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The Technique of Continuous Action in Roman Comedy

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PREFATORY NOTE

In these chapters I have endeavored (1) to reveal the devices employed in Roman comedy to secure continuity of action; (2) to establish a strong probability that in view of the recurrence of the same devices in the action surrounding many of the so-called "vacant stages" such "vacant stages" do not indicate an essential pause in the action. As the "vacant stage" in Roman comedy is the main criterion employed by modern editors for discovering act-division either in the Greek models or in the Latin adaptations or both, my study has a direct bearing on that problem; but I do not wish to be understood as formulating any new theory of act-division; on the contrary, the general trend of my study, in that regard, is destructive. Primarily, I am interested in revealing the technique employed to maintain uninterrupted action.

Citations from the plays of Plautus are made from the *editio minor* of Götz and Schöll (the second edition for the first six plays, the first edition for the remaining plays and fragments). The plays of Terence are cited from the edition of Dziatzko (1884), the plays of Menander from the *editio maior* of Körte's *Menandrea*² (1912).

It is fitting that I here express my gratitude to the several members of the classical faculties of the University of Chicago and the University of California, under whom I received my training in the classics. I further desire to make acknowledgment of my great indebtedness to Professor Henry W. Prescott, under whose direction this dissertation has been prepared. His advice has been of the utmost value to me, both in the arrangement of material and in the elucidation of particular problems. To him, also, is due much of the material and the interpretation contained in the discussion of *Bacchides* 107 and *Pseudolus* 573.

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INTRODUCTION

The chorus was the distinctive feature of the older Greek drama, the nucleus from which tragedy developed. In the fifth-century tragedies the chorus separated the episodes of action, with which it was intimately concerned. Thus choral song allowed the actors breathing space and opportunity for the change of costume in the shift from one rôle to another,¹ and simplified the poet's treatment of time by permitting the assumption of indefinite lapse of time between episodes. Gradually the chorus became subordinated to the action and lost intimate connection with it. Thus if the tragic chorus had been dropped out, a well-constructed drama would have resulted, divided into parts (six or seven, usually), and often marked by vacant stages where choral songs had stood.²

Old Comedy, on the other hand, according to current theory (the correctness of which we need not in this context question) owed its origin to the union of farce and chorus, the latter developed from the rude *kômos* of Dionysus. Historically, then, as one of two dissimilar elements, the chorus in comedy was separable as it was not in tragedy. Yet, though more easily detachable, the omission of choral parts from Aristophanic comedy as we know it would not suffice to produce a coherent play divided into acts by vacant stages.³ Current theory, therefore—the correctness of which we neither defend nor deny—inclines to attribute to the later and especially Euripidean tragedy, a potent influence upon the form of New Comedy. The chorus wholly or in part disappeared from comedy, and under the influence of the coherent structure of Euripidean tragedy, the New Comedy is thought to have assumed a unified form which approximated loosely that of a modern five-act play.⁴

¹ *Vila Aristophanis* xxviii D.

² On the development of tragedy see Leo "Der Monolog im Drama" *Abh. d. gött. Ges.* N. F. X (1908) 40 n. 2; *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* (1913) I 97; Reisch *PWRE s.v. Actus, Chor*, and literature cited; Bethe *Prolegomena zur Geschichte des Theaters* (1896) 15 ff.

³ The *Knights*, among the early plays, and the several late plays of Aristophanes, are, however, relatively coherent. See Leo *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 99 n.; Frantz *De comoediae Atticae prologis* (1891) 2 ff.

⁴ On the development of comedy see Leo "Die plautinischen Cantica und die hellenistische Lyrik" *Abh. d. gött. Ges.* N. F. I (1897) 114; *Plautinische Forschungen*² (1912) 113, 226 ff.; *Monolog* 38 ff., 53, 116; *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 96 ff.; Körte *Hermes* XLIII (1908) 41 f.; Legrand *Daos* (1910) 461 ff.; Süss *Rhein. Mus.* LXV (1910) 441 ff.

The diminishing importance of the chorus in Hellenistic drama cannot be traced in detail. Our knowledge of the tragedy of this period is especially limited. The majority of modern scholars are inclined to believe that in it the chorus continued to form a part, though granting its lessened importance, and admitting the possibility of exceptional performances without the chorus.⁵ In accordance with this view the chorus of Senecan tragedy is traced to the Hellenistic drama.⁶

Our knowledge of the development of comedy is based upon more extensive evidence. Ancient theory in the *prolegomena* presents conflicting views. In the Greek tractates of Platonius, Tzetzes, and others the lack of choral song in Middle Comedy is attributed to the change in economic conditions;⁷ on Menander and the New Comedy these treatises perhaps furnish no direct evidence,⁸ yet there is certainly an implication that in this later period, also, comedy was without a chorus. This is stated by Euanthius III 1 (W. I 18):

. ita paulatim velut attrito atque extenuato choro ad nouam comoediam sic peruenit, ut in ea non modo non inducatur chorus sed ne locus quidem ullus iam relinquatur choro. nam postquam otioso tempore fastidiosior spectator effectus est et tum, cum ad cantatores ab actoribus fabula transiebat, consurgere et abire coepit, res admonuit poetas ut primo quidem choros tollerent locum eis relinquentes, ut Menander fecit hac de causa, non ut alii existimant alia. postremo ne locum quidem reliquerunt, quod latini fecerunt comici

Here development within the drama provides the explanation of the loss of the chorus. Yet the presence of a chorus in Middle and New Comedy is attested by references in Aeschines and Aristotle, later inscriptional evidence, and fragments which are considered to be the remnants of choral songs.⁹

These references hardly permit us to form an accurate idea of the part taken by the chorus in New Comedy—if, indeed, it existed; on this

⁵ See Dörpfeld-Reisch *Griechische Theater* (1896) 258 ff.; Leo *Rhein. Mus.* LII (1897) 518 and n.; Reisch *PWRE* III (1899) 2401 ff.; Körte *N. Jhb.* V (1900) 81 ff.; Leo *Monolog* 40 and n. 2; *contra*, Bethe *Prolegomena* 248 ff.; *N. Jhb.* XIX (1907) 84 ff.

⁶ Leo *Monolog* 40 and n. 2.

⁷ See Kaibel *Hermes* XXX (1895) 74 ff.; *Abh. d. gött. Ges. N. F.* II (1898) 4, 47 f.; Körte *N. Jhb.* V (1900) 87 ff.

⁸ Kaibel *Abh. d. gött. Ges.* II 49. The only passage which bears upon this point is ruled out by him, as the work of a later editor (*Com. Gr. frag.* [1899] 18, on l. 30); see also van Leeuwen, ed. *Plutus* (1904) xxi; Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 138. The question of authorship of course does not impair the validity of this passage for our purpose.

⁹ Leo *Monolog* 40 f.; Körte *loc. cit.*

point the fragments of Menander offer valuable evidence. In them the action of the play is broken in a number of places by vacant stages marked by XOPOT,¹⁰ at which enters an incidental chorus quite unlike the chorus of the older drama, in that it is not an organic part of the action of the play. This incidental chorus consists of a boisterous group of revellers in several instances where its character is made clear by actors in the preceding scene. It has therefore been taken to be the *kômos* of Dionysus, one of the two elements which, in modern theory, combined to form Old Comedy. Stress has been laid upon the conservative force of dramatic tradition, and this *kômos* has been declared to be a permanent one which appeared at the end of the first act and occupied the succeeding *entr'actes*¹¹ with no change of character. The

¹⁰ See Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 227 n. 3 and the references there given, to which may now be added: Wilamowitz *N. Jhb.* XXI (1908) 57; Leo *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 125, 242 and n.; Michaut *Sur les tréteaux latins* (1912) 223; Lindsay *Bu. J.* CLXVII (1914) 13 ff. See also pp. 53 f., 71 ff., below.

¹¹ The number of *entr'actes* is still left indeterminate by the fragmentary condition of the plays. Editors and critics, however, with more or less assurance, have frequently divided the plays into five acts (see the editions of Lefebvre [1907], van Leeuwen [1908], Robert [1908], Capps [1910]; and Wilamowitz *N. Jhb.* XXI [1908] 60, Capps *AJP* XXIX [1908] 430 n., Croiset *Rev. ét. grec.* XXI [1908] 233 ff., Robert *Hermes* XLIV [1909] 303, Gerhard *Philol.* LXIX [1910] 10 ff.). Leo took exception to this practice (*Monolog* 50 n. 5): "Auch bei Menander wird jetzt einfach mit den fünf Akten operiert; es muss aber gesagt werden, dass die Reste gar keinen Anhalt geben, Handlungen von je fünf Akten zu rekonstruieren." Compare *Pl. Forsch.*² 231 n. 5; Legrand *Rev. ét. anc.* X (1908) 3 f.; *Daos* 467 n. 2. While recent discoveries have reopened the question, the state of affairs has not materially changed. It is now agreed by the majority of critics that the Fragmentum Petropolitanum printed by Körte as *Fabula Incerta* II (*Men.*² 142 ff.) belongs to the *Epitrepontes* (see van Leeuwen ed. [1908] 16 f.; Capps *Berl. phil. Woch.* XXVIII [1908] 1198 ff., 1230 f.; *AJP* XXIX [1908] 410 ff.; XXX [1909] 25 ff.; *Four Plays of Menander* [1910] 33 ff.; Croiset *Rev. ét. grec.* XXI [1908] 294; Kapp *Hermes* XLVII [1912] 317 ff.; Robert *Sitzb. d. berl. Akad.* [1912] 405 ff.; Hütloff *De Menandri Epitrepontibus* [1913] 24 [this dissertation has not been accessible to me]; Jensen *Hermes* XLIX [1914] 392; *contra*, Körte *Men.*² [1912] xx ff.). This adds a second XOPOT passage to the one at 201. Furthermore, the new fragment of the *Epitrepontes* (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* X [1914] 88 ff.; see Wilamowitz *N. Jhb.* XXXIII [1914] 244) through its coincidence with fragment β , printed as *Peric.* 449 ff. by Körte, gives a third *entr'acte* (Körte's *Peric.* 505); this is the largest number of XOPOT passages thus far assigned to any of the plays of Menander. In publishing the new fragment Grenfell states (*Oxy. Pap.* X [1914] 90) that "the proof of the division of the *Epitrepontes* into five acts is thus obtained." This is an overstatement: the fourth *entr'acte* is entirely conjectural. And I need hardly point out that even if one or several plays of Menander are discovered to be divided into five acts, it would still remain uncertain whether all, or any large number, of the writers of New Comedy were rigidly bound by a law of five acts or not.

majority of scholars have found this interpretation forced, and consider that this chorus did not carry any consistent rôle throughout the play; furthermore, that in various scenes in Latin comedies we may see in a band of slaves, a troop of cooks, and similar groups, this same incidental chorus.

The XOPOT note is also found in certain MSS of Aristophanes,¹² where it has been taken to indicate the omission of a choral song. Accordingly, in the opinion of some critics, the chorus in Middle and in New Comedy sang "topical songs," ditties of no lasting value, in the *entr'actes*; others consider that the pause was filled by a dance;¹³ there is also evidence to show that the *entr'acte* was occupied by instrumental music.¹⁴ Most important, however, is the fact that this chorus is so loosely attached to the action that its removal would not materially affect the composition of the play. That throughout an extended period of development no chorus was present throughout the play in a consistent rôle is shown by certain characteristic features of New Comedy, especially the monologue, which could hardly have attained such importance if the playwright in years immediately preceding had been hampered by the constant presence of a chorus during the action of the play.

Thus both in tragedy and comedy the diminishing importance of the chorus changed materially the form of the plays: if the choral parts dropped out, vacant stages would easily result, but the integrity of the play would not otherwise be impaired.

The division of a coherent Greek play by choral parts gives the ancient drama, or ancient tragedy, at least, a certain resemblance in form to the modern play with its separation into acts. There is, however, no evidence of act-division in the text-tradition of the classical drama from Aeschylus through Terence, nor do Greek scholia on the drama refer to such a theory or practice.¹⁵ The earliest refer-

¹² See Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 227 n. 3. There may be but a nominal resemblance between XOPOT in its appearance in the MSS of Aristophanes and in the fragments of Menander; at all events, the difference between the permanent chorus of Aristophanes, taking a fairly consistent rôle throughout the play, and the incidental chorus of Menander must be borne in mind.

¹³ Körte *Hermes* XLIII (1908) 303 and n. 1; *Men.*² xxv n. 2.

¹⁴ Donatus *praef. ad And.* II 3 (W. I 38 f.): *Est igitur attente animaduertendum ubi et quando scaena uacua sit ab omnibus personis, ita ut in ea chorus uel (et ATCV) tibicen obaudiri possint. quod cum uiderimus, ibi actum esse finitum debemus agnoscere.* Note also *Pseud.* 571 ff. (discussed below pp. 78 ff.).

¹⁵ Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 231; Ritschl, ed. *Bacchides* (1835) 9 n.; Hauser *Zeit. f. öst. Gymn.* XXXVI (1885) 909 ff.

ence to it is in the use of the word μέρος to describe a section of a play; this usage may go back to Aristophanes of Byzantium.¹⁶ A division into five acts, in tragedy, was probably part of the practice and theory of the Hellenistic period and as a theory it is variously attested.¹⁷ That any such theory or practice prevailed in comedy we have no direct evidence.¹⁸ The Latin comedies offer the only reliable material from which to determine whether or not such was the case. And any attempt to find through critical study of the Latin plays traces of act-division in the Greek originals is hazardous in view of the changes in form incident to rehandling by the Latin poets, to contamination, and to retractation in the course of later productions.

Quite apart from the question whether a theory and practice of act-division in Greek comedy may be concealed in the Latin comedies is the problem whether Plautus and Terence themselves were conscious of act-division in their own compositions. This second question is all that concerns us in the present study, primarily at least. It is in itself an important matter to determine whether or not the Latin plays were intended for continuous, uninterrupted production, or whether the vacant stages are, all or any of them, significant of pauses in the action and intended to set off chapters in the action. Obviously, in the course of interpretation we must reckon with the Greek background and the historical relation of Greek comedy to its antecedents, but we need not confuse the two distinct questions of act-division in Hellenistic comedy and act-division in Roman comedy.¹⁹

External evidence is distinctly against conscious act-division on the part of Plautus and Terence. The text-tradition reveals no trace of

¹⁶ Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 230 f.; *Monolog* 50 n. 1.

¹⁷ Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 230 f.

¹⁸ The word *actus* is found but once in Roman comedy: Ter. *Hec.* prol. 39, *primo actu placeo*. Here Hauler (ed. *Phormio*⁴ [1913] 52 n. 2) quite properly cites *Ad.* 9, *in prima fabula*, and translates "im Anfang der Aufführung, des Stückes." See also Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 230 n. 1. The incidental nature of the reference to *actus* in Apuleius *Florida* XVI: [*Philemon*] *cum iam in tertio actu quod genus in comoedia fieri amat, iucundiores affectus moueret*, does not permit us to infer that the author intends to reproduce the dramatic conditions or theory of *Philemon's* time.

¹⁹ Neither Leo (*Monolog* 46, 87) nor Legrand (*Daos* 484) is directly interested in act-division as consciously practised by the Latin poets; their concern lies chiefly in determining through the plays of Plautus and Terence the practice of the Greek comic poets.

it;²⁰ Varro is the first in extant testimony who seriously considered the problem of act-division in Terence, presumably under the influence of Hellenistic philologists.²¹

The commentators on Terence reflected in Donatus, Euanthius, and Eugraphius, distinctly state that the Latin comic poets did not divide the plays into acts.²² Their commentaries present confused and inconsistent theories on the subject. Euanthius mentions a three-act division,²³ clearly of academic origin, and also the five-act division in accordance with which five plays are divided in the commentary of Donatus.²⁴

Wessner has summed up and evaluated the evidence offered by these writers in so far as it bears upon the problem of act-division. He points

²⁰ See p. 10 n. 15. Ritschl was the first to show the lack of authority for the five-act division of Plautus's plays which earlier editors had accepted without question from the Renaissance editions. In the next half-century no critical principle was followed in this regard and the opinions of Plautine scholars diverged widely. Ussing (ed. [1875] I 164 ff.) abandoned all attempt to divide the plays of Plautus into acts and believed continuous performance to have been the rule. Spengel (*Akteinteilung der Komödien des Plautus* [1877] 7 ff.) supported the five-act theory, basing his division of the plays upon their metrical composition. This thesis has found little favor among scholars. Lorenz in reediting the *Mostellaria* ([1883] 197) persisted in his threefold division of the plays into "Exposition, Verwicklung, Auflösung." Hauler (*Zeit. f. öst. Gymn.* XXXVI [1885] 909 ff.) reviewed the evidence for act-division in the plays of Terence and concluded that the stage-manager determined the number of pauses in the plays, taking into consideration the metrical composition, change of rôles, time-element, etc.; that there was in practice no definite application of a theory of act-division. Later literature on the subject I shall discuss in greater detail below.

It is the practice of most recent editors of the Latin comic poets to divide the plays into acts, often perhaps merely for convenience of reference, but in some cases with implications of attributing to such divisions an authority which they do not possess. Later editions of Dziatzko-Hauler's *Phormio* (1898, 1913) properly enclose such labels in square brackets.

²¹ Donatus *praef. ad Hec.* III 6 (W. II 192); Leo *Pl. Forsch.* 229 and n. 1.

²² Euanthius III 1 (W. I 18); Donatus *praef. ad Ad.* I 4* (W. II 4); *praef. ad Eun.* I 5* (W. I 266).

²³ Euanthius IV 5 (W. I 22). This is the forerunner of the three-act theory which Keym (*De fabulis Terenti in actus dividendis* [1911]) has recently endeavored to apply to the plays of Terence, following a suggestion of Körte (*Menandrea* [1910] xxi ff.; see also *Menandrea*² [1912] xxiv ff.). As external evidence for a three-act theory is of negligible value, Keym can do no more than show the possibility of dividing Terence's plays into three parts. The results of his analysis are quite unconvincing; nor has he tested his theory by extending it to the plays of Plautus. Furthermore, the recent assignment of three *entr'actes* to the *Epitrepontes* (see above p. 9 n. 11) provides a strong argument against him.

²⁴ Euanthius III 1 (W. I 18).

out²⁶ that the act-division of Donatus is in a number of instances wholly unacceptable.²⁶ Furthermore, it does not preserve authentic tradition from the time of Terence, but takes its origin from a scholiast's adherence to the precept, gleaned perhaps from Horace, that *huius modi poemata quinque actus habeant necesse est* (*praef. ad Ad.* I 4* [W. II 4]).²⁷ This unknown scholiast encountered no little difficulty²⁸ in the division of the plays, but derived encouragement from the fact that earlier scholars had followed the same course; these are discreetly referred to as *antiqui, docti ueteres*, terms which at best can cover only scholars of Varro's or Probus's age.²⁹

From Cicero and Varro³⁰ we learn that plays were divided into *actus* in the first century; their incidental and transferred use of the word does not justify the drawing of further conclusions on the number of acts, and certainly has no bearing upon act-division as practised by Plautus and Terence.

There remain two references of doubtful import. In Diomedes (*Kaibel Com. Gr. frag.* p. 61, ll. 239 ff.) we read: *Membra comoediae diuersa sunt, definito tamen numero continentur a quinque usque ad decem.* From the previous sentence: *Membra comoediae sunt tria: diuerbium, canticum, chorus*, it appears that *membrum* is equivalent to μέρος in the Aristotelian sense of "constituent part" (*Poetics* XII [1452b]). That it is here equivalent to μέρος in the technical sense of *actus* has been proposed, but is not clear.³¹ Finally, a passage in Vitruvius *De architectura* (V praef. 4) tells us: *Graeci quoque poetae comici interponentes e choro canticum diuiserunt spatia fabularum, ita partes cybica ratione facientes intercapedinibus leuant actorum pronuntiationes.* The significance of *cybica ratione* is apparent from the preceding sentences of Vitruvius's treatise. The cube is the most stable solid (compare Plato *Tim.* 55DE); a division

²⁶ *Woch. f. kl. Phil.* XXVIII (1911) 1199.

²⁷ See Keym *ibid.* 6; reviewed by Flickinger *Class. Phil.* VII (1912) 496 f.

²⁸ Compare Donatus *praef. ad Hec.* I 4* (W. II 189): *Diuisa est autem ut celerae quinque actibus legitimis.*

²⁹ Euanthius III 1 (W. I 18); Donatus *praef. ad And.* II 3 (W. I 38 f.); *praef. ad Eun.* I 5 (W. I 266).

³⁰ Donatus *praef. ad Ad.* I 4* (W. II 4); *praef. ad And.* III 6 (W. I 40); see Leo *Monolog* 50 n. 3; Legrand *Daos* 464.

³¹ Legrand *Daos* 465 f., 663; Keym *op. cit.* 5 f., 22 f.; Leo *Pl. Forsch.* 229; *Monolog* 50 n. 2.

³² Leo *Pl. Cant.* 112 n.; Legrand *Daos* 467 n. 1; Keym *op. cit.* 6; Wessner *loc. cit.* 1200.

of verses into sections, the lengths of which are (numerically) perfect cubes, carries with it a similar quality, (*ibid.*) *quod is numerus uersuum, uti cybus, in quemcumque sensum insederit, immotam efficiat ibi memoriae stabilitatem*. Adducing a concrete example, Vitruvius explains that the task of the actor is lightened by the division of the play into parts thus mathematically prescribed, separated by breathing spaces (*intercapedines*) which are filled in with *cantica*. This most academic theory clearly presupposes a division of Greek comedy, in some undefined period, by *cantica*—a term which seemingly is here invested with rather wide denotation. It is hardly permissible to find in this a reference to a theory of act-division.³²

From this brief review it appears that external evidence is distinctly against conscious act-division in Plautus and Terence. It remains to discover criteria for determining from the texts whether the Latin comedies were intended for uninterrupted performance, or were marked by regularly or irregularly recurring pauses intended to set off sections roughly corresponding to modern acts.

Historically considered, the "vacant stages" may mark the intervals once occupied by choral songs; these intervals, at least in tragedy, probably led ultimately to the theory and practice of act-division in the Hellenistic drama. This is the principle employed by Donatus in the division of the plays of Terence;³³ from a practical standpoint, too, the vacant stage is the only immediately tangible evidence available from a printed text.³⁴

³² Hauler (*Zeit. f. öst. Gymn.* XXXVI [1885] 911) reaches the same conclusion.

³³ *Praef. ad And.* II 3 (W. I 38 f.); compare Euanthius III 1 (W. I 18).

³⁴ Only at *Most.* 430 (and tentatively in the *Andria*) does Leo divide a play when the stage is occupied. Note *Monolog* 52: "Tranio ist auf der Bühne geblieben, aber zurückgetreten, nicht weil er Theopropides schon kommen sieht, wie es sonst in solchem Falle zu sein pflegt, sondern er sagt: *concedam a foribus huc, hinc speculabor procul, unde advenienti sarcinam imponam seni*. Hier ist es also, nach dem Sturm der letzten Scene, eine natürliche Pause, ein Aufatmen in der Spannung der Situation, dann das Einsetzen der entscheidenden Action mit dem Auftreten des Alten." Leo is considering here, I think, not the end of an act, taken in the strict modern sense, but the end of a chapter in the action, an unconscious division of the play into parts as the result of historical development; these parts conceivably may end when the stage is occupied, as at *Most.* 313, where the act closes in Leo's scheme with the coming of the revellers (*Hermes* XLIII [1908] 309 f.). Yet it is noteworthy that Leo elsewhere recognizes the vacant stage as a valid criterion for act-division. (See also Wilamowitz *N. Jhb.* XXI [1908] 60: "Aktschluss ist wenn die Bühne leer wird.")

Legrand states the question in the following words (*Daos* 467 and n. 3): "Les moins que doive signifier, semble-t-il, la règle [des cinq actes] . . . c'est

There are "possible" and "inevitable" vacant stages. Whether a "possible" vacant stage in a given case is significant of an actual essential pause in the action, and whether an "inevitable" vacant stage, similarly, means a momentary pause in the action, of no significance, or a significant pause marking the end of an act, can be determined only by a study of the structure of the plays; conceivably by a comparison of similar scene-complexes we may obtain some clue to the question whether vacant stages are, or are not, significant. All students of the problem grant that vacant stages are not always significant of real essential pauses.³⁵ The only means, outside the vacant stage itself, by which we may determine the significance of a vacant stage is through sympathetic study of the poet's technique.

As a result of a study of the monologue the theory has recently been formulated³⁶ that, in consequence of the historical development of the

que, dans tout drame où elle est observée, le cours des événements sera interrompu quatre fois. Il nous faut donc rechercher avant tout si les intrigues, chez Plaute et chez Térence, admettent uniformément quatre pauses." *Ibid.* n. 3: "Le critérium indiqué par Donat (*praef. ad And.* II 3 [W. I 38]) . . . ne doit pas être admis sans réserves. Il n'y avait certainement pas entr'acte chaque fois que la scène était vide, si elle était vide pour peu d'instant. Et il pouvait arriver, inversement, qu'un acteur demeurât en scène, sans rien faire, pendant toute la durée d'un entr'acte." Here we are dealing with conscious act-division, pauses and *entr'actes*; tangible evidence is required to support this statement. Legrand's citations from tragedy (*ibid.* 474 f.: the *Medea*, "où l'héroïne, après qu'elle est sortie de son palais, reste en scène jusqu'au meurtre de ses enfants," and the *Troades*, "où Hécube est en scène du commencement à la fin") are hardly fair parallels, for special conditions of the plot control both these cases. *Medea* would lose much of her command of the dramatic situation, were she to withdraw from the stage between episodes; to separate Hecuba from the captive women of the chorus would be incongruous. But further than this, the relation between actor and chorus in tragedy was by no means the same as that between actor and (incidental) chorus in New Comedy. Clearly we require evidence from New Comedy to substantiate Legrand's assertion; this certainly is not forthcoming in *Hauton* 748 (*ibid.* 474 f.) or *Most.* 532 (*ibid.* 482): in the one instance Legrand merely suggests the possibility of an occupied stage during the *entr'acte*; in the other his assumption that the dramatist attempted a realistic portrayal of time-relations is not valid (see below pp. 17 ff.).

Ashmore (ed. Terence [1908] on *And.* 171, 819) makes no endeavor to support his assertion "that the division into acts was not dependent upon the stage being void of actors."

* See especially *Leo Monolog* 51.

* *Leo Pl. Cant.* 113 ff.; *Monolog* 28, 30, 46 ff., 59 n. 2. See the criticism of Legrand (*Daos* 489 f.) and Michaut (*op. cit.* 191 ff.).

drama, chapters in the action began and ended with speeches of the monologue type.

In the later plays of Euripides, especially the *Helena*, episodes are not infrequently introduced by the monologue of an entering character and ended similarly by a speech or prayer uttered "over the heads" of the other players. If Leo's theory is correct, we expect to find the XOPOT in the new Menander preceded and followed by monologues; but these pauses are not regularly set off by monologues³⁷—certainly with no greater regularity than the possible or inevitable vacant stages which are not marked by XOPOT.³⁸

For further evidence Leo is forced to rely upon his division of the plays of Plautus and Terence. With one exception, in Leo's interpretation, the several parts of the *Persa* begin with monologues; with more or less regularity the parts of the three plays of Philemon begin and end with monologues. It seems clear, however, that if the Latin poets recognized this convention, they did not derive it from their own analysis of the Greek plays, but adopted, consciously or unconsciously, an established convention. It is consequently somewhat surprising to find that in the *Pseudolus*, a play which in theory at least was remodeled by Plautus, the Latin poet regularly begins and ends the acts with monologues, while the other contaminated plays, especially those reconstructed from the comedies of Menander, show little trace of such a convention. The *Asinaria*, on the other hand, against which the charge of contamination has not yet been advanced, shows no trace of the validity of Leo's theory.

So with varying success Leo applies his theory to Roman comedy. As we have seen, this theory of the monologue is simply part of his larger view that Euripidean tragedy exerted a potent influence at an early time upon the form of Middle and New Comedy,³⁹ but quite apart

³⁷ Monologues precede and follow *Epitrep.* 201 and *Samia* 270; perhaps the entrance of the *kômos* in Alexis 107 K. is preceded by one. The XOPOT notes in *Fab. Inc.* II 33 and *Papiri greci e latini* (PSI) II (1913) no. 126, 45, are apparently preceded by dialogues and followed by monologues. Clearly *Peric.* 505 (*Epitrep.*) is preceded by a dialogue; while *Peric.* 76 and the two occurrences of XOPOT in the Ghorân Papyri (*Bull. corr. hell.* XXX [1906] 106, [113 f.], 148 f. = Demiańczuk *Suppl. com.* 100, 109) are both preceded and followed by dialogues.

³⁸ Such are, in so far as we may judge from the uncertain text, *Epitrep.* 521 and *Peric.* 51 (preceded and followed by monologues), *Georg.* 21 (preceded by monologue, followed by dialogue), *Cüh.* 52 (preceded by dialogue, followed by monologue).

³⁹ Leo seemingly admits, however, that the monologue in New Comedy may be traced to the address to the chorus of Aristophanic comedy (*Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 107):

from the formal development of comedy, the connection between Euripides and the New Comedy is here especially weak, in that the relatively few Euripidean monologues anticipate in content few of the many types of monologue in Roman comedy.

Whatever be the force which we give to such a theory for other purposes, I think that its weakness as a criterion for the division of Roman comedy into acts is quite apparent. The large number of monologues in the average play rendered inevitable their frequent occurrence at the beginning and end of divisions in the action. Again, a number of vacant stages which do not mark real pauses in Leo's scheme are preceded and followed by monologues;⁴⁰ on the other hand, in very many passages *Übergangsmonolog* precedes *Zutrittsmonolog* with, of course, no vacant stage and no implication of pause in the action.⁴¹ Then too, Leo is forced in many cases to make divisions in the absence of monologues, and to pass over places where their presence should indicate a real pause. In view of these facts I can only conclude that this criterion may only with extreme caution be applied as a means of determining whether Plautus and Terence consciously divided their plays into acts.

Further criteria for the determining of pauses in the action have been discovered in the announcement of the departure of the characters upon the stage (*ibo ad portum, ibo intro*, etc.), combined with the absence of all reference to the entrance of the characters for the following scene.⁴² Announcements of entrance and exit are of considerable importance in the study of the vacant stage, yet no evidence has been adduced which would warrant the drawing of conclusions from the absence of these formulæ; it is consequently not permissible to consider the absence of such announcements a valid criterion in this study.

An additional criterion has been used by some students of the question. The significance of a vacant stage has been determined by con-

"Die Freiheit mit dem Publikum zu agieren gehört der Komödie von Ursprung an und ist bei Menander so lebendig wie bei Aristophanes, ja ihr Gebiet erweitert sich, da die Rede, die in der alten Komödie an den Chor gerichtet wurde, jetzt als Monolog dem Publikum vorgetragen werden kann." See *Monolog* 79 ff.

⁴⁰ E. g., *Aul.* 586, 623, 700; *Cist.* 652; *Merc.* 802; *Rud.* 457; *Eun.* 922; *Ad.* 510.

⁴¹ E. g., *Aul.* 460 ff., 661 ff.; *Bac.* 229 ff., 606 ff., 761 ff.; *Cas.* 558 ff., 616 ff.; *Cist.* 528 ff.; *Curc.* 555 ff., 589 ff.; etc.

⁴² Foster "The Divisions in the Plays of Plautus and Terence" *University of Michigan Studies in Language and Literature* I 3 (1914); for objections to Foster's method and conclusions see review in *Class. Phil.* IX (1914) 466 f.

sidering whether or not a pause in the action was necessary to represent realistically the natural lapse of time.⁴³

In our first chapter, therefore, we examine this presupposition without prejudice. If it appears from evidence outside the environment of the vacant stages that the realistic presentation of time is of little or no consequence to Plautus and Terence, it follows that the consideration of time in estimating the significance of vacant stages is not a valid criterion.⁴⁴

⁴³ This is clearly illustrated in Legrand *Daos* 464-90, despite his review of passages wherein "sans que l'enchaînement des scènes soit rompu ni l'action suspendue, il arrive que les événements marchent beaucoup plus vite dans la coulisse que sous les yeux des spectateurs" (*ibid.* 426 ff.). Note for example, in his discussion of the *Curculio* (*ibid.* 472): "Pause nécessaire entre 370 et 371, pour que Curculio ait le temps de dîner et de se déguiser en soldat. Autre pause nécessaire entre 532 et 533, pour que Cappadox, du vers 532 au vers 557, ait le temps d'offrir son sacrifice. Pause opportune entre 590 et 591, pour éviter que Thérapontigone ne reparaisse presque aussitôt disparu, et pour que Cappadox du vers 588 au vers 676, puisse faire rendre gorge à Lycon (v. 682 et suiv.)." Compare, also, Legrand's similar observations on the new plays of Menander (*Rev. ét. anc.* X [1908] 4 n. 2); see Ritschl *Rhein. Mus.* N. F. IV (1846) 599 and Stamkart *Commentarium in Plauti Mostellariam* (1858) 10 ff.

Keym (*op. cit.*) is somewhat inconsistent in his consideration of the time-element. On page 13 he recognizes in *And.* 480 ff. an instance of disregard of time on the part of the poet, yet on *Ad.* 712 he remarks (*ibid.* 28): "Hoc loco optime actus finitur, quod e Demeae verbis v. 713 'defessus sum ambulando' apparet multum tempus intercessisse, quod inter duos actus facile fit."

⁴⁴ [In the course of printing this dissertation Brasse's thesis, *Quatenus in fabulis Plautinis et loci et temporis unitatibus species veritatis negligatur* (1914), came to my attention, but I have been unable to get a copy of it, owing to the present disturbance in Europe. A recent review in *Woch. f. klass. Phil.*, makes it clear that Brasse has included in his dissertation the general theme of my first chapter. An essay on the element of time in Aristophanes is promised in the next volume of the *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* (see *ibid.* XXIV 206).]

CHAPTER I

THE PRESENTATION OF SMALLER INTERVALS OF TIME

In this chapter we have no immediate interest in the so-called "Unity of Time" and modern interpretations of Aristotle's generalization. "Ideal time," "double time," "unity of time," "laws of time,"—such terms, from my present standpoint, tend only to obscure the phenomena which they are intended to describe. The question before us is simply: What degree of realism in the presentation of time is observed in Roman comedy?

1

The time-element in the Greek drama has been discussed by many critics.¹ A considerable number of the extant plays are not realistic in so far as the time-intervals involved in the plots are long.

The *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus² illustrates this well. The fire-signals announcing the fall of Troy to the waiting Argives, the coming of the herald to tell of the stormy voyage home, the entrance of Agamemnon, and the swift issue of Clytemnestra's plot—the compression of this action within the limits of the play indicates that the poet had no desire to portray time-relations accurately.³ The *Prometheus*, as Verrall has observed, has no time at all. Other instances of the poet's relative freedom from temporal restrictions will occur to every reader of Greek tragedy.

Equally familiar is Aristophanes's disregard of time and space, well shown in the *Acharnians*. Amphitheus accepts Dicaeopolis's commission and leaves for Sparta in 133; within the time given to the hearing of Sitalces's legate Amphitheus accomplishes the journey, conducts his negotiations, and returns with the treaty of peace in 175.⁴

¹ Campbell *Cl. Rev.* IV (1890) 303 f.; Verrall *The Ion of Euripides* (1890) xlviii ff.; Butcher *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* (1902) 289 ff.; Wilamowitz *Sitzb. d. berl. Akad.* (1911) 481; Kent *TAPA XXXVII* (1906) 39 ff.; Felsch *Breslauer phil. Abh.* IX (1909) 4; Polczyk *De unitatibus et loci et temporis in nova comoedia observatis* (1909)

² Furness *Variorum Shakespeare* "Merchant of Venice" (1888) 341 ff.; Kent *loc. cit.* 40.

³ This explanation is in my opinion much to be preferred to Verrall's perplexed interpretation of the *Agamemnon* (ed. [1904] introd.). See Campbell *loc. cit.* 303 f.; Kent *loc. cit.* 40 n. 3; Headlam, ed. *Agamemnon* (1910) 3 n. 2, 8 ff.

⁴ See Körte "Die Hypothesis zu Kratinos Dionysalexandros" *Hermes XXXIX* (1904) 489: "Wie zu erwarten, ist Kratinos genau so erhaben über Raum und Zeit

With such antecedents, however slight their direct influence, it is not strange that the poets of the New Comedy did not feel obliged to avoid plots which involved extreme compression of event. The journey of Philocrates in the *Captivi* is fairly comparable with that of Amphitheus. Philocrates leaves the stage with Hegio in 460, obtains his passport and leaves for his home in *Alide* before the return of Hegio from the forum in 498; Ergasilus enters in 768, bearing the tidings of Philocrates's return from Elis—and the lengthy journey has been accomplished in some three hundred lines.⁵ To this extent the treatment of time in the *Captivi* resembles that of Aristophanes; in the introduction of Ergasilus, whose quest for a meal restricts the time of the play to one day,⁶ we may see an analogy to the "double time" discussed in connection with Shakespeare's plays.⁷ This Dr. Furness, in analyzing

wie Aristophanes. Dionysos eilt nach Sparta und kommt im Handumdrehen mit der Helena wieder, gerade wie Amphitheos in den Acharnern den Weg nach Sparta und zurück während der Verse 133-175 macht."

⁵ We must also conceive of a contraction of the time of Tyndarus's stay in the quarries—unless we choose to think of his sufferings as purely mental. He is dragged off the stage in 750, and is seen returning from the quarries in 997. See Langen *Plant. Stud.* (1886) 120 f.; Legrand *Daos* 428; Polczyk *op. cit.* 33.

⁶ Sonnenschein (ed. [1880] 5 n.) finds in this "an inconsistency: the one set of facts cannot be reconciled with the other and a sense of incongruity is forced upon the audience." Brix (ed. [1884] 3) rejects the unpoetic fiction of the Unity of Time, declares that observance of the Unity of Action alone was binding upon the playwright, and considers that by centering the attention of the audience upon the main action and omitting details of the journey, the poet did not allow his audience to note the difficulties involved. Langen (*Pl. Stud.* 119 ff.) from a detailed consideration of the question arrives at the following conclusion: "Aus Allem geht hervor, dass sich der Dichter rücksichtlich der Zeit, in welcher die Handlung verlaufen soll, sehr wenig Sorge gemacht hat." Schöll (ed. [1887] xvi n. 2) declares that Langen as well as Brix "eis nititur rationibus, quas inimus, ubi singula singillatim comprehendimus, non totam fabulam oculis animisque subicimus: neque in communis vitae tempore vivimus, sed idealem quem vocamus diem poetae concedimus." See also Dietze *De Philemone comico* (1901) 74 n.; Knapp *Class. Phil.* II (1907) 6 n., 281; Polczyk *op. cit.* 32 f.; Legrand *Rev. ét. anc.* X (1908) 7 n. 4; *Daos* 421 and n. 1; Brix-Niemeyer, ed. *Captivi* (1910) 3. Of course it is a matter of small moment whether we attribute the poet's distortion of time to carelessness or to the use of an "ideal day": the critics differ only in their estimation of the degree in which the poet's treatment of time was conscious—and on this point speculation is not likely to produce convincing results.

⁷ Wilson *Trans. New Shak. Soc.* (1875-76) App. I, (1877-79) App. III; Furness *Variorum Shakespeare* "Hamlet" (1877) I xiv ff.; "Othello" (1886) 358 ff.; "Merchant of Venice" (1888) 332 ff.; Buland "Presentation of Time in the Elizabethan Drama" *Yale Studies in English* (1912) 1 ff., 134 ff.

Shakespeare's treatment of the time-element, defines as "a method whereby in the most artful manner he [Shakespeare] conveys two opposite ideas of its [time's] flight: swiftness and slowness; by the one series of allusions we receive the impression that the action of the drama is driving ahead in storm, while by another series we are insensibly beguiled into the belief that it extends over weeks and months" (*Variorum Shakespeare* "Hamlet" [1877] xiv f.). In like fashion are the discordant time-relations united in the *Captivi*: thus the day which rewards Ergasilus's efforts so bountifully becomes a number of days—a week, it may be—when viewed from the standpoint of Philocrates, bound on his mission to Elis. Yet definite references to two different lengths of time such as occur in the *Othello* of Shakespeare are lacking in the *Captivi* and, so far as I know, in all of the ancient drama. "Double time" in the *Captivi* is implicit, and it would be decidedly unjustifiable to charge Plautus with the conscious use of this artifice.

Extreme compression of the action is to be noted at the end of the *Amphitruo*.⁸ In 1052 a thunderbolt strikes down Amphitruo before his house. As his body remains upon the stage (see 1072) it is hardly possible that a pause precedes the next scene. Juppiter enters the house in 1039: *Intro hinc eo: Alcumena parturit*. This presumably marks the moment of Alcumena's invocation of the gods, referred to in 1061. From this point (1039) on there is an inevitable lack of temporal correspondence between the very simple action before the house and the miraculous birth and strangling of the serpents within, announced by Bromia at the beginning of the next scene. We must consider that the playwright in choosing the material for the end of his play abandoned all hope of a rational adjustment of the time-element—if indeed he considered it at all. Narration in Bromia's monody replaces dramatic action, and into the brief space of Amphitruo's monologue (1039-52) are forced the birth of Hercules and the attendant miracle.

2

These plays, the *Captivi* and the *Amphitruo*, illustrate in its extreme form that disregard of time-relations in the large which I find also in details throughout Roman comedy. It will be borne in mind that we are not concerned with the so-called "Unity of Time"—except as apparent infringement of it may illustrate disregard for time in general—

⁸ The contamination theory recently advanced by Leo (*Gött. Nachr.* [1911] 254 ff.) need not be considered here, for the final scenes (861 to end) are admitted by him to be from one source (*ibid.* 258).

but are considering only the poet's manner of dealing with the lapse of smaller intervals of time within the play itself.

In the plays of Plautus and Terence, as in all ancient literature, we can hardly hope to find definite and recurring specification of the hour such as sets clearly before us the passage of time in the *Comedy of Errors*. References to the time of day are not consistently introduced or of such a character as to enable us to trace by their aid the poet's treatment of the smaller intervals of time. In the temporal adverbs, however, which are freely used in almost all the plays, there is explicit reference to the passage of time; it seems advisable, therefore, to consider in some detail their use in Plautus and Terence.⁹

The use of *mox*, *iam*, etc., is necessarily based upon the expectation of the speaker and so may or may not find justification in the light of the completed action. This is amply illustrated in the inconsistency of the following Plautine passages:

- Cas.* 274: *Iam hic erit*; reentrance, 279.
Bac. 794: *Iam exeo ad te*; reentrance, 799.
Men. 954: *Iam hic erunt*; exit, 956; reentrance, 990.
Men. 225: *Iam ego hic ero*; reentrance, 273.
Bac. 1066: *Iam ego huc reuenero*; reentrance, 1087.
Aul. 274: *Iam ego hic adero*; reentrance, 371.
Pseud. 393: *Iam ego hic faxo aderit*; reentrance, 694.
Pseud. 561: *Iam hic ero*; reentrance, 1063.

It is consequently unsafe to make deductions from the use of these adverbs without strong confirmatory evidence.

This is true in hardly less degree of the use of *dudum*, *iam dudum*, *modo*, etc.; the striving for vividness in narration, peculiarly characteristic of colloquial speech, may result in the summoning-up of the past in false perspective. Thus the impatience of a lover, the foreboding of an intriguing slave, may cause an exaggeration of time-relations which does not directly concern, I take it, the objective portrayal of the course

⁹ E. g., *Most.* 651: *Heus iam adpetit meridiem* <S>; compare 579 ff. This fixes definitely a single point of time, but gives us no means of measuring with any degree of exactness the passage of time. Mention of *cena* or *prandium* is hardly a better guide, for we cannot look upon these meals as fixed points in the day. *Cena* is, moreover, loosely equivalent to *prandium* in the *Bacchides* (94, 716), the *Mercator* (579, 741), and apparently in the *Rudens* (150 f.). (See Cerf *TAPA XXXVII* [1906] xl f.; Postgate *Hermathena XXXVIII* [1912] 115.) Metrical convenience and assonance or alliteration (note especially Pomponius 177 R., *passerinum prandium*) seem to have influenced in marked degree the poet's choice of words, and the confusion thus arising shows that neither of these words refers consistently to a definite time.

of events by the playwright. Of course there is no question that *iam dudum*, *dudum*, *modo*, are not objectively equivalent in the mind of the speaker; this is proved by *Amph.* 690 ff.¹⁰ It is merely the subjective coloring that shades their use.

The Plautine use of *dudum* is thus summed up by Langen:¹¹ "Dudum mit einem Präteritum bei Plautus nie einen längeren Zeitabschnitt bezeichnet, sondern sich entweder auf ein Faktum bezieht, was im Verlauf der Komödie stattgefunden hat, resp. als stattgefunden gedacht wird oder, jedoch nur selten, ohne mit der Komödie in näherer Beziehung zu stehen, auf ein Faktum, was noch an demselben Tage stattfand, an welchem die Handlung des Dramas vor sich geht: nie geht *dudum* über den Tag der Handlung hinaus auf einen, wenn auch noch so kurz verfloßenen Zeitraum." Terence's usage is not materially different. The following passages illustrate the range of the use of *dudum* within these limits:

Amph. 387: *Ego sum Sosia ille, quem tu dudum esse aiebas mihi*; see 364 ff.

Men. 311: *nummum illum, quem mihi dudum pollicitu's dare*; see 290 ff.

Rud. 1122: —*Dudum dimidiam petebas partem.—immo etiam nunc peto*; see 958 ff.

Aul. 457: *Coctum ego, non uapulatum, dudum conductus fui*; before 280.

Poen. 415 f.: *Trecentos Philippos Collabisco uilico dedi dudum, priusquam me euocabas foras*; between 197 and 207.

Bac. 957 f.: *Nam dudum primo ut dixeram nostro seni mendacium et de hospite et de auro et de lembo, ibi signum ex arce iam abstuli*; between 235 and 348.

Men. 1138: *clam meam uxorem, quoi pallam surrupui dudum domo*; before 109.

Haut. 983: *Immo et ibi nunc sum et usque id egi dudum, dum loquitur pater*; between 954 and 977.

Haut. 595: *Quid tu? ecquid de illo quod dudum tecum egi, egisti, Syre?* See 550 ff.

And. 824: *ut beneficium uerbis inilum dudum nunc re comprobes*; before 600.

And. 840: *Credo, et id facturas Dauos dudum praedixit mihi*; see 507-22.

Phorm. 913 f.: *Ferne cadem omnia, quae tute dudum coram me incusaueras*; see 348-440.

Iam dudum also covers a varying interval of time, according to the subjective conception of the speaker.¹²

¹⁰ See Langen *Beiträge zur Kritik und Erklärung des Plautus* (1880) 33 ff.; Lodge *Lexicon Plautinum* s. v. *dudum*; Allardice and Junks *An Index of the Adverbs of Plautus* (1913) s. v. *dudum*.

¹¹ *Op. cit.* 34.

¹² Langen *op. cit.* 41 ff.

Men. 419 f.: *Iam dudum, mulier, tibi non imprudens aduorsabar*; from 369.

Eun. 743: *Thais, ego iam dudum hic adsum*; from 727.

Eun. 917: *Ite intro: iam dudum era uos expectat domi*; Thais entered the house in 909.

Haut. 409: *Ite intro: nam uos iam dudum expectat senex*; not before Clitipho entered the house in 380.

Asin. 486: *Ei nunciam ad erum, quo uocas, iam dudum quo uolebas*; see 452.

Miles 1428 f.: —*Philocomasium iam projectast? dic mihi.*—*iam dudum*; she made her exit in 1345.

Phorm. 289: *iam dudum te omnis nos accusare audio*; from 231.

Rud. 1030 f.: *ecquid condicionis audes ferre?—iam dudum fero: ut abeas, rudentem amittas, mihi molestus ne sies*; from 938.

The use of *modo* varies in like manner, as may be observed from the following citations:

Aul. 628: **foras, lumbrice, qui sub terra erepsisti modo*; since Euclio's exit in 615.

Bac. 631: *Militis parasitus modo uenerat aurum petere hinc*; see 583 ff.

Bac. 204: *Hic, exeuntem me unde aspexisti modo*; in 178.

Poen. 1324 f.: *Nam hic noster pater est: hic nos cognouit modo et hunc sui fratris filium*; see 1256 f.

Pseud. 716: *Epistulam modo hanc intercepi et symbolum*; see 647 f.

Trin. 1138: *Modo mihi aduenienti nugator quidam occessit obuiam*; see 840.

Eun. 696 f.:—*uenit Chaerea.* . . . —*quam dudum?—modo*; see 472.

Thus in by far the greater number of cases the loose use of temporal expressions may be attributed to this psychological tendency toward vividness rather than to the playwright's distortion of the time-element. The latter is shown, however, in *Bac.* 372 ff. Lydus enters the house of Bacchis in 169 and comes out from it in 368. Yet his words:

*Apage istas a me sorores, quae hominum sorbent sanguinem.
omnis ad perniciem instructa domus opime alque opipare:
quae ut aspexi, me continuo contuli prolinam in pedes,*

indicate that his stay within has been but momentary; this can hardly be explained save as due to disregard of time-relations by the playwright.¹³ Again, in *Haut.* 241 Syrus and Dromo are seen approaching. Dromo is sent back to escort Bacchis and Antiphila, who have fallen behind. In the long conversation which precedes the arrival of the women the situation is clearly defined; at the close of this essential

¹³ Brachmann (*De Bacchidum Plautinae retractione scaenica* [Leipziger Stud. III (1880)] 125 f.) would reject 374 as due to retraction. Yet, as Langen points out (*Pl. Stud.* 113), "Nur etwas gemildert, aber durchaus nicht aufgehoben werden die erwähnten Bedenken, wenn man Vers 374 für späteren Zusatz erklärt." See also Ritschl *Opuscula* II (1868) 358 f. (= *Rhein. Mus.* N. F. IV [1846] 601 ff.); Ladewig *Philol.* XVII (1861) 264.

scene Syrus sees the women approaching and exclaims (375): *Sed quam cito sunt consecutae mulieres*. There is an apparent contradiction between *quam cito* and the hundred and thirty-five verses which cover Dromo's absence. The length of this interval is partially justified by the gathering darkness and other factors in the situation which may have retarded the women (see 248 f.); it is, however, more immediately justified by the dramatic necessity of revealing to the audience certain essential facts before the arrival of the women. The poet in using *cito* after the long interval seems almost to disclose his consciousness of retarding the arrival of Bacchis and Antiphila for dramatic convenience.

3

I think that it is clear from this discussion that the loose use of temporal adverbs in Roman comedy can only in exceptional cases be attributed with certainty to the poet's disregard of the element of time; this disregard may, however, be amply illustrated through analysis of the plays and in particular by comparison of scenes in different plays which cover action of the same general type and might be expected to involve approximately equal time-intervals. This study will in the main be confined to the portions of the plays in which the action is continuous for in these alone, in the absence of any possible pause, is the time-element clearly defined.¹⁴ Thus the material will in general be limited to passages where the continuity is unbroken by *scaenae vacuae*; I shall, however, occasionally make use of scene sequences in which, despite the "vacant stage," it is clear that the action proceeds without interruption.¹⁵ Naturally this restriction does not apply to cases where the time-interval allowed seems over-great; here the evidence need not be limited to passages where the continuity is clearly unbroken, for a pause between scenes would increase the time-interval and serve only to strengthen the argument that the poet has little regard for time.

a

There are a number of scenes scattered through the plays, in which the poet's freedom in large measure from temporal restrictions is quite apparent.¹⁶ In *Most.* 528 Theopropides leaves the stage, greatly alarmed

¹⁴ This restriction is not observed by Polczyk (*op. cit.* 31 ff.) in his discussion of time-relations in Roman comedy. Consequently his work is in some measure robbed of its value through failure to take into account the possibility of a lapse of time when the stage is vacant. See Legrand *Rev. ét. anc.* XIII (1911) 488.

¹⁵ See Leo *Monolog* 51.

¹⁶ See Legrand *Daos* 426 ff.

by Tranio's tale; in 541 he is seen approaching, much to Tranio's surprise (542: *Sed quidnam hic sese tam cito recipit domum?*) and to that of the reader when it appears (547 ff.) that Theopropides has sought out the former owner of the house, told him all, and heard his denial of Tranio's preposterous charges—all this within the thirteen lines taken up by the disjointed monologues of Tranio and the *danista*.¹⁷ The poet in his desire to create the situation which here confronts Tranio has hastened Theopropides's return. Tranio and Misargyrides are ready for the following scene; the *senex* must be separated from Tranio and his suspicions must be aroused before he can take his part. There is no convenient way of filling the interval of his absence, and the playwright does not trouble to invent one; the off-stage action is sketched in question and answer, and the sole concession made to the element of time is in the surprised query of Tranio (542).¹⁸

In *And.* 459 Mysis and the midwife Lesbia come upon the stage, entering the house in 467. The birth takes place at once (473: *Iuno Lucina, fer opem, serua me, obsecro*); Lesbia reappears in 481, gives a few instructions and leaves the stage in 488. The compression of events is manifest, yet this differs somewhat from the *Mostellaria* passage in that birth-scenes are in greater or less degree conventionalized, occurring always at opportune moments, as in the *Hecyra*, *Aulularia*, *Amphitruo*, *Adelphoe*. This is only an extreme case of the freedom with which the poet usually treated them.

In *Hauton* 948¹⁹ Menedemus enters the house; Chremes delivers a brief monologue, and in 954 Clitipho comes out with Menedemus, having in this short time learned the details of the situation from him.²⁰ Simi-

¹⁷ Ritschl (praef. *Most.* [1852] xiv f.) ended an act at 530 because of this distortion of the time-element. Ladewig (*Philol.* XVII [1861] 467 ff.), similarly perplexed, rearranged the text to escape the difficulties in which Ritschl became involved.

¹⁸ Here the dramatist seems to admit that he has handled time-relations with considerable freedom. Compare, perhaps, *Haut.* 375; *And.* 474, 916 f.; see Legrand *Daos* 394 n. 1; 427 n. 2. Somewhat similar technique is employed in Vergil *Aeneid* VI 537 ff.; here Norden (ed. [1903] 350) observes that "die Begegnung mit Deiphobus . . . durch die Situation bedingt ist, dass sie die Haupthandlung . . . retardiert—das deutet der Dichter selbst . . . an."

¹⁹ See Köhler *De Hautontimorumēni Terentianae compositione* (1908) 17 n. 1, 28 n. 2.

²⁰ In this connection we may note several passages in the Menander fragments. Compare *Samia* 319 ff. Parmeno is sent within for Moschio's traveling equipment (319); in 325 he returns, acquainted with all the particulars of the situation. Compare also *Peric.* 120 ff., 170 ff.

larly in *And.* 901 Pamphilus goes into the house, tells Crito of his need, and reappears upon the stage with him in 904. In *Hauton* 558 Chremes goes within, returning to the stage in 562 with Clitipho, whom he has caught taking liberties with Bacchis; Syrus's monologue on the situation covers the brief time spent within. Equally significant is the fact that in 595 Chremes asks Syrus: *Ecquid de illo quod dudum tecum egisti, Syre?* when 559-61 is the only interval in which Syrus could have formed any plans. Between 480 and 486 of the *Miles*, Palaestrio must coach Periplecomenus in his part for the following scene; the latter knows the general outline of the intrigue from 237 ff., but the details of his action in the next scene must be told him. These passages will suffice to show the playwright's tendency to contract the time allowed for off-stage action.

b

The converse should here be true: we should find that in some cases an entrance is unduly delayed.²¹ The most striking instance of such delay is found in Lydus's stay within the house of the Bacchides (*Bac.* 169-368); as I have noted above (p. 24), the length of his visit is by no means in accord with the spirit in which he departs. His exit in 169 is followed by three scenes in which Chrysalus plays a part; not until Chrysalus withdraws does the playwright choose to bring Lydus upon the stage, and 390 f. show that Lydus's monologue simply gives Chrysalus time to meet Mnesilochus and inform him of the past action.

The *Rudens* affords several illustrations of the same technique. In 484 Sceparnio enters the temple to return the *urna*; and there he must stay until the end of the entrance-scene of Labrax and Charmides (559), a time utterly disproportionate to his errand within. The *leno* enters the temple in 570; yet we have no hint of his activity within until Daemones remarks on the uproar, in 613. Clearly the dramatist has chosen to delay the action by inserting Charmides's comic colloquy with Sceparnio and Daemones's somewhat inconsequential meditation upon his dream,²² rather than give the action point by hastening its progress. This tendency appears again in Trachalio's prayer for help, which is protracted by trivial jest and wordy explanation: Trachalio rushes from the temple in 615, yet Daemones does not enter with his slaves until 660. Finally, an inordinately long time is allowed for Daemones's stay within the temple before he drags out the *leno* (706); this interval is filled by the lyrics of Palaestra and Ampelisca.

²¹ See Legrand *Daos* 426 n. 4, 454.

²² See Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 162 ff.

In *Hauton* 168 ff. the hour for the *cena* seems close at hand; in 172 Chremes is about to go in, lest he delay his guests. Yet this anxious haste is forgotten by 211, and Chremes remarks as he ends his conversation with Clitipho: *Ego ibo hinc intro, ut uideam nobis quid cenae siet: tu, ut tempus est diei, uide sis ne quo hinc abeas longius*. In 409 Syrus bids the party go in and we learn from the following scene that the *meretrix* was a guest at the dinner. Thus the hour for this repast recedes at the playwright's pleasure. In *And.* 431 Byrria leaves the stage to inform Charinus of the conversation which he has overheard; yet the plot-development is such that Charinus, the eager lover, may not enter until 625 to seek explanation of Pamphilus's seeming faithlessness.²³

Thus entrance follows exit at the will of the dramatist. The length of time allowed for off-stage action varies with the nature of the material wherewith the playwright chooses to fill the interval, and may be increased or diminished quite without regard for the element of time. This has been shown in the preceding discussion and further evidence will now be adduced in the comparison as regards length of scenes in different plays which refer to the same general type of action and consequently involve approximate equivalence of time-interval.

c

An errand within the house often requires that a character be absent from the stage for a short time; the interval between exit and reentrance varies from three to twenty-two lines.²⁴ Difference in much the same

²³ Quite common are less striking cases where an entrance seems unduly deferred. In *Aul.* 406 Congrio and his helpers rush forth from the house; a ten-line monologue is given before Euclio pursues them (415). Similarly, in the *Captivi*, Hegio enters the house with Aristophontes in 515; Tyndarus then comes upon the stage, speaking seventeen lines before Hegio follows him with the words (533): *Quid illum nunc hominem proripuisse foras se dicam ex aedibus?* In *Rudens* 449 ff. Ampelisca announces the approach of Labrax and Charmides; Scepharnio must enter, deliver his monologue (458-84), and retire within the temple, before they enter. The arrival of Theopropides is announced in *Most.* 365 after Tranio's entrance as *servus currens*; yet before the *senex* enters (431) all traces of the banquet are removed, and the house is locked up—this in somewhat leisurely fashion. In the *Cistellaria*, Halisca follows Melaenis into the house in 652. Lampadio and Phanostrata enter upon the essential recognition-scene, and Halisca's entrance in search of the casket is delayed until 671.

²⁴ Davus enters the house in *And.* 715 and reappears with the new-born babe in 721. Gnatho goes within with Virgo in *Eun.* 283, reentering in 286. Thais leaves the stage in *Eun.* 493, saying: *Hos prius intro ducam et quae uolo simul imperabo: post huc continuo exeo*. She comes out in 500, giving final instructions to her maids. In *Persa* 723 (see below p. 40 and n. 6) Dordalus retires into his house with the words: *Attah! oblitus sum intus dudum edicere quae uolui edicta*, and in his absence Toxilus

degree is to be observed in the time spent within the house in counting out money or in the completion of a sale.²⁵ This variation, while quite in accord with our views as to the poet's disregard of time, is not sufficiently marked to require further attention.

gives Sutorio word to be in readiness. Dordalus reenters in 731: *Transcidi loris omnis adueniens domi ita mihi supellex squalet atque aedes meae*. Agorastocles makes his exit in *Poen.* 197, reentering in 207. Milphio comments on the situation, breaking off with a call to his master when he sees Adelphasium and Anterastylis. Agorastocles has given a bag of gold to Collabiscus in this interval, with some account of the intrigue (415 f.). Euclio in the *Aulularia* breaks his conversation with Megadorus by dashing into his house (203-207, 242-50) that he may assure himself of the safety of his gold. In 66 he leaves the stage for the same purpose (see 39), reentering in 79: the essential nature of Staphyla's monologue may serve to explain the greater time spent within. Again, between 444 and 449 Euclio digs up his treasure and carries it under his cloak for safe-keeping. It takes him much the same time to dig it up and remove it from the temple of Fides (660-67), but a longer interval is required when he conceals it (586-608) because of the essential nature of Strobilus's entrance-monologue, which falls between Euclio's exit and reentrance. (On the continuity of action in this passage see *Leo Monolog* 57 n. 1.) Between 715 and 726 of the *Bacchides* Pistoclerus enters the house and gets *stilum, ceram et tabellas, linum*. In *Rud.* 444 Scepharnio leaves the stage to fetch water for Ampelisca, returning in 458; his stay is prolonged because of the necessary length of her exit-monologue.

²⁵ In *Bac.* 1052 Nicobulus goes within, saying: *Binos ducentos Philippos iam intus eceram*, and reappears in 1058. The interval is taken up by Chrysalus's monologue continuing the metaphor of the fall of Troy. Dordalus retires in *Persa* 672 with the words: *Abeo intro atque argentum adfero*. He reenters in 682; the interval is covered by Toxilus's word of commendation for Virgo and final instructions to Sagaristio which need hardly be taken as essential for the clear understanding of the action. In *Epid.* 633 Stratippocles enters the house for money wherewith to pay the *danista* and reenters in 646; the interval allows time for the recognition-scene. Demipho goes into the house with Chremes in *Phorm.* 681 for money wherewith to pay Phormio. During their absence (681-713) the essential scene between Antipho and Geta takes place. In *Hauton* 804 Chremes goes within to get the money for Syrus. Clitipho enters from his walk and the situation is explained to him as briefly as possible; at the end of this essential scene (829) Chremes reenters. In *Pseud.* 1016 Simia and Ballio enter the house to effect the transfer of Phoenicium, with whom Simia reenters in 1032; Pseudolus covers the interval with a monologue wherein are expressed his fears lest some untoward chance mar his plans. During the *choragus's* unessential speech (*Curc.* 462-86; see below p. 38) take place the paying-over of the money and the transfer of Virgo to Curculio. The Roman elements in this monologue (see *Leo Monolog* 59 n. 2) show that Plautus extended the scene intervening between exit and reentrance even when its content was irrelevant. From the other passages cited it appears that when an essential scene intervened between exit and reentrance the playwright felt at liberty to increase quite materially the time allowed for this purpose.

The interval allowed for summoning a character from a house represented in the stage-setting affords opportunity for a wider range of variation. In *Capt.* 657 and *And.* 860 the call for *lorarii* meets with instant response. In the *Bacchides*, Nicobulus leaves the stage in 794 to bring out Artamo, returning in 799; this gives Chrysalus time to assure the audience that Nicobulus is not outplaying him at his own game. Davus is summoned in *And.* 579 and enters in 580. This situation receives quite different treatment in the *Casina*, however; in 295 Chalinus is bidden to summon Cleostrata and prepare for the drawing of lots; he withdraws in 302, but the monologue of Lysidamus and his dialogue with Olympio intervene before the entrance of Cleostrata (350), which is evidently postponed in order to set the stage for the drawing of lots by bringing on Olympio. It is apparent that the poet's attention to the action intervening between entrance and exit has determined the length of the interval, rather than the nature of the off-stage action.²⁶

To this same factor is due the marked variation in the time required for an off-stage errand; the point which has been reached in the development of the plot also has bearing on the length of the interval. In *Hauton* 502 Chremes goes off-stage to his neighbor's house that he may free himself from an engagement, returning to Menedemus in 508. This

²⁶ The following passages may also be cited under this head; in them the variation is less marked. Juppiter's *Euocate huc Sosiam* in *Amph.* 949 is followed by Sosia's entrance in 955. Phaedria bursts into the house in *Eun.* 663, coming out with Dorus in 668. Between 1305 and 1311 of the *Miles*, Palaestrio brings Philocomasium from the house of Pyrgopolinices. In *Hec.* 719 f. a *puer* is sent for Bacchis, whose house is "on-stage" (see 733); she appears in 727. In *Miles* 344 Palaestrio goes into the house for Philocomasium, reentering with her in 354; their words upon entering indicate that he has been giving her instructions, yet slight allowance is made for the time thus consumed. Sceledrus's intervening monologue is not essential. In 396 Philocomasium leaves the stage, crosses through the secret passage into Periplecomenus's house, and enters as Dicaea in 411; the longer interval allows time for Palaestrio to play upon the fears of Sceledrus. (With this should be contrasted 522-25, where the similar action within is apparently carried out while Periplecomenus is giving the instructions for it to Philocomasium.) In *Poen.* 786 Agorastocles goes into Lycus's house to fetch out Collabiscus, reappearing in 796. The length of his stay within is determined by the monologue of Lycus, who decamps before Agorastocles returns to the stage. Leaena enters the house in *Curc.* 138: *Tu me curato ne sitiam, ego tibi quod amas iam huc adducam.* She reappears in 158 with Planesium. The interval between exit and reentrance is here lengthened by the poet's insertion of the lyric addressed to the *pessuli pessumi*. Similarly in *Phorm.* 446-59 Geta's stay within the house in search of Antipho is lengthened because of the comic scene between Demipho and the *advocati*. In this connection we may compare *Peric.* 328 ff.

errand is related to the plot only in so far as it illustrates Chremes's character.²⁷ The intervening monologue of Menedemus is not essential. These facts account for the shortness of the interval.²⁸ In *Men.* 737 Decio is sent for the *senex*. The latter is seen approaching in 746 and must be on the stage at the beginning of his long monologue (753).²⁹ In forcible contrast to the speed of his arrival, occasioned in large part by the fact that the action must be at a standstill until he comes, is the tardiness of his second coming from his house. He leaves the stage in 956, assuring the *medicus* (954, 956) that he will hasten to return; yet it is in 990 that he reappears with his slaves, for in Menaechmus's soliloquy and the long monody of Messenio there is no lack of material to fill the interval, and the action need not halt until he arrives, as in the earlier passage. In *Rudens* 779 Trachalio leaves to summon Plesidippus, with no very clear idea where he will find him; he returns with his master in 839. The interval is filled by the *leno's* scene with Daemones and the *lorarii*, which is susceptible of well-nigh indefinite expansion. If we consider with Leo (*Monolog* 54 n. 6) that the vacant stage at *Rud.* 1264 does not indicate a pause in the action, Trachalio's second search for his master is more quickly ended (1224-65). This is to be accounted for on two grounds: its occurrence late in the play and the lack of pertinent matter wherewith to fill the interval; the poet has recourse to a moral disquisition from Daemones which he perhaps did not care to prolong indefinitely. In *Miles* 805 Periplectomenus leaves the stage for Acroteleutium and Milphidippa, and is seen returning in 870. Again it is early in the play and comparatively easy to fill the interval with a final order to Pleusicles and the comic scene with the tippling Lurcio. Parmeno's search for his master falls late in the play (*Hec.* 815-41); Bacchis covers the interval with a monologue which is notably free from padding. At the end of the *Captivi*, also, there is a decided shortening of the time in Tyndarus's return from the

²⁷ See Köhler *op. cit.* 6 n. 1, 16 n. 3; compare Chremes's absence on a similar errand at 170. See also pp. 35, 53 f. below.

²⁸ See Köhler *op. cit.* 17 n. 1: "Legrandius (*Rev. ét. gr.* XVI [1903] 353) qui sex versuum spatium (502-507) non satis esse putet, quo Chremes munere illo se liberet, quot tandem versuum spatio opus sit, vix ipse statuet, cum de proximis vicinis agatur. Quo accedit, quod tali in re ab antiquis poetis unquam rerum veritatem ipsam accurate expressam esse nemini persuadebit."

²⁹ To be compared with this is the situation at *Merc.* 788, where Syra leaves the stage to summon Dorippa's father, returning in 803, after a vacant stage. Lysimachus's exit-monologue intervenes between exit and reentrance, together with the clearing-away of the *vasa*.

quarries. The slaves are sent for him in 950 and in 997 he returns, at the end of the essential scenes which establish his identity. In *Hec.* 726 Phidippus goes to engage a nurse, returning with her in 767, after Laches has come to an agreement with Bacchis. In the *Andria*, Mysis, sent in 228 for the midwife Lesbia, leaves the stage in 300 and does not return until 459. The striking contrast between the length of time spent on these errands with practically the same purpose shows that the dramatist had only slight regard for the requirements of time, and felt at liberty to treat them in such a way as to bring exit and entrance at the moment required by his plot.

This is well illustrated in the trips to the forum, the harbor, and elsewhere. In *Persa* 448 Dordalus leaves for the forum, where he manumits Lemniselenis, returning in 470; between his exit and reentrance fall Toxilus's padded monologue and the presentation to the audience of Sagaristio and Virgo in Persian attire. Evidently the poet has been hard put to it to fill this interval, for the compression of the off-stage action is very noticeable. In *Asin.* 380 Leonida hurries away to the forum, where he informs Demaenetus of the intrigue, returning with measured pace, as befits the steward's dignity. He is seen approaching in 402. During his absence Libanus, with some little effort, holds the *mercator* in conversation. For this errand, also, the time allowed is very short, particularly when we regard the long scenes which precede and follow this hasty trip (*Langen Pl. Stud.* 101 f.). Much more time is given Cappadox, who leaves for the forum in *Curc.* 588 to secure his money from Lyco, is successful after a decided effort, and returns home in 679. The interval between his exit and reentrance is filled by the recognition-scene. In the *Mostellaria*, Tranio leaves for the Piraeus in 75; Grumio withdraws, Philolaches's monody is succeeded by the toilette scene and the beginning of the *comissatio*; finally, in 348, Tranio hurries upon the stage, bearing the tidings of Theopropides's coming. In *Hec.* 360 Parmeno is sent to meet the slaves on their way from the harbor. Pamphilus's essential monologue comes to a close as he sees the slaves approaching (409). They enter in 415. The fifty-five lines allowed for this trip are in marked contrast to the hundred and thirty-one which separate the exit and reentrance of Dromo (*Hauton* 250-381) on a similar errand (see above pp. 24 f.). In these passages the element of time has clearly given the playwright no concern: he has simply accommodated exit and entrance to the exigencies of his plot.

d

Further illustration of his disregard for time may be found in the final scenes of the *Miles*—the continuity of action at 1393 is hardly to be disputed (Leo *Monolog* 60). Philocomasium leaves the stage with Pleusicles in 1345; the slaves follow them in 1353; Palaestrio leaves in 1373. The slaves return in 1427 and Sceledrus reports that he has seen the ship depart. Here again the time-element has suffered compression. The scene between Amphitruo and Sosia (*Amph.* 551 ff.) furnishes us with another example of the playwright's loose treatment of time. Ussing notes that it is staged near the ships;³⁰ Palmer, that Amphitruo is on his way from the harbor to his home; Leo's conception of the scene is quite different,³¹ necessitating the excision of 629-32.³² These lines have been shown by Prescott to be quite in harmony with the setting of the scene at or near the harbor.³³ During Alcumena's monody (633-53) the party moves slowly forward, and at its end is close to the house. The violation of the laws of time is made easier by the infraction of the laws of space. The continuity of action in the final scenes of the *Aulularia* is not broken by the vacant stages at 681 and 700 (Leo *Monolog* 57). Euclio starts for the temple of Silvanus (*extra murumst auisus*) in 676. Strobilus leaves in pursuit (681). His absence is covered by the essential dialogue of Eunomia and Lyconides, which leads up to Strobilus's return in 701 (*ibid.* 54 n. 5). Euclio is seen approaching in 712; he has gone back and discovered his loss, for he does not know the thief. Here there is absolutely no regard for time on the part of the playwright; only thirty lines are allowed for the long trip from the temple,

³⁰ The "harbor" may be pictured at one end of the stage, with the house at some distance from it. There is nothing to indicate that Amphitruo and his party leave the stage at 632.

³¹ *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 132 n.

³² These lines have been rejected by Ussing and Langen also. See Langen *Pl. Stud.* 237 f. Siewert (*Plautus in Amphitruone fabula quomodo exemplar Graecum transtulerit* [1894] 83 ff.) retains 629-32, but considers the scene staged before the house. His interpretation of the action is forced, involving a trip to the harbor by Sosia after 631, and ignores entirely the arguments which have caused critics to set the scene at or near the ships. The difficulty in 631, which seemingly conflicts with 576, is solved, as Professor Prescott suggests, by reference to *Persa* 170, whence it appears that *mandata cum uino bibere* is merely a slang expression with no reference to the immediately preceding action—Ussing (ed. I [1875] 294) in citing this parallel interprets the metaphor too literally. Siewert's explanation of 631 (*op. cit.* 80, 84) by reference to 429 ff. is quite inept.

³³ *Class. Phil.* VIII (1913) 20 ff.

and Strobilus's words (705 f.): *Nam ut dudum hinc abii, mullo illi adueni prior, multoque prior me conlocaui in arborem*, imply a considerable wait at the spot where the pot of gold was buried—to say nothing of the time consumed by Euclio's return to the temple after the treasure had been removed, which certainly is not adequately represented in the dozen lines which separate his reen trance from that of Strobilus (see Langen *Pl. Stud.* 108 f.).

This study of the dramatic element of time in Roman comedy begins with the *Amphitruo* and the *Captivi*; in these plays, as in the *Agamemnon* and the *Acharnians*, the poet has shown complete disregard for time in the general outlines of the plots. We may reasonably expect to find such evidence confirmed by consideration of the smaller intervals of time within the plays.

The New Comedy, like the rest of ancient literature, lacks, in general, explicit reference to the passage of time other than that afforded by the temporal adverbs. It is found impossible, however, to trace through them the poet's treatment of time: a psychological tendency toward vividness of expression widens the application of *modo*, *dudum*, *iam dudum*, etc.; the use of *mox*, *iam*, etc., referring to uncompleted action, may or may not find justification in the light of the completed act.

Recourse must therefore be had to analysis of the plays; this is confined to portions which contain continuous action—for the most part to passages which are free from vacant stages—and the necessity of considering the possible lapse of time in pauses in the action is thus avoided. In certain of these passages the disregard of time is obvious; this evidence is supplemented and confirmed by the comparison in length of scenes in different plays which refer to the same general type of action, and consequently involve approximate equivalence of time-interval.

The conclusion is drawn that the time-interval allowed for the completion of off-stage action may be shortened or lengthened practically without limit and depends upon the nature of the material to be presented upon the stage during that interval. It follows immediately therefore that the consideration of time in estimating the significance of vacant stages is not a valid criterion.

CHAPTER II

THE TECHNIQUE OF CONTINUOUS ACTION

We shall first consider the recurrent features of structure in passages where the action is continuous; if such features seem to be intended, primarily, to make the action continuous, the fact that they appear also in certain other passages where modern theory finds a vacant stage significant of an essential pause in the action, militates against such a pause. It is difficult to suppose that a technique which secures continuous action is employed quite accidentally in parts of the play in which modern theory finds essential pauses interrupting the action and marking the ends of acts.

In many passages where the action is continuous a scene or portion of a scene intervenes between the exit and reentrance of a character or characters. This scene-complex assumes such importance that I have chosen to discuss it at some length, as characteristic of those portions of the plays wherein the action is continuous. For purposes of comparison I shall group these passages in several classes.

1

During the absence of the retiring character the action is sustained without appreciably increasing the spectator's knowledge of the plot.

First, perhaps, come those situations in which the brief absence of a person serves *only* to bring out a trait in his character. Euclio's dashes into the house to assure himself of the safety of his gold (*Aul.* 203-207, 242-50) are typical of this class. The interval of Euclio's absence is covered by Megadorus's puzzled comment on the sudden withdrawal of his friend. Similarly in *Bac.* 794 Nicobulus goes within for his *lorarius*, while Chrysalus delivers a brief monologue (795-99); this action serves chiefly to show the transparence of Nicobulus's designs and to contrast forcibly his gullibility with Chrysalus's astuteness. In the *Hauton* 502 Chremes withdraws to free himself from an engagement, that he may devote his time to Menedemus's affairs. The latter's monologue is relevant only to this incident, which emphasizes the officiousness of Chremes.¹

¹ Compare *Hauton* 170 f. and see below pp. 53 f. It is perhaps worth while to note that this technique of the "characterizing exit" is peculiar to Menander. The original of the *Hauton* is certainly by his hand; that of the *Bacchides* is commonly attributed to him; and the original of the *Aulularia* has been assigned to him with a considerable degree of probability. (See Geffcken *Studien zu Menander* [1898] 3 ff.; Wil-

It is more usual, however, for a character to leave the stage on an errand more definitely connected with the plot. Not infrequently the interval is filled by a scene in which the comic element predominates. In *Miles* 1305-10 Pleusicles's jest at the expense of the soldier serves to enliven the audience during Palaestrio's stay within the house. Lycus and Collabiscus leave the stage in *Poen.* 720; the interval before Lycus's (unmotivated) reentrance in 742 is covered by the comic dialogue between Agorastocles and his *advocati*. With this may be compared Demipho's consultation with his conservative friends during Geta's search for Antipho (*Phorm.* 446-59). Periplecomenus leaves the stage in *Miles* 805 for Acroteleutium and Milphidippa; no small part of the interval before his return (874) is covered by Palaestrio's comic cross-examination of Lurcio.² In *Rudens* 779 Trachalio leaves to summon his master; the scene intervening before his return is taken up by the discomfiture of the *leno*, with the endless opportunity for comic effect afforded by the drubbing of Labrax³ as he renews his attempts to gain possession of the girls.

In these cases the comic element has been uppermost in the intervening scenes; in *Rudens* 664-705 the lyrics of the frightened girls not only cover the absence of Daemones and his slaves, but seem to defer for an unreasonable length of time their return with the captured *leno*. Compare *Curc.* 139-57 and see above p. 27.

Frequently a monologue on the foregoing action or on the situation covers the absence of the retiring character, spoken by a character who remains on the stage for the coming action. In *Miles* 537 Sceledrus enters the *miles's* house, finds Philocomasium, and returns in 540 to Periplecomenus, who has commented briefly on the slave's befuddlement. The *virgo* is led by Gnatho into Thais's house in *Eun.* 283; in the interval before the return of the parasite (286) Parmeno comforts himself with the thought of the imminent overthrow of the *miles's* hopes. In *Cas.* 423 Olympio, Cleostrata, and Lysidamus enter the house; in 434 Lysidamus returns to the stage with Olympio. The interval is filled by Chali-

amowitz *N. Jhb.* N. F. III [1899] 517 n.; Legrand *Rev. ét. gr.* XV [1902] 357 ff.; Leo *Monolog* 55; *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 109; *Hermes* XLI [1906] 629; Krieger *De Aululariae Plautinae exemplari Graeco* [1914]—a dissertation which has not been accessible to me; earlier views are summarized by Götz, ed. [1881] vii.)

² In this passage (806-73) the contamination theory finds strong support. See Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 178 ff.

³ Compare *Clouds* 541 ff. and scholiast *ad loc.* (Rutherford I 194): καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος τοῦ γελαῦ χάριν τοὺς ἐγγὺς ἐστῶτας ἐτυπτεν τῇ βακτηρίᾳ; *Clouds* 1438 ff.; *Peace* 742 ff.

nus's gloomy reflections on the past action. Menedemus enters his house in search of Clitipho in *Haut.* 948, reappearing in 954; Chremes's monologue covers the absence of his neighbor with brief explanation of his motives in disinheriting his son. Earlier in the play (558) Chremes left the stage to return shortly (562) with the guilty Clitipho; Syrus comments on the foregoing action in the interval.⁴ In *Miles* 344 Palaestrio enters the house, returning with Philocomasium in 354; in the intervening monologue Sceledrus reassures himself as to his own conduct and utters invidious comment on the toadying of his fellow-slave. Agorastocles enters the house in *Poen.* 197 and prepares Collabiscus for his share in the plot against the *leno*; Milphio meanwhile delivers the conventional monologue of the intriguing slave, ending by a call to his master (205) as he sees the sisters enter. In *Aul.* 444 Euclio hurries into the house to dig up his gold, returning in 449; Congrio fills the interval with abuse of him and review of his own predicament. In *And.* 715 Davus goes within, reappearing with the baby in 721; Mysis comments on the situation during his absence. Simo and Ballio enter the house in *Pseud.* 1016; Pseudolus gives utterance to his fears of mischance, until his anxiety is relieved by Simia's return in 1032.

Similarly a dialogue on the situation may fill the interval between exit and reentrance. Thus the exclamations of the *ancillae* cover the time spent by Phaedria within the house in search of Dorus (*Eun.* 663-68). In *And.* 902 Pamphilus goes into the house for Crito, reappearing with the latter in 904; in dialogue with Simo, Chremes somewhat sententiously approves of his friend's course of action, in the few words which fill the interval. Thais enters her house with the supposed eunuch in *Eun.* 493, reentering in 499 after a noisy colloquy between Thraso, Gnatho, and Parmeno. Toxilus's words of commendation to Virgo and his unnecessary sketching of the retreat of Sagaristio cover the time spent within by Dordalus in counting out his gold (*Persa* 672-83).⁵

⁴ Parallels in Menander's plays indicate that the technique is Greek. In *Samia* 145 Demea rushes into the house past the startled cook, reappearing with Chrysis in 154. The interval is covered by the cook's comment on this unwonted action. Compare 203-11, 218-23, where Niceratus's dashes within are covered by Demea's observations on his friend's conduct. In 319 Parmeno is sent within by Moschio for traveling equipment; the latter continues his monologue in the interval, considering the probable course of action which Demea will take. Compare *Peric.* 109 ff.; 120 ff.

⁵ The case is somewhat different in *Bac.* 715-26. Here the forming of Chrysalus's plan is not interrupted by Pistoclerus's departure, but is carried on without a break in the dialogue with Mnesilochus.

Finally, in the absence of material relevant to the action, the poet may insert a monologue which has little or no bearing upon the plot. The speech of the *choragus* (*Curc.* 462-87; on the continuity of action, see below p. 49) is the best instance of this practice; it covers the time spent by Curculio within the house of Cappadox in the purchase of Planesium. The Roman elements in the monologue make it likely that it is from Plautus's hand, and quite unlikely that the *choragus* played any part in the Greek original (Leo *Monolog* 59 n. 2; see also Legrand *Daos* 472 f.). Somewhat similar is the use of Dorippa's prayer (*Merc.* 678-80) to cover the interval wherein Syra discovers Pasicompsa.

2

In the following scene-complexes, also, an interval separates the exit and reentrance of a character (or characters); before his return to the stage an appreciable advance is made in the plot.

This may be accomplished by dramatic presentation in the course of a dialogue, as in *Hauton* 977-1002. Chremes enters his house, returning to the stage with Sostrata only after Syrus's dialogue with Clitipho has prepared for the coming action by introducing a new and final complication. In *Persa* 469 Toxilus dismisses Sagaristio and Virgo, giving them in 543 their cue to reappear; in the intervening scene he presents the letter to Dordalus and develops the intrigue. In *Epid.* 633 Stratippocles goes within, counts out his money, and reappears in 646; the interval is covered by the essential recognition-scene, more easily handled, perhaps, during the absence of Stratippocles. Alcесimus leaves the stage in *Cas.* 557, returning in 591 to see if Lysidamus has come home; the intervening space is taken up by Cleostrata's mischief-making, in preparation for the quarrel between the *senes* in the coming scene. In *Miles* 396 Philocomasium goes within, reappearing as Dicaea in 411; in the interval Palaestrio works upon the fears of Sceledrus, that Sceledrus may the more readily fall victim to the trick. Phidippus in *Hec.* 726 leaves to hire a nurse for his grandchild, reappearing in 767; in the meantime Bacchis has entered and has come to an amicable agreement with Laches. In *Cas.* 302 Chalinus is sent into the house for Cleostrata; Olympio appears, and Lysidamus tells of his resolution to cast lots for the bride, bolstering up the courage of his henchman by repeated assurances of support; at the end of this scene enter Cleostrata and Chalinus with the paraphernalia for the casting of lots. Philocrates enters the house with Philopolemus in *Capt.* 953; he is called out by Hegio in 978, after Stalagmus's disclosures have indicated that

Philocrates may be able to fix the identity of the lost son. Similarly, Agorastocles, sent into the house in *Poen.* 608, is called forth by the *advocati* in 711, that he may witness the consummation of the intrigue, for Lycus is now too close upon his prey to suspect doubledealing. In *Aul.* 712 Strobilus hurries away to hide his treasure, returning (808) to meet Lyconides only after the latter has been apprised of Euclio's loss. In *And.* 523 Davus is sent within by Simo, returning to the stage in 580. In the meantime Simo has attempted to win Chremes's consent to the proposed marriage; it is Davus's appearance and his forced assurance of Pamphilus's good faith which finally gain Chremes's assent. In *Hauton* 804 Chremes goes within for his money, reappearing in 829; the interval is occupied by Syrus in instructing Clitipho in his part for the next scene. Later in the play (996) Clitipho leaves the stage in search of his father, returning in 1023 to find his parents before the house, somewhat prepared for their son's demand by their own discussion.

In the last case, as in a number of others, the entrance of another character is sufficient preparation for the coming scene, and the intervening action is of little importance. This is the case in *Amph.* 633 ff., where Alcumena appears and sings a monody (633-53) which separates the scene at the ships from the arrival of Amphitruo and Sosia at the house. Theopropides leaves the stage in *Most.* 528; the *danista* appears and Tranio is preparing to deal with him when he perceives Theopropides hastening back (541); the interval has been occupied by disjointed monologues from Tranio and the *danista*. Leonida leaves for the forum in *Asin.* 380 and is seen returning in 403; the *mercator* appears and is with difficulty entertained by Libanus until the pretended steward's return. In *Men.* 956 the *senex* and *medicus* leave Menaechmus I; after the latter's monologue on the situation Messenio appears and delivers a monody. In 990 the *senex* reenters with his slaves, the stage has been set by Messenio's coming, and the action proceeds.

Again, during the scene intervening between the exit and reentrance of a character the exit of another may be required in the development of the plot. In *Poen.* 786 Agorastocles rushes into the house of the *leno* and hales forth Collabiscus; Lyco takes advantage of the opportunity and postpones the solution of his difficulties by a hasty retreat. Saturio is given his final instructions and retires in *Persa* 730, returning to the stage in 737, just after Toxilus's withdrawal.

In several instances an entering character fills the interval between exit and reentrance with a monologue detailing precedent action which

took place off the stage. Thus Amphitruo's monologue on his past action (*Amph.* 1009-20) separates Mercurius's exit from his reappearance on the roof. Compare also *Eun.* 922-41; here Pythias's exit and reentrance are separated by Parmeno's monologue, in which he expresses his interest in Chaerea's adventure and attempts to justify the part he had taken. In *Hec.* 815 Parmeno goes to find Pamphilus, returning with him in 841; during this interval Bacchis's monologue informs the audience of the happenings within. Earlier in the same play, during Parmeno's absence (360-415), Pamphilus tells of his *contretemps* within the house.

3

In the passage intervening between the exit and reentrance of a character (or characters) the action is advanced in a phase of the plot which has no organic connection with the withdrawal of the retiring character; thus the spectator's knowledge of the retiring actor's share in the plot is not increased during his absence.

In *Persa* 448 Dordalus leaves for the forum, returning to the stage in 470, after the manumission of Lemniselenis; Toxilus's padded monologue and his colloquy with Sagaristio and Virgo fill the interval. The scene intervening before Dordalus's return virtually amounts to a presentation of Sagaristio and Virgo in "Persian" attire, that the audience may be prepared for their later appearance in the play; similarly, mention of the *tabellae* in 460 f.—hardly essential or, indeed, clear at this point—prepares the audience for their appearance later, in 497 ff. In *Aul.* 66 Euclio disappears to count his gold within the house (see 39); in his absence Staphyla comments upon her master's strange behavior and goes on to introduce a further complication by mention of her young mistress's approaching confinement. In *Persa* 723 Dordalus enters the house, reappearing in 731, after Toxilus has given Satorio final instructions as to the part he is to play in the coming scene.⁶ Chremes takes Demipho within, in *Phorm.* 681-712, to give him money; the essential scene between Geta and Antipho fills the

⁶ The poor motivation of Dordalus's exit has caused the scene to be suspected of retractation (Wilamowitz *Ind. schol. Gött.* [1893-94] 21; Coulter *Retractatio in the Ambrosian and Palatine Recensions of Plautus* [1911] 38 f.), yet the insertion of these instructions to Satorio, however unessential they may seem, is quite in accord with the careful outlining of the coming action which is peculiarly characteristic of the *Persa* (e. g., in 462 ff.). These instructions can be given only in the absence of Dordalus; hence he is crudely removed from the stage. The repetition of 467-68 in 727-28 is natural; the circumstances were the same in both places.

interval. In *Truc.* 209 Diniarchus enters the house to await Phronesium's pleasure; during his absence (209-320) Astaphium delivers her monody and takes part in a scene with Stratulax.

There is a group of scenes in the *Miles* wherein the continuity of the action is sustained by the presence upon the stage of Palaestrio, conversing now with the soldier, now with his fellow-plotters. In 1093 Milphidippa returns to her mistress, appearing in 1133 with the latter and Pleusicles for a consultation with Palaestrio; in the meantime Palaestrio has forced the *miles* to decide to send away Philocomasium and has sent him into the house (1129) to announce this decision to her. The interval before his return (1198) is occupied by Palaestrio's council with his confederates; in this there is much repetition, but Pleusicles's part in the coming action is for the first time clearly defined. As Pleusicles and the women retire the *miles* enters to tell of his conference with Philocomasium; in 1215 Acroteleutium and Milphidippa reenter to bid for the love of the impressionable soldier.

In these scene-complexes the playwright on occasion has presented in the interval between the exit and reentrance of a character, matter which sustains the action but does not make an appreciable advance in the plot. In many cases, however, it has been possible to carry the action along through the presentation of material which contributes directly to our knowledge of the retiring actor's part in the play—by setting the stage for his reappearance, as it were, by the entrance or exit of other characters or by the development of the plot in dramatic presentation. Lastly, he has chosen to introduce a new complication in this interval, or a scene from a phase of the plot in which the retiring character has no direct interest.

In many cases the close bond between the scenes of this complex is to be remarked in the foreshadowing, at the time of exit, of a character's return upon the completion of a certain action. We shall have occasion at a later point to trace this and other features of this scene-sequence in our discussion of the vacant stage; another group of scenes now claims our attention.

4

There are many scenes in which the main action on the stage is watched, with casual comment, by an actor (or actors) who is himself unobserved.⁷ This is one form of a somewhat larger group which

⁷ See *Leo Monolog* 68 f., 74 f., 87 ff.; *Légrand Daos* 431 ff; *Schaffner De aversum loquendi ratione in comoedia Graeca* (1911).

includes the scenes in which a silent actor stands by, observing the action and waiting to take his part in it, or remaining in ignorance, for a time, of the presence of other characters upon the stage.⁸ The relation between this technique and that of the scene-complexes which we have just discussed, is clear. In the latter the character made his exit, returning to the stage after an interval filled with whatever material seemed to the playwright appropriate; in the former the actor does not withdraw, but remains within the view of the audience until the time arrives for him to take his full share in the action. Thus, in the retention of an actor or actors from the preceding scene, who remain silent (or at least remain apart from the action) throughout a subsequent scene, the playwright found a means of securing continuous action.

Familiar instances of the use of this technique are the toilette scene of the *Mostellaria* (157 ff.), where Philolaches plays the eavesdropper, and the long scene in which Ballio admonishes his slaves (*Pseud.* 133 ff.), his monologue broken occasionally by comment from the listening Calidorus and Pseudolus. Scenes of this general type are by no means infrequent; the comment of the characters who are observing the course of the action is of varying importance. In *Poen.* 821 Milphio sees Syncerastus enter; the latter delivers a monologue upon which Milphio comments *a parte* until 851, when he addresses his friend. Pinacium is seen coming by Gelasimus in *Stich.* 270; the latter breaks the *puer's* entrance-monologue with casual comment until 315, when he steps out to accost him. Acanthio is seen by Charinus in *Merc.* 109; he enters as *servus currens* and delivers his monologue until Charinus reveals his presence in 132. Melaenis remains upon the stage when Lampadio enters (*Cist.* 536) and overhears his monologue and dialogue with Phanostrata, commenting thereon in asides until 597, when she addresses him, after Phanostrata's exit. Sosia's entrance-monologue (*Amph.* 153 ff.) is an excellent example of this type of scene; Mercurius watches his entrance and speaks in asides until 292, when Sosia observes him and comments in turn upon the blustering words of this stranger. Occasionally the *entering* characters observe unnoticed the course of events. In *Eun.* 1025 Thraso and Gnatho enter, overhear Chaerea's dialogue with Parmeno, and are not seen until 1060. Compare also *Eun.* 391 ff., where Parmeno listens unobserved to the conversation of Thraso and Gnatho. These instances will be sufficient to show the use of this

⁸ Note Donatus *praef. ad And.* I 3 (W. I 38), III 6 (W. I 40).

technique;⁹ its convenience to the playwright is apparent, in that the entering character may in this way give information to those remaining upon the stage from the previous scene, and vice versa.¹⁰

The comment *a parte* of the listening character adds liveliness and realism to these scenes; it is frequently omitted, however, especially in the shorter passages where its absence is not felt. Thus in *Aul.* 667 ff. (compare 608 ff.) Strobilus listens to Euclio's scheme for the safe disposition of his gold, without being observed by the incautious miser. Similarly Menaechmus I is seen coming (*Men.* 898) and his monologue is overheard by the *senex* and *medicus*, who do not approach him until 909. Lysidamus's words are in like manner overheard by Cleostrata (*Cas.* 563-74). Palaestrio, in *Miles* 156-65, overhears Periplectomenus's tirade against his neighbor's slaves. Curculio enters as *servus currens* in *Curc.* 274; he is seen coming, but delivers his monologue without interruption, until he is finally addressed in 303. Pamphilus overhears Charinus's monologue (*And.* 625-41) and speaks to him in 642; he is immediately answered, without the manifestation of surprise which is usual on the part of the person addressed. During the entrance of Thraso and his forces (*Eun.* 771 ff.), Chremes and Thais stand silently by until 783, when Chremes expresses his alarm over the impending peril.¹¹

Sometimes characters are allowed to stand aside until the time comes for them to take part again in the action. Dorias ends her monologue in *Eun.* 628 and remains silent during Phaedria's monologue and his dialogue with Pythias until 656, when her query shows that she has been an interested spectator. In the *Adelphoe*, Demea ends his conversation with Syrus in 888 and engages in talk with Geta and later with Aeschinus; meanwhile Syrus stands by, ready in 916 to carry out Demea's order.¹²

⁹ Compare also *Aul.* 475 ff.; *Asin.* 590 ff.; *Bac.* 842 ff.; *Capt.* 788 ff.; *Men.* 110 ff., 466 ff.; *Most.* 431 ff., 690 ff., 1064 ff.; *Persa* 81 ff.; *Truc.* 95 ff.; *And.* 236 ff., 338 ff.; *Eun.* 232 ff., 292 ff.; *Phorm.* 179 ff., 841 ff.; *Ad.* 299 ff.; *Peric.* 176 ff.; *Epitrep.* 165 ff.

¹⁰ Note *Merc.* 477, where Eutychus declares that, standing in the doorway, he has overheard the conversation between Demipho and Charinus. Compare *Hec.* 607. Leo (*Monolog* 74 f.) is perhaps inclined to underestimate the value of this device to the playwright.

¹¹ Compare also *Bac.* 612 ff.; *Cas.* 621 ff., 875 ff., 937 ff.; *Men.* 351 ff.; *Rud.* 615 ff.; *Eun.* 549 ff.; *Samia* 67 ff., 296 ff.; *Peric.* 62 ff.

¹² Compare *Stich.* 436 ff. (see 458); *Most.* 562 ff., 683 ff. In *Epitrep.* 6 Smicrines is asked to act as judge in the dispute between Davus and Syrus; he has apparently

Persons on the stage often see at a distance an entering character, yet do not hear his words as he approaches. This is the case in *Eun.* 834 ff.; Chaerea is seen approaching by Thais and her maids, soliloquizes (840-47), and finally sees Thais before her house. Pleusicles is seen coming by Pyrgopolinices in *Miles* 1281; his monologue (1284-89) evidently is not meant to reach the ears of the *miles*, whom he sees only in 1290. The entrance of Harpax (*Pseud.* 1101 ff.) is observed by Simo and Ballio; before the latter addresses him, Harpax delivers his monologue, much of which is not to be overheard by the *leno*. In the *Truculentus*, Cuamus is seen in the distance by Stratophanes (548), delivers a long monody (551-74), and only at its end addresses Phronesium (577). The entrance of the *senex* (*Men.* 753 ff.) is very much like this, and similar cases are plentiful;¹³ the monologue of the entering character, perhaps, relieves the awkwardness of the long walk across the stage.

Most significant for our immediate purpose are the passages in which the entrance is not announced and those already upon the stage do not seem aware of the presence of the entering character during his monologue. In *Most.* 348 Tranio enters, delivers the conventional monologue of the *servus currens*, and is seen only in 363 by the group of revellers. With this may be compared *Phorm.* 591 ff.; Geta's entrance-monologue is not overheard by Demipho and Chremes, whom he espies in 600. (Contrast *Curc.* 274 ff.) In *Epid.* 337 Epidicus enters with a bag of gold, speaks a monologue, and only at its end (344) does he see Stratippocles and Chaeribulus, who have not noticed his entrance. In *Truc.* 482 Stratophanes enters with an introductory monologue (482-98) at the conclusion of which Astaphium sees him. During Toxilus's instructions to Paegnium (*Persa* 183-200) Sophoclidisca remains silent, neither observing nor overhearing the intervening action. Amphitruo, struck down by lightning, is perforce a silent and unobserving actor until resuscitated by Bromia at the end of her monologue (*Amph.* 1053-71).

Perhaps the monody was felt to be somewhat artificial; at any rate it is by no means unusual for a monody to be sung without being overheard by the persons upon the stage. Nicobulus enters in *Bac.* 1087 at the end of Philoxenus's monody and begins a long narrative monody (1087-1103); he is seen at its end by Philoxenus. (Compare *Persa* 7 ff.)

been present upon the stage as silent actor during the preceding six lines (see *Leo Hermes* XLIII [1908] 129).

¹³ E. g., *Bac.* 640 ff.; *Cas.* 217 ff.; *Curc.* 679 ff.; *Men.* 571 ff.; *Merc.* 335 ff.; *Miles* 874 ff.; *Most.* 1122 ff.; *Persa* 470 ff.; *Trin.* 843 ff.; *Georg.* 35 ff.

In the *Persa* 778 the *convivium* is in progress as Dordalus enters with his monody (778-87); he sees the revellers in 787 and is seen by them in 790. During Alcumena's monody (*Amph.* 633-53) Amphitruo and his train of slaves approach the house from the harbor; she sees them in 660 and is seen in 664. Messenio sings a monody on the duty of a slave (*Men.* 966-89); he is not seen by Menaechmus I, who has just ended his monologue and stands near the door of his house. In 990 the *senex* enters with his slaves, and in 1001 Messenio turns to see what is going on.

In *Merc.* 842 ff. Charinus's monologue is followed by Eutychus's monody; then monologues alternate until 864, when the friends discover one another's presence.¹⁴ In *Poen.* 1280 Antamoenides enters with a monologue (1280-91), sees Anterastylis and her father in 1296, and approaches her in 1305. Phidippa enters with a monody (*Epid.* 526-32) at the end of which she is seen by Periphanes, who does not immediately disclose his presence. In *Cist.* 671 Halisca enters to search for the casket. She sings a monody (671-94) at the end of which her presence is observed by Lampadio; continuing her monody (698-704) she is accosted by Phanostrata, as she is about to reenter the house.

We have seen that through the introduction of a passage of varying length the stage has been filled during the interval between the exit and reentrance of a character. The content of the intervening passage has varied greatly: it may be directly relevant to the action, introducing a character or otherwise advancing the action as the plot may require, before the return of the absent character; or, again, a minor plot may be taken up in the interval; finally, the action may be sustained by a scene in which the comic element predominates, or relevance to the action may be entirely lacking in the intercalated passage.

Further than this, instead of making his exit, the character may be retained upon the stage, to interlard with his comment the monologue (monody) of an entering character; or the entrance of a character at a distance may be observed by those on the stage, while his words escape them; finally, with complete lack of realism, the character or char-

¹⁴ Compare *Stich.* 58 ff. Somewhat similar is the part taken by Abrotonon (*Epilep.* 213 ff.). She enters in 213, carrying on joint monologues with Onesimus (who entered in 202), until Syrisus comes upon the stage in 225. During his dialogue with Onesimus (225-47) she is silent, although, judging from 224 f. and the readiness of Onesimus's reply to her question in 249, the latter has been aware of her presence since 224.

acters of the preceding scene may stand silently by until the entering actor finishes his speech and approaches those already upon the stage.

In all these passages the action has been continuous; it is not unreasonable to suppose, therefore, that, if we find precisely the same technique in scene-complexes which modern theory regards as interrupted by a vacant stage marking the end of an act, this vacant stage does not indicate an essential pause, but merely a momentary interval without any relation to act-division.

CHAPTER III

"VACANT STAGES" WHICH ARE ADMITTED TO INDICATE NO ESSENTIAL PAUSE

Next in logical order we should consider the features of technique described in the preceding chapter as they occur in passages in which the stage is left unoccupied. Momentarily, however, I digress for the purpose of making it quite clear that vacant stages are not always significant of real, essential pauses in the action; this chapter, accordingly, will introduce the study of the vacant stage by consideration of certain groups of passages wherein, quite apart from our present study of technique, it is generally admitted that the vacant stage does not, in all probability, break the action.

1

Among the sure indications of the immediate succession of scenes is the announcement of the entering character; we are here concerned only with cases where such an announcement is made by a retiring character, as for example in *Eun.* 918 ff., where Pythias's words: *Virum bonum eccum Parmenonem incedere uideo* are followed by her exit and the coming of Parmeno. (Compare *And.* 226; *Epitrep.* 453 f., 486.)

At *Amph.* 983 the command of Juppiter (976 ff.; note also 880 f.) is equivalent to an announcement of Mercurius's coming. This Leo noted (*Monolog* 51): "Es braucht kaum besonders bemerkt zu werden, dass das Leerwerden der Bühne nicht immer eine Pause in der Handlung bedeutet Auftretende können unmittelbar vorher angekündigt werden (wie *Rud.* 906 vgl. 897, *Amph.* 984)." The fact that Leo is later inclined (*ibid.* 61) to place a *Schnittpunkt* at *Amph.* 983 does not destroy the validity of his previous assertion.¹ (See also Legrand *Daos* 469.)

¹ This and other apparent inconsistencies in Leo's study of act-division in Roman comedy are presumably to be attributed to the fact that his interest lay chiefly in the study of the Greek originals through the Latin plays (*Monolog* 46, 87). In several instances this has caused slight confusion in his treatment of act-division in the Latin plays (see above p. 14 n. 34), in regard to which he has not stated his views: nowhere in his treatment of the subject does he definitely and explicitly commit himself to a theory of conscious act-division in Roman comedy. The meaning of *merê* on the Roman stage he did not choose to make clear; his statements are so guarded that we may not decide whether these *merê* mark conscious act-division in the plays of Plautus and Terence (as is implied in *Pl. Forsch.*² 227 n. 3 *fin.* and elsewhere; yet see *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 125), or were simply survivals of Greek usage, marking chapters in

Ampelisca, in *Rud.* 450 ff., announces the coming of Labrax and Charmides (Leo *Monolog* 54 n. 4); although they were then *procul in litore* there can be no longer delay, in view of this announcement, before their entrance (485).² Similarly, at *Rud.* 184, as Legrand states (*Daos* 483), "Palaestra et Ampélisca sont annoncées de telle sorte par Scéparnion, aux vers 162 et suiv., qu'une pause entre 184 et 185 est peu vraisemblable." (Leo [*Monolog* 54] finds the end of an act at this point.) At *Rud.* 906, as Leo observes (*ibid.* 51, 54 n. 5), the entrance of Gripus is announced in Daemones's monologue, which has as its sole function the linking of two parts of the plot. The essential crudeness of this technique accounts for the feeble motivation of Daemones's entrance and exit. To this Leo (*ibid.* 54 n. 5) compares *Aul.* 696. Here Lyconides, about to leave the stage, reflects on the absence of Strobilus: *I, iam sequar te, mea mater, sed seruum meum Strobilum miror ubi sit, quem ego me iusseram hic opperiri.* As his exit is followed by Strobilus's entrance, the words of Lyconides may very well be taken as the announcement of Strobilus's coming. This is recognized by Legrand (*Daos* 470): "Les paroles de Lyconidès, aux vers 696 et suiv., annoncent effectivement la réapparition de Strobile."

In *Eun.* 500 ff. Thais's instructions to Pythias prepare for Chremes's entrance in 507 and preclude the possibility of a pause at that point. (See Leo *Monolog* 57 n. 6.) At *Hec.* 280 the preceding monologue of Sostrata, ending with the words: *Filium multimodis iam expecto ut redeat domum*, serves to introduce Pamphilus, who enters with Parmeno in the following scene, and, as in the passages previously quoted, preserves the continuity of the action. (Leo [*Monolog* 58] marks an *Einschnitt* at this point.) Similarly, in *Merc.* 224 the arrival of Demipho is announced by Acanthio (219, 223 f.); in view of this a pause seems quite improbable. (Leo [*Monolog* 52] ends the act here.) In much the same way, the words of Ballio (*Pseud.* 903 f.) announce the coming of Pseudolus (see Legrand *Daos* 477): *Nunc ibo intro atque edicam familiaribus profecto nequis quic-*

the action which were practically without meaning for the Latin playwright. (See Flickinger *Class. Phil.* VII [1912] 27 f.; Michaut *Sur les tréaux latins* 191 ff.; Legrand *Daos* 489 f.)

In the following pages I have been careful to cite, for the convenience of the reader, Leo's view on the passage under discussion; to Legrand's *Daos* I have referred less often, inasmuch as my discussion of the time-element (see above pp. 19 ff.) relieves me of the necessity of considering in detail many of his comments.

² This announcement also operates to render the action continuous at 457, the point of Ampelisca's exit and Sceparnio's reentrance.

quam credat Pseudolo. This would seem to forbid a pause. (Leo [*Monolog* 60] ends the *meros* at 904.)

2

With the scenes which are linked together by the announcement of an entering character fall those passages in which reference is made to the entering character by the retiring one.³ This is well illustrated in *Cist.* 149 f.; Auxilium enters with the words: *Utrumque haec, et multiloqua et multibiba, est anus: satin[e] uix reliquit deo quod loqueretur loci?* The manner of reference to the *lena* is sufficient to establish the close relation between the scenes and to indicate the continuity of the action. Similarly, in *Miles* 78 a pause is improbable because of the reference to Pyrgopolinices in 88 f.: *Illest miles meus erus qui hinc ad forum abiit*. (See Legrand *Daos* 482.) In *Curc.* 462 the close relation between the two scenes is similarly emphasized: *Edepol nugatorem lepidum lepide hunc noctust Phaedromus*. Compare also *Peric.* 7 f., τῆς παιδὸς ἦν νῦν εἶδере ὑμεῖς;⁴ Alexis 108 K., ὁ μὲν οὖν ἐμὸς υἱὸς, οἷον ὑμεῖς ἀπρίως εἶδετε,

³ See Leo *Hermes* XLIII (1908) 140 and n. 4.

⁴ The occurrence of internal prologues in New Comedy can hardly be taken as an indication of essential pause in the action. Three of the passages in question (*Cist.* 149 ff.; *Miles* 79 ff.; *Peric.* 1 ff.) are joined so closely with the preceding scene that the vacant stage before the prologue cannot be significant of a real pause in the action. At the end of the monologue of Ignoratio (*Peric.* 51) there is no indication of continuity of action; at *Cist.* 202, the end of the speech of Auxilium, there is also no indication of continuity of action; but the monologue of Palaestrio ends with the announcement of Periplecomenus's entrance and so is closely joined with both preceding and following scenes. In none of the other extant plays in which this device is used is the context sufficiently well preserved to aid us in the determination of this point. (As Kauer suggests [*Berl. phil. Woch.* XXVII (1907) 1663], the fact that Ἡρώς is third in the list of dramatis personae of the *Heros* probably indicates that the [missing] prologue followed the first scene of this play [see also Leo *Hermes* XLIII (1908) 125 ff.; Wilamowitz *N. Jhb.* XXI (1908) 40 f.; Körte *Men.*² xvi]; it is, on the whole, likely that the exposition of the *Phasma* was developed in this way [Leo *Hermes* XLIII (1908) 127 and n. 3]. The speech of Τύχη [*Papiri greci e latini* II (1913) no. 126; see *ibid.* p. 29] is presumably an example of this type; as far as we can ascertain, it is not joined to the following scene. Note also the internal prologue preserved in Alexis 108 K. On this type of expository scene in general, see Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 213 ff., 235; *Monolog* 30 n. 3; Frantz *op. cit.* 44.) Mercurius's monologue (*Amph.* 463 ff.) is closely related to the internal prologue (see Leo *Pl. Forsch.*² 222 f.; on the further extension of this technique, *ibid.* 215 n. 1); in this case, also, there is provision for continuous action; with this should be considered *Amph.* 861 ff. (see below p. 62) and 983 ff., where the continuity of action is clearly marked (see above p. 47). Again, the prologue at the beginning of the play is joined quite frequently with the opening scene (*Amphitruo*, *Aulularia*, *Mercator*, *Rudens*, *Trinummus*, and

τοιούτος γέγονεν; and possibly τοῦδε τοῦ φιλαργύρου in the new fragment published in *Papiri greci e Latini (PSI)* II (1913) no. 126, 4 (see *ibid.* p. 29).

3

In many passages rapid action is essential for the dramatic effect, as Leo observes (*Monolog* 51), citing *Men.* 1049 as an instance where for this reason a pause is quite improbable. (See also Legrand *Daos* 476.) Messenio has left Menaechmus I (1038), promising to return with his chattels and the purse which had been entrusted to his keeping. Menaechmus I, sorely puzzled by this new turn of events, ends the scene with a monologue and enters Erotium's house, resolved to effect a reconciliation with her. Thus the stage is left free and Messenio reenters with his proper master, endeavoring to recall to Menaechmus II the services which he had rendered Menaechmus I. The gain in dramatic effect through the rapid succession of these scenes is apparent.

In *Capt.* 515 Hegio enters the house with Aristophontes, who desires to meet his friend Philocrates. Instantly Tyndarus, seeing Aristophontes enter, realizes that he can hardly hope to impersonate Philocrates longer, bursts from the house, makes clear his plight to the audience, and turns to face the entering Hegio. Again it is clear that no interval may intervene between the exit of Hegio and the entrance of Tyndarus.

On *Ad.* 787 Dziatzko-Kauer (ed. 1903) notes: "Die Bühne wird zwar leer, doch nur für einen Augenblick." (See Legrand *Daos* 469.) In 782 Demea rushes into the house in search of Ctesipho. The brief interval before his reentrance (783-88) is filled by Syrus, who withdraws with amused comment on Demea's rôle as unwelcome guest, and by Micio, who enters to share honors with Demea in the dénouement. The need for the rapid succession of events is so clear that Leo has omitted

possibly *Captivi*—see Lindsay [ed. 1900] on 252); in the *Pseudolus* and *Truculentus*, as also in the *Vidularia*, the fragmentary condition of the prologue leaves the question open, while in the *Asinaria*, *Casina*, and *Menaechmi* we have the same state of affairs at the end of the prologue as in the *Pericliomene* and *Cistellaria*. (The dissociated prologue developed by Terence need not enter into the discussion.) Thus in every instance where the prologue is spoken by a character in the play there are clear indications of continuous action, as also in at least three of the cases (*Aulularia*, *Rudens*, *Trinummus*) where a person unrelated to the argument (as in the *Pericliomene* and *Cistellaria*) delivers the prologue. With these facts before us, it is clear that the position of the internal prologue affords no valid argument for conscious act-division in the plays of Plautus.

the passage from his list of the vacant stages in the *Adelphoe* (*Monolog* 57 f.).

At *Aul.* 623 Strobilus enters the temple of Fides in search of the pot of gold; Euclio's entrance must follow immediately, for the success of the action depends in large measure upon the rapidity with which it is executed. Similarly, Strobilus is dragged forthwith from the temple in 628, protesting his innocence. That he had hardly gone within when Euclio seized him, is apparent, too, from the fact that he had failed to discover the treasure.

At *Capt.* 908, as Lindsay notes (ed. [1900] 323), the stage is vacant only for a moment—the clatter of dishes within, as Lindsay surmises, may tell the audience of the devastation wrought by Ergasilus. Thereupon the *puer* enters to describe the work of the parasite within.

A pause is likewise improbable at *Hec.* 515. Phidippus makes his exit (515); in 516, after Laches's short exit-monologue has intervened, Myrrhina enters. From her words it is apparent that Phidippus went at once to his daughter, so that his exit should precede the entrance of Myrrhina by but a short space of time (see 522). Legrand (*Daos* 475), following this course of reasoning, declares that a pause is not permissible at 515; Leo (*Monolog* 58) considers an *Einschnitt* improbable at this point.

At *Cist.* 652 the exit of Melaenis and Halisca leaves the stage free for Lampadio's essential scene with Phanostrata; yet Halisca's reentrance in search of the casket can hardly be long postponed—see Leo *Monolog* 56: "[*Cist.*] 652 kann unmittelbar anschliessen." The ejection of Pyrgopolinices from the house of Periplecomenus (*Miles* 1394) should follow immediately upon the monologue of the *puer* (1388-93), which describes the preparations for the reception of the *miles*, ending with remark on the uproar within. Leo allows no pause here (*Monolog* 60).

In this chapter we have considered certain features of the technique of Roman comedy which indicate that the vacant stage is not always significant of a real, essential pause in the action: the announcement of the entering character by a retiring actor, a common feature of continuous action, has been found to link together passages in which the stage is left vacant for the moment; similarly, the entering character may refer to the person who has retired at the end of the preceding scene, in such a way as to make a pause between scenes quite improbable; finally, continuity of action may be necessary for dramatic effect. In

considering these passages we have digressed somewhat from our study of scene-complexes; to this we now return. There can now be nothing surprising in the possibility that other apparent vacant stages are only apparent and not significant of essential pauses in the action.

CHAPTER IV

THE TECHNIQUE OF ACTION ENVIRONING "VACANT STAGES" WHICH ARE COMMONLY SUPPOSED TO MARK AN ESSENTIAL PAUSE

The passage intervening between the exit and reentrance of a character (or characters) has received detailed attention in the second chapter (pp. 35 ff.), as a prominent feature in the technique of continuous action. It now becomes necessary to study this scene-complex in passages where the stage is left vacant, comparing these passages one with another and with those already discussed. In order to facilitate such comparison we shall group these scene-sequences as in the second chapter.

1

During the absence of the retiring character the action is sustained without appreciably increasing the spectator's knowledge of the plot. In the second chapter I considered first those situations in which the brief absence of a character serves *only* to bring out a trait in his character (p. 35). Such an absence is usually covered by a monologue delivered by a character left on the stage; a vacant stage is quite uncommon in this situation. Yet at *Hauton* 168 ff. we seem to have a case of this technique. Chremes goes to remind his neighbor Phania of his dinner engagement and, returning, says (171 f.): *Nil opus fuit monitore: iam dudum domi praesto apud me esse aiunt. egomet conuiuias moror*. These lines have been taken to indicate that the original of Menander had a XOPOT at this point.¹ It is admitted, however, that Terence employed no incidental chorus, and from a comparison of this passage with Chremes's similar exit at 502 Köhler (*op. cit.* 6 n. 1, 16 n. 3) seems justified in his assertion that Terence, at least, intended in this way to illustrate the officiousness of Chremes. In each case Chremes hurries from the stage on an errand which is not even remotely connected with the plot. That the dramatist wished in this way to bring out forcefully Chremes's overweening interest in his neighbor's affairs, is clearly demonstrated by Menedemus's monologue (502-507); this is a stop-gap, pure and simple, yet it fills an interval which, from the point of view of plot-development, need not exist; in itself it contributes nothing to the plot save in emphasizing, with comic irony, Chremes's most prominent characteristic (see Siess's characterization of Chremes: *Wien*.

¹ Flickinger *Class. Phil.* VII (1912) 24 ff.; Skutsch *Hermes* XLVII (1912) 141 ff.

Stud. XXVIII [1906] 249). The brevity of this monologue serves to measure the interval at 170; a pause of more than momentary duration would in either instance deprive the incident of all effect from the point of view of character treatment. Again, in so far as we may judge, the XOPOT of the Greek plays does not cover the brief absence of a character from the stage, but marks the end of a chapter in the action. To end such a chapter at 502 would destroy the unity of a scene which properly ends at 511; a break in the action is quite as unlikely at 170, for this scene is surely a unit ending at 174. It is significant that neither Leo (*Monolog* 58) nor Legrand (*Daos* 475)—writing, of course, before the possibility of a XOPOT pause at 170 had been suggested—felt that the unity of this scene should be broken by ending the act at 170.²

In the passages wherein the action is continuous a monologue on the situation frequently covers the absence of the retiring character, spoken in general by one who remains on the stage for the coming action (see pp. 36 f. above). In *Hauton* 996 ff., however, Syrus's monologue on the situation ends with his exit, as he perceives the *senex* reentering; this announcement of Chremes's entrance assures us that there is no break in the action. Geta's monologue in *Phorm.* 778 ff. ends with no such announcement, yet that the vacant stage here denotes a real pause, is quite improbable: Demipho enters the house for Nausistrata in 777 and reappears with her in 784; the interval is covered by Geta's monologue. [At *Cas.* 514 the situation is quite the same. Lysidamus enters Alcesimus's house in 503, and Chalinus covers the interval of his absence by a monologue (504-14), at the end of which the two *senes* appear upon the stage. (In neither of these two places does Legrand end an act [*Daos* 476 f., 472]; Leo marks an *Einschnitt* at *Cas.* 514 [*Monolog* 54], but considers [*ibid.* 58] that the action is continuous at *Phorm.* 783.) At *Merc.* 788 Syra leaves the stage to summon Dorippa's father; Dorippa enters the house (792) and Lysimachus, left alone, delivers a monologue on his predicament, bids his wife send slaves to clear away the *vasa*, and departs for the forum (802). In 803 Syra returns; her errand, covered by Lysimachus's monologue, links the scenes together, as Leo recognized (*Monolog* 52 n. 2). Similarly, the soliloquy of Cappadox (*Curc.* 527-32) provides for the meeting of Therapontigonus and

² While we are not immediately concerned with the technique of the Greek original, it may not be amiss to call attention to the fact that this "characterizing exit" seems peculiarly Menandrian (see above p. 35 n. 1). Is it likely that Menander interrupted the unity of character treatment by a XOPOT at 170?

Lyco, who left the stage in 526 and returns in 533. At *Rud.* 1183 Gripus alone is left upon the stage as the other characters enter the house with Daemones. His monologue on the situation, reminiscent of Chalinus's plaint (*Cas.* 424-36), covers the scene within; its similarity to the passages outlined in this paragraph renders it probable that no pause intervenes before Daemones's reentrance (1191). (Leo ends the *meros* at 1190 [*Monolog* 54].)

In *Eun.* 196 Phaedria and Parmeno either draw to one side or leave the stage; the following monologue of Thais, in which she assures the spectators of the sincerity of her motives, is certainly not meant to be overheard by either master or slave. Whether the stage is unoccupied or not—and the exit of Phaedria and Parmeno is not clearly indicated—there seems to be little probability of a pause at this point, for the action interrupted in 196 is resumed in 207 (it should be noted that 207 repeats 189); then, too, the final words of Thais anticipate the entrance of Virgo with Gnatho (232). (Leo [*Monolog* 57] indicates a pause at 206.)

In *Men.* 1038 Messenio leaves the stage; Menaechmus I ends the scene with a monologue (1039-49). In 1050 Messenio enters with his master, Menaechmus II; as we have seen (p. 50), continuity of action is necessary for dramatic effect. Earlier in the play (875) the *senex* leaves to get a physician; Menaechmus II ends the scene with a monologue (876-81) and flees. In 882 the *senex* returns with the *medicus*. From the former's words it would seem that his arrival has been considerably delayed; this emphasis on the time passed in waiting is due in large measure to the desire to develop the comic character of the *medicus* (Legrand *Daos* 128). It is clear that rapidity of action heightens the effect of these scenes, and the similarity to the other passages cited renders a pause improbable after Menaechmus's exit. (Leo [*Monolog* 59 n. 4] ends the *meros* at 881.)

In *Phormio* 310 ff. Geta makes his exit, returning in 315, deep in conversation with Phormio. Demipho, in his exit-monologue (311-14), declares his intention of entering his house to pay his respects to the Penates, and goes on to say that he will then leave for the forum, thus preparing the audience for his reentrance from the forum with his *advocati* (348). His final words (313 f.: *Amicos aduocabo ut ne inparatus sim, si ueniat Phormio*) are equivalent to an announcement of Phormio; this, taken together with the technique of the stop-gap monologue, indicates that the action was probably continuous. (Leo

[*Monolog* 58] ends the *meros* at this point.) The crudeness of the workmanship, displayed in the brief mention of the forum trip and the somewhat abrupt entrance of Geta, suggests a condensation of the Greek original.

In these passages a monologue on the situation has ended the scene and linked it with the following one, covering the interval between the exit and reentrance of a character; a dialogue may likewise provide for continuity of action (see p. 37 above). In *Rud.* 1224 Trachalio leaves to find Plesidippus; the interval of his absence is covered by Daemones's dialogue with Gripus, padded out with moralizing. That the action is here continuous is argued by Leo (*Monolog* 54 n. 6): "Sie [Scene 1265-80] entspricht in ihrem Bau der Scene 1210-1226 und darf von dieser nicht getrennt werden." This is hardly to be questioned, yet to my mind Trachalio's trip also serves to link these scenes together, and the padding-out of the dialogue between Gripus and his master is a final and conclusive argument for the continuity of action in this passage. Very similar is the situation in *Miles* 935 ff., where Palaestrio's absence is covered by the inconsequent conversation of Periplecomenus with Acroteleutium; the linking of these scenes would seem to forbid a pause. (Leo [*Monolog* 60] ends the *meros* at 946.) In *Men.* 521 Peniculus leaves to inform the *matrona* of her husband's misdeeds. Menaechmus II's scene with Erotium's maid follows Peniculus's exit; it is quite unessential, and, as Leo interprets the action (*Monolog* 59 n. 4), the vacant stage at Menaechmus's exit (558) cannot mark a real pause, for the scene with the *ancilla* merely covers Peniculus's absence.

In *Curc.* 462 ff. the irrelevant speech of the *choragus* fills the gap left by Curculio's absence from the stage. With this passage, in which the action is indubitably continuous, Leo classes several scenes which, though not closely linked with the preceding or following action, cover in similar fashion the absence of characters from the stage without contributing to the development of the plot, and in consequence of this padding affirms that in this group continuity of action is undeniable, considering such scenes intermezzos between two *merê* (*Monolog* 61 f.; compare *ibid.* 50 n. 6, 59; *Ges. d. röm. Lit.* I 147 and n., 115 and n.; Legrand *Daos* 426 n. 2). In *Capt.* 460 Hegio leaves to send Philocrates to Elis, returning in 498 with an account of his movements. Meanwhile, Ergasilus enters and describes in detail his fruitless quest for a meal, in a monologue which is quite unessential. Again, in 908, Ergasilus, given *carte blanche* in Hegio's kitchen, proceeds to his work within; the *puer*

hurries out and tells of the ruin wrought by the parasite. This speech, together with Ergasilus's exit-monologue, fills a gap between the exit and reentrance of Hegio and, like Ergasilus's long monologue, has no bearing on the plot.

In the loosely woven plot of the *Stichus*, Stephanium's brief monologue (673-83) fills the interval in which Stichus and Sagarinus prepare for the *convivium*; here Leo considers that the action is continuous (*Monolog* 56). Anthrax's brief soliloquy (*Aul.* 398-405) very evidently is inserted to maintain the continuity of the action. In 397 Euclio bursts into his house; in 406 the cooks rush forth. That continuity is demanded by the rapidity of the action is so manifest that the need of Anthrax's leisurely, unessential monologue is hardly apparent (Leo *Monolog* 56 f.).

2

In the following scene-complexes, also, an interval separates the exit and reentrance of a character (or characters); before his return to the stage the plot requires that an appreciable advance be made in the action.

This may be accomplished, as we have seen (pp. 38 f.), by dramatic presentation in the course of a dialogue. In *Curc.* 591-609 the basis for the recognition of Planesium is established in Curculio's monologue and the following conversation; during this interval the stage is, in all probability, occupied by Therapontigonus, as silent actor (see below p. 69). The interval between Halisca's exit and reentrance (*Cist.* 652-71) affords room for a similar recognition; the action here is probably continuous, for the situation requires the speedy return of Halisca (see p. 51). In *Epid.* 606 Periphanes leaves the stage in search of Epidicus; the latter, entering in 610, sketches the situation confronting him. Before Periphanes's return the complication is resolved by the recognition of Telestis as Stratippocles's sister. The situation is clearly analogous to that of the *Curculio* and the *Cistellaria*. At the end of the scene (665) neither Leo (*Monolog* 61) nor Legrand (*Daos* 473) marks a pause (see below p. 61): the stage is set and all preparations made for the reception of Periphanes; Epidicus's exit serves merely to render more effective the entrance of the *senes* and his own reentrance. At the beginning of the scene—where Leo's *meros* ends (*Monolog* 61)—we may consider the parting words of Periphanes equivalent to an announcement of Epidicus's entrance (605 f. : *Ego relictis rebus Epidicum operam quaerendo dabo. si inuenio, exitiabilem ego illi faciam hunc ut fiat diem*);

certainly it directs the spectator's attention to Epidicus's predicament and thus strengthens the argument that the technique here exemplified is characteristic of continuous action.

In *Capt.* 194 Hegio's exit is poorly motivated; his absence from the stage serves only to bring forward the captives and permit them to rehearse the intrigue already outlined in the prologue. It is not clear that the stage is vacant at 194; as Lindsay suggests (ed. [1900] on 252) the captives may have been present since the prologue. However that may be—the case is quite indeterminate—their conversation prepares for the following scenes with Hegio; this fact, taken together with the inadequate motivation of Hegio's exit, is sufficient indication of the absence of a pause at 194. (See Leo *Monolog* 59.)

The absence of Ballio from the stage (*Pseud.* 904-56) permits the introduction of Simia and Pseudolus, and the launching of the intrigue against the *leno*. Again, the final words of Ballio (903 f.) announce Pseudolus's entrance (Legrand *Daos* 477; see above pp. 48 f.); the continuity of action at 904 is accordingly assured.³ (Leo [*Monolog* 60] ends the *meros* here.)

At *Men.* 225 Cylindrus hurries away to the market; in his absence Menaechmus II and Messenio are introduced in their dialogue. This prepares for the confusion arising upon Cylindrus's return; furthermore, to place a pause at 225 (as Leo does, *Monolog* 59 n. 4) detracts somewhat from the plausibility of the action, which as at 1049, is aided by the rapid succession of events, as the poet realized in inserting several indications of haste: *Propera modo* (215); *Redi cito* (225).

Again, in *Aul.* 119 Euclio's return is hastened by fear for his treasure. In his absence (120-78) preparation is made for the following scene in Eunomia's conversation with Megadorus. (Leo [*Monolog* 56 f.]

³ Further than this, the padded scene-ending (891-904) provides for a change of rôles (Prescott *Harv. Stud.* XXI [1910] 44), and thus affords another argument against a pause at 904 (*ibid.* 36 n. 3). This is one of a number of cases in which the structure shows signs of accommodation to the distribution of rôles among a limited number of actors; the playwright hampered by this condition must allow the player time for change of costume in the shift from one rôle to another, covering the interval by on-stage action or, if the action of the drama is not continuous, by the pause of an *entr'acte*. It has recently been demonstrated (*Harv. Stud. loc. cit.*) that several padded scenes in the plays of Plautus owe their existence to this demand upon the playwright; it follows that the action is continuous at these points (*Capt.* 921; *Miles* 1393; *Pseud.* 706, 904). Further study might reveal that in other places such provision was made for change of rôles: obviously, a pause in the action would make such provision unnecessary; but the discussion of the bearing of this condition upon vacant stages I must defer to another occasion.

marks an *Einschnitt* at 119.) At *Cas.* 854 the bridal party enters the house of Alcesimus; the entrance of the women and their disposition in convenient hiding-places prepare for the reentrance of Olympio (875) and render a pause improbable. (Leo [*ibid.* 54] ends the *meros* at 854).

In *Phorm.* 566 Geta leaves to consult Phormio; Demipho then enters with Chremes, to find whom he left the stage in 462; in their conversation the cause of Demipho's objection to his son's marriage is revealed. In 591 Geta reenters, announcing Phormio's readiness to aid Phaedria. Antipho's entrance is crowded in (606-608); he stands apart during the following scene. Thus Geta's absence is covered by the conversation of the two *senes*, wherein the plot is more clearly outlined. The technique is similar to that employed in the cases discussed above; accordingly, a pause is improbable at 566 (where Leo [*Monolog* 58] ends the *meros*).

At *Asin.* 827 Leo admits continuous action (*Monolog* 62). The presentation of the revellers covers the parasite's absence while giving information to Artemona, and at the same time prepares for the entrance of the latter (851). The situation is analogous at *Persa* 753, where the beginning of the *comissatio* covers the absence of Dordalus at the forum and prepares for his reentrance (778). (Leo, disregarding the similarity of these scenes, marks a pause at *Persa* 752 [*Monolog* 51].)

At *And.* 819 the final words of Davus direct the spectator's attention to Simo's share in the plot (819: *Sequar hos: me nolo in tempore hoc uideat senex*), and are perhaps equivalent to an announcement of the coming of the *senes* in the next scene. Chremes entered Simo's house in 789 to break the betrothal of his daughter; their conversation upon entering (820-41), covering Davus's stay within, leads up to the reentrance of the latter and the dénouement. Thus the preceding and following scenes are linked together and a pause is correspondingly improbable at 819. (Leo [*Monolog* 57] makes this an *Einschnitt*.)

As we have seen (p. 39), the entrance of a character is frequently sufficient preparation for the coming action; his unessential monologue does little more than introduce the speaker and cover the off-stage action. Thus, in the *Stichus*, Crocotium leaves the stage in 154, with instructions to return promptly with Gelasimus; she reenters in 196 to find him already before her mistress's house. Her search links the scenes together; his entrance is sufficient preparation for the following action.⁴

⁴ Neither Leo (*Monolog* 56) nor Legrand (*Daos* 483) marks a pause in the action at this point. Leo's interpretation of the action is (*Gött. Nachr.* [1902] 375 n.): "Die

The words of Cleostrata in *Cas.* 531 (*Hoc erat ecaster [id], quod me uir tanto opere orabat meus*), referring to Chalinus's report of the conversation which he had overheard, indicate the close connection between the scene and the preceding one which ended in Chalinus's exit (514). Her entrance prepares for the following scene with Alcesimus, and covers his stay within the house. Leo considers the action continuous (*Monolog* 54). At *Stichus* 649 Sagarinus comes upon the stage while Stichus is fetching the keg from within; the action is clearly continuous. (See Leo *Monolog* 56.) Euclio's stay within the temple of Fides (*Aul.* 587-607) is covered by Strobilus's monologue; the latter's entrance is, of course, essential for the following action. Here Leo comments (*Monolog* 57 n. 1): "Es ist leicht zu sehen dass 586 keinen Einschnitt macht." At *Bac.* 169 Leo admits the possibility of continuous action (*ibid.* 55 n. 1); here Pistoclerus enters the house with Lydus, reappearing upon the stage in 178; the interval is covered by the entrance-monologue of Chrysalus, the central figure in the following scenes. Again, at *Bac.* 384, Leo (*Monolog* 55) marks no pause. Here Lydus departs in search of Philoxenus, and the interval is covered by Mnesilochus's monody on his good fortune.

The *Mercator* furnishes several instances of this technique, where an entrance-monologue (dialogue) separates the exit and reentrance of a character and sets the stage, as it were, for the oncoming action. At 543 Lysimachus and Pasicompsa enter the house; Demipho then appears, with an inconsequent monologue; in 562 Lysimachus goes out from the house to find Demipho and enters into conversation with him. Clearly the vacant stage at 543 does not break the action (Leo *Monolog* 52 n. 2). Similarly the exit and reentrance of Dorippa are separated by Lysimachus's monologue (692-99) and here again Leo (*ibid.*) recognized

Bühne wird v. 154 nicht leer: Crocotium (v. 150) bleibt, weil der Parasit ankommt: v. 196." Kakridis objects to this view (*Barbara Plautina* [1904] 28 n. 66a) on the ground that Crocotium does not speak during Gelasimus's monologue. Consideration of similar cases of the silent actor (pp. 43 ff. above) will show that this objection lacks cogency. Furthermore, Kakridis is hardly justified in assuming that Crocotium's appearance from the house is delayed "ita ut in scaenam prodiret posteaquam Gelasimus prodierat." If we are to avoid a strained interpretation of the action we must consider with Leo that Crocotium is a silent actor from 155 to 196, or that she leaves the stage in 154 and returns from an ineffectual search for Gelasimus in 196. I have chosen the latter alternative, inasmuch as it appears to me the more natural one: her exit, motivated by Panegyris's order (150 ff.), and reentrance would be easily understood by the spectators. Contrast *Curc.* 591 ff. (see below p. 69). Certainly Leo's view is quite in accord with the technique employed elsewhere in Roman comedy.

the continuity of the action. At 956 the exit of Charinus and Eutychus is followed by the entrance of Demipho and Lysimachus; at the end of their entrance-dialogue Eutychus reenters (962) in search of his father; here, too, Leo (*ibid.* 52) admits that the action is continuous.

These examples in which the vacant stages, if compared with similar passages in which no vacant stage occurs (see above p. 39), assuredly do not mark real pauses in the action, are sufficient to establish the type; it remains to consider instances of this technique in which there is question among critics as to the continuity of the action.

At *Persa* 52 Leo ends the *meros* (*Monolog* 51); but Saturio's monologue fills the interval of Toxilus's absence, and Leo's own analysis of the action indicates the similarity of this scene to those just discussed and consequently argues against a pause at this point (*Pl. Forsch.*² 195): "Hier gibt das Sklavengespräch der ersten Scene die vollständige Einführung in die Handlung; aber die Handlung selbst beginnt unmittelbar danach. Der Monolog des Parasiten steht zwar noch dazwischen, doch er ist nur eine typische Einführung der Person, mit der dann gleich Toxilus die Intrige bespricht."

The comic dialogue of Chaeribulus and Stratippocles (*Epid.* 320-36) covers Epidicus's transaction within the house, and brings the *adulescentes* upon the stage for their scene with Epidicus. The padding of the dialogue strengthens the argument for continuity of action. (Leo's *Einschnitt* [*Monolog* 61] falls at this point.)

With *Epid.* 165 may be compared the situation at 665 of the same play, discussed above (p. 57). In each case the entrance of Apocides and Periphanes, preceded by a padded monologue delivered by Epidicus, covers the interval between Epidicus's poorly motivated exit and reentrance; both scenes are freely padded. At 165 Epidicus resolves to direct his attack against Periphanes; at 665 he is ready to submit proof of his innocence. The situation and technique are similar in these two passages; yet Leo ends the *meros* at 165, while at 665 he thinks the action is continuous (*Monolog* 61).

In *Phorm.* 152 Geta leaves for the harbor; in 177 he is seen by Phaedria and Antipho as he hurries back to report the arrival of their fathers. The intervening dialogue forms an excellent sequel to the expository scene between Geta and Davus; while it does not advance the action, it defines it more clearly. As in the other cases we have discussed, the technique indicates the improbability of a pause. (Leo [*Monolog* 58] ends the *meros* at 152.)

The entrance of Hanno, with his medley of Punic and Latin (*Poen.* 930-60), separates Milphio's exit from his reentrance with Agorastocles. Hanno's monologue merely introduces him, repeating the exposition of the prologue (104 ff.). The technique renders a pause improbable here: the necessary introduction of Hanno covers the equally necessary errand of Milphio within. (Leo [*Monolog* 56] ends the *meros* at this point.)

Hegio leaves the stage in *Capt.* 767 with Aristophontes, whose part in the plot is now completed; the absence of the *senex* (767-81) is covered by Ergasilus's monologue, with its hint of good news. As we have seen, a pause is improbable under these conditions. (Here Leo [*Monolog* 52] ends the *meros*.) At *Amph.* 860 the padded expository monologue of Juppiter separates the exit of Alcumena from her reentrance (882). It is clearly a stop-gap—compare the similar monologue of Mercurius (463 ff.)—serving incidentally to introduce the false Amphitruo; a pause is consequently improbable at this point, the end of Leo's *meros* (*Monolog* 61). At *Curc.* 215 Phaedromus and Palinurus leave the stage; Cappadox's entrance-monologue (216-22) introduces a new character and covers the interval of Phaedromus's absence (215-23). The drawing of the bars of the temple may serve as an announcement of Cappadox's entrance therefrom (Legrand *Daos* 472). The technique, at all events, is not different from that which we have found characteristic of continuous action. (Leo [*Monolog* 62] ends the *meros* at 215.)

In *Most.* 858 ff. Phaniscus sings his monody and engages in a heated colloquy with his fellow-slave. These scenes cover Theopropides's inspection of his neighbor's house, yet the sole essential feature of their content lies in the introduction of these slaves, whose part it is to free Theopropides from his illusion. It seems quite improbable, therefore, that there was a break in the action at 858. (Leo [*Monolog* 52] ends the act at this point.)

Nicobulus leaves in *Bac.* 1066 to pay the *miles* in the forum, promising a speedy return; Chrysalus ends the scene in 1075 and enters the house of Bacchis. Philoxenus's entrance prepares for the following action, but his monologue (1076-86) is unessential. In 1087 Nicobulus reenters; his trip to the forum has been covered by the two intervening monologues; Chrysalus's exit and Nicobulus's entrance are sufficient preparation for the coming scenes. (Here again Leo [*Monolog* 55] ends the *meros*.)

Similarly, in *Merc.* 816, Eutychus enters the house, to find Pasi-compsa within. Syra's monologue follows, as she hobbles across the

stage to the door (*Pl. Forsch.*² 119 ff.). Thereupon, Charinus enters and in his farewell song prepares for the following action, which begins with the reentrance of Eutychus (842). Thus the stay of Euclio within is covered by Syra's padded monologue and the entrance-monologue of Charinus—indications, as we have seen, that the action is continuous. (Leo [*Monolog* 52] ends the *meros* at 829.) At *Truc.* 698 Astaphium leads Stratulax within. Diniarchus's monody follows, separating Astaphium's exit from her reentrance. The padded content of this song does not advance the action; the technique renders a pause unlikely. (Leo [*ibid.* 59] notes a break in the action.)

The exit of Simo in *Pseud.* 1245 is separated from his reentrance by the monody of Pseudolus (1246-84). Simo's exit is inadequately motivated and his exit-monologue prepares for Pseudolus's entrance (1245: *Nunc ibo intro, argentum promam, Pseudolo insidias dabo*). Pseudolus's monologue, padded like that of Chrysalus (*Bac.* 924 ff.), is filled out by a dance. His entrance alone is essential to the coming scene; there need be no break in the action. (Leo [*Monolog* 60] ends the act at this point.)

At *Bac.* 525 Mnesilochus leaves the stage with his train of slaves, that he may inform his father of Chrysalus's trickery and restore the money to him. Before his reentrance in 530 Pistoclerus enters; his monologue is unessential, and his presence on the stage is sufficient preparation for the next scene. Accordingly we may consider the action continuous; the narration of the off-stage action, as in *Most.* 547 ff., takes the place of dramatic presentation and, as we have seen (pp. 39 f.) renders a pause between entrance and exit superfluous. (Leo [*Monolog* 55 n. 1] ends the *meros* here.)

Lycos's monologue (*Curc.* 371-83) intervenes between Curculio's exit and reentrance; it is very like that of Saturio (*Persa* 53 ff.), characterizing the person by describing the type which he represents; thus it prepares for the following scene by introducing a character who is to take part in it, while, on the other hand, it covers Curculio's absence within. The technique is in no wise different from that of the passages of this type wherein the action is continuous. (At 370 Leo [*Monolog* 62] marks a *Schnittpunkt*.)

In the group of passages just discussed the interval between the exit and reentrance of a character (or characters) has been occupied by an entrance-monologue (dialogue) which prepares for the coming action by presenting one or more of the characters in it, while at the same

time covering the absence of the retiring character. This type of scene-sequence has been traced in passages where the action is continuous; it is a fair inference, therefore, that the employment of this technique in passages where Leo and others end the acts, is an indication of continuity of action, so far as the Roman comedies are concerned.

Again, in a number of passages where the action is continuous (p. 39) the poet found it necessary that a character (or characters) withdraw from the scene during the interval between the exit and reentrance of another actor. At *Ad.* 510 Leo disregards the vacant stage;⁵ Hegio's entrance of Sostrata's house (506) affords opportunity for the exit of Demea, which necessarily precedes that of Hegio, bound to the forum on the same errand. In *Truc.* 433 Phronesium enters the house; during the padded exit-monologue of Diniarchus (434-47) she prepares within to take the part of *puerpera* in the following scene, while the stage is cleared by the exit of her lover. (Here Leo [*Monolog* 59] ends the *meros*.)

Demea rushes into the house in *Ad.* 782. During the interval of his stay within (783-89) Syrus withdraws and Micio enters, thus preparing for the following scene by clearing the stage and introducing another character. Continuity of action is so obviously necessary that Leo does not include 786 in his enumeration of vacant stages (*Monolog* 58; see above pp. 50 f.).

Thais enters the house with her maids in *Eun.* 810; in 817 she reappears, asking Pythias the reason for the confusion within. The interval is covered by the retreat of the *miles* with his forces; the stage is accordingly clear for the following action. Comparison with the passages discussed above renders a pause improbable. (Here Leo [*Monolog* 57] marks an *Einschnitt*.) At *Rudens* 592 technique and situation seem to require continuous action. The *leno*, informed by Sceparnio of the presence of the girls within the temple, hurries in (570); yet we do not hear of further activity on his part until 613. The stage is cleared by the exit of Sceparnio and Charmides; Daemones, recounting his dream, enters to take part in the following action; finally, Trachalio enters with his plea for help. Thus elaborate preparation is made for the following scenes while the *leno* tarries within; not until 706 is he dragged forth from the shrine, after the lyrics of Palaestra and Ampelisca have further delayed the action. This delay, already unnaturally

⁵ *Monolog* 58; compare Legrand *Daos* 468. Kauer's bracketing of 511-16 (Dziatzko-Kauer, ed. *Adelphoe* [1903] 175 f.) seems to me quite unjustified. I shall, however, discuss this in a later paper.

prolonged by the intervening scenes, affords a strong argument for continuity of action at 592, as it makes further protraction by a pause in the action unlikely. (At this point Leo [*Monolog* 54] ends the *meros*.)

Frequently the interval between the exit and reentrance of a character is filled by an account of precedent off-stage action. Thus, at *Miles* 1393, where Leo (*Monolog* 60) notes that the action is continuous, the *puer* tells of the preparation made to receive the *miles*, thus covering the latter's brief stay within (1388-93). In *Hec.* 510 Phidippus leaves the stage; in 516, after the exit-monologue of Laches, Myrrhina comes out from the house and in a brief monologue explains the situation within; Phidippus reappears in 522. As we have seen (p. 51), rapidity of action is necessary here for dramatic effect, and, indeed, is indicated in Myrrhina's monologue. (Compare also *Capt.* 516 ff.) In *Ad.* 609 Hegio and Micio enter the house of Sostrata; the monologue of Aeschinus follows (610-35), in which he recounts his conversation with Canthara; in 635 Micio reenters. Here Leo (*Monolog* 58 n. 2) considers that the monologue of Aeschinus links together the preceding and following scenes. At *Most.* 1041 Tranio's account of his movements since his exit fills the time spent by Theopropides within the house and renders a pause quite as unnecessary as in the *Adelphoe*. (Here Leo [*Monolog* 52] ends the *meros*.) Similarly, between *Men.* 441 and 463 Menaechmus II dines with Erotium; after Messenio's exit (446) the monologue of Peniculus, telling of his misadventures in the forum, covers the interval of Menaechmus's absence from the stage; comparison with the illustrations of similar technique given above, shows the improbability of a pause at 445. (At this point Leo [*Monolog* 59 n. 4] ends the act.)

In these scenes precedent off-stage action is detailed; yet in a number of instances where there is good reason to consider the action continuous, there is a close approach to the narration of coincident off-stage action (*Amph.* 1053 ff.; *Capt.* 909 ff.; compare also *Eun.* 1002 ff.; *Miles* 1388 ff.). Note particularly *Miles* 522 ff.; here the purpose of Periplecomenus's instructions to Philocomatium is, of course, to give the audience a glimpse of the simultaneous activity within. In this class we may put the monologue of Pardalisca (*Cas.* 759 ff.); from consideration of the analogous cases wherein the action is continuous, it becomes probable that no real pause separated Lysidamus's exit from Pardalisca's account of the confusion within, which covers his absence from the stage. (Leo [*Monolog* 54] ends the *meros* at 758.)

3

In the passage intervening between the exit and reentrance of a character (or characters) the action is advanced in a phase of the plot which has no organic connection with the withdrawal of the retiring character; thus the spectator's knowledge of the retiring actor's share in the plot is not increased during his absence.⁶

On the vacant stage at *Ad.* 354 Leo notes (*Monolog* 58 n. 1); "Geta läuft 354 um Hegio zu holen, 447 tritt er mit ihm auf; diese beiden Momente konnten durch Pause getrennt sein, sie sind aber durch die zwischentretende Scene verbunden." Thus Leo recognizes as a factor in the securing of continuous action, the type of scene-complex which we are now about to consider. Upon Geta's exit (354) Syrus enters, meets Demea, and reassures him as to Ctesipho's innocence; he leaves the stage in 434. Demea links this scene to the following by a transition-monologue, and upon Geta's return with Hegio the affairs of Aeschinus again come into prominence. Later in the play, at 516, Hegio leaves the stage in search of Micio. The interval of his absence is covered by the introduction of another phase of the plot: Ctesipho and Syrus enter, their conversation is broken by Demea's coming, and again Syrus reassures the *senex* as to his son's conduct; finally, after sending Demea

* An extension of this technique is to be observed in several passages where a scene intervenes between the exit of one of the *dramatis personae* and the entrance of another character who appears upon the stage in pursuance of the wishes of the retiring person. At *Bac.* 368, as we have seen (p. 27), the entrance of Lydus from Bacchis's house is necessarily deferred by the presence of Chrysalus upon the stage during the three preceding scenes. The latter upon his exit (367) announces his intention of seeking out Mnesilochus and telling him of the situation; Mnesilochus appears upon the stage in 385. The interval between his entrance and Chrysalus's exit is covered by the monologue of Lydus, who leaves the stage (384) in search of Philoxenus. (Leo [*Monolog* 55] ends the *meros* at 367, considering the action continuous at 385.) With this we may compare *Phorm.* 819 ff., where Leo does not mark a pause (*Monolog* 58). Here Demipho's exit with Chremes (819) is followed (in 841) by the entrance of Geta, ordered by Demipho to find Antipho. The interval is covered by the entrances of Antipho and Phormio, which prepare for the following scene (compare p. 39). Meanwhile, the off-stage action following the exit of Demipho brings Geta upon the stage, in quite the same fashion as Mnesilochus's entrance is linked with Chrysalus's exit. At *Merc.* 498 the technique is similar. Demipho's exit (468) is followed by a scene between Charinus and Eutychus (469-98) which covers Demipho's transaction at the harbor; in 499 Lysimachus, having acceded to Demipho's request, enters with Pasicompsa. (Leo [*Monolog* 52] ends his *meros* at 498.) The technique of these passages is clearly similar to that discussed in the text above, and indicates that the action was probably continuous.

away on a fruitless hunt for Micio, he enters the house (591). In 592 the effect of Syrus's foolery is increased by the prompt appearance of Micio, for whom Demea is vainly searching. Despite the similarity of this case to the one preceding, Leo marks a pause at 516, granting, however, that the action is continuous at 591 (*Monolog* 58).

At *Aul.* 681 the stage is left vacant by Strobilus's pursuit of Euclio; Lyconides enters with Eunomia, and the proposed marriage of Megadorus is again brought to the fore. Thus the absence of Strobilus is covered (681-701); Leo considers the action continuous (*Monolog* 57; see also Langen *Pl. Stud.* 108 f.). Again, at *Bac.* 572 the exit of Pistoclerus and Mnesilochus is followed by the entrance of parasite and slave, forecasting the *miles's* share in the plot. In 583 Pistoclerus is called forth from the house and rudely dismisses them. Thus in the interval between Mnesilochus's exit and reentrance (572-612) a different aspect of the plot is presented. Leo notes (*Monolog* 55 n. 1): "Ohne Pause anzuschliessen ist 573."

At *Hec.* 793 Bacchis enters Phidippus's house; Laches's exit-monologue (794-98) ends the scene. Thereupon Parmeno, entering in 799, delivers a monologue on his useless errand—a feature of the comic minor plot—at the end of which Bacchis reappears, to send him in search of Pamphilus. The technique is clearly similar to that employed in the cases discussed above. (Leo [*Monolog* 58] marks a pause at 798.) There is a similar interleaving of scenes at *Phorm.* 765, the end of Chremes's scene with Sophrona, in which he learns the identity of Phanium. His conversation with her (728-65) covers the interval of Demipho's absence at the forum, during which he pays Phormio. (Leo [*Monolog* 58] ends the *meros* at 765.)

At *Eun.* 538 Dorias leads away Chremes to the *miles's* house; in 539 Antipho enters, introducing himself and explaining his purpose in a monologue (539-48), at the end of which Chaerea, appearing from Thais's house, engages in conversation with him.⁷ After their departure Dorias returns, predicting that the *miles's* dinner party will soon end in disorder. Here again the interleaving of brief scenes from separate phases of the plot seems to indicate continuity of action. (Leo [*Monolog* 57] considers 538-614 a *meros*.)

At *Poen.* 449 the *leno* enters with Antamoenides. Again the minor plot covers a gap in the main plot: in 448 Agorastocles leaves for the

⁷ From Donatus's commentary (W. I 386 f.) we learn that the dialogue of Chaerea with Antipho replaces the monologue of Chaerea in the Greek original, presumably amplifying the latter considerably.

forum to summon his *advocati*, returning with them at the end of the scene between Lycus and Antamoenides. The interleaving of scenes again renders a pause improbable. (Leo [*Monolog* 56] considers this scene (449-503) a *meros*.) This is also the case in the *Asinaria*, where the padded dialogue of Cleareta and Philaenium (503-44) covers the absence of Leonida, Libanus, and the *mercator*.⁸ (Leo [*Monolog* 62] marks an *Einschnitt* at 503.)

In *Eun.* 288 Gnatho leaves the stage; Parmeno's monologue links this scene to the following one, in which Chaerea enters and demands Parmeno's assistance in his love-affair. Upon their exit in 390 Gnatho and Thraso enter and indulge in a padded conversation of familiar type, overheard by Parmeno. Here again the alternation of scenes from different phases of the plot renders a pause improbable at 390, (At this point Leo [*Monolog* 57] ends the *meros*.) At *Trin.* 614 Callicles hurries away to consult Megaronides; Stasimus ends the scene with a monologue and listens for some time to the following conversation of Lysiteles and Lesbonicus without taking part in it. (At their exit [728] Leo ends the *meros* [*Monolog* 52].) Megaronides's entrance with Callicles is foreshadowed in his exit at 614, and links this scene with the precedent action, so that a pause is improbable at 728.

Syrus, promising a speedy return with the *obsonium*, leaves the stage in *Ad.* 287; in 364 he reenters, after the brief entrance-monologue of Demea (355-64). The interval is covered by the dialogue of Sostrata and Canthara, and their conversation with Geta. Again the interleaving of scenes from different phases of the plot furnishes an argument for the continuity of the action at 287 and 354. (Leo [*Monolog* 57 f.] ends the *meros* at 287, considering the action continuous at 354.)

At *Persa* 167 the retarding action begins. After dismissing Saturio, Toxilus says (165 ff.):

. ego puerum uolo
mittere ad amicam meam, ut habeat animum bonum,
med esse effecturum hodie.

In 183 he reenters, giving Paegnium his final instructions before sending him on the errand. The interval is covered by Sophoclidisca's dialogue with Lemniselenis. Here again the action is so linked together that a

* The conclusion of this scene is curiously abrupt. This has caused some critics to consider that a number of verses were lost at this point. (See Havet *Rev. phil.* XXIX [1905] 99; Ahrens *De Plauti Asinaria* [1907] 11 f., 23.) This possibility need be given no further consideration here.

pause seems improbable. (See Legrand *Daos* 488 n. 5. Leo, however, marks an *Einschnitt* at 167 [*Monolog* 51].) At 250 Paegnium and Sophoclidisca part, to go on their errands. Sagaristio then enters, telling of his unexpected windfall; at the end of his monody Paegnium reenters from the *leno's* house, having accomplished his mission. Accordingly, a pause is improbable at this point also, because of the close connection between the scenes preceding and following Sagaristio's monody. (Leo [*Monolog* 51] ends the *meros* at this point.)

Finally, at *Aul.* 264 Megadorus summons Strobilus and leaves to do his marketing. After a brief dialogue with Staphyla, Euclio leaves on a similar errand (274); Staphyla ends the scene with a monologue, introducing once more her fears for her young mistress, and goes within (279). Strobilus's return with cooks, flute-players, and provisions follows, introducing a long series of scenes in the retarding action. It seems improbable, therefore, that a pause breaks the action at 279. (Leo ends the act at 279 [*Monolog* 56 f.].)

4

In the second chapter (pp. 41 ff.) I have grouped passages of continuous action wherein an actor is separated from the action and left silent for a number of lines; in a few cases it is not clear whether an actor has made his exit, leaving the stage vacant, or has merely drawn to one side for the moment as other actors enter. This difficulty arises in *Curc.* 591 ff., where, as Ussing states (ed. [1878] II 576), "*miles aut scenam reliquit aut solus in diversa parte moratur, nam Curculionem non ante v. 609 agnoscit.*" Legrand (*Daos* 472 n. 2) denies the latter alternative; "*Il est inadmissible, à mon avis, que Thérapontigone reste en scène du vers 590 au vers 610 sans voir Curculio, qui mène grand tapage.*" Leo takes the opposite stand (*Monolog* 66 n. 1). The absence of an announcement of the exit or reentrance of the *miles* renders his stay as silent actor by far the more probable of the two alternatives, supported as it is by the instances of similar technique collected above (pp. 43 ff.) The interval during which the *miles* is silent, is occupied by the development in rapid dialogue of the history of Planesium's ring; this forms the basis of the later recognition-scene, and is conveniently presented while the *miles* is held apart from the action. Not until the conclusion of this essential bit of action is the disturbing presence of Therapontigonus made known; thus the possibilities of the situation are realized without introducing exit and reentrance, with their almost inevitable monologues.

In *Bac.* 925 ff. Nicobulus may be a silent actor (see Foster *op. cit.* 12 f.). There is no explicit announcement of exit; his words spoken immediately before Chrysalus's return (925) may indicate only that he draws to one side to reread the letter from his son; this view is confirmed by the fact that Chrysalus does not perceive his reentrance, but notices his presence upon the stage (978: *Priamum adstantem eccum ante portam uide[re]*). Finally, Nicobulus's first words (979: *Quoianam uox prope me sonat*) cannot be paralleled as the first speech of an entering character, but rather belong to one whose presence on the stage is established. (Compare *Amph.* 325; *Aul.* 731; *Bac.* 773; *Curc.* 111, 229; *Merc.* 864; *Pseud.* 702; *Rud.* 229 ff., 332 ff.; *Stich.* 88; *Trin.* 45; contrast *Aul.* 727; *Cist.* 543; *Eun.* 454.) In both these places, then, the stage may be occupied.⁹ (Leo [*Monolog* 55] ends the *meros* at *Bac.* 924.)

Similarly, at *Hauton* 229, Legrand finds the end of the act, preferring to consider that Clitipho retires within at 229, so that Clinia comes out upon an empty stage, followed closely by his friend. While Leo, also, marks this as the end of his first *meros* (*Monolog* 58), he indicates at a later point (*ibid.* 65), by comparing the scene with *Ad.* 758 ff., that Clinia joins Clitipho, thus eliminating the latter's exit and the consequent vacant stage. This is also the view of Köhler, although he conceives of a pause at this point in the Greek original of Menander.¹⁰ The sudden outburst of Clinia's impatience in 230 is foreshadowed in 175 ff., so that in the absence of all evidence to the contrary, we should preserve the continuity of the action at 229.

In this chapter we have discussed such vacant stages as occur in scene-complexes marked by the technique of continuous action. In many of these cases Leo and other critics have considered the action continuous and the vacant stage significant only of a momentary, unessential pause in the action. I have endeavored to show that in many other passages the Latin playwrights, in making use of this same technique, have provided for continuous action in places where modern theory has considered that the vacant stage marks a real, essential pause in the action.

⁹ On the possibility of the employment of similar technique at *Stich.* 155 ff., see above p. 59 n. 4.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.* 8 n. 2. See also Skutsch *Hermes* XLVII (1912) 143: "Die Scenen von 171 ab . . . schliessen bis 409 aufs engste zusammen."

CHAPTER V

If our study of technique is admitted to be rightly applied in estimating the significance of vacant stages, we have eliminated a large number of pauses in the action that have been generally regarded to be essential and to mark the ends of acts. There remains, of course, a fairly large number to which our study of technique does not apply, except in so far as, once we have provided for a large number of vacant stages that are not significant of essential pauses, the probability that the other vacant stages are necessarily significant is very much weakened. And it is quite possible that these other vacant stages, studied from a different point of view, might prove equally unessential. But granting this, there would still remain a small minority of vacant stages which everybody must admit furnish reasonable grounds for the view that there were some essential pauses in the action, at least in the Greek original, and possibly even in the Latin adaptation; in the main, these vacant stages are such as have come into prominence recently since the discovery of XOPOT in the new Menander; and of these the most striking, and the most suggestive of essential pauses in the action, are a few vacant stages which separate the withdrawal and reappearance of the same character or group of characters. Now it is always proper to use this small minority of cases as evidence of XOPOT in the Greek original. But it is quite a different question whether in these cases the Latin playwrights intended the stage to be more than momentarily vacant and whether in at least some of the cases they provided a musical interlude or a dance or any other device to fill the gap. And so far as the Greek originals are concerned I wish to emphasize the fact that there is no reason for supposing absolute uniformity in the practice of the Greek playwrights; it is quite conceivable, for example, that the original of the *Hauton* of Terence was marked by regular essential pauses, while the original of the *Mostellaria* was marked by uninterrupted action. Nor may it be denied that such lack of uniformity may have been reproduced in the Latin copies. In our present study we are chiefly concerned with illustrating certain phases of technique that seem to us to indicate a general interest in maintaining continuous action; we are not bent upon eliminating all the vacant stages from the text of Roman comedy. At the same time we may properly be expected to discuss the admittedly critical cases; nor will it be out of place to suggest, with such evidence as we can muster, how these criti-

cal cases might be reconciled with a view that the action of the Roman comedies was uniformly continuous, if anybody cares after our discussion of technique to foster that view.

1

XOPOT AND THE "VACANT STAGE" IN ROMAN COMEDY

In only one of this small number of critical cases has it been contended that the Latin playwright made use of the *entr'acte* chorus: *Bacchides* 107.¹ In other cases modern scholars are content to say that the Latin text points to a XOPOT in the Greek original. We must, therefore, discuss at length the complicated textual and exegetical problems raised by the passage in the *Bacchides*.

- 105 BACCHIS. Aqua calet: eamus hinc intro, ut laues.
 107 simul huic nescioqui, turbare qui huc it, decedamus <hinc>,
 106 nam uti nauis uecta's credo, timida es. SOROR. Aliquantum, soror.
 108 BACCHIS. Sequere hac igitur me intro in lectum, ut sedes lassitudinem.
 LYDUS. Iam dudum, Pistoclere, tacitus te sequor,
 110 expectans quas tu res hoc ornatu geras.
 namque ita me di ament, ut Lycurgus mihi quidem
 uidetur posse hic ad nequitiam adducier.
 quo nunc capessis te <d> hinc aduorsa uia
 cum tanta pompa?

Ritschl concluded that 107 is corrupt, arguing² that neither Pistoclerus nor Lydus can be referred to, as their altercation begins upon their entrance, and that there is no reason to suspect that another person entered and left the stage before the scene in which they appeared. His view received general acceptance,³ until, after the discovery of the new Menander, Leo interpreted the line as referring to the *kômos* chorus, and conceived (*loc. cit.*) that 108 "ist als Aktschluss an Stelle von 107 gesetzt worden, als die Bacchides ohne Zwischenspiel des Chors aufgeführt werden sollten." Thus, in Leo's opinion, two different scene-endings are to be traced in 105-108.

The order of verses in *BC* is 105, 106, 107, 106, 108; there is, then, a question as to whether 106 belongs before or after 107. Now *timida*

¹ Leo *Hermes* XLVI (1911) 292 ff.; see also *Pl. Forsch.*² 227 n. 3 and the literature there cited; Lindsay *Bu. J.* CLXVII (1914) 15 f.

² *Opuscula* II (1868) 357 n. (= *Rhein Mus.* N. F. IV [1846] 600 n.); see also Schneidewin *Philol.* V (1850) 375 f.

³ Vahlen (*Hermes* XV [1880] 260) and Lindsay (ed. Plautus [1903]) did not bracket this line, but gave no satisfactory explanation of it.

(106) refers to an after effect of seasickness;⁴ 106 is clearly an explanation of 107 and should follow it, spoken by Bacchis I, not her sister. The idea is: "Let us get out of this rumpus that's coming, *for* you are nervous and panicky."

It is wholly fanciful to deem contradictory Bacchis's suggestions for her sister's comfort; equally so to find in *ut sedes lassitudinem* necessary reference to the bath.⁵ Not only *Merc.* 127, which Leo quotes (*loc. cit.*), but 371-73 refer to seasickness—and in the latter place we read *eas ac decumbas*. After travel both bed and bath relieve weariness: compare Apuleius *Metam.* 104, 24 f. (Helm): *Prohinc cubiculo te refer et lectulo lassitudinem refoue et ex arbitrio lauacrum pete*; 105, 4 f.: *Prius somno et mox lauacro fatigationem sui diluit*; 114, 24 ff. There is consequently no repetition of 105 f. in 108. The passage reads: (105) "The water's warm; let us go in, that you may take your bath (107), and at the same time let's get away from this Tom, Dick, and Harry that's coming here to raise a rumpus. (106) For as you have been aboard ship you are nervous and panicky." "Yes, a little bit, sister." "Follow me this way, then, to the couch, that you may relieve your weariness." (That is, as in Apuleius, bed first, bath afterwards.) Accordingly, there is no valid evidence that 105-108 has been clumsily remodeled after the *kômos* chorus dropped out.

Furthermore, there is absolutely nothing which makes it necessary that 107 refer to this incidental chorus. The padded exit-dialogue (101-108) which separates the exit and reentrance of Pistoclerus is characteristic of continuous action; the absence of Pistoclerus may seem to require a longer interval (see Ritschl *loc. cit.*), but if, as we have seen in chapter I, the comedies do not attempt realistic presentation of time, it is idle to assume a pause at 108 simply to provide

⁴ Note Donatus *ad. Hec.* III 1, 41 (W. II 250): *Pauere et timere et ad corporis ei ad animi perturbationem ueteres referebant. Plautus in Bacchiidibus: "nam ut ex mard timida es."* See also *ad Ad.* III 2, 7 (W. II 72); *ad Phorm.* II 1, 54 (W. II 420); *at Eun.* IV 2, 4 (W. I, 406). Compare Cic. *ad Att.* V 13, 1: *Ephesum uenimus a. d. XI Kal. Sextilis . . . nauigauimus sine timore et sine nausea.* See also Rolfe *PAPA XXXIV* (1903) v; *AJP XXV* (1904) 192 ff.; Knapp *Class. Phil.* II (1907) 293 and n. 2. This rendering avoids the difficulties raised by Lindsay (*Bu. J. CLXVII* [1914] 16) against Skutsch's interpretation (in which 106 follows 107).

⁵ See Lindsay *Bu. J. CLXVII* (1914) 15 f. The phrase *sedare lassitudinem* is not a common one, but in one, at least, of the passages I have found, the restriction which Leo places upon its meaning is manifestly absurd. Nepos *Eumenes IX* 6: . . . *diem unum opperitur ad lassitudinem sedandam militum ac reficienda iumenta, quo integriore exercitu decerneret.*

for the lengthening of the time-interval. Again, there is no evidence that Bacchis has *seen* anyone; she has heard voices (109 ff. may have been recited while Bacchis herself was talking). It is immaterial whether Pistoclerus or Lydus enters first: the two sisters are off the stage before the entering characters appear; Lydus has spoken the opening lines of the next scene, his voice is unknown to Bacchis, and consequently he is properly referred to by her in *nescioqui*. Or else the reference is to the noisy approach of the *tanta pompa*.

Finally, the use of *turbatio* to get people off the stage occurs elsewhere. Note *Aul.* 403 ff.:

Sed quid hoc clamoris oritur hinc ex proxumo?
coqui hercle, credo, faciunt officium suum.
fugiam intro, ne quid turbae hic itidem fuat.

Compare *Miles* 479; at *Trin.* 601, *exturbauit* appears before a vacant stage; *cunctos exturba aedibus* (*Trin.* 805) is surely referred to in *eo ego igitur intro ad officium meum* (818)—again before a vacant stage. Only the clear definition of the situation, it would seem, has saved us from conjectural κῶμοι at these points.

It remains to consider the textual difficulties raised by Lindsay's recent notes on the passage (*Berl. Woch. f. kl. Phil.* XXXII [1912] 1010; *Cl. Quart.* VII [1913] 1 f.; *Bu. J.* CLXVII [1914] 15). He prints the following *apparatus criticus* on the line: *nescioqui* codd.; *turba* (ex turbe) *equi* *B*¹; *turbare qui* *B*² *CD*, and suggests that the true reading is: *simul huic nescioqu<o>i<i> turbae quae huc it decedamus <hinc>*. The scribe of *B*, then, as Lindsay views these facts,⁶ substituted for *turbae* of the MS he was copying, the spelling *turbe* (*ae = e*); thereupon, thinking that this was not the dative of *turba* followed by *qui*, but the nominative of *turba* followed by *equi*, he changed the final *e* to *a* and wrote *turba equi*—two separate words. Subsequently, the corrector (who, Lindsay suspects, used *C*, *D*, or a similar MS) changed *turba equi* to *turbare qui*.

However, an alternative interpretation, quite as cogent in my opinion as that of Lindsay, may be adduced to support the reading of *CD*.⁷

⁶ For this elaboration of Lindsay's printed views I am indebted to Professor Prescott, who has very kindly allowed me to consult a letter on the subject written to him by Lindsay. I desire also to thank Professor C. H. Beeson, whose examination of *B*, made in response to my request, entirely confirms Lindsay's reading as given above.

⁷ This argument is of equal validity against Havet's defence of *turbae* (*Cl. Quart.* VII [1913] 120 f.), based, like Lindsay's, on his preference for the reading of *B* over that of *CD*.

The scribe, having *turbarequi* in the MS from which he was copying *B*, but with the *r* indistinct, saw only *turba equi*, and was naturally in doubt whether this was meant for *turbae qui* or *turba equi*. He started to follow the first interpretation, influenced by the preceding dative, *nescioqui*, and wrote *turbe* (= *turbae*); but immediately saw that *turbae qui* would be impossible, because of the gender of *qui*, changed *turbe* to *turba*, and wrote *equi*. The corrector, using *C* or *D*, or himself deciphering the obscured *r* in *turbare*, corrected properly to *turbare qui*. It will be noted that this interpretation does not necessitate a departure from the *qui* read in all the MSS.⁸

The passage in the *Bacchides* is one of several places in which, starting from the *kômos* chorus in New Comedy, modern scholars have found in the Latin comedies evidence of an incidental chorus in more or less close association with the vacant stage.

Now, the only clear evidence at our disposal indicates that the *entr'acte* chorus was a band of revellers;⁹ this view is supported by modern theory, which finds in the Dionysiac *kômos* one of the two original elements of ancient comedy. With this starting-point critics, working especially on Roman comedy, have conceived that the *entr'acte* chorus might be made up of any group of subordinate actors¹⁰—a band of slaves, a troop of cooks, etc. (See Leo *Hermes* XLIII [1908] 166 f.; *Pl. Forsch.*² 227 n. 3; above pp. 9 f. On the following see in particular Bethe *Ber. d. sächs. Ges.* LX [1908] 217 ff.) But this immediately introduces uncertainty, even if it is not in itself in error, for both Menandrian comedy¹¹ and Roman comedy have groups of supernumeraries outside of any possible choruses: under these condi-

⁸ The fact that Leo deemed it necessary to cite parallels (*loc. cit.*; see also Haupt *Opuscula* I [1875] 123) for *turbare it* suggests that this reading may be entitled to support as the *lectio difficilior*.

⁹ *Peric.* 71 ff.; *Fab. Inc.* II 33 ff.; Alexis 107 K. We should add that from the mention of *κυνηγέται* in *Heros* frag. 9, Capps (*Four Plays of Menander* [1910] 6) has conjectured that the *entr'acte* chorus was in this case made up of huntsmen. The list of dramatis personae makes no mention of the chorus. See Legrand *Daos* 424 and n. 1; Wilamowitz *N. Jhb.* XXI (1908) 40.

¹⁰ While the composition of the incidental chorus appearing at *Samia* 270 is not clearly defined, there is reason to believe that it was made up of wedding guests (Körte *Hermes* XLIII [1908] 304 f.)—surely in itself no contradiction of the view that it was a *κῶμος μεθύοντων*. But it is a far cry from this to the *plus decem ancillae* of the *Hauton* (451), whose sobriety we have no reason to suspect.

¹¹ *Peric.* 227, 276 (discussed below p. 76 n. 13); *Samia* 67 (see 80); *Georg.* 40.

tions it is difficult to identify a χορός in Roman comedy, or to discover a passage where, possibly, ΧΟΡΟΪ stood in the Greek original.¹²

The hazardous nature of such investigation is clear in numerous instances. At *Eun.* 810 did the Greek original have two *kōmos* choruses? Thais enters the house accompanied by her maids, while the slaves of the *miles* are still upon the stage; it is a fair inference that the exit of the latter group was attended by antics befitting their low-comedy rôles, yet it is by no means clear that any historical connection exists between them and the *entr'acte* chorus. Again, it seems quite unlikely that the slaves entering with Sosia in the first scene of the *Andria* (28 ff.) had any connection with the *kōmos*. Finally—and we could not wish for a clearer illustration—in *Peric.* 275 we should expect ΧΟΡΟΪ to fill the vacant stage, especially since the retainers were available at least up to 231, if not at 275.¹³ If ΧΟΡΟΪ does not appear here, is it not because the χορός is never anything but a *κῶμος μεθόντων*?

In the ΧΟΡΟΪ passages of Greek New Comedy,¹⁴ as far as we may judge from the scanty evidence at our disposal, the *entr'acte* was itself suffi-

¹² We note the following passages in the plays of Plautus and Terence where groups of supernumeraries appear: *Amph.* 629 ff. (see 854); *Aul.* 280 ff.; *Bac.* 385 ff. (see 525), 799 ff.; *Cas.* 720 ff.; *Curc.* 1 ff.; *Men.* 226 ff. (see 436); *Merc.* 741 ff., 802; *Miles* 1 ff., 1349 ff.; *Most.* 431 ff. (see 467 ff.); *Poen.* 930 ff. (see 1147 f.); *Pseud.* 133 ff., 790 ff.; *Stich.* 402 ff. (see 418); *Truc.* 448 ff., 482 ff., 551 ff.; *And.* 28 ff.; *Hauton* 381 ff., 748 ff.; *Eun.* 232 ff., 471 ff., 771 ff.; *Hec.* 415 ff.

¹³ The condition of the text renders it quite impossible to decide whether the slaves left the stage with Sosia in 231, as Capps thinks (*Four Plays of Menander* 138, 188), or were driven away by Moschio in 276 ff.—Körte's view (*Hermes* XLIII [1908] 302; ed. *Menandrea*² [1912] xl f.). It will be noted that Körte (*Hermes loc. cit.*) identifies the beleaguering forces of 275 with the *entr'acte* chorus of 76: "Da hätten wir also einen Chor, der freilich nicht spricht, aber dessen Aufgabe eine doppelte ist, erstens durch Gesang und meinetwegen auch Tanz die Zwischenpausen zu füllen und zweitens eine stattliche Statistenschar abzugeben, wo die Handlung das fordert." This is based upon his unwarranted assumption (*loc. cit.*) that the χορός of 76 is to be related to the action as friends of Polemo, returning from their carousal at the country villa. Evidence to sustain these views is quite lacking; the absence of ΧΟΡΟΪ at 275 is inexplicable under the conditions he assumes. As Bethe (*Ber. d. sächs. Ges.* LX [1908] 217 f.) observes, in refusing to accept this identification of the χορός with the retainers of 275, supernumeraries were available at all periods in the history of Attic comedy. Note in this connection Legrand *Rev. ét. anc.* X (1908) 4 n. 2; the difficulties which he finds are removed, I think, by the discussion of the time-element in chapter I above.

¹⁴ *Epitrep.* 201; *Samia* 270; *Peric.* 76, 505 (*Epitrep.*); *Fab. Inc.* II 35; Alexis 107 K.; Ghorân Papyri (*Bull. corr. hell.* XXX [1906] 106, [113 f.], 148 f. [reprinted in Demiańczuk *Suppl. com.* 100, 109; discussed by Körte *Hermes* XLIII (1908) 38 ff.]); *Papiri greci e latini* II no. 126, 45.

cient to cover the interval between the exit and return of the same character; in this case it was not supplemented by such stop-gap scenes as we have considered in the preceding chapter.¹⁵ This confirms our view that the insertion of a passage between the exit and reentrance of a *dramatis persona* is characteristic of continuous action.

The available evidence in New Comedy shows XOPOT under two conditions: (1) intervening between the exit and return of the same character (*Epitrep.* 201; *Peric.* 76); (2) intervening between the exit of a character (or characters) and the entrance of a different character (or characters), as in *Samia* 270, *Fab. Inc.* II 35, *Papiri greci e latini* II no. 126, 45. In Roman comedy, vacant stages appear under similar conditions, but the cases of (1) in Roman comedy are strikingly few and many of these few are not indisputable.

At *Asin.* 809 Leo's assumption (*Monolog* 50 n. 6) that Diabolus spends considerable time within the house of Cleareta is one of two possibilities; we may observe that the revellers of the next scene are in no wise prepared for Artemona's entrance or for other interruption, as they should be if Diabolus had been observed by them. It is, accordingly, not unlikely that Diabolus's stay within was but momentary, that a brief survey of the scene within acquainted him with the recent developments (see Legrand *Daos* 444).

On *Ad.* 854 Dziatzko-Kauer (ed. 1903) notes: "Micio geht in sein Haus. Demea bleibt auf der Bühne. Es kann somit kein Akteinschnitt angesetzt werden." This perhaps follows more easily if 854 is given to Demea rather than to Micio, as Kauer (*ibid.* 191) suggests, yet, on the whole, I do not see the need of adopting this ascription of the verse, plausible though it is. Micio, as he enters the house, bids his brother join in the feast, but we need not infer from the text that

¹⁵ This certainly holds true at *Peric.* 76 and *Epitrep.* 201. In the other cases we may form no definite opinion. At *Samia* 270 we are left in doubt because of the lacuna at 201. The incomplete scene leaves Chrysis telling of her plight to Niceratus; in 270 Demea is aware of Moschio's innocence and Niceratus's fears are aroused. From 271 we may infer, perhaps, that Moschio has appeared upon the stage, and engaged in conversation with Niceratus or Demea or both (see Capps *Four Plays of Menander* 227 f.) yet we cannot pretend to fill the gap with any degree of certainty. Moschio's return to the stage (271) begins a new chapter in the action, one which could not have been foreshadowed at the time of his exit; to this extent, at least, it fails to conform to the greater part of the stop-gap scenes treated above. I am, accordingly, inclined to consider it improbable that the scene before the XOPOT (270) is a stop-gap covering with the *entr'acte* Moschio's absence from the stage.

Demea accepts the invitation and enters at once with him.¹⁶ That he does not enter is argued by Kauer from Syrus's words (882): *Heus, Demea, orat frater ne abeas longius*, which are perhaps best taken as a repetition of Micio's invitation. Again, there is no indication either in Demea's words or in the words of those coming from the house, that Demea has joined the revellers within; indeed, it is only in 877 that Demea decides upon his course of action, and there would be little point in his entering the house before he assumes his new character and makes this step definitely known to the audience. The evidence is therefore against a pause at this point.

The scene between Simo and Sosia is ended (*And.* 171) by the former's words: *Eamus nunciam intro: i prae, sequor*. The following scene opens with Simo's three-line monologue:

Non dubiumst, quin uxorem nolit filius;
ita Dauom modo timere sensi, ubi nuptias
futuras esse audiuit. sed ipse exit foras.

Leo interprets the action thus (*Monolog* 57 n. 3): "Simo tritt 171 ins Haus und 172 wieder heraus," thus allowing a pause. Fairclough (ed. [1904] 87) remarks: "We must suppose that instead of following Sosia immediately, Simo lingers behind to reflect on the situation." Donatus's commentary (W. I 85 f.) supports the latter view: *peracta narratione iam persona Sosiae non erat necessaria; ergo substituit senex, per quem agenda sunt reliqua. . . . non recessit de loco senex. Modo* (173) is then interpreted as referring to a time *antequam cum Sosia loqui coepisset*. This, I think, is the correct view. *I prae, sequor* is accordingly to be explained as a convenient way of disposing of a character unnecessary in the following scene, while it need not require the exit of the speaker. Compare *Hec.* 358, where Pamphilus bids his mother enter the house: *I sodes intro, consequar iam te, mea mater*. Yet, after dismissing Parmeno, Pamphilus delivers a long monologue and remains for the subsequent action. (Note also *Merc.* 816; *Poen.* 193.)

At *Pseud.* 573b Pseudolus, retiring to form his plans, presents the *tibicen* as the one who will entertain the audience during this brief delay:¹⁷

¹⁶ The action is considered continuous by Legrand *Daos* 456, 468, and Siess *Wien. Stud.* XXIX (1907) 94. Compare *Poen.* 193. Leo (*Monolog* 58) finds the end of a *meros* here. Sipkema (*Quaest. Terent.* [1901] 42, 47 ff.) believes that Demea left the stage with Micio at 854, as does Nencini (*De Terentio eiusque fontibus* [1891] 142 n. 1).

¹⁷ The text is by no means certain at this point. Verse 573a is found in *A*, not in *P*. *Exibo* (read before *non ero uobis morae* by Leo and Lindsay) is quite uncertain,

571 Concedere aliquantisper hinc mihi intro lubet,
dum concenturio in corde sycphantias.

573a * * * * * non ero uobis morae.

573b tibicen uos interibi hic delectauerit.

With this introduction of the *tibicen* we may compare several passages in Old Comedy. In the *Birds* of Aristophanes the *coryphaeus* calls for Procne (659); she enters (666) and is pounced on, with banter and horseplay, by Pisthetaerus, Euelpides, and Epops; finally, after their departure, she remains on the stage and furnishes the flute accompaniment for the parabasis. Van Leeuwen (ed. [1902] 109) suggests that a prelude on the flute precedes the choral song, as in *Birds* 858, where the sacrificial procession enters, headed by Corax, piping vilely. In *Thesmoph.* 1175 the flute solo of Teredo brings Sagittarius out from the house to take his part with Euripides in the following scene. The Laconians come upon the stage from the *convivium* in *Lysistrata* 1241 with a *tibicen* (addressed in 1242 ff.) who accompanies the following monody. In *Frogs* 1305 the Muse of Euripides is called forth—apparently a player on the *δοτρακα* who accompanies Aeschylus's monody. Compare *Eccl.* 891, where the *tibicen* is called upon to accompany the following song; in Ameipsias frag. 22 K. the *auletes* is bidden to furnish the accompaniment for a drinking-catch; see also van Leeuwen's note on *Eccl.* 102. Particularly significant is a fragment from Eupolis's *Baptae*: αὔλησον αὐτῇ (cod. b: αὐτήν; Wilamowitz *Sitzb. d. berl. Akad.* [1907] 9: αὐτῇ; Demiańczuk ταὐτῇ) κύκλιον ἀναβολὴν τινα, from Photius Berol. 107, 12. (= Demiańczuk *Suppl. com.* 42). From citations given by Demiańczuk (Aristoph. *Peace* 830 and scholiast *ad loc.*; Antiatt. Bekk. [*Anec. Gr.* I] 80, 1) it is sufficiently clear that ἀναβολή is a prelude, played on the pipes as were those of Corax and Teredo.

We have seen, then, that in Old Comedy the *tibicen* is not infrequently introduced in the text of the drama, as in the *Pseudolus*; his relation to the action is quite loose, and he never attains the dignity of a "speaking part." That this stage-convention was retained in Greek New Comedy is amply attested by *Stich.* 715 ff., 758 ff.; *Cas.* 798 ff. Further than this, a prelude played by the *tibicen* has preceded

as Studemund's reading shows. Yet 571: *concedere* *intro* (see *Truc.* 386; *Eun.* 206; and Feyrabend *De verbis Plautinis personarum motum in scaena exprimentibus* [1910] 101) contains sufficient assurance that Pseudolus retires from the view of the audience.

a choral song or monody. Is not this just what we have in the *Pseudolus*—the playing of a prelude before Pseudolus's monody?¹⁸

The pause at this point is admittedly brief (573a: *Non ero uobis morae*): what evidence have we for considering that it indicates conscious act-division? Merely the statement of Donatus (quoted above p. 5 n. 13), preceded by an obvious error,¹⁹ and involved in his erroneous application of the five-act theory to Roman comedy.

Furthermore, it is hardly justifiable to assume a historical connection between the solo of the *tibicen* in the *Pseudolus* and the *entr'acte* chorus

¹⁸ It is worthy of note in this regard that, with two exceptions (*Epid.* 81 ff.; *Truc.* 210 ff.), monodies in the Latin plays are sung by entering characters. This fact has no bearing on the relation of the monody to pauses in the action, for the stage is more frequently occupied than vacant when the singer enters (Leo in *Der Monolog* notes 27 *Eintrittsmonodien*, 32 *Zutrittsmonodien*, 2 *Übergangsmonodien*; out of these [61 in all], 21 begin his *merê*); but it suggests that some mechanical factor in the production of the play established this convention, if such it be: possibly it proved difficult to secure the proper effect for the monody if the speaker was not detached from the preceding action in this way. In *Truc.* 210 the monody follows immediately upon Diniarchus's exit; the *Epidicus* opens with a lyrical scene, which makes Epidicus's monody (81 ff.) a natural conclusion of the first scene.

Leo's theory of the historical development of the drama is the chief basis of his statement (*Pl. Cant.* 114): “. . . . die cantica [finden sich sehr häufig] an den Stellen der *στάσιμα*, d. h. unmittelbar nach den Aktschlüssen, zwar nicht als Zwischenakt, aber, wie wir sagen dürfen, an den Zwischenaktsmusik (*Pseud.* 573) anschließend, als Beginn einer neuen Theiles der Handlung. . . . Es scheint dass der Chor, der für die Kunstform der Komödie noch als er zu existiren aufgehört hatte bestimmend gewesen ist, auch auf das Verhältniss der cantica zur allgemeinen Composition der plautinischen Komödie Einfluss geübt hat. Hier fehlen die Mittelglieder; aber die Analyse der Stücke kann vielleicht den Weg zu ihrer Ergänzung öffnen.” If, as Leo considers (*Monolog* 46), the monodies were composed by the Latin poets, Pseudolus's long monody (*Pseud.* 1246 ff.) deserves particular attention, as a mingling of dance with song, which thus fills the place of the *χορός*, as defined by Leo (*Monolog* 41); on this passage we may note Leo's pronouncement (*Monolog* 60), that “. . . . das grosse Lied des *Pseudolus* 1246 [ist] von Plautus frei gedichtet.” It is certainly a possibility that the Plautine monody at times replaces the incidental chorus of Greek New Comedy: like the latter, it varies the action by the introduction of song and—occasionally, at least—dance. The adoption of this technique of course posits an interest in continuous action on the part of the Roman playwrights.

¹⁹ *Praef. ad And.* II 3 (W. I 38 f.): *Principio dicendum est nullam personam egressam quinque ultra exire posse. . . . posse autem quinto egredi personam, non et necesse esse dicimus, ut appareat ultra exire non posse, in tragoedia parcius exire et solere pariter et licere.* This rule is violated several times in the plays of Terence alone: e. g., by Chremes in the *Hauton*, by Geta and Demipho in the *Phormio*.

in New Comedy, merely because Donatus (*loc. cit.*) has loosely joined them in *chorus uel (et) tibicen*. On the contrary, the flute solos of Old Comedy afford a clear analogue, quite distinct from the tradition of the *entr'acte* chorus, for the prelude which covers Pseudolus's absence. To be sure, we do not find this identical situation in Old Comedy, for there the chorus was always available to fill in the gap caused by the absence of a *dramatis persona*, yet the introduction of the *tibicen* forms a satisfactory link between the technique of the Latin poets and their predecessors; in view of the evidence given above, the prelude of the *tibicen* can hardly be considered an innovation of the Roman playwrights.

There is, then, no evidence that this prelude is historically of the same character as the XOPOT, or the vacant stage left by the omission of the *entr'acte* chorus. What right have we to assume that a prelude by the *tibicen*, even if it covers a vacant stage, is indicative of the end of an act?

While the possibilities of this prelude are somewhat difficult to determine, it seems significant that all the sure cases in this group of critical passages (*Pseud.* 573b; *Cist.* 630; *Trin.* 602; *Hauton* 873) reveal iambic senarii before the vacant stage, trochaic septenarii or a monody after it. In every case, then, the *tibicen* was needed in the scene following.

The remaining case in this group may now be briefly considered. At *Cist.* 630 Melaenis goes to her house—which apparently is not represented in the stage-setting—(629 f.: *Ibo domum atque ad parentes re <d>ducam Selenium*). Upon her return with Selenium she remarks (631): *Rem elocuta sum tibi omnem*. Here, as in the *Pseudolus*, the same character retires and immediately reappears, leaving the stage vacant in the interval; in this case, her words upon return suggest off-stage action during the interval.

With these passages should perhaps be considered the situation at *Trin.* 1114. Here Stasimus leaves the stage; Lysiteles, entering in 1115, declares (1120): *Modo me Stasimus conuenit <domi>*. With this may be compared *Epid.* 612, where Epidicus, entering in 610—four lines after the exit of Periphanes—says that in this brief interval he has met Periphanes in the forum. The intervening speech of Stratippocles serves as a stop-gap in this case, however. If we consider the action continuous in these instances, the lack of realism in the presentation is by no means greater than that attested elsewhere (pp. 25 ff.).

Similarly, in *Hauton* 873 the exit of Menedemus and Chremes is followed in 874 by their reappearance from their respective houses.

In *Trin.* 601 Stasimus enters Callicles's house to tell of the betrothal of Lesbonicus's sister; in 602 Callicles enters with Stasimus. Yet the former's words upon entering: *Quo modo tu istuc, Stasime, dix[is]ti?* may well be taken to indicate that this amounts to no more than summoning Callicles from the house, so that the action may take place in view of the audience.²⁰

2

SOME GENERAL ASPECTS OF MODERN DIVISION INTO ACTS

In the preceding discussion we have been concerned chiefly with the interpretation of particular passages; we shall conclude with brief consideration of the plays as wholes. This will present some of the larger difficulties in the way of theories of conscious act-division, and incidentally will afford opportunity for summarizing a number of points made in the preceding argument.

The division of the Latin comedies into a definite number of well-balanced acts has always proved peculiarly difficult. Thus Legrand, failing in his attempt to divide Roman comedy in accordance with the five-act theory, was forced to conclude (*Daos* 484): "Cette division ne fut donc pas particulièrement chère aux comiques latins." Leo, however, encountered no such difficulty in his division of the plays into *merè*, for the number of these chapters in the action is not fixed in his discussion. Yet their variation in number and inequality as to length²¹ detract somewhat from the plausibility of this division either

²⁰ With this we may perhaps compare the beginning of the council-scene of the *Miles*. At 595 Periplecomenus enters the house to attend the council; in 596 Palaestrio appears, to scan the street for eavesdroppers; he fills the gap between Periplecomenus's exit and reentrance (595-610) with a rambling quasi-monologue. Apparently the council-scene is in this way transferred from the interior to the stage; yet 612 ff. suggest that plans have been formed within, in an interval between 595 and 596. Leo (*Pl. Forsch.* 2 180 ff.) considers that 596-611 were added by Plautus in patching together scenes from different plays; if we accept this view, it is quite reasonable to consider that these unessential lines were inserted to secure continuity of action at 595 (where Leo [*Monolog* 60] ends the *meros*). In this connection it seems significant that the *Andria*, one of the contaminated plays of Terence, is admitted by Leo (*Monolog* 57) to have practically continuous action, while the *Hauton*, in which contamination is by no means certain (see Kauer *Bu. J.* CXLIII [1909] 232 ff. and literature cited, to which may be added: Skutsch *Hermes* XLVII [1912] 145 n. 2; Legrand *Daos* 359 and n. 2; Siess *Wien. Stud.* XXVIII [1906] 241 ff.), conforms far more readily to schemes of act-division.

²¹ In this connection it is usual to refer to Donatus's quotation from Varro (*praef. ad Hec.* III 6 [W. II 192]): *Docet autem Varro neque in hac fabula neque in aliis esse*

in the Greek originals or in the Latin adaptations. The *Truculentus*—not by any means an extreme example²²—falls into *merê*, according to Leo's division, of 426, 197, 54, and 270 lines—a division which would hardly commend itself either to stage managers from a practical standpoint, or to the poets from any æsthetic consideration.

Again, some plays have very few vacant stages. In the *Mostellaria* the stage is left unoccupied only twice (857; 1040); consequently Leo is forced to fall back on unconscious act-division (at 430; see above p. 47 n. 1) and conjecture that the continuous action of the *comissatio* (313-47) represented a *Zwischenaktsspiel* in the Greek original (*Monolog* 52). Similarly, in other plays (*Amphitruo*, *Aulularia*, *Bacchides*, *Miles*, *Poenulus*, *Pseudolus*, *Stichus*, *Truculentus*, *Andria*) passages over four hundred lines in length—i. e., more than a third of a play of normal length—are unbroken by real pauses in Leo's scheme. On the other hand, in plays where the stage is more frequently left unoccupied, the ending of the *merê* at certain of these points involves, as we have seen, the slighting of other vacant stages with equal claims to recognition.²³

In our study of scene-complexes we have revealed evidence of an apparent effort to preserve continuity of action; the recurrence of this technique even where vacant stages are inevitable, has led us to doubt if those vacant stages indicate anything but momentary unessential pauses. Once such vacant stages lose their significance, it becomes

mirandum, quod actus impares scaenarum paginarumque sint numero, cum haec distributio in rerum discriptione, non in numero uersuum constituta sit, non apud Latinos modo, uerum etiam apud Graecos ipsos. Compare Donatus praef. ad Ad. III 7 (W. II 8); and note Legrand Daos 489. Yet this need mean only that Varro found the same difficulty as modern critics in applying an academic theory to plays, the authors of which were innocent of any such theory.

²² The *Aulularia* is divided by Leo into *merê* of 81, 160, 91, 464 + lines; the *Curculio*, into *merê* of 215, 155, 91, 268 lines; the *Mercator*, into *merê* of 224, 274, 89, 79, 163, 197 lines; the *Miles*, into *merê* of 78, 517, 351, 491 lines; the *Persa*, into *merê* of 52, 115, 83, 78, 71, 353, 105 lines; the *Poenulus*, into *merê* of 320, 55, 313, 113, 442 lines; the *Pseudolus*, into *merê* of 572, 193, 138, 341, 90 lines; the *Hauton*, into *merê* of 177, 180, 339, 125, 194 lines; the *Hecyra*, into *merê* of 140, 83, 235, 61, 222, 82 lines.

²³ Thus Leo in marking an *Einschnitt* at *Asin.* 809 passes over 827. At *Bacch.* 368 he ends an act, and in so doing is forced to consider the action continuous at 384, where Legrand marks a pause. The same state of affairs appears at *Cas.* 514 and 530; at *Merc.* 802 and 829; at *Trin.* 728 and 819. Again, one must choose between *Cist.* 630 and 652; between *Epid.* 606 and 665. The difficulty of holding to a consistent course is manifest.

at least an open question whether other vacant stages, in places where the technique of continuous action is not employed, are really significant of essential pauses in the action. This becomes a more plausible suggestion if such vacant stages find a ready explanation in peculiar conditions of the play or of the context in which they appear.

In the succession of loosely joined episodes of the *Stichus* it is not at all surprising to find the connecting links absent between scenes (401, 640). The apparent lack of continuity at *Asin.* 126, 248, 745, may be due to nothing more than the dissociation of the groups of characters in the action; this is the more plausible if we accept Havet's ingenious theory²⁴ that Diabolus rather than Argyrippus appeared in the second and third scenes, for he is quite out of touch with the intrigue developed in scenes one and four.

At the beginning of the play, before the interrelation between the several aspects of the action is established, vacant stages are likely to separate the scenes in which different groups of characters appear. Thus in the *Menaechmi* (226) the entrance of Menaechmus II and Messenio could hardly be announced by any of the characters upon the stage; yet their entrance-dialogue is interposed between the exit and reentrance of Cylindrus, so that continuity of action is probable at this point. We have noted similar technique at the beginning of several plays: *Aul.* 119; *Epid.* 165; *Persa* 52; *Phorm.* 152. On the other hand, the action occasionally falls into larger groups, between which the conditions of the plot render direct connection impossible or difficult, as at *Ad.* 154, where Micio goes off in search of Aeschinus, who enters in 155. (Compare *Cas.* 143; *Trin.* 222; *Hec.* 197.) The supposition that peculiarities of the plot, rather than an actual lack of continuity in the action, account for the presence of vacant stages, is of course supported by the occurrence of long continuous passages in the plays which have a simple, well-knit plot; it is in the passing from one phase to another of a complex plot that vacant stages are most numerous.

Let us contrast, for example, the *Mostellaria* with the *Mercator*. In the former play, Tranio is the dominating figure; after his wrangle with Grumio in the expository scene, the situation is more clearly defined by Philolaches's monody, the toilette scene, and the *comissatio*; Tranio returns with news of Theopropides's coming, brings the revelry to its end, and prepares to receive his returning master. In the following scenes he piles lie on lie, leaving the stage finally to examine Simo's

²⁴ *Rev. phil.* XXIX (1905) 94 ff.; *contra*, Ahrens *De Plauti Asinaria* 13 ff.

house in company with Theopropides. In their absence the *advorsitores* enter, ready to perform their part of enlightening Theopropides; this they do after Tranio's departure. Simo joins Theopropides and they leave the stage, planning Tranio's undoing. Tranio appears and the play ends with his lucky escape from punishment. Thus Tranio, on the stage for the greater part of the play, welds the action together.

In the *Mercator* on the other hand, we trace the fortunes of several groups of characters. The exposition is made by Charinus in his monologue and dialogue with Acanthio. Upon their exit Demipho appears and joins in conversation with Lysimachus; Charinus reenters after Lysimachus's departure, and engages in dialogue with Demipho; after the latter leaves the stage Eutychus offers his help to Charinus. When the stage is clear Pasicompsa is led into the house by Lysimachus; Demipho returns, and leaves for the *macellum* with Lysimachus. Again, Charinus and Eutychus enter; their dialogue is followed by the homecoming of Dorippa and her scenes with Lysimachus. Thereupon Eutychus returns, discovers Pasicompsa's presence in the house, and rushes out to find Charinus. As the two friends leave the stage Demipho and Lysimachus appear, and Eutychus reenters to resolve the complication. Thus we follow no single, well-defined plot, but shift from one phase to another of action which involves several groups of characters, whose aims often conflict and are curiously entangled, so that vacant stages cannot be avoided.

It seems, therefore, altogether reasonable to suppose that in Roman comedy the vacant stages very regularly mark only momentary, insignificant pauses, and that the variation in the number of vacant stages and in the amount of intervening action is often due simply to the nature of the comic plot.

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