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# SOME PROBLEMS OF DRAMATIC SPACE IN PLAUTUS

In New Comedy and its Latin adaptations characters enter and leave the stage either through one of the doors of the *skene*, representing houses or other buildings, or by one of the wings, regarded as leading to other offstage localities, especially city-centre, harbour or country. A somewhat confused tradition associates one wing with the city-centre, the opposite one with the country; it is not certain whether the way to the city was on the audience's right or left, on which side was the way to the harbour, how the convention was adapted for plays set in the country, and whether the Roman convention differed from the Greek.[1] It seems clear, however, that at least in the Greek theatre the actual movements of the actors helped the audience to visualize the imaginary space of the offstage dramatic action. It is in keeping with this that in the extant plays, both Greek and Latin, characters normally re-enter from the direction to which they made their last exit; cases where it is explicitly stated that a character will go by a back-way out of sight of the audience are the exceptions that prove the rule.[2]

There are a few real exceptions in the comedies of Plautus and some of these were long ago used as evidence for changes by the Latin adapter to his Greek model. Discovery of fragments of the *Dis Exapaton* of Menander provided proof that an anomaly in the *Bacchides* did indeed result from Plautine changes.[3] In the Latin play Nicobulus leaves the stage after line 348 towards the forum, having been told by Chrysalus that his son Mnesilochus is there (346–8).[4] When, however, Mnesilochus goes into his father's house after 525, Nicobulus is at home, since Mnesilochus re-emerges at 530 having met his father and handed over to him the gold he brought from Ephesus (530);[5] and when Nicobulus next appears at 770 it is from his house, as

[1] Cf. M. Johnston, *Exits and Entrances in Roman Comedy* (New York, 1933), 68–105; A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens* (Oxford, 1946), 234–8; W. Beare, *The Roman Stage* (London, 1964[3]), 248–55; E. W. Handley, *The Dyskolos of Menander* (London, 1985), 129; K. B. Frost, *Exits and Entrances in Menander* (Oxford, 1988), 103, n.5; M. Leigh, *Comedy and the Rise of Rome* (Oxford, 2004), 105–11. Men. *Cith*. 52f. imply opposition between *agora* and country but do not provide certain evidence for the harbour (Frost, 79).

[2] Johnston (n. 1), 15f.; G. E. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy* (Princeton, 1952), 119.

[3] Cf. C. Questa, *T. Maccius Plautus Bacchides* (Florence, 1975[2]), 20–3; A. Primmer, *Handlungsgliederung in Nea und Palliata*, Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 441 (Vienna, 1984), 53–5; J. Barsby, *Plautus: Bacchides* (Warminster, 1986), 142f.

[4] In fact Mnesilochus must still be at the harbour, where he met Chrysalus (390–3) and from where he comes at 386, accompanied by a train of slaves (525, *vos me sequimini*; E. W. Handley, *Menander and Plautus: A Study in Comparison* [London, 1968], 20, n. 11; J. Wright, 'Plautus, "Bacchides" 525', *CQ* 21 [1971], 440f.; H.-P. Schönbeck, *Beiträge zur Interpretation der plautinischen "Bacchides"* [Düsseldorf, 1981], 53, 106). Chrysalus had good reason to prevent Nicobulus from meeting Mnesilochus at the harbour (Barsby [n. 3], 125).

[5] *Bacch*. 507, *nam iam domum ibo atque—aliquid surrupiam patri,* already implies, behind the typical Plautine *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* joke, that Mnesilochus expects his father to be at home. Schönbeck (n. 4), 97f., suggests that in 393 an interpolator may have inserted *sed eccum video incedere* with the idea that Nicobulus should here silently return home; but for different explanations see J. Blänsdorf, *Archaische Gedankengänge in den Komödien des Plautus* (Wiesbaden, 1967),

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is clear from the intention expressed by Chrysalus in 768f. to wait at Nicobulus' door for him to come out. We now know that the discrepancy is connected with Plautus' omission of two short scenes of the *Dis Exapaton* in which the old man appeared, presumably entering from the *agora* in the first scene (*Dis Ex*. 30) and certainly leaving for the *agora* at the end of the second (*Dis Ex*. 89 ἄπειμι πρὸς ἀγοράν). Between the two scenes omitted by Plautus was a choral interlude during which the handing over of the gold took place. The surviving fragments of the Greek play do not make clear where the gold was handed over, but it was probably somewhere in the vicinity of the harbour, not in the old man's house fronting the stage.[6] Plautus, however, telescoping the action of his model, made the handing over of the gold take place in Nicobulus' house.[7] His motive seems to have been to minimize the lapse of dramatic time required for the offstage action which in the Greek play had been covered by a choral interlude. Consistently with his staging in 525–30 Plautus makes Nicobulus re-enter from his house at 770, but very probably in the *Dis Exapaton* the old man re-entered from the agora. Chrysalus' words in 769 perhaps preserve a relic of the Menandrian staging; *advenienti* suggests someone coming along the street rather than out of his house, and it is more natural to wait outside a house for someone expected to come home than for someone known to be inside.[8]

The fact that the anomaly concerning Nicobulus' offstage movements has proved to be the result of Plautus' changes to his Greek model encourages one to explain similar anomalies in the same way.[9] After *Asin*. 248 Argyrippus leaves for the forum (245 *pergam ad forum*).[10] When he next appears at 591, it is from the house of Cleareta, together with Philaenium.[11] There are strong grounds, however, as I have argued elsewhere,[12] for attributing to Plautus Philaenium's appearance in 591ff. In the first place the involvement of four speaking characters in this scene breaks what seems to have been a general rule in Greek New Comedy.[13] Moreover, after Cleareta's threats in 1.3 it is unrealistic that Argyrippus should have been allowed to return to her house; and Philaenium's role in this scene shows many signs of Plautine authorship. The probable explanation of Argyrippus' anomalous offstage movements is that Plautus introduced Philaenium into this scene and therefore made Argyrippus come

51; Barsby (n. 3), 130f. O. Zwierlein, *Zur Kritik und Exegese des Plautus*, AAWM (Stuttgart, 1990–2), 1.30–9, 4.253–9, implausibly includes both 507 and 525 in supposed post-Plautine interpolations.

[6] Primmer (n. 3), 35, n.67. Sostratos (= Mnesilochus), having been informed of the slave's scheme at the harbour (*Bacch*. 392f.), would naturally deposit the gold there rather than bring it to his father's house. Moreover, *Dis Ex*. 59f. μετ' ἐμοῦ δ' ἀκολούθει καὶ λαβὲ τὸ χρυσίον surely implies that Sostratos is not carrying the gold with him.

[7] Mnesilochus must have the gold with him, presumably in the baggage carried by the train of slaves, whose silent and at times awkward presence in the background throughout 385–525 can be attributed to Plautus.

[8] Handley (n. 4), 20, n. 11; K. Gaiser, 'Die plautinischen "Bacchiden" und Menanders "Dis Exapaton"', *Philologus* 114 (1970), 60, n. 20; Primmer (n. 3), 35 with n. 69; Barsby (n. 3), 157. It is also unclear how in 768 Chrysalus knows that Nicobulus is at home (Schönbeck [n. 4], 107).

[9] See C. Lowe, 'Terence, *Adelphoi*: problems of dramatic space and time', *CQ* 48 (1998), 470–86, at 471, for likely explanations of similar anomalies in Terence's *Phormio*.

[10] Havet's theory that the young lover in this scene is Diabolus not Argyrippus has been widely accepted but wrongly; cf. J. N. Hough, 'The structure of the *Asinaria*', *AJPh* 58 (1937), 26f.; C. Lowe, 'Aspects of Plautus' originality in the *Asinaria*', *CQ* 42 (1992), 152–75, at 159–63.

[11] The discrepancy was attributed to 'contamination' by Hough (n. 10), 19–37, and G. Rambelli, 'Studi plautini: I. *Asinaria*', *Dioniso* 19 (1956), 46–81.

[12] Lowe (n. 10), 163–70.

[13] K. Gaiser, 'Zur Eigenart der römischen Komödie', *ANRW* 1.2 (1972), 1039f.; Frost (n. 1), 2f.

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out of Cleareta's house with her. The young lover of the Greek original can be supposed to have entered alone from the *agora*. Two passages that prepare for Argyrippus' second appearance from the Cleareta's house, 329 *hic est intus* and 533 *trudetur … foras*, can be regarded as consequential additions by Plautus.

After *Stich*. 145 Antipho leaves to consult his friends (143), therefore presumably in the direction of the forum. When Epignomus enters at 402, however, coming from the harbour with a troupe of slave-girls (418, 435), he describes having met Antipho (408); and at 505 Antipho enters with Pamphilippus, clearly also from the harbour.[14] A likely explanation of the anomaly is that Plautus cut a scene in which the old man returned from the *agora* and then set off towards the harbour to meet his returning sons-in-law. There are many reasons to believe that Plautus has drastically altered his Greek model, Menander's *Adelphoi α′*, curtailing the more serious parts of the plot and emphasizing the role of the comic parasite Gelasimus,[15] and there are particular grounds for supposing that Plautus cut a scene in which Antipho again attacked his daughters; it was long ago recognized that the ease with which Antipho gives in is psychologically incredible and dramatically weak.[16]

Curculio's exit with Planesium after *Curc*. 524 must be towards the harbour, since he pretends to be going to rejoin Therapontigonus still in Caria (437–41).[17] At 591, however, he comes out of Phaedromus' house (598 *foras me abripui*), followed by Planesium at 599. Knowing that Curculio was only pretending to take Planesium to Therapontigonus, the audience can easily deduce that they have entered Phaedromus' house by a back way, but this is not made explicit.[18] There are a number of reasons, however, for supposing substantial Plautine changes in the latter part of the play. From 599 four speaking characters are on stage, contrary to the New Comedy norm, and from 697 five. How the Greek play ended we can only guess, but it is probable that Plautus has typically curtailed the *anagnorisis* theme and expanded the comedy associated with the parasite.[19] The awkwardness of Therapontigonus' unoccupied presence in the background in 591–609 is probably the result of Plautus having bridged an act-division after 590 by keeping Therapontigonus on stage.[20] It is at least a plausible guess that Plautus omitted a scene at the end of the act in which the

[14] Although in the *Rudens* the city and harbour of Cyrene seem to be located on the same side of the stage (K. Rees, 'The significance of the parodoi in the Greek theater', *AJPh* 32 [1911], 401f.; Johnston [n. 1], 58, 74; Beare [n. 1], 251), this is unlikely to have been the case in plays with a normal urban setting (ibid., 250). It seems clear that in the *Captivi* city and harbour are located on opposite sides of the stage (Johnston [n. 1], 35; Beare [n. 1], 248).

[15] F. Leo, 'Über den Stichus des Plautus', *NAWG*, phil.-hist. Kl. (1902), 376, 'so dichtet kein attischer Dramatiker'; cf. H. Petersmann, *T. Maccius Plautus Stichus* (Heidelberg, 1973), 28–36. Vogt-Spira in E. Lefèvre, E. Stärk and G. Vogt-Spira (edd.), *Plautus barbarus*, ScriptOralia 25 (Tübingen, 1991), 163–73, probably goes too far in attributing to Plautus the entire role of Gelasimus.

[16] E. Fraenkel, *Plautinisches im Plautus* (Berlin, 1922) (Philologische Untersuchungen 28), 285 = *Elementi plautini in Plauto* ([Florence, 1960), 274; T. B. L.Webster, *Studies in Menander* (Manchester, 1950), 144f.

[17] G. Burckhardt, *Die Akteinteilung in der neuen griechischen und in der römischen Komödie* (Diss. Basel, 1927), 28, n. 4; T. B. L. Webster, *Studies in Later Greek Comedy*, (Manchester, 1953), 201; G. Monaco, *Plauto: Curculio*, (Palermo, 1969), 199.

[18] Contrast *Most*. 928–31.

[19] Webster (n. 17), 202; E. Fantham, 'The *Curculio* of Plautus: an illustration of Plautine methods in adaptation', *CQ* 15 (1965), 97f.

[20] P. E. Legrand, *Daos: tableau de la comédie grecque pendant la période dite nouvelle,* (Lyon–Paris, 1910), 472; Lowe in R. Hartkamp and F. Hurka (edd.), *Studien zu Plautus' Cistellaria*, ScriptOralia 128 (Tübingen, 2004), 96f.

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parasite escorted the girl to her lover's house; the crucial piece of action described by Curculio in 590–8, the girl's recognition of the ring, could have taken place onstage in the Greek play. Since a Greek act-division is probable after 532 to cover the banker's trip to the harbour,[21] if the next one was after 590 that implies that Plautus must have omitted at least one scene.

At *Mil.* 1196 Pleusicles goes into the house of Periplectomenus to disguise himself as a ship's captain; in accordance with Palaestrio's scheme he is to collect his beloved Philocomasium and her possessions from the house of the soldier Pyrgopolynices, take them to the harbour and from there set sail for Athens in the ship in which Philocomasium's mother is supposed to be waiting (1176–95). When Pleusicles next appears at 1284, however, it appears to be from the harbour, since Pyrgopolynices observes his entrance at 1281f. and comments *nescioquis eccum incedit*.[22] Like Curculio in the passage just discussed, Pleusicles is playing a role, and the audience would have little difficulty in assuming that he has left the house by a back way, but this is not made explicit.[23] Since, however, it is probable that the four-speaker *ludificatio* of Pyrgopolynices in the preceding scene is a Plautine addition,[24] it is not certain that in the *Alazon* the soldier was on stage to witness the entry of the young man in disguise. Even if he was, the young man's entry could have been from the neighbour's house; Pyrgopolynices was informed at 1110 that the ship's captain is lodging with Periplectomenus. Only the wording of 1281 indicates that Plautus probably envisaged Pleusicles entering from the harbour; his entrance lines, first a soliloquy complaining of the indignity of his disguise (1284–9), then, on noticing the soldier, a pretended tirade against the slowness of women (1290–5), would be at least as appropriate if his entrance was from Periplectomenus' house.

After *Truc.* 314 Truculentus goes off to the forum to inform Strabax's father how Strabax is being induced by Phronesium's blandishments to squander the family's wealth (306–13). When he next appears at 669, however, it seems to be from his master's house, since otherwise he would hardly be in a position to express surprise that Strabax has not returned from the country (692f.). We can only guess at possible explanations of this apparent anomaly. It would not require great changes to Truculentus' entrance lines to fit an entry from the forum. The plot of this play, however, poses many problems, and probably diverges greatly from its Greek model, if it had one.[25] The problems particularly concern Truculentus and Strabax, and have given rise to theories that this strand of the plot has either been 'contaminated' from a secondary Greek model,[26] or curtailed by Plautus.[27] Amongst the odd features of the play is the fact that Truculentus' intended trip to find Strabax's father has no consequences, even though Strabax's account on his first entry of how he has cheated his father (645–60) might lead one to expect this situation to have some developments. Is the intention expressed by Truculentus in 313 simply a threadbare pretext to motivate his exit,[28] or has Plautus curtailed developments that took place in a Greek

[21] Legrand (n. 20), 472.
[22] Cf. Johnston (n. 1), 64 with n. 40 on *incedere*.
[23] Ibid., 91.
[24] E. Lefèvre, 'Plautus-studien IV', *Hermes* 112 (1984), 39–41.
[25] Legrand (n. 20), 484; Lefèvre (n. 15), 175–200.
[26] T. Ladewig, *Ueber den Kanon des Volcatius Sedigitus* (Neustrelitz, 1842), 33 = U. Gärtner and E. Stärk (edd.), *Theodor Ladewig. Schriften zum römischen Drama republikanischer Zeit* (Leipzig, 2001), 60.
[27] P. J. Enk, *Plauti Truculentus* (Leiden, 1953), 1.19.
[28] Johnston (n. 1), 98 'Perhaps … an idle … threat'.

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model?[29] Another notorious puzzle of the play is Truculentus' unmotivated and surprising transformation from surly opponent of Astaphium to willing victim on his second appearance in 669ff.[30] It seems likely that the anomalous offstage movements of Truculentus are in some way connected with other problematic features of his role and attributable to Plautus.

After *Amph*. 854 Amphitryon goes towards the harbour to fetch Naucrates from his ship (849, 854). When he next appears at 1009, however, he recounts how he has vainly searched for Naucrates all over the town, listing in some detail parts of the town he has visited (1010–14). It seems therefore that he should enter from the forum. Now the geography of this play is problematic, since Thebes is an inland city and the nearest port is some 15 miles away; moreover it is not clear why a campaign against the Teleboi needed ships.[31] Whether Plautus' Greek model already referred to a harbour used by Amphitryon's army or to a land encampment, so far as one can tell the plot does not call for any characters to visit the city-centre of Thebes; all entrances and exits are either into/from Amphitryon's house or from/to the army encamped outside the city. We cannot altogether rule out the possibility that both city and harbour were regarded as in the same direction, as apparently in the *Rudens*.[32] The simplest explanation of the anomaly, however, is that in the Greek original Amphitryon returned directly from his army and that Plautus has exaggerated his vain search for Naucrates, a recurring dramatic motif, in the topographical catalogue of 1011–13. That this catalogue has been given a markedly Greek colouring, with its references to *gymnasia*, *myropolia*, etc., does not in the least count against the hypothesis that Plautus added it. The hypothesis is supported by the very similar catalogue in *Epid*. 197–9.[33]

At *Poen*. 608 Agorastocles goes into his house upon Collybiscus' urging (604), and consistently with this, Milphio at 920 announces his intention of going into the house to report to his master, with the implication that Agorastocles is at present inside; at 961 Agorastocles comes out of his house with Milphio. There is an inconsistency, however, in 929 where Milphio announces the intention of waiting in the house for Agorastocles to return from the forum, *dum erus adveniat a foro*. This inconsistency is usually explained by supposing 923–9 interpolated,[34] and these lines do indeed duplicate the substance of 917–22. It is difficult to see, however, why an interpolator should have introduced such an obvious inconsistency, and there is nothing obviously un-Plautine in the lines. There are grounds for believing that 929 may preserve a relic of a different staging in the Greek original, whereby the young man instead of going

[29] Cf. D. Konstan, *Roman Comedy* (Ithaca–London, 1983), 152–6. The least likely explanation is that a substantial portion of the Latin play has been lost in transmission (A. Ernout, *Plaute VII* [Paris, 1940], 92).

[30] O. Ribbeck, *Geschichte der römischen Dichtung* (Stuttgart, 1894), 1.93; Konstan (n. 29), 154f.

[31] Cf. E. Lefèvre, *Maccus vortit barbare. Vom tragischen Amphitryon zum tragikomischen Amphitruo*, AAWM (1982), 40f.; V. Masciadri, *Die antike Verwechslungskomödie*, Drama Beiheft 4 (Stuttgart, 1996), 179–81; Z. Stewart, 'Plautus' *Amphitruo*: three problems', *HSCP* 100 (2000), 293–9. It should be noted that, in the *Rudens*, characters make trips between the seashore and the city of Cyrene some 12 miles away during the course of the play (D. J. Blackman, 'Plautus and Greek topography', *TAPhA* 100 [1969], 20); and in Menander's *Dyskolos* a trip from Phyle to Athens and back, a distance of some 25 miles, is apparently possible (Handley [n. 1], 199; T. B. L. Webster, *An Introduction to Menander* [Manchester, 1974], 72).

[32] See n. 14 above.

[33] Cf. Masciadri (n. 31), 188.

[34] J. L. Ussing, *T. Maccii Plauti comoediae* (Copenhagen, 1883), 4.2.336; A. Thierfelder, *De rationibus interpolationum Plautinarum* (Leipzig, 1929), 25, 155; Zwierlein (n. 5), 1.198f.

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into his house went off to the *agora*, entering his house later in a scene cut by Plautus.[35] The hypothesis that Agorastocles' entry into his house at 608 is a Plautine innovation provides an explanation of another inconsistency which was noticed long ago and prompted theories of 'contamination'.[36] Milphio's words on coming out of the house at 817, *exspecto quo pacto meae techinae processurae sient*, raise the question why he was not informed of the situation by Agorastocles when he entered the house at the end of the preceding scene. I have argued elsewhere that Plautus made substantial changes in 504–816, transforming mute upper-class witnesses into the vulgar freedmen *advocati* who take an active role in the deception of Lycus.[37] In particular there are signs of Plautus' handiwork in the exit of Lycus at 795, to consult his friends on how best to hang himself, and Agorastocles' dismissal of the *advocati* in 807 with instructions to meet him *cras … in comitio*. It has long been recognized as a peculiar feature of the *Poenulus* that the scheme hatched by Milphio early in the play is never brought to its intended conclusion, being overtaken by the discovery that Adelphasium and Anterastilis are freeborn daughters of Hanno. It can hardly be doubted that Plautus has drastically rewritten the end of the play, if only because up to six speaking characters are involved, whichever of the two alternative endings of the Latin play is the authentic version. Moreover Gratwick has shown that the underlying assumption that the discovery of the girls' free birth will automatically secure their release from Lycus reflects Roman, not Greek law.[38] It seems clear that Plautus has curtailed the original conclusion of the slave's scheme, rendered redundant by an *anagnorisis* viewed in Roman terms. The use of the word *cras* in 800 and 807, deferring legal action until the next day, is a signal of this curtailment.[39] How the Greek plot developed after the successful tricking of the pimp is beyond recovery, but it is a plausible hypothesis that the young man with his witnesses went off to the agora to initiate legal proceedings against the pimp for harbouring stolen goods. If 929 does reflect the staging of the *Karchedonios*, it does not seem very likely that 923–9 are simply a post-Plautine interpolation. 917–22 and 923–9 certainly look like variants, comparable with the alternative endings of the play, but it is the first passage that looks like a correction (by the author himself?) of the second.

At *Amph*. 628 Amphitryon, who has entered with Sosia from the direction of the harbour, orders Sosia to follow him towards his house; he wishes to discover the truth behind the absurd story Sosia has just told him, that there is another Sosia in the house. At 633, however, Alcmena comes out of the house and a long dialogue between husband and wife follows, punctuated by humorous comments by the slave, before Amphitryon leaves at 854 to fetch Naucrates from the ship (849), Sosia goes into the house with other slaves, presumably carrying baggage (854 *duc hos intro*), and Alcmena follows soon after at 860. Sosia's next appearance at 956 is from the house (949, 955). There is an inconsistency, however, in 629–31. The natural interpretation of 629 *sed vide ex navi ecferantur quae imperavi iam omnia* is as an order to Sosia to return immediately to the ship to see to the unloading of baggage, but that interpre-

[35] C. Lowe, 'Plautus' choruses', *RhM* 133 (1990), 274–97, at 289f.

[36] F. Leo, *Plautinische Forschungen* (Berlin, 1912²), 172f.; cf. Fraenkel (n. 16), 269f. = *El. pl.* 259f.

[37] Lowe (n. 35), 278–93

[38] A. S. Gratwick, in E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen (edd.), *Cambridge History of Classical Literature* (Cambridge, 1982), 2.98–103.

[39] Cf. *Pseud*. 1231; G. Jachmann, 'Die Composition des plautinischen Poenulus', in T. Bögel et al. (edd.), *Χάριτες—Festschrift F. Leo* (Berlin, 1911), 275f., C. Lowe, 'Pseudolus' "intrigue" against Simo', *Maia* 51 (1999), 1–15, at 13.

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tation is inconsistent with Amphitryon's order in the preceding line *sequere hac igitur me*. If, much less naturally, Amphitryon means his order to be carried out later, it is still dramatically pointless, since Sosia never complies, despite his promise in 630f.; and it seems inconsistent with 854 *duc hos intro*. Hence several scholars have regarded 629–31 as a post-Plautine interpolation, and Leo suggested that the motive for the supposed interpolation was to remove Sosia from the scene, so that he is not present during the following confrontation between Amphitryon and Alcmena.[40] This explanation is not plausible.[41] Why should an interpolator have wished to excise all the comedy from the following scene? A more plausible explanation, I suggest, is that 629 is a relic of the Greek original in which the slave was sent back to Amphitryon's ship and that it was Plautus who kept him on stage in order to add a comic element to the very serious confrontation between Amphitryon and Alcmena. Throughout that scene Sosia acts as a typically irreverent Plautine slave.[42] Some support for this hypothesis can be found in the manner of Sosia's next appearance at 956. It is clear from 949 *evocate huc Sosiam* and 955 *atque aperiuntur aedes. exit Sosia* that he comes out of the house. Yet Jupiter's words in 957 *optume advenis* are not altogether appropriate when he has just ordered the slave to be fetched; they would be more appropriate if Sosia had at that moment fortuitously appeared from the direction of the harbour.[43] Moreover there are grounds for attributing to Plautus 949b–55, the passage in which Jupiter orders Sosia to be fetched; his aside comment, unheard by Alcmena (954),[44] that he wishes the slave to fetch Blepharo, duplicates his order to Sosia in 967f.

[40] F. Leo, *Plauti comoediae*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1895), ad loc.; cf. Ussing (n. 34), 1.293f. The argument that 631 contradicts 576 is not cogent (E. Paratore, *Plauto, Amphitruo* [Florence, 1959], 15). *Cum vino ebibere* seems to have been an idiomatic expression for 'forget' (cf. *Pers.* 170, *quamquam ego vinum bibo, mandata non consuevi simul bibere una*), and need not imply that Sosia had actually been drinking. Leo further objects that 632 gives inappropriate sense, since Amphitryon disbelieved everything that Sosia said; but that is to apply too strict a logic to Plautus, and there is dramatic irony in *utinam di faxint* … (D. M. Christenson, *Plautus: Amphitruo* [Cambridge, 2000], ad loc.).

[41] Thierfelder (n. 34), 125–7, suggests a different but equally unconvincing motive for the supposed interpolation, to occupy Amphitryon and his slaves with some stage business during Alcmena's entrance-monody. That there is an unrealistic delay before Amphitryon and Sosia observe and are observed by Alcmena is not abnormal in Plautus and can be attributed to Plautine expansion in Alcmena's entrance-monody and Sosia's comic asides. S. Mariotti, in H. Dahlmann and R. Merkelbach (edd.), *Studien zur Textgeschichte und Textkritik G. Jachmann gewidmet* (Cologne, 1959), 123–6, suggests that a later producer wished to introduce a spectacular baggage-train. Highly improbable is the notion of Ussing (n. 34), 1.286; H. W. Prescott, 'The *Amphitruo* of Plautus', *CPh* 8 (1913), 18–21; Burckhardt (n. 17), 24f.; and Christenson (n. 40), 241, 245, 249, that Amphitryon and Sosia are to be regarded in this scene as at the harbour. They are on their way back from the harbour and approaching Amphitryon's house (F. Leo, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* [Berlin, 1913], 132, n. 1; Duckworth [n. 2], 123 with n. 57; C. Questa, review of Christenson, Plautus, *Amphitruo*, *RFIC* 129 [2001], 91–9, at 92); *hic* in 562 and 594 means 'where I stand' (= 577, *apud te*) as opposed to *domi* (= 594, *illic*), whereas in 559 and 615 *hic* refers, as often, to the house visible on stage (cf. Donat. *ad And.* 506 '*hic' dicendo ostendit domum*; E. Woytek, *T. Maccius Plautus Persa*, SAWW 385 [Vienna, 1982], on *Pers.* 131).

[42] E.g.: 664–7, riddling reference to Alcmena's pregnant state based on double meaning of *satura*; 703, comparison of Alcmena to bacchanals; 660–74, backchat framed by repeated *sequere me*. Cf. Lefèvre (n. 31), 15f. 'Sosias Witze in der Szene II 2 sind ausschliesslich Plautus' Erfindung'. On my hypothesis, contrary to Lefèvre, a nucleus of Sosia's role in 1.1 and 2. 1 derives from a Greek model, though no doubt much expanded by Plautus.

[43] Cf. e.g. *Pers.* 101, *opportune advenisti*, *Poen.* 576, *opportune adgrediuntur*, Men. *Sam.* 280, ἀλλ' εἰς καλὸν γὰρ τουτονὶ προσιόνθ' ὁρῶ.

[44] Cf. D. Bain, *Actors and Audience* (Oxford, 1977), 158, on the stereotyped Plautine phraseology of Alcmena's aside.

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In the last two cases the hypotheses I have put forward to explain inconsistencies attribute the inconsistencies to carelessness on the part of Plautus rather than to later interpolation. That Plautus was highly tolerant of inconsistencies is indisputable. When he made changes to his Greek models inconsistencies were particularly likely to arise.[45] To what extent the transmitted text of his comedies contains variants intended for different performances is a difficult question. The alternative endings of the *Poenulus* constitute one apparent example. Probably there are others, but, given Plautus' propensity to repetition as well as inconsistency, it is hard to be sure.[46]

To conclude, examination of all the cases in Plautus where a character re-enters from a direction different from that of his previous exit provides confirmation that these anomalies are probably always due to the Latin adapter rather than the author of the Greek original. Only for Nicobulus in the *Bacchides* do we have hard evidence, but in the other cases too arguments of varying degrees of cogency can be adduced for holding Plautus responsible. The hypothesis fits well with Plautus' general tolerance of inconsistency and with the greater elasticity of dramatic time in both Plautus and Terence compared with Menander.[47] To observe these aspects of Plautus' technique in no way diminishes his comic genius, but can contribute to an understanding of his methods of working.

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[45] In *Rud.* 725 *foras* is inconsistent with Plautus' staging since the girls are at the altar outside the temple, but is explicable as a relic of the Greek original in which they were probably still in the temple (K. Gaiser, *ANRW* 1.2 [1972], 1076).

[46] Cf. Duckworth (n. 2), 65–8; Blänsdorf (n. 5), 48–53. There is still scope for great diversity of opinion. E.g. *Cist.* 126–9 clearly duplicate the substance of 120–3, are omitted by A, and interrupt the expository narrative of the *lena*; moreover 125 + 130–2 duplicate 190–3 in the narrative of prologue-speaker Auxilium. These passages have been much discussed but no entirely convincing explanation has emerged (Blänsdorf [n. 5], 51–3; S. M. Goldberg, in Hartkamp and Hurka [n. 20], 387–9). See C. Lowe, 'Notes on Plautus' *Mercator', WS* 114 (2001), 143–56, at 147, 151f., with n. 45 for cases where scholars have supposed interpolation but Plautine *abundantia* is more likely.

[47] Duckworth (n. 2), 130; F. H. Sandbach, *The Comic Theatre of Greece and Rome* (London, 1977), 113f.; R. L. Hunter, *The New Comedy of Greece and Rome* (Cambridge, 1985), 38f.; Lowe in Hartkamp and Hurka (n. 20), 89–105.

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