

Menander and his audience between Reception and Expectation

This paper attempts to study the Reception and Expectation theory with particular reference to Menander's plays within the framework of modern trends in classical studies. It was a game between Menander and his audience. While exponents of theatre' sociology consider that the audience of Modern Greek Comedy are interesting in the details of the dramatic plot, and that Menander used to hide the truth away from his audience, in order to create more suspense and arouse their eagerness to know the details till they know it gradually, Menander also plays with the expectation of his audience and their curiosity to know the specific details about the characters of his comedies .

Menander also depends on some visible hints and signals: their names, masks and addresses, from which the audience expect their roles and their behaviour in the play, then changes these roles . In the same way he gives some hints about the actions that will run in the next act, so the audience expect what will happen. Then he changes the actions and goes on in another direction, and so on.

Menander's technique therefore creates a successful dramatic effect.