

DID 'RESPECTABLE' WOMEN ATTEND SYMPOSIA?

In her article, 'Women's Commensality in the Ancient Greek World', which appeared in this journal in 1998, Joan Burton set out to correct scholars' neglect of 'the topic of women's part in the history of ancient Greek dining and drinking parties'.¹ She argued that the proposition that citizen women never participated in symposia is a broad generalization. Based on classical Athenian evidence, it misses variation over time and in different places. Even in the case of classical Athens it is overstated, overlooking the male bias of our sources. Moreover, scholars' concentration on the symposium has led to the neglect of other occasions of commensality and so of the important role played by women in Greek commensality more broadly:

the participation of women in the history of Greek commensality does not depend solely on female presence at male-defined symposia. Just as men had a wide range of venues in which they might socialize with one another, including public banquets (many of them religious), so too women.

Thus Burton surveyed the sources to document 'the female side of wining and dining', including citizen women's participation in the symposium.

Most interpretations of the symposium, including my own, have seen exclusion of women of the household as central to the institution's meaning and function.² The belief that respectable women were as a rule excluded also forms a basic premise for the interpretation of vase-painting. Thus Sian Lewis observes that

the symposium is the only scenario in which identification of the hetaira is secure: by definition all women depicted at symposia would be hired entertainers – musicians,

¹ J. Burton, 'Women's Commensality in the Ancient Greek World', *G&R* 45.2 (1998), 143–4.

² See, *inter alia*, O. Murray, 'Symptotic History', in idem (ed.), *Symptotica. A Symposium on the Symposium* (Oxford, 1990), 6; idem, 'Forms of Sociality', in J.-P. Vernant (ed.), *The Greeks* (Chicago, IL, 1995), 230–1; E. Stehle, *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece. Nondramatic Poetry in its Setting* (Princeton, NJ, 1997), 213–61; S. Corner, 'Transcendent Drinking: The Symposium at Sea Reconsidered', *CQ* n.s. 60.2 (2010); idem, 'Bringing the Outside in: The Andrōn as Brothel and the Symposium's Civic Sexuality', in A. Glazebrook and M. M. Henry (eds.), *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Madison, WI, 2011), 60–85; 'Symposium', in T. K. Hubbard (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities* (Malden, MA, and Oxford, forthcoming).

dancers and prostitutes – since the fact of attendance at symposia is one of the touchstones used by the orators to distinguish respectable women from hetairai.³

It is worthwhile, then, to review the evidence that Burton adduces for respectable women attending symposia. I shall argue that it in fact confirms the rule of respectable women's exclusion. I shall also argue, however, that Burton's discussion does nevertheless point to ways in which we ought to revise our understanding of the symposium. Burton calls for 'opening up the consideration of women's commensality beyond the male-defined symposium' (a call lately renewed by Clare Kelly Blazeby).⁴ This her survey very valuably does. The evidence she collects, however, seems to me to point to the need to look not only to different occasions of commensality but also to the relationships between them. Our tendency to think in terms of distinct kinds of commensality – private vs. public, domestic vs. sympotic or civic, *dais* ('sacrificial feast') vs. *symposion* – can obscure a more complex set of relationships.

Burton argues that the 'male-defined symposium, which arose during the archaic age, started opening up to include respectable women, at least by the third century B.C., if not earlier'.⁵ She offers good evidence of some relaxation of gender restrictions at symposia in the Hellenistic period (concomitant with basic changes in the conditions of the *polis* and in the gender order of Greek society generally), though I would note that the activities of queens, while on the one hand influential, were also inherently exceptional, and that Nepos' famous remark on the striking difference between Greek and Roman practices in this regard is strong testimony for the persistence of a general norm of exclusion:

Many actions are seemly according to our code which the Greeks look upon as shameful. For instance, what Roman would blush to take his wife to a dinner-party? ... But it is very different in Greece; for there a woman is not admitted to a dinner-party, unless relatives only are present. (Nep. *Praef.* 6–7)⁶

³ S. Lewis, *The Athenian Woman. An Iconographic Handbook* (London and New York, 2002), 112.

⁴ With special attention to women's drinking: C. Kelly Blazeby, 'Women + Wine = Prostitute in Classical Athens?', in Glazebrook and Henry (n. 2), 86–105.

⁵ Burton (n. 1), 160, see also 149.

⁶ *contra ea pleraque nostris moribus sunt decora quae apud illos turpia putantur. quem enim Romanorum pudet uxorem ducere in convivium? Aut cuius non mater familias primum locum tenet aedium atque in celebritate versatur? quod multo fit aliter in Graecia; nam neque in convivium adhibetur nisi propinquorum.* Translation from J. C. Rolfe, ed., *Cornelius Nepos* (Cambridge, MA, 1984, first published 1929).

My concern, however, is with the evidence that Burton offers of some participation by respectable women in symposia in the classical period.⁷ She duly acknowledges the evidence of Attic oratory, in which a woman's participation in symposia is adduced as proof *ipso facto* that she is a *hetaira* since, in the words of Isaeus (3.14), 'no one, I suppose, would dare to revel with a married woman, nor do married women accompany their husbands to banquets or think of feasting in the company of strangers [*allotriôn*], especially mere chance comers'.⁸ Burton argues, however, that Isaeus here implies that citizen women might feast with male acquaintances, rather than strangers, and indeed even with strangers so long as not mere 'chance comers'.⁹ This, I think, misconstrues the passage. *Allotrios* in Greek stands in opposition to *oikeios*, and as such *hoi allotrioi* is regularly used in the sense of 'non-kinsmen', in contradistinction to *hoi oikeoi*.¹⁰ This is, I think, the most natural reading in this context, rather than 'non-acquaintances'. Further, the last clause does not delimit the reference of 'strangers' only to 'chance comers', but rather only emphasizes the promiscuity of the woman's mixing: she not only consorts at banquets with strangers but does so freely with *any* stranger; as Isaeus has said (3.11, 3.13), she gives herself to anyone. This reading is supported by Demosthenes' speech *Against Neaera* (59.24, 33, 48), in which drinking and dining with men is adduced *tout court* as the mark of the courtesan. Thus all positive statements on the subject in our sources attest a strong rule of women's exclusion from banqueting with non-kinsmen. This supports a formidable argument from silence – as Andrew Dalby puts it, 'in all the narratives of men's...symposia

⁷ I include early Hellenistic sources since it is artificial to draw a line at 323. From the archaic period, Burton adduces only Sappho, as being 'at the centre of a group of women... [whose] gatherings also included food and drink on occasion'. Sappho's poetry may well reflect some institution of women's sympotic sociality but, as Skinner comments: 'We have virtually no textual evidence for archaic social conditions on Sappho's native island of Lesbos... Elsewhere in mainstream Greek culture a male-centred patriarchal gender ideology was so entrenched that it is not easy to imagine a milieu that could give rise to this seemingly unorthodox, female-oriented construction of sexuality.' As for material evidence for such women's commensality in the period, we have only the Polyxena Sarcophagus, which is hardly less elusive than Sappho's poetry since it 'has no contemporary parallels in Greek art', was made by Greeks but for a Persian patron, and the funerary context makes it difficult to know what relationship the imagery has to social practice: see M. B. Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture* (Oxford, 2005), 60–1.

⁸ *καίτοι οὐδὲ πού γε ἐπὶ γαμετῆς γυναίκας οὐδεὶς ἂν κομᾶζεν τολμήσειεν οὐδὲ αἱ γαμεταὶ γυναῖκες ἔρχονται μετὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐπὶ τὰ δεῖπνα, οὐδὲ συνδειπνεῖν ἀξιούσι μετὰ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων, καὶ ταῦτα μετὰ τῶν ἐπιτυχόντων.* Translation from E. S. Forster, ed., *Isaeus* (Cambridge, MA, 1927).

⁹ Burton (n. 1), 147.

¹⁰ LSJ s.v. *ἀλλότριος*, section II, and *οἰκεῖος*, section II.1.

from the period there is not one certain indication of the presence of a woman of the household'¹¹ – since it indicates that this silence is a reflection of actual practice rather than only of our sources' elision of women's lives.

Burton, however, seeks to show that the sources do in fact document at least some instances of respectable women mixing with non-relatives at symposia. She does not deny that these are exceptional, and exceptions are of course important for a fuller and more complex understanding of social life. But it is also important to observe that the cases identified by Burton are not simply exceptional but are in fact exceptions that prove the rule. 'Several anecdotes concerning philosophers', she argues, 'suggest that respectable women were not unknown at convivial gatherings that would have included male strangers or acquaintances (not kin).'¹² Since Lastheneia of Mantinea and Axiothea of Phlius were included among the pupils of Plato, she reasons that they 'might have attended philosophers' dinner parties'.¹³ For all that it is reported that Axiothea did such unconventional things as wear men's clothes (Diog. Laert. 3.46), no source reports that she, or Lastheneia, participated in symposia. Similarly, while one can agree with Burton that it would not have been out of keeping with their beliefs for Pythagorean and Epicurean communities to have included female members in their conviviality, there is again no direct evidence that they did so. Given the extraordinary openness of these groups to women, we might suppose it probable, as Burton does; but we might equally say on the very same grounds that the silence is telling (just as it is striking that in Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae*, despite the fantasy of gender role-reversal and abundant indulgence in the stereotype of women as luses, symposia remain exclusively male affairs).¹⁴ Perhaps more importantly, even if we suppose that these groups did include women in conviviality, this would only be another instance of their iconoclasm, of the oppositional stance that they took in relation to society's norms (which in the case of the Pythagoreans prominently included opposition to alimentary and commensal norms). Thus it would testify, in the negative, to the rule of women's exclusion.

¹¹ A. Dalby, 'Food and Sexuality in Classical Athens: The Written Sources', *Food, Culture & History* 1 (1993), 170.

¹² Burton (n. 1), 147–8.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁴ See J. Wilkins, *The Boastful Chef. The Discourse of Food in Ancient Greek Comedy* (Oxford, 2000), 59–60.

The same may be said of Hipparchia, the wife of Crates the Cynic, the only one of the female philosophers mentioned by Burton who is actually reported to have attended symposia (Diog. Laert. 6.96–8). Burton herself notes that ‘she lived a life far different from the usual upper-class Greek woman’ and that her presence at symposia ‘reportedly sometimes led to unpleasant encounters with men unaccustomed to dining in the company of outspoken well-born women’, as in the case of one interlocutor who, having been bested by her in philosophical argument, responded by pulling up her cloak.¹⁵ Laertius nowhere indicates that Hipparchia’s participation in symposia only ‘sometimes’ provoked a reaction. Rather, as I read it, he offers the story of this particular dinner as an illustration of his general theme: that Hipparchia’s way of life as a female philosopher – going about with her husband, dressing like him, appearing with him in public, and accompanying him to symposia – represents an inversion of normative gender roles.¹⁶ It is not, then, simply Hipparchia’s outspokenness at the dinner that is provocative. By engaging in philosophical disputation she only does as a symposiast does, which is to say that she assumes a man’s place. Thus her bested interlocutor raises her cloak, as if to see whether she is a man. That this is the significance of the gesture is made clear by what he says to her, alluding to Euripides’ Agave: ‘is this she who has left her shuttle at the loom?’¹⁷ She, Laertius notes, ‘showed no sign of alarm or of the perturbation natural in a woman’.¹⁸

Other than female philosophers, Burton adduces Aspasia and Agariste, the wife of Alcmaeonides. Again, there is no actual report of Aspasia attending symposia with non-kinsmen; Burton only suggests that it is likely. She thinks it likely, though, because Aspasia’s status as an ‘outlander’ allowed her to assume an ‘unusual status as a woman of visibility and influence’ and to enjoy the society of notable men, such as Socrates, and because if she had been a *hetaira*, as was reputed, ‘she

¹⁵ Burton (n. 1), 147–8.

¹⁶ Diog. Laert. 6.97: ταῦτόν ἀναλαβοῦσα σχῆμα συμπεριφέρει τάνδρῳ καὶ ἐν τῷ φανερώ συνεγίνετο καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ δεῖπνα ἀπήει. ὅτε καὶ πρὸς Λυσιμάχον εἰς τὸ συμπόσιον ἦλθεν (‘adopting the same dress, [she] went about with her husband and lived with him in public and went out to dinners with him. Accordingly she appeared at the banquet given by Lysimachus’). Translation from R. D. Hicks, ed., *Diogenes Laertius*. Lives of the Eminent Philosophers, vol. II (Cambridge, MA, 2005, first published 1925).

¹⁷ Ibid. 6.98: αὕτη ἐστὶν ἢ τὰς παρ’ ἰστοῖς ἐκλιπούσα κερκίδας; (my translation); cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 1236.

¹⁸ Ibid. 6.97: ἀλλ’ οὔτε κατεπλάγη Ἰππαρχία οὔτε διεταράχθη ὡς γυνή. Translation from Hicks (n. 16).

would have been familiar with the customs of symposia'.¹⁹ Whether or not Aspasia was ever a *hetaira*, the fact that she was a foreigner made her perforce Pericles' concubine, by virtue of his own citizenship law.²⁰ Thus, if she did attend symposia, this would not represent, by Athenian standards of respectability, an exception to the rule of respectable women's exclusion. In the case of Agariste, there is no direct evidence that she was present at the party in the house of Charmides at which the Mysteries were profaned. Burton follows Sarah Pomeroy in supposing that she may have been. Pomeroy emphasizes, however, that her presence at a symposium in a house not her own, among men not of her family, would have been scandalous (which is why most scholars suppose she must have gained her knowledge of what transpired there second-hand).²¹ If she was present, it would have been another scandalous feature of an altogether scandalous occasion that stood in quite deliberate opposition to all standards of respectability.

All evidence, then, attests the existence of a rigorous rule of exclusion of women of the household from sympotic conviviality with men outside their family. Were respectable women also excluded, however, from celebrating symposia among themselves? Was the symposium an exclusively male institution in this sense too? Other than at religious festivals and celebrations of betrothals and weddings, when women might celebrate a *pannychis* ('all-night festival') together, women's convivial dining outside the family is associated in our sources with the daytime meal, the *ariston*.²² No literary source depicts citizen women having symposia. There has been much debate as to whether a small group of Attic vases representing all-female symposia depict reality or fantasy.²³ Literary sources do tell of *hetairai* holding symposia, and those who hold the former view (to which Burton inclines) have taken this to be what the vases represent.²⁴

¹⁹ Burton (n. 1), 148, 156.

²⁰ See M. M. Henry, *Prisoner of History. Aspasia of Miletus and Her Biographical Tradition* (New York, 1995).

²¹ S. B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves. Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York, 1975), 81. See also R. W. Wallace, 'Charmides, Agariste and Damon: Andokides 1.16', *CQ* n.s. 42.2 (1992), 333.

²² See Burton (n. 1), 150; Dalby (n. 11), 172; Wilkins (n. 14), 57–8, 60–2. *Pannychides* were held for private, as well as public, celebrations of festivals: e.g. Men. *Sam.* 38–46. On *pannychides*, see below.

²³ See L. Kurke, *Coins, Bodies, Games, and Gold* (Princeton, NJ, 1999), 205–8, and the literature review included there. Lewis (n. 3), 113–15, argues that the reality to which the vases speak is not Greek but Etruscan.

²⁴ Burton (n. 1), 152.

Kelly Blazeby, however, has recently argued that the nudity of the women on the vases does not necessarily imply that they are *hetairai*:

It may seem to be a flip observation, but it is hot in Greece, so why not shed some clothes in the company of other women while drinking in a hot stuffy room? Some contemporary cultures, nationalities, and individuals experience unease with communal nudity while others do not, so do we really know how classical Greek women behaved together behind closed doors?²⁵

She draws on Lewis' argument that female nudity on Greek vases is not limited only to *hetairai* (and hence cannot by itself be used to identify a woman as a courtesan). Yet Lewis, in keeping with current scholarly thinking, emphasizes that vase-painting offers not a description but a symbolic representation of the world. Thus she notes that the prevalence of male nudity on vases does not reflect practice in a society that was in fact quite concerned with proper dress. Not only women, but even men, outside particular contexts such as athletics, were expected to be decently covered. The fact that men may be depicted naked on vases when in life they would have been dressed illustrates the point that nudity functions in vase-painting as a sign.²⁶ One can appreciate what the nudity of a bride in a nuptial scene might signify, but female nudity at a symposium (and communal nudity, what is more) is hardly consistent with Greek conceptions of female respectability. Altogether, then, there is no evidence that respectable women held their own symposia.

Thus in the end a survey of the evidence confirms the *opinio communis* that the exclusion of women of the household was, at least before the Hellenistic period, an essential and defining feature of the symposium. Citizen women were excluded both from attending symposia with men and from having symposia of their own. Burton finds very few exceptions: indeed, only one – Hipparchia – that is definitely attested. Moreover, all of these are, as I hope I have shown, exceptions that prove the rule. Within the free, citizen population, only men participated in symposia, making the symposium by definition an occasion for men to mix outside the family with other men.²⁷ If the sources support the view that the symposium was distinctly an

²⁵ Kelly Blazeby (n. 4), 104–5.

²⁶ Lewis (n. 3), 101–4.

²⁷ For the exclusion of citizen women (and indeed normally even of the maidservants of the household) as part of the anti-domestic orientation of the symposium more generally, see the works cited in n. 2. These texts also discuss the fact that the presence, and role, of *hetairai* is consistent with this quality of the symposium as an association of male non-kin confraternity.

occasion of male homosociality, they do at the same time, however, exhibit some ambiguity with respect to distinctions between different occasions of commensality. Reflection on this point may valuably complicate our view.

One of the sources that Burton looks to for women's participation in commensality outside the symposium is Menander's *Dyskolos*.²⁸ As Dalby notes, the *Dyskolos* provides the only extant 'extended description of a family meal in the literature of classical Greece'.²⁹ In fact, it describes two (or three) feasts. The first is called in the text an *ariston* (555). A family sacrifices and enjoys a picnic lunch at a shrine of Pan and the nymphs. Though a *mageiros* is hired as sacrificer and cook, the preparation of the feast is supervised by the women of the household. The men of the family arrive later, and the son, Sostratus, brings along the brother, Gorgias, of the girl he is courting. Thus Burton presents this as an occasion at which citizen women might enjoy commensality with men outside their family.³⁰ Dalby reads the scenario differently. He argues that even at family meals in the home women probably served the men at their meal while they themselves ate only before or after. That in the *Dyskolos* the men arrive at the feast after the women he interprets as following this rule of gender segregation. Sostratus, he suggests, can only bring Gorgias along because the men will eat separately from the women.³¹ However, while there is evidence of women serving the men during meals at home, these passages do not state and (as Dalby acknowledges) need not imply that the women did not also share the meal.³² Nor do I find persuasive Dalby's argument that the men's late arrival in the *Dyskolos* is more than happenstance.³³ It appears, then, that at this sort of daytime feast men and women of different households may indeed have mixed.

²⁸ Burton (n. 1), 152–3, 155.

²⁹ A. Dalby, *Siren Feasts. A History of Food and Gastronomy in Greece* (London and New York, 1996), 1.

³⁰ Burton (n. 1), 155.

³¹ Dalby (n. 11), 173–4, 176–7; idem (n. 29), 3–5, 15.

³² The same may be said of the funerary reliefs on which, as Dalby observes, 'a reclining man attended by a seated woman may in turn be attended by standing children and slaves'. Dalby (n. 11), 176–7. Contra, see Wilkins (n. 14), 59 (with n. 32).

³³ It does not seem to me that, as Dalby claims, Menander would have needed to offer 'more in the way of motivation or excuses' if the men's arriving late did not represent general practice. Dalby also argues that it is owing to the fact that there will be unrelated men present that Gorgias' mother cannot be invited along with her son. Yet it is not clear that she may not be invited; Gorgias merely indicates that he is concerned about being away too long while his mother is home alone (and so sends his slave to look after her).

The evening celebration that follows is different. In the course of the day, Sostratus is betrothed to Gorgias' sister and Gorgias to Sostratus' sister. Thus that evening the shrine becomes a venue for a betrothal party (with the weddings to follow the next day) and the focus shifts to drinking. Gorgias scruples to join a party at which women of another family are present but is reminded that they are in fact now his kin (871–3). On the matter of why he showed no such scruple at the luncheon, Gomme and Sandbach comment: 'to associate with strange women at a meal and at a wine-party may have been very different things'.³⁴ Gorgias' scruples are all the more notable given that the celebration is segregated. The men and women drink in separate circles, which, moreover, are marked as distinct kinds of conviviality: the women celebrate a *pannychis* while the *potos* or *symposion* is specifically 'for the men'.³⁵ Yet both are drinking parties and the *pannychis* seems to follow sympotic form: toasts circulate among the women just as among the men.³⁶ While formal wedding feasts, involving guests outside the family, seem to have been segregated, it appears that at more intimate parties, limited to the family, women and men shared cups and participated alike (which would seem to speak against Dalby's claim of segregation at family meals).³⁷ Such an occasion is described in Menander fr. 186. In terms of convivial ritual, it appears to be, as Burton calls it, a 'sympotic party'.³⁸ In the text,

³⁴ A. W. Gomme and F. H. Sandbach, *Menander. A Commentary* (Oxford, 1973), 265, n. 871.

³⁵ *Men. Dys.* 855–7: *δεῖ πότον ἡμῶν γενέσθαι, παππία, νυνὶ καλόν, καὶ τῶν γυναικῶν παννυχίδα* ('we must have a fine drinking party now, Papa, and the women a *pannychis*'); 940: *ἡδὲ τρέπιζον συμπόσιον ἐγὼ τι τοῖς ἀνδράσιν* ('I was preparing a symposium for the men'; both translations my own). Wilkins (n. 14), 55 (also 64 and 413, n. 158) writes that 'the *pannychis*, or all-night festival...was on some occasions part of a festival of the polis such as the Panathenaea and on others an impromptu celebration for women. Some *pannychides* appear to have resembled sympotic festivity.' Bravo has argued that certain festivals combined a *pannychis* for women, involving all-night dancing, with a concurrent *symposion* for men: B. Bravo, *Pannychis e simposio. Feste private notturne di donne e uomini nei testi letterari e nel culto, con uno studio iconografico di Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux* (Pisa and Rome, 1997). This is of necessity somewhat speculative given that we have so little evidence for the *pannychis*. For Burton's discussion of the party in the *Dyskolos*, see Burton (n. 1), 155 (with n. 68).

³⁶ *Ibid.* 946–8: *ἄλλος δὲ χερσὶν Εὐνιον γέροντα πολλὸν ἤδη ἔκλιπε κοῖλον εἰς κύτος, μειγνύς τε νᾶμα Νυμφῶν ἐδεξιοῦτ' αὐτοῖς κύκλωι, καὶ ταῖς γυναιξὶν ἄλλος.* ('Someone else was decanting a venerable old vintage into a dimpled jar, mixing it with the Naiads' rill, and pledging the men sitting round, while another pledged the ladies.') Translation from N. Miller, *Menander. Plays and Fragments* (London, 1987).

³⁷ On gender segregation at wedding feasts, see Wilkins (n. 14), 60; cf. Burton (n. 1), 158–9. As Burton (n. 1), 147, emphasizes, Nepos (see above, n. 6) does say that Greek women could be admitted to a *convivium* if only relatives were present.

³⁸ Burton (n. 1), 147.

it is called a *triklinon sungeneias*, which Wilkins translates as 'family symposium'.³⁹

All this raises questions about the categorization of different forms of commensality. On the one hand, 'symposium' is treated in the sources as a marked term for a distinct occasion: that is, for night-time convivial drinking specifically among men (therefore per se for men and not for women of the household). It is an occasion on which men come together outside family in male homosocial association. On the other hand, when the celebration is limited to kin, when the occasion is not one of mixing outside family but instead of the community of kinship, rather than a symposium 'for men' we have a symposium, or *triklinon*, 'of kinsfolk'.⁴⁰ At a betrothal or wedding, ties formed between two households are celebrated with family friends and in the wider community. At the betrothal feast in *Dyskolos*, there is a symposium (that is, 'for men'). The men join in a convivial circle apart from their women. At the same time, it is a family celebration, and celebration of family, in which the women join, in their own circle alongside. They have a *pannychis*, a night-time drinking party for women, as opposed to the men's symposium. Yet the *pannychis* is parallel to the symposium, following the same forms. Thus, even as we see marked distinctions between different types of commensality, we also see significant interconnection. We are accustomed to distinguishing between private and public feasts, between domestic and civic commensality, and between private *symposion* and civic *dais*. But things are more complex. The daytime feast in the *Dyskolos* is a family meal, but it is also a sacrificial feast, and is held in a communal sanctuary. In the evening, the sanctuary hosts a *symposion* and a *pannychis*, here a private party, but a ritual that is also integral to various public festivals. Conversely, civic festivals could be celebrated by feasting at home. In the *Acharnians*, Dicaeopolis during the Anthesteria prepares

³⁹ Men. fr. 186 KA ap. Ath. 2.71e: ἔργον εἰς τρίκλινον συγγενείας εἰσπεσεῖν. οὐ λαβὼν τὴν κύλικα πρῶτος ἄρχεται λόγον πατὴρ καὶ παρανέσας πέπωκεν, εἶτα μήτηρ δευτέρα, εἶτα τηθὶς παραλαλεῖ τις, εἶτα βαρύφωνος γέρων, τηθίδος πατήρ, ἔπειτα γραῦς καλοῦσα φίλτατον. ὁ δ' ἐπινεύει πᾶσι τούτοις. ('It's hard work to be thrown into a family dinner party. The father picks up the cup and makes the first speech, and after giving some advice, he has a drink; the mother's second; then an aunt rambles on, followed by a deep-voiced old man, who's the aunt's father; then comes an old woman who calls him "dearest". And he nods his head, agreeing with them all.') Translation from S. D. Olson, ed., *Athenaeus*. The Learned Banqueters vol. I (Cambridge, MA, 2006). Wilkins (n. 14), 60.

⁴⁰ For this as the force of *sungeneia* in Men. fr. 186, see Gomme and Sandbach (n. 34), 693.

a feast at home and attends a symposium at the house of the priest of Dionysus.⁴¹

Thus, rather than thinking in terms only of looking outside the symposium, looking also to other occasions, we might at the same time examine the interrelationship between different occasions and forms of commensality.⁴² The distinctions are important, but although the various commensal groupings are delineated in contradistinction to one another, they are also mutually implicated, as articulating distinctions and connections between the different social groupings that integrally form the larger society. This kind of approach may offer a way of reconciling the conflicting models of the symposium offered by Oswyn Murray and Pauline Schmitt Pantel.⁴³ Murray sees the symposium as opposed to the household and concomitantly to the city. The symposium, in his view, was an institution of exclusive, private confraternity, standing in opposition to civic commensality, to the inclusive, public feast. Schmitt Pantel argues that the *dais* and the symposium both belonged to an integral system of commensality that was constitutive of civic life in the archaic period (she accepts that to some degree a gap opened up between the two in the classical period). Murray's model thus emphasizes distinction and opposition, whereas Schmitt Pantel's emphasizes continuity. These might be reconciled in a third model that admits of tension between the bonds of family and the bonds of friendship, and between confraternal solidarity and wider civic association, but at the same time allows that the symposium was

⁴¹ See Wilkins (n. 14), 57, 65–6, 178, 205–10, who similarly criticizes the notion of an antithesis between private, exclusive symposium and public feast.

⁴² Kelly Blazeby (n. 4) echoes Burton's call for scholars to look beyond the symposium, arguing, in contrast to Burton ([n. 1], 143), that the importance of the symposium, being a 'largely private and aristocratic male preserve' and so significant only to very few, has been overstated. For the symposium as part of the culture of the city more broadly, however, see: Wilkins (n. 14); N. Fisher, 'Gymnasia and the Democratic Values of Leisure', in P. Cartledge et al. (eds.), *Kosmos. Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 1998), 85–6; idem, 'Symposiasts, Fish-Eaters and Flatterers: Social Mobility and Moral Concerns in Old Comedy', in D. Harvey and J. Wilkins (eds.), *The Rivals of Aristophanes. Studies in Athenian Old Comedy* (Swanswea, 2001); idem, 'The Bad Boyfriend, the Flatterer and the Sykophant: Related Forms of the *Kakos* in Democratic Athens', in I. Sluiter and R. Rosen (eds.), *Kakos. Badness and Anti-value in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden and Boston, MA, 2008); S. Corner (n. 2), 2010, 2011, and forthcoming; idem 'The Politics of the Parasite', *Phoenix* (forthcoming).

⁴³ Murray's view is presented in a pioneering series of articles, but summarized in Murray, (n. 2), 1995. Schmitt Pantel's is laid out in P. Schmitt Pantel, *La cité au banquet. Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques* (Rome, 1997). For discussion specifically of the difference between her conception and Murray's, see P. Schmitt Pantel, 'Sacrificial Meal and *Symposion*: Two Models of Civic Institutions in the Archaic City?', in Murray (n. 2), 1990, 14–33.

implicated in a complex of associations that together constituted the association of the city.⁴⁴

SEAN CORNER

corners@mcmaster.ca

⁴⁴ This is an idea that I have sought to flesh out in a number of articles, approaching the topic from different vantages: see S. Corner (n. 2), 2010, 2011, and forthcoming; idem (n. 42), forthcoming.