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COMEDY AND THE RISE OF ROME

MATTHEW LEIGH

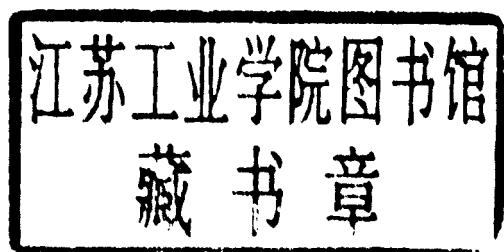
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PREFACE

I owe my initial interest in Plautus and Terence to the benevolent coercion of my former colleagues at the University of Exeter and to the peculiarly stimulating students—Sally Jaine, Eileen Tapsell, and Larry Shenfield—with whom I shared my first classes on the subject.

A number of colleagues have aided me in the further development of this project. I am particularly grateful to Peter Brown who read initial drafts of every chapter and who encouraged me throughout. John Wilkins, Llewelyn Morgan, Roger Crisp, Paul Strohm, Tobias Reinhardt, and Flavio Raviola read and commented on initial drafts of various chapters. The anonymous readers for OUP offered much wise advice and chastised me for my neglect of Anglo-American scholarship. Hilary O'Shea and her colleagues at the Press have been most supportive throughout.

My work on Plautus and Hannibal was first presented at the September 2000 memorial conference for my former supervisor, Don Fowler, and I wish here to acknowledge the inspiration which I drew from Don as a teacher and the delight which I take in the recollection of his life. Other chapters were first aired in lectures to the Roman Society and the Department of Classics at UCLA.

Since October 1997 I have been privileged to work in the Classics School of St Anne's College, Oxford. Roger Crisp, Margaret Howatson, Peta Fowler, Ed Bispham, and Adrian Kelly are the best of colleagues and our students remarkable for their talent and dedication. This work would not, however, have been completed but for the partial or complete release from my professional responsibilities which I have enjoyed in the academic years 2001–3. This was facilitated by the award of a Philip Leverhulme Prize for which I offer the Leverhulme Foundation my sincere thanks. I wish also to acknowledge the Dipartimento dell Scienze dell'Antichità of the University of Padua for the refuge which it offered me for the year 2002–3 and for the friendship which Emilio Pianezzola and his colleagues have repeatedly shown me over the years.

I have lived in interesting times of late and wish to acknowledge my debt to all those who have come through them with me, in particular my parents, Pat Britton, Victoria Kwee, Michael Hall, and Ulrike

Tschugguel. To the person who has made those times so interesting and so sweet, this book is dedicated.

M. L.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The works of Plautus are cited in accordance with the 1895 Berlin edition of F. Leo. The works of Terence, certain matters of orthography apart, are cited in accordance with the 1926 Oxford edition of R. Kauer and W. M. Lindsay. References to Greek and Latin authors and their works follow the abbreviations employed in *TLL* and *LSJ*.

<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies</i>
<i>C&M</i>	<i>Classica et Mediaevalia</i>
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i> (Berlin, 1863–).
<i>CISA</i>	<i>Contributi dell' Istituto di Storia Antica dell' Università del Sacro Cuore di Milano</i>
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>CPh</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CSCA</i>	<i>California Studies in Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>CW</i>	<i>The Classical World</i>
<i>EV</i>	<i>Enciclopedia Virgiliana</i> (Rome, 1984–90).
<i>GLK</i>	<i>Grammatici Latini</i> , ed. H. Keil (Leipzig, 1855–80).
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>HSPh</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>IF</i>	<i>Indogermanische Forschungen</i>
<i>ILLRP</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i> , ed. A. Degrassi (Florence, 1963–5).
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>K-A</i>	<i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , ed. R. Kassel and C. Austin (Berlin and New York, 1983–)
<i>LEC</i>	<i>Les Études Classiques</i>
<i>LSJ</i>	<i>Greek-English Lexicon</i> , ed. H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones, 9th edn. (Oxford, 1940)
<i>MH</i>	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
<i>NJPhP</i>	<i>Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik</i>
<i>OLD</i>	<i>Oxford Latin Dictionary</i> , ed. P. G. W. Glare (Oxford, 1982)

ORF ³	<i>Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta</i> , 3rd. ed., ed. E. Malcovati (Turin, 1967)
Pauly RE	<i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , ed. A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, W. Kroll (Stuttgart, 1894–1972).
PVS	<i>Proceedings of the Virgil Society</i>
QUCC	<i>Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica</i>
REL	<i>Revue des Études Latines</i>
RFIC	<i>Rivista di Filologia e Istruzione Classica</i>
RhM	<i>Rheinisches Museum</i>
RIL	<i>Rendiconti dell' Istituto Lombardo, Classe di Lettere, Scienze Morali e Storiche</i>
SDHI	<i>Studia et Documenta Historiae et Iuris</i>
SHAW	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophische-Historische Klasse</i>
TAPhA	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association</i>
TLL	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Latinae</i> (Leipzig, 1900–)

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Introduction

The aim which I have set myself in composing this study has been to investigate the comedies of Plautus and Terence in the light of Roman history and Roman history in the light of Plautus and Terence. To this end, rather than treat history as a context by which to explain comedy or comedy as a source to be mined for information about history, I have attempted to keep the two in constant dialogue with each other. The most obvious way in which this approach manifests itself in the four chapters which follow is in the tendency of the argument to develop through a succession of subsections in which the perspective passes constantly between comedy and history, history and comedy. I trust that my reader will not find this procedure unduly disconcerting.

The crucial phenomenon of the age of Plautus and Terence is the rise of Rome from regional power to effective master of the Mediterranean world. If the career of the former coincides first with the great crisis of the Second Punic War and the Hannibalic invasion of Italy, then with the first stages of Roman expansion into Greece and Asia Minor, that of the latter is located in the years immediately after the Battle of Pydna and the Roman conquest of Macedon. Two features therefore predominate in all that I have written: the fundamentally military culture of Rome and the economic and social transformation of the city consequent on the acquisition of empire. If the title which I have chosen for this work suggests to some an enthusiastic complicity with this process, they will be mistaken. For I have no affection for imperialism and have found the comic texts studied most eloquent, not in their celebration of the process of national expansion, but rather in their evocation of the necessary negotiations attendant on rapid political and economic change and in the expression given to perspectives which assimilate uneasily to those propounded by the senate and the Roman ruling class.

It would be fatuous to pretend that this is the first study to attempt to think historically about Roman comedy. Indeed the last chapter of this book engages directly with some of the most intriguing past attempts

to do so and analyses the reasons why the approach has failed to take hold. It is, however, the case that the dominant trends of Plautine and Terentian criticism, whether the analytical criticism of the schools of Lefèvre and Zwierlein or the metatheatrical and formalist approaches of American critics, consider Roman comedy as a literary or at best theatrical artefact. I have indeed learnt much from all such perspectives and have engaged with the conclusions drawn where they have a significant bearing on my argument; I hope nevertheless that one consequence of this study will be to suggest that it is possible, and timely, to ask rather different questions of our texts. To this end, the pages which follow set out in greater detail some of what is at issue in this study and confront certain fundamental problems of evidence and method.

The *Comoedia Palliata* and Rome

Plautus and Terence wrote for the theatrical games (*ludi scaenici*) which took a central role in the rapidly expanding festive calendar of the mid-Republican Roman state. Further opportunity for such performances could be provided by the funeral, triumphal, and dedicatory games so common in this period.¹ All such events make spectacle out of the transformation of the Roman state, the expansion of its horizons, and the consequences which this entails. Modern scholarship may contest claims of a determined plan of overseas conquest; but the festive absorption of alien cult and culture is the obverse of Rome's perception of itself as a Mediterranean and not simply an Italian power.²

The best evidence for the festive culture of this period is provided by books 21–45 of Livy and much may be learnt from the historian's account of the institution of two new sets of games. The first of these is the *Ludi Apollinares* first held at the height of the Hannibalic crisis in 212 BC; the inspiration behind them is said to be perusal of the prophetic verse of the native seer (*vates*) Marcius, but his most striking stipulation is that sacrifice should be conducted according to Greek procedure (*Graeco ritu*).³ The second is the *Ludi Megalenses* or *Megaleisia*.⁴ These first involved theatrical performance either in 194 or 191 BC

¹ For the festive calendar and the *ludi scaenici*, see esp. Taylor (1937); Gruen (1992) 183–222; Goldberg (1998). Gruen offers a particularly valuable account of the political dynamics of theatrical performance in this period.

² Gruen (1990) 10, 33.

³ Liv. 25. 12. 1–16.

⁴ Gruen (1990) 5–33 is fundamental but not impeccable. Burton (1996) offers some valid criticisms.

and it was at this event in 191 BC that the temple to the Magna Mater was dedicated and the *Pseudolus* of Plautus first performed.⁵ Yet the Megalesia were first held in 204 BC, ten years before they took on a theatrical aspect, and their inception followed a similar pattern to that of the Ludi Apollinares: recurrent showers of stones prompt inspection of the Sibylline books; this leads to consultation of the oracle at Delphi; and the final cure proposed is the transportation of the stone of Pessinus, the symbol of the Magna Mater, from Asia Minor to Rome.⁶ What is perhaps most significant in all this, however, is the necessary diplomatic engagement with Attalus of Pergamum,⁷ a large part of which must have turned on the Trojan origins of Rome and their consequent kinship with the region over which Attalus ruled.⁸ In later years the priests of Cybele would play an important role in securing the good-will of Roman forces operative in the region.⁹

Both the Ludi Apollinares and the Megalesia are represented as religious observances undertaken in order to secure the well-being of the Roman state and, in particular, the expulsion of a foreign foe in the form of Hannibal. Yet by their conscious institutionalization of foreign cults or ceremonies they also ensure that the Rome which emerges at the end of the Second Punic War will never be quite the same again.¹⁰ It was suggested above that the comic authors who wrote for these festivals evoke some of this cultural transformation. Yet—inasmuch as the works which they present are translations or adaptations of the masterpieces of the Athenian stage—they are themselves profoundly implicated in and indeed at the forefront of the process. Plautus may allude to or exploit more traditional forms such as Atellane farce or mime; he is not content simply to write in them.¹¹

As important as the overall Hellenizing character of the theatrical festival is the selectivity of its engagement with Greek culture, and

⁵ Liv. 34. 54. 3 cf. 36. 36. 1–7. For the *Pseudolus*, see the didascalia to the play.

⁶ Liv. 29. 10. 4–8. The claim of Gruen (1990) 16–18 that the stone originated on Mt Ida attributes undue evidentiary value to the narrative in Ov. *fast.* 4. For a defence of Pessinus as the origin of the stone, see Burton (1996) 42–58.

⁷ Liv. 29. 11. 5–8. Gruen (1990) 17–18 and Burton (1996) 43–4 discuss the possibility that Varr. *ling.* 6. 15 represents an alternative version of the role of Attalus but neither notes the profound textual problems identified by Riganti (1978) ad loc. For detailed discussion of this problem, see Leigh (forthcoming).

⁸ Hdn. 1. 11. 3; Gruen (1990) 5–33, esp. 15–19, and (1992) 47–8.

⁹ Plb. 21. 37. 4–7; Liv. 37. 9. 9–10, 38. 18. 9–10; D.S. 36. 13. I am not convinced by the interpretation of some of these episodes in Gruen (1990) 17 n. 16.

¹⁰ For the strikingly alien character of the cult of Cybele, see Gruen (1990) 5 n. 1, 20 n. 74.

¹¹ For allusions to the stock types of Atellane farce, see Plaut. *Bacch.* 1087, *Rud.* 535–6.

this is particularly true of the authors of the *comoedia palliata* (Roman comedy in Greek dress). For, while Roman audiences in the same period were accustomed to attending tragedies avowedly based on those of the great fifth century dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, in comedy the model set by Aristophanes, Eupolis, and Cratinus is eschewed in favour of that provided by the fourth- and third-century writers of what is known as New Comedy, most notably Menander, Diphilus, Philemon, Posidippus, Alexis, and Apollodorus. This is a significant decision and one which requires investigation both in and of itself and for the methodological problems which it entails for a project of this sort.

The form embraced by the Roman comedians creates from the start two significant barriers to historical interpretation. First, the Greek New Comedy on which it is based is characterized by its concern for specifically social and domestic concerns and, with certain notable exceptions, eschews the direct political commentary which characterizes the work of Aristophanes and his peers.¹² To the extent that this new approach represents a necessary response to changed historical conditions, it is itself pregnant with political meaning.¹³ Yet it also does violence to the works under consideration to demand that they function exactly like those of Aristophanes or to insist that their every familial crisis, rape plot, and servile ruse contains a covert allusion to specific contemporary events.¹⁴

¹² For continuation of the personalized attacks on politicians in New Comedy, see Philippid. fr. 25 K-A = Plu. *Dem.* 12. 6-7, 26. 5, fr. 26 K-A = Plu. *Mor.* 750 E-F; Arched. fr. 4 K-A = Plb. 12. 4. 7 with Walbank (1967) ad loc.; Philem. test 9 K-A and fr. 132 K-A = Plu. *Mor.* 458A

¹³ Note Men. test. 155 K-A = Platon. diff. com. (Proleg. de com. I) 57 p. 5 Kost. for the claim that the change from comic masks designed as accurately as possible to evoke the features of the contemporary Athenian being mocked to the standardized types and stock roles of New Comedy is due to fear of the city's new Macedonian overlords (δεδοικότες τοὺς Μακεδόνας καὶ τοὺς ἐπηρτημένους ἐξ ἐκείνων φόβους).

¹⁴ The standard periodization of Greek comedy distinguishes between the Old, Middle, and New. In this context, however, it is intriguing to note the alternative division represented by Men. test. 149a K-A = Tzetz. diff. poet. (Proleg. de com. XXI^a) 78 p. 87 Kost. cf. test. 149b K-A = Tzetz. prooem. I (Proleg. de com. XI^a 1) 78 p. 26 Kost. where the earliest mode of comedy is associated with the open mockery of Susarion of Megara, the second with the more veiled mockery of Aristophanes, Eupolis, and Cratinus, while the third, that of Menander, permits only disguised attack or symbolic comedy except against slaves, foreigners, and barbarians. To this catalogue of soft targets might be added the figure of the philosopher. Among the many examples of this, see Eub. fr. 137 K-A = Ath. 113 F; Alex. *Olymp.* fr. 163 K-A and *Par.* fr. 185 K-A = D.L. 3. 28; Antiph. *Koryk.* fr. 132 K-A = Ath. 366 B-C; Philem. *Phil.* fr. 88 K-A = Clem. Al. *Strom.* 2. 121. 2.

The second problem lies in the process of adaptation. For both Plautus and Terence maintain the specifically Greek setting of their dramas and a consciously depoliticized and domestic form is thus held one step further back from any direct comment on specifically Roman society or politics by the fact that it is played out in the land of its original authors. This is most importantly so in the case of Terence whose restrained and naturalistic drama restricts all reference to the process of adaptation to the prologue and avoids the tendency of Plautus overtly to revel in the hybridity of the form and to play with the boundaries which divide Greece and Rome: allusions to Roman topography, institutions, and ritual in a Greek play;¹⁵ knowing allusions to Romans as barbarians and Latin as a barbarian tongue;¹⁶ an extravagantly Hellenized Latin vocabulary;¹⁷ characters deliberately acting Greek or even talking in Greek itself.¹⁸ Yet even in Plautus the modern analytical critic will often find much to identify as entirely Attic and suggest in consequence that a given phrase, motif, or scene has nothing to do

¹⁵ For topography, see esp. Plaut. *Curc.* 462–86 with Moore (1991) cf. *Capt.* 90, 489, 882–4 and *Bacch.* 12; for institutions, see e.g. Plaut. *Capt.* 823 and Fraenkel (1960) 126–7 for the aedilician edict, *Persa* 159–60 cf. *Poen.* 1011–12 for the role of the aediles in organizing the games, *Asin.* 269, *Bacch.* 1068–75, *Pseud.* 1051 for the triumph; for ritual, see Plaut. *Curc.* 268–9 cf. *Trin.* 83–7 and Capitoline Jove. Hough (1940) 194–7 and n. 20 lists 84 separate allusions of this sort in Plautus. For the strong suggestion that Plautus does what Naevius did before him, see e.g. Nacv. *com.* 21 = Macr. *Sat.* 3. 18. 6 referring to ‘Praenestini et Lanuvini hospites’. Beare (1964) 26–9 brings out the richly Roman and Italian element in the Naevian *palliata* and offers a sympathetic discussion of what the *Tarentilla* (*com.* 72–93) might have meant to a Roman audience.

¹⁶ Plaut. *Bacch.* 123, *Capt.* 884, *Mil.* 211, *Most.* 828, *Poen.* 598 all use ‘barbarus’ or its cognates in contexts which suggest that the barbarian in question is Roman or Italian. Plaut. *Asin.* 11, *Trin.* 19 refer to Plautus translating the Greek original into ‘barbarian’. For Romans perceived by Greeks as barbarians and their common language as a source of unity amongst the latter, see Plb. 5. 104. 1, 9. 37. 6, 11. 5. 6–8, 18. 22. 8; Cato *ad fil.* fr. 1 J = Plin. *nat.* 29. 14; Liv. 31. 29. 15 cf. 31. 30. 4, 34. 24. 3–4.

¹⁷ For the readiness of Plautus to introduce Greek loan-words even where the equivalent term did not stand in the Attic original, see Leo (1912) 103. See also the contrast between this aspect of Plautine style and the more reserved procedures of Terence in Hough (1934) and (1947–8); Shipp (1960) 52–3.

¹⁸ For acting Greek associated with dissipation, see the uses of *pergraeacari* and *congraeacare* at Plaut. *Bacch.* 743, 813, *Most.* 22, 64, *Poen.* 603, *Truc.* 87. The tendency of characters to talk in Greek is attributed by Leo (1912) 106–7 to Plautine mirroring of Roman life, most notably the speech of characters of low social status. However, what Hough (1934) 348–9 finds for Greek loan-words—that they are often used to put on airs and are particularly concentrated in lines describing feasting and female luxury—has a bearing on the use of straight Greek too. For instances where the use of Greek corresponds to the self-conscious refinement of the speaker, see Plaut. *Cas.* 728–31 cf. *Most.* 41 with Leo’s emendation ‘caeno κομπών commixte’. See also Plaut. *Bacch.* 1162 where the *vai γάρ* of Philoxenus is perfect for a character who suddenly feels himself coming over all ‘Greek’.

with mid-Republican Rome. It is not necessary to think in exclusively political terms or to invoke the notion of plausible deniability in order to suggest that the comic poets often had much at stake in allowing this view to take hold.

Rome in the Mirror

If the *comoedia palliata* really did have nothing to say about Rome, Cicero at least seems to have missed the point. In his speech in defence of the young Roscius of Ameria, he finds himself representing a son accused of murdering his father out of indignation at his dishonourable relegation to the family estate while his favoured older brother is allowed to enjoy the life of the city. The construction of comic plots around the contrasting lives of different pairs of brothers is as old as Aristophanes,¹⁹ and is also familiar from the works of Alexis.²⁰ In New Comedy it is most familiar from the reworking of the Menandrian *Adelphoi* B in the *Adelphoe* of Terence and this drama is analysed in detail in Chapter 4 of this study. Cicero, therefore, appeals precisely to the model of comedy in order to underpin his construction of the relationship of the father to his sons, and chooses as his point of reference a play by the great intermediary between Plautus and Terence, Caecilius Statius.²¹ And what is most significant here is the way in which the orator can claim without any sign of embarrassment that the characters of this drama are interchangeable with the actual inhabitants of Rome and Italy, that the Caecilian Eutychus and his life out in the Attic countryside are effectively identical with any youth living out in the fields of Veii:

si tibi fortuna non dedit ut patre certo nascerere ex quo intellegere posses qui animus patrius in liberos esset, at natura certe dedit ut humanitatis non parum

¹⁹ Ar. *Dail.* test. 6 K-A = Ar. *Nu.* 528–36 and Schol. Ar. *Nu.* 529a suggests that the *Daitaleis* featured a virtuous youth (σώφρον μεράκιον) and his dissolute (ἄχρηστον) counterpart.

²⁰ Alex. *Kour.* fr. 113 K-A = Ath. 443D–E: ὁ μὲν οὖν ἐμὸς νιός οἶον ὑμεῖς ἀρτίως | εἶδετε, τοιοῦτος γέγονεν, Οἰνοπίων τις ἢ | Μάρων τις ἢ Κάπηλος ἢ (καὶ) Τιμοκλῆς | μεθύει γάρ, οὐδὲν ἕτερον. ὁ δ' ἕτερος – τί ἂν | τύχοιμ' ὀνομάσας; βῶλος, ἄροτρον, γηγενῆς | ἄνθρωπος. The thematic continuity is noted at Wehrli (1936) 49.

²¹ For the probable identification of the Caecilian drama in question with the work variously known as *Hypobolimaeus sive Subditivus*, *Hypobolimaeus Chaerestratus*, and *Hypobolimaeus Rastriarius*, see the introduction of Ribbeck (1898) to Caecil. *com.* 75–91 cf. Landgraf (1914) at Cic. *S. Rosc.* 46. For the Attic Ὑποβολιμαῖος ἢ Ἀγροικός, see Men. fr. 372–87 K-A.

haberes; eo accessit studium doctrinae ut ne a litteris quidem alienus esses. ecquid tandem tibi videtur, ut ad fabulas veniamus, senex ille Caecilianus minoris facere Eutyechum, filium rusticum, quam illum alterum, Chaerestratum?—nam, ut opinor, hoc nomine est—alterum in urbe secum honoris causa habere, alterum rus supplicii causa relegasse? ‘quid ad istas ineptias abis?’ inquires. quasi vero mihi difficile sit quamvis multos nominatim proferre, ne longius abeam, vel tribulis vel vicinis meos qui suos liberos quos plurimi faciunt agricolas adsiduos esse cupiunt. verum homines notos sumere odiosum est, cum et illud incertum sit velintne ei sese nominari, et nemo vobis magis notus futurus sit quam est hic Eutyechus, et certe ad rem nihil intersit utrum hunc ego comicum adulescentem an aliquem ex agro Veientini nominem. etenim haec conficta arbitror esse a poetis ut effictos nostros mores in alienis personis expressamque imaginem vitae cotidianaе videremus.

If fortune did not allow you to be born of any definite father from whom you might understand what a paternal attitude to children was, yet nature certainly granted that you should not be short on refinement: your zeal for learning reached such a point that you were not even a stranger to literature. To turn then to the theatre, does that old man of Caecilius seem to you in any way to value Eutyechus, his rustic son, less than that other one, Chaerestratus? (for that, as I think, is his name) or to keep the one with him in the city as an honour and to have exiled the other to the country as a punishment? ‘Why are you resorting to these follies?’ you will say. As if it would indeed be difficult for me to cite by name any number, not to go too far off, of my own tribesmen or neighbours who wish their sons, whom they esteem most highly, to be regular farmers. But it is loathsome to drag in men one knows when it is yet uncertain whether or not they wish themselves to be named, and nobody is going to be more familiar to you than this Eutyechus, and it would surely make no difference to the case whether I named this young man of comedy or someone from the fields of Veii. For I consider these things to have been invented by the poets so that we might see our own ways represented in the characters of others and thus a carefully fashioned image of our daily life.²²

This is surely an important claim and its implications worthy of further consideration.

It was noted above that it was the particular propensity of Plautus to undermine any naturalistic representation of Attic life by shamelessly jarring references to the differences between Greeks and Romans or to specifically Roman or Italian places and institutions. These are the most obviously Plautine elements in Plautus though the great study of Fraenkel elicits far more than just these.²³ The second chapter of this

²² Cic. *S. Rosc.* 46–7.

²³ Fraenkel (1960).

study therefore takes as its starting point an area where Fraenkel demonstrates a specifically Plautine intervention in the Greek originals of his work: the elaboration of the slave as hero and his self-representation as a decidedly Roman general. Yet what Cicero seems to suggest is rather different. The closing claim that comic poets present us with an image of ourselves and of our daily life in the characters seen on the stage is one to which he returns in further descriptions of comedy.²⁴ These in turn may recall the famous praises lavished by Aristophanes of Byzantium on the naturalistic mode of Menander.²⁵ The crucial difference is that Menandrean naturalism has as its end the theatrical representation of the life of the poet's own society; Cicero, by contrast, for all that the Caecilian *palliata* continues to give its plays a specifically Attic setting, nevertheless finds in them a mirror of Roman life.²⁶

What Cicero's remarks betray is a reading strategy which maps the conventional oppositions played out in Greek New Comedy onto specifically Roman coordinates. And, inasmuch as this is a *reading* strategy, it is one which may be extended not only to those plays which go out of their way to draw explicit attention to such a possibility but also to others which aspire to the most perfectly faithful translation of their original. In the instance which Cicero considers, what is at issue is the contrast between the life of the town and that of the country and this in turn will be a prominent consideration in both Chapters 4 and 5. Essential to the argument in both these cases will be the Roman response to the Attic association of the city with indolence and luxury and of the country with self-denial and toil. In particular, attention will be drawn to the contemporary representation of the rustic life as the foundation of traditional Roman culture and the indictment of the city as the fount of new ways which are both luxurious and fundamen-

²⁴ Cic. *Hort.* fr. 10 Grilli = Don. *de com.* 5. 1: 'comoediam esse Cicero ait imitationem vitae, speculum consuetudinis, imaginem veritatis'. See also Don. *de com.* 5. 5 apparently also quoting Cicero: 'aitque esse comoediam cotidianae vitae speculum, nec iniuria. nam ut intenti speculo veritatis lineamenta facile per imaginem colligimus, ita lectione comoediae imitationem vitae consuetudinisque non aegerrime animadvertimus.'

²⁵ Men. test. 83 K-A = Syrian. in Hermog. *Π. σάς.* 1 (p. 29, 18 R.), ii. 22, 25 R.: ὦ Μένανδρε καὶ βίε | πότερος ἄρ' ὑμῶν πότερον ἀπεμμήσατο: For similar verdicts cf. Men. test. 94 K-A = Manil. 5. 476 describing the comic poet as 'qui vitae ostendit vitam'; Men. test. 101 K-A = Quint. *inst.* 10. 1. 69 stating that Menander 'omnem vitae imaginem expressit'.

²⁶ The playwright to whom Cicero refers, Caecilius Statius, has often been treated as a partial forerunner of the naturalistic mode of Terence and it might serve the orator's case were that true. For a survey of such claims but also vigorous arguments against their validity, see Wright (1974) 87-126.

tally Hellenic. The Plautine response to this is to set a play in Athens, then have the rustic slave indict his spendthrift urban counterpart for Greeking it up; the urban wag responds by speaking to him in Greek.²⁷ Terence does none of this. Yet not even his care to preserve the smooth surface of post-Menandrean naturalism has spared the *Adelphoe* from interpretation as an image of Roman life and this tradition appears again to be as old as Cicero.²⁸

The perception of the world of the *palliata* as fundamentally foreign is often bound up with the notion that some of what it presents would be deemed impossibly scandalous if placed in a Roman setting. Crucial to this approach is the statement of Donatus that the slaves of the *palliata* are allowed to be represented as cleverer than their masters but that generally (*ferè*) this is forbidden in the *togata*.²⁹ Now the fact that this is said to be only generally the case should warn against the assertion of any absolute rules.³⁰ But, more importantly, the very notion of a form of New Comedy set in Rome or Italy must also offer some potential objective correlative for the subjective reading strategy described above for the *palliata*. And this is indeed the case.

The three authors of the *comœdia togata* substantial remains of whose work have been preserved are Titinius, Afranius, and Atta. There is no firm evidence to date the first,³¹ but the statement by Afranius that he has imitated both Menander and his Latin counterpart, that is, Terence, places him most probably in the mid- to late second century,³² and Jerome's attribution of the death of Atta to 77 BC probably puts him even later still.³³ The further implication of Afranius' avowed debt to Terence and Menander, that plays from Greek New Comedy

²⁷ See pp. 101–5.

²⁸ This at least would be the implication of Cic. *Cato* 65 where Cato the Elder refers to the *Adelphoe* and greatly prefers the 'comitas' of Micio to the 'durities' or 'dirtas' (see Powell (1988) ad loc. for the text) of Demea. The sly joke is that Cato is appalled by the very character whom readers have regularly associated with his own ways.

²⁹ Don. at Ter. *Eun.* 57: 'concessum est in palliata poetis comicis servos dominis sapientiores fingere, quod idem in togata non fere licet.'

³⁰ Afran. *com.* 189–91 = Non. p. 409 L certainly suggests the attempts of son and slave to deceive the father. See also Afran. *com.* 251 = Non. p. 823 L.

³¹ Fuss's emendation of Lyd. *Mag.* 1. 40 τὸ τετίνιος to τότε Τετίνιος would place the comic poet as early as 219 BC but there is nothing else to support such a date. Daviault (1981) 31–4 is more sympathetic to the notion than Guardì (1985) 18–19.

³² Afran. *com.* 25–8 = Macr. *Sat.* 6. 1. 4 cf. *com.* 29 = Suet. *vita Ter.* fr. 5 Rostagni. It is significant that this claim is made in the prologue to a play the title of which *Comptitalia* suggests a specifically Roman festival. For Afranius and Menander, see also Cic. *fin.* 1. 7 cf. Hor. *epist.* 2. 1. 57.

³³ Suet. *vita Att.* fr. 1 Rostagni = Hier. *chron.* ad Ol. 175. 4.