice avoided (222 OCT). It is not altogether certain whether Polemon himself saw Glykera in the arms of Moschion or Polemon learned of the embrace from Sosias. But since Polemon directed his anger entirely against Glykera and did not go after Moschion, it seems most likely that Polemon learned about the embrace from Sosias and did not see the two together.[4] If this is the case, Polemon should have had at least a moment or two to get under control. He should have asked questions and in so doing should have given Glykera the opportunity to explain her behaviour. However, there is little reason to think that Glykera would have revealed the brother-sister relationship. The goddess tells us that prior to Polemon's arrival Glykera had preferred to conceal the relationship for Moschion's sake (147–150 = 27–30) and we know that after Polemon's violent deed Glykera continued to conceal the relationship (160–162 = 40–42). Apparently we must say that Polemon did not make a reasonable effort to find out why Glykera was in the arms of Moschion, but had he done so, he would not have found out that Glykera and Moschion are brother and sister.[5] If we focus on Polemon's failure to investigate Glykera's motives we may want to speak of his action as a culpable error. But if we focus on the improbability of learning about Glykera's relationship to Moschion, we may want to say that Polemon's action described in terms of this relationship is a misfortune.[6]

[4]Prof. E. W. Handley suggested this reading to me. Cf. MacCary (above, note 1) 282. At 356–357 = 166–167 Sosias considers the possibility of reporting falsely that Glykera is with Moschion. Presumably this would be a second report.

[5]Still Polemon might have learned something. For even if Glykera chose not to reveal the brother-sister relationship, she might well have said something to establish or support her innocence. Cf. 708–719 = 301–312 where she convinces Pataikos that her motives are pure without revealing the sibling relationship. This relationship remains unknown to Pataikos until 827 = 397 where Moschion comes forward to identify himself.

[6]The *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* seems to agree with the *Nicomachean Ethics* in that it marks off a misfortune from an error on the grounds that a misfortune is not due to the agent himself but rather to other persons or to chance. However, it seems to go beyond the *Ethics* in connecting misfortune with failure to accomplish nobly or well conceived plans (1427a35–37). This addition makes it even more difficult to think of Polemon's act

Artistotle's second reason for classifying a piece of behaviour as a misfortune, external causation, cannot be appealed to in the case of Polemon. Of course, Polemon is confronted with an unexpected situation to which he must respond. To this extent there are external factors in play. But this does not mean that Polemon's agency is in any way diminished. Cutting off Glykera's hair is very much his own response. He assesses the situation and acts upon his assessment, so that from the standpoint of external causation his action seems to be more an error originating in himself than a misfortune originating from outside (1135b18–19). When Aristotle speaks of external causation he seems to be thinking of force or violence over which a man has no control. We may think of a man whose hand is grabbed and slammed against someone else (1135a27–28). Or again we may think of a man who is picked up and carried along by the wind (1110a3). Such men suffer misfortune due to external causation. But when Polemon flares up and moves against Glykera, he is himself acting and not a victim of external forces. He does not suffer misfortune.

A possible misinterpretation should be anticipated. Early on in the play the goddess Ignorance addresses the audience and claims to have led Polemon into an unnatural display of anger (163–165 = 43–45). These words should not be pressed to mean that Polemon is a victim of external causation. The role of the goddess is quite compatible with Polemon's own agency and responsibility.[7] She does not cause a mis-

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as a misfortune. He has neither thought up a good plan of action nor been frustrated in its execution.

[7]On the general compatibility of divine and human agency see W. Ludwig, "Die plautinische *Cistellaria* und das Verhältnis von Gott und Handlung bei Menander," in *Ménandre* (Geneva 1970) 79–80. On the *Perikeiromene* see 92–93. However, Ludwig may be conceding too much to the divinity, when he says that Polemon's anger does not correspond to his *natürliche Wesensart* (φύσις) and therefore is a work of the divinity (92). Polemon is by nature a *sphodros*. His natural temperament is not at odds with extreme anger and actually predisposes him to such anger. When the goddess says that Polemon is not φύσει (164 = 44) such a person, she is not denying that Polemon is *sphodros* (128 = 8). To be sure the word φύσις is used often in connection with innate temperament, but it can be used also in connection with acquired character. Cf. Aristophanes *Nubes* 1187 where Solon is said to be *demos*-lover τὴν φύσιν. Such a character is learned and not innate in the way that a temperament may be. (Compare our use of "nature" for learned or moral charater: e.g., "It's not his nature to act so shamefully.") Moreover, φύσις may be used primarily to emphasize an attribute. Cf. *Nubes* 537 where Aristophanes' play is decent φύσει. We might say "basically" decent. (Cf. W. Starkie, *Aristophanes, The Clouds* [London 1911] 133.) For a Peripatetic parallel cf. Aristotle's *Rhet.* 1417a35, where the phrase φύσει τοιοῦτος is used to underline and support noble intentions arising from good moral character. So in the *Perikeiromene* when the goddess wishes to make clear that Polemon's moral character is basically sound (this is important, if Polemon is ultimately to be reconciled with and married to Glykera), she uses the phrase οὐ φύσει τοιοῦτον ὄντα (164–165 = 44–45) and thereby underlines the fact that Polemon's deed does not manifest his true (acquired, moral) character.

fortune but rather sets up a situation in which Polemon's vehement temperament is aroused to extraordinary anger. This is an important point for understanding the *Perikeiromene*. Cutting off Glykera's hair may not be typical of Polemon's behaviour. But neither is it something altogether unrelated to Polemon's character. He is *sphodros* (128 = 8), a vehement individual who may be expected to jump up and come running if he hears that Glykera is in the company of another lover (356–357 = 166–167). When he responds to correction by shouting (499 = 239), when he repeats himself thereby underlining despair (506–507 = 256–257), when he piles up antecedent clauses (514–516 = 264–266), and when he humorously persists in urging an inspection of Glykera's wardrobe (516–525 = 266–275), Polemon is exhibiting his *sphodrotes*. Similarly, when Doris, the maid servant, tells Polemon that Glykera will return to him, providing he makes a serious effort to reform, Polemon not only promises a full effort but also goes on to promise freedom for Doris (802–803 = 404–405). Such an excessive response is typical of a vehement individual, as is Polemon's eagerness to celebrate Glykera's good fortune in discovering her father and brother by sacrificing a sow without waiting to perform the proper preliminary ritual (996–998 = 418–420). Or again when Polemon hears that not only Glykera but also her father are about to appear, he reacts impetuously and runs off (1002–1004 = 424–426). And finally when Pataikos enjoins Polemon to give up being a soldier so that in the future he may do nothing impulsive (*propetes*, 1117 = 439), Polemon replies in a typically impulsive manner. He calls on Apollo, asks rhetorically whether he who has all but perished will again do anything impulsive and then, depending on how we fill the lacuna, promises that he will never find any fault in Glykera or that he will do nothing rash even in a dream (1018–1020 = 440–442).[8] Either way, the response is humorous and indicative of just how intense a person Polemon is.

Throughout the play Polemon manifests an impulsive vehemence. The goddess is aware of this temperament and describes Polemon as a *sphodros*. When she says subsequently that Polemon is not naturally such a person (164–165 = 44–45), she is not contradicting or in any way modifying her earlier mention of Polemon's vehement temperament. On the contrary, her point is that Polemon's vehemence does not normally express itself in such extraordinary anger and that a particular situation—a chance coincidence of events (151 = 31)—had to be arranged to call forth an unusually violent outburst of anger. Here Ignorance is actually making use of Polemon's vehement temperament to achieve her own goal. The goddess is aiming at a revelation of identities (165–167 = 45–47) and

[8]The first restoration is that of Wilamowitz and is printed as line 441 in the Teubner text and as line 1019 in the OCT. The second is that of Weil and is printed as line 900 in the Loeb text.

toward this end finds Polemon's temperament useful in that it predisposes him to an excessive act which sets in motion the process of discovery.[9] Cutting off Glykera's hair is an exceptional action even for Polemon. He is after all more than an intense individual. As the dialogue with Pataikos makes clear (486–525 = 236–275), Polemon has a certain sense of fair play and also a genuine concern for Glykera's well-being. Insisting that Pataikos view Glykera's wardrobe is a humorous manifestation of *sphodrotes*. But it also helps us realize how well Glykera has been treated.[10] We may say that Polemon is a complex character and that commendable qualities exist side by side with an innate temperament which qualifies all of Polemon's behaviour and which makes possible both an act of extraordinary violence and also a subsequent tearful regret (174 = 54).

It may be helpful to compare and contrast Polemon with Moschion. The goddess Ignorance describes Moschion as overbold or rash (151 = 31). She also tells us how he saw Glykera and responded straightway by running up and kissing her (154–156 = 34–36). Out of all context we might want to compare this immediate response with that of Polemon. Both men, we might say, act in a similar manner in that they both respond straightway (155 = 35, 988 = 410). But despite this similarity the two actions are very different. Moschion has prepared for his action. The goddess makes this quite clear when she tells us that Moschion took care always to pass by Glykera's house (152–153 = 32–33). In other words, Moschion was seeking an opportunity to approach Glykera and therefore was ready to act straightway. He is a schemer who on occasion sends out a scout, considers how best to flatter his mother, and practises his lines ahead of time (295 = 105, 314 = 124, 550 = 300). In contrast Polemon is not a schemer and has not prepared for his deed of violence. He is surprised and responds impetuously in accordance with his temperament. Moreover, to be a *sphodros* who is likely to do something *propetes* (128 = 8, 1117 = 439) may be rather different from being *thrasyteros* (151 = 31). A rash or bold man, a *thrasys*, is typically a confident individual who thinks himself secure. The disposition of *thrasytes* is closely connected with the emotion of *tharsos* (cf. Arist. *EN* 1115b28–29) which is a cog-

[9]Polemon's violent outburst is referred to by the words παροινεῖν and πάροινον (988 = 410, 1022 = 444). This does not mean that Polemon acted when drunk, but that he acted as if he were drunk. (Cf. *Dysk.* 93, *Aspis* 386 and Handley [above, note 1] 146.) The analogy with drunken behaviour is not inappropriate. Just as a drunken man may do something quite unusual, so Polemon, although sober, performs an exceptional act in cutting off Glykera's hair. And just as an alcoholic may be prone to drunkenness and therefore more liable than other people to do something regrettable, so a man of vehement temperament is prone to precipitous and regrettable action.

[10]For gifts of clothing as a mark of genuine concern cf. Plautus *Cist.* 488 where Alcesimarchus attempts to prove his love for Selenium by citing the jewelry and clothing with which he has fitted her out.

nitive phenomenon involving sanguine expectations or opinions about the future (cf. *EN* 1116a4, *Rhet.* 1383a18). It is, of course, difficult to be certain that Menander is using *thrasyteros* in such a precise sense. But perhaps we can say that calling Moschion *thrasyteros* suggests or encourages us to think of an overly confident man whose aggressive acts are supported by certain thoughts and beliefs. A very different impression is conveyed by the label *sphodros*. The disposition of *sphodrotes* is or may be thought of as a natural temperament that is not grounded upon certain opinions but rather caused by a physiological condition. We may cite Plato's *Statesman*, where the Eleatic Stranger sets forth a doctrine of temperaments and relates it to the art of statesmanship. Here *sphodrotes* or vehemence is grouped together with swiftness and sharpness and is treated as an innate temperament which manifests itself in many kinds of actions including mental, bodily, and vocal performances (306e3–5). Since such a temperament is a natural endowment passed on genetically and controlled primarily by careful breeding practices (310a7–311a2), it differs fundamentally from excessive confidence and boldness, which are largely acquired or learned and therefore properly subjected to moral training. As a *sphodros* Polemon is naturally vehement and prone to regrettable outbursts. But he is not a *thrasys* and not open to censure in the way that Moschion is.[11]

Shifting to an Aristotelian framework we may say that Polemon has a fair set of values but an over-active *thymos*. He is not a malicious plotter (*EN* 1149b14) but a man who wants to do the right thing and yet goes wrong in the way that an over-hasty servant makes a botch of things by rushing off to his task without hearing his master out (*EN* 1149a26–28). Such a servant may explain his behaviour by reference to a hasty temperament (cf. *EN* 1149a30) but he cannot excuse his miscue as a misfortune due to external causation. Similarly Polemon may explain his violent response by reference to a vehement temperament, but he cannot claim to have suffered a misfortune attributable to external causes, whether natural or divine in origin. Indeed, we have in Polemon a clear case of human responsibility existing side by side with divine involvement. The goddess desires to bring about recognition and reunion. Her *modus operandi* is not to intervene as an external force which diminishes responsibility and converts culpable action into misfortune. Rather it is to make use of Polemon's *sphodrotes*. This temperament actually invites the workings of Ignorance in that it predisposes Polemon to hasty actions based upon misperceptions. The goddess need only create a situation

[11]Cf. A. Körte, "Menandros," *RE* 15.1 (1931) 760.28–30 who describes Polemon as "hitzig und unbesonnen, dabei jedoch ein ehrlicher Kerl, dem eitlen Schürzenjäger Moschion weit uberlegen."

which arouses Polemon's natural vehemence and so evokes a violent response whose immediate consequences are regrettable but whose ultimate consequences are reunion and happiness.[12]

3. Over 150 lines have been lost between the third and fourth acts of the play. When the text resumes Glykera is endeavouring to persuade Pataikos that her move to the house of Myrrhina involves no amorous intentions toward Moschion. She succeeds and then asks Pataikos to depart, adding that in the future Polemon should act wantonly (ὑβριζέτω) toward someone else (722–723 = 315–316). The clear implication is that Polemon behaved wantonly when he cut off Glykera's hair. Pataikos' response is only partially preserved. He certainly denies the allegation of wanton action, but his word or words are lost at the end of 723 = 316. As a restoration οὐχ ἑκούσιον has been suggested and subsequently justified on the grounds that Polemon's deed is an *atychema* or misfortune.[13] This justification will not do for the simple reason that at this point in the play Pataikos does not know that Glykera and Moschion are siblings, and therefore does not think of Polemon's deed as a misfortune beyond reasonable expectation.[14] This is not to say that Menander could not have written οὐχ ἑκούσιον, or that if he did he was writing something altogether unintelligible. Much as it makes sense to restore οὐ φυγεῖν ἑκούσιον in 326 = 136 to describe an action which seems to be forced on Glykera by her situation and to be motivated by fear (320 = 130, 401 = 211), so it is plausible to restore οὐχ ἑκούσιον in 723 = 316 to describe an

[12]The preceding argumentation should make clear why I find it difficult to follow MacCary (above, note 1) 282 when he says that "there is a clear distinction made between Moschion's natural violence and Polemon's externally motivated wrath." On my view it is Polemon's violence which is natural in the sense that it is directly attributable to an innate temperament and not to a learned disposition such as characterizes Moschion. Moreover, Polemon's wrath is not externally motivated. Of course, there is an unexpected situation which is outside Polemon's control. But the way in which he responds to the situation is very much a matter of his own choice. He acts in accordance with his vehement temperament and in accordance with his assessment of the situation.

[13]The restoration is that of S. Sudhaus, *Menandri Reliquiae Nuper Repertae* (Bonn 1914) 48. The justification is that of Webster (above, note 1) 205. Other restorations of 723 = 316 are possible. The suggestion οὐχ ὑβριστικῶς (E. Capps, *Four Plays of Menander* [Boston 1910] 199) is attractive in that it adds nothing which goes beyond the surviving text and at the same time makes Pataikos' speech an emphatic denial of Glykera's charge. But there is no compelling reason why the gap must be filled by a word or words describing Polemon's deed. A phrase referring to Glykera is equally possible: e.g., οὐχ ὥς σοι δοκεῖ. Furthermore, it is by no means certain that a χ ends the negative. (Working with less than clear plates Sudhaus suspected χε on a separate scrap of papyrus.) If it does not, then the number of possible emendations is even larger: e.g., προαίρετον (Koerte, Teubner 2nd ed. 1912), and see below, note 16.

[14]See above, note 5. A. Gomme and F. Sandbach (*Menander, A Commentary* [Oxford 1973] 517) miss this point when they try to support the reading οὐχ ἑκούσιον by citing Aristotle (*EN* 1110b18) on acts due to ignorance.

action which seems to have been forced on Polemon by unexpected circumstances and uncontrolled anger (163 = 43). But being driven by angry emotion is not the same thing as suffering a misfortune and there is no reason to think that Pataikos confuses the two. In other words, *οὐχ ἑκούσιον* is a possible restoration, but the idea of misfortune is irrelevant to the textual issue and to the more general issue of how Pataikos defends Polemon against the allegation of wanton behaviour.

For our purposes the important point is that ignorance of Glykera's relationship to Moschion does not really meet the allegation. Polemon might have been in error about this relationship and still acted in a manner that manifested *hybris*. Of course, Polemon would have acted very differently, had he realized that Glykera was in the arms of her brother. But actions performed in ignorance may reveal moral character just as much as actions performed with full knowledge.[15] If Pataikos wants to dissociate Polemon from *hybris*, what he ought to do is to show that Polemon is not given to acts of *hybris*. For an Aristotelian this means that Pataikos ought to show that Polemon is not the sort of person who does and says things which bring shame to another person, not for the sake of some acquisition but rather for the pleasure that comes with thinking oneself superior (*Rhet.* 1378b23–29). We do not know whether Pataikos tried such a move. The text fails us at this point. But the move would have been a sensible one and quite in line both with Aristotelian doctrine and with Polemon's character. For as we already observed in the preceding section, Polemon is a vehement individual not unlike Aristotle's hot-tempered man. Both are prone to unreflective, hasty outbursts of anger (356–357 = 166–167, 988 = 410; *EN* 1149a24–34). And just as Aristotle dissociates his hot-tempered man from wanton behaviour, so Pataikos might try to clear Polemon from the allegation made against him by Glykera. The same general principle applies equally well in both cases. When a man acts in anger, he feels pain and therefore does not engage in wanton action accompanied by pleasure (*EN* 1149b20–21).[16]

[15]A striking case is Smikrines in the *Aspis*. He believes falsely that Kleostratos is dead and his sister an heiress of considerable wealth. Accordingly he moves to break up a wedding planned for the sister and to marry her himself, thereby gaining control over her inheritance. Smikrines' action is in no way illegal. He is the girl's older uncle and therefore has the law on his side (186–187, 254–255, 297–298). But despite his legal rights, Smikrines' behaviour is morally wrong, and it is wrong whether or not he has the facts straight concerning the condition of Kleostratos. In other words, while ignorance is part of the play and mentioned early on by the goddess Tyche (99), ignorance does not prevent Smikrines from revealing a greedy character. Indeed, it is ignorance which leads Smikrines to reveal himself as a *philargyros* (123, 351, cf. 149) deserving censure.

[16]Assuming that χ does not end the negative in 723 = 316 (see above, note 13) and thinking of a passage like *EN* 1149b21, an overly keen Aristotelian might restore 723 = 316 with *οὐ μεθ' ἡδονῆς*. Such a restoration may be fanciful, but there is nothing improbable about Menander's having introduced an excuse which agrees with Aris-

An angry man is not a wanton man acting without (apparent) provocation (*Rhet.* 1374a3, 1402a3) and for the sake of pleasure (*Rhet.* 1374a14–15). Polemon is no exception. He is angered (163 = 43) by apparent infidelity and therefore acts in pain and for revenge. He is not taking pleasure in superiority and therefore is not acting wantonly.

Such an Aristotelian rebuttal has obvious appeal, but it should be pointed out that without further argumentation this rebuttal cannot convict Glykera of absurdity in speaking of wanton action. For it is not immediately clear how Glykera conceives of *hybris*. She may think of *hybris* in a narrow Aristotelian sense or she may think of it in a wider sense which covers cases of misguided and excessive anger. We may compare Demosthenes' speech *Against Meidias*, in which sudden acts of angry revenge are first marked off from *hybris* and then subsequently treated as special cases of *hybris*. Polyzelos, we are told, acted in anger and with impulsiveness of character. He got ahead of his reason and went wrong, but his action was not based upon *hybris* (21.38). This case of impulsive anger reminds us of Polemon's impetuous deed, and its dissociation from *hybris* seems to harmonize with an Aristotelian interpretation of 316 = 723. Later, however, Demosthenes associates angry emotional response with *hybris*. A man, we are told, can act angrily, suddenly, and wantonly (ὑβριστικῶς), and still excuse himself with a plea of anger (21.41). Here again we are reminded of Polemon. The difference is that this time a sudden outburst of anger is not dissociated from *hybris*. Anger is recognized as a mitigating factor, but the behaviour is still characterized as wanton. For an appreciation of Glykera's charge this is important. She may be, indeed almost certainly is, thinking of *hybris* in a sense compatible with anger. She knows full well that Polemon was angry and would probably admit that anger is normally a mitigating factor. But Polemon's anger was extraordinary, and as Glykera argues, resulted in an ungodly action out of place even in regard to a slave girl (724–725 = 317–318). Glykera has just been under siege and is likely to be thinking of Polemon as an exceedingly self-willed individual. We may recall how Glykera's maid-servant Doris spoke of her mistress' suffering injustice and then added that Polemon would be delighted to learn of Glykera's tears

totelian doctrine. We may compare Terence's *Eunuch*. In this play, which is based upon a like-named work by Menander (20), Chaerea rejects the idea of *contumelia* (= *hybris*) by pleading *amor* (877–878). This is a good Aristotelian move. Cf. *Pol.* 1311b19, 1315a22–23. Similarly in the *Perikeiromene* Pataikos may be thinking in the manner of an Aristotelian who would counter the charge of *hybris* with a plea of anger and impetuosity. However, it must be kept in mind that a distinction between *hybris* and impulsive anger is not unique to Aristotle. Cf. Demosthenes 21.38. Aristotelian frameworks may be useful for elucidating Menander, without proving any direct dependence of Menander upon Aristotle. Cf. K. Gaiser, "Menander und der Peripatos," *Antike und Abendland* 13 (1967) 15.

(188–189 = 68–69). The words are Doris', but the sentiment may be shared by and even derived from her mistress. Certainly at 723–725 = 316–318 Glykera feels outraged and is prepared to suggest that Polemon acted wantonly. Whatever Pataikos may have said in defense of Polemon, it had little practical effect. He is soon in the service of Glykera, assisting in the transference of birthtokens.

4. As the *Perikeiromene* comes to a close Polemon receives forgiveness (*syggnome*) on the grounds that his violent act has been a source of blessings (1021–1023 = 443–445). There is no mention of ignorance and no suggestion that forgiveness depends upon classifying Polemon's deed as a misfortune. This is intelligible enough. Polemon is in trouble not because he acted against a sister in the embrace of her brother (under this description Polemon's act may be a misfortune), but rather because he subjected Glykera to treatment unworthy even of a slave girl (under this description the act is an injustice). Polemon's ignorance of the brother-sister relationship does not excuse his treating Glykera in this manner and therefore is no reason for forgiveness. However, Polemon's vehement temperament is a reason. At least Aristotle is prepared to extend forgiveness to persons who act in anger on account of a hot and swift temperament (*EN* 1149b4, cf. 1149a30), so that we might magine Polemon receiving forgiveness on the grounds that his rage is attributable to an innate *sphodrotes*. But no such reason is offered. Rather forgiveness is justified solely on the grounds that Polemon's act has been a source of blessings (1021–1022 = 443–444). This justification is to be taken at face value. The blessings resulting from Polemon's act simply nullify any possible moral indignation Glykera may have felt and at the same time remove from the spectator any serious concern with fine distinctions between misfortunes, errors, and injustices. Whatever the proper Peripatetic grounds for extending forgiveness, Polemon is forgiven because he has set in motion a process of discovery. Early on, the goddess Ignorance makes clear that the movement of the play is toward a revelation of identities (165–167 = 45–47). When this goal is reached, hair-splitting justifications appropriate to moral philosophers are out of place. The play takes on a carefree air, so that it is dramatically correct to extend forgiveness on grounds that can only seem odd to someone expecting an Aristotelian pardon.[17]

[17]The forgiveness offered Moschion may have been no less carefree than the forgiveness offered Polemon. Of course, Moschion does act in ignorance when he embraces his sister. This ignorance is sufficient to excuse him from the incestuous act of pursuing a sibling, but it does not excuse his deed thought of as an act of premeditated aggression. The goddess tells us that Moschion took care always to pass by Glykera's house (152–153 = 32–33) and so lets us know that Moschion was prepared for any opportunity that

This carefree pardon harmonizes well with Pataikos' immediately preceding demand that Polemon give up military life and so cease to act impetuously (1016–1017 = 438–439). The demand implies that the impetuosity of Polemon is due to his profession, so that retirement from military life will be sufficient to temper his character. But this is nonsensical, if Polemon's *sphodrotes* is a natural temperament. For when men are impetuous by nature, they are impetuous whatever their walk of life. We can imagine that even if Polemon abandons military service, he will remain impetuous and will remain likely to come running whenever Sosias fabricates a story about Glykera and a paramour (356–357 = 166–167). Indeed, the injunction to abandon military life is the occasion for Polemon to make a typically impetuous response. He calls upon Apollo and expresses his good intentions with exaggerated promises (1018–1020 = 440–442). The humour here is subtle, but the intensity of Polemon's reply suggests that Pataikos has things turned round. Polemon is a good soldier because he is impetuous, and not *vice versa*.[18] Still, it would be a mistake to press this point and to claim that Menander has made Pataikos

might present itself. His response is like Polemon's in that it is immediate (155 = 35, 988 = 410), but it differs in being premeditated and in failing to qualify for the forgiveness due to hasty expressions of hot temper (*EN* 1149b4). Yet Moschion is forgiven in the gap between 827–976 = 397–398, and his marriage is in preparation when the text fails us at 1024–1026 = 446–448. We do not know what Moschion said to his newly discovered father and sister, but it seems most unlikely that he came up with a satisfactory excuse. It is possible that he did little more than promise to do better in the future (cf. Polemon at 1018–1019 = 440–441) and then received forgiveness because the happiness of reunion wiped out concern with previous misbehaviour. Such forgiveness would be extremely carefree but it would be in keeping with the spirit of the play. Alternatively and more probably, Moschion may have done something in addition to promising better deportment. Perhaps (as an anonymous referee has most kindly suggested to me) Moschion was forgiven on the condition that he take a wife. Cf. Terence's *Heauton Timoroumenos* (based on a like-named play of Menander) in which Cleitiphon receives forgiveness because he agrees to the punishment and preventive treatment of marriage (1051–1059).

[18]Polemon may be compared with Thrasonides in the *Misoumenos*. Thrasonides has an intense temperament which is manifested at the very outset of the play when he expresses his passionate love for Krateia (A4–5, A11–12 OCT) and which is referred to later when he is described by the adjective *itamos* (399). As in the case of Polemon, so here we may suspect that Thrasonides' temperament is not a product of military life but rather the reverse. Thrasonides has been an outstanding soldier in Cyprus (fr. 5 OCT = 7 K), because his impetuous nature suits him to military service. Furthermore, the fragmentary ending of the *Misoumenos* has a teasing similarity to the ending of the *Perikeiromene*. Just as Pataikos in the latter play gives his daughter away by employing a traditional formula, mentioning the dowry and then enjoining Polemon to forget about being a soldier, so Demeas in the *Misoumenos* uses the marriage formula, names a dowry, and then enjoins the bridegroom to give up something (444–447). Assuming that the bridegroom is Thrasonides, it is tempting to ask whether he, too, is being asked to give up the vehement life of a soldier. But this is, of course, pure speculation.

look foolish. We are now at the end of the play and the happiness of reunion has created its own logic. We are not meant to scrutinize Pataikos' injunction in terms of a consistent theory of human personality. Polemon's agreement to abandon military life has an important dramatic value. It paves the way for continued happiness and so helps bring the play to a tidy ending. Polemon's *sphodrotes* has set in motion a process of discovery and has enlivened the play as it moves toward a climactic reunion. To wind up the play it is sufficient that Polemon agree to moderate his behaviour, so that the newly won happiness may appear to endure beyond the final curtain. It simply does not matter that Pataikos' injunction is, on some deeper analysis, wishful or even foolish. Of course, the possibility of absurdity may add a humorous touch. Just as the astute spectator smiles at the grounds on which forgiveness is offered, so he smiles at the injunction to abandon impetuous behaviour by giving up military life. But he does not object and does not fault the playwright for closing the *Perikeiromene* on a lighthearted note.[19]

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[19]I want to express my thanks to Eric Handley and Richard Sorabji for reading earlier versions of this paper, to members of the King's College Aristotle Seminar for criticizing my views, and to the American Council of Learned Societies for financial support.