

Aemilius's dying message to Fabius, stories which need not be totally rejected as apocryphal<sup>12)</sup>, but also by the family connection with the Fabii established by his son.

If this is so, the election of Aemilius Paulus will represent a compromise between the Scipionic group and the Fabii, under which Fabius withdrew his threat to invalidate the elections in return for the election of one consul who, though a leading member of the Scipionic group, was personally acceptable to him.

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## THE AUTHOR OF THE GREEK ORIGINAL OF THE POENULUS

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Adequate analysis of all the theories that have, like barnacles, attached themselves to that rather poor Plautine play, the *Poenulus*, would require a volume of gargantuan size. The aim of this essay is modest: to track down finally the author of the Greek original used by Plautus as his main source; consequently the larger questions, dealing with the methods of Plautus in adapting his Greek originals, will here be considered only insofar as they become relevant to my main thesis. This is, that Alexis' 'Karchedonios' lies behind Plautus' play; the theory has previously been propounded by Bergk<sup>1)</sup> and others, and it is on the foundation of their positive if uncertain arguments that I desire to build here. It is hoped that the resulting edifice will then be able to stand firm and stormproof.

Dietze first rested this theory on a firm foundation when he pointed out in a dissertation<sup>2)</sup> that the one remaining fragment of Alexis' 'Karchedonios' (Kock, CAF II 331, 100): βάρη-λος εἰ appears to be translated at *Poenulus* 1318: *Nam te*

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12) The story of the death of Aemilius in Livy XXII. 49. 6—12 probably goes back to a contemporary source.

1) Griechische Literaturgeschichte, IV (1887), 154 n. 116.

2) C. A. Dietze, *De Philemone comico* (*Diss. Acad. Georg. Aug.*, (1901)), p. 82.

*cinaedum esse arbitror*. The Alexis fragment is far too short for the concurrence to be conclusive, but it remains positive evidence. G. Zuntz and H. Lucas<sup>3)</sup> rediscovered the tie independently, and the latter pointed out Gellius' statement<sup>4)</sup> that Alexis was one of the Greek comic poets known to have been adapted by Roman playwrights for the Roman stage: a statement apparently verified by the comparison of fr. V of Turpilius' *Demetrius* (Ribbeck ed. 3, II p. 101) with the beginning of a fragment of Alexis' 'Demetrius' (K II 314, 46)<sup>5)</sup>. Lucas, however, is not content with this, which shows a possible connexion, even though tenuous, between Alexis' and Plautus' plays; he tries to argue further that Alexis, as a native of Thurii, would be more likely than other Greek poets to have possessed a knowledge of the Punic tongue, and that the geographical closeness of Thurii to Rome would tend to make Plautus interested in Alexis' plays. Both these ideas are falsely based; the former, because Plautus himself may have been responsible for the introduction of the passage in Punic into his play, and the latter, because Alexis, whatever his origins, wrote as an Athenian and not as a South Italian composer of farces.

There is further evidence in support of Alexis' claim; but before it is stated, it will be as well to consider the claim to *Poenulus* fatherhood of the other Greek playwright to whom a 'Karchedonios' is definitely attributed: Menander<sup>6)</sup>. The extant

3) G. Zuntz, *Mnemosyne* V (N. S.), 1937, 61 n. 1; H. Lucas, *Rh. Mus.* LXXXVIII, 1939, 189 f.

4) ii 23, 1: *comoedias lectitamus nostrorum poetarum sumptas ac versas de Graecis, Menandro aut Posidippo aut Apollodoro aut Alexide et quibusdam item aliis comicis.*

5) The tie was discovered by Scaliger (*Coniect. in Varronem*, 159): *vide* Ribbeck, *ad loc.*

6) The claim of Menander, it must be admitted, has been strongly favoured; its adherents include Wilamowitz (*Neue Jahrbücher*, III 1899, 517 n. 1: cf. his *Menander, Das Schiedsgericht*, p. 147 n. 1), Körte (*Berichte Sächs. Akad., Leipzig, Ph.-H. Kl.*, LXXI 1919, vi 31; G. G. A. CXC 1933, 373; *Menander, Reliquiae* (Teubner) II p. 88), B. Krysiniel (*Eos* XXXIV 1932-3, 1 ff.) and Professor T. B. L. Webster (*Studies in Menander*, 132 ff.). The arguments that they produce, however, are all (with the flimsy exception of the ἀσχοπιτήνη-*marsuppio* tie) circumstantial: persuasive, but circumstantial. To cite the most important, (i), "The general shape of the *Poenulus*, deception followed by recognition, is known from the 'Epitrepontes', *Andria*, and other plays by Menander" (Prof. Webster, *loc. cit.*). The absence of any complete play of Alexis prevents our averring with certainty the same about him, of course; but if my interpretation of the title and fragments of the 'Agonis' or 'Hippiskos' is correct (see below), it

fragments from his play afford no ties with the *Poenulus*; admittedly, as Professor Webster points out, they are generally too vague to give any help one way or the other (Körte 228, 230, 231, 233), and Körte 232 ἀσκοπιτήνη may just possibly be translated by *marzuppio* at *Poen.* 782 (cf. 784). But two fragments presuppose situations alien to the Latin play. In Körte 227 a man is reflecting in terms which suggest doubt over his parent-hood; and how can Körte 226, which refers to a sacrifice to Boreas, be reconciled with a play whose plot revolves round the Aphrodisia festival, as the *Poenulus* does? Argument from negative evidence is always a risky undertaking, but in view of the total absence of cogent ties between the Menandrian fragments and the *Poenulus*, how can any general similarities of dramatic treatment, such as Professor Webster and others have noted between the *Poenulus* and Menander, have any strong weight against the arguments in favour of Alexis?

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seems not improbable that in this play there was a trick and a recognition. (ii) Several similarities of detail have been noted by the above scholars, of which the most striking are the resemblance between passages of the Menander 'Misoumenos' papyrus and *Poenulus* 1122 ff. and 1296 ff. (Körte, *loc. cit.* and R. E. XV i 750; cf. W. Theiler, *Hermes* LXXIII 1938, 294), and the use of broken dialogue to suggest excitement at *Poenulus* 428—41 and in Menander, Pk. 264 ff. Körte alleges that broken dialogue of this kind occurs only in Menander of new-comedy writers — a safe enough argument, considering the small number of new-comedy papyri which can be firmly attributed to their authors. Yet when we discover a similar technique in Euripides (Bacch. 966—70) and Aristophanes (Plut. 391 ff., 400 ff.), how can we deny to Alexis and others the right to imitate methods of dialogue technique already well-known?

It may be noted here that Menander and Alexis are not the sole claimants to the paternity of the *Poenulus*, although these two playwrights alone are known to have written a 'Karchedonios'. W. H. Friedrich (Euripides und Diphilos, Munich 1953 (Zetemata 5), 233 ff.) compares the general structure of the *Poenulus* with that of the Rudens, and suggests from this that Diphilos may have been the author of the main original used by Plautus for his *Poenulus*. In the absence of positive ties between the *Poenulus* and Diphilos, and the lack of any Carthaginian title for the latter, Friedrich's arguments are tentative, to say the least; cf. G. Zuntz, *L'Antiquité Classique*, xxiii 1954, 198 f. P. Legrand (*Revue des Etudes grecques*, xvi 1903, 358 ff.) seeks to account for the flaws in the plot of the *Poenulus* by the assumption that Plautus' original was a second-rate play by a deservedly unknown author, first produced in Calydon ca. 221 B. C. The weaknesses in this striking theory are (i) the fact, admitted by Legrand himself, that no theatre has been discovered in Calydon; and (ii) that to arrive at the late dating of Plautus' original, emendation and combination over v. 664 of the *Poenulus* are necessary.

In any case, these general similarities of treatment can be easily reconciled with Plautus' choice of Alexis, not Menander, as a main source. Of course, we have no long passages of Alexis that will prove his style and his methods to have resembled Menander's; but we do have an ancient tradition preserved by an anonymous tractate about comedy<sup>7</sup>), which relates that Μένανδρος . . . . . συνδιατρίψας δὲ τὰ πολλὰ Ἀλέξει, ὑπὸ τούτου ἐδόκει παιδευθῆναι. Either this tradition is historically true, or else, if false, it is probably based on such similarity of treatment of plots and the like as would lead later gossip writers to interpret it by the assumption of a pupil-teacher relationship between Menander and Alexis. Such a relationship would lead us to expect some similarities of detail between the two poets other than those of plot organisation; the careful reader will accordingly not be surprised when he finds that Menander, Körte fr. 416 and Terence, Adelph. 739 ff. (which derives from Menander) are profounder restatements of themes we find in Alexis, frs. 219 and 34 respectively<sup>8</sup>).

But what evidence is there that Alexis wrote plays of the type we call "new comedy"? His *floruit*, first of all: Athenaeus cites him as the author of a 'Hypobolimaïos' which contains a clear allusion to the marriage of Ptolemy Philadelphus and his sister Arsinoe in the seventies of the third century<sup>9</sup>). There is no reason to doubt the attribution, for we have independent evidence of Alexis' longevity<sup>10</sup>), and we need not date his

7) Dübner, *Scholia Graeca ad Aristophanem*, XV; Westermann, *Biogr. Gr. Min.*, 163 ff.; Kaibel, C. G. F. I p. 9. The Suda (s. v. Ἀλεξίς) turns this teacher-pupil relationship into one of blood: Alexis becomes Menander's paternal uncle. This kinship seems very difficult if Alexis was indeed a native of Thurii (as the same Suda note attests) and Menander's father an Athenian of high caste. And so Kaibel is probably right to interpret the alleged kinship as 'bloße Kombination' of the other relationship (R. E. I 1468, 29); none the less, it is just possible to reconcile the two statements; for instance, Menander's father and Alexis could have been separated at a very early age by some misfortune such as kidnapping, and Alexis thus transferred to southern Italy.

8) The relation between Alexis, fr. 219 and Menander, fr. 416 Körte is well discussed by G. Zuntz in Proc. Brit. Acad., XLII 234 ff.

9) Athenaeus x 431 b, xi 502 b. The evidence for the dating of the wedding is cited by Pfeiffer, on Callimachus, fr. 392 (p. 322).

10) Plutarch, *Moralia* 420e (*Defect. Orac.*), says that at death Alexis had reached double the age of Metrodorus; Metrodorus died fifty-three years old (Kroll, R. E. XV 1477). If we allow for the exaggerations or inaccuracies probable in this sort of statement, we can give to Alexis a span of about ninety to a hundred years. Plutarch is unlikely to have exaggerated

earliest plays more than a few years before Plato's death<sup>11</sup>). The title 'Hypobolimaïos' furthermore, seems more in keeping with a play of the new rather than the middle comedy. Secondly, consideration of the fragments and titles that we have of Alexis leads to the conclusion that he wrote plays of the Poenulus kind. Let us examine first the play entitled 'Agonis' or 'Hippiskos'. The Suda tells us that Agonis is the name of a hetaira, and *ἑπίσκοτος*, explained by L.S.J. as an ornament for the head, would serve well as a recognition token. Fragment 2 (K II 297) seems to be the description of a trick for obtaining money or credit, as the words of the second speaker indicate: ἀλλὰ ταυθ' ὅλως / πρὸς ἀλαζονείαν οὐ κακῶς νενηγμέν' ἦν<sup>12</sup>). Here, then, we may well possess three ingredients of plot-construction: hetaira heroine, recognition, and deceit, that occur in the Poenulus also, whatever Plautus' source or sources may have been. Of a second play of Alexis, the 'Demetrios' or 'Philetairos', we can reconstruct a few characters and incidents by looking at the fragments left of the play which Turpilius made by translating it<sup>13</sup>). Fragment II R appears to be the words of a young man, possibly the play's hero, whose shyness and inexperience are revealed by what he says. The object of this young man's love may well be the hetaira with whom in one scene he holds

much; there is an anecdote about Alexis as a very old man (Stobaeus, 50b 83 Hense), and the number of plays he is supposed to have written (245 according to the Suda: we know more than 130 titles) would presuppose a long dramatic career. Plutarch, *Moralia* 785b (*Sen. Admin. Re. Pub.*) relates that he died an active dramatic poet.

11) Several plays mention Plato as still alive (fr. 1, 180, and probably also 147 and 152): i. e. they date from before 348—7. Restoration of the *Marmor Parium* gives to Alexis a probable first victory at the City Dionysia in 356 (Capps, A. J. Ph. XXI 1900, 60); IG II<sup>2</sup> 2325 (= II 977) puts his first Lenaea victory above that of Aristophon (351—0), i. e. prior to it. We may accordingly date the beginning of Alexis' dramatic career some time before 356; Prof. Webster (S. L. G. C. p. 239 and C. Q. II (N.S.) 1952, 15—16) and Schiassi (R. F. I. C. LXXIX 1951, 222) suggest that Alexis' first plays date from the late 360's, but there is no compelling reason to push back the date of these plays so far before 356.

12) Athenaeus vi 230 b introduces part of this fragment with the explanation that Alexis is here putting on the stage a young man in love displaying his wealth to his beloved (*νεανίσκον παράγων ἐρωῶντα καὶ ἐπιδεικνύμενον τὸν πλοῦτον τῇ ἐρωμένῃ*). A glance at the fragment itself shows that Athenaeus' words are incorrect: the first speaker (presumably Athenaeus' 'young man') is describing a display of wealth that he has made already in the past. Perhaps Athenaeus has misread a context in which the young man is telling his beloved about his ἀλαζονεία in making this past display.

13) The fragments are in Ribbeck, S. R. P. F. II (3rd edn), 100 ff.

a conversation, and who perhaps is a free-born girl orphaned of her parents, if we interpret fr. XIII correctly. Certainly the young man is guilty of a trick on his father, as fr. XVI indicates. These incidents all have parallels in the Poenulus, though there admittedly the trick is on the pimp.

The evidence from these two plays shows that Alexis was capable of writing a play on the lines of the Poenulus, and it can be readily supplemented. For instance, the 'Daktylios' and 'Kalasiris' (a garment of Egyptian origin)<sup>14</sup> seem to indicate recognition tokens; the 'Tokistes' or 'Katapseudomenos' title is evidence enough for a plot based on deceit; many titles are drawn from hetairai names, and probably a good proportion of these are *personae fictae*<sup>15</sup>. The 'Thrason' suggests a soldier hero<sup>16</sup>, as does the 'Stratiotes', from which fragment 209 (K II 373) deals with a dispute over a baby in terms which recall immediately the arbitration scene in the 'Epitrepontes'<sup>17</sup>. The title 'Pannychis' suggests strongly that that play dealt with the consequences of the rape of a free-born girl at a night festival, just as a similar one set in motion the plot of the 'Epitrepontes'<sup>18</sup>.

From the words in the fragments themselves, we may note other points of similarity between Alexis and the Poenulus<sup>19</sup>. Fragment 253 (K II 389) mentions Aphrodisia festivals,

14) Herodotus ii 81.

15) E. g., the 'Agonis', the 'Isostasion', and the 'Polykleia'.

16) See Breitenbach, *De genere quodam titulorum comoediae atticae* (Basel 1908), 59 ff.

17) "Recalls" is hardly the right word, however, for Alexis' play must antedate Menander's by many years; fr. 209 parodies the famous Halonnesos quibble of Demosthenes, and so the play cannot be dated much later than 343. Topical jokes of this variety (i. e. dealing with a situation, not a personal characteristic) go stale very quickly.

18) Cf. also Eubulus' play of this name, and R. E. XVIII 3, p. 631, 43 ff., where Eubulus' title is referred to the Stenia. Prof. Webster (S. L. G. C., p. 83) has the attractive idea that Pannychis may have been a prologue figure in the two plays; this would not, of course, alter the interpretation of the play that is suggested above.

19) It may be worth while here to cite verbal echoes between Alexis and Plautus, which indicate common use of the same common stock, if no more. In several places Plautus says the same thing in similar language as Alexis, and these places are by no means always platitudinous. For instance, cf. Alexis K II 326, 90 and *Captivi* 277—8 (same joke on *πλούσιος*); Alexis 167, 4 and *Poenulus* 700 (toothless wine); Alexis 172, 5 and *Pseudolus* 884 finger-eating); Alexis 390, 254 and 392, 259 and *Poenulus* 238—9 (the mean). The correspondence between Alexis 364, 178 vv. 1—2 and *Menaechmi*

one of which plays so large a part in the *Poenulus*; did the Philousa, from which the fragment derives, have a plot focused on the same festival? In fr. 108 (K II 334) a father is contrasting the characters of his two sons, the one a good-for-nothing drunkard, the other a rustic bumpkin<sup>20</sup>). It is hard to believe that these two sons were not presented on the stage with characters contrasted in the way outlined by their father's words, just as the two sisters are vividly contrasted in the *Poenulus*. In the play from which this fragment originates, the 'Kouris', there was clearly a  $\chi\omega\mu\omicron\varsigma$  chorus of the type usual in new comedy<sup>21</sup>): another link with Menandrian usage.

More evidence of this sort can be adduced, linking details of subject matter and incident in the *Poenulus* with Alexis; but this is enough, since, when all is said, such evidence proves only that Alexis could have written, not that he did write, the Greek original which Plautus used as his primary source for the *Poenulus*. To prove the latter true, the  $\beta\acute{\alpha}\kappa\eta\lambda\omicron\varsigma$   $\epsilon\iota$  tie discovered by Dietze is suggestive but not sufficient; we must supplement and strengthen it by the discovery of a more cogent tie between Plautus' *Poenulus* and Alexis. Such a tie undoubtedly exists, though to my knowledge the correct deduction has not hitherto been made from it<sup>22</sup>). When the *advocati* are hurried onto the

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77 may be accidental. E. Fraenkel (*Plautinisches im Plautus*, 26 ff., 50 ff., and 170 f.) cites instances in Plautus of idiomatic Greek figures that are to be found in Alexis. To the two examples given by him at 26 ff., Alexis, K II 380, 227 may be added.

20) Cf. Menander, 'Hypobolimaïos' (Körte, Menander: *Reliquiae* II 146 ff.; T. B. L. Webster, *Studies in Menander*, 100 f.; and G. Zuntz, op. cit. in n. 8, 236 f.).

21) As Leo, *Hermes* XLIII 1908, 308, was the first to point out; fr. 107 from Alexis' 'Kouris' contains the same kind of formula as we find in Menander for the introduction of a  $\chi\omega\mu\omicron\varsigma$ -chorus.

22) So far as I know, this tie lurked unseen until F. Ostermayer in a Greifswald dissertation (*De historia fabulari in comoediis Plautinis*, 1884, 4 f.) quoted these two passages as one of nine examples designed to show "*quam arcte coniunctus sit poeta Umber cum Graecis exemplaribus*". First sight of these words led me to believe that my arguments alleging Alexis as Plautus' chief model for his *Poenulus* had been anticipated. However, somewhat surprisingly, Ostermayer's sole purpose hereabouts was to illustrate the closeness (a very debatable proposition: see n. 24) of Plautus' rendering of the original Greek, and no conclusions connecting Plautus' *Poenulus* and Alexis' 'Karchedonios' were drawn. The absence of any such conclusion seems quite remarkable: did Ostermayer perhaps regard the Alexis fragment as merely stereotyped rendering of a commonplace that was repeated elsewhere in similar terms in Greek comedy?

stage by the eager Agorastocles, their leader chides him for his haste (522 ff.):

liberos homines per urbem modico magi' par est gradu  
ire, servoli esse duco festinantem currere —  
praesertim in re populi placida atque interfectis hostibus  
non decet tumultuari.

The sentiment would, no doubt, sound truly Roman to the ears of Plautus' audience, but it is wrong to argue from this (as a recent scholar has done<sup>23</sup>) that the lines are a Plautine invention. The Athenians also believed that a hurried gait was unworthy of a free man, although apparently they never expressed the belief in set terms such as would turn precept into proverbial commonplace<sup>24</sup>). Among those Attic writers who refer to the precept is Alexis, in a fragment (K II 393, 263) from an unknown play:

ἐν γὰρ νομίζω τοῦτο τῶν ἀνελευθέρων  
εἶναι, τὸ βαδίζειν ἀρρόθμως ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς,  
ἐξὸν καλῶς· οὐ μήτε πράττεται τέλος  
μηδέ(ν τ)ις ἡμᾶς, μήτε τιμὴν δόντα δεῖ  
ἐτέρῳ λαβεῖν, φέρει δὲ τοῖς μὲν χρωμένοις  
δόξης τιν' ὄγκον, τοῖς δ' ὀρώσιν ἡδονήν,  
κόσμον δὲ τῷ βίῳ, τὸ τοιοῦτον γέρας  
τίς οὐκ ἂν αὐτῷ κτῆτο φάσκων νοῦν ἔχειν;

23) R. Perna, *L'Originalità di Plauto*, Bari 1955, 166, after making this statement, goes so far as to claim that Roman custom was of itself sufficient to account for Plautus' words. The claim I think untenable; a more reasonable assumption is that Plautus found in his Greek original an image reflecting an Athenian social custom and ethical judgement which could be exactly and comprehensibly paralleled in Rome, and so he was able to render that image in his own language with a Roman allusion added on.

24) Fourth-century remarks on walking decently include Plato, *Charmides* 159 b (where Charmides says that to walk *κοσμίως καὶ . . . ἡσυχῇ* in public is a mark of *σωφροσύνη*); Demosthenes xxxvii 55 (where Nicobulus attacks Pantaenetus as a blackguard although he is *δ' ἀτρέμας βαδίζων*: i. e. social propriety is not incompatible with moral obloquy); and Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* iv 1125a 12 (*κίνησις βραδεῖα* is a mark of the *μεγαλόφυχος*). To walk quickly was as improper as to stare at the ground as one walked (*Philemon* II 479 f., 5 v. 2; *Theophrastus*, Chr. XXIV). Extant comedy makes no allusion to adult behaviour in this way, so far as I know, with the exceptions of the quoted passages; *Aristophanes*, *Nub.* 964, which describes boys crocodyling to their music-master, praises their old-fashioned general orderliness, not specifically their gait.



It seems very likely that this fragment derives from the 'Karchedonios', and that Plautus has taken it as his model for that part of the speech of the *advocati* beginning at *Poen.* 522. That Plautus should have changed iambs into trochaics, or replaced the general Athenian reflections of vv. 3—8 of the Alexis fragment by a briefer, Roman allusion, is not surprising; that is how we should have expected Plautus to work<sup>25</sup>). But the translation of Alexis' first two lines by *Poen.* 523 is too close for us to assume that we have here a chance correspondence of platitudes; only one conclusion can be reasonably drawn. Plautus was translating Alexis as his primary model for the *Poenulus*.

Thus we may reasonably deduce that in Plautus' play act III scene i (the first entrance of the *advocati*) and act V scene v (the soldier's discovery of the Carthaginian and Anterastilis embracing) derive from Alexis' play, at least; and it would be tempting to go further and suppose that in the original play the *advocati* and the Carthaginian were concerned together in the same intrigue. Tempting, but not wise: for we have no means of discovering Alexis' own plot and how that may have differed from Plautus' adaptation of it. If we had objective means to this end, it is unlikely that we should have so many different and irreconcilable solutions to the question how Plautus con-

25) There are hardly any passages of Plautus of any length that may be checked against the original Greek from which they have been adapted, and none, so far as I know, that can be cited as a relevant or instructive example to compare against the present Alexis-*Poenulus* tie. For instance, although *Cistellaria* 89 ff. can be shown to translate Menander, fr. 382 Körte, the fact that their common subject matter is the narration of the antecedents of the plot makes the exactness of Plautus' rendering necessary, and so we can make no inferences therefrom about the probable Plautine treatment of non-narrative passages such as the present one of Alexis. Previous attempts, such as those made by Ostermayer (loc. cit. in n. 22) and F. Groh (Listy Filologike, XIX 1892, 1—16), to investigate Plautine methods of translation by the comparison of Latin passages with the Greek originals are handicapped from the start by the lack of passages in the original Greek, and Groh's conclusions are further bedevilled by his seeing ties where none exist (e. g., in his comparison of the frs. of Menander's 'Adelphoi' with the *Stichus*). In general, the only way at present viable of approaching objectively the question of Plautus' treatment of particular passages in his originals is that followed by Fraenkel in his 'Plautinisches im Plautus': the comparison of typical and traditional motifs in later Greek comedy and in Plautus: and we should have no difficulty in accepting Fraenkel's conclusion (406 ff.) that particular passages of the original Greek plays provide raw material only, to be worked on, expanded and abbreviated at will, however much that destroys the shape and organisation of the play.

structed his *Poenulus*<sup>26</sup>). Did he model it closely on an incompetent plot of Alexis (and to assume that Alexis, brought up in a comic tradition that was nearer in time to the unintegrated plots of the 'Plutus' and 'Ecclesiazousai' than to the flawless constructions of Menander, was incapable of putting onto the stage a plot as badly organised as that of the *Poenulus*, is dangerous in the absence of positive evidence) — or did he in fact take the Carthaginian story from Alexis and the Collybiscus trick from another source? The latter alternative would

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26) Satisfactory discussion of Plautus' treatment of his Greek original/ originals in the *Poenulus* would be possible only if the original Greek were extant. This not being so, the conclusions drawn by various scholars after the valuable and detailed analysis of the Latin version alone are unconfirmed, and must remain speculative since they are based on — not false, but — uncertain hypotheses. Consequently, any of several theories about Plautus' composition may be correct. He *may* have fused incompetently two Greek plays into a whole, one dealing with the Carthaginian's rediscovery of his daughter (i. e. the Greek 'Karchedonios', corresponding in Plautus' play to parts of Act V and the prologue), and the other concerned with the Collybiscus intrigue (unknown Greek original). This theory was propounded by P. Langen, *Plautinische Studien* (= *Berliner Studien*, V), 1886, 181 ff., and developed in detail by F. Leo, *Plautinische Forschungen* (1895), 153 ff. More recently it has found new support from G. Jachmann, who in 'Plautinisches und Attisches' (1931), 195 ff. defended it against Fraenkel (see below), and from W. Theiler, *Hermes*, LXXIII 1938, 289 ff. K. Karsten, *Mnemosyne*, XXIX 1901, 363 ff., produced a variant of this theory by arguing that Plautus' extant play represents a second version made by him, with the Collybiscus intrigue inserted into an earlier version of the *Poenulus* which was concerned solely with the Carthaginian plot. Much might be said in support of this argument: it explains the glaring discrepancies and weaknesses in the plot of the extant play (such as the startling change in the girl's characters in the last act), and it provides a reason for the unnecessary second humiliation of the pimp. But, at the same time, the hypothesis on which the argument rests is unproven — that the flaws of construction could not have been present in the Greek original play. If that original is Alexis, and if his play antedates considerably the period when the watertight constructions of Menander were in vogue, how can we demand for him and it the flawless plot economy that followed later? At a time when the slave's successful plotting in order to promote a love intrigue was a new device, the mechanism of the trick would have been interesting for itself alone, not merely as one stage in a highly organised sequence. It is not that the audience would have failed to notice the flaws in the plot, but that they would not have objected to them, just as they did not worry over inconsistencies in old comedy.

If, however, over-sanguine adherence to the theories of the "contaminationists" seems, in our present state of knowledge, unwise, is not a similar degree of firmness in denying altogether any possibility that Plautus ever fused together different Greek plots equally unwise? P. W.

require us to believe that Plautus was guilty of even grosser 'contaminatio' than is usually imagined, even in this play: he must have switched the advocati from the Carthaginian to the Collybiscus intrigue. But consideration of these wider questions lies outside the scope of this paper; in any case, it will be better postponed until publication of the new Menander papyri reveals how much less of the Plautine there is in Plautus than is generally accepted today<sup>27</sup>).

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Harsh (A. J. P. LVIII 1937, 282 ff.), Professor Beare (Rev. Phil. LXVI 1940, 28 ff.; *Hermathena* LXXI 1948, 64 ff.; *The Roman Stage*, 88 ff. and 100 ff.), P. J. Enk (*Miscell. G. Galbiati* I (1951) 105 ff.) and others may always be right in claiming that Plautus was no incompetent fuser or "contaminator" of different plots; but the evidence does not exist that would prove this.

These two extreme views do not exhaust the possibilities, by any means. Much might also be said in favour of a further pair of theories, which lie midway between the extreme views. Miss B. Krysinel (*Eos* XXXIV, 1923—3, 1 ff.) suggests in a detailed analysis of the *Poenulus* that the original used by Plautus was a Greek (Menandrian) Karchedonios, in which the main theme was the Carthaginian's search for his daughter and their eventual recognition, and that Plautus had added out of his own head the rest, to satisfy the Roman taste for farce and low intrigue. The theory is very attractive, but like the others is fundamentally unprovable. Perhaps the most satisfactory theory — because the one that best agrees with known Plautine practice elsewhere — is Professor Fraenkel's (*Plaut. im Plautus* 262 ff.). He argues that only one scene of the *Poenulus* does not belong to the Greek original of the *Poenulus*: Act I Scene II, vv. 209—409: the long scene between the girls and the young man with his slave, which serves only to outline the characters of the participants without advancing the plot. Whether Plautus introduced this scene from some other Greek play, as Fraenkel thinks, or invented it himself out of his own head perhaps from hints in the original plot, I do not know; but if Fraenkel's theory is correct, we shall have no difficulty over the position in the Plautine play of those passages which tie up with the two fragments of Alexis.

27) Dr. G. Zuntz was kind enough to read this paper before publication and to comment upon it.