MENANDER'S *THAIS* AND THE ROMAN POETS

A. TRAILL

THE REPUTATION OF THE *Thais*, one of Menander's most famous plays in antiquity, rested on its title character, a pricey hetaira who plied her trade in the play's fictional Athens. The remains of this celebrated work are disappointingly few: seven complete lines distributed over three fragments and a handful of such proverbial phrases as "to die like a rat" (i.e., a slow and wasting death) and "poorer than a κίγκλος [a small bird]."[1] But we do have several intriguing allusions in Roman poetry to an elegant, artful courtesan named Thais, two of which specifically connect her with Menander. This has tempted scholars in the past into attempting reconstructions of the original plot. Comparison of the "Thais" invoked in Propertius 2.6 and 4.5, Juvenal *Satires* 3 and 6, and Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and *Remedia amoris* with the remains of Menander's *Thais* will suggest reasons to be cautious in this. What these allusions do offer, however, is an interesting case study in Roman poetic use of Menander. Specifically, they suggest that we need to think about allusion slightly differently when the source is New Comedy rather than elegy, lyric, or epic. These passages pose an interpretive problem similar to that of the *topos* in that they frustrate efforts to identify and activate a specific earlier model for a broadly familiar motif. This paper will look closely at Thais in her Roman context and attempt to show how this problem may be understood, at least in part, as a reflection of New Comedy's own conventions.

What we know about the play from direct sources is, by a generous reckoning, small. It is largely dependent upon a four line passage preserved in Plutarch's *Moralia* (19a = *PCG* 6.2 163), which offers important, if problematic, evidence for the play's title character. This fragment draws a vivid picture of a successful hetaira:

> ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν ἄειδε τοιαύτην, θεά,
> θρασεῖαν, ὡραίαν δὲ καὶ πιθανὴν ἅμα,
> ἀδικοῦσαν, ἀποκλείουσαν, αἰτοῦσαν πυκνά,
> μηδενὸς ἐρῶσαν, προσποιουμένην δ' ἀεί.
>
> Sing to me, goddess, of a woman like this:
> brazen, but young and also charming,

An earlier version of this paper was delivered at CAMWS in Cleveland, on April 15, 1999. I would like to express warm thanks to Richard Thomas, Peter Knox, and the anonymous readers for *Phoenix* for their many helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. K-T = Körte-Thierfelder 1953; *PCG* = Kassel and Austin 1983 and 1998.

[1] κατὰ μυὸς ὄλεθρον (*PCG* 6.2 166 = K-T 188), which Webster (1974: 189) translates "a living death"; πτωχότερος κίγκλου (*PCG* 6.2 168 = K-T 190). Citations of Menander are from F. H. Sandbach's Oxford Text (1990), except where noted; citations of Propertius, Ovid, and Juvenal are from the Oxford Classical Texts of Barber, Kenney, and Clausen respectively.

PHOENIX, VOL. 55 (2001) 3–4.

who flouts the laws, shuts [lovers] out, constantly asks [for money],
loves no one but is always pretending to.

Unlike so many Menander quotations which survive as illustrations of a lexical or grammatical oddity or as excerptable bits of gnomic wisdom, this passage reaches us in a comparatively informative context. Plutarch cites it as evidence that playwrights may hold critical attitudes toward elements of their own plays:

... εἰ ὁ ποιητὴς αὐτὸς ἐμφάσεις δίδωσι κατὰ τῶν λεγομένων ὡς δυσχεραινομένων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. καθάπερ ὁ Μένανδρος ἐν τῷ προλόγῳ τῆς Θαΐδος πεποίηκεν.

... if the poet himself makes a statement against the content of the play as being disagreeable to him, just as Menander has done in the prologue of the *Thais*.

Plutarch may well have known excerpts rather better than whole plays, as E. Fantham suggests, but there is no reason to doubt that this fragment, with its obviously introductory material (notably the epic opening ἄειδε ... θεά) comes from the prologue.[2] It may have been the opening of the play. How reliable is this portrait? Recent critics have been skeptical, with reason. The speaker sounds like a typical wrong-headed New Comic youth parading his mistakes about a woman.[3] But we may be too eager to distrust him. Older critics heard a more authoritative voice, perhaps a deity (Wilamowitz) or even the poet himself (Leo).[4] Despite Plutarch's testimony (ὁ ποιητὴς αὐτός), the latter seems unlikely since the speaker is speaking in character. But it is also unlikely that a deity, even a nonce-god like "Misapprehension" of the *Perikeiromene*, would invoke another deity, and this speaker seems a little *too* identified with a lover's point of view, a little *too* emotionally engaged—despite his rhetorical flourishes[5]—to belong with the immortals. The personal nature of some of these complaints suggests a love-struck youth or his loyal slave, the only characters likely to consider "not

[2] Fantham 1984: 300. The epic parody in these lines has been noted by Wilamowitz (1925: 145), Holzberg (1974: 50), and Krieter-Spiro (1997: 138). Holzberg points out that ἐν τῷ προλόγῳ need not mean in the prologue *rhesis*, specifically (rather than in the prologue scene). The latter case would account for both the emotional tone of these lines and the apostrophe to a goddess.

[3] Most critics hear a male voice here (as I think one must) of doubtful reliability: e.g., Brown 1990: 254; cf. Henry 1985: 129. As Krieter-Spiro (1997: 167) notes, this kind of slander is a virtual norm and Hauschild (1933: 24) also saw stock charges in this speech. With Holzberg (1974: 50), I agree that the speaker is most likely a lover. Photiades (1958: 109) identifies him as a youth, citing the youth who speaks the *Georgos* prologue as a comparison (and arguing, less convincingly, that a youth also speaks the *Phasma* prologue).

[4] Wilamowitz 1925: 145–146, but he knew of no other kind of prologue speaker (the *Samia* prologue had, of course, not yet been discovered) and his main purpose was to refute Leo (1912: 239–240), who took Plutarch at his word, reading these lines as straightforward presentation of Menander's opinion. Although he rightly rejected this, Wilamowitz expressed no doubts about the speaker's credibility. In assuming that the play drew an unsympathetic portrait of Thais, Webster (1945: 147–148) implicitly takes this speaker at his word.

[5] This may be three tricola within a tricolon: (1) θρασεῖαν, ὡραίαν ... πιθανήν; (2) ἀδικοῦσαν, ἀποκλείουσαν, αἰτοῦσαν πυκνά; (3) μηδενὸς ἐρῶσαν, προσποιουμένην δ' ἀεί, with a third element (not necessarily relevant to Plutarch's point) perhaps running through the end of the following line.

loving anyone" (μηδενὸς ἐρῶσαν) an outrage in a prostitute. Is this sketch to be dismissed, then, as biased and misinformed, like the picture Sostratos paints of his innocent girl-friend in the *Dis Exapaton* fragment (O13 Sandbach)? There must be a grain of truth in these charges, enough at least for the passage to serve as a plausible example of a poet's editorializing (δυσχεραινομένων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ). There is no reason to believe that Plutarch's argument depended on a basic misrepresentation of Menander's best known hetaira.

This passage, then, paints a portrait we must assume to be true in outline. A Thais who pursues profit in her own right (αἰτοῦσαν πυκνά) and refuses admission (ἀποκλείουσαν),[6] presumably to her own household, must be free and is probably foreign, like most prostitutes in Menander's Athens.[7] It is not clear how far the play as a whole endorsed this speaker's unsympathetic view of her *modus operandi*. These criticisms could easily be made of Habrotonon in the *Epitrepontes*: she has plenty of nerve, charm, and good looks, easily bamboozles the youth Charisios with a "pretence" (cf. προσποιουμένην δ' ἀεί), shows no sign of loving him or anyone else, and finally, when the play breaks off, appears likely to profit from her scheming.[8] Yet despite the hostile portraits of Onesimos and Smikrines (and a few scholarly critics), she could hardly be called an object of the playwright's δυσχέρεια.[9] A Thais who gulled the infatuated was, at most, a secondary target of the play's criticism, and even this would be something of an anomaly in the unscrupulous world of New Comic deception plots.

The figure of moral consequence in the *Dis Exapaton* and the *Epitrepontes* is not the hetaira, an attractive nuisance with limited influence over a citizen

[6] "Shutting out," as Richard Thomas has kindly reminded me, is a stereotyped element of the *paraclausithyron*, which we know from the opening scene of the *Misoumenos* to have figured in New Comedy. Set in a context of loud, drunken komasts, Thais' gesture might seem less capricious than this speaker suggests. Alternatively, this may be simply the *topos*, so frequent in Lucian, of rejecting a poor lover in favour of a rich one (e.g., *Dial. Mer.* 8.3, 11.3, 14.1); note especially Lucian *Dial. Mer.* 12.1, which also links "demanding" and "shutting out" (μήτε ἀργύριον πώποτε ἠτησά σε μήτ' ἀπέκλεισα ἐλθόντα).

[7] Slave prostitutes in Menander do not appear to handle their own fees (e.g., *Epitr.* 136–137: πορνοβοσκῷ δώδεκα τῆς ἡμέρας δραχμὰς δίδωσι; *Kol.* 120–132). On Thais' free status, see Krieter-Spiro 1997: 53; on the foreign origin of many hetairai at Athens, see Long 1986: 122–123 (a standard view recently challenged by Cohen 2000).

[8] Hauschild (1933: 24–25) points out that Plautus' Phronesium has these traits, too.

[9] Onesimos and Smikrines accuse her of profiting at Pamphile's expense through baby- and husband-stealing (*Epitr.* 538–540, 749–800), but the play appears to clear her of the charge of harming anyone, while still recognizing self-interest as a motive for her actions. For some critics this has been her only significant motive: e.g., Gomme and Sandbach 1973: 334: "her only deep feelings are for herself"; Post 1931: 233: "she is . . . not seriously moved except when she utters a prayer for freedom"; *contra* Henry 1985: 57–60; Goldberg 1980: 63–64, describing her motivation as "a complex blend of altruism and self-interest." Opinions about her motives will always be divided, but it is, I think, fair to say that the play does not take criticisms for the sort of faults the *Thais* speaker lists very seriously.

household, but the male citizen who jeopardizes patrimony and social standing for the love-affair. *PCG* 6.2 164, an introspective comment by an obviously lovelorn speaker, testifies to one such character, at least, in the *Thais*:

ἀκρατής,
ἄγγαρος, ὄλεθρος· ἡδέως ἄν μοι δοκῶ
ὅμως πεπονθὼς ταῦτα νῦν ταύτην ἔχειν.

the one with no self-control, imbecile [lit. "courier"], disaster; still, I think I would now happily take her at this price.[10]

Without the context we cannot know how seriously to take these accusations. They suggest a male character of some social consequence (ἀκράτεια is a vice of the privileged), whose "wrong" decision would offer the playwright a more plausible object of serious criticism than a hetaira's stereotyped conniving. It is tempting to see confirmation of this in φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρήσθ' ὁμιλίαι κακαί, "bad company corrupts good habits" (*PCG* 6.2 165 = K-T 187), a trimeter quoted by the apostle Paul (I *Cor.* 15:33) and generally attributed to the *Thais*.[11] Even if this attribution is correct, however, and we can assume the obvious suspects (ἤθη χρήσθ' would refer to a corrupted lover, formerly of "good habits" and ὁμιλίαι κακαί to Thais herself, probably the "worst" company—at least morally speaking—in the play),[12] we have no way of knowing whether to take this line at face value. Menander could and did put edifying remarks in the wrong mouths; perhaps Thais was brash (θρασεῖα) enough to say it herself. At best, we may suppose that the jeopardized ἤθη are those of a free male character, the sort of person in Menander who might choose his company (ὁμιλία implies voluntary association) and be described as χρηστός, a status term.[13] Since Menandrean plays do not end with a breakdown of the family, we can assume that the fear

[10] *Phot. Berol.* p. 10, 21 (cited at K-T 1953: 74) glosses ἄγγαρος as a kind of Persian pony-express rider, a low status job apparently, as the word came to connote stupidity and servility (τίθεται τὸ ὄνομα καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν φορτηγῶν καὶ ὅλως τῶν ἀναισθήτων καὶ ἀνδραποδωδῶν). For ὄλεθρος of people, cf. *Dysk.* 365–366: ταῖς βώλοις βαλεῖ / εὐθὺς σ', ἀποκαλεῖ τ' ὄλεθρον ἀργόν. For a similar use of ἀκρατής (another lovestruck youth's self-reproach), cf. *Dis Ex.* 16 with Sandbach's restoration.

[11] For modern scholars, the question has been whether the line originated in the *Thais*, not whether it appeared there. Ling (1925) and Körte (1953: 74) reconcile attributions to Menander (Jerome *Comment. ad Titum* chap. 1), Euripides (Socrates the historian *Hist. eccl.* 3.16), and an unnamed tragedian (Clement of Alexandria *Strom.* 1.59.4) by taking the line as a Euripidean allusion in Menander. This is apparently confirmed by a papyrus reference (Knox 1925). *Contra* Grant 1965: 160. For further bibliography, see *PCG* 6.2 *ad loc.*

[12] So Webster 1960: 148.

[13] *Pace* Anderson 1984: 133, n. 2 and Brown 1990: 252, normal Menandrean usage reserves χρηστός for freeborn males (see, e.g., *Asp.* 125; *Dis Ex.* 57; *Epitr.* 1066; *Theoph.* 1.14; *Sam.* 142, 408; *Sik.* 14; K-T frag. 580.2), presenting exceptions as paradoxes (e.g., *Sam.* 140–142; K-T frag. 722.5–8 = *PCG* 6.2 adesp. 1027: πολλάκις ὁ δοῦλος τοὺς τρόπους χρηστοὺς ἔχων / τῶν δεσποτῶν ἐγένετο σωφρονέστερος. / εἰ δ' ἡ τύχη τὸ σῶμα κατεδουλώσατο, / ὅ γε νοῦς ὑπάρχει τοῖς τρόποις ἐλεύθερος).

expressed here was not realized. This play may well have been one that ended, as Plutarch claims a number did, with a broken-off affair.[14]

The portrait from Menander is sketchy but it is enough to set his Thais apart from the "Thais" of Ovid, Juvenal, and Propertius in several important details. Before turning to these texts, however, I would like to address two questions of identification. The first concerns other Roman Thaises. Many of the women of the demi-monde named "Thais" in Latin poetry appear to have no significant connection to Menander's hetaira (for example, none in Martial do).[15] Propertius footnotes Menander when he mentions Thais, but Ovid and Juvenal are not so explicit, although their "Thais" has clear theatrical associations. The familiar problem of what does and what does not constitute an allusion in Latin poetry is complicated here by two factors specific to New Comedy. First, comedy is not a model that the elegists comfortably acknowledge (satire is more candid) and there is consequently little discourse about the nature of their relationship to it. Second, their debt is almost always to the genre: they imitate by "code," to use Conte's distinction, rarely specifying "exemplary models" from New Comedy (as, for example, a particular *lena* or a particular version of a stock comic phrase).[16] It is often difficult to connect comic material in elegy and satire with specific texts, even as "code models."[17] The *Thais*, the only specific work of a New Comic poet mentioned by name, makes an intriguing case study because it figures in both types of intertextual relationship, making a connection to a whole body of texts in Ovid and Juvenal and to a specific text in Propertius.

The second is a small but persistent error in commentaries on these passages, which suggest a potential reference the poems do not invoke. There was another

[14] At *Mor.* 712c, an often quoted passage, Plutarch cites Menander's prostitute plots as proof that the plays promote married love: τὰ δὲ πρὸς ἑταίρας, ἂν μὲν ὦσιν ἰταμαὶ καὶ θρασεῖαι, διακόπτεται σωφρονισμοῖς τισιν ἡ μετανοίαις τῶν νέων, ταῖς δε χρησταῖς καὶ ἀντερώσαις ἡ πατήρ τις ἀνευρίσκεται γνήσιος ἢ χρόνος τις ἐπιμετρεῖται τῷ ἔρωτι, συμπεριφορὰν αἰδοῦς ἔχων φιλάνθρωπον. For Thais as an example of the first "rash and bold" type, see Brown 1990: 254. How far this holds true for Menander has been debated. Terence's *Heauton Timoroumenos* ends with a break-up due to a youth's "change of mind" (μετάνοια) at the prospect of disinheritance, but this resolution comes in the "second" plot-line of a double-plot, a recognized area of Terentian innovation (first noted by Evanthius 3.9, in *Don. Comm.*, but see also Goldberg 1986: 123–148) and may not go back to Menander. Fantham (1975: 52–53, n. 25) takes the incident as an addition by Terence. Apart from the *Heauton*, the likeliest candidates for a broken-off affair with a "bold" hetaira are the *Thais* and the *Dis Exapaton*, but neither play is sufficiently preserved to confirm Plutarch's claim.

[15] Martial uses the name for several malformed figures who bear no resemblance to Menander's ὡραῖαν δὲ καὶ πιθανήν hetaira: one-eyed Thais (3.8, 11), black-toothed Thais (5.43), ill-smelling Thais (6.93), and skinny Thais (11.101).

[16] Conte 1986: 31.

[17] Attempts to prove New Comic influence on elegy through parallels have run against this problem. A. A. Day's chapter "New Comedy and Elegy" (1938: 85–101) resorts to argument from quantity ("the number of close parallels . . . is too great to be the result merely of chance" [91]), and Yardley (1972: 139) reaches a highly qualified conclusion: "comedy as a direct influence on elegy cannot, on the basis of the examples here cited, be ruled out completely."

famous Thais in late fourth-century Athens, an Attic hetaira, kept first by Ptolemy and then by Alexander (or possibly the other way round), who left her mark on history by convincing a drunken Alexander to burn the royal palace at Persepolis. She eventually married Ptolemy and lived to see her daughter wed to a king of Cyprus, or so the story goes. Questions of the truth or fiction of this account lie beyond the scope of the present study.[18] At issue is her relevance to the "Thais" mentioned by Propertius, Ovid, and Juvenal. Butler and Barber (1933: 200) gloss Prop. 2.6.3, *Menandreae Thaidos*, as a reference to Alexander's Thais. In their commentaries on this poem, Enk (1962: 98), Richardson (1977: 227), and Rothstein (1898: 1.246) cite both the fictional and the historical figure, although Rothstein's wording ("Thais, [die Geliebte] Alexanders des Grosses die man mit der Titelheldin einer Komödie des Menander identifizierte") suggests reservations about identifying the two. A similar point is sometimes made concerning Prop. 4.5.43, *Thais pretiosa Menandri*.[19] Brandt (1963: 186) identifies the Thais of Ovid *Ars am.* 3.604 with Alexander's lover, despite the absence of other historical material and the numerous comic elements in this passage and Pianezzola's note implies a similar connection.[20] Alexander's mistress is invoked to explain these New Comic allusions, not, I think, because of any cues in the Latin texts, but because Menander is assumed to have based his own Thais on her. This idea sometimes appears in commentaries on passages that do not activate either source, comic or historical, as, for example, the "Thais" in Martial 6.93, 11.101, and 5.43.[21]

Few scholars of Menander accept Alexander's Thais as a prototype for the play's title figure, and I would only add a few points to A. Körte's argument that this figure had "nothing in common with Menander's but the name."[22] New Comic conventions restricted the degree to which a real person could figure in a play. New Comedy rarely lampooned prominent public figures, except in passing remarks like the jokes about "Chairephon" and "Androkles" in the *Samia*

[18] Cleitarchus (paraphrased in Ath. 13.576d–e), Plutarch (*Alex.* 38), Diodorus (17.72), and Q. Curtius (5.7.2–7) all tell of Thais and the palace-burning, with varying details. Arrian (3.18.11–12) omits Thais entirely and sets the event elsewhere. Her role in the destruction has been questioned by some modern scholars (Bosworth 1994: 817; Pearson 1960: 218; Hammond 1989: 2). Borza (1972: 234–235) accepts that she may have been present, but doubts whether her part in the incident can be known with certainty.

[19] For example, Gutzwiller 1985: 108. Butler and Barber (1933: 354, nn. 43–44) simply refer the reader back to their note on 2.6.3.

[20] Pianezzola 1991: 407: "*Taide*: nome di una famosa etera ateniese amata da Alessandro Magno e assunta come simbolo delle donne cui Ovidio si rivolge .... Taide è la *meretrix* per eccellenza ... la *meretrix blanda* di Menandro .... "

[21] Grewing (1997: 581–582) mentions both Alexander's Thais and Menander's in his commentary on 6.93, but rightly treats generic use of the name for slaves and prostitutes as a separate phenomenon. Kay (1985: 272) makes a similar point about Martial 11.101.

[22] Körte (1919: 92) argues that none of Menander's plays is named for a historical personage. Hauschild (1933: 23, following Breitenbach 1908) and Henry (1985: 129) also dismiss the historical Thais.

(603–604, 606–608) or the hetaira "Nannion" in the *Pseudherakles* (*PCG* 6.2 414).[23] Alexander's mistress is unlikely to have served Menander as a model because her distinguishing features could not be admitted into a New Comic plot. She traveled in the wrong circles (Alexander's court) and in the wrong places (Persia and Egypt) for plays set in middle-class Athens. At a distant stretch one might imagine the *Thais* as a prequel—the story of Thais *before* Persepolis—though at this stage in her career she would have had nothing to distinguish her from any other comic hetaira and might as well have been a "Chrysis." The playwright Hipparchus (third century B.C.) later wrote a *Thais* of his own, evidence that Menander's hetaira names, even famous ones, were not copyrighted.[24] Nor was the name, Thais, unique to Alexander's mistress. It is attested for several married, perhaps even citizen, women at Athens.[25] One might compare the equally famous Glykera, mistress of Harpalos (and, allegedly, of Menander himself).[26] This Glykera has nothing to do with the heroine of the *Perikeiromene*, the *Misogynes* Glykera (*PCG* 6.2 240), or the Glykera of *PCG* 6.2 96, who may, like Thais, have given her name to the play.[27]

Athenaeus (13.567c) does mention Menander's *Thais* and *Phanion* in a list of plays named for hetairai, at least one of which was clearly a real person (Eubulus'

[23] References to Nannion are collected in Ath. 13.587a–b.

[24] *PCG* 5 "Hipparchus" 3. Hipparchus' Thais also had expensive tastes if, with Meineke (cited *ibid.*), we take a certain "cup worth 200 gold pieces" as one of the courtesan's gifts. The Latin poet Afranius also wrote a *Thais*, perhaps borrowing from Menander's, but not closely. As an anonymous referee has pointed out to me, Afranius wrote *togatae*, not *palliatae*. The two preserved fragments (Ribbeck *CRF*^{3} pp. 247–248) offer no insight into the character of the heroine. The name was typical enough of New Comic courtesans (and it is even a ship name in *Anth. Pal.* 5.161.1) for Lucian to use it twice in his dialogues (*Dial. Mer.* 1, 3).

[25] From Traill 2000: 4–5: Thais daughter of Aristolokhos from the deme Aithalidai (500162, second–first century B.C.) and Thais wife or daughter of an unnamed man from the deme Aixone (500163, second century B.C.) were probably citizens. Thais Herakleotis (500165, possibly second century A.D.) daughter of Philon and wife of Sthenedemos from the deme Teithras (also known from *IG* II 945), seems, despite her non-Athenian status, to have married an Athenian. Another Thais of unknown status (500160, second century A.D.) is attested as married to a man named Hermeias. These women are evidence that the name was not exclusive to prostitutes. For the sake of comparison: the *CIL* index for Rome (*CIL* VI^2 pars 7 fasc. 5) lists forty-seven slaves, freed-, and free women who bore the name Thais and Solin (1996: 263) records twenty-three attestations (slaves and freedwomen only) between the Augustan age and the end of the second century.

[26] Alciphron *Letters* 4.18 and 19 form an exchange between Menander and a "Glykera." Körte (1919: 89–90) points out the chronological and other problems of identifying this Glykera with Harpalus' mistress. That Alciphron's Glykera was based on any real original is unlikely. Both Körte and Arnott (1979: xvii) allude to another supposed love-affair between Menander and a "Thais," but this depends on an extremely literal reading of Martial 14.187 (Μενάνδρου Θαΐς *hac primum iuvenum lascivos lusit amores; / nec Glycera pueri, Thais amica fuit*). With Leary (1996: 252), I take *Thais* as a double entendre for both a prostitute and a play. The witticism, then, in this otherwise bland epigram is that Menander's first "girlfriend" was a play.

[27] Not surprisingly, "Sweetie" is a common name off-stage, as well. From the fourth to the second century we know of at least twenty-five women of uncertain status named Glykera (most attested on graves): see Traill 1995: 289–293: one freed woolworker (277520) and one likely citizen (277710).

Clepsydra was actually named Metiche), but he is concerned with how the plays acquired their titles, not with how the playwrights created their characters. His list also includes examples from Middle and Old Comedy, which, unlike New Comedy readily satirized individuals by name.

What we may call the Thais *topos* appears in four passages in Ovid and Juvenal. In the *Ars amatoria*, Ovid invokes Thais when he advises women to fabricate difficulties in order to maintain a lover's interest:

> *quae venit ex tuto, minus est accepta voluptas;*
> *ut sis liberior Thaide, finge metus.*
> *cum melius foribus possis, admitte fenestra.* (*Ars am.* 3.603–605)

Perfectly safe sex isn't as much fun; even if you're less chaperoned than Thais, fake fears. Let him in through the window, though you could more easily use the door.

A *Remedia* passage casts Thais as a symbol of Ovid's own transgressive poetics, presenting elegy as a stock "role" with strict performance conventions:

> *quis ferat Andromaches peragentem Thaida partes?*
> *peccet, in Andromache Thaida quisquis agat.*
> *Thais in arte mea est: lascivia libera nostra est;*
> *nil mihi cum vitta; Thais in arte mea est.* (*Rem.* 383–386)

Who would put up with Thais playing the role of Andromache? Anyone who played Thais in the style of Andromache would ruin the part. Thais is in my art: our flirtatious sporting is free. I have nothing to do with matron's ribbon; Thais is in my art.

Two references in Juvenal emphasize the standard role of the comic *meretrix*, of which Thais is merely a famous example. The third satire castigates Greeks as a nation of actors:

> *. . . an melior cum Thaida sustinet aut cum*
> *uxorem comoedus agit vel Dorida nullo*
> *cultam palliolo? mulier nempe ipsa videtur,*
> *non persona, loqui . . .* (*Sat.* 3.93–96)

Does a professional actor [*sc.* do any better than Greeks], when he plays the part of Thais, or plays a wife, or a Doris with her "sleeves rolled up"? Why, it seems like a real woman, not an actor, speaking.

In the sixth satire, Juvenal warns against the *reticulatus adulter*:

> *hic erit in lecto fortissimus: exuit illic*
> *personam docili Thais saltata Triphallo.* (*Sat.* 6.025–26)

This man [*sc.* the adulterer-in-a-dress] will be his manliest in bed. There Thais, who is being played by skillful "Triphallus," takes off the mask.

All of these passages present Thais as stock New Comic prostitute, but without the details that might tie her to a particular play.[28] *Thais* is the costume (*nil mihi cum vitta*), mask (*exuit illic / personam*), actions and gestures of the performed role (*Thaida quisquis agat, cum Thaida sustinet, Thais saltata*). Both Ovid and Juvenal reduce this stock character to generic traits, *viz.*, licentiousness (*liberior Thaide, lascivia libera nostra*) and wit (*finge metus*), which may be easily transferred to the objects of comparison: poetry, in the *Remedia* passage, and hypocritical Greeks, in *Satire* 3. "Thais," shorthand for a standard role, is antonomasia, rather than allusion in the strictest sense. The *Remedia* passage contrasts "Thais" with a standard tragic role, *Andromaches partes* (i.e., *any* tragic version of Andromache), the third satire lists it with standard comic women's parts, the *ancilla* ("Doris") and the *uxor*, and the sixth satire characterizes "Thais" only in general terms of performance.

Menander's *Thais* must have played a large part in establishing "Thais"—not Bacchis, Chrysis, or Glykera—as the name that typified the comic prostitute but otherwise exercised little direct influence on these passages. The reader is expected to know Thais not from reading, but from watching performances on stage (and there is no hint that either poet has Menandrean plays, performed in Greek, in mind). McKeown has pointed out that the *Ars amatoria* situation resembles a popular type of mime, the Adultery-Mime, with its love triangle and window entrance ("probably a standard feature of amatory mimes").[29] This may account for the comic language here: the *ancilla* is *callida* (607), the husband is a *durus vir* (602), a variant of the comic *pater durus*, and his deception is described in comic terms (*eludi*, 611; *ut fallas*, 616; *verba dabis*, 618). New Comedy did not generally treat adultery, but mime, its later descendant, certainly did.[30] Whether or not Thais was a mime role (which is not implausible), *Ars am.* 3.604 clearly introduces a theatrical model which the female reader is encouraged to adopt. Likewise Juvenal's third satire explicitly places Thais in comedy (*comoedus agit*), although this may be Roman, not Greek comedy (the *uxor* seems to have been a rarer figure on the Menandrean than the Plautine stage) and the sixth satire passage may also refer to comedy.[31] These theatrical associations serve to bring out what we may call

[28] An allusion in Varro suggests that Menander's Thais was the proverbial Greek prostitute in first-century Rome. In his *Meleagri*, an attack on hunting, Varro criticizes the excessively short costume of the hunt: *non modo suris apertis sed paene natibus apertis ambulans / cum etiam Thais Menandri tunicam demissam habeat ad talos* (*Men. Sat.* 301, 302; on the joining of these fragments see Cèbe 1987: 1324). If Thais still dressed "decently," it was no doubt for the reason Cèbe cites (1987: 1325–26): the Athenians, unlike the Romans, did not regulate the costume of prostitutes. Despite the apparently specific reference, Varro is using the name to call up a a generic type, like the Tarentines who once gave the nickname "Thais" to a local rake (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 19.4.6, cited in Cèbe).

[29] McKeown 1979: 76.

[30] For the influence of New Comedy on mime, see Fantham 1989: 156–157.

[31] The preserved corpus gives speaking parts to only two wives, one deserted (Pamphile, *Epitrepontes*) and the other a widow (Myrrhine, *Georgos*). Donatus (*ad And.* 14) tells us of a third in the opening scene of the *Perinthia*. None of these roles compares with that of a Plautine *matrona*. Juv.

the connotative force of the allusion. Both poets use "Thais" to call up the idea of acting a part, whether it is Ovid's poetry impersonating tragedy or Juvenal's Greek actor impersonating a woman. This is not just performance, but self-conscious performance. Juvenal's hypocritical Greeks, his *reticulatus adulter*, and even Ovid's playful, personified *ars* all perform deliberately and knowingly—like actors. Thais is seen from an extra-dramatic point of view; she becomes an image of artifice. It is the artifice of the real-life actor, however, not of the fictional prostitute (Menander's hetaira must have shared Habrotonon's acting skills, as she was "always pretending"). Neither Latin poet places her in a Menandrean context. *Ars am.* 3.604 plays with a married Thais pretending to be afraid of her husband, while *Rem. am.* 383–384 imagines Thais acting the role of Andromache; Juvenal focuses on the actors behind the role, invoking "Thais" as theatrical fakery at its height.

If Ovid and Juvenal use Thais to call up their readers' general knowledge of the comic *meretrix* and experience of contemporary theatre, Propertius, in contrast, downplays her theatricality while marking her literary origins in the most obvious way possible: he names Menander. Consequently, both allusions (2.6.1–6 and 4.5.41–44) have been mined for information about the original play. Their thorough integration into the Propertian context, however, invites some skepticism. They do not in fact send a reader back to the text of the Menandrean play but fall rather under R. Thomas's category of "apparent" reference, "a context that seems clearly to recall a specific model but that on closer investigation frustrates that expectation."[32] In poem 2.6, the speaker humorously upbraids Cynthia for the excessive number of her male "friends." He includes Thais in a kind of priamel of previous record-holders:

> *non ita complebant Ephyraeae Laidos aedis,*
> *ad cuius iacuit Graecia tota fores;*
> *turba Menandreae fuerat nec Thaidos olim*
> *tanta, in qua populus lusit Ericthonius;*
> *nec, quae deletas potuit componere Thebas,*
> *Phryne tam multis facta beata viris.* (2.6.1–6)

They didn't fill the house of Corinthian Lais like this, and all of Greece lay at her door. Nor was the crowd of Menander's Thais, with whom the Athenian public played, so large back then. And not even Phryne, who could restore destroyed Thebes, was made rich by so many men.

The absence of Alexander's Thais here provides an additional reason to doubt that this famous hetaira lay behind Menander's stock type. The only hint of a

---

Sat. 6.025–26 cannot refer to mime since the female part is performed by a male actor in a mask, though *salto* was used for performing in mime and pantomime (but not for playing a comic role). Plautus and Terence use the verb to describe dancing at parties (*Stich.* 755–757, *Ad.* 752), or dancing by *cinaedi* (*Men.* 197–199; implied at *Mil.* 668: see Gratwick 1993: 159, n. 197).

[32] Thomas 1999: 132.

historical Thais is the word *olim* in the third line. But Propertius has clearly taken pains to balance the three elements of this priamel. He describes Lais, Thais, and Phryne each with the city in which she famously plied her trade (Corinth, Athens—*not* Persepolis or Alexandria—and Thebes),[33] a characteristic detail (*ad cuius iacuit Graecia tota fores; populus lusit Ericthonius; deletas potuit componere Thebas*), and, most importantly, a notoriously large clientele (*tota Graecia; turba; tam multis . . . viris*). Fitting this "one-time" (*olim*) Thais into the list of historical figures serves to focus attention on this last central point, the size of a Hellenistic courtesan's entourage. Rather than invoke the legend of a burned palace and a royal mistress—monogamous by this point, presumably—a legend which would suit neither the playful tone nor the argument of this passage, Propertius chose to take advantage of the comic figure and downplayed her fictionality by assimilating her to two real hetairai of the Hellenistic world. Indeed, by Propertius' day, Lais and Phryne had themselves become legends, as is clear from his references to the homage of "all Greece" (*tota Graecia*) and the supposed offer to restore Thebes at private expense after its destruction by Alexander.[34]

Propertius' Thais betrays signs of adaptation to her elegiac context that go beyond the focalization S. Hinds has argued is inherent in the very practice of allusion.[35] Propertius is not selectively highlighting certain aspects of the *Thais*, but pretending to derive his "famous Greek hetaira" *topos* from Menander's play, without using it as an "exemplary model" at all. The *populus Erichthonius* has no place in Greek New Comedy, which operated within a private world almost by definition.[36] Menander's *Thais* could have had no crowd scenes and no chorus of shut-out lovers (or of welcomed lovers, for that matter), since it is impossible to "pretend," as Thais did, to love admirers who arrive *en masse*. She may have entertained many in succession, but clearly a prostitute who shuts clients out and demands gifts "frequently" (πυκνά) is not operating on a fee per service basis. Menander's hetaira bled—or tried to bleed—a few rich men dry, working a selective segment of the Athenian public, not the broad network that *turba* and *populus Erichthonius* would imply, even with allowance for exaggeration.[37] Why then, the pointed reference to the playwright in line 3 (*Menandreae . . . Thaidos*), which spoils the sense of a homogeneous list? Like Ovid and Juvenal, Propertius is using Thais to evoke the stage as well as the symposium. The key is

[33] These are not their home cities. Lais reputedly came from Sicily (Ath. 13.588c) and Phryne from Thespiae (Ath. 13.590d).

[34] They may have been legends earlier, if *Anth. Pal.* 6.1 (Lais' mirror) is Hellenistic. I am grateful to Peter Knox for this reference.

[35] Hinds 1998: 103.

[36] Cf. Theophrastus' definition: κωμῳδία ἐστὶν ἰδιωτικῶν πραγμάτων ἀκίνδυνος περιοχή (Diom. 1.488.4–5, cited in Fortenbaugh 1981: 258, q. v. for ascription to Theophrastus).

[37] The speaker also exaggerates the lovers of Lais and Phryne. Cf. Epikrates (Ath. 13.570c) on the discrimination of another Lais ("you could see Pharnabazos sooner than you could see her"). I would simply note that in the case of Thais, genre conventions (and not just prices) would have operated to restrict her clientele.

the word *lusit*, which carries several comic connotations here, in addition to the typically elegiac one of "erotic" play.[38] Not only were these plays performed at *ludi*, they also use *ludus* to describe their own contents (for example, Plautus *Cas.* 760–761 sums up the duping of Olympio as *ludi ludificabiles*), and *ludere* (with *ludificare* and *ludos facere*) is the activity par excellence of their trickster-heroes.[39] *Lusit* thus subtly associates the people of Athens with the world of comedy in two ways: it suggests a festival occasion (they "played," in the sense "kept the holiday" by watching a comedy), and it suggests characteristic comic behaviour (they "played," in the sense "took part in a comic scheme"). *Menandreae* puts the reader in mind of Thais' comic origins. Moreover, if *olim* may also be taken as a reference to the time of the play's popularity, a nice ambiguity emerges: *populus Erichthonius* alludes on the surface to the Menandrean Thais' clientele, which was actually small (as Propertius himself recognizes in 4.5, she was *pretiosa*; see below, 298–299), and it also calls to mind the audiences that thronged to this celebrated play, deft preparation for lines 27–34 (how lascivious art corrupts the viewer). *Menandreae* frustrates our efforts to connect "Thais" with the play as a text, but may evoke the play as an event.

Propertius' other reference to Thais appears to promise a much closer connection. In poem 4.5 he footnotes both author and genre and offers a summarized plot. Here the *lena* Acanthis advises the speaker's mistress to put profit before love, setting the example of Thais against that of Medea:

> *nec te Medeae delectent probra sequacis*
> *(nempe tulit fastus ausa rogare prior),*
> *sed potius mundi Thais pretiosa Menandri*
> *cum ferit astutos comica moecha Getas.* (4.5.41–44)

Nor should the disgraceful conduct of Medea the man-chaser delight you (of course she endured arrogant rejection—she had the nerve to ask him first!) but rather elegant Menander's expensive Thais, when the comic adulteress is tricking clever Getics.

The temptation to ascribe this all-too-typical comic scenario—a *pretiosa Thais* duping Getic slaves, rather like Philocomasium and Sceledrus in the *Miles*—to the *Thais* has been hard to resist.[40] Even the generic advice that follows, *viz.*, to receive anyone with money, has been read to reflect events in the *Thais*,

[38] Adams (1990: 162) notes that *ludo, lusus* cover a variety of sexual activities and commonly suggest "the amatory indulgence granted to youth." Richardson (1977: 227) takes *lusit* in two simultaneous senses ("whichever we choose, the other is an overtone") with two different antecedents of *qua*: (1) "made love" (*qua* = Thais) and (2) "found amusement" (*qua* = *turba*). This ambiguity would complement my double reading of *populus lusit Erichthonius*. On the use of *in qua*, see Camps 1967: 92–93.

[39] Further examples of *ludus* in this self-reflexive sense include: Plaut. *Mil.* 991; *Poen.* 206; *Pseud.* 552; Ter. *An.* 479. "Playing" (duping) the old man/pimp is a stock boast of the trickster, e.g., Plaut. *Bacch.* 642; *Cas.* 685; *Epid.* 373; *Trin.* 896.

[40] Rothstein (1898: 2.268), Webster (1960: 148), and Harsh (1955: 139) take this passage as straightforward plot summary. Rothstein even identifies the Getas ("es kann nur ein Diener des Alten

despite the unlikely appearance of a professional sailor (not a New Comic type) and formerly chalked-and-labeled slaves from "the forum" among the clientele.[41] But it is hard to see anything more than the genre in Roman form behind this scene. The plural *Getas* in the general condition *cum*-clause generalizes the reference, making it call up typical *mala meretrix* behaviour rather than any single incident in the *Thais*. Moreover, the *Thais* prologue fragment suggests that the comedy played out its antagonisms between the hetaira and her lovers, not their slaves (and particularly not Getai, to whom Menander seems to have allotted modest roles).[42] It may be questioned whether any comic hetaira, *pretiosa* or not, expended efforts on a slave.[43] None of Menander's extant hetairai do, nor do Plautus' or Terence's (or Lucian's), although slave-girls may do so on their behalf (for example, Astaphium, Pythias). For a Roman author looking back on a genre that abounded in prostitutes, trickery, and clever slaves, it may not have mattered whether a particular combination occurred often—or at all. We must recognize the generalized character of this "typical" behaviour.[44]

The Thais of 4.5 is also romanized. In making her the adversary of *astutos Getas*, Propertius sets her against a character that had been amplified and given particular prominence by Roman comedy.[45] The presence of a simple "Geta" here might suggest Menandrean origin, since Plautus, unlike Menander, preferred to give his clever slaves names of his own invention (for example, Palaestrio, Pseudolus, Epidicus), rather than the conventional descriptive or ethnic names (for example, Parmeno, Onesimus, Davus, Syrus). But Ovid uses the same name alongside the obviously generic *pater* to evoke what is most typical of Menander at *Ars am.* 3.332, where he alludes to the playwright as *cuive pater vafri luditur arte Getae*.[46] An *astutus Geta* is in fact unlikely to have appeared in the *Thais*. Menander's other Getics pose no overt challenge to the Athenian stereotype of the virile but stupid Thracian: witness the aggressive bluster at *Dysk.* 470–480 (and also the play's final scene), *Mis.* 216–221, or *Asp.* 242–245,

---

gemeint sein"). Richardson (1977: 445) is more cautious: "probably P. here refers to some particular incident or intrigue in a play of Menander . . . but it cannot be identified."

[41] *nec tibi displiceat miles non factus amori, / nauta nec attrita si ferat aera manu, / aut quorum titulus per barbara colla pependit / cretati medio cum saluere foro* (4.5.49–52); cf. Webster 1960: 148: "for money she [*sc.* Menander's Thais] accepts the unlovable soldier (cf. 732K) and the horny-handed sailor and the ex-slave."

[42] MacCary 1969: 293.

[43] Fantham (1984: 302) raises the same objection to this passage: "we know of no play in which the courtesan cheats a slave; usually they are allies in cheating some aged father or intrusive soldier."

[44] Cf. Fantham 1984: 302: "it seems most likely that Propertius has simply associated a famous title character of Menander with his own conception of a Menandrean plot—a conception which . . . resembles more closely the plots of Plautus than any extant play."

[45] Fraenkel (1960: 223–241, esp. 234–239) shows how Plautus expanded the role of the *servus callidus*. *Contra* Gratwick (1982: 93), who credits this to Naevius.

[46] Brandt (1963: 166) and Fantham (1984: 303, n. 14) also read this as a reference to a comic template, rather than to a specific play. *Contra* Pianezzola 1991: 385–386, n. 332.

from the self-identified—but unnamed—Getic *trapezopoios*.[47] The *Heros* Getas mentions the mill, too (*Her.* 3), as he plays the commonsense confidant to a lovelorn Daos, not unlike Thrasonides' Getic in the opening scene of the *Misoumenos*.[48] These Getai are not intellectually subtle characters, but for a Latin elegist and his Roman audience, any ethnic content the name "Getas" may have held in Athenian eyes was of little importance. The more common Greek New Comic slave names were easily interchanged (Terence did this, for example, in his *Eunuchus*).[49] Here Propertius is using a typically Greek name for an ostensibly Greek allusion, while taking pains to evoke not the shrewd, but subordinate, Menandrean schemer (we may call him a "Daos," for the sake of argument), but the Roman *servus callidus*, a principal character and worthy counterpart to the *mala meretrix*. She, as much as any Menandrean character, serves as the foil for Cynthia here and it is her Roman milieu that *astutos* evokes.

The very language of these lines betrays Roman influence. Like *ferit* ("tricks") and *inanis* (in line 47, "broke"), *astutos* derives from Roman comedy, not elegy,

[47] Men. *Asp.* 242–245: ἡμεῖς μόνοι / οἱ Θρᾷκές ἐσμεν ἄνδρες· οἱ μὲν δὴ Γέται, / Ἄπολλον, ἀνδρεῖον τὸ χρῆμα· τοιγαροῦν / γέμουσιν οἱ μυλῶνες ἡμῶν.

[48] On Thracian stereotypes, see Long 1986: 143. Long identifies ethnically stereotyped traits in certain Menandrean slaves (124–126, 151–152). MacCary (1969: 294) had earlier denied this ("the ethnic names—Getas, Sangarios, Syros, Syskos, Tibeios, Lydos—are not rendered appropriate by emphasis in characterization upon any national trait"), but he was looking for exaggerated features (for example, those of the Phrygian in Euripides' *Orestes*) common to all slaves of the same name. This, Brown (1987: 199) rightly cautions, is not to be found in Menander. I would suggest that ethnic stereotypes offered possibilities to be exploited at the playwright's discretion. Menander's Daoi (from Phrygia), for example, do the bulk of the scheming and lying in his plays (MacCary 1969: 285, 288; Wiles [1991: 95–96] overstates this tendency; the Daos of the *Dyskolos*, for example, who "anticipates [the] downfall of Sostratos" can hardly be said to "scheme"). Both Wiles (1991: 186) and Long (1986: 164) point out that Menander contrasts self-consciously "Phrygian" and "Thracian" slaves in the *Aspis*. The un-Phrygian loyalty and integrity of this Daos make a good case for Long's general argument (1986: 125 and *passim*) that Menander, far from denying them, actually emphasizes superficially foreign traits when he wants to demonstrate the fundamental, common humanity of Greeks and non-Greeks. It may be better, then, to think of ethnicity in Menander as a set of limitations requiring the non-contradiction of stereotyped external traits (Menander's cooks, for example, do not come from Thrace) but allowing more freedom in internal, and in particular moral, qualities. On "Daos" as an ethnic name associated with Phrygia, see Lascu 1969 (affirming); Krieter-Spiro 1997: 55–56 (doubtful).

[49] Terence's name changes are attested in the scholion to *Pers.* 5.161–175. Galen cites both Daoi and Getai as typical Menandrean schemers, with whom he compares the disputatious "Asclepiadeans" and "Erasistrateans" (*Nat. Fac.* 1.17): ὁμοίως δὲ τοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ βελτίστου Μενάνδρου κατὰ τὰς κωμῳδίας εἰσαγομένοις οἰκέταις, Δάοις τέ τισι καὶ Γέταις, οὐδὲν ἡγουμένοις σφῖσι πεπράχθαι γενναῖον, εἰ μὴ τρὶς ἐξαπατήσειαν τὸν δεσπότην. Galen's argument requires the *exemplum* of an incorrigible *servus callidus*, hence the exaggeration (τρὶς ἐξαπατήσειαν does the *Dis Exapaton* one better) and his un-Menandrean use of γενναῖον, which smacks of Roman comedy. The generalizing τισι also suggests a certain disregard for details. With MacCary (1969: 277–278), I doubt that Galen was thinking strictly of Menander. ὁ βέλτιστος Μένανδρος was merely a respectable means of alluding to the genre.

as Yardley has demonstrated.[50] *Moecha* is neither customary elegiac Latin nor, strictly speaking, Menandrean Greek, since Menander uses only the masculine μοιχός (five times in the major fragments).[51] Despite being a Greek loan-word, *moecha* evokes little that might be described as Menandrean. "Adulteress," possibly the only sexual term of abuse a Greek could not reasonably hurl at a prostitute, does not mean the same thing as "loving no-one," an accusation of calculated pretense (not infidelity). Latin *moecha* had already been used for its connotative rather than its literal meaning in Catullus 42 (*moecha putida*)[52] and may mean little more than "promiscuous" here, with a hint of Greek decadence. *Comica moecha* also suggests the *callida nupta* (Ovid *Tr.* 2.1.500) of mime. Used of a prostitute, *comica moecha* humorously extends the elegiac practice of applying the language of formal relationships to illicit affairs.[53] Far from evoking Menander's *Thais*, the word *moecha* imposes an additional distance between the poem's Roman context and the Greek referent of the allusion.

Although Roman comic language predominates in this couplet, the word *pretiosa* adds an elegiac touch. The adjective is remarkably uncommon in Plautus and Terence. Of all the prostitutes said to look expensive or cost too much, only Bacchis is *pretiosa* (Plaut. *Bacch.* 74: *nimium pretiosa es operaria*) and here, paired as it is with *operaria*, the word hardly flatters. Propertius' bawd, however, with her self-serving views on the fee scale of the profession, uses *pretiosa* ("expensive") to suggest elegance and desirability. This is of course a comic *topos* (witness Scapha, who praises Philematium as *lepida* and *venusta* as she urges her to despoil Philolaches),[54] but *pretiosa* is not to be read only in a positive sense. The reporting lover cannot be ignored here, any more than the eavesdropping Philolaches in the *Mostellaria*. His framing remarks alert the reader to the bawd's rhetorical skills (4.5.5: *docta vel Hippolytum Veneri mollire negantem*) to make us suspicious of her euphemisms. We also recognize the focalizing *persona* of the poor elegiac lover who refuses to tolerate any commerce in *amor* by his mistress. His grievance is not the comic lover's familiar complaint that the courtesan he loves demands too much and too often (a criticism actually made, as we have seen, of Menander's Thais); *pretiosa* implies the fault, not of being "overpriced," but of being "priced" at all. Elsewhere Propertius consistently associates "payment" (*pretium*) with corruption, and in particular, prostitution by women who are not prostitutes: for example, Cleopatra (3.11.31–32: *coniugii obsceni pretium Romana poposcit /*

[50] Yardley 1987: 180–181: "every word in this line [*sc.* 4.5.44] has comic associations, with the sole exception of *cum*."

[51] Menander's usage is simply common Greek. For reasons of Greek custom and law (not to mention etymology: see Adams 1990: 142 on μοιχός as the agent noun from ὀμείχω), μοιχός rarely appears in the feminine, and when it does μοιχάς is preferred to μοιχή (described as "rare" by LSJ s.v.). Latin *moecha* is essentially a back-formation from the much more common *moechus*. Terence and Plautus use the masculine form only (four and eleven times, respectively).

[52] Adams 1990: 133.

[53] Lyne 1980: 24, 79–80, 119.

[54] Plaut. *Most.* 168, 182.

moenia) or the Roman *matronae* whose taste for luxury has made love at Rome *pretiosa* (3.13.1: *quaeritis, unde avidis nox sit pretiosa puellis*).[55] Acanthis can even advise the mistress to pass herself as a *matrona* for the sake of a higher *pretium* (Prop. 4.5.29: *et simulare virum pretium facit*); she is clearly not a prostitute plain and simple. In its elegiac context, *pretiosa* hints at criticisms that were not and could not be made of Menander's Thais (being for hire), while it retains the flattering primary sense ("expensive") the bawd intends. This is not, I think, a case of allusion as correction (the imitation is not close enough for this to be possible), but an instance of what Hinds has called the multiple "constellations" of a single *topos*-code being presented simultaneously.[56] The poem's two readings of the *pretiosa-topos* (elegant vs. mercenary expensiveness) work against one another, rather than against the "source" of the allusion.

Once again, we are left to account for an explicit reference to Menander in the context of a generalized Roman comic plot. Part of the explanation surely lies in the way the Augustan poets learned their Menander. Not one of them refers to watching his plays performed, though several mention reading his "books." Propertius imagines traveling to Athens for this purpose (3.21.27–28: *persequar aut studium linguae, Demosthenis arma, / librorumque tuos, docte Menandre, sales*); Horace mentions "packing" the playwright (*Sat.* 2.3.11: *quorsum pertinuit stipare Platona Menandro*); and Ovid observes that he is "read" by children (*Tr.* 2.1.369–370: *fabula iucundi nulla est sine amore Menandri, / et solet hic pueris virginibusque legi*). This last citation, like *Ars am.* 3.332 and *Am.* 1.15.18, places Menander in a list of poets whose work is "read" or "sung" (i.e., recited). In *Tristia* 2, Ovid writes of Greek tragedy, Accius, and Terence as reading matter (*legis*, 395; *liber*, 357), but he refers to mime as something everyone "watches" (*spectat*, 502).[57] These poets all know "Menander" not as performed plays, but as a major literary author, distinguished for wit, refinement, and learning.[58] Propertius 4.5 should be understood in the context of a dialogue *about* Menander. *Menandri* invites the reader to associate Thais with Menander's literary reputation, as

[55] Money (*pretium*) corrupts astrologers, too, at Prop. 4.1b.81. In his elegiac poems, Ovid commonly uses *pretiosa* to criticize a commodity as unnecessary and overvalued; for example, *Am.* 3.8.3: *ingenium quondam fuerat pretiosius auro*; *Ars am.* 1.303: *quo tibi, Pasiphaë, pretiosas sumere vestes.* Cf. also *Ars am.* 2.261, 299; *Her.* 17.72, 223.

[56] Questioning the fixity of the *topos*, Hinds (1998: 34–47, esp. 42–47) demonstrates how each reader may identify different cues within even the most familiar *topos*, not all of which may be relevant in every context. This idea has intriguing applications in New Comedy, which was in the business of exploring permutations of its own *topoi*. It may be helpful to think of this process as "mobility and renegotiation" within New Comic codes.

[57] Fantham (1984: 303–309) treats much more fully the question of performance of Menander up to the time of Plutarch. She points out that we have no evidence for performance in Greek before a general audience at Rome and concludes that Menander was most familiar as a "textbook" for schoolchildren and orators.

[58] *Docte* in Prop. 3.21.28 is disputed. Richardson (1977: 402) translates it "refined" to distinguish it from *docte* in line 26. Fantham (1984: 302, n. 11) suspects a dittography.

evoked by the word *mundus*, which may be read in two senses here. Clearly the bawd means to attach a little of the playwright's *munditia* to his creation, Thais ("*she* would never chase a lover"), and uses *mundi* as a transferred epithet. As Menander's "brazen" (θρασεῖαν) Thais was anything but coy, the bawd must mean any stock comic prostitute, with a hint, perhaps, of the Greek demi-mondaine so prominent in Latin elegy.[59] Educated Roman readers must also have seen in *mundus* an allusion to the playwright's reputation for stylistic elegance, the *eloquendi facultas* praised by Quintilian and others.[60]

If these poets neither demonstrate nor expect a scholar's interest in detail, the reason may lie in the genre itself. New Comedy rarely recognized specific comic influences. Menander quotes from tragedies, for example, but not from other comedies.[61] Plautus once refers to his own *Epidicus* (*Bacch.* 214), but otherwise mentions specific works only in his prologues, while Terence's prologues reveal the efforts he took to avoid even the appearance of "borrowing" (or, as his enemies put it, "stealing," *Eun.* 28) from more than one Greek source play or from any earlier Roman comedy. Identification of specific allusions is in fact difficult within New Comedy's highly developed code of stock features. Comic names, for example, recur so frequently that it is hard to connect one "Daos" significantly with any other. A kind of nomenclature for these stock elements eventually evolved, with common comic names often standing for roles. This language was familiar to many Roman poets (it is used, for example, to capture the essence of Menander in *Am.* 1.15).[62] Thus Ovid and Juvenal are adopting a usage already conventional in Roman comedy when they use "Thais" to denote a type with a range of associated characteristics, which I have likened to the variations possible within the *topos*. Ovid and Juvenal's allusions call up the original context of Thais at the level of the genre rather than the specific play (Thais = a typical comic *meretrix*). Their vantage point outside the genre allows them to associate Thais with theatricality in general, i.e., with "acting a part," *peragentem partes* (Thais = a typical performed role). Propertius (2.6, 4.5) also attaches the name to a generic type, but mention of Menander serves to associate Thais with the fame attached to his name and with his celebrated elegance of style, his distinguishing features in Roman literary circles. I have suggested that these allusions reflect the cultural position of Greek

[59] Comic prostitutes are occasionally described as *mundae* (Plaut. *Cist.* 55: *neque munda adaeque es*; Ter. *Eun.* 934: *nil videtur mundius*) or associated with *munditia* (Plaut. *Men.* 353; *Poen.* 192), although this is by no means stock language. On expensive Greek prostitutes and the Latin elegists, see Lyne 1980: 8–13.

[60] *Inst. Or.* 10.1.69. See *PCG* 6.1 83–167 *Iudicia Varia* for views on Menander in antiquity. Cf. Rothstein 1898: 2.268: "*mundus* . . . geht auf die reine Sprache und vielleicht auch auf den sorgfältigen Bau der Dramen des Menander." A fable of Phaedrus (5.1) attests to the playwright's personal elegance but it is questionable how far we can trust this source, and I would hesitate to see anything but a reference to Menander's plays in Propertius' *mundus*.

[61] See Webster 1960: 155–162: "Quotation of Tragedy"; cf. 162–169: "Borrowing of Situations from Tragedy and Comedy."

[62] *dum fallax servus, durus pater, improba lena / vivent et meretrix blanda, Menandros erit* (1.15.17).

comedy at Rome, where Menander was more familiar as literature than as theatre. They also reflect the allusive practices of New Comedy itself, a genre which readily discussed, even criticized, its own conventions (as Chrysalus scorns his petty-thieving predecessors and Pamphilus refuses to disclose all "as happens in comedies," Ter. *Hec.* 866), but made it difficult to engage with a specific model. In this sense, allusion to New Comedy operates, and needs to be understood, on its own terms.

Department of Classics
University of Colorado at Boulder
Boulder, Colorado 80309–0348
U.S.A. traill@colorado.edu

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, J. N. 1990. *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*. London.
Anderson, W. S. 1984. "Love Plots in Menander and His Roman Adapters," *Ramus* 13: 124–134.
Arnott, W. G. 1979. *Menander* 1. Cambridge, Mass.
Barber, E. A. ed. 1960. *Sexti Properti Carmina*. Oxford.
Borza, E. 1972. "Fire from Heaven: Alexander at Persepolis," *CP* 67: 233–245.
Bosworth, A. B. 1994. "Alexander the Great Part 1: The Events of the Reign," in D. M. Lewis, J. Boardman, S. Hornblower, and M. Ostwald (eds.), *CAH*^{2} 6: 791–845.
Brandt, P. ed. 1963. *P. Ovidi Nasonis. De Arte Amatoria Libri Tres* 1 (Text and Commentary). Hildesheim.
Breitenbach, H. 1908. *De genere quodam titulorum comoediae atticae*. Diss., Basel.
Brown, P. G. M. 1987. "Masks, Names and Characters in New Comedy," *Hermes* 115: 181–202.
—— 1990. "Plots and Prostitutes in Greek New Comedy," *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar* 6: 241–266.
Butler, H. E. and E. A. Barber (eds.). 1933. *The Elegies of Propertius*. Oxford.
Camps, W. A. ed. 1965. *Propertius: Elegies. Book 4*. Cambridge.
—— ed. 1967. *Propertius: Elegies. Book 2*. Cambridge.
Cèbe, J.-P. ed. and tr. 1987. *Varron, Satires Ménippées: Édition, traduction et commentaire* 8. Rome.
Clausen, W. V. ed. 1959. *A. Persi Flacci et D. Iuni Iuvenalis Saturae*. Oxford.
Cohen, E. E. 2000. "'Whoring Under Contract': The Legal Context of Prostitution in Fourth-Century Athens," in V. Hunter and J. Edmondson (eds.), *Law and Social Status in Classical Athens*. Oxford. 113–147.
Conte, G. B. 1986. *The Rhetoric of Imitation: Genre and Poetic Memory in Virgil and Other Latin Poets*. Ithaca and London.
Day, A. A. 1938. *The Origins of Latin Love-Elegy*. Oxford.
Enk, P. J. ed. 1962. *Sex. Properti Elegiarum, Liber Secundus*. Leiden.
Fantham, E. 1975. "Sex, Status, and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy," *Phoenix* 29: 44–74.

—— 1984. "Roman Experience of Menander in the Late Republic and Early Empire," *TAPA* 114: 299–309.
—— 1989. "Mime: The Missing Link in Roman Literary History," *CW* 82: 153–163.
Fortenbaugh, W. W. 1981. "Theophrast über den komischen Charakter," *RM* 124: 245–260.
Fraenkel, E. 1960. *Elementi Plautini in Plauto.* Tr. F. Munari. Florence.
Goldberg, S. M. 1980. *The Making of Menander's Comedy.* Berkeley and Los Angeles.
—— 1986. *Understanding Terence.* Princeton.
Gomme, A. W. and F. H. Sandbach. 1973. *Menander: A Commentary.* Oxford.
Grant, R. 1965. "Early Christianity and Greek Comic Poetry," *CP* 50: 157–163.
Gratwick, A. S. 1982. "Drama," in E. J. Kenney (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature* 2.1: *The Early Republic.* Cambridge. 77–138.
—— ed. 1993. *Plautus:* Menaechmi. Cambridge.
Grewing, F. 1997. *Martial, Buch VI: Ein Kommentar.* Hypomnemata 115. Göttingen.
Gutzwiller, K. J. 1985. "The Lover and the Lena: Propertius 4.5," *Ramus* 14: 105–115.
Hammond, N. G. L. 1989. *Alexander the Great.* Bristol.
Harsh, P. W. 1955. "The Intriguing Slave in Greek Comedy," *TAPA* 86: 135–142.
Hauschild, H. 1933. *Die Gestalt der Hetäre in der griechischen Komödie.* Diss., Leipzig.
Henry, M. M. 1985. *Menander's Courtesans and the Greek Comic Tradition.* Studien zur klassischen Philologie 20. Frankfurt.
Hinds, S. 1998. *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry.* Cambridge.
Holzberg, N. 1974. *Menander: Untersuchungen zur dramatischen Technik.* Nuremberg.
Kassel, R. and C. Austin (eds.). 1983. *Poetae Comici Graeci* 5. Berlin and New York.
—— (eds.). 1998. *Poetae Comici Graeci* 6.2. Berlin and New York.
Kay, N. M. 1985. *Martial, Book 11: A Commentary.* Oxford.
Kenney, E. J. ed. 1968. *P. Ovidi Nasonis Amores, Medicamina faciei femineae, Ars amatoria, Remedia amoris.* Oxford.
Knox, A. D. 1925. "Evil Communications," *CQ* 19: 164.
Körte, A. 1953. *Menander, Reliquiae* 2. Rev. by A. Thierfelder. Leipzig.
—— 1919. "Glykera und Menander," *Hermes* 54: 87–93.
Krieter-Spiro, M. 1997. *Sklaven, Köche und Hetären: das Dienstpersonal bei Menander.* Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 93. Stuttgart and Leipzig.
Lascu, N. 1969. "Intorno ai nomi degli schiavi nel teatro antico," *Dioniso* 43: 97–106.
Leary, T. J. 1996. *Martial, Book 14: The Apophoreta.* London.
Leo, F. 1912. *Plautinische Forschungen.* Berlin.
Ling, P. H. 1925. "A Quotation from Euripides," *CQ* 19: 22–27.
Long, T. 1986. *Barbarians in Greek Comedy.* Carbondale.
Lyne, R. O. A. M. 1980. *The Latin Love Poets: From Catullus to Horace.* Oxford.
MacCary, W. T. 1969. "Menander's Slaves: Their Names, Roles, and Masks," *TAPA* 100: 277–294.
McKeown, J. C. 1979. "Augustan Elegy and Mime," *PCPS* N.S. 25: 71–84.
Pearson, L. 1960. *The Lost Histories of Alexander.* New York.
Photiades, P. 1958. "Pan's Prologue to the *Dyskolos* of Menander," *G&R* 5: 108–122.
Pianezzola, E. ed. 1991. *Ovidio. L'Arte di Amare.* With commentary by G. Baldo, L. Cristante and E. Pianezzola. Milan.

Post, L. A. 1931. "The 'Vis' of Menander," *TAPA* 62: 203–234.
Richardson, Jr., L. ed. 1977. *Propertius Elegies 1–4*. Oklahoma.
Rothstein, M. ed. 1898. *Propertius Sextus: Elegien*. 2 vols. Berlin.
Sandbach, F. H. ed. 1990. *Menandri Reliquiae selectae*. Oxford.
Solin, H. 1996. *Die Stadtrömischen Sklavennamen: Ein Namenbuch* 2: *Griechische Namen*. Stuttgart.
Thomas, R. F. 1999. "Virgil's *Georgics* and the Art of Reference," in *Reading Virgil and His Texts: Studies in Intertextuality*. Ann Arbor. 114–141. (Orig. publ. *HSCP* 90 [1986] 171–198.)
Traill, J. S. 1995. *Persons of Ancient Athens* 4: *Auxanon to Gypsinis*. Toronto.
—— 2000. *Persons of Ancient Athens* 9: *Th- to Ioana*. Toronto.
Webster, T. B. L. 1945. "Forethoughts on Later Greek Comedy," *BRL* 29: 143–159.
—— 1960. *Studies in Menander*^{2}. Manchester.
—— 1974. *An Introduction to Menander*. Manchester.
Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, U. von. 1925. *Menander: Das Schiedsgericht*. Berlin.
Wiles, D. 1991. *The Masks of Menander*. Cambridge.
Yardley, J. C. 1972. "Comic Influences in Propertius," *Phoenix* 26: 134–139.
—— 1987. "Propertius 4.5, Ovid *Amores* 1.6 and Roman Comedy," *PCPS* N.S. 33: 179–189.