

COMIC CHARACTERS: MENANDER AND THEOPHRASTUS

Caracteres Cômicos: Menandro e Teofrasto

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Abstract: Menander and Theophrastus offered an insight into contemporary 4th BCE Greek society and illustrated comic figures who deviated from accepted standards of behavior through their oeuvres. This article will attempt to re-evaluate their relationship and focus on the similarities and the differences between Menander's comic characters through his most complete plays and Theophrastus' *Characters*. While Theophrastus meticulously examines his characters according to their external vicious traits, he shares little interest in deeper motives. On the other hand, Menander seems to combine both external features and inner motives, in order to depict his characters' deviant dispositions. Therefore, I examine the way specific comic characters are portrayed by means of key words/phrases that occur in both Menander's and Theophrastus' texts. Thus, I will bring the two authors together, in order to find resemblances between their character-types and to show more clearly how they choose to study unrefined types, in a humorous and ethical perspective.

Keywords: *Menander; Theophrastus; comic characters; New Comedy; similarities; differences.*

Introduction

Several studies have been produced on the confrontation between the human types of Menander's comedy and Theophrastus' *Characters* (Millett, 2007, pp. 29-40; Ussher, 1960, pp. 3-31). Diogenes Laertius (D.L., V.P. 5.36-37) noticed that Theophrastus was the teacher of Menander, on the grounds that both authors developed a theoretical relationship with Aristotle's philosophy and a similar tradition of drawing their characters. Firstly, Theophrastus, as the pupil of Aristotle, was interested in indicating portraits in misconduct via humour (Vellacott, 1973, pp. 9-19; Ussher, 1977, pp. 75-79). In his *Characters*, he aligns the ethical philosophy with the practical discourse, by applying thirty different vicious character-types (McCabe, 1995, p. 34). That is to say, he demonstrates various figures, in order to expose their particular unrefined traits, in terms of how they act and think. Secondly, Menander focuses on how his characters are portrayed through his plays. Just like Theophrastus, he shared similar ideas with Aristotle's ethical thought about human nature and emotions (Cinaglia, 2012, pp. 553-566). He puts his emphasis on vicious characters, in order to create comic scenes and laughter according to the conventions of New Comedy. As Flórez Restrepo has pointed out, the reason Theophrastus and Menander study their characters' deviant traits is that these types create more laughter and funny moments, due to their particular vicious features (Flórez Restrepo, 2016, pp. 199-205). Moreover, both authors attempt to reprimand such behaviors, in order to morally guide their audience by means of laughter (Flórez Restrepo, 2016, pp. 199-205). That is, by presenting character-types with bad attitude, they offer comicality and show more vividly the necessity of adopting good manners and right behaviors. Hence, there are resemblances between Theophrastus' character-writing and Menander's comedy.

In parallel with this, some scholars have attempted to analyze Menandrian and Theophrastus' comic figures, in order to pinpoint the similar way they treat their characters' attitudes (Fortenbaugh, 1973, pp. 163-164). As a result, my article is an attempt to take this line of research further. By applying particular character-models, I will try to show that there are significant analogies between the two authors that live in the 4th BCE Greece and use a shared comic and social lifestyle (Hicks, 1882, p. 128; Cox, 2002, p. 391). Although Theophrastus describes the vicious traits of his characters by means of visual behaviors, Menander, who shares a common interest with Theophrastus' character-sketches, argues that the traits of his characters are conceived and depicted by particular motives though his different comedies (Fortenbaugh, 1973,

pp. 163-164). Theophrastus displays his characters in all their folly, in order to educate and entertain his audience (McCabe, 1989, pp. 31-32). Menander seeks to indicate the purpose of his characters' obnoxious behavior, so as to illustrate the reason they act accordingly. He applies the plots of New Comedy, which are based on recognitions, misapprehensions and intrigue, so as to provide the motives of his characters' behaviors and to make his audience acknowledge the reasons his individuals perform depending on their vicious traits (Post, 1960, pp. 152-153; MacCary, 1972, p. 298). Furthermore, unlike Theophrastus, he aims to make his vicious characters become better individuals as the conventions of comedy require. While unkindness is emphasized and succeeds in Theophrastus' oeuvre, Menander's comedies provide a new milieu where the characteristic aberrations disappear and the virtuous traits seem to show up (Post, 1960, p. 159; Flórez Restrepo, 2016, pp. 199-205). That is, the triumph of virtue prevails at the end of the different comedies by means of marriage, reconciliation between father and son and the revelation of mistaken identities, in general (Post, 1960, pp. 155-158; Traill, 2008, pp. 265-268).

Therefore, my aim is to show that Theophrastus and Menander share the same way of thinking and presenting their particular characters on the basis of ethical thought and humor. Their texts reflect the social life of 4th BCE Greece and provide further information about the Athenian society, the social class, the human relationships and family values. I have selected the two old men – Knemon and Smikrines – in Menander's *Dyskolos* and *Epitrepontes* and the two young men – Moschion – in the *Samia* and the *Perikeiromene*, respectively, in order to constitute a character case-study in Menander's plays and Theophrastus' *Characters*. Both Menander and Theophrastus focus on the theme of non-accepted characteristic traits. Thus, the selection of these male character-models is based on how these comic types, who are most fully developed and who provide a sufficient set of data for characterization, deviate from the norms and illustrate their annoying and comic disposition. Furthermore, I chose these particular individuals because the characters, who often make the mistakes and behave badly, are mostly men who belong to the upper class, namely, free-born citizens (Traill, 2008, pp. 245-246). Moreover, characters' social status may differ, as Menander often portrays his figures through his plays, namely, the subject of differing wealth between the rich, urban people and the poor, rustic ones (Arnott, 1964, pp. 114-116; Cox, 2002, pp. 391-393; Cox, 2002, pp. 351-356).

Thus, even though the old men – Knemon and Smikrines – come to different social statuses, that is, the former is poor and the latter is wealthy,

they equally adopt common negative attitude, such as distrust and stinginess, and play the role of the dominant barrier-type who stands in the way of the two young lovers' happiness (MacCary, 1971, p. 307, pp. 315-317, pp. 324-325). Contrarily, in the *Samia* and *Perikeiromene*, Moschion is depicted as a naïve, young man who shares typical traits related to their upper-middle status in a domestic level. The relationship between father and son and his relations with his friends and slaves are challenged and reflect traits of inadequacy and cowardice (Grant, 1986, pp. 172-184). Hence, young men, such as Moschion, are easily persuaded by their slaves and they struggle with making any decision, whereas the old character-models – Knemon and Smikrines – function as the obstacle to the development of the plot and to the romance of the young lovers. That is to say, every character succeeds in bewildering the other characters of the play, through the different comedies, due to their unrefined behavior. Therefore, my analysis suggests that Menander's characters apply and reflect some of the vicious character-types of Theophrastus, as they both pay close attention to the aspects of contemporary Greek society, namely, different statuses, human relationships, social affairs and offer similar portrayals of comic transgressive dispositions, in order to educate and amuse their audience.

Knemon in *Dyskolos*

Menander's *Dyskolos* revolves around the themes of the amorous Sostratos, a rich young Athenian citizen who falls in love with the daughter of the poor farmer Knemon (Men. *Dys.* 44) and the misanthropy of the latter. Menander, through his comedies, highlights the subject of class, as it is important for the characterization and the development of the story (Rosivach, 2001, pp. 127-134). Knemon and his grouchy, misanthropic attitude is the character case study. His inhuman disposition, bitterness and irascible temperament (Men. *Dys.* 6-7) do not leave space for Sostratos to approach him, in order to ask for his daughter's hand to marriage and, therefore, he makes many unsuccessful attempts, in order to achieve his plan (Zagagi, 1979, pp. 39-48; Brown, 1992, pp. 10, 14-15). However, due to the conventions of New Comedy, Menander's play demands a happy ending, namely, the marriage of Sostratos with the daughter of Knemon and the taming of the old man (Kiritsi, 2017, pp. 110-116). Therefore, this study gives emphasis to Knemon's traits that deviate from the accepted standards of human behavior with the aid of Theophrastus' *Characters*. Knemon reflects some common features depicted in the comic character sketches of Theophrastus' oeuvre. Firstly, focusing on the individual

characteristic traits of Knemon narrated by the divine prologue of Pan, he is an inhumane and unfriendly person (Men. *Dys.* 5-11, ἀπάνθρωπος, δύσκολος πρὸς ἅπαντας) who does not want to talk to anyone with pleasure (Men. *Dys.* 7-10, οὐ χαίρων... λελάληκεν ἡδέως; Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, p. 137). As a poor farmer, he works hard and alone at his field (Men. *Dys.* 17, 31) without any servant's or worker's assistance (Men. *Dys.* 327-331, αὐτὸς γεωργῶν διατελεῖ μόνος, συνεργὸν δ' οὐδέεν, οὐκ οἰκέτην, οὐκ μισθωτόν).

Gomme comments on Knemon's hard life, such as his tiring form of labour to break up the earth with a mattock and livestock farming with horses and oxen (Men. *Dys.* ζυγομαχῶν; Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, pp. 139-140). As a result, Knemon is a rude countryman who deals with his agricultural tasks and toils alone, without the need of friends or slaves. The Theophrastean *Boorish Man*, namely, the ἄγροικος, has some similarities with Knemon, in terms of his distrust and suspicion towards friends and relatives (Thphr. *Char.* 4.6). Like Knemon, the boorish man is that type of man who does not trust anyone (Thphr. *Char.* 4.6, τοῖς μὲν φίλοις καὶ οἰκείοις ἀπιστεῖν; Konstan, 1995, p. 100). He lives alone with perhaps only one servant, such as Knemon, and he is the one who opens the door when someone knocks (Thphr. *Char.* 4.12, τὴν θύραν ὑπακοῦσαι αὐτός, Men. *Dys.* 466-467, 500-503, τί τῆς θύρας ἄπτει). Moreover, Sostratos and the cook Sikon use the word ἄγροικος, in order to describe Knemon (Men. *Dys.* 202, 956). Later, it is Knemon who shows his boorish attitude while he speaks to Getas and Sikon in an impolite and unfriendly way, when the latter asks for a stewpot and a skillet (Men. *Dys.* 472-473, 505). The old man is not willing to offer anything, just like the *Boorish Man* in Theophrastus' *Characters* who does not give anything freely and pleasantly, when he involuntarily gives a plough, a basket or a sack (Thphr. *Char.* 4.14). One last similarity between Menander's Knemon and the Theophrastean *Boorish Man* is that they both work hard with oxen (Thphr. *Char.* 4.11, ὑποζυγίοις, Men. *Dys.* 17, ζυγομαχῶν), a common attitude that describes their poor lifestyle and hard working.

In parallel with Knemon's boorish attitude, he possesses some features from the *Self-Centered Man* of Theophrastus who lacks sensitivity and good manners. Like Knemon, the self-centered man, namely, the αὐθάδης, is verbally hostile to social contacts (Thphr. *Char.* 15.1). When someone addresses him by chance, he responds 'Don't bother me' (Thphr. *Char.* 15.2). Knemon starts cursing and threatening Pyrrhias, Sostratos' slave, when the latter attempts to greet him (Men. *Dys.* 108, 110, 111, 114). Pyrrhias realises how unbearable the old man is (Men. *Dys.* 124, κακὸν οἶόν ἐστι) that it is not surprising that no

one wants to be with him. It is noteworthy to mention the linguistic similarity between Knemon and the *Self-Centered Man*, when they both refuse to greet or talk to anyone (Thphr. *Char.* 15.3, μὴ ἀντιπροσείπειν, Men. *Dys.* 877, ἀντεῖπας). He is able to curse the stone, if he accidentally falls (Thphr. *Char.* 15.8, καταράσασθαι τῷ λίθῳ) while Knemon wishes to petrify anyone who annoys him (Men. *Dys.* 153-159, ὃ λίθους ἅπαντας ἐπόει τοὺς ἐνοχλοῦντας).

Furthermore, the Theophrastean *Self-Centered Man* does not offer anything, not even to gods (Thphr. *Char.* 15.11, θεοῖς μὴ ἐπέυχασθαι), an attitude clearly illustrated in Knemon's character. He commands his old servant woman to close the door because he does not want to socially interact with the worshippers who prepare the sacrifice on behalf of the god Pan and the Nymphs (Men. *Dys.* 442-455). He states that Nymphs are nothing but trouble (Men. *Dys.* 444) and he sharply criticizes the hypocritical piety of the worshippers who offer the portions of meat that the gods cannot eat (Men. *Dys.* 444-445, 449-453). However, the difference is that Knemon attacks the – from his point of view – superstitious, namely, Sostratos' mother and her propensity to religious mania and god-fearing, whereas the Theophrastean *Self-Centered Man* is not interested in worshipping gods at all (Diggle, 2004, pp. 349-350).

Apart from Knemon's incapability in social relations, Menander also portrays him as an arrogant man. Knemon intentionally ignores others while he walks down the street, just like Theophrastus' arrogant type (Thphr. *Char.* 24.8, πορευόμενος μὴ λαλεῖν τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσι). Knemon and the *Arrogant Man* do not greet (Men. *Dys.* 10, προσηγόρευκε πρότερος δ' οὐδένα) or make the first move to approach anyone (Thphr. *Char.* 24.6, προσελθεῖν πρότερος οὐδενὶ θελήσει), on the grounds that they do have a lot of contempt for people. However, in contrast to the character type of Theophrastus, Knemon cares for his daughter. Lastly, just like the arrogant man who does not appear in the dinner (Thphr. *Char.* 24.9, αὐτὸς μὴ συνδειπνεῖν), Knemon is not willing to participate in his daughter's and his step-son's wedding party, albeit he apologizes for his misanthropic and eccentric behavior (Men. *Dys.* 709-747).

We could add to Knemon's character some of the Theophrastean traits of penny pinching, too (Thphr. *Char.* 10). Although Knemon is poor and possesses only a mattock (Men. *Dys.* 579) and one field that costs τάλαντων δεῖν (Men. *Dys.* 327-331), he is not parsimonious. According to Diggle's commentary, the *Penny Pincher*, namely, the *μικρολόγος*, is not avaricious, but a man who is deeply afraid of others because he believes that they would take advantage of him (Diggle, 2004, pp. 301-302). Thus, just like Knemon, the penny pincher does not allow the passers-by to eat (Thphr. *Char.* 10.8,

οὐκ ἂν ἔᾶσαι οὔτε συκοτραγῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κήπου) or walk through his field (Thphr. *Char.* 10.8, οὔτε διὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀγροῦ πορευθῆναι, Men. *Dys.* 161, ἐπεμβαίνοντες εἰς τὸ χωρίον). He prohibits his wife from lending salt (Thphr. *Char.* 10.13. μήτε ἄλας), just like Knemon does, when Getas and Sikon ask for kitchen tools and the old man refuses to offer anything (Men. *Dys.* 505-506, οὔθ' ἄλας; Tzifopoulos, 1995, pp. 169-177).

Lastly, Knemon's distrust has some similarities with Theophrastus' *Distrustful Man* (Thphr. *Char.* 18), on the grounds that he wants to control everyone, due to his rooted suspicious trait (Thphr. *Char.* 18.1, ἀπιστία). Knemon does not need many slaves. His old servant woman is enough because he can keep an eye on her more easily, as she is only one domestic servant to handle. Moreover, he explains his distrust via his apology, when he believes that everyone's intention is to gain money and thus, people become selfish, due to their desire to gain more belongings (Men. *Dys.* 720-721, κερδαίνειν ἔχουσιν – οὐδέν' εὔνουν ψόμην).

To sum up, Knemon's vicious characteristic traits are depicted in the Theophrastean *Boorish Man*, *Self-Centred*, *Arrogant Man*, *Penny-pincher* and *Distrustful Man*, both linguistically and ideologically. However, Theophrastus focusses on the external traits of his human types and tries to ridicule their flaws. On the other hand, Menander, who makes use of some of Theophrastus' characters' traits, is not trying to portray Knemon as an object of ridicule. He is a poor farmer who works hard and goes through the toils of rural life. Despite his antisocial and grouchy manners, he is still a noble farmer who acknowledges his faults, when Gorgias saved him during his fall into the well (Men. *Dys.* 625; Post, 1960, pp. 154, 160). Knemon's deviant attitude has changed, because he appreciated Gorgias' philanthropy and selflessness to rescue him (Haegemans, 2001, pp. 675-696). As a result, he may be a difficult and eccentric figure, due to his misanthropic attitude and his distrust, but, as Anderson points out, he acknowledges his mistake (Anderson, 1970, pp. 208-216).

Moschion in *Samia*

Menander's *Samia* deals with the romantic affair of two young lovers, namely, Moschion and Plangon. Nevertheless the story is centered on the relationship between father and son and the series of misunderstandings between these two main figures of the play (Grant, 1986, pp. 172-184). More specifically, Moschion, who is the case-study character, is the adoptive son of the wealthy Demeas who impregnated Plangon, the daughter of the poor

Nikeratos, out of wedlock (Men. *Sam.* 1-57). Because of his unethical behavior towards her, Moschion is ashamed of his act. Although he took responsibility for what he had done (Men. *Sam.* 52), he failed many times to face his father and thus, he concealed the truth of his illegitimate child. In his case, Moschion's immoral error is the reason for his comic and vicious disposition through the play and towards Demeas (Cinaglia, 2012, pp. 556-558). The absence of knowledge along with the series of misunderstandings make Moschion fail to behave properly and to stand up for himself. Due to his inability to control himself, he makes a moral flaw that prevents him from telling the truth to his father. Nevertheless, Menander's play offers the romantic, happy ending for the young couple and the reconciliation between father and son (Cinaglia, 2012, pp. 556-559).

At the beginning, it is evident that the young man is overwhelmed with the emotions of fear and timidity, because he does not want to ruin the ideal father-son relationship they have along with the perfect image Demeas has for his son (Keuls, 1973, pp. 1-20). Moschion acknowledges Demeas' efforts for his upbringing and feels ungrateful and more ashamed of his deeds (Men. *Sam.* 7-8, 17-18). He is both ashamed and coward because he cannot confess his deed to his father (Men. *Sam.* 47-48, ὀκνῶ λέγειν, αἰσχύνομαι...αἰσχύνομαι). As a result, Menander enhances the characteristic trait of cowardice in Moschion's character which has some similarities with the Theophrastean *Coward* type. They both lack confidence and courage and almost fear anything (Thphr. *Char.* 25.1, δειλία δόξειεν...τις ψυχῆς ἔμφοβος). Moschion declare himself to be a coward (*Samia*, 65, δειλὸς ἤδη γίνομαι) when his domestic slave, that is Parmenon, urges him to tell the truth and act like a responsible man, in order to restore the reputation of the girl (Men. *Sam.* 63-69). Moschion appears doubly coward. Not only does he lack courage to admit his deed to Demeas and Nikeratos but also he calmly accepts Parmenon's insulting language towards him, as the latter names him cowardly man (Men. *Sam.* 69, ἀνδρόγυνε) who is scared to death (Men. *Sam.* 69, τρέμεις; Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, pp. 552). Menander skillfully shows how the slaves talk and react to the main characters, in order to create humour and a comic tone through the play (Konstan, 2013, pp. 144-146). Parmenon shouts at his young master and treats him as a spoiled child who does not have the strength to defend himself. Thus, Menander exploits the reactions and the current disposition of the slaves, in order to highlight Moschion's pusillanimity and weakness, as the latter accepts the advice from a slave, that is, a low-status individual (Konstan, 2013, p. 151). Just like the Theophrastean *Coward* who always makes excuses, in order to

stay away from the battlefield (Thphr. *Char.* 25.4), Moschion, too, prefers leaving to dealing with his responsibilities (Men. *Sam.* 161, ἀλλ' ἀπέρχομαι, 539, ἐκποδῶν ἄπειμι). He is not brave enough, even when Demeas urges him to tell the truth and to be courageous (Men. *Sam.* 539, θάρρει, 599, μὴ φοβοῦ; Groton, 1987, pp. 440). Nevertheless, Moschion is shivering (Men. *Sam.* 515, αὐός εἰμι καὶ πέπηγα; Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, pp. 602).

Even though Moschion is not dealing with attacks in the battlefield like the *Coward* (Thphr. *Char.* 25.4-8), Menander makes use of military vocabulary when Moschion pretends that he is leaving for Bactria as a mercenary (Men. *Sam.* 628, ἐκποδῶν εἰς Βάκτρα). When the truth is revealed at the end of the play, Moschion is annoyed that Demeas has misjudged him, because he believes that his son is the father of Chrysis' child (Grant, 1986, p. 173). Therefore, he tries to protest but his defense is weak (Konstan, 2013, pp. 147-150). It is noteworthy to mention here that Theophrastus and Menander use similar military words, such as enemy (Thphr. *Char.* 25.5, τοῖς πολεμίοις, Men. *Sam.* 706, τοῖς ἐχθροῖς), cloak and sword (Thphr. *Char.* 25.2, χιτωνίσκον, 25.4, τὴν σπάθην, Men. *Sam.* 659, χλαμύδα καὶ σπάθην), in order to highlight the coward's reluctance to utilize the military equipment. Moschion cannot stand that his father has accused him of adultery with Chrysis (Men. *Sam.* 620-622) and thus, he tries to frighten him into participating in this pretentious military mission. He used his slave, in order to make sure that Demeas would observe Parmenon's moves and willingness to bring the military apparel (Men. *Sam.* 688), just like the *Coward Man* commands his slave to watch and observe the position of the enemy (Thphr. *Char.* 25.4). However, he is still afraid of becoming the laughingstock, if his father gets angry with him (Men. *Sam.* 682-686, ἀποργισθεῖς... γελοῖος ἔσομαι; Grant, 1986, p. 173).

Furthermore, apart from Moschion's cowardice, the above discussion argues that the young man, through his opening monologue, shares strong similarities with the traits illustrated in Theophrastus' *Boastful Man* (Thphr. *Char.* 23). Nevertheless, Moschion is not a liar, like the boastful type of Theophrastus who pretends that he has more qualities (Thphr. *Char.* 23.1), in order to enhance his social status. Indeed, Moschion seems to be a boastful young man who enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle (Men. *Sam.* 7) because of the generosity of his father (Men. *Sam.* 9). He was distinguished by the generosity of choruses (Men. *Sam.* 13-14, τῷ χορηγεῖν διέφερον), public service, namely, his high position as the city chief (Men. *Sam.* 15, ἐφυλάρχησα λαμπρῶς) and his kindness to help his friend (Men. *Sam.* 15-16). However, the difference between Moschion's bragging and Theophrastus' boaster type is that the

former does not lie or pretend to be someone else. Moschion brags about himself, in order to show that he is the ideal son who managed to make his father feel proud of him and thus, his misfortune with Plangon is only one faux pas comparing to his overall good manners. Nevertheless, it seems that Menander and Theophrastus use the same cultural motives of public service (Thphr. *Char.*, 23.6, καὶ τὰς τριηραρχίας... τὰς λειτουργίας), generosity (Thphr. *Char.*, 23.5, διδόντι τοῖς ἀπόροις, 23.6, εἰσενηνέχθαι εἰς ἐράνους) and civic status (Thphr. *Char.*, 23.3, ἐστρατεύσατο), in order to represent the arrogance of Moschion and the *Boastful Man*, respectively.

To conclude with, Moschion's deviant attitude shares some of the characteristic traits depicted by the *Coward* and *Boastful* man of Theophrastus' oeuvre. However, Menander's plots put emphasis on human gullibility and comic mistaken identity, in order to depict atypical norms in a humorous and instructive way (Traill, 2008, pp. 251-264). Moschion feels embarrassed about his immoral deed and, due to the strong relationship with his adoptive father, he lacks courage to face him. Although Theophrastus enumerates the typical features of the *Coward* and the *Boastful* man, Menander utilizes these characteristics in his character and goes deeper, in order to illustrate the root cause of Moschion's cowardice, that is, his unethical deed to Plangon. His remorse is evident his silent passivity along with the fact that he willingly follows the orders of his slave, make him laughable and coward through the play (Traill, 2008, pp. 256-257). Menander illuminates the inverted structure of relations between masters and slaves, in order to pinpoint Moschion's unrefined trait (Konstan, 2013, p. 151). However, such deviant behaviors cause laughter and leave space for the gradual appearance of virtuous qualities, as Menander's plots are based on the restoration of flaws and misconceptions.

Moschion in *Perikeiromene*

In the *Perikeiromene*, Moschion does not seduce a free-born young girl, like in the *Samia*, but, he is in love with Glykera, that is, his later revealed twin sister and the love affair of the Corinthian mercenary soldier, Polemon. Menander uses the theme of love between two young men who love and claim the same woman. Menander composes a story based on a series of misapprehensions and conflicts between his characters anew, because both Moschion and Polemon do not know the whole truth about Glykera's civic status. Although the character of Polemon is more developed, because his violent action of cutting off Glykera's hair (Men. *Pk.* 172-173) initiates the

development of the story, it is highly important to lay stress upon Moschion's character and to scrutinize his comic-deviant behavior. He is the reason of these misconceptions and Polemon's doubts about Glykera's love and loyalty (Fortenbaugh, 1974, pp. 430-443; Konstan, 1987, pp. 128-129; Traill, 2001, pp. 282-291).

Firstly, Moschion stands out for his cowardice and lack of bravery. In particular, the young man is having a dialogue with his slave Daos about Glykera's arrival in his house (Men. *Pk.* 267-354). Daos is the only person who counsels Moschion, in terms of what to do with Glykera and how to deal with the situation. He commands his servant to become his spy (Men. *Pk.* 295-296, Δᾶε ... κατάσκοπος ... γένου) because he does not have the strength to do it on his own (Men. *Pk.* 311). He prefers anticipating Daos (Men. *Pk.* 297-299, περιπατῶν δὲ προσμενῶ σε), in order to inform him, while he is spending his time delivering monologues, fully despaired. It is obvious that Moschion is that type of spoiled young man who does not want to take any responsibility. He is dependent on his slave's assistance (MacCary, 1972, p. 284). In Theophrastus' *Characters*, the *Coward Man*, also, orders his attendant to spy out any hostile ambush (Thphr. *Char.* 25.4, τὸν παῖδα ἐκπέμψας κελεύειν προσκοπεῖσθαι) because he is too afraid of fighting. Even when Daos returns from Moschion's house and informs him that he could not manage to learn anything from Glykera's arrival to his master's house, he advises Moschion to go inside and persuade her, so as to make some progress about the situation (Men. *Pk.* 338-340). Thus, it is only when the low-status Daos urges him to face Glykera and his mother that Moschion eventually decides to confront them.

Furthermore, Moschion's cowardice is implicitly depicted when Daos deals with Sosias, Polemon's slave, who threatens and accuses Daos' master of adultery (Men. *Pk.* 370, 375-377, 390). Moschion is typically absent while his slave takes charge on his behalf. At this point, Menander creates a battle scene between Daos and Sosias, quite similar to the description shown in Theophrastus' coward type. They use words and phrases that are based on the same semantic concept of fear, weapons and fighting, such as φοβεῖται (Thphr. *Char.*, 25.2), τὴν σπάθην (Thphr. *Char.*, 25.4), μάχεσθαι (Thphr. *Char.*, 25.5) and οὐδ' ἄνδρας εἶναι (Men. *Pk.* 380), σάρισαν (Men. *Pk.* 396) and μαχοῦμεθ' (Men. *Pk.* 381-382), respectively, and thus, the linguistic interrelation between Menander's Moschion and Theophrastus' *Coward Man* is more evident with respect to the trait of cowardice through Menander's comedy and Theophrastus' text (Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, p. 499). Lastly, Moschion's cowardice is illustrated, when he eavesdrops on Glykera's and Pataikos' conversation. As

Gomme points out, Moschion draws back and stays silent, despite the fact that their conversation may bring news that affects him (Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, pp. 520-521). It is not surprising that Menander may deliberately use the name Moschion, which is the diminutive term of moschos and means that something has a derogatory significance, in order to highlight his cowardice (MacCary, 1970, p. 289).

Apart from Moschion's cowardice, he also seems to act like the *Boastful Man* of Theophrastus (Arnott, 1995, p. 30). He equates arrogance with pretense (Thphr. *Char.*, 23.1, προσποιήσις), just like the *Boastful Man* who pretends that he has more attributes, whereas, in fact, he has nothing, a common liar (Hugh Lloyd-Jones, 1974, p. 2090). Similarly, Moschion expresses his boastfulness and self-praise when he bows to Ἀδράστειαν, in order to apologize for his beauty and his appeal towards Glykera (Men. *Pk.*302-304; Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, p. 485; Arnott, 1995, p. 17). However, Moschion does not acknowledge that his arrogance is misleading. He actually believes that he has won Glykera's heart, whereas the *Boastful Man* knows that he acts in a pretentious and deceptive way. Lastly, Menander seems to make use of the word arrogant, namely, the ἀλαζών, in a similar manner to Theophrastus' corresponding character, when he characterizes Daos as ἀλαζών (Men. *Pk.*267-268), in order to express Daos' deceit against Moschion (Men. *Pk.* 267-269, πλανᾶς με).

In the end, Moschion's character displays some of the characteristic traits of Theophrastus' *Ungrateful Grumbler* and *Flatterer*. More specifically, when Moschion eventually learns that Glykera is her twin sister, he says that his wretched life is totally destroyed (Men. *Pk.* 777-778; Furley, 2015, pp. 33, 36). Just like the *Ungrateful Grumbler*, Moschion does not seem happy when he finds out that he has a sister. He laments because the woman he loves is his sister (Traill, 2008, pp. 247-248). Theophrastus' *Ungrateful Grumbler* is presented as the man who always complains about everything, even when he finds something valuable, such as a wallet on the road (Thphr. *Char.* 17.5). Moschion is not happy with the development of the story and the fact that Glykera is his twin sister. Even though he discovers that he has a sister, he is not thankful for his fate. He complains about his unhappiness because Glykera is his love interest and now he struggles to cope with this new information. Hence, he behaves as the *Ungrateful Grumbler* who is not satisfied with anything.

In terms of Moschion's flattery, it is merely illustrated, when he desires to gain his mother's approval and thus, he compliments her, in order to make a good impression (Men. *Pk.* 312-314, φιλησαι, εἰς τὸ κολακεύειν). Similarly, Theophrastus' *Flatterer* tries to please people with compliments (Thphr.

Char. 2.4, ἐπαινέσαι, 2.6, φιλήσας), as an act of self-interest (Thphr. *Char.* 2.1, συμφέρουσιν δὲ τῷ κολακεύοντι).

To sum up, within this play, Moschion, once again, acts as a weak young man who is easily manipulated by his slave. Menander portrays Moschion's comic and deviant traits according to the characteristic traits of the *Coward* and the *Boastful Man* of Theophrastus. There are, indeed, many similar features between Theophrastus' two types and Moschion's attitude. However, Menander's Moschion is slightly ridiculed because he has no idea about Glykera's status. The concealment of truth, the mistaken identity and the misinterpretations of Moschion are significant elements that enhance his vicious traits and extend the misunderstanding of the plot (Traill, 2008, pp. 251-254, p. 264). Nevertheless, Menander seeks to reveal the truth between the twin siblings on time, so that Moschion cannot proceed to incest with Glykera. The author aims to expose his character's deviant traits, but the norms of comedy should offer consistency and family's approval (Traill, 2008, pp. 265-268) Hence, Moschion's cowardice and bragging are explained by Menander's portrayal of characters within the development of the story and the series of misconceptions, comparing to Theophrastus' character types who act funnily and strangely by nature, without a particular purpose.

Smikrines in *Epitrepontes*

The last case study of this character-writing research is Menander's play *Epitrepontes* which is considered to be one of the last works of Menander (Furley, 2009, pp. 10-12). The play concentrates on the theme of misunderstanding, in relation to exposed children and foundling's tokens (Iversen, 2001, p. 381). Charisios, the husband of Pamphile, discovers that his lawful wife had been sexually abused and five months after their marriage she bore a child and exposed it. Having been informed about the situation by his slave Onesimos, he took up residence in his neighbor's house and he squandered Pamphile's dowry for his own pleasure. While a sequence of conflicts and misconceptions takes place before the revelation of truth, it is noteworthy to put emphasis on the role of Pamphile's father, Smikrines, who, like Knemon, is an old, dominant miser. He interferes in his daughter's and his son's-in-law lives and he acts as the meddling figure (Men. *Epit.* 656, πολυπραγμονῶ) who blocks the development of the story (MacCary, 1971, pp. 307-308, 315).

Because of the fragmentary nature of the text, it is difficult to draw a full picture of Smikrines. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Smikrines' character is

distinguished by his miserliness and his parsimony, as it is clearly depicted by his frustration by Charisios' behavior to spend Pamphile's dowry on wine (Men. *Epit.* 127-131) and women (Furley, 2009, pp. 18-26). Smikrines has saved up a large dowry for his daughter's marriage (Men. *Epit.* 135) and now he believes that his savings have been squandered by Pamphile's husband. At the beginning of the play, he is talking about the spending habits of Charisios and thus, his language revolves around money. More particularly, he complains that Charisios may buy some wine at one obol (Men. *Epit.* 130-131, τούβολοῦ ὠνούμενος πίνειν) and spend twelve drachmas per day for his hetaera (Men. *Epit.* 136-137, δώδεκα τῆς ἡμέρας δραχμὰς δίδωσι). Even Chairestratos, Charisios' neighbor, admits that Smikrines is very good at calculations (Men. *Epit.* 140-141, εὖ λελόγισται) while Onesimos, at the end of the play, characterizes him as λογιστικοῦ ἀνδρὸς (Men. *Epit.* 1081), in terms of someone who uses his brain for calculations (Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, p. 377; Kiritsi, 2017, pp. 74-77).

Moreover, there are similarities between Smikrines' character and the Theophrastean *Penny Pincher* and *Illiberal Man*. As MacCary notices, Smikrines' name indicates this trait of being formed from (s)*mikros* and μικρολόγος (MacCary, 1971, p. 282). As Smikrines reclaims the dowry, the *Penny Pincher* calculates (Thphr. *Char.* 10.4, λογιζεται) everything while he asks for repayment of a half-cent before the month is out (Thphr. *Char.* 10.2). Smikrines may not pursue overdue debtors or charge compound interest, like the *Penny Pincher* (Thphr. *Char.* 10.10), but he expects that his son-in-law will return the dowry, as the couple is separated (Furley, 2009, pp. 26-31). Moreover, Smikrines' miserliness is depicted when he discovers that Charisios has fathered a child by Habrotonon (Men. *Epit.* 645-646) and he immediately intends to take his daughter away from her husband (Men. *Epit.* 655-660), in order to save the dowry (Kiritsi, 2017, pp. 66-82). He does not really care for his daughter's emotional condition and the reason the couple has separated. Firstly, he enumerates Charisios' expenditure, as he will have to waste two bills for the festivals of Thesmophoria and Skira (Men. *Epit.* 749-750), in order to take care both Pamphile and Habrotonon and lastly, he mentions his daughter's humiliation (Men. *Epit.* 750) when she would have to reside in the same house with Charisios and his hetaera (Furley, 2013, pp. 82-90; Römer, 2015, pp. 49-54). However, in parallel with Theophrastus' *Penny Pincher* and according to Diggle, penny pincher's attitude is based on the perspective that others will take advantage of him and thus, he is obsessed with keeping what's his own (Diggle, 2004, pp. 301-304). Hence, Smikrines' meanness stems from

his penny-pinching attitude. He is not greedy, such as the Theophrastean *Shabby Profiteer* or extremely avaricious.

Furthermore, Smikrines seems to act like the *Illiberal Man* of Theophrastus with a servile propensity to gain. Even though Smikrines cares for Pamphile's honor, his illiberal attitude, namely, his ἀνελευθερία, is based on the fact that he behaves inappropriately in terms of his status and he tends to act more like a servant rather than a free-born citizen. Once again, Menander puts his emphasis on class matters and the fact that upper or middle-class characters tend to behave in a deviant way, totally opposite to their social status. As Kiritsi mentions 'he will tend to get angry in the wrong way, rather than feel anger over his daughter's dishonor and thus, gets infuriated because his servile expectations are not fulfilled' (Kiritsi, 2017, p. 69). The linguistic resemblance between Menander's submissive disposition and Theophrastus' *Illiberal Man* is clearly depicted when Menander and Theophrastus utilize προκόλπιον (Men. *Epit.* 382) and προκολπίω (Thphr. *Char.* 22.7), in order to portray the servile attitude of a man who carries either his groceries or anything else in that kind of folding, instead of employing a servant to carry them for him (Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, p. 320). However, one difference is that the *Illiberal Man* will hire staff that must bring their own food supplies for his daughter's wedding feast (Thphr. *Char.* 22.4, θυγατέρα... ἐν τοῖς γάμοις οἰκοσίτους μισθώσασθαι), whereas Smikrines does not seem to act accordingly. We can presume that he had organized a festive wedding, in order to satisfy his daughter, on the grounds that he gave her a four-talents dowry (Men. *Epit.* 134-135, προῖκα...τάλαντα τέτταρ' ἀργύρου; Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, pp. 296-298; Sommerstein, 2014, p. 8).

Lastly, Smikrines, in the arbitration scene (Men. *Epit.* 218-375), appears to act like the *Arrogant Man* of Theophrastus. He addresses the two slaves as wretched, namely, ὧ κάκιστ' ἀπολούμενοι (Men. *Epit.* 229-230), when he is invited to become the arbitrator (Men. *Epit.* 228, κριτήν) over the ownership of the trinkets of the exposed baby. He feels disgusted when he encounters them, due to their rustic appearance (Men. *Epit.* 229-230, διφθέρας ἔχοντες) and his involvement in a private arbitration for minor matters wherein the litigants are slaves (Gomme & Sandbach, 1973, p. 305). As Diggle states, the *Arrogant Man* feels superior to others, he cares only for his own matter and he seems indifferent to others' problems (Diggle, 2004, p. 445). Like Smikrines, when he is called in to arbitrate, he delivers his judgement while he is walking down the street (Thphr. *Char.* 24.4, ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς τὰς διαίτας κρίνειν, Men. *Epit.* 229-230, δίκας λέγοντες περιπατεῖτε) and he does not even speak to

passers-by while he strolls (Thphr. *Char.* 24.8, πορευόμενος μὴ λαλεῖν τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσι). Syros was the one that saw him while he was arguing with Daos and asked him to become their arbitrator, in order to help them solve their problem (Men. *Epit.* 224-228). Syros was the one who told Smikrines not to be scornful (Men. *Epit.* 231-233, μὴ καταφρονήσης), as Smikrines seems to behave disparagingly towards them.

In conclusion, I have pointed out that Smikrines shares some similarities with the *Penny Pincher*, the *Illiberal* and the *Arrogant Man* of Theophrastus. It is evident that Menander attempts to highlight that high-status men also possess vicious characteristic traits that reflect comicality, apart from the usual funny approach the slaves perform through the comic plot (Iversen, 2001, pp. 381-401; Konstan, 2013, p. 144). Smikrines' aberrant behavior is presented much stronger, considering that elderly high-status people do not usually act bewilderingly and unethically. On the contrary, it is young men who seem to be more immature and unprepared for taking responsibility. Thus, Menander creates more laughter because the audience would not be expecting that this old man possesses quite a few unrefined traits. However, Menander does not solely intend to portray Smikrines as the parsimonious old man who is afraid that the dowry would be completely squandered by his son-in-law (Men. *Epit.* 1065, καταφαγεῖν τὴν προῖκά μου). On the contrary, he is concerned about his daughter and due to his ignorance and the series of misapprehensions, he tends to adopt these non-accepted standards of behaviors which are opposed to his social and economic status. He does not stop reflecting some good behavioral qualities, clearly depicted at the arbitration scene. He is in favor of justice and what it is best for the exposed child and its social standing. Even when he is not aware that the child is his grandson (Men. *Epit.* 293-352), he acts justly and fairly at all times. Therefore, Menander's two goals are to expose Smikrines' deviant traits, in order to produce laughter and to show that these unethical behaviors, which are enhanced with the concealment of truth and the misunderstandings, should be avoided and not be adopted, so that the characters can live happily and peacefully.

Conclusion

Summing up, my research has suggested that Menander and Theophrastus share analogous notions on how they portray their characters' flaws and deviant behaviors. Indeed, Theophrastus observes the human nature and concentrates on his characters' bad behaviors and deeds. In parallel with this, Menander,

through his different comedies, pays attention to his comic characters and how their unrefined traits affect these individuals, the other characters of the play and the development of the plot. Both authors are interested in depicting the social life of Greek society and constructing individual types who deviate from the normal standards of behavior, because these characters bring more laughter and because they are applied for ethical thought. Through his character sketches, Theophrastus meticulously studied the external features of his vicious characters while Menander attempted to provide the inner motives that lead them to adopt such obnoxious and annoying attitudes. That is to say, Menander shares with Theophrastus an interest in exposing transgressive behaviors, but he takes the study of characterization further by applying characters' particular motives.

I hope that my article has supported this argument. There is an obvious affinity between characters that are portrayed in real life and the in fiction (MacCabe, 1989, pp. 33-34). Both authors make use of the philosophical and comical perspective through their character-types, in order to scold bad attitude and to amuse the audience. Moreover, Menander's study of characterization, reflects how other people pay attention to these characters' vicious traits. As Arnott argues 'Menander has discovered that a person's assessment of someone else's character may in fact reveal far more about his own character than about that of the other person' (Arnott, 1964, p. 113). Thus, Menander makes use of how other characters are presented and interact with the vicious characters, so as to build a more developed dramatic persona whose unrefined traits are clearly depicted, examined and commented by others.

That is, Knemon and Smikrines, the dual character-study, are portrayed as the leading old men who succeed in causing many problems within the plays, due to their anti-social, suspicious and self-centered behavior, while Moschion, in Menander's two different comedies, displays lack of courage. Menander employs the same tradition of drawing characters with Theophrastus' oeuvre, but he seeks to explain the inner reasons concerning his characters' deviant attitude. He attempts to inform his audience and to clarify that there is a particular cause behind his characters' aberrant attitude. He serves the conventions of New Comedy, namely, the characters' typical lack of knowledge, the series of misconceptions and the concealment of truth that play a contributory factor for the development of his characters' disposition and the story, in general. He respects his characters and he slightly mocks them. He aims to show that human naivety, deception, mistaken identity and lack of information are important factors in New Comedy plays that affect

how his characters fail to respond properly and effectively (Traill, 2008, p. 264; Cinaglia, 2012, p. 566). That is why, Menander exploits the theme of exposing bad behavior so that the characters can learn their lesson, improve themselves and become ethically better.

On the other hand, Theophrastus' character-study tends to ridicule bad behaviors, on the grounds that he addresses the typical characteristics of these individuals. His characters are treated with disdain and therefore, Theophrastus achieves to amuse and educate the audience, providing that these transgressive traits should not be adopted or applied by anyone. Therefore, even though Menander's and Theophrastus' main goal is twofold, that is, to offer funny moments and to ethically teach their audience for aberrational behaviors, in his turn, Menander emphasizes on human folly, with respect to the anti-social, the suspicious, the cowardly, the besotted and the deceived, in order to demonstrate an overall explanatory image of his characters' unrefined portrayals. Menander, unlike Theophrastus, offers social and emotional consistency at the end of his comedies by means of marriage, reconciliation and revelation of truth. The audience must have comprehended that these obnoxious characters are laughable, but also, they are capable of altering their bad behavioral traits, in order to improve themselves in a social and ethical level.

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