

IX.—Comedy and the Comic Poets in the Greek Epigram¹

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Two paragraphs taken together — the first and the last — form a summary of this paper.

This paper attempts to discuss such Greek epigrams as deal with comedy and the comic poets from the point of view of literary criticism. Consequently, it is confined to those epigrams that express a judgment, or from which a judgment may be inferred. It does not pretend to collect every reference to a comic poet in the epigram; it attempts, however, to give a fairly complete collection of those epigrams that are of critical importance. For my purposes, then, four types of reference to the comic poets are important: (1) epigrams on comedy as a type and on comic appurtenances; (2) epigrams addressed to, and epitaphs on, the comic poets; (3) quotations from and imitations of the comic poets, in which class I include the comic fragments that have strangely wandered into the Palatine Anthology as separate epigrams, and also references to the titles of comedies; and (4) imitations of comic methods.²

¹ An abstract of a portion of this paper appeared in *Proceedings of The Missouri Academy of Science* 3 (1937) 149–50. Since that time it has been revised and augmented, and the conclusions have been modified.

² The following are the most important authorities used in preparing this paper. If in later footnotes a catch title or abbreviation is used in citing any of the works in the list below, it is included in brackets after the title to which it refers. When necessary, the method of reference is also explained. Quotations from *AP* are generally in the text of Paton, though occasionally I have departed from him in minor matters of orthography and punctuation; and the translations from *AP* are his, except as otherwise noted. I have silently modified the spelling of a few proper names to conform to my own practice. Quotations from Aristophanes are in the text of Rogers as reproduced in the Loeb Library.

COLLECTIONS OF EPIGRAMS AND LYRIC FRAGMENTS

- E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*, vol. 1 (2nd ed., Leipzig, 1936). [Diehl.²]
 F. Dübner, *Epigrammata Anthologia Palatina cum Planudeis et Appendice Nova Epigrammatum Veterum ex Libris et Marmoribus Ductorum*, 3 vols. (Paris [Didot] 1864–90). [Dübner; vol. 3 ed. E. Cougny, here referred to as Cougny.]
 G. Kaibel, *Epigrammata Graeca ex Lapidibus Conlecta* (Berlin, 1878). [Kaibel.]
 —, *Supplementum Epigrammatum Graecorum ex Lapidibus Conlectorum*, *RhM* 34 (1879) 181–213. [Kaibel, *Suppl.*]
 W. R. Paton, *The Greek Anthology*, 5 vols. (Loeb, 1917–20). [Paton.]

Of all the comic poets, Menander is most frequently spoken of and quoted. But the frequency of these references to him seems to show personal interest in Menander rather than interest in the New Comedy as a type. Besides Menander, five poets of the New Comedy appear: Diphilus, Epicrates, Machon, Philemon, and Philiscus. Three of these — Diphilus, Philemon, and Philiscus — are represented only by stray fragments from their comedies,³ and the solitary epigram on Epicrates (*AP* 11.12, Alcaeus of Messene) does not treat him as a comic poet. Of the Old Comedy, Aristophanes, Cratinus, Epicharmus,⁴ and, very doubtfully, Plato Comicus⁵ are represented; and more fully than any of the poets of

H. Stadtmüller, *Anthologia Graeca*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1894–1906). [Stadtmüller; references to volume and page.]

P. Waltz, *Anthologie Grecque* (Paris [Budé] 1928—). [Waltz.]

COLLECTIONS OF COMIC FRAGMENTS

J. Demiańczuk, *Supplementum Comicum* (Krakow, 1912). [D; references to fragment number.]

G. Kaibel, *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* (Berlin, 1899). [Kaibel, *CGF*; references to page.]

T. Kock, *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*, 3 vols. (Leipzig, 1880–88). [Kock; references to volume and page or fragment number.]

A. Meineke, *Fragmenta Comicorum Graecorum*, 5 vols. (Berlin, 1839–57). [Meineke; references to volume and page.]

EDITIONS OF INDIVIDUAL AUTHORS

Aristophanes: Aristophanes, with the English translation of Benjamin Bickley Rogers, 3 vols. (Loeb, 1927).

— The Eleven Comedies, edited, translated and explained by B. B. Rogers, 11 vols. (London, 1875–1917). [Rogers.]

Decimi Magni Ausonii Burdigalensis Opuscula, recensuit Rudolphus Peiper (Leipzig, 1886). [Peiper.]

Callimachus and Lycophron, with an English translation by A. W. Mair (Loeb, 1921). [Mair.]

Callimachea, ed. O. Schneider, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1870–3). [Schneider.]

Menander, The Principal Fragments, with an English translation by Francis G. Allinson (Loeb, 1921). [Allinson.]

CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL WORKS

Lane Cooper, *An Aristotelian Theory of Comedy* (New York, 1922). [Cooper.]

A. Franke, *De Pallada Epigrammatographo* (Diss., Leipzig, 1899). [Franke.]

Ph. E. Legrand, *The New Greek Comedy*, translated by James Loeb (London, 1917). [Legrand.]

Richard Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion* (Giessen, 1893).

³ See below, p. 91.

⁴ Epicharmus, of course, does not strictly belong to the Old Comedy.

⁵ *AP* 9.359, Ποσειδίππου, οἱ δὲ Πλάτωνος τοῦ κωμικοῦ. The epigram is almost certainly not by Plato Comicus. Stadtmüller suggests that the lemma had been

the New Comedy except Menander. Two further epigrams on types allied to comedy may be mentioned: one on Rinthon, the writer of tragic burlesques (*AP* 7.414, *Nossis*), and one on the supposed birth-place of the Satyr-drama, Sicyon.⁶ I omit the Platonic epigram on Alexis (*AP* 7.100), for there is doubt whether the comic poet is meant, and if he is, the epigram has nothing to do with him as a writer; I also omit an epigram on Tellen the flute-player (*AP* 7.719, Leonidas of Tarentum), here spoken of as an inventor of comic songs. Two comic writers, unknown except for epigrams in which their names occur, will be discussed later.

1. Under comedy in general, and comic appurtenances, I include (a) characterizations of comedy, (b) references to comic scenery, and (c) allusions to comic actors.

a. There seem to be only two characterizations of comedy as such in the Anthology. These, both anonymous and apparently late,⁷ occur in poems on the nine Muses, under the name of Thalia. The first (*AP* 9.504.10):

κωμικὸν εὔρε Θάλεια βίον καὶ ἥθεα κεδνά.

The second (*AP* 9.505.7–8):

κωμικὸν ἀμφιέπω Θάλεια μέλος, ἔργα δὲ φωτῶν
οὐχ ὅσιων θυμέλῃσι φιλοκροτάλοισιν ἀθύρω.

Both these epigrams, especially the second, show traces of theoretical poetics.⁸ Some characterizations of comedy under the names of individual comic poets will be discussed below.

b. There is only one reference to comic appurtenances: the amusing epigram of Callimachus (c. 310–235 B.C.) on the comic mask of Pamphilus (*AP* 6.311): “Tell, stranger, that I, the mask of Pamphilus, am dedicated here as a truly comic witness of the victory

Ποσειδίππου τοῦ κωμικοῦ “conveniuntque cum epigrammate Poseidippi comici fragmenta.” But this is not convincing, nor are the parallels Stadtmüller adduces.

⁶ *AP* 11.32 (*Honestus*); and cf. 7.707 (*Dioscorides*).

⁷ The poems cannot be dated with certainty. Such diversions were popular among Latin poetasters; one occurs in the spurious works of Ausonius (*Peiper* 412), also found among the so-called minor poems of Virgil; cf. also *Anth. Lat.* (ed. Bücheler-Riese) 1.1.121, no. 88; 1.2.134, no. 664, which is the Ausonian poem, here ascribed to Cato; cf. also no. 664a. The lateness of these Latin poems suggests a late date for the epigrams.

⁸ Schol. (*ap.* Stadtmüller 3.503.6) ἡ γὰρ κωμῳδία τοὺς πονηρὸν διαβάλλει; cf. Aristotle, *Poet.* 5.1449A: ἡ δὲ κωμῳδία ἐστὶν . . . μίμησις φανωτέρων, κτλ., *Tract. Coislin.* 4–5 (*Kaibel*, *CGF* 52).

of Agoranax the Rhodian in the theatre. I am not, like Pamphilus, bitten by love, but half like a roast fig and the lamps of Isis."⁹ This epigram has caused interpreters some difficulty; probably the correct interpretation is that the mask is so poorly made as to appear only half human.¹⁰ What Pamphilus is referred to is undiscoverable; Pamphilus was a stock name for a young lover in the New Comedy.¹¹ The use of *κωμικός μάρτυς* by Cicero¹² seems to show that the expression was almost a technical term. Agoranax might be either a comic poet or, more probably, an actor.

c. Allusions to comic actors are more numerous. Callimachus' epigram, above quoted, perhaps belongs here also. There is an epigram by Phalaecus (Alexandrian, of uncertain date) on Lycon,¹³ whose dedicated picture will preserve to posterity the pleasure he has given his audiences (*AP* 13.6). Crinagoras (c. 65 B.C.–15 A.D.) has an epigram on a good actor of Menander (*AP* 9.513): "Thou didst excel in the many dramas that Menander, with one of the Muses or one of the Graces, wrote," and Palladas (c. 400 A.D.) writes of a bad actor, Paulus (*AP* 11.263): "Menander, standing

⁹ "Ἡμισὺν δ' ὅπτην / ἰσχάδι καὶ λύχνῳ Ἰσιδος εἰδόμενον. Paton translates, "But one side of me is wrinkled like a roast fig and the color of Isis' lamps," accepting the usual interpretation of the phrase: that the mask is made on one side to represent the young lover Pamphilus and on the other an old and wrinkled man. Cf. Schneider 1.439; Mair 172–3, note c. From this view Waltz (3.180) dissents. "Le masque offert par Agoranax est si grossièrement fait . . . qu'il ressemble plus à un vieux fruit ou à une mauvaise terre cuite qu'à l'image d'un jeune amoureux. Il n'est nullement question, comme l'ont cru divers commentateurs d'un masque à double expression." Waltz is unquestionably right. The authorities on double masks (Pollux 4.144, Quintilian 11.3.74) speak only of *senex* masks with differing expressions. It is absurd to think of a juvenile mask also representing an old man. Cf. also Bieber, *RE* s.v. "Maske" (14.2075–6).

¹⁰ See the preceding footnote.

¹¹ For a list of Pamphili and Pamphiliae see Mair *loc. cit.* (see note 9). To these may be added a Pamphilus who is addressed in one of the unidentifiable fragments of Menander (631 K). Waltz (3.155) would identify with the Pamphilus in the *Hecyra* of Apollodorus, on what grounds I do not know. There is a Pamphilus in Plato Comicus; see Kock 1.604 (frag. 14).

¹² *Fam.* 2.13, and cf. Tyrrell and Purser *ad loc.* (2nd ed., 3.216). Although Tyrrell and Purser are not sure of the exact meaning of the phrase, they are certain that it means "a witness in a comedy," probably one who turns up in the nick of time to testify to the parentage of a child or the like. Cooper (273–4) calls attention to the inclusion of *μάρτυρες* by Aristotle (*Rhet.* 1.2.1355b and 1.15.1375a) among the non-artistic means of proof, and to the use of *μαρτυρία* in the *Tractatus Coislinianus* (Kaibel, *CGF* 52). The phrase undoubtedly had a technical flavor.

¹³ For this famous actor, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great, see Meineke 1.327, Oldfather in *RE* s. v. "Lykon" (13.2503), and J. B. O'Connor, *Chapters in the History of Actors and Acting* (Chicago, 1908) 114.

over the comedian Paulus in his sleep, said: 'I never did you any harm, and you speak me ill.'"¹⁴

2. Epigrams addressed to, and epitaphs on, the comic poets.

a. Cratinus. Christodorus of Thebes (A.D. 532) mentions among the statues in the gymnasium Zeuxippus at Byzantium that of "gifted Cratinus, who once sharpened the biting shafts of his iambs against the Athenian political leaders, devourers of the people. He improved sportive comedy" (*AP* 2.357-60). Conventional though this is, it is a fair characterization of the great rival of Aristophanes. Cratinus is further characterized in *AP* 13.29, which will be discussed elsewhere.

b. Epicharmus. He is mentioned in a very conventional distich among the *ἐπιτύμβια* (*AP* 7.82, Anon.), and later in the same book is treated more as a philosopher than as a comic poet (*AP* 7.125, Anon.). The great epigram on Epicharmus is *AP* 9.600, ascribed to his countryman Theocritus, which claims for Epicharmus the discovery of comedy, wise sayings, and useful teachings:

"Α τε φωνὰ Δώριος, χώνηρ ὁ τὰν κωμωδῖαν
εὐρών 'Επίχαρμος, κτλ.

(9-10) πολλὰ γὰρ ποττὰν ζῶαν τοῖς παισὶν εἶπε χρήσιμα
μεγάλα χάρις αὐτῷ.¹⁵

c. Aristophanes. There is, of course, the well-known Platonic epigram, which is not in the Anthology:¹⁶ "The Graces (Χάριτες), seeking a shrine that would not fall, found the soul of Aristophanes." This epigram, whoever the author, will remain the best and briefest characterization of Aristophanes. It is especially noteworthy for calling attention to an aspect of Aristophanes' work much neglected by both ancient and modern commentators — its great lyrical beauty. But the epigram by Antipater of Thessalonica (1st century B.C.-A.D.) preserved in the Anthology is very fine in its way

¹⁴ To these epigrams add the following unimportant epigrams from sources other than the Anthology: on Moschian of Smyrna, a *κωμωδός* (2nd century B.C., Kaibel 604); on Paphius "the Paphian, who lies here, leaving the crown he won in life" (No date, Kaibel 605); on the versatile Pythocles, victor in athletic events, in the cyclic choruses, as a flute-player, and as a *κωμωδός* (3rd century, Kaibel 926, Cougny 1.291); on Tyrannus, a *κωμωδός* who died at the age of 18 (Rome, n.d., Kaibel, *Suppl.* 190.605a), and a dedication by Dionysodorus, who, when he was archon (52-3 A.D.), won the victory in the tragic, lyric, and comic choruses (*ibid.* 201, no. 926a, at Athens).

¹⁵ Cf. Ar. *Ranae* 1054-6: τοῖς μὲν γὰρ παιδαρίοισιν / ἔστι διδάσκαλος ὅστις φράζει, τοῖσιν δ' ἡβῶσι ποιηταί: / πάνιν δὲ δέχεται χρηστὰ λέγειν ἡμᾶς.

¹⁶ Diehl² 1.1.106.

(*AP* 9.186): "These are the volumes (*βιβλοι*) of Aristophanes, a divine work (*θεῖος πόνος*), over which the ivy of Acharnae (*Ἀχαρνέως κισσός*) shook in profusion its green locks. Look how the pages are steeped in Dionysus, how deep-voiced are the dramas full of terrible grace (*φοβερῶν πληθόμενοι χαρίτων*). O comic poet high of heart, and worthy interpreter of the spirit of Hellas, hating what deserved hate, and mocking where mockery was due!"¹⁷ Rhetorical, it is true; but none the less a worthy characterization of the great comic poet. Here, as in the preceding epigram, Aristophanes is associated with *χάριτες*; but in *φοβερῶν* and in the last two lines another aspect is presented — his vigorous satire. There is further a distich (*AP* 7.38) by Diodorus (? 1st century A.D.): "Divine Aristophanes (*θεῖος Ἀριστοφάνευσ*) lies dead beneath me. If thou askest which, it is the comic poet who keeps the memory of the old stage alive." Note *θεῖος* in the last two quotations.

d and e. Machon and Menander are the only poets of the New Comedy on whom there are epigrams. On Machon, known chiefly as a writer of scandalous anecdotes, of whose comedies only three or four fragments are preserved,¹⁸ we have an epigram ascribed to Dioscorides (3rd century B.C.):¹⁹ "Light earth, give birth to ivy that loves the stage to flourish on the tomb of Machon the writer of comedies. For thou holdest no re-dyed drone, but he whom thou clothest is a worthy remnant of ancient art. This shall the old man say: 'O city of Cecrops, sometimes on the banks of the Nile, too, the strong-scented thyme of poesy grows.'" It is unfortunate that we know so little of Machon's comedies by which to check so good an epigram. Note that in vss. 3–4 the poets of Machon's age are by implication accused of lack of originality; *ἀλλά τι τέχνης ἄξιον ἀρχαίης* shows a real appreciation of the Old Comedy; the point of the whole epigram seems to be that Machon kept the pungent satire of the Old Comedy.²⁰ The fragments discovered by Jensen serve further to confirm this interpretation; they appear to be vigorous satire directed against the Socratic dialogue.

On Menander there are several epigrams. Christodorus of Thebes mentions him as the shining star (*σελασφόρος ἀστήρ*) of the

¹⁷ I understand this epigram to have been written on an edition of Aristophanes, which was actually divided into "books." Is *Ἀχαρνέως* an allusion to Aristophanes' *Ἀχαρνείς*?

¹⁸ Kock 3.324; Jensen, "Aristoteles in der Auge des Machon," *RhM* 83 (1934) 195.

¹⁹ *AP* 7.708. The epigram was inscribed on Machon's tomb; cf. Athenaeus 241 f.

²⁰ Cf. Körte in *RE* s.v. "Machon" (14.158). The old comic poets are forever asserting their originality: cf., e.g., *Vespae* 1051–58, Lysippus 4 K.

New Comedy (*AP* 2.361–6). An anonymous epigram (*AP* 9.187) deserves to be quoted:

Αὐταί σοι στομάτεσσιν ἀνηρείψαντο μέλισσαι
ποικίλα Μουσῶν ἄνθεα δρεψάμεναι.²¹
αὐταὶ καὶ Χάριτές σοι δωρήσαντο, Μένανδρε,
στωμύλον εὐτυχίην δράμασιν ἐνθέμεναι.
ζῶεις εἰς αἰῶνα· τὸ δὲ κλέος ἐστὶν Ἀθήναις
ἐκ σέθεν οὐρανίων ἀπτόμενον νεφέων.

According to Allinson,²² the epitaph by Diodorus (*AP* 7.370) may have been actually inscribed on Menander's tomb: "Menander of Athens, the son of Diopeithes, the friend of Bacchus and the Muses, rests beneath me, or at least the little dust he shed in the funeral fire. But if thou seekest Menander himself thou shalt find him in the abode of Zeus or in the Islands of the Blest."

Outside the Anthology there is a series of epigrams on Menander, probably by Aelian (2nd century A.D.).²³ These epigrams, inscribed on a herm found at Rome, which faced a herm containing epigrams on Homer, are written in verses described by Kaibel as "miserrimi," and are too long to quote entire; I give only b and c:

- b. Φαιδρὸν ἐταῖρον Ἐρωτος ὄρῳ, σειρήνα θεάτρων
τόνδε Μένανδρον αἰεὶ κρᾶτα πυκαζόμενον,
οὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἀνθρώπου ἱλαρὸν βίον ἐξεδίδαξα
ἡδύνας σκηνῇ δράμασι πᾶσι γάμων.
- c. Οὐ φαύλως ἔστησα κατ' ὀφθαλμούς σε, Μένανδρε,
τῇσδε γ' Ὀμηρείης, φίλτατέ μοι, κεφαλῇς·
ἀλλὰ σε δεύτερα ἔταξε σοφὸς κρέινειν μετ' ἐκείνων
γραμματικὸς κλεινὸς πρόσθεν Ἀριστοφάνης.

The chief interest of these epigrams, apart from their almost hysterical enthusiasm for Menander, lies in the allusion to Aristophanes of Byzantium.²⁴ Note also that, as is usual among the Epigram-

²¹ Cf. Ar. *Aves* 748–50: ἐνθεν ὥσπερ ἡ μέλιττα / Φρύνιχος ἀμβροσίων μελέων ἀπε-
βόσκετο καρπὸν αἰεὶ / φέρων γλυκεῖαν ψῆδαν. But the figure later became common prop-
erty; see Rogers *ad loc.*

²² P. xiv, n. 4.

²³ Kaibel 1085 a.b.c.; Cougny 3.114 a.b.c.

²⁴ Kaibel (*ad loc.*) quotes the famous query of the great scholar: ὦ Μένανδρε καὶ
βίε, πότερος ἄρ' ὑμῶν πότερον ἀπεμμήσατο; Cf. also A. Körte, "Homer und Menander,"
Hermes 71 (1936) 221–2.

matists, the *teachings* of Menander are stressed, not his power of amusing.²⁵

Finally, two epigrams on comic poets otherwise unknown must be mentioned. The first, found at the Dipylon gate at Athens, dates from the fourth century B.C.:²⁶

Ζηλοῖ σ' Ἑλλάς πᾶσα ποθεῖ θ' ἱεροῖς ἐν ἀγῶσιν,
 Εὐθία, οὐκ ἀδίκως· ὃς τέχνην, οὐχὶ φύσει
 ἐν βοτρυοστεφάνῳ κωμῳδίᾳ ἡδυνέλωτι
 δεύτερος ὦν τάξει, πρῶτος ἔφυσ σοφίᾳ.

In this very interesting epigram, with its praise for the "art" of the poet as opposed to his "nature," especially to be noted is the use of the word *σοφία* in the sense of "wit" or "cleverness" — a favorite use with the comic poets.²⁷ Euthias seems to be known only through this epigram.

Very similar is Callimachus' epigram, *AP* 9.565:²⁸ "Theaetetus walked in an untrodden road (*καθαρὴν ὁδόν*)²⁹ and if this path does not lead, Bacchus, to thy ivy, the heralds shall call the names of others for a brief season, but Hellas shall proclaim his wit (*σοφίαν*) forever." The reference to Bacchus and the ivy seems to show that Theaetetus was a comic poet, especially when this epigram is compared with the one on Euthias. A Theaetetus is known as the author of several extant epigrams,³⁰ but not as a dramatic poet.

3. Quotations from and imitations of the comic poets.

Two epigrams are assigned to comic poets. One, that doubtfully ascribed to Plato Comicus, has already been discussed.³¹ The other (*AP* 7.72), on Epicurus and Themistocles, is ascribed to Menander. A friendship between Menander and Epicurus has been assumed on the basis of this epigram, but the ascription is doubtful enough. Although the epigram cannot be proved not

²⁵ Cf., e.g., the epigram of Theocritus on Epicharmus quoted above. On this point, as on many others, the epigrammatists reflect the usual Greek point of view.

²⁶ Kaibel 38; Cougny 2.147 (Anon.).

²⁷ Cf., e.g., Cratinus 199 K; Ar. *Ranæ* 676 and *passim*.

²⁸ Kaibel (*ad loc.*) refers to it.

²⁹ Paton's "untrodden" seems to give the right sense; Theaetetus is too original to be understood by his contemporaries. In vs. 4 I have altered Paton's "wisdom" to "wit"; see the commentary on the preceding epigram.

³⁰ "Quis . . . poeta ille dramaticus fuerit Theaetetus non constat, probabilis tamen Meinekii suspicio est, eundem esse qui nobilissimum in Cratinum epigramma fecerit." Schneider 1.412. But see below, note 63.

³¹ Above, note 5.

to be by Menander, modern scholars are skeptical.³² The poem itself can hardly be used as evidence one way or another; it is good enough, but neither better nor worse than hundreds of others:

Χαῖρε, Νεοκλείδα, δίδυμον γένος, ὦν ὁ μὲν ὑμῶν
πατρίδα δουλοσύνας ῥύσασθ', ὁ δ' ἀφροσύνας.

The following comic fragments appear as individual epigrams:

AP 9.450, the famous lines of Philemon on Euripides, "If the dead in truth had the use of their senses, gentlemen, as some say, I would have hanged myself to see Euripides."³³

AP 10.110, Aristophanes *Ranae* 1431, spoken by Aeschylus in the play, and here ascribed to the tragic poet:

Οὐ χρὴ λέοντος σκύμνον ἐν πόλει τρέφειν.
μάλιστα μὲν λέοντα μὴ πόλει τρέφειν.
ἦν δ' ἐκτραφῇ τις, τοῖς τρόποις ὑπηρετεῖν.

Note that all three lines of the passage are given here; most manuscripts of Aristophanes omit one or the other.³⁴

AP 11.438. This verse on the Corinthians is ascribed to Menander:³⁵

Κορινθίῳ πιστεῦε, καὶ μὴ χρῶ φίλῳ.

AP 11.439, a verse of Diphilus: "Argus is the land of horses, but the inhabitants are wolves."³⁶

AP 11.441. Philiscus, "The Peiraeus is a big nut and empty."³⁷

³² The epigram is accepted by Meineke 4.335. Dübner follows Meineke. Susemihl (*Geschichte der Griechischen Literatur in der Alexandrinerzeit* [Leipzig, 1891–2] 1.254, n. 34) and Stadtmüller follow Wilamowitz (*Antigonos von Karystos* [Berlin, 1881] 179, n. 2) who argues that no contemporary of Epicurus could so address him. Körte (*RE* s.v. "Menandros" [15.709]) does not positively deny that Menander wrote the epigram, but is very doubtful.

³³ Kock 2.519 (frg. 130). With the sentiment, cf. Philemon 3 D. Paton translates *ἄνδρες ὡς φασὶν τινες*, "as some say"; but *ἄνδρες* is so common an address in comedy that the translation given above seems better: cf., e.g., Ar. *Acharnenses* 496.

³⁴ Cf. Rogers *ad loc.* Does the presence of this fragment in the Anthology lend support to the notion that these lines of Aristophanes are really a quotation from Aeschylus? The usual view is that the passage is an adumbration of Aesch. *Ag.* 717 ff., but Rogers observes that the expression is thoroughly Aeschylean.

³⁵ Kock 3.214 (frg. 764). The fragment is preserved only in *AP*. There has been a good deal of unnecessary tampering with the text.

³⁶ Kock 2.576 (frg. 120). Preserved only in *AP*.

³⁷ Kock 2.443 (frg. 2). Preserved only in *AP*.

Further, *AP* 11.440, ascribed to Pittacus,³⁸ has been since Meineke regarded as an extract from a comic poet; it warns the reader "to flee all Megarians, for they are bitter." So too vs. 1 of *AP* 10.116 is thought to be a comic fragment:

Οὐκ ἔστι γήμας ὅστις οὐ χεϊμάζεται
λέγονσι πάντες, καὶ γαμοῦσιν εἰδότες.

It is quite possible that both lines are from a comic poet.

How these fragments wandered into the Anthology is not clear. We know that manuscripts of Menander's monostichic gnomes were in circulation as early as the third century A.D.,³⁹ but it seems unlikely that the compiler of the Palatine Anthology used such a collection; if he had, considering his usual habits, we should surely have had more gnomes. Reitzenstein's suggestion of *florilegia* of speeches from the New Comedy, especially Menander, for recitation at symposia, may give the right answer.⁴⁰ If our compiler's source were a collection containing epigrams, and also *sententiae* from comedies, the matter would be explained. Note, too, the position of most of these fragments: *AP* 11.427–36, "Lucian"; 437, Aratus; 438–41, comic fragments. After these, a different hand has added six epigrams, of which all but one (442) have appeared before. Thus, in reality, we have this small collection of comic fragments lumped together at the end of book eleven. I will later show that this position may be significant.

Reference to titles of some of Menander's plays is found in two epigrams. One, by Fronto (? 3rd century A.D.), uses the titles of four comedies for a number of rather stupid puns (*AP* 12.233). The point is obscure, and probably indecent.⁴¹ An imitation and expansion of Fronto's epigram by Agathias (6th century A.D.) is more interesting to the student of Menander and of the Anthology (*AP* 5.218): "The arrogant Polemon, who in Menander's drama cut off his wife Glycera's⁴² locks, has found an imitator in a younger

³⁸ Meineke's suggestion (*ap. Dübner ad loc.*) of Φιλίσκου for Πιττακοῦ is ingenious, but not convincing. The lines are very probably from a comic poet; but the ascription to Pittacus may suggest that they are based upon an ancient saw.

³⁹ Körte in *RE* s.v. "Menandros" (15.737).

⁴⁰ Richard Reitzenstein, *Epigramm und Skolion* 37–9.

⁴¹ Cf. Dübner *ad loc.*

⁴² Reading Γλυκέρας with Scaliger: γλυκεράς P. Paton reads γλυκερούς with Plan. and translates accordingly. Γλυκέρας is certainly right; cf. Waltz 2.97, n. 6 and textual note. It does not seem significant that, as Waltz notes, in the Περιειρομένη as we have it, Glycera is not made Polemon's wife until the end of the play; mere convenience

Polemon, who with audacious hands despoiled Rhodanthe of her locks, and even turning the comic punishment (τὸ κωμικὸν ἔργον) into tragic sufferings (τραγικοῖς ἀχέεσσι)⁴³ flogged the limbs of the slender girl. It was an act of jealous madness, for what great wrong did she do if she chose to take pity on my affliction? The villain! and he has separated us, his burning jealousy going so far as to prevent us even looking at each other. Well, at any rate, he is 'The Hated Man' (Μισούμενος) and I am 'The Ill-Tempered Man' (Δύσκολος), as I don't see 'The Clipped Lady' (τὴν Περικειρομένην)." Note here the brief summary of the plot and principal characters of Menander's *Περικειρομένη* and its application to the present circumstances; also the clear reference to theoretical poetics in vss. 5-6.⁴⁴ Oddly enough, Menander had a play with the title 'Ραπιζομένη: *She Who Gets Flogged*. Is Agathias alluding to this play in vss. 5-6? Is an adverse criticism implied? It is of course quite possible that we are encountering mere coincidence; but an omnivorous reader and indefatigable imitator such as Agathias shows himself to be would probably know at least the title of this play; and if he knew it, his allusion was probably intentional. Fronto adds to the list of Menandrian titles *The Treasure*, *The Ghost*, and *The Boor*.

Of all the comic poets, Menander is most drawn upon for quotations. But before we come to the epigrams that quote him, we must consider the fine epigram on Cratinus, written in alternate hexameters and trimeters and ascribed in the Anthology to Nicaenetus:⁴⁵ "Wine is a swift horse to the poet who would charm, but, drinking water, thou shalt give birth to naught that is clever. This Cratinus said, Dionysus, and breathed the perfume, not of one bottle, but of all the cask; therefore was he great, loaded with

probably dictated the choice of τῆς ἀλόχου in vs. 2. At least once in Homer ἀλοχος appears to mean "concubine"; cf. *Il.* 9.336 and Liddell and Scott s.v.

⁴³ Paton translates: "turning the comic punishment into a tragic one." Perhaps "business" in the technical stage sense is the best translation of ἔργον.

⁴⁴ I see in these vss. an allusion to the Aristotelian doctrine that comic deformity should not be painful or destructive. Cf. *Poet.* 5.1449A: τὸ γὰρ γελοῖόν ἐστιν ἀμάρτημά τι καὶ αἰσχρὸν ἀνδύονον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν, κτλ. *Τραγικοῖς ἀχέεσσι* and *κωμικὸν ἔργον* seem to be used almost as technical terms.

⁴⁵ *AP* 13.29. "In Plan. inscribitur Νικαράτον. . . . In cod. Mediceo est ἀδέσποτον. Sine auctoris nomine legitur ap. Athen. 2. p. 39, C. Demetrio Halicarnassensi tribuit Zenob. 6.22, Asclepiadi [because of 11.23?] aut Theaeteto Suidas v. ἕδωρ." — Boissonade *ap.* Dübner *ad loc.* Meineke, as we have seen (above, note 30), wished to ascribe it to the Theaetetus of Callimachus' epigram; but this is only a wild shot in the dark.

crowns, and his forehead, like thine, was yellow with the ivy." The reference is to Cratinus' *Πυτίνη*, *The Flask*, his most famous play, with which he defeated Aristophanes' *Clouds*, and in which he defended himself against Aristophanes' charge of drunkenness.⁴⁶ This quotation is probably from his direct answer to that charge. With vs. 1 (Οἶνός τοι χαρίεντι πέλει ταχὺς ἵππος αἰιδῶ) compare *AP* 11.23 (Antipater of Sidon, 2nd century B.C.):

Πίνωμεν· καὶ δὴ γὰρ ἐπήτυμον, εἰς ὁδὸν ἵππος
οἶνος, ἐπεὶ πεζοῖς ἀτραπὸς εἰς ἀδήν.

Kock approves of Cobet's judgment that only the trimeter in "Nicaenetus'" epigram is by Cratinus.⁴⁷ The initial hexameter probably did not appear in that form in the *Πυτίνη*; but the statement "This Cratinus said" surely seems to attribute both lines to him. I believe that the author of the epigram changed a trimeter of Cratinus into a hexameter to suit his rather eccentric metre. If this is true, is Antipater also imitating Cratinus? Probably not; both were doubtless alluding to some well-known saying.⁴⁸

Coming now to Menander, we find the most famous of the monostichic gnomes ascribed to him to have been used by writers of sepulchral inscriptions. This gnome is

Ὅν γὰρ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος—

"Whom the gods love dies young."⁴⁹ An inscription (assigned to the Roman age by Dittenberger, *CIA* 3.2, no. 1337) contains this line:⁵⁰

Παῖδας [ἀποθνήσκειν οὐ]ς φιλέουσι θεοί;

another (second or third century — Kaibel):⁵¹

Ὅσους γὰρ φιλέουσι θεοὶ θνήσκουσιν [ἄωροι].

⁴⁶ Ar. *Equites* 526–36; schol. Ar. *Equites* 400 and *passim*.

⁴⁷ 1.74 (frg. 199). It is possible, of course, that Cratinus used such a metre in the *Πυτίνη*, though I can find no exact parallel; but it is surely rash to use this fragment as an undoubted example of metrical shifts in comedy as does A. T. Murray ("On a Use of Δοκῶ," *CPh* 5 [1910] 489).

⁴⁸ I omit a sepulchral inscription which contains an echo of a spurious verse of Epicharmus (Kaibel 715.3; the verse of Epicharmus is given in Kaibel *CGF* 136, frg. 245).

⁴⁹ Meineke 4.352 vs. 425; Kock 3.36 (frg. 125), *δν οἱ θεοί, κτλ.*

⁵⁰ Kaibel 153.14, Cougny 2.316.14.

⁵¹ Kaibel 340.8,

Two further gnomes⁵² are adapted in the following (Kaibel 426):

Καλὸν τὸ γηρᾶν καὶ τὸ μὴ γηρᾶν †τρίς χεῖρω κακόν.⁵³
Καλὸν τὸ θνήσκειν, οἷς τὸ ζῆν ὕβριν φέρει.⁵⁴

Among the more literary epigrams, there is this well-known epigram of "Lucian" (? 4th century A.D.):⁵⁵

Ὡς τεθνηξόμενος τῶν σῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀπόλαυε,
ὥς δὲ βιωσόμενος φείδω σῶν κτεάνων.
ἔστι δ' ἀνὴρ σοφὸς οὗτος, ὃς ἄμφω ταῦτα νοήσας
φειδοῖ καὶ δαπάνη μέτρον ἐφηρμόσατο.

Meineke points out the resemblance between this and an epigram among the spurious writings of Ausonius, there said to be translated from Menander:⁵⁶

Re fruiere, ut natus mortalís: dilige set rem,
Tanquam immortalís. Fama est in utroque verenda.

The resemblance is striking; if the Latin lines are a translation from Menander, it is possible that "Lucian" is imitating him. Geffcken, however, observes that the sentiment is a piece of ancient "lebensweisheit";⁵⁷ hence the parallel should not be pressed too strongly.

The most persistent imitator of Menander is Palladas of Alexandria (fl. c. 400 A.D.). This epigrammatist has been the object of very diverse judgments. He is, however, as Paton observes,⁵⁸ at least interesting as the sole poetical representative of his period

⁵² Meineke 4.283: καλὸν τὸ γηρᾶν καὶ τὸ μὴ γηρᾶν πάλιν, and 291: καλὸν τὸ θνήσκειν οἷς ὕβριν τὸ ζῆν φέρει.

⁵³ Corrupt. Franz (*CIG* 3 [1853] 29–30, no. 3902r) suggests καλὸν τὸ γηρᾶν καὶ τὸ μὴ γηρᾶν τρίς λέγω κακόν; Kaibel (*ad loc.*) offers κακόν τὸ γηρᾶν καὶ τὸ μὴ γηρᾶν τρίς χεῖρον κακόν. Neither suggestion is satisfactory. The passage appears to be desperate.

⁵⁴ These parallels are noted by Kaibel. Kock (3.215, frg. 767) notes that a fragment of Menander (μισῶ πονηρόν, χρηστὸν δταν εἴπη λόγον) is similar to Kaibel xxiii no. 1117a (n.d.) δταν ποιῶν πονηρά χρηστά τις λαλῇ / καὶ τὸν παρόντα πλησίον μὴ λανθάνη / διπλάσιος αὐτῷ γίνεθ' ἢ πονηρία.

⁵⁵ *AP* 10.26.

⁵⁶ Meineke 4.335; cf. Ausonius (ed. Peiper) 23.18 (p. 427). Meineke puts this distich under *Epigrammata*, which seems unnecessary. Aus. 23.17 (this apparently imitates Men. 595 K) De Ingratis ex Menandro; *ibid.* 18, ex Eodem. Whoever composed the epigram does not indicate that he is translating an *epigram* of Menander; he might (as in the preceding instance) be making an epigram of a line from a play.

⁵⁷ J. Geffcken, "Ein Unbekannter Spätgriechischen Epigrammatiker," *PhW* 42 (1932), *Festschr. Franz Poland*, pp. 145–6 (no. 35–8). Geffcken also shows a striking likeness between *AP* 9.367.15–6 and Euphron the comic poet 4 K (*ibid.* 157–8).

⁵⁸ Paton, 4.1.

and surroundings. Palladas' interest in comedy is noteworthy. His epigram on the bad actor of Menander has already been mentioned. In *AP* 10.72 he compares life to a stage and a play;⁵⁹ in 10.52 he says:

Εὖγε λέγων, τὸν καιρὸν ἔφης θεόν, εὖγε Μένανδρε,
ὥς ἀνὴρ Μουσαῶν καὶ Χαρίτων τρόφιμος·
πολλάκι γὰρ τοῦ σφόδρα μεριμνηθέντος ἄμεινον
προσπесὸν εὐκαίρως εὐρέ τι ταυτόματον.⁶⁰

This allusion Meineke and Kock dubiously identify with a fragment of Menander's *Cnidia*.⁶¹

ταυτόματόν ἐστιν ὡς ἔοικέ που θεός,
σφῆζει τε πολλὰ τῶν ἀοράτων πραγμάτων.

A very dubious identification indeed, in spite of *ταυτόματον*; for *καιρὸν*⁶² seems to be the crucial word; note Palladas' play on it in vs. 4. In *AP* 11.286 Palladas quotes two of the gnomes:

Οὐδὲν γυναικὸς χείρον, οὐδὲ τῆς καλῆς.⁶³
δούλου δὲ χείρον οὐδὲν, οὐδὲ τοῦ καλοῦ.⁶⁴
χρηζεῖς ὅμως οὔν τῶν ἀναγκαίων κακῶν.
εὐνοῦν νομίζεις δούλον εἶναι δεσπότη;
καλὸς δ' ἂν εἴη δούλος ὁ τὰ σκέλη κλάσας.

With verse 3 cf. Menander, 651 K:

τὸ γαμῆν, ἐάν τις τὴν ἀλήθειαν σκοπῇ
κακὸν μὲν ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαῖον κακόν.

This whole epigram is strange, and much more disconnected than is usual with Palladas. The sentences follow one another with only a very loose connection in thought. Is the epigram a cento from Menander? Or is it a series of *sententiae* from that author, intended

⁵⁹ Παίγνιον. Since, as John L. Heller shows ("Nenia 'Παίγνιον,'" *TAPhA* 74 [1943] 254 and note 52), this word was used with the specialized meaning of an impromptu mime without a plot, its employment here gives a special point to Palladas' epigram, and is thoroughly in keeping with the cynical bitterness that informs so much of his work.

⁶⁰ Kock frg. 933; Meineke 4.331.

⁶¹ Kock 3.82 (frg. 291).

⁶² Καίρως seems to have been a favorite word of Menander; cf. Jacobi's *Ind. Com. Dict.* (Meineke 5) s.v.

⁶³ Meineke 4.351, vs. 413.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* 344, vs. 133.

to be read as units, which some scribe or compiler has crowded together?⁶⁵

Palladas again adapts Menander in *AP* 10.95:

Μισῶ τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν διπλοῦν πεφυκότα,
χρηστὸν λόγοισι, πολέμιον δὲ τοῖς τρόποις.

Compare Menander, 767 K:

μισῶ πονηρόν, χρηστὸν ὅταν εἴπῃ λόγον.

The sentiment is common enough, but the expressions here are so similar that imitation is almost certain.

Many other epigrams of Palladas can be compared with passages from Menander. *AP* 9.165 and 167 are perversions of the familiar story of woman's being given to man as an evil to counterbalance the benefits of fire, similar to Menander, 535 K. Menander elsewhere says (708 K):

ἐὰν τροφήν δοὺς τὸν λαβόντ' ὀνειδίσης
ἀψινθίῃ κατέπασας Ἀττικὸν μέλι.

Compare Palladas (*AP* 11.341):

Αἰνίζειν μὲν ἄριστον, ὃ δὲ ψόγος ἔχθεος ἀρχή·
ἀλλὰ κακῶς εἰπεῖν Ἀττικὸν ἐστι μέλι.

Instances might be multiplied;⁶⁶ but these are enough to show at least the similarities of expression that we find between Palladas and Menander.⁶⁷ Palladas' fondness for writing epigrams in trimeters⁶⁸ may also suggest comic influence.

⁶⁵ As the first two vss. are from Menander, and the rest are Menandrian enough in vocabulary and sentiment, it seems natural to assume that these subsequent vss. are by Menander.

⁶⁶ E.g. Menander 598 K, ἄνθρωπε, μὴ στέναζε, μὴ λυποῦ μάτην, cf. Palladas *AP* 10.73, εἰ τὸ φέρον σε φέρει, φέρε καὶ φέρον· εἰ δ' ἀγανακτεῖς / καὶ στυγὸν λυπεῖς, καὶ τὸ φέρον σε φέρει; Palladas *AP* 10.65.3-5, τὴν δὲ Τύχην βιότοιο κυβερνήτειραν ἔχοντες, / ὥς ἐπὶ τοῦ πελάγους, ἀμφίβολοι πλέομεν, / οἱ μὲν ἐπ' εὐπλοίην, οἱ δ' ἔμπαλιν, cf. Menander 482-3 K, οὐδὲν γὰρ πλεον / ἀνθρώπινος νοῦς ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ὃ τῆς τύχης . . . / τοῦτ' ἐστι τὸ κυβερνῶν ἅπαντα καὶ στρέφον / καὶ σῶζον . . . Τύχην κυβερνᾷ πάντα.

⁶⁷ One more rather curious similarity deserves notice. Palladas *AP* 11.381, Πᾶσα γυνὴ χόλος ἐστίν· ἔχει δ' ἀγαθὰς δύο ὥρας, / τὴν μίαν ἐν θαλάμῳ, τὴν μίαν ἐν θανάτῳ. Editors of the Anthology point out the resemblance to a pseudo-Hipponactean vs. (Diehl² 1.3.118), δὴ ἡμέραι γυναικὸς εἰσιν ἡδισται, / ὅταν γαμῇ τις, κακὴ φέρη τεθνηκυῖαν. With this A. D. Knox (*Herodes, Cercidas, and the Choliambic Poets* [Loeb, 1929] p. 6) compares Com. frg. adesp. 1224 K. And cf. esp. 1265 K, γυναικα θάπτειν κρείττον ἐστίν ἢ γαμεῖν = Men. *Mon. Gn.* 95. These similarities probably show only a common source; but at least Palladas has imitated a vs. which was popular with comic poets.

⁶⁸ E.g. *AP* 9.180-1, 400; 10.90-2, 94-6, etc.

What is the reason for Palladas' interest in Menander? Doubtless the misanthropic and misogynistic sentiments in Menander appealed to the embittered Palladas, whose calling of *grammaticus* would make him familiar with the comic poet. Further, if, as some scholars believe, Palladas compiled an anthology, in which he included his own works and the works of others,⁶⁹ he might well have included *sententiae* from Menander and other comic poets, since Palladas is known to have been partial to gnomes. This may help explain the presence of the comic fragments in the Anthology. If, as Franke believes,⁷⁰ the Lucianic epigrams were included in Palladas' anthology, the position of the comic fragments noted above⁷¹ may become significant. First, it will be remembered, we have a series of epigrams ascribed to Lucian; then, one by Aratus, which, dealing as it does with a grammarian, would appeal to Palladas; then, the comic fragments. We may, then, have here a fragment of Palladas' anthology that contained a group of comic *dicta*, which were taken into the Anthology along with the epigrams. That collections containing comic speeches were in circulation is shown by the fragments of a school anthology published by Milne,⁷² in which occurs a comic passage on the introduction of woman by Prometheus which closely parallels Palladas' epigrams on this subject. The fragment is certainly from the New Comedy, possibly from Philemon or Menander (cf. Philemon 3 D, 28 K vs. 10, Menander 404 K). From a similar compilation Palladas may well have derived most of his knowledge of Menander and the other comic poets. Such an anthology, into which he had inserted marginally his epigrams and those of others, may have been the source from which the compiler of *AP* drew the epigrams of Palladas and the comic fragments.

4. As to the employment of comic methods, only a few of the main lines can be indicated. Needless to say, almost every division of the well-known *Tractatus Coislinianus*⁷³ could be illustrated from the Anthology. Here are a few illustrations. Only too many epigrams depend on homonyms for their point; e.g. 11.139 (Lucilius,

⁶⁹ Cf. Schmidt-Reitzenstein in *RE* s.v. "*Anthologia*" (1.2385); Franke 47-72. His conclusions are summarized on p. 71.

⁷⁰ P. 71.

⁷¹ See p. 92.

⁷² *JHS* 43 (1923) 40-3.

⁷³ The famous abstract of a work on comedy, perhaps ultimately Aristotelian, which treats comic methods under a number of headings, some of which are here illustrated. Text in Kaibel, *CGF* 50-3; translation and illustration in Cooper 224-86.

1st century A.D.). An example of the use of paronyms formed by clipping is found in 6.85 (Palladas) where we have $\theta\acute{\omega}$ for $\theta\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha\varsigma$, $\kappa\eta\eta$ for $\kappa\eta\eta\mu\acute{\iota}\varsigma$, and $\kappa\rho\acute{\alpha}$ for $\kappa\rho\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\varsigma$; by lengthening, $\lambda\epsilon\pi\tau\epsilon\pi\iota\lambda\epsilon\pi\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ (thinner-than-thin-as-thin-can-be), 11.110 (Nicarchus, 1st century A.D.), and $\tau\rho\iota\pi\iota\theta\eta\kappa\iota\nu\omicron\nu$, 11.196 (Lucilius). Palladas' epigram (11.373) on the gambling poet, whose muse is not, as usual, Καλλιόπη but Ταβλιόπη (i.e. Gambliope), illustrates paronyms formed by both clipping and addition. Humor from grammar and syntax is illustrated by 11.247 (Lucilius), where, as Paton observes, the epigram can mean either "we sail the seas," or "we, the seas, are sailing," according as $\pi\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\alpha\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is taken as nominative or accusative. From countless instances of humor from the unexpected, I select 11.194 (Lucilius), wherein Marcus, having taken nothing in his hunting, hung up to Pan — the dogs themselves. True comic names are Ἰπποκρατιππιᾶδης and the malicious $\text{Διονυσιοπεγαυόδωρος}$ (11.17, Nicarchus).⁷⁴ The little dialogues 5.46 (Philodemus, 1st century B.C.) and 5.101 (Anon.) seem related to the mime.⁷⁵ But in all such cases, it is hard to decide whether we have true imitations of comic methods, or only testimonials to the universality of comic principles.

These references to comedy in the epigram make an important chapter in the history of Greek appreciation of comedy. Our extensive collections of Greek epigrams have a longer span than any other single body of ancient literature; they extend from early times down to a period relatively modern. They further include verses by authors of all ranks, ranging from the great poets like Simonides and great poets and scholars like Callimachus down to writers who were neither poets nor scholars. In the main, however, they provide something of an index to the familiar interests of more or less ordinary, but cultured spirits of the Alexandrian and later ages. Consequently, in those that have a literary bent we have what seems to be a fair opportunity for studying the rise, decline, and fall of interest in certain literary types. What evidence of the history of taste in comedy, then, is found in the epigrams?

⁷⁴ With the exaggerated "horsiness" of the first of these names, cf. Ar. *Nubes* 63-7; with the absurd piling up of aristocratic elements, the similar piling up of wealth-suggesting elements in *Thensaurochrysonicochrysidēs*, Plautus, *Captivi* 286. In the second, the insertion of $\pi\epsilon\gamma\alpha\upsilon\acute{o}\nu$ recalls the similar jibes at Euripides in the old comic poets; cf. Ar. *Acharnenses* 478, *Ranae* 840.

⁷⁵ For further comments on the relation of the epigram to comedy, see Legrand 526-9.

One of the most striking facts in literary history is the decline of taste for the Old Comedy. We know, of course, that the great Alexandrian scholars concerned themselves with poets of the Old Comedy.⁷⁶ Now from the epigrams we may be able to discover how general this interest was. We may begin with the great Platonic epigram on Aristophanes, which is, no doubt, contemporary with him. After this, we have no epigram on any poet of the Old Comedy that can be surely dated before the first century B.C.⁷⁷ From this century date the epigram on Aristophanes by Diodorus, and the excellent one by Antipater of Thessalonica. There follows a long gap until we reach Christodorus of Thebes' surprisingly good characterization of Cratinus, which is the latest reference in the Anthology to a poet of the Old Comedy.

The poets of the Old Comedy were little drawn on for quotations; the only sure instance is the passage from Cratinus in the epigram ascribed to Nicaenetus.

It is surprising that Eupolis, Crates, Pherecrates, and others are not mentioned in the epigrams. We should have expected to find at least the name of the great Eupolis. It is also noteworthy that Callimachus, whose work must have brought him into contact with the writings of poets of the Old Comedy,⁷⁸ seems not to have thought it worth his while to write an epigram on any of them.

Plutarch's *Comparison of Aristophanes and Menander* shows that Plutarch thought the old comic poets of scant artistic worth, interesting only to scholars of language and antiquities. The epigrams (at least by their silence) show that this opinion was general. That true appreciation, however, never entirely died, is shown by the epigram of Dioscorides on Machon, the epigrams on Aristophanes and Cratinus, and the late reference to Cratinus by Christodorus of Thebes.

In the New Comedy, there was, as we should expect, a certain amount of contemporary interest. Euthias, Machon, and some others are praised; but soon references to all writers of the New Comedy except Menander disappear. From the examples quoted above, it can be seen that we are able to trace, through reference and quotation, a consistent knowledge and love of Menander from

⁷⁶ Cf. J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship* (Cambridge, 1906) 1.105-44.

⁷⁷ If Horace *Epist.* 1.19.1-3 is an allusion to Nicaenetus' (?) epigram on Cratinus, it places this epigram before Horace; but further dating is unsafe.

⁷⁸ Sandys, *op. cit.* 123.

his own time down to the sixth century after Christ. The New Comedy is, as we should expect, more drawn upon for quotation than the Old; with one exception (the quotation from Cratinus in *AP* 13.29) all the comic fragments collected in the Anthology are taken from writers of the New.⁷⁹ Most interesting is the occurrence of Menandrian lines in sepulchral inscriptions, some of which are evidently the work of persons of no great culture. This is not proof, of course, that such persons read Menander; but it does show how thoroughly, from whatever source, Menandrian sentiments had passed into the minds of the people.

Such theoretical interest in comedy as is displayed, though little enough, is one of the striking points in the epigrams. Here we find the usual emphasis on comic teaching rather than on comic pleasure. Epicharmus is great because he gives "wise precepts and useful teachings"; Menander because of his "fluent felicity," not because of his *vis comica*. Comedy "plays the parts of men who are not virtuous" instead of causing pleasure and laughter. These epigrams, which come from widely different periods, show how fundamental this concept had become. Three epigrams, however, rise above this conventionality: those of Antipater on Aristophanes, Dioscorides on Machon, and Nicaenetus on Cratinus. Although the first of these may be a little too serious in tone, we seem to catch in all of them an echo of the true comic spirit.

As to imitations of comic methods, it will be noted that most of my examples are taken from two writers of the first century after Christ. Legrand⁸⁰ draws his illustrations from Alexandrian epigrammatists, mostly of the third and second centuries B.C., who might well have been influenced by the New Comedy. To these two periods of apparent comic influence may be added a third: that of the revival of the Greek epigram under Justinian; for in the epigrams of Agathias, Paulus Silentiarius, and their fellows may be found little scenes that are reminiscent of the New Comedy, and comic methods similar to those I have enumerated.⁸¹ Here, however, the comic echoes may come from imitation of Alexandrian

⁷⁹ There is also the puzzling Aristophanic-Aeschylean fragment (above, p. 91).

⁸⁰ P. 526.

⁸¹ E.g. Agathias, *AP* 5.267, 269, 289; Paulus 5.248 (cf. Agathias 5.218), 256, 279, 281; Eratosthenes Schol. 5.242. For comic methods, cf. Agathias 11.354, 365, 376, 382, in which the persons satirized are all *ἀλαζόνες*, a type dear to comedy, and in which humor is also drawn from garrulity and from the unexpected.

epigrams rather than from direct imitation of comedies.⁸² Agathias' summary of Menander's *Περικειρομένη*, however, shows that Menander at least was still read, enjoyed, and imitated.

Finally, comedy is more slightly treated than tragedy and lyric poetry. This slighter treatment may result in part from the decline in taste for certain comic types and authors. Plutarch shows how the taste for the Old Comedy had declined; Legrand, how much fault the grammarians could find even with Menander.⁸³ Doubtless the objections that could be made to him would apply even more to other poets of the New Comedy. Another cause is surely the epigrammatists' love of display; comedy gave them less chance to show their virtuosity than did other types of poetry.

The epigrams, then, confirm the evidence from other sources, that, compared with more serious literary types, comedy, especially the Old, was not held in high esteem. But the epigrams also show that its influence was enduring, and had penetrated to all levels of society. In the fifth century, Palladas, the poor grammarian, who may never have attended a performance or read a complete play of the New Comedy, could say that Menander spoke like "a nurse-ling of the Muses and the Graces," and could find spiritual kinship in his bitterness and fatalism; in the sixth, Agathias, the elegant courtier, could point his own wit with allusions to Menander's urbanities. Humble folk found in his wisdom consolation for their calamities, and had his sentiments inscribed upon their tombs. Nor were the older poets quite forgotten. In the first century before Christ the words of Cratinus and Aristophanes could still inspire fine poetry; and as late as the sixth century of our era the name of Cratinus had meaning for Christodorus of Thebes. From the anonymous epitaph for Euthias to the love poems of Agathias and later, the epigrams reflect an interest in the theory of comedy that may help to explain the existence of such documents as the *Tractatus Coislinianus*; and comic *dicta* were studied and recited in the schools. Vulgar in its origin and achieving in the hands of its great masters an almost perfect union of the popular and the artistic, comedy retained its hold on slave and freedman, unlettered citizen, scholar, and courtier alike.

⁸² Thus, Agathias, *AP* 5.267, obviously harks back to the type of dialogue mentioned on p. 99; in *AP* 11.354 vs. 17 we have a specific reference to Callimachus' epigram on Cleombrotus.

⁸³ Legrand 256-9, who refers to W. G. Rutherford's *The New Phrynichus* (London, 1881) 491-9; where see Rutherford's commentary.