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Love: Ancient and Later Representations

This chapter argues that although concepts more or less overlapping with the idea of true love may be found in ancient literature, the academic appreciation of such concepts is today complicated by certain divides in scholarship. The chapter identifies the theory that true love was invented in mediaeval France, here dubbed 'the mediaeval model of love', as particularly challenging, and suggests that this scheme should be recalibrated to include classical antiquity. It therefore launches an alternative model and outlines how it might help to bridge several divides in the research so that a scholarly map might be drawn that fits the landscape of ancient love literature more accurately.

Introduction

Today it seems that everyone across the globe knows what 'true love' is. This is a kind of love that may go under different labels in scholarship,[1] but whose common denominator is a combination of affection for the beloved's person and sexual desire, the fulfilment of which through actual sex with the beloved is of secondary importance compared to the state of being in love itself. Moreover, it is not true love if the lover acts against the will of the beloved, for example by means of obsessive stalking, offering money to achieve intimacy or, worse, using violence to that end. Acts of harassment, payment and violation are incompatible with true love. Indeed, even if the aim of true love should be to live 'happily ever after', it can never serve as a mere stepping stone on the way to acquiring marital or formal partnership status, if the purpose of such a status is to uphold a successful social façade and propagate one's own genes through offspring. True love is, in other words, unconditional. It has no extraneous cause and no extraneous purpose. It is love for love's sake. Its beginning and end cannot be anything other than the very person of the beloved (which may, of course, be idealized by the lover); and this person's will and well-being is the lover's care, to the extent that he or she is willing to sacrifice everything, even life, for the beloved's sake.

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1 Lyne's concept of 'whole love', which includes both passionate desire and affectionate care, is perhaps the most accurate designation that has been launched in classical scholarship of the phenomenon in question; see Lyne 1980, *passim*. For the terms 'courtly' and 'romantic', see below.

Love in ancient literature

This chapter argues that – broadly speaking – such a concept of true love, which is marked by a willingness to fulfil the beloved's wishes, male *and* female longing, an urge to merge into one, and a death-defying fearlessness, was known in ancient Greek and Latin texts.

One example of such 'making of classical love'[2] is that of the Milesian king Phrygius, whose wish to fulfil the will of his beloved Pieria was so great that it became proverbial. The tale, which is found in Callimachus (fr. 80–1 Pf.), Plutarch (*De mul. vir.* 16) and Aristaenetus (1.15 Drago), is like a topsy-turvy reflection of the story of Judith and Holofernes, which is found in the book of Judith in the *Septuagint*, the koine translation of the *Old Testament*. Pieria's city Myus is at war with that of Phrygius, Miletus. During an armistice, Pieria, in order to attend a festival in honour of Artemis, visits Miletus, where Phrygius sees her and immediately falls in love. Straight away the two of them go to bed together. But instead of having his head cut off, which is what Judith did to Holofernes, the enemy leader, Phrygius, 'makes loving love' (ἐρασμίως ἐναφροδισιάσας, Aristaenetus 1.15.33) to Pieria. Nonetheless, Pieria, like Judith, does still save her people. For, eager to please his beloved in every way, Phrygius asks Pieria what he can possibly give her as a token of his love. And so, modestly blushing, Pieria asks not for jewels or precious clothes – 'all those things that the female sex is utterly crazy about' (Aristaenetus 1.15.41–2, οἷς ἅπασιν ἀτεχνῶς ἀγάλλεσθαι τὸ θῆλυ πέφυκε γένος; cf. Callim. fr. 80.8) – but for peace between the two cities. Phrygius happily fulfils her wishes and stops the war. According to Plutarch, '[t]here was, consequently, in both cities repute and honour for Pieria so that the women of Miletus pray even to this day that their husbands may love them as Phrygius loved Pieria' (Plut. *De mul. vir.* 16, ἦν οὖν ἐν ἀμφοτέραις ταῖς πόλεσι δόξα καὶ τιμὴ τῆς Πιερίας, ὥστε καὶ τὰς Μιλησίων εὔχεσθαι γυναῖκας ἄχρι νῦν οὕτως τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐρᾶν αὐτῶν, ὡς Φρύγιος ἠράσθη Πιερίας; cf. also Aristaenetus 1.15.67–9). So remarkable an act of love was Phrygius' eagerness to fulfil his beloved's wishes.

While the love of Phrygius is recognized in the proverb that was later cherished by other women, we learn little about the feelings of Pieria in the extant versions of the story. However, ancient literature also accommodates female desire, as seen in Alciphron's fictitious letter from Glaucippe to her mother Charope, in which the daughter also pays tribute to the poet of female desire par excellence, Sappho, to whom I shall return below:

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2 If I may be allowed a twist on the title of Reddy 2012; see also below.

Οὐκέτ᾽ εἰμὶ ἐν ἐμαυτῇ, ὦ μῆτερ, οὐδὲ ἀνέχομαι γήμασθαι ᾧ με κατεγγυήσειν ἐπηγγείλατο ἔναγχος ὁ πατήρ, τῷ Μηθυμναίῳ μειρακίῳ τῷ παιδὶ τοῦ κυβερνήτου, ἐξ ὅτου τὸν ἀστικὸν ἔφηβον ἐθεασάμην τὸν ὠσχοφόρον, ὅτε με ἄστυδε προΰτρεψας ἀφικέσθαι Ὠσχοφορίων ὄντων. καλὸς γάρ ἐστι, καλός, ὦ μῆτερ, καὶ ἥδιστος, καὶ βοστρύχους ἔχει βρύων οὐλοτέρους, καὶ μειδιᾷ τῆς θαλάττης γαληνιώσης χαριέστερον, καὶ τὰς βολὰς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐστι κυαναυγής, οἷος τὸ πρῶτον ὑπὸ τῶν ἀκτίνων τῶν ἡλιακῶν ὁ πόντος καταλαμπόμενος φαίνεται. τὸ δὲ ὅλον πρόσωπον – αὐτὰς ἐνορχεῖσθαι ταῖς παρειαῖς εἴποις ἂν τὰς Χάριτας τὸν Ὀρχομενὸν ἀπολιπούσας καὶ τῆς Ἀργαφίας κρήνης ἀπονιψαμένας· τὼ χείλη δὲ τὰ ῥόδα τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἀποσυλήσας τῶν κόλπων διήνθισται ἐπὶ τῶν ἄκρων ἐπιθέμενος. ἢ τούτῳ μιγήσομαι ἢ τὴν Λεσβίαν μιμησαμένη Σαπφὼ οὐκ ἀπὸ τῆς Λευκάδος πέτρας, ἀλλ᾽ ἀπὸ τῶν Πειραϊκῶν προβόλων ἐμαυτὴν εἰς τὸ κλυδώνιον ὤσω.

<mark>(Letters of Fishermen (</mark>11 = iii.1 Benner and Fobes))

I am no longer myself, mother; I cannot endure the thought of being married to the boy from Methymna, the sea-captain's son to whom father recently promised to betroth me; I have felt this way ever since I saw the young guardsman from the city, the one who carried the vine-branch when, at your bidding, I went there on the occasion of the Oschophoria. He is beautiful, mother, beautiful, the sweetest thing, and his locks are curlier than sea-moss, and his smile is more charming than the sea in a calm, and the radiance of his eyes is like the dark blue of the sea, as it appears in the first moment of illumination by the sun's rays. And his whole face – you might say that the Graces themselves have left Orchomenus and, after bathing in the Argaphian spring, are dancing in his cheeks; and his lips – he has filched the roses from the bosom of Aphrodite and tipped his lips with their bloom. I intend to have this man, or, if I can't, I shall follow the example of Lesbian Sappho: not indeed from the Leucadian cliff[3] but from the jutting rocks of the Peiraeus I shall hurl myself into the surf.

(Transl. Benner and Fobes)

Glaucippe is suffering due to the distance between her and her beloved, which is increased by the prospect of marriage to someone she does not love.

A striking – and humorous – example of how not even the physical intimacy of a kiss is sufficient to satisfy the lover's sustained urge to merge with the beloved, soul to soul, is found in a set of poems that evoke the figures of Plato and Agathon, recorded by Aulus Gellius (and later by Macrobius). The first of the two poems is an epigram attributed to Plato:

Τὴν ψυχὴν Ἀγάθωνα φιλῶν ἐπὶ χείλεσιν ἔσχον·
🗨λθε γὰρ ἡ τλήμων ὡς διαβησομένη.[4]

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3 The legend that Sappho threw herself from the Leucadian cliffs out of lovesickness for her beloved Phaon is not attested in Sappho's own poetry, but in the later tradition; see Thorsen 2014 and Thorsen/Berge 2019, 309, 329 and 350.

4 The epigram is also recorded under Plato's name in the *Anth. Lat.* 5.78 = *FGE*, 162.

My soul, when I kissed Agathon, did pass my lips; as though, poor soul, it would leap across.

(Transl. Rolfe)

Gellius claims that a friend of his, when young,[5] translated this couplet *licentius liberiusque* – 'with license and freely' – into Latin iambic dimeters, thus:

dum semihiulco sauio
meum puellum sauior
dulcemque florem spiritus
duco ex aperto tramite,
†anima† aegra et saucia
cucurrit ad labeas mihi,
rictumque in oris peruium
et labra pueri mollia
rimata itineri transitus,
ut transiliret nititur.
tum si morae quid plusculae
fuisset in coetu osculi,
Amoris igni percita
transisset et me linqueret,
et mira prorsum res foret,
ut fierem ad me mortuus,
ad puerum intus uiuerem.

(Gell. NA 19.11.4; Macrob. Sat. 2.2.16 = Apuleius 6 Courtney)

While kissing my boy with half-parted lips, drawing his breath's sweet bloom from its open course, my poor wounded soul raced up to my lips and strained to leap across to the passage of the boy's parted mouth and soft lips. If we had lingered a moment more in the union of our kiss, then – roused by love's fire – it would have passed over and left me: a strange thing that would be, leaving me dead to myself but alive to the boy, within him.

(Transl. Kaster, from Macrobius)

Even Gellius casts doubt on the Platonic authorship[6] of the original epigram, and introduces the Greek couplet and Latin iambic dimeters in a playful context, which suggests that the epigram is a witty dramatization of the bewildered presence of 'Platonic love', in the shape of the soul's sustained longing (perhaps a hint at penetration), in the non-Platonic act of kissing. Be that as it may, the two poems are also an elaboration on a deeply romantic notion, namely that love is an urge to connect with one's soulmate.

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5 Since Dahlmann 1979, the poem has commonly been assumed to be by Apuleius; see Harrison 1992 and Courtney 1993.
6 See also Ludwig 1963, 71.

However amusingly, the two poems, and the Latin more than the Greek, evoke the shadow of death, which is commonly envisaged as the departure of the soul from the dying person's body in ancient literature. In this literature, we also find examples (that are markedly less humorous than that of Gellius) of a willingness to risk one's life or even choose death for the beloved's sake. This willingness to die for the beloved readily emerges as an ultimate proof of 'true love'. One story of such a choice is that of Ovid's Pyramus and Thisbe (*Met.* 4.55–166), two young lovers from mutually hostile families who live next door to one another and who manage to communicate through a crack in the wall. One day they agree to stealthily leave their houses during the night so that they may finally meet. But, having successfully left her house and found the spot where she and Pyramus have agreed to come together, Thisbe discovers a lioness, whose mouth is bloody from a recent kill. Terrified, she flees from the site, but drops her cloak, which the lioness soon finds and starts to chew on; when Pyramus subsequently arrives at the spot, he finds not Thisbe, but a bloody piece of her garment, and believes that she has been killed by the beast. Desperate with grief, he stabs himself with his own sword. When Thisbe soon returns, she finds her love already dead, and so she too throws herself on his sword and dies.

Shakespeare knew the story, and integrated a famous version into his *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595). Moreover, several aspects of Ovid's basic plot are repeated in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), possibly *the* love story that is most famous in our day and age. However, Ovid himself also recasts the same plot in his story of Leander and Hero in the double *Heroides* 18–19.[7] Ovid's Leander and Hero arguably knew love at least as profoundly as Romeo and Juliet did (cf. Act III, scene v), because they certainly enjoyed the physical pleasures of erotic embraces. Indeed, Leander and Hero's corporeal encounters allow them to remember past joys and fantasize about future bliss when they are separated against their will, thus:

> excipis amplexu feliciaque oscula iungis,
> > oscula, di magni, trans mare digna peti,
> eque tuis demptos umeris mihi tradis amictus
> > et madidam siccas aequoris imbre comam.
> cetera nox et nos et turris conscia nouit,
> > quodque mihi lumen per uada monstrat iter.
> non magis illius numerari gaudia noctis

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7 For the story of Leander and Hero from antiquity up until the Renaissance, see Montiglio 2017. For the likelihood that Ovid's double *Heroides* belong to the end of his poetic career, see Thorsen 2013c n. 10.

Hellespontiaci quam maris alga potest.
quo breuius spatium nobis ad furta dabatur,
hoc magis est cautum, ne foret illud iners.
iamque fugatura Tithoni coniuge noctem
praeuius Aurorae Lucifer ortus erat.
oscula congerimus properata sine ordine raptim
et querimur parvas noctibus esse moras,
atque ita cunctatus monitu nutricis amaro
frigida deserta litora turre peto.
digredimur flentes, repetoque ego uirginis aequor
respiciens dominam dum licet usque meam.

(Ov. *Her*. 18.101–118 Kenney)

You welcome me with your embrace, share happy kisses with me – kisses, O you great gods, worth seeking across the deep! – and from your own shoulders you strip the robes to give them over to me, and dry my hair all dripping with the rain of the sea. For the rest – night knows of that, and ourselves, and the tower that shares our secret, and the light that guides me on my passage through the floods. The joys of that dear night may no more be numbered than the weeds of the Hellespontic sea; the briefer the space that was ours for the theft of love, the more we made sure it should not idly pass. And now Aurora, the bride of Tithonus, was making ready to chase the night away, and Lucifer had risen, forerunner of the dawn; in haste we ply our kisses, all disorderly, complaining that the night allows brief lingering. So, tarrying till the nurse's bitter warnings bid me go, I leave the tower and make for the chilly shore. We part in tears, and I return to the Maiden's [Helle's] sea, looking ever back to my lady while I can.

(Transl. Showerman, rev. by Goold)

Similarly, Hero fantasizes about Leander's arrival and is tormented by his delay:

nam modo te uideor prope iam spectare natantem,
bracchia nunc umeris umida ferre meis,
nunc dare, quae soleo, madidis uelamina membris,
pectora nunc nostro iuncta fouere sinu
multaque praeterea linguae reticenda modestae,
quae fecisse iuuat, facta referre pudet.
me miseram, breuis est haec et non uera uoluptas ;
nam tu cum somno semper abire soles.
firmius o cupidi tandem coeamus amantes,
nec careant uera gaudia nostra fide!
cur ego tot uiduas exegi frigida noctes ?
cur totiens a me, lente morator, abes?

(Ov. *Her*. 19.59–70 Kenney)

For now I seem to see you already swimming near, and now to feel your wet arms about my neck, and now to throw about your dripping limbs the accustomed coverings, and now to warm your bosom clasped to mine – and many things else a modest tongue should say

nothing of, whose memory delights, but whose telling brings a blush. Ah me! brief pleasures these, and not the truth; for you are ever wont to go when slumber goes. O more firmly let our eager loves be knit, and our joys be faithful and true! Why have I passed so many cold and lonely nights? Why, O tardy loiterer, are you so often away from me?

<div align="right">(Transl. Showerman, rev. by Goold)</div>

Leander and Hero are not only separated by the Hellespont; his parents also condemn their love. That is why Leander steals out at night as often as he can and swims over to Hero's side of the strait, guided only by the moon and the stars, and the light in Hero's tower. On the night when their Heroidean letters are written, a terrible storm has been obstructing Leander for days from entering the waves; only a sailor dares to defy the wild waters in his boat, and Leander sends his letter with him to Hero. She receives it, reads and sits down immediately to write back. At the same time, Leander has thrown himself into the waves at last, willing as he is to sacrifice everything, even life, for his beloved. And, as Virgil (*G.* 3.258–63) and Musaeus record in their versions of the couple's story, the light in Hero's tower goes out, most likely due to the storm, Leander gets lost, drowns and is washed ashore on Hero's side the next day, whereupon she throws herself from her tower to her death. Notably, although this sad outcome infuses Ovid's story with tragic qualities, this ending never actually takes place in *Heroides* 18–19. In accordance with the epistolary mode of Ovid's double *Heroides*, these letters can be penned only as long as the hero and heroine are alive; in this way, their love paradoxically survives (if I may be allowed to repeat myself) in 'the eternal now of literature'.[8]

All of the above-mentioned examples contribute, alongside many other texts in antiquity, to notions of love that combine erotic desire with a care for the beloved's person that goes beyond that desire. And, among these examples, which overlap more or less with 'true love' as outlined above, Ovid's Leander and Hero arguably stand out as its perfect embodiment, inasmuch as both are simultaneously loving subjects *and* objects of love – each loves the other equally – and both are *writers*,[9] thus underscoring the very important metapoetic aspect of ancient love literature, to which I shall return below.

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8 Thorsen 2013c, 127.

9 Both also arguably rewrite crucial passages in the Ovidian corpus, which enhances their metapoetic significance; see Thorsen 2018. The metapoetics of love poetry in the case of Ovid has received fresh attention in Oliensis 2019.

Divides in scholarship

Despite examples such as these, the claim that a concept of love of the kind outlined at the outset of this chapter existed in antiquity remains a contentious one. The contentiousness is upheld by a number of divides that mark current scholarship, and which therefore merit specific scrutiny. These divides include that between 1) classical and post-classical conceptions of love; more strictly within classical scholarship, that between 2) studies on love and studies on sexuality; and 3) Attic New/Roman Comedy and Latin love elegy on the one hand and other kinds of ancient literature pivoting on love on the other. While these divides all have their merits, they also have limitations, on which I will focus here.

One of the most fundamental divides in the relevant scholarship concerns the classical and post-classical conceptions of love. For a considerable, influential and vigorous body of research argues that the concept of love as described above was invented only by the troubadours and trobairitz, i.e. male and female singer-songwriters, of twelfth-century Provence. Notably, in this scholarship – and beyond – 'true love'[10] is alternatively labelled 'courtly'[11] and 'romantic', evoking the feudal society of mediaeval *courts*, and the *Romance* languages of the early middle ages. These terms are thus designed to tie the concept of true love to mediaeval France. Moreover, scholarship interprets this love in accordance with the religious world view of the time, by identifying the lover's exaltation of the beloved, who as a rule is already married, and with whom the lover envisages no wedlock or propagation of children, as a 'cult', in which 'woman' has become 'religion'.[12] However, contrary

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10 Cf. 'véritable amour', Briffault 1945, 144; 'true love', Lyne 1980, e.g. 114, 'true love'; Reddy 2012, *passim*.

11 The term 'courtly love' was invented by Gaston Paris in his study of *Lancelot, ou le Chevalier de la Charrette* (see n. 13 below): 'Dans aucun ouvrage français, autant qu'il me semble, cet amour courtois n'apparaît avant le *Chevalier de la Charrette*', Paris 1883, 519; see also Hult 1996 and Kim 2010; 2012, who sees the choice of this term as a strategy to render the theme of love more scientific and scholarly.

12 Gillet 1941, 22–3 in this longer passage: 'ils [the troubadours] avaient fait une chose extraordinaire ... ils avaient inventé le culte de la femme. Révolution de portée immense! Ces vieux poètes archaïques, que personne ne lit plus ..., travaillèrent pour les siècles, gravèrent dans nos âmes le trait fondamental de notre civilisation ... En calquant les formes de l'amour sur celles du service et da l'hommage chevaleresque, en lui donnant des rites et un langage spéciaux ..., ils opérèrent un changement d'une nouveauté incalculable. C'était une véritable création morale, la plus originale du Moyen Age, *une sorte d'amour entièrement détaché de la génération et de la reproduction de l'espèce*. La femme devint une religion.' My italics, quoted from Briffault 1945, 88. This male-centred interpretation, typical of its time, fails to take into account the women singer-songwriters, the trobairitz, of whom we have more than twenty names preserved, some

to the religion of the Church, the 'woman' as 'religion' includes adulterous sex, though only with the (married) beloved,[13] and only if it is not to the detriment of the beloved's well-being. If sex is impossible or harmful to the beloved, the lover (usually) happily abstains.

Departing from such assumptions, which amount to what I will call the mediaeval model of love, the historian and anthropologist William Reddy makes the following claim, in his book *The Making of Romantic Love: Longing and Sexuality in Europe, South Asia and Japan 900–1200 CE* (2012):

> In a common Western way of feeling, romantic love is paired with sexual desire ... When the beloved returns one's love, and when neither of the two lovers' well-being is threatened by sexual embrace, then love and desire may both be fulfilled without harm. The opposition between love and desire is thus a productive one. This particular dualism is unique to Western conceptions and practices ... Western conception of romantic love was first formulated in the twelfth century CE ... One searches in vain through ancient Greek and Latin literature – from the Iliad to the Aeneid, from Sappho to Ovid, from Plutarch's account of Antony and Cleopatra's love to the later Greek romances – for any trace of opposition between love and desire ... The originality of the 'courtly love' phenomenon is well known to medievalists. The inventiveness of the trobairitz and troubadours has never been doubted. But scholars have not agreed on the origin and the significance of the twelfth century conception of 'courtly love'.[14]

As is hinted at in Reddy's last sentence in this passage, behind claims such as his[15] lies a massive scholarly discussion that involves many and various arguments, which, despite seriously questioning many of Reddy's claims, nevertheless seems to have made scholarship somewhat reluctant to deal with the concept of love as both erotic and other-oriented in antiquity. It is therefore important to outline some of the most significant contributions to this discussion and show

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poetry and the music of one song; see e.g. Sankovitch 1999. Since these women poets and composers loved men, in a fashion similar to that of the troubadours, the 'religion' in question should rather have been described inclusively with regard to sex: in other words, as that of 'the beloved', instead of as that of the female sex only. This problem may be regarded as solved, though arguably in a misogynous manner, by the Lacanian theory of desire in which the *femme* is understood as a function which may be occupied by either sex; cf. Janan 2001, Lindheim 2003 and Palmore in this volume.

13 As e.g. in the adulterous story of Geneviève, wife of King Arthur, and his knight Lancelot in *Lancelot, ou le Chevalier de la Charrette* by Chrétien de Troyes (fl. 1165–81) – see n. 11 above – and, more generally, in *De arte honeste amandi* by Andreas Capellanus (fl. late 1180s).

14 Reddy 2012, 1–2.

15 The same idea is expressed even more crudely in e.g. the subheading 'A world without love: The Greco-Roman world and early Christianity' in chapter 3 of Lindberg 2008.

how these are linked to central strands of relevance to this chapter's topic in classical scholarship.

Monumental in this regard are C.S. Lewis' *The Allegory of Love: A Study in the Mediaeval Tradition* (1936) and Denis de Rougemont's *L'amour et l'Occident* (1939; revised in 1956 and again in 1972), which was translated into English under the titles *Passion and Society* (1951, 2nd rev. ed. 1965 and 3rd rev. ed. 1962, UK) and *Love in the Western World* (1940, 2nd rev. ed. 1956 and 1983, US). In his book, Lewis dismissed the relevance of ancient love poets, especially Ovid, for the understanding of the notion of love that emerged in the middle ages and that, according to the trajectory of Lewis' study, was brought to full fruition in the English literature of Edmund Spenser. Thus, the then recent work of scholars such as Wilibald Schrötter (1908) and E.K. Rand (1925), which revealed strong affinities between the love in Ovidian works and that of troubadour literature (a fact which scholarship has continued to confirm),[16] was rejected. Similarly, the book by de Rougemont, which may be regarded as *the* classic treatment of the concept of love in Europe, rehearsed the same trajectory, but following the lines of French literary history more closely, launching true love as a heretical, anti-establishment religion in opposition to that of the Church.[17] Unlike Lewis, de Rougemont did not even mention Ovid, nor the love literature of other ancient poets, in his history of 'love in the Western world'.[18]

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16 See e.g. Minnis 2001, on the influence of Ovid on the crucial work in mediaeval love literature, the *Roman de la rose*; Clark/Coulson/McKinley 2011 for influences on mediaeval culture more generally; and Kretschmer 2013 for Ovid's influence on mediaeval love poetry.

17 I leave it to future scholarship to gauge the significance of Christian concepts of love for that of the mediaeval model, but would like to add that as long as this kind of love, by being sexual and adulterous, violates some of the most fundamental Christian codes, preliminary observations suggest that the Church played much the same role in relation to love literature in the middle ages as Augustan legislation did in ancient Rome; cf. below and n. 67.

18 In one (UK) English translation of his work, de Rougemont explains in the preface: '... some readers have supposed – and there I may have been to blame – that I regard passionate love as an invention of the twelfth century. Actually, the matter is more complex. At all times and in all places the natural growth of what I call passionate love has been visible. But alike in Greece and Rome and in the East the frenzy of passion was treated as simply a frenzy and nothing more. Not till the twelfth century – the century of Abélard, Saint Bernard, the Troubadours and *Tristan* – and then in Western Europe, did the natural seeds of passion, instead of being destroyed, suddenly begin to be cultivated. The love frenzy was raised to the level of religious wisdom. It was given a symbolic expression that made it acceptable, a dignified form, and a rhetoric that endowed it with standing. Unfortunate love was admitted to be beautiful and good *to the extent it was woeful.* "De tous les maux le mien diffère: il me plaît", wrote Chrestien de Troyes. Delight in the tribulations of love is the novelty I set out from – the "difference" I have sought to account for', de Rougemont 1962, 9.

Lewis' and de Rougemont's omission of ancient poetry as irrelevant to this history did not remain uncriticised. In the decades that followed these publications, scholars such as J.P. Sullivan (1961), Godo Lieberg (1962), Niall Rudd (1981) and Lesley Cahoon (1987) all responded in various ways, pointing to numerous examples of classical concepts of love that seem confoundingly similar to those in mediaeval literature, such as the cult of the beloved in Catullus (esp. Lieberg), Medea's all-consuming passion in Apollonius' *Argonautica* (Rudd) and Ovid's many lovers and beloveds (Sullivan and Cahoon). To this list, the mediaevalist and Latinist Peter Dronke must be added,[19] whose scepticism towards the mediaeval model of love appears grounded in his knowledge of the rich reception of Ovid in that era, as well as in his deep insights into the multifaceted nature of the love that the middle ages thus received:

> ... the middle ages ... knew the Amores and the Heroides almost equally well [as the Metamorphoses]. And what they found in these was far more ... for these works displayed the greatest imaginable range in love of men and women, from the lightest to the most tragic, from flirtation to the utmost bounds of passionate love. No shade of feeling, shallow or profound, is alien to them.[20]

Alongside these responses to the mediaeval model of love, a shift in the understanding of Latin love poetry, and of Ovid in particular,[21] took place in classical scholarship especially from the 1980s onwards. Seminal here was R.O.A.M. Lyne's *The Latin Love Poets: From Catullus to Horace* (so entitled despite ending not with Horace, but Ovid; 1980), which was fairly conservative in its approach to the relationship between the historical reality and the literariness of the genres in question. However, this book was also pioneering, inasmuch as it introduced the concept of 'whole love',[22] which included erotic passion and other-oriented affection in much the same way as the kind of love outlined at the outset of this

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19 See also Crosland 1947.

20 Dronke 1965 I, 161.

21 Seminal in Ovidian studies are Hinds 1987a and 1987b, Conte 1989, Barchiesi 1986; 1987, and McKeown 1987; 1989; 1998, all preparing the ground for an even richer scholarly *aetas Ovidiana* in the following years, the vastness of which is reflected in the fact that Ovid is the only ancient author to whom as many as five *Oxford Bibliographies Online* articles have thus far been dedicated: Myers 2009, Thorsen 2017, Fratantuono 2017, Tissol 2017 and Fumo 2017. Of these two, Thorsen 2017 and Fumo 2017 are dedicated to 'Ovid's love poetry' and 'Ovid and the Middle Ages' alone.

22 See n. 1 above.

chapter. Lyne found this kind of love to be present in Roman poetry from Catullus onwards.[23]

This shift could perhaps have made love a more natural topic to explore *per se* in classical scholarship, were it not for Paul Veyne's publication *L'élégie érotique romaine: l'amour, la poésie et l'Occident* (1983), which was issued in English under the title *Roman Erotic Elegy: Love, Poetry and the West* (1988). For it is indeed tempting to see some connection between Veyne's massively influential study and the scholarship on Latin love poetry that followed, which focused sharply on its artistic sophistication from the point of view of literary theory,[24] as well as on gender and power play inspired by feminist perspectives,[25] and less on the phenomenon of love *per se*. While valuable in many regards, not least for replacing reductive biographical-historical approaches to elegy with the interpretative sophistication of literary theory, Veyne's study functioned as a Trojan horse of sorts for the outlook on Western literature promoted in de Rougemont's book, to which Veyne's French subtitle explicitly alludes.[26] For while Veyne extended the project of de Rougemont by focusing on love in antiquity, and thus in many ways corrected the latter's outline of the history of love in the West, Veyne nevertheless subscribed to the fundamental claim of de Rougemont, in the sense that the love he saw in Latin elegy was not true, but rehearsed, dead and boring.[27]

This problematic divide between classical and post-classical conceptions of love is furthermore linked to another division more strictly located within classical scholarship itself, namely that between studies of love on the one hand and those on sexuality on the other. For while this scholarship abounds with studies

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23 '... a profound, systematic, and continuing exploration of a single relationship through poems which relate to and illuminate each other ... is not in any ancient poet's manner or nature before Catullus. There is no precedent in ancient literature for Catullus and Lesbia', Lyne 1980, 21.

24 E.g. Veyne 1983; 1988 (see above) and Kennedy 1993, which draws on the French literary theorist Roland Barthes, and especially his *Fragments d'un discours amoureux* (1977), and Miller 2004, which expounds on the genre's historical uniqueness by means of perspectives such as those drawn from Marxism and psychoanalysis.

25 E.g. Greene 1998, which focuses on male-centred aspects of the genres in question, Wyke 2002, which investigates the nature, or rather the male-made *art* of the female beloved in Roman elegy, and James 2003, to which I will return below. Most recently, Spentzou 2013 revisits the genre from the point of view of its cultural context, reaching back to Syme 1939, and McCoskey/ Torlone 2014 summarize the *Stand der Forschung* so far, while touching upon the very important homoerotic aspects of this body of literature. For further examples of this vast scholarship I refer to Conte 1994b, 321–66, Gold 2012 and Thorsen 2013a.

26 Veyne 1988, 140–1 also explicitly refers to de Rougemont, though without mentioning his name, as related to his own project; see also Thorsen 2013b, 17.

27 Veyne 1988, 33.

on the latter, those on the former topic are scanty indeed. This situation is without doubt informed by another monumental figure within French theory, namely Michel Foucault, who was also a personal friend of Veyne.[28] The part of Foucault's project that has been most conspicuously relevant for classical scholarship is the two volumes of his four-book *History of Sexuality*[29] entitled *L'usage des plaisirs* (1984, volume 2) and *Le souci de soi* (1984, volume 3). The first of these focuses on sources from ancient Greece and was published in English as *The Uses of Pleasure* (1985a), while the other concentrates on sources in Greek and Latin from the time of imperial Rome and was translated into English as *The Care of the Self* (1985b).

The influence of Foucault, which has mostly been embraced, but also criticized by classicists,[30] is felt almost everywhere in the vast scholarship on ancient sexuality, which, as already mentioned, arguably eclipses the theme of love. So, in a standard reference volume such as the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, there is only one article that sports the word 'love' in its title, and it is paired with 'friendship' in a non-erotic, philosophical (yet affectionate and other-oriented) sense.[31] By comparison, the dictionary includes several articles with the word 'sexuality' and related vocabulary in their titles.[32] Even in the pioneering work of David Konstan,[33] in which he identifies true love (i.e. 'symmetrical and reciprocal') in the genre of the ancient Greek novel, 'sex[ual]' literally comes before 'love' even in the title, which is *Sexual Symmetry: Love in the Novel and Related Genres* (1994).[34] And in the recent vogue of studies on emotions in antiquity, love has remained surprisingly little explored, albeit with exceptions such as *In the Orbit of Love: Affection in Ancient Greece and Rome* (2018), also by Konstan. However, here too

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28 See Veyne 2008 and 2013. The non-romantic approach to sex-related issues in Rome is upheld in Veyne 2005.

29 Of which only three were published in his lifetime and the final volume, *Les Aveux de la chair*, was published posthumously in 2018.

30 Among more or less critical voices are Richlin 1993; 1998, Goldhill 1995, Larmour/Miller/Platter 1998, Foxhall 1998, Davidson 2001, Halperin 2002, and Detel 2005.

31 *OCD* s.v. 'love and friendship in Greek philosophy'.

32 See e.g. *OCD* s.v. 'sexuality', 'sexuality, textual representation of', 'heterosexuality', 'sex, anal', 'homosexuality', 'homosexuality, female', 'sexual representation, visual', 'prostitution, sacred', 'prostitution, secular male', 'prostitution, secular female', 'pornography', 'incest', etc.

33 Arguably more pioneering still is Konstan's article on Terence's *Eunuchus* as one of the 'origins of erotic subjectivity', which not only has 'love' as the first word in the article title, but also identifies the citizen boy Phaedria's love for the prostitute Thais as 'a harbinger ... of a moment in the history of love that found expression in the elegists of the Augustan principate, and, after another transformation, in the mediaeval tradition of courtly love', 1986, 372.

34 Whitmarsh 2018, also on the novel, features 'love' prominently, even in the title of his work.

the phenomenon under scrutiny is explicitly non-erotic and of the kind which may exist between friends and family members.

Finally, our understanding of love in ancient literature is also complicated by the challenges arising from yet another divide in classical scholarship, namely that between Attic New/Roman Comedy and elegy on the one hand and other love literature on the other. The comparison of Attic New/Roman Comedy with elegy has considerable merits and is well explored in scholarship.[35] Even so, comparisons between elegy and other poetic genres may prove equally if not more useful in drawing up a map that more accurately fits the actual landscape of love in ancient literature.

In this landscape, Latin love elegy does certainly stand out. Not only is the genre surprisingly easily defined by a striking unity, represented by one metre (the elegiac couplet), one canon (Gallus, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid) and one theme (love),[36] it is also one of the most prominent candidates among ancient media for a genre concerned with true love. For love is essential in the life of an elegiac lover, who either makes love to the beloved if he or she is present (and willing) or writes about the agony of not making love to the beloved when he or she is absent (often due to the beloved's rejection of the lover); moreover, the beloved is sometimes married or belongs to someone else, but the lover has no concern for conventional wedlock or children;[37] the lover's only care is love, which governs his or her life, either in the active form of 'love's fighting/soldiering for love' (*militia amoris*),[38] or in the passive form of the lover's inescapable 'love's slavery/slavery of love', (*seruitium amoris*).[39] Either way, the lover is willing to risk everything for the beloved, even life.[40] In fact, in Latin love elegy there is no life outside love.[41]

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35 See Gold 2012.

36 Thorsen 2013b, 4–5. As I argue in Thorsen 2013c, the *Heroides*, including the letters of Leander and Hero, also belong to the genre of Latin love elegy.

37 The absence of traditional wedlock and children is also a conspicuous feature of the mediaeval concept of love; see n. 12 above.

38 Sharrock 2013a.

39 Fulkerson 2013.

40 E.g. Prop. 1.1; 2.1.47; 2.15.36, Tib. 1.1.59–68; 1.6.27–8.

41 This is also the deeper message in Ovid's *Remedia amoris*; see Conte 1989, Fulkerson 2004 and Thorsen 2014, 184–93; in terms of the relevance of this insight for the mediaeval model of love, it is highly noticeable that the twelfth-century Chrétien de Troyes, the author of *Lancelot, ou le Chévalier de la Charrette* (see n. 11 and 13 above) lists *Et les comandemanz d'Ovide* as one of his works in the opening of his *Cligés*, which likely refers to a translation in the vernacular of Ovid's *Remedia amoris*; see Zink 1987.

Now, the striking characteristics of this genre have prompted classicists, whose disciplinary instinct is traditionally to assume that 'nothing arises from nothing', to search for its origin via a style of *Quellenforschung* that has been applied for more than a century.[42] This quest has now resulted in the establishment of what may be labelled the 'comedy model'. This model is most prominently expounded by Sharon James in her milestone publication *Learned Girls and Male Persuasion: Gender and Reading in Roman Love Elegy* (2003). This book builds on the century-long hypothesis that Attic New/Roman Comedy is the most important literary precursor of Latin love elegy, but innovatively suggests that, though the two genres share many similarities, the major difference is that whereas the comic *adulescens* ('youth') pays money for his love (if the beloved is a prostitute),[43] the elegiac *amans* ('lover') offers poems to his beloved, who, though they are described in a notoriously fleeting and indefinite manner,[44] are understood (in this model) to evoke much the same category of women as the comic *meretrix* ('prostitute'). James argues that the elegists thus promote a love that is no truer than that of the comic *adulescens*, who uses money rather than words[45] (when he does not resort to violence)[46] to express his interest in the beloved. In fact, the elegist's love may be regarded as crueller, as the lover's goal still is to have sex with the beloved, but he (usually)[47] tries to achieve this in exchange for poems, which are of limited use to the beloved; her highly literary qualities notwithstanding, she still needs cash to sustain her livelihood. From such a woman's point of view, accepting the elegist's love (= poetry) means starving.[48]

James' interpretation of elegiac love as a male poet-lover's means of getting sex for free, while sugar-coating the harsh social reality of working girls in

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42 See Sharrock and Brecke in this volume for an overview of the relevant scholarship.

43 The beloved may also be a citizen's daughter, but in that case the *adulescens* normally does not express his love by paying her, but by raping her; see Brecke 2020 and Brecke in this volume.

44 See e.g. Wyke 2002, Brecke and my final chapter in this volume.

45 See Sharrock in this volume.

46 See Brecke in this volume.

47 The Latin love elegist and woman Sulpicia, who strongly complicates this interpretation, is explicitly argued out of it by James 2003, 220.

48 James' argument is strikingly similar to that of the prostitute Philochremation ('lover of money') in Aristaenetus' letter 1.14: οὔτε αὐλὸς ἑταίραν οἶδε προτρέπειν οὔτε λύρα τις ἐφέλκεται πόρνας ἀργυρίου χωρίς· κέρδει μόνον δουλεύομεν, οὐ θελγόμεθα μελῳδίαις. τί οὖν μάτην, ὦ νέοι, διαρρήγνυσθε τὰς γνάθους ἐμφυσῶντες τῇ σύριγγι; οὐδὲν ὑμᾶς ὀνήσει τὰ κιθαρίσματα (Arist. 1.14.1–5 Drago, 'You can't win over a hetaira by playing a flute, nor can you attract prostitutes with a lyre if you don't have money. We are slaves only to profit and are not bewitched by melodies', transl. Höschele and Bing). I have yet to see this text referred to in the comedy-elegy scholarship.

Rome,[49] has (at least) two consequences for scholarship. First, this interpretation is very much in line with the idea that true love is a mediaeval phenomenon, in the sense that it largely denies the existence of a concept of true love in Latin love elegy, which is one of the most obvious locales for such ideas in antiquity. Next, James' interpretation has, due to its sheer influence, which has been considerable, driven a wedge between the study of this genre and that of other non-dramatic love literature,[50] making it hard, for example, to assess the relevance of poetry such as Anacreon Fr. 16: ἐμὲ γὰρ λόγων < ∪ – > εἵνεκα παῖδες ἄν φιλέοιεν / χαρίεντα μέν γ᾽ἀείδω, χαρίεντα δ᾽ οἶδα λέξαι ('It is for my art that boys should love me: I can sing gracious songs, and I can speak kind words'),[51] or concepts such as Konstan's 'sexual symmetry' between a boy and a girl in the Greek novel.[52]

The homopoetic model of love

Given the circumstances outlined above, ancient literature should arguably be included in the mediaeval model of love, which would thus call for a rebranding. As an alternative term, I would like to suggest the 'homopoetic model of love'. The first part of the coinage 'homopoetic', which evokes the Greek adjective ὁμός, refers to love's ideal of sameness, in the sense that the love experience is envisaged (however unrealized or unrealizable this may be) as 'common' and 'joint', felt and shared equally between the two partners.[53] The next part of the coinage, 'poetic', refers to the medium of most relevance in this context, which is literature that prominently, though not exclusively, takes the form of poetry. Moreover, this common and joint experience is to be understood in terms of equality and reciprocity, both of which may remain only imagined and longed for, and it may or may not encompass sameness of sex. Thus, the model includes heteroerotic and heterosexual kinds of love in antiquity (and beyond) as freely as homoerotic and

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49 The topic of prostitution, especially its harsher aspects, is of course an important subject *per se*, which has traditionally been unjustly neglected in scholarship.
50 An exception in this regard is Keith 2011a, focusing on another genre with which Latin love elegy shares strong affinities, namely epigram; see also Keith in this volume.
51 See D'Andrea in this volume.
52 See my final chapter in this volume.
53 *LSJ* sv 'ὁμός', 'one and the same, common, joint.'

homosexual ones.[54] Finally, according to this model, love has no divine cause, no societal purpose and aims for equality in terms of voluntary, affectionate reciprocity.

Consequently, it is not love if the love in question is orchestrated by (usually) an Olympian god as a part of a divine plan. This feature makes the homopoetic model of love less compatible with the grand erotic schemes in the genres of epic and tragedy. This does not mean that these genres cannot accommodate conceptions of love understood as true, such as that of Achilles for Patroclus.[55] However, while love plays a prominent role in the *Iliad*, with Aphrodite's plot to have Paris seduce – or rape? – Helen as the trigger that eventually launches the Trojan War, we are told at the very outset of the epic that it all happened in order to fulfil the 'will' or 'plan' of Zeus (Διὸς ... βουλή, *Il.* 1.5). The incompatibility of such an outlook on love with the homopoetic model is sharply underscored by Sappho in the preamble, known as Fr. 16 Voigt, in which she relieves us of the uncertainty around whether Paris raped Helen, taking her against her will, or not. For here Sappho uses precisely Helen's love for Paris – which made her sacrifice everything, parents, husband and child – to demonstrate how an object of love, whether a phenomenon or a person, is 'the most beautiful thing on the black earth' (Sappho, Fr. 16.2–3 Voigt, ἐπ[ὶ] γᾶν μέλαι[ν]αν/ ἔ]μμεναι κάλλιστον). Likewise, Phaedra's love for her stepson Hippolytus in Euripides' eponymous tragedy is ultimately the maddening result of Aphrodite's double revenge. This revenge is directed both against the Sun god,[56] whose descendants, including Phaedra, were cursed by Aphrodite because the god exposed her extramarital affair with Ares, and against Artemis, the anti-erotic virgin goddess to whom Hippolytus pledges his allegiance, thus scorning the powers of the goddess of love.[57] Accordingly, in the genres of epic and tragedy, love is readily applied as an instrument of divinely instilled insanity, personified in the *Iliad* by Ate, the daughter of Zeus (cf. *Il.* 19.91, 'Madness'), usually with death and devastation as its result. By contrast, according to the homopoetic model of love, which we have seen applies to Helen in Sappho Fr. 16 Voigt, only the beloved can be the cause of love.

That said, it should be added that the model does not imply the exclusion of divinities altogether. For a start, the presence and veneration of Aphrodite/Venus

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54 The model could thus have been called 'bisexual', which, despite being a modern term, makes sense in the context of ancient conceptions of love and desire, as expounded by Cantarella 1992; cf. also e.g. Harrison 2018a and Ingleheart in this volume.

55 See Acosta-Hughes in this volume.

56 Cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 337–41, Ov. *Her.* 4.53–66, and Sen. *Phaedr.* 124–8. See also Armstrong 2006, 62–3.

57 Hom. *Od.* 8.266–366 and Ov. *Ars am.* 2.561–92.

is so deeply embedded within this model that one may talk about a 'cult of love'. This 'cult' is most prominently exemplified by Sappho's hymn to the goddess, known (despite being the poet's only extant complete poem) as Fr. 1 Voigt. Here, Aphrodite divulges, notably as witnessed by Sappho herself, that she fully intends to cure the lovesickness of the poet, who in turn famously bids the goddess, in the imperative, to assist her in her *militia amoris*:[58] σὺ δ᾽ αὔτα/ σύμμαχος ἔσσο (Sappho 1.27–8 Voigt, 'and you, yourself, be my fellow-fighter'). Moreover, the non-Olympian god of love, in Greek called Eros (sometimes Erotes, in the plural), and Amor and Cupido in Latin, is a constant presence in the ancient love literature that operates according to the homopoetic model. Again, Sappho splendidly captures the overpowering (λυσιμέλης), paradoxical-state-stirring (γλυκύπικρον), inescapable (ἀμάχανον) and beastly (ὄρπετον) nature of the god and the phenomenon of Love/love all in just one fragment: Ἔρος δηὖτέ μ᾽ ὁ λυσιμέλης δόνει,/ γλυκύπικρον ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον (Sappho, Fr. 130 Voigt, 'Once again limb-loosening Love makes me tremble, the bitter-sweet, irresistible creature'). No wonder Love/ love is not one but a multitude of emotions, as brilliantly expressed also by Sappho in Fr. 31 Voigt, in which the poetic I is famously struck dumb, burns, goes blind, hears pounding in her ears, sweats, turns greener than grass and is on the verge of death, all at once, at the sight of her beloved, a woman, chatting and laughing in front of a man.

Last but not least is the character of the god and phenomenon of Love/love as 'weaver of stories', again in the brilliant words of Sappho (Fr. 188 Voigt, μυθοπλόκον). This quality, love's loquaciousness and urge to tell tales, underscores the very important metapoetic dimension of love in ancient literature,[59] where the lover may also be seen as represented by the poet, and the beloved by the reader, who together secure the survival of literature and render 'art enduring', *ars longa*.[60] In fact, the ultimate object of love may also be other (most often dead) poets. Indeed, the names of the elegiac *puellae* such as Lesbia (recalling Sappho from Lesbos) and Corinna (the second most famous woman poet in antiquity)

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58 See above.

59 And not only in antiquity: in fact, love and literature become inseparable in Dante's casting of the famous story of Paolo and Francesca, modelled on historically real persons known personally to the poet, and often heralded as the paramount example of the mediaeval model (it is the painter Ingres' portrayal of the two that decorates the jacket of Reddy 2012). In the *Divine Comedy*, Francesca explains to Dante that it was while reading how Geneviève kissed Lancelot (see n. 13) that Paolo and she fell in love: 'Galeotto fu 'l libro e chi lo scrisse' (*Div. comm.* 5.137, 'Galeotto was that book and the one who wrote it'). Galeotto is the name of the seneschal who acted as a messenger between Lancelot and Geneviève.

60 Cf. e.g. Svenbro 1993 and Nilsson 2009.

may be regarded as hints at the fact that the poets Catullus and Ovid are ultimately in love not with Roman ladies of their own day and age, but with an artifice of eternity that is crafted by words; their own as well as those of other – including women – poets.[61]

Moreover, according to this model, love is not love if its ultimate goal is to uphold the marital institution and secure offspring. This aspect renders the model largely incompatible with the grander schemes of the genres of Attic New/ Roman Comedy. However, as it does in the case of Achilles in the *Iliad*, a kind of love that matches the model may also occur in the comic genre.[62] Moreover, the idea of marriage as a sacred union between the lover and beloved is not completely alien to the homopoetic model of love. Roman love poets may for example envisage themselves in relationships with their beloveds that seem almost more binding than normal wedlock, as famously dramatized in Catullus poem 68.[63] Love may indeed be conflated with marriage, as in the Greek novel, but as its token, not its purpose. In a similar fashion, love may result in children, but it is not love if its purpose and motivation is producing them. Indeed, the validity of the homopoetic model of love can perhaps be seen most acutely in poetry based on heterosexual configurations, since even here not only wedlock, but also the question of children remains a difficult issue. Thus, in Tibullus' dream-vision of a life shared with his beloved Delia, he envisages her not with their child, but a *uerna*, a 'slave-child' from his household, in her lap (Tib. 1.5.26), while Propertius refuses outright to engender soldiers for the regime (Prop. 2.7.14) and Ovid's abortion poems (*Am.* 2.13 and 2.14) strongly complicate the relationship between love

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61 See also Astrup Sundt in this volume. The double nature of the 'written girl' as an artifice in herself *and* as a tribute to 'writings' – included those of women poets – is captured in Propertius' second book of elegies, where we encounter the phrase *scripta puella* applied to Cynthia (Prop. 2.10.8), cf. Wyke 2002, but also *scripta Corinnae* (2.3.21), the 'writings of Corinna [of Tanagra, the poet]'; see Thorsen 2012a; 2019b. Although these two instances of the word *scripta* (belonging to different grammatical categories) are rarely linked in scholarship, the double metapoetic aspect they represent offers a different perspective on James' line of reasoning about the cruel 'getting sex for free' motivation of the love of the Latin love elegists, since their poetry is not to be unequivocally understood as addressed to the beloved; instead, their writing is a symptom of the beloved's (voluntary or involuntary) absence, and if their poetry does have a motive beyond offering the only alternative activity that the lover is able to resort to when he or she is unable to make love, then this motive is to address posterity, which would explain why the elegist – as a corollary – can offer the beloved eternal fame in verse.

62 As e.g. in the case of Phaedria's love for the *meretrix* Thais in Terence's *Eunuchus*, which is not destined for wedlock; see n. 33 and Brecke in this volume.

63 One of the most conjugal interpretations of this poem is found in Lyne 1980, 52–69.

and procreation (and the relevance of these two phenomena to Augustan politics).

Finally, this model posits a kind of love that is pre-eminently voluntary, affectionate and reciprocal.[64] Certainly, Konstan (1994) is quite right when he argues that this kind of love is realised in a sustained manner within one literary genre in antiquity only: that of the Greek novel. Indeed, this genre is marked by configurations of striking symmetry (even if the lovers are of different sexes): usually both are equally active, equally deeply in love (although one girl ends up being kicked so badly by the boy in a fit of jealousy that she faints and is mistaken for dead)[65] and both are also equals in terms of social status (though sometimes from enemy families). However, instead of regarding this novelistic 'sexual symmetry' as exceptional, we may see it as the fulfilment of a drive towards equality that is embedded more generally in the concept of love in ancient literature, even in its homoerotic form. In fact, the reality of asymmetries[66] is something the lover in ancient literature seeks to overturn, or even expressly perceives as less real than the reality in which the lover regards the beloved as on a par with, or even more highly placed than the lover him- or herself.

Three consequences follow from this drive towards reciprocity in the homopoetic model of love: (a) money can't buy you love, (b) violence cannot produce love, and (c) love is potentially revolutionary. The last point is perhaps best illustrated by the Augustan laws against adultery, which not only made it a punishable crime to have extramarital sexual relations with the daughters, wives and widows of Roman citizens,[67] but also prohibited a citizen from manumitting a slave with whom he had fallen in love so that he could marry her.[68] A lover's disregard of the beloved's place in existing hierarchical structures (asymmetries) is

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64 As pondered on by Whitmarsh 2018, 172–3.

65 Chariton, *Callirhoe* 1.4.

66 Perhaps most conspicuously embodied in the older penetrator/younger penetrated paradigm, which is so strongly associated in scholarship with Greek homosexuality and which has been thoroughly criticized by Davidson 2001.

67 These laws (*lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*; *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*; *lex Iulia theatralis*; *lex Fufia Caninia* and *lex Aelia Sentina*; see Cooley 2013, 'section S') may be regarded as a proof that love of the kind Reddy describes above existed in antiquity. For if desire in the form of sexual appetite was the only urge that was known at a time when slaves and prostitutes were freely available for the gratification of such desire, why would anyone risk exile or worse to have sex with someone for any reason other than love? Cf. also Treggiari 1991; 1996, Cohen 1991.

68 Gardner 1993.

a potential threat to the social order, and the guardians of such an order may impose severe measures to curb its latent dangers for the establishment, such as the Julian laws introduced in Rome from the last decades BCE onwards.[69]

Concluding remarks

I will close this chapter by pointing out two consequences that follow from the homopoetic model of love as a means of drawing a map in scholarship that arguably fits the landscape of ancient love literature more accurately than the models currently in common use. These consequences have to do with love in literature as a research object more generally.

First, the homopoetic model of love privileges the experience of the lover through verbal descriptions and narratives, which aligns love not only with literature itself but also with metapoetics.[70] Next, the model focuses attention on the presence and reality of the beloved, who may be idealized, though not necessarily, and who may be both attractive and intimidating.[71] This focus on the beloved as an imposing, desirable, but also inescapable and sometimes frightening, even repugnant person, who is at the same time the cause and the goal of the lover's love, also highlights the literary qualities of this kind of love and renders it different from love e.g. in philosophy, where the ultimate object may be pleasure (Epicurus) or beauty (Plato).[72]

Both aspects, the description and narrations of the lover's experience and the lover's sustained focus on the person of the beloved, underscore the literary–aesthetic specificity of this model, which therefore includes the term 'poetics': through the god and phenomenon of Love/love which Sappho rightly identifies as a 'weaver of stories', 'you' and 'I'[73] become distinctive literary realities.[74]

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69 It is just as likely that these laws were manifestations of a dictator's (i.e. Augustus') need to control all spheres of life, including emotional and sexual relations, as it is that the laws were a reaction to some alleged decadence and lack of moral decency among Romans at the time, as assumed e.g. by Lyne 1980, 8–17. Cf. also Edwards 1993.

70 And not only in ancient literature; see n. 59 above.

71 Thus, the concept of 'crystallization', the process which transforms the beloved, however unlovely, into a flawless and unequivocally delightful person in the lover's eyes, in Stendhal 1822 (= 2014), is too reductive to cover the range of perceptions of the beloved in ancient literature.

72 See Kayachev in this volume.

73 Or, in third-person narratives, the 'one' and the 'other'.

74 I pursue the ~~latter~~ 'literary reality' further in the last chapter in this volume.