

overconfident. But Brasidas decides no. If he is going to commit his troops, he has a better chance with a staggered surprise attack. He accordingly eschews the putative benefits of making his enemy contemptuous (5. 8. 3). Also, he assumes or knows that Cleon expects reinforcements.⁹ Brasidas will accordingly attack before any reinforcements can arrive. This will be the sense in which Cleon's troops are *μεμονωμένους* at 5. 8. 4.

Finally, when Brasidas, addressing his troops before the battle (5. 9. 3), alludes to Athenian contempt, he is again back in the context of the Athenian view of him and his 1,500 troops on Cerdylion, when the Athenians did not have any means of forming an accurate estimate of his troop strength.¹⁰ They never do, in fact, until too late, when Clearidas bursts out of the Thracian Gate in the second phase of Brasidas' successful battle plan.¹¹

To sum up, Thucydides does not lose his way when he tells us what Brasidas is thinking. Whether Brasidas is soliloquizing or addressing troops, his assessment at each point of the narrative is in accordance with what it should be at the time and place stipulated. Thucydides, as he writes, seems to put himself inside Brasidas, a position from which he can gauge how Brasidas would change responses as position and circumstances changed. It is such attention to detail that distinguishes the best writers.

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9. *Βρασίδης δὲ πυνθανόμενος ταῦτα . . .* (5. 6. 3).

10. The phrase *ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄντος καταφρονήσεως* at 5. 8. 3 stipulates contempt arising from the true situation (*τοῦ ὄντος*) because, as 5. 9. 3 shows, Brasidas can also encourage his troops with the hope that Cleon will be contemptuous out of a false notion of Brasidas' strength.

11. It is by no means a necessary inference from 5. 10. 2 that Cleon, who was outside the city, could count all of Brasidas' troops in the city.

AN UNNOTICED RULE OF PLAUTINE METER

In a regular lyric meter in Plautus whose normal form contains two consecutive *longa*, if the verse is syncopated by omitting one of these *longa*, then (a) the syllable omitted will be the second of the two, and (b) a word break will occur at that point. The rule has two unequivocal applications, one in cretic and one in bacchiac systems. Most cretics in Plautus come in tetrameters:

— ◡ — | — ◡ — || — ◡ — | — ◡ — [Capt. 239]
nam secun- dum patrem tu's pater proxumus.

There is a diaeresis between the two halves of the verse; otherwise, word breaks may occur, or fail to occur, at any point. Occasionally we meet a shortened form, in which only one *longum* occurs at the juncture of the third and fourth feet:

— ◡ — | — ◡ — || — ◡ — ◡ — [Pseud. 1285]
uox uiri pessumi me exciet foras.

This is the most common syncopated verse form in Plautus, and it has been mentioned by those who have discussed Plautine meter.¹ Although nobody has commented on the fact, these lines almost always show a word break before the next-to-last syllable. Out of sixty-one such lines, at least fifty-five² have such a break, a circumstance whose random probability is less than one in a trillion.³

In bacchiacs we find, rather less commonly, a form in which the next-to-last foot has one *longum* rather than two:

$\cup \text{---} | \cup \text{---} : : \text{---} | \cup \text{---} | \cup \text{---}$
 adaeque miser :: ludo ego hunc facete; [Cas. 685]

According to our rule, such lines should show a diaeresis before the last foot: eleven of thirteen cases do so.⁴ There are other shortened forms of cretics and bacchiacs: $\text{---} \cup \cup \text{---}$, $\cup \text{---} \text{---}$, and $\cup \text{---} \cup \text{---}$, to mention the most common. To none of them would our rule apply, and none shows any obligatory word break.

All of the exceptions to the rule may be plausibly explained or emended. Four of them have, instead of a word break, a juncture between a separable prefix and the root: *ad-uenis*, *red-didi*, *ac-cubat*, *im-peratum est*,⁵ and we may perhaps add *op-pido*,⁶ if the *op-* was felt to be a prefix. For two more, Lindsay had already proposed emendations which would remove them from our list,⁷ and the last could also be "fixed" by a trifling correction,⁸ though I do not think it is necessary: Plautus was anything but a rigid versifier.

1. In English, W. M. Lindsay, *Early Latin Verse* (Oxford, 1922; repr. 1968), pp. 293–94. In current handbooks, J. W. Halporn, M. Ostwald, and T. G. Rosenmeyer, *The Meters of Greek and Latin Poetry* (Indianapolis and New York, 1963), p. 88; and D. S. Raven, *Latin Metre* (London, 1965), p. 127. Lindsay scanned $\cup | \text{---} \cup \text{---}$, and others have suggested $\cup | \text{---} \cup | \text{---} \wedge$. In view of the rule here noted, I presume that the correct scansion is $\text{---} \cup \text{---} | \cup \text{---}$.

2. *Bacch.* 26, 621, 622, 643, 645, 650, 663–65, 667, *Cas.* 873, 942, 952–53, *Curc.* 117, *Ep.* 169, *Most.* 109, 133, 134, 141, 337, 338, 343, 345, 690–92, 694, 695, 698–701, 707–11, 714, 717, *Pseud.* 258, 261–63, 1109, 1112, 1280a, 1285, 1287, 1288, 1291, 1294, 1300, *Truc.* 116–18 (my list is based on Lindsay's text and analysis). The six exceptions are *Amph.* 242, *Capt.* 836, *Most.* 113, 136, *Pseud.* 1309, 1311.

3. The probability—lest I be accused of inventing the figure—is

$$\sum_{n=55}^{61} \binom{61}{n} (.45)^n (.55)^{61-n},$$

taking the probability of such a break as .45 on the basis of a random sampling of some six hundred lines from the *Epidicus* and the *Menaechmi*.

4. *Bacch.* 1121a, 1139, 1140a, *Cas.* 662, 673–74, 685, 695, 702, *Men.* 763a, *Rud.* 287, 289. The two exceptions are *Most.* 314 and 796.

5. *Capt.* 836, *Pseud.* 1309, 1311, *Most.* 314.

6. *Most.* 136.

7. *Conspicatus* for *conspicatus est*, *Amph.* 242; *hasc' uenum dedisse* for *hasce uendidisse*, *Most.* 796.

8. For *iam est usus* (*Most.* 113), one might read *iám | usus est*, giving an unsyncopated cretic. There are also sixteen cases where the sequence $\text{---} \cup \text{---} \cup \text{---}$ appears either alone or as the first half of a line; of these ten (*Bacch.* 621, 643, 645, *Cas.* 942, *Cist.* 16, *Pseud.* 1112, 1280a, 1292, 1308, 1310) have a diaeresis before the penultimate syllable; three (*Pseud.* 1109, 1293, *Rud.* 231) have a separable prefix there; one is an uncertain reading (*Pseud.* 1308a, where the reading of the Ambrosian palimpsest, *tactus est Ballio*, would remove it from our list), and two are halves of lines that do not appear to be cretic at all (*Epid.* 67 and 68a, where the first shows a morpheme break any-

I am certain that Plautus never dreamed of a rule such as I have formulated. Why, then, did he observe it? There hardly seems to have been any need to break up the cretic tetrameter, which was already short and split in half by a diaeresis. Nor can the word break have been heard as part of a regular system, for these syncopations do not generally come in groups, but are rather occasional sports in longer, more or less regular, cretic and bacchiac systems.

But these "systems" were songs sung to a tune. It is at least possible to suggest that, where our text is predominantly cretic or bacchiac, the tune was even more regularly so, so that even syncopated lines might be sung to the tune of an *un*-syncopated tetrameter,⁹



 uox uiri pessumi mē exciet foras.

It would surely be awkward to have a single word straddling the one-*longum* rest; and this will be why Plautus regularly avoided such a thing. Had he placed the pause at the end of the third foot, rather than the beginning of the fourth, he would have left a short syllable before the pause: such a syllable would probably not be short at all, but an *anceps*, which would have no place in the middle of the line. In musical terms, I should think that the singer would either have to cut the syllable unnaturally short before the pause, or let it carry over inelegantly into the next note. Where the second *longum* is omitted rather than the first, the inelegance is avoided.¹⁰

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way). Two of our exceptions here, and another two in the first list (n. 2), belong to the drunken Pseudolus; I do not think this is accidental.

9. Some syncopations are too extreme for this explanation; there the tune must surely have changed.

10. My thanks to Professor G. P. Goold for introducing me to the labyrinth of Plautine metrics, and to much else in Latin letters.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF PRISCUS FRAGMENT 6

O. J. Maenchen-Helfen has conclusively demonstrated that the great Hun War mentioned in fragments 3 and 5 of Priscus occurred in 447.¹ The Peace of Anatolius mentioned in fragment 5 must therefore be dated to the same year. E. A. Thompson mistakenly dates the Peace of Anatolius to 443, and assigns fragment 6 to the following year (444).² I contend that fragment 6 is to be dated to 441 and not to either 444 or 447, in spite of the fact that fragment 6 follows fragment 5 in the *Excerpta de legationibus gentium*.

Priscus says in fragment 6 that after a certain treaty with the Romans the Huns sent repeated embassies to Constantinople on the pretext of demanding the

1. *The World of the Huns* (Berkeley, 1973), pp. 111–25.

2. *A History of Attila and the Huns* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 87–88.