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CUSTOMS, PLACES AND 'GENTES'
IN PLAUTUS

by RICHARD LEVIS

A Dissertation submitted
to the School of Graduate Studies
of the University of Ottawa
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Ottawa
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the cultural constructs that are the basic elements of the comedies of Plautus. To achieve this goal the study has been divided into four chapters: Language, Customs, Places and 'Gentes'. Chapter One, Language, analyzes how the Latin language influences the way in which the characters express the various aspects of their world. Chapter Two, Customs, considers the expression of the affairs of daily life that are of common interest to the characters on stage. This chapter evaluates a cross-section of the activities that the characters describe, such as their reference to public offices and civic duties, the details of their religious practices, their dealings with wealth and money, as well as their references to travel, education and slave duties. Chapter Three, Places, looks at the wide variety of places that construct the world of Plautus' characters. This chapter is divided into three parts: the city sites, the dramatic settings, and the distant countries and cities of the world. Chapter Four, 'Gentes', examines the manner in which Plautus ascribes his characters and the people of the world into particular groups and what variation and importance there are in these attributes and specifications.

The comedies of Plautus are filled with descriptions of cultural details that are evidence for some of the ways in which Latin-speaking peoples of the Middle Republican period

conceptualized the world. The cultural resonance of the Latin language influences how the characters express important elements of their stage world. This influence is especially acute in the moral and familial terms that the characters use, but it filters through as well into the political world of the comic stage and other customs that are a part of the characters' interactions. Furthermore, the places that the characters of the comic stage describe maintain certain consistent associations which allows for an easy identification from play to play as well as an easy transition from the stage to the places with which the audience was familiar. Finally, Plautus draws upon a fairly narrow band of ethnic characterizations which he applies to the gentes who populate his plays. Many of these attributes follow the themes of comedy itself. Otherwise, the designation of origin is an important attribute that is tied to a character's social status and birthright as a free citizen. Plautus' characters are citizens from all over the Mediterranean world and this fact plays an important role in the development of the plots of the plays and in most of their resolutions.

CUSTOMS, PLACES AND 'GENTES' IN PLAUTUS

A Dissertation by Richard Levis
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ABBREVIATIONS OF PERIODICALS AND LEXICA

<u>AJPh</u>	<u>American Journal of Philology</u>
<u>CB</u>	<u>Classical Bulletin</u>
<u>CJ</u>	<u>Classical Journal</u>
<u>CIL</u>	<u>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</u>
<u>CP</u>	<u>Classical Philology</u>
<u>CQ</u>	<u>Classical Quarterly</u>
<u>GL</u>	<u>Grammaire Latine</u>
<u>CW</u>	<u>Classical World</u>
<u> OCD</u>	<u>Oxford Classical Dictionary (2nd. ed. 1970/1987)</u>
<u>OLD</u>	<u>Oxford Latin Dictionary</u>
<u>PhQ</u>	<u>Philological Quarterly</u>
<u>TAPA</u>	<u>Transactions of the American Philosophical Association</u>

ABBREVIATIONS OF PLAYS

<u>Am.</u>	<u>Amphitruo</u>
<u>As.</u>	<u>Asinaria</u>
<u>Au.</u>	<u>Aulularia</u>
<u>Ba.</u>	<u>Bacchides</u>
<u>Cap.</u>	<u>Captivi</u>
<u>Cas.</u>	<u>Casina</u>
<u>Ci.</u>	<u>Cistellaria</u>
<u>Cu.</u>	<u>Curculio</u>
<u>Ep.</u>	<u>Epidicus</u>
<u>Men.</u>	<u>Menaechmi</u>
<u>Mer.</u>	<u>Mercator</u>
<u>Mil.</u>	<u>Miles Gloriosus</u>
<u>Mo.</u>	<u>Mostellaria</u>
<u>Per.</u>	<u>Persa</u>
<u>Poe.</u>	<u>Poenulus</u>
<u>Ps.</u>	<u>Pseudolus</u>
<u>Ru.</u>	<u>Rudens</u>
<u>St.</u>	<u>Stichus</u>
<u>Tri.</u>	<u>Trinummus</u>
<u>Tru.</u>	<u>Truculentus</u>

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For Erika

qui utuntur vino vetere sapientis puto
et qui lubenter veteres spectant fabulas (Cas. 5-6).

INTRODUCTION

The mixture of tradition and experience that comprises the work of art has been a focus of study for many scholars of Classics.¹ Art both perpetuates itself through the continuation of specific genres and it also functions within the social system that bestows it with the name of art. One of the consequences that follows from studying the artistic style in its cultural context is that one must also accept that art expresses not only the time when it is created but also the time within which it is popular. The artistic creations that appeal to the popular taste express the sentiments of popular taste. Perhaps the best example of this kind of changing cultural tastes expressed in the milieu of constant themes is found in the myths that keep their basic plot lines but take on varied emphases according to the author's intention. The author manipulates a well-known mythical story to convey a particular contemporary message, perhaps political or moral, to an audience whose likes and dislikes he caters to or attempts to influence. The central themes of the mythical stories themselves, however, carry across place and time to emerge in new productions and in new languages. They, in turn, function in new societies as

¹ Most notably by Gordon Williams who examines Roman themes and cultural focuses that are embedded in Greek literary structures: G. Williams, Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry (Oxford, 1968); see also, N. Zagagi, Tradition and Originality in Plautus (Goettingen, 1980); and, J. Griffin, Latin Poets and Roman Life (Chapel Hill, 1986).

expressions of their new social context. One can consider the continuation of other literary styles in a similar reflective light. The work reflects the tradition of the genre as the artist adapts it through his personal experience of the society he writes for. In time the works become as well a part of the experience of the audience that enjoys the work.

The interpretation of literature in the context of either tradition or experience creates its own particular set of problems that a social historian or a literary critic must address. If one attempts to read a work or body of works from the historical perspective of literary tradition, then one must accept the limitations that are a consequence of that approach. Most significantly, in such an analysis the authorial intentions and social consequences of the work are set in the background. If, however, one would like to address the functioning of a literary work within its contemporary social context, then different questions will be asked and the material will yield different results. The material is then studied as a coherent whole that creates its meaning in the context of its own society. Such a study begins by fashioning the best means to make meaningful comparisons of the expressions and the repeated images in the literary works. This will allow for similarities to surface and it will allow a more thorough analysis of the material. The focus will shift to the author's use of literary patterns that made

meaning for his audience. The messages that are inherent in the consistencies of the language will reveal in part how the audience understood the work.

Plautine comedy is replete with cultural images that are most often examined in the hope of revealing the sources from which the images were taken. But it is important to remember that Plautus' comedies provided a live form of entertainment in Rome and Italy. They had real contemporary meaning for people as a living art form and the material should also be studied in terms of how the images that it presents created meaning. Moreover, through such a study one will obtain a better understanding of how one of the popular arts at that point in time disseminated ideas and information. These images are not merely, for example, the commonplace identification of Persians with wealth. They include associations that extend to a vast range of linguistic, cultural, geographical and ethnic details that are the focus of this study. This dissertation proposes to build the cultural world-view found in Plautus from the ground up. The First Chapter examines the ramifications of the Latin language itself as a medium that inherently affects the content and meaning of the plays. The Second Chapter considers how the Latin language affects the most prominent customs of the comic stage that are described by the characters. These two chapters, studying the language and the social life depicted

on the Latin comic stage, will form a kind of structural foundation for the work that follows.² The Third Chapter examines how the characters portray the places of their urban world, their dramatic settings and the world abroad. Finally, the Fourth Chapter examines the various peoples of the Mediterranean world and beyond that the characters discuss and how the attributes of these gentes are important in the scope of the Plautine plays.

During the last one hundred years, Plautine scholarship has grown out of two emphases: the first is from Leo, who stressed the playwright's reliance on his Greek sources; and the second is from Fraenkel, who highlighted what was original in the comedies.³ The former school maintains that Plautus is merely a translator, an arranger or at best an interpreter; the latter school sees Plautus as the adaptor, a playwright who embellishes and extends his material for pure comic effect. The most recent strain of criticism, however,

2 For visual evidence see: M. Bieber, The History of the Greek and Roman Theatre (Princeton, 1961) Chaps. 10 and 11. Corroboration of the visual evidence can be found in such passages as Harpax's description of Pseudolus: rufus quidem, ventriosus, crassus suris, subniger, magno capite, acutis oculis, ore rubicundo, admodum magnis pedibus (Ps. 1217-19). Visual evidence for the comic stage survives in the form of vase paintings, wall-paintings and figurines, as well as in the character descriptions in the texts themselves. These descriptions may perpetuate the stereotype of the character in question, but they by no means delimit character absolutely.

3 'Es ist nicht mehr aber auch nicht weniger als die Übersetzungskunst.' Leo, F., Plautinische Forschungen, (Darmstadt, 1966/Berlin, 1912) p.87; Fraenkel, Eduard Plautinisches im Plautus (Berlin, 1922) Franco Munari, trans., Elementi Plautini in Plauto, Firenze, 1960; and N. Zagagi, 1980.

emphasizes the "tradition and originality" approach of interpretation from a slightly different angle. The critic concentrates on the works as complete creations in their own right.⁴ The plays are no longer mere objects of dissection and subsequent source criticism but rather creations of significant socio-historical value in themselves. Such a shift in critical focus allows the social and political inferences that are found in Plautus to be examined in a historical context.⁵ As noted by J.A. Hanson among others, Plautus is first and foremost both a production of his time and a reflection of his time:

If we cut out everything that is possibly Greek in origin from a second century B.C. document, we are falsifying the picture of that century's society as truly as if we cut out everything Greek or Oriental from our conception of Rome in the second century A.D. ... [each passage of Plautus] becomes Roman as soon as it is written down in Latin and subsequently performed before a Roman audience; that is, it becomes part of the milieu of ideas and expressions in Rome of that age.⁶

One does not need to address the intricate problem of originality in order to make critical observations about the socio-historical significance of the plays. Source criticism

4 For example: 'Whatever his sources, he [Plautus], and he alone, is responsible for the shape of the Latin play he has created and for its artistic success or failure.' N. Slater, Plautus in Performance (Princeton, 1985) p.7.

5 Examples include: E. Gruen, Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy (Leiden\New York\Kobenhavn\Köln, 1990); D.C. Earl, 'Political terminology in Plautus' Historia 9 (1960) pp. 235-243; J. Hanson, 'Plautus as a sourcebook for Roman religion,' TAPA 90 (1959) 48-101.

6 J. Hanson, TAPA 90 (1959) p.50.

is, admittedly, an important approach for Plautine studies, but it is certainly not the only way in which the plays have meaning. The texts speak to us as historical documents that stand on their own as significant products of their place and time.

Roman comedy has also been examined as a curious kind of social institution. Erich Segal considers the production of comedies by Romans to be evidence of a social release valve that was a consequence of an overly strict and structured social order.⁷ He elaborates upon the contrast between the celebrated and stereotyped staidness of the Roman temperament and the relatively chaotic antics presented on the comic stage. The normal social roles are reversed: slave becomes master, master slave. Segal's interpretation of Plautine comedy, however insightful, is somewhat mechanical and too all-inclusive for the realities of the eclectic and multi-ethnic society of Rome in the late third, early second century BCE. Even the most inbred societies, after all, do not produce clones. Segal is a bit too absolute in his configuration of audience response into one tidy package that essentially assumes an audience that is derived from one social class only. As the introduction to the Poenulus establishes, the audience was not composed only of the Roman

7 E. Segal, Roman Laughter (Cambridge, 1970).

aristocratic families.⁸ Moreover, not all Plautine characterization reverses social norms: not every servus is master-controlling, not every adulescens is profligate. Furthermore, much of the morality that permeates the texts of the plays is exactly the kind with which even an Elder Cato might agree, as one finds, for example, in the introduction to his work on agriculture.⁹ Plautus may express his moral points inharmoniously with our expectations of the stereotyped aristocratic Roman and his attendant mores, but the professed morality itself is in line with what may perhaps be termed orthodox beliefs.¹⁰

8 Even slaves attended the performances: servi ne opsident, liberis ut sit locus (Poe. 23). In an admittedly unverifiable but nevertheless plausible relative point, Frank estimates the population of the 7,000 sq. mi. around Rome to be one million freedmen and citizens. Such a figure argues for a diverse audience. T. Frank, An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome, vol. I, Rome and the Early Republic (New Jersey, 1959/orig. 1933) p. 75.

9 Compare, for example, Curculio on bankers and lenones (Cu. 506-11) with Cato's opening of his De Agricultura: Est interdum praestare mercaturis rem quaerere, nisi tam periculosum sit, et item fenerari, si tam honestum sit. Maiores nostri sic habuerunt et ita in legibus posiverunt, furem dupli condemnari, feneratorem quadrupli. Quanto peiorem civem existimarint feneratorem quam furem, hinc licet existimare (Cato De Ag.Cult. 1.1).

10 Roman values and morality permeate Plautus' plays. Examples can be seen in such general things as the emphasis on the chastity of the girl who is to marry the young man (Cu. 51-2); she may be a meretrix but she is definitely at the beginning of her career. Other examples of the moral aspects may be seen in the servus Palinurus' attempts to restrain the young lover Phaedromus at the beginning of the Curculio (23-38). The best overall general statement of this morality is at the conclusion of the Captivi: Spectatores ad pudicos mores facta haec fabula est... (Cap. 1029). The subject of Roman value terms in Plautus is dealt with at the end of Chapter One.

The considerable Latin literary production of the third century BCE reveals at the very least the development of a great popular interest in literature. This interest flourished within the relatively short time of two generations and not only reflects growth in the world experience of the Latin-speaking people of Italy, but also suggests a certain concomitant sophistication. The peoples of central Italy were for the first time exposed to formal, written artistic creations that portrayed characters, peoples, places, things, and customs in formalized Latin language. The impact of all these ideas goes beyond the power of literature as a form of entertainment; literature is also a medium of education. One learns of the world through the experiences of others, through the images that writers choose to put on display. Comedy was an important part of the Latin literary explosion through which the Roman people received information about the world, even if comedy created a world on the stage that maintained its own particular set of verbal images and portrayals. The comedies of Plautus are not exclusively a self-contained and self-referential meta-theatre, that only have meaning in relation to some lost Greek source. They are products of both place and time and they reveal certain aspects of their place and time in the words that are used in their production. Comedy is one literary form through which Latin-speaking peoples gleaned information about both their own world and the world beyond their immediate realm of direct experience in the

late third and early second century. The words that create the customs and that define the places and the gentes of the world in Plautus are the focus of this dissertation. The goal is to better comprehend Plautus' work as a conveyer of cultural information. The method followed here has four stages: first, to examine the impact of the Latin language on the expression of the plays; second, to analyse to what extent this language has an impact upon the customs that the characters detail; third, to consider how place is described by the characters of the plays, how much of the world they are aware of, and what associations attend their descriptions; fourth, to study the attributes of the gentes that populate Plautus' comedies. Such a study is essential for a full understanding of the cultural scope and social impact of Plautus' work.

In order to study the cultural details, topical descriptions and ethnic associations in Plautus, one must establish internal standards by which one can measure the material. The significance of any statement in a comedy can only be properly understood by analyzing its relation to the internal practices of its own genre. For example, in order to understand the Plautine depiction of Hanno as a Carthaginian in the Poenulus, one must be able to compare that depiction with the portrayal of other Carthaginians as well as the portrayal of other gentes in the plays. A similar view has

been expressed by Dauge concerning the Roman terminology to classify Barbarianism:

Les études mêmes qui sont spécialement consacrées à la question barbare font mal la différence entre la Grèce et Rome; elles sous-estiment toutes la spécificité romaine, et ne considèrent les choses qu'en surface, de manière statique, faute de renoncer à la vision stéréotypique traditionnelle - qui s'intéresse aux barbares, et non à la barbarie - et de discerner la réalité et le drame de la volonté créatrice romaine.¹¹

The Plautine comedies as well deserve to be studied on their own terms, not always in relation to the reconstructed norms of another society. The material must be understood in its own linguistic, cultural, social and historical context. The many cultural images and associations in the plays must be collated and compared among themselves before one may fully understand how the cultural and ethnic elements of the plays form literary standards and create cultural meaning.

One may debate whether the primary aim of comic drama itself is personal catharsis, social affirmation or didactics,¹² but a great part of the attraction to Plautus is simply escape. In the Roman world of the late third-century, filled as it was with the fear of total destruction from the

11 Y.A. Dauge Le Barbare (Bruxelles, 1981) p.15.

12 For Plautus' plays as social education see W. E. Gruber Comic Theatres: Studies in Performance and Audience Response. (Athens and London, 1986). Gruber maintains that Plautine comedy is "assimilative rather than recreative or restorative" (p.60).

Carthaginian armies, the grandiose importance placed on a lost son or daughter, the love affair of a young man or the clever tricks of a slave perhaps borders on a theatre of the absurd. But one should not therefore underestimate the significance of the social impact of the plays themselves. They present a variety of human activities, different countries and various peoples all of which together form certain impressions of human existence and the world.

It is inadvisable to work with any literature from the ancient world without taking into consideration the manuscript tradition. The first recorded traces of the manuscript tradition for the Plautine texts appear in the middle of the first century BCE. From among hundreds of manuscripts that circulated at that time under the name of Plautus, Varro established a canon of twenty-one plays that he determined were original.¹³ These twenty-one plays are considered to be the ones that we now possess.¹⁴ Part of the difficulty in the texts, apart from the lack of early manuscripts that are complete, is the difficulty of the metre and orthography.

13 See for example, Karl Heinz Chelius, Die Codices Minores Plautus: Forschungen zur Geschichte und Kritik (Baden-Baden, 1989). The introductions to most of the commentaries of the individual plays usually touch on the manuscript tradition in some way. The best explication of the tradition begins with Varro's selection of twenty-one plays, known as the fabulae Varronianae. Most scholars recognize the Ambrosian Palimpsest of the fourth century as an edition of this (cf. Varro in Gell 3.3.3).

14 This dissertation only examines the material in twenty of the plays. The Vidularia exists only in fragments that account for little more than 100 lines.

Even Cicero, a contemporary of Varro's, had difficulty with the scansion.¹⁵ He apparently did not recognize the variations to rules for Latin metrics that Plautus adopted for his plays. The present work bases its research and subsequent conclusions on the assumption that the texts as they have been reconstituted are the products of the early second century BCE. Certain consistencies within the body of extant work allow for this conclusion. First, the original metre can be reconstructed by replacing the orthography of early Latin. Second, some of the vocabulary is archaic Latin and it also contains some relatively obscure Greek terms that are found only in the texts of Plautus - no later grammarian or scholar bothered to change or modernize the terms. Third, the manuscript tradition maintains some Greek script, presumably as a pronunciation directive to the actor. This Greek script in the text would not be a later addition, because of the absorption of Greek by Latin that is already evident from the extant texts of the third century. Finally, however one regards the current status of the manuscript tradition, a comprehensive study of all the texts as they now stand will further our ability to establish the texts, by recognizing consistencies of diction, style and imagery. This dissertation relies upon the texts as they were established by

15 comitorum senarii propter similitudinem sermonis sic saepe sunt abiecti, ut non nunquam vix in eis numerus et versus intellegi possit (Orator 55.187; cf. Orator 20.67). Citations taken from W.M. Lindsay, T. Macci Plauti, Captivi (Oxford, 1887) p.10.

W.M. Lindsay and will only discuss variations and emendations when they affect particular interpretations.¹⁶

* * *

LUDI IN ROMAN REPUBLICAN SOCIETY

A society works on many cultural levels and each level makes a contribution that reflects the society in some way. The development of comedy at Rome during the Republic has much to tell us about the life and outlook of the Roman people themselves. The fact that the plays were staged at all immediately reveals that the people of Rome were not exclusively concerned with the military and politics. After all, although the negation of otium, like the Protestant work ethic, was a revered virtue, this does not deny, either then or now, the need for rest and relaxation. The fact that comedies were written and performed suggests that the Romans of the Middle Republic were something more than simple variations on the two-dimensional soldier-statesmen that Livy portrays.¹⁷ It is, obviously, erroneous to think of a people

16 W.M. Lindsay, T. Macci Plauti Comoediae II vols. (Oxford, 1984; first published, 1905).

17 Livy's interest in comedy is as a deviance from traditional Roman mores. He mentions ludi, for the most part, in connection with their religious function.

only in terms of their ideals, especially the ideals of a moralising historian.

The chronicle evidence, as it is fleshed out by later historians, reveals that the Ludi were an important aspect of the early social life in Rome.¹⁸ Livy preserves some of the traditions that were associated with the origins of several festivals. The Consualia, for example, was apparently the pretense under which the Romans lured the Sabines into the city so that their women could be taken as brides for Roman men. Livy also records that Tarquinius Priscus established the Roman or Great Games for the celebration after the capture of Apiolae.¹⁹ Although exact details of the rule of the Etruscan Tarquins are obscure, the contribution of some Etruscan customs, including festivals and music, has been dated to the sixth century. Livy maintains that the early games consisted only of Etruscan boxers and horse races, but he relates a story of the Great Games of 491 that at least

18 André Piganiol Recherches sur les jeux romains (Strasbourg/ Paris, 1923). Dionysius of Halicarnasus details a pompa from Rome's early history (Dion. Hal. R.A. 7.70f). For an examination of the early growth of ludi and their cultural significance over their use as a political tool see Erich S. Gruen, Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome, Chpt. 5 'The Theater and Aristocratic Culture' (Ithaca, 1992), pp. 183ff.

19 See Ogilvie A Commentary on Livy: Books 1-5 (Oxford, 1965) on 1.35. Numerous duplications of the details and accomplishments of the two Tarquins, Priscus and Superbus, are evident. Ogilvie notes, however, that prosopography reveals that the Tarquins did encourage Etruscan families to settle at Rome.

suggests a more diverse format.²⁰ This story is found in different sources, so Livy's version of it allows for an insight into the authors' uses of the available material.²¹ In Livy's version, a violation of religious propriety occurred when manacled slaves were driven across the arena before the ludi, an act that violated the sanctity of the occasion. Displeased, Jupiter himself sent a dream to a certain Titus Latinus, that was a warning to the Romans:

haud multo post Tito Latinio, de plebe homini, somnium fuit: visus Iuppiter dicere sibi ludis praesultatorem displicuisse; nisi magnifice instaurarentur ii ludi, periculum urbi fore (Livy 2.36.2).

Not much later, Titus Latinus, a plebeian, had a dream: Jupiter appeared to say that he was displeased at the leading dancer in his Games; unless the games were renewed in great display, the city was in danger.

Apparently, no one realized the desecration by the manacled slaves until Titus Latinus had this dream. Where the elaboration of the story comes from is perhaps less important than the salient association of dancers with the earliest Games in Rome. Livy shapes the story so that the leading dancer is symbolically realized in the dream rather than the dancer being a reflection of the practices of the time in question. The dream elaboration suggests that the historian

20 Tarquinius Priscus apparently planned the Circus Maximus and set up the first stands with special seats for senators (Livy 1.35.7-10).

21 Other sources for this story include Macrobius (Sat. 1.11.3); Cicero (de Div. 1.55); and Min. Felix (7.3); Plut. Vit. Cor. 24-25.

attempted to rationalize what he considered to be violations of traditional mores (i.e. dancers at Rome).²² The historian appears to have enmeshed the renewal of the Great Games of 491 with a story of later date to account for the mention in the annals of a dancer.²³

Livy presents his account of the origins of comedy in Rome in the year following the death of Marcus Furius Camillus. As a result of his death, Roman morals continue their thematic gradual decline.²⁴ When a second calamity, the plague, hits the following year, Livy says that fear and superstition drove people to adopt foreign practices to placate divine wrath. Among these practices were scenic entertainments that were "novel for a war-like people whose only previous public spectacle had been the Circus".²⁵ If one assumes that Livy is accurate in his statement, then all the Ludi celebrated before 364 were exclusively athletic and military competitions. Livy's presentation, however, may

22 Another example of a tradition that Livy adapted to suit his own particular view of chronology is in the flute-players' strike. Livy attributes the episode to the late-fourth century (Livy 9.30.5) while Plutarch places it in the mid-fifth century (Plut. Q.R. 55).

23 Ogilvie favors Macrobius' later date of 279 for the story. Macrobius has the name T. Amnius, not T. Latinus; see Ogilvie, A Commentary on Livy, note on 2.36.

24 Livy thinks of the social institution of theatre as a seed that grows: inter aliarum parva principia rerum ludorum quoque prima origo ponenda visa est... (7.2.13).

25 nova res bellicoso populo nam Circi modo spectaculum fuerat... (Livy 7.3.3).

reveal more of his own didactics and his nostalgia (also manifest in Augustan reforms). The evidence of Etruscan wall-painting and the suggestion of a dancer at the Great Games seem to contradict his rendition of the earliest evidence of dancers in Rome as only a manifestation of a symbolic dream.²⁶

Livy details the development of comedy at Rome as a neatly packaged progression of events. Initially, song and dance were introduced, to which ribald jokes, crude Fescennine verse and corresponding body gestures were later added.²⁷ Subsequently, these Fescennine verses were refined into saturae, short skits, that were accompanied by music. The Oscans, meanwhile, had their own impromptu theatre of jokes, known as Atellan farce. If the Etruscans to the north and the Campanians to the south both practiced some form of comic release as part of their social and religious observances, then again one may question Livy's affixed date of 364. After all, even if one chooses to ignore the diversity of the local population, Rome was a rest stop through which the traders of Etruria and Campania had long travelled.²⁸ Valerius Maximus reproduces item for item the development of comedy found in

26 For early Etruscan wall paintings of comic figures see M. Bieber, The History of the Greek and Roman Theater (Princeton, 1961) p.147.

27 Livy 7.2.

28 For the difficulties of the sources for Early and Middle Republican Rome, see G. Alföldi The Social History of Rome, trans. David Braund and Frank Pollock (London & Sydney, 1985).

Livy 7.2,²⁹ but he also mentions an early entertainment that closely resembles drama, although it is difficult to date its origin. He states that the eldest sons would gather at a feast and compose songs to the sound of pipes (ad tibias) about the outstanding deeds of their elders. This practice, he maintains, is a domestic discipline, and it makes an interesting parallel to the practice of dancing at the ludi Livy mentions.³⁰ Horace's account of early Latin literature links the ribaldry of Fescennine verses with the festival after the planting of crops.³¹ One can easily find parallels in the practices of other cultures for some form of comic relief after solemn rituals as well as parallels of practices to relieve the stresses inherent in an agricultural society.³² Horace continues his version with the moralistic twist that in Rome the verses eventually became a licence for slander and had to be restrained.³³ With the evidence of so many diverse comic traditions so near to Rome, and the suggestions of diverse activities as part of the earliest Ludi in Rome, one

29 Val. Max. 2.4.4.

30 quas Athenas, quam scholam, quae alienigena studia huic domesticae disciplinae praetulerim (Val. Max. 2.10)?

31 Hor. Ep. 2.1.139-155.

32 Compare Burkert's account of the Greek Thesmophoria, part of which he links to the origin of the iambos or mocking verse. The third day of this festival was dedicated to feasting. See W. Burkert, Greek Religion (Harvard, 1985) pp. 242-6.

33 There was a law against defamation in the 12 tables (Occentatio). Perhaps Horace is referring to Naevius who in the late third century was apparently imprisoned for slanderous remarks in his comedies.

must cautiously interpret Livy's contention that the practice of theatre began in Rome only in the middle of the fourth century. If he followed the extant chronicles at his disposal then at best one may say that his history preserves the dating of officially sanctioned theatre at Rome. This dating would certainly in no way preclude either private practices or the "unofficial" touring of performers who play for money or even impromptu renditions by amateurs. It is notable as well that Valerius Maximus depicts the Caristia, the festival of family unity, as the driving out of conflict through humor.³⁴

Another problem in establishing the origins of comedy in Rome is the determination of exactly what constituted the Ludi, since, unfortunately, no detailed program of the events survives.³⁵ The evidence suggests that there were a diversity of motives for staging entertainment and the program appears to have been affected by both the reason for the show and what was available under the circumstances. We know, for example, that the profits of legal action fostered recreational games. When the plebeian aediles convicted and fined meat-sellers for extortion in 295, they used the money to adorn the temples and

34 [Caristia] cui praeter cognatos et adfines nemo interponebatur, ut, si qua inter necessarias personas querella esset orta, apud sacram mensam et inter hilaritatem animorum et fautoribus concordiae adhibitis tolleretur (Val. Max. 2.8).

35 Si l'on voulait établir une classification des ludi, il semble que l'on devrait distinguer deux formes fondamentales: les jeux du type de la danse et les jeux du type du concours ou de l'agôn (A. Piganiol, Recherches sur les jeux romains (Strasbourg, Paris, 1923) p. 102.

The Ludi Apollinares, for example, were initially vowed to secure victory in the Second Punic War. They were established five years later as an annual celebration in hope of relief from the plague.⁴¹ Unfortunately, the brevity of Livy's details on the contents of the Ludi corresponds with the brevity of his depictions of most other religious festivals. The Lupercalia are briefly detailed for their historic origins in Arcadia.⁴² The Saturnalia is briefly and incorrectly mentioned to have begun in 217.⁴³ The particulars of the festivals are not the traditional stuff of history and Livy treats all the Ludi in a similar fashion. For Livy, comedy only has particular importance because it affects general morals after it was introduced to Rome as a curative measure for the plague in 364. The origin of comedy in Rome is repeatedly overshadowed by the moral concerns of Roman historians. In the case of the "pipe players' strike" of 311, Livy states that the incident would have been omitted from his history except that it concerned religious duties.⁴⁴ Livy clearly displays such sentiments again in his depiction of the funeral games that Scipio Africanus held for his father and his uncle

41 Livy 25.12 (212 BCE) and 27.23 (208 BCE).

42 Livy 1.5.1-3.

43 Livy 22.1.20. See Ogilvie on 2.21: "What L, forgetful of the present passage, mistakenly regards as the institution of the Saturnalia, was a radical reorganization of it under Greek influence..."

44 Livy 9.30.5; Ovid Fast. 4.561; Plut. Q.R. 55.

in Spain in 206.⁴⁵ At these games, the gladiatorial spectacle is distinguished by the fact that those who took part in the contests were volunteers, not bought slaves. Livy only briefly notes that in addition to the gladiatorial spectacle, funeral ludi were held, at least as far as the limitations of military camp and provincial equipment would permit.⁴⁶ He does not elaborate on what the events were. As is the case with much of the social history of the ancient world, the extant historical records only present marginal outlines of the Ludi in Rome. Popular entertainments only appear sporadically as a measuring point by which the author gauges the moral gravity of the time.

One source that speaks for itself is the Middle Republican calendar. The Roman Republican calendar with its systematic grid of specific designations for social activities attests to many holidays throughout the year. Ludi at Rome were very frequent; they were something that either had just taken place or were about to happen. The historical evidence reveals a gradual increase in the frequency of the diversions from Mars and Labor at Rome. Traditionally this calendar dates from the time of Numa, but the earliest extant version is the Fasti Antiates Maiores, which, in a simplified

45 Livy 28.21.

46 Huic gladiatorum spectaculo ludi funebres additi pro copia provinciali et castrensi apparatu (Livy 28.21.10).

description, charts a series of working days (F= Fastus), holidays (N= neFastus), festival days (NFP= neFastus, feriae publicae) and days which were half and half (EN= endotercisus).⁴⁷ The festivals were of diverse kinds, from religious observances, both public and private, to public spectacles and theatre. Many festivals appear to have incorporated a variety of activities and diversions. The three designations of festival days were feriae stativae, fixed religious holidays; feriae conceptivae, annually or seasonally proclaimed festivals; and feriae imperativae, which were held in honour of a special event.⁴⁸ The designation feriae does not mean that ludi⁴⁹ were performed (it may refer only to religious observances), but ludi were part of the dies fasti.⁵⁰ By the beginning of the Second Century, there were four major established games that included scaenici: Ludi Megalenses (6 days in April); Ludi Apollinares (2 days in July); Ludi Romani (4 days in September); Ludi Plebeii (3 days in November);. Other holidays on which games were held or drama was staged include the Consualia (April and December)

47 An excellent overview is A.K. Michels The Calendar of the Roman Republic (Princeton, 1967). See also E.H. Warmington, Remains of Old Latin vol. IV (Cambridge, Mass., 1979) pp.450-465; and R.M. Ogilvie, The Romans and their Gods in the Age of Augustus (New York/ London, 1969) p.70 ff. For Livy's account of Numa's calendar see 1.19.6-7.

48 Michels, p.73.

49 Ludi is translated as 'games', 'shows', or 'festivals' in order to catch the many aspects of the Latin term.

50 Michels, p. 82.

and the Cerialia (April). All these festivals still do not take into account the various funerals and triumphs that are not noted in the extant histories and chronicles. In addition to the festivals that were introduced into Rome to appease plague-bearing wrathful gods, festivals were celebrated after military victories in Triumphs, as the fulfilment of votive offerings, at funerals, after plebeian court victories over the patricians as well as to maintain the tranquility of the familia.⁵¹ With all these potential occasions for dramatic performances, one might be tempted to suggest that for some, the foundations of the social fabric were the Ludi.

* * *

LITERATURE IN THE MIDDLE REPUBLIC

Roman comedy is traditionally dated with the first dramatic production by Livius Andronicus in 240.⁵² Although the details of his life and work are fragmentary, one can assume that he found a ready audience for his work. In the case of his translation of the Odyssey, he had adopted an already established Latin metre, the Saturnian. Moreover, as a result of his other literary work, many other writers took

51 G. Wissowa, Religion und Kultus der Römer (München, 1912) p. 449f.; A. Piganiol, 1923.

52 For a good overview on the extant source material on the early authors see E. Gruen, 'Poetry and Politics: The Beginnings of Latin Literature,' Chapter III in Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy (Leiden/ New York/ Kobenhavn/ Köln, 1990).

his lead and continued the creation of Latin literature. Gnaeus Naevius, Staius Caecilius, Maccius Plautus, Quintus Ennius, among others produced an enormous body of work within the fifty years following the first stage productions of Livius. The first Latin literature included comedies, tragedies, epics and annalistic histories. Even if the numbers cannot be verified with the precision one might prefer, the reported output is very impressive: Andronicus - 8 plays, 1 epic; Naevius - 28 comedies, 6 tragedies, 1 epic; Plautus - 130 comedies; Caecilius - 42 comedies; Ennius - 20 tragedies, an unknown number of comedies, other works in prose and poetry, as well as history.⁵³ In all, there are about 230 plays, the titles of which are known through the survival of fragments or through secondary sources. The quantity of the works implies that literature was widely accepted and had a substantial impact on Roman society of the late third century.

Livy and others chronicle many of the early political, religious and cultural contacts between Rome and foreign cultures and literature lurks behind some of the activities that are recorded.⁵⁴ The sacred Sibylline Books, for example,

53 Numbers taken from the corresponding articles in the O.L.D. (2nd ed. 1970/1987).

54 Livy essentially details that Roman culture was mostly assimilated culture - e.g. the story of Aeneas, the Etruscan origin of the curule chair, toga praetexta, the number of lictors (Livy 1.8.3), Juno brought from Veii to Rome (Livy 5.21.) - to mention only a few examples.

were written in Greek.⁵⁵ Moreover, a Roman embassy was reportedly sent to Athens as early as 452.⁵⁶ Another embassy was sent to Epidaurus in 291 to bring the god Aesculapius back to Rome.⁵⁷ Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries and Epidaurus in the fourth and third were both cultural centres of dramatic arts. Furthermore, the close connection between the god of healing, Aesculapius, and the theatre in Epidaurus may have contributed much to the acceptance of comedy in Rome, since the introduction of rites was often an attempt to appease plague-bearing gods.⁵⁸ At the time of the embassy to Epidaurus, the New Comedy was at its height,⁵⁹ and it is not long after this same embassy that Livius Andronicus, who apparently was a part of the war-spoils brought to Rome after the battle of Tarentum in 272, wrote his translation of the Odyssey. For another potential cultural contact from the south, one might note that as much as two centuries earlier, Epicharmus, a native of Sicily, was one of the most famous

55 Dion. Hal. 4.62.1-6.

56 Livy 3.31.8. For a list references to early Roman connections with Delphi see Gruen, Studies in Greek Culture and Roman Policy (1990) p. 9, n. 18.

57 Livy 10.47.7; also Ovid Met. 15.622 ff.

58 Aesculapius appears prominently in the Curculio.

59 Menander (342/1-293/89), Alexis (c.372-275), Philemon (368/60-267/63), Diphilus (b. 360-350), and Apollodorus of Carystus (c.285), are the most well known.

comic playwrights of ancient times.⁶⁰ This rendering of cultural and political contacts, moreover, does not take fully into account the impact of the many different cultural backgrounds of the slaves in Rome by the late-third century.

It is not surprising that the different cultural influences that surrounded Rome appear in Plautus, just as Plautus and Latin literature itself are a manifestation of the impact of various foreign cultures. The contacts between Greece, Etruria and Southern Italy extend back to the traditional date of the founding of Rome.⁶¹ The Roman assimilation of literature is further evidence of their celebrated adoptive and adaptive nature. The Latin language quickly becomes a language of literature. Perhaps it took two hundred years to refine and polish style and metre, but literature quickly became a part of daily life even for the ruling class who expressed the most opposition to social change through the medium of literature itself. Indeed, long before the time of Cicero literature became an essential aspect of the well-rounded citizen who might practice the writing of history, rhetoric or poetry. But literature reached out across all classes of society. Latin Comedy by itself may only reflect one aspect of the contemporary

60 Apparently Epicharmus' writings mentioned Pythagoras as a Roman citizen (Plut. Numa 8.9).

61 For example, Caere, a city associated with the Tarquins, had a treasury at Delphi.

literary panoply, but it reflects the most popular one. Perhaps the best example of this social reflection is found in the god who makes the most frequent appearance on the comic stage, Hercules. The popularity of this god in Plautus' comedies is evidence of internal Italian tradition and custom as much as it is evidence of the transference of culture from extant Greek New Comedy texts. Third century Latin inscriptions reveal that Hercules had some popularity in dedications.⁶² For a second example, Apollo, who appears in both Greek and Latin Comedy, is also common in third century Roman dedications.⁶³ The gods on the stage are the same gods who are familiar to and popular with the audience. The culture of the stage is a part of the living culture of the people who enjoy the stage.

No one would suggest that Plautus began from a blank slate when he created his comedies. There are not only the artistic nuances of translation to consider but also the contemporary cultural and political context that poets at Rome had to work within. Both writers and their creations are defined by their place and time. The well-known story of

62 A block of tufa found near Praeneste c. 250 is dedicated to Heracles (CIL 1.2.62). One finds Aesculapius as well: Aiscolapio Dono [M] / L. Albanus K. f. dedit (CIL 1,2 26); cf. CIL 1,2 27,28.

63 The first two denarii struck at Rome 269-64 BCE had Apollo and Hercules on the obverses. K. W. Harl, Coinage in the Roman Economy 300 B.C. to A.D. 700 (Baltimore and London, 1996). For examples of inscriptions of Apollo see C.I.L. 1, 2. 384 or 399.

Naevius, in particular, reveals the possible consequences of crossing the boundaries of what the Roman ruling class would accept. Tradition maintains that he attacked the consulship of Metellus. This led to his imprisonment and, perhaps because of the two plays he wrote in prison, to his exile at Utica.⁶⁴ We know from the pages of Catullus the kind of invective that Latin writers eventually used against political or amatory enemies.⁶⁵ The evidence of Naevius' ordeal suggests that he attempted what would not be accepted for at least another century (in the work of Lucilius).⁶⁶ From another angle, Quintus Ennius gives us an indication of what was being read and tolerated at Rome from a religious perspective. Through Lactantius we know that Ennius wrote a translation of Euhemerus' Sacra Historia.⁶⁷ This work rationalized the existence of the gods as deified mortals. To a more contemporary way of thinking such a treatise questions the conventional theological beliefs and appears more threatening than the occasional political barb. But apparently the Roman ruling class was less concerned with the challenge to the

64 Miles 211ff. a guarded poet thought to be Naevius; see Aul. Gell. N.A. 3.3.15, for Naevius in prison and in exile. Naevius was perhaps spared a worse fate on account of his patriotic epic on the First Punic War.

65 Of interest is Wiseman's proposal that later references to Catullus as a comic playwright are to the lyric poet: T. P. Wiseman, Catullus and his World: A Reappraisal (Cambridge, 1987) esp. 189ff..

66 esp. Book 11.

67 Quoted in Lactantius, Divinae Institutiones, also referred to in Cicero, de Nat. Deor. 1.42.119.

intellect than with the questioning of individuals in authority. Literature could be produced as long as it did not openly attack the Senatorial class. Religions could be questioned or practiced as long as they did not upset the social order.⁶⁸ At the same time that Livy portrays the popularity of the stage as widespread and extravagant, he does not specify what makes this form of entertainment so popular or why this aspect of society survived and thrived so well.

The prologue to Plautus' Poenulus begins with something of a commentary on the audience that attended Middle Republican theatre. Although it cannot be absolutely established that the prologues of Plautus' comedies were penned by the author himself, there is no overwhelming evidence to the contrary.⁶⁹ The Poenulus prologue offers a unique picture of a large crowd eagerly awaiting the entertainment of the comic stage.⁷⁰ The first thing that strikes one is the confident tone of the soliloquy and the close rapport that the actor has with his audience. The prologue actor steps on stage announcing to everyone that he

68 e.g. the acceptance of the Idean mother in 204 compared with the expulsion of Bacchus in 186.

69 See G. Maurach, who concludes that neither content nor stylistics negate Plautus as the author of the Poenulus prologue, Plauti Poenulus (Heidelberg, 1975), p.156-61.

70 For further examination of Plautus' prologues see N. Slater, 'Plautine Negotiations: the Poenulus prologue unpacked' Yale Classical Studies 29 (1992) 131-46.

is taking lines from Aristarchus' Achilles and he follows with four commands:

sileteque et tacete atque animum advortite,
audire iubet vos imperator histricus (Poe. 3-4).

and silence, be quiet, turn your attention here,
the performing Emperor orders you to listen.

The introduction is filled with established cultural markers. A certain degree of understanding of the common language of comic performance is assumed. The actor himself assumes the guise of an Imperator and orders the audience quiet. As an Imperator, he makes his will known to all those in attendance and in this declaration he names some of those who would be expected to be present at the performance. The herald (praeco, 11) is ordered to announce the play and the lictor (18) is asked not to make a noise with his rods. The reference to the lictor suggests that a Magistrate is in attendance, otherwise the rods would be absent. Slaves are then told to give way to freedmen unless they have paid to get in.⁷¹ Both nurses (nutrices, 28) and matrons (matronae, 32) are also present and the audience is referred to as both seated and standing. This portrayal of an audience suggests that members from all levels of Roman society are attending the comedy. One notes the presence of those of prestige and power as well as the humble servants. Moreover, scholars who claim that the evidence alluding to the audience reveals that the

⁷¹ servi ne opsidaeant, liberis ut sit locus, vel aes pro capite dent (Poe. 23-4).

crowd was difficult to control because of an inherent rowdiness or because of other simultaneous distracting spectacles are perhaps being anachronistic.⁷² They conveniently overlook passages in Plautus like the command of this prologue as well as the attentiveness necessary to enjoy the plays and appreciate their humor. One may also point to remarks such as Acanthio's reply to Charinus suggesting that the audience has fallen asleep.⁷³ As the prologue to the Poenulus demonstrates, Plautus did not write in a vacuum. His work was an interwoven cultural thread of the Roman social fabric. It lived on in the minds of the people who witness it. They took home what they have seen and heard, and adapted it to suit their own lives and their own world views.

The cultural content of Plautine comedy may seem confused to those who want to create Greek and Roman cultural absolutes, but much of the content extends beyond all precise cultural labels. Built into the presentation of Latin comedy are ideals of social welfare and family values, there are political structures, religious practices, and common cultural practices, there is reference to a myriad of places, both local and distant, and there are a number of references to various ethnic groups. One should perhaps even avoid

72 Terence's prologue for the Hecyra discusses possible distractions with the audience.

73 dormientis spectatores metuis ne ex somno excites (Mer. 160)?

evaluating Latin Comedy in the simplistic contrast between Old Comedy as a political statement and New Comedy as a domestic one. The Clouds, for example, from one point of view, is a moral play on the breakdown of the family, based on the relationship of father and son.⁷⁴ The Captivi, in contrast, details to some extent the politics of prisoner exchange during the aftermath of war. It may be more valid to consider the difference in the comic art forms in terms of theorizing and practicality. Latin Comedy does not debate the family as the foundation of society because the anticipated conclusion is a happy one in which identities are recovered or the socially stabilizing marriage bond is established. Human life, i.e. social life, arises out of havoc and misunderstanding to a renewal of feast and harmony. This type of ending is opposite to tragedy or even the Clouds, where all ends in destruction. Moreover, given the differences in the societies and the cultural contexts within which Greek comedies and Plautine comedies were staged, they both may in fact have served similar social functions for their respective audiences, though in different ways. They both present on stage political and social issues of contemporary concern and through the content of the texts we have a glimpse of what those concerns were.

74 Where can one find a closer study of family ties than in the Oedipus Rex? Granted, such elevation of social status is, for the most part, beyond the confines of New Comedy.

In the genre of Greek New Comedy Menander was thought by at least one enthusiastic critic to have held a mirror up to nature,⁷⁵ but in fact he bases his characters on the exaggeration of personality types. The ill temper of the old recluse Knemon is little more than generic stereotype. The only mirror that one may reflect on is found in the cultural references that Menander's characters make and the social and moral ideals that the characters express. Plautus, similarly, not only does not hold a mirror up to nature, he creates a scenario for his comedy whose basic pretense is built upon a synthetic circumstance. While the settings and most of the characters' names are consistently Greek, the language of the characters is not Greek but Latin and the idiosyncracies of the characters all play on Roman ideas of the normal, or on Roman stereotypes. The most conventional interpretative approach for this synthetic comedy is to remove it from the realities of the social context in which it was performed and study it as a repository of another language and another time. Such an approach assumes that the abyss between literary tradition and contemporary experience is too great to allow for any type of socio-historical examination of the text. But the contemporary world is unavoidably injected into all the works of Plautus. There may be less of the political world than of the cultural and geographical world, but the texts

75 Ὡς Μένανδρον καὶ βίε, πρότερος ἀρ' ὑμῶν πρότερον ἀπεμιμήσατο, Syrian, an Hermog. II, 23.

themselves are extant cultural evidence of the political world in which they were created. The texts provide us with the best evidence of a type of world view that was presented to an audience of the second century BCE. One may argue about how much of the content was drawn from common knowledge and how much of it was drawn from synthetic comic technique, but once the audience became familiar with the content, the expanse of its world view changed. The concern here is not with Plautus' Greek and Roman dichotomies, nor with his plays in performance nor with the capabilities of his audience. This is a study of the texts of the plays and how the cultural and ethnic world is described within them. Literature brought more to Rome than simply entertainment, it brought with it images and ideas. Plautus, because of his quality, quantity, and consistency, offers a unique opportunity to study one way in which the world was portrayed in Latin on the stages of Italy and Rome.

CHAPTER ONE

LANGUAGE

The comedies of Plautus offer the literary critic and the social historian a window into the otherwise shadowy era of the Middle Republic. Here we possess the words that invested the world with formal patterns of significance through an important popular entertainment. Moreover, this is the earliest Latin literature that survives in sufficient quantity to allow serious critical analysis and some degree of comprehensiveness. Although the impact of literature on Middle-Republican society, on individual Romans and on other Latin-speaking peoples, cannot be evaluated with the degree of precision that one might prefer, one can certainly infer from the surviving works, as well as from the multitude of fragments and the myriad references to lost works, that many forms of literature became very popular very quickly. This influx of culture, in turn, suggests changes in popular consciousness, or at the very least an expansion of cultural awareness. There is certainly some evidence of the contemporary reaction to the effects of literature on the social conscience of the populace. The elder Cato, who most frequently stands as a symbol of Roman social and political traditions, provides the best example of the negative reaction to Hellenization and all that Hellenization carried in its wake, although his stature to later generations assumes many

characteristics of myth. It is well known that even if he railed against the influences of foreign cultures, Cato himself was well versed in Greek.¹ Cato's own work, more significantly, reveals that he fully understood the power of the word. In his epic of Roman history, the Origines, he omitted the names of the generals, apparently to steer away from inflating the vulgar popularity of any particular family.² In contrast to Cato, Fabius Pictor had already written the first senatorial history that was patriotic and political in purpose.³ Evidence from Polybius suggests that Fabius weighted historical causation heavily upon the characters of the principal participants.⁴ In the practice of writing for the stage, the evidence suggests that Gnaeus Naevius was imprisoned for crossing the boundaries of

1 See A.E. Astin, 'Cato and the Greeks' in Cato the Censor (Oxford, 1978) 157-181. For a reappraisal of the evidence on Cato the Censor see Erich S. Gruen, Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome, (Cornell, 1992) Chapt 2.: 'Cato and Hellenism' pp. 52-83. Gruen sees Cato using Hellenism in a positive sense to define 'Roman values and qualities' p. 81.

2 Certe Cato, cum imperatorum nomina annalibus detraxerit... (Pliny N.H. 8.11). The motive behind such a practice is to promote gloria for the sake of society, not for the sake of the individual. See also, Cornelius Nepos 24.3.

3 Fabius Pictor wrote "to counter the propaganda of the Greek historiographers of Hannibal, Silenus, Chaereas, Sosylus, and the rest." Alföldi, Early Rome and the Latins (Michigan, 1964) p.172. "He gave...a political and juridical documentation of the growth of the Roman power, as being in accordance with the will of the gods, pointing from the hour of its birth toward its future greatness." Alföldi, p.173.

4 For example, Polybius states that according to Fabius it was Hannibal himself who was responsible for the second Punic war even against the wishes of the Carthaginians (Poly. 3.8-9).

contemporary political correctness.⁵ Taken together, these examples reveal the deliberate use of literature for specific social and political purposes and they also indicate some of the responses to this relatively new and developing means of communication. Such accounts suggest a society struggling to come to terms with a new cultural force of some consequence. Literature was recognized as a phenomenon able to affect the way people act as well as the way they feel and think. The most immediate consequence of literature was that the scope of the Latin language itself widened, both in new vocabulary and in extensions of word meanings.⁶

There is more to the influence of language on literature, however, than its use as a means to promote or defame prominent contemporaries, current ideals or morality. The language itself affects the way people themselves may think and act. The most obvious example of this is simply the effect of particular words themselves on the manner in which people express their own thoughts. The introduction of formal literary works into a previously non-literary society produces both an expansion in consciousness and new ways of expressing

5 nam os columnatum poetae esse indauidi barbaro, cui bini custodes semper totis horis occubant (Mi. 211-212). cf. Cic. Brut. 60; and, Duckworth p.42.

6 Not only is the Latin language changing, but the linguistic makeup of Rome itself is changing. On the amount of Greek in Rome after the influx of slaves from Tarentum see, B. Gentili, Theatrical Performance in the Ancient World (Amsterdam, 1979) p. 32.

that consciousness. New images create new ideas, new associations. The manner in which the writer turns his phrase can and will influence the manner in which his audience compose their phrases.⁷ At the very least, the imagery and descriptions of literature create for an audience a formalized standard by which their own personal experiences can be measured. The literature may be realistic, fantastic, satiric or comic, but this does not alter the fact that it formulates images and makes certain types of impressions that can stand apart from the work itself. Ideas become fused with the words that express them and the words create manners of expression and these mannerisms, in turn, become traditions of the language which shape the way in which people think. There is some evidence of how the ancient grammarians considered the influence of literature in a passage from Varro. He mandates caution when exposing the ares populi to pronunciation:⁸

Quas novas verbi declinationes ratione introductas
respuet forum, his boni poetae, maxime scaenici,
 consuetudine
subigere aures populi debent, quod poetae multum
possunt in hoc: propter eos quaedam verba in

7 Although the Latin language was still considered poor by the first century estimation of Lucretius: Nunc et Anaxagorae scrutemur homoeomerian\ quam Grai memorant nec nostra dicere lingua\ concedit nobis patrii sermonis egestas (Lucr. De Re. Nat. 1.830-32), as this example itself shows, it was in fact enhanced by many neologisms and Greek words from the time of the Hellenistic influence onward.

8 cf. Horace on the fluctuations of popular language:
Multa renascentur, quae iam cecidere, cadentque
quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
quem penes arbitrium est et ius et norma loquendi
(Ep. 2.3 70-2).

declinatione melius quaedam deterius dicuntur
 (Varro L.L. 9.11.17).

The good poets, especially the dramatists, must conquer the ears of the populace through custom, by the new words declined by reason but spurned once introduced in the forum. The poets are very powerful in this: because of them, certain words are spoken with a better pronunciation, others worse.

As a technical term for ancient grammarians, declinatio extends beyond just the declension of a word.⁹ Although Varro was concerned foremost with the pronunciation of the Latin language, his observation holds for other aspects of language as well.

Dramatic performances not only subjected the Latin populace to variations in declensions, inflections and pronunciations, they brought with them new words, formal constructs and particular descriptions that consciously differed from the informal discourse of everyday speech. The playwrights may try to make an impression by innovation, but through familiarization and repeated exposure, the new becomes the norm, images and ideas become codified, even if many of the images that were flooding into the Latin language were not native to the people or their language. For example, Plautus sprinkled his comedies with his own created words, compound nouns, humorous names and verbalizations. Many of these words

⁹ Dans l'anc. gramm. on se servait de ce mot non seulement pour exprimer la déclinaison des noms subst., mais en général pour toute sorte de flexion d'un mot quelconque; ainsi on comprenait par ce mot la conjugaison, la comparaison et la dérivation aussi bien que la déclinaison proprement dite (G.L., p.735).

enter into the tradition of literary usage, as can be determined by the number of later authors who use the vocabulary first found in Plautus. Other terms, however, are particular to Plautus alone, at least as far as extant Latin works reveal. Common usage, if literature can be used as a parallel scale, assimilated some of the language that Plautus introduced, but not all of it.¹⁰ Leo, who devotes his third chapter to the significance of language in Plautus,¹¹ maintains that Plautus brought a previously unknown ease and richness to Latin:

In einer Bühnensprache, die sich an eine vorhandene reich ausgebildete anlehnt, müssen neben dem Umgangston des eigenen Lebens auch fremde Wendungen heimisch werden oder versuchen es zu werden.¹²

Even though Leo's basic interest remains the study of Plautus as a translator, he still concedes that there is an enormous impact on popular speech from the language of the stage.

This chapter creates a foundation for the later chapters by examining the impact of the Latin language on the plays.

10 The Doctoral Thesis by E. Bostroem notes, for example, the Greek words that occur only in Plautus. E. Bostroem, De Vocabulis Graecis apud Plautum, Doct. Thes. (New York, 1902). The O.L.D. notes many other words that are not found in later usage.

11 F. Leo, Plautinische Forschungen (Darmstadt, 1966).

12 "In the case of a stage language which is modelled upon an extant richly developed stage language, even foreign idioms must become native, or try to be, alongside the colloquial speech of one's own life." Leo, p. 104.

Since the Latin-speaking audience bring along their own experience of the Latin language, the meanings of the words that Plautus, both consciously and unconsciously, used to create his plays have their meaning in the contemporary usage of the language. While this contemporary usage may be maintained, modified, and even completely changed for comic effect, certain aspects of the language override the comic intentions of the playwright. At the very least, the terms used begin from a particular vantage point of meaning. Furthermore, although comedy has its own conventions in regard to the way in which persons, places and things are depicted and the manner in which characters express themselves, one will only reach some general understanding of the standards and scope of these conventions by studying the language that creates them. This study of the language of Plautus is not an attempt to enumerate possible translations from Greek words or sources. Nor is this study a process of dissecting the Greek from the Latin. It begins from the premise that the cultural and ethnic constructs of Plautus all take their relative meanings from the pool of the Latin language that was the spoken language of the audience. The Greek and Punic content are also understood from a Latin-speaking perspective. A careful consideration of the use of language will reveal to what extent Latin itself controls the meaning of the plays. This chapter is divided into three parts: the first part looks at the use of the Greek and Punic words and passages in

the texts. Because the language of Plautus' main sources is Greek, an obvious place to begin evaluating his use of language is with the employment of the Greek language itself. The second part examines Plautus' innovative techniques of naming his plays and his characters. The third part considers the inherent cultural overtones of the Latin language itself and how it creates an undercurrent of moral emphasis and cultural focus for the comedies.

* * *

THE GREEK LANGUAGE

The extant work of Plautus often provides the evidence for those who argue for an early and substantial influence of Greek words on common Latin vocabulary. Indeed, Gentili goes even further and argues that the 'objection that the public of the city of Rome was not able to follow performances in Greek is not valid.'¹³ But such evaluations fail to consider how little Greek there is in the extant plays of Plautus.¹⁴ Plautus certainly presents most of his characters with Greek names,

13 B. Gentili, Theatrical Performances in the Ancient World, (Amsterdam/Uithoorn, 1979) p.32. For a stylistic evaluation of Greek in the comedies see J.N. Hough, 'The Use of Greek Words by Plautus' AJPh (1934) 346-64.

14 Maltby notes that there are 446 Greek words in Plautus (p.112). Robert Maltby, 'The distribution of Greek loan-words in Terence' CQ 35 (1985) 110-123.

often for the characterizing wordplay, and he also maintains the Greek words for the names of some exotic things associated with foreign peoples, places or activities, but the Greek language by no means dominates the plays. Greek is most conspicuous in the vocabulary that refers to new things and concepts which have only recently become familiar to the Latin-speaking audience. For all the supposed "Greekness" of the stage world, the language of the plays is definitely Latin and, as this chapter will reveal, the Latin carries with it all the inherent ethical and moral values of the language. Apart from character names, the playwright uses very little Greek in his plays. Considering the main sources, the assumed citizenship of the characters, the topics, and especially considering the dramatic setting, Plautus maintains surprisingly little Greek vocabulary. If one compares the percentage of Greek in later authors as given by J. Marouzeau, then the relative paucity in Plautus is even more striking:

Il y a une proportion de 10% de mots Grecs dans Catulle, un peu plus chez Tibulle et Ovide, 11 dans les Satires et les Épîtres d'Horace, 12 chez Properce, 14 dans les Bucoliques de Virgile, 15 chez Juvénal, près de 20% chez Perse...¹⁵

According to the figures more recently published by Maltby, Plautus contains less than 10% Greek loan-words, and the total Greek vocabulary is a fraction of that, because many of the

15 J. Marouzeau Traité de Stylistique Latine (Paris, 1946) p.176.

words are repeated.¹⁶ If one allows the character names to be left aside, then it must be granted that Plautus has created Latin plays, not Greek plays in Latin. The distinction may be a fine one, but coming to terms with the the force of the Latin language of the plays is important for all subsequent evaluation.

In a study of the Greek words in Plautus, E. Bostroem makes no other analysis beyond the four categories into which he neatly catalogues the material.¹⁷ Bostroem simply lists four reasons why the Plautine texts include Greek: first, deficiency of Latin language; second, the Greek nature of the plays; third, metre; and fourth, to create a joke.¹⁸ His thesis is essentially a catalogue of how the Greek in Plautus breaks down into these four categories. The first three of these categories, however, do not consistently carry the weight of Bostroem's interpretation, or at the very least demand further exegesis, and the fourth is a technique not unique to Plautus' use of Greek, but is paralleled in Plautus' use of Latin and Punic as well.¹⁹ More problems become apparent with Bostroem's

16 Maltby, p. 112-113.

17 E. Bostroem, De Vocabulis Graecis apud Plautum, Doct. Thes. (New York, 1902).

18 Utitur Plautus Graecis vocabulis propter has causas: primum propter linguae egestatem, deinde propter Graecam fabularum naturam, tum propter versum, denique ioci causa (Bostroem, p. 3).

19 For a similar critique on Bostroem's interpretations see: J.N. Hough, 'The use of Greek words by Plautus' AJPh (1934) 346-64. Hough interprets

thesis as one considers each of his categories. To begin with, he does not note that, of the 225 Greek words that he lists, 50% occur only once or only in one extant play. More recent attempts to analyze the Greek content of Plautus focus on the use of Greek as a method of characterization.²⁰ But the major problem with this approach is that one must take into account that the characters who use the most Greek words may be doing so because of the topics of their dialogue as much as because of characterization through language. Slaves, old men and women simply do not discuss the same kinds of things on the comic stage. So it may be the subject matter that is the characterizing influence as much as the Greek language. For example, the senex may discuss the forum, the meretrix the rigors of fleecing men, the adulescens the pain of unobtainable love. A second problem in this 'use of the Greek language for characterization' approach is including such words as nummus in the Greek vocabulary when nummus is clearly a Latin or Latinized term naturalized well before the time of Plautus.²¹ Moreover, the inherent implications of the Greek language must be considered in the Latin social context of the

the amount of Greek in a play as an indication of the playwright's technical skill -- he concludes that the early plays have less Greek and that the later plays have more Greek that is also more skillfully used.

20 M. Gilleland tallies 446 different Greek words that occur 1,861 times (omitting prologues and common oaths). M.E. Gilleland, Linguistic Differentiation of Character Type and Sex in the Comedies of Plautus and Terence (Ph.D. Diss. Virginia, 1979 (cf. R. Maltby, p. 112).

21 Nummus 61 times, Gilleland p. 106.

plays, not treated as some historical specimen that is divorced from its environment. It is difficult at best to determine exactly which Greek words were already assumed by the Latin language. Since all the language of a culture defines that culture, even the introduction of the terms on stage for new experiences and things will have some collateral social impact.²² The stage language itself becomes part of the Latin language and part of Roman culture.

The majority of the Greek words in Plautus are nouns.²³ This in itself may suggest a certain egestas in the Latin language, but perhaps more importantly it indicates an expansion in the Latin vocabulary for material things and concepts only recently introduced to the central Italian shores. These include such things as various exotic plants, merchandise and abstract concepts. Indeed, it is self-explanatory that at least 10% of the Greek words in Plautus are internally referential to literature or important aspects of comedy itself.²⁴ They refer to the stage or some technical aspect of the stage: poeta (As. 748), comoedia (Cap. 1033),

22 "[everything in Plautus] becomes Roman as soon as it is written down in Latin and subsequently performed before a Roman audience." Hanson 'Plautus as a source book for Roman religion', TAPA 90 (1959) p. 50.

23 Of the 547 Graecisms that Bostroem records in Plautus, there are only 13 different verbs (this reckoning omits the interjections euge and apage).

24 The following references are cited as examples, not as comprehensive lists.

comicus (Per. 465), tragoeda (Cu. 591), choragus (Per. 159), tympanum (Poe. 1317). Notable as well are the terms for the character types themselves who are synonymous with comedy: parasitus (St. 574), sycophanta (Men. 283), cinaedus (Au. 422), moechus (Poe. 862). The use of this Greek language is a reflection of the tradition of comedy as much as it may be an unconscious cultural assimilation or a conscious method of characterization on the part of the playwright.

Plautus also uses a number of Greek nouns that signify professions or vocations, such as artisans, military and political positions. While the playwright adopts the Greek terms for various professions, this adoption again reflects the established literary usage that comes with traditions of literature itself. Thus one finds the terms for the literary professions: tragicus (Per. 465), poeta (As. 748), choragus (Per. 159), comicus (Per. 465), paedagogus (Ps. 447), and, philosophus (Ru. 986). Furthermore, since bankers and ship owners are an essential ingredient to the plots that are presented on the comic stage, one also finds them wearing Greek tags: trapezita (Cu. 420), danista (Mo. 623), naucclerus (Mi. 1109-10), and gubernator (Ru. 1014). Only a few of the military figures who appear on the Roman stage, however, retain a Greek designation: strategus (St. 702)²⁵ and stratioticus (Ps. 918). One also notes that some, but very

25 Sagarinus declares Stichus the strategus of their feast (St. 702).

few, political offices and social statuses remain Greek: agoranomos (Cu. 285), comarchus (Cu. 286), demarchus (Cu. 286), ephebus (Mer. 61), and tyrannus (Cu. 285). As noted above, the preponderance in these plays is toward the use of Latinized terms and designations. The Latin titles for vocations that one finds are far more numerous than the Greek titles: caupo (Au. 509), ianitor (As. 390), mercator (As. 396), meretrix (Men. 1140), messor (Cap. 661), pastor (Ba. 1122), tonsor (Au. 312), tutor (Au. 430), portitor (Tri. 1107), magister (Ba. 427), and the praeco (Mer. 663). Moreover, the military figures who take the stage also prefer to use the Latin terms: miles (Mi. 246), dux (Ps. 447), imperator (Am. 1121), and dictator (Ps. 416). In the political spectrum one finds a Latin propensity as well: orator (Mo. 1126), praetor (Poe. 790), pontifex (Ru. 1377), aedilis (Poe. 1012), praefectus (Mo. 941), magistratus (Tru. 761), civis (Poe. 621), patronus (Per. 838), cliens (Men. 577), tres viri (Am. 155), and contio (Men. 448). The prevalence of the familiar Latin terminology is overwhelming.

If one examines Plautus' terms for specific places one finds a similar Latin preponderance. General references to a city or a state itself are by urbs (Am. 97), oppidum (Am. 191) or civitas (Av. 481). Plautus does not incorporate, for example, the noun polis and although the Greek noun platea (Tri. 1006) does appear with some frequency in the texts to

describe part of the urban stage, the Greek certainly does not displace the far more common use of via (Men. 686). Specific places that are mentioned by their Greek name include the gymnasium (Au. 410), the palaestra (Am. 1012), the barathrum (Ba. 149), the basilica (Cu. 472), the theatrum (Ps. 1081), the hippodromus (Ci. 549), and the gynaecium (Mo. 755, 759, 908). Specific Greek terms used to describe places of commerce and work are the myropolium (Am. 1011), thermipolium (Ps. 742), pantopolium (Ps. 742), poterium (St. 694), and the lautumiae or latomiva (Cap. 723; Poe. 827). Some of the cited Greek terms, indeed, already reveal a Latinization. Moreover, for all of the Greek designations, for both the general names of places within the city and the specific places of commerce there are far more Latin words that the characters employ. The most obvious example of this is the forum (Cu. 403), which is one of the most frequent place references: it completely displaces agora. One finds many other locations that are designated by their Latin word as well: portae (Ps. 659), comitium (Cu. 403), pistrinum (Cap. 808), carcer (Am. 155), taberna (Ps. 658), domus (Am. 362), tectum (Ru. 574), the Capitolium (Tri. 84), angiporta (Ps. 961), hortus (Mi. 378), latrina (Cu. 580), campus (Tri. 834), and the circus (Mi. 991). The evidence again is overwhelming that Plautus preferred Latin for the nouns that describe the people and the places of the city. These two important aspects of the texts are considered in more detail in the second and third

chapters.

Evaluating the Greek vocabulary as evidence for egestas in the Latin language has a few problems as well. Some of the words that Plautus used are found in no other extant authors after him. This would not suggest that the words were indispensable to the language. The adverb athletice, for example, although obviously Greek in flavour, nevertheless is not absolutely irreplaceable in Latin, as the frequency of strenue attests. The adverb strenue occurs more than ten times throughout the plays (e.g. Ba. 445; Mi. 458) and athletice occurs only twice (Ba. 248; Ep. 20).²⁶ The playwright's motive for his choice of word may be less deficiency of the Latin language than convenience, metrics, comic emphasis or desire for variation. One finds reference to the same medical condition in the Greek noun glaucuma (Mi. 148) and the Latinized adjective lippa (Mi. 1108) in the same play.²⁷ One can just as easily argue either that the playwright retains a particular Greek word in order to play with the Greek comic tradition or that the Greek word in question was in popular use at the time of the play's production. As far as Boestrom's argument of Plautus' use of Greek for the

26 For other examples of Latin equivalent to Greek words in the text, Hough cites eleutheria/libertas and architecton/faber, p.347.

27 Lippus is related to λιπαρός.

necessities of metre is concerned,²⁸ anyone familiar with the propensities of a metre such as the Iambic Senarius need only consider its flexibility and Plautus' deftness with language, to dismiss such a contention. The Greek adjective morus, for example, is easily replaced by stultus, but both appear. Although stultus is certainly the preferred word, morus can be found in six plays.²⁹ Finally, one important aspect to Plautus' use of Greek is that he sometimes doubles the Greek word with the equivalent Latin term to stress the point and to make his meaning clear: more hoc fit atque stulte, mea sententia (St. 641).³⁰ Gelasimus gives another example of a bilingual phrase when he ponders with himself on life in general: viden, benignitates hominum ut periere et prothymiae (St. 633)? This kind of technique furthers the argument that Plautus tends towards clarity, both in plot outline and in vocabulary. When he uses Greek, he does not put the meaning of his statements in jeopardy.

Interpreting Plautus' use of Greek words as a device to maintain a flavor of foreignness poses a number of problems as well. The foremost of these is the inconsistency of the use of Greek in the texts. The texts of Plautus transliterate

28 utitur hoc vocabulo versus complendi causa (Boestrom p.26).

29 Not all manuscripts agree on each occurrence.

30 Consider Plautus' play with the sound of Greek and Latin words: amor...mores hominum moros et morosos efficit (Tri. 669).

most of the Greek words, but not all Greek words are transliterated.³¹ In performance, of course, it would make no difference which script a word was written in as long as the audience understood what was said. The presence of Greek script in the texts, however, presumably signals a stage direction for some change in the actor's presentation, perhaps an added accent or gesticulation. The emphasis that is marked by the choice of script signifies a conceptual difference between the use of Latinized forms of Greek and speaking in Greek itself. Nine plays contain Greek script, and one play has a transcription of the Punic language or a parody of the Punic language. The words that are in Greek script in the texts range from simple exclamations to complete phrases, as the comprehensive list that follows reveals.

Two of the play titles appear in their equivalent Greek form: the Sortientes (Casina) opens with a declaration of the Greek title Κληρούμενοι in the prologue,³² and the Miles has the Greek title Ἀλαζών (86) in its second-act prologue. The subtle shifts in the meanings of the title will be attended to in the next section of this chapter. In the dialogue proper, the simplest influence of Greek is most notable in the interjections of a single word for emphasis. These include

31 In the passages that can be checked, the Ambrosian manuscript contains the Greek. G. Studemund, T. Macci Plauti Fabularum Reliquiae Ambrosianae (Hildesheim/New York, 1972).

32 The Onages, however, in the Asinaria is transcribed (As. 10).

such commands as those of Megaronides who shouts out παῦσαι (Tri. 187) and Cyamus who quotes Diniarchus using ἔξω to command the moving of his goods (Tru. 558).³³ When Phaniscus replies to Theopropides she uses the negative interjection μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω (Mo. 973). In a slightly more complex linguistic arrangement, Olympio and Lysidamus intersperse their dialogue with a smattering of Greek phrases: πράγματά μοι παρέχεις (Ca. 729), μέγα κακόν (Ca. 729a) and the invocation ὦ Ζεῦ (Ca. 730). When Saturio asks Toxilus where they will get the costume to dress up the girl so she looks like a Persian, he asks the question with the linguistic mix πόθεν ornamenta? (Per. 159). Stasimus also mixes the languages when he describes the loss of money in a financially poor exchange of a house for minae quadraginta as departing money: argentum οἴχεται (Tri. 419). Finally, for an example of what appears to be a common saying, Stichus recites a Greek drinking rhyme, exhorting banqueters to drink in odd numbers: Cantio graecast: ἦ πέντ' ἦ τρία πῖν' ἦ μὴ τέτταρα (St. 707).³⁴

The Pseudolus contains the most Greek script of all the comedies. The full range of linguistic devices noted above can be found in this one play. Ballio interjects a bit of

33 Greek exclamations such as euge and apage are frequent and transliterated.

34 In this case the Greek is not in the Ambrosian manuscript although the passage survives. The servus Milphio expresses the Greek saying: αἱ δὲ κολλῦραι λύραι (Poe. 137), but the text is corrupt and may be simply gibberish, see Maurach, Plauti Poenulus (Heidelberg, 1975) note.

Greek when he threatens Xytilis with punishment by noting that her admirers have the supremacy over olive oil at home: amatores olivi δύναμιν domi habent maxumam (Ps. 211). Pseudolus uses the epic invocation ὦ Ζεῦ (Ps. 443), when he laments the quality of the men of his times. Pseudolus also plays with Greek phrasing when he answers Simo who is questioning him:

S. quid ais? ecquam scis filium tibicinam
meum amare? Ps. ναὶ γάρ. S. Liberare quam velit?
Ps. Καὶ τοῦτο ναὶ γάρ (Ps. 483-4).³⁵

S. What are you saying? Do you know that my son is
in love with a flute-player? Ps. Certainly.
S. Whom he wants to free? Ps. That too, certainly.

Later in the play, Pseudolus stresses the characterizing aspect of Harpax's name in Greek: ni quid ἄρπαξ feceris (Ps. 654). Plautus uses his bilingual Greek and Latin technique for clarity when Calidorus emphasizes his description of Pseudolus as excessively masterful and clever: nimum est mortalis graphicus, εὐπετής mihist (Ps. 700). Finally, Pseudolus explains one of his exclamations by noting in Greek how well he is working his wiles: EUGAE! iam χάρις τούτῳ ποιῶ (Ps. 712).

Plautus also uses Greek words that sound like place names in a verbal technique that crosses linguistic borders. In the Captivi, Ergasilus tells Hegio that he has seen his son and

35 Further questioning summons the reply again: Καὶ τοῦτο ναὶ (Ps. 488).

the captive Elean together. Ergasilus and Hegio have the following dialogue that is a punning play on Greek words and Latin place names:

He. et captivom illum Alidensem? Er. μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω.
 He. et servolum
 meum Stalagmum, meum qui gnatum surrupuit?
 Er. ναὶ τὰν Κόραν.
 He. iam diu? Er. ναὶ τὰν Πραινέστην. He. venit?
 Er. ναὶ τὰν Σιγνέαν.
 He. certon? Er. ναὶ τὰν Φρουσινῶνα. He. vide sis.
 Er. ναὶ τὸν Ἀλάτριον.
 He. quid tu per barbaricas urbes iuras?
 Er. quia enim item asperae
 sunt ut tuom victum autumabas esse (Cap. 877-885).
 He. and that captive Elean? Er. No by Apollo!
 He. And my little slaye
 Stalagmus, who stole my son? Er. Yes by Cora.³⁶
 He. Just now? Er. Yes, by Praeneste He. He comes?
 Er. yes, by Signia!
 He. Sure? Er. Yes, by Frusinona! He. You saw?
 Er. yes, by Alatrium!
 He. Why do you swear by barbarian cities? Er. Because,
 they are as harsh
 as you deem your food.

It would be difficult to argue that the author did not fully intend that the audience would understand the double-entendre of the two languages in play here. The comedy lies in the recognition that the Greek language is being used to pun on the Latin place names. Lindsay suggests that Ergasilus swears by Kora, the name for Proserpine and then is led by the sound association of the one town of Latium to swear by the other Latin towns as well.³⁷ The Greek script serves as a stage

36 Cora, Praeneste, Signia, Frusino and Aletrium are all ancient towns in Latium.

37 Lindsay, Captivi (1887) n. 881.

direction indicating an especially heavy accent, excessive gesticulation and heavy emphasis on the pronunciation. The humor arises from the outrageousness of the Greek pronunciation and accent, that would best work if the emphasis was progressive. Plautus' use of word play is especially important for the Greek names of his characters. This will be considered in more detail in the next section of this chapter. Characterization by name is most evident in names such as Harpax which, as noted above, appears in adjectival form in Greek script. In another example, Philocomasium, disguised as her own sister, declares that her name is Dicea. Sceledrus, however, still incredulous that she is who she claims to be because of the similarity of the two women, replies to her in a mixture of Greek and Latin that has overtones of legal terminology: ἀδικος es tu, non δικάια, et meo ero facis iniuriam (Mi. 438). In this case, it is necessary to understand the meaning of Dicea and the Greek words for the humor to make sense of how Sceledrus expresses his feeling that he is being wronged.

All of the Greek script in all the plays depends first and foremost upon the understanding of its presence in the context of the passage. Some of the puns play on sense, some on sound. In some cases the humor of the Greek would be highlighted by the exaggeration of the accent that accompanied their expression. The appearance of Greek in popular stage

entertainment suggests to what extent Greek had become part of the Italian popular scene by the early second century. But it also emphasizes just how much contrast remains between the specialized uses of the Greek language and Greek terms in the comedies and the more normal use of Latin. Even in the Pseudolus, the Greek in Greek script is not excessive or difficult. It does, however, add a stylistic dimension to the play that was not a part of its predecessor.³⁸ Although the Greek playwrights could use various Greek dialects for characterization and elaborations, they did not use a different language except to portray barbarian gibberish. This kind of Greek and Latin language interplay is one of the defining aspects of Plautus' work. The bilingualism of many of the characters may reveal a corresponding biligualism in the audience, since much of the humor is dependent upon the understanding of Greek words and phrases. But bilingualism was not necessary for understanding, since by a careful delivery the meaning of the Greek in most instances could have been easily made clear.

38 Syntactical Graecisms, as noted by Leo, the crossing of idioms from one language to another, become a part of Latin new comedy. For example, there is the use of simple phrases such as quid verbis opust? for τὶ δεῖ λέγειν; (p.104). Many commonplace sayings as well filter into the Latin language by way of the comic stage. Leo notes as well the translation of καίρος with both tempus and occasio (p.105). Such examples lead one to recognize that not only was the translation of Greek literature introducing new ideas and images into Latin, it was creating extended meanings for the words that were in common use at the time.

Greek is not the only foreign language to make its appearance on the Plautine stage. The Punic passage in the Poenulus offers an interesting variation on Plautus' play with languages. Hanno enters the stage delivering a speech that apparently makes sense, but as his subsequent translation reveals, no one understands (Poe. 930-949).³⁹ The text, as it survives, poses many problems but its function in the play is clear enough.⁴⁰ Punic, or Punic sounds, have been transliterated into Latin script to compose a sort of humorous babble that is presented as a play upon the topos of how a traveller greets a new city upon arrival. For gibberish to work as humor, the comprehension of the individual words is to some extent secondary, perhaps even undesirable. As Gratwick notes, there are similarities in the entrance speeches of many characters, and they include the establishment of the character's identity as well as the invocation of the gods.⁴¹ Such a standardized self-introduction, moreover, is particularly credible, since Hanno subsequently shifts to

39 The date of composition of the Punic passage and the authorship of the subsequent Latin translation are still unresolved questions. For a compilation of proposals see G. Maurach, Plauti Poenulus (Heidelberg, 1975) pp. 315f..

40 The relevance of this passage to this thesis is in the presence of another foreign element in the text and in its humorous intentions, not in its semantic meaning in translation. For details of semantic and textual scholarship see: A.S. Gratwick, 'Hanno's Punic speech in the Poenulus of Plautus' Hermes 99.1, 1971, 25-45. For a Hebraic interpretation of the individual words see: R.J.H. Gottheil Vocabula Punica in G. Lodge, Lexicon Plautinum vol.1 (Hildesheim, 1962) pp. 915-7.

41 Gratwick, p.32

Latin, reiterating what he has just said in Punic. His Latin follows the recognizable pattern of stage-entrance introduction. The audience, therefore, with the help of an actor's gestures, could easily have understood the gist of the Punic speech even if it made no linguistic sense. For example, as Hanno invokes the gods of the city into which he arrives, he need only point to some sort of representation of the gods in a reverent manner to be understood.

The scene that immediately follows Hanno's entrance expands the interplay of the two languages. Just as Plautus had used Greek as a vehicle for homophonic puns, Milphio, who declares that he understands Carthaginian, pretends to translate what Hanno says while the latter is trying to communicate with Agorastocles. Milphio plays on the sound of Hanno's words and approximates some Latin sound equivalent. Thus Milphio 'translates' the supposedly Punic meharbocca (Poe. 1002) as the Latin misera bucca (Poe. 1003). For this interplay to be humorous the audience must only recognize that Milphio is misinterpreting the Punic. We find a parallel for this linguistic technique in another passage when Truculentus plays on the Praenestine pronunciation of 'conea' for ciconia (Tru. 690-1).⁴² As with some of the Greek passages, the play on the languages is in the approximation of the sound to

42 Citation from C.C. Coulter 'The speech of foreigners in Greek and Latin comedy' Ph.Q. 13.4 (1934) p. 134.

Latin words.

The foreign words and phrases presented on an early second century Roman stage must be considered within the Latin cultural context. Plautus presents a play that is easily accessible to a Latin-speaking audience. The Greek vocabulary in the dialogue is relatively infrequent. When Greek words are used, it is most often either out of necessity (for something to which no Latin equivalent existed), in phrases inter-referential to the comic genre or for the humorous meaning or sound. One common technique that Plautus utilizes is to use a foreign language either for babble or for a homophonic pun, a word that plays on an equivalent sounding Latin word. The use of Greek words for their etymology is part of his technique for the naming of his characters and the titles of his plays, which will be considered next.

* * *

GREEK NOMENCLATURE

Of the many aspects of the twenty comedies that reveal how Plautus reworked his material, the most prominent is the nomenclature.⁴³ Plautus achieves two objectives by creating

43 On the multiple sources that are other than Greek New Comedy, see Duckworth "Early Italian Popular Comedy" in The Nature of Roman Comedy (Princeton, 1971). Also note Gratwick on the legal aspects of the

his own names for his characters and his works. The new character names essentially create a new foundation from which the characters emerge and the new titles emphasize different aspects of the plays. For the plays that can be verified as adaptations of specific Greek Comedies, almost all of the characters are given names that are different from that Greek original. Unfortunately, not all of the Latin titles survive within the texts of the plays. Most of the titles come to us as designations at the head of later manuscripts or as acrostics written at a much later date.⁴⁴ Whether or not these acrostic titles are Plautus' cannot be determined, but six of the plays contain their titles within the text proper and these give us some indication of what Plautus was doing. One finds, for example, in the prologue of the Asinaria:

Huic nomen Graece Onagost Fabulae;
Demophilus scripsit, Maccus vortit barbare,
Asinariam volt esse, si per vos licet (As. 10-12).

The name of this Greek tale is The Assdriver;
Demophilus wrote it, Maccus changed it barbarously,
he wills it to be the Assinine Affair, if you please.

The "Assdriver", we are told, becomes the "Assinine Affair". The change in the title seems to demonstrate, in a comic manner, the claim of a barbarous reworking of the material in the play. Most frequently, the adverb barbare is understood to be Plautus' referral to his translation of the Greek into

Poenulus (p.30 n.1).

⁴⁴ Lindsay Captivi 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1920/66) suggests 'in the time of the Empire' p.69.

the "barbarous" language of Latin. But one may argue that the term extends its reach farther than that. The 'barbarification' implies as well a self-inflicted comic shot at the playwright's own reworking of the play.⁴⁵ If one extends the intention of such a comment slightly further, then the barbarousness is as much the play itself as it is the reworking of the title and the language in which the play has been rendered. Plautus perhaps mocks both his own creation and at the same time the artifice of comedy. In a second example where the same vortit barbare phrase is used, the change of title of the Greek Thensaurus to Trinummus alludes to a shift of focus from the treasure itself to a small cash payment. The hired sycophant disguises himself as Charmides to carry out a deception which ultimately fails on account of the return at the wrong time of Charmides himself from Seleucia.⁴⁶ The play is introduced as follows:

huic Graece nomen est Thensauro fabulae:
Philemo scripsit, Plautus vortit barbare
nomen Trinummo fecit... (Tri. 18-20).

The name of this tale in Greek is the Treasure Chest:
Philemus wrote it, Plautus changed it barbarously
he made it the Three Penny Play.

Plautus has reworked the play and in doing so he has refocused the plot so "barbarously" that in his retitling he emphasizes

45 For other examples of Plautus' use of barbarus see Chapt. 4.

46 The disguise of the sycophant and the return of Charmides are the central focus of the play (Tri. 843-1007). See B. Krysiniel-Jozefowicz, De Quibusdam Plauti Exemplaribus Graecis (Torun, 1949): quo facto aperit nobis quam magnae curae ei sycophanta in fabula facturus sit...(p. 84).

the contrast of a treasure to an insignificant three coins. The playwright purposely belittles his own creation as well as perhaps the ostentation of a title such as Thensaurus for a work of comedy. The third example of title-elaboration appears in the Poenulus. In this passage the playwright reaches for humor in ethnic culinary stereotype:

καρχηδόνιος⁴⁷ vocatur haec comoedia;
Latine Plautus Patruus Pultiphagonides (Poe. 53-54).

This comedy is called The Carthaginian;
Plautus, in Latin, calls it Uncle Porridgeater.⁴⁸

The other three titles that are found in the texts are strict translations from Greek into Latin: the Κληρούμενοι (As. 31) becomes the Sortientes, the Ἀλαζών (86) the Gloriosus, and the Ἐμπορος (9) the Mercator.

The majority of the extant plays bear titles that do not appear in the text proper, so there can be no absolute certainty that Plautus intended those particular titles for the plays. But as they stand, all the titles but one derive from two aspects of the comedies: either prominent characters or props. The most common trait of the titles is a reference to the main character or characters either by name or by status: Amphitruo, Bacchides, Curculio, Epidicus, Menaechmi, Pseudolus, Stichus, Truculentus, Persa, Poenulus, Captivi,

47 This title is not in Greek script in the Ambrosian Ms.

48 The title Poenulus is a diminutive ethnic term derived from the earlier Greek title Carchedonios.

Mercator, Gloriosus, Sortientes /Casina.⁴⁹ The second common title highlights the prominent prop that figures in the resolution of the plot: Aulularia, Cistellaria,⁵⁰ Rudens, Mostellaria, Trinummus. The Asinaria is the one exception, in that the title refers to an event or a set of events. This title illustrates Plautus' comic approach to nomenclature by highlighting the farcical aspect of his creation, as noted for the Trinummus.

Just as Plautus adapts the titles of most of his plays for contemporary significance, he renames almost every character that appears on stage, mostly in Greek.⁵¹ In the cultural context of a Latin comedy, the Greek names of the characters contrast sharply with the Greek names of the characters of Greek New Comedy, both in their etymology and in their homogeneity with the language of the plays. The names make their greatest impact in their contrast to the language of the characters on stage. A Greek noun spoken to a

49 Examples of new titles to reflect main character names are the two Menandrian plays Δίς Ἐξαμάτων and the Ἀδελφοί which become the Bacchides and the Stichus. From Duckworth (1971) pp. 52-3.

50 On the original title of Menander's play Synaristosae see Duckworth, p.53.

51 For an approximate statistical analysis of the Menandrian names in Plautus and Terence, see B.L. Ullman 'Proper names in Plautus, Terence and Menander.' (CPL. 11, 1916) 61-64. 'Barring doubtful cases, out of seventy-two different names in the fragments of Menander, twenty-three appear in the six plays of Terence and only fourteen in the twenty-one of Plautus' (p.63). A complete etymological explanation for the name of each character is usually given in the commentaries.

predominantly Latin-speaking audience would assume a different range of significance than the same noun or compound spoken to a Greek audience. Plautus uses various naming techniques targeted specifically to his audience. He makes up names for their humor in their sound or length, or assigns Greek names that play on the act of naming itself. For the most part, however, he leans heavily upon the comic characterization that is inherent in the Greek etymology of the chosen name. One can categorize four basic types of names: etymological, humorous, locative and mythological.

The convention that a name reveal the character is common on the comic stage.⁵² In fact, when this convention is broken, it is usually done to expand the boundaries of comic effect in order to point out a character's shortcomings. But often character traits stem from an etymological association with the character's name so that he is more or less the name and vice versa. Very few of the names that Plautus adapts have no etymological sense or suggestion.⁵³ The most common use of a name is to establish a character's proclivities by straightforward declaration, but the reverse is possible: a

52 See A. Barton, The Names of Comedy (Toronto, Buffalo, 1990). With reference to Plato's Cratylus and the dichotomy between rationalism and nominalism (i.e. that names are an attribute of the thing itself vs. arbitrary), Barton details the "Cratylic" nature of the names in comedy, i.e. that the characters are inherently their names.

53 See, for example, Lindsay's notes for the Captivi: Ergasilus "(this is sarcasm)"; Hegio etc.... he lists the etymology for each character in the play (p.69).

name may emphasize a character trait to suggest that a character is not in fact what his name suggests.

The technique of characterizing by etymology draws attention to the character's most redeeming or reviling trait. Plautus has examples of this in every play: in the Amphitruo, Blepharo (from βλέπω/βλέφαρον) is a navigator; Euclio (εὐκλεία) is the senex of the Aulularia who wishes to be less well-known; Pistoclerus (πεῖθω, κληῖρος) is the carefree and credulous adulescens in the Bacchides. The Prologue of the same play translates the derivation of the name Phronesium as sapientia (Tru. 78a) to establish the character of the main female role.⁵⁴ Megadorus has a slave called Pythodocus, who certainly presents himself as a truthful slave (Au.). Chrysalus is aware of his name when he makes a pun on his name and his need for gold: opus est chryso Chrysalo (Ba. 240).⁵⁵

Plautus uses his naming techniques as the basis for his characterization. He also extends the use of characterization

54 The inclusion or exclusion of the line (bracketed by Lindsay) epitomizes the debate concerning audience awareness of character-name significance. If the playwright expects his audience to understand immediately his character's name and its connotations, then this line is more likely a later scholiast's insertion. If, however, the playwright assumes a general ignorance of Greek among his audience, then the character of Phronesium is emphasized by the definition of her name. The weight of the argument falls on other internal evidence where Plautus carefully leads his audience through the plot or clearly indicates the significance of particular actions.

55 The adulescens of the Asinaria, Argyrippus, is related to silver.

by name to the characters in his plays. Perhaps the best example of this is in the Stichus, where Gelasimus, the parasite, is known by three different names. He initially explains that his name was given to him by his father because of his character: a pausillo puero ridiculus fui (St. 175). In the next scene Gelasimus tells Crocotium that having used up his original name he is now best known as Miccotrogus -- 'Crumbgnawer' (St. 242). Later in the play Epignomus rejects the parasite's overtures for an invitation to dinner fearing that he will become a laughingstock: Catagelasimus (630).⁵⁶ In another play, Philocrates tells Hegio that the family he belongs to is called Polyplusius, 'Very Wealthy' (Cap. 278). The financially tantalizing name of the disguised Persian girl is Lucris (Per. 627), a name that is established to be especially appealing to the leno Dordalus. Some of the names reveal the character's appearance, although they may also be suggestive of character. Lysimachus observes that Pasicompsa (all-adorned) is named after her appearance (Mer. 517), and the same character focus on appearance is suggested in Philocomasium (beautiful hair, Mi.). Phaedromos (beaming) is radiant with love for Planesium (wanderer, Cu.).⁵⁷ A name that could be both appearance and character trait is Simia, the sycophant in the Pseudolus. Elsewhere, Labrax (Ru.) is

56 Daemones calls to his slaves Turbalio (turmoil) and Sparax (disperser) to arrest the leno Labrax (a ravenous fish) (Ru. 656-7).

57 For the names in the Curculio, see Plautus' Curculio Introduction and notes by John Wright, (Norman and London, 1993) pp. 47-9.

boisterous, of course. The leno Lycus (Poe.), and the trapezita, Lyco (Cu.) are both wolves. The Leaena in the Curculio is a lioness. Greek, however, is not the only language from which Plautus draws his characters' names. Hanno needs no cultural explanation, and Agorastocles' deceased Carthaginian parents, Ampsigura and Iahon (Poe. 1065), are included as an identifying attribute of his character. Curculio, Latin for weevil, reveals the parasite's character and perhaps appearance as well. The eponymous slave Truculentus is in fact truculent by nature,⁵⁸ at least before his change of character in the middle of the play where he succumbs to the overwhelming influence of vice.

The most patently ridiculous names belong to the various milites who either appear on stage or in some cases are described by other characters. These names are primarily extensions of the bombastic characters who possess them. The three most prominent are Pyrgopolynices (All-cleansing multi-victor, Mi.),⁵⁹ Therapontigonus (begotten by a companion in arms, Cu.),⁶⁰ and Antamoenides (Firstdefender, Poe.). Philocrates mentions that Tyndarus' fictitious father is Thensaurochrysonicochrysidēs (Goldentreasurewinnerofgold,

58 As it is established early in the play: nimi' quidem hic truculentust (Tru. 265).

59 Pyrgopolynices' cognomen is pulcher (Mi. 1037-8).

60 J. Wright, p. 49.

Cap. 285)⁶¹ because of his supposed avarice. Pyrgopolynices names the emperor of one of his exploits as Bumbomachides Clutomistaridysarchides (Bombasticbattler Famouslymixed-updyarch, Mi. 14).⁶² Plautus takes this absurd naming device to its extreme in the fictitious brother of Sagaristio whose name is a play on enormous names:

Vaniloquidorus Virginesvendonides
 Nugiepiloquides Argentumexterebronides
 Tedigniloquides Nugides Palponides
 Quodsemelarrripides Numquameripides (Per. 702-5).

Hollowtalking- Girlseller, Muckraking-Moneysqueezer,
 Inyourfacegabbing-Silverextorter
 Self-revealing Garbage Flatterer
 Whatonceyouhavestolen Neverletitgobertson.

One should note as well that the names are Latin, revealing that Plautus did not only single out foreign languages in order to create funny names.

To complete a study of Plautus' naming propensities, one must include the names derived from places as well as names derived from mythology. Some characters bear the name of a location, either a foreign country or a site in the typical Greek city-state. We find Lydus (Ba.), Thessala (Am.), Olympio (Cas.), Cappadox (Cu.), Delphium (Mo.), Syra (Mer.). For names derived from internal locations of a typical Greek

61 'son of gold, outvying treasuries of gold', Lindsay, Captivi, (1921, 1930) p. 86, n. 285.

62 Tyrrell discusses some of the possibilities of this name. Miles Gloriosus, (London, 1905) p. 138, n. 14.

city, there are Gymnasium (Ci.), Palaestrio (Mi.), and Palaestra (Ru.). The two flute players in the Aulularia are named Phrygia and Eleusium (Au. 333). Plautus names a few characters after well-known mythological characters, for example Tyndarus (Cap.), Palinurus (Cu.) and Phaedria. Mythology as the source for names is, of course, especially prominent in the characters of the Amphitruo: Jupiter, Mercury, Amphitryon and Alcumena.

Plautus' choice of names is the foundation of his characterization. Since the names that were originally assigned to the characters would not maintain their original significance in their new theatrical context, he changed them. Although there are different intentions behind his new names, the underlying reason is always the same: to create humor for his audience. This follows the basic tenet of Plautus' creative approach, he always modifies the plays with the Latin language and the Latin-speaking audience in mind. Plautus may have wished to leave his creative stamp on the tradition of the plays he worked, but most plausible as a primary driving force is a desire to create entertainment that would be understood and popular. Part of the formula for success was to generate humor from the sense or the sound of his character names.⁶³ When one is looking for defining traits

63 This contrasts, for example, the subdued nature of the names in a work such as Menander's Dyscolos. One could note, as well, the peculiarity of popular Roman nomenclature in general, which maintained proper nouns whose

for Plautus' comedy one might consider such things as the mixture of Atellan farce with Fescenine verses,⁶⁴ but the use of language is perhaps the most salient defining trait and this is most prominent in the names that Plautus creates for his characters and the titles of the plays.

* * *

THE LATIN LANGUAGE

The two previous sections of this chapter have considered some of the most important influences that foreign languages have on the Plautine texts. If one considers the impact of the Greek and the Punic languages, however, one must balance their consideration with an attendant study of the influence of the language of the plays themselves, Latin. There are many points of interest that naturally arise from the inherent properties of the Latin language in the plays. Two of the most significant of these properties are the character designations and the Roman value terms.

Proper nouns are not the only linguistic device that Plautus used for the designation of characters. Most of the

etymologies were not exactly flattering to their owners -- e.g. Brutus, Cicero.

64 One finds many verbal abuse scenes. See, Lilsa, Saara Terms of Abuse in Roman Comedy (Helsinki, 1965).

main characters are members of families and so at some point in the play they refer to each other using familial names. The members of the families of the Palliatae follow the familiar cultural pattern of the Latin language. While the proper nouns create their significance in their humorous overtones and suggestive characterization, the designations for a character's status within the institution of the on-stage family are exclusively Latin and Roman. To begin with, the characters often refer to their familia, which is used as a generalized reference for either the material or the personal aspects of the household, or both. Sosia, for example, although a slave, declares himself to be a member of his household as: quin me esse huius familiai familiarem praedico (Am. 359). The character who recites the prologue of the Aulularia declares himself as the divine protector of the household: ego Lar sum familiaris ex hac familia (Au. 2).⁶⁵ The captive Tyndarus, who is a slave disguised as a master, negotiates with Hegio and recalls his former social status in very Roman terms as imperator familiae (Cap. 307). The exaggeration of a disguised slave as imperator heightens the impact of the humor and it also reveals the degree to which the humor is culturally focused. Even the aspects of Plautus' plays that are thought of as most removed from Roman moral reality are depicted in Roman familial terms. Sophoclidisca declares herself to be a part of the household of a leno by

65 cf. familiai Lar pater (Mer. 834).

referring to it as a lenonis familia (Per. 213).⁶⁶ The economic aspect of the familia is evident when Toxilus urges Dordalus to purchase the Persa because he will obtain wealth and power over the familiae of other men: evortes tuo arbitrato homines fundis, familiis (Per. 566).⁶⁷ The basic structure of the Roman familia plays an important part in almost every comedy and it automatically assumes all the social connotations of the understanding of familia by the audience.

Although the proper names of the characters are mostly Greek, the customary names of the Latin familia are evident for all the internal household relationships. The characters present themselves to the audience in the terms of a Roman family. Indeed, the internal relationships of the family are an essential part of Plautus' characterization techniques. The characters are labeled on one level in general terms as homo, mulier, puer and puella, but in a more definite designation they bear titles such as pater, mater, vir, uxor, mulier, frater, soror, filius and filia. One need only consider the moral weight of the term pater to understand the important cultural overtones that these familial designations carry with them to the Latin comic stage. The extension of the stage family can assume all the familiar trappings of the Roman familia in a humorous manner. When the servus Sceledrus

66 ut decet lenonis familiae (Per. 213).

67 Cf. totum lenonem tibi cum tota familia dabo hodie dono (Poe. 168-9).

characterizes himself, he does so in terms of his death being the same as that of his many ancestors'. He follows the tradition of his family line in the fact that he too will be a victim of Roman slave punishments: scio crucem futuram mihi sepulcrum; ibi mei sunt maiores siti, pater, avos, proavos, abavos (Mi. 372-3). Beneath the pretences of Greek character names, the Greek dramatic settings and appearances of the actors, lie the forceful and omnipresent structure of the Roman familia, in all its dimensions.

The designation pater is in every play. It can either signify the importance of a character or it can be an identifying attribute of a character. The occurrences of pater in the comedies are simply too many to cover completely here (Lodge has more than eight columns of examples⁶⁸), but the domineering weight of such a figure from Roman society making his presence felt on the comic stage underlies all the characterizations of the pater, whether serious or comic. The word pater, as a social title, often appears in the presence of comments or actions that reflect the father's authority as head of the household. In the Mercator, for example, the pater sends his son Charinus to Rhodes to act on his behalf in business (Mer. 11). In the Mostellaria the pater assigns Tranio power over his household while he is away. Similarly in the Bacchides, the pater has exercised his authority to

68 G. Lodge Lexicon Plautinum 2 vols. (Hildesheim, 1962) pp. 289-294.

assign Lydus as his son's tutor. The slave Strabax relates the orders of a pater who is the head of an estate: rus mane dudum hinc ire me iussit pater (Tru. 645). Palaestra makes a reference to the pater as the authority who bestows social distinction within the family when she recognizes the bullae that her pater presented to her on her birthday: bullae aureae pater quam dedit mihi natali die (Ru. 1171). Palaestra subsequently greets her long lost parent salve mi pater insperate (Ru. 1175).⁶⁹ Roman family designations permeate all the comedies and they create an important cultural base through which the characters have meaning to the audience. As a character type, the pater is most often someone who voices moderating social values to his wayward son. An important exception to this, however, can be found in the character Demaenetus, who fears his wife because she brought a large dowry with her. When he accepted the money, he says he lost his imperium: Argentum accepi, dote imperium vendidi (As. 87).

The cultural reality of these plays, evident in Plautus' use of Latin familial names, is manifest as well in the terms that the characters use to express morality. Just as the characters radiate from the focal point of the familia, so to a great degree the Roman political world radiates from the characters' expressions of value judgments. The political

69 cf. cupite atque expectate pater, salve (Poe. 1260-1). Similarly one finds the matron of the household referred to as a mater familias (Mer. 405;415); also St. 98.

values that are expressed on stage are always based on the standards of Roman morality that one would expect:

It is the essence of certain types of comedy that they should be topical and one of the ways in which Plautus introduced Roman topicality into his Greek plots was by his use of the contemporary political vocabulary.⁷⁰

The traditional concept of Roman mores is expressed in value-laden words and it branches out through Roman political and social structures. The use of such language assumes that much of the comedy relies on the common values shared by the characters and the audience.⁷¹ These values are then humorous, when they are measured by the degree to which a character can or cannot live up to them. But regardless of the humorous intention of the playwright, the moral terms carry with them the underlying weight of their moral extensions. Just as the characters present themselves in the framework of the Roman family, so any character on stage always speaks in relation to the audience's own personal values.

The meaning of the term mores extends from the general custom to the personal habit. The term is consistent in its application, but its frame of reference is adapted at times to the circumstance of the comic stage. Demaenetus declares that he wants to follow the same mores as his father -- which in

⁷⁰ D.C. Earl, 'Political Terminology in Plautus', Historia 9 (1960) 235-243.

⁷¹ Z.S. Hoffmann, 'The parody of the idea of mos maiorum in Plautus', Oikumene 3 (1982) 217-223.

context means the mores of the comic stage, not the mores of the audience. In this case, Demaenetus refers to assuming a disguise in order to deceive the leno and take one of his courtesans (As. 68-73). He uses the term with its culturally infused tradition of handing down a vocation from father to son. In the merging of the comic stage with a Roman tradition, Demaenetus follows a practice similar to Sceledrus' listing of his ancestral lineage, as was noted above. Mores is also found in reference to the wider context of social good. Stasimus, for example, laments that the mores ought to supercede the leges (Tri. 1037). Philto says that he avoids what he labels as 'dreg practices': faeceos mores (Tri. 297). Menaechmus' wife declares that she would rather be a widow than suffer her husband's behavior (mores, Men. 726), by which she means his involvement with Erotium and his disregard for her.⁷² Lysiteles blames Amor for making men's behavior foolish: is [Amor] mores hominum moros et morosos efficit (Tri. 669). Megaronides opens with a condemnation of the customs of his day that nothing is cheap or common except bad behavior: neque quicquam hic nunc est vile nisi mores mali (Tri. 33).⁷³

As Earl points out, Plautus parallels other sources with the connotations of his political terminology. Virtus

72 The matrona's father balances the actions of the husband with the rights of the wife, presenting Roman morality in legal terms (Men. 765-71).

73 Cf. Tri. 273-4.

maintains its essential meaning of active striving for gloria, either military or political. This is exemplified by Alcmene when she lauds its attributes upon entering the stage:

virtus praemium est optimum;
 virtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto:
 libertas salus vita res et parentes, patria
 et prognati tutantur, servantur;
 virtus omnia in sese habet, omnia adsunt
 bona quem penest virtus (Am. 648-53).

"Virtus" is the best prize
 "virtus" entirely surpasses all things;
 freedom, safety, life, property and parents,
 country and offspring are guarded and preserved;
 "virtus" is the all-in-all, he who has "virtus",
 has everything worth having.

Every word in Alcmene's cantica is steeped in Roman tradition and it reflects a Roman sentiment expressed in the Latin language. For another example, Lysiteles, from a similar moralizing standpoint, succinctly details the pursuits of good men expressed in much the same language as Livy:

boni sibi haec expetunt, rem, fidem, honorem,
 gloriam, et gratiam: hoc probis pretiumst (Tri. 273-4).

Good men seek out these things: goods, trust, honor, glory and grace: this is the reward for the virtuous.

Similarly, Callides tells Megaronides that Charmides entrusted him with the knowledge of his treasure: per amicitiam et per fidem (Tri. 153). Pietas is expressed in the daughter's duty to her mother when Cleareta asks Philaenium if she will honor her mother's imperium: an ita tu es animata, ut qui matris expers imperio sies (As. 507)? Pamphila defines the virtue of wives in terms of puclitia: pudicitiast, pater, eos nos magnificare qui nos socias sumpserunt sibi (St. 100-1).

Plautus also uses his plays as vehicles to make comments about Roman historical events in Latin cultural terms. When Lysidamus voices his concern as to whether his friend Alcesimus is an amicus or an inimicus, he invokes the battle led by the legendary Camillus in the war with the Gauls. He asks his friend to see to the preparations quickly as if they were off to Sutrium: Quasi eant Sutrium (Cas. 524).⁷⁵ The playwright indulges as well in direct addresses to the audience, praising the Romans for their recent victory against the Carthaginians:

bene valete et vincite
virtute vera, quod fecistis antihac;
servate vestros socios, veteres et novos,
augete auxilia vestra, iustis legibus.
Perdite perduelles, parite laudem et lauream,
ut vobis victi Poeni poenas sufferant
(Ci. 197-202).⁷⁶

Be strong and conquer
by true valour, as you have done previously;
keep your allies, old and new,
increase your armies by just rule,
destroy the enemy, earn praise and laurel
so that the conquered Poeni pay your penalties.

Of equal interest is the passage in the Persa with another celebratory reference to the end of a war, concluded by acknowledging the help of the gods:

hostibus victis, civibus salvis, re placida,

⁷⁵ This passage is addressed again in the third section of Chapter Three under Italy.

⁷⁶ There is another prayer for good fortune on the battle field in the Asinaria: date benigne operam mihi, ut vos, ut alias, pariter nunc Mars adiuvet (As. 14-15).

pacibus perfectis,
 bello exstincto, re bene gesta, integro exercitu
 et praesidiis,
 quom bene nos, Iuppiter, iuivisti, dique alii omnes
 caelipotentes... (Per. 753-5).

our enemies conquered, the citizens safe, public
 affairs pacified, peace complete, the war over,
 the end well done, the army and garrison intact,
 Jupiter you have guided us well along with all
 other powers of heaven.

However tempered, the plays reveal sufficient evidence to suggest that the stage was something of a political forum. Plautus took the opportunity to express some of the legitimate concerns of his day, most notably the desire to succeed in war. Not all of the contemporary allusions, however, are military. Pinacium equates his running slave entrance with running in the Olympic games, but the stage, he suggests, is too short (St. 306-7). Plautus even turns his criticism to actors when he humorously denounces the actor Pellio's performance in his own Epidicus.⁷⁷

* * *

Some evidence of how Plautus compared his own work with that of his Greek predecessors appears in the Mostellaria. At the conclusion of the comedy, the playwright boasts that his play is in fact better than either Diphilus' or Philemon's.

⁷⁷ See note in Barsby, Bacchides 213-5.

When the character Theopropides wonders aloud what he should do, Tranio replies:

si amicus Diphilo aut Philemones,
dicito is quo pacto tuos te servos ludificaverit:
optumas frustrationes dederis in comoediis
(Mo. 1149-51).⁷⁸

If you are a friend of Diphilus or Philemon tell them how your servant deceived you: you will give them the best plot complication in comedy.

This comment makes no excuses of any kind of creative barbarism, but suggests an air of artistic superiority in the ability to create the best kind of comic plot. In a second direct reference to the plays, the prologue of the Casina refers to Plautus' comedies as: Plautinae Fabulae (Ca. 12),⁷⁹ as opposed to a translation of some famous Greek playwright. As noted above, Plautus makes a boast of his 'barbarous' ability to outrageously manipulate the plays. His ability to translate the material to the Latin language is more than just the substitution of a Latin word for a Greek word. He has to create humor that will be meaningful to an audience that understands the world in Latin terms. Like any popular playwright, Plautus uses words that are the best manner of conveying his comedies to his audience. The Latin language of his plays and the Latin language of his audience had to converge. This means that the Latinization of his material at

78 cf. Cas 860-61.

79 For another reference to bringing Plautus to the stage see: adporto vobis Plautum, lingua non manu (Men. 3).

the same time contributes to a shift in the cultural reference points of the texts. To a large degree the shift in the cultural focal points of the dialogues is made by the contemporary usage of the language itself.

This chapter has considered how the languages that Plautus used in his plays reveal a cultural bias. Plautus interjected foreign languages into his dialogues, he used foreign words in his name characterizations, but the family designations of the characters, and the moral terms they use to express their emotions are Latin and Roman. This is important because it is the foundation upon which the characters speak about who they are and what their place is in the world. In the predominant moral and cultural undercurrents of his plays, Plautus emerges as a playwright whose purpose is to communicate clearly and directly to a Latin-speaking audience. He is very careful to make sure that everyone knows exactly what is happening on stage even when, or especially when, some of the characters on stage have no idea what is going on. This kind of attention to detail argues for his careful choice of individual words and expressions in order to convey his meaning clearly. The following chapters will examine those choices as they pertain to customs, places, and gentes.

CHAPTER TWO

CUSTOMS

As an important part of the continuous dialogue of the comedies, Plautus' characters describe their customs, actions and interactions. These descriptions are found in one character's depiction of the customs of other characters or of other peoples, or they may be part of an observation upon his own deeds. The force of the Latin language as it was examined in the first chapter is evident throughout the topics considered here. In this chapter, however, the focus is shifted from the inherent moral properties conveyed by the language itself to the inherent social norms that are behind the customs that the characters define. The comedies of Plautus are replete with allusions to and depictions of many day-to-day customs of ancient life. Throughout the plays, the characters describe such common aspects of life as political offices, civic duties, financial transactions, religious practices, methods of transportation, personal habits of various kinds such as reading and writing, as well as some of the duties of slaves. These customs reveal commonplace traditions that were part of the workings of the Mediterranean world as they were presented on the early second-century comic stage. If any element of Latin Comedy can be said to hold something of a "mirror" to Roman life it is found in the consistency of the details that describe recognizable

political practices, religious activities and social events. While these details may not reflect Roman practice, they do reflect patterns of thought. Many of these customs, moreover, are not specifically ethnically oriented. They are common to the social behavior of the ancient world, and they stem from a composite of Mediterranean cultural influences.

For the spectators, the experience of dramatic performance may be more conceptual than actual, but even the experience of watching the portrayal of various human activities on stage establishes the grounds of the very least benefit that can be derived from its study: whatever was presented on the Roman stage was part of the imagistic diet that the Roman mind consumed in the late third, early second centuries BCE. Such images existed as constructs that were comprehensible to the minds of the audience, if they were not a replication of normal routines found in their own lives. For example, few would suggest that the frequency of domestic violence alluded to on the comic stage was in fact the daily norm for every Roman household, but one would have to concede that its appearance on stage was certainly one manifestation of an inherent violence in the society.¹ Nor is it necessarily important that all the customs depicted on the Roman stage reflect either traditional or contemporary Roman customs. For

¹ Just as today television programs portray and reflect actual social violence to some degree.

example, the practice of mercenary soldiery, although not a part of the personal experience of the Republican Roman soldier, nevertheless was certainly a part of his experience both with some of the foreign armies that he fought as well as with his literary and theatre-going experience.² Similarly, some of the interpersonal relationships of the characters themselves -- slave commanding master, son flagrantly disobeying father -- displaying as they do social reversals and comic stereotypes, nevertheless may be read in various ways, including the exposition of latent social fears, or the diffusion of subtle moral didactics, or perhaps even as depicting actual extremes of behavior.

Latin Comedy plots demand to a great degree a conscious suspension of disbelief. The action on stage is that of make-believe, of miracle reunions and absurd dupes. The characters of Latin Comedy often display excessive affectation in their speech and they exaggerate human behavior as well. But the manner of the allusions to and descriptions of social institutions, customs, and historical events that are part of their dialogues have a grounding in their time and place of composition, whether the source of the allusion is historical

2 The soldier of the Epidicus asks Periphanes if he is the soldier who as a youth served in the armies of kings and made his fame and fortune: nempe quem in adulescentia memorant apud reges armis, arte duellica, divitias magnas indeptum (Ep. 449-51)?

or literary, indigenous or extraneous.³ As noted in Chapter One, the Latin language itself informs the plays with inherent depths and meanings, but in order to see how the customs of the stage speak to the audience one must also study how that language describes human affairs. Plautus' audiences were expected to understand many things about the social workings of the world. They were presented with various perceptions about many social practices that were a part of their cultural repertoire of Mediterranean world and beyond. The content of the comedy of Plautus must be read as more than simply a dichotomy of Greek and Roman sources. By the mid-third century Rome was already a multi-cultural, Mediterranean world centre. Heraclides Ponticus, in the middle of the fourth century, characterized Rome as a polis Hellenis.⁴ Such a depiction is certainly reflected well in the eclectic nature of Plautus' comedies one century later. It allows that one might interpret the texts of Plautus starting from the premise that the audience comprehended what was being said on stage and furthermore understood how the images depicted there

3 "Some of the alterations of the Greek originals seem to be concessions to a popular taste which had been nurtured on a rather different dramatic fare. Many, and in particular the allusions to Roman customs or topicalities, were probably intended to make the exotic settings of the plays appear more familiar, and so to produce a greater degree of 'audience participation'. A similar device is adopted by Shakespeare when, for instance, he introduces his Elizabethan 'base mechanicals' in the court of 'Duke' Theseus, or when he stations Dogberry and Verges in the court at Messina." W.R. Chalmers 'Plautus and his Audience', Roman Drama (London, 1965) p. 28.

4 Plut. Camillus 22.2. As noted by A. Momigliano, Alien Wisdom, The Limits of Hellenization (Cambridge, 1978) p. 13.

functioned within the context of how they understood their own constructed social order. The same audience would then be able to understand what was represented on stage by making comparisons to their own familiar social norm. How the comedies of Plautus portray these customs and events and which aspects of human society are included grant us further insight into the scope and nature of how the world was understood by Middle Republican Romans. This chapter considers the Plautine presentation of customs including political offices, civic duties, religious practices, financial transactions, education, transportation, and slave duties.

* * *

PUBLIC OFFICES AND CIVIC DUTIES

The political offices and political duties presented on the Plautine stage reflect in name at least those that were most familiar to the audience. Although the focus of Latin Comedy centres on family relationships and there is a tendency to diminish the presence of politics and the state, the recurrent themes of trade and travel bring with them attendant circumstances in which the state is necessarily involved. Indeed, many of the legal aspects of marriage with its attendant transference of property are fairly commonplace on

the Plautine stage. Plautus, moreover, employs various metaphors that bring the Roman political world to the dramatic Greek city-state of the comic stage. References to Roman public offices range from the highest to the lowest, from the ruling imperator to the tax-collecting portitor. The Roman political vocabulary that Plautus incorporates into his plays is further evidence of how the Latin language makes its presence felt in the production of these plays.

The characters of Plautus' comedies discuss their political world in terms that correspond to the Roman social orders. One finds in the dialogues a number of personal statuses and political positions that range from servitude to the establishment of a character's citizenship to the highest offices of state. In an interesting contrast of personal power, Ergasilus portrays Hegio as a general when he orders around his slaves, although he is a private citizen: hic qualis imperator nunc privatus est (Cap. 166). In another reference to the military consul, Messenio resigns himself to obeying Menaechmus II since he was bought to obey orders, not to be an imperator:

sed ego inscitus qui domino me postulem moderarier:
 dicto me emit audientem, haud imperatorem sibi
 (Men. 444).

But I'm an idiot trying to manage my master:
 he bought me to obey, not to be his Emperor.

The actor who presents the prologue of the Poenulus proclaims

himself an imperator (Poe. 4) as he begins his proclamation. Lysiteles makes an interesting, if oblique, reference to the office of dictator after he replies to Lesbonicus' fear of having people throw things at him if he contracts a dowerless marriage between his sister and his friend. Lysiteles includes in his reply the fact that Lesbonicus could not become a dictator if he has no property:

Lesb. si sine dote duxeris:
 tibi sit emolumentum honoris,
 mihi quod obiectent siet.
 Lys. quid? te dictatorem censes fore, si aps te
 agrū accepērim (Tri. 693-5)?

Lesb. If you marry her undowered:
 you will have the fortune of honour,
 and I will have whatever the mob can throw.
 Lys. What? do you think that you will become a dictator,
 if I accept your farm?

Leonida mentions the Triumph, a function that is connected to the offices of the imperator and dictator, when he considers the rewards he will win from his master or his son: maximam praedam et triumphum eis adfero (As. 269).

Not all of the public offices are used as hyperbole to poke fun at the comic status of the characters. The Senate and some of the lower echelon of the cursus honorum make an appearance on stage as well. Artemona explains a senator's absence from home and fatigue by suggesting that Demaenetus is either in the senate or helping his clients: eum etiam hominem <aut> in senatu dare operam aut cluentibus (As. 871). In an association of power and office, Sceparnio is concerned that

the magistratus will toss him in chains if he is caught in possession of the water pitcher from the temple of Venus (Ru. 476-7). Phaniscus suggests that the newly elected prefect is overeager to exercise his newly acquired powers: nisi forte factu's praefectus novos qui res alienas procures, quaeras, videas, audeas (Mo. 941-2). The praetor makes an appearance on the comic stage as an adjudicator for property and of personal status. Milphio reveals the extent of the power of the praetor when he assures Agorastocles that upon their successful deception of the Leno the praetor (Poe. 186) will award them the Leno's whole household. Dordalus tells an incredulous Toxilus to go to the forum and ask the praetor for the definitive word on whether his love Lemniselenis is freed or not. Saturio calls the leno Dordalus in ius and says that he will declare his case apud praetorem (Per. 745-52). Diniarchus mentions that he has just completed some public business as a legate with authorized imperium: nam ego Lemno advenio Athenas nudiustertius legatus hinc quo cum publico imperio fui (Tru. 91-2). The prologue of the Captivi states that Hegio bought the two captives from the quaestores: emit hosce e praeda ambos de quaestoribus (Cap. 34). All of these passages show us how some of Rome's highest political and judicial offices were presented on the comic stage. The transactions of the state were conducted in a manner that was familiar to the Roman audience.

Along with the above direct references to political offices and their functions one finds a number of metaphorical allusions to various Roman public offices that humorously categorize a character or a situation. Thespio, in banter with Epidicus, takes offense at the latter's haughty questioning and comments upon what is missing from his assumed praetorship: lictores duo, duo ulmei fasces virgarum (Ep. 28). Sagaristo humorously proclaims that during the past year he has been the chained and flogged tribune at the mills: plusculum annum fui praeferratus apud molas tribunus vapularis (Per. 22). When Periplectomenus describes his intention to consult with the scheming Palaestrio concerning how to continue their deceit of Sceledrus and Pyrgopolynices, he evokes the allusion of the senate and consulship, calling his own house the Senate:

redeo in senatum rusum; nam Palaestrio
 domi nunc apud me est, Sceledrus nunc autemst foris:
 frequens senatus poterit nunc haberier.
 ibo intro, ne, dum absum, alter sorti defuat
 (Mi. 592-5).

I return to the Senate again; for Palaestrio
 is at my house, Sceledrus is now gone out:
 Now we can hold a full Senate meeting.
 I go inside, so my colleague won't miss the
 drawing of lots while I'm away.

Here, Periplectomenus metaphorically depicts Sceledrus and himself as fellow consuls whose presence is necessary to oversee some monumental decision made by the "Senate". In a metaphorical use of the term provincia as authority over some political domain, Stichus offers his conservus Sanginarius

imperium over the province of either Fons or Bacchus:

St. vide, utram tibi libet etiam nunc capere,
cape provinciam.

Sang. quid istuc est provinciae?

St. utrum Fontine an Libero
imperium te inhibere mavis (St. 698-700)?

St. Come on, take whichever province you like.

Sang. What is this province?

St. Whether you prefer to assume imperium
over Fons or Liber?

This kind of poetical use of political imagery to ask another character what he would like to drink, reveals how extensively Roman customs are an integral part of the Plautine stage performance. Finally, one even finds a reference to the protocol of obtaining a royal audience by either letter or envoy. Acroteleutium details such formalities when she says that they are the usual practice for obtaining an audience with Pyrgopolynices: per epistulam aut per nuntium, quasi regem, adiri eum aiunt (Mi. 1225).

Plautine characters also refer to the workings of Roman civic political offices. Toxilus invokes the decemviri and their authority, when he tells Dordalus that since he belongs to the decem sodales he should banish himself for being a perjurer (Per. 561-2). Gelasimus says that Pinacium gives the orders to clean the house as if he were a self-elected aedile of the people: sine suffragio populi tamen aedilitatem hic

quidem gerit (St. 362-3).⁵ In the Trinummus, the sycophant summons the power of the aediles to threaten Charmides with flogging: enim vero serio, quoniam advenis -- vapulabis meo arbitrato et novorum aedilium (Tri. 989-90). In a parallel of mortal powers with the divine, Trachalio uses Neptune as a comparison for an image of Labrax as a fastidious aedile who tosses overboard all doubtful goods: novi, Neptunus ita solet, quamvis fastidiosus aedilis est: si quae improbae sunt merces, iactat omnis (Ru. 372-3). It is interesting to note that the reference to political offices is not always contained within the dramatic setting. The aediles are associated with the comic stage by the character Toxilus, who replies to Saturio's question of where one can obtain foreign dress: aps corago sumito; dare debet: praebenda aediles locaverunt (Per. 159-60). The aediles have contracted for everything that must be supplied for the dramatic production. Other Roman officials make an appearance as well. Euclio invokes the tres viri as a source of aid for citizens who feel that they are physically threatened, when he sees Congrio coming at him with a knife: Eucl. Quia ad tris viros iam ego deferam nomen tuom. Cong. Quem ob rem? Eucl. Quia cultrum habes (Au. 416-7). One public position that surfaces as an attribute of the recurrent themes of trade and travel is the portitor. When Pinacium relates his recent visit to the port, for example, he mentions that he

⁵ The Greek equivalent to the aedilis appears in probus agoronomus (Mi. 727); cf. aedile (St. 252-3).

asked the portitores whether any ship had arrived from Asia (St. 366-7). Megaronides suggests that a portitor had the power to break the seal of a letter and inspect it: iam si opsignatas [litteras] non feret, dici hoc potest, apud portitorem eas resignatas sibi inspectasque esse (Tri. 793-5).⁶ Menaechmus, describing his inquisitive wife, says that he married a portitor, since she asks him about everything (Men. 117).

The political world of the Plautine stage is not only dependent upon the structure of Roman political offices, it also reinforces that structure by references to the Roman political system itself and to the duties of citizens. Euclio on his way off stage says that the magister of his curia has promised each of them two silver coins (Au. 107-8). Toxilus strengthens his demand for the use of Saturio's daughter in his scheme by threatening to drive Saturio out of town: ex hac decuria (Per. 143). Lyconides, the lover who is concerned about the outcome of his affair that is in the hands of others, likens his situation to the comitia that decide capital punishment: ibo intro, ubi de capite meo sunt comitia (Au. 700). Philto equates the reckoning at the time of death with the census, when he tells Lesbonicus that all are the same in death:

6 One finds the same powers in Terence, Ph. 150.

aequo mendicus atque ille opulentissimus
censetur censu ad Acheruntem mortuos (Tri. 493-4).

the beggar and the most wealthy, dead in Acheron,
are estimated equally by census.

The sycophant later in the same play tells Charmedes that he duly paid his taxes at the time of the census: census cum sum, iuratori recte rationem dedi (Tri. 872). Lysiteles tells Lesbonicus that he is able to perform his official public duties, moenia (munia, Tri. 686), only if he retains possession of his farm. Palaestrio accepts the obligation of outlining the argument of the plot and he call it his comitas: mihi ad enarrandum hoc argumentum est comitas (Mi. 79). Stratippocles and Thesprio at the beginning of the Epidicus have just returned from their stint in the army: priusquam hinc ad legionem abiit domo (Ep. 46). When Erotium tells Peniculus that he is extra numerum (Men. 182), Peniculus replies that such a position is the same as the supernumeraries in the legion: idem istuc aliis adscriptivis fieri ad legionem solet (Men. 183). Periplectomenus uses the term clienta (Mi. 789) for the woman who (he says) will be just right for Palaestrio's scheme to dupe the miles. She in turn calls Periplectomenus her patron: mi patrone (Mi. 878). When Menaechmus has been delayed in the forum by one of his clientes, he complains of the corruption in the whole social system in an extended passage:

ut hoc utimur maximo more moro
molesto atque multo, uti quique sunt op-
tumi, maxime morem habent hunc:

characters' speeches but it also has an overwhelming influence on the way that the characters present the various social dimensions of their dramatic world. The basic Roman vocabulary for political practices establishes the characters in the same cultural framework as the audience. Despite the Greek dramatic setting of the comedies and despite any presumption of original Greek designations for the official functionaries that were once a part of the scripts, the Latin comedies operate within the language that expresses the political framework of the Roman social order. It does not matter if the dramatic setting of the play is at Cyrene, or Athens, or Epidaurus, the officials and the civic duties are almost exclusively given Roman designations. Whether these designations are the titles for political functions that are necessary for the plot of the play or they are hyperbolic analogues to a stage character's actual social status or personality, they help create a framework that is culturally specific. But the public offices and civic duties are certainly not the only customs described on the Plautine stage that maintain important social indices.

* * *

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

The comedies of Plautus contain many examples of ancient religious practices. The characters refer to or give details of the invocation of one or of multiple deities, public and private sacrifices and offerings, the reading of auspices or omens, and purification rites. The amount of material brings with it many attendant interpretive problems. To begin with, as with any study of ancient religion, one soon discovers that it is often difficult to distinguish absolutely between exactly what is religious and what is secular. Indeed, in keeping with the tradition of comic hyperbole, the characters frequently display both an irreverence towards the gods and an overtly fastidious attitude towards religious practices. As the inclusion of this material in the comic plays reflects in part the relevance of religious practices in the ancient world, and as the plays themselves were staged as a part of a religious function, the nature of the material warrants careful investigation. The following pages will consider some of the manifestations of religion as a cultural aspect of the Latin comic stage.

Hanson has already noted the tendency for scholars to adopt an analytic approach to the study of Plautus.⁷ He

⁷ J. Hanson, "Plautus as a Source Book for Roman Religion", TAPA 90 (1959) 48-101.

cautions, however, against the limitation of such an approach by the observation that 'by the end of Plautus' dramatic career, Roman religion, like Roman culture in general, was already a complex hybrid.'⁸ Roman culture had already been exposed to a wide variety of religious practices. The Romans had developed a complex web of gods, festivals, observances, rituals, prayers and sacrifices that were an integral part of their social activities, both public and private. Moreover, the Roman tendency to be fastidious in their religious observance is well attested. Livy often records that the public Ludi had to be repeated on religious grounds, which presumably meant that the plays had to be repeated as well. For example, in 215 the Plebeian Games were thrice repeated: Plebeii ludi aedilium M. Aurelii Cottae et M. Claudii Marcelli ter instaurati (Liv. 23.30.17).⁹ The performance of the plays themselves undoubtedly was not an unwelcome ingredient of the repeated Ludi. The political motivation for presenting Ludi in the first place was for gaining popular support, and the repetition of a festival would presumably increase and solidify that support. One might suggest as well that a secondary motive for the staging of popular entertainment was

8 Hanson p.50. The article discusses Roman religion in Plautus under three main headings: '(1) the nature of the gods; (2) the actions and attitudes of the gods towards men; and (3), the actions and attitudes of men toward the gods.' Hanson, p.60.

9 Livy's tendency throughout his extant history is to mention stage productions as little as possible. When he does, his emphasis is on their supposedly negative moral effects (see Introduction on 'Ludi in Roman Republican Society' for further details).

as a means of diverting the attention of the populus from the more pressing matters of either war or unemployment.

The most frequent religious practice in Plautus is the invocation of the gods. The gods who are named by the characters include an eclectic mix of personified deities and abstractions, but the most commonly invoked deities are Jupiter, Venus, Hercules, Neptune, Pollux and Castor.¹⁰ These deities reflect, in part, the nature of the comic genre itself. Venus, for example, assumes an obvious role on the comic stage since the plots frequently involve romantic love. Neptune, Pollux and Castor reflect the concern with successful sea trade. Jupiter makes an appearance as the supreme deity and Hercules is a common popular god. Plautus' characters have recourse to many different short invocations that reveal distinctly Roman cultural tendencies. Phaedria, when she is in labour, calls upon Iuno Lucina (Au. 692).¹¹ When Epignomus gives thanks to the gods upon his safe return from abroad, he includes the personified Tempest along with Neptune and Mercury (St. 402-5). Scepharnio invokes the famous navigator, Palaemon, as a companion of Neptune and Hercules: sed, o

10 From Hanson, p.62. He also notes that the most frequent reference to the gods is unspecified: di or di omnes or di deaeque.

11 Bromia describes Alcmena's invocation of the immortal gods to aid her during birthing cf. (Am. 1092-3); Phronesium plans a sacrifice on behalf of her new-born child on the fifth day see Tru. 423-4.

Palaemon, sancte Neptuni comes qui Herculis socius esse diceris (Ru. 160-1). Chrysalus illustrates well a mixture of gods and abstractions in his invocation:

ita me Iuppiter, Iuno, Ceres,
[Minerva], Latona, Spes, Opis, Virtus, Venus,
Castor, Polluces, Mars, Mercurius, Hercules,
Summanus, Sol, Saturnus,
dique omnes ament...(Ba. 892-5).¹²

One finds numerous examples of the names of Roman gods, or Romanized gods. Damaenetus invokes the god Fidius: per Diem Fidium quaeris (As. 24). Charinus invokes the Lares Viales (Mer. 865) on his way to his self-imposed exile. At the same time he bids farewell to his household gods as well as to the city of the dramatic setting, Athens (Mer. 830-41). Euclio, the miser, is concerned that someone will steal his treasure, so he tells Staphyla not to let even the personified goddess Bona Fortuna (Au. 100) into his house. Ergasilus, the parasite, invokes Sancta Saturitas (Cap. 877). Congrio invokes Laverna, the goddess of thieves, to aid him: ita me bene amet Laverna (Au. 445). One example reveals the sanctity that is frequently attributed to a place of worship. Although the deity of the shrine is not mentioned, Tranio, once caught, invokes the inviolable sanctity of the altar itself: ego interim hanc aram occupabo (Mo. 994). In a passage that recognizes the inherent power of an altar, Gripus makes Labrax

¹² Pistoclerus also mixes tradition and abstraction when he lists all of the gods that follow him as an adulescens in love: Amor, Voluptas, Venus, Venustus, Gaudium, Iocus, Ludus, Sermo, Suavisaviatio (Ba. 115-6).

I botch it because of you.
Mel. Go on, pray.
Alc. Indeed thus Jupiter and Juno and thus Janus....
 All the gods great and small,
 and even the teensy-tiny
 treat me; unless I....

The contract formula curse that Alcesimarchus uses here is against Melaenis. He makes an exaggerated wish to kill Melaenis and her daughter, and to destroy her whole household if she does not send Selenium back to him. Although Hanson notes that the contractual basis of mortal and divine conference is notably absent from the extant comic stage, this observation, as the passage quoted above demonstrates, is not absolute.¹³ The passage ridicules the fastidious concern for exactly the proper formulaic manner of identifying the gods and in making sure that no god is left out of one's prayer. In another parody of the gods, Ergasilus identifies himself as Hegio's saviour by calling himself a number of gods: mi Hercle, nam ego nunc tibi summus Iuppiter idem ego sum Salus, Fortuna, Lux, Laetitia, Gaudium (Cap. 864-5).¹⁴ One notes how freely the practice of divine invocation and taking an oath was portrayed on the comic stage. The gods that play an important role in the lives of the characters are Roman gods with Latin names. Some of the invocations are serious within

¹³ See also St. 232-3. One might note as well that the Lar familiaris of the Aulularia's prologue is concerned with how much attention he receives before he is willing to give up his secrets (Au. 15f.).

¹⁴ Ergasilus tosses off an insult about how Fortuna has neglected Hegio when Hegio asks him to look at him: Fortuna quod tibi nec facit nec faciet, me iubet (Cap. 834).

the context of the play, but the characters also have fun with Roman practices of invocation, such as naming absurd personified abstractions as well as naming every possible manifestation of the divine who might be interested in one's prayer.

As an extension of the vocal traffic between the mortal and the divine, the characters detail a variety of offerings, which can be a part of the action on stage, described action of another place or time, or at times take the form of a vow. Gripus after his safe return from a fishing trip offers a simple thanks to Neptune himself, his patron: Neptuno has ago gratias meo patrono (Ru. 906). The Lar who gives the prologue for the Aulularia says that it is Phaedria's custom to offer incense, wine or something else to him daily, and garlands as well (Au. 22-24). Callicles also enters the stage proclaiming his desire to offer a garland to the Lares (Tri. 39). Daemones, after his daughter has been recognized, plans to make an offering of sheep and pigs to his Lares Familiares since they have increased his household (Ru. 1206-8).¹⁵ Palaestrio salutes his Lares as he departs:

et iam nunc saluto te, Lar Familiaris, prius quam eo.
 conservi conservaeque omnes, bene valetate et vivite,
 bene quaeso inter vos dicatis et me apsentem tamen
 (Mi. 1339-41).

15 Lar Familiaris also at Au. 386; Mer. 834, 836, 856; Mi. 1339.

At last now I salute you, Familial Lar, before I go.
 Fellow slaves and maids all, fare well and be well,
 I ask that you speak well of me although I am away.

Panegyris, after her prayers for the safe return of her husband have been answered, orders her slave, Pinacium, to prepare the household for a sacrifice (St. 396).¹⁶ Apoecides says that Periphanes sacrifices to Orcus at his wife's tomb (Ep. 173-6). The accompaniment of music may be part of an offering as well. Epidicus declares that his senex, Periphanes, has asked him to hire a fidicina who will sing while he makes an offering of some kind.¹⁷ Other characters mention divine offerings that express a religious observance outside the home. The contract between Diabolus, the Lena and Philaenium includes the details of an offering to Venus and Cupid that is comprised of wreaths, garlands and unguents (As. 803-4). Libanus, who possesses the money that Argyrippus needs to free his love, tells the lover to sacrifice to him since, metaphorically, he is his Salus (As. 712-3). Even Jupiter in the Amphitruo asks Alcumena for the sacrificial vessels (vasa) that he needs to fulfil the vows that he supposedly made as Amphitryon on the battlefield (Am. 946-8). As the neighbor of a temple that is outside of the city, Daemones details the utensils that are most frequently requested of him by those who come to sacrifice at the altar

16 iube famulos rem divinam mi apparent (St. 396).

17 dum rem divinam faceret (Ep. 316).

interesting role in a number of comedies. Megadorus says that he must wash in order to purify himself before the sacrifice: ego, nisi quid mevis, eo lavatum, ut sacrificem (Au. 579).¹⁸ Similarly, after Theopropides has touched his supposedly haunted house, Tranio tells him to touch the ground in order to expiate any transference of evil (Mo. 468-69). Stichus plays with the concept of a ritual cleansing of all that is foreign by festal celebrations:

volō eluamus hodie, peregrina omnia
relinque, Athenas nunc colamus (St. 670).

I want us to be washed-out today, put aside
all foreign doings, now let us revere Athens.

The parasite of the Asinaria notes the religious distinction between a woman spending pure nights with impure, or spurca nights: si forte pure velle habere dixerit, tot noctes reddat spurcas quot pure habuerit (As. 806-7). These examples reveal a concern for the inherent spiritual properties in various circumstances and they give some idea of attitudes towards the proper manner of dealing with greater powers.

One frequent occurrence of a sort of divine intervention in Plautus is the reading of omens or auspices in various forms. The omens range from external signs to dreams to personal feelings. Libanus reads the auspices of the birds, before he sets out on his swindle:

¹⁸ also at Au. 612.

impetritum, inauguratumst: quovis admittunt aves,
 picus et cornix ab laeva, corvos, parra ab dextera
 consuadent; certum Herclest vostram consequi sententiam.
 sed quid hoc, quod picus ulmum tundit?

non temerariumst.

certe hercle ego quantum ex augurio eius pici intellego,
 aut mihi in mundo sunt virgae aut atriensi Saureae
 (As. 259-64).

I have asked, I have augured:

'where you will' the birds affirm;
 the pecker and raven from the left, persuade,
 the crow, barn owl from the right;
 Yes by Herc I will follow your advice.

But what's this? the woodpecker pecks the elm?

That means something.

I understand this much from the omen of this woodpecker
 the rods are ready for either me or the steward Saurea.

For another example that shows an interest in the direction of
 the sign, Sangarinus mentions his sighting of a good omen that
 was on the left: bona scaeva strenaque obviam accessit mihi
 (St. 672). Gelasimus maintains that it is propitious that
 when he came out, a weasel caught a mouse in front of his feet
 (St. 459-61). Demipho interprets for the audience the details
 of his dream which serve as an allegory for the plot of the
 comedy (Mer. 225f.). Daemones as well details his dream of a
 monkey and two swallows which again outlines allegorically the
 subsequent plot (Ru. 593).¹⁹ Euclio, perpetually concerned for
 his treasure, hears a crow on his left and considers it
 ominous. The omen is apparently worse because the crow is
 scratching at the ground and croaking: Non temere est quod
corvos cantat mihi nunc ab laeva manu; semul radebat pedibus

19 cf. Philocomasium makes up a dream that she says she had about her
 sister (Mi. 380).

terram et voce croccibat sua (Au. 624-5). Libanus feels his shoulders tingle and this apparently portends a whipping (As. 315-6).²⁰ Congrio, after a confrontation with Euclio, considers his arrival to be under bad auspices (Au. 447). Toxilus tells Dordalus to follow the proper religious protocol of auspication before he begins his questioning of the disguised Persian girl: in proelium vide ut ingrediare auspicato (Per. 606-7). The girl then replies that the auspices are bright: liquidumst auspicium, tace (Per. 607). Epidicus apparently considers good auspices important when he leaves the house to embark on his purpose: St! tacete, habete animum bonum, liquido exeo foras auspicio, avi sinistra (Ep. 181-2). Menaechmus II acts as though he is possessed by Apollo and he mimics divine possession and voices directives (Men. 840-50). Bromia apparently considers twins to be a sign of the benevolence of the gods (Am. 1090). Jupiter, at the end of the Amphitruo, tells Amphitruo to put aside his diviners, the harioli and the haruspices (Am. 1132).

The religious content of the comedies express a diversity of religious practices and observances. The characters in general present an easy commerce and reverence towards the sacred dimension of life. They invoke powers that are inexplicable, or that are greater than human, and that they assume will aid them in obtaining their desire. Moreover, the

²⁰ Also Sceledrus (Mi. 397).

characters assume that the gods are immediately available for their communicative interaction, and that the presence of divine forces can work for or against them. This section has considered four of the most prominent aspects of the plays that touch upon religion. The characters invoke their gods, make offerings, consider purification rites and read omens in a manner that suggests heavy Roman cultural influences. The Latin language plays an important role in understanding and defining the religious customs of the comic stage. The gods that make an appearance are the Roman or Romanized gods, and Latin also dictates the meaning of the personifications and the divine abstractions. Finally, as with the culturally specific political designations, the religious content of the plays displays a Roman cultural bias that presents a contemporary portrait of homogenized religious practice.

* * *

FINANCIAL EXCHANGE

One of the driving forces of plot complication in Latin Comedy is wealth, or the lack of wealth. The most typical scenario portrays a young lover who is in need of some cash to free the woman he loves. But it is important to recognize that the wealth of the comic stage is more than simply money

and that the many aspects of wealth create an interesting complex of cultural standards and expectations of custom. Wealth assumes diverse forms of both currency and goods that the characters mention in their possession or in their transactions with one another. The mercantile language describes buying and selling, borrowing and lending, the relative value of contracts, and personal accounts of ownership. The way in which the characters detail their trading activity allows some insight into the normal expectations of the custom of trade as it is presented on the comic stage. One may find as well some of the vocabulary of exchange that was commonly applied to everyday commerce. Language, according to the definition proposed by J.W.D. Skiles, is a repository of the past and an aggregate of the present.²¹ Some of the commercial vocabulary in Plautus derives from the earliest transactions of simple exchange that entailed symbolic ritual, but it also incorporates more complex commercial expressions borrowed from the contemporary world.²² In the plots themselves commerce and trade have various degrees of influence. One finds the obtaining of needed funds being absolutely crucial to the happy resolution of the plot. The conflict in the Bacchides, for example, is

21 J.W.D. Skiles 'The commercial vocabulary of early Latin as shown in the comedies of Plautus' CJ 36 (1941) 519-536.

22 The legal content of the comedies has long been recognized to be composite; cf. O. Frederhausen de iure Plautino et Terentiano (Göttingen, 1906).

that one of the sisters needs money to escape the clutches of the miles: nam si haec habeat aurum quod illi renumeret (Ba. 45). Similarly, the plot of the Asinaria revolves around the necessity of obtaining twenty minae. In the other extreme, there is the simple convenience of a character who must be off-stage so he is said to be doing business in the forum.

Various aspects of wealth contribute to a general ethos of the characters towards the subject. The associations that accompany wealth all stem from a recognition of its inherent power for social position or for stability in the household. Wealth and happiness are inextricably intertwined. One finds the emphasis upon social position when Toxilus uses the promise of wealth as a part of his lure in a comic deception. Toxilus draws the Leno Dordalus into the purchase of the 'Persian girl' by the promise of incredible future wealth coupled with its attendant powers:

Si hanc emeris,
di immortales, nullus leno te alter erit opulentior.
evortes tuo arbitrato homines fundis, familiis;
cum optimis viris rem habebis, gratiam cupient tuam:
venient ad te commissatum (Per. 565-9).

If you buy her,
Immortal Gods, no other Leno will be more resplendent
than you. You will destroy men at will,
their estates,
their households; you will do business with the best
men, they will desire your good will,
they will come to you when summoned.

The sentiments in this passage reflect the power that a wealthy land-holding patron had over his land-renting clients.

Megadorus notes that the difference in the power that a husband maintains over his wife depends on whether she has a dowry or not (Au. 532-5). As a criticism on the extremes of extravagance, Astaphium says that Diniarchus has mortgaged his farm and home to pay for his desires: nam fundi et aedis obligatae sunt ob amoris praedium (Tru. 214). One of the bases for character identification can be the ownership of certain possessions or property. Euclio, a miser, uses the Hellenistic kings, Philip and Dareus (Au. 84-6) as a metaphor for the extremes of wealth and poverty when he characterizes himself as their opposite. Euclio himself is characterized as the heir to some land, but it was small and he had to work it hard to make his living (Au. 13-14). Megadorus rails against the ostentation of conspicuous wealth with a long list of extravagances that focuses on the craftsmen who produce them (Au. 510f). Stichus contrasts the rich and the poor by naming the relative values of different types of drinking vessels. He says that while the rich have their choice of three different kinds of drinking cups the poor have only one made from Samian clay: quibus divitiae domi sunt scaphis, cantharis, batiolis bibunt, at nos nostro Samiolo poterio (St. 693-4). Part of the deceit that the two slaves Leonida and Libanus concoct involves the money necessary for the maintenance of a household. Leonida plays the part of the atriensis Saurea and he asks Libanus if he paid for the shipping of some olive oil: equis pro vectura olivi rem solvit

(As. 432)? The two slaves continue to discuss a fictitious financial situation with the payment for wine that involves the presence of a banker (trapezita As. 437). The merchant, however, suspiciously refuses to give the money that he owes to anyone but Demaenetus himself. At one point in the Aulularia, Euclio complains about how expensive everything is at the forum macellum, where he was looking to buy fish and meat (Au. 371-78).

The acquisition of wealth is often directly related to overseas mercantile trading. The initiative for the venture that leads to the shipwreck in the Rudens is the allure of good markets in Sicily. Gripus, Daemones' slave and the fisherman in the same play, includes with his dreams of freedom and wealth the ability to trade with large ships. He says that he will be a king among kings:

iam ubi liber ero, igitur demum instruam
 agrum atque aedis, mancupia,
 navibu' magnis mercaturam faciam,
 apud reges rex perhibebor (Ru. 930-1).

When I am free, I will procure farms, buildings
 possessions,
 I will trade with huge ships,
 I will be a king among kings.

Shipping as a means to wealth is also found at the beginning of the Mercator, where we are informed that Charinus' father sold his inherited farm, bought a ship and became wealthy (Mer. 73-6). Charmides also makes it clear that he returns from Seleucia wealthy (Tri. 837). Furthermore, the letter

that Toxilus has forged (written as though from a mercenary in Persia) maintains that he is unable to be in Athens because he is doing business and making money abroad: ego valeo recte et rem gero et facio lucrum (Per. 503).

Not all references to overseas trade are to successful expeditions. When Philto inquires about his son's friend's loss of fortunes, he asks if it was due to public contracts, maritime ventures or slave dealing: qui eam perdidit? publicisne adfinis fuit an maritumis negotiis (Tri. 331-2)? In another example, Epignomus, having returned from overseas, states that his wife has looked after his affairs less than perfectly:

nam ita me absente familiarem rem uxor curavit meam,
omnium me exilem atque inanem fecit aegritudinum
(St. 525-6).

For my wife looked after our household affairs while
I was gone in such a manner
that she made me an exile of everything, thin and weak.

Finally, damnum as financial loss is also a pun on a place name. When Menaechmus II arrives in Epidamnus he tells Messenio to give him their money so that Messenio does not suffer a financial loss: ne mihi damnum in Epidamnuo duis (Men. 267).

The inclination of the characters to thoughts of wealth and trade also spills across the boundary of the stage to play a part in the parley between the actors and the audience.

Mercury begins the prologue of the Amphitruo by praying for the audience's personal prosperity both at home and abroad:

Ut vos in vostris voltis mercimoniis
 emundis vendundisque me laetum lucris
 adficere atque adiuuare in rebus omnibus
 et ut res rationesque vostrorum omnium
 bene me expedire voltis peregrique et domi
 bonoque atque amplo auctare perpetuo lucro...(Am. 1-6).

As you want me to help in your trade,
 buying and selling goods and
 to help in all things and as you want me
 to expedite well the affairs and dealings of you all,
 both abroad and at home and to increase
 your goods with perpetual profit....

This coupling of trade and travel is an important part of the action in most of the plays. The ethos of the Stichus, for example, is not simply the return of the two brothers Epignomus and Pamphilus from abroad, but especially their wealth-laden return, which results in happiness, family reunion and marital harmony. Thematically, the play celebrates the material success of a commercial venture to Rhodes.²³ Similarly, the plot of the Cistellaria follows the consequences of the youthful exploits of the Lemnian mercator Demipho, who once visited Sicyon on a trading voyage and who later emigrates there. As a variation to the commercial voyage theme, Stratippocles has just returned from a successful stint in the army, ad legionem (Ep. 46), during which time he purchased his beloved. The soldier realizes part of his financial profit during military duty by obtaining

23 Charinus: pater ad mercatum hinc me meus misit Rhodum: biennium iam factum est, postquam abii domo (Mer. 11-12).

a bride.

The characters of course refer to transaction in coin, in their frequent discussion of exchange of goods and services.²⁴ The spectrum of reference to money extends from the most generalized mention of gold and silver to very specific accounts of sums paid for particular things. The terms for money in general are aurum, argentum, pecunia and lucrum. Specific terms for coinage are Philippus, talentum (both a weight and a coin), drachma, nummus (2 drachmae), denarius (Ru. 1314), minae, aes, obol, and triobolum (Poe. 381; 868). With the exception of the Amphitruo, coins of various types play an important role throughout all the plays. Part of the difficulty in establishing the relative values for the coins used on stage is the fact that the value of coins in the Roman world fluctuated at this time. Roman coinage went through a series of changes and was only stabilized after the Second Punic War with the minting of the new denarius.²⁵

The Philippus coin appears in eight of the surviving

24 For background on currency I have consulted: A. Burnett Coinage in the Roman World (London: Seaby, 1987). J. Anthony Collecting Greek Coins (London and New York: Longman: 1983). M.H. Crawford Roman Republican Coinage 2 vols. (Cambridge 1974). For a comparison reference to contemporary (the same century) value of coins see the purchase of war prisoners after the First Punic War, ransomed for 18 denarii each (Livy 21.41.6-7).

25 The denarius was standardized at 84 to the pound, see K. Harl Coinage in the Roman Economy (Baltimore and London, 1996), chapt. 3.

plays,²⁶ in both gold and silver denominations. Cleareta (As. 153) and Pyrgopolinices (Mi. 1064) speak of Philippi as golden coins. The sum in question between Charmides and the Sycophant is one thousand golden Philippi (Tri. 954-5). Moreover, the treasure entrusted to Callidorus was three thousand golden Philippi (Tri. 152). The sum given to Collybiscus in the Poenulus is three hundred golden Philippi (Poe. 166 et passim). Pistoclerus returns from Ephesus with twelve hundred Philippi which a friend there owed his father (Ba. 230-31). Theotimus is the priest (sacerdos) of Diana at Ephesus (Ba. 307-8) where Chrysalus falsely tells Nicobalus they stored his twelve hundred golden Philippi for safety's sake. The sum that Cleomachus wants returned in lieu of Bacchis is two hundred Philippi (Ba. 590), but Chrysalus is out to cheat the leno of four hundred (Ba. 934). Stratophanes mentions a talent of silver Philippan coins: em tibi talentum argenti Philippi hic est (Tru. 952). Labrax describes the Philippi as minae: minaria Philippa (Ru. 1314). Most of the references to Philippi are to enormous amounts of wealth.

There are many stage transactions in minae, a coin used mostly in the prices of slaves. The mina was minted in both

26 In contrast to Plautus, Menander avoids specific reference to coinage and prefers instead generalized gold or silver references. Terence does likewise, see Barsby Bacchides n.220. From a historical standpoint, the Philip of the original Greek New Comedy of one century before Plautus referred to Philip II whereas the Philip of contemporary reference to the Roman audience was Philip V.

gold and silver but the consistency within the texts suggests that the characters refer to the silver coin. The amount that Stratippocles had to borrow in order to buy his beloved is forty minae and the interest that he must pay the Theban danista on that sum is one silver mina per diem (Ep. 52-4). Epidicus' interjectory reaction when he learns of the rate of interest suggests that it is outrageously high.²⁷ In contrast, Misargyrides charges Philolaches a more reasonable rate of ten percent, four minae on a loan of forty (Mo. 627-31). Dordalus haggles with Sagaristio over the price of the 'Persian girl' and they finally settle on sixty minae, a price reduced from the original proposal of one hundred (Per. 661-7). When Dordalus brings the money he retains two minae as the price, he says, of the purse.²⁸ Phoenicium tells Calidorus in her letter that she has been sold to a Macedonian miles for twenty minae (Ps. 51-2). In comparison, we find that Charmides' house commands a price roughly twice the cost of Phoenicium, but less than the 'Persian girl', when Callidorus says he paid forty minae for it (minas quadriginta Tri. 126). This seems ridiculously low for the price of a house. Lesbonicus who received the forty minae for the house spends the whole sum in less than fifteen days and his servus Stasimus presents a catalogue of what he spends it on:

27 Papae! (Ep. 54). This rate of interest, not compounding, is 2.5% per diem, 17.5% per week, and 912.5% per annum (approx. 900% p.a. in a 360 day calendar) -- outrageous by any financial or historical standard.

28 crumina (Per. 683-4).

comessum, expotum, exussum: elotum in balineis,
 piscator, pistor apstulit, lanii, coqui,
 holitores, myropolae, aucupes: confit cito (Tri. 406-8).

eaten, drunken, burned: washed away in the baths,
 the fish-dealer, the miller took it, butchers, cooks,
 vegetable-dealers, perfumers, bird-catchers;
 quickly done.

On a smaller financial scale but still relatively expensive, Menaechmus says that he paid four minae for the palla he gave to his wife (Men. 205). Lysiteles says he will fine Lesbonicus for his stupidity one mina (Tri. 708). For a comparison between the mina and the drachma, Lesbonicus borrowed and repaid the trapezita Olympicus one thousand drachmas, a sum that was only a portion of the forty minae he received for his father's house (Tri. 425).

There are a few other coins mentioned in the texts as well as some general references to money. The cook asks Lysimachus to give him a drachma: drachmani dato (Mer. 777). When the cook in the Pseudolus discusses the cost of hiring a cook, he explains to Ballio that he is unemployed because people only hire the least expensive cooks (Ps. 804-9). Calidorus asks Pseudolus for one drachma to buy a rope (Ps. 85-89). Agorastocles laments that he is worthless if he doesn't take revenge and uses a monetary metaphor: non ego homo triboli sum (Poe. 381). Lycus also uses the same phrase when he depicts a prognosticator as worthless: condigne haruspex, non homo triboli (Poe. 463). Since the tribolum is

a coin of least value, it is used to express the equivalent of no payment at all: neque tribolum ullum amicae das et dutae gratiis (Poe. 868)?²⁹

Nummus is a widely used term that refers to coins of various values, from gold to the lowly obol. Labrax and Gripus haggle over the sum that the latter is willing to accept for the return of the former's trunk. At first Labrax simply calls the contested item a trunk filled with much gold and silver (Ru. 1309) but then he elaborates on specifics and includes a few coins: nummi octinginti, aurei ... centum minaria Philippa (Ru. 1313-14). He also refers to a large talent of silver, talentum argenti ... magnum (Ru. 1318), perhaps in contrast to a smaller talent in gold. Gripus, the fisherman who recovered the trunk, for his part demands a talent that is apparently the equivalent of two thousand nummi. This talent is figuratively divided up at the end of the play by Daemones as the price for the freedom of both Gripus and Ampelisca (Ru. 1405f.). In another play, Anthrax defines the price of freedom as a whole talentum magnum (Au. 309). Erotium gives Cylindrus, her cook, three nummi to purchase an afternoon feast (Men. 219). On his return, Cylindrus tells Menaechmus II that the price of a sacrificial pig is one nummus (Men. 288-90). The ancilla asks Menaechmus to add the weight of two nummi to her earrings (Men. 542).

29 cf. Ba. 260 and also at Rudens 1039, 1330, 1354, 1367.

Congrio, a cook, is hired for one nummus but he says after a beating by Euclio it will cost more for the doctor: nummo sum conductus: plus iam medico mercedest opus (Au. 448).³⁰ Charmides says that he would not trust the sycophant with even a lead coin: quoi ... nummum numquam credam plumbeum (Tri. 962)? In another exaggerated statement of value, Stasimus equates the price of food with an inheritance: cena hac annona est sine sacris hereditas (Tri. 484).³¹ The prologue of the Casina makes a comparison between the devaluation of newly minted coins (nummi novi) and the value of the play which is worth more because it was written in the past (Cas. 9-10).³² Toxilus asks to borrow sixty nummi to purchase the freedom of his love, Lemniselenis (Per. 36). Sagaristio's reply to the request is that he could not get such a sum if he sold himself (Per. 40). The generic term for coinage or 'cash' is aes. Thus Cleareta discusses the basic premise of her trade in succinct financial terms: si aes habent, dant mercem (As. 201).³³ Megadorus mentions a soldier coming to collect military taxes as aes: miles inpransus astat, aes censet dari (Au.

30 There are a couple of references to the transfer of goods at such formal events as auctions: Gelasimus the parasite declares that his town (Athens) is filled with curious people who want to know the reason that an auction is held (St. 198-205); Charinus and Demipho conduct their own auction over the purchase of Pasicompsa (Mer. 429-445).

31 see also: quom cara annona sit (Cap. 3.1.35 and St. 1.3.25)

32 The prologue, of course, is possibly of later date.

33 For a similar reckoning of accounts see: ducuntur, datur aes (Au. 520).

528). In another comedy, Antamonides uses aes again for the military tax: aere militari tetigero lenunculum (Poe. 1286). The prologue of the Poenulus states that servi can sit if they have paid cash in a kind of poll tax: servi ne obsideant, liberis ut sit locus, vel aes pro capite dent (Poe. 23-4).

The commercial transactions of the plays assume that the audiences had a general appreciation for various advantages of wealth. Financial abundance always accompanies the happy conclusion that attends the final family reaffirmation that is realized in marriage or the reunion of parent and child. The recognition of wealth, or the lack of it, extends from the level of personal power to the awareness of the intrinsic value of material things. The dialogue expects and also plays upon the audiences knowledge of relative values for specific goods and services. Often the point of the humor is the outrageously high or low price that is paid for a person, a thing or interest on a loan. Forms of wealth are found in the possession of gold and silver, different types of coins, the possession of land, the ownership of slaves and also exotic items of luxury. The consistency of monetary references suggests that the relative values in the coins used for trade and bargaining on the comic stage are general but not absolute. Other recurrent themes used in conjunction with wealth range from the squandering of fortunes on lavish living to the practical suggestion of the price for the purchase of

freedom. It may be an oversimplification, a caricature, to state that "pound-foolishness in Plautus is as common as penny-pinching was in the Rome of his day,"³⁴ since such sentiments echo more the ideals of a later Augustan Rome. The historical evidence in fact suggests in the second century that the influx of wealth had an opposite effect. The Lex Oppia of 215 BCE that forbade the public displays of wealth and limited a woman's right to property was repealed in 195. That such a law was enacted as a war-measures act in the first place reveals that a certain visible extravagance and opulence existed to be curbed. Such legal evidence in light of the comic stage reveals that wealth was beginning to permeate through the social strata of Rome. Consider, for example, the expense of the senatorial decrees of 217 BCE, just before the loss at Trasimene. Livy relates the gift of a fifty pound golden thunderbolt for Jupiter as well as gifts of silver for Juno and Minerva.³⁵ In addition to this, the married women were to gather as much as each one could contribute to Queen Juno of the Aventine and hold a Lectisternium. Moreover, the freed-women were to give a cash gift to Feronia. While such decrees may reflect either how desperately the state needed money or to what extent the state wanted to control the amount of wealth in circulation, they certainly suggest a certain

34 Segal p.69.

35 Decemvirorum monitu decretum est Iovi primum donum fulmen aureum pondo quinquaginta fieret... (Livy 22.1.17).

abundance in general currency. A similar abundance is reflected by some of the characters on the comic stage.

* * *

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

References to travel and transportation in the plays of Plautus are especially significant because the stage that the comedies assume covers the entire known world. The extension of the stage to many distant places is maintained by the characters in their discussions of their travels. Many of the characters at the point of entrance or exit describe their arrival or departure by either land or sea. Moreover, as part of the commerce that creates the backdrop to the plots of most of these plays the characters discuss some of the requirements for commerce, such as the means of travelling upon the Mediterranean sea or the money that is needed for a voyage.

The most frequent detail that the characters give for travelling is reference to different types of ships. Perhaps the most striking illustration of the close association of travel and successful trade among the plays is in the Stichus. After Pinacium notes that the ship on which the two husbands travelled was a Cyprian bark (cercurus, St. 368), he

elaborates the details of the ship by saying that it is the biggest Cyprian bark that he has ever seen, laden with gold and silver and other items of luxury:

argenti aurique advexit nimium...
 lanam purpuramque multam... lectos eburatos, auratos...
 tum Babylonica et peristroma tonsilia et tappetia
 advexit, nimium bonae rei... poste, ut occepi narrare
 fidicinas, tibicinas, sambucas advexit secum
 forma eximia...
 poste unguenta multigenerum multa (St. 374-383).

And he (Epignomus) brought lots of silver and gold...
 reams of dyed wool... couches inlaid with
 ivory and gold...
 he also brought Babylonian draperies and tapestries,
 more than enough good things... after,
 as I began to speak
 he brought with him lyre girls and flute girls
 and harp girls
 of astounding beauty... then a lot of ointments
 of every kind.

Other specifically merchant ships can be found as well. Nicobulus says he is on his way to the Piraeus to look for a navis mercatoria (Ba. 236) from Ephesus. The senex, Demipho, acquired his first merchant ship that carried a weight of 300 metretae (Mer. 76).³⁶ He bought the ship from the profit of the sale of his father's land after the latter's death and proceeded to accumulate wealth.

Most of the characters generalize their descriptions of

36 The metreta is a Greek liquid measurement indicating how much cargo the ship carried. The number of metreta perhaps indicates how many amphorae could be carried on board.

ships in such words as navis or puppis,³⁷ but one can also find specific types of boats such as the scapha (Ru. 366-7), the lifeboat that saves Ampelisca and Palaestra from drowning. Menaechmus describes the ship upon which he has travelled the Mediterranean world as wooden, well worn and often repaired and caulked with a hammer: [navem] ligneam, saepe tritam, saepe fixam, saepe excussam malleo. (Men. 402-3). Finally, when Demipho goes out to meet his son Acanthis on board his boat he rows out in a dinghy he calls a very tiny cutter: lembus pauxillulus (Mer. 191-4). The pirate ships that preyed upon successful merchants also appear on the comic stage. Chrysalus, in the story he concocts to deceive the senex Nicobulus, declares that since a pirate ship followed them out of the harbour they turned back to the port (Ba. 285f.). He includes a rather threatening portrait of the pirate ship as decked out in a meagre, inimical fashion: ego lembum conspico longum, strigorem maleficum exornarier (Ba. 279-80). Messenio metaphorically calls Erotium's house a navis praedatoria (Men. 344) that leads away Menaechmus II who as an extension to the metaphor is a crucified, or wrecked ship: lembum diirectum (Men. 442). Interestingly, there are examples of boats that are described as privately hired out and others that are said to be publically owned. The Sicilian senex privately hires a boat to carry the leno, the girls and their belongings from Cyrene to Sicily: navis clanculum conducitor (Ru. 47). That

37 e.g. As. 157-8 and As. 518-20.

ship, subsequently, is wrecked in a storm. In contrast, Ergasilus tells Hegio that he saw his son arrive in a public boat: vidi in publica celoce (Cap. 874).

The means of sea travel is not the only nautical elaboration present in the Plautine texts. Some characters relate their fears of the sea and some of the physical effects of travelling by ship. Sosia relates the effects of travelling on the sea when he tells of his exhaustion and nausea after disembarking: lassus sum Hercle, navi ut vectus huc sum: etiam nunc nauseo (Am. 329). Bacchis says that her sister is fearful as one would expect from her boat travel: nam ut navi vecta's, credo, timida es (Ba. 107). Labrax notes the danger of sea travel in his declaration that whoever wishes himself wretched and a beggar entrusts himself to Neptune (Ru. 485-6). Charinus also expresses his fear of his own ship sinking when he is concerned for his beloved: obsecro, num navis perit? salvast navis, ne time (Mer. 173-4). Charmides is relieved when he returns safely from Seleucia and he expresses his thanks to Neptune for a safe and calm journey (Tri. 820f).³⁸ As an example of nautical imagery used to illuminate metaphors, Lepimachus makes the comparison of Demipho urging cooks the way that a coxswain urges oarsmen: sed coquos, quasi in mari solet hortator remiges hortarier,

38 For an interesting historical comparison, Livy details a shipwreck at Cyrene of the Capuan patriot Decius Magius, who was sent by Hannibal to Carthage (Liv. 23.10.11).

ut ego hunc preteram leonem vetulum, olentem, edentulum
iam adstiti in currum: iam lora teneo, iam stimulam...
(Men. 862-7).

now you command me to harness
the fierce, untamed horses and to climb the chariot
so that I can overtake the old lion, stinking, toothless,
now I stand in the chariot: now I hold the reins,
now the whip....

Libanus refers to the impossible as flight without wings: age sis, tu sine pennis vola (As. 93). When Stasimus ruminates on the possibility that he must follow his master as a mercenary soldier to the east, he mentions preparations such as tying up his backpack, binding a shield to his back and having heels added to the soles of his socci.³⁹ The joke lies, in part, in the reference to the type of comic stage shoes that he is wearing in contrast to the type of footwear indispensable for a long journey.

The ability to travel on the comic stage goes beyond the physical apparatus to include a few references to the financial and political means that make travel possible. When Hegio is about to send Tyndarus to retrieve his son from Elea he mentions that he is about to fetch travelling expenses from his banker: sequere me, viaticum ut dem a trapezita tibi (Cap. 449). He also adds the political necessity of obtaining a letter of passage from the praetor to travel with the legion: eadem opera a praetore sumam syngraphum (Cap. 450).

39 Quid ego nunc agam, nisi uti sarcinam constringam et clupeum ad dorsum accomodem, fulmentas iubeam suppingi socis? (Tri. 719-20).

When Epidicus is ready to take flight in anticipation of the consequences for his uncovered deceptions, he asks Stratippocles for travelling expenses: quin tu mihi adornas ad fugam viaticum priu' quam pereo (Ep. 615)? Messenio returns to his inn (taberna) to retrieve luggage and a wallet with travelling money: marsupium cum viatico (Men. 1036). The wallet that Charmides lost in the storm was in his travelling bag: sacciperium (Ru. 548). Agorastocles' Carthaginian father apparently went down to Acheron without his viaticum (Poe. 71).⁴⁰ Pseudolus uses the term viaticum metaphorically after he discovers a way clear to succeed in his clever plot (Ps. 668). Stasimus humorously claims that someone owes him a talent which he will go to the forum to retrieve and use as his travelling expenses: ad forum ibo; nudiu' sextus quoi talentum mutuom dedi, reposcam, ut habeam, mecum quod feram viaticum (Tri. 727-8). Later in the play, Charmides refers to the long name of the sycophant as being so long that one needs a viaticum in order to travel to the end of it (Tri. 887). Messenio notes the decrease in Menaechmus' travelling expenses by declaring that their wallet, marsupium, is only suitable for summer travel (Men. 254-5). Presumably, the expenses of travelling in the summer are fewer, because one may sleep outside without the expense of lodgings.

40 also at Tru. 937.

Because travel is such an integral aspect of Plautine comedy, the characters' details of their means of travel flesh out an intricate part of the plot. There is a great diversity of references and associations to travel that create an interesting mosaic of the manner in which an important custom of the late third and early second century was considered. The characters detail various possibilities for travel, some of the preparations that were necessary, the many difficulties associated with travel and the attendant danger of loss of either merchandise or life.

* * *

EDUCATION

The characters of Plautine comedy are also concerned with the proper rearing of children at times, especially within the context of the adulescens gone astray. One finds references to various practices and concerns of education embedded in some of the dialogue. The lack of proper moral education, in fact, becomes an underlying theme in plays such as the Mostellaria, where a youth brings ruin upon his family while his father is away. In this play, Philolaches compares the building of a house to the rearing of children. He expects this education to include the refinement of literature,

justice and law, all at a cost that is beneficial to society as well as the person concerned:

primumdum parentes fabri liberum sunt:
 i fundamentum supstruont liberorum;
 extollunt, parant sedulo in firmitatem,
 et ut in usum boni et in speciem
 populo sint sibique, hau materiae reparcunt
 nec sumptus ibi sumptui ducunt esse;
 expoliunt: docent litteras, iura, leges,
 sumptu suo et labore
 nituntur ut alii sibi esse illorum similis expetant
 (Mo. 120-8).

First and foremost, parents must be builders of children: They lay down the children's foundation; they raise them and carefully make them solid and that they will be good in service and appearance to the society and themselves, they spare no expense, nor do they reckon such expense, expense; they polish: they teach letters, justice, laws, striving by their own expense and toil that others will seek to copy them.

Such a sentiment is replete with the ethics of proper child rearing in the accepted practices of an aristocratic society. The focus is upon the social expediency of the education. There is only one example where the texts mention an educational institution that is artistically oriented. The adulescens Plesidippus falls in love with Palaestra apparently when he was on his way home from music school: ludus fidicinius (Ru. 43).

The most frequently mentioned consequence of education on the comic stage is literacy. The ability to read and write is portrayed in a number of interesting ways. Characters refer to the writing of historical accounts, to the agreement of

contracts and to the form and shape of written letters. In a few instances the characters read these contracts and correspondences aloud on stage. One notes, as well, the mention of a few posted notices and other written inscriptions on objects. Of particular note are the references to the tools of writing, the stylus and the tablets or the wax palette. Artotrogus, for example, keeps tabellae and a stylus ready for the dictation of the exploits of the miles, Pyrgopolynices. Messenio suggests that the only possible good that might come of his and Menaechmus' further travels is if they write a travelogue about them, which he calls a historia (Men. 247-8). Lesbonicus, in his father's absence, puts the house up for sale by writing a sign on the house (Tri. 166). Stasimus draws the attention of the audience to an inscription of laws nailed to a wall: vae [leges] miserae etiam ad parietem sunt fixae clavis ferreis (Tri. 1039). Arcturus, delivering his prologue, declares that Jupiter inscribes the names of good people on tablets (Ru. 21). Diabolus enters the stage asking his parasite to show him the contract (syngraphum) that he has with Cleareta and Philaenium (As. 746-7). The parasite then reads aloud the stipulations of the contract that include provisions such as Philaenium's posting a notice on her door to the effect that she is engaged, and that she must have no love letters in the house (As. 761-3). Gelasimus, concerned that he may lose his position as parasite because of an inability to keep the attention of his

metaphorical rex, enters the stage declaring that he has studied his books of jokes: libros inspexi: tam confido quam potis me meum optenturum regem ridiculis meis (St. 454-5). When he exited at line 400 he declared that he was off to consult his books and learn clever phrases. Other examples of writing include the practice of inscribing articles with the names of owners. Sceparnio states that the water pitcher from the temple of Venus declares who its owner is: nam haec [sacra urna] litteratast, eapse cantat quonia siet (Ru. 478). Palaestra's little sword is engraved (litteratus) with her father's name, and her mother's name is on an ax (Ru. 1156-9).

The characters frequently introduce correspondence by letters, suggesting a general recognition of and familiarity with this form of communication. Palaestio sends a letter from Ephesus to his former master Pleusicles in Athens, informing him of the whereabouts of his beloved Philocomasium (Mi. 129-31). Stratippocles, while in the army, sent a letter to Epidicus every day (Ep. 58) concerning the female slave that he wanted the latter to purchase at Athens (Ep. 131-2). Pseudolus reads a letter aloud on stage and comments on the quality of the writing. He observes that the words look as though they are climbing on top of each other so that only a Sibyl might be able to read them (Ps. 23-6). The content of this particular letter is a lament by Phoenicium to Calidorus that she has been conditionally sold against her true wishes

(Ps. 40-73). Toxilus asks Dordalus to read aloud the letter that he pretends has been sent to him from Persia (Per. 496f.). This letter is later described as that which has been entrusted to wax: quod erat cerae creditum (Per. 528). Sophoclidisca and Paegnium describe the messages that they are both delivering to each other's masters as little tablets, tabellae, and a sealed wooden letter, obsignata abies (Per. 247-8). Stratoppocles, however, calls the letters he sent by the act of writing itself: scripta (Ep. 138). One also notes the use of the term epistle, when Sagaristio maintains that part of his reason for being in a hurry is to deliver some letters: volo deferre epistulas (Per. 695).

Several examples in the texts refer to individual letters of the alphabet or to the ability to spell out individual words themselves. Sophoclidisca maintains that even a sheep could learn the alphabet: ovis si in ludum iret, potuisset iam fieri ut probe litteras sciret (Per. 173). Demipho declares that he has learned to spell the word amo in school:

- D. hodie ire in ludum occepi litterarium,
Lysimache, ternas scio iam.
L. Quid ternas?
D. A.M.O. (Mer. 303-4).
D. Today I began literary school, Lysimachus.
I know three letters already.
L. What three letters?
D. A. M. O.

Staphyla languishes in a comic lovelorn desire for suicide and she imagines her hanging body as the capital letter I: ex me

ut unam faciam litteram longam (Au. 77-8). In the same play, the cook Congrio insults his colleague Anthrax by calling him a three-letter man: F.U.R. (Au. 325). Spelling is also highlighted by Gripus who asks Labrax if he is a medicus. The latter replies that he is one more letter than a medicus which Grippus infers means that he is a beggar, not a physician: tum tu mendicus es (Ru. 1304-6).

Although the degree of literacy in the ancient world is contested (and it is a question that will probably remain so), the number of references to reading and writing present in the extant texts of Plautus suggest a high degree of familiarity with the basic mechanics of reading and the shape and function of written letters. There is a high degree of literacy found among the characters on the Plautine stage.

* * *

SLAVE DUTIES

The slave characters of the Plautine stage are of more interest than simply as a stereotype whose prominence is recognized as a hallmark of Latin Comedy.⁴¹ Jean-Jacques

⁴¹ The prominence of the slave character is, of course, first analysed by Fraenkel. The topic has been touched upon by many scholars since, perhaps most thoroughly in P.R. Sprange Historische Untersuchungen zu den

Aubert, for example, has used the material in Plautus as evidence for slaves acting as business agents on behalf of their masters.⁴² As a part of the characterizations of slaves in general, there are references to different types of labour that their dramatic owners expect of them. Included with this material are a few pertinent reminders of the social status of the slave. Demipho, for example, gives an interesting description of the duties of a house maid:

nihil opust nobis ancilla nisi quae texat, quae molat,
 lignum caedat, pensum faciat, aedis verrat, vapulet,
 quae habeat cottidianum familiae coctum cibum
 (Mer. 397-8).

we have no need for a slave unless she can weave, grind, cut wood, make wool, sweep the house, stand whipping, who would give the household its daily cooked meal.

Similarly, Pasicompsa declares that she does not fear the abilities of others her own age in the task of weaving (Mer. 519f.). The distinction of social status is highlighted by Pagnium, who declares that her owner orders her to have a slave's duty but a free tongue: servam operam, linguam liberam erus iussit med habere (Per. 281). Tyndarus raises the legal question of private and public ownership of a slave when he asks Hegio about the status of his captive son in Elis: sed is privatam servitutum servit illi an publicam (Cap. 334)? The two slaves who battle for Casina on behalf of their masters

Sklavenfiguren des Plautus und Terenz (Wiesbaden, 1960).

42 He refers to transactions in the Ps., As., Rud., and Per., among others. See especially his introduction to Chapter One, J. Aubert, Business Managers in Ancient Rome, (Leiden/New York/Köln, 1994).

are metaphorically designated to other appropriate servile positions, a vilicus for the senex and an armiger for the adulescens (Cas. 52;55). Gelasimus, a parasite, describes himself as a slave boy for sale with all the trappings: venalis ego sum cum ornamentis omnibus (St. 172). When Pyrgopolynices questions Palaestrio about the woman who is supposed to be in love with him he asks whether she is freeborn or a slave freed by means of a festuca, a rod that is part of the ceremony to set a slave free (Mi. 961). Truculentus accuses Astaphium of trying to claim her freedom falsely by showing that she owns property in the form of brass rings: mancupion qui accipias, gestas tecum ahenos anulos? (Tru. 274). He also wants to bet her that the coins she has are wooden, not silver: pignus da ni ligneae haec sint quas habes Victorias (Tru. 274-5).⁴³ The young woman engaged by Epidicus declares her moral and social standing with the statement that no one can buy her for any money because she has been free for five years (Ep. 497-8). Dordalus boasts that he is a good citizen because he has made the Attic state greater and increased the citizenry by one female: auxi civi femina (Per. 474-5). This is the girl he mistakenly believes is a slave and has set free under the orders of Toxilus: fac sit mulier libera (Per. 438). Charinus declares he will free Acantho in a few months: liberum caput tibi faciam cis paucos mensis (Mer. 153). In reference to a slave being in

43 The Victoria refers to a silver coin, perhaps hung as earrings.

possession of money one finds Lysidamus accusing Chalinus of being a worthless slave who has not saved a lead cent: quoi homini hodie peculi nummus non est plumbeus (Cas. 258). Antipho recognizes the cost of slaves when he says that slaves are forgetful in their work but they remember to claim their food every month: vos [servi] meministis quot kalendis petere demensum cibum (St. 60).

Although the Plautine servus has been most commonly recognized as a defining character for Latin Comedy, the importance of slavery in the plays is more than a repeated character pattern of Pseudolus. If one looks only at the role of slavery that is manifest in the stereotyped characters, valuable references and historical evidence will be overlooked. The references set out above present a complex variety of details that flesh out the status and predicament of slaves who, after all, had to make room for the freedmen at the theatre or pay for their seats (Poe. 23-24). Roman slaves were not the Aristotelian tools of the Politics. However inhumane the practice of slavery was, the assumed end of Roman slavery was freedom (if one avoided death). It is important to note the contemporary fact that after Cannae, some 8,000 slaves were recruited for the army.⁴⁴ Thus their status was in no way considered an innate attribute. Some of these same ex-

44 et aliam formam novi dilectus inopia liberorum capitum ac necessitas dedit: octo milia iuvenum validorum ex servitiis, prius sciscitantes singulos vellente militare, empta publice armaverunt (Liv. 22.57.11).

slaves undoubtedly were a part of Plautus' audience.

* * *

The above cross section of the customs that were presented on the comic stage reveals the complexity of the world of the characters and the manifold variations and possibilities of the actions they describe. We see in some detail the specific aspects of culture that the Plautine texts highlight and the wide range of cultural information that was presented on the stage. These portrayals of daily customs by Greek comic characters do not have to be an exact reflection of the audience's contemporary social reality in order to have contemporary social significance. They provide, rather, an important insight into the intellectual composition of the period, into ways in which the cultural aspects of the world were portrayed and considered. The significance of these references, moreover, demands that they be considered in light of the contemporary Roman and Italian audience. This audience, after all, had to complete the verbal images that were presented by the characters on the stage. As important as Plautus' sources are to modern scholarship, they were of little consequence to those who enjoyed his plays. Comedy's impact must be immediate. As with any genre, certain methods of expression and specific manners of portrayal establish an

internal standard of what is normal, but for comedy to be effective both the content and the context must be immediately familiar. 'In-jokes' or jokes of foreign national character or politics have little or no comic effect to an audience unaware of the people referred to or the background details. Comedy lives in its relevance to contemporary circumstance or contemporary knowledge and it must maintain a common ground with its audience in order to survive.

The customs of the Plautine characters are focused through the Latin language of the plays and it is through the cultural lenses of the audience that they have contemporary significance. Many of the ways of doing things that the characters describe are simply common to the Mediterranean world of the period. Much of the apparent cultural duality of Greek and Roman ways of doing things is not a contemporary duality, it is a reflection of the homogenous Hellenistic culture that is actively developing at the time. Whatever mannerisms the actors affected, they are not consistently voiced through the language that describes the customs that are portrayed on stage. Drama by etymological definition is action, and this action, whether comic or tragic, imitates to some degree the human condition, either physically or psychologically. This Aristotelian imitation in turn can be analysed as a historical event in itself since the drama performed is an integral aspect of the audience's own

experience. The contemporary mindset is therefore in part understood by examining the manner in which the customs of human life are portrayed on the comic stage.

CHAPTER THREE

PLACES

nunc regiones, limites, confinia determinabo (Poe. 48-9).

As the first two chapters have demonstrated, the Latin language has a significant influence on the nature of Plautus' comedies. The playwright uses many culturally-oriented linguistic conventions. His characters present many of their customs in familiar Latin terms. At the same time, however, the playwright maintains the tradition of a Greek dramatic setting for his plays. All of the extant comedies are situated somewhere other than the Latin-speaking urbes of contemporary Roman Italy. Indeed, the foreign settings define the plays as palliatae, since it is on account of the setting that the characters can wear Greek dress.¹ Critics often suggest that the distancing of the dramatic setting in this manner has the effect of separating the unRoman acts and exploits of the characters from any immediate connection to the audience. However recognizable the words and customs presented on the stage, the audience will in the end dismiss the characters and their exploits as foreign. But if both the customs and the language of the comic stage shape the material so that it is familiar to the audience, then one might want to consider whether there were any aspects of place with which

¹ In contrast, the Latin plays that were set in Italy are known as Togatae.

the audience could easily identify as well. If one needs another justification to examine the material in regard to place, one need only note that the dramatic settings are far from being the only place references in the texts of Plautus.

One critical argument against placing too much significance upon the places and the dramatic settings of Plautine comedy begins from the physical aspects of the stage itself. The generic type of scene containing two houses, shrine and opposing exits to the port or highway on the one side, and the centre of town on the other, such critics assume, lessens the significance of the city or country in which the action takes place because the local place references are essentially interchangeable from play to play.² But such an argument is based upon questionable assumptions. First is the assumption that the audience made a conscious and continuous demarcation between the places portrayed on stage and their own world. Second is the assumption that one can measure exactly what is important within both the context of the play and the social context of the theatre on some kind of definitive relative scale. What we now think was significant and what was then significant are not necessarily the same things. Third is the assumption that the principal focus on

² G. Hahn, at least, concludes that the physical appearance of the stage need not change: Mutari aspectum proscaeni in omnibus viginti fabulis nusquam necesse est. G. Hahn Scaenicae Quaestiones Plautinae (Gryphiswaldiae, 1867) p.7.

stereotyped characters cast within limited plot possibilities overwhelms the significance of either the stage or the dramatic setting of the play. The above arguments, most importantly, ignore most of the place references in Plautus. They take their lead from a particular angle of questioning that diminishes the peripheral content of the comedies. They do not take into consideration that the role of place extends beyond simply the generic stage setting of 'some Greek city state'. The characters frequently refer to a diversity of locations in the city itself and to the distant world, all of which merit due consideration.

The plays contain references to a variety of places, many of which develop their own extended meanings. First, in the immediate vicinity of the stage area, the characters create the urban surroundings by a network of references to local places such as the forum and the port. Second, the city-state setting itself, even if one grants that the city-state chosen for the dramatic settings of the plays is somewhat generic and therefore inconsequential to the action, maintains a consistent presence to the characters of the plays and they in turn communicate this presence to the audience. In most of the plays the characters declare where they are, and Plautus carefully maintains an internal consistency. Moreover, Plautus varies the city-state setting from play to play whenever it is necessary for some specific dramatic purpose or

because of the necessities of the plot. The plays are not all simply set in Athens. Third, at a farther remove from the stage, the characters make frequent reference to many parts of the world that are not only distant from Rome but also distant from the setting of the play itself. These references reveal the extent of the world that was presented to a Latin-speaking audience on the comic stage and shed some light on how that world was portrayed.

Independent literary evidence for the physical description of Middle Republican Rome itself survives in only a few details that can be found in sources such as Livy. In the best example concerning events contemporary to our purposes, the historian recognizes that Rome of 210 was somewhat different from the city which currently surrounded him. In this passage he details the fires that broke out in various sites around the forum in that year:

Interrupit hos sermones nocte quae pridie Quinquatrus fuit pluribus simul locis circa forum incendium ortum. Eodem tempore septem tabernae quae postea quinque, et argentariae quae nunc novae appellantur, arsere; comprehensa postea privata aedificia -- neque enim tum basilicae erant -- comprehensae lautumiae forumque piscatorium et atrium regium; aedis Vestae vix defensa est tredecim maxime servorum opera, qui in publicum redempti ac manu missi sunt (Livy 26.27.1-4).

A fire interrupted such talk (various complaints of the general populace), it flared up around the forum in several places on the night before the Quinquatrus. At the same time The Seven Shops burned (afterwards, The Five), and the banking houses which are now called New; later, private buildings were engulfed -- at that time there were no basilicae -- the stone quarries, the fish market and the Royal

Atrium; scarcely saved was the shrine of Vesta by the great efforts of thirteen slaves who were bought by the state and manumitted (in recognition of this act).

However briefly, this passage portrays the destruction of a central area of Rome which was known by its shops, banks and temple of Vesta. If one sifts out the same type of references from the texts of Plautus, one notes that the characters of his comedies often give details of the city of their dramatic setting that are similar. For example, the historian and the playwright maintain a certain parallel in that they both mention shops, stone quarries,³ bankers' stalls and specific fora. Like modern cities, of course, ancient cities had similar identifiable features so that whichever city one is in, one may expect to find the same types of buildings and establishments in similarly established areas. The fact that cities are described in history and in comedy with a similar focus makes all the literary references valuable. The places mentioned in Plautus can speak for themselves even in the boundaries of their own context. This chapter examines place in Plautus by gathering together the most prominent references to various places and noting the consistencies and the associations. For ease of analysis, the places are arranged in three groupings: the descriptions of the urban setting immediate to the stage; the city-states themselves that are

³ The main prison in Rome is called the Lautumiae by Varro L.L. 5.32.42.151; Livy says that the Aetolian princes were thrown there (37.3). See below for Plautine references to lautumiae and carceres.

the dramatic settings for the comedies; and, the references to places of the world that are distant to the stage setting.

* * *

INTERNAL CITY STRUCTURE

Each of the twenty plays is structured within a localized framework where the action and the reported action occur. The characters themselves create this framework by their references to various places and by their physical descriptions of the immediate city where some of the dramatic action takes place. The descriptions may be no more than brief references to the port or to the forum that are given to denote the direction of an entrance or an exit; but internal setting descriptions are present as well in more detailed lists and accounts of specific places. The consistencies in the details given by various characters reveal what places concerned them as well as the associations to a particular place that were common on the comic stage. The first section of this chapter examines the specific places of the city and its environs. The following is a list of the places considered here that are local to the Plautine stage.

Rus/ Urbs
 Rome itself
 Generic City Descriptions
 The Forum
 Specific Fora -- Velabrum
 -- macellum
 Comitium, Senatus
 Portum
 Portae
 Taberna, Tonstrina, Balneum
 Carcer
 Pistrinum
 Domus

RUS/ URBS

One prominent demarcation in the description of off-stage action is that between the city and the country. Both the rus and the urbs have their own particular associations of human activity and industry. But one finds as well that the country itself has two distinct characteristics that denote the degree of distance from urban life. This distinction marks the difference between the cultivated country of the farm and the wild, uncivilized wasteland. The best example of this is the shipwreck in the opening of the Rudens which describes the desolation that one experiences outside the influence of any human society. Palaestra and Ampelisca are shipwrecked on what they describe as a wild shoreline and furthermore they are lost to each other as well. In their soliloquies subsequent to their reunion, they each portray the desolation of the place where they find themselves tossed ashore:

ita hic sola solis locis compotita sum.
 hic saxa sunt, hic mare sonat,
 neque quisquam homo mihi obviam venit (206a).
 Hoc quod induta sum, summae opes oppido,
 nec cibo nec loco tecta quo sim scio:
 quae mihi spes qua me vivere velim (Ru. 205-09)?

So, here alone I am placed in a lonely place.
 Here are rocks, here the sea roars
 without any person coming to meet me.
 These clothes are all I have, my only hope in the world,
 neither do I see food, nor place for shelter:
 what hope do I have by which I might wish to live?

Although Palaestra laments her plight with an exaggerated flourish of rhetorical histrionics and poetry, the underlying sentiments present an image of the individual human life absolutely dependent upon the established structures of human society. The combination of food, habitation, hope and life is echoed by her companion Ampelisca, who at first also finds herself alone: neque magis solae terrae solae sunt quam haec loca atque hae regiones (Ru. 227).⁴ They express their first hope of survival upon contact with each other when Ampelisca, on their meeting, tells her friend that she now wants to live: tu facis me quidem vivere ut nunc velim, quom mihi te licet tangere (Ru. 244-5). When they discover a shrine of Venus (a sign of human activity), Palaestra declares that they are near civilization: hau longe abesse oportet homines hinc... (Ru. 256). In another example of such desolation, when he learns that his fortunes were spent by his son, Theopropides expresses his current predicament in metaphorical terms of a

4 She contemplates suicide because of her solitude (Ru. 220-228).

trip to the ends of the earth (Mo. 995-6). He says that he is ruined because of his son and that this ruin can be compared to a journey beyond the (relatively recognizable) land of Egypt:

Perii, Hercle, quid opus verbis? ut verba audio
 non equidem in Aegyptum hinc modo vectus fui
 etiam in terras solas orasque ultimas
 sum circumvectus, ita ubi nunc sim nescio (Mo. 993-6).

I'm dead, Hercules, what can I say? As I hear it,
 I was not taken only as far as Egypt,
 but I sail around such lonely and distant shores
 that I don't know where I am now.

Plautus emphasizes the isolation of his situation by the equation of financial ruin with exile to the farthest ends of the earth. Theopropides makes good use of the traditional associations of distance from civilization and fear of the unknown that haunt the descriptions in the Rudens as well.

The images of the country, however, are not always so desolate and remote. They are more often replete with the kind of activities that are associated with the farm. The agricultural life maintains its own set of ideals and associations that are closer in some ways to the security of civilization, but that are still removed in particular ways from social refinement. Tranio, for example, states that the rustici come from the country: veniunt rure rustici... (Mo. 1076). These rustici, of course, are identified by their lack of social cultivation. Tranio, as one of the two slaves arguing in the opening scene of the Mostellaria, declares that

Granio's bawling is appropriate in the country: an ruri censes te esse? (Mo. 7). One also finds Astaphium accusing Truculentus of behaviour that is rus merum when he threatens to step on her like a sow on her piglets: quasi sus catulos pedibus (Tru. 266-69). Not all of the associations with the country, however, paint an unfavorable or boorish picture. Ergasilus draws the contrast between the hustle of the city and the relative quiet of the country in his remark that one goes to the country during the holidays: ubi res prolatae sunt, quom rus homines eunt (Cap. 78). Eutyclus lectures Charinus on the effects of love and recommends the country as a therapeutic place of exile for a lover (Mer. 649-57). But the death of the Epidamnian merchant, who drowned in a swelling river not far from the city when he went to the country (rus), perhaps suggests an inherent danger or fear (Men. 63-6). The country, moreover, is also simply a convenient place for a character such as Callicles to be when the plot dictates his absence for a specific time from the stage (Tri. 166). When Alcesimarchus enters the stage, he mentions that his father has kept him for six days on the estate: ita pater apud villam detinuit me hos dies sex ruri continuos (Ci. 225-6). The farm or the country estate, as Stasimus notes, is an important source of wealth and sustenance. Stasimus fears that Lesbonicus might give away his only means of survival as a dowry for his sister (Tri. 561). In another business deal, Libanus and Leonida detail

the transportation of goods between the city and the country when they invoke the burden of a mule carrying its load to and from the country:

Leon.[asini], qui tibi subvectabant rure
huc virgas ulmeas.
 Lib. Teneo, atque idem te hinc vexerunt
vinctum rus (As. 341-2).

Leon. The asses that always brought you elm rods
from the country.
 Lib. I get your meaning, and the same ones that took
you back, chained.

From a slave's perspective, of course, estate life in the country is very different from what the estate-owner sees. Chrysalus thinks of the farm as a place of suffering where one finds rods (virgae) and slave whipping: si illi (Nicobulus) sunt virgae ruri... (Ba. 365). In all, the stereotypical images of rusticity associated with boorishness and hard labor are only a small part of all the ideas presented on the comic stage.

In contrast to the wilds of the uninhabited lands and the slightly more civilized rural farmland, the images of the city and its locations are far more numerous and complex. One finds a few statements about the nature of the city as an entity in itself used as a metaphor for the quality of the inhabitants. When the disguised Persian girl is asked about her impressions of Athens, she begins her observations by maintaining that there may be a distinction between the appearance of the city and the behaviour of the people: urbis

speciem vidi, hominum mores perspexi parum,... (Per. 550). While the Persian girl is obliquely commenting on the actions of her father in allowing her to be placed in such a situation as she finds herself in, her comment also maintains a general moral contrast. Hegio follows Ergasilus' catalogue of local Latin towns with the characterization of the cities he swears by as barbaricae (Cap. 884).⁵ Hegio wants an immediate response from the audience members who are either from the towns that Ergasilus has mentioned or are in agreement with him. The counsellors in the Poenulus maintain that within the city it befits freedmen to walk with a measured pace, while haste signals servitude (Poe. 522-23). By this statement, the freedmen are parodying the affectations of freedmen in the city of Rome and making fun of the character of the slave on the comic stage. Megadorus comments on ostentation and extravagance versus practicality, when he says that one now sees more vehicles in front of a town house than in front of an estate in the country (Au. 505ff). The vehicles, he continues, are the means of transportation for the various tradesmen, who are apparently necessary to maintain a fashionable life in the city. One notes that all these general characterizations of the city are closely linked with character traits of the inhabitants of the city.

⁵ This passage is more closely examined in the third section of this chapter.

ROME

The most detailed description of a city-scape given on the comic stage is the panoramic vision of the Choragus, or company manager, who presents Rome when he enters at line 462 of the Curculio.⁶ Most scholastic debate on this passage begins from the premise that the soliloquy is absolutely disconnected from the play. But if one considers the passage in context and compares the choragus passage closely with sites mentioned in other comedies and with the moralistic strain of the Curculio as a whole, important similarities emerge. Timothy Moore, for example, maps out the places in Rome that this passage refers to.⁷ His analysis then connects the themes of the Choragus with the themes of the play. He does not, however use the material for comparison with place references in other comedies. Many of the places that the Choragus mentions are simply the standard fare of the comic stage. Moreover, it is certainly not the only place where Plautus has a moral comment on the contemporary social and

6 The problems associated with this passage include orthography, the historicity of the reference to the Basilica at Rome, and the Plautine authenticity of the whole passage. See G. Duckworth, 'Plautus and the basilica Aemilia', in Ut Pictura Poesis (Leiden, 1955); H. Bosscher, De Plauti Curculione, Disputatio (Lugduni-Batavorum, 1903) Chapt. 8.

7 Moore focuses on the similar use of descriptive terms for the characters of the comic stage and the 'characters' of Rome. Timothy J. Moore, "'Palliata Togata': Plautus, Curculio 462-86", AJPh 112 (1991) 343-62.

Cloacina, the temple of Castor, the Tuscan quarter and the Velabrum. Although it is impossible to determine to what extent this description of Rome corresponds to contemporary social activity, the passage nevertheless offers a comparative basis for the rest of the urban details that one finds in Plautus. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of this passage is not the degree of its historical accuracy, but the close parallel between the character types that the Choragus focuses on and some of the basic character types of the comic stage itself. He is in effect portraying the city of Rome as a stage with a cast of characters from comedy. One finds the same opposition between the 'good' character and the 'bad' character in the plots of Latin Comedy, e.g. the adulescens vs. senex or leno vs. adulescens. If the intention of the passage is to humorously create a corollary between the comic stage and contemporary reality, then the Choragus passage suggests that there might be moral implications to place reference in all the comedies. The Choragus highlights specific places with the associations of cheating husbands, prostitutes and usurers that create an image of Rome through a kind of satirical 'catalogue of corruption'. Although this speech is formally presented as external to the plot, it nevertheless maintains some consistencies that are coherent with references and associations to the internal locations of the city within the context of the Curculio as well as the cities detailed in other plays. These parallels will be

examined in the following sub-section.

There are a few other appearances of Rome on the comic stage, some of which also correspond to the places in the Choragus passage. There are two references to specific fora in Rome itself. The Velabrum is a market particular to Rome and appears in the passage where Ergasilus complains that the oil dealers in the Velabrum price their product in collusion: omnes de compecto rem agunt, quasi in Velabro olearii. (Cap. 489). When Euclio enters the stage detailing his excursion to the macellum, he says that he looked for fish and meat, but it was all too expensive (Au. 373-5). Varro discusses the various fora of the first century. Varro mentions two of the sites one finds in Plautus, the macellum, which he, in contrast to Plautus, tells us sold vegetables in bulk, and the forum piscarium.¹⁷ In another play, Callicles mentions the crown of Capitoline Jupiter:

nam nunc ego si te surrupuisse suspicer
Iovi coronam de capite ex Capitolio
qui in columine astat summo (Tri. 83-5).

As if now I suspect that you have stolen
Jupiter's crown from his head off the Capitoline statue
that stands on the high beam.

The Capitol is also found in the Curculio. When Cappadox tells his dream to the cook he mentions how Aesculapius had

17 Varro notes that the forum holitorium used to be the old Macellum; he even quotes Plautus (Cu. 474) in his list of fori (L.L. 5-146); see also Paul. Fest. where six meanings are given to the word Forum.

ignored him. To this the cook replies that he should lie in the temple of Jupiter under whose auspices Cappadox swears his oaths. Cappadox replies that if all perjurers were to do that there would not be enough room on the Capitol: Siquidem incubare velint qui peieraverint, locu' non praeberi potis est in Capitolio (Cu. 268-9). In one final reference to the environs of a city that might be Rome, Euclio says that he is going to hide his treasure in the grove of Silvanus, outside the walls (Au. 674). Even though only a small proportion of the body of Latin Comedy survives and must serve as a representative of a much greater body of work, it reveals that references to specific sites of Rome played a significant role on the palliata stage. The Roman place references connect the plays securely to their actual place of performance.¹⁸

GENERIC CITY-SCAPES

There are a few other extended passages describing the city-scape of the dramatic setting that include references to particular locations. Some of the details in these passages have similarities to the choragus passage.¹⁹ Amphitryon, for example, lists the places of the town where he has looked for

18 see also Porta Trigemina infra.

19 Eutychus searches the city as well but he does not describe his search: defessus sum urbam totam pervenarier (Mer. 805).

same types of areas and the same specific places. If one compares these two descriptions with the details of the Choragus passage, a number of points coincide. All three descriptions focus on various sites of trade and places of relaxation. Specifically, the markets are an important area of town that suggest both business and busyness. One finds references to the general area of the forum, and specifically the Velabrum, the Lower Market (forum infumum), the forum piscarium and the macellum. Other places of commerce listed are the emporium, the veteres tabernae, the argentariae, the tonstrinae, the myropolium, and the medicinae. The Amphitruo and the Curculio passages highlight sacred sites in the Cloacinae sacrum, the aedem Castoris and the inclusive omnes aedes sacrae. Other city features, the palaestra and the gymnasium, are associated with recreation. The Choragus passages contains almost all of the references that specifically suggest the city of Rome. These include the comitia, perhaps the basilica, the Leucadia Opimia, the canalis, the lacus, and the Tuscan Quarter. But thematically the passages focus in on similar places of the city.²⁰

One other passage presents an interesting view of a city-scape. Epidicus describes the return of an army and the accompanying crowd that fills the streets:

20 The Tuscan Quarter was beside the Velabrum and since it apparently was the site of the first Etruscan settlers, it must have been one of the oldest areas of Rome (Livy 2.14.9).

Quia ego ire vidi milites plenis viis;
 arma referunt et iumenta ducunt....
 Tum captivorum quid ducunt secum! pueros, virgines,
 binos, ternos alius quinque; fit concursus pervias,
 filios suos quisque visunt....
 Tum meretricum numerus tantus, quantum in urbe
 omni fuit,
 obviam ornatae occurrebant suis quaeque amatoribus,
 eos captabant (Ep. 208-14).

Because I saw soldiers marching through
 the crowded streets;
 They were carrying their weapons and led the carriages...
 First, what captives they brought with them! boys, girls,
 two, three, some five each; the traffic jams the streets,
 everyone wants to see their own son...
 Then, as many prostitutes as the whole city has,
 decked out they run to meet their own lovers,
 and capture them.

This return of a victorious army through crowded streets of the city suggests, though it does not describe of course, a Triumphal procession. The characterization of the soldiers with their spoils (iumenta) and the courtesans in full regalia again parodies the seriousness of a real triumph by focusing on two of the main characters in comedy.

FORUM

The forum is one of the most frequent off-stage references in Plautus. As noted in the passages above, sometimes a character will specify the forum as a particular market, but for the most part it is a general reference. It is, at times, little more than a convenient place to which a character who has fulfilled his function in the present scene

may remove himself. Likewise, characters who enter the stage from the forum may specify the location as a simple convenience rather than an integral part of either their own characterization or the plot.²¹ In many examples however, the characters invest the forum with various associations in their descriptions. Simo contrasts leisure and business when he declares that he is going to the forum rather than to rest after his meal (Mo. 707). He repeats this sentiment later when he declares that he is too busy to show Theopropides through the house: apud forum negotium (Mo. 844). In a commonplace differentiation between work and love, Lysiteles states that the lover flees the forum (Tri. 260). Lysiteles later in the play advises the adulescens Lesbonicus to attend to his friends in the forum rather than his amica in bed: in foro operam amicis da, ne in lecto amicae, ut solitus es (Tri. 651).

Because of the commercial functions of all fora, the business of moneylending is, of course, an obvious association. Dordalus tells us that the forum is the place the bankers (argentarii) hurry to as soon as one lends them money (Per. 433-36), presumably to reinvest it in high-interest loans. On the other side of the financial coin,

21 For the physical aspects of the Plautine stage see: itaque in omnibus viginti fabulis alter in forum ferat aditus necesse est. De altero aditu tribus in fabulis (Aulularia, Casina, Cistellaria) nihil constat... (G. Hahn Scaenicae quaestiones Plautinae (Gryphis Waldiae, 1867) p.10.

Leonida says that he has spent three days looking for a loan in the forum (As. 428-9). At the conclusion of the opening scene of the Asinaria, Demaenetus as well is going to see his banker in the forum:

Dem. apud Archibulum ego ero argentarium.
 Lib. nempe in foro?
 Dem. ibi, si quid opus fuerit. (As. 116-7)²²

Dem. I will be at Archibulus', the banker.
 Lib. In the forum, you mean?
 Dem. There, if you need me.

As a lender, Stasimus expects to find the fellow to whom he lent a talentum in the forum (Tri. 727-28). So the business of the forum on the Plautine stage includes the associations of bankers and loan sharks who play an important role in the comic plots themselves, but who were also an aspect of contemporary Roman society as the Choragus passage suggests (Cu. 480).

The buying and selling of goods and services also appears as an activity located in the forum described on the comic stage. Some characters, for example, recognize the forum as a place to hire help. Megadorus goes to the forum to hire a sycophant necessary to execute his scheme (Tri. 815). Pythodicus returns from the forum where he says his master has bought provisions and procured cooks and flute-players for the intended wedding (Au. 280-2). Ballio, griping because he

²² Demaenetus reiterates that he is going to the forum and the banker (As. 125-6).

feels cheated, complains that the forum coquinum where he hired a cook is really the furinum forum (Ps. 790-1). Charinus includes a number of products that he associates with the marketplace which he calls a pantopolium: it sells all kinds of different drinks such as myrrh wine, raisin wine, must, mead and honey as you like it: murrinam, passum, defrutum, mellam, mel quoivismodi (Ps. 741-2). The financial dealings of the fora of the comic stage reflect a variety of merchandise and tend to focus in on the humor of complaining about the high cost of living.

The forum is not inevitably a place of financial transactions. Simia mysteriously declares that most men in the forum do not recognize themselves: nam in foro vix decumus quisque est qui ipse sese noverit (Ps. 973). Perhaps this is a comment upon the perpetual bustling industry of the place. Apoecides says that he is off to the forum to act as a witness (advocatus) for a friend who is involved in some unspecified business he calls res magna (Ep. 422-3). Hegio fears the forum as a place of rumour when he realizes that he has been duped:

quod cum scibitur, tum per urbem inridebor.
 Cum extemplo ad forum advenero, omnes loquentur:
 hic ille senex doctus, quoi verba data sunt
 (Cap. 785-87).

Which once it is known, then I will be derided
 through the city.
 As soon as I arrive in the forum, all will say:
 this is the learned old man, who was tricked.

Ballio knows that the forum is the place for public flagellation (Ps. 1145). Simo tells Theopropides that he has just returned from the forum where he witnessed a funeral procession (Mo. 998-1002). Finally, the prologue of the Casina notes the calm of the forum while the festival is on: ludi sunt, ludus datus est argentariis; tranquillum est, Alcedonia sunt circum forum (Cas. 25-6). While the forum of the comic stage concentrates on business, it is perhaps first and foremost recognized as an important center of social activity for the city.

COMITIUM, SENATUS

References to the comitium on the comic stage are divided between the location and the political function. Agorastocles asks his attendant witnesses to meet him in the Comitium the next morning in order to prosecute the leno Lycus whom he has tricked (Poe. 807-8). His vilicus, Collybiscus, disguised as a Spartan freedman, has given Lycus his master's money under the pretense of a legal exchange. In another example, Peniculus complains that only those who have eaten should be caught in such public assemblies because of the enormous amount of time they consume:

quibu' negoti nihil est, qui essum neque vocatur
neque vocant:
 eos oportet contioni dare operam
atque comitieis (Men. 459-60).

Those who have no business, who are not invited out
 nor inviting others for lunch:
 they should be industrious at the assemblies
 and the courts.

The connection between perjury and the comitium mentioned by the Choragus in the Curculio is consistent with the function of the comitium as a court. In a brief exchange, Lyco and Curculio play on the words forum and comitium. They play with both the political function and the public aspect of the locations:

Curc.quaeso ne me incomities.
 Lyco Licetne inforare, si incommitare non licet?
 Curc. Non inforabis me quidem, nec mihi placet
 tuom profecto nec forum nec comitium
 (Curc. 400-3).

Curc. ... please do not publically insult me.
 Lyco Can I accuse you in court then,
 if not insult you in public?
 Curc. You cannot accuse me in court, I don't like
 at all your forum nor your comitium.

The political association of the comitium can be found in other comedies as well. Three characters invoke the comitia as the judicial assembly that decides life and death sentences. Ballio specifically describes Pseudolus' power as the Centurian Court that decides over his 'life and death' situation: Pseudolus mihi centuriata habuit capitis comitia (Ps. 1232). Lyconides, concerned for the outcome of his suit to marry Phaedria, also compares it to a capital judgment: ibo intro, ubi capite meo sunt comitia (Au. 700).²³

23 The third example is Diniarchus: meo illic nunc sunt capiti comitia (Tru. 819).

The senate appears on the Plautine stage as well. Most of the references are to the senate as a council meeting, but two in particular seem to at least suggest a specific place. When Demipho returns to the stage he says that he has come from the senate: ex senatu (Ci. 776). In another play, Artemona says that her husband Demaenetus is in the senate: eum...in senatu dare operam (As. 871). Elsewhere, senatus is used in reference to some kind of meeting. Tranio uses the senate as a metaphor for self-consultation: dum mi senatum consili in cor convoco (Mo. 688). Perplectomenus calls the meeting that he is about to have with Pleusicles a full senate: frequens senatus poterit nunc haberier (Mi. 594). In a political reference Cleostrata describes her husband as a pillar of the senate: senati columen (Cas. 536).

PORTUM

The port is another location frequently mentioned by the characters of the Plautine stage. As a reflection of the assumed transient society that is the background of the comedies, the harbour often plays an important role in the world travels of the characters. Obviously, the first association of any port, fictitious or not, is with the

arrivals and departures of ships.²⁴ Other references include activities in the port itself. Sagaristio elaborates on the pretense of the captive Persian girl to Dordalus by declaring that she recently arrived in the port: nam heri in portum noctu navis venit (Per. 577). The harbour is also mentioned in advance of a character's arrival in the Stichus when Panegyris sends Pinacium, her scout, to watch for Epignomus' arrival from Asia (St. 363ff.). Messenio describes the custom of meretrices sending a scout to the port in order to inquire about foreign ships and the names of those on board, presumably seeking out potential business: si qua peregrina navis in portum advenit, rogitant [meretrices] quoiatis sit (Men. 340).²⁵ Nicobulus enters the stage from his house declaring his intention of going to the Piraeus to look for his son's merchant ship: ibo in Piraeum visam ecquae advenerit in portum ex Epheso navis mercatoria (Ba. 236).²⁶ The arrival of trading goods on the comic stage also includes the association of paying customs duties.²⁷ Cleareta, for example, figuratively compares the customs-house at the harbour with the doors of a brothel: portitorum similumae sunt ianua lenoniae (As. 241).

24 See the Second Chapter for examples of ships as a means of transportation.

25 For the complete passage see Men. 338-43.

26 The Piraeus as a specific port is found only in the plays set in Athens but it is not specified in all of them, e.g. Ba. 235; Tri. 1103.

27 On portitores see Chapter Two, 'Public Offices and Civic Duties'.

The port is also depicted as another area where mercantile business takes place. Demipho goes directly to the port in order to find his neighbour, Lysidamus, and ask him to purchase his heart's desire, Pasicompsa (Mer. 466-68). Demipho's original reason for going to the port was some sort of business transaction:

ad portum hinc abii mane cum luci semul;
 postquam id quod volui transegi,
 atque ego conspicor
 navim ex Rhodo quast heri advectus filius (Mer. 255-7).

I left here for the port at the break of dawn;
 after I had conducted the business I wanted, I saw
 the ship from Rhodes that yesterday brought my son.

Tranio mentions the Piraeus as the place where he will procure some fish: ego ire in Piraeum volo, in vesperum parare piscatum mihi (Mo. 66-67). In the Rudens, Plesidippus wants to take Labrax to the port where he expects to find a carnifex, because, one assumes, this type of profession would be found outside of the town walls. He tells Trachalio to tell the others who are out of town by the sea to return to the city port where he can hand over Labrax to the hangman: iube illos in urbem ire obviam ad portum mihi quos mecum duxi, hunc [Labrax] qui ad carnificem traderent (Ru. 856-7). Plautus also sets the arrival of Amphitryon at the port (Am. 400). Sosia says that he has been sent to his master's home from the port by Amphitryon as a messenger to Alcmena (Am. 195). These declarations have led some scholars to question the reliability of places referred to on the comic stage

because there is no port geographically near Thebes. But as Blackman has pointed out, Thebes had a port in Anthedon and one must simply measure the time of travel between this port and Thebes as a quick 'stage' time.²⁸

PORTAE

The gates of the ancient city fixed a demarcation that was both territorial and religious. In Plautus, portae reveal other interesting associations. Epidicus, for example, in the passage that depicts the return of a victorious army (quoted above pp.160-61), mentions having seen Acropolistis, falsely labelled as a tibicina, by a gate with four other flute girls: quom ad portam venio, atque ego illam illi video praestolarier et cum ea tibicinae ibant quattuor (Ep. 217-18). Philto laments that when Charmides returns from abroad he will end up by the portae because of the profligacy of his son: pater quom peregre veniet, in porta locus, nisi forte in ventrum filio conrepserit (Tri. 423-4)). He will either become a beggar or he will have to crawl into his son's stomach where all his wealth now lies. Ergasilus states that parasites who do not live up to certain standards might as

28 This topic is best covered by D.J. Blackman, 'Plautus and Greek topicality' TAPA 100 (1969) 11-22. Blackman suggests that the ex portu Persico at (Am. 403) refers to the Port of Perseus rather than a Persian Port.

well go into exile with their beggar's wallet. He specifically mentions exile as being outside the Trigeminan gate: ire extra portam Trigeminam ad saccum licet (Cap. 90).²⁹ Other characters also express place in relationship to an urban area as the difference between being inside and outside the portae. Menaechmus from Syracuse declares that he has never been to Epidamnus before by denying his presence intra portam (Men. 400). Pyrgopolynice's slave tells us that Pleusicles and Philocomasium began to embrace as soon as they had left the city, apparently secure in the knowledge that they had escaped the leno's legal reach: nam postquam porta exierunt nil cessarunt ilico osculari atque amplexari inter se (Mi. 1432-33). Hegio also draws the internal-external contrast in his demarcation of extra portam, where he notes that the stone quarries (lapicidinae) can be found (Cap. 735).³⁰ Pseudolus uses the same phrase when he says that he must go outside of the city to fetch the metaphorical slaughterers (lanii) for the sacrifice he has planned (Ps. 331-34).³¹ Harpax enters the stage looking for Ballio's house and he recites directions that use a porta as their reference point: septumas esse aedis a porta ubi ille habitat Leno (Ps. 597). Similarly, Simia

29 A gate at the foot of Mount Aventine, Livy 4.16.2; 35.10.2. Lindsay suggests that he would be waiting there to be hired as a porter or a messenger (Captivi 1887, note).

30 cf. Men. 359.

31 Nixon notes on this line that 'executioners lived outside the Esquiline Gate'.

looks for the alley where he will find Ballio's house that he has been told is sixth from a gate: habui numero sedulo: hoc est sextum a porta proximum angiportum, in id angiportum me devorti iusserat quotumas aedis dixerit, id ego admodum incerto scio (Ps. 960-62).³² So he may not know the number of the dwelling itself, but he at least knows the alley. The portae of the comic stage assume the association of frequent traffic, commercial interaction of a low social order and the demarcation of the city itself.

TABERNA, TONSTRINA, BALNEUM

Some of the characters refer to places in town that offer rest and recreation. As another manifestation of the travel theme that is so much a part of Latin Comedy one finds a few references to lodgings that some characters seek for the night. The lodgings that the transient characters seek are called different names and have several different associations. The taberna, for example, is the lodging where characters spend the night in both the Menaechmi (436) and the Pseudolus (658). In the Truculentus, the eponymous hero uses the term taberna euphemistically to suggest a place where one

32 Hares also exit ex porta when released at the games (Per. 435-36). Chrysalus mentions the gates at Troy in his extended analogue of his own scheme and the sack of Troy: Portae Phrygiae limen (Ba. 955); cf. Ba. 711,978.

might expect to lose one's money. This suggests either excessive prices, expensive drinks, gambling or perhaps a brothel:

in tabernam ducor devorsoriam
ubi male accipiar mea mihi pecunia (Tru. 697-99).

I am being led into a devouring taverna where I will be received for my money to my loss.

The brothel is known by many different names. *Lysiteles* refers to a brothel as an assembly place of loss: damni conciliabulum (Tri. 314).³³ *Cleostrata*, who wants to know which brothel her husband has been in, asks him: ubi in lustra iacuisti? (Cas. 242). *Lycus* characterizes *Pistoclerus* as one who reclines in a brothel: ille est qui in lupanari accubat (Ba. 454). But hostels and brothels are not the only places of rest and recreation described on the comic stage. For a drinking establishment, the *Choragus* mentions the thermopolium (Cu. 292). *Stasimus*, in a mock self-inquiry, says that he had forgotten his slave-ring in the bar after stuffing himself. Presumably he used it to pay: satin in thermopolio condalium es oblitus, postquam thermopotasti gutturem? (Tri. 1013-14) *Menaechmus II*, concerned about both his purse and *Messenio*, fears that his slave has immersed himself in an eatery that he calls by the name of ganeum (Men. 703, also As. 887).

The barber shop is portrayed as a local meeting place.

³³ Also at Ba. 80.

In recounting their searches through town, both Epidicus and Amphitryon note that the tonstrinae were places they look, in order to find someone (Ep. 198; Am. 1013). In another play, Leonida says that he was sitting in the barber shop where he met the adulescens who, with the money from the sale of the asses, is looking for Saurea, Demaenetus' atriensis (As. 347). He later says that at the time he was waiting for Libanus: Libanum in tonstrinam ut iusseram venire, is nullus venit (As. 408). Another gathering place in the city is the baths. Leonida says that the young man who brings money from the merchant of Pella is on his way to the baths: ille in balneas iturust (As. 357). When Stasimus lists the reasons why his master had squandered forty minae, he mentions his washing in the baths: elotum in balneis (Tri. 406). Charmides complains about the salty and cold quality of drink that Neptune, as a balneator, serves: ne thermopolium quidem ullum instruit ita salsam praehibet potionem et frigidam (Ru. 529-30). Two other places of recreation in town are the theatre and the exercise grounds. Ballio, the leno, refers to the customary abuse he receives as common fodder for the comic theatre: nugas theatri verba quae in comoediis solent lenoni dici, quae pueri sciunt (Ps. 1081-2). This admittedly refers to the institution rather than some physical location, but theatre as a complete concept includes all its aspects, play

performers, theatre and audience.³⁴ Congrio uses *gymnasium* figuratively to describe himself as the site of a workout that the *senex* has had in giving him a vigorous beating: ita me iste habuit senex gymnasium (*Au.* 410).

CARCER

In contrast to places of repose and recreation there are references to the local prison, *carcer*, which is mentioned as a site within the city walls. None of the references are to a specific jail, but the number of times the place is mentioned suggests that as a place of punishment it held a certain amount of fascination.³⁵ Naturally, this is a place of particular concern for the slave characters. Libanus, for example, calls Leonida a guard of a *carcer* as an insult: quid agis, custos carceris? (*As.* 297). Sosia enters the stage concerned that one of the *tres viri* might lock him up in jail (*Am.* 155). Cappadox threatens to put Therapontigonus and Phaedromus in jail to rot: at ego vos ambo in robusto carcere ut pereatis (*Cu.* 692-3). Menaechmus I, in his feigned mad

34 There was, of course, no permanent theatre in Rome until Pompey. He dedicated his theatre in the Campus Martius in 55 BCE.

35 Livy notes that in 212 BCE the tax farmers were either thrown in jail or exiled (25.4); also at (24.19). cf. carcer a coercendo, quod exire prohibentur. In hoc pars quae sub terra Tullianum, ideo quod aditum a Tullio rege. Quod Syracusis, ubi di <icti> causa custodiuntur, vocantur latomiae, <in> de lautumia translatum, quod hic quoque in eo loco lapidicinae fuerunt (Varro *L.L.* 5.151).

raving, describes incarceration as a punishment for the theft of Jupiter's sacred crown (Men. 941-2). Agorastocles threatens Lycus with the same fate while arguing over a sum of gold (Poe. 1408-10). Collybiscus comments on the conditions that one might find in such a place in comparison with the lodgings he seeks:

quia a muscis si mi hospitium quaererem
adveniens irem in carcerem recta via (Poe. 691-2).

Because if I sought lodgings without flies
upon arrival I would go directly to jail.

Harpax declares that Ballio's patria is a carcer (Ps. 1172). Charmides wishes that he had gone to prison rather than befriend Labrax, the shipwrecked leno (Ru. 498-9). Labrax is later threatened with exactly the same fate (Ru. 712-15). Libanus lists the carceres as one of a host of punishments that he has defeated by his trickery (As. 547-51). Epignomus accuses Gelasimus, the parasite, of not only being willing to go to a carcer to get dinner, but also to be hanged (St. 618-26). Paegnium, in an abusive verbal exchange with Sagaristio, wishes the latter was in jail without the means to pay: utinam vades desint, in carcere ut sis (Per. 289).

LAPIDICINAE, PISTRINUM

There are other places of punishment in Plautus as well. The stone quarry is the other place which the characters

equate with severe punishment. Hegio tells Tyndarus that he will go to the stone quarry to work: inde ibis porro in latomias lapidarias... (Cap. 723). He says that he will dig out twelve blocks a day or he will be whipped. The normal amount of work he says is eight blocks a day (Cap. 724-6). After Tyndarus is recognized for who he is, he returns from the quarry which he says is the very image of Acheron:

Vidi ego multa saepe picta, quae Acherunti fierent
cruciamenta, verum enim vero nulla adaeque est
Acheruns
atque ubi ego fui, in lapididinis.
illic ibi demumst locus,
ubi labore lassitudo est exigunda ex corpore
(Cap. 998-1001).

I have often seen many pictures, which depict the tortures of Acheron, but no torture of Acheron equals where I was in the stone quarries. There is a place where by labour weariness is worked out of the body.

The mill is also noted for its disagreeable conditions. Ergasilus maintains that the pistrinum is an odoriferous place by which one would rather not pass:

tum pistorum scrofipasci, qui alunt furfuribus sues
quarum odore praeterire nemo pistrinum potest
(Cap. 807-08).

Then those sow-feeding millers, who feed bran to their pigs because of whose stink no one can pass by the mill.

Pseudolus tells us that, for slaves, the pistrinum meant only one thing, hard work (Ps. 497-99). The most frequent association of the mill is with the punishment of slaves. Nicobulus, for example, threatens his slave Chrysalus with life-long punishment: ferratusque in pistrino aetatem conteras

(Ba. 781).³⁶ Gramio, when lambasting Tranio, declares that the latter will soon be slaving in the country at the mill (Mo. 16-19). Syncerastus mentions work at the mill while chained: ita me di ament, vel in lautumiis vel in pistrino mavelim agere aetatem praepeditus latere forti ferreo (Poe. 827-8). The Leno, Dordalus, verbally abuses Toxilus by calling him pistrinorum civitas (Per. 420), literally a state of mill workers.

DOMUS

The domus is one the physical stage components by which many of the main characters of Latin Comedy identify themselves. For the characters who live in the houses of the stage setting it is the physical part of their familia. The domus maintains a prominent place in the plots of most of the plays and in some plays the domus influences the action. These houses are, of course, no more than facades with a single door each, but several characters refer to a few of the details within the house when there is some action that takes place out of the audience's sight. Palaestrio, when he is covering up for Philocomasium, tells Sceledrus that what he thought he saw would have been impossible because of the structure of his master's house. He wonders aloud that there

36 also at Ps. 494, 534, 1060; Ep. 145.

is no passage between the two houses through which one might pass except the impluvium: neque solarium neque hortum, nisi per impluvium? (Mi. 340). Theopropides compares the private portico of his neighbour's house to the size of public porticoes (Mo. 910).³⁷ Tranio then confirms this comparison, avowing that he and Philolaches have measured all the public porticoes (Mo. 910-11). Stichus mentions an entrance through the back door to his house as an ostium posticum.³⁸ Demaenetus sneaks into Cleareta's house by the back way for his expected liaison with Philaenium:

angiporto illac per hortum circum iit clam,
ne quis videret huc ire familiarum (As. 741-3).

He went secretly from the street there through the garden so that none of his family would see him going.

Stichus says that he will visit his amica by crossing the garden (hortus) to reach the neighbouring house (St. 437). Similarly, Truculentus says that Stabax climbs over the wall (maceria) in the backyard to get to Phronesium's house (Tru. 300-5). Tranio describes the additions that he says Theopropides wants to build onto his own house:

sed senex
gynaecium aedificare volt hic in suis
et balinas et ambulacrum et porticum (Mo. 754-56).

But the old man
wants to build a women's room in his house
and baths, a walk-way and a portico.

37 Also, portisculus As. 518.

38 est enim hic ostium aliud posticum, nostrarum harum aedium (St. 449-50).

Euclio mentions the hearth in his kitchen as a focus (Au. 439). Lesbonicus, although he sold his father's house, retains a small room in the back that Callicles calls a posticulum (Tri. 194). The one impression of the domus in Plautus that stands out, perhaps, is just how little detail of it there is, considering that the house is such a strong focal point of the stage. A few of the details, such as the impluvium and the hortus are definitely Roman house features.

The city of the Plautine stage is a complex of many different sites. The characters add to these sites a number of interesting associations that allow us to enhance our knowledge of the manner in which places were described in Latin, in the Middle Republican era. The locations that fill out the city of the dramatic setting are essentially extensions of the stage itself. These places are all within travelling distance from the stage, and are easily travelled to and from by the characters during the course of the play. The references have been compiled in this manner in order to reveal with what frequency and in what variety these places made an appearance in the plays and their relative importance to the working of the plays. For the most part they serve as establishments that represent places that are busy or where business transactions are carried out. Otherwise, the associations to places on the Plautine stage reinforce comic

themes, such as prostitution and debauchery.

In Plautus there is a good cross-section of references within the city and outside the city all of which maintain particular associations. There are many references to the places of trade and finance in the various fora. The port is an important extension of the stage as a place of business as well as for arrivals and departures. Moreover the city of the comic stage is filled out extensively with many other intra- and extra-urban sites such as the farm, the mill, the prison and the home. Although these depictions do not necessarily present a mirroring microcosm of the local macrocosm, they nevertheless allow us to appreciate how the comic stage presented the physical world to the ancient mind. Furthermore, we can see that some consistency is evident between the associations to places in Rome in the Choragus passage and the details for similar sites mentioned in the other dramatic settings. The Plautine city that is presented on the Middle Republican stage preserves many stock characterizations regardless of the dramatic setting of the play. It is through this consistency that the audience clearly understood the dimensions of the places that make up the city of each play.

* * *

STAGE CITY STATE

The determination of place in Plautine comedy, of course, is not limited to the characters' descriptions of the various sites of the city-scape and the surrounding countryside that radiate out from the stage. Each of the comedies has a specific dramatic setting, which either modifies the play itself in some way, or is determined by the content of the play. Since the dramatic setting is often such an important aspect of each play it is worthwhile considering it on its own in order to best evaluate how its presence is felt. As the previous section of this chapter has shown, most of the internal references to sites in the city are generic. To a large extent, they are a reflection of the themes of the comedy. But Plautus does establish some local details to the dramatic setting. These details allow the audience to make certain assumptions, particularly in regard to the citizenship status of the character vis-à-vis the dramatic setting. Although scholars generally assume that Plautus maintained the same city of the dramatic settings of his Greek source, given the playwright's propensity to change the character-names and the titles, this is not necessarily a correct assumption. Certainly Menander's Dis Exapaton and the Bacchides appear to be set in the same place, Athens, but it is impossible to match up all of Plautus' plays with the setting of an extant Greek source. Even if one assumes that Plautus followed the

geographical setting of his source, the Greek dramatic settings of Plautine Comedy have dramatically different connotations and implications for a Latin-speaking audience of the third and second centuries than they did for the Greek audience of the fourth and third centuries. In both cases the dramatic world presented on a stage is influenced by the audience's understanding of their contemporary world. We must attempt to understand the texts as much as possible on their own contemporary terms, if we are to use them as documents of social history.

The dramatic setting of each of Plautus' Palliatae is an urban scene, or a scene near an urban centre. The physical realization of the dramatic setting is relatively simple: two or three houses comprise the backdrop of the stage, a shrine may be in front of one of the houses or may be the entrance of the middle house, and a street runs along the front of the stage. The exit on one side of the stage leads to the forum; the exit on the other side leads either to the port or else to the country. The degree to which the city of the dramatic setting has a role in each play differs, just as the quantity of referents to the internal locations of the stage city varies from play to play. Plautus obviously felt that it was necessary to vary the location of the dramatic settings for his plays for various reasons. Plot necessity determines the dramatic setting of some of the plays, either because of local

geographic requirements, or from citizenship status associations of the main characters, or from the mythological traditions behind the story. Of the twenty plays considered here, twelve are set in Athens, six are set elsewhere in Greece, one is in Asia Minor and one in North Africa. The plays set outside Athens transport the stage either to the remote sites of Cyrene (North Africa) and Ephesus (Asia Minor) or to relatively closer locales around Greece itself, such as Thebes (Boeotia), Calydon (Aetolia) and Epidamnus (Illyria). The comedies in which plot necessity determines the dramatic settings are three: the Amphytruo, which is based on a myth set in Thebes; the Captivi which takes place in the aftermath of a war between Aetolia and Elea; and the Rudens, the action of which demands that the play take place on the seashore, outside of a city. In all his plays, Plautus is careful to maintain internal consistency in the construction of his dramatic settings, just as the characters' references to the internal city sites maintain a certain coherence. Most of the comedies have a prologue that establishes clearly the dramatic setting,³⁸ and for this study the comments of the prologue are included with the other evidence from the play itself. The following is a list of the twenty plays with their dramatic settings as they appear within the text of the plays.

38 The extant prologues vary greatly. Five of the plays have no prologue at all: Cu., Ep., Mo., Per., St.. The Cistellaria and the Miles have a delayed prologue; the Bacchides' is missing and the prologue to the Pseudolus is only two lines. Other prologues can be more than 100 lines: Poenulus.

Comedies set in Athens:

<u>Asinaria</u>	<u>Mostellaria</u>
<u>Aulularia</u>	<u>Persa</u>
<u>Bacchides</u>	<u>Pseudolus</u>
<u>Casina</u>	<u>Stichus</u>
<u>Epidicus</u>	<u>Trinummus</u> ³⁹
<u>Mercator</u>	<u>Truculentus</u>

Comedies set elsewhere in the Hellenistic Greek world:

<u>Amphitruo</u>	-- Thebes (Boeotia).
<u>Captivi</u>	-- unnamed city (Aetolia). ⁴⁰
<u>Cistellaria</u>	-- Sicyon (near Corinth).
<u>Curculio</u>	-- Epidaurus (Argolid).
<u>Menaechmi</u>	-- Epidamnus (Illyria).
<u>Miles Gloriosus</u>	-- Ephesus (Asia Minor).
<u>Poenulus</u>	-- Calydon (Aetolia).
<u>Rudens</u>	-- near Cyrene (North Africa).

39 Athens is not mentioned but the Piraeus is at 1103.

40 Lindsay mentions Calydon in his 1887 Oxford edition, but later suggests Pleuron (2nd. ed. 1921/repr. 1930/66) p.69.

One cannot escape the fact that the above list exists only because of the chance survival of particular plays. The many other palliatae that Plautus may have written and the hundreds of other comedies that were written at this period presumably were set in locations that covered much more of the Mediterranean.⁴¹ But even though this is something of a random subset of all the comedies that were produced, one may assume that any given subset reflects in some way the whole. There are, moreover, many comparative points of interest in the material that has survived. All of the city-states are political, mercantile or religious centres of the ancient world. The diverse geography of the dramatic settings reveals the extent to which the playwright incorporated foreign details in his plays. In the social context of the performance of these plays, the dramatic settings first and foremost serve as the foundation of the foreign dimension that is an important part of these plays.

The most basic characterization of the dramatic setting in Plautus simply refers to Athens as the generic home of comedy. The prologue to the Menaechmi clearly reveals the artifice of the dramatic setting as an established nuance of this type of comedy itself:

41 Gellius mentions 130 plays attributed to Plautus alone (3.3.11). See A. Daviault Comoedia Togata (Paris, 1981) pp. 27-31 for a partial list of dramatic settings of togatae in Italy.

atque hoc poetae faciunt in comoediis:
 omnis res gestas esse Athenis autumant,
 quo illud vobis Graecum videatur magis
 (Men. 7-10).

And besides, the poets do this in comedies:
 they declare that everything happens in Athens,
 so that it seems more Greek to you.

As is most often the case with Plautus' self-revealing style of presentation, the declaration allows for absolutely no sense of deception or possibility of misunderstanding between the play, the actors and the audience. The play itself is very much the 'thing' in which the consciousness of the audience is made an accomplice to what it is, where it is and what is happening on stage. The actors express an awareness of themselves as actors working within the created world of their dramatic surroundings. This technique allows the actors to be in league with the audience, and it allows for side jokes that are a kind of running commentary on the practice of comedy as a whole. The pretense of the dramatic setting is made with an implied agreement between the actors themselves and the audience that is in part undermined when contemporary political topics are introduced or when the characters refer specifically to places in Rome itself. One might read the intent of this declaration by saying that it appears to be a license to make fools of the Greeks as much as possible. But this statement also sets up another relationship between the actors and the audience against the playwrights. Since the audience is fully conscious of the synthetic premise that

underlies comedy, it is brought into league with the actors themselves in the ludicrous nature of comedy itself, of pretending things are what they are not. The 'Greekness' in this sense simply refers to the level of false pretense that the playwrights construct, of the play and the absurd premise of comedy itself.

ATHENS

Athens is the most prominent Greek city in Plautus, both as a dramatic setting and as a city that is referred to in the plays that are set elsewhere. Athens is, of course, the most well known of all Greek cities, and it has a history that is associated with many of the most important people and events for which all of Greece is famous. Indeed, Athens in popular terms can be synonymous with Greece itself. The Athens that was presented on the Roman stage is a melange of general references to city sites, such as those detailed in the first section of this chapter, mixed with the mention of a few sites that are geographically site-specific, such as the Piraeus. The physical attributes of Athens impose themselves to different degrees on the twelve plays that are set in the city. One finds as well in a few of the plays that are set elsewhere a number of important references to Athens that will be included here with the material on the dramatic setting.

If one considers the number of times Athens is named by the characters in one play, its importance ranges from negligible, as in the Trinummus,⁴² where the name of the city is not mentioned at all, to the Miles, where Athens is invoked in some form more than twenty times, even though it is not the dramatic setting. Athens also has a significant role in the Rudens, although the dramatic setting is in Cyrene. Plautus' use of Athens as a specific dramatic setting does not necessarily mean that many of the plays could not as easily have been set somewhere else in the Mediterranean world. But the playwright maintains a conscious consistency of his settings and this consistency has repercussions throughout each play in the comings and goings of the characters and the important establishment of birthplace, citizenship and social status.

The characters create their dramatic setting in various ways. The most direct method of establishing just where the comedy occurs is for the dramatic setting to be announced by the prologue. The Truculentus provides an example of this:

perparvam partem postulat Plautus loci
de vostris magnis atque amoenis moenibus
Athenas quo sine architectis conferat (Tru. 1-3).

Plautus desires a small piece of this place
from your great and pleasing walls,
where without builders, he brings you Athens.

42 Although in the Trinummus there are no internal references to the city of Athens itself, Charmides mentions the Piraeus (1103).

This passage and the passage from the Menaechmi cited above do more than simply establish where the play is set. They stress the synthetic construct that underlies the premise of the comic plays in regard to the dramatic setting and the consciousness of that construct. Attention is drawn both to the illusion of the dramatic setting and to the physical reality of the place where the stage is set up. Such a conceit allows the actors to draw the audience into a kind of conspiracy so the actors will be able to step out of character and laugh at the 'play' as well.

Athens, as a dramatic setting, is given a number of physical details that either correspond to a specific geographical place or set it in relationship to other parts of the world. The nearby port of Piraeus, for example, is an important locating detail. Since he is waiting for his son to return from a business trip, Nicobulus enters the stage from his house and states that he is on his way to the Piraeus to see if any ship has arrived from Ephesus (Ba. 235-6). Similarly, Charmides tells Stasimus to run down to the Piraeus to see his ship (Tri. 1104). For a more distant positioning reference, Toxilus characterizes the girl disguised as a Persian captive who is up for sale as a person who was born far from Athens: sed longe ab Athenis esse se qnatam autumet (Per. 151). There is an important travelling reference in the Miles. Phronesium disguised as her own sister says that she

and Pleusicles arrived in Ephesus from Athens: quae heri Athenis Ephesum adveni vesperi, cum meo amatore (Mi. 439-40). At the end of the play, the two lovers leave Ephesus with the intention of sailing away (Mi. 1317), to return to Athens (Mi. 939).

The setting of Athens on the Roman comic stage contains the familiar host of inconsistencies and incongruities that have been examined in the first two chapters. The names of the characters stand out in this respect, especially since many characters with Greek names appear as slaves in Athens. This is, of course, not absolutely historically or dramatically impossible, since the Athenians recognized debt-slavery until it was abolished by Solon, but again one is faced with the fact that the creation of humorous Greek names stands out as one of the defining attributes of Plautus. One finds in the Casina, for example, the slave Olympio, whose name suggests a hallmark of Greek culture. Moreover, of all the Plautine characters, Pseudolus is the quintessential Greek slave-character, he works his trickery in Athens. Even Ballio emphasizes that Pseudolus is the worst slave in the city when he greets him: salve multum, serve Athenis pessume (Ps. 270). From another perspective, some of the characters in Athens have Latin names. Consider the slave Truculentus whose name reflects his character; or, in the Persa, the parasite has the name Saturio. There is no consistency followed in making the

names of the characters agree with the dramatic setting. As with other aspects of the language of these plays, a tension arises out of the synthetic construct of the dramatic setting and the techniques that make the play easily accessible and humorous.

As noted in the first chapter, the Latin of the plays maintains its inherent moral overtones and underpinnings. Here again one may note the tension between content and context. One should note that the basic moral ideals of the Hellenistic Greeks and Romans were not necessarily that far apart. Both Greek and Roman commonplace morality radiates out of what one might call the universal generalizations of normal social behaviour: a proper reverence for the work ethic, social institutions, the family, and the gods. But the force of the Latin language is an undeniable factor in the presentation of these concepts. An excellent example of this is found in Saturio's daughter, who, disguised as a Persian princess, replies when asked if she likes the look of Athens, that the appearance of the city is one thing, the character of its inhabitants another:

Sag. Satin Athenae tibi sunt visae fortunatae
 atque opiparae?
 Vir. Urbis speciem vidi, hominum mores perspexi parum
 (Per. 549-50).

Sag. Does Athens seem to you sufficiently fortunate
 and wealthy?
 Vir. I see the city's appearance, but perceive
 too little the mores of the men.

This moralizing contrast is then extended by Sagaristio when he continues his inquiry and asks her what she thinks of the defense wall that surrounds the city. She replies to this with a list of ten deadly sins, saying that if the city is free of them, then it is sufficiently fortified. Her list is the core of the Roman belief system including perfidia (treachery), peculatus (embezzlement), avaritia (greed), invidia (envy), ambitio (flattery), optrectatio (slander), periurium (perjury), indulgentia (favors), iniuria (insult), and scelus (crime) (Per. 554-60). She maintains that if a city is not free from such vices, it is not sufficiently protected by one hundred walls. The characterization of what would make a strong city is neatly imbedded in her underlying chastisement of her father for committing such an atrocity as selling her. As the 'Persian girl', she appears wise and makes remarks that are universal in their moral appeal. The characterization of Athens itself is a moral issue. But the statements and actions of the characters in Athens do not always take the moral highroad. Stichus, for example, addresses an apparent conflict of actions on the comic stage when he justifies the behaviour of slaves in an aside to the audience:

atque id ne vos miremini, hominis servolos
 potare, amare atque ad cenam condicere:
 licet haec Athenis nobis (St. 446-8).

And do not marvel, that men's young slaves
 drink, love and chat among ourselves at dinner:
 we are allowed these things in Athens.

The absurd premise that underlies the characterizing associations of this statement is in sharp contrast to the moral seriousness that dominates the comments of the 'Persian girl'. Stichus portrays a city that is diametrically opposite to the standard notions of the social order. It is a city of festivity, of the comic stage itself. Later in the play, Stichus makes the further contrast between what he calls foreign customs and Athenian customs when he discusses bathing with Sangarinus. In a double entendre on being cleaned out (eluo) he invites Sangarinus to follow him to his dinner party and cultivate Athenian manners: volo eluamus hodie, peregrina omnia relinque, Athenas nunc colamus (St. 669-70). In this comment, Stichus equates Athens with the performance on the comic stage itself and the foreign customs are those that take place off stage. In a related characterization of Athens as the city of moral degradation, Mnesilocus mistakes the object of his friend's affections and suggests to Pistoclerus that there are plenty of meretrices in Athens for him other than the one that he wants: tibi non erat meretricum aliarum Athenis copia quibu' cum haberes rem... (Ba. 563-4)?

As detailed in Chapter Two, Roman political terminology stands out against the foreign premise of the plays. This is clearly seen in both the Asinaria and the Aulularia, where one finds repeated conflict between the dramatic setting of Athens and the details of the political structures. Demaenetus, for

example, looks for a loan in the forum (As. 116-7). Leonides tells us that the ass-buyer's representative goes from the barbershop to the baths (As. 357). Artemona says that her husband's excuse for being so tired at night is his exhaustion from helping his clients in the senate (As. 871). Libanus accuses Leonides of wearing out the lictores who were using their rods on him (As. 575). Other significant features of familiar Roman social structures appear in the dramatic setting of Athens as well. The tres viri (As. 131), the triumph (As. 269,) the patron (As. 621) and the social status of freedmen (As. 411) are all incorporated into the constructed Athenian urban scene. In the Aulularia, the city plays only a small part, but it is still significant. The business of hiring flute girls (Au. 333) or buying wine (Au. 356), of course, takes place in the forum, but the Roman macellum is twice specified as part of the forum of the play (Au. 265; 373). Moreover, as an added element to Euclio's absence from the stage, he goes to a political rally where his magister curiae (Au. 107) has promised money, one assumes to gain political support (cf. his return, Au. 180). The Athens of other plays reveals aspects of Roman political life as well. Epidicus rhetorically asks Thesprio who he thinks in Athens is more worthy of the praetura (Ep. 25-6). Simo, moreover, claims that his son is the most likely candidate for dictator out of all the dishonest men and lovers: Si de damnoseis aut de amatoribus dictator fiat nunc Athenis Atticis

nemo antiveniat filio, credo, meo (Ps. 415-7). Perhaps the most recognizable displacement of recognizable locations is Callicles evoking the crown of Jupiter on the heights of the Capitol although he is supposed to be in Athens (Tri. 84). Athens as a dramatic setting assumes in translation much of the trappings of Roman social and political life.

The foreign premise of these plays betrays itself in a number of ways such as some of the spin behind the names of the characters, the morally laden Latin words, the familiarity of the social and political terminology and the customs detailed on stage. Athens of the comic stage is presented with few specific details. It is used as a moral reference point, but the morality is not always negative. When the references are morally negative, they evoke as much the practices of the comic stage itself as anything else. The conflict between Athens and the Latin social and political terminology allows for the smooth transition of reference points for the audience, from stage site to city site, just as in the choragus passage of the Curculio. There are only a few physical aspects specific to Athens that the characters detail on stage and these can be matched by the details proper to Rome in the plays that are supposed to be in Athens.

AETOLIA: CALYDON, PLEURON

Two of the comedies have their dramatic setting in Aetolia. One can only assume that Aetolia had some current relevance in the political discussions of Rome at least from the time of 201BCE, when Aetolia signed a treaty with Laevinus.⁴³ In the case of Calydon, however, the popular story of the boar might be considered a factor as well.⁴⁴ Aetolia was a part of the complex mixture of military and political powers that increasingly came into contact with Roman interests at the end of the third century. With this in mind, it is interesting that the dramatic setting of the Poenulus is Calydon. The adulescens, Agorastocles, was an abducted child taken from Carthage to Calydon, where he was purchased, adopted and made an heir to a fortune (Poe. 72-77). As it happens, he is in love with Adelphasium, who is his neighbour and another abducted Carthaginian child. Lycus, the leno, who owns Adelphasium, is another immigrant who came to Calydon from Anactorium (Poe. 93-94).⁴⁵ So all of the main characters in the Poenulus are formerly citizens of other cities.

43 The treaty between Rome and Aetolia was against Philip V of Macedon. It included a provision whereby Acarnania should come under the domain of Aetolia (Livy 26.24).

44 The myth is Meleager, Atalanta and the Caledonian boar: see Hom Il. 9.533ff; Apollod. 1.65ff.; Bacchyl. 5.93ff.

45 This is a town in Acarnania, cf. Plin. Nat. 4.4.

The characters in this play give only a little detail of the city itself beyond the stage. In one passage, Adelphasium describes the odoriferous festival of Venus as crowded with her clients who have come to Calydon:

Arabus murrinus omnis odor
 complebat. hau sordere visust
 festu' dies, Venu', nec tuom fanum:
 tantus tibi clientarum erat numerus
 quae ad Calydoniam venerant Venerem (Poe. 1179-81).

The scent of Arabian myrrh fills the air.
 It is not right to mar,
 Venus, your feast day, nor your shrine.
 You have such a great number of clients
 that have come to Calydonian Venus.

She identifies the goddess as the Calydonian Venus (Poe. 1181). Other than that one specific site association, the city stands as a focal point for character identification. A group of witnesses that Agorastocles hires in the Poenulus refer to themselves as Aetolian citizens, not as Calydonians: Aetoli cives te salutamus, Lyce (Poe. 621). Hanno at first wonders if Agorastocles is the son of an Aetolian father: hic autem habuisti Aetolum patrem (Poe. 1057). The one apparent Plautine lapse in place consistency occurs when the slave Milphio promises Adelphasium that his master, Agorastocles will make her an Attic citizen: ac te faciat [Agorastocles] ut sies civis Attica atque libera (Poe. 372). It appears that, in this instance, Attic is synonymous with Greek and it has no geographical significance. The statement reveals, perhaps, that it is the social status, i.e. freedom, that is more important than the exact location of the dramatic setting.

But this Attic reference is an anomaly and stands in sharp contrast to Plautus' usual consistency in references to dramatic setting. Calydon, in the Poenulus, stands out foremost as a city populated by foreigners. The characters are there by some unfortunate chance of life, abduction in the case of the young Carthaginians and the prolonged search in the case of Hanno.

The Captivi is the only play that does not explicitly indicate its dramatic setting. Although Lindsay maintains that the city of the Captivi is in fact Pleuron, where Posidippus had inaugurated the theatre some half-century prior to Plautus' version of the play, there is no reference to a specific city in the text of the comedy.⁴⁶ The general location of the play, however, is made clear enough in the details of the events that lead up to the time of the stage action, even before Ergasilus sets the scene by stating: nam Aetolia haec est (Cap. 94). A war between the Aetolians and the Eleans forms the background to the dramatic events. The prologue humorously reassures the audience that the war takes place off-stage:

Quia bellum Aetolis esse dixi cum Aleis:
foris illic extra scaenam fient proelia (Cap. 59-60).

Because I said there is a war between
the Aetoleans and the Eleans:
the battles will be there, off stage.

46 W.M. Lindsay, T. Macci Plauti Captivi: with Introduction and Notes. (Oxford, 1921) p.6. See above, note 40.

Elea, the state that had been at war with Aetolia, of course plays an important secondary role in the Captivi. As a boy, Tyndarus was originally taken to Elea after he was kidnapped by a runaway slave who sold him there (Cap. 8-10). Coincidentally, Hegio's other son is currently held captive by a doctor named Menarchus in Elea (Cap. 22-4). So here, the importance of city is as a focal point for the birthplace of the main characters. Ergasilus mentions the necessity of sea travel between the two states when he tells Hegio of his son's arrival in the harbour in a public ship: nam filium tuom modo in portu Philopoleum... vidi in publica celoce (Cap. 872-4). Elsewhere Hegio refers to the Aetolian's overseer of the marketplace. This reference is particularly interesting because it is one of the few places where a Greek political office is maintained in the text, even though it is alongside the usual reference to aedilean edicts:

Eugepae, edictiones aedilicas hic quidem habet,
 mirumque adeost ni hunc fecere sibi Aetoli agoranomum
(Cap. 823-4).

Wow! This guy gives Aedilian edicts,
 it's a miracle that the Aetolians don't make
 him their agoranomus.

In one further Aetolian association from another play, Toxilus mentions the Aetolian boar as one of the labours of Hercules (Per. 3). The common theme that runs through the presentation of Calydon in the Poenulus and the unnamed Aetolian city of the Captivi is the relationship of the characters to the city itself as citizens or as non-citizens.

THEBES

The Boeotia and Thebes contemporary to Plautus are again part of the Roman involvement in the military and political conflicts of Greece. Livy notes, for example, that in the truce of Phoenice in 204, Boeotia is on the side of Philip V.⁴⁷ The Amphitruo takes place in Thebes, following the mythical tradition of the plot. There is, of course, no other city in which one could plausibly set a play that has for its theme the birth of Hercules and retain some consistency with the tradition of the myth. Mercury defines the dramatic setting with the words: haec urbs est Thebae (Am. 97), but the characters give only a few other specific details of the city. Because the action of this play is centered around the events in front of Amphitryon's house and the reported action at the port, the city itself plays a very minor role. Mercury and Sosia describe the other action that is important for the plot: the war between the Thebans and the Teleboians that precedes the play. The most salient question in regard to the identification of Thebes in this play is the proximity of the port. As noted in the previous section, for Thebes (an inland city) to have such a convenient port nearby, one might assume that the play simply follows standard comic stage settings rather than reflects geographical accuracy.⁴⁸ But Anthedon

47 Livy 29.12.14.

48 p. 176.

apparently served as the port for Thebes, and it was only some twenty-four kilometres away.⁴⁹ The other identifying characteristics of the city are in the epithets given to the citizens. In this play, the Thebans are referred to either as cives (Am. 376; 678) or as Thebanus populus (Am. 101; 190; 259). In another conspicuous example of Plautus' adherence to Roman political terms, Sosia characterizes Amphitryon as praefectus over the Theban legions (Am. 363).

Thebes is also mentioned in two other plays, the Rudens and the Epidicus. Already noted above is the leno Labrax's remark on the lack of importance of the birth place of slaves: quid mea refert, hae Athenis natae an Thebis sient dum mihi recte servitutum serviant (Ru. 746-47)? In the Epidicus, Stratippocles, the Miles/Adulescens, has recently returned to Athens after a campaign in Thebes (Ep. 206, 417). He apparently borrowed money in Thebes in order to buy a female slave (Ep. 51-55, 252). Epidicus identifies the slave, Telestis, by her place of birth: natae Thebis (Ep. 635). Epidicus also takes the identification of person by place of birth one step further by noting that she was conceived in Epidaurus (Ep. 636).

49 See D.J. Blackman, 'Plautus and Greek topography' (1969), esp. p.16.

SICYON

The dramatic setting of the Cistellaria is Sicyon, a city-state west of Corinth. The resolution of the plot in this play is dependent upon the birthplace and the citizenship of Selenium. The conflict of the plot arises out of an indiscretion of a Lemnian youth, Demipho, during the Dionysia at Sicyon years before which resulted in Selenium's birth (Ci. 156). Demipho is identified as a Lemnian merchant (157) who has subsequently immigrated to Sicyon (huc commigravit, Ci. 177) and married the mother of Selenium. Alcesimarchus, the adulescens, is promised to wed a Lemnian although he is in love with Selenium (who will be revealed to be a Lemnian). Syra identifies Alcesimarchus by the city of his birth and his social rank: Sicyone, summo genere (Ci. 130). So in this play one finds that many of the main characters are from places other than the dramatic setting, as in the Poenulus. It is this detail that allows for the complexities of the plot. Syra makes one generalized observation on the nature of a town when she compares a prosperous meretrix to a town full of men: verum enim meretrix fortunati est oppidi simillima: non potest suam rem obtinere sola sine multis viris (Ci. 80-1). But there are no details of the city that are specific to Sicyon itself.

Outside of the Cistellaria, Sicyon is mentioned in three

other plays. When Lyco asks Curculio (who has only one eye), if he is a cyclops, the latter replies that the loss of his eye is a war wound from a battle in Sicyon: catapulta hoc ictum est mihi apud Sicyonem (Cu. 394-5). Curculio makes the further claim that his wound is a distinction that he gained on behalf of the state: ob rem publicam (Cu. 399). Elsewhere, Charinus includes Sicyon in his list of possible places for his self-imposed exile (Mer. 647). Sicyon is referred to a number of times in the Pseudolus. Simia, who plays the part of the miles' envoy and procures Phoenicium on his behalf, declares that he must get to Sicyon or die because of his master's harsh nature (Ps. 995). Ballio tells Simo, the senex, that Phoenicium has just been taken to Sicyon (Ps. 1098). Ballio and Harpax invoke the travel time between Sicyon and Athens in their exchange:

Bal.		quotumo die
	ex Sicyone huc pervenisti?	
Har.		altero ad meride.
Bal.	Strenue mehercle iisti	(Ps. 1173-5).
Bal.		How many days
	did you take to come here from Sicyon?	
Har.		One and a half.
Bal.	By Herc you came applying haste.	

The humor lies in the exaggerated slowness of the journey which in turn implies some knowledge of the relative proximity of the two cities.

EPIDAURUS

The Curculio takes place in Epidaurus in the Argolid. Although the city-state of Epidaurus is referred to only three times, the dramatic setting plays an important role as a center for business and travel. In this play, Plautus again makes a second distant location imperative for the plot. The reported action takes place in Caria, in Asia Minor. The premise of the play is for the young lover to find money to buy the girl he loves. The parasite Curculio has been sent by Phaedromus to borrow money from his friend, so that Phaedromus can buy his love, Planesium. It is Curculio's subsequent return from this business trip that is the focus of this play. Palinurus first identifies Curculio as the parasite who was sent to Caria: estne his parasitus qui missus est in Cariam (Cu. 275)? It is exactly at the point of Curculio's return that he presents his famous diatribe against the Greeks (Cu. 280f.). The ethnic characterizations in this passage will be considered in the next chapter. Here, the significance that this passage has for dramatic setting is the tension that it creates between content and context. One would, of course, expect to find Greeks in the city of Epidaurus, so the humor of the passage depends upon the audience being able to immediately transport the association of places and ideas to the streets of Rome itself. A little later in the play, Curculio details his trip to Caria (Cu. 329f.) and he says

that although Phaedromus' friend had no money, a chance meeting with a soldier in the forum in Caria led to an invitation for dinner. This soldier had business connections in Epidaurus with Cappadox, the leno of this play, and the banker, Lyco, that amounted to a contract for the same Planesium for whom he is trying to recover his master's money. After the dinner, Curculio says that he stole the soldier's signet ring and bolted from the house under the pretense of going out to relieve himself (Cu. 335-63). It is during Curculio's recitation of this story that the audience first hears, in the context of his entrance on the stage, that the banker, Lyco, lives in Epidaurus (Cu. 341).

Epidaurus is also identified when Lyco reads out the salutation of Curculio's forged letter: miles Lyconi in Epidauro hospiti suo Therapontigonus Plataqidorus plurumam salutem dicit (Cu. 429-31). When the soldier, Therapontigonus, finally arrives, Cappadox greets him by acknowledging his safe arrival in Epidaurus: salvos quom advenis in Epidaurum (Cu. 562). The one important local identifying aspect of Epidaurus is the religious association with Aesculapius. Cappadox enters the stage declaring that he is leaving the altar of Aesculapius because his prayers for a cure have not been heard: Migrare certumst iam nunc e fano foras quando Aesculapi ita sentio sententiam... (Cu. 217-8). Epidaurus, however, mainly serves the plot of the play as a

city frequented by those who travel the Mediterranean on business. There is one other play that has an important connection to Epidaurus. The plot of the Epidicus hinges on the identity of the daughter born to Periphanes from an encounter with the woman Philippa in Epidaurus. Both Periphanes and Philippa recognize each other from their encounter in Epidaurus. Philippa says that Periphanes stole her chastity there: Plane hicine est, qui mihi in Epidauro primus pudicitiam pepulit (Ep. 540).

EPHESUS

The dramatic setting for the Miles Gloriosus is the religious and trading centre of Ephesus, in what is now known as Asia Minor. During his synopsis of the play, the servus Palaestrio informs the audience of where the events of the play will occur: hoc oppidum Ephesust (Mi. 88). The plot is again complicated by travel and trade in the fact that Philocomasium, Periplectomenus' daughter, was abducted from Athens, brought to Ephesus and sold there. The travel theme is also exploited further as a part of the main deception of the comedy. Philocomasium plays the part of her own sister who is said to have recently arrived in Ephesus from Athens. When Philocomasium describes her fictitious dream she says that in her dream her twin sister, Dicea, travelled from

Athens to Ephesus hac nocte in somnis mea soror geminast germana visa venisse Athenis in Ephesum... (Mi. 383-4).

While playing the part of this sister, Philocomasium explains that she has just arrived from Athens with an Athenian youth:

Quae heri Athenis Ephesum adveni vesperi
cum meo amatore, adulescente Atheniensi (Mi. 439-40)?

I, who arrived yesterday evening to Ephesus from
Athens with my lover, an Athenian youth?

Palaestrio then asks her what business she has in Ephesus: dic mihi, quid hic tibi in Epheso est negoti (Mi. 440-1). To this she replies that she is seeking her sister (Mi. 441-2). The main local identifying association with Ephesus is the goddess Diana. As with the Venus with Calydon (Poe.) and Aesculapius with Epidaurus (Cu.), Philocomasium invokes the local goddess as Ephesian Diana: Inde ignem in aram, ut Ephesiae Dianae laeta laudes gratisque agam... (Mi. 411). In a humorous distinction of refinement, the senex, Periplectomenus, considers that his place of birth, Ephesus, is a sign of proper upbringing and manners, especially in comparison with the people of Animula in Apulia: post Ephesi sum natus, non enim in Apulis; non sum Animula (Mi. 648). In one other reference to the population of the town, Palaestrio tells us that Periplectomenus believes himself more handsome than Alexander, and that all the women in Ephesus follow him: Isque Alexandri praestare praedicat formae suam, itaque omnis se ultro sectari in Epheso memorat mulieres (Mi. 777-8).

Ephesus also plays an important role in one other comedy, the Bacchides. The play makes a perfect contrast to the Miles, in that the locations for dramatic situation and the reported action are reversed. In the Bacchides, the dramatic setting is Athens and the reported action occurs in Ephesus. Chrysalus, the servus, has been in Ephesus with Mnesilochus, Nicobulus' son, for two years prior to the action of the play. When he comes on stage he expresses a formal salutation for his homeland: Erilis patria, salve, quam ego biennio postquam hinc in Ephesum abivi, conspicio lubens (Ba. 170-1). Nicobulus' motive for sending his son to Ephesus is the business of recovering an outstanding debt. Thus he queries Chrysalus about the money when they first meet: qua causa eum <hinc> in Ephesam miseram, accepitne aurum ab hospite Archidemide (Ba. 249-50)? The deception of this play begins by Chrysalus scheming to keep some of the money to pay for Mnesilochus' love Bacchis:

Negotium hoc ad me adtinet aurarium.
 mille et ducentos Philippum adtulimus aureos
 Epheso, quos hospes debuit nostro seni (Ba. 229-31).

This golden business has now fallen to me.
 We brought from Ephesus one thousand two hundred
 Philippi, that a friend owed our old man.

Chrysalus concocts a story, in reference to the missing money, that Mnesilochus has deposited it with the priest of Diana at Ephesus (Ba. 307-313). In one other reference to communication between the two principal locations of this comedy, Mnesilochus talks of sending a letter from Ephesus to

Pistoclerus in Athens with the instructions to find his beloved Bacchis: misine ego ad te ex Epheso epistulam super amica, ut mi invenires (Ba. 561-2).

EPIDAMNUS

The Menaechmi is set in Epidamnus, Illyria. The prologue follows a pattern similar to the one in the Truculentus (noted at the beginning of this section) in emphasizing the fictitious nature of the dramatic setting:

haec urbs Epidamnus est, dum haec agitur fabula:
quando alia agetur, aliud fiet oppidum (Men. 72-3).

This city is Epidamnus, while this play is on,
when another play takes place, it becomes another town.

The argument of this plot begins with a conflict over the circumstance of trade. A Syracusan merchant took one of his twin sons on a trading voyage from Syracuse to Tarentum. The boy was lost in a festival crowd and then taken by another merchant from Epidaurus back home with him (Men. 32-33). Again one finds that with this play the dramatic setting is most important as the scene of a trading centre. There are no real local details besides the association of citizenship. When Messenio sees the lorarii carry off Menaechmus, for example, he invokes the citizens:

O facinus indignum et malum, Epidamnii cives, erum
meum hic in palato oppido luci peripier in via
(Men. 1004-5).

Epidamnian citizens, a crime, terrible and undeserved,
my master snatched away in broad daylight in the street.

The travel theme is projected beyond the conclusion of the play. At the end of the play Menaechmus agrees to return home with his brother to Syracuse: in patriam redeamus ambo (Men. 1152).

CYRENE

The Rudens is the only surviving play that does not have a city street as its dramatic setting. Nevertheless, the city-state of Cyrene plays an important part in supplying some of the local background details for the plot. Moreover, Cyrene is important as a place that the main characters identify themselves as not being from. The first reference to location in the play is in the prologue where Arcturus names the dramatic setting in his outline: huic esse nomen Diphilus Cyrenas voluit (Ru. 32-33). The underlying premise of this play is again business, or more accurately a failed trading expedition. The action that occurs just prior to the play is a shipwreck. In their attempt to become wealthy by trading in Sicily, Charmides and Labrax run into a storm that has tossed them and their cargo into the sea off the coast of Cyrene. From this point, the plot revolves around the establishment of birthplace and citizenship of two characters who were a part of the cargo in the shipwreck, Palaestra and Ampelisca. For

this aspect of the plot, a second remote place that has importance is Athens. Both young women can prove their freeborn status by the possessions that they have in a trunk that, as it happens, was recovered by the fisherman, Gripus. Daemones, the old man who lives just outside Cyrene, is also from Athens, not from Cyrene. He makes it clear that he was bred, born, and raised there: Athenis natus alusque educatusque Atticis (Ru. 741). Trachalio states that Palaestra and Ampelisca were abducted as children from Athens: haec (one of them) Athenis parva fuit virgo surepta (Ru. 1105). The play concludes with a joyful reunion of the family. Throughout the play the city of Cyrene is evoked three times in the mention of the citizens, a political body, and the local religion. Trachalio invokes the people as pro Cyrenenses populares (Ru. 615). Trachalio wants to call judges for establishing the status of the two young women in this play from the senate of Cyrene: Cedo iudicem de senatu Cyrenensi quemvis opulentum virum... (Ru. 712-13). One again finds a local association in the identity of a local deity when Gripus, the slave and fisherman, invokes the Venus of this play as Venus Cyrenensis (Ru. 1338).

* * *

The city-state of the dramatic setting in Plautus serves an important function in each of the comedies. While the specific physical details of each city may not make a significant contribution to the plot of each play, the world of Plautine comedy is one in which characters coming from all over the Mediterranean happen to end up in the same city-state. These merchants, soldiers, working women, abducted children and captive citizens, interact in a dramatic setting that becomes the anchoring reference point from which the characters can establish who they are in reference to their birthplace, their citizenship and their social status. It is important to note that many of the characters who dwell in the cities of the dramatic setting are in fact foreign citizens who have moved because of an abduction, a chance displacement or because of business. The dramatic setting is the point from which the characters establish their identity and it is the character identity which frequently sets up the complication of the plot and allows for its resolution. Establishing the relationship between the main characters and the dramatic setting often serves to resolve the play in the discovery of a common citizenship bond between the transient character and the displaced character who currently resides in the city of the dramatic setting.

Another important aspect of the dramatic setting is how the cultural overtones of the Latin language create a kind of

tension between place and custom. In a few instances this same tension is extended by direct references to the city of Rome itself, superimposed upon the formal pretense of the established dramatic setting. Thus, the details of the city mentioned during the play do not necessarily maintain consistency with the dramatic setting. As is revealed in the first section of this chapter, most of the detail that the characters give for specific sites of their city are generic. This illustrates Plautus' synthetic composition, the merging of traditions, and the surface tension of the plays between content and context. This tension is often resolved by the repartee developed between the actors and the audience, so that the humor rises out of the consciousness of the false premises of comedy shared by the actors and the audience, both of whom can step back to enjoy the 'play' of the characters.

* * *

THE DISTANT WORLD

Advenio ex Seleucia, Macedonia, Asia atque Arabia,
Quas ego neque oculis nec pedibus umquam usurpavi meis
(Tri. 845-46).

Having examined the variety of details one finds for places in and around the cities of the comedies and the influence of the individual dramatic settings, we turn to the places of the distant world. The characters mention many known cities and countries of the Mediterranean world and beyond in various contexts. Included in the dialogue are towns from Italy, Greece and many other places farther afield such as Africa, Egypt, Persia, and India. Plautus also creates a few fictitious place names for humorous effect, playing with his place names as he does with his character names and play titles. Since the Roman audience is situated in a particular geographical location and therefore views the geographical world from this perspective, the material is arranged here with that in mind. For example, the inclusion of southern Italy along with central Italy highlights the political shift of the previous century that has moved these territories from the Greek to the Roman sphere. This political power shift affects how the content of the plays is understood, if they are discussed as socially relevant historical documents. The remaining material is gathered together according to geographical location.

Two general designations for places that are either outside the stage setting or extensions of the stage are found in the terms colonia and provincia. In the context of Rome's expansion throughout Italy and beyond, the use of these political terms on the comic stage again brings the preponderant cultural weight of the language into play. Although these terms are not strictly territorial, they can carry with them a sense of area of domination within which one wields political power.⁵⁰ When Epidicus gets hold of a bag full of money, for example, he deliberates with himself, wondering why he does not run away with it to some unspecified colony:

sed ego hinc migrare cesso
ut importem in coloniam hunc <meo> auspicio commeatum
(Ep. 343-4).

But I delay migration,
to carry this provision to a colony, of my own accord.

The political implication that lies behind Epidicus' notion of exile is that it will remove him from the legal hold of his present city-state, in this case Athens. Similarly, Euclio goes out to bury his treasure in fear that Megadorus will

50 For an overview on the development of political power outside of the city of Rome itself, see W. Kunkel, An Introduction to Roman Legal and Constitutional History, trans. J.M. Kelly, (Oxford, 1973 2nd. ed.) pp. 39-42. Some of the earliest colonies had full Roman citizenship, other colonies, founded in conjunction with the allied states, were the equivalent of Latin States. "It was not until the huge increase in Roman power had reduced every other form of citizenship to insignificance that the Roman settlement policy returned to the foundation of coloniae civium Romanorum; the great agricultural settlements which arose in northern Italy, south of the Po, at the end of the third century and at the beginning of the second century B.C. ... all remained within the Roman citizenship." Kunkel, p. 39.

steal it and change its colonia (Au. 575). The term colonia also appears associated with the negative implications of slavery. As an insult, Simo suggests that he should make Pseudolus enlist for the colony of the mill: quid ego cesso Pseudolum facere ut det nomen ad molas coloniam (Ps. 1099-1100). In a similar connection, Leonides characterizes Libanus as a colonist calling him a colonist of chains: O, catenarum colone (As. 298). The term colonia is specifically a place away from the city-state of the dramatic setting. Plautus' use of the term for humor relies upon its political and legal implications in respect to the local authority.

The designation of provincia is also used to determine political area of authority, but the idea of place is often closely associated with it. Chalinus, for example, who wants to get rid of his rival Olympio, tells him to go back to the rus, which Chalinus disparagingly maintains is his provincia (Cas. 103). Provincia is most often a reference to specific authority over a particular action or set of actions. When Stichus asks Sangarinus to choose between the two provinciae of pouring either the water or the wine, he elaborates on his offer with the metaphor of imperium over the personified gods Fons and Liber (St. 698-700). Callicles also uses the metaphoric imagery of power over a provincia when he asks Megadorus for help phrasing his question: communicesque hanc mecum meam provinciam (Tri. 190). Ballio labels household

chores as provinciae while he angrily tells his slaves that he had given them their various duties the day before (Ps. 148). Hegio labels the burden which his son, the now captive Philopolemus, once bore in feeding the parasite Ergasilus a provincia (Cap. 158). The idea of power over a particular area is taken to its fullest Roman extent on a number of occasions. Palaestrio and Acroteleutium enact the scene of an imperator delegating imperium over provinciae (Mi. 1159) when they are planning to deceive Pyrgopolynices. Palaestrio dictates his orders in a formalized manner that assumes full political authority: nunc hanc tibi ego impero provinciam (Mi. 1159). Acroteleutium maintains the military pretense and calls him an imperator (Mi. 1160). Behind the use of provincia is the sense of duty for one's occupation. These references are to sphere of influence and not specifically territorial. But the full weight of the Latin term as a political authority over a specific place should be considered, especially in the final two examples. The culturally informed underpinnings of the language of the comedies reveals something of how Plautus worked with the terminology of the structures of Roman power in use at the time.

The above references to undefined places and areas of political influence, of course, only serve as a starting point for the exploration of the geographical range of the comedies.

As was discussed in the second chapter, trade and travel form a backdrop for the plots of Plautine comedy, and this travel is often manifest in the various comings and goings of the characters who enter or leave the stage travelling from or going to far away places. But there are as well many other examples of characters who mention places of the world in their dialogue for the sake of detailing where they have been, where they might be travelling to, or what place is associated with particular things or ideas. When Menaechmus II and Messenio enter the stage the latter presents an itinerary of their quest for the former's twin brother:

Nam quid modi futurum est illum quaerere?
 hic annus sextus, postquam ei rei operam damus.
 Histros, Hispanos, Massiliensis, Hilurios,
 mare superum omne Graeciamque exoticam
 orasque Italicas omnis, qua adgreditur mare,
 sumu' circumvecti (Men. 233-8).

For what limit will we set to seek him out?
 This is the sixth year since we began the search.
 We have circumnavigated the Istrians, the Spaniards,
 the Massilians, the Ilyrians, over the whole sea,
 and Magna Graecia, and all the Italian shores,
 that the seas touch.

Just as Menaechmus II depicts his wanderings around the Mediterranean world, so, in a similar if less formally structured manner, various other Plautine characters include details of traversing the places of the world in their dialogues.

* * *

ITALY

The inclusion of Italian cities within the dialogue of the comedies emphasizes the time and place of their production. The primary motive of so much local detail is to give the audience the familiarity of some local colour. Indeed, some of the local details are evidence of Roman stereotypes of Italian towns. The inclusion of so much local detail is another prominent defining aspect of Plautus' comedy, because it obviously reflects contemporary Roman sentiment by exploiting regional biases. The largest list of Italian towns is found in Ergasilus' wordplay in the Captivi. In this scene, Ergasilus swears by various towns of Latium when he is telling Hegio that he has seen Hegio's son arrive. Plautus utilizes his familiar technique of the play on sense and sound. In this case the playwright exploits the similarity of the sound of the ostensibly Greek words and the names of the Latin towns themselves creates the humor of the scene:

He.	et captivom illum Alidensem?	Er.	μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω
			He. et servolum
	meum Stalagmum, meum qui gnatum surrupuit?		
			Er. ναὶ τὰν Κόραν.
He.	iam diu?	Er.	ναὶ τὰν Πραυνέστην. He. venit?
			Er. ναὶ τὰν Σιγνέαν.
He.	certon?	Er.	ναὶ τὰν Φρουσινῶνα. He. vide sis.
			Er. ναὶ τὸν Ἀλάτριον.
He.	quid tu per barbaricas urbes iuras?		
			Er. quia enim item asperae
	sunt ut tuom victum autumabas esse		(<u>Cap.</u> 877-885).

is Campania. One notes, for example, that artistry in the form of tapestries was not the sole province of the carpets from the east. When Ballio threatens to thrash his slaves so hard that it will change the color of their skin, he compares their appearance to Campanian tapestries:

ita ego vostra latera loris faciam ut valide varia sint,
 ut ne peristromata quidem aequae picta sint Campanica
 neque Alexandrina beluata tonsilia tappetia
 (Ps. 145-7).

Thus I will whip your sides so that
 they become multicoloured
 like no wall hanging or Campanian embroidery
 nor Alexandrian tapestry with ornate tassels.

Another localized association just to the south of Rome is the silphium trade. In the Rudens, Trachalio greets Daemones for the first time and he prays for the latter's prosperity in terms of a successful trip to Capua with the products of silphium and silphium juice. Plautus' localization of the material is certainly evident in this familiar 'may the gods grant you wealth' kind of salutation:

Tra. teque oro et quaeso, si speras tibi
 hoc anno multum futurum sirpe et laserpicium
 eamque eventuram exagogam Capuam salvam et sospitem,
 atque -- ab lippitudine usque siccitas ut sit tibi...
 Dae. Sanun es? Tra. Seu tibi confidis fore multam
 magudarim...(Ru. 629-33).

Tra. I beg and beseech you, if you hope
 for a good crop of silphium this year and silphium balm
 and its safe and sound exportation to Capua
 and may your own eyes be dry from blearyness
 Dae. Are you sane? Tra. or if you hope to have
 much silphium seed.

Cyrene fits perfectly as a source for silphium, but Capua as

a trading destination is a local touch.⁵² In another Campanian association, Simo accuses Pseudolus of being able to drink four jars of wine from the Campanian Mount Massicus (Ps. 1302-4).

Plautus makes other references and associations to places in the south of Italy. Stabax, for example, specifically mentions Tarentine sheep (ovis Tarentinas, Tru. 649),⁵³ although he does not say why sheep are especially noted from this area. The sheep are simply part of a business deal that his father has arranged. In the Menaechmi, the prologue portrays Tarentum as a bustling trading centre. It is just the sort of place where, during the festivals, one might be lost in the crowd:

imponit geminum alterum in navem pater,
Tarentum avexit secum ad mercatum simul,
illum reliquit alterum apud materem domi.
Tarenti ludi forte erant, cum illuc venit.
mortales multi, ut ad ludos, convenerant;
puer aberravit inter homines a patre (Men. 26-31).

The father placed the one twin in his ship and
he took him with him to Tarentum to trade.
He left the other twin at home with his mother.
By chance there was a festival at Tarentum
when he arrived;
many people were gathered, as they do at festivals;
the boy wandered away from his father among the crowd.

52 For other references to silphium see F. Marx Plautus: Rudens (Amsterdam, 1959) pp. 142-44; and, E.A. Sonnenschein T. Macci Plauti: Rudens (Oxford, 1958) note.

53 Leo noted a problem with the position of this line, but Lindsay includes it in his text.

When Menaechmus explains his childhood abduction, he also remembers Tarentum as the place his father went to conduct business: cum patre ut abii Tarentum ad mercatum... (Men. 1112). Periplectomenes takes a shot at the Apulians when he elaborates on his own good manners at the dinner table. In order to drive his point home he claims that he was born in Ephesus, not in Apulia: post Ephesi sum natus, non enim in Apulis; non sum Animulas (Mi. 648). The wordplay is on Animula. Animula was a small, and apparently poor, town in Apulia,⁵⁴ and animula is the diminutive form of anima, soul. The prologue of the Casina also refers to Apulia. This passage says that in Apulia the people take more trouble with their slaves' weddings than with those of free men:

Et hic in nostra terra in Apulia;
maioaque opere ibi serviles nuptiae
quam liberales etiam curari solent (Cas. 72-74).

And here in our land, in Apulia;
they usually take more fuss over their slaves'
weddings than the weddings of their freemen.

This again seems to accuse Apulia of a lack of civilization because of their outrageous social practice that borders upon barbarism. Lysidamus stresses the need for preparation with an allusion to the haste once needed in a march to Sutrium: cum cibo cum quiqui' facito ut veniant, quasi eant Sutrium (Cas. 524).⁵⁵ In his description of his travels, Messenio

54 Urbs parvarum opum in Apulia Fest. p.21.

55 Livy describes the battles that were waged against Sutrium as part of the early expansion into Etruria (6.9.3).

makes a general reference to Magna Graecia in southern Italy in his phrase Graeciam exoticam orasque Italicas omnis (Men. 236-7).

The cities of Italy which are already in the sphere of Roman power enter the comic dialogues in almost half of the productions. It is, therefore, not reasonable to claim that the plays are in any absolute sense removed from local influence simply because the dramatic setting is a Hellenistic city-state. The local references in the plays is another important factor that makes Plautus current and relevant to his audience.

GREECE AND SICILY

The localities of Greece that were present on the Latin stage are, of course, especially interesting in light of the dramatic settings of the plays and the assumed Greek origin of many of the characters. The dramatic settings considered in the second section of this chapter are only a part of the Greece that is brought to the Roman stage. Plautus includes a wide variety of other specific sites that at times are coupled with associations of manufactured things or physical attributes. When Charinus in Athens considers his own self-exile which he hopes will ease his lovesickness, he lists

eleven possible places that are a mixture of city-states, islands and geographical areas. His deliberation begins with a rhetorical question that extends the designation of civitas to the following list:

non possum durare, certumst exulatum hinc ire me.
 sed quam capiam civitatem, cogito, potissimum:
 Megares, Eretriam, Corinthum, Chalcidem, Cretam, Cyprum,
 Sicyonem, Cnidum, Zacynthum, Lesbiam, Boeotiam
 (Mer. 644-47)?

I cannot bear it, I must go into exile.
 But consider which state I will choose
 to best advantage:
 Megara, Eretria, Corinth, Chalcis, Crete, Cyprus,
 Sicyon, Cnidus, Zacynthus, Lesbos, Boeotia?

Charinus brings to the Latin stage a veritable map of Greece, but the references to Greece in Plautus constitute more than just a list of place names.

The characters apply many specific associations to places in Greece, some of them familiar commonplaces, some of them less so. A few of the references personify a specific area of Greece or they identify a personality or trait associated with an area. Sangarinus enters the stage and hails Athens as the nurse of Greece: Salvete, Athenae, quae nutrices Graeciae... (St. 649). In a less positive association, Amphitryon mentions one of the common associations of Thessaly with the witches who practice sorcery:

ego pol illum ulciscar hodie Thessalum veneficum
 qui pervorse perturbavit familiae mentem meae
 (Am. 1043).

I will take vengeance today on that Thessalian witch
who disturbed the mind of my household.

Pseudolus sets himself up as the oracle of Delphi when Simo and Callipho question him: si quid vis, roga. quod scibo, Delphis tibi responsum dicito (Ps. 479-80). As the Delphic oracle, Pseudolus answers their queries in the manner that was associated with Delphic responses: short, ambiguous Greek phrases (Ps. 482ff.).⁵⁶ Elsewhere, in an effort to avoid issuing a dinner invitation to the parasite Gelasimus, Epigonis says that he has invited men from Ambracia, a state in the south of Epirus, who, he adds, are orators (St. 490-1). Characterizing the Ambracians as orators may suggest a high degree of loquaciousness that is often associated with Greeks on the comic stage. This is a characterization that will be discussed in the next chapter. There is one reference to Greece that has political overtones. Curculio says that his eye was knocked out by a catapult in the battle of Sicyon (Cu. 394-5). Collybiscus, in disguise, is described by one of the advocati as a fleeing mercenary for King Attalus of Pergamum when Sparta was captured: nam hic latro in Sparta fuit, ut quidem ipse nobeis dixit, apud regem Attalum ind' nunc aufugit, quoniam capitus oppidum (Poe. 663-5). Attalus I, along with the Aetolians, sided with Rome in the 'Second Macedonian War' against Philip V. One familiar place association invokes the famous fountain of Pirene in Corinth.

56 The Greek of this passage is quoted in Chapter One.

Euclio complains that the flute girl (tibicina) Megadorus hired is able to drink dry the Corinthian spring of Pirene (Au. 557-9). This reference covers both the stereotype of the courtesan-drinker on the comic stage and the traditional association of Corinth with prostitution. Two other city-states are mentioned to complete the attributes of a character's identity. The leno of the Poenulus apparently once lived in Anactorium (Ps. 93), a Corinthian colony in Acarnania, before moving to Calydon. Saturio notes that the leno Dordalus is from Megara (Per. 137).

The themes of travel, trade and place are connected in a number of passages. An excellent example of this is found in the Mercator. Charinus takes himself and the audience on an imaginary voyage of exile across the Aegean from Cyprus to Chalcis in Euboea:

Ch. egomet me moror. tu puer, abi hinc intro ocus.
iam in currum escendi, iam lora in manus cepi meas.
Eu. sanus non es. Ch. quin, pedes, vos
in curriculum conicitis
in Cyprum recta, quandoquidem pater mihi exsilium parat?
Eu. stultus es, noli istuc quaeso dicere.
Ch. certum exsequist,
operam ut sumam ad pervestigandum ubi sit illaec.
Eu. quin domist.
Ch. nam hic quod dixit id mentitust.
Eu. vera dixi equidem tibi.
Ch. iam Cyprum veni. Eu. quin sequere, ut illam videas
quam expetis.
Ch. percontatus non inveni. Eu. matris iam iram neglego.
Ch. porro proficiscor quaesitum. nunc perveni Chalcedem;
video ibi hospitem Zacyntho, dico quid eo advenerim,
rogito quis eam vexerit, quis habeat si ibi indauidiverit.
Eu. quin tu istas omittis nugas ac mecum huc intro ambulas?
Ch. hospes respondit Zacynthi ficos fieri non malas.
Eu. nil mentitust. Ch. sed de amica se indauidivisse autamat

hic Athenis esse. Eu. Calchas iste quidem Zacynthiust.
 Ch. navem conscendo... iam redii <ex> exsilio...
 (Mer. 930-47).

Ch. I delay myself. You boy, go inside at once.
 I've climbed into the chariot, I've gripped the reins
 in my hands Eu. You are insane. Ch. Feet, why not throw
 yourselves on a course straight for Cyprus,
 since father prepares exile for me?
 Eu. You are a fool, please don't talk like that.
 Ch. Certainly I will,
 all that matters is that I find out where she is.
 Eu. She is at home.
 Ch. That's a lie. Eu. No, I told you the truth.
 Ch. I arrive in Cyprus... Eu. Continue then
 if you want to see her.
 Ch. I've tried, I cannot find her.
 Eu. Now I forget mother's anger.
 Ch. Then I continue my search. Now I've found Chalcis,
 I see there my host from Zacynthus,
 I'll tell him why I've come
 here, I'll ask who brought her and what he has heard.
 Eu. Why not leave off your fooling and come inside with me?
 Ch. My host replies that at Zacynthus figs grow, not apples.
 Eu. That's no lie. Ch. But he says he heard that my girl
 is here, in Athens. Eu. That Zacynthian is
 a perfect Calchas.
 Ch. I'm leaving the ship...; I have now returned from exile.

This passage plays on both place and place name.⁵⁷ Once in
 Chalcis, Charinus meets a friend from Zacynthus who tells him
 that the girl he seeks is in fact in Athens. That Zacynthus
 is famous for its figs, not its apples, perhaps suggests a
 sexual pun on the type of woman that he is looking for (Mer.
 943). Other Greek trade goods are celebrated in association
 with their places of origin as well. The maid Scapha
 specifically mentions Melian cream when she observes that
 young girls should not bother with makeup: cerussam Melinum
 (Mo. 264). Stichus contrasts the types of cups that the

57 For a similar chariot mounting scene cf. Men. 865.

wealthy drink from with the common ware of slaves, which he calls our little Samian cupware: at nos [bibunt] nostro Samiolo poterio (St. 694). When Menaechmus knocks gently on Erotium's doors, Peniculus makes a similar reference to the quality of Samian pottery, observing that Menaechmus is afraid that the doors are like Samian ware and will break easily (Men. 178).⁵⁸ Philocrates characterizes his cheap father by pointing to his father's refusal to sacrifice to his own genius with anything but inexpensive Samian ware for fear that his own genius will steal the bowls: Genio suo ubi quando sacruficat, ad rem divinam quibus est opu', Samiis vasis utitur, ne ipse Genius surrupiat (Cap. 289-92). Sagaristio also suggests a regional commercial specialty, when he relates that his master sent him to Eretria in order to buy domestic oxen at the market (Per. 259-60). Wine is the trading good that has the most associations with different places around the Greek world in Plautus. Lycus, the leno, tempts Collybiscus to his lodgings by the offer of the best wine from four different locations:

Ubi tu Leucadio, Lesbio, Thasio, Chio,
vetustate vino edentulo aetatem inriges (Poe. 699-700).

Where you can irrigate your youth with wine,
toothless from age, Leucadian, Lesbian, Thasian, Chian.

Charmides, in contrast, accuses Greek wines of being salty and watery when he says that Neptune has doused Labrax and him as if they were Greek wines (Ru. 588-9). Palinurus describes the

58 Similarly at Ba. 202.

lena, Leaena, as Lagoena, which is a type of wine jar used to store Chian wine (Cu. 78-9).⁵⁹

Although technically at this time Sicily is under Roman political influence, since its main language is Greek it is still considered as part of the Greek world on the comic stage. This attitude is especially prevalent in the general characterizations of Sicilians themselves that are discussed in the next chapter, but it is also noticeable in a few place references. Sicily is especially prominent in the Rudens, as it is the island that Labrax and Charmides are destined for before their shipwreck. Charmides accuses Labrax of greed, using the image of a monster wanting to devour the whole island:

iam postulabas te, impurata belua,
totam Siciliam devoraturum insulam (Ru. 543-44)?

You already planned, you filthy beast,
to devour the whole Sicilian island?

Charmides apparently told Labrax that Sicily is the place to make one's fortune in the sex trade:

tibi auscultavi, tu promittebas mihi
illi esse quaesitum maximum meretricibus,
ibi me conruere posse aiebas ditias. (Ru. 540-2)

I heard you, you promised me that there
is a great demand for women there [Sicily],
there, you said, I could reap wealth.

59 Stichus brings an unspecified Dionysus with him to the banquet as a conviva (St. 661).

Messenio notes that the two Menaechmi are both born in Syracuse, Sicily: in Sicilia te Syracusis natum esse dixti; et hic natust ibi (Men. 1096-7). Syncerastus says that his master Lycus bought Hanno's daughters and their maid from a Sicilian pirate in the port city of Anactorium: quia illas emit (Lycus) in Anactorio parvolas de praedone Siculo (Poe. 896-7). Finally, Palaestrio compares the height of Pyrgopolynices' pile of silver with Mount Aetna (Mi. 1065).

The information about places in Greece and Sicily on the comic stage is quite extensive if one also takes into account the previous section on the dramatic settings. The countries and city-states of Greece are, however, far from being the only places on the minds of the Plautine characters. The characters refer to many places in Greece and these places carry along with them a number of associations. One must conclude that most of Greece was not as exotic or foreign to the contemporary audience as the reference in the speech of Messenio might suggest (Graciamque exoticam, Men. 236). The associations of the Greek city-states and islands, however, do have a tendency to focus on the types of activities that are the stuff of the comic stage, i.e. trade in women, piracy and wine. But one must also keep in mind that Plautus chooses to present some of the most famous place associations as well as some very obscure details.

THE EAST

The world of Latin Comedy expands well beyond the shores of Italy, Sicily and Greece, even beyond the Mediterranean. Plautus' characters invoke other parts of the Eastern world in their brief descriptions of material things, in their travel lists and in their lists of military conquests. When Stasimus ponders his future as a slave to a mercenary soldier he considers such locations as Asia or Cilicia:

effugiet ex urbe [Lesbonicus], ubi erunt factae nuptiae,
ibit istac, aliquo, in maximam malam crucem,
latrocinatum, aut in Asiam aut in Ciliciam (Tri. 597-9).

He will flee the city, when the nuptials are done,
he will go somewhere, the worst damnation,
to be a mercenary, either in Asia or in Cilicia.

In another play, Artotrogus recounts the military feats of Pyrgopolynices that include one hundred and fifty men killed in Cilicia, one hundred in Scytholatronia, thirty Sardians, and sixty Macedonians:

memini centum in Cilicia
et quinquaginta, centum in Scythian-robberland
tringinta Sardos, sexaginta Macedones --
sunt homines quos tu -- occidisti uno die (Mi. 42-45).

I recall one-forty in Cilicia
one hundred in Scytholatronia
thirty in Sardis, sixty Macedonians --
men that you killed in one day.

In what is the most distant land referred to on the comic stage, Artotrogus declares that Pyrgopolynices has worked as a mercenary soldier in India, where he broke the limb of an elephant: edepol vel elephanto in India, quo pacto ei pugno

praefregisti bracchium (Mi. 25-6).⁶⁰ He adds to his list of the soldier's accomplishments five hundred men Pyrgopolynices would have vanquished in Cappadocia if his sword had not been dull (Mi. 52-3).

The importance of travel in the plots of the comedies is especially brought to the fore in three plays: Curculio, Trinummus, and Stichus. All three of these plays contain a significant eastern Mediterranean presence. The Curculio straddles two cities and two continents. As is noted in the second section of this chapter, the play's dramatic setting is Epidaurus, but most of the reported action has occurred in Caria. When the play opens, Phaedromus awaits the return of the parasite Curculio whom he has sent to Caria in order to procure a loan from a friend (Cu. 67-9). Phaedromus states that the expected time for a return trip between Epidaurus and Caria is four days (inclusive): Nam parasitum misi nudiusquartus Cariam petere argentum, is hodie hic aderit (Cu. 206-7). This time lag is important to the plot of the play which loosely depends on the distance between the cities and on the time it takes two different characters to travel from one place to the other. After Curculio steals the soldier's ring in Caria (Cu. 335-363), he is able to travel to Epidaurus faster than the soldier, Therapontigonus. This allows him to

60 The ambiguity of exactly whose arm was broken is resolved in the following dialogue in which Artotrogus says that he meant to say femur (Mi. 27) not bracchium.

impersonate the soldier's messenger Summanus. Disguised as Summanus, Curculio concocts a story for Lyco that attributes his acting alone on the soldier's behalf. Curculio elaborates on this story with some detail of their travelling in the east. He tells Lyco that they arrived in Caria from India four days ago: quia nudiusquartus venimus in Cariam ex India (Cu. 438-9). The soldier stayed behind in Caria in order to have a golden statue made of himself out of Philippean gold, a monument to his deeds: factis monumentum suis (Cu. 441).

The plot of the Trinummus is built upon the absent father Charmides who is in Seleucia (Tri. 112). The play begins just before Charmides returns from his business ventures in the east. When Charmides does arrive, the sycophant of the play attempts to deceive him by claiming that he travelled with Charmides. The sycophant elaborates on his story with a number of outrageous concoctions of confused geography and mythology. First he says that he left Charmides at the court of Rhadamas on the Cecropean island: ad Rhadamantem in Cecropia insula (Tri. 928).⁶¹ Then, when Charmides asks him where they had travelled together, he replies with a confused idea of just exactly where things are in the east:

Syc. omnium primum in Pontum advect ad Arabiam
terram sumus.
Charm. eho an etiam Arabiast in Ponto?
Syc. est: non illa ubi tus

61 Rhadamas is a wordplay on the name of Rhadamanthus, the judge of the underworld. Cecrops was the first king of Athens.

gignitur, sed ubi absinthium fit atque cunila
gallinacea (Tri. 933-5).

Syc. First of all we travelled in Pontus to the
Arabian land.

Charm. Wow, you mean Arabia is in Pontus?

Syc. Yes, not the one where incense grows, but where
absinth and gallinaceous origanum is made.

The dialogue humorously draws out the confusion of the sycophant clearly revealing that he does not know what he is talking about. Charmides plays along with the fancifulness of the sycophant's journeys in collusion with the audience. The sycophant, after all, has no idea that he is talking to Charmides, the man who is supposed to have written the letters he is delivering. When Charmides questions the sycophant about Arabia being in Pontus, his replies reveal a basic ignorance of geography that the audience is obviously not supposed to share.

The association of the east with vast wealth is taken to its logical heights in the Stichus. The comedy begins just before the return of Epigononius and Pamphilippus from Asia. When the travelers' wives, Panegyris and her sister, discuss their own situation in Athens, Panegyris says that their husbands have been away for three years: nam viri nostri domo ut abierunt, hic tertius annus (St. 29-30). Panegyris sends her slave Pinacium to wait at the port for any sign of her husband's ship: nam illum ecastor mittere ad portum volo, si qua forte ex Asia navis heri aut hodie venerit (St. 151-2). When Pinacium returns from the port he describes what he did

and saw at the harbour:

dum percontor portitores, ecquae navis venerit
ex Asia, negant venisse, conspicatus sum interim
cercurum, quo ego me maiorem non vidisse censeo
(St. 366-8).

when I asked the customs officials, which ship
came from Asia, they said none, meanwhile
I saw a Cyprian bark,⁶² bigger than any I had ever seen.

Pinacium subsequently describes to Gelasimus the ship laden
with the treasure of a successful trading voyage to Asia.
Gelasimus is excited about his prospects of free meals from
his friend. The passage is replete with associations of
luxurious goods from the east:

Pan. Tutin ipse ipsum vidisti? Pi. Lubens.
argenti auri advexit nimium. Ge. Nimis factum bene.
hercule vero capiam scopas atque hoc convorram lubens.
Pi. Lanam purpuramque multam. Ge. Est qui ventrem vestiam.
Pi. Lectos eburatos, auratos. Ge. Accubabo regie.
Pi. Tum Babylonica et peristroma tonsilia et tappetia
advexit, nimium bonae rei. Ge. Hercule rem gestam bene.
Pi. Poste, ut occepi narrare, fidicinas, tibicinas,
sambucas advexit secum forma eximia. Ge. ...
Pi. Poste unguenta multigenorum multa (St. 373-83).

Pan. You yourself saw him? Pi. Happily.
He brought a lot of silver and gold.
Ge. A deed very well done.
Hercules, I will take up my brush and sweep this
happily.
Pi. Much wool and purple cloth. Ge. To dress my belly.
Pi. Ivory couches, inlaid with gold. Ge. I will lie royally.
Pi. Then he brought Babylonian curtains, carpets
and tapestries. Lots of beautiful things.
Ge. Hercules, a thing well done.
Pi. Then, as I began to say, he brought with him
lyre girls, flute girls, harp girls of rare beauty.
Ge. ...
Pi. Then, all kinds of different ointments.

62 For cercurus as a light vessel of the Cyprians see Plin. Nat. 7.208;
Liv. 23.34.4; also at Plaut. Mer. 87.

A few of the characters refer to Asia and its association with incense. The soldier Stratophanes states that the incense that he brought is from Arabia, and the balsam is from Pontus: ex Arabia tibi attulit, Ponto amomum (Tru. 539-40). When Philocomasium goes off to express her religious devotion to Ephesian Diana, she says that she will burn Arabian incense: Inde ignem in aram, ut Ephesiae Diana laeta laudes gratisque agam eique ut Arabico fumificem odore amoene (Mi. 411-2). The association of wealth with the east is also found in Plautus' comedies. In a sort of spoof on the military dispatch, Dordalus reads a forged letter from an imaginary soldier Timarchides, and says that the Persians have captured the city of Chrysopolis in Arabia:

Chrysopolim Persae cepere urbem in Arabia,
plenam bonarum rerum atque antiquam oppidum
(Per. 506-7).

The Persians have taken the city Goldberg in Arabia, an ancient town filled with delightful things.

Panegyris voices a variation on the stereotyped image of eastern wealth by depicting the mountains of Persia as made of gold:

neque ille sibi mereat Persarum
montis, qui esse aurei perhibentur,
ut istuc faciat quod tu metuis (St. 24-27).

He would not gain for himself the Persian mountains, which, they say, are made of gold, to do what you fear.

Two other references to the east allude to its great distance from the dramatic setting and perhaps suggest mystery.

Dordalus refers to the distance and obscurity of Persia. He describes the origin of the disguised Persian girl as ex Arabia penitissima (Per. 522/cf.41). Another reference to a person from a distant land is found in Tranio's concocted dream where the ghost is a man called Diapontius who apparently described himself literally as a guest from across the sea: transmarinus hospes (Mo. 497).

AFRICA

Geographers had not agreed upon the continent of Africa as a geographical entity in the late third century B.C.⁶³ The dramatic setting of the Rudens, of course, is Cyrene on the north coast. The associations of Cyrene and various aspects of trade have been addressed in the second section of this chapter. The other Plautine comedy that has an important African presence is the Poenulus, where the city of Carthage is associated with the main characters. The prologue of the Poenulus even mentions a park just outside of Carthage from which Hanno's two daughters and their nurse were abducted (Poe. 86). One other mention of Africa in this comedy refers to the animals brought to Rome for the spectacles. Milphio

63 See esp. Sallust: In divisione orbis terrae plerique in parte tertia Africam posuere, pauci tantum modo Asiam et Europam esse, sed Africam in Europa (Jug. 17.3-4). Cato mentions African figs, but he says nothing about his thoughts on the status of the continent (Agr. 8.1).

mistranslates part of Hanno's Punic speech, saying that Hanno was talking about African mice:

Ag. quid venit?

Mil. non audis? mures Africanos praedicat
in pompam ludis dare se velle aedilibus (Poe. 1010-2).

Ag. Why does he come?

Mil. Didn't you hear? He declared that he wants
to provide African mice for the parade in the
Aedilean Festival.

The Mostellaria is another play that relies upon the absent father in order to establish the circumstance of the plot. Before Theopropides appears on stage he is twice described as abroad in the term peregre (Mo. 353;374). When he finally enters the stage, he declares that he has been in Egypt for three years and that he expects that his household awaits him: Triennio post Aegypto advenio domum; credo expectatus veniam familiaribus (Mo. 440-1). There are two other plays which mention places in Africa. Charinus associates Egypt with a medical remedy when he describes a cure as Egyptian resin mixed with honey: resinam ex melle Aegyptiam vorato (Mer. 139). Finally, Curculio includes Libya in his detail of Therapontigonus' exploits (Cu. 444).

IMAGINARY PLACES

The invented places in the comedies are another dimension of Plautus' play on language. Just as Plautus plays on character names and the titles of his comedies, he plays with

the names of places. The characters invent some outrageous place names for the sake of metaphor, humorous contrast or pun. The invented place names most often appear in conjunction with real places, as part of a recitation. These place names are compound nouns that are etymologically self-explanatory. The most outrageous and extensive list of fantastic lands is in Curculio's recitation of the soldier's exploits. In this list he refers to Peredia (Thoroughly-stuffed-land), Perbibesia (Thoroughly-drunken-land), Centauiromachia (Centaur-battle-land), Classia Unomammia (Onebreasted-fleet-land) and Conterebromia (Pressed-Bacchus-land) (Cu. 442-8). In another play, Palaestrio mentions that one of the many places of Pyrgopolynices' conquests is Scytholatronia -- Scythian-Robberland -- a kind of mercenary soldierland or pillage-land somewhere beyond the Black Sea (Mi. 43). In a reference more local to the stage and Roman practices, Simo threatens to make Pseudolus work at the mill as punishment which he calls the 'Mill colony': ad molas coloniam (Ps. 1100). Libanus, Demaenetus' slave, fearful of asking his master the wrong question, describes his fear in an allegory of the barley mill (polenta), since he does not want to invoke the dreaded place by naming it:

Lib. num me illuc ducis, ubi lapis lapidem terit?
 Dem. quid istuc est? Aut ubi istuc est terrarum loci?
 Lib. ubi flent nequam homines qui polentam pinsitant,
 apud fustitudinas, ferricrepinas insulas,
 ubi vivos homines mortui incursant boves
 (As. 31-34).

Lib. Will you lead me there, where stone crushes stone?

Dem. Where is that? Or where is such a place
on the earth?

Lib. Where wretched men weep who grind pearl-barley,
among the Club-banging, Iron-clanging islands,
where dead men run over living bulls.

Finally, in a humorous cross-reference between the practices of the stage and the world, one of the advocati who accompany Agorastocles explains the use of stage money as having a real function in a land he calls 'Barbaria':

aurum est profecto hoc, spectatores, comicum:
macerato hoc pingues fiunt auro in Barbaria boves
(Poe. 597-8).

Audience, this is certainly the coin of comedy:
when soaked, this gold makes oxen fat in Barbaria.

Plautus makes use of invented places in ways that parallel the techniques he uses in naming his characters. He plays on meaning, sound, or strangeness. The inclusion of invented places in close proximity to real place names clearly suggests that the audience could easily distinguish between the real and the fictitious place names. Moreover, we can appreciate the full extent of Plautus' ability to manipulate language as well as the humor that emerges from the different associations that are attached to the fictitious places.

* * *

With the place references collated into the three sections of this chapter in the above fashion, one can appreciate better the extent of the material and the variety of implications that place offered on the Plautine stage. Plautus' characters depict a complex world that has been grouped in this manner in order to facilitate a comprehensive analysis. The number of place references and the complexity of the humor constructed on some of them, argue against a disposition to interpret place on the comic stage as of little consequence. Place is very important to the situations of all of these comedies and almost all of the resolutions. Even if the focal point of the physical stage may be centered upon the home (domus), the comments of the characters extend the stage to the local sites of the city, to the relative position of the dramatic setting and to all the world known to Europeans at this time. Besides creating an important framework within which the action of these plays can take place, the influence of place in Plautus is especially prominent for the themes of travel, trade and character identity. The characters define the places of the world in which they do business and the places of the world define in part the characters who travel around that stage world. The material reveals, in part, that the array of implications and associations that attend many of the place details adhere to a certain code that applies to the genre of comedy itself, but there is plenty of material outside of the stock comic references. Moreover, the depth of

the humor that is dependent upon various places reveals that the audience is well informed. They are able to understand subtle allusions and interpret the nuances of wordplay. The names of the places in the world that the characters refer to and association with a variety of things and actions are a part of the contemporary speech patterns. Otherwise, they have the potential to become a part of the contemporary Latin language as soon as they are spoken on the stage. The following chapter expands upon this investigation of the places and examines the references to the various gentes who populate Plautus' comedies.

CHAPTER FOUR

'GENTES'

tuo ex ingenio mores alienos probas (Per. 212).

All of the elements of Plautine comedy that have been considered to this point have been arranged so as to generate a clearer picture of the world that the characters created on stage. The customs that the characters define and the places that they detail reflect linguistic consistencies that are a window on a part of the makeup of the Roman mind in the early second-century BCE. The complexity of the plots and the incredible diversity of the material argue that the audience needed a considerable familiarity with the methods of comic depiction in order to appreciate the social, political and geopolitical content of the plays. In all of this cultural material, one finds that there are a great number of city-states, islands and countries that the characters claim as their birthplace or their home. These claims involve birthright, citizenship status, and at times the designation of larger ethnic groups. This final chapter will consider the different characters who populate the plays, their citizenship and the ethnic associations that attend their portrayals.

In the broadest social context, the greatest difference between the impact of character portrayals in Greek theatre and Latin Comedy is the homogeneity of the main characters

with the audience. When a Greek went to the theatre, he (or she?)¹ saw for the most part characters on stage who were also Greek. Certainly the Athenian playwright had the option of the different characterizing dialects of Greek, rustic (Doric) and urbane (Attic), but the statements made by all these characters, be they political, social, or moral, were made within a Greek context. If the characters were not Greek, then they were foreign to both the characters and the audience. The contrast of peoples presented on the Greek stage had a definite "us" and "them" delineation that extended from the stage to the audience.² Both Pheidippides (Aristophanes) in the fifth century and Knemon (Menander) in the fourth were Athenians acting before an Athenian audience, and their remarks anticipate immediate audience recognition and empathy.³ But most of the characters of Plautine comedy

1 Even if women were not part of the fifth century audience in Athens (and this is a controversial point), this does not mean that the same would be true for other city states and later centuries. J. Henderson maintains that the evidence is in favor of women in the audience. The Maculate Muse: Obscene Language in Attic Comedy, (Oxford, 1991) p. 34.

2 Hall, Edith Inventing the Barbarian (Oxford, 1989).

3 When Long tackles the question of how to read the basically negative depiction of foreigners in Greek Comedy, he cites examples of the opinion that the intention is merely to produce laughter (Long paraphrases Julius Juthner and quotes Ehrenberg, p.144). The two reservations that Long has for this view are: first, that "apparent superficiality need not imply that there is no earnest background to the playful jokes of Old Comedy"; and second, "that the expressions of Old Comedy about the Barbarian-Hellene antithesis are remarkable not because of their shallowness, but because of their uniformity" Long, Timothy Barbarians in Greek Comedy (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1986) p.144-45. This uniformity, Long argues, reveals a pervasive societal sentiment rather than fleeting ethnic jibes.

are ostensibly not Roman. They come from all over the Mediterranean world. The Menaechmi, Hanno, Pyrgopolynices and Pseudolus are inherently distanced from a Roman social context by their dress, their names and where they come from. Both the way they appear and their names present certain aspects of their characters. But an equally important character attribute is where the characters come from in the world.

We have already examined how the natural resonance of the Latin, the familiarity of the customs and the consistency in the depiction of urban locations allow for the Roman audience's easy comprehension of the plays. Although the vast extent of the Mediterranean world is verbally transported onto the Plautine comic stage, it is certainly done so that the audience can follow the dialogue easily. Whenever the playwright feels it necessary, the strange or foreign aspects of the plays are as carefully explained as the plots are. However, the fact that many of the characters claim their birthrights and citizenships from a variety of places around the Mediterranean raises the question of how that differentiation is communicated. Along with the places, the associations of things and ideas with particular groups of peoples warrant attention in order to achieve a better understanding of the distinctions that are made in these plays between the diversity of characters who claim ties to many different places.

CHARACTER IN PLAUTUS

The individual characters of Latin Comedy present numerous problems for analysis. The genre itself has certain defining limitations which begin with the stereotypical nature of its characters. W.H. Juniper notes that the codices list the personae of the comedies under thirty-seven headings.⁴ Such categorization, however, should not be relied upon too stringently, because such listings are dependent upon the categories that the critic chooses.⁵ Moreover, one must keep in mind that in a critical analysis of the texts, the characterization inherent in the descriptions of the characters is not as vivid as it would be live on stage. But since the texts present important descriptions of some character types, one may compare the characters who maintain the stereotype with the characters who extend the stereotype or who contrast the stereotype. This characterization does not need to be elaborate in order to be effective. What Hochman determines as a general truth for literature is certainly true in Plautus:

Literature, in short, has the capacity to charge relatively limited quantities of information with a sense of significance and to consolidate them into patterns of meaning. In the realm of character, this capacity leads to the heightening of something we know only too well from life -- namely, the

4 W. H. Juniper, 'Character portrayal in Plautus', CJ 31 (1936) 276-88.

5 One could, for example, list all of the characters under six categories: divinities, freemen, freewomen, freedmen, freedwomen and slaves.

impulse to make constructs on the basis of limited information; to infer wholes from parts; and to generalize from those parts to the nature of the whole that they represent.⁶

An audience need only see the deceptions carried off by a few slave characters and it will be ready to assume that the next slave they see on stage may pull off some deceit. The prologue of the Poenulus, for example, asks the audience to fill in the character of the leno Lycus for itself merely on the significance of his name:

vosmet nunc facite coniecturam ceterum
quid id sit hominis quoi Lyco nomen siet
(Poe. 91-2).

Now conjecture the rest of the traits
that belong to a man whose name is Wolf.

Such preconceived notions of character are the basis of many characters in Plautine Comedy: they are unambiguous representations of either their name, as Chapter One has revealed, or they are molded after a particular character stereotype. One expects the leno to be greedy; the senex, irascible and difficult like Menaechmus I's father-in-law (Men. 753-60); the meretrix, self-serving, etc.... If pressed, one might determine a catalogue of the most notorious characters in just ten or eleven types: servus, miles, senex, adulescens, parasitus, leno, meretrix, mater, filia, lena. To establish only such a standard as social position or social function for the delineation of Plautine character, however,

⁶ B. Hochman, Character in Literature, (Ithaca and London, 1985) p. 70.

over-simplifies the task of exegesis, although one must grant such a premise as the starting point. While a determination of character by social status or function does not clash with contemporary Roman social ethos, it does not allow for a full consideration of the ethnic specifications that are an important aspect of the plays.

The preconceived delineation of character outlined above only begins to express the scope of characterization in Plautus. When Euclio characterizes many of the members of the audience as thieves, he does so to elicit laughter and to reveal his own character, not to establish an absolute truth.⁷ For every character 'type' in Plautus one can easily locate his or her corresponding 'anti-type'. Plautus creates, as often as not, characters who are the opposite of what one might expect in a rigid scheme of stereotypes. The senex, Demaenetus, for example, is not only amicable, he openly supports his son's suit. In this play, the Asinaria, it is the matrona Artemona who represents the strict opposing force that is usually accorded to fathers.⁸ In another character type contrast, the senex Antipho exudes the qualities of traditional good sense (St.), while another senex, Euclio, has avarice as his main character trait (Au.). The character

⁷ quid est? quid ridetis? novi omnes, scio fures esse hic compluris (Au. 718).

⁸ Demaenetus notes: quamquam illum mater arte contenteque habet, patres ut consueverunt: ego mitto omnia haec (As. 78-9).

switch in the Curculio is the servus Palinurus who is in fact the moderating moral voice of the play, not a scheming deceiver. Messenio of the Menaechmi is also a bonus servus, who looks after his master's affairs well.⁹ The women of the Stichus, far from portraying any standard 'type' of comic female character, reveal themselves to be diligent and faithful wives, virtual Penelopes in fact, who will stand by their husbands even against the wishes of their father.

For another example of the rigidity of character stereotype and Plautus' free use of these types, one can look at the miles, who is recognized first and foremost as boastful and bombastic. Once again a complete assessment of all the material will reveal that this stereotype is a simplification. The miles of the Captivi, for example, is not at all gloriosus, as in fact the introduction states: neque miles gloriosus (Cap. 58). Philocrates is a most intelligent and thoughtful adulescens who fought for his country Elea and was unfortunately captured. Elsewhere, the miles of the Pseudolus reveals another aspect of the humor that Plautus strove for in his characterizations of soldiers. Polymachaeronlagides never appears on stage but that does not diminish his significance to the plot. He is referred to by his envoy, Harpax, and is imaginatively described by Simia who plays the part of Harpax

⁹ See his song at Men. 966f. where he recites how and why a slave should be obedient. The Mercator has no major servus character at all.

in disguise. Simia indeed portrays part of the stereotyped character of a miles when he answers Ballio's inquiry about what the soldier is presently engaged in: quod edepol fortis atque bellator probus (Ps. 992). But apart from this characterization and the outrageousness of his name, there are only two traits that single out this miles: first, Simia disparagingly calls him dentatus (Ps. 1040); second, his repeated epithet is simply Macedonius. So if one forces generalizations upon the material, however useful they are as an exegetical starting point, their limitations soon become evident.

The difficulties of too much reliance on stereotypes are wider still. Whatever list of 'types' one proposes, each character may be slotted under more than one appellation. For example, an adulescens may also be a filius as well as a miles (e.g. Captivi). A meretrix at the beginning of the play often turns out to be in fact someone's free-born filia, e.g. both Adelphasium and Anterastilis (Poe.). The pater may also be a mercator, as is Theopropides (Mo.); and so may a filius, e.g. Charinus (Mer.). Menaechmus II calls the parasite Peniculus an adulescens (Men. 494) and characterizes him as a cinaedus (Men. 511-3), although neither of these traits are commonly thought of as particular to the parasitus. This multiplicity of character appellations shows that the characters are more than simply cut-out replications of each other. The list in

the prologue of the Menaechmi highlights this changeability of the characters by focusing on the different aspects of character that may be necessary for different plays:

sicut familiae quoque solent mutarier:
 modo hic habitat leno, modo adulescens, modo senex,
 pauper, mendicus, rex, parasitus, hariolus
 (Men. 74-76).

Just as the household also is accustomed to change:
 now a leno lives here, now an adulescens, now a senex,
 poor man, beggar, king, parasite, seer.

Just as the character type assumes a diversity of possible names and titles, the character function varies as circumstance determines. The fact that a character is a mendicus may take precedence over the character type, whether he is a senex, an adulescens, a servus, a miles, or a leno. The dominant trait of any one character is determined by the necessities of the play itself, whatever the character's social position or profession.

The difficulties in categorizing the character types and the variations of character traits demand that one look for any evidence of characterization that is specifically linked to ethnic groupings. One can certainly find a few features or stereotypes of a few Plautine characters that are associated with their place of origin. But one wonders how much variation there is in the descriptions. One assumes, for example, that there are visible differences in the costumes that display a character dressed 'in foreign fashion' (in

peregrinum modum, Per. 158). Certainly, as is the case with Hanno the Carthaginian, the other characters on stage can make much of these visual differences (e.g. Poe. 975).¹⁰ The study of ethnic characterization that follows is derived from the details of language, customs, birthright, social status and citizenship when they are associated with a character's stated place of origin.

* * *

ETHNIC DEMARCATIONS

In the performance of these comedies the ethnic features of the characters would have been based upon different aspects of both sight and sound. The actors could achieve stereotyping variations of ethnic origins by their manipulation of language in both pronunciation and accent, as well as their appearances and their actions. In the texts, however, one must consider the ethnic characterizations from the descriptive passages that have a variety of intentions within the contexts of their own plays. Characters in Plautus at times associate a people from a particular city-state or a larger group of people with a particular trait. The use of

¹⁰ For more details on this passage see the section on the Carthaginians below.

the term gentes here is as a linguistic convention signifying a group of people. There are many different ways in which people are categorized, and one of them is to give a particular group of people a name. The term is only significant as a label to be studied in comparison to Plautus' use of other similar labels. One finds the designation of a large ethnic group with such terms as Graeci (Cu. 288) or the singular reference of Poenus (Poe. 991), but one notable rarity in the language of the plays is the appearance of a general term for race itself. The prologue of the Rudens, however, gives one example of Plautus referring to the peoples of the world. Arcturus opens the play by stating that the gods oversee many different peoples and that the gods are concerned about the deeds of men:

qui est imperator divom atque hominum Iuppiter
 is nos per gentis alium alia disparat,
 qui facta hominum, mores, pietatem et fidem
 noscamus, ut quemque adiuvet opulentia (Ru. 9-12).

Jupiter, who is the Emperor of gods and men,
 he disperses us, some here, some there, throughout
 the human race, that we learn the deeds of men,
 their manners, piety and trust, how wealth assists each.

This plural use of gens is the only example of a blanket reference to the different peoples that make up the world.¹¹ In contrast, the other appearance of gens is specific. Philto moralizes on the rapaciousness of a kind of people whom he

¹¹ Plautus uses gens almost exclusively in the genitive plural as the equivalent of 'world'. Thus one finds, for example, nusquam gentium (e.g. Am. 620); unde gentium (e.g. Ep. 483); quo gentium (Ba. 831); and ubi gentium (Ep. 678).

describes among other things as the 'gaping people': hiulca gens (Tri. 286). For another term of reference to 'people' or 'kind' one looks to genus. The noun genus, however, almost exclusively refers to personal family. Most of the cases in which genus does mean 'kind' or 'race' are comic and they will be discussed in the appropriate section at the end of this chapter. One might also consider the adjective humanus. It is used to underscore the qualities and aspects of being human, but it does not denote ethnic features or even a quality that contrasts barbarianism. One finds, for example, that human affairs are contrasted to divine affairs (Am. 258), and that human fortune itself is a thing that is subject to change (Ci. 194). Tyndarus notes that fortuna humana (Cap. 304) does as it pleases. There is only one instance where humanus has the ethical sense of humane or considerate. Theopropides compliments Tranio's clever advice by noting its human quality: humani ingenui (Mo. 814).¹²

Although the designation of the human race as an entirety is uncommon, the specification of a character belonging to a larger group of people as an attribute is frequent. Indeed, the establishment of citizenship is one of the most consistent characterizing attributes in the comedies of Plautus. This is not surprising, since one of the major focuses in most of

12 Taken from the corresponding note of Sonnenschein, Mostellaria. He also notes that the word with such a meaning is frequent in Terence.

these plays is character identity and this identity is closely tied to one's birthplace, birthright and citizenship. The social status of the character is dependent upon his or her being (or not being) a free-born citizen, which carries with it attendant rights. The establishment of this social status is often developed in a plot that relies upon travelling the world for commerce or for lost children. It is within this transient world that the characters make sense of who they are, in part, by knowing where they are from. As examined in Chapter Three, the dramatic settings allow the action of the play to create a local demarcation of peoples and a basis of characterization for each character as either native or foreigner. The Latin terms that can be used to distinguish between citizen and non-citizen are civis, populus, peregrinus, alienus, and barbarus.

Most frequently civis distinguishes a citizen. The referent of civis, of course, is most often to a main character of the play, but it also refers to the people who are citizens of the city where the play is set. Thus one finds in the appropriate dramatic setting references to the citizens (or to a citizen) along with the appropriate epithet: Thebani cives (Am. 376); civis Atticus (Ep. 602); Epidamnii cives (Men. 1005); Aetoli cives (Poe. 621).¹³ The idea of being

13 As a variation on this, Plautus also uses Cyrenenses populares (Ru. 615).

a citizen of a specific place even takes on divine dimensions when Arcturus appropriately declares himself as a citizen of Jupiter's heavenly state: eius [Juppiter] sum civis civitate caelitum (Ru. 2).¹⁴ In another play, Milphio tells Adelphasium that his master, Agorastocles, will make her an Attic citizen: ac te faciet ut sis civis Attica atque libera (Poe. 372). This is curious because the play is set in Calydon, not Athens. Therefore, it is either a slip of the playwright or an example of the use of Attic as a generic term for the Greeks. Some examples of civis specifically refer to social status. Charinus declares that Eutyclus kills him, a free citizen, by telling him that his love has been taken away: liberum civem enicas (Mer. 612). Ballio comments on the Roman legal process when he notes the rotation of the courts between the complaints of citizens and those of non-citizens: peregrinos absolvam, cras agam cum civibus (Ps. 1231). The deception and the resolution of the Persa hinge on the citizenship of the disguised girl. The girl is disguised as a Persian, who as a captive slave has no rights. When she is offered for purchase to Dordalus, he expresses his concern that perhaps someone might come along, claim her as a free Persian woman and take her back to Persia.¹⁵ Later in the play, when Saturio wants to establish her citizenship once and for

14 Megaronides makes the characterization of the urbani assidui cives (Tri. 202).

15 qui ego nunc scio, an iam adseratur haec manu? quo illum sequar? in Persas? (Per. 716-8).

all, he says that he will take her before the praetor: sequere hac, mea gnata, me usque ad praetorem (Per. 752). Saturio accuses Dordalus of trading in free citizens: qui hic commercaris civis homines liberos (Per. 749). The most inclusive delineation of the distinctions between various civic statuses appears in the Aulularia. Congrio enters, assuming the role of the praeco, and he declares:

attatae cives, populares, incolae, advenae omnes
date viam qua fugere liceat, facite totae plateae
pateant (Au. 406-7).

Attention citizens, dwellers, tenants, visitors all
give way that I may flee, make clear the broad streets.

The four possible statuses for the general population that one might meet on the stage street reflect the rigid demarcation of social status so prevalent among the audience.

The noun populus is also used to refer to the local population of the dramatic city-state. Populus, for example, is used to refer to a crowd of people. The prologue of the Asinaraia tells the herald to make his announcement to quiet down the audience: face nunciam tu, praeco, omnem auritum populum (As. 4). The witnesses in the Poenulus do not want the local people of Calydon whom they call populus to chase after them like madmen with stones: neque nos populus pro cerritis insectabit lapidibus (Poe. 528). Interestingly, as freedmen they describe themselves as plebii and pauperes (Poe.

515).¹⁶ Menaechmus II refers to the populus of a city as one of the bodies that have judicial power:

quippe qui pro illis loquimur, quae male fecerint:
aut ad populum aut in iure
aut ad iudicium rest (res est) (Men. 586-7).

Indeed, we are they who plead on behalf of those things
which have been wrongly done:
the case rests with the people, or the magistrate
or the judge.

Similarly, Sosia refers to the Theban people as those who have the power to decide the fate of war refugees: in dicionem atque in arbitratum cuncti Thebano poplo (Am. 259). Otherwise populus can be found in the genitive case roughly equivalent to 'of the people'. Congrio's characterization of Anthrax, for example, is his renown as a beautiful and chaste male prostitute: bellum et pudicum vero prostibulum populi (Au. 285). Cleostrata also sarcastically calls her husband's friend Alcesimus a pillar of the senate and a guard of the people: senati columen, praesidium populi (Cas. 536).

The term peregrinus, in contrast to civis, conveys two possible ideas. The first is that the character is not a citizen of the dramatic setting and the second is that the character is in transit, that he or she has come from a distant place or is going to a distant place. The most frequent form of the word used to describe being abroad is the

16 The other occurrence of the term plebes is a wordplay on plebiscitum in a humorous scene in the Pseudolus. In a repartee Pseudolus discusses Calidorus with Charinus and says that a plebiscite is not more insightful: plebi scitum non est scitius (Ps. 748).

adverb peregre. The characters use the term to declare that they are in transit. The term does not always carry along with it the distinction of being a foreigner. When Sosia returns home he characterizes himself as coming from abroad when he asks Mercury why he is in his way: tu domo prohibere peregre me advenientem postulas (Am. 361)? Similarly, Tranio announces the return of his master Theopropides from abroad: erus advenit peregre (Mo. 353). Later on in the same play Phaniscus declares that Theopropides, Philolaches's father, has been absent from Athens: hinc peregre eius pater abiit (Mo. 957-8). One can find peregre used also with a thing in the Asinaria. The parasite announcing the terms of a contract describes a letter as brought from abroad: peregre allatam epistulam (As. 761). In another play, Messenio notes the custom of meretrices to send their slaves to look in the harbour for a ship that is described as foreign: peregrina navis (Men. 340). In this case, the foreign ship is associated with the arrival of lucrative prospects in their particular line of work.

Although the most common grammatical form of peregrinus may be peregre, some of the characters bear the adjective as an attribute. The merchant, Chlamydatus, declares that he is unfamiliar with a certain Saurea and gives the reason: peregrinus ego sum (As. 464). His declaration, of course, makes him an easy target for the recurrent 'dupe the stranger'

motif. It should be noted, however, that Chlamydatus is a stranger to the characters but not a foreigner to the dramatic setting of the play. Colybiscus is another example. Labelled a peregrinus seven times, he is ripe for such a deception as well: peregrinus...aliunde ex alio oppido (Poe. 560).¹⁷ He declares that he is a stranger -- one who is unfamiliar with the city of the dramatic setting: huius ignarus oppidi (Poe. 656). Mnesilochus states in his letter that he has slept with the wife of a soldier who was out of the country: peregrinus miles (Ba. 1009). Syra, who establishes the plot of the Cistellaria, reports that the abandoned child that she gave to her friend was declared at the time of birth to have been fathered by a lover from abroad: amator peregrinus (Ci. 143). Menaechmus II refers to himself as a stranger who has just arrived: peregrino... advenienti (Men. 724). Hanno thinks Milphio worthless because he ridicules a stranger: servom Hercle te esse oportet et nequam et malum hominem peregrinum atque advenam qui inrideas (Poe. 1030-1). Lycus refers to Colybiscus specifically as a Spartan foreigner: peregrinum Spartanum (Poe. 770). Charinus asks Eutyclus about the man who purchased his beloved, whether he was a citizen or not: rogitares...civisne esset an peregrinus (Mer. 635).

Frequently the adjective peregrinus applies to a foreign character's dress. Toxilus describes the fitting out of the

17 cf. Poe. 175.

Sagaristio in peregrine fashion: quasi sit peregrinus (Per. 157). By this he refers to his manner of dress such as his tunic, belt, type of sword and hat (Per. 155). Simia, disguised as a soldier's messenger, is described as having a peregrine appearance and of being of low birth: peregrina facies videtur hominis atque ignobilis (Ps. 964). Megaronides, in planning a disguise for the sycophant, calls for the peregrine fashion: is homo exornetur graphice in peregrinum modum...quasi...ex Seleucia veniat (Tri. 771-73). Finally, one finds that certain modes of behaviour are labeled as 'peregrine'. Stichus uses the neuter plural form to contrast customs abroad, when he is preparing to celebrate a party with his fellow slave Sagarinus in Athens: volo eluamus hodie, peregrina omnia relinque, Athenas nunc colamus (St. 669-70). Most uses of peregrinus are in relationship to the dramatic setting of the play and the characters who populate the city-state.

Alienus is another possible marker for the 'outsider'. This term, however, is more often used to signify a contrast to 'my people' on a more personal level of familia or household. Thus Sosia replies to Mercury who is impersonating Sosia himself: Certe edepol tu me alienabis numquam quin noster siem; nec praesente nobis alius quisquamst servos Sosia (Am. 399-400). Elsewhere, Astaphium tells Diniarchus that since he is not completely broke, he is welcome in her place:

haud alienus tu quidem es (Tru. 176). In the same play moreover, Astaphium accuses Diniarchus of being too concerned with other people's business using the same term: alienis rebus (Tru. 137). Curculio refers to the trading of goods as something that the leno does on behalf of other people:

egone ab lenone quicquam
mancupio accipiam, quibus sui nihil est nisi una lingua,
qui abiurant si quid creditum est? alienos mancupatis
alienos manu emittitis, alienisque imperatis (Cu. 494-6).

Can I legally take anything given by a pimp?
Men who own nothing except one tongue
with which they swear off their debts? They take other
people's property, free other people's slaves, order...

Syra tells Gymnasium that she is free to speak her mind because the present company is safe: nemo alienus hic est (Ci. 21). Hegio calls Ergasilus an alienus, although he is his son's parasite: Alienus quom tam aegre feras, quid me patrem par facerest (Cap. 146-7) To this Ergasilus replies that he is by no means an outsider: Alienus? ego alienus illi (Cap. 148)? When Palaestrio and Philocomasium are in the process of duping Sceledrus, Philocomasium (playing the part of her own sister) says that she does not know either of the two men. Palaestrio plays along with her and suggests to Sceledrus that perhaps they have lost their identities: persectari hic volo, Sceledre, nos nostri an alieni simus... (Mi. 430-1).

Plautus only partially draws from the Greek roots of the term barbarus as a linguistic, political and social marker of

'us' and 'them'.¹⁸ Plautus more frequently plays with barbarus in a self-mocking jibe on his transformations of Greek plays into Latin. For this he uses phrases such as Plautus vortit barbare (Tri. 19).¹⁹ At first glance the play on the word becomes focused on the humorous split between the high Greek culture of the formal stage and the relative barbarity of the Latin comedy. This is a self-referential twist on the original Greek use of the word and it seems to mockingly suggest how absurd the premise of culture can be, if comic productions are the standard by which one judges culture. But the barbarity that Plautus wants to evoke may be more than the language and the relative lack of culture of the Roman people. Plautus seems to suggest that his creations are uproariously funny if one compares them to their relatively sedate ancestors. In a sarcastic way, he changes the plays barbarously. Such an interpretation is certainly supported if one compares Plautus with Menander. Moreover, Naevius, a contemporary writer of comedy, is referred to as poeta barbarus (Mi. 211). This may be Plautus' way of paying a compliment to his colleague.

Barbarus is found only seven times outside of the prologues, always in a humorous, self-referential context.

18 As defined for example by E. Hall Inventing the Barbarian (Oxford, 1989).

19 The parallel line is Maccus vortit barbare (As. 11).

One finds the humorous and uncivilized characterization of the Lydian Lydus, when Pistoclerus calls his tutor a barbarus (Ba. 121), who is more dense than a barbarus poticius (Ba. 123).²⁰ Pistoclerus mocks Lydus because the tutor does not know the gods that a young lover knows and he goes on to create a list of absurd divinities. In another reference to the comic actors themselves, Tranio shows Theopropides around the house that the latter's son has supposedly acquired and he points out the quality of the door by commenting on the indigenous quality of the workmanship: non enim haec pultiphagus opifex opera fecit barbarus (Mo. 828). The gruel-eating workman referred to stands in the singular as a characterization of the comic actors themselves who build the stage. Phaedromus associates comedy with barbarity when he invokes the bolts of his love's door and wishes that they become "comic dancers": Ludii barbari (Cu. 150). This passage can be either a reference to the 'festival' or perhaps Etruscan (i.e. Lydian) dancers. Two other references also highlight the barbarian manners or social practices of the stage. The parasite Gelasimus complains about the scarcity of dinner invitations. He then declares that he has learned the barbarian custom of inviting himself which he equates with self-auction:

haec verba subigunt me uti mores barbaros
 discam atque ut faciam praeconos compendium
 itaque auctionem praedicem, ipse ut venditem (St. 194-6).

20 The meaning of poticius is uncertain; Festus suggests that it is in reference to the Potitii (Festus pp.217, 237M); cf. Livy 1.7.14; 9.29.9). The references are taken from J. Barsby, note on line 123.

These stories make me learn barbarian customs
so that I save the price of a herald
and I announce the auction and so I can sell myself.

Finally, Sceparnio mistrusts Charmides and tells him that he does not want to entertain an uncultured guest in his temple: barbarum hospitem mi in aedis nil moror (Ru. 583). The word barbarus is most often used to play on the hilarious pretense of comedy.

Such are the basic elements of Plautus' determination of relative civic designation and citizenship. The selected examples are meant to present the range of possible uses for each term. Plautus had a complex palette from which to choose the basic attributes of his characters. Added to these basic attributes, of course, are others that associate characters with particular ethnic groupings or that characterize groups of people with particular traits. These characterizations will be the focus of the following study.

* * *

THE 'GENTES' IN PLAUTUS

The characters in the comedies of Plautus are the inhabitants of the whole Mediterranean world. Plautus uses many different designations for his characters that cover the peoples of the Mediterranean world and beyond. One must always be conscious of the limitations imposed by the loss of most of the comic plays that were written at the time, but even taking that loss into consideration, the international content of the extant Plautine corpus is vast, impressive and inclusive. The world of the Latin comic stage is an ethnically diverse and multicultural world. First and foremost, one finds the ethnic variations of the human race presented as a natural attribute of the world on stage. The characters are most prominently defined by citizenship to a particular city-state, but other ethnic traits are thrown into the mix. The specifics of ethnic characterizations have different degrees of impact in the different plays. The main characters in the Menaechmi, for example, are foreigners to Epidamnus, where the play takes place. These characters are designated mostly by their unfamiliarity with the city and the people. In the Poenulus, in contrast, the humor of incomprehensible language and strange dress are the vehicle used to reinforce the presentation of ethnic distinctions. On an individual scale, the characterization of the soldier as Macedonius (Ps. 51) instantly captures the essence of his

function and character. For a more comprehensive list one turns to Curculio's recitation on the world and the peoples that populate the world. Curculio, in order to establish the character of Therapontigonus in the comic miles fashion, illustrates the latter's exploits with a catalogue of his aristeia in battles against different peoples and places, both real and fictitious:

Curc. Dicam. quia enim Persas, Paphlagones
Sinopes, Arabes, Cares, Cretanos, Syros,
Rhodiam atque Lyciam, Perediam et Perbibesiam,
Centauromachiam et Classiam Unomammiam,
Libyamque omnem, omnem Conterebromniam,
dimidiam partem nationum usque omnium
subegit solus intra viginti dies (Cu. 442-48).

I will tell you. Indeed, because single-handedly he subdued the Persians, the Paphlagonians, the Sinopians, the Arabs, the Carians, the Cretans, the Syrians-- Rhodes and Lydia, Gorge-on-the-gristle-land, Bottoms-up-land, Centaur-battle-land, One-breasted-fleet-land, and the whole of Lybia, Wine-pressed-land -- half of all the nations -- all within twenty days.

This brief panegyric for Therapontigonus reveals that the audience must be able to immediately distinguish between the authentic references and the fictitious. One also observes that there is often a close tie between naming the places of the world and the peoples who dwell in those places; for variation, Curculio mentions either one or the other. Moreover, when Lyco, the banker, does not believe that all the above-mentioned peoples and countries could be taken in twenty days, he frames his disbelief of Curculio's catalogue with something of an estimation of the world population:

quia enim in cavea si forent
 conclusi, itidem ut pulli gallinacei,
 ita non potuere uno anno circumirier (Cu. 449-51).

...because if those people were enclosed
 in a coop, like domestic chickens,
 he could not walk round them in one year.

Imbedded in the humor of this passage is a half-serious generalization about the size of the world and its population.²¹ By invoking the world population on the comic stage, Lyco invites the audience to consider the size of the world and its population. This invitation, in turn, asks us to take a closer look at the gentes involved in the plays. The following pages will evaluate the ethnic references in Plautus by individual country.²²

ITALIANS

Closest to the audience on the Latin Comic stage are, of course, the peoples of Italy. This fact both creates and reflects the social significance of the content of the plays as historical documents. The references to Italian groups of peoples create local and contemporary implications to the

21 Cavea can refer to the seating area in a Roman theatre: ut conquaestores singula in subsillia eant per totam caveam spectatoribus (Am. 65-6); also at Am. 68; or, to the stage as part of the theatre: venitne in mentem tibi quod verbum in cavea dixit histrio (Tru. 931)?

22 Many of the citations that follow owe at least a cross-reference to R. Coon, The Foreigner in Hellenistic Comedy (Chicago, 1920).

comedies in the same way as references to Italian towns. But not all of the stereotyping passages are specifically targeted to Italian peoples. The Choragus passage in the Curculio,²³ for example, might be considered as a selected account of characters found in the city of Rome itself, but it is more concerned with commenting on the general morals of the time rather than the specifics of ethnic origin. All of the references to Italians are to Rome's neighbours except one example that invokes the lowest class of Roman citizens themselves. The miles Antamonides hurls a number of abusive characterizations at Hanno the Carthaginian, including the comparison of him with Roman oarsmen, who, he says, are stuffed with leeks and garlic: tum autem plenior ali ulpicique quam Romani remiges (Poe. 1313-4).²⁴ In such a comment, social status takes an obvious precedence over ethnic concerns.

Foremost among the Italian references are the Praenestines. To begin with, Ergasilus includes Praeneste in the list of barbaricae urbes by which he swears (Cap. 883). Elsewhere there are more specific traits that are associated with the Praenestines. When Stasimus replies to Callicles' inquiries as to where and when the marriage contract of his sister was agreed upon, he maintains that a manner of making a contract is particular to the Praenestines: illico hic ante

23 See the first section of Chapter Three.

24 cf. Romabo corr. (Tru. 966) and fr.I 111.

ostium, tam modo, inquit Praenestinus (Tri. 608-609).²⁵ The most likely interpretation for this somewhat obscure remark is that Praenestines are ostentatious in their affairs, i.e. they conduct their business in public. This interpretation accepts that the inquit refers to the whole line, rather than simply to the previous tam modo. There is evidence to support such an interpretation because it fits nicely with another reference which states that the Praenestines have a reputation for boastfulness:

Praenestinum opino esse, ita erat gloriosus,
neque id haud subditiva gloria oppidum arbitror
(Ba. VIII).

I think he is a Praenestine, he was so boastful,
I think that the fame of the town is not spurious.²⁶

Praenestines appear to have been something of a target as well for their strong accent. Truculentus cuts syllables off words thinking that the lopped-off section is his own profit and he compares this practice to the way that the Praenestines pronounce conia for ciconia (Tru. 689-91). The reference is to a rude gesture that is made with the fingers.²⁷ These characterizations of Praenestines focus in on one specific mannerism and the habits of speech.

25 Festus notes that tammodo was used for promodo. Festus ed. W.M. Lindsay de verborum significatu quae supersunt cum pauli epitome, (Hildesheim, 1965) p.492-3.

26 The text at the beginning of this play is unfortunately corrupt. I include the passage because its sentiment is corroborated by my interpretation of the other passage. On the text here see Barsby pp.93-4.

27 The ciconia is a stork or a derisive gesture made with the hand: O.L.D.

The references to Italian peoples, however, do not all stay so close to Rome as the nearby Praenestines. Plautus also brings to his stage the Campanians and the Apulians to the south. Stasimus, in his attempt to make the dowry of a farm for Philto's daughter seem less attractive, comments on the hardiness of the Campanians in comparison to Syrians:

- Stas. tum autem Surorum, genus quod patientis summumst
hominum, nemo extat qui ibi sex menses vixerit:
ita cuncti solstitiali morbo decidunt.
- Phil. Credo ego istuc, Stasime, ita esse; sed Campana genus
multo Surorum iam antidit patientia (Tri. 542-6).
- Stas. Then moreover, the Syrians, the most enduring people
on earth, no one survives who lives there six months:
thus they all fall by the midsummer disease.
- Phil. Stasimus, I believe that is true;
but the Campanian people
now far surpasses the Syrians in endurance.²⁸

That the Campanians should be thought of as enduring is especially intriguing in light of the politics of the Hannibalic Wars. Capua defected to Hannibal after the battle of Cannae in 216 BCE. When Rome took possession of the city again it essentially destroyed the former political structure of the city, killing its leaders, dispersing its citizens and confiscating its lands.²⁹ Elsewhere in Italy, Plautus takes two shots at the Apulians, both times referring to the strangeness of their customs. The first concerns the social

28 See Chapt. 3: the Campanian embroideries are coupled with Alexandrian tapestries (Ps. 145-6). The other possible reference to Campanians is unfortunately corrupt (Tru. 942).

29 For the defections in the south of Italy after Cannae see Livy 22.61.10-15; and for the punishment of Capua see Livy 26.16.5-13.

status of slaves and their relative freedom in Apulian society. In an apparent clarification for the benefit of the audience, the prologue to the Casina states that the practice of slaves marrying is common to the comic stage, just as it is in Carthage, Greece and Apulia. The prologue contends, moreover, that the slave weddings in the above places are of greater concern than those of freemen. Finally, however, to dispel the falsehood, the prologue offers a bet:

id ni fit, mecum pignus si quis uolt dato
 in urnam mulsi, Poenus dum iudex siet
 uel Graceus adeo, uel mea caussa Apulus.
 quid nunc? nihil agitis? sentio, nemo sitit (Cas. 75-8).

If this is not so, if someone cares, let him bet
 me an urn of honied wine, as long as the judge
 is Punic or Greek or, for my sake, Apulian.
 What? You don't stir? I see, no one's thirsty.

The statement implies that the speaker will lose the bet because the judge that he asks for will know the truth of the social practices in each of the places he has mentioned. The prologue assumes the loss of the bet, so the intention is to emphasize the falsehood of the statement and then proceed. Although there is a reference to the questionable trustworthiness of the Apulians, Greeks, and Poeni, Plautus turns the joke around still further by calling the trustworthiness of the character on the comic stage into question. The second Apulian reference criticizes table manners in regard to clearing one's throat and spitting. Periplectomenos, although he is a resident of Ephesus, declares that his table manners are not uncivilized:

minime sputator, screator sum, itidem minime mucidus:
 post Ephesi sum natus, non enim in Apulis non
 sum Animulas (Mi. 647-8).

I'm not a spitter, hawker, least of all a snorter:
 I was born in Ephesus, not in Apulia,
 I am not an Animulan.

Animula is a small town in Apulia whose provincialism and
 rusticity are ridiculed by this statement.

Plautus also takes the opportunity to pun on the
 Umbrians. In the Mostellaria Tranio explains to Simo that the
 reason why someone wants to look over his house is that he
 wants to incorporate some of the features such as its
 shadiness into his own house. When Simo replies that his
 house is in fact without any shade at all, Tranio asks him
 about his Umbrian (i.e. 'Shady') girl:

Quid, Sarsinatis ecqua est,
 si umbram non habes (Mo. 770)?

How, what about the Sarsinian girl (i.e. the Umbrian),
 if you have no 'shadiness'?³⁰

The Etruscans to the north of Rome do not escape the jest of
 the comic stage. The associations with the Etruscan quarter
 of Rome itself have already been noted in Chapter Three. The
 Choragus, in his detail of Rome, equates the Tuscan Quarter
 with the business of people selling themselves (Cu. 482-3).
 The Etruscan people are thus associated with the manner of
 earning a living which is notorious for that area of Rome.
 Lampadio relates his story of Phanostrata's child whom he was

30 Sarsina is the reported birthplace of Plautus.

told to abandon. A courtesan found and raised the child giving her the name Selenium. When Lampadio relates his conversation with Syra to Phanostrata he says that he told Syra that if Selenium does not take his offer of returning to a good and reputable home she will have to acquire her dowry according to the Etruscan way of doing things: ex Tusco modo (Ci. 562-63). Phanostrata then asks if the woman who raised her is a meretrix (Ci. 564), to which Lampadio replies that she was at the time (Ci. 565).

It should be noted that almost half of the extant plays have references to the peoples of Italy. If this percentage is at all representative of the Roman Comedy of the period, then it must be granted that local ethnic references were not uncommon on the Palliata stage. Indeed, if one considers that during a festival many different plays would be seen, the chances are very good that there would be a number of comments specifically directed towards the local peoples of Italy. Any comments about Italians that were made on the dramatic stages of Rome, of course, could not escape contemporary political overtones, especially at a time when some of the Italian allies were defecting or had defected to Hannibal. But one may also reflect on the relative harmlessness of the comic spur of the Roman stage in comparison, for example, to Roman retribution on Capua in 211 BCE noted above.

GREEKS

How the Greeks are portrayed on the Latin stage raises several interesting interpretive problems from a socio-historical point of view. There are a few basic difficulties that one must address when approaching the question of Greek characterization in Plautus' comedy. First, while many of the characters are ostensibly Greek, they are only Greek in a Roman conceptual context. Second, the Greeks portrayed on the comic stage are in fact from many different places around the Mediterranean. Their specific citizenship takes precedence over their 'Greekness' in the resolutions of the plots. Third, the lines between the ethnic identification and the character type are often blurred beyond distinction. As a visual presentation Plautus' comedy is the fabula palliata,³¹ i.e. the characters wear the Greek pallium. The costumes play on the underlying cultural expression of the characters' 'otherness', but the visual portrayal of the 'Greekness' of the individual characters is only one part of the overall characterization of Greeks. The characterization of Greeks on the comic stage is a complex of identifying attributes which incorporate a number of references that the characters themselves make to various Greek peoples. There are many

31 Ergasilus, for example, describes the slave's appearance in a hurried-entrance scene with his pallium bundled around his neck: nunc certa res est, eodem pacto ut comici servi solent, coniciam in collum pallium,... (Cap. 778-779).

aspects to the portrayal of what exactly 'Greek' is. The characters are by no means simply paraded before the audience under one convenient label or ethnic stereotype. The characters are Greeks from many places in the Mediterranean and, although the convenient metonymy is to call all that is Greek Athenian, the ethnic characterizations are not all as simple as that. The characters are as much defined by social status as by their place of origin, and the social hierarchy of the stage is in line with that of the audience, especially when that hierarchy is reversed for ridicule and comic effect. What the characters of the Plautine stage considered to be Greek is found in the passages that describe the Greek people and the things and behaviors that are associated with them. This also takes into account other less detailed remarks that are directed either toward the Greeks as an ethnic group or toward a Greek from a specific place. These comments stand out from the characterization that is part of the action on the stage, because they are expressed rather than implied.

The best example that presents an overview of Roman sentiments on the Greeks appears in the Curculio. The eponymous parasite gives his opinion about Greeks in general when he runs on the stage through the hindering crowds:

tum isti Graeci palliati, capite operto qui ambulant,
 qui incedunt suffarinati cum libris, cum sportulis
 constant, conferunt sermones inter sese, drapetae,
 obstant, obsistant, incedunt cum suis sententiis,
 quos semper videas bibentes esse in thermipolio,
 ubi quid subripuere -- operto capitulo calidum bibunt,

comments as well are further evidence that the audience easily slipped from dramatic context to contemporary context without the need for additional prompting.

While Curculio's ethnic stereotyping is the most thorough ethnic scourge in the extant texts, most of the details of his stereotype find parallels in other less-detailed characterizations of other gentes. This again suggests that the complaints that he levels against the Greeks are common comic characterizations as much as they are specific stereotyping. Moreover, some of Curculio's characterizations perhaps reveal a few fundamental fears in the Roman psyche, such as the fear of antisocial ideas and clandestine gatherings, more than ethnic prejudice.³² The initial description of the Greeks in this passage stands out to a certain extent from the other comments. Curculio portrays the Greeks as secretive (capite operto) and he suggests that they have thoughts of their own (incedunt cum suis sententiis). Both of these qualities suggest anti-social behavior in a Roman context. Otherwise most of the humor of these characterizations relies on the comic reputation of those who indulge in excesses of food and drink. Curculio also labels the Greeks as stuffed with both books and Roman handouts (suffarcinati cum libris, cum sportulis). It is particularly

32 The best roughly contemporary example of Roman reaction to clandestine social gatherings is the Bacchic suppression of 186 BCE (Livy 39.8ff.).

interesting that the Greeks are stuffed with the handouts that are associated with the Roman freedman-client. This implies that Greeks are dependent on Roman charity. Otherwise, they apparently eat barley (crepitum polentarium), at least as is evident from their flatulence. They also drink a lot (bibentes in thermipolio) and they are grim when they are intoxicated (tristes atque ebricoli). The accusation that stands out in this passage is that Greeks are characterized as runaway slaves (drapetae). This taunt fits in nicely with the freedman association of the sportula and it perhaps presents us with the worst insult one could level against a freedman: that he is really a fugitivus in disguise. The one common comic stereotype that is missing from Curculio's list is the acute interest in sex that is often associated with Greeks on the comic stage. With all this material it would be easy to create a standard Roman ethnic stereotype of the Greeks, but there are other factors to consider. It is important to note that similar types of characterizations can be found elsewhere in the comedies against other character types and other ethnic groups. One need only look to the characterization of the gluttonous parasite, the alcoholic lena,³³ or at Carthaginians, against whom the same 'gruel-eater' taunt is thrown (Poe. 54).

Curculio's characterization of the Greeks as over-

33 The lena of the Cistellaria is a heavy drinker, who also mentions talkativeness as a trait of her kind whenever sufficiently 'ballasted': quae ubi saburratae sumus ...plus loquimur quam sat est (Ci. 121-2).

indulging drunks compares to the associations with Greeks that one finds in other passages. The Mostellaria opens with two slaves on stage, one of whom, Granio, chastizes his colleague Tranio for corrupting their ward, Philolaches. Granio catalogues Philolaches' apparent debauchery and includes the standard list of vices:

dies noctesque bibite, pergraecamini,
amicas emite liberate, pascite
parasitos, obsonate pollucibiliter (Mo. 22-4).

Drink night and day, thoroughly do the Greek,
buy girls, free them, pasture parasites,
feast sumptuously.

A little later in the scene, Granio again emphasizes his Greekizing with drinking, stuffing one's self, and slaughtering the fattened animal: bibite, pergraecamini, este, ecfercite vos, saqinam caedite (Mo. 64-5). The libidinous sexual appetite that is a part of Granio's first accusation, is also added to other similar passages. In the same play, Phaniscus associates 'thoroughly doing the Greek' with hiring prostitutes and flute girls: triduum unum est haud intermissum hic esse et bibi, scorta duci, pergraecari, fidicinas tibicinas ducere (Mo. 958-61). In the Poenulus, one of the advocates also equates Greekizing with a pleasant place for love and drink: liberum ut commostrarem tibi locum et voluptarium ubi ames, potes, pergraecere (Poe. 602-3).³⁴ Elsewhere, Dimiarchus implies sexual acts when he accuses

34 The similar association of women and eating with Greekizing at Ba. 743.

Phronesium of wanting to 'Greekize' with her Babylonian miles:
ut cum solo pergraecetur milite (Tru. 87).

Some of the comments directed towards the Greeks have sexual overtones, while at the same time they play on the kind of commercial practices that are common elsewhere on the comic stage. Gelasimus, in his mock announcement of self-auction, elaborates on the blandishments that one buys if one gives him, a parasite, food. He juxtaposes his 'wares' with other Greek indulgences such as an oiled massage:

vel unctiones graecas sudatorias
 vendo vel alias malacas, crapularias;
 cavillationes, adsentatiunculas,
 ac perieratiunculas parasiticas (St. 226-9).

...I sell either sweaty Greek unctions
 or other soft oils, intoxicating;
 scoffings, little sweet-nothings,
 and parasitical perjurifications.

Cleareta tells Argyrippus that he must pay for future services with the same disciplina (As. 201) that is common in business. She explains that while some things in life may be free, others must be paid for on Greek trust, which is, of course, no trust at all:

diem aquam solem lunam noctem, haec argento non emo:
 cetera quae volumus uti Graeca mercamur fide.
 quom a pistore panem petimus, vinum ex oenopolio,
 si aes habent, dant mercem: eadem nos disciplina utimur
 (As. 198-201).

The day, water, the sun, moon and night,
 these I do not buy with silver.
 The other things we want to use we purchase on Greek trust.
 When we ask a baker for bread, a winemaker for wine,
 if they get the cash they give the goods:
 we use the same custom.

In a metaphor of sexuality and commerce, Lysimachus refers to Demipho when he tells Pasicompsa that he will give her a sixty year-old sheep of Greek birth who is easily fleeced (Mer. 524-6). Two other references to the Greeks as a whole have their ties to mythology. Menaechmus II, for example, uses Greek popular mythology to explain to his brother's wife that she is vexing. He says that the Greeks are accustomed to say that Hecuba is a bitch: non tu scis, mulier Hecubam quapropter canem, Graii esse praedicabant (Men. 714-5). In another mythological reference, Chrysalus uses the epic reference to the Greeks as Achivi (Ba. 936) in his extended analogy of the Trojan War. Such an appellation has both literary and martial overtones.

Apart from these stereotypes of the Greek people as a single and identifiable entity in itself, the texts contain many references to specific Greek peoples from around the Mediterranean. The most frequent distinctions made between two ethnic groupings are in the references to the Athenians and the Sicilians. This is perhaps in part due to the fact that Athens is the dramatic setting for most of the extant plays and Sicily is the second most important source for the New Comedy tradition. To begin with, the Athenian and Silician dialects have different implications and associations on the Latin stage. Diabolus, for example, notes the distinction of dialect as part of his contract that stipulates

that Philaenium must only speak Attic:

neque ullum verbum faciat perplexabile,
neque ulla lingua sciat loqui nisi Attica
(As. 792-3).

She is not to use perplexing words,
nor may she knowingly speak any language except Attic.

Such a comment essentially contrasts the licentious overtones that are associated with the rustic Sicilian speech, perhaps notorious in the comedy of Epicharmus,³⁵ with an assumed purity associated with Attic Greek. One also finds that Sicilian humor is set apart from Athenian humor in similar ways. The prologue of the Menaechmi makes a distinction between an Attic plot and a Sicilian plot:

Atque adeo hoc argumentum Graecissat, tamen
non Atticissat, verum Sicilicissitat (Men. 11-12).

and indeed this plot Greekizes, however
it doesn't Atticize but Sicilicize.

Saturio maintains that Attic humor is somehow superior to Sicilian when he assures his daughter that as a dowry she will have all Attic jokes:

si hoc adcurassis lepide, quoi rei operam damus,
dabuntur dotis tibi inde sescenti logei,
atque Attici omnes; nullum Siculum acceperis
(Per. 393-5).

If you cleverly look after this affair we ask,
six hundred phrases will be given to you as dowry,
and all Attic, you will get no Sicilian.

The implication is that Attic is the language of a polite

35 Certainly a part of Theocritus' Idylls.

comedy as opposed to the coarse language and lewd inuendoes of the Sicilian stage. The joke relies on the audience's knowledge of the contrast between the types of humor that are associated with the plays in both Greek dialects. One also finds characters attributed with being Athenian and of high or noble character. Daemones exalts in his good fortune to marry his daughter to an Athenian who is also his relative: et eam [filiam] de genere summo adulescenti dabo ingenuo, Atheniensi et cognato meo (Ru. 1197-1198). Casina is freeborn and inherently modest, qualities that are described as those of a native born Athenian: et pudica et libera, ingenua Atheniensis (Cas. 81-2). Finally, in a connection of Athenian with a particularly Roman value term, Pardalisca makes the prudent contrast that while courtesy is Atticam disciplinam, to kill one's own husband is mala disciplina (Cas. 652).

The two most prominent Plautine Sicilians are, of course, the Menaechmi twins. The fact that they are Sicilian is an important identifying attribute for both of the characters, and it creates some of the confusion of mistaken identity that is the hallmark of the play. Erotium identifies the Menaechmus that she knows by listing in hyperbolic detail his father, where he was born and who the previous kings of Syracuse were:

Non ego te novi Menaechmum, Moscho prognate patre
 qui Syracusis perhibere natus esse in Sicilia,
 ubi rex Agathocles regnator fuit et iterum Phintia
 tertium Liparo, qui in morte regnum Hieroni tradidit,

pirate and sold in Anactorium: quia illas emit in Anactorio parvolas de praedone Siculo (Poe. 896-7). This pirate association is consistent with some of the place references to Sicily in the Rudens detailed in Chapter Three.

The Greeks of other places besides Athens and Sicily are singled out for characterizations as well. The international travel theme of these comedies is particularly evident in the Menaechmi. When the Sicilians, Menaechmus and Messenio, arrive in Epidamnus, the latter, who is by this time ill-disposed to continuous travel, declares that he wants to return home. He describes Epidamnus as a place that is less than hospitable and populated by men and women of vice:

nam ita est haec hominum natio: in Epidamnieis
 voluptarii atque potatores maxumei
 tum syncophantae et palpatores plurumei
 in urbe hac habitant; tum meretrices mulieres
 nusquam perhibentur blandiores gentium.
 propterea huic urbei nomen Epidamno inditumst,
 quia nemo ferme huc sine damno devortitur
 (Men. 258-264).

For this nation of men is thus: voluptuaries
 and drinkers are most valued among Epidamnians,
 first in this city live many sycophants
 and flatterers; then the prostitute women
 more conniving than any anywhere.
 Above all, the name Epidamnus is given to this city
 because almost no one is lodged here
 without financial loss.

In the context of the play, of course, this observation sets up much of the hilarious comedy of wrong identification that follows. That the Epidamnians might value above all else drunkenness and lust is played out and proven by the antics of

misunderstanding that arise from mistaken identity. Messenio, for example, finds all these exact faults in Erotium when she seduces his master because she mistakes him for her own neighbour. But the thread of Messenio's comments is also in keeping with the rest of the generalized ethnic descriptions in Plautine comedy. What underlies his comments is a basic mistrust of the foreign, of the unknown. In contrast to this comment one finds Menaechmus I investing his hope for justice in the citizens of Epidamnus. When the lorarii carry off Menaechmus I, he vainly invokes the Epidamnienses cives (Men. 1000) in the hopes of some assistance.³⁷

Citizenship is also especially important for the plot resolution in the Rudens. Although the dramatic setting is near Cyrene, Daemones is immediately characterized as an Athenian exile (Ru. 35). The play is resolved by the recognition of Athens as the birthplace of Daemones' daughter. Plesidippus delights to discover from Trachalio that Palaestra is an Athenian compatriot of his after he asks if she is of his people: et popularis est? (Ru. 1268). In the Cistellaria, citizenship and social status are also crucial to the plot resolution. Demipho is a Lemnian who years ago had visited Sicyon during the Dionysia festival where his indiscretion led to the birth of a baby girl who was later abandoned (Ci. 156-7). The audience is also aware that he is

³⁷ Also Messenio: Epidamnii cives (Men. 1005).

now a resident of Sicyon and that one of his female relatives from Lemnos is betrothed to the local adulescens Alcesimarchus (Ci. 100). Melaenus, the adoptive mother of Selenium, portrays this bride-to-be as wealthy, when she complains to Alcesimarchus of his broken promise to Selenium: eo facetu's quia tibi aliast sponsa locuples Lemnia (Ci. 491). Demipho, in the end, discovers that Selenium is his long lost daughter and so the play resolves in the happy fact that Selenium is a legitimate citizen of Lemnos, a relative of Demipho and the young woman whom Alcesimarchus loves. There is one other interesting claim of citizenship status. Although a meretrix, Selenium's mother is nevertheless clearly characterized as a freedwoman as her friend, the lena, notes: libertinae sumus (Ci. 38).

Two other Aegean island populations on the Latin comic stage are the Rhodians and the Samians. Rhodes itself, as one of the focal points of Aegean trade, is recognized as a wealthy trading centre. When Epidicus characterizes a soldier from Rhodes he mentions that the soldier is rich in gold, great, a plunderer of enemies and vainglorious (Ep. 299-302). In another similar characterization, Leonida tries to secure the trust of a trader by telling him that Periphanes, another wealthy merchant from Rhodes, counted out his silver talent while his (Leonida's) master was away: etiam nunc dico Periphanes Rhodo mercator dives apsentem ero solus mihi

talentum argenti soli adnumeravit (As. 499-501). One also finds that some of the women from Rhodes have other attributes. Charinus describes the girl he has brought back from Rhodes very favourably in regard to her character:

Dem. quid? ea ut videtur mulier?

Char. non edepol mala.

Dem. ut moratast?

Char. nullam vidi melius mea sententia (Mer. 391-2).

Dem. Then? How is the woman?

Char. Not, by Pol, bad.

Dem. ... and her character?

Char. In my opinion I know of no woman who is better.

Demipho explains to his son Charinus that because of her beauty, if they allow the Rhodian girl to be a housemaid to his wife, it may create a scandal. Demipho then enumerates his fears of rumour and insinuation that might attend her presence in his house, including the charge of pandering (Mer. 405-411). Her beauty along with her Rhodian origin are apparently enough to associate her with prostitution. The association of prostitution also appears with the Samians. Most prominently, the visiting sister in the Bacchides comes from the island of Samos.³⁸ But another frequent association with Samos is the fragility of the pottery. Chrysalus, who is concerned for her on behalf of his master Mnesilochus, asks Pistoclerus to look after her, using the metaphor of Samian ware for her fragility: vide quaeso ne quis tractet illam indiligens: scis tu ut confringi vas cito Samium solet (Ba.

³⁸ Barsby notes that Samian women were prominent courtesans in New Comedy, Plautus: Bacchides, 200 n.; on Samian pottery, id. 202 n.

201-2). Similarly, Philocrates notes the cheapness of the Samian ware (Cap. 289-92) as does Stichus (St. 693f.). As an interesting contrast to the wealth of the Rhodians, the Samians are associated with things that are fragile and cheap.

The Spartans appear on the Latin comic stage characterized with some of their most familiar stereotypes, such as a frugal and martial nature. The parasite Ergasilus, in a passage in which he bemoans his lot in life, refers to himself as a Laconian able to suffer blows and who also has words but no provisions or money: nil morantur iam Lacones unisubseli viros, plagipatidas, quibu'sunt verba sine penu et pecunia (Cap. 471-3). When the advocates in the Poenulus elaborate on their deception, they include the detail that the disguised Collybiscus is a mercenary soldier who fought for Attalus in Sparta (Poe. 663-5). Lycus in turn labels Collybiscus as the Spartan foreigner: peregrinum Spartanum (Poe. 770). When Collybiscus talks of Spartan affairs in order to elaborate upon his disguise he calls them simply res Spartiaticas (Poe. 719). Similarly, the advocates reiterate their identifying of Collybiscus as a Spartan when they reveal to Lyco that his identity was false: quem tibi nos esse Spartiatem diximus (Poe. 780). Three items appear in the plays along with a Laconian tag. Epidicus uses Laconian to denote the breed of a dog and a new type of woman's garment (Ep. 229-35). Tranio calls the key to the house a Laconian

key (Mo. 405).

Other brief references to and characterizations of the various peoples of the Greek world appear scattered throughout the texts. Tyndarus gives Thales the epithet Milesium (Cap. 274) and, not surprisingly, associates him with being wise. Amphitryon vows revenge on the sorcerer who is specifically Thessalian and who has disturbed the mind of his household (Am. 1043-44). Epignomus tells Gelasimus that he has invited Ambracian legates to dine with him. He identifies these legates as public orators: at ei oratores sunt populi, summi viri; Ambracia veniunt huc legati publice (St. 490-1). The miles who is interested in the female slave that Stratopoles bought is a wealthy Euboean (Ep. 153). Leonida specifies both product and merchant by gentes when he asks Libanus if he remembers the asinos Arcadicos that they sold to the Pellean merchant (mercatori Pellaeo, As. 333). Diniarchus includes a Greek cabinet (armariola Graeca, Tru. 55) in his list of gifts that a meretrix might demand. Sangarinus associates Ionian dancers with cinaedici (St. 766).³⁹ Chalinus also suggests some similar sort of indulgent carousing when he accuses Lysidamus of desiring Massilian customs: mores Massilienses (Cas. 957). The war that Amphitryon and the Argives wage is with the Teleboians, a people of Acarnania, who later colonize

39 In a corrupt text, Pseudolus refers to the same thing as ex disciplina ... Ionica (Ps. 1275); cf. Hor. Od. 3.6.21.

Capreae.⁴⁰ Ergasilus characterizes parasites as Molossician when the festivals are over: parasiti venatici [canes] sumus... Molossici odiosicique et multum incommodestici (Cap. 85-7). Molossia, in Epirus, was famous for its hounds.

The Greek ethnic descriptions in Plautus are much more than a creation of simple dichotomy through contrast with Roman virtues. The characterizing ethnic nuances in these plays range from character attributes that are identified with specific Greek peoples to general associations for all Greeks. The most frequently delineated picture painted in Plautus is that the Greeks are people who drink, eat and have sex to excess. But such specifics highlighted in comic passages throughout the texts should also be put in the context of the characters themselves. Few of the Plautine characters would in fact conform to these kinds of descriptions. The only one, in fact, is the adulescens, who is always on the point of mending his ways. Most of the main characters of these comedies are much more than simply debauching Greeks. They have particular social statuses, birthrights and family connections that fill out their existence in a manner that was recognizable to the audience. In fact, it is these important aspects of their characterization that are so frequently the focus of the resolutions of the plays themselves.

40 The war with the Teleboians is referred to numerous times: Am. 101; 205; 217; 251; 414; 418; 734.

CARTHAGINIANS AND OTHER AFRICANS

The depiction of Carthaginians on the Plautine stage offers some interesting contrasts and comparisons, especially if one keeps the various depictions of the Greeks in mind. The most obvious and abundant source for the Carthaginian is of course the Poenulus, but perhaps the most notable excursus that mentions Poeni appears in the Cistellaria. The god Succor delivers a postponed prologue and exits with a reference to the end of the Second Punic War:

Bene valete et vincite
virtute vera, quod fecistis antidhac;
servate vestros socios, veteres et novos,
augete auxilia vestra iustis legibus,
perditae perduelles, parite laudem et lauream,
ut vobis victi Poeni poenas sufferant (Ci. 197-202).

Fare well and conquer
by true courage, as you have in the past;
preserve your friends, old and new,
increase your armed allies by just laws,
destroy the attackers, produce praise and laurel
so that the conquered Poeni will pay the price.

This passage suggests that the performance date was after the battle of Zama in 202 BCE. The Poeni are characterized as conquered enemies and the speech celebrates that victory in terms of Roman political, moral and military ideals. There is no verbal abuse of the subjected people, but the boast of victory and the claim of just redress are certainly clear.

In contrast to this rather sober declaration, however,

the Poenulus portrays the character of the Carthaginians in a ambiguous manner. On the one hand there are comic stereotypings some of which are exactly the same as those associated with the Greeks; on the other hand, the most prominent Carthaginian, Hanno, is quite a noble figure. The most prominent comic stereotype of the Carthaginian character is that of a clever deceiver: et is omnis linguas scit sed dissimulat sciens se scire: Poenus plane est (Poe. 112-113). The fact that Hanno can speak many languages means that he cannot be trusted. A second stereotyping of the Carthaginians has to do with the nature of the food that they eat:

Charchedonius vocatur haec comoedias
latine Plautus Patruus Pultiphagonides (Poe. 53-54).

This comedy, The Carthaginian, Plautus calls in Latin: Uncle Pap-Eater.

The title of the 'Carchedonian Man' has been mockingly reduced to 'Uncle Pap-Eater'. One notes that neither of these characterizations is ethnically exclusive. Curculio makes similar claims about the Greeks in his diatribe (Cu. 288-95). The more significant aspect of the characterization of Carthaginians in this play is the conflict between the character of Hanno and characterization of the Carthaginians as a group. As a character, Hanno is portrayed as a sympathetic figure. It is only in Milphio's mocking asides that his strangeness is emphasized.⁴¹ He is introduced as a

⁴¹ Gratwick says that Hanno is the most pious of all of Plautus' characters (p.32 n.5).

benevolent Punic uncle (Poe. 120), who is described along with his cousin in the prologue as a Carthaginian of the highest birth with great wealth: Carthaginienses fratres patruales fuere, summo genere et summis ditis (Poe. 59-60). Although Hanno is said to talk funny and look strange, he is the father who is looking for his lost daughters and the 'good uncle' who wants to return his brother's wealth to its rightful heir.

In the scene that introduces Hanno, Milphio emphasizes his foreignness both visually and linguistically. Hanno mumbles a brief soliloquy in Punic (or in what is supposed to be Punic) in order to evoke laughter. The expected audience response is voiced by the other characters on the stage in a 'split stage' scene in which characters have yet to formally recognize each other. Agorastocles recognizes Hanno immediately as a Carthaginian in appearance: facies quidem edepol Punicast (Poe. 977). He adds that the man is a 'gugga', a term that has yet to find a translation, but by its sound it might refer to the Carthaginian language itself, as barbaros originally referred to the strange sound of foreign tongues.⁴² The most prominent characterizations of Hanno come from Milphio, the young lover's slave, who reacts to Hanno in affected amazement. He wonders what kind of bird (avis) Hanno is and whether he stole his cloak from the baths. Milphio

⁴² Mauruch suggests that the word sets up the avian imagery that follows, by labeling Hanno as some kind of African bird. See his note on 977.

civilized in all respects. When he enters the stage, he entreats the local deities. He speaks the local language and, above all, his search is on behalf of his brother's children as well as his own daughters.⁴³ The plot of this play relies upon the legal hinge of the free-born status of Adelphasium, Anterastilis and Agorastocles (Poe. 900-902). Their Carthaginian birth engenders a positive resolution and it places the women in a socially and morally superior position to the Leno. One especially interesting point about the Poenulus is that all of the main characters in the play are foreigners to the dramatic setting of Calydon. The one significant native of Calydon, Collybiscus, comes on stage and pretends to be a foreigner in order to dupe Lycus: sed ita adsimulatote quasi ego sim peregrinus (Poe. 600).

A few other references to the Poeni in the comedies include some ethnic characterizations. Euclio compares the lamb that Megadorus sent him to a Punic lantern because it is so thin that one can see right through it (Au. 565-6). This comparison suggests a double-entendre of seeing through Punic deceptiveness. The prologue for the Casina desires a Poenus

⁴³ Livy uses the same characterizing attributes two hundred years later for Hannibal who is austere and intelligent but cruel and dishonest. For example, Livy notes that Hannibal breaks a promise of freedom made by Maharbal to the equestrians after the battle of Lake Trasimene: quae Punica religione servata fides ab Hannibale est atque in vincula omnes coniecti (22.6.12). Franko distinguishes a semantic distinction between Carthaginiensis and Poenus in literary usage, the former being a civic term and the latter an ethnic one with negative ethnic overtones. G.F. Franko CP vol. 89.2 (1994) p. 158.

for one of the judges (Ca. 71-8). The passage at first states that slaves actually get married in Carthage, but then it implies that the opposite is true. A wager is proposed that would be lost unless an untrustworthy character, such as a Poenus, were a judge. Plautus' portrayal of the Punic and Carthaginian character is complex. One finds the associations of deception and the consumption of strange food that are also a part of the Greek comic characterization, but in contrast the Carthaginians are not associated with secretiveness, gluttony or excessive libido.

Although other Africans are much less prominent than the Punic people in Plautus, the plays contain a few passages that specifically mention them. One reference that is also immediate to the city of Rome itself is the passage that portrays bucket carriers who walk across the Circus. When the miles Antamonides realizes that he may have been tricked out of both money and his female slave, he threatens the leno Lycus and his amica Adelphasicum. Antamonides says that if he ran into her he would beat her darker than the Egyptians:

iam Pol ego illam pugnis totam faciam uti sit merulea
 ita replebo atritate, atrior multo ut siet,
 quam Aegyptini, qui cortinam per Circum ferunt
 (Poe. 1291).

Now, Pol, I will bash her with my fists all over so that she is blackbird blackened, darker than the Egyptians who carry water jars across the Circus.

Another reference also invokes Africans and the spectacles

that were presented at Rome, but it is to animals, not people. Milphio, in one of his mistranslations of Hanno, mentions African mice in a parade of Games presented by the aediles: Non audis? Mures Africanos praedicat in pompam ludis dare se velle aedilibus (Poe. 1011-12). This refers to the prelude of a ludi that is embellished by animals imported from Africa, making fun of the contrast in size and appearance between mice and the animals from Africa. In another play, there is an African reference that suggests skin color. When Charinus proposes that he give the Rhodian Pasicompsa to his mother for a maid, Demipho says that her beauty would cause a scandal. He notes that the perfect industrious slave for his wife would be either an Egyptian or a Syrian (Mer. 413-7). Behind this idealization of Rhodian beauty is the assumed contrasting light color of the skin. One final African passage refers to women with associations of prostitution. When Antamonides sees Anterastilis talking to Hanno he voices his anger at her by calling her an African lover: hanc amatricem Africanam (Poe. 1304). The ethnic associations to Africans all focus on some aspect of the festivals in Rome or on the characters of the comic stage itself. One finds similar characterizations of the Italians, the Greeks and the Carthaginians.

LYDIANS

Lydians, of course, have an extra association with the Italians in myth because they are the peoples who left Asia Minor and settled in Italy. This association is closely tied in with the Etruscans and their social practices that include the theatre. One finds this association when Phaedromus invokes the sympathetic power of Lydian (i.e. Etruscan) dancers (ludii [Lydii] barbari Cu. 150) as he sings to the hinges of his beloved's door. The most prominent Lydian character, however, is Pistoclerus' slave in the Bacchides who has the name Lydus. Lydus is a moderate character who serves as a sharp contrast to the Athenian adulescens, Pistoclerus. The entrance scene defines the contrast of the two characters. Pistoclerus is decked out for a religious observance wearing ostentatious clothes (ornatus, Ba. 125) and is on his way to the house of Bacchis. Pistoclerus calls Lydus a barbarian for not being aware of the gods that dwell in Bacchis' house, such as the personified god Suavisaviatio (Ba. 116). Plautus has fun with the portrayal of these two characters by emphasizing that their characterization of each other is in fact a characterizing of their own character. For it is made obvious that Pistoclerus is the barbarian and Lydus is the civilized one. Lydus, the paedagogus (142), laments that all his teaching has been in vain (132-3). In his brief soliloquy after his exit from Bacchis' house, Lydus describes

Pistoclerus' actions within the house as shameful and he says they make them companions in disgrace: tua infamia fecisti gerulifigulos flagiti (Ba. 381).⁴⁴ Lydus reveals his learnedness in his mention of Lycurgus (Ba. 111) and Thales (Ba. 122). The Lydian in Lydus comes across in a similar manner to the rational and reasonable characterization of the disguised Persian girl in the Persa that will be detailed below.

SYRIANS

At the time of Plautus' writing, the Hellenistic Kingdom of Syria had not made much of an appearance on the stage of Roman politics, but Syrians nevertheless appear on the Roman comic stage. The most prominent presentation of the Syrian is when Pseudolus plays the part of a Syrian slave in his deception of Harpax: servos est huic lenoni Surus, eum esse me dicam (Ps. 636). Harpax, when he is attempting to establish his claim to be himself, describes Pseudolus who earlier pretended to be this Syrus:

rufus quidam, ventriosus, crasis suris, subniger,
 magno capite, acutis oculis, ore rubicundo, admodum
 magnis pedibus (Ps. 1218-1220).

A certain red-haired man, pot-bellied,
 thick swarthy calves,

44 For gerulifigulos see Barsby, note: 'Lit. 'perpetrator-instigators'.

with a huge head, sharp eyes, reddened mouth and exceedingly large feet.

The description here again confuses the norms of the comic stage with ethnic characteristics, as this description is obviously of a comic slave character rather than the details of any particular ethnic attribute. In contrast, when Leonida plays the part of the Atriensis Saurea (As. 367ff), he does not change his appearance.⁴⁵ For this role playing, the pun is on the name and place of origin. Libanus describes Leonida, who is acting as the atriensis Saurea for the Mercator, as a man with peculiar traits that are similar to those detailed for Syrus:⁴⁶

macilentis malis, rufulus aliquantum, ventriosus,
truculentis oculis, commoda statura, tristi fronte
(As. 400-401).

with lean cheeks, a red head, pot-bellied,
truculent eyes, convenient height, grim brow.

When Demipho compares an image of a beautiful Rhodian, who could not be expected to manage the labours of housework, with Syrian or Egyptian house maids who are not so pleasant to look at, he elaborates on their industry:

ego emero matri tuae
ancillam viraginem aliquam non malam, forma mala
ut matrem addecet familias, aut Syram aut Egyptiam:
ea molet, coquet, conficiet pensum, pinsetur flagro,
neque propter eam quicquam eveniet nostris foribus
flagiti (Mer. 413-7).

⁴⁵ There are a number of possible etymological connections for Saurea, including the Greek for lizard, σαύρα, and the word for mustard, saurion (Plin. 19.8.54).

⁴⁶ Sarmatia (Slavic Black Sea).

I will buy your mother
 some manly maid, a good one, nothing to look at
 as is right for the matron of the house, either Syrian
 or Egyptian:
 she will grind, cook, make wool, be thrashed,
 and there will be no disgrace at our door
 because of her.

The miles Stratophanes also brings back servant women from Syria as gifts for Phronesium: adduxi ancillas tibi eccas ex Syria duas (Tru. 530). He claims that they were princesses: istae reginae domi suae fuerunt ambae (Tru. 531). In the same play Phronesium says that her hairdresser is a Syrian: tonstricem Syram... nostram (Tru. 405-6). In another characterization by name, Phoenicium is the name of the meretrix in the Pseudolus. Ballio threatens to work Phoenicium in a brothel and in a pun he says that she will wear a Tyrian-purple skin of Phoenician leather: cras, Phoenicium, Poeniceo corio invisēs pergulam (Ps. 226-9). In another comedy, Stasimus again evokes the endurance of the Syrians. When he recounts the negative aspects of his master's farm in order to make it less appealing to Philto, he concludes his list by mentioning the farm's unhealthy situation. To illustrate this point he names the Syrians as the most enduring people but who nevertheless succumb to illness on the farm before six months are up: tum autem Surorum, genus quod patientis sumumst hominum (Tri. 542-3).⁴⁷ Elsewhere, one notes that Stichus' rival in his love affair is

⁴⁷ Also quoted above p. 255.

a Syrian named Sangarinus (St. 432-4).

SELEUCIANS

Seleucians only play a minor part in one of the extant plays, the Trinummus. Callicles and Megaronides conceive a plan to surreptitiously return the treasure that Charmides entrusted to them before he went on a trading voyage. He left his personal affairs in the hands of his friend so that his son, Lesbonicus, would not be able to squander all that he had. When Lesbonicus is in need of the treasure to provide a dowry for Lesbonicus' sister, Callicles and Megaronides devise letters to Lesbonicus that are supposedly sent from his father along with gold from Seleucia. When Megaronides discusses his plan with Callicles he suggests that they hire an outsider as a dupe to deliver the letters: Homo conducatur aliquis iam, quantum potest, quasi sit peregrinus (Tri. 764-5). The hired man is then to be fitted as if he were a foreigner sent from his father in Seleucia and Megaronides lists the qualities that the dupe must have as the ability to lie, falsify and be audacious:

is homo exornetur graphice in peregrinum modum
ignota facies quae non visitata sit,
mendaciloquem aliquem
falsidicem, confidentem...
quasi ad adulescentem a patre ex Seleucia
veniat, ... (Tri. 767-772).

The man will be suited out clearly in the foreign fashion,

an unknown face, that has not been seen,
 some lie teller...
 false talker, confident...
 pretending he has come out of Seleucia to the youth
 from his father....

Charmides arrives back on the scene unexpectedly and when he first sees the disguised messenger he describes him:

sed quis hic est, qui in plateam ingreditur
 cum novo ornatu specieque simul (Tri. 839-40)?

but who is this man who's coming up the street
 with the latest dress and trappings too?

Apart from his strange appearance, the pseudo-Seleucian tells Charmides that his name would take until bedtime to recount if he began before daybreak (Tri. 884-6). His familiar name, he says briefly, is Pax (Tri. 889).

PERSIANS AND OTHERS FROM THE EAST

As a geographical place, Persia is commonly treated as either distant or wealthy. Panegyris, for example, evokes Persian wealth when she reassures her sister that their father Antipho cannot be bought off: neque ille sibi mereat Persarum montis, qui esse aurei perhibentur, ut istuc faciat quod tu metuis (St. 24-6). This standard association of the Persian with wealth, however, is considerably fleshed out in the Persa. The focus of this play is the deception of the leno who buys what he is told is a Persian war captive but who in reality is a local Athenian citizen. Although the common

fooling the leno while at the same time making sure that the audience is in on the double-entendre of her answers that are really geared towards her father, and the fear that her father has abandoned her. Toxilus tells Saturio, the 'Persian girl's' parasite father, to dress Sagaristio in the foreign fashion (quasi sit peregrinus, Per. 157) in order to be part of the deceit to sell the girl as a foreigner. Toxilus subsequently describes that he expects him to dress in a tunic with a belt, with a sword and a funny hat: cape tunicam atque zonam, et chlamydem adfero et causeam (Per. 154-5). When the 'Persian girl' enters the stage Toxilus also describes her:

Euge, euge, exornatu's basilice;
 tiara ornatum lepida condecorat schema.
 tum hanc hospitam autem crepidula ut graphice decet
(Per. 462-4).

Well done, well done, you have her decked royally;
 charming scheme crowned well with a tiara.
 Then, the sandals become this strange guest perfectly.

Later in the play Dordalus still calls her Persa (Per. 738), although the truth of the girl's identity has been established and he has lost financially. He continues with a wordplay on the sound of the word and damns the Persa and the Persae and finally all personae (Per. 781).

There are a few other noteworthy associations with Persians and people from the east. After Sagaristio has recited the extraordinarily long name of his fictitious brother, he explains that a long name is in line with Persarum

mores (Per. 707). Stratophanes, the miles of the Truculentus, is identified as a Babylonian. His main characteristics are not in ethnic specifics or in outlandish dress, but in his reversal of the norm for the stereotypical comic mercenary. He does not boast and his ethnic background is only important in its contrast of foreigners to the Athenian Diniarchus. His epithet, Babyloniensis, appears a number of times (Tru. 84, 202, 392, 472). The Phrygian people also maintain a specific association on the Latin comic stage. Erotium asks Menaechmus II to embellish the palla his namesake has given her by taking it to a Phrygian, which is recognized as a synonym for an embroiderer (Men. 426-7).⁴⁸ Megadorus lists the tradesmen who frequent the doors of the wealthy and he includes the Phrygian as a title for a tailor (Au. 508).

HUMOROUS 'GENTES'

As noted above when discussing the Choragus passage in the Curculio, not all the references to peoples on the Latin comic stage are to actual gentes. Plautus constructs for the sake of humor numerous fictitious gentes, just as he creates fictional places and personal names. He invents these gentes for various reasons from different sources. They may be word-

⁴⁸ Stratophanes brings Phronesium what he calls a little cloak pallula from Phrygia (Tru. 536).

plays for the sake of a pun that elaborates on character stereotypes, or they may highlight some other association by referring to the curious nature of dress, a strange habit, or some animal nature. Charmides thinks that the sycophant who is disguised as his messenger looks like an Illyrian from his appearance and dress:

pol hic quidem fungino generest: capite se totum tegit.
 Hilurica facies videtur hominis,
 eo ornatu advenit (Tri. 851-2).

Pollux, this man is of the mushroom-born people:
 he hides himself completely with his head.
 He appears Hilurian, coming in that dress.

Antamonides, when he sees Hanno, calls him a porter, baiolus, and he comments on his dress saying he is of the womanly people: sane genus hoc mulierosumst tunicis demissiciis (Poe. 1303). Ballio rails against his slaves and calls them the 'welt-wearing kind of men': plagigera genera hominum (Ps. 153). A similar kind of slave suffering is also noted by Grumio, who calls the slaves who work in the country the enchained people: genu' ferratile (Mo. 19).

In commiseration with Hegio for the latter's captured son, Ergasilus paints a metaphorical picture of his means of support as his edendi exercitus (Cap. 153). Hegio then details the amount of effort that is needed to keep the parasite Ergasilus in food, as if he were feeding an army:

Non pol mirandum [omnes] fugitare hanc provinciam.
 multis et multigeneribus opus est tibi
 militibus: primumdum opus est Pistorensibus;

eorum sunt aliquot genera Pistorensium:
 opu' Panicis est, opu' Placentinis quoque;
 opu' Turdetanis, opust Ficedulensibus;
 iam maritimi omnes opu' milites sunt tibi (Cap. 158-64).

By Pollux, no wonder they avoid that province.
 You need many different types of soldiers:
 first and foremost you need Millers;
 and there are several kinds of Millers:
 you need Loafers, you need Placentians,
 you need Turditani, you need Ficedulians,
 you must have every maritime soldier.

Lindsay provides a full explication for this melange of puns on places, people and things.⁴⁹ Pistoria is a town in Etruria and a pistor is a miller or a baker. The loaf, in panicis, plays on Punici. The cake, placenta, puns on Placentia in Gallia Cispadana. The thrush, turdus, plays on the Turditani from southern Spain. And finally, the ficedula is suggestive of an imaginary 'bird people': Ficedulenses. Some of Plautus' fictitious gentes call upon animal imagery. Thesprio typecasts men he doesn't like as goat- and panther-like: qui varie valent; capreaqinum hominum non placet mihi neque pantherinum genus (Ep. 17-18). Dordalus declares himself to be part of the breed of Pimps: genus lenonium (Per. 582). Curculio, as well, condemns the breed of Pimps with the same phrase (Cu. 499). He makes it clear that pimps are equal to the lowest form of existence and that those who associate with pimps are degenerate (Cu. 494-504). Philto offers moral direction to his son Lysiteles telling him to avoid certain types of men he calls the wide-mouthed people:

49 The following is paraphrased from Lindsay Captivi (1966) n. 162ff.

rapax, avarus, invidus,
 sacrum profanum, publicum privatum habent,
 hiulca gens (Tri. 285-6).

The gaping people, rapacious, greedy, envious,
 they think the sacred profane,
 and the public private.

Euclio invents a kind of people out of the mythology of Geryon, the King of Spain who had three bodies. He implies that cooks are thieves who have six hands because they are of the Geryonian people: coquos, cum senis manibus, genere Geryonaceo (Au. 554). Pseudolus says that he belongs to a dry-eyed breed: genus nostrum semper sicco culum fuit (Ps. 77).

* * *

The many ethnic groups that Plautus includes in his comedies are evidence of a diverse and multi-cultural world that the playwright produced for his audience. This is a stage of many city-states whose inhabitants come from all over the known world. These characters are familiar with many dimensions of the world, they travel the world as merchants, as lovers and as soldiers. They are characters who understand that people from many different places might live in the same town. In the dialogues of these plays we are presented with a number of ways of identifying characters. These characterizations are often presented with ideas and associations that produce a verbal picture of basic ethnicity

as it was presented by Plautus. The Italians, the Greeks, the Carthaginians, or the Persians all share common attributes of good and bad, which may depend upon who is doing the characterization or the dictates of comedy itself. Some care is needed to separate Plautus' stock types of characters and his characterizations of peoples. While certain ethnic characterizations follow a pattern of stereotypes, the norm is to use the themes of comedy rather than deliberately focusing in on some particular ethnic detail for its own sake. Moreover, not many of the characterizations that might be associated with specific ethnic groups are exclusive or necessarily negative.

The real focus of ethnicity in Latin comedy has a different emphasis. Since the foundation of Roman comedy lacks the patent ethno-centric bias of Greek comedy, it creates a new focus on citizenship, social status and place of birth. The overriding observation for the extant plays is just how essential a multitude of characters from many different places is to Plautus' comedies. Plautus' characters are a diverse group of slaves and citizens from all over the Mediterranean. They are characters whose social status can easily change if their birthright is established. The rights of the character who is discovered to be freeborn are recognized as basically equal to the character who is a citizen of dramatic setting of the play itself, as is the case

in plays such as the Poenulus. The one common thread that surfaces from the transient nature of the characters in the comedies is the recurrent disadvantage of characters who are strangers to the city of the dramatic setting. Strangers are mistrusted and easily duped, and this fact is more important to the comic stage than are the details of their ethnic origin. If the political correctness of Plautine comedy lay in apparent distance of the characters from the citizens of Rome, Plautus disregards this in his frequent portrayal of moral and good characters whose origins are expressly from diverse places around the Mediterranean. It is an accepted fact that the population of a city-state may be from all over the Mediterranean.

CONCLUSION

The world that forms a backdrop to the Plautine comedies is to some degree the same world that forms a backdrop to the lives of the audience. At the very least, it is a world that the audience could juxtapose against their own world. Plautus created characters who describe in the Latin language and on Roman terms many customs, places and gentes. These characters present their world as a coherent mixture of images and ideas that are complete with various stereotypes and associations. The study of these images and ideas allows a direct insight into what the Latin speaking peoples of that period were exposed to in their own language on their dramatic stages. Even if the full social impact of Plautus' use of language is incalculable, these comedies reveal the consistency of reference points and prominent associations by which the characters portrayed certain aspects of the world. The material speaks more forcefully when it is gauged in relation to other passages within the context it is presented. Plautus obviously took for granted that his audience was aware of many conventions of depicting various aspects of the world in the comic genre. He depended on their possession of a considerable amount of subsidiary information ranging from mythology to law, from distant places to peculiar customs, in order to make his comedy understood. The base of knowledge that is needed to fully appreciate one of these performances

is an important part of the cultural awareness of the audience. This cultural awareness is part of the worldview of Middle Republican Romans.

This dissertation addresses the problem of unlocking the cultural codes that are embedded in the comedies of Plautus. The examination begins with the question: if the comedies were so foreign, how were they intelligible to their audience? The significance of the Latin language itself as a medium of expression certainly carries much of the responsibility. It is the language from which the playwright created his humour through many familiar words and expressions. The Latin of the plays is more than simply a translation or a paraphrase of the Greek, it is replete with cultural overtones that resonate throughout the dialogue. Most significantly, the comedies are always underscored by the inherent morality of the Latin political and social terms that is assumed to be shared by the audience. The language of the plays, moreover, influences how the characters describe many customs and social activities, all of which are described in a manner that also assumes certain preconceptions are shared with the audience.

The Latin of the plays also influences how the characters describe the places of the world that they live in. Certain cultural perceptions are found in the descriptions of specific sites of the cities of the dramatic settings and in various

places around the Mediterranean world. These places and place associations are considered from three angles: the places within the stage city, the dramatic setting itself and various places of the world distant to the stage. Whatever comments and descriptions the characters make about the locations either perpetuate associations between the place and the character of the place in question, or they potentially create some new association. Moreover, the descriptions of the urban setting immediate to the stage are an extension to the stage street itself and they have a tendency at times to spill off the stage into the streets of Rome itself. The Choragus passage of the Curculio exemplifies just how easily Plautus' comedy turns into social commentary. But the dramatic settings for the comedies all maintain a consistency of associations to recognizable city-states themselves. Furthermore, they create an important foundation for character identity. An important character attribute is whether one is a citizen of the stage city-state or visiting from abroad. The references to places of the world that are distant to the stage setting reflect in part what it is to live in a society that is dependent upon trade and sea travel. The details of place in Plautus reveal how firmly rooted the plays are in particular realities of contemporary society.

The fourth chapter, 'Gentes', looks at Plautus' use of ethnic attributes in his plays. The ethnic elements in

Plautus are presented for the most part in ways that express their importance to both the characterization of comic characters and to the plots of the comedies. Plautus establishes a range of the associations that attend ethnic stereotyping, many of which he uses to depict different ethnic groups. However, some of the ethnic details of the comedies are often confused with the comic portrayal of the characters of comedy itself. Moreover, there can be a sharp contrast between the direct disparagement of a particular ethnic group and the manner in which a character from that ethnic group is portrayed. If one considers the Greek characters of the stage, the actual detail of their identity is more complex than simply being Greek. The characters of Plautus' comedies are from all over the Mediterranean. Important to the plots and the resolutions of most of these comedies are place of birth, citizenship, and the character's social status.

Whatever distance the Latin comic stage affected to maintain from its audience, it was first and foremost a living part of the social organization. The frequency and regularity of the performances argue for a strong influence on the members of society. Theatre is as much a source of information as it is of enjoyment. The exposure to a loosely systematized re-creation of the world and the workings of the world creates a model by which one may reflect upon one's own world. Indeed, it is often this quick reflection that creates

the humor in the statements that the characters make specifically to be compared with what the audience knows in fact to be the case. The influence of this material need not be conscious in order to be effective, nor does the educational aspect of a theatre cloaked and masked in the guise of farce need to be intentional.

Finally, the analysis of the content of the plays in the manner done here allows for a more meaningful definition of the genre of Latin comedy. Certainly, there is much more to the identifiable traits of Plautus than simply the salient slave character, or the Greek versus Roman dichotomy. We can appreciate how it is that the language creates an inherent tension within the premise of the plays and how the customs reflect this tension as well. The characters themselves are bound by the a priori significance of their language. This is clearly revealed in the manner in which they describe the places of the stage world and the peoples who inhabit that world. Moreover, we can see that the importance of how you were born takes precedence over where you were born. All of these elements of Plautine comedy help generate the stage-created world-view that presented a world that allowed a general audience appreciation of the performances.

The comedies of Plautus were perhaps the first international art form. Their appeal and their content are

both universal and multi-cultural. Obviously, one must be able to identify with the world that is presented on stage in order to appreciate the widespread allusions and the eclectic nuances. The content of Plautus' comedies has been collected here with the intention of further developing an appreciation of the social history of Rome. Given the paucity of other Latin language sources for the period, Plautus stands alone as an ambassador for his age in a way that no later writer can: he gives us one set of words that were used to describe customs, places and gentes in his day. The methodology employed allows for a clear grasp of the range of cultural and ethnic characterizations that were present on the comic stage. With the dearth of surviving texts from the Middle Republic it is of paramount importance that all the material that does survive be utilized to its fullest extent. With all this in mind, one can then visit the plays of Plautus for the sheer enjoyment of it, or as references to lost Greek texts, or, as indicators of the mindset of the period of their creation and appreciation.

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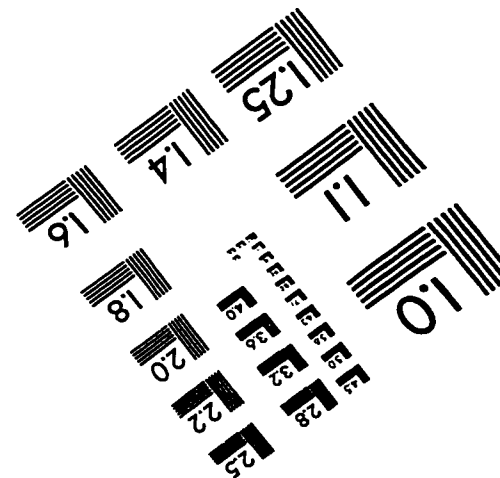
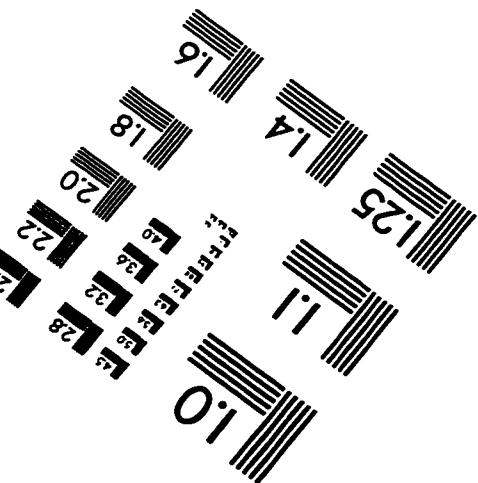
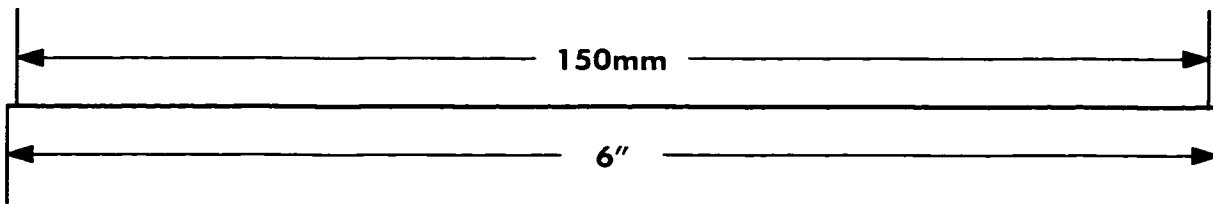
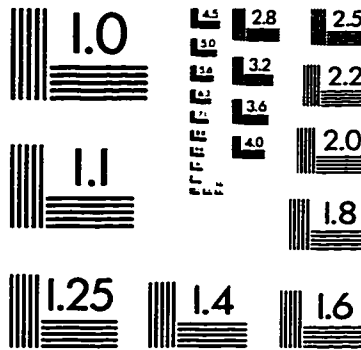
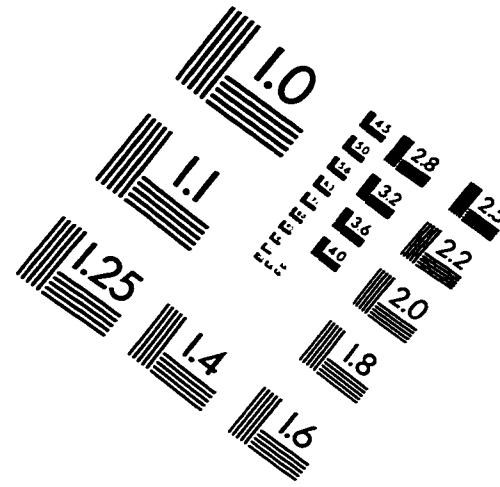
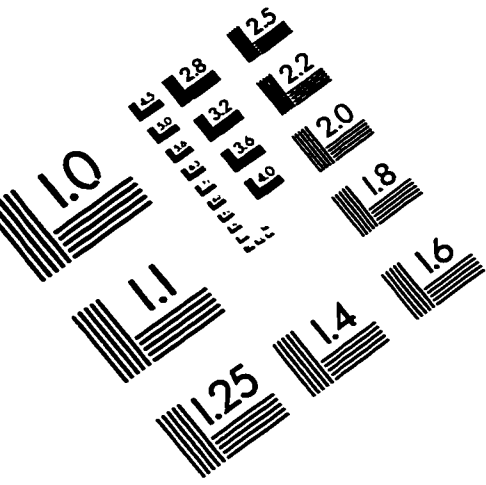
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