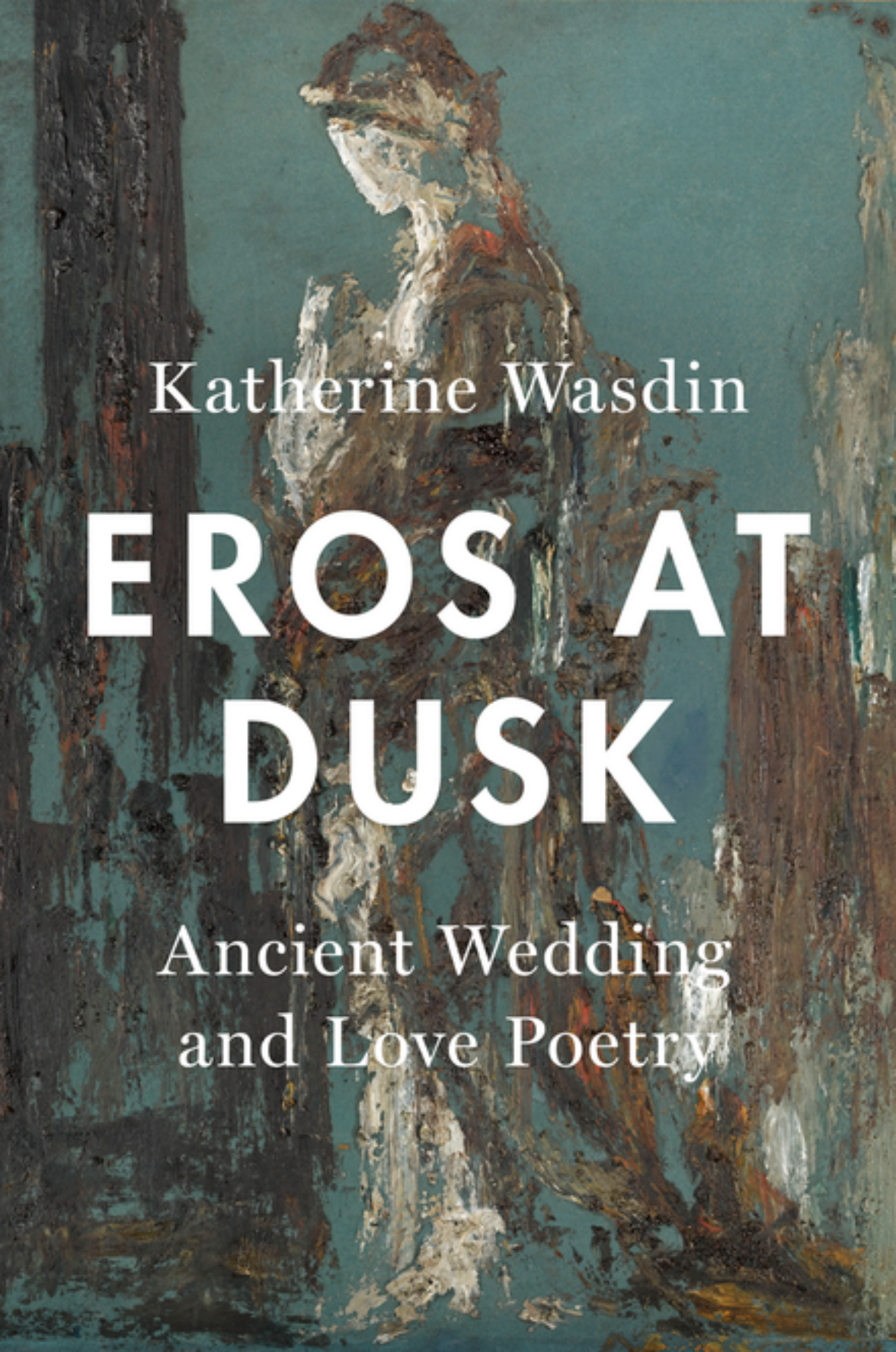
Katherine Wasdin
EROS AT DUSK
Ancient Wedding and Love Poetry

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Contents

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Texts and Abbreviations

Texts

Unless otherwise noted, texts are from the Oxford Classical Texts series.

Claudian	Hall, J. B. 1985. *Claudian: Carmina*. Leipzig.
Himerius	Colonna, A. 1951. Himerii Declamationes et orationes cum deperditarum fragmentis. Rome.
Pindar	Maehler, Herwig. 1989. *Pindari carmina cum fragmentis*. Leipzig.
Propertius	Gould, G. P. 1990. *Propertius: Elegies*. Cambridge, MA.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations in footnotes follow those found in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, edited by Simon Hornblower and Anthony Spawforth. 3rd ed. 2005.

Courtney	Courtney, Edward. 2003. *The Fragmentary Latin Poets*. Oxford.
Diggle	Diggle, James. 1970. *Euripides*: Phaethon. Cambridge.
DK	Diels, Hermann and Walter Kranz. 1951. *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. 6th ed. 3 vols. Berlin.
FGrH	Jacoby, F. 1923–. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Leiden.
G	Gentile, Bruno. 1958. *Anacreonte: Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione, studio sui frammenti papiracei*. Rome.
Gow	Gow, A. S. F. 1952. *Theocritus*. Cambridge.

GP	Gow, A. S. F. and Denys L. Page. 1965. *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams*. Cambridge.
GPh	Gow, A. S. F. and Denys L. Page. 1968. *The Greek Anthology: The Garland of Philip*. Cambridge.
Harder	Harder, Annette. 2012. *Callimachus:* Aetia. Cambridge.
Hollis	Hollis, Adrian S. 2009. *Callimachus*: Hecale. *Second edition with Introduction, Text, Translation, and Enlarged Commentary*. Oxford.
Hunter	Hunter, Richard. 1983. *Eubulus: The Fragments*. Oxford.
K-A	Kassel, R. and C. Austin. 1983–1995. *Poetae Comici Graeci*. 8 vols. Berlin.
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., Robert Scott, and H. S. Jones. 1996. *A Greek–English Lexicon*. Oxford.
M-W	Merkelbach, Reinhold and Martin L. West. 1990. *Hesiodi Fragmenta*. 3rd ed. Oxford.
Nauck	Nauck, A. 1889. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. 2nd ed. Leipzig.
Page	Page, Denys L. 1978. *Rufinus*. Oxford.
PMG	Page, Denys L. 1962. *Poetae Melici Graeci*. Oxford.
Powell	Powell, John Undershell. 1925. *Collectanea Alexandrina: Reliquiae Minores Poetarum Graecorum Aetatis Ptolemaicae, 323–146 A.C.* Oxford.
PPM	Carratelli, Giovanni Pugliese and Ida Baldassarre (eds.). 1990–2003. *Pompei: Pitture e mosaici*. 10 vols. Rome.
Radt	Radt, Stefan L. 1999–2009. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. *Vol. 3: Aeschylus* and *Vol. 4: Sophocles*. Göttingen.
Reed	Reed, J. D. 1997. *Bion of Smyrna: The Fragments and the* Adonis. Cambridge.
Ribbeck	Ribbeck, Otto. 1871–73. *Scaenicae Romanorum poesis fragmenta*. Leipzig.
SH	Lloyd-Jones, Hugh and Peter Parsons. 1983. *Supplementum Hellenisticum*. Berlin.
Sider	Sider, David. 1997. *The Epigrams of Philodemus*. Oxford.
TLL	1990–. *Thesaurus Lingae Latinae*. Leipzig.
V	Voigt, Eva-Maria. 1974. *Sappho et Alcaeus*. Amsterdam.
W	West, Martin L. 1989–1992. *Iambi et Elegi Graeci*. 2nd ed. Oxford.

Eros at Dusk

Introduction

"They Go Together Like a Horse and Carriage?"

We may never be certain about what exactly prompted the archaic Greek poet Sappho to compose the stanzas we know as fr. 31 V. The poem, an account of a lover's suffering, concentrates on the affective responses of the speaker and gives only a smattering of ambiguous clues about the surrounding context. The roles played by the speaker and the addressee, the setting for the narrative, and the appropriate venue for the performance all remain highly contested. Two prominent theories about the work are that it is a song for a wedding or an expression of personal longing, possibly in the context of a ritual. But what is the relationship between these two options? How sharp is the distinction between them? This book will show how the discourses associated with private love affairs and public weddings overlap, diverge, and mutually influence each other throughout antiquity. Sappho fr. 31 V, then, is a useful test case with which to begin our exploration:

φαίνεταί μοι κῆνος ἴσος θέοισιν
ἔμμεν' ὤνηρ, ὄττις ἐνάντιός τοι
ἰσδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἆδυ φωνεί-
σας ὐπακούει
καὶ γελαίσας ἰμέροεν, τό μ' ἦ μὰν
καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν·
ὠς γὰρ ⟨ἔσ⟩ σ' ἴδω βρόχε' ὤς με φώνη-
σ' οὐδὲν ἔτ' εἴκει,
ἀλλὰ †καμ† μὲν γλῶσσα †ἔαγε†, λέπτον
δ' αὔτικα χρῷ πῦρ ὐπαδεδρόμακεν,
ὀππάτεσσι δ' οὐδὲν ὄρημμ', ἐπιβρό-
μεισι δ' ἄκουαι,
†ἐκαδε† μ' ἴδρως κακχέεται, τρόμος δὲ

παῖσαν ἄγρει χλωροτιέρα δὲ ποίας
ἔμμι, τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω 'πιδεύης
φαίνομ' ἔμ' αὔτ[αι.
ἀλλὰ πὰν τόλματον, ἐπεὶ †καὶ πένητα†

He seems to me equal to gods that man
whoever he is who opposite you
sits and listens close
to your sweet speaking
and lovely laughing— oh it
puts the heart in my chest on wings
for when I look at you, even a moment, no speaking
is left in me
no: tongue breaks and thin
fire is racing under skin
and in eyes no sight and drumming
fills ears
and cold sweat holds me and shaking
grips me all, greener than grass
I am and dead— or almost
I seem to me.
But all is to be dared, because even a person of poverty[1]

Ps. Longinus, who quotes the poem, praises its sublime style and accurate description of love, but does not situate it in any performance context.[2] Since there is no external source to identify it with a specific setting, we must therefore approach it using internal lexical and narrative cues, as well as later references to the poem in antiquity. Some of these cues do imply a wedding context. The opening line describes a social gathering at which a man and woman converse. One likely occasion for interaction between men and women would be at a wedding, leading some to propose that they are the bride and groom.[3] Furthermore, the statement that the man is "equal to the gods" (ἴσος θέοισιν, fr. 31.1 V) is, as we will see in chapter 6, praise traditionally offered to the wedding couple. Even the speaker's list of debilitating symptoms could provide evidence for the bride's beauty, admiration of which is an important

1. Translations of Sappho are from Carson 2002. All others, unless indicated, are my own, and aim to be literal rather than elegant.

2. [Longinus] *Subl.* 10.1–3. I use "poem" to refer to most works, although at times I will refer to the "songs" of Sappho or other archaic poets.

3. The wedding theory was proposed by Wilamowitz 1913: 56–61 and followed by many others, such as Merkelbach 1957: 5–12, Lasserre 1989: 147–60, Miller 1994: 96–99, Lardinois 2001: 90, and Nagy 2007: 28–35. Rissman 1983: 72–92 sees it as praise of a bride and groom in the vein of Homeric epiphanies.

element of the wedding ritual. There are, therefore, compelling reasons for assuming that Sappho composed the song to be performed at a wedding.

The ancient reception of the poem, however, follows a different trajectory.[4] Countless love poets, from archaic Greece to the Roman Empire, similarly complain about the physical pain of unrequited love.[5] Some of these complaints are clear allusions to Sappho, while others parrot expressions that have become route commonplaces. Indeed, the "wounds" or "sufferings" inflicted by Eros become traditional in genres such as New Comedy, epigram, and elegy.[6] Additionally, some elements of the poem might be out of place at an ancient wedding, particularly the vivid corporeality of the speaker's affliction and the relatively brief mention of the man and woman at the beginning of the poem.[7] Certainly no other extant wedding song devotes so little attention to the wedding couple and so much to the wedding singer, nor does any other wedding song describe the laughter of the bride. Instead, she more often appears to be frightened or distressed during the ceremony. So far, we have seen plausible arguments both for and against a nuptial context for the song.

For me, this stalemate presents not a problem but an opportunity. I propose that the scholarly dispute is in fact a symptom of the poem's purposeful mixture of nuptial and erotic language.[8] One way of mediating between these stances is by positing that Sappho's song alludes to the discourse of love in a wedding composition, or to the discourse of the wedding in an erotic composition, so that one occasion is imbued with traces of another.[9] For example, if we understand the poem as intended for a wedding, the speaker would infuse an erotic discourse of loss and pain into the successful narrative of the wedding to contrast the couple's happiness with her own distress. As I show in this book, weddings and love affairs produce discourses that are often separate but complementary. Our readings of poems associated with these contexts are enriched by the recognition of such flexible categories, shared conventions, and interdiscursivity between occasional genres.

4. See Yatromanolakis 2007 on Sappho's reception in antiquity.

5. Allusions or translations can be found at Plat. *Phdr*. 251b–c, Theoc. *Id*. 2.82–86 and 106–10, Valerius Aedituus fr. 1 Courtney, and Catull. 51. Privitera 1974: 92–95 and 122–25 reads the poem as erotic based on these later echoes. See Acosta-Hughes 2010: 24–29 on Sapphic symptoms in Theoc. *Id*. 2.

6. Fantham 1972: 82–91 discusses metaphors for love in Terence and other Latin authors.

7. Page 1955: 33 is memorably scathing in his denial of the wedding theory: "There was never such a wedding-song in the history of society; and there should never have been such a theory in the history of scholarship."

8. I use the adjective "erotic" interchangeably with "love" to designate poems or situations concerned with the realm of Eros.

9. My reading is thus in sympathy with that of Ferrari 2010: 183–85, who suggests that the speaker is watching a man courting her beloved at a sanctuary and is overcome with thoughts of the girl's impending wedding; similar opinions in Latacz 1985. Burnett 1983: 232–37 notes nuptial elements, although she rejects the wedding as performance context, and McEvilley 1978 suggests the wedding is hypothetical.

The continual attempts to pin down a specific performance venue for Sappho fr. 31 V demonstrate the symbiotic relationship between occasional verse and its occasion for performance. The way we read almost any poem, even one that is avowedly literary and avoids reference to specific social settings, stems from our assumptions about ancient daily life and interactions and about what emotions and actions would be appropriate, expected, or plausible among people of different genders, ages, and classes. Furthermore, authors often maintain a distinction between what they say *about* a situation and what they say *in* it. Discourse norms prevent, for example, threatening the bride with violence during a wedding song, although prose sources suggest that one rationale for enthusiastic singing during the ceremony is to mask the bride's distress.[10] Nor do wedding songs often praise necessary but mundane tasks associated with being a good wife, such as weaving or household management.[11] Similarly, most love poetry obscures the unequal statuses and financial transactions that must have been a part of many elite love affairs, often by framing payment as gifts.[12] Poetry may embellish or distort reality, and recreating actual contexts solely from poetic evidence can give a distorted view of ancient customs. Throughout this book, I will frequently turn to evidence from various literary and material sources to provide a more balanced view of how and why poetic discourses frame and manipulate cultural practices.

The chapters to follow delineate the relationship between erotic and nuptial scenarios in Greco-Roman poetry, demonstrating that poems written for specific occasions can share or borrow the atmosphere of others. The eroticization of the wedding and the nuptialization of the love affair reaffirm and reflect general cultural norms while influencing actual social dynamics.[13] As a general rule, I draw an important distinction, often overlooked, between the isolated and seductive moment of the wedding and the more stable union of the marriage. Wedding poetry employs the language of erotic poetry, although it excludes many negative characterizations of *eros* (i.e., that it is dangerous, temporary, and one-sided). Conversely, love poets adopt nuptial topoi to elevate nonmarital affairs, suggesting the success, reciprocity, and optimism that typify the wedding.[14] A model that recognizes subtle interaction and shared themes

10. Schol. Theoc. *Id*. 18.

11. Helen's spinning prowess at Theoc. *Id*. 18.32–34 is likely influenced by Homer's portrayal of her as weaver. Pantelia 1995: 78–79 suggests resonances with *Od*. 4.

12. See Kurke 1997 and James 2003: 35–68 on the presentation of elite prostitution as based on gifts rather than financial exchange.

13. For a formulation of this dynamic in terms of psychological efficacy, see Stehle 1997: 20: "The performers, women as well as men, spoke *for* the community in representing its traditions and also *to* it in moving it to a new stage of communal life."

14. The conflation of affairs with weddings or marriages has been sporadically noted by others, but without sustained discussion. See Garrison 1978: 50–51 (on maidenly *hetairai* in epigrams), Scheid and Svenbro 1996: 70–72 (on nuptial blankets outside of marriage), James 2003: 41–52 (on Prop. 3.20 and Ov. *Am*. 3.11's concept of matrimony with unmarriageable women),

is especially helpful in discussing poems that have been difficult to categorize, often precisely because of this dynamic, such as Sappho 31, [Theocritus] 27, Catullus 45 and 68, and a number of Horatian *Odes*.

This introduction will first provide a basic outline of the occasional settings and cultural expectations surrounding wedding rituals and love affairs. These scenarios will be necessary background for later chapters, since poets often assume an audience that does not require explicit reminders of the setting or context. The topics of ritual, gender, and sexuality in the ancient world are vast, and the material covered here is meant simply as an outline. Only after this framework is in place can we appropriately determine how and when overlap between categories occurs. Ancient societies did not assume that marriages were based on romantic love in the same way that many contemporary Western societies do. Therefore, I will also clarify the limited role played by *eros* in wedding preparations and in stereotypical marriages. The distinction between love and marriage further underscores the role of poetry in suggesting erotic emotions during the wedding and in representing love affairs as nuptial. Finally, I will explore the categorization of occasional poetry according to formal, rhetorical, and thematic features, as well as different methods of formulating interaction between genres. Such consideration of the discrete but overlapping categories of occasional verse encourages flexible and innovative conceptions of genre itself.

Ancient Weddings

A wedding, in the ancient world as in the modern one, is a ceremony designed to commemorate the beginning of a marriage, the cohabitation of the couple, and the legitimacy of future offspring.[15] The wedding ritual was intended to prepare the couple for marriage and to ensure that the community was aware of the union.[16] I will here give a streamlined treatment of the main movements of the ancient wedding, which followed a similar path in Greece and Rome, pointing out where divergences occur.[17] These societies shared many cultural

Greene 1998: 80–81 (on Ov. *Am.* 1.5), and Caldwell 2015: 33–34 (on Sulpicia). All of these describe passages that present women as brides or wives in contexts when marriage is unlikely.

15. See Coontz 2005 for a comparative discussion of marriage and Lincoln 1981 for an anthropological approach to female coming-of-age ceremonies.

16. In both Greece and Rome, however, the ritual might be optional, replaced by what is today called "abduction marriage." For more on abduction marriage, see Evans-Grubbs 1989. Hersch 2010: 51–55 argues that the wedding was indeed required in Rome as a legally binding demonstration of agreement (*consensus*).

17. For fuller descriptions of the Greek wedding, see Oakley and Sinos 1993 and Vérilhac and Vial 1998; for Roman weddings, see Treggiari 1991: 161–80, Hersch 2010, and Caldwell 2015: 134–65. Spartan weddings, at least according to Plut. *Lyk.* 15, were distinctive, but have left little trace in the poetic record; for these see Cartledge 1981: 99–102.

traits, among them monogamy and unequal standards for male and female extramarital relationships. Some commonalities between the attested wedding rituals of Greece and Rome may be due to literary borrowings on the part of the Romans as much as to shared practices. From the viewpoint of this study, however, the literary associations of such customs as markers for wedding poetry override the question of actual practice.

In typical Greco-Roman weddings, the bride was the most important participant, followed by the groom. Grooms were usually older than their brides, although visual representations of the wedding tend to show them as coevals.[18] Since the marriage bond united the two families as well as the two spouses, other family members, particularly the father and mother of the bride, played central roles as well.[19] Most weddings that we know of were arranged by the parents of the bride and the groom, who acted on his own accord or at the wishes of his parents.[20] The bride's father and the groom made the betrothal (ἐγγύη or *sponsus*), a formal agreement for the marriage. The betrothal could take place years before the wedding and, at least in Greece, did not require the presence of the bride.[21] Directly before the wedding ritual, the participants made offerings to the gods to ensure a successful transition. Brides venerated goddesses of the life stage they would leave behind, such as Artemis, as well as those who watched over the wedding (Aphrodite in Greece, Venus in Rome) and the marriage (Hera Teleia and Zeus Teleios in Greece).[22] The preliminaries to the wedding demonstrate that it is both an agreement between men to transfer a woman who will produce heirs and a transitional moment in the personal life of the bride.

Various forms of feasting and celebration were accompanied in Greece and Rome by public processions that transferred the bride from her paternal home to that of her new husband. The procession was the most visible part

18. See Vérilhac and Vial 1998: 214–18 on Greek couples and Shaw 1987 and Scheidel 2007 on Roman ones. I owe the observation of a discrepancy between the visual representations and historical scenarios to an anonymous reviewer.

19. Caldwell 2015: 105–33 shows how Roman marriage, especially early marriage for women, reflected the interests of husband and father-in-law. Second or third marriages may have involved more participation from the bride; see the evidence in Cicero's letters on his daughter Tullia's marriage, described in Treggiari 1991: 127–34 and 2007: 83–99.

20. Roman men with living fathers fell under their legal control. Some jurists debated how much say they might have in selecting their wives. See *Digest* 23.1.13 and 23.2.21–22.

21. Oakley and Sinos 1993: 9 propose that the betrothal was represented on vases with a handshake. See Ferrari 2003 for more on the Greek betrothal process. In Rome, Augustan legislation set the maximum period from engagement to wedding as two years; see Treggiari 1991: 153–55.

22. For more details on these rites, see Vérilhac and Vial 1998: 287–91, Redfield 2003: 111–18, and Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 218–19. Greek brides would offer their hair and childhood toys, typically to Artemis or another virginal figure. Examples of Greek bridal offerings can be found at Eur. *Hipp*. 1423–27, Callim. *Hymn* 4.291–98, Paus. 1.43.4, 2.32.1, and 2.33.1–3, and *AP* 6.133, 6.206–7, and 6.280. Roman traditions are less well attested, but the bride may have offered a doll to Venus or the Lares, as claimed by Pers. 2.70 and Ps. Acro on Hor *Sat*. 1.5.65–66.

Fig. I.1 *Sarcophagus Front with Dextrarum Iunctio*, Vatican Museums, Inv. no. 268

of the wedding, marked by torches, songs, and general celebration.[23] In both Greece and Rome, sources say that the bride would carry symbolic implements to indicate her coming role as wife, such as a sieve or spindle, but wedding poetry generally omits these elements.[24] Instead, the bridal veil symbolizes the wedding and the bride's starring role within it. The bride was simultaneously hidden and revealed, not just to her new husband, but also to the community at large. The veil functions on Greek vases as an iconographic marker for brides (or bride-like figures), and the day of the wedding could even be called the "unveiling day" (ἀνακαλυπτήρια), with the ceremony perhaps containing a ritual unveiling of the bride.[25] In Rome, the bride's yellow-orange veil, the *flammeum*, had similar importance and many wedding terms contain roots connected with veiling.[26] An example of a Roman wedding veil can be seen on a second-century CE Roman sarcophagus now in the Vatican (Fig. I.1).[27]

23. For nuptial torches, see, e.g., Eur. *Phoen.* 344–46, *IA* 732–34, and *Tro.* 315. On the shield of Achilles in *Il.*18, a wedding scene features women watching the torch-lit procession from their doorways (*Il.* 18.491–96). The torches were a common poetic metonym for the wedding in Latin (see *TLL* s.v. *fax*).

24. Pollux 3.38 reports that the Greek bride carried a sieve and Zenobius 3.98 claims that a boy with a breadbasket took part in the ceremony. Plutarch *Quaest. Rom.* 31 and Plin. *Hist. Nat.* 8.194 attest that the Roman bride would have carried spinning implements.

25. Ferrari 2003: 35 suggests that "the 'uncovering' that gives the day its name refers primarily to the emergence of the bride into sight, from figurative seclusion in *engue*." See Oakley and Sinos 1993: 25–26, Lissarrague 1996: 417, and Llewelyn-Jones 2003: 227–48 for speculation about a specific unveiling ritual and the importance of veils in the wedding.

26. See Boëls-Janssen 1993: 127. The etymology is traced by Treggiari 1991: 163: "Indeed, the verb used of the woman marrying, *nubo*, is related to *nubes*, a cloud, and means literally 'I veil myself.' From this come *nupta*, a married woman, *nova nupta*, a bride, and *nuptiae*, the wedding. The event turns on the bride and on her veiling."

27. Reinsberg 2006: 109–15 and Hersch 2010: 208–12 discuss the iconography of the sarcophagus and argue that the couple's joining of hands represents the long-term relationship of the marriage, not a particular moment in the wedding ceremony.

The bride is guided by a female figure, presumably Venus acting as *pronuba*, and her face is totally obscured by the veil.[28] Her husband greets her with an outstretched hand, while the goddess of agreement, Concordia, mediates between them. The husband's features are visible, but the *flammeum* completely covers the face of his bride, and clearly marks the moment as a wedding. Despite the ancient bride's pivotal role, she is not viewed as straightforwardly eager for the wedding. She is likely young, in her teens, and she mourns the end of childhood and her separation from her mother, demonstrating her chastity with her lamentation as much as with her veil.[29]

After the procession arrived at the groom's home, other rituals marked the union of bride and groom and her acceptance into her new household. In the Greek world this might be represented by the *katachusmata*, in which nuts and fruits were poured over the couple.[30] Roman grooms offered their brides fire and water and possibly welcomed them on a *lectus genialis*.[31] The wedding procession culminated with the installation of the couple in the wedding chamber (θάλαμος or *thalamus*), which could be elaborately decorated.[32] In Greek sources, we hear of festivities that lasted all night as the guests celebrated until dawn. The following day, the bride received further gifts to mark her change in status. The wedding rituals transferred the bride to a new home, where her primary role would be to bear children for her new husband.[33] In Greece, she did not become known as a wife (γυνή) until she had borne children for her husband's family, remaining in an intermediate bridal status until that point.[34] Despite the apparent lack of erotic passion in the planning of the wedding and the main purpose of the marriage, both the wedding ritual and the poetry performed at it emphasized the sexual desirability of both bride and groom. Eros, often a threatening figure in private nonmarital relationships,

28. Some Greek vases also show brides completely covered. See Lloyd-Jones 2003: 233–35 for examples and discussion.

29. For bridal resistance and wedding laments, see Alexiou 2002: 120–22, Lardinois 2001: 80–88, Panoussi 2007: 280–87, and Levaniouk 2008. A mythical variant can be found in Persephone's distress at her abduction, for which see Tyrrell and Brown 1991: 105–12 and Foley 1994: 103–17.

30. See Schol. Ar. *Plut*. 768, which connects the *katachusmata* with the hearth. Stesich. fr. 187 *PMG* describes pelting the wedding chariot of Helen with fruits. The practice also extends to newly acquired slaves, as discussed in Deubner 1978.

31. On fire and water, see Plut. *Quaest. Rom*. 1 and Serv. on *Aen*. 4.103, as well as Boëls-Janssen 1993: 193–201. On the *lectus*, see Hersch 2010: 214–19.

32. On the wedding chamber, see Vérilhac and Vial 1998: 324–26 and Vatin 1970: 211–28. Himerius *Or*. 9.4 associates the decoration of the chamber with the aesthetic adornment of song.

33. As noted by the Roman idiom to describe a marriage "for the sake of obtaining children" (*pro liberorum quaerundorum causa*). See Suet. *Caes*. 52, Plaut. *Capt*. 887, and Gell. 4.3.2 for the phrase.

34. For more on the Greek terminology of female life-stages and the special status of the *numphe*, see Andò 1996. Roman women may have changed status more immediately; see Boëls-Janssen 1993: 227–28. Gell. *NA* 18.6 reports a disagreement on whether a woman who was married but had not born children could be called a *matrona*.

here encouraged the reproduction of the community via a public celebration of his powers.[35]

Pre-Nuptial Passion

Despite the fact that wedding poetry envisions the bridal couple as protagonists in a love affair, accounts of how spouses were chosen in antiquity do not stress emotional or physical attraction as a motivating factor.[36] I argue that the amorous couple is an ideologically charged ideal, but not one common in reality. Passionate love between bride and groom before the wedding was theoretically possible but unlikely, and featured only in certain literary genres.[37] In many cases, the bride and groom would have had little to no contact before the wedding, and modern scholars frequently assert that love matches were rare in antiquity.[38] There were, however, some opportunities for unmarried men and women to encounter each other, even in places where women were relatively secluded, such as Classical Athens.[39] The idealized amorousness posited by wedding poetry, then, was neither frequent nor utterly implausible. Literary works indicate a fantasy that emotional bonds or even erotic desire could lead to marriage.

Our best examples of weddings resulting from erotic love come from the genres of New Comedy (including Roman comedy) and the idealized Greek novel, both known for far-fetched and improbable plot developments.[40] For example, in Menander's *Dyskolos*, the hero falls in love with a farm girl but spends little time actively courting her. Rather, he focuses on convincing her misanthropic father to allow their union. Courtship, in this case, is a negotiation between men, not a mutual and romantic affair between a man and a woman. The role of love in planning a wedding is expressed by the hero's father, who claims that it makes marriage more reliable, and thus agrees to

35. Sissa 2008: 89: "In the nuptial performance, the Greeks symbolised the dual nature of marriage both as an erotic event and as the foundation of a legitimate family, with the resulting alliance between kinship groups."

36. Instead, sources focus on economic and social standing. See Menander fr. 804 K-A., in which a speaker chides his compatriots for valuing breeding over personality in the choice of spouse.

37. See Lape 2004: 96–99 for an overview of the term "romance" in the ancient world; she correctly observes that many ancient romances were one-sided, not mutual.

38. E.g., Reinsberg 1989: 8, Glazebrook and Olson 2014: 70 (Greek) and 76 (Roman).

39. This is more plausible since Athenian women could marry relatives, who were among the few men that would have had regular access to them. To give a slightly later example, Clitophon, already engaged to his half-sister, falls in love with his cousin in Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

40. Vérilhac and Vial 1998: 219–20 note that sentimental marriages occur only in the Greek novel and New Comedy.

marry his son to a woman from a much less wealthy family.[41] Other plots, especially those found in Roman comedy, contain mutually affectionate affairs between citizen men and unmarried women of apparently lower status. These relationships end in marriage only under specific circumstances: she must remain a virgin or have intercourse only with the man in question, and then be found to be freeborn.[42] Women of manifestly free and marriageable status, however, never show interest in their suitors.

Interestingly, when attempts at courtship are successful, they are as likely to result in an abduction marriage as in a ritual wedding. This is what we see in two of the extant Greek novels, the other genre to feature love marriages. The novels of Longus, Chariton, and Xenophon do include normative weddings that take place with the consent of the parents of bride and groom. In the works of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, however, the couple elopes together before being officially married at the novel's close. In both cases, the "abduction" is required partially because the girl's father has already formally betrothed her to someone else.[43] Clearly, romantic motives are not seen as sufficient reason to break engagements. The love marriages in New Comedy and in the Greek novel have both been seen as deviations from a cultural norm and as literary or social responses to political shifts that remove agency from elite men and cause them to turn to private life for satisfaction.[44] I would suggest that these shifts should be seen as continual negotiations, rather than sharp breaks. Idealized erotic marriage was always thinkable in ancient society and its prominence in literature fluctuates in different periods and genres.

This evidence suggests that for some ancient audiences, falling in love and courting a marriageable young woman was an appealing fantasy.[45] In all of these examples, as in the wedding ritual, women are primarily concerned with maintaining their chastity. It falls to their male lovers to take more direct measures to bring about the wedding. Although most unions in the ancient world were made for pragmatic socioeconomic reasons rather than for

41. Kiritsi 2013 shows how the play emphasizes other affectionate terms such as *philia* or *storge* rather than *eros*. In the *Samia*, marriage occurs only after the groom has unwittingly raped the bride. See Fantham 1975 for further categorization of which types of comedic interactions were likely to lead to a wedding.

42. As in Men. *Mis*. and *Pk*., Plaut. *Cist*. and Ter. *An*. These plots commonly include women of intermediate status, *pallakai* or *concubinae*, who were not wives but were kept by men as long-term and monogamous partners. See Sommerstein 2014 for their presence in Menander.

43. Lateiner 1997 discusses the abduction marriage in Heliodorus.

44. Lape 2004 interprets the role of love in New Comedic marriages from a political standpoint. Stafford 2013 argues for a similar change in Athenian art of the late fifth century; this would predate the loss of Athenian power and corresponding internal shift perhaps seen in later comedies. See also Sutton 1992. Konstan 1994 argues that the Greek novel is innovative in depicting mutually passionate relationships.

45. Rudd 1981 suggests that, whatever actual constraints applied to elite citizen women, romanticized fantasies of mutual courtship could exist. Cohen 1991 makes a similar argument based on comparative evidence from other Mediterranean societies.

erotic love, the concept that such passion could lead to marriage was attractive at certain times and in certain types of discourse. The underlying idealization of passionate courtship, however rare it may have been, makes it more likely that wedding poetry is drawing on pre-existing notions in attributing *eros* to the couple. The examples from the Greek novel raise a related question. What happens to erotic feelings within the marriage? While most Greek novels end with a wedding and thus avoid the issue of marital eros, those of Chariton and Xenophon begin with one. However, they prolong the nuptial atmosphere by separating the couple for most of the novel. As the next section shows, married erotic love is conceivable, but restricted in literary accounts to specific periods and situations.

Married Love

The wedding is the inauguration not of a passionate affair, but of a long-lasting and productive marriage. In iconography, ritual, and poetry, weddings are distinct from marriages, and the way Greeks and Romans talked about brides is generally quite different from the way they talked about wives, especially after the wife had given birth.[46] The contrast between the two roles can be easily observed in the way Roman wives were commemorated after their death. Susan Treggiari provides a wealth of epigraphic evidence for the devotion brought about by a long and successful marriage.[47] She divides the qualities of spouses mentioned in this context into categories of sexual fidelity, faith, respect and cooperation, kindness, housekeeping, and partnership. A wife of many years is never described on her tombstone as having been a reluctant partner, as brides often are, nor is her beauty often praised. Brides, on the other hand, are routinely characterized by their hesitancy and physical charm.

The Roman myth of the abduction of the Sabine women illustrates the primary purpose of marriage and provides an etiology for many Roman marriage customs. When the city was founded, Livy tells us, Romans lacked the ability to intermarry with their neighbors.[48] After being rebuffed by the

46. Corner 2011: 75 usefully distinguishes between reproductive and nonreproductive sexuality, a distinction that further demonstrates the nonerotic status of the wife and mother. Nonreproductive sexuality was a hallmark of the symposium and seen in romances with *hetairai* and boys. The dichotomy is hinted at by Feeney 2007: 123: "What a strange genre the epithalamium is, since any wedding is an act of hope, a kind of unilateral 'optimistic reading' in the face of the knowledge that even long and happy marriages are not a continuation of the wedding mood."

47. Treggiari 1991: 229–53. See also Riess 2012: 495, who lists the rare combinations of domestic and sexual virtues on Roman funerary inscriptions. Dixon 2011: 256–58 gives evidence for married love in Rome. The Stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus condemns all sexual intercourse for purposes other than reproduction (fr. 12); he does promote equal partnership between husband and wife as "yokemates" (fr. 13A). For more on his views of domesticity, see Milnor 2005: 242–53.

48. Livy 1.9–13. See Miles 1995: 179–219 on the myth as an etiology for Roman marriage.

surrounding communities, they resorted to a cunning ploy. The Romans invited the neighboring populations to a festival, then seized all the available women at a predetermined signal and carried them off as brides. From this event, antiquarians report, comes the Roman wedding cry *talassio* and the tradition of snatching brides from their mothers. This theft was not unpunished, and the Romans fought to keep their new wives before the Sabine women threw themselves in the midst of a battle to stop the war between their husbands and their birth families. As wives, they connected their new and old families and provided heirs for the community. It is clear that the primary goal of the Romans was not erotic love and companionship, but reproduction. According to Livy, they soothed and praised the women, but only as a tactic to calm them and make them accept their new situation.[49]

Marriage, then, may involve erotic love, but is not inherently defined by it. Rather, the ideal marriage is based on mutual agreement and lack of conflict.[50] In fact, strongly eroticized wives are characterized by language drawn from nonreproductive relationships. Writing to his younger wife, Pliny bemoans their temporary separation and complains that in his loneliness he haunts her bedroom door just as a lover would the house of his mistress (*Ep*. 7.5). His sentiments, however earnest, are clearly inspired by the frivolous love poetry that he claims to have composed in the previous letter (*Ep*. 7.4).[51] Spouses who express erotic love are almost always separated from each other and have not yet had children.[52] Even in the mythical realm, amorous spouses, such as Orpheus and Eurydice or Protesilaus and Laodamia, are childless newlyweds whose relationship has not yet transitioned fully from bride and groom to husband

49. Brown 1995 discusses the importance of persuasion and *concordia* in Livy's account.

50. Greek marriages are praised for *homonoia* (concord) and *harmonia* (agreement). In Greek, *philia*, associated with familial love, is more common for spouses than *eros*, the word for sexual love. See Konstan 2000 for *philia* within the family, including between husband and wife, and Gutzwiller 2015 on *eros* as a typically one-sided emotion, in contrast to the more reciprocal Latin *amor*. She shows that the Greek *eros* was inherently nonreciprocal and destabilizing, perhaps closer to the Latin *cupido*. In marriage, Romans prized *concordia* (agreement) and the *bene concordans matrimonium* (successfully agreeable marriage). See Treggiari 1991: 228–61 on Roman marital ideals and Williams 1958 on the ideal wife as being *morigera* (obedient).

51. De Verger 1997–98: 114–16 and Carlon 2009: 170–71 discuss Pliny's love letters. See Ormand 2009: 158–59 for romantic marriage in Terence. In Stat. *Silv*. 5.1, Abascantus is devastated by the death of his wife. Sharrock 2013: 171–73 notes that Statius must borrow language from nonmarital scenarios to adequately express Abascantus's unusually strong emotions.

52. In an anonymous dramatic fragment (fr. 953 Nauck), a young wife forced to leave her husband by her father protests that her husband loves her. She uses the verb *stergein* but does not mention her own emotions or any children. In Prop. 4.3, Arethusa, another lovelorn woman, complains like an elegiac mistress even though she presents herself as a wife, as noted by Wyke 2007: 85–93 and deBrohun 2003: 186–92. James 2012 argues that Arethusa is a concubine, not a wife. Valladares 2012: 332–34 describes a funerary altar that presents an erotic relationship between a husband and his dead wife. Notably, it mentions no children.

and wife.[53] In general, the narrative framework associated with erotic love is an awkward fit with stable and long-lasting relationships.

Other depictions of *eros* in marriages appear in philosophical texts. For example, Xenophon's *Symposium* ends with a spectacular enactment of the union of Ariadne and Dionysus by hired entertainers, and specifies that Ariadne is "adorned like a bride" (ὡς νύμφη κεκοσμημένη, 9.3). The performers seem to be actually in love, not simply acting, and are likely to be prostitutes. Instead of arousing the audience to extramarital sexual engagement, the display makes the audience suddenly crazy for their wives by staging an erotic wedding night. Xenophon's ideal of husbands frenzied for sex with their spouses is, as Kate Gilhuly notes, based on a spectacle that elides the difference between wife and whore.[54] His conjunction of marriage and romance is not repeated so dramatically until Plutarch's *Amatorius*, which justifies marriage as the only positive use of *eros* and contrasts it with love for boys or for nonwives.[55] Marriage, therefore, is only seldom seen in terms of erotic love.[56] *Eros* may be a component of the wedding, but other emotions and considerations are more important in establishing the marriage as a lasting relationship in the wider community. The wedding is a specific point in which a relationship defined by its reproductive capacity is momentarily presented in terms typical of nonreproductive relationships. While it may be possible for husbands and wives to feel erotic love for each other, it is not a common feature in descriptions of ancient marriage, making the amorous discourse of wedding poetry all the more remarkable.[57]

Amorous Encounters

If love poems are seldom about potential brides or about wives, then what sorts of partners do they envision? The social contexts of *eros* are much broader than the relatively well-defined wedding ritual. They include an array of venues

53. Trouble is likely to follow when women with children express sexual interest in their husbands, as do Deianeira in Soph. *Trach.* and, according to Jason, Medea in Eur. *Med.* On eroticized marriages in tragedy, see Kaimio 2002. A more positive, albeit still childless, example may be Berenike in Callimachus (and Catullus's) *Lock*, on whom see Prioux 2011: 207 and 215 and Gutzwiller 1992.

54. Gilhuly 2009: 138: "Although there are no wives present at this symposium, a nearly universal desire for wives is produced when the prostitute plays the part of the legitimate wife as she performs ritual. Though this superimposition, the role of wife is both eroticized and legitimized."

55. It is worth noting that the conversation in Plutarch's *Amatorius* is set when Plutarch was himself a newlywed, before the birth of his children (*Amat.* 749b).

56. See Lefkowitz 1983 on the ways that wives and husbands expressed affection for each other.

57. Contrast the snide comment in Philetairos fr. 5 K-A that there are temples for Aphrodite *hetaira* but none for Aphrodite the wife (γαμητή). For an argument about the increasing eroticization of Roman *matronae*, see Strong 2016: 128–30; most of her examples concern brides or newlyweds.

ranging from the symposium to more intimate encounters, and feature a wider cast of adulterous lovers, boyfriends, girlfriends, *hetairai*, and *puellae*.[58] Marriage would be impossible in many scenarios because both partners were of the same gender, were already married to others, or could not marry legally due to unequal social status. These desirable figures tend to deny easy erotic access, requiring extensive persuasion before sharing their sexual favors.[59] Much of the piquancy of love poetry depends on the inability of the lover to connect in any permanent way with the beloved, who is often just out of reach, either physically or emotionally.[60] Ovid, cynically advising *puellae* on how to keep a man interested, explains why marriage and *amor* are incompatible:

> hoc est, uxores quod non patiatur amari:
> conveniunt illas, cum voluere, viri.
> adde forem, et duro dicat tibi ianitor ore
> "non potes," exclusum te quoque tanget amor.
>
> This the sort of thing that doesn't permit wives to be loved: men come to them when they want. Add a door and let a doorkeeper say "no way" to you with his harsh mouth, and love will touch you also when you are shut out.
>
> Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* 3.585–88

Interestingly, Ovid does not say that consummation itself leads to the end of *amor*, but that accessibility does.[61]

In lieu of a formal ritual, we can consider the potential environment of a love affair. Love poetry can be set in a number of real or imagined situations, but the symposium or *convivium*, along with its aftermath, the *komos* (drunken revel) and *paraklausithyron* (door song), are all stereotypical erotic settings.[62]

58. The literature on these social categories and relationships is vast, and recently augmented by a number of handbooks and companions, such as Skinner 2005, Ormand 2009, Rawson 2011, James and Dillon 2012, and Hubbard 2014. For more on ancient prostitution, see Glazebrook and Henry 2011 and the Spring 2015 special issue of *Helios*. For the *puella* (the female protagonist of Latin elegy), see Hallett 2013. Rawles and Natoli 2014 discuss the social backgrounds of Greek and Roman erotic lyric.

59. This is not to say that ancient sexual norms were identical in various places and at various times, simply that there are commonalities between most ancient communities. For example, respectable women were allowed a greater role in public life in Rome, and adulterous relationships were more celebrated in Roman poetry than in Greek. The collections in the previous note discuss the nuances of sexuality in different times and places; see also Lear and Cantarella 2008: 7 on the range of pederastic norms across ancient Greece.

60. Carson 1986 is a seminal discussion of *eros* as lack of the beloved.

61. For a similar sentiment about a pederastic relationship, see Call. *AP* 12.102 = 1 GP and the discussion of persuasion in chapter 7.

62. See Calame 1999: 91–98 on pederasty at the symposium and Topper 2012: 53–87 and 105–35 on the unclear status of eroticized male and female participants on symposiastic vases. There are, of course, differences between the Greek symposium and Roman *convivium*. Respectable

As semiprivate events in which elite men enacted their political and sexual identities, symposia are ideal spaces for enforcing social norms of acceptable passion. Scenes of the drunken lover stumbling through the streets can be found in poetry related to the archaic symposium and the practice flourishes in the Hellenistic epigram and Latin love elegy.[63] In the works of Meleager and the poets he wove into his anthology, lovers weep uncontrollably on doorsteps, leave behind wreaths, and embarrass both themselves and their beloveds. Symposiastic occasions provide so familiar a narrative setting for love poetry that they can serve as the assumed background without being explicitly described.[64] The symposium could spill out into the street and, if the lover was lucky, culminate in the bedroom; both of these locations are certainly well represented in poetry.

Erotic encounters were not limited to the drinking party, however. Epigrams and Latin love elegies commonly mention private meetings in the home of the beloved or lover. In Classical Athens, for example, the gymnasium was a prime spot for pederastic activity.[65] Ritual songs for public celebrations could also offer praise of physical beauty, and Greek sources describe courting women at public religious settings like festivals and funerals.[66] Romans had even more chances to encounter women in the public sphere. Beyond realistic settings tied to specific occasions, poets set their works in symbolic natural locales like meadows. Admissions or complaints of love, then, can come in a range of public or private settings, each with its own cultural resonances and literary topoi.

Despite the manifest differences in contexts, poets present nonmarital relationships in terms customary for weddings in order to elevate, praise, and persuade potential partners by likening them to brides. Both bride and beloved must both be persuaded, resulting at times in motifs that are shared, albeit refracted in divergent public and private settings. Wives, however,

women were forbidden from Greek parties, but did attend them at Rome. See Plotke 2005 for female participation in Roman banquets and Yardley 1991 for banquet scenes in Latin love elegy.

63. Tarán 1979: 52–113 provides a survey of epigrams on this theme. For an early example, see Alc. fr. 374 V: δέξαι με κωμάσδοντα (receive me as I revel). For more on the *paraclausithyron*, see chapter 2, pp. 61–63.

64. Hunter 1992: 118: "For epigrammatists, garlands are *par excellence* the mark of the symposium and the *komos*; indeed they often act as a kind of metonymic sign which evokes the whole poetic world of *eros* and the symposium which lies at the centre of so much of Greek epigrammatic production."

65. On visualizations of Greek pederasty, see Lear and Cantarella 2008. Hubbard 2003 and Fisher 2014 tease out the connections between athletics and pederasty. There are fewer Roman love poems addressed to boys, but see Catull. 15, 21, 24, and 81. On Tibullus's homoerotic elegies 1.4 and 1.9, see Nikoloutsos 2011 and Drinkwater 2012. Williams 2010 discusses the larger conception of same-sex love in the Roman world.

66. For praise of beauty, see Alcm. fr.1 *PMG*; for meeting women at rituals see Lys. 1.8 and Heliod. *Aeth.* 3.4. Ov. *Ars am.* 1.67–262 describes a wider range of opportunities for meeting women in Rome.

hold less appeal. Greek love poetry seldom uses language correlated with the marriage even though we know from other sources that it was possible for some nonmarital encounters, such as those with concubines, to endure and take on certain aspects of marital commitment, but not the ability to produce heirs.[67] Even when there is overlap with nuptial discourse, Greek poems seldom seem to suggest that lovers might marry their beloveds. In Callimachus *AP* 5.6 = 11 GP, Kallignotos swears to a *numphe* (girl or bride) that he will never love anyone more than her, seemingly hinting at a potential marriage.[68] However, the epigram goes on to admit that he later abandoned her for a boy.

Conversely, poems from Rome, such as the epigrams of Catullus and some Latin love elegies, do at times suggest that a lover could idealize his mistress as if she were a permanent partner like a wife.[69] Many Roman men kept women, particularly freedwomen, as concubines (*concubinae*), meaning that they had a formally acknowledged relationship that was still not legally counted as a marriage. As a result, any children would be illegitimate.[70] Participants in such a union could style themselves as husband and wife even though they would never become legally married. It is likely that the durable relationships sought after in Latin love elegy would have been understood as *concubinatus*, not *matrimonium*. Still, poets present their beloveds as brides or wives, a confusion perhaps seen in the presentation of Arethusa in Propertius 4.3.[71] This idealization of a marriage-like relationship is to be distinguished from the subject of this book, which is the idealization of the wedding in love poetry and of the affair in wedding poetry. The wedding marks the beginning of a marriage, but it is quite a different thing to suggest that someone is a bride than to imply that she is a wife.[72]

67. See Davidson 1997: 98–108; his evidence comes primarily from prose and legal sources, since love poetry seldom describes such scenarios.

68. Callimachus does not specify that the oath involved marriage, but the designation of the girl as *numphe* certainly hints at it.

69. There are some similar plots in comedy involving couples who could not marry but treat the union as a marriage, as in Plaut. *Men*. and *Most*. and Ter. *An*. On this scenario see Williams 1958. Catullus in particular borrows language related to marriage, but also adds political terms like *foedus* (treaty) and *amicitia* (friendship). Gardner 2007: 158–60 observes that Latin love elegists do not adopt Catullus's language of *amicitia*.

70. For more on these unions, see Rawson 1974 and Treggiari 1981.

71. As argued by James 2012b, who points to the slippery terms used to describe the partners of soldiers in Phang 2001: 142–228.

72. Propertius 3.20 suggests a sort of marriage with the beloved, but frames the union in terms of legal requirements rather than mimicking the discourse of the wedding song or ritual elements. The beloved is not being persuaded to leave behind her maidenhood, but to change an unfaithful partner for a more loyal one. For more on this poem, see Racette-Campbell 2013.