

ATHENIAN COMEDY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

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H O L O T M S B U R Y

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Ignorance and the Reception of Comedy in Antiquity

Tom Hawkins and C.W. Marshall

non medius fidius ipsas Athenas tam Atticas dixerim.

I would say that not even Athens itself was so Attic.

Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 4.3.5

In a letter to his friend Caninius, the younger Pliny raves about a recent gathering, at which the impressively named but otherwise unknown Vergilius Romanus had given a reading of his latest poetry – his first foray into the realm of old comedy, *comoedia vetus* (*Ep.* 6.21.2). Among other details, Pliny tells us that Vergilius had presented his work to just ‘a few people’ (*paucis*), that he was already an accomplished author of *mimiambi* and comedies that rivalled Menander and others ‘of that era’ (*aetatis eiusdem*);¹ that he was a veritable Plautus or Terence; that he commended virtue and rooted out vice, using names both fictitious and real; and that he had lavished praise upon Pliny himself, perhaps adapting the self-promotion of many Old Comic parabases to the demands of Roman patronage.

Such information provides a rare glimpse into contemporary comic practice at Rome and the enduring influence of earlier eras, but its very rarity also makes this passage difficult to assess in broader terms. Does Pliny use *vetus* as a temporal or generic marker? Does this private reading imply that comedies of this sort were no longer staged? Was Vergilius’ literary versatility the norm or an oddity? Was he composing in Greek or Latin? And can we deduce anything from the naming of the most famous poets of Greek New Comedy and Republican Roman Comedy compared to the absence of any expected Old Comic names? None of these questions have answers, and it was largely in response to this experience of ignorance that we were inspired to undertake this exploration of the reception of classical Athenian comedy in the Roman imperial era. We hope that this volume provides some answers to important questions about the

influence and vitality (or decrepitude) of Athenian comic drama in the imperial era across an array of genres and media, and that our efforts inspire others to go even further in asking new questions and generating new insights on this topic.

Ignorance and misapprehension still dominate the subject of this collection. Many aspects of the reception of Athenian comedy in the Roman Empire have not yet been explored and we believe a collection of new studies from a range of theoretical approaches will benefit our field. In particular, we hope this project will appeal both to those interested in the afterlife of Greek comedy in the first five centuries CE and anyone concerned with the sources for the cultural and literary products emerging primarily in the Greek-speaking Roman world. For this reason, the personified *Agnoia* (Ignorance or Misapprehension) serves as a kind of muse for this project, and we see these chapters eroding the areas where she has the greatest sway. *Agnoia* herself also has a dramatic life, appearing as the delayed prologue in Menander's *Perikeiromenē* ('The Girl who Got her Hair Cut'). An illustration of her appears in a second- or third-century CE papyrus which we assume comes from this play (*P. Oxy.* 2652), and which has served as the cover image to this volume.² Her wide-eyed stare out from the papyrus holds our gaze and challenges the viewer to explain what she represents. If this does come from an illustrated edition of Menander, is the image of a soldier in *P. Oxy.* 2653 from the same play (and therefore a representation of Polemon)? Does her appearance reproduce details from an active performance tradition, or is the imagery independent, with the artist depicting erroneously the close-lipped mask characteristic of pantomime, the elite artistic entertainment of the empire? Is her simple and comparatively unadorned costume reflecting something in the play's text that no longer survives? By seeming to point at herself, *Agnoia* dares us to overcome ignorance itself in explaining the many unusual features of this exceptional pair of illustrations.³

The overview presented in the following three sections provides a chronological frame that allows us to consider the individual studies presented in *Athenian Comedy in the Roman Empire*. We outline the development of Athenian comedy from its inception until the death of Alexander; we provide an account of the transition through the Hellenistic and Roman Republican periods (which coincides with the development and spread of what comes to be known as New Comedy); and we then present some of the questions that dominate the study of the reception of Greek comedy in the Roman Empire to help position the original contributions in this collection.

Classical Athenian comedy (486–323 BCE)

The story of comic drama in Athens traditionally begins 2500 years ago in 486, when Chionides (Suda, *ad loc.*) presented an Old Comedy at the City Dionysia.⁴ By c. 440 comedies were being staged as part of the Lenaea as well (IG II² 232.5), and from an early date both festivals probably were using the theater of Dionysus to showcase their dramatic competitions. Virtually everything that we know about classical Athenian drama derives (directly or indirectly) from these two festivals, at each of which five comic playwrights and their casts of actors annually competed. From this basic information, we can infer that there must have been hundreds of comic dramas produced in the classical era, of which we can talk about only a handful.⁵ Yet this represents only a small part of the fuller story of early comic drama. Comedies were staged in Sicily earlier than they were at Athens, and similar traditions must have existed both throughout the Mediterranean basin and in a variety of smaller venues across Attica.⁶ And thus our eleven complete plays by Aristophanes that span the years 425 (*Acharnians*) to 388 (*Wealth*) amount to a tiny slice of early Greek comedy and one that does not offer a representative sample of comic drama from this period.

From the evidence that we have, however, we can deduce a list of traits that delimit the shape of Athenian Old Comedy: individual playwrights composed a single play, which, if approved by the archon, was granted access into the competition at either the Lenaia or Dionysia; a selected play was assigned a chorus of citizens and a *chorēgos* (citizen-producer), who paid for the costuming and training of the chorus;⁷ professional, male actors played the speaking roles, and wore elaborate costumes including masks and padded bodysuits with an attached leather phallus; plots tended toward the fantastical, rather than mythological or historical themes, but they took as their principal frame of reference the social, historical, and physical space of contemporary Athens; grotesque and sexual language and imagery were paired with sharp political satire of named and easily recognizable public figures; and plays were typically structured around an alternation of actor-driven, plot-driven episodes and choral interludes; of the latter, the three most prominent were the entrance song (*parodos*), the parabasis (in which the chorus interrupts the plot to speak as if with the voice of the poet about matters relating to comic dramaturgy, the greatness of the poet, the baseness of his rivals, the character of the audience, and political matters of the day), and the exit song (*exodos*). Although our evidence is incomplete and a great deal of variety existed within this broad superstructure, we can use this list of traits to demarcate the Old Comedy of Aristophanes, Cratinus

and Eupolis (and their contemporaries) from other, later iterations of comic drama and as a benchmark against which to assess imperial receptions of the earliest phase of Athenian comedy.

In recent years, a spate of work on early Athenian comedy has helped contextualize Aristophanes more broadly. The continued publication of volumes of *Poetae Comici Graeci* (PCG) offers updated texts and textual analysis of all the comic fragments. Translations and commentaries on comic fragments are becoming easily available.⁸ Mills and Olson have collected, edited, and analyzed the inscriptional evidence for the Athenian dramatic festivals.⁹ The cumulative result of this work is that we now have a better understanding of Old Comedy beyond the Aristophanic witness than at any time since antiquity. What's more, the accessibility of many of these important scholarly tools means that the study of comic fragments is much easier now than ever before, which will encourage more and more individuals to pursue their study.¹⁰

The wealth of fifth-century evidence, centered around Aristophanes and primarily from the last quarter of the century, declines toward the end of the Peloponnesian War. Platonius, writing no earlier than the late Hellenistic era but perhaps much later, claims that politics and the theatrical license to abuse public figures precipitated the shift from Old to Middle Comedy. Although such neat schematizations were commonly used in antiquity, they are not always helpful for modern analyses, and this is particularly true in the case of 'Middle' Comedy.¹¹ Platonius describes this transitional period or sub-genre in terms of a diminished role for the chorus and a lack of overt political engagement. In particular, he points to the legend about Alcibiades murdering Eupolis in response to the playwright's effeminate portrayal of him in *Baptae*, and claims that this event marks a clear historical transition. But this explanation does not fit the evidence – most importantly, because Eupolis' death in 411, even if at the hands of Alcibiades, precedes the alleged decline of Old Comedy by at least a decade, and since Csapo has shown that 'what we normally think of as Old, Middle and New Comedy designate synchronic, not period styles'.¹² Such questioning of ancient categories has led modern scholars to debate the existence of Middle Comedy as a useful heuristic concept, since it certainly does not reflect a straightforward chronological development. Even if we accept some notion of distinct periodizations of Athenian comedy, and distinguish the careers of Antiphanes, Alexis and their contemporaries in the early fourth century as Middle Comedy, it is probable that they saw themselves as continuing and developing the traditions established by the previous generations of comedians. The lack of any complete example of a play that shares both the timeframe and

the stylistic features that Platonius describes – with the possible exception of Aristophanes' *Wealth* (388) – means that our understanding of the period between Aristophanes and Menander remains woefully misunderstood.¹³ For these reasons we have chosen to forgo references to 'Middle' Comedy altogether in favor of more precise and useful categories of analysis.

At the same time, however, the early part of the fourth century begins the era in which we can see the influence of Athenian comedy reach well beyond the stage.¹⁴ From the fifth century, we find a very limited number of clues that, for example, suggest the impact of Old Comedy on tragedy, and Aristophanes tells us that bits of Cratinus had become standard repertoire at symposia (*Knights* 529–30), but otherwise we find little evidence of any wider influence of comic drama. But in the fourth century Plato and Aristotle bring comedy into the emerging realm of highly theorized intellectual discourse. Perhaps most importantly, Plato gives Aristophanes a prominent role in two texts: his *Apology* positions Aristophanes' *Clouds* as a key piece of evidence in the case against Socrates; and his *Symposium* situates philosophy as an intimate partner with both tragedy and comedy through the roles of Agathon and Aristophanes at the dinner-party to which the title refers.¹⁵

Two works by Aristotle have exerted more analytic influence on our understanding of comedy than any other, despite the fact that they are both now lost. His *Didaskaliai*, 'Production Notes', collected information from official records about the history of dramatic competitions at the major Athenian festivals and became the point of reference for the ancient system of dating that we still rely on today.¹⁶ And although his second book of *Poetics*, devoted wholly to the subject of comedy, does not survive, we know a great deal about his general arguments, and he discusses comedy on other occasions throughout his corpus.¹⁷ Thus, even though we have far more complete comic dramas from the fifth century than we do from the fourth, we can see comedy taking root more broadly in Greek culture during this period.¹⁸ Storey has even gone so far as to suggest the influence of Plato propelled Aristophanes to become the face of Old Comedy rather than the more successful Eupolis and Cratinus.¹⁹

The inscriptional evidence from the fourth century shows several changes in Athenian dramatic practice that impacted the history of comedy. Most important is the increasingly common habit of restaging earlier plays. In the fifth and early fourth centuries, restagings at the major Athenian festivals were rare.²⁰ By 386, however, the Dionysia featured regular restagings of tragedies, and by 311 comedies were also being reperformed. Re-performances opened new theatrical possibilities, as we can see in Aulus Gellius' (second c. CE) story about

a fourth-century actor named Polus who was playing the lead role in Sophocles' *Electra*: as Electra laments her brother's death, not knowing that he was actually still alive, and clings to the urn that supposedly contains his ashes, Polus' audience is also aware that the actor is holding the very urn containing the ashes of his recently deceased son (*Attic Nights* 6.5.7–8). This new habit of restaging fifth-century dramas is of obvious importance for a variety of reasons relating to canon formation, repertory and audience expectations, but in terms of the history of comedy, reperformance raises a specifically vexed question of terminology. When a bit of evidence refers to the performance of an old (παλαιά, ἀρχαία, *vetus*) or new (καινή, νέα, *nova*) comedy, how can we determine if the adjective is being used as a temporal or generic marker? Unlike tragedy and satyr drama, ancient classifications of classical Athenian comedy blur matters of periodization and generic nomenclature. In the didascalic inscriptions (based on and extending Aristotle's lost *Didaskaliai*), comparison with notices about tragedies and satyr dramas seems to ensure that *palaios* is used as a temporal, rather than a generic, term, but we should not assume a consistent terminological usage in different times and places.

As the restaging of fifth-century dramas became increasingly common, the didascalic inscriptions show that by 341 satyr drama had been separated from tragedy in the slate of competitive performances at the Dionysia (*IG* II² 2320). This might not seem to be a critical development in the history of comedy, but Shaw has shown that satyr drama, cut loose from the constraint of working in conjunction with tragedy, began to appropriate some of the distinctive traits of Old Comedy, particularly in terms of onomastic abuse, urban settings, metrical flexibility, paratragic engagement, and parabolic statements.²¹ Yet the Old Comic aspects that Shaw finds in Agen's *Python* and Lycophron's *Menedemus*, for example, reflect a dynamic ebb and flow of generic horizons, and he goes on to show that this new direction in satyr drama may itself have been the result of a shift on the part of comic drama in the direction of satyr drama. This shifting of generic-performative territory raises a more subtle issue than the matter of nomenclature. Namely, how can we track the influence of a classical genre in the imperial era when the genre in question did not remain static?

Dramatic genres present a particular challenge in this regard, since they are structured around a mixture of parameters imposed by a festival program (e.g. the official labelling of a play as a tragedy or a comedy; the number of actors available; the presence or absence of a chorus) and other less rigid issues, such as a preference for urban or rustic settings, or mythological or political plot themes. The old chestnut of Euripides' *Alcestis* presents precisely this issue in a more

familiar guise. Since that play was staged in the fourth position in a tragic tetralogy – in the position traditionally taken by a satyr drama – should we think of it more as a satyr drama that has cannibalized tragic dramaturgy or a tragedy that has supplanted satyric theater? Such reductive alternatives unnecessarily constrain both the role of the artist who brings a play to the stage and the role of an audience's generic expectations to participate in the production of meaning and the appreciation of generic dissonance, but they represent a necessary starting point for assessing the generic complexities of the shifting terrain of classical drama.²² As we trace the development of Athenian comedy beyond the end of the fifth century, therefore, we need to be attuned both to the continued role of what passed for comic theater in any particular social context as well as the various strands of comic influence discernible in other modes of artistic expression.

Comedy in the Hellenistic era (323–31 BCE)

About the time of the death of Alexander the Great (323), trends in comedy again shifted toward a topical realism that drew upon romantic narratives that share narrative features with late Euripidean tragedy and which ancient commentators termed 'New Comedy'. Although the figure of Menander eventually became synonymous with this era of comic production, the careers of Apollodorus, Diphilus and Philemon also flourished at this time, and like Menander they too exerted a strong influence on the Roman comedy of Plautus and Terence.²³ Papyrus discoveries from the last century of many, often substantial, Menandrian fragments mean that we now have significant portions of six plays in addition to a great number of smaller fragments.²⁴ The best preserved is the essentially complete *Dyskolos* ('The Grouch'). There is less of *Epitrepontes* ('The Arbitrators') and *Samia* ('The Girl from Samos'), and less again of *Aspis* ('The Shield'), *Perikeiromenē* ('The Girl who Got her Hair Cut') and *Sikyonioi* ('The Sikyonians').

Menandrian New Comedy can be distinguished from its dramatic predecessors in a variety of ways. Compared to fifth-century drama, surviving texts suggest a diminished choral role, though this may reflect matters of textual transmission more than any real change in performance practices; the individual actors gained more prominence; characters came from a stock set of stereotypes, such as the 'angry father', and masks became more expressive as these roles become individuated. Compared to Old Comedy, the plots of New Comedy were

typical and commonplace with generic settings, such as a farm, rather than the fanciful worlds of Aristophanes, and political satire and grotesque imagery were displaced by plots centered on romantic love and relationships among families and neighbors among whom the occasionally intervening divinities are not Olympians but minor gods and personifications (Pan, Chance, Ignorance). These traits help to distinguish New Comedy from its earlier comic forms, but lines of continuity are also evident. New Comedy's realism and its emphasis on family relations, for example, can be traced back to fifth-century tragedy, which often seems to be the point of reference for New Comedy's self-presentation.²⁵

The conflation between Menander and New Comedy generally (and the concomitant occlusion of other authors) is itself part of the historical backdrop to our current endeavor. Philemon and Diphilus were Menander's two greatest rivals, and what we know of their careers diverges from the model of Menander in several ways. Whereas Menander was an Athenian citizen, part of a prominent family (his uncle was Alexis, another of the most prominent fourth-century playwrights) and preferred to stay in Athens rather than move to Egypt at the invitation of Ptolemy I, neither Philemon nor Diphilus were native Athenians. Philemon, who is said to be from either Cilicia or Syracuse, defeated Menander in competition several times with plays that were supposedly less refined than those of his rival, and he visited Alexandria at the request of Ptolemy II.²⁶ These anecdotes, however, highlight the difficulty we have in seeing through the layers of later pro-Menandrian bias: Gellius' claim that Philemon defeated Menander only due to underhanded tactics (*Attic Nights* 17.4) sounds suspiciously like a later writer trying to square his own tastes with the historical record of victories; and Plutarch's allusion to the mock execution ordered by Magas of Cyrene (*de cohib. ira* 458a, *de vit. mor.* 449e), after Philemon had been shipwrecked upon the king's shores, may be a fantasy that grew out of Philemon's mockery of Magas on stage (fr. 132 K-A) or an assimilation of Philemon into the theme of playwrights being attacked by their powerful targets offstage (rumors of Cleon suing Aristophanes, and Alcibiades supposedly 'dyeing' Eupolis in the sea on account of his depiction in *Baptae*, 'The Dyers'). Diphilus was from Sinope and died in Smyrna after a career spent mostly in Athens, and some of his works were adapted by Plautus (in *Casina* and *Asinaria*) and Terence (in *Adelphi*). In terms of dramaturgy he stands out, because several of his titles indicate plays centered on mythological burlesques of some kind (e.g. *Heracles* and *Daughters of Danaus*) and in his *Sappho* he presented the historically impossible scenario of Archilochus and Hipponax being rivals for the affections of Sappho.

These last points again raise questions about the relationship between comic genres and periodization, since mythical and historical themes do not fit with

standard assumptions about the stock characters and realistic scenarios of New Comedy. We have already seen that in the fourth century satyr drama could adopt certain Old Comic traits, so it is possible that Diphilus' mythological plays have taken a cue from satyr drama. Similarly, the presentation of famous historical figures is most clearly known from Old Comic sources (Aeschylus and Euripides in Aristophanes' *Frogs* and Aristides, Miltiades, Solon and Pericles in Eupolis' *Demoi*). Although Menander eventually came to dominate thinking about New Comedy, we should bear in mind that other models thrived concurrently with his career.

The rough and perhaps semi-legendary outlines of the careers of these New Comic poets also reflect the changing dynamics throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin after the conquests of Alexander. The spread of Greek culture and the trends in festival patterns reflected in the epigraphic record show that entertainments of all sorts, including drama, were becoming wildly popular across the region during this period. During these years many new festivals emerge (some called *Dionysia* but others with names associated with other divinities or human patrons), as do the various unions (*synodoi*) of theatrical specialists (*tekhnitai*) under the patronage of Dionysus that organized the involvement of performers of all stripes at the myriad festivals that dotted the annual cycle.²⁷ With these changes, the Athenocentrism of our classical sources gives way to a model that looks much more like what we find in the imperial era.

With the death of Menander in 291 the era of clearly attested Athenian comedy essentially comes to a close, though inscriptional evidence (*IG II² 2323*) shows that comic competitions were still being staged at the Athenian *Dionysia* beyond the middle of the second century BCE.²⁸ In these later years, new plays continued to be produced, new poets were introduced, and old favorites were at least occasionally restaged.²⁹ From here, the story of Athenian comedy can be broken down into the overlapping themes of preservation and influence.³⁰

The preservation of Athenian comedy derives from a desire to delimit and maintain the integrity of a fixed canon of plays. To some extent this impulse can explain habits of reperforming classical plays, though large-scale public performances were presumably not driven primarily by antiquarian interests. The history of comic texts in antiquity is difficult to discern, though Wilson notes that the Alexandrian editions presumably provided some uniformity as a basis for other copies.³¹ More diffusely, the school curriculum, preferences for entertainment at dinner parties and scholarly activities worked together to develop an elite canon of taste and exclusivity. The typical school curriculum included comedy, with Menander (and Euripides) following close on the heels of

Homer, and with the more historically involved Old Comedy introduced to advanced students.³² Menander's reputation for naturalistic depictions of everyday life, his clear and elegant Greek, and the continued staging of his plays must have contributed to his place in the educational canon and his continued popularity. Perhaps this combination of style and social location also explains the appearance from the first century CE onwards of lists of Menandrian maxims (often called *monostikhoi* or *sententiae*), many of which are clearly the product of school exercises.³³ Students who studied comedy as part of their education grew into the social set that tended to present bits of comic and tragic dramas at dinner parties, either as songs sung by the invited guests themselves or with performers brought in for private viewings. Pliny's decision to name two of his villas at Lake Como Tragedy and Comedy, based on contrasting analogies between the high vantage of the former with the 'high boots' (*cothurni*) of tragedy and the shoreline setting of the latter with the 'low slippers' (*socculi*) of comedy (*Ep.* 9.7.3) and the many theatrical mosaics and frescos from private homes in the Roman era offer easy examples of the deep connection between elite hospitality and the dramatic tradition.³⁴

More rarefied scholarship on comedy begins early in the Hellenistic era with the polymaths assembled at Alexandria, though nearly all of these works are now lost: Lycophron, who was from Euboea and worked in Alexandria during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (reigned 283–246), was counted among 'the Pleiad' (i.e. the seven leading tragic playwrights in Hellenistic Alexandria); he organized and catalogued the comic texts held by the Library of Alexandria, and he wrote a nine-volume work titled *On Comedy*; Euphronius (probably from Cyrene and working in the third century) began the tradition of writing commentaries on individual plays (Athenaeus 11.495c), an intellectual endeavor perhaps already discernible in incipient form in the confrontation between Aeschylus and Euripides in Aristophanes' *Frogs*; another Cyrenean, Callimachus (310–240), produced the massive *Pinakes*, which effectively catalogued the holdings of the Library of Alexandria, and continued the Aristotelian work on dramatic chronology; Eratosthenes, also from Cyrene (c. 275–195) and who is perhaps most famous for his calculation of the circumference of the earth, wrote a single volume titled *On Ancient Comedy*; Aristophanes of Byzantium (c. 257–c. 185) edited the texts of Old Comedy and gave each a preface (*hypothesis*); he also seems to have begun the scholarly practice of working on Menander and may have edited his plays.³⁵ Such scholarly work continued beyond the Hellenistic era with the likes of Didymus, Varro, Quintilian, Plutarch, and Athenaeus, and the social location of comedy as a subject for these towering intellectual figures

ensured the literary imprimatur of both New and Old Comedy in parallel to the continuing history of staged performances of comic dramas.

Whereas we have used the notion of continuity to refer to the enduring practice of staging comic plays and preservation to describe the social and physical contexts that served to maintain the prominence and knowledge of classical comedies, influence is a far slipperier and more sprawling category of analysis that resists many objective analytic criteria beyond the counting of recognizable citations. The most familiar case of classical Athenian comedy influencing the literature of the Hellenistic era is to be found among the works of the Republican Roman dramatists Plautus and Terence. These playwrights often loudly proclaimed their indebtedness to Greek New Comedy, and sometimes suggest that they have merely translated an old Greek play into Latin. Plautus' *Mercator* ('Merchant'), for example, takes its basic plot from Philemon's *Emporos* ('Merchant') and his *Casina* from Diphilus' *Klêroumenoi* ('Those Casting Lots'); Terence's *Eunuchus* ('The Eunuch') and *Andria* ('The Girl from Andros') emerged from Menander's plays of the same names. Decades of scholarship have been spent trying to discern Greek originals beneath the obscuring surface of these Latin works, but this inevitably comes at the expense of considering the Latin plays as Roman literary products that in the first instance were being addressed to Roman Republican audiences.³⁶

Beyond these obvious (if hardly straightforward) cases of Greek New Comedy influencing Republican Roman comedy, instances of literary influence become more challenging to isolate. At one end of the spectrum, we can assume that classical Greek comedy exerted some influence at least indirectly on every author of the Hellenistic and indeed of the imperial era as well, but such a claim offers no useful critical insight. At the other extreme, we can doubt any assertion of influence that is not bolstered by such overt clues as quotations of comic material or references to comic playwrights, but such stringent parameters may lead to overlooking important connections. Influence, furthermore, is not always direct or linear. We have already mentioned the example of Plato's incorporation of Aristophanes into his *Apology* and *Symposium*, texts that were widely read and studied in the post-classical era, and similar extra-comedic avenues of influence can be found throughout antiquity. Theophrastus' *Characters*, for example, seems deeply engaged with the typicalized set of characters familiar from Menandrian New Comedy, but reaches beyond the world of the stage to the everyday world of Athens in its discovery of recognizable foibles that distinguish individuals.³⁷ Menander studied under Theophrastus (who was the successor of Aristotle as the head of the Lyceum), though the teacher outlived the student by a few years,

and it is impossible to determine whether Menander's plays influenced Theophrastus' *Characters* or vice-versa. Influence is obvious, but the precise details remain elusive, and a common source could lie behind the *ethopoeia* (character drawing) of both Menander and Theophrastus.

Herodas, whose dates are uncertain but who almost certainly composed his *Mimiamb*s in the later part of the third century BCE, presents a different version of the challenge of influence. Kutzko has shown that this fragmentary collection of poems draws together themes and structures borrowed from the Sicilian mimes of Sophron and Athenian comedy while also foregrounding the importance of Hipponax, who appears in *Mimiamb* 8 and whose choliambic meter is used throughout the collection.³⁸ Herodas' plan, that is, was not to continue the practice of composing recognizable comedies in the Athenian mode nor to preserve the legacy of Athenian comedy but, rather, to create something new in the mash-up of several literary models. Similarly, Horace's claim that Roman satire is built upon the legacy of Aristophanes, Cratinus and Eupolis (*Satires* 1.4.1–8) represents a manipulation of cultural authority and generic expectations rather than any sort of straight-forward assertion of a rigorously delineated literary genealogy.³⁹ These examples highlight the interconnectedness and partialness of literary influence, and they raise the possibility of indirect influence. For an imperial figure such as Persius, for example, how much of his engagement with Greek comedy is direct and how much is negotiated through his philosophical interests, which may have included Theophrastus, or his satirical debt to Horace's use of Old Comedy or to the choliambic of Herodas (and Hipponax) with which he composed the preface to his collection? For those authors in this volume who build their arguments around matters of literary influence, therefore, a basic challenge is to establish clear criteria by which comic influence can be recognized, defended and analyzed.

Athenian comedy in the Roman empire (31 BCE –)

Around the same time as the political changes that occurred following the Battle of Actium, as Rome was transformed into Augustus' principate and then the empire, and as the impact of Roman culture was disseminated across the Mediterranean basin and throughout Western Europe, we can document significant changes in the preferred forms of popular entertainment. Stone theatres continued to be built, leaving distinctive Roman architectural landmarks that distinguish the ambitions of an urban setting, a place wanting to be noticed.

Yet we have very little idea what sorts of performances took place in these venues. While musical and artistic contests did continue throughout the empire, and while plays did continue to be written and read (in turn shaping the literary output in other genres as well), it seems that the theatres were used primarily for the elite artistic medium of pantomime, a kind of masked ballet that focused on the mimetic dance of a single performer.⁴⁰ Pantomime flourished into the sixth century CE, and so shaped artistic tastes throughout the history of the empire. The mythological narratives of pantomime largely displace tragedy in the social and imaginative world of the Romans. The separate but related dramatic form known as mime develops from the specific kind of unmasked improvisatory street theatre of the Hellenistic era to a scripted literary form in the first century BCE, beginning with the authors Decimus Laberius and Publilius Syrus. In the empire, the use of the term *mime* broadened to include almost any performative genre, including (confusingly, at times) pantomime.⁴¹ Both these genres were widely performed and remain inadequately understood today.

Where comedy as a theatrical genre fits within the literary and social practices of this world is the subject of *Athenian Comedy in the Roman Empire*. This is not a complete account, nor even a representative survey, but it does offer a number of new studies that complement what we know about comedy in this period. We choose to position these studies in terms of the reception of Athenian comedy – how the Romans (broadly conceived in political terms as those living in the empire and writing in Greek and Latin) understood, interpreted, and reshaped their own literary pasts.⁴² A few scholars have considered these issues before (many of the same names recur regularly throughout the footnotes of the contributions here), but we are particularly heartened by the near explosion of new scholarship on this subject that has emerged since we first conceived of this collection early in 2013. In particular, the appearance of Sebastiana Nervegna's *Menander in Antiquity* (2013) makes easily accessible a wealth of material that was previously widely scattered. The publication of a number of handbooks and companions provides important groundwork for advancing that articulation of this history: in particular, *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Comedy* (2014) and *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Comedy* (2014) contain substantial sections on reception in the Roman period. These synthetic accounts (again, many of which are cited in footnotes here) demonstrate the degree to which the topography of this subject has changed in just two years. These works provide crucial detail to a general outline, and will facilitate more engaged exploration of this scholarly territory.

The place of Greek comedy in the Roman Empire is surprisingly free of the chronological distinctions that separate Menander from Aristophanes, as detailed in the historical survey above. This is, to us, unexpected: the division of Old and New Comedy (and the transition from one to the other, which can be given the label Middle) was reinforced by the scholarly attitudes that emerged in the early centuries CE. That it is not possible easily to separate studies in this volume focused on Old Comedy from those focused on New demonstrates that what was important was the larger conceptual category of Athenian comedy. Different sources may favor one over the other, but in the larger chronological sweep both periodizations remain relevant in different ways.

Another conceptual frame that might be employed foregrounds the place in society where awareness and knowledge of Athenian comedy emerges. Nervegna isolates three of these, when she (following a model articulated by Plutarch) discusses ‘Menander in public theatres’, ‘Menander at dinner parties’, and ‘Menander in schools.’⁴³ Of course, the delineations between categories are highly permeable, and it is never long before enquiry along one path leads to many forking branches that demonstrate how deeply embedded ideas about Athenian comic theatre can be. These areas do provide some useful clusters for thinking about how comedy ‘fits’ into a larger cultural history.

Theatre

Though Athenian comedy was disseminated widely through performance in the Hellenistic period, evidence for the continued performance of these plays as plays in the empire is frustratingly hard to produce. Plays were performed, and existed as part of the larger performance traditions widely available. Many plays had been translated and adapted into Latin, generating a new comedic literature, as Greek comedy too continued to re-invent itself; and there are contexts where performance of excerpts of earlier comedies, at times set to music, seems to have emerged. At the same time, the Athenian plays were known, and live performance remains a plausible avenue for the dissemination of that knowledge. Yet we are tantalized by a frustrating lack of unambiguous evidence for reperformance of classical Athenian comedies at this time. Authors seem to assume that plays were still staged, but their assumptions are never unpacked to the degree that the modern theatre historian would like. Plutarch asks rhetorically, ‘For what reason is it truly worth while for an educated man to go to the theatre, except for the sake of Menander?’ (*Mor.* 854b: τίνας γὰρ ἄξιον ἀληθῶς εἰς θέατρον ἐλθεῖν ἄνδρα πεπαιδευμένον ἢ Μενάνδρου ἕνεκα), and this would seem to suggest that

he could see Menander on stage in the first century CE. We are left wondering whether that's true, and how often he had the opportunities to see Menander performed on stage. Which plays were in the repertoire, and were they performed in Chaeronea, in Athens, in Rome, or elsewhere? Plutarch's comment answers nothing; it only points to how much we do not know.

Performances of comedies – both new compositions and restaged classics – did continue, though no imperial comedies survive with the exception of the Lucianic *Swift-foot*, a short piece consisting of fewer than two hundred lines of iambic trimeters that expects a performance context of some sort, but precisely what is not known.⁴⁴ Lucian emerges as an author who is especially clear about his debts to earlier comedy. Among imperial authors, Lucian foregrounds his use of Athenian comedy most prominently in his claim to have created a new generic amalgam that blends Old Comic wit and invective with the prose form and intellectual perspective of Platonic dialogue.⁴⁵ In a variety of texts, he engages with plots and scenarios recognizably modelled on classical Athenian plays, while also peppering his texts with passing references and allusions to both Old and New Comedy.⁴⁶

Banquets

The presence of Athenian comedy at elite dinner parties is also attested widely.⁴⁷ Songs, performances of excerpts (by slaves, by hired performers, or perhaps by distinguished guests), and intellectual discussion could all include comedy in different ways. Athenaeus in his sprawling second-century work *Deipnosophistae* ('The Learned Banqueters') provides an extreme literary model of such a social context in which Athenian comedy is a constant point of reference. Many of the plays he cites are lost, and this fictional example provides a model against which we can hope to measure the more quotidian reality: what might someone attending a *cena*, *convivium*, or (Greek) *symposion* be expected to know or recognize from the literature of an earlier era? Dinner parties provided a private venue for comic performance to supplement the public venues described above, but for which documentary evidence does not exist. Additional information comes from these venues themselves, which can feature illustrations of Menander or Menandrian plays.

The most spectacular examples of these illustrations consist of mosaic floors of these dining rooms that represent scenes of actors from specific New Comedies, which at times are helpfully labeled with play title, character name, and even act number.⁴⁸ There is a so-called 'House of Menander' in Pompeii,

Mytilene, and Daphne (a suburb of Antioch on the Orontes), with similar mosaics found in Chania (on Crete), Zeugma (like Daphne in modern Turkey), Ulpia Oescus (in Bulgaria), etc. The representation of actors in performance would seem to support a living theatrical tradition. Unfortunately, in at least some of these examples, it can be demonstrated conclusively that the representation dates back to a Hellenistic illustration.⁴⁹ The continued interest in performed Menander might indicate his continued presence on Roman stages, but the specifics of the representation leaves the question open. Possibly, details provided in these mosaics are updated by the artist to reflect contemporary performance trends, but we cannot know.

These representations of performed scenes share important features with artistic representations in other media. Throughout the imperial period, artistic representations of masks and other accoutrements of theatre proliferate beyond the immediate reference to the theatrical event: emblems in the form of a comic mask are found on lamps, terracotta figurines show comic slaves seeking sanctuary on an altar,⁵⁰ wall paintings are adorned with theatrical scenes or settings; marble sculptures show an actor dressed for comic performance; fine metalwork and carved gems include scenes that reveal the personal attachment a Roman citizen might have with the comic theatre.⁵¹ All of these document the notional importance, even centrality, of the comic theatre in everyday Roman life. Further, they share features with the illustrated tradition of performance of Roman comedy that survives in the manuscripts of Terence (and which also are based on an earlier theatrical tradition).⁵² It emerges that thinking in terms of the influence of Athenian comedy on elite Roman dinner parties quickly spreads to other areas of cultural representation, and cannot be easily contained.

Education

A similar story emerges when considering the role of comedy in schools and in scholarship. Both Menander and Aristophanes were known (or at least knowable), as were the works of many of their rivals. Comedy was part of the school curriculum, and its speeches were used to help prepare orators.⁵³ The language and vocabulary used established a standard by which 'pure Attic' could be determined.⁵⁴ Greek literature in the second century CE in particular looked to classical Athens as a standard which should be emulated, and the impact of this interest in Athenian comedy affected all levels of the academic hierarchy. At one end of the scale, students would read Aristophanes (foregrounding *Clouds*, because of its relevance to Socrates); at the other end, learned commentaries

were being written on Eupolis' *Taxiarchs* (1st c. CE?; Eupolis fr. 268 K-A, = *P. Oxy.* 2740) and *Prospaltians* (3rd c. CE; Eupolis fr. 259 K-A, = *P. Oxy.* 2813). Plays were being copied, edited, selected, and preserved.

Despite all the energy directed toward maintaining the social and intellectual prominence of classical Greek comedy, precious little has survived to the modern day, and the story of preservation must be paired with a history of loss, a history that must be deduced, as it were, from the negative space around evidence of preservation. Prior to the printing press, texts had to be copied by hand, and the entire corpus of ancient Greek comedy was simply too large to maintain.⁵⁵ Some texts were carefully preserved, as seen in the manuscript tradition of Aristophanes' surviving plays; others were excerpted into anthologies, making it difficult to know with certainty how many complete plays were still available to someone such as John Stobaeus, whose late antique *Anthology* includes selections taken from many Menandrian plays and quite a few by lesser-known figures such as Philemon. Galen (*On his own Books*, 17) still had enough material from which to compose separate treatises on political words in Aristophanes, Cratinus and Eupolis respectively, which strongly suggests that some complete plays of all three authors were still available. Yet by the early Byzantine era, it seems that Menander had largely disappeared and Old Comedy was quickly coalescing around a limited number of Aristophanic plays: the so-called Byzantine triad of *Clouds*, *Frogs*, and *Wealth*, with *Knights* also prominently attested. Papyrus evidence, preserved thanks to the dry climate of Egypt though often in a terribly fragmentary state, offers critical insights into the contours of this dwindling of the comic (and, indeed, classical) corpus, and it is from a series of papyrus finds that the extant corpus of Menander has grown enormously over the last century.⁵⁶

Comedy as cultural literacy

These areas alone do not fully describe the place of Athenian comedy in the Roman Empire. As we have seen, none of these groupings creates a discrete set: each spills over, resisting classification and description. But comedy goes beyond this, serving as a familiar point of reference to the authors of the empire. Anecdotes continue to be told about comic actors from the classical period, and the 'idea of Menander' gains a cultural currency that would have been unimaginable to Menander himself. Comedy becomes an essential part of the basic cultural literacy of any educated person, and we should expect that most had heard stories about Aristophanes and Menander, as well as Eupolis, Cratinus, and others, and that they might quote lines in ordinary conversation being only

barely aware of their source. When Julius Caesar or Saint Paul quote Menander,⁵⁷ it would be easy to assume an intimate familiarity with his plays. In each case, this is possible, but the quotation alone demonstrates no more than the established place lines of comedy might have in everyday speech.

Other imperial authors give clues about the status of comedy in this era via allusions to scripts or performances. The first-century CE literary scholar Quintilian, for example, speaks in glowing terms about the language of both Old Comedy (*antiqua comoedia*, with references to Aristophanes, Eupolis, and Cratinus) and Menander, who seems to have become the icon of New Comedy by this era (*Institutio Oratoria* 10.65–72). Three centuries later, in his self-abusing rant *The Beard-Hater*, the Emperor Julian compares himself to the titular grump of Menander's *Dyscolus* (342a) and later claims that the people of Antioch have heard of philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Theophrastus, only from their roles in comic parodies (353b).⁵⁸

Many of the chapters in *Athenian Comedy in the Roman Empire* explore this wider position Old Comedy and New Comedy held in the living imaginations of Roman authors. They build on previous studies⁵⁹ and help describe the place comedy occupied in the Roman literary imagination, particularly when plays had transferred from the world of performance to a life beyond the theatre, beyond the dining hall, and beyond the schoolroom. The importance of these works is different for each author considered. Specific studies like these strive to expand the ways that the reception of comedy can be discussed. What emerges, though, is that tracing this history in the lives of Greek comedies, from four to ten centuries after they were first composed and performed, reveals a vast canvas that has only begun to be studied.

Notes

- 1 We might suspect that *mimiambi* here refer to typical Roman mime (a performance genre that falls outside the scope of this volume) if not for the fact that Pliny elsewhere praises another contemporary mimiambist by likening his verses to those of Callimachus or Herodas (4.3). It was this other poet, the consular Arrius Antoninus, who inspired Pliny's epigraph to this section.
- 2 Turner 1967 (= *MNC*³ 6EP 1): 'Thick hair, from which ringlets fall down by the side of the neck. Prominently circled staring eyes: they perhaps represent a mask but the lips do not appear to be open. A chiton clasped at the right shoulder, reaches below the knee and is caught up by a girdle. The bare right arm is bent upward at the elbow

- and rests, with thumb extended, lightly on the chest. A cloak or scarf hangs down the left side from the shoulder, and a gathering of it is perhaps caught up by the left arm at waist level' (1967: 180).
- 3 There is a third papyrus from an illustrated Menander edition, *PSI VII 847*; see Bartoletti 1962 and Dedoussi 1980.
 - 4 On the earliest history of comedy in Athens, see Storey 2010.
 - 5 For a reassessment of the traditional notion that only three plays, rather than five, were presented annually at the Dionysia during the Peloponnesian War, see Csapo and Slater 1995: 107 and 135, where they print *P. Oxy. 2737*, fr. 1, col ii, 1–17, which claims that Plato Comicus' *Theater Police* (produced sometime between 427 and 413) placed fourth at the Dionysia.
 - 6 Aristotle (*Poetics* 1449a-b) claims that the origins of comedy are not clearly known, but he points to Epicharmus and the shadowy Phormis as Sicilian examples of comic playwrights who preceded the rise of comedy in Athens. For the most recent discussions of early Sicilian comedy, see Boshier 2014; for Aristotle on comedy see Janko 1984 and Watson 2012; for performances at deme theaters in Attica, see Makres 2013: 81–6 and Paga 2010; for inscriptional evidence of comic performances outside Attica, see Csapo and Slater 1995: 44–9; for the iconographic evidence, see Csapo 2014, Taplin 1993, Nervegna 2014b and Slater 2014; for theatrical performances in Attica at the Rural Dionysia and Anthesteria, see Csapo and Slater 1995: 121–38.
 - 7 Csapo and Slater 1995: 351–2 discuss the evidence for the recruitment of citizen choreuts (members of a chorus); as they show, participation in a chorus seems to have been considered a burden, and the *chorēgos* had a surprising range of coercive powers that he could use to ensure participation.
 - 8 Henderson 2008; Most et al. 2013–; Nesselrath 2010; Olson 2007; Rusten 2011; Storey 2011. In addition, Storey 2003 and Bakola 2010 provide important monographs on Eupolis and Cratinus, respectively.
 - 9 Mills and Olson 2012.
 - 10 Dobrov 1995, Harvey and Wilkins 2000 and Biles 2014 exemplify this new potential for studying Athenian comedy beyond the few playwrights whose works survive intact.
 - 11 Platonius (pp. 2–3 Koster = Storey 2011: vol. 1, 8–9). Storey 2011: vol. 1, xvii succinctly presents the various ancient periodizations of Athenian comedy.
 - 12 Csapo 2000: 121. For further debunking of the legend about Eupolis' death, see Storey 2003: 56–7.
 - 13 Nesselrath 1990 offers the most thorough analysis of this period. He surveys the ancient and modern evidence (1–64) and argues for a temporal definition of Middle Comedy spanning 380–50 BCE, while admitting that the preceding years had led up to this period gradually (333–8). Csapo 2000 argues for a more gradualist

- perspective in which elements of Old, Middle and New Comedy can be found throughout the entire period of classical Athenian comedy. Csapo and Slater 1995, e.g. 404, extend the period of Middle Comedy to c. 320. Arnott 2010, Shaw 2014: 106–22, and Sidwell 2014a: 60–78, offer the most updated discussions. On Alexis, see Arnott 1996a. See Rusten 2011: 434–576 for translations of the comic fragments from this period.
- 14 A similar process can be charted for virtually every other literary genre as well, since the surviving body of fourth-century Athenian texts show a high degree of cross-referentiality.
- 15 Clay 1975 discusses the theatrical aspects of *Symposium*; Platter 2014 analyzes Plato's engagement with Aristophanes.
- 16 We also hear of an Aristotelian *Nikai*, 'Victories', though it is never cited in antiquity. Blum 1991: 31 suggests that the *Nikai* may have been an appendix to the *Didaskaliai*.
- 17 See Watson 2012 for a thorough discussion of Aristotle and comedy, and Janko 1984 on the second book of *Poetics*.
- 18 For a quick overview of the inscriptional evidence, especially the *Fasti* (IG II² 2318), the Victors Lists (IG II² 2325) and the *Didaskaliae* (IG II² 2319–23a), see Csapo and Slater 1995 40–44; for a thorough discussion see Mills and Olson 2012.
- 19 Storey 2003: 4.
- 20 On fifth-century reperformance of tragedy, see Lamari 2014 and Biles 2006/7. Taplin 1999: 38 discusses early revivals of tragedy outside Athens. The reperformance of Aristophanes' *Frogs* is attested in the play's hypothesis (1c Dover). *Life of Aeschylus* (12) claims that the Athenians voted to restage his plays soon after his death in about 456 and that Aeschylus himself restaged *Persians* in Sicily at the request of Hieron of Syracuse. This second performance of *Persians* must have occurred between 472, when the play was debuted in Athens, and 467, when Hieron died. Bosher 2012 argues for the heterodox position that *Persians* was performed for the first time in Syracuse.
- 21 Shaw 2014: 123–48.
- 22 Marshall 2000.
- 23 Nervegna 2013 and Lape 2004 provide thorough and updated assessments of major issues relating to Menander. See Rusten 2011: 601–25, 660–704 for translations of the fragments of Menander's rivals (with valuable discussion still at Webster 1953: 125–83, 205–32).
- 24 The most recent major discovery was in 2003, when a 400-line palimpsest (that is, a text that remains partially visible after having been erased to make space for a different text) was found in the Vatican Library. The text, which is still unpublished, contains parts of *Dyscolos* and a previously unknown play called *Titthe* ('The Wetnurse').
- 25 Petridis 2010: 101: 'Tragedy seems to operate within New Comedy in ways comparable to the workings of epic myth in tragedy itself.' The foundational work on

- Menander and tragedy is Katsouris 1975, updated by Petridis 2010 and Omitowoju 2010. Aristophanic plays such as *Acharnians*, *Thesmophoriazusae* and, above all, *Frogs* also use tragedy as a key point of reference, though Old Comedy often seems to be fifth-century tragedy's rival, whereas New Comedy is its heir.
- 26 Bruzzese 2011 is now the standard resource for all matters relating to Philemon.
- 27 Le Guen 2014: 362–7.
- 28 See Mills and Olson 2012: 76 for an assessment of the text; they conclude that the final entries on *IG II² 2323*, which may extend as far as the 130s, must derive from the last years of the Dionysia's existence as a venue for dramatic competitions.
- 29 For Hellenistic restagings of comedies, see Nervegna 2013: 65–70 and Summa 2008.
- 30 Nervegna 2014a is structured around the claim that the 'ancient contexts of reception of Greek comedy' (387) were the theater, dinner party and school (following the structure of chapters in Nervegna 2013, which offers a focused treatment of the ancient reception of Menander). As this volume shows, the idea of artistic influence does not fit well with any of these three categories.
- 31 Wilson 2014a: 657.
- 32 Aristophanes of Byzantium ranked Menander second only to Homer (*IG XIV.1183c* = Test. 170c K-A); see also Statius *Silv.* 2.1.113–19 and Martial 14.87, 183, 184). For the pairing of Menander with Euripides, see Nervegna 2013: 9–10 and 110–16. For Menander's place in Egyptian education (the region from which papyrus finds permit the most detailed insights), see Criboire 2001: 197–201.
- 33 For the collection of Menandrian maxims as a discrete corpus, see Liapis 2002 and Pernigotti 2008. Nervegna 2013: 201–51 and 2014a: 398–402 assesses the curricular role of classical comedy. Wilson 2014b: 427 notes that Aristophanes largely supplants Menander's place in the standard curriculum in late antiquity.
- 34 Nervegna 2014a: 395–8 discusses the literary sources for comic performances at dinner parties whereas at 2013: 120–200 she places much more emphasis on the host's theatrical décor. Hunter 2014: 379–84 addresses the social implications of Plutarch's comments about appropriate entertainments for dinner parties (*Sympotic Questions* 7.8). Tronchin 2012a and 2012b raises a cautionary issue – namely that Roman décor tended to emphasize eclecticism over spotlighting specific pieces. This suggests that we need to proceed cautiously when drawing conclusions about the presence of New Comic visual motifs (and the absence of Old Comic motifs) in Roman homes. At the very least, however, we can recognize that the aesthetic of New Comedy was among the many styles preferred by Roman tastes.
- 35 For early Hellenistic scholarship on comedy, see Lowe 2013.
- 36 For more on adaptations of Greek comedy at Rome, see Brown 2013, Petrides 2014, Fontaine 2014a, 2014b, and Ruffell 2014.
- 37 On Theophrastus and Menander, see Fortenbaugh 2003: 281–326; for a thorough analysis of Theophrastus' *Characters*, see Diggle 2004 and Millett 2007.

- 38 Kutzko 2012.
- 39 On Horace's claim, see Ruffell 2014b, Sidwell 2014b, Sommerstein 2011 and Nelson Hawkins, chapter 3 in this volume.
- 40 On pantomime, see Garelli 2007, Lada-Richards 2007, Hall and Wyles 2008, and Webb 2008: 58–94.
- 41 On the connection between Hellenistic and Roman mimes, see Panayotakis 2014; and for the most famous author of Roman mimes, Decimus Laberius, see Panayotakis 2010.
- 42 For an overview of Reception Studies as a sub-discipline of Classics, see Hardwick 2003.
- 43 Nervegna 2013: 63–119; 120–200; 201–51. See also Marshall, chapter 6 in this volume, for a discussion of Plutarch, *Mor.* 854 A-B.
- 44 If Lucian is not the author of *Swift-Foot*, it may have been composed by the fourth-century CE orator Libanius or his student Acacius. On this text see Zimmermann 1909.
- 45 See, for example, his discussion of the relationship between dialogue and comedy in his own works (*Prometheus* 5; *Fisherman* 33).
- 46 For example, his reference to Aristophanes' *Clouds* (*True History* 1.25) and his introduction of a Menanderian prologue named Elenchus as a ventriloquized narrator (*False Critic* 4).
- 47 Jones 1991, 1993.
- 48 *MNC*³ vol. 1: 85–96 provides an overview of these illustrations, with individual entries, esp. 6CM 1–2, 6DM 1–3, 6FM 1–2 and 5NP 1–30 (and see Green forthcoming). The bibliographies on the mosaics are extensive: see esp. Charitonidis, Kahil, and Ginouvès 1970, Gutzwiller and Çelik 2012 and Nervegna 2013: 136–69, and their bibliographies. Other studies include Abadie-Reynal and Darmon 2003, Balty 1995, 2004, Berczelly 1988, Bieber and Redenwaldt 1911, Bruneau 1970, 1972, 1984, Campbell 1988, Campbell, Ergeç, and Csapo 1998, Campbell and Stillwell 1941, Çelik 2009, Darmon 2004, Friend 1941, Görkay, Linant de Bellefonds, and Prioux 2006, Kahil 1970, Marx 1930, Nervegna 2010, Önal 2002, 2009, and see Dunbabin 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2010.
- 49 See Green 1985, Csapo 1997, 1999, 2014: 116–26, Bruneau 1999, Ferrari 2004.
- 50 See Webster 1995: vol. 1, 229–35.
- 51 Green 1994 105–71.
- 52 Wright 2006.
- 53 For education practices generally, see Morgan 1998 and Cribiore 2001.
- 54 Tribulato 2014.
- 55 Zimmerman 1998: 9 tabulates more than 2,300 plays by 256 known comic playwrights. Such specific figures are open to suspicion but they usefully provide a rough estimate of the overall number of plays that existed in textual form.

- 56 Bathrellou 2014 documents the many papyrus discoveries published over 40 years. For more on the history of the comic corpus, see Wilson 2014b for an overview; Nesselrath 2010 on fragments; Sommerstein 2010 and Wilson 2007 on Aristophanes; Blume 2010 and Handley 2011 on Menander.
- 57 Caesar: ἀνεπίφθω κύβος (Plutarch, *Pompey* 60.2.9, *Caesar* 32.6; Menander fr. 64 K-A; cf. Suetonius, *Julius Caesar* 32). Paul: φθείρουσιν ἥθη χρησθ' ὁμιλῖαι κακαί (1 Corinthians 15: 33; Menander fr. 165 K-A).
- 58 On this passage, see Hawkins 2014: 291.
- 59 Fantham 1984, Bowie 2007, and Karavas and Vix 2014 are essential starting points. For an analysis of comic allusions in Greek novels, see Trzaskoma 2009, 2010, 2011, and Höschele 2014. Nesselrath 2014: 677–78 traces the influence of Greek comedy on the works of Clement of Alexandria.