

COMPARISON BETWEEN MAENECCI AND THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

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ANALYSIS SHEET PLAUTUS' AND SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDIES' STRUCTURE

ARGUMENTUM
PROLOGUE
ACT
SCENES

Can you find it in each comedy? In both works there are acts and scenes but only in *Menaechmi* do we find the prologue.

What are they like? In Plautus the acts and scenes are vulgar, confusing and full of misunderstandings.

What does the prologue tell? The prologue is short and Plautus introduces himself and the work.

TITLE	<p>The title "<i>Menaechmi</i>" is sometimes translated as <i>The Brothers Menaechmus</i> or <i>The Two Menaechmuses</i>.</p> <p><i>Menaechmi</i> is a comedy about mistaken identity, involving a set of twins, Menaechmo of Epidamno and Menaechmo of Syracuse.</p>	<p>The <i>Comedy of Errors</i> is Shakespeare's only play that has "comedy" explicitly in the title. The <i>Comedy of Errors</i> seems to have all the elements of a farce, Shakespeare asserts that it is a more serious play by deliberately putting "comedy" in the title. Shakespeare's insistence that it's actually a comedic work demands that we read it with greater scrutiny. Like many of his comedies, deeper issues (death, loss, isolation, etc.) are addressed alongside the slapstick antics and hi-jinks of misunderstanding. Therefore, this play's title is simultaneously an admission and an invitation: Shakespeare knows he'd put together a silly piece, but he's also challenging the viewer or reader of the play to be looking out for deep issues and dangerous problems.</p>
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TIME	Menaechmi is a comedy by Plautus written towards the end of the 3rd century BC	The action takes place on one single day, in three locations around Ephesus – the market place, the area surrounding the priory and the house of Antipholus.
SPACE	The story is set in Epidamno, there are more places and the places mentioned are: the <i>forum</i> from which Menechmo I returns; the house of the harlot Erozio.	The place where the first scene is set is a square overlooking a hedgehog. The second scene takes place in the house of Antipholus of Ephesus. The third scene and the fourth scene are set in the market place. So, there are more places.
CHARACTERS	In this act the characters are: Menecmo I, wife of Menecmo I, Spazzola, Erozio and Menecmo II. Menechmo I is the protagonist, all the other characters are antagonists. Spazzola is one of the fixed masks in the opera: indeed, the audience was able to recognise his role the moment he entered the scene or when he was mentioned. He represented an elementary stage of social relations and appeared predictable in his actions because of his lack of introspective characterisation. Another mask is the courtesan, Erozio (in Latin <i>meretrix</i>), the mischievous woman with whom the young protagonists fall in love.	In the first scene the characters are: Angelo, the guard, Antipholus of Ephesus, Dromio of Ephesus and Dromio of Syracuse. In the second scene they are: Adriana: wife of Antipholus of Ephesus, Luciana: sister of Adriana and Dromio of Syracuse. In the third scene the characters are: Antipholus of Syracuse, Dromio of Syracuse and the prostitute. In the fourth and last scene the characters are: Antipholus of Ephesus, Dromio of Ephesus, the jailer, the prostitute, Adriana, Luciana, Pinch: the doctor, Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Syracuse.
THEMES	Deception is a theme of the play. Everyone mistakes one brother for the other; this is exacerbated by the fact that the two brothers are deceitful. For example, the first Menecmo cheats on his wife with Erozio and steals his wife's cloak to give it to his own wife, then the cloak is taken by Menecmo II and Menecmo I is accused by Erozio of deception. Without these deceptions, the cases of mistaken identity would not have been so intense.	Themes of The Comedy of Errors are: Commerce and Exchange; Marriage and Family; Appearances and Identity; Mistakes and Coincidences; Scapegoats and Social Hierarchy

ANALYSIS OF THE 4^o ACT OF MAENECCI

Peniculus has told Menecmo's wife about the theft of the cloak and the banquet in Erozio's house.

Menecmo I arrives, he too complains about the time lost in the *Forum*, and goes to Erozio's house, but he meets his (enraged) wife and Spazzola.

The situation is made particularly intricate by the fact that Menecmo I, in order to defend himself, denies having taken the cloak (and here he lies) but also that he has feasted at Erozio's house. Here he does not lie because in reality the guest of the courtesan was Menecmo II.

At the end of the scene his wife, exasperated, declares that she will not let Menechmus return home until he has recovered her cloak.

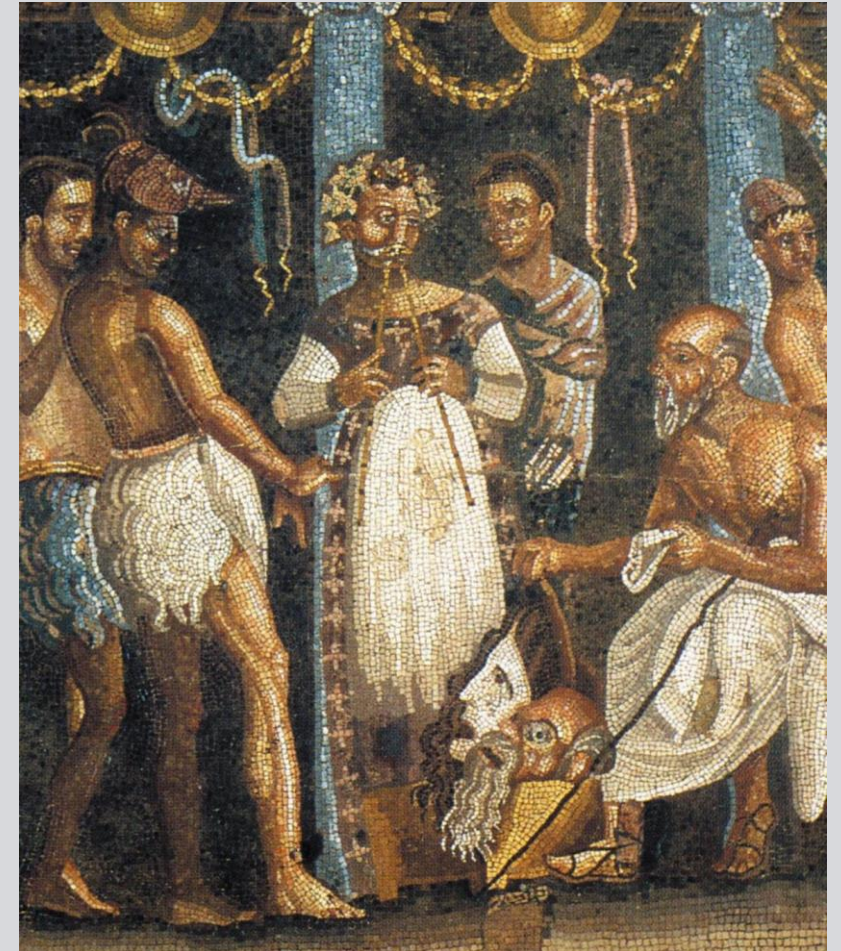
Menecmo I is forced to ask Erozio to return the cloak. She believes that Menecmo is trying to deceive her, she is furious and throws him out of her house.

The cloak is now in the hands of the twin after a thousand vicissitudes

The characters are confused, they don't understand what is true and what is false.

In the first part of the act there's a quarrel between Menechmus, his wife and Spazzola.

The falling action is the moment when Menechmus is not believed by either woman and is kicked out of the house by both.



COMIC MECHANISMS	QUOTE FROM ACT N° IV	EXPLANATION
<p>EXCHANGES OF CHARACTERS AND TWISTS</p>	<p>THE WIFE: A mantle, I say, has been lost from home. MENAECHMUS Who has stolen it? THE WIFE: I faith, he knows that, who took it away. MENAECHMUS: What person was it? THE WIFE : A certain Menaechmus. MENAECHMUS: By my troth, 'twas villanously done. Who is this Menaechmus? THE WIFE: You are he, I say.</p>	<p>Menaechmus' wife accuses her Husband Menecmo I of stealing her cloak, but Menecmo II actually stole it. Menecmo I is unaware of this. In fact he's surprised by his wife's accusations.</p>
<p>PARODY, A CARICATUREL IMITATION OR ACCENTUATION OF THE PROTAGONISTS' DEFECTS</p>	<p>SPAZZOLA Such is the return. Do you make haste to eat up the breakfast in my absence; and then in your drunkenness make fun of me, with your chaplet on, before the house.</p>	<p>Spazzola is angry because Menaechmus did not wait for him for breakfast. This makes the character of the greedy servant evident.</p>
<p>PUNS AND PLAYFUL IDENTIFICATIONS</p>	<p>MENAECHMUS of Epidamnus. I, gave it her? SPAZZOLA You, you, I say. Do you wish for an owl to be brought here, to say "you, you," continually to you? For we are now quite tired of it.</p>	<p>Spazzola continues to answer Menaechmus' questions by saying that he was guilty, continuing to repeat the pronoun "you", remembering the owl's verse.</p>
<p>METAPHORS</p>	<p>SPAZZOLA: O the wicked fellow; how he does dissemble. You cannot conceal it; she knows the matter thoroughly; by my faith, I've disclosed everything.</p>	<p>Spazzola tells Menaechmus that he has now "turned on the tap" to indicate that he has now opened his mouth on what he has done.</p>

<p>COMBINATION OF REFINED AND CRUDE WORDS</p>	<p>THE WIFE OF MENAECHEMUS of Epidamnus. And shall I allow myself to remain in this disgusting marriage with a husband who steals everything from me secretly and gives it to his whore?</p>	<p>The wife of Menaechmus uses crude words to indicate Erotium.</p>
<p>MIXTURE OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTIC REGISTERS</p>	<p>MENAECHEMUS:How we do practise a custom here that is very foolish and extremely troublesome, and how even those who are the most worthy and great do follow this habit: all wish their dependants to be many in number; whether they are deserving or undeserving, about that they don't enquire. Their property is more enquired about, than what the reputation of their clients is for honor. If any person is poor and not dishonest, he is considered worthless; but if a rich man is dishonest, he is considered a good client. Those who neither regard laws nor any good or justice at all, the same have zealous patrons. What has been entrusted to them, they deny to have been so entrusted; men full of litigation, rapacious, and fraudulent; who have acquired their property either by usury or by perjury; their whole pleasure is in litigation.</p>	<p>In this monologue Menaechmus uses a rather complex language, with the use of hypotactic. However, it also uses low register words.</p>
<p>VULGAR JOKES AND EXASPERATION OF NATURAL FEELINGS</p>	<p>EROTIUM [...]Unless you bring money, you'll be disappointed; you can't cajole me. Find some other woman, henceforth, for you to be disappointing.</p>	<p>when he asks Erotium for the cloak, she gets furious, telling him not to come to her again unless he brings her money.</p>
<p>DOUBLE MEANINGS, ESPECIALLY OF A SEXUAL NATURE</p>	<p>EROTIUS Do you treat me like that? Is this how you compensate for my favors?</p>	<p>Erotius is referring to sexual favours given to Menaechmus</p>
<p>THE FREQUENT USE OF HALF LATIN AND HALF GREEK WORDS OR WORDS FORMED WITH SEVERAL ROOTS OR NEOLOGISMS, OR HYPERBOLIC AND RIDICULOUS SUPERLATIVES</p>	<p>MENAECHEMUS of Epidamnus. For my part, I'm not alarmed at all aside except about one thing; the mantle makes my face mantle.</p>	<p>"<i>Palla pallorem incutit.</i>" In his alarm he cannot avoid a pun on the resemblance between "<i>palla</i>" the "mantle," and "pallor," paleness. The meaning is, literally, "the mantle strikes paleness into me;" but an attempt is made in the translation to imitate the play upon the words.</p>

ANALYSIS OF THE 4^o ACT OF COMEDY OF ERRORS

Angelo, a goldsmith, mistakenly gives Antipholus of Syracuse a gold chain ordered by Antipholus of Ephesus, who had told him that he would come by later to pay. When Antipholus of Ephesus refuses to pay, Angelo has him arrested. Meanwhile, Adriana and her sister, Luciana, are convinced that Antipholus and Dromio (of Ephesus) have lost their minds, which leads them to have them tied up and taken to a doctor. Of course, when Adriana later meets Antipholus and Dromio (of Syracuse), she thinks they have escaped the doctor's care.

The falling action is the moment when Antipholus of Ephesus' wife, Adriana, asks Dr Pinch to exorcise him, the doctor prays for him because he believes he is possessed by the devil.



COMIC MECHANISMS	QUOTE FROM ACT N° IV
EXCHANGES OF CHARACTERS AND TWISTS	<p>When the merchant has Angelo arrested by the justice officer and Angelo in turn asks the justice officer to arrest the merchant.</p> <p>Exchange of characters: Angelo gets confused and instead of selling the chain to Antipholus of Ephesus, he hands it over to Antifolo of Syracuse.</p>
PARODY, A CARICATURE IMITATION OR ACCENTUATION OF THE PROTAGONISTS' DEFECTS	<p>“Foolish fellow” from Antifolo to Angelo</p>
PUNS AND PLAYFUL IDENTIFICATIONS	<p>From Angelo to officer "I would not spare my brother in this case, If he should scorn me I know apparently. "</p> <p>From Dromio to Adriana " Time is a very bankrupt, and</p>
METHAPORS	<p>“ like a shrew," from Antifolo to Angelo.</p> <p>From Dromio to Adriana " have you not heard men say That Time comes stealing on by night and day?"</p> <p>Antifolus of Syracuse to Dromius referring to Ethera "she is the devil's dam; and here she comes in the habit of a light</p>

MIXTURE OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTIC REGISTERS

From Antifolo to Dromio "piece of donating", "idiot", "drunken scoundrel", "I will teach your ears to listen better to what I say".

Antifolus of Ephesus to Dromio "Thou whoreson, senseless villain!"

Adriana to Antifolo of Ephesus "

Dissembling villain".

Antifolo of Ephesus to Adriana "Dissembling harlot, thou art false in all"

DOUBLE MEANINGS, ESPECIALLY OF A SEXUAL NATURE

Dromio "She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.»

Adriana to Luciana "He is deformed, crooked, old and sere,

Ill-faced, worse bodied, shapeless everywhere;

Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind;

THE FREQUENT USE OF HALF LATIN AND HALF GREEK WORDS OR WORDS FORMED WITH SEVERAL ROOTS. OR NEOLOGISMS, OR HYPERBOLIC AND RIDICULOUS SUPERLATIVES

Ethera to Antifolo of Syracuse and Dromio "Your man and you are marvellous

merry, sir.

Will you go with me? We'll mend our dinner here?"

Dromio to Etera "Fly pride," says the peacock: