

XIV.—Miscellanea Plautina: Vulgarly, Extra-Dramatic Speeches, Roman Allusions

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Vulgarity, not including frank, non-humorous references necessitated by exigencies of the plot, appears eighty-four times. Extra-dramatic speeches, shattering the dramatic illusion by direct second person address to the audience or by discussing and comparing the play, players, or playwright with others, number forty-five. Roman allusions, restricted to those which by internal evidence cannot under any circumstances have stood in a Greek play, form the only reliable group of Plautine original textual contributions that do not involve speculative or subjective interpretation; these number eighty-four. All these literary techniques increase in frequency in Plautus' *later* plays.

I. VULGARITY

The coarseness of Plautus' plays is not as great as is sometimes supposed, especially by casual readers and moralists. Granting that the plot of many plays revolves around the emotions of young men and their relations with courtesans, and that there is free reference to love and its manifestations, there is, nevertheless, comparatively little which even to our more delicate civilization would seem undeniably unclean. In accord with the mores of the Romans the relationships between young men and women are taken for granted and, even if not entirely approved of by elders, are spoken of freely and openly. Nowhere in Latin literature would one expect more frankness than in Comedy. But there is a difference between frank statement and obscene allusion. Of the former there is much; of the latter, both spoken and acted, the average is hardly more than four passages per play.

We may not include in our discussion any straightforward references which are an integral and necessary part of the exposition or the plot (e.g., *Merc.* 532: *ecastor iam biennumst quom mecum rem coepit*), yet other references, in equally straightforward language, are clearly introduced merely to add humorous flavor to an otherwise innocuous context (e.g., *Truc.* 94: *cum ea quoque etiam mihi quid commercium*). One can easily visualize the actor's sly smile which would accompany such a remark and the titter it would cause in the audience. The distinction between necessary statements of fact relative to the physical nature of mankind and the gratuitous

introduction of gross humor does not require any philosophical discussion of Roman republican mores, nor is it a subjective distinction which would vary with every reader. Once the broader nature of Roman speech is recognized, the total amount of obscenity in Plautus will be about the same by any count.

Excluding, then, all serious statements which are necessary to the exposition or to the understanding of the plot, there remain some eighty-four references which are indubitably coarse.¹ The majority of these (forty-eight) are simple jokes of which more than half are verbal puns of the *tango*, *comprimo*, *ventum* variety; about a third (twenty-eight) are obscene references which, though containing no humorous elements, are wholly unnecessary to the text and obviously exist only for their own sake; in the remaining eight, vulgar action takes place upon the stage with or without accompanying verbal text.

These passages vary in length from a single word-pun to extended sections such as the final three scenes of the *Casina* (873–1011) which, although containing four distinct obscene jokes, are built on a highly indecorous motif. In addition to these, there are a few passages which offer ample opportunity for vulgar gestures but which must be left aside only as possibilities in the absence of any textual proof. Such passages are noted in the statistics by "plus" appended to the numerical figures.²

The distribution of the eighty-four passages³ is as follows: *Pseud.*, 11; *Curc.*, 10; *Cas.*, 9; *Truc.*, *Pers.*, 5 plus; *Most.*, *M.G.*, 5; *Rud.*, *Amph.*, *Poen.*, 4; *Bacch.*, 3 plus; *Aul.*, *Cist.*, *Merc.*, *Asin.*, 3; *Epid.*, *Men.*, 2; *Stich.*, 1 plus; *Trin.*, *Capt.*, 1.

Obviously the *Pseudolus*, *Curculio*, and *Casina* stand well apart from their nearest competitors, whereas all the rest show a close

¹Accuracy requires a frank definition of this quality. I include references to parts and functions of the body of sexual or excretory significance. Malodorousness in the less-bathed society of the Romans and Greeks is not considered here unless it is in conjunction with any of the above.

²*Asin.* 851–941 and *Bacch.* 1120–1207, in which *senes* are seduced by their sons' mistresses; the carousing finales of *Stich.* 683–775 and *Persa* 735–857; and the turning of Phronesium's wiles onto any and all comers in the *Truculentus* (*passim*).

³*Pseud.* 24, 68, 121, 217, 343, 952, 1178, 1182, 1260, 1279, 1295; *Curc.* 31, 74, 222, 315, 401, 415, 445, 580, 621, 691; *Cas.* 82, 465, 656, 731, 810, 847, 905, 912, 1010; *Truc.* 94, 150, 279, 324, 422; *Persa* 98, 128, 631, 806, 847; *Most.* 289, 386, 696–703, 829, 895; *M.G.* 324, 682, 1092, 1398, 1416–26; *Rud.* 428, 511, 1075, 1125; *Amph.* 251, 287, 348, 664–75; *Poen.* 291, 609, 862, 1416; *Bacch.* 74, 480, 1158; *Aul.* 286, 304, 740 (scene based on double entendre of *tango*); *Cist.* 379 (frg. viii), 656, 777; *Merc.* 272, 314, 575; *Asin.* 663, 786, 874; *Epid.* 216, 224; *Men.* 166, 295; *Stich.* 572; *Trin.* 651; *Capt.* 867.

gradation from the *Truculentus* and *Persa* down to the "pure" (so announced) *Captivi*, the *Trinummus* (no girl, no *leno*, no *miles*, no parasite, no intriguing slave⁴), and the *Stichus*.

As far as plot is concerned the obscene plays (*Pseud. Curc. Cas.*) offer no more opportunities for coarseness than others. The *Mercator* and *Epidicus*, for example, offer many opportunities, but they are not accepted as they are in the other play featuring an older man in love, the *Casina*. Harpax, Curculio, Therapontigonus are no more suitable to obscenity than are Pyrgopolynices, Gelasimus, Peniculus, or Antamonides; Pseudolus and Chalinus could change places in every respect but that of vulgarity with Palaestrio, Milphio, Epidicus, or Sosia. If obscenity was an end in itself there are many missed opportunities in the *Amphitruo*, *Epidicus*, *Poenulus*, and *Stichus*.

The *Pseudolus*, *Curculio*, and *Casina*, however, have one other thing in common which binds them together. They all belong to the later period of Plautus' literary activity.⁵ Of the four plays next in line of relative obscenity, all but the *Miles*, namely the *Truculentus*, *Persa*, and to a less degree, the *Mostellaria*, almost certainly appeared in the latter half of Plautus' productivity. Of the five cleanest, all but the *Trinummus* are probably fairly early productions, while the remaining eight plays having three or four passages of vulgar nature are wholly scattered over his early and middle periods with the sole exception of the probably late *Bacchides*.

⁴ Stasimus does not really intrigue, and the *sycophanta* is discovered before he starts.

⁵ In all of the following discussion of chronology I am using as a measuring table the order of plays which I set up in "The Use of Greek Words by Plautus," *A.J.P.* LV (1934), 361, and have supported at various times since. The order has never been claimed as exact, but only as approximate within groups of early, middle, and late. For convenience of grasping the distribution of obscenity in plays of different periods I adhere to the particular order there printed. Variation within groups will not upset the results. The order is: *Asin. Merc. Cist. Miles, Poen.*; *Men. Stich. Epid.*; *Capt. Rud. Most. Amph.*; *Aul. Truc. Trin.*; *Curc. Pseud. Bacch. Pers. Cas.* Although the specific chronology of the plays is uncertain, a reasonable amount of agreement exists, sufficient to make group comparisons valid. Cf. bibliography in the article cited above and in addition Hough, "The Development of Plautus' Art," *C.P.* xxx (1935), 43-57; "The Understanding of Intrigue," *A.J.P.* LX (1939), 422-435; "Link-Monologues and Plautine Chronology," *T.A.P.A.* LXX (1939), 231-241. Since the present paper was originally written, C. H. Buck's "A Chronology of the Plays of Plautus" (Baltimore, 1940) has appeared. The specific dates to which he assigns the plays I cannot accept as established for reasons which will appear in a forthcoming review. But the differences between us are not such as to affect the matters discussed in this paper because we agree in general regarding early and late groups and because I attempt in this paper merely to establish a general trend for which specific years are not necessary.

While differences of one or two digits do not, of course, offer definitive evidence, it is worth while to observe that with few exceptions these figures suggest a gradual increase in relative obscenity over Plautus' period of dramatic activity, hardly distinguishable at first and not at all regular, but becoming more and more marked in the latter half of his career. Of the total of eighty-four, thirty-eight (and two pluses) are in the last group of five; forty-seven (and three pluses) in the last group of eight plays; fifty-four, or sixty-four per cent of the total, in the last half of an arbitrary division through the middle of the middle group. Or, by taking all the plays in groups of four, the totals for these groups are, progressively, fourteen, nine, fourteen, nineteen, and twenty-eight. These figures are so clear-cut in their implications that that shifting of a few plays of uncertain relative position hardly alters the result.

There can be no doubt of a general tendency in the direction of greater vulgarity. The few signal exceptions not only cannot turn the scale against the others, but usually have in themselves some fairly obvious explanatory circumstances.⁶

Heretofore we have dealt with all examples as of equal value. This has been done to avoid the inevitable subjectivity of any decisions regarding relative degrees of vulgarity. One or two simple observations, however, may find general acceptance. I have distinguished three types of obscenity within the material cited, namely, jokes, humorless statements, and gestures. Humor and obscenity are two separate qualities; humor, of course, is the basic element of all Plautus' writing and exists in hundreds of situations throughout all his plays. Since it is so, those examples of obscenity which produce it may be said thereby to have some mitigating quality. Conversely, gratuitous vulgarity without humor closely approaches unmitigated filth. Whether this be so or not, I think

⁶ The *Trinummus*, as noted above, is composed mainly of respectable characters, and the intrigue is actually carried out by honorable *senes*. The *Bacchides*, coming from Menander, may represent a cleaner tradition (see discussion below), but on the other hand it contains a number of passages the obscene nature of which is debatable. *Bacch.* 50, 72, and 1127 might be added to our list without incurring criticism of unnecessarily indecent interpretation. The "plus value" of the final scene is greater than any of the others. All these factors should be considered in a true estimate of this play. The relatively excessive vulgarity of the *Miles* may be explained in part by its great length which consequently gives it a lower proportionate rate, in part by the utter vulgarity of nearly every character in it (only Pleusicles and Periplectomenus excepted), and in part by the unavoidable implications of its adulterous plot (1398, 1416-1426). Several questionable passages in the *Miles* might be added (785, 966).

that it goes without saying that the acted gestures on the stage may be considered a lower form of vulgarity than either of the other two.

Breaking down the eighty-four passages into these three types, we find the forty-eight jokes appearing steadily through the whole corpus, but twenty-four of the twenty-eight humorless vulgarities appear in the last ten plays as do also six of the eight gestures.⁷ I believe these distinctions are sound enough and the figures overwhelming enough to be accepted as evidence of an increase of vulgar type within the general increase of number.

The distinction between purely Plautine vulgarity and that which may have stemmed from the Greek originals is a still more delicate point upon which no general agreement will probably ever be reached. Twenty-five passages, however, may be certainly ascribed to the Roman author because they are verbal puns possible only in the Latin language. These are spread over all the plays but a fifty per cent increase is apparent among the last ten. In addition to these, five other jokes may be safely inferred to be Plautine, for they are found in close conjunction with indubitable Roman references (*Truc.* 150, 324), or included in longer passages which bear the familiar earmarks of Plautine expansion (*Amph.* 664, *Most.* 696-703, *Cas.* 82 prologue, but in that part which probably antedates the revival text). Many of the twenty-five Plautine puns are marked in this way as well. In all, over a third of Plautine obscenity can be with reasonable certainty ascribed to him. Of that which remains, personal literary judgment will be the deciding factor in the evidence for or against the Roman source, and when such is the case, consideration is futile in this connection.⁸

Even if the non-Plautine residue could be certainly regarded as Greek it unfortunately gives hardly any clue as to possible differences of taste in vulgarity among the authors of New Comedy. Menander is protected not only by his own fragments, but by the *Bacchides*, *Poenulus*, *Stichus*, and, if the original of the *Curculio* is his, by the instant reduction of its ten passages to but four through

⁷ Excepting only *Rud.* 429 and 511, and the *Rudens* is at the extreme end of the first ten.

⁸ It is impossible to say how many indecent Greek puns Plautus may have omitted; Menander and the Greek fragments do not, however, suggest that they were very abundant. The *Ω Ζεῦ* of *Cas.* 731 is undoubtedly a pun on *ὄζειν* as indicated by the words following (*potin a me abeas nisi me vis vomere hodie*) and more than likely came from the Greek original. A few examples from Menander (*Peri.* 226-35, *Perinthia* 16-8, *Phasma* 40-43) are in general not so gross as Plautus.

the elimination of Plautine puns. Diphilus' *Rudens* falls from four to two by the same process and the *Casina* from nine to five by dropping the final wedding scenes which probably, though not certainly, stem from another source. Only the *Pseudolus* retains its excessive proportion, losing only one of its eleven passages; the other ten could be Greek, though they are not necessarily so. But we do not even know the name of the writer of the Greek model; if it is Philemon, as is perhaps the best guess, there are the pure *Mercator* and *Trinummus* to counterbalance the *Pseudolus*. Of the known originals, those of Diphilus (*Cas.*, *Most.*, *Rud.*) have the best claim to the dubious honor of coarseness, those of Menander may be the purest, but the differences are so slight as to leave the suggestion of the most tentative nature.

The conclusion to which these observations lead, namely that Plautus increased not only the quantity but the vigor of his vulgarity as his writings progressed, would give students of human behavior interesting material for psychological speculation did we know exactly how old he was when he was writing the later plays and had we the details of his family life. In the absence of these, however, we must rest content with the literary implications of the facts, which suit admirably, if in no too complimentary a fashion, the known requirements of the Roman audience of his day.

II. SPEECHES OUT OF CHARACTER

An actor speaking *ex persona* usually produces a comic effect. This is the humor of anomaly, and needs no reinforcement from jokes, puns, or other witty material. It is inherent in the actor ceasing for a moment to be such; he may take the audience into his confidence by personal address or in various ways call attention, directly or indirectly, to the very fact that he is an actor in a play.

In the collection of such material from the comedies of Plautus, however, one encounters some difficulty in determining exactly which lines may be fairly said to have been spoken *ex persona* and, in some cases, whether their effect would truly be humorous. In limiting the material we must first exclude all simple monologues and asides as being merely voiced thoughts, a mechanism necessary to dramatic art (to an even greater extent in ancient times than now) but neither out of character nor humorous in or of themselves. On the other hand all speeches, whether asides or not, in which the

audience is clearly addressed in the second person must be included.⁹ The border-line cases are those in which drama or dramatic writers are referred to in such terms as might be perfectly suitable to human speech in actual life but which may imply a conscious comparison between the play which was being produced and some other theatrical production or technique. Such passages as *Poen.* 1168: *Tragicæ* (Leo: *Thraecæ* Mss.) *sunt*, or *Rud.* 1249: *spectavi ego pridem comicos ad istunc modum sapienter dicta dicere*, and others like them may be only normal human speech.¹⁰ Yet some which on the printed page seem hardly any more significant than those just cited have an entirely different effect when spoken by actors. At *Amph.* 984, Mercury, posing as a slave, boasts that he has as much right to threaten people in the street *quam servolo in comoediis* and immediately acts the part of a *servus currens*. The audience is emphatically invited to compare his action with other familiar comic situations (in *Pseud.* 1240, the word *alius* actually appears: *insidias dare quam in aliis comoediis* fit). *Most.* 1149: *si amicus Diphilo aut Philemoni es, dicito . . . : optumas frustrationes dederis in comoediis*—can only leave the spectator with the feeling that the actor has exceeded the limitations of his part. Even so guileless a statement as *Bacch.* 649: *non mihi isti placent Parmenones, Syri*, from the lips of a boasting slave leaves no doubt of the implied comparison. *Persa* 465: *sed satin estis meditati?* *Sag. Tragicæ et comici numquam aequæ sunt meditati*—is distinctly reminiscent of the dramatic situation in which it appears.

The total number of speeches out of character is forty-five,¹¹ of which forty-one break the dramatic illusion completely, and the

⁹ This strict criterion accounts for the inclusion of such passages as *Amph.* 998 and *Truc.* 482, the only Plautine passages in which the reference is confined to a mere parenthetical *spectatores*. On *Amph.* 485 and *Merc.* 851 see discussion of Menander below. All other references involve some further violation of dramatic propriety than this.

¹⁰ Similar insignificant expressions in which other dramas or actors are called to mind but with no implication of comparison are *Bacch.* 912, *Curc.* 591, *Rud.* 86, *Trin.* 931, and Menander, *Samia* 387. Parodies of tragic passages or allusions to tragic productions are, of course, not out of character. Addresses to the *tibicen* in *Cas.* 798, *Stich.* 713, 755, are excluded because the flutist is considered part of the staging, being accompanist to dancing, and may actually have been on stage.

¹¹ *Amph.* 479–485, 868, 998, 1006; *Aul.* 715–720; *Bacch.* 213, 1072; *Cas.* 685, 860, 879, 951, 1006; *Cist.* 678; *Curc.* 462; *Men.* 879; *Merc.* 160, 267, 313, 851, 1105; *M.G.* 862, 1130; *Most.* 280, 710; *Persa* 550; *Poen.* 550, 597, 921, 1224; *Pseud.* 388, 562, 575a, 720, 1234, 1240; *Stich.* 220, 443, 673; *Truc.* 108, 463, 482 plus the four cited in the text above (*Amph.* 984; *Bacch.* 649; *Most.* 1149; *Persa* 465).

above cited four suggest the present or other dramatic productions. Of these forty-five passages, twenty-nine, or about sixty-four per cent, appear in the last ten plays, and an especial concentration of seventeen, or thirty-seven and one half per cent, may be noted in the last five plays, which represent one quarter of the whole corpus.¹² We must now determine which *ex persona* speeches actually produce a humorous effect. The most rigorous examination will fail to eliminate more than eight (*Amph.* 479, 998, 1006; *Merc.* 851; *Stich.* 443, 673; *Pseud.* 575a, 1240).¹³ Since five of these are in relatively late plays (*Pseud.*, *Amph.*), any less rigorous application of standards of humor will only result in maintaining even a closer proportion to the figures for the total number. Of the thirty-seven remaining examples, twenty-four are still in the last ten plays (sixty-five per cent), and fifteen (or forty per cent) in the last five.

The evidence is clear, whether the distinctions of humor are maintained or not, that Plautus, while employing the *ex persona* speech all his life, used it with greater frequency (and probably with greater humorous effect) toward the close of his career. The shattering of the dramatic effect shows how far the author will go for a laugh, though he sometimes combines with it other functions as well, such as smoothing over weaknesses of construction (*Cas.* 1006; *Merc.* 1007) or complaining against the stupidity¹⁴ of the audience (*Poen.* 550; *Pseud.* 388, 720).

The brutal violation of dramatic illusion, the Roman text of some of the passages,¹⁵ and the incorporation of Plautine technical devices such as those just mentioned in the *ex persona* speech, all

¹² Even if the seven examples excluded in note 10 were included the proportions would still be 64 per cent in the last ten plays and 34 per cent in the last five. Five groups of four plays each show eight, eight, eight, five, and sixteen examples respectively.

¹³ *Pseud.* 575a is a mere statement of fact which has only to do with the filling of a vacant stage; 1240 is questionable for it is only the *alii* which brings this passage into consideration at all. It is doubtful if any spectators gave much attention to the distinction, for the action is over, too fast, and humor entirely lacking. *Stichus* 673 is a serious explanation of movements off-stage while 443 is Plautus' explanation of an apparent breach of *mores* which to the Roman of the second century would undoubtedly be more serious than funny; it is more humorous to us. The *scitis* or *Amph.* 485 is so insignificant as hardly to merit any attribution of humor; 998 and 1006 are similar. *Merc.* 851 *ut videtis* is as parenthetical and humorless as *Amph.* 485.

¹⁴ Cf. Hough, "The Understanding of Intrigue," *A.J.P.* LX (1939), 435.

¹⁵ *Bacch.* 213, reference to Pellio and the *Epidicus*; 1072, reference to triumph; *Stich.* 443 and 673 (see note 13). Possibly the *aediles* of *Persa* 159-160 are originally Roman although it may be a translation from the Greek; the use of the word *choragus* in the preceding line suggests the latter.

combine to suggest that most of the passages referred to are of Plautine origin. The contrast between those in Plautus' plays and the only two comparable passages in Menander (*Samia* 117, 481) strengthens the supposition. Both Menandrian passages are straightforward monologues which have a parenthetical vocative *ἄνδρες* thrown in, but no second person verb and no mention of anything which is not strictly within the normal range of the monologue.¹⁶ Only matters pertaining to the plot of the play are discussed or philosophical reflections uttered. The only passages among these thirty-seven of Plautus which even remotely approximate those in Menander are (1) 'Stratophanes' monologue at *Truc.* 482, beginning: *ne expectetis, spectatores, meas pugnas dum praedicem*; (2) the virtually inaudible and wholly parenthetical: *ut videtis* of *Merc.* 851; and (3) *Amph.* 485, where *iamne hoc scitis quid sciet?* is thrown into the middle of a long expository monologue. Every other address to the audience involves a few words or even a whole sentence which could not possibly be spoken by the actor in his proper role. In Menander this is not the case; the parenthetical *ἄνδρες* could be omitted without changing a word, and the thought would remain exactly as it was before, but in the form of a monologue instead of an address to the audience. These facts make the conclusions concerning Plautine increase in use of the technique all the more significant as evidence of his, rather than reflected Greek, technique.

III. ROMAN REFERENCES

Under this ambitious rubric we cannot, of course, attempt the enumeration of every passage which may have stemmed from Plautine source. Such an exhaustive undertaking would necessarily involve highly controversial issues and would only defeat the purpose of this study by introducing the doubts and misgivings which must attend upon any such subjective task. I propose, on the contrary, to eliminate controversy by applying the one line of demarcation which can be drawn with certainty, that is, to exclude

¹⁶ F. Leo, *Gesch. der Röm. Lit.* (Berlin, Weidmann, 1913) is misleading in asserting (p. 107) that the address to the audience is as *lebendig* in Menander as in Aristophanes. It is true only insofar as Leo is referring to straightforward monologues with no reference out of character and no second person address. His phrase "Anrede ans Publikum" is ambiguous, however, for it suggests the above types even more than the reflective monologue to which he is really referring.

all debatable cases and to require irrefutable evidence that the passage in question could not (not "may not") have appeared in the Greek original. Such clear evidence can be given only when it is not needed, namely, when the proof itself is an integral part of the allusion. The resulting basic nucleus of Roman references is fairly small and does not, of course, represent all that actually was Plautine originality, but it does represent all that cannot help but be Plautine. Within the limits of the allusion, this is as far as any study can go with absolute certainty.¹⁷

The line of demarcation on the Roman side of which every passage listed in this paper lies, is as follows: all inherently Roman historical, geographic, and literary allusions are included and all references to political, legal, social, and religious life and institutions, but only when the allusion is so handled that it cannot be a mere transposition of a Greek political, legal, social, or religious reference into Latin words. In application this means that the words *senate*, *consul*, *praetor*, for example, are not *per se* Roman references, for they may be Roman language for corresponding or nearly corresponding Greek officers. They are therefore excluded unless something is said concerning them which could not be true of the Greek parallel officer. If this is so, the Roman allusion is admitted. This test has been applied with equal rigor to all references in all phases of civilization touched upon by Plautus. It is of the ut-

¹⁷ No Roman reference in the non-dramatic sections of the prologues is admitted. Such passages are in reality outside the play and do not possess the incongruity which true Roman references in Greek settings must have. Neither need there be any confusion between the incongruity of speeches out of character and of Roman reference, for the latter, while breaking the Greek illusion, may leave the dramatic illusion untouched. Occasionally both types of illusion are shattered simultaneously and by the same method (see note 22). Verbal puns have been excluded except in those rare cases in which Plautus deliberately explains or comments upon them (e.g., *Aul.* 325, *Merc.* 304, *Amph.* 305). Such explanation or comment is by its very nature evidence of the Roman quality of the pun, for it depends not only on the Latin language but on spelling and letter counting. The inclusion of these few will not be questioned; the exclusion of the great mass of puns may seem, at first sight, unjustified since their linguistic nature seems to mark them as Roman. Such may not be the case, however, since we cannot ever be certain that a Greek pun of equal or nearly equal linguistic value may not have stood in the original. The pun may not necessarily have been on the same pair of meanings; unlimited possibilities are therefore opened up for what may have stood in the Greek. Without question Plautus found it easier to compose his own puns than to attempt to translate Greek ones, but there can be no certainty that what stands in the Latin may not represent, if not translate, a Greek original. It is better to omit them from consideration than to jeopardize the validity of so strict a criterion as I am applying to Roman references.

most importance to make this distinction,¹⁸ for only misleading results can come from an uncritical listing of everything which merely suggests Roman flavor; it may be Roman flavor, but it may also be a reflection in Roman language of something Greek. The results based upon the smaller but more reliable data derived from these stricter discriminations are of greater validity than speculations resting upon a mass of material uncritically lumped together.

¹⁸ The only justification for the present study is the fact that K. M. Westaway's *The Original Element in Plautus* (Cambridge, England, University Press, 1917) failed to make this distinction and consequently is of no value in understanding that feature of Plautine technique to which the title presumes. Although an example of this failure is given in the text above, relative to political offices, so broad a condemnation as this requires further explanation. Similar examples can be drawn easily from all phases discussed by Westaway. Contrast the praetor in *Cap.* 450 with the lictors and fasces of the praetor at *Epid.* 26; contrast *antestari* of *Curc.* 621 with the specific ear-touching custom involved in the *antestari* of *Persa* 748; contrast the general term *recuperatores* in *Rud.* 1282 with the appointment of these persons by praetors in *Bacch.* 270; contrast the frequent employment of the Senate motif for any reference to taking counsel (e.g., *Epid.* 159) with the specific reference to the *senatus frequens*, a purely Roman allusion, at *M.G.* 592. These are but a few examples of what could be carried out through all phases of Westaway's book. In the social field the author is too quick to assume the custom *is* Roman because it is clear that it *may* be Roman. But recognitions of new-born children, *bullae* (magic charms), dowries, marriage-feasts, drinking-feasts, wax tablets, *stili*, auctions, punishment, *peculia*, and manumission of slaves—all these and many more so-called "Roman" customs are familiar reading in any standard book on Greek life. Many passages which have given rise to much discussion in commentaries as to their Roman nature are taken without question as Roman. Such doubtful passages as *M.G.* 1016, *Baccharum es*, *Epid.* 224, ladies' dress, *Curc.* 508, usury, may well be Roman but they may as well not be. Even textual matters are at times overlooked, for *bullis* (*Curc.* 612) should not be used as evidence without first defending the reading against the equally readable *bulbis*. Finally, some out-and-out mistakes further mar the material presented. It is hard to understand how *pilleus* of *Persa* 155 can be offered as evidence of Roman dress when all manuscripts and all editions read the Greek word *causia*! *Truc.* 136 referring to the *lex* of Livy *xxi.63* is fantastic and absurd; *palus* at *Rud.* 1290 is any stake or stick, not a reference to a gladiator's sword, nor is *in statu* of *M.G.* 1389 (Westaway reads 1839) a Roman gladiatorial metaphor any more than a Greek military one. To make matters worse, the conclusion that these Roman elements increased during Plautus' literary activity is presented without any comparative recapitulation, verbal or graphic. To confirm this conclusion the reader would have to do all the work of the author and would then find the evidence still to be vague, for frequently the material is given as "typical", but no full count is ever presented for any or all plays. Presumably such a count would give this result, but there is nothing to show it in the book. The thesis that Plautus increased his Roman references as years went by, I believe to be correct, and it is supported by the certain and complete evidence given within the accepted limits of this paper. That the uncritical and nebulous material heretofore presented produced the same conclusion, is mainly due to the fact that the evidence was too strong to be clouded by loose treatment. Westaway's error of assuming an allusion without critical judgment has recently been repeated by C. H. Buck, *op. cit.* (see note 5).

Although we may in this way omit many passages which to Plautus and his audience actually were Roman allusions,¹⁹ I believe this study will be more valuable if by strict limitation we preserve a reliable picture of a small but important truth rather than a larger but shadowy outline which may shift with each reader's interpretation.

The Roman allusions listed in accordance with these strict rules number eighty-four.²⁰ The relative distribution may be seen in the table subjoined; the proportions appearing in early and late groups are similar to those of the vulgarity group and those of the speeches out of character. Only thirty appear in the first ten plays, while fifty-four are in the last ten. If the plays are divided into five groups of fours each, the groups show the following totals, beginning with the earliest: thirteen, seven, nineteen, twenty-four, twenty-one. That Plautus increased his original contributions has long been surmised, but only on the basis of a much larger mass of evidence, the speculative nature of which has been noted. In this strictly limited, but more certain, field, this tendency is confirmed.

IV. SUMMARY

It remains only to present the evidence of these three discussions in graphic form to see the development as a whole, as well as individually, of these features of Plautus' comic effort. In these passages are included most of Plautine humor exclusive of the pun and the humor of situation. The former, though indubitably Roman, are beyond the scope of this paper;²¹ the latter are almost

¹⁹ Although most of the augury in Plautus is of Roman nature rather than Greek (cf. C. B. Gulick, "Omens and Augury in Plautus," *H.S.C.P.* vii [1896], 235-247), the general effect is not such as to create a marked incongruity with the surrounding texts. I doubt if Roman spectators were familiar with the details of Greek procedure and they would probably interpret the Plautine text, if at all, as a mere transposition into Roman terms. To include such passages here is tempting, but unsound.

²⁰ *Amph.* 160, 305, 458; *Asin.* 119, 575; *Aul.* 325, 566; *Bacch.* frg. viii, 83, 213, 1073, 1087, 1282; *Capt.* 90, 160, 489, 823, 882-888; *Cas.* 354, 446, 524, 815, 963; *Cist.* 562, 650; *Curc.* 70, 268, 462-484, 613; *Epid.* 26, 343; *Men.* 164; *Merc.* 304; *M.G.* 164, 211, 359, 592, 648, 692, 792, 1030; *Most.* 22, 64, 159, 226, 770, 960; *Persa* 160, 702, 748; *Poen.* 603, 1291; *Pseud.* 26, 146, 303, 334, 1100, 1232, 1303; *Rud.* 373, 383, 535, 630, 1382; *Stich.* 226, 487; *Trin.* 84, 330, 345, 423, 545, 609, 922, 990; *Truc.* 55, 86, 144, 213, 265, 350, 495, 649, 690, 761.

²¹ See above note 17. The pun is a particularly strong feature of the *Bacchides*, a late play and one which is surprisingly lacking in some of the features discussed in the paper, esp. obscenity. This may be a hint that the results of an investigation of the pun would be similar to the conclusions here presented. Such would not be an unexpected result.

certainly of Greek origin. Within our limits, then, we see clearly an increasing tendency to achieve comic effect in supposedly Greek plays by vulgar, undramatic, and incongruously Roman methods which, though aesthetically reprehensible, are undeniably successful. We have ample evidence that in these dramatic qualities Plautus employed as his literary precept the proverb "Nothing succeeds like success." As in so many other dramatic concerns, especially where success is involved, Plautus here is in distinct contrast to Terence who rarely indulges in any of the comic effects here discussed. The younger poet's plays might have enjoyed a greater popularity had he done so.

	Vulgarity	Speeches Out of Character	Roman Allusions	Total
<i>Asin</i>	3		2	5
<i>Merc</i>	3	5	1	8 ²²
<i>Cist</i>	3	1	2	6
<i>M.G.</i>	5	2	8	15
<i>Poen</i>	4	4	2	10
<i>Men</i>	2	1	1	4
<i>Stich</i>	1	3	2	6
<i>Epid</i>	2		2	4
<i>Capt</i>	1		5	6
<i>Rud</i>	4		5	9
<i>Most</i>	5	3	6	14
<i>Amph</i>	4	5	3	12
<i>Aul</i>	3	1	2	6
<i>Truc</i>	5	3	10	18
<i>Trin</i>	1		8	9
<i>Curc</i>	10	1	4	14 ²²
<i>Pseud</i>	11	6	7	24
<i>Bacch</i>	3	3	6	10 ²²
<i>Persa</i>	5	2	3	10
<i>Cas</i>	9	5	5	19
	84	45	84	209 ²²

²² Corrected for duplication. The following passages are simultaneously and for the same reasons both out of character and of Roman material: *Bacch*. 213, 1072; *Curc*. 462-484; *Merc*. 313.