

QUIS EGO SUM SALTEM?

An Investigation of Plautus' *Captivi*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*
with Special Reference to Problems of Identity

By

SHIRLEY ANNE MURRAY

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Latin at the
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my great gratitude to my supervisor, Mrs Anne Gosling, for her unfailing encouragement, constructive criticism and consistent application of high standards.

I have received outstanding support from the staff of the Classics Department while writing this thesis and I would like to express my appreciation to them all, and in particular, to Professor John Hilton, who also provided great technical expertise.

I also owe my long-suffering family and close friends a debt of gratitude for their understanding and support of my studies over the years, and I am very grateful in particular for the encouragement which I received from my parents and to Val Grobler who nobly helped me with the proofreading.

DECLARATION

I declare that the material included in this dissertation has not been submitted for a degree in this or any other university, and that it is my own work.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

ABSTRACT

Many of Plautus' extant plays contain identity problems, the results of comic confusions in identity. The confusion may arise from deliberate deceit through impersonation, or from mistaken identity through ignorance. While mistaken identity features in many Plautine plays, these identity problems are usually brief comical complications arising from the machinations of a crafty slave or from a twist of fate. However, the *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* all contain pervasive identity problems which are complicated and extend throughout the play.

Further, all three plays present an unusual identity problem which provides strong contrast to the conventional Plautine problems including the ineligible girl later being found to be of free birth and now available for marriage, or the son and his slave successfully obtaining money from the son's father by trickery and impersonation. On closer examination, it is apparent that in each of these three plays Plautus has explored these identity issues and used them as a vehicle to highlight other significant social and moral issues.

In *Captiui*, the young man who should be eligible for marriage is instead found to be the slave of his own father who has unwittingly mistreated him. In *Menaechmi*, two identical twin brothers, separated as young boys, who are coincidentally in the same foreign town at the same time and are repeatedly mistaken for one another, with far-reaching consequences. In *Amphitruo*, two mortals are impersonated by two gods, with identity theft and depersonalisation occurring.

In all three plays, the identity problems form an integral part of the play and are explored extensively by Plautus. This dissertation examines the concepts of personal identity as exploited by Plautus in these three plays in the light of concepts of personal identity and the self as found in the works of ancient and modern philosophers, and of contemporary psychologists and sociologists.

PREFACE

My attention was first drawn to identity problems in *Captiui* by Mrs Anne Gosling, who suggested that the theme of the local legend of Tyndarus, captured as a boy and later returned to his father by a freak chance of fate, would bear fruitful investigation.¹ While exploring the *Captiui*, I became intrigued with the identity problems in this play and felt that it, together with the *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, were unusual Plautine plays in that they all had ongoing identity problems, and all had sub-strata of other more serious themes as well.

To explore identity issues proved very challenging, as there have been so many diverse schools of thought on personal identity in the last few decades, but it has been extremely interesting to compare thoughts on identity over the centuries, and to discover that many of the modern concepts of identity are featured in these plays of Plautus. While mistaken identity occurs very frequently in Plautus, I am not aware of any other research that has been undertaken on the concept of identity in Plautus, and certainly not aware of any other research that has grouped these three plays into one study.

My study of these three plays starts with an overview of the concepts of identity through the ages and covers the philosophical, psychological and sociological views of identity as represented by the leading figures or schools through history. I have also included recent research on identical twins to assist us with the examination of the *Menaechmi* as well as exploring some ancient views on slavery. This is followed by a discussion of each of the three plays with a chapter each.

I have endeavoured throughout, to concentrate on the performance aspects of the scripts, rather than just the written word, as there is sometimes a great contrast between the words and visual appearance of some of Plautus' characters, notably Alcumena in *Amphitruo*. Above all, I am setting out to convey that these plays of Plautus are extremely amusing, but yet they cover identity issues, which are still relevant today and also comment lightly on current situations and topics of Plautus' time, which he wished to share with his audiences.

¹ Lindsay (1921) 6 refers to this local legend in his edition of the *Captiui*.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
Preface	iii
Contents	iv
Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
The concept of identity	2
The philosophical view of self	3
The psychological view of self	7
The sociological view of self	12
Identity and doubles in literature	18
Aspects of identity in studies of identical twins	20
Ancient views on slavery	23
Relationship of theories of identity to Plautus' three plays	27
 Chapter 2 – <i>Captiui</i>	 33
The prologue	33
The main body of <i>Captiui</i>	37
The combined roles of Tyndarus and Philocrates in <i>Captiui</i>	41
The roles of Philocrates	42
The roles of Tyndarus	46
Conclusion	70
 Chapter 3 – <i>Menaechmi</i>	 83
The prologue	83

Physical appearance and the name as criteria of identity in <i>Menaechmi</i>	86
The roles of the Menaechmi brothers	90
The encounters of the citizens of Epidamnus with Menaechmus II and the recurring themes of waking and dreaming, drunkenness, sanity and insanity	92
The encounters of the citizens of Epidamnus with Menaechmus and the recurring themes of waking and dreaming, drunkenness, sanity and insanity	101
The recognition scene of the Menaechmi twins	108
Conclusion	112
Chapter 4 – <i>Amphitruo</i>	121
Mercury's identity in the prologue	121
Mercury's identity in the main body of the play	129
The identity of Jupiter	142
The identity of Sosia	150
The identity of Amphitruo	161
The identity of Alcmena	169
Recurring themes of waking and dreaming, sanity and insanity	178
Accusations of sleeping	178
Accusations of insanity	181
Accusations of drunkenness	184
Accusations of being diseased or bewitched	186
Conclusion	188
Chapter 5 – Conclusion	201
Bibliography	209

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Many of Plautus' extant plays feature identity problems, which create comic confusion, and misapprehension until the truth is revealed and the identity of the character is made known. The confusion may be created by deliberate deceit, when the impersonation of one character by another character occurs, or confusion may arise when a character is mistaken for somebody else, or not recognised through sheer ignorance, due to circumstances caused by a turn of fate. As examples of deliberate deceit regarding identity, *Curculio*, *Epidicus* and *Poenulus* all contain impersonation and intrigue leading to mistakes being made regarding identity and the intrigue is masterminded by the scheming slave or the parasite. *Cistellaria* and *Rudens* are examples of Plautine plays where fate plays a role in concealing identity, as both plays feature freeborn maidens whose true identity is not realised initially, but who, by chance, are later discovered to be freeborn.

By contrast, in *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, there are no conventional *serui callidi*, no *uirgines* and no conventional love plots. In these three plays, we find that mistakes are also made regarding identity, but in these three plays particularly, the problems of identity are not mere brief comical complications arising from the intrigue of a slave, as in the *Pseudolus*, nor are they simply part of the happy *denouement* that frequently comes with the recognition of a person's identity, as in the *Rudens*. In *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, the problems of identity are more extensive and complicated than in the other plays, and in addition, these identity problems are an integral part of the serious issues raised in these plays, and the very problems of identity are presented from unusual angles.

In *Captiui*, it is not the maiden who is discovered by chance to be freeborn, but it is the slave who emerges as freeborn, (and who has been conspiring with his master to impersonate him). The play contains several simultaneous identity issues. In *Menaechmi*, there is no deliberate impersonation and nor is there any doubt about the free status of any of the protagonists, but repeated innocent errors are made regarding the identities of the identical twins. This identity problem pervades the entire play and affects all the characters' lives while highlighting other personal issues until the relationship is realised at the end. In *Amphitruo*, the identity problem is more complicated in that two mortal characters are impersonated by two divine characters who, for their own ends, assume the identical physical appearance of these mortals, causing complete comic chaos, accompanied by more than a hint of tragedy.

The identity problems raised in these plays, while initially on the physical plane, assume psychological and moral aspects also, and although the physical aspects of the identity problems in these three plays are resolved, the other aspects of identity are not always fully resolved. In each of these three plays, despite the fact that they are amusing comedies, there are major identity problems, which are not simply mechanical plot devices. Nor are these identity issues haphazardly inserted for comic effect, but are skilfully intertwined with the main themes of the plays. These identity issues are universally and timelessly relevant to man and the problems he faces.

The Concept of Identity

In my investigation of identity in *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* of Plautus, I have found it helpful to consider some ancient, modern and comparatively modern viewpoints on identity from psychological, philosophical and sociological perspectives, and to consider the identity problems of these three plays in relation to these points of view. The meaning and significance of identity, although not solely a modern problem, has been paid increasing attention this century, especially in the last five decades, by both psychologists and sociologists. It has not been an easy task to formulate a common viewpoint on identity, as it seems that to define identity conclusively is almost impossible. David Hume, the British empiricist sceptical philosopher, himself called his chapter on personal identity 'a labyrinth.'¹ Erikson, an acknowledged pioneer and expert in the study of personal identity, says that identity has become 'a term for something as unfathomable as it is all pervasive.'² No definition is ever comprehensive or concise enough to include the differing criteria for identity with the consequence that disagreement persists regarding where the emphasis should lie in defining identity. Even the term 'identity' itself is not without problems, as the term is not static but largely interchangeable with the terms 'personal identity', 'ego identity' and 'self, and to a lesser degree with the terms 'self-concept' and even 'self awareness.' Generally it is agreed however that when the question is raised, 'Who am I?' it is not enough to reply in terms of one's name, ancestry and locale or physical attributes, and that the concept of identity is inextricably bound with the self. The relationship between the mind and body has also continued to present a problem to philosophers, psychologist and sociologists alike.

¹ 'Upon a more strict review of the section concerning personal identity, I find myself involv'd in such a labyrinth, that, I must confess, I neither know how to correct my former opinions, nor how to render them consistent.' *Treatise of Human Nature* 633 quoted by Vesey (1974) 2.

² Erikson (1968) 9, quoted by McKinney in Corsini (ed.) (1984) 181.

The Philosophical View of the Self

The general Western philosophical view of the self is that it is incorporeal and inborn, existing because of the feeling of consciousness one has of one's self. Plato and Aristotle did not examine the self *per se*, but rather considered the structure of the soul.

Plato and Socrates regarded the soul as the most important part of man and the seat of intellectual and moral personality. Plato equated the soul with the mind and stated that the soul is the source of movement and the first born of all things.³ Plato also believed that the soul was divine in the Pythagorean sense, as immortal, existing before and after its successive hierarchical lodgings in the human body, and belonging to the higher world of Forms and Soul.⁴ The soul for Plato is essentially distinct from the body, but may be influenced physically, for example, by music.⁵ Plato regarded the soul as man's most divine possession and held that the soul is prior to the body, the body secondary and derivative and that the soul governs in the real order of things and the body is subject to governance.⁶ Plato's soul or psyche was tri-partite, with reason as the rightful ruler of the whole soul situated in the head, higher emotions or spirit in the breast, and lower, carnal emotions or appetite, in the belly. Reason, the highest element of the soul, was immortal, and was a unifying force in the soul, aided by the higher emotions, which were similar to moral courage in man, but also found in animals.⁷ Eros or Desire was the motive force behind all human thought and action, and although available to all three parts of the soul, as a driving force Eros could be harnessed by reason. Plato in his *Phaedrus* illustrated his doctrine of the tripartite soul in his famous comparison of the soul with the charioteer and a team of horses. Reason is the charioteer driving the higher and carnal emotions, which are like two horses, the one the natural ally of reason and easy to guide, while the other horse is unruly and requires restraint and the whip.⁸ Rogers notes that Freud's division of the psyche is analogous to Plato's tripartite soul, with Freud's ego similar to the charioteer representing reason and control, the superego relating to Plato's passion or spirit and his id to Plato's appetite or desire.⁹ Plato's concept of the tripartite soul served to explain the inner conflict in man. Plato regarded the function of the soul as a medium between the body and the Forms, and regarded man's earthly body with its accompanying characteristics of sex and death as a barrier to man's

³ Legg. 896b.

⁴ Armstrong (1957) 40-41, 90. *Phaedrus* 245c-e.

⁵ Copleston (1961) 1: 207-208.

⁶ *Phaedrus* 245c-e. Legg. 896b.

⁷ Copleston (1961) 1: 209.

⁸ Plato *Phaedrus* 246a 6ff discussed in Copleston (1961) 1: 210.

⁹ Rogers (1970) 9. See also Levin (1992) 4.

true nature.¹⁰

Aristotle rejected the disembodied soul and dualism of Plato, and regarded the soul as intimately united with the body. The soul for Aristotle was the principle of biological, sensitive and intellectual life, and is 'the actuality which realises the potentiality of a body capable of having life; it is the formative principle which makes a living body a living body.' Aristotle postulated the First Unmoved Mover as the source of all motion in the universe, aided by the fifty-five Unmoved Movers or Intelligences responsible for motion of the sun, moon and planets, and together with these immaterial thinking substances able to exist separately, Aristotle ranks the highest power in the human soul, Separable Reason or *Nous*.¹¹ This Separable or Active Reason is eternal and unchanging, and activates man's passive reason and causes knowledge, by causing the potential forms of the passive reason to become actual by illuminating them.¹² Aristotle held that the soul communicates with the body through the medium of *pneuma*, which is a generative substance, somewhat analogous to *Aether*, with life-giving heat. Aristotle regarded the relationship of soul to body in the same light as form to matter, and believed that the soul was the Form, the principle of life and being, in living things.¹³

St Augustine later combined aspects of the philosophical systems of Plato and Aristotle in emphasising the importance and divine quality of the soul as well as the unity of the soul with the body, but he further regarded the soul as more than just the animator or force for animation, and regarded each soul as a unique spiritual entity. He believed that the soul should guide the body to subordinate 'the lesser to the greater, the bodily to the spiritual, the lower to the higher, temporal to the eternal.'¹⁴ For St Augustine, as for Plato, the soul was immortal in a mortal body. He believed that man consisted of soul and body, although the soul was independent of the body, but used and ruled the body and its sense organs solely for its own purposes. St Augustine regarded the soul as actively perceiving the form-elements of things as these are akin to the soul and while we know material external objects through the senses alone, we are conscious of our self as a living, thinking reality through the perceptions of the soul.¹⁵ The physical properties of the soul represented a problem for St Augustine who rejected the concept of a corporeal soul, but regarded the soul as entirely present in every bodily part in a symbiosis of body and soul which is comparable to the relationship between a spoken word and its

¹⁰ Armstrong (1957) 41-43.

¹¹ Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1073a 26-61, as referred to by Armstrong (1957) 89.

¹² Aristotle *De Anima* 412a 27 as referred to by Armstrong (1957) 91-92, 96-97.

¹³ Copleston (1961) 1: 327-329. Armstrong (1957) 91.

¹⁴ O'Daly (1987) 40.

¹⁵ Armstrong (1957) 216-217.

meaning.¹⁶ St Augustine, the most important link between ancient philosophy and the later thought of the western Christian world, anticipated Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* in his arguments for the existence of the soul and argued that to doubt the existence of the soul was to in fact assert it, for to doubt is to think, and to think is to exist and souls are thinking beings, (*Si fallor, sum*).¹⁷

Locke was the first philosopher to deal with personal identity as a separate philosophical topic, stating that personal identity consisted in 'the identity of consciousness', which is generally interpreted as memory being the sole criterion of personal identity.¹⁸ Locke believed that personal identity consisted in the sameness of consciousness, not in any material or immaterial substance, but in memory.¹⁹ This view originated in basic form with St Augustine, and St Augustine's views were adopted and developed by Descartes, who was a rationalist rather than an empiricist, as he regarded the evidence of the senses as potentially deceptive.²⁰ In his Doctrine of Innate Ideas, Descartes expressed the view that the concept of self is inborn and therefore is placed in our minds by God.²¹ Descartes emphasised self-consciousness as the essence of a person, in that a person is conscious of his self through direct experience and introspective knowledge, but cannot have the same certainty through introspective knowledge regarding his body, and therefore concluded that body and soul must be distinct and that the soul must be non-corporeal.²² Whilst the mind and body are both substances, the body is a material substance, and the mind a spiritual substance.²³ Descartes' description of a person 'was that of a particular thinking being which happens to be, but could equally well not be, united with a particular body.'²⁴ The Cartesian self was primarily a thinking thing (*res cogitans*), and affirmed the metaphysical duality prevalent in Plato.²⁵

Butler stated that our bodies no more belong to our self than any other material around us, and, following Descartes, that personal identity arises from a consciousness of self and that this self is the same self now as it was a few years previously.²⁶ However, Butler rejected the possibility

¹⁶ *Sermones* 150.6, 348.3 as discussed in O'Daly (1987) 22, 40.

¹⁷ *De libero arbitrio* 2, 3, 7 referred to in Copleston (1959) 2: 54

¹⁸ Vesey (1988) 612.

¹⁹ Shoemaker (1983) 458. Locke - *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, (ed. Fraser A C), referred to by Copleston (1961) 5: 100.

²⁰ *De quantitate animae* XIII-XIV: 400-22, X: 413-26, XI, as referred to by Thalberg (1983) 556.

²¹ Jones (1952) 680. Wylie (1984) 3 282.

²² Copleston (1965) 4: 103-104. Thalberg (1983) 556.

²³ Armstrong (1988) 491.

²⁴ Vesey (1988) 612.

²⁵ Bakhurst & Sypnowich (1995) 2-4.

²⁶ 'The Analogy of Religion' in *Works of Bishop Butler* Gladstone (ed.) ch.1. Dissertation 1 as referred to

of defining personal identity, because although we are aware of personal identity, we can no more define it than we can define similarity or equality although we know what they are.²⁷

Hume queried the basis of this consciousness of self and the certainty that the self exists. He viewed the self, not as a unitary consciousness but as a bundle of different perceptions with a felt bond between them, and he believed that the only things which we know directly are our perceptions themselves and therefore we are deceived if we think that we have knowledge of our own personal identity as selves.²⁸ In Hume's view, there was no real identity possible as genuine identity is incompatible with change. Kant supported Hume's view that there is no introspective knowledge of a self, on the grounds that internal experience is only possible through external experience, and that one could only be conscious of a self through the immediate consciousness of external things. He further argued that the self is assumed, but not proven, to be separate from the body.²⁹ More modern philosophers, such as Perry, view the self in terms of one's self-concept and as the aggregate of the individual's concepts about himself and his capabilities, values and aims.³⁰

The philosophical debate concerning the relationship between the body and the mind, which commenced with Plato, was revived with Shoemaker's famous theoretical case of Mr Brown's brain being transplanted into the skull of Mr Robinson, resulting in the formation of a new person, Mr Brownson, who has Robinson's body but Brown's memories and personality.³¹ After much consideration, it is generally accepted that Brownson is in fact Brown, and that personal identity therefore consists in the brain, rather than in the body, as the brain is the seat of memory, character and personality.³²

In general, the philosophical view of the self, when considering the question of personal identity, gives some recognition to the role of the body as contributing to personal identity, but places far greater emphasis on the spiritual and mental aspects of the individual and minimises the physical aspects of identity.

by Thalberg (1983) 556.

²⁷ Copleston (1961) 5: 169.

²⁸ Thalberg (1983) 556. *A Treatise of Human Nature* Book I Part I Section II as referred to by Wright (1941) 208. Shoemaker (1983) 459.

²⁹ Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* B 157, B 404-8 as referred to by Thalberg (1983) 557. Copleston (1964) 6: 273-274.

³⁰ Thalberg (1983) 557.

³¹ Shoemaker S. (1963) *Self-knowledge and Self-identity* as discussed in Noonan (1989) 23.

³² Noonan (1989) 7-8.

The Psychological View of the Self

The psychological view of the self is generally a system of self-reference developed over a lifetime, a synthesis of perceptions of oneself which comprises 'I', as the knower, the experiencing aspect of self, and 'me', as the known, the knowledge of self as object. William James, the pioneer in psychology on the topic of self, considered a sense of personal continuity and a sense of distinctness from others to be basic components of the sense of personal identity and that both of these senses are closely associated with the I, the self as knower. 'Each of us spontaneously considers that by 'I', he means something always the same. The 'I' is pure ego, and is 'that which at any given moment is conscious, whereas the 'Me' is only one of the things it is conscious of.' James also refers to this 'I' as 'Agent', 'Thinker', 'Soul', 'transcendental Ego' and 'Spirit' and regards this 'soul' as a combining medium as it connects the various thoughts and states of consciousness and contributes towards the sense of sameness in the self as Knower.

The self as object consists of the physical, active, social and psychological characteristics that the individual uses to define himself and others.³³ James argued that this empirical self or me, comprises in its widest sense 'the sum total of all that he can call his, not only his body and psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors, and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses and yacht and bank account.' James further divided the known me into the material me, the social me and spiritual me. The body is the innermost part of the material me, followed by one's clothes, and our immediate family and then our home and material property, including the collections of objects made during one's life. The social me is the recognition bestowed by one's friends, and James stated that in fact a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognise him as one generally shows different aspects of oneself to different people or groups of people. The spiritual me is the entire collection of one's states of consciousness, psychic facilities and dispositions.³⁴

James also proposed that different empirical selves emerge during the development of the individual and that most of these different selves are relinquished while the remaining selves become integrated to form the identity of an individual. James posited a hierarchy of the individual's various selves ranging from the bodily me at the bottom followed by the wider group of material selves and then the many social selves in the middle culminating in the

³³ Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987) 126.

³⁴ James (1999) 69-75.

spiritual me at the apex. Consequently, a man ought to place more value on honour, friends and human ties than for his physical wellbeing or wealth and in order to retain his spiritual self a man ought to be willing to forego all his other selves which are inferior to the spiritual self in the hierarchy and be prepared to lose friends, fortune or even life itself. In seeking to attain the ideal social self, for motives of honour and conscience a man may endure the disapproval and recriminations of those around him, and substitute the thought of other and better possible social judges for those who presently condemn him. This idea social self is the true, permanent and ultimate self.

James stressed the continuity of the self by stating that the memories of the individual as a youth and as a man are the same common memories.³⁵ Much of the groundwork in psychology regarding identity and the self has been laid by James, and indeed he has greatly contributed to the sociological viewpoint on the self too. Clinicians such as Freud, Adler and Jung emphasised the importance of self-conceptions in obtaining a clinical understanding of the individual in order to treat a person's self in terms of his self-concept. Freud's concept of personality contained three components, the id, ego and superego, which bear some resemblance to Plato's tripartite psyche. The id is present from birth onwards and is the source of instinctual drives. The one set of drives is constructive and consists of life instincts or libido, and these instincts aid survival or individual pleasure. These life instincts are opposed by another set of drives, which are death or destructive instincts. The id is completely selfish in nature and operates on the pleasure principle without reference to reality or moral considerations. The ego develops after birth and serves to channel the life instincts so that pleasure is not pursued blindly and dangerously, as the ego formulates practical plans for satisfying the needs of the id. The last component of personality to develop in childhood is the superego, which rewards or punishes the thoughts or deeds of the ego in a parent-child type relationship.³⁶

Erikson, the modern successor to James in the field of personal identity, concurs with James regarding the sense of personal continuity and sense of uniqueness being central components of the concept of personal identity. His contribution was to view identity as being developed over the individual's lifetime. Erikson defined the development of the ego in eight stages in a complete lifespan. He formulated the concept that the development of identity continues throughout these stages, commencing in infancy and reaching its peak in the adolescent years, but continuing throughout life into old age, and that identity is the integration of selected earlier

³⁵ James (1890) *Principles of Psychology*, 372, quoted by Abse (1976) 166.

³⁶ Wylie (1984) 282.

identity experiences.³⁷ Erikson accepted Freud's division of the personality into three divisions but extended and developed Freud's stages of personality development, replacing Freud's theory of psychosexual urges as the main motivation for personality development with the concept of psychosocial development. A sense of identity is accompanied by a 'feeling of being at home in one's body, a sense of knowing where one is going, and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count.' This sense of identity however is not static and permanent, but to some degree is constantly lost and regained.³⁸ At puberty, in the fifth stage of Erikson's life cycle, the adolescent faces a conflict between identity and role diffusion as he experiences confusion in his attempts to move towards independence. To achieve a sense of ego identity, the adolescent should acquire a perception of having 'inner sameness and continuity' and have a sense of being the same person over time. Secondly, society should also perceive a sameness and continuity in the individual, and the adolescent may undergo an identity crisis if he senses that he does not have a significant role in society or is moving in a role contrary to society.³⁹ It is at this life stage that the individual must develop a sense of personal identity, of stable selfhood in order to make a meaningful connection between the past and the future.⁴⁰ Erikson held that the very last stage of the eight stages of ego development included the establishing of ego integrity, thereby accepting personal responsibility for the successes and failures of one's life, coming to terms with the meaning of one's life and being prepared to die with dignity.⁴¹

Allport coined a new name, *proprium*, for the self or ego as he considered the fully formed adult personality to consist of several different aspects of selfhood, added at different stages of development. These aspects of selfhood included a sense of early self by the age of three, which comprises a sense of the bodily self, followed by a sense of self-identity, (with awareness of a possessing a personal name with accompanying evaluations such as good and bad, happy and sad), a sense of self-esteem (together with a need for autonomy). This early self moulds a core of identity, which strongly underlies all future personality development. Individuals differ according to the varying proportions of the three components of self, (the senses of bodily self, self-identity and self-esteem). In the following couple of years, self-extension occurs when other persons and objects, such as favourite toys, are perceived as important facets of one's own identity, and a basic self-image or conscience is evident as personal standards of good or naughty behaviour are formed. Awareness of the self as rational copier, capable of abstract

³⁷ Monge (1977) 10 104. Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987) 121.

³⁸ Erikson (1980) 127-128.

³⁹ Samuel (1981) 62-63.

⁴⁰ Hjelle & Ziegler (1981) 143.

⁴¹ Samuel (1981) 63.

thought and logical behaviour, occurs next followed by adolescence which brings an urgent search for self-identity together with the need to choose a career and establish independence, which necessitates the selection and pursuit of long term goals and what Allport calls 'proprie striving.' This proprie striving consists in successful attempts to attain self-defined goals, and enables the adolescent to become an adult with a durable sense of self-esteem and a stable self-identity and self-image.⁴²

Rogers was the first clinician to undertake extensive research on self-conceptions. He was pre-occupied with one element of personality, namely the self. He writes of his early experience with therapy:

Speaking personally, I began my work with the settled notion that the 'self' was a vague, ambiguous, scientifically meaningless term, which had gone out of the psychologist's vocabulary with the departure of the introspectionists. Consequently, I was slow in recognising that when clients were given the opportunity to express their problems and their attitudes in their own terms, without any guidance or interpretation, they tended to talk in terms of the self. Characteristic expressions were attitudes such as, 'I feel I'm not being my real self.' 'I wonder who I am, really'... 'I never had a chance to be myself' ... 'I think if I chip off all the plaster facade I've got a pretty solid self - a good substantial brick building underneath.' It seemed clear from such expressions that the self was an important element in the experience of the client, and that in some odd sense his goal was to become his 'real self.'⁴³

Rogers went on to define the self-concept or self-structure as 'an organised configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible to awareness. It is composed of elements such as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities; the percepts and concepts of self in relation to others and the environment; the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects; and goals and ideas which are perceived as having positive or negative valence.'⁴⁴

Turner also emphasised the enduring and unifying aspects of the self-conception, and regarded the concept of self to consist of a selective organisation of values and standards, chosen to form

⁴² Samuel (1981) 76-77, 279.

⁴³ Rogers (1959) 200-201, quoted by Samuel (1981) 92.

⁴⁴ Wylie (1984) 3 283.

a workable framework for social interaction. 'Typically, the self-conception is a vague but vitally felt idea of what I am like in my best moments, of what I am striving towards and have some encouragement to believe I may achieve, or of what I can do when the situation supplies incentive for unqualified effort.'⁴⁵

Based on Erikson's work on identity, Marcia developed an interview designed to assess empirically an individual's commitment to vocations, ideologies and sexual orientations as a means of assessing identity. This system has become a paradigm for identity research, but is not comprehensive enough to examine personal identity fully.⁴⁶ Nozick further expands the sense of personal identity over time, first propounded by James, to include two further criteria, namely to what extent the future self is causally related to the present self, and to what extent the future self is unique. This would mean that for a person to assume that in five years hence he will still be the same person he is now, he must assume that he is the same person as he was five years ago, and also that he will be only one person in future and that that person will be unique.⁴⁷ In researching the meaning and development of identity, Hart, Maloney and Damon place special emphasis on the sense of personal continuity over time and distinctness from others and they note that when asked to describe the self, most subjects describe the objective self in terms of their physical, social or psychological attributes, (for example having brown eyes, being friendly or clever), rather than in terms of the abstract concepts of continuity over time or uniqueness, and that these subjects described other people in the same terms.⁴⁸ These authors conducted empirical research into the development of the sense of personal continuity and distinctness from others, which included posing the following question to children and adolescents:

'If you change from year to year, how do you know you are still you?'

Answers given were based on externally observable physical characteristics, immutable, psychological characteristics of self, or were related to the social context, and included a sense of continuity of the properties and characteristics of the self:

'My eyes stay the same colour.'

'Because I have always been smart.'

'I will have the same friends and they will be able to tell that I am the same old person.'

⁴⁵ Turner (1968) 105.

⁴⁶ Marcia (1966) 'Development and validation of ego identity status', in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 35 551-8, discussed by Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987) 122.

⁴⁷ Nozick (1981) 'Philosophical Explanations', referred to by Hart, Maloney, and Damon (1987) 123.

⁴⁸ Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987) 126.

'Well, nothing about me always stays the same, but I am always kind of like I was a while ago, and there is always some connection.'

A second question was put to the participants:

'What makes you different from everybody you know?'

The replies again were in terms of observable physical features, character dimensions believed to be different, a combination of physical and psychological qualities or unique experiences:

'Nobody has my hair colour.'

'Nobody else in my class is as smart as me.'

*'Nobody else sees things or feels the same way about things as I do.'*⁴⁹

Generally however the psychological concept of self has two major aspects, which are a set of relatively private attitudes regarding one's self (one's own mental and physical capabilities, one's ideologies and values, and the image one thinks one's appearance presents to others), and a set of internalised perceptions of the expectations and attitudes others have about oneself, (one judges oneself by the standards of others and bases one's behaviour on feedback from the overt or sensed reaction of others).⁵⁰ Overall, the self is seen from a psychological view as an enduring percept, which develops cumulatively together with a sense of personal continuity and a feeling of distinctness from others, together with a sense of the self which is separate from mere public behaviour and public appearance.⁵¹

The Sociological View of the Self

The sociological view of the self generally regards the self as being socially constructed, malleable and liable to change with changes in social stimulation. Due to this emphasis on the intersocial construction of the self, there is far less emphasis placed on the sense of continuity and stability of the self from a sociological stance than from a psychological viewpoint.

The interactionist school of social psychology is largely developed from Cooley's theory, which was greatly expanded by Mead, of the looking glass self, which views the self as a reflection of other peoples' attitudes towards us, as we think we appear in the eyes of others and an

⁴⁹ Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987) 127-128.

⁵⁰ Monge (1977) 104.

⁵¹ Back (1977) 101, Turner (1968) 99.

anticipation of that response. In interactions with others, they become the mirror, reflecting their interpretation of us by their gestures, facial expressions and statements.⁵²

‘Each to each a looking-glass
Reflects the other that doth pass.’⁵³

Cooley explained this view, stating ‘We are ashamed to seem evasive in the presence of a straightforward man, cowardly in the presence of a brave one, gross in the eyes of a refined one, and so on.’⁵⁴ This view of the importance of social interactions in influencing the conception of self was expanded by Mead to include, as essential for the development of self, the ability to take the role of the other in order to appraise his attitudes towards us. Goffman developed this concept of the self in social interaction so that he viewed social interaction in terms of drama with masks and role-playing, with the participants as actors responding to various cues and promptings, performing in scenes and settings before an audience who are present at every social interaction both front-stage and back-stage.⁵⁵

Strauss too views social interaction as a drama with many more persons present at each interaction than there are physical bodies. Strauss developed the looking glass self to include the masks worn by people, stating ‘whatever else it may be, identity is connected with the fateful appraisals made of oneself - by oneself and by others. Everyone presents himself to the others and to himself and sees himself in the mirrors of their judgements. The masks he then and thereafter presents to the world and its citizens are fashioned upon his anticipations of their judgements. The others present themselves too; they wear their own brands of mask and they are appraised in turn.’ Strauss points out that this mirror image may be distorted, or that the results of the interaction may turn out quite differently from those envisaged, and that when the responses of others are out of tune with our expectations, and there is a denial of validation by other people who are important to us, this inevitably leads to reinterpretations of one’s activity. Interaction is described as a ‘going on between persons who each enact a role or occupy a status’ and interaction takes place in a continuous fluid process with those involved taking up successive stances in relation to each other after an initial reading of each other’s identity. ‘Sometimes they fence, sometimes they move in rhythmic psychological ballet.’ Strauss

⁵² Denzin (1984) 283.

⁵³ Cooley (1936) in *Human Nature and the Social Order* 184 quoted by Strauss (1977) 34. Cooley borrowed the couplet and term from Ralph Waldo Emerson’s ‘Astraea,’ according to Turner (1968) 93.

⁵⁴ Cooley (1902) *Human Nature and the Social Order* 184 quoted by Denzin (1984) 3 293.

⁵⁵ Fogelson (1979) 75.

modifies Goffman's audience present at each social interaction into supplementary actors who represent a wide range of relationships including relatives, friends, teachers and persons long since dead, those arising from the actor's past and groups to which the actor belongs, and these supplementary actors make exits and entrances in and out of the interaction. The actual people participating in the interaction are not merely individuals, but are in fact representatives of various groups, such as doctor and patient, social classes and ages.⁵⁶

These dramaturgical terms are continued by Berger when he describes the importance of society in forming identity and prescribing the roles individuals are to play in society. Berger states that 'society not only determines what we do but also what we are,' and that each situation that we enter arouses specific expectations which demand specific responses from us and thus we adopt roles in response to these expectations. 'Society provides the script for all *dramatis personae*, and the individual actors, therefore, need but slip into the roles already assigned to them before the curtain goes up. As long as they play their roles as provided for in this script, the social play can proceed as planned.'⁵⁷ In his outline of his role theory, Berger views role and identity as inextricably linked in that every role has a certain identity attached to it and this identity has been socially assigned, whether the role is trivial and temporary, as in a simple occupational role, or whether the role and its consequent identity is virtually inescapable, for example one's race or gender. 'Roles are sets of expectations, rights, obligations and patterns of predictable behaviours that persons employ when occupying particular positions. Roles are also labels that people use to characterise themselves and others, and expectations about roles are generally shared.' These role expectations have both anticipative and normative aspects where the audience or other person has the ability to predict what will happen next, or to expect what should happen.⁵⁸

From a sociological perspective, identity is socially bestowed, socially sustained and socially transformed, even identity that is usually considered to be one's essential self. It is impossible to maintain an identity all on one's own without confirmation by others in society, and similarly, an alternation in identity, a conversion from one self-image to another, requires conspiracy on the part of a group to bring about this change. Berger perceives the individual as a 'repertoire of roles, each one properly equipped with a certain identity. The range of an individual person can be measured by the number of roles he is capable of playing. The person's biography now

⁵⁶ Strauss (1977) 9, 35, 55-56, 70.

⁵⁷ Berger (1963) 112.

⁵⁸ Babad *et al.* (1983) 211, 215.

appears to us as an uninterrupted sequence of stage performances, played to different audiences, sometimes involving drastic changes of costume, always demanding that the actor be what he is playing.' Generally, these roles are unplanned and are immediate and instinctive responses to the demands of the situation, but Berger adopts Goffman's concept of role distancing, when an individual consciously adopts a role without inner commitment and plays the role tongue-in-cheek for an ulterior purpose, usually because this is the only means available of maintaining human dignity in a situation.⁵⁹

While the self is conceived as being a fluid process, continuously created and recreated in each social interaction and held together by the slender thread of memory, there is nevertheless an inner compulsion towards consistency, motivated by the need to perceive oneself as a totality. The 'normally' functioning person aims for consistency in all aspects of his life.⁶⁰ There are also strong external pressures exerted by society to maintain some consistency in the various roles and ensuing identities. Society encourages and coerces its members to maintain constancy and conformity by means of ridicule, persuasion, gossip, the threat of ostracism and physical violence, which is the strongest means of social control.⁶¹ Strauss emphasises that a sense of meaningfulness, continuity, unity and coherence in one's life depends on one's own interpretation of past acts. 'The awareness of constancy in identity is, then, in the eye of the beholder rather than 'in the behaviour itself.'⁶²

Aspects of the sociological self are involuntary, such as the racial or gender group into which the individual is born. It is up to the individual to make sense of these aspects by creating an appropriate socio-identity. However, the individual has free choice over other aspects of the Sociological self, such as choosing a value orientation which is the integration of those chosen values into one perspective, and this integration is an important facet of the sociological self.⁶³ Identity is closely bound with values such as truth, beauty, freedom, duty and order, which guide the individual's behaviour, as 'to know who I am as a person is a species of knowing where I stand.'⁶⁴ McCall states that 'self, in the sense of personal identity, is most profoundly revealed (if not discovered) in the context of moral decision.'⁶⁵ According to Rokeach, it is values, and not attitudes, that are the most significant constructs in accounting for human

⁵⁹ Berger (1963) 115-121, 123, 156-157.

⁶⁰ Lecky (1945) 'Self-consistency, a Theory of Personality', as referred to by Gergen (1968) 301.

⁶¹ Berger (1963) 84-88, 124-125.

⁶² Strauss (1977) 145-147.

⁶³ Babad *et al*, (1983) 229-232.

⁶⁴ Taylor (1989) 27.

⁶⁵ McCall (1977) 279.

conduct.⁶⁶ A person who is strongly committed to himself as a certain kind, or kinds, of person will have strong convictions of how he should behave in situations and what is worth striving for and what should be avoided. Strauss argues that any long-standing commitment involves a commitment to sacrifice, which may involve the sacrifice of any cherished thing, act or person, and that the highest form of sacrifice is self-sacrifice, perhaps even yielding oneself up to death. 'Self-sacrifice signifies often the firmest of identities and the most total of commitments.'⁶⁷ The opposite of commitment is identity diffusion, signifying a lack of commitment, and this diffusion sometimes, but not always, occurs due to a crisis.⁶⁸ More recently, Baumeister notes that the self is often not content to remain a passive recipient of feedback from the social world, but often seeks instead to institute and maintain control over the environment. He describes this active, dominant aspect, which is responsible for making choices and taking control, as the executive function of the self.⁶⁹

Strauss considers that the essential core of personality is laid down in early life, but that although a person remains essentially the same, transformation in identity may occur at turning points when critical incidents occur. The transformation may be subtle, for example, as a result of successful experimental role-playing, when a person is forced by circumstances to play a range of roles he did not previously believe himself capable of playing or had not conceived of himself as playing. The transformation may be dramatic, for example, when betrayal by anyone with whom a person is closely identified occurs. A third type of critical incident leading to transformation in identity may occur when a person realises that he has been deceived by events in general and that his naming of his self has been mistaken, and he is not what he thought he was. In this connection, Strauss cites the example of a person discovering in later life that he was adopted as a child and that therefore one of his chief terms of self-reference is erroneous with the discovery of the truth. Strauss explains the importance of naming and names as an aspect of identity and regards the name by which a person is known as a 'distinctive appellation', indicative of both its donor and its owner, as names are an integral part of 'qualities' and 'classifications.' To name is to know, indicate and identify an object as some kind of object and to place it within a category, and this act of identifying objects, whether they are human or physical, enables an individual to organise his action with reference to those objects.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Rokeach (1968) 160.

⁶⁷ Strauss (1977) 39, 42.

⁶⁸ McKinney (1984) 181

⁶⁹ Baumeister (1999) 12.

⁷⁰ Strauss (1977) 15-19, 45, 91-100.

Deschamps and Devos later note that ‘personal identity is not well defined. However, it indicates how an individual is aware of his difference with respect to others. That feeling can only be experienced in relation to others and personal identity refers to the fact that the individual perceives himself as identical to himself; in other words he is the same in time and in space, but that is also what specifies him and marks him out from others. Personal identity is what makes you similar to yourself and different from others.’⁷¹

Although the influence of identity on politics was the chief interest for Taylor, his concept of identity follows the sociological view of identity very closely, as he links identity with recognition by others – ‘our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition by others.’ He believed that we define our identity through dialogue with (or against) the things which our significant others see in us, even to the extent that we often continue internal conversations with our parents, for example, long after these have disappeared from our lives. Identity is formed through internal and external dialogue with others and depends crucially on dialogical relations with others.⁷²

The looking glass self and symbolic interaction theories, first developed at the beginning of the last century, nevertheless remain at the core of current social psychological theories of the self.⁷³ The most comprehensive definition of personal identity that I have yet found combines elements of both the psychological and sociological concepts in social psychology. This states that ‘the self-concept is, in content, a representation of an individual’s personal identity; each self-concept is a unique or idiosyncratic property of the perceiver belonging to only one individual and not shared with others; the sociological self is a looking glass self, a reflection and internalization of others’ reactions to the public self as presented in social interaction; and the self-concept is a relatively enduring, stable cognitive structure. The self is thus fairly fluid in that it reacts in social interaction as the looking glass self, yet is also relatively stable in that it consists in several self-concepts, (some of which are core and others peripheral, according to their psychological importance), which are organised in a personality structure, a self schema.⁷⁴ The self-schema has gradually replaced the older term of self-concept as the term self-concept implies that all self-knowledge is united into one single concept, whereas the self-schema embraces a large organised range of self-knowledge. ‘The self-schema is a cognitive

⁷¹ Deschamps & Devos (1998) 3.

⁷² Taylor (1994) 34-37.

⁷³ Denzin (1984) 293.

⁷⁴ Baumeister (1999) 5.

framework that guides the way we process information about ourselves. Self-schemas reflect all of our past self-relevant experiences; all of our current knowledge and existing memories about ourselves; and our conception of what we were like in the past, what we are like now and what we may be like in the future.⁷⁵ The self schema minimises variation in the processing of self-related information contained in the individual's social experiences as these experiences are interpreted, filtered and reinterpreted selectively, resulting in a stable personal core.⁷⁶

The psychological and sociological views of the self overlap greatly but perhaps the greatest difference between the sociological and psychological views of the self on the one hand and the philosophical views of the self on the other is the quiet reflection required by the philosophers to discover the sense of self, whereas the sociological and psychological views support vigorous effort by the individual, particularly in a social context in order to realise a sense of identity.⁷⁷

Account must be taken also of 'folk' or 'common sense psychology', which reflects the practical viewpoint of the ordinary individual, who, in normal life may question his identity, but his method will differ dramatically from the philosophical or psychological modes that have been outlined above. An average person will not normally question which of his several self-concepts he is at present, or how he comes to be aware of his sense of self nor ponder on the relationship between mind and body. In our everyday lives, personal identity is generally considered to consist in bodily identity, and this is especially true of children and many adults in cultures where psychology does not play a major role.⁷⁸ Alternatively, when questioning their identity, these ordinary people will be 'thinking about what they are like: about the characteristics that make them distinctive, the things that make friendship with them different from friendship with someone else.'⁷⁹

Identity and Doubles in Literature

In early Greek and Roman literature, the character of a person reflected in speech and writing was inclined to be stoic rather than a driving force. The character of a person was regarded as predictable, and certainly, 'Theophrastus' characters remain fixed; and therefore they are not transformed by the unfolding of events' but instead their characters form their responses to these

⁷⁵ Baron & Byrne (1994) 175-176.

⁷⁶ Turner & Onorato (1999) 12-17.

⁷⁷ Turner (1968) 99.

⁷⁸ Noonan (1989) 3, Baumeister (1999) 1-2.

⁷⁹ Glover (1988) 109-110.

events. The ancients were influenced by Aristotle's view of character being fixed whereby any moral struggles merely strengthened the character qualities already present, but did not lead to any new qualities, as he held that character does not grow or change, but merely becomes filled in and well rounded.⁸⁰

Regarding the theory of character in literature, the mind-body problem was not an issue, as physical and psychological traits were united as diffuse aspects of the one organism.⁸¹

A further aspect of identity that must be considered is that of the double as a literary motif with psychological implications. The double in literature is often used to imply a spiritual affinity linking the physical identical pairs of characters, and sometimes to indicate an inner dichotomy within an individual. Rogers states that 'the conventional double is of course some sort of antithetical self, usually a guardian angel or tempting devil. Critics oriented toward psychology tend to view the diabolic double, which predominates, as a character representing unconscious, instinctual drives.' Doubles in literature may be manifest, as physically identical doubles, or latent as those found by Freudian-type analysis.⁸² For the purposes of my study, the manifest doubles are the closest to the doubles appearing in Plautus' plays. The double in modern literature, especially in Poe, Stevenson and Dostoevsky, owes much to the romantic double or doppelganger in the works of Hoffmann and Jean Paul Richter.⁸³ Otto Rank, in considering examples of the double in literature such as Hoffmann's *Fantastic Tales*, Poe's *William Wilson*, Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, describes the typical double:

'We always find a likeness, which resembles the main character down to the smallest particulars, such as names, voice and clothing. Always, too, this double works at cross-purposes with its prototype and as a rule, the catastrophe occurs in the relationship with a woman, predominantly ending in suicide by way of the death intended for the irksome persecutor. In a number of instances this situation is combined with a number of thoroughgoing persecutory delusions or is even replaced by it, thus assuming the picture of a total paranoid system of delusions.'⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Bakhtin (1981) 140-141.

⁸¹ Rorty (1976) 304.

⁸² Rogers (1970) 2, 48-51 calls latent doubles 'secret sharers' and discusses Lady Macbeth in Macbeth in this light, as being simultaneously double and mother of Macbeth and Banquo, and Macduff, Malcolm, Donalbain and Duncan all as doubles of Macbeth.

⁸³ Tymms (1949) 16.

⁸⁴ Rank (1971) *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*, transl. by H Tucker, 33, quoted by Abse (1976) 168.

Doubling may also be called splitting, fragmentation and decomposition. Decomposition in literature has clinical counterparts in autoscopy, the visual hallucination of the physical self, and in dissociation, the dual or multiple personality. Multiple personality involves behavioural dissociation in time whereas autoscopy involves visual dissociation in space. Other features of autoscopic hallucinations, which have counterparts in literature, are the double as a conscience figure, as a projected wish-fulfilment, and as a reflection of the subject's narcissism. The hallucinations of seeing oneself are without exception regarded as narcissistic, especially the mirror image, where the projected self is seen in not merely a similar self, but an exact duplicate. Rogers notes that delusions of meeting oneself denote a morbid preoccupation with one's own essence, and Abse speaks of delusional identity occurring when there is a loss of personal sameness and historical continuity, resulting in a doubling of the self.⁸⁵ This doubled self 'displays disowned parts of the self at times of identity crises, and is a 'result of a frantic attempt to escape from hatred of the self.' Abse also states that illusions of a doubling of the self constitute a way-station on the road to change, either progressive or regressive disintegration of the personality.⁸⁶

Tymms discusses Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and *The Double* as examples of the divided self, but regards the doubles in *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* as manifest doubles and refers to the doubles in *Amphitruo* as an example of physical duplication of the self by magic, and the doubles in *Menaechmi* as an example of duplication of the self as a natural phenomenon.⁸⁷ This contrasts with the view of Segal who regards *Menaechmus II* as a surrogate self, a product of wish fulfilment on the part of his brother, and the play itself as only the dream of *Menaechmus*.⁸⁸

Aspects of Identity found in Studies of Identical Twins

A further aspect of the study of identity concerns theories on twins, especially identical twins, and the bond between them, and the concept of twinship. Comparatively recent studies indicate that, on account of the very close bond that exists between twins, identification between the twins takes place to a large degree, with the result that there is only partial differentiation of their ego structures, and unit identity emerges, rather than separate and unique identities. This twinning bond begins at conception and continues throughout the twins' lives, either consciously

⁸⁵ Rogers (1970) 14-15, 18.

⁸⁶ Abse (1976) 39 167.

⁸⁷ Tymms (1949) 20, 24, 43, 92, 99.

⁸⁸ Segal (1969) 92.

or unconsciously, and is described as a 'psychological thread between twins' and 'involves experiencing oneself as part of the other person (i.e. the twin). A sense of self is shared or distributed between the individuals of the pair.'⁸⁹ This twinning bond has been demonstrated by researchers and described by clinicians and twins themselves. In a study of twins by Paluszny and Beht-Hallahni in 1974, it was established that the twins who were the closest to each other did not marry, as they found separation from the other twin too painful, illustrating that the twinning bond often continues into adulthood.⁹⁰ Schave embarked on a synthesising study, integrating the methods and findings of previous research.⁹¹ One of her findings was the six main patterns of identity based on the relationship formation among the twins and dependent on the degree to which twins were able to separate and develop individually. These six types of twinship experiences are:

- (i) **Unit identity** where aspects of the twins' personalities have merged and their egos function as one unit. Either both the twins do everything the same way or each twin represents one half of a whole personality. While the twins in the study had separate careers and friendships, they remained a psychological unit, and felt a regressional pull towards each other, to the detriment of their other relationships. Unit identity is characterised by a lack of a significant relationship outside the twinship, and although the twins may live in different locations, when other relationships become too difficult, these twins return to each other as their most important other. These types of twins are not able to separate psychologically from each other, and aspects of their egos remain merged.
- ii) **Interdependent identity** where twins look to each other for support and assistance in every way. They lead separate but interwoven lives, and choose careers and partners to which they can both relate, and always remain close to one another. These twins do not strive for psychological separation, but choose a symbiotic relationship and value their twinship above their individuality.
- (iii) **Split identity** occurs where twins have primarily opposite self-images, and one twin becomes idealised and the other becomes the scapegoat. While there is a bond between

⁸⁹ Schave and Ciriello (1983) 5, 11.

⁹⁰ Paluszny, and Beht-Hallahni (1974) 'An Assessment of Monozygotic Twin Relationship by the Semantic Differential', in: *Archives of General Psychiatry* 31: 110-117, referred to in Schave and Ciriello (1983) 14-15.

⁹¹ Schave (1982) studied behavioural geneticists (Floderus-Myhred et al. 1980; Gessel 1941; Scarr-Salaptik 1973), educational psychologists (Brody and Brody 1976; Plomin and Rowe 1977; Wilson 1977), psychoanalytic clinicians (Hift 1980), ethnographic researchers (Lytton Conway and Suave 1977; Smith 1976) and statisticians (Farber 1981) as discussed in Schave and Ciriello (1983) 41.

these twins, the relationship is fraught with discord, and these twins find other relationships difficult also. As adolescence is reached, these twins separate to seek out more satisfying relationships.

- (iv) **Idealised identity** where twins regard their twinship as the most important aspect of their existence, and each identifies with the concept of twinship rather than with the other twin and they neglect to develop other aspects of their personalities or other relationships. Separation is not at all difficult for these twins, as they value the concept of their twinship more than closeness with each other and generally, although these twins stay in contact with each other, they lead separate lives, and their relationship is neither particularly intimate, nor complicated.
- (v) **Competitive identity** where twins show a high degree of individual development, while still maintaining close ties with their twins and fostering good relationships with others. Most of the twins in the study fell into this category. Separation is not problematic, and although it is difficult for each twin to establish relationships as close as that experienced in the twinship, these twins have the ability to maintain their own independent lives as well as their twinship.
- (vi) **Sibling attachment identity** occurs where the twins are of opposite sexes, and consequently, although often close, the relationship does not resemble the close twinning bond of the other relationships described above, and the relationship between the male/female set of twins is that of non-twin siblings. There is no confusion of identity, due to early sex role differentiation within the family at an early age, and separation is easily accomplished, although each twin always regards the other twin as special.

While some of the twins in the study fitted into more than one of the twin identity categories, it was universal that the pattern, which had begun in infancy, persisted throughout the lives of the twins. For the purposes of my study of *Menaechmi*, the first group of twins, the unit identity relationship, is the most relevant. In the study, one twin, who was typical of the unit identity category, commented, 'the bond between us is inevitable, making our lives interrelated. It is larger than us and cannot be overcome.' Another twin of the unit identity type stated, 'We started together and we stayed together. Now we have our independence with our husbands and families. Later on, we will be back together. There isn't anything we can't share.'⁹² The intensity of the twinning bond varies between twins according to the degree of mothering that the twins have experienced, and this twinning bond is a result of the relationship between the

⁹² Schave and Ciriello (1983) 48-83, 105.

twins themselves and their parents, and identity is created, consciously or unconsciously, by the parents for their twins in this twinning bond.

Scheinfeld reports several cases of identical twins reared apart who, after repeatedly being mistaken for each other, were accidentally re-united in later life, and who then discovered an empathetic bond between them to the extent that they took steps to be closer to each other. One extreme example is of male twins, Tony and Roger, brought up as Italian and Jewish respectively, who despite their very different backgrounds, felt such a bond on encountering each other at the age of twenty-three, that Roger moved to the same city as Tony to be close to him. The Danish twins, Palle and Peter, despite vast differences in education, found such affinity on discovering each other at the age of twenty-two, that they left their respective homes to be together.⁹³

Ancient Views on Slavery

As a final facet of the identity questions to be examined, as our three Plautine plays under examination contain slaves who play major roles in these plays, it remains to consider the views of the ancient Romans and Greeks on slavery. Prior to the *Politics* of Aristotle, there are no distinct treaties on slaves and the concept of slavery, and we rely on literature for insight into the attitude towards slaves and slavery.

The popular theory of the 'natural slave' is a post-Homeric phenomenon, and its basic tenet was that Greeks were destined to enjoy freedom, and that barbarians were by nature destined to be slaves, and this was accompanied by a contempt for physical labour. In the heroic period, there is no evidence in Homer of a disdain for menial tasks nor a pan-Hellenic nationalism, but after the Persian Wars, there arose a consciousness of national unity combined with an attitude of national superiority over other nations, who were considered to be barbarians. In addition, the readiness of the barbarian to submit to an absolute monarch, combined with these factors led to the consequent view that the barbarians were innately fitted only for slavery, and that it was in fact therefore the duty of Greeks to enslave them, with the simultaneous view that the Greeks were innately suited for freedom.⁹⁴ The barbarians as slaves in fact were thought by both Plato and Aristotle to be deficient in the governing element of the soul, the rational part, and the

⁹³ Scheinfeld (1967) 175-176.

⁹⁴ Aeschylus *Pers.* 241-242, Herodotus 7, 135, 3; Euripides *Hel.* 276, *Iph. Aul.* 1400-1401, Isocrates 4, 131-132; 181-182, discussed in Schlaifer (1936) 165-168.

theory of the natural slave arose, meaning that the slave was by nature designed to be a slave, and only a slave. While in the Homeric period slaves were simply facts of life and pieces of property, the view later gradually developed that labour was contemptible, and banal tasks were despised, together with the slaves who performed these tasks, and the physical appearance of the slave as evidence of character was taken as corroboration of the theory of the natural slave.⁹⁵ Aristotle states that slaves are physically distinguished from freemen in that the bodies of slaves are capable of great strength suitable for their physical tasks, while freemen are of upright carriage suited for the social life of soldiers or civilians. Both Plato and Aristotle supported the view of natural slavery, and Plato believed that the slave did not possess the moral excellence of the first class rulers of the state, nor the ability of personal self-rule of the second class in the state. In his *Politics*, Aristotle states that a slave is an animate article of property, and belongs to his master absolutely. It is not only necessary but expedient that some men should rule and others be subject, and while some are marked out from birth for subjection, others are born to rule. Moreover just as the body is inferior to the soul and benefits from being ruled by the soul, so does the slave as the natural inferior benefit from living under the rule of the master. Aristotle defines a slave as 'one who by nature can (and therefore does) belong to another, and who shares in reason to the extent of apprehending without possessing it.' The slave and beast are alike in that their physical energy serves their master's needs. The slave has brutish strength, but is mentally and morally unequipped for anything other than menial physical tasks. Aristotle defines the slave as lacking in the ability to deliberate and consider in advance and in 'the exercise of this deliberate choice based on this previous consideration.' The natural slave lacks part of the soul, and consequently is not wholly a man, although he is above an animal, which has no soul. The slave cannot participate fully in all the moral virtues, as this is reserved for citizens only, but he can attain some moral virtue in serving his master without inefficiency, and since he lacks part of the soul, the slave cannot fully be a man or participate in true friendship with his master, as friendship is reserved for men. As slaves are human beings, and therefore have some share in reason, they must have some share in virtue, and the virtue of a slave is relative to his master. A slave needs the minimum of virtue to perform his tasks satisfactorily without falling short in his duty due to cowardice or lack of self-discipline. As the maximum benefit is obtained by all things fulfilling their functions according to their design, and the slave is designed to serve his master, in Aristotle's view it benefits the natural slave to be enslaved to his master, particularly as some of the *arete* of the master may be transferred to the slave by virtue of their close association. In this case, the slave is in a better position than

⁹⁵ Plato *Rep.* 590cd, Aristotle *Pol.* 60a12. Theognis 535-538 in Schlaifer (1936) 185.

the free workman who has no such association with *arete*.⁹⁶ While it was Aristotle's belief that it is evident that by nature some men are by nature free and others by nature designed for slavery and that for this latter class, slavery is practical and right, he also goes on to explore slavery resulting from war, and states that slavery arising from war is not automatically justifiable and that superior strength in war should not be the criterion for taking slaves, in that the cause of the war may itself be unjust. Aristotle also states that Greeks do not recognise the term 'slave' in relation to a Greek, only as applied to a barbarian. Aristotle then concludes that some men are slaves under any circumstances and others under no circumstances, and qualifies his theory of a natural slave by admitting that by nature all men are not either slaves or freemen. Aristotle also briefly considers the methods of acquiring slaves, and says that the art of acquiring slaves justly is a species of hunting or warfare, and Warrington notes that Aristotle considered the just and natural way of acquiring slaves was to make raids on those who were already slaves by nature.⁹⁷

While many slaves enjoyed elevated status as agents for their masters, thus enabling them to improve their social and financial status, at the other end of the scale, slaves were simultaneously considered as chattels. Tablets dated A.D 51 document the use of slaves as chattels for loans.⁹⁸ In discussing the composition of the citizen's house and household in his *Laws*, Plato includes slaves among the goods and chattels desirable for the citizen to possess in order to fulfil his tasks. Plato presents two popular opposing theories on slaves, the first of which concedes that slaves have frequently shown themselves superior men to brothers or sons in every way, including the preservation of persons, property and the whole family. The other view holds all slaves rotten at heart and the whole tribe of slaves untrustworthy, thus presenting a somewhat ambiguous view on the humanity of the slave. Plato stated that the character of the slave was without honour, shame or any sound element at all, and Aristophanes makes even Charon refuse to ferry a slave in his boat due to the evil archetypal nature of the slave. Plato admits the difficulty in defining the distinction between the real slave and real free man and master, but advocates proper treatment of slaves by masters in order not to make their servants into slaves at heart by the scourge and lash. Plato's proper treatment of slaves consists in using no violence nor familiarity towards a servant and in showing even more reluctance to wrong a slave than an equal, for a man's character is revealed by his dealings with those whom he can easily mistreat, and a man's genuine unfeigned reverence for right and real abhorrence of wrong

⁹⁶ Aristotle *Pol.* 1260a. Westermann (1943) 91.

⁹⁷ *Pol.* 54b6-60b5, 463a-463b, 1253b-1254b, 1259b-1260a, 590 463, 1255a-1255b. Warrington (ed.) (1959) 14.

⁹⁸ Lintott (2002) 558-559.

is thus revealed. However Plato regards any sane man quite free to lay hands on his own slave for any purpose he pleases in the way of lawful business.⁹⁹

Aristotle held that for the citizen to participate fully in the functions and benefits of the state, sufficient leisure was necessary, and this freedom from menial tasks was made possible by slaves, as a natural expedient. Plato takes the system of slavery for granted without comment, beyond stating that a man should have the best and most trusty slaves possible. Both Plato and Aristotle disapproved of the citizen participating in trade and manual labour. Plato condemned agricultural labour, commerce and industry as demeaning for the citizen, as these were more suitable occupations for the peasants, manual labourers and slaves as these banausic occupations would prevent the citizen from socialising with his friends or fulfilling his obligations to the city due to a lack of leisure. He specifically singles out trade as causing or encouraging men to pursue their appetites beyond the measure of reason. Plato forbids the ownership of silver and gold in an ideal society and expressly states that it is impossible to be simultaneously good and exceedingly wealthy. Extreme social stigma is attached to all classes of retailers as they always strive to make an exorbitant profit rather than a reasonable one. The only people suitable for following a retail business are resident aliens or foreigners and if a citizen is found to be engaged in sordid trade, he should be prosecuted and punished.¹⁰⁰ Aristotle condemns retail trade, reflecting the ordinary Greek attitude towards commerce, which was regarded as illiberal and unfit for the free man and as unnecessary acquisition of wealth and property.¹⁰¹ Aristotle distinguishes between the necessary and unnecessary acquisition of property, which he calls the natural and unnatural acquisition of property, and the latter encompasses amassing more than one needs for wealth's own sake.¹⁰²

Westermann notes that there were various forms of bondage amongst the Greeks and that the Greek idea of slavery was flexible within four basic principles as reiterated in the Delphic inscriptions recording slave manumission. Freedom was not a fixed indivisible concept and there was not a rigid dividing line between free man and slave and in fact in Greek society a man could be part free and part slave, with what Westermann calls an 'astonishing fluidity of status in both directions, from slavery to freedom as from freedom to slavery.' Finley describes ancient society as comprising a spectrum of statuses with the free citizen at one end and the

⁹⁹ Plato *Legg.* 776-778, 914e, Aristophanes *Ran.* 190, as discussed in Schlaifer (1936) 184-191.

¹⁰⁰ Aristotle *Pol.* 69a34ff., 28b37ff., Plato *Legg.* 742e, 806d, e, 846d, e, 918d, as discussed in Schlaifer (1936) 173-175, 192.

¹⁰¹ Aristotle *Pol.* 1256a ff. as discussed in Copleston (1961) 1: 353.

¹⁰² *Pol.* 1256b-1258a.

slave at the other with a considerable number of shades of dependence in between. The four principles, which establish the freedom of manumitted slaves, declare the right of the slave to be his own master, with the right to represent himself in courts of law, to be protected against seizure as property, except by due process of law, to have freedom of action and do what he desires to do, and to go where he desires to go, including living where he desires to live. Westermann comments on the lack of self-consciousness in ancient Greek society regarding slavery and the lack of fear or hysteria regarding slaves in Greek literature and Finley too notes how completely the Greeks took slavery for granted as one of the facts of human existence.¹⁰³

If we look more particularly at slavery in Italy, while it is impossible to be completely precise regarding the number of slaves in Italy, 'recent estimates stand at two or three million by the end of the first century BCE (between thirty and forty per cent of the population).' The same ambivalent attitude towards Roman slaves can be discerned in that slaves were regarded as instruments for their masters' living, with Varro defining the slave as a 'speaking instrument' (*instrumentum uocale*), but yet the Roman slave was expected to exercise virtue in that he should display loyalty to his master in times of danger, to the extent that a law was passed in Rome making it compulsory for slaves to come to the aid of their masters in times of trouble. 'The slave both does and doesn't share the moral world of the master.'¹⁰⁴

Relationship of Theories of Identity to Plautus' Three Plays

In relating the theories of identity discussed above in the study of the self, the study of twins, the literary motif of doubles, and ancient views on slavery to the plays of Plautus, it must be questioned to what extent Plautus and his audience would have valued these view points. The ancients in fact did not consider the concept of personal identity as related to the self, but instead viewed the soul as the seat of personality. The fact that identity was of interest to the ancient Romans and Greeks is evident in the number of New Comedy plays featuring problems relating to identity, some identity problems accompanied by intrigue, others occurring spontaneously. Of the extant Plautine plays, Duckworth deems *Cistellaria*, *Rudens*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* to contain mistaken identity problems without intrigue, and *Captiui*, *Curculio*, *Epidicus*, and *Poenulus*, to combine mistaken identity with intrigue.¹⁰⁵ Other Plautine plays,

¹⁰³ Westermann (1943) 9-16. Finley (1959) 145-147.

¹⁰⁴ Varro *R.R* 1.17.1, Fitzgerald (2000) 3, 6-7.

¹⁰⁵ As the humans are as baffled by the tricks played through divine intrigue as they would be by *errores* occurring naturally, Duckworth (1952) 147 places *Amphitruo* in the category of mistaken identity without guile.

such as the *Asinaria*, *Casina*, *Mercator*, *Miles Gloriosus*, *Persa* and *Pseudolus* contain impersonations of other characters engineered by cheeky slaves and a parasite.¹⁰⁶

Plato accounted for internal turmoil in man together with the unifying force of reason, by postulating the three divisions of soul, each struggling for ascendancy and stipulating that reason was the proper governor of the soul. While Aristotle conceived of the soul and body as united, the general philosophical stance since St Augustine, who followed Plato's principles, has been to ignore or minimise empirical evidence and the physical body in favour of the soul and mental attributes, and to consider the continuity of consciousness instead when evaluating personal identity. While Descartes considered the identity of a person to lie in man as a thinking being with an innate consciousness of self, Hume rejected the validity of the concept of a consciousness of self due to his view that there is no real bond in our perceptions, but only a felt bond between bundles of different perceptions. Even among the modern philosophers like Perry, when considering identity, there is generally an emphasis on the mental aspects of self, consciousness of self or man's concepts about himself and his values, to the detriment of the corporeal aspect of self. In view of the fact that the plots of both *Amphitruo* and *Menaechmi* hinge largely on the evidence of the senses and the similarity of physical bodies, rather than academic concepts, it is necessary for us to also look beyond the philosophical view of the self to understand these plays of Plautus.

The psychological and sociological views of identity as seen in examination of the self tend to overlap somewhat, in that both views see the self as incorporating mind and body to a greater extent than the philosophical view of the self and both views take account of the varieties of selves that generally present themselves in everyday life. The psychological view incorporates the dual self, the 'I', the experiencing subject of self, and the 'me', the knowledge of self as object, with several 'me's', that include the social, spiritual and material 'me's.' Despite the variety of selves, there is a strong sense of stability and personal continuity through time as personal identity is seen as the cumulation and integration of various selves through life, together with a strong sense of distinctness from others. Unlike the philosophical view of the self, the psychological sense of self includes empirical evidence and that this is the widely accepted everyday layman's criterion of personal identity is supported by the experiments done by Hart, Maloney and Damon, when subjects describe their sense of continuity and differentiation of self in physical and psychological terms.¹⁰⁷ The psychological view of the self

¹⁰⁶ Duckworth (1952) 142-166.

¹⁰⁷ Hart, Maloney and Damon (1987) 127-128.

has relevance to *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* in view of the variety of selves comprising the average individual and many of Plautus' characters in these three plays. Another point of relevance is the use by Plautus' characters in *Amphitruo* and *Menaechmi* of the same criteria for personal identity as the general psychological view point, as will be seen in the examination of these plays in the ensuing chapters.

While the sociological view of the self also includes a variety of selves, these selves are not seen as gradually integrated into a basic stable identity but are viewed as continuously created and re-created in response to a variety of promptings and cues from society. There is a measure of consistency in the sociological self, but to a far lesser degree than in either the philosophical or psychological view of the self, and the consistency of the sociological self is not due to the accumulation of percepts regarding the self through time, but due largely to the pressure of society to conform in some measure and due also to an internal need for some consistency. Consistency is not a definable standard, but is dependant on the individual interpreting his experiences and roles in terms of unity, stability and coherence. The greatest consistency or commitment to one's concept of self and one's values often involves some form of sacrifice, (as occurs with Tyndarus in *Captiui*), and when the commitment to one's sense of self and one's values is weak, identity diffusion may occur, (as with Sosia in *Amphitruo*). Personal identity is viewed as having its origin in society, is sustained only by society and is transformed by society. (We can relate this concept to Tyndarus in *Captiui*, who, without changing his basic essential self or values, underwent transformations in personal identity, due to society, from freeborn, to slave of Philocrates, to an even greater degree of slavery under Hegio, to freeborn again and of equal status to Philocrates). While in the contemporary view the individual is seen as an actor undertaking numerous roles in response to the expectations of others in society, these roles are generally an automatic response to the cues given by others in society, and the individual is for the most part sincere in his role. It is when the individual assumes a role without sincerity that distancing occurs, usually as a means of maintaining dignity in a humiliating situation. Distancing occurs in practically all Plautine comedies, as they are rife with *serui callidi* who undertake any number of roles with no inner commitment, but with ulterior motives. It would be true to say that the cheeky slave in Plautus exults in the unaccustomed power that he wields and his temporary elevated status in society as he constructs and manages plots and undertakes a variety of roles with no inner commitment to any of the personae he has constructed. While there is technically no *seruus callidus* in *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* or *Amphitruo*, characters in these three plays undertake roles with tongue-in-cheek attitude, and display aspects similar to the conventional cheeky slave while doing so. It seems

that the sociological view of the self has considerable relevance for an examination of these three plays of Plautus, in view of the correspondence between the individual as an actor and the characters in *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, who are actors who self-construct their roles within the plays in response to the demands of the situations and the expectations of the other characters.

Modern research, based on the studies of identical twins has revealed bonds of varying degrees between identical twins, and has moreover shown that the plot of *Menaechmi* is not preposterous, as other identical twins studied have been separated when young, and then, when re-united by chance as adults, after being mistaken for each other, have discovered a twinship bond that makes them want to be together.¹⁰⁸ The sense of self shared between them may be experienced in various degrees, often to the detriment of their other relationships, and it appears that the unit identity experienced by identical twins in the research study is the most relevant to the identical twins in *Menaechmi*.

Just as twins have been an object of fascination or fear throughout the ages, so has the concept of doubles been a similarly fascinating motif in literature. With the double having its origin in Attic drama, the concept of doubles as a result of impersonation or twins is prominent in Plautus if we think of the *Miles Gloriosus*, *Bacchides*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*. Later literature featured the concept of doubles as manifest, such as in *Amphitruo* and Jupiter in *Amphitruo*, or latent and revealed by Freudian-type analysis, as in the Brothers Karamazov. It seems clear that *Amphitruo* and Jupiter are manifest doubles, but what has yet to be examined is the extent to which *Menaechmi* twins are latent or manifest doubles, and also Sosia and Mercury in *Amphitruo*.

These are the issues that I will be examining in my study of *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo* and the problems of identity raised in these three plays. I am looking at these problems from all the above perspectives, and although I have not found one single viewpoint to cover all the identity issues in these three plays, it seems that the following definition of identity is the most comprehensive and suitable for my study:

Identity is 'the feeling that we are the same person we were yesterday and last year; a sense of continuity derived from our body sensations (coenesthesia), our body image, and the feeling that our memories, purposes, values, and experiences belong to us; a

¹⁰⁸ See Aspects of Identity in Studies of Identical Twins in my Introduction, Scheinfeld (1967) 175-176.

sense of uniqueness and independence ("I am my own person").¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Goldenson (ed.) (1984) 366.

CHAPTER TWO: CAPTIUI

The Prologue

The *prologus* warns us in the prologue that *Captiui* will be unusual.

Profecto expedit fabulae huic operam dare.
Non pertractate facta est neque item ut ceterae
Neque spurcidici insunt uorsus, immemorabiles;
Hic neque periurus leno est nec meretrix mala
Neque miles gloriosus;

(ll.54-58)

Even allowing for the usual enthusiasm of the *captatio benevolentiae*, *Captiui* is indeed an unusual play. The striking opening scene features the two protagonists, Philocrates and Tyndarus, shackled in such a manner that they are unable to sit and are thus forced to stand uncomfortably during the prologue. While other Plautine plays abound with threats and jokes regarding torture, nevertheless these threats are not carried into action and the insouciant *serui callidi* escape punishment. By contrast, *Captiui* opens and closes with slaves physically bound by shackles, and Tyndarus is the only Plautine slave actually to experience physical punishment.¹

The *prologus* further stresses the play's unusual aspects by advising the audience to benefit by paying attention to the play, as it does not contain the usual stock characters of pimps, courtesans or braggart warriors. However, this promise is somewhat undercut by Plautus himself, as the most ebullient character in *Captiui* is the stock character from the *demi-monde*, the parasite, Ergasilus, who is the first person to burst onto the stage after the prologue and who confides that his nickname is 'Scortum' or 'Prostitute' (l.69). Nevertheless, *Captiui* is different. It contains neither a conventional *seruus callidus*, nor any female characters at all, with the consequence that there is no love story. Instead, although it is a comedy, *Captiui* features war and the consequences of warfare – slavery.

Another differentiating factor in this play is Plautus' use of various aspects of identity, operating

¹ Thalmann (1966) 119 notes that *Captiui* is the only Roman comedy to feature other actors on stage during the prologue, underlining the promise of an unusual play.

on different levels throughout the play, and his use of these aspects of identity to create comical scenes as well as convey the more serious aspects of war and the resultant slavery.² In *Captiui*, the problem of identity in one form or another is pervasive, and the issues of identity in this play are not contained solely in isolated incidents as in other Plautine plays where the *seruus callidus* adopts a temporary disguise or mounts a temporary impersonation. Nor do these identity issues in *Captiui* occur merely as a means of revelation to tie up loose ends in the finale. We are given the major manifest identity problems right at the beginning of the prologue itself, in order to inform the audience fully, and so gain the maximum effect from the audience's appreciation of the rich irony with its blend of the comic and the tragic that runs throughout the play.

*Sed is quo pacto seruiat suo sibi patri,
Id ego hic apud uos proloquar, si operam datis.*
(Il.5-6)

In the telling of how Tyndarus became the slave of his own father, we learn that Tyndarus had already undergone a change in identity in his transition from free child to slave child, when abducted as a young boy and sold as a slave to Philocrates' father (Il.8-10). We are made aware, even in the prologue, of various other unusual aspects of identity problems in the play that appear to support the claims of the *prologus* that *Captiui* is a play composed in a style different from the conventional Plautine comedy:

*Hisce autem inter sese hunc confinxerunt dolum,
Quo pacto hic seruos suom erum hinc amittat domum.
Itaque inter se commutant uestem et nomina;
Illic uocatur Philocrates, hic Tyndarus:
Huius illic, hic illius hodie fert imaginem.
Et hic hodie expediet hanc docte fallaciam,
Et suom erum faciet libertatis compotem,
Eodemque pacto fratrem seruabit suom
Reducemque faciet liberum in patriam ad patrem,
Imprudens: itidem ut saepe iam in multis locis
Plus insciens quis fecit quam prudens boni.
Sed inscientes sua sibi fallacia*

² McCarthy (2000) 166 comments on the didactic tone and the play's concern with the emotional and philosophical problem of identity, which separates *Captiui* from much of the rest of the corpus.

Ita compararunt et confinxerunt dolum

Itaque hi commenti, de sua sententia

Ut in seruitute hic ad suom maneat patrem:

Ita nunc ignorans suo sibi seruit patri;

Homunculi quanti sunt, quom recogito!

(ll.35-51)

In this passage of the prologue, it is implied that Tyndarus and Philocrates are going to play the roles of clever slaves (*docte fallaciam* l.40) and the usual descriptive words of trickery (*dolum* ll.35, 47, *fallacia* ll.40, 46), conventionally ascribed to *serui callidi*, are used here to describe the plan which the pair have devised for freeing Philocrates. However, Tyndarus differs here from the usual clever slave in that he and his master have **jointly** formulated the plan for rescuing Philocrates (*confinxerunt dolum* ll.35, 47), and the aim of the deception is to achieve, not the liberty of the slave, but the freedom of the master. This signals a sharp contrast to the masterful and egotistical plans engineered single-handedly by *serui callidi*, such as Tranio in *Mostellaria* or the arch *servus callidus* Pseudolus. The close relationship and sense of equality between master and slave is emphasised by the fact that we are twice informed in the prologue that the planning was shared between the pair.³ It also prepares us for the comparative ease with which Tyndarus the slave is able to exchange identity and roles with his master.

The prologue of *Captivi* contains a unique aspect of the exchanging of identities between master and slave, in that the exchange of roles is actual, not metaphorical.⁴ It is stated that master and slave actually exchange names and clothing (l.37), and as they exchange social status also, they accordingly exchange identities literally and completely. This is in contrast to the momentary reversal of roles that occurs in several other Plautine plays where the *adulescens* is reliant on his slave for help and so briefly adopts a mock subservient tone in supplication or gratitude, while the slave, in temporary ascendancy, assumes a domineering manner.⁵ Names and clothing are both regarded as important aspects of identity, if we refer to James' view of clothing as an integral part of the 'material me' and to Strauss' view of the name being an important aspect of classifying and identifying an object in order to be able to organise one's actions with reference to these objects.⁶ It is difficult to assess the precise clothing worn and exchanged by the pair, as

³ 'inter sese confinxerunt dolum', (l.35), 'ita compararunt et confinxerunt dolum', (l.47).

⁴ Gosling (1983) 53.

⁵ E.g. *Asinaria*, *Casina*, *Mostellaria*, *Epidicus*, *Rudens*.

⁶ See my Introduction pp.7-8 for James' views of the self and pp.13-14 for Strauss' views from a psychological and sociological perspective respectively.

no reference is made later in the play to the dress of either character⁷. Nor has the precise meaning of *imaginem* (l.39) been conclusively settled as to whether it refers to the exchanging of masks or the exchanging of appearances.⁸ However, for our purposes, it is not vital to ascertain precisely what costume was worn by master and slave, or what exact meaning one construes for *imaginem*, as the end effect is the same, namely that the impression is given in the very beginning of the play that the exchange of identities between Tyndarus and Philocrates is complete and that there is a great degree of parity between them to enable them to accomplish this transition.

Other unusual aspects of identity problems presented in the prologue include the outlining of the roles that Tyndarus will play. It has been implied that Tyndarus will play the role of *seruus callidus* to rescue his master, and it is standard practice in Plautus for the clever slave to rescue his master from his plight by wily stratagems, but usually the young man's dilemma is that he is *amans et egens* and in the chains of love, not in the physical chains of prisoners of war and slaves.⁹ As stated previously, there is no love interest in the *Captiui*, nor indeed any female roles at all, and this is highly unusual.¹⁰ It is usually the role of the slave to rescue his master from his father, whereas Tyndarus is striving to return Philocrates to his father (ll.36, 49). It is conventional for the clever slave to dupe his master, who is the father of the *adulescens*, but in *Captiui*, this master is actually the father of the **slave**. The motive for the deception is unusual, as Philocrates' being a prisoner of war and a slave represents more dire circumstances surrounding the *adulescens* than are generally found in Plautine comedy. Of course, the most unusual feature of all in *Captiui*, as we were carefully informed in the beginning of the prologue, is that Tyndarus is slave to his own father. Due to the prologue's emphasis on the cunning aspects of the plan to rescue Philocrates, we might be encouraged to expect Tyndarus to fulfil the standard role of a *seruus callidus*, but in fact, the foundation has been laid in the prologue, not only to inform the audience what to expect by outlining the plot carefully, but also to depict the identity problems operating on two levels. On the one hand we have the deception by the pair masquerading as each other to deceive Hegio in order to facilitate Philocrates'

⁷ Wiles (1991) 188-190 describes the typical New Comedy slave garb as a symmetrical *chiton* covering both shoulders, with a token rag of a garment appended to the *chiton* to denote his cloak.

⁸ Wiles (1991) 131-144 discusses the arguments for and against the wearing of masks in the time of Plautus. He supports the general view of the English language scholars that it was highly likely that masks were worn in Plautine plays. See my *Amphitruo* chapter - Mercury's role as a god in Mercury's Roles in the Prologue for further discussion of the use of masks in Plautus. See also my Introduction - Ancient Views on Slavery for the characteristic appearance of the slave. Tyndarus obviously does not conform to Aristotle's description of the distinctive physical appearance of the natural slave, as the exchange of identities is initially successful.

⁹ E.g. *Bacchides*, *Miles Gloriosus*, *Mostellaria*, *Pseudolus*, *Asinaria*. Segal (1968) 15.

¹⁰ The only other extant Plautine play that does not contain a female role is *Trinummus*, which has Luxuria and Inopia in the prologue, but no females in the main body of the play.

escape, and on the other, we know that Tyndarus is both the slave and unknown son of Hegio, and because these details have been explained clearly in advance, the audience is in a position to appreciate the comic irony inherent in the situation and in much of the dialogue.

In many ways the prologue is an indication of how Plautus will handle the rest of the play, and is a forerunner of Plautus' treatment of the play in a manner that varies between being humorous, serious and ironic. As he played in the prologue with the spectators by introducing Ergasilus, and undercutting our aroused expectations of an elevated play, Plautus also plays with our expectations in the prologue by joking that he is not after all going to present a tragedy (*ll.*59-62), despite the fact that we have seen prisoners in chains amid warfare and that we are presented with Tyndarus becoming the slave of his own father under circumstances which are reminiscent of the fortunes of Oedipus and of Aristotelian descriptions of tragedy.¹¹ What Plautus does present is a comedy with strong tragic overtones, with farce side by side with *fides*, with humour interlaced with the serious side of slavery, and because of what Arnott cleverly terms 'multivalency', which is very appropriate for the varied audience attending Roman dramatic festivals, we are free to appreciate the *Captiui* at various levels.¹² Plautus uses identity as a vehicle to convey this multivalency. Identity issues are raised *ab initio*, with the revelation in the first few lines of the prologue that Tyndarus is slave to his own father (*l.*5), and these identity issues are also interwoven throughout the play until and including the finale of the play where Tyndarus learns that he is Hegio's son (*l.*1011).

The Main Body of *Captiui*

Physical Appearance and the Name as Criteria of Identity in *Captiui*

The most common criteria for judging personal identity in Plautus are the person's physical appearance and name.

1. In *Captiui*, as Hegio is not familiar with either slave, he is not in a position to confirm the identities of Philocrates and Tyndarus by their physical appearance or by name, nor is he interested in their identities as individuals. They are, in Hegio's opinion, just two slaves, but his interest in their identities is to establish status and discover which one is the master, which the slave, in order to ascertain which of the captive pair is the son of an Elean wealthy noble, suitable for ransom. Hegio accepts the identities of the pair as they represent themselves to the

¹¹ Aristotle *Poetics* 1453b.

¹² Arnott (1975) 313 describes multivalency as 'the ability to make a word, a sentence, a speech, an action operate at several levels and for several purposes at one time.'

old man and his *lorarius*, with Tyndarus as master and Philocrates as slave, and although Hegio takes pains to confirm identity by careful interrogation of the supposed slave about his master's family, background, father's name and wealth (*ll.*263-293), he is satisfied concerning their respective ranks because of the acceptable answers they give to his questions and their successful playing of roles that the pair sustain in his presence (*ll.*253-452).¹³

2. Philocrates, in his role of clever slave, indulges in some playfulness in furnishing magnificent names as corroboration of the pair's identity for Hegio's benefit. Hegio is completely won over by the plausible surname of 'Polyplusii' for the fictional wealthy family of Tyndarus, and the glorious name of 'Thensaurochrysonicochrysides' for his father (*ll.*277, 286). These exaggerated names are both a source of comic humour and a means of convincing Hegio that he has the right slave in his power and that it will be worth his while to proceed with his plan to send the supposed slave to arrange the ransom. Although the audience is aware that these names are coined on the spot, these names are reassuring to Hegio as a means of affirming identity, reinforcing the importance of the name as a criterion in assessing identity.¹⁴

3. It is Aristophontes who challenges the identity of Tyndarus first on the criterion of name and then on physical appearance (*ll.*541-563). The name as a means of establishing identity plays an important role in this scene. At first Hegio is not surprised when Tyndarus ignores Aristophontes, because in his view, it is natural for a man not to respond when called by the wrong name, and by his slave's name at that. Hegio assumes that Aristophontes has misclassified Tyndarus with the wrong name, and as the name is such an intrinsic aspect of personal identity to the ancient Romans and Greeks, Hegio is initially convinced that Aristophontes is insane because he apparently called the master by the slave's name (*l.*559). Tyndarus seizes his chance to capitalise on the supposed madness of Aristophontes by assuring Hegio that Aristophontes is so insane that he sometimes even forgets his own name and identity (*l.*560). Aristophontes and Hegio fence with words debating the issue of name and identity.

Hegio:	<i>Pol planum id quidem est, Non novisse, qui istum appelles Tyndarum pro Philocrate. Quem uides, eum ignoras; illum nominas quem non uides.</i>
Arist:	<i>Immo iste eum sese ait qui non est esse et qui uero est negat.</i>

(*ll.*564-567)

¹³ *Quo de genere natust illic Philocrates? (l.277). Quid erat ei nomen? (l.286).*

¹⁴ See my Introduction p.16 for Strauss' view that the name as a distinctive appellation indicative of both its donor and owner.

However, Aristophontes denounces Tyndarus by name as he masquerades as Philocrates, and he correctly names his master as Philocrates. Tyndarus makes a spirited attempt to retain his identity as Philocrates, and even puns on the supposed name of 'Liberus' (l.578). Aristophontes points out that his name of Tyndarus betrays him as no other Elean slave has a similar name (ll.589-590).

4. The final factor to convince Hegio that Tyndarus is posing under a false identity is the fact that Aristophontes plausibly argues that Philocrates' father's name was not 'Thensaurochrysonicochrysidēs' as given by Tyndarus earlier, but instead was the perfectly ordinary name of 'Theodoromedes' (ll.633-635). This ordinary name sounds genuine enough to convince Hegio that he has been deceived and that all his hopes of ransoming his son have been destroyed by the pair's trick in exchanging names (ll.670-677).

5. When Aristophontes further substantiates his claims denouncing the identity of Tyndarus by accurately describing the physical appearance of the real Philocrates, Hegio is finally convinced that he has been duped (ll.253-265).

*Macilento ore, naso acuto, corpore albo, oculis nigris,
Subrufus aliquantum, crispus, cincinnatus.*

(ll.647-648)

This description of Philocrates places him within the ranks of the *serui callidi*, but it compares favourably with the description in *Pseudolus* of the slave Pseudolus.

*Rufus quidam, uentriosus, crassis suris, subniger,
Magno capite, acutis oculis, ore rubicundo admodum,
Magnis pedibus.*

(*Pseud.* ll.1218-1220)

Philocrates seems less of a large lout than Pseudolus, but on the other hand, Philocrates appears sharp and cunning. What Philocrates has in common with the traditional appearance of the slave in Roman comedy is red hair, or at least a tendency towards red hair. Probably the fact that Philocrates had reddish hair was a factor confirming his identity as slave in the eyes of Hegio. (Presumably Tyndarus also had red hair, in order to fulfil the conventional appearance of a slave). While neither of the captives has the physical appearance reputed by Theognis and

Aristotle to distinguish the natural slave from the free man, it appears that they do possess the conventional physical appearance of comic slaves with red hair, thus confirming the importance of physical appearance as a criterion of identity.¹⁵ Perhaps Philocrates' sharp features are also an indication of his ability to be cunning, despite the fact that he is of free birth, and to succeed in his deception where Tyndarus, who looks less cunning although he is a slave, fails.

6. When later sentencing Tyndarus to extreme hard labour in the quarries, Hegio quips that unless he achieves a rate of one-and-a-half times the rate of the other slaves, Tyndarus' name will be changed to 'Sescentoplago' as an indication of his new even lower status of whipped slave (*ll.724-726*). Chrysalus in *Bacchides* expressed the fear that he would undergo a similar name change, from 'Chrysalus' to 'Crucisalus' if he were unsuccessful in his scheme of deception, but unlike Tyndarus, Chrysalus triumphed as an *architectus doli*.

7. However, just as it is his name that betrays Tyndarus, it is also his name that later leads to confirmation of his true identity as the freeborn son of Hegio. The names 'Paegnium' and 'Tyndarus' are vouched for by Stalagmus and Philocrates, which convinces Hegio of Tyndarus' identity as his long lost son (*ll.983-984*). Tyndarus affirms this by dimly recalling that his father's name was 'Hegio' (*ll.1016-1018*).

8. In Plautine comedy the physical appearance of the character is important as a criterion of identification, but the name is generally more important than appearance in Plautine comedy and in *Captivi* especially, names have particular significance, as Plautus followed the New Comedy principle of *redende Namen*; a means of identifying not only the person, but also his personality.¹⁶ Plautus frequently plays with the names of his characters, and *Captivi* is no exception. It has been noted that Aristophontes means the 'Killer of the best', and Tyndarus did indeed come very close to forfeiting his life in the mine, due to Aristophontes' betrayal. Philocrates is a fine typical name for a soldier, and this suits his character, as he was indeed a soldier, before being captured in the Aetolian war.

9. Tyndarus is aptly named both in his original and adopted name. His first name, 'Paegnium', Plaything, is suitable in that indeed he was the plaything of fate, tossed as a child into slavery, later as a man into a different, worse kind of slavery, and only by chance is re-instated as a free man. His second name, 'Tyndarus', with its root meaning of *tund-*, (to pound), is fitting for the

¹⁵ See my Introduction p.24 regarding ancient views on slavery.

¹⁶ Segal (2001a) 195.

slave who was condemned to extra-hard labour in the mine with the expectation that he would pound rock until he worked himself to an early death deep in the earth in Hegio's quarry. The names 'Tyndarus' and 'Tyndareus' are interchangeable, and the association of Tyndarus with Tyndareus, the Spartan hero, who in legend was raised from the dead by Asclepius and who miraculously returned from his visit to the underworld, is appropriate for one who is a survivor of a visit to a type of underworld and death, and who returns from torture deep in the bowels of the earth to the upper level to see 'the light of day again' (l.1008). This association gains credence from Tyndarus' words on returning from the stone quarries to Hegio's house, where he talks about having returned from torture in Acheron (ll.998-1001), and a rebirth is implied when he returns from underground to daylight.

There is an ironic twist in Tyndarus' nomenclature, as his first name as the freeborn son of Hegio was 'Paegnium', which is a Roman slave-name, yet this was the name given to him before he was kidnapped and sold into slavery.¹⁷ 'Tyndarus' is a free person's name, yet he was a slave. This inversion is typical of the wry humour Plautus displays in *Captiui*, where Plautus encourages us not to take everything in this play at face value. The fact that these two names are awry also indicates the narrow margin between the state of freedom and the state of slavery in the world of Plautus, due to the accident of war. It is also possible that, by including a Roman name among the Greek names of the characters, Plautus' intention is to include the Romans in his comments on slavery, making the situation more immediate and not merely confining these to the 'Greek' milieu. In the same way when Aristophontes describes the appearance of Philocrates, he could well be describing the conventional appearance of a comic slave, not that of a free man, in view of the red curly hair and thin pointy face, with its implications of shrewdness. If the free man is to have the appearance of a slave or the name of a slave, and the master is to have the appearance of a slave, then the distinction between master and slave which is already marginal in the case of Tyndarus and Philocrates is further lessened, and their common humanity increased.

The Roles of Tyndarus and Philocrates in *Captiui*

After Tyndarus and Philocrates have switched identities as explained in the prologue, in order to maintain these new identities and succeed in their joint plan, they are both obliged to undertake new roles and to sustain them as convincingly as they can. Each man endeavours to sustain the role of the other whenever the pair can be overheard, but when conversing together in private,

¹⁷ Lewis & Short (1966) 1288. 'Paegnium' is also used as a slave name in Plautus' *Persa*.

each lapses into his own identity. These new roles differ from Berger's concept of the individual assuming a variety of roles in response to the expectations of the situation in that the roles of Tyndarus and Philocrates when in public are not played with inner commitment, but are in fact played solely with an ulterior purpose, that of deceiving Hegio and his guards.¹⁸ There is a strong contrast between the public selves that the pair project as they consciously manage the impressions that they make when within earshot of Hegio or his *lorarius*, and the selves that are revealed when they converse in private. Whilst the parasite Ergasilus also undertakes a variety of roles, these roles provide comic relief between the more serious scenes, but are not integral to the issues of identity and thus fall outside the scope of this study.

The Roles of Philocrates

Philocrates plays two roles:

- (1) The role of the master towards his slave when the two are alone
- (2) The role of the cheeky slave when in public

(1) Philocrates as master

In the presence of the guards, Philocrates is careful to sustain his new role as slave, and his two remarks are in the saucy tone of a slave (*Il.*208-209). Once they are out of earshot of the guards, Philocrates assumes his former status as master, and when he reminds his slave that they have to work carefully at their plan and not to forget his new role (*Il.*219-228, 240-248, 249-250), in fact Philocrates is reminding Tyndarus not to forget his self. Despite the change in Tyndarus' circumstances, Philocrates' words of appeal to Tyndarus presume the same sense of continuity of his slave's self from past to present that is inherent in the psychological view of the self as propounded by James and Marcia.¹⁹

*Ne me secus honore honestes quam quom servibas mihi,
Atque ut qui fueris et qui nunc sis meminisse ut memineris.*
(*Il.*247-248)

Philocrates pleads with Tyndarus to remember his new identity, who he has been and who he now is, and not to change his values even though his status has been arbitrarily put on a par with that of his former master, as they are both slaves in Hegio's household. In fact, Tyndarus at this

¹⁸ See my Introduction pp.13-15 for Goffman and Berger's views of the sociological self.

¹⁹ See my Introduction pp.10-12 for Rogers and Marcia's views of the psychological self.

point has ascendancy over his master, as Philocrates needs the help of his slave to extricate himself from a dilemma more dire than usually befalls an *adulescens* in Roman comedy, and instead of imperiously giving orders, he begs his slave for help. This scene between Philocrates and Tyndarus as master and slave has parallels with scenes between other Plautine masters and slaves where the master is dependent on the goodwill and co-operation of the slave for the achievement of his goal.²⁰ There is also some similarity between Philocrates' gratitude towards his slave and the gratitude shown by other masters toward their slaves for their assistance:

*Non ego erus tibi, sed seruos sum; nunc obsecro te hoc unum -
Quoniam nobis di immortales animum ostenderunt suum,
Ut qui erum me tibi fuisse atque esse conseruom uelint,
Quom antehac pro iure imperitabam meo, nunc te oro per precem*
(ll.241-244)

*Pol ego si te audeam, meum patrem nominem:
Nam secundum patrem tu's pater proximus.*
(ll.238-239)

In *Casina*, Lysidamus too heaps gratitude on his slave Olympio in language that echoes Philocrates' words and emotions (l.241).

Seruos sum tuos.
(Cas. ll.738)

*Obsecro te,
Olympisce mi, mi pater, mi patrone.*
(Cas. ll.738-739)

This reversal of roles between master and slave, where the master is subservient to and dependant on the slave, is common in Plautus²¹ but in *Captiui*, the reversal is presented differently and exploited because the war has ostensibly reduced Philocrates to the same status

²⁰ For example, Argyrippus and his slaves Libanus and Leonida in *Asinaria* (ll.650-738), Lysidamus and Olympio in *Casina* (ll.736-740), Philolaches and Tranio in *Mostellaria* (l.407), Periphanes and his slave Epidicus in *Epidicus* (l.721), Plesidippus and his slave Trachalio in *Rudens* (l.1265).

²¹ See Segal (1968) 99-136 for a discussion of Saturnalian reversal of roles between master and slave in Plautine comedy.

as his slave, yet in private Philocrates has maintained the role of master to Tyndarus, and now has to drop his role of superior to beg his slave in Saturnalian fashion to assist him. Usually the reversal of roles between master and slave revolves around the dilemma of the *adulescens*, who turns to his slave to rescue him from his dilemma. The plan for rescue devised by the clever slave usually involves a breach of *pietas*, as it is frequently the young man's father who is to be fooled and often fleeced as a means of resolving the dilemma.²² The young man generally ignominiously begs the slave for assistance and humbles himself while doing so.²³

In *Captivi* by contrast, Philocrates entreats Tyndarus both as a former master and as a fellow slave (*l.* 241), but does not grovel before Tyndarus as Plautine masters frequently do in the Saturnalian reversal of roles. Although this scene in *Captivi* is reminiscent of the conventional Plautine scene where the master is reduced to begging his slave to rescue him, this similarity serves to create comic tension between the conventional reversal of roles and the actual reversal.²⁴ The situation gains an extra dimension as Tyndarus is implored to rescue his master, not from the chains of love, but from the physical chains of captivity, and the situation is not frivolous but deadly earnest and involves the risk of punishment and death (*ll.* 222, 230).

It is important to note that Philocrates is only able to sustain the role of master when in private with the consent and support of Tyndarus, as Philocrates as a slave in Hegio's household technically has no authority over Tyndarus, and is otherwise unable to assert superior rank to his slave. Berger states that identities are socially bestowed and socially sustained, and that one cannot maintain any particular identity all by oneself, as it is necessary for others in the immediate vicinity to confirm one's identity.²⁵ Despite the fact that his master is as much a slave as he himself is, Tyndarus continues to treat Philocrates as his master and so sustains Philocrates' identity as master, although he is theoretically merely a fellow-prisoner.

Another unique feature of *Captivi* is the extensive role that the master plays in formulating the plot to deceive and in executing this plot. Conventionally the clever slave conceives a grand plan for the rescue of his master and sweeps all the other characters, including his master, before him, as dictator in grand style, to a successful conclusion. Chrysalus in *Bacchides*, Pseudolus in *Pseudolus*, Palaestrio in *Miles Gloriosus* and Tranio in *Mostellaria* are prime examples of the

²² Segal (1968) 15-17 discusses the passages *Pseud.* *ll.* 120, 122, *Bacch.* *l.* 506, *Most.* *ll.* 233-234, *Truc.* *ll.* 660-662 where sons wish their fathers dead and conspire with their slaves to defraud their parents.

²³ Segal (1968) 105-151 quotes as examples of masters supplicating their slaves, Argyrippus, *Asin.* *ll.* 662-699, Eunuchus, *Eun.* *ll.* 721-730.

²⁴ Segal (1968) 115 calls this 'an inversion of the typical inversion.'

²⁵ Berger (1963) 118.

slave as director-general with their masters Mnesilochus, Calidorus, Pleusicles and Philolaches as mere puppets in their schemes, doing as they are bid.²⁶ Pseudolus replies in a most dismissive manner to his master's request for aid in obtaining money, and intimates that he does not want to be bothered further for details of his plan and assumes total control of the scheme:

Dabo. Molestus nunciam ne sis mihi.

(Pseud. l.117)

Nil curassis, liquido es animo: ego pro me et pro te curabo.

(Pseud. l.232)

Philocrates, by contrast, has participated jointly in the formulation of the scheme,²⁷ and plays an active physical role by playing the role of slave, and to some extent assumes some of the direction of the playing out of the deception (*ll.*224-228, 249-250). By his active involvement to such an extent, Philocrates shows that the gap in ability between master and slave is unusually narrow, as most other masters in Plautine comedy would be incapable of assuming the identity of another.

(2) Philocrates as slave

As Hegio approaches the pair, Philocrates, assuming the role of Tyndarus' slave once more, at once seizes the initiative and, to forestall any questions regarding his name or his identity as the slave or the master, strikes up pert conversation with Hegio in the cheeky, cheerful manner of a clever slave (*ll.*253-265). Philocrates manages his role as slave in a very lively manner, and manages to be smart and amusing and to intersperse comic exaggeration mixed with enough factual foundation to be credible to Hegio. In fact, Philocrates plays the part of a *seruus callidus* very well, and is never at a loss for a lively answer when questioned by Hegio about his supposed master's family and background (*ll.*277-292). Philocrates even goes beyond what is strictly necessary to convince Hegio of his identity as slave when he invents the preposterous names of 'the Polyplusii', and 'Thensaurochrysonicochrysides' for the family of Tyndarus (*ll.*277, 286). It is obvious that Philocrates is exceeding his brief as he is exulting in playing his role tongue-in-cheek and deriving a feeling of elation from fooling Hegio and achieving some form of temporary power although a slave in his master's absolute power.²⁸

²⁶ *Bacch. ll.*702, 728-729, *Pseud. ll.*117-120, *Mil. Glor. ll.*596-610, *Most. ll.*371, 396, 399-401.

²⁷ *Hisce autem inter sese hunc confinxerunt dolum (l.35).*

²⁸ See Strauss' views on transformation in my Introduction p.16.

The Roles of Tyndarus

Tyndarus plays a wider range of roles than Philocrates, who is limited to just two roles, that of Tyndarus' master in private or the cheeky slave in public. It is worthwhile to recall Berger's statement that a person's range is measured by the number of roles that he is capable of playing.²⁹ The implication is that the extent of a person's character is commensurate with the ability to undertake a variety of roles, and that the more roles undertaken, the greater the person. This is especially applicable to the characters of Plautus, as in general the slaves have more extensive roles and therefore greater characters than the *adulescentes*. It is particularly applicable to *Captiui*, where Tyndarus not only undertakes a variety of roles in response to the demands of the situation but is in fact a better person in a dual sense as he is more versatile than Philocrates as well as being an heroic figure.

- (1) Tyndarus plays the master when with the *lorarius* or Hegio
- (2) Tyndarus plays the loyal slave of Philocrates when alone with Philocrates
- (3) Tyndarus plays the cheeky slave commenting in asides to the audience
- (4) Tyndarus tries to play the cheeky slave as *uorsipellis*
- (5) Tyndarus plays a dual role simultaneously in Hegio's presence as Philocrates' master for the benefit of Hegio, while emphasising his role as loyal slave to Philocrates.
- (6) Tyndarus plays the man with commitment to self and values when questioned and punished by Hegio
- (7) Tyndarus becomes the returned son

(1) Tyndarus as the master of Philocrates.

Tyndarus, as befits a master, assumes a dignified air of quiet authority when addressing the *lorarius* and arranging a moment of privacy (ll.211-218), and indeed issues an order to Philocrates in the presence of the overseer.

Concede huc.

(l.216)

Tyndarus has assumed this role in order to deceive Hegio into freeing Philocrates. Although Tyndarus plays the dignified master without inner commitment, he assumes the role of master with ease. No such demand to play the role of master is placed on other Plautine slaves, who

²⁹ See my Introduction p.14.

are only required by the demands of the situation to assume roles of a lower social scale and closer to their own social spectrum, for example stewards or the slaves of other owners such as pimps or soldiers. Tyndarus meets the challenge of playing the role of his own master through displaying dignity, not through badinage, the more usual weapon of cheeky slaves when facing a challenge. When assuming Philocrates' identity for the benefit of Hegio, Tyndarus adopts the same stoical manner regarding his fate that Philocrates had displayed recently towards him. Again Plautus exploits and extends the humour of conventional role reversal between master and slave by remodelling the convention in *Captivi* and reversing the role reversal. Plautus achieves an extra dimension in the reversal of master-slave roles here through the unexpected humour of a slave playing his master in a dignified manner.

*Nunc quando patriam et libertatem perdidit,
Non ego istunc me potius quam te metuere aequom censeo.
Uis hostilis quom istoc fecit meas opes aequabiles.*
(Il.300-302)

*Fortuna humana fingit artatque ut lubet:
Me qui liber fueram seruom fecit, e summo infimum;
Qui imperare insueram, nunc alterius imperio obsequor.*
(Il.304-306)

Tyndarus' words above are humorous echoes of Philocrates' previous philosophical words to him:

*Quoniam nobis di immortales animum ostenderunt suum,
Ut qui erum me tibi fuisse atque esse conseruom uelint,
Quod antehac pro iure imperitabam meo, nunc te oro per precem -
Per fortunam incertam et per mei te erga bonitatem patris,
Perque conseruitium commune, quod hostica euenit manu,
Ne me secus honore honestes quam quom seruihas mihi.*
(Il.242-247)

Tyndarus is able to assume the identity of his master with ease and his solemn philosophising and extemporising convince Hegio of his identity as Philocrates. The audience is also aware of abundant dramatic irony in his contention that he was previously of free status and accustomed

to issuing orders, (although this was stated to convince Hegio of his supposed identity), but both Hegio and Tyndarus are completely unaware of the actual truth of these statements.

Me qui liber fueram seruom fecit, e summo infumum;

(I.305)

Tam ego fui ante liber quam gnatus tuos.

(I.310)

Ego patri meo esse fateor summas diuitias domi

Meque summo genere gnatum.

(II.318-319)

A powerful irony, which at this stage is purely comic irony, has been created by Plautus in that the audience is aware that Tyndarus' lies are in fact true. Tyndarus once was free, but has been thrown from the heights of freedom to the depths of slavery. In addition, not only was he once as free as Hegio's son, but he **is** Hegio's son. Further, it is true that his father is indeed wealthy, (and is also inclined to be rather careful with his money), just as Tyndarus described his fictitious father II.319-323. The fact that it is only the spectators who are aware of Tyndarus' true identity gives the audience a type of double power with the ability to see the situation from two perspectives simultaneously. There is delicious irony in the fact that we, the audience, can see Tyndarus, the slave, playing a very convincing role as the master and fooling Hegio, as well as Tyndarus the freeborn, successfully playing the role of a noble slave who is assuming the role of a master.

(2) Tyndarus as the slave of Philocrates.

When alone with Philocrates, Tyndarus plays the slave of Philocrates in private with inner commitment (and no role distancing) as the loyal slave of Philocrates, respectful but not subservient, and in complete contrast to the saucy, bold attitude of other Plautine slaves who are aiding their masters.³⁰ As they converse in private, Tyndarus replies in a quiet but reassuring manner to his master's warnings and pleadings not to let him down (I.249). Indeed, before Tyndarus bursts into his asides to comment on Philocrates' role-playing, there is not a great deal of difference between his role as master in public and his role as slave in private, as both are characterised by a quiet dignity.

³⁰ See my Introduction pp.14-15.

Tyndarus reminds Philocrates not to forget his slave's loyalty to him once he is free:

*At scire memento, quando id quod uoles habebis;
Nam fere maxuma pars morem hunc homines habent; quod sibi uolunt,
Dum id impetrant, boni sunt;
Sed id ubi iam penes sese habent,
Ex bonis pessumi et fraudulentissimi
Fiunt: Nunc ut mihi te uolo esse autumo.*

(*Il.*231-237)

In *Casina*, Olympio too reminds his master Lysidamus of what he has done for him, but we find his loyalty consisted in sexual compliance:

*Ut tibi ego inuentus sum obsequens. quod maxime
cupiebas, eius copiam feci tibi.*

(*Cas. Il.*449-450)

Ut tibi morigerus hodie, ut uoluptati fui.

(*Cas. I.*463)

In *Asinaria*, Leonida and Libanus insist that their master grovels at their feet, before they come to his rescue by handing over the money to him, but Tyndarus makes no demands other than to remind his master that, from affection, his slave is risking his life for him.³¹

*Nam tu nunc uides pro tuo caro capite
Carum offerre meum caput uilitati.*

(*Il.*229-230)

The greatest differentiating factor between Tyndarus and the other slaves in Plautus is that matters are far more serious for Tyndarus than for any other Plautine slave. The other Plautine slaves joke about torture and whipping in an insouciant manner, whereas Tyndarus does not joke but is absolutely earnest in his grave reminder to his master.³² The potential danger of their

³¹ *Asin. Il.*662-710.

³² *Am. I.*446, *Asin. Il.*551, 564-565, *Pers. Il.*270-271, *Most. I.*1178, *Bacch. Il.*361-362.

plans is borne out by the fact that Philocrates concurs with Tyndarus that he is putting his own life at risk in exchanging identities with his master (ll.229-231).

Tyndarus' natural response to the demands of the situation in which he finds himself as the slave of Philocrates, is to be solemn and dependable. He reassures Philocrates that he will be totally trustworthy and that he understands perfectly their exchanging of identities and the demands of their new roles.

Ero ut me uoles esse.

(l.228)

Scio quidem me te esse

(l.249)

This is an instinctive response by Tyndarus to the situation and is not a calculated, managed impression that he adopts without inner commitment.³³

(3) Tyndarus as the cheeky slave.

When listening to Philocrates playing the part of the cheeky slave, Tyndarus in admiration comments in asides on how well his master is performing his role (ll.266-269, 274-276, 285). In Plautine comedy, it is usually the *seruus callidus* who indulges in amusing animal metaphors and comments in asides on his own prowess, and Tyndarus briefly adopts aspects of the clever slave when he does the same in his first aside.³⁴

*Nunc senex est in tostrina, nunc iam cultros adtinet,
Ne id quidem, inuolucrum inicere, uoluit, uestem ut ne inquinet.
Sed utrum strictimne attonsurum dicam esse an per pectinem,
Nescio; uerum, si frugist, usque admutilabit probe.*

(ll.266-269)

See Duckworth (1952) 288-289, Segal (1968) 140-169, Parker (1989) 233-246, for discussions regarding the frequency of threats of punishment in Plautine plays as part of the Saturnalian spirit.

³³ Tyndarus' words of reassurance to Philocrates when they are alone are practically inverted when the pair are in the presence of Hegio and are pleading with each other for continued loyalty in multivalent language.

³⁴ Chrysalus refers to Nicobulus first as a ram to be shorn of its golden fleece and then as a thrush entering a trap baited with a worm (*Bacch.* 239-242, 792-793). Pseudolus also declares that he will bone Ballio like a lamprey (*Pseud.* 382).

Serui callidi frequently make exuberant comparisons, likening themselves to mighty generals and leaders, but Tyndarus is different from the usual *serui callidi* in that he is full of admiration, not for himself, but for his master, and he humorously compares him to a legendary wise man, Thales.³⁵ By commenting to the audience on his master's skill in acting, Tyndarus simultaneously reinforces the fact that his master is playing the role of slave and also, in his pride at Philocrates' prowess, demonstrates his loyalty and affection toward his master.

*Eugapae!, Thalem talento non emam Milesium,
Nam ad sapientiam huius hominis nimius nugator fuit.
Ut facete orationem ad seruitutem contulit.*
(II.274-276)

Tyndarus has occasion to make one further remark about how well his master is playing his role.

Salua res est, philosophatur quoque iam, non mendax modo est.
(I.284)

Whilst the verb '*philosophatur*' links up with Tyndarus' previous admiring comparison of his master with Thales, the legendary wise man and early Ionian philosopher, it is most likely that the audience would associate the first words, '*Salua res est*', with the legendary incident during the Punic Wars which gave rise to the famous proverb,³⁶ '*Salua res est, saltat senex*'.³⁷ It is obviously quite ridiculous to link the glorious military feat of repulsing the arch enemy and the *pietas* shown by the Roman ancestors with the fooling in *Captiui* of an old man by a slave, but the absurdity adds to the humour. Tyndarus has definite aspects of the clever slave in his amusing asides to the audience as he verbally echoes the *serui callidi* Pseudolus and Chrysalus, when Pseudolus applauds Simia's fooling of Ballio, and when Chrysalus is calculatedly enraging Nicobulus:

³⁵ Chrysalus ranges himself with Menelaus, Agamemnon, Ulysses and Alexander (Paris), (*Bacch.* 946-947). Zagagi (1980) 15-119 comments on the Plautine device of slaves boasting that they have surpassed some mythological figure in heroic deeds or some form of suffering. Zagagi calls this device mythological hyperbole, and it is interesting to note that Tyndarus is boasting of his master's prowess in fooling Hegio, rather than on his own performance.

³⁶ Duckworth (1952) 13 tells how in the midst of the celebration of the games of Apollo in 211 BC, the Romans were forced to abandon the games to ward off an impending march on Rome by Hannibal. The Romans were successful in repelling Hannibal and on their hasty return, were relieved that the ritual had not been interrupted after all, as the elderly actor Pomponius had continued dancing, accompanied by the flute, and thus it was not necessary to repeat the entire procedure from the beginning.

³⁷ Festus II.436ff. and Servius *ad Aen.* VIII, 110, quoted by Duckworth (1952) 13.

Saluos sum, iam philosophatur.

(*Pseud.* ll.974)

*Saluos sum, iratus est senex.*³⁸

(*Bacch.* ll.772)

In his three asides, Tyndarus has involved the audience in the fooling of Hegio. Slater points out, 'The aside links player to audience through the ability to share a joke or a position of superior knowledge. The player speaking the aside and the audience become allies in the fight against whatever enemy has currently taken the stage against them.'³⁹ By stepping outside of the play and his immediate role, and addressing the audience in his asides, Tyndarus invites us to share with him the enjoyment of the fine performance of Philocrates as he fools Hegio, and because we are secure in the knowledge of Philocrates' real identity, we are able to appreciate the fooling of Hegio even more, particularly as we know that Hegio is the literal enemy of the pair and is not just a conventional comic *agelast*.⁴⁰

Serui callidi in Plautus frequently make asides.⁴¹ It is part of their nature to be flippant and amusing and their witty comments contribute greatly to the humour of the plays, as an additional guide on how to interpret the scene. Tyndarus in his asides has commented each time on the way that Philocrates is performing his role as the pert slave. Slater notes that there are a surprising number of asides in Plautus commenting on the style of performance of the players, and that it is frequently the *serui callidi* who are telling each other or themselves how to play a particular scene.⁴² It is usually during a deception that the *serui callidi* either exchange notes on performance, (as Palaestrio and Milphidippa do when deceiving Pyrgopolynices in *Miles Gloriosus*),⁴³ or else congratulate themselves on their performance, (as Tranio in *Mostellaria*

³⁸ Slater (1985) 108 n. 21, associates the ancient theatrical saying with Chrysalus' allusion to Nicobulus' anger, and comments that he is probably the first to make this identification.

³⁹ Slater (1985) 159.

⁴⁰ Leach (1969a) 271-275 notes that the pair's deception and disguise, although adopted as the only means of expediency to them, also becomes a 'dangerously enjoyable game that compensates them for the humiliation of their bondage' as they possess a secret knowledge that allows them to feel superior to their captor, and so providing a degree of freedom to the slaves in captivity.

⁴¹ Chrysalus in *Bacchides* (ll.640-642), Tranio in *Mostellaria* (ll.775-777), Palaestrio in *Miles Gloriosus* (l.1066), Pseudolus (ll.562-574), Libanus in *Asinaria* (l.446).

⁴² Slater (1985) 159. Pseudolus informs the audience how he will play a role by saying, '*magnifice hominem compellab'*', *Pseud.* l.702.

⁴³ *Mil. Glor.* l.1066.

and Chrysalus in *Bacchides* do when fooling their masters).⁴⁴ Slater in his discussion of metatheatre comments on the self-conscious awareness of the play as a play by characters that are normally clever slaves with the ability to control other characters.⁴⁵

Captiui is different from other Plautine comedies in that Tyndarus is congratulating his master, not himself or nor a fellow menial, on his fine performance as a slave, and he is not the director-general of the performance of Philocrates, as they are equal directors and partners in the deception. Tyndarus himself is for the moment, through his asides, living up to the expectations of the audience that he will provide humour in the pert conventional way of the clever slave and when it is his turn to face Hegio, he continues to meet audience expectation that as a clever slave he will be a *uorsipellis*, undertaking other roles and improvising schemes to meet the demands of each situation, and the audience might well expect Tyndarus to follow the usual pattern of deception and intrigue, with cunning and daring improvisation resulting in light-hearted success, not the downfall of Tyndarus.

Tyndarus does make one further aside when, on being questioned by Hegio, he discovers that the old man's son in Elis has been sold to a client of Philocrates' father (l.335). This aside is not part of the deliberate playing of a specific role but is aimed at putting the audience in possession of a fact helpful for the full understanding of the play, and is of a metatheatrical nature in that Plautus is using Tyndarus as a director to supply the audience with necessary information to facilitate the spectators' understanding of the play. In this case, Tyndarus the director prepares the audience for the expediency with which Philocrates returns from Elis (ll.872-873), having obtained the release of Hegio's elder son.

(4) Tyndarus as *uorsipellis*.

Chrysalus, the arch *seruus callidus* in *Bacchides*, defines the requirements for a clever slave, which consist chiefly in the ability to be a *uorsipellis*, and change skins or roles in immediate response to the demands of the situation and being able to concoct a plan out of nothing at all in any emergency, as well as having intelligence and the ability to be as good or bad as the company present necessitates.⁴⁶

Nequis nil est quam egens consili seruos, nisi habet multipotens pectus:

⁴⁴ *Most.* ll.775-777, *Bacch.* ll.640-642.

⁴⁵ Slater (1985) 16.

⁴⁶ Slater (1985) 16 discusses the ability of the *uorsipellis* to improvise and the 'self-transformational power' of the clever slave.

*Ubiquomque usus siet, pectore expromat suo.
 Nullus frugi esse potest homo,
 Nisi qui et bene et male facere tenet.
 Improbis quom improbus sit, harpaget furibus
 Furetur quod queat,
 Uorsipellem frugi convenit esse hominem,
 Pectus quoi sapit: bonus sit bonis malus sit malis;
 Utquomque res sit, ita animum habeat.*

(*Bacch. ll. 651-660*)

Tyndarus has partially met these requirements for a clever slave in that he and Philocrates have jointly created a plan to rescue Philocrates from his predicament, and he has been a *uorsipellis* in that he put on the skin of the master with no difficulty when he assumed the identity of Philocrates with convincing ease. However, when Tyndarus realises that Aristophontes may expose his real identity as slave and not master, he falls into a panic and despairs of creating a clever plan to extricate himself from his crisis, whereas a true clever slave would not have despaired but would have imaginatively created a new cunning plan.

*Neque iam Salus seruare, si uolt, me potest, nec copia est,
 Nisi si aliquam corde machinor astutiam.
 Quam, malum? Quis machiner? Quis comminiscar? Maxumas
 Nugas ineptus incipisse. Haereo.*

(*ll. 529-532*)

We can contrast Tyndarus' despair with Pseudolus' creative insouciance when also faced with the unexpected arrival of an undesired person, Harpax.

*Nouo consilio nunc mihi opus est,
 Noua res subito mi haec obiectast:
 Hoc praeuortar principio; illa omnia missa habeo, quae ante agere occepi.
 Iam pol ego hunc stratioticum nuntium aduenientem probe percutiam.*

(*Pseud. ll. 601-604*)

Both Chrysalus in *Bacchides* and Pseudolus concoct daring schemes to aid their masters, only to have these upset by a fresh turn in events, and in response they have to create new schemes and start again. Neither is ever at a loss despite setbacks, but each improvises most successfully and

audaciously, and turns the setback into a triumph.⁴⁷ It is unusual for a scheme of deception to be discovered early in the Plautine play, as occurs in *Captiui*, because discovery usually takes place together with resolution of the plot and forgiveness at the end of the play. *Captiui* has a counterpart in *Mostellaria* in that both plays feature early discoveries of the slave's *dolum*. Although Tranio has not explicitly devised a plan to deceive Theopropides, he is an accessory to Philolaches' depravity, and when Theopropides returns unexpectedly, Tranio, like Tyndarus, is faced with imminent ruin and punishment early in the play. Although Tranio and Tyndarus both initially panic and foresee the worst punishments awaiting them, Tranio recovers his powers of improvising and immediately assumes the role of director-general of a new outrageous plan to deceive and pacify Theopropides. More importantly, Tranio successfully sustains this scheme practically until the end of the play.⁴⁸

In *Captiui*, the feeble plan that Tyndarus improvises when he is faced with exposure, that of pretending that Aristophontes is mad, lacks the diabolical cunning that other Plautine *architecti doli* are able to summon up when facing imminent ruin. Although Tyndarus in the midst of his dilemma uses the conventional language of the *uorsipellis* with words like *subdolis*, *mendaciis*, *male factis*, *dolis*, *fabulabor* and *astutiam* (ll.519-538), this language is not that of the triumphant *uorsipellis* but is used in deep, helpless despair. The device of feigned madness is common in comedy and is exploited successfully as a means of escape by Menaechmus II in *Menaechmi*, but less successfully by Tyndarus here. Tyndarus paints lurid but stock pictures of the physical symptoms of madness, including senseless ravings, extreme aggression, epilepsy, hostile glares, amnesia, blazing eyes, and bright spots covering the whole body (ll.547-550, 557, 560, 594-595).⁴⁹ Tyndarus' attempts at being a *uorsipellis* in response to the demands of the situation consist in alternating between trying to hint to Aristophontes that he is trying to restore Philocrates to his father, and loudly declaring Aristophontes to be raving mad and not to be approached. However, Tyndarus is only initially successful in this attempt at being a *uorsipellis*, and does not succeed in convincing Hegio of his identity as Philocrates. Although it is Tyndarus' actual name that betrays him to Hegio, other attributes of personal identity also come into play in *Captiui*, including the realisation that the name supplied by Tyndarus as his father's name is incorrect, supported by a description of Philocrates' physical appearance..

Aristophontes is oblivious to the desperate innuendoes, puns and gestures of Tyndarus (ll.574-

⁴⁷ *Bacch.* ll.760-769, *Pseud.* l.1036.

⁴⁸ *Most.* ll.348-998, *Capt.* ll.516-538.

⁴⁹ Compare *Men.* ll.828-886, for descriptions of madness comprising green and glittering eyes, green temples and forehead, peculiar gestures and delusions, accompanied by violent intentions.

611). In his indignation that Tyndarus the slave has committed the social sin of daring to pose as his master and because Tyndarus does not acknowledge him, Aristophontes believes that this non-acknowledgement is a slight directed at him personally because he is now a fellow slave of Tyndarus and no longer a free man. Aristophontes sees the identity problem in terms of social identity and not national identity.⁵⁰ He regards Tyndarus as an impudent slave who does not know his proper status, rather than a compatriot who has grown up with him, and now is a fellow slave who has been captured in war and is in trouble and in the power of an enemy common to them both, Hegio.⁵¹ Aristophontes is obsessed with status and taunts Tyndarus with having been a slave all his life, while he himself has only been a slave since he was captured in the war. What Aristophontes fails to see is that in fact he, Philocrates and Tyndarus all share exactly the same status and social identity, that of slave, while in Hegio's power. He contemptuously sneers at Tyndarus using the slave epithets *furcifer* and *mastigia* (ll.563, 577, 600) as a means of maintaining a distance in status between himself and Tyndarus. It is worth noting that Philocrates does not use these terms of abuse towards his slave, which is indicative of the close bond between master and slave.

Tyndarus' attempt at being a *uorsipellis* fails signally, as Aristophontes is intent on exposing the false Philocrates as the true Tyndarus (ll.609-610). Tyndarus is unable single-handedly to sustain the identity of Philocrates in the face of outright denial of his identity by Aristophontes and he is also unable to improvise further in order to turn affairs to his own advantage.⁵² It is indicative of the honourable nature of Tyndarus that he cannot prevaricate and weave a web of lies even to save himself, and his last line of defence is to appeal to Aristophontes to do the decent thing and not to interfere. Again, the audience is faced with an unexpected and unconventional role reversal in that the despised slave, Tyndarus, is pointing out the proper pattern of behaviour for the supposed gentleman, Aristophontes, to follow.

Meam rem non cures, si recte facis.

(l.632)

The role of gentleman was far easier for Tyndarus to assume than the role of skin changer, who should never be at a loss for a plan and a trick. In fact, his master Philocrates, with his sharp

⁵⁰ Konstan (1976) 77-81.

⁵¹ ll.543-544, 563, 591, 600.

⁵² Frangoulidis (1966a) 155-158 notes that in effect this is an incident of counter-theatricalisation in *Captivi* when Aristophontes 'fails to perceive the theatrical dimension of Tyndarus' identity switch', and therefore he does not participate in the slave's comic piece of play-acting. Aristophontes counter-theatricalises the performance of the slave's scheme by converting Tyndarus' theatre into reality.

features and large feet, has been better equipped to sustain the role of *seruus callidus* than Tyndarus the slave. When other clever slaves change skins, it is generally to deceive and often defraud other characters to rescue their masters and further their love affairs. Other clever slaves change skins to assume the identities of people of fairly low rank, somewhat close to their own station in life, as for example the slave Leonida in *Asinaria* poses as the steward Saurea, and Pseudolus pretends to be the slave of the leno Ballio.⁵³ Despite being a slave, Tyndarus was better able to assume the role of gentleman because it was closer to his own true nature than the role of *uorsipellis* as he simply lacked the innate cunning and deceit necessary for completely successful prevarication.⁵⁴

(5) Tyndarus and Philocrates together in their double roles.

When Tyndarus and Philocrates are playing their roles as each other in public before Hegio, Hegio compellingly invites them to complete their arrangements for the despatch of Philocrates on his mission (*Il.* 358-359). To do so necessitates the public finalisation of arrangements and leave-taking, all the while maintaining their respective assumed roles as master and slave. This results in a whole scene fraught with vibrant undertones, while both Tyndarus and Philocrates play double roles, maintaining their public identities as each other while simultaneously projecting their private identities to each other and trying to convey secret messages to remind each other to be loyal. While Hegio is oblivious to these secret messages, the audience is fully equipped to intercept them. There is a third aspect to these meaning-laden passages, as all three characters are unaware of the tragic irony present in many of the pair's statements, while the audience is in a position to appreciate that many of the things, uttered as part of a ploy to maintain the deception of Hegio, are in fact true.⁵⁵

Tyndarus, playing the role of a dignified master, instructs Philocrates to relay the full account of his master's (meaning his slave's) situation to his father (*Il.* 374-377), and, in a touching plea, reminds Philocrates to remember that Tyndarus has given loyal service to his master, but disguises this reminder within instructions to Philocrates to present himself as a loyal slave, (meaning to behave as a loyal master). In the same disguised manner, Tyndarus reminds Philocrates that it is through his slave's efforts and sacrifice that the master is going back to his

⁵³ *Asin.* *Il.* 407-503, *Pseud.* *Il.* 605-666.

⁵⁴ Physical appearance is generally an important facet of identity, but in modern terms, self-concepts are more important than the name or physical appearance. By contrast, in Plautus, the name is paramount as criterion for identity, followed by physical appearance.

⁵⁵ Thalmann (1966) 129 comments appreciatively on the 'fine specimen of metatheatre' in this scene, where the audience is watching actors (who probably were themselves slaves), 'playing a slave and a free man playing a free man and a slave respectively for the benefit of Hegio, the internal audience and putative master of both' men.

parents, a free man (*Il.* 401-411). This moving appeal by Tyndarus to Philocrates is an echo of Andromache's appeal to Hector in the *Iliad*, and Leach notes how skilfully Tyndarus has 'turned his apparent circumstances into a moving description of his real dependence upon Philocrates.'⁵⁶ When, in reply, Philocrates allows the pert slave's role to predominate over his own identity and jauntily promises always to be true to Philocrates without further reassurance that he will be true to Tyndarus, he is echoing his previous lightheartedness when he praised the deferential manner of his supposed master, (who of course is his slave) and as such had to be deferential (*Il.* 415-418). This levity causes Tyndarus concern and he launches a passionate plea, under the guise of the master's giving advice to the slave, to Philocrates to remain true and to be mindful of the sacrifice that Tyndarus is making for his master.

*Sed, te quaeso, cogitato hinc mea fide, mitti domum
Te aestimatum, et meam esse uitam hic pro te positam pignori,
Ne tu me ignores, quom extemplo meo e conspectu apscesseris,
Quom me seruom in seruitute pro ted hic reliqueris,
Tuque te pro libero esse ducas, pignus deseras
Neque des operam pro me ut huius reducem facias filium.
Fac fidele sis fidelis, caue fidem fluxam geras:*

*Nam pater, scio, faciet quae illum facere oportet omnia;
Serua tibi in perpetuom amicum me, atque hunc inuentum inueni.
Haec per dexteram tuam te dextera retinens manu
Opsecro, infidelior mihi ne fuas quam ego sum tibi.*

(*Il.* 433-443)

When Plautus wishes to parody tragic scenes, he frequently uses metre to illustrate the comic contrast between the metric aspirations of the speaker and the reality of his lowly status and subject matter, as he does with Ergasilus' ode to Jupiter on his newly found legacy, expressed in mock-heroic *iambic octonarii* (*Il.* 770-778).⁵⁷ There is no intention of mocking the deadly earnestness of Tyndarus here, and the passage conveys an impression of serious legal language, with the repetition of *pignus*, and ritualistic patterns,⁵⁸ especially where the alliteration, polyptoton, repetition and use of the imperative '*fac*' increase the serious tone (*l.* 439). The polyptoton and alliteration also convey the notion of solemn ritual (*l.* 442), and the repeated use

⁵⁶ *Iliad* 6.429-430 in Leach (1969a) 278-279.

⁵⁷ See Tobias (1979) 15.

⁵⁸ See Sheets (1983) 202.

of the concept of *fides* adds to the gravity of Tyndarus' double-edged plea, as he ostensibly appeals to his slave not to forget him once free, but is of course appealing to his master not to shrug him off as a mere slave once he has escaped.

*Haec per dexteram tuam te dextera retinens manu
Opsecro, infidelior mihi ne fuas quam ego sum tibi.*
(Il.442-443)

Tyndarus comes perilously close to dropping his pose as master when he issues a final reminder to Philocrates that he represents the sole source of hope for Tyndarus, and he almost gets carried away on a wave of emotion.

*Tu mihi erus nunc es, tu patronus, tu pater,
Tibi commendo spes opesque meas.*
(Il.444-445)

This causes Philocrates in turn almost to lose his façade of presenting himself as the slave when he cuts Tyndarus short before he betrays them both (Il.445-446). The fact that Tyndarus is using the conventional language of supplication that the *adulescens* normally uses when urging his clever slave to aid him in his love affair serves to contrast the usual comic plight of the *adulescens*, prisoner of love, with the desperate plight of Tyndarus the slave, prisoner of war, urging his master not to forsake him. These words amount to an inversion of an inversion, as they do not represent the 'normal' situation of a master able to issue orders to his slave with complete authority, nor the conventional comic inversion of this interplay as, in Saturnine fashion, the master begs his slave to lend his assistance. Instead, we have here the conventional language of comic inversion in a unique situation where the slave is earnestly begging the master to aid him for his life and is addressing him with the conventional Saturnalian supplicatory terms *erus*, *patronus*, *pater*. While Tyndarus is in deadly earnest, and the success of his plea could be the difference between literal life and death for him, his language of servile supplication convinces Hegio, who sees the conventional inversion in his use of *erus*, *pater* and *patronus* towards his supposed slave. We find similar language used in circumstances that are more frivolous where it is used very differently for the sake of broad comic humour by the *adulescentes* in *Rudens* and *Mostellaria* when flattering their slaves to gain their aid.

Mi anime, mi Trachalio,

Mi liberte, mi patrone potius, immo mi pater!

(*Rud.* ll.1265-1266)

In tuam custodelam meque et meas spes trado, Tranio.

(*Most.* l.407)

The lecher Lysidamus in the *Casina* too, when behaving like an *adulescens* in love, sycophantically begs his slave Olympus to help him:⁵⁹

Servos sum tuos. Obsecro te

Olympisce mi, mi pater, mi patrone.

(*Cas.* ll.738-739)

Not only do the two prisoners maintain double roles in front of Hegio, but some of their words, uttered in deceit with the intention of making their deception more convincing, have more of a basis in reality than any of the characters could imagine. As an example of the unconscious irony inherent in some of their statements, Tyndarus states that he feels as though he is a free man despite his guard (l.394), but of course, he **is** a free man as he was born Hegio's son. Hegio expresses his affection for his son as any father would (l.399), but he does not take cognisance of the fact that each of his slaves is the son of some father, and of course he is unaware that his own particular son is standing before him as his slave. The supreme irony for the audience is Tyndarus' statement, as he projects the identity of Philocrates, that he is quite sure that his father will do everything that befits a father to do (l.440), as we are fully aware that Tyndarus' father in reality is Hegio, who does not behave fittingly towards his unknown son.

Nam pater, scio, faciet quae illum facere oportet omnia;

(l.440.)

We cannot help contrasting these expectations from a father with Tyndarus' situation where we know that he is his father's slave and has been chained at his father's command, and it is the sentiment underlying the unconscious irony in these words that make it very difficult later for Tyndarus on his return from the mine to accept the fact that Hegio is in fact his father when Hegio has behaved in complete contrast to what might be expected from a father.

⁵⁹ See Segal (1968) 99-123 for detailed discussion of Saturnalian convention and reversal of master-slave roles.

Philocrates and Tyndarus are successful in maintaining their assumed identities throughout their farewell scene, and they even move Hegio to comment admiringly on the extent of their devotion to one another (*Il.* 418-420), as he is unaware of the loaded meanings and ironies of the pair's words.

(6) Tyndarus as the man with commitment to self and values.

When it is obvious that he can no longer sustain his assumed identity as Philocrates, Tyndarus comments wryly in two asides on the punishment awaiting him. He would sound like a typical Plautine slave commenting in the usual manner on the potential punishments awaiting him, if it were not for the fact that we realise from Tyndarus' previous comments that the punishments appear inevitable.

Uae illis uirgis miseris, quae hodie in tergo morientur meo.

(*l.* 650)

Quid cessatis, compedes,

Currere ad me meaque amplecti crura, ut uos custodiam?

(*Il.* 651-652)

The remarkable frequency of jokes and threats in Plautus about the torture of slaves, as well as the fact that these threats fail to be carried out, has been well noted.⁶⁰ Segal has explained the non-fulfilment of these threats as part of the Saturnalian spirit, in that these threats are there not to be carried out but to remind the audience of the real world and its contrast to the world of the play. Parker describes these jokes in terms of Freud's description of Galgenhumor, as we mock the things that terrify us.⁶¹ Nevertheless, both Segal and Parker agree that cheeky slaves are never punished for being cheeky, but that those who do get punished and beaten are the slaves who are stupid or cowardly, or the pimps and braggarts, the *agelasts* of the *adulescens*.⁶² Both point out that Tyndarus is the exception to the rule that slaves are not punished for their cheekiness, but do not elaborate further on the reason for Tyndarus' punishment. However, as Tyndarus is the only slave undertaking deception who fails early in his bid to be a *uorsipellis*,

⁶⁰ See Duckworth (1952) 288-291, Segal (1968) 137-163, Parker (1989) 233-246, for discussions on the threats of torture and punishment in Plautus, their significance and their general failure to be carried out.

⁶¹ Parker (1989) 236.

⁶² Segal (1968) 137, 144, 152. Parker (1989) 240-241.

he is punished, not for being one of Segal's *agelasts*⁶³ but because he is not able to tell lies successfully nor improvise his way out of his dilemma with fresh schemes, as it is not in his nature to be sly and mendacious. Tranio in *Mostellaria* is the only other leading Plautine slave to be faced with actual physical punishment instead of the conventional blustering threats. When Tranio's deceit is discovered he is unable ethically to justify his actions, but instead, *uorsipellis* till the end, he slips nimbly off to seek refuge by seating himself jauntily on the altar, and is later forgiven, with the mutual understanding that he is very likely to merit, and receive, punishment the next day.⁶⁴ When Tyndarus' deceit is exposed by Aristophontes, he refuses to acknowledge that he has done anything wrong in helping his master, but in a dignified manner expresses contentment that he has followed the right moral path, and questions the reason for Hegio's anger towards him.

Decet innocentem seruom atque innoxium
Confidentem esse, suom apud erum potissimum.
 (ll.665-666)

Sed qui negoti est? Quamobrem suscenses mihi?
 (l.669)

Tyndarus' words indicate a reversal of roles between master and slave in a most unusual form. For a slave to represent what is right and what is wrong to his master who owns him body and soul is a complete reversal of roles, particularly when Tyndarus leads Hegio through a process of Socratic-type reasoning where he proves quite logically and reasonably that Hegio does not have the moral high ground, and can't logically justify his anger or intended actions (ll.669-721). Hegio describes Tyndarus' actions with words like *dolus*, *assimulo*, *falsidica fallacia*, and views Tyndarus as the cunning slave and describes himself as *deceptus*, while Tyndarus responds by describing his behaviour in terms of *recte*, *decet*, *gloria* and *uirtus*. This is an extension of the previous unusual role reversal where Tyndarus, the former slave, advised Aristophontes, the former freeborn, regarding the morally correct behaviour to follow (l.632). This unconventional humour of the slave besting his master calmly and competently in philosophical argument, instead of the conventional brazen type of banter normally delivered by clever slaves, would be even funnier if the consequences were not outlined so explicitly by Hegio.

⁶³ See Segal (1968) 70-71, 163.

⁶⁴ *Most.* ll.1096, 1175-1180.

Adstringite isti sultis uehementer manus.

(l.667)

At quom cruciatu maxumo id factumst tuo.

(l.681)

Facito ergo ut Acherunti clueas gloria.

(l.698)

Quando ego te exemplis excruciaruero pessumis

Atque ob sutelas tuas te morti misero,

Uel te interiisse uel periisse praedicent;

Dum pereas, nihil interdico aiant uiuere.

(ll.691-694)

Nam noctu neruo uinctus custodibitur,

Interdius sub terra lapides eximet:

Diu ego hunc cruciabo, non uno absoluam die.

(ll.729-731)

Tyndarus is the only slave actually to be punished instead of merely being lavishly threatened, and is also the only Plautine slave to risk his life instead of just his back.⁶⁵ Moreover, he is the only slave to be punished for his loyalty.⁶⁶ Despite their deceit and tricks, the Plautine slaves are generally loyal to their masters, whether largely from fear of punishment or love of mischief, but Tyndarus' motive is *fides*. In comic contrast, Messenio in *Menaechmi*, renowned for his loyalty, states his loyalty and value ethic and admits frankly that he does what is best for his back.

Metum mihi adhibeam, culpam abstineam, ero ut omnibus in locis sim praesto.

Metuam haud multum. Prope est quando erus ob facta pretium exsolvet.

Eo ego exemplo seruio, tergi ut in rem esse arbitror.

⁶⁵ *Most.* ll.1066-1067, *Bacch.* ll.358-365.

⁶⁶ See Segal (1987) 155 and Ketterer (1986a) 117 regarding the fact that Tyndarus is the only slave in the extant plays of Plautus to actually undergo punishment instead of just being threatened with punishment.

(*Men. ll.982-984*)

Chryalus in *Bacchides* and Palaestrio in *Miles Gloriosus*, through sheer love of mischief, comment gleefully on the confusion caused through deception.

Erum maiorem meum ut ego hodie lusi lepide, ut ludificatust.

Callidum senem callidis dolis

Compuli et perpuli, mi omnia ut crederet.

(*Bacch. ll.642-644*)

Quantas res turbo, quantas, moueo machinas.

(*Mil. Glor. l.813*)

Nowhere in Plautus do we find the concept of *fides* mentioned as frequently as in the *Captiui*. It is a recurring theme in the play, mentioned frequently by various characters. Tyndarus refers to *fides* when assuring Hegio of the bond between the pair (*ll.348*), Hegio twice urges the supposed slave to be faithful to his master in his mission (*ll.363, 424*), Tyndarus represents himself to Philocrates as having been faithful always (*l.405*), Philocrates swears never to be unfaithful to himself (*l.427*), and Tyndarus in response launches into an earnest but veiled appeal to Philocrates which contains five references in thirteen lines to *fides* (*ll.430-443*). In his eagerness to send Philocrates off on his mission, Hegio himself twice urges Tyndarus to act faithfully to his master Philocrates, and it is Hegio who first makes the distinction between the older and newer masters of Tyndarus.

Quae res bene uortat mihi meoque filio

Uobisque, volt te nouos erus operam dare

Tuo ueteri domino, quod is uelit, fideliter.

(*ll.361-363*)

Ergo quom optume fecisti, nunc adest occasio

bene facta cumulare ut erga hunc rem geras fideliter.

(*ll.423-424*)

Hegio also praises the *fides* of the pair when they are taking leave of each other and putting on a convincing show for him, and he remarks admiringly on their devotion to each other (*ll.418-*

420). Unlike Tyndarus, Hegio does not unwaveringly uphold the values that he has espoused, and despite his earlier praise for the *fides* of the pair toward each other and his admonition to Philocrates 'the slave' to be loyal to his older master (*ll.*362-363), Hegio shows inconstancy in his values and commitment to self by condemning absolutely this same loyalty that Tyndarus the slave now displays and by punishing Tyndarus severely for this loyalty. Tyndarus compels Hegio to admit that his slave's actions were intrinsically commendable (*ll.*711-715),⁶⁷ but that he is angry because Tyndarus showed more loyalty to his older master than to his more recent master.⁶⁸

Quia illi fuisti quam mihi fidelior.

(*l.*716)

Hegio changes his moral stance yet again when he discovers that the man whom he has been punishing is his son, and then the actions of Tyndarus which Hegio had denounced as *scelestis falsidicis fallaciis* (*l.*671) become *suis uirtutibus* (*l.*997) in Hegio's new value system,⁶⁹ and he also praises the *fides firma* of Philocrates in keeping his promise and returning with his other son (*l.*927). By contrast, throughout Hegio's questions and threats, Tyndarus remains unmoved from his original moral stance. He avers that he has done nothing wrong, and that his actions are praiseworthy and even make him eligible for fame because of his loyalty to his master at the expense of his own life and that he has followed the right course of action since his older master, his *erus maior*, placed his son in his care (*ll.*665-720). The plight that Tyndarus has faced in choosing between *fides* towards two masters is epitomised on his return to daylight from the quarry, when he comments that he sees before him both his master and his other master from Elis.

⁶⁷ The slave Palaestrio in *Miles Gloriosus* is in a similar position to Tyndarus, in that he too shows loyalty to a previous master at the expense of his newer and present master, but Palaestrio shows great ability as a *uorsipellis*, and so escapes detection and punishment.

⁶⁸ McCarthy (2000) 173 points out that according to the legal principles of slavery, this conflict of loyalty to older and newer masters should be easily resolvable. (However, in my opinion, this then serves to emphasise even more the nobility of Tyndarus' choice of values as he was flouting traditional principles of relations between slaves and masters).

Konstan (1976) 79 notes that Tyndarus' argument that he is morally bound to loyalty towards his former master has a moral basis in the ethics of the ancient city state, as moral responsibility was limited to within the boundaries of the city state. According to this principle, Tyndarus would be obliged to support Philocrates against Hegio and his 'treachery' towards Hegio would be inevitable.

Thalmann (1996) 115 finds the theme of *fides* in the play incongruous, as the slave would be excluded from the world of 'fulfilment of oaths, contracts and moral obligations, reciprocal trust and loyalty' as these should exist only between free persons. He views the treatment of *fides* in *Captiui* as indicating an aspect of the ideology of slavery, and calls this the 'benevolent' version of slavery.

⁶⁹ Konstan (1983) 68-70 comments that Hegio does not alter his opinion of Tyndarus' conduct *per se* until he learns that Tyndarus is his son.

*Sed erus eccum ante ostium, et erus alter eccum ex Alide
Rediit.*

(*Il.*105-1006)

Tyndarus shows the strongest commitment to his values, and so commitment to his sense of self. There is a strong contrast between the lowly servile status of Tyndarus and the high quality of character that he displays in his preparedness to sacrifice himself for his master, without expectation of reward, other than asking Philocrates not to forget to return for him.⁷⁰ So strong is his commitment that Tyndarus is prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice - his life - rather than surrender his values, revoke his commitment, apologise or beg for mercy.⁷¹

*Dum ne ob male facta, peream, parui existumo.
Si ego hic peribo, ast ille ut dixi non redit,
At erit mi hoc factum mortuo memorabile,
Me meum erum captum ex seruitute atque hostibus
Reducem fecisse liberum in patriam ad patrem,
Meumque potius me caput periculo
Praeoptauisse, quam is periret ponere.*

(*Il.*682-688)

Qui per uirtutem, periit, at non interit.

(*I.*690)

Tyndarus has been aware from the beginning of the deception that it has the potential for very serious consequences, (*Il.*229-230, 433-434), but has resolved to risk his life in his attempt to free his master.⁷² He displays commitment to his chosen values and so displays commitment to

⁷⁰ Messenio in *Menaechmi* also shows devotion and bravery when he rushes to the aid of his supposed master, but having accomplished his master's rescue, the slave immediately asks for his freedom as a reward (*I.*1023).

⁷¹ McCarthy (2000) 167-169 sees personal and moral qualities as a result of an 'unalterable divine dispensation', rather than as a result arising from conscious choice, and sees Tyndarus as maintaining his freeborn qualities although a slave in Hegio's household. This view of McCarthy's would tie in with the ancient view of character as being fixed rather than developing through time and according to circumstances. However, Tyndarus' words have an heroic quality in response to the desperate situation in which he now finds himself.

⁷² Ergasilus comments that Hegio would be prepared to become an executioner in order to achieve his objectives, *Il.*129-132. Leach (1969a) 281.

his self.⁷³ It is at the depth of his misery, when he has been exposed, humiliated and reviled, that Tyndarus shows his greatness and does not cringe, but is proud of the role he has played in helping his master to escape.⁷⁴ In many respects, Tyndarus is more of a tragic figure than a comic figure, as he, like Oedipus, due to fate and the will of the gods, meets unknowingly with his parent.⁷⁵ While Oedipus actually kills his father, and Iphigenia is prevented from slaying her brother at the last minute, Tyndarus' father comes very close to killing his son, with elements similar to the tragedies *Oedipus* and *Iphigenia among the Taurians*.⁷⁶ There is also a similarity between the words of Tyndarus and the tragic words uttered by Sophocles' Antigone when she defies the decree forbidding the burial of her brother's body, as she voices and upholds the same values as Tyndarus despite the consequences.⁷⁷

I know I please those whom I most should please.

(*Antig.* l.89)

I shall suffer nothing as great as dying with a lack of grace.

(*Antig.* l.96-97)⁷⁸

Tyndarus has chosen not to follow the advice of the *lorarius* when he advised the prisoners not to chafe against their fate, but to accept it calmly and to fall in unquestioningly with the will of Hegio, because, as their master, his wish was automatically the correct moral choice for his slaves to follow.

Si di immortales id uoluerunt, uos hanc aerumnam exsequi,

Decet id pati animo aequo: si id facietis, leuior labos erit.

domi fuistis, credo, liberi:

Nunc seruitus si euenit, ei uos morigerari mos bonust

Et erili imperio eamque ingeniis uostris lenem reddere.

indigna digna habenda sunt, erus quae facit.

⁷³ See my Introduction pp.15-16, for McCall, Rokeach and Taylor's views of values orientation and moral decisions.

⁷⁴ Dumont (1974) 514.

⁷⁵ Frangoulides (1996a) 144-145 follows the arguments of Hunter, Segal and Viljoen in defining the plot of *Captiui* as stereotypical of comic plays, and he downplays the 'frequently detected tragic elements in Tyndarus' *fallacia*.'

⁷⁶ Aristotle *Poetics* 1453b, 1454b 59, where Aristotle describes the pitiful or terrible circumstances where an unknown close family member is killed or almost killed by a family member.

⁷⁷ *Capt. ll.* 681-688, 690, 706-708, 739-743.

⁷⁸ Antigone tr. Wyckoff (1959).

Despite the fact that we have been introduced to Tyndarus as the slave who is going to devise a cunning plan to free his master (Il.40-41), and despite the words denoting cunning and deceit, normally associated with *serui callidi*, that abound in *Captiui*,⁷⁹ this Plautine comedy is different in that it focuses on issues such as *gloria*, *uirtus*, and *fides*.⁸⁰ The deceit involved in the exchange of identities is a means of sustaining *fides* while exemplifying *uirtus*, and is an end to gaining *gloria* (Il.689-691). The slave Tyndarus has consciously chosen a value orientation of *fides* that is indicative of his self,⁸¹ and the fact that he has no hesitation in his choice indicates a closely integrated self, if we consider Charles' statement that values guide the individual's behaviour, and that 'to know who I am as a person is a species of knowing where I stand.'⁸² Despite undergoing a series of social changes which could affect his sense of identity, Tyndarus has maintained consistency in his identity, and has not undergone any alternation due to his own sense of meaningfulness, continuity, unity and coherence in his life, as well as maintaining his personal set of values. Tyndarus is a prime example of Strauss' ultimate sacrifice, the sacrifice of self, signifying often the firmest of identities and the most total commitment.⁸³

(7) Tyndarus as returned son

As Tyndarus is escorted off to the mines, heavily shackled, to toil underground, he bids a solemn farewell to Hegio, and his words, '*uale atque salue*' (l.744), have a note of finality.⁸⁴ When Tyndarus returns from the mine, he comments on his torment in the underground mine in terms of having experienced the torture of the underworld, Acheron, (Il.998-1001). The term

⁷⁹ Torrance (1978) 65 lists the hallmarks of the Plautine *seruus callidus* as trickery and deceit, *dolus* and *mendacium* flanked by an auxiliary squadron of kindred virtues - *fallacia* and *perfidia*, *sycophantia* and *malitia*, *industria* and *astutia*, *fraus*, *facetia*, *audacia* and the like. We can apply these hallmarks to *Captiui*, as words such as *dolum*, *fallacia*, *astutia*, are common in this play - (Il.35, 40, 46, 47, 221, 222, 251, 530, 538, 653, 671, 678, 679). Other words of trickery and deceit not listed by Torrance but mentioned in the play are *mendaciis*, *perfidis*, *machinor*, *malum* (Il.520, 521, 530, 531).

⁸⁰ McCarthy (2000) 6-27 comments that the Roman audience sought release from the labour of mastering those socially below them (especially slaves), and would also enjoy a respite from fending off the impositions of those socially above them in the peculiarly Roman hierarchical society. McCarthy maintains the Plautine comedy in general is a blend of naturalistic and farcical modes that function in dialogic interaction. The naturalistic mode reassures the audience that their control over others is still operative, and is able to withstand challenges. McCarthy views *Captiui* as one of the extreme naturalistic comedies where those who exhibit the qualities of nobility, generosity and piety are exalted and a better version of the real world is offered.

⁸¹ See Rokeach's views of the social self and moral choices in my Introduction pp.15-16.

⁸² Taylor (1989) 27. See also Taylor's views in my Introduction p.17.

⁸³ See Strauss' views in my Introduction p.16.

⁸⁴ I see this same finality in Eurydice's farewell, '*iamque uale*' as she is compelled to return to the underworld once more and bids Orpheus farewell for the last time, (*Georg.* iv l.497).

'ostium' that Tyndarus uses (*l.*1005), while commonly denoting a door or entrance, is used frequently by Roman writers, including Plautus to describe the entrance to Acheron.⁸⁵ Roscher notes that the name Tyndarus is associated with the Latin '*tundere*', to beat or strike, and the name Tyndarus itself is significant, as it is an apt name for Tyndarus the miner hewing at the rock, and also Tyndarus the fighter, ready to strike to defend his principles and also, as a version of Tyndareos, is a further link with the previous imagery of the underworld. Roscher lists the name Tyndarus as a variant of Tyndareos, who amongst other exploits, belonged to a small group of heroes who actually entered the underworld and returned from the dead.⁸⁶ The combined effect of the significance of Tyndarus' name linked to the name Tyndareos, and his descriptions of his torment in the underground mine as those in Acheron, is to build an image of Tyndarus returning, not just from underground, but from the underworld and from the dead, and this is borne out by his remark concerning the opportunity to see the light bestowed on him by his parents (*ll.*1007-1008), as one born again.⁸⁷ It is as though the old Tyndarus, the dignified slave and man of values has been left behind in the underworld and the new reborn Tyndarus, the about-to-be-acclaimed son of Hegio emerges, bewildered and reproachful. Whereas Tyndarus, emerging from the mine is able to make a wry joke about his bad experiences underground (*ll.*1000-1004), the fact that Hegio, his malefactor, is his father is more difficult for Tyndarus to deal with than his physical hardships and leaves him dazed (*ll.*1016-1017), and not able to express instant joy at being united with his father and brother, or even with Philocrates. This is consistent with Strauss' transformation in identity that occurs with critical incidents, in this case when Tyndarus realises that his naming of self and his sense of self have been erroneous and that he is the freeborn son of Hegio and not his slave.⁸⁸ Leach has noted the 'relative joylessness' of the reunion and contrasted the unknowing kindness of fathers, like Daemones in *Rudens*, towards their unknown children with Hegio's treatment of Tyndarus.⁸⁹ There is a contrast between the treatment of Tyndarus by his respective masters, namely Philocrates' father, who has raised the slave almost as a son (*ll.*991-992), and his actual father, Hegio.⁹⁰

This treatment stands as a barrier between Hegio and Tyndarus and is the reason for the

⁸⁵ Lewis and Short (1966) V.1284.

⁸⁶ Roscher (1977) 1416.

⁸⁷ Leach (1969a) 294 remarks that Plautus emphasises that Tyndarus' self-discovery is a rebirth, a physical return from certain death in the stone quarries, the horror reinforced by memories of the paintings of the torments in Acheron.

⁸⁸ See my Introduction p.16 for Strauss' views of transformation of the self.

⁸⁹ Leach (1969a) 293.

⁹⁰ Dumont (1974) 513.

atmosphere of the recognition scene of *Captiui* being sombre in comparison to other Plautine plays of recognition and reunion.⁹¹

Conclusion

In *Captiui*, as we have noted, despite the fact that the trick of Tyndarus and Philocrates in exchanging identities is discovered halfway through the play (l.651), the identity problems are not then at that stage resolved but are pervasive right through the play in many forms. These identity problems all have unusual aspects and differ from the conventional identity problem in Plautus, when the problems usually centre around the love affair of the *adulescens*, and often, after obstacles are surmounted with the help of the clever slave, the girl is discovered to be of free birth after all and subsequently eligible for marriage.

In *Captiui*, by contrast, no female appears at all, not even in the prologue as in the *Trinummus*. *Captiui* has two main identity problems, both operating at different levels in the play. The overt main identity problem is that of the physical exchange of identities by the two prisoners at the beginning of the play, resulting in the deception of Hegio and the escape of Philocrates from slavery. The second main identity problem, which underlies the whole play from beginning to end, is that, unknown to the participants in the play, Tyndarus is the son of Hegio, his owner and torturer. The fact that the audience has been carefully included in this knowledge adds an extra dimension to the plot, and brings both comic and tragic irony to the scenes of deception where the characters utter words that are in fact true although uttered in deceit.

The first main identity problem, the exchange of identities, has many aspects that set it apart from the conventional role reversal of other Plautine comedies. In *Captiui*, the exchange of identities has been actual, and of comparatively long duration, and involves personality, clothes and possibly masks, in contrast with the temporary transposing of identities in role reversal between master and slave or the brief impersonation by a *seruus callidus* in conventional Plautine comedy. Instead of the slave being the *architectus doli* and directing the action in a peremptory fashion, in *Captiui* master and slave form a team to co-engineer, co-direct and sustain the scheme, and consequently Philocrates has a more extensive and active role in the

⁹¹ *Rudens*, *Menaechmi*, *Stichus*, and *Miles Gloriosus* all end on a festive, happier note. McCarthy (2000) 198 comments on the fact that there is no resolution at all in the final scene of *Captiui*, merely 'a confluence of circumstances that obliterates the problems raised in the earlier acts.' Leach ((1969a) 273-274 comments on the fact that although justice has ultimately been served in that Tyndarus is freed and Stalagmus is punished, there are no palliatives for the injustices incurred through ignorance.

deception than other *adulescentes*, and he undertakes his new identity as slave successfully, to the admiration of his slave. The conventional role reversal between master and slave in Plautus is counter-reversed in *Captiui*, with the *adulescens* successfully bluffing his way out of a situation by impersonation, while the slave fails in his deception. Most unusually, comparatively early in the play, the slave Tyndarus' deception is exposed and consequently punished, as for once the Plautine slave is unable to improvise his way out of trouble or sustain his deception, but this exposure does not signal the end of the identity problems. Tyndarus is unique in that he is the only Plautine slave actually to suffer punishment for his deceit, and is also unique in that his motivation is not love of mischief, nor concern for his back, nor the hope of freedom, but *fides*, for which he is prepared to sacrifice his hope of freedom and his life. *Casina* also deals with the concept of *fides*, but in a far more farcical manner, with ridicule instead of physical punishment for the transgressor, Lysidamus.⁹² Finally, in *Captiui*, it is not the girl who is discovered to be of free birth and therefore eligible for marriage, or a long-lost daughter who by chance is re-united with her family. It is the slave, who is found to be of free birth and the long-lost son of a wealthy family, and who is proved to be eligible to take his place as the equal companion of Philocrates by birth and not just by nobility of character. This physical exchange of identities between master and slave is indicative of the bond between them which more closely resembles the bond between two friends of equal status than a disparate master-slave relationship. This is a complete contrast to the master-slave relationship described by Aristotle where the slave, like the animal, is a purely a physical instrument. The exchange of identities illustrates the *fides* of Tyndarus and his innate moral worth, (despite being a slave), rather than his *astutia*. Tyndarus provides the perfect foil to Aristotle's theory of the slave being unable to display any innate *arete* or ability to reason.

The second main identity problem of Tyndarus' being the slave of his master brings an aspect of multivalency to the whole play. There are tragic elements in the *Captiui*, in that Hegio, in ignorance of the fact that Tyndarus is the son whom he has been mourning, subjects him to extreme hard labour in the mines, with the intention of punishing him until he dies.⁹³ Tyndarus steps beyond the bounds of a comic figure and at times instead assumes the larger proportions of a tragic hero.⁹⁴ Few, if any other slaves in Plautus have this stature, but Tyndarus displays

⁹² Williams (1993) 33-59 has explored the concept of *fides* in *Casina* and the consequences of breaking *fides* with particular emphasis on the metatheatrical aspects of the play and the play-within-the-play.

⁹³ Jones (1956) 195 notes that '*damnatio ad metallum* under the Principate became a common alternative to the death penalty, especially for the lower classes.'

⁹⁴ Knox (2001) 19 discusses the 'close brush with the incurable tragic act' in Euripides' tragedies, *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Helen*, where Ion and Creusa are averted from following the fates of Orestes and Medea by a narrow margin. Tyndarus also has a 'narrow brush with the incurable tragic act at the hands

many of the elements that are traditionally associated with heroic figures in tragedy. He has, through a tragic twist of fate, fallen from great circumstances and is thereby prevented from realising his potential. Although the son of a wealthy man of good standing, after his abduction as a young child by a wicked slave, Tyndarus has been reduced to the status of a slave instead of taking his place as the son of a leading citizen. There is also a tragic aspect in the steadfastness of Tyndarus' refusal to renounce or denounce his loyalty towards his original master, who is now a mere fellow prisoner, in favour of his newer powerful master who has had him chained and who is threatening him with dire punishment. As the audience has been primed carefully by the prologue regarding Tyndarus' true identity, we are in a position to appreciate the tragic irony inherent in many of the words uttered by Tyndarus in deceit, which are actually true.

A further aspect of the identity problems in *Captiui*, which contribute to the multivalency of the play, is the play's attention to the influence of fate and war on identity. There are many references to fate and war and the consequences of war – slavery – and these topics are all interwoven with identity and all considered in *Captiui*. If we review the profile of identity issues occurring in the play, as they are mentioned, we can see that they are numerous and also embrace the issues of war, slavery and fate.

1. In the prologue we are informed of Tyndarus' true identity, that he is the slave of his own father (*Il.5*, 21).
2. Tyndarus was abducted from his father's house at the age of four by a slave, sold in Elis to Philocrates' father and given as a slave companion to Philocrates (*Il.8-10*). Thus, Tyndarus took on a new name and the identity of a slave.
3. After being captured in war, Tyndarus and Philocrates are bought as slaves by Hegio, and Philocrates takes on the identity of a slave and becomes Tyndarus' peer. Tyndarus, although already a slave, is further diminished in status by being chained and treated with more contempt than he was accustomed to as a slave in Philocrates' household.⁹⁵ In order to facilitate Philocrates' freedom, the pair exchanges names, garments, and (possibly) masks, and identities, with the consequence that the slave becomes the master and the master takes on the identity of the slave.
4. Philocrates is successful in projecting the assumed identity of his slave, and while

of his father', as comedy echoes tragedy. Leach (1969a) 270 notes that 'Hegio's consignment of his son Tyndarus to the stone quarries exemplifies Aristotelian *hamarteia*, an error committed in ignorance.'

⁹⁵ These degrees in servitude experienced by Tyndarus at the hands of Philocrates and Hegio reflect the ancient Greek view of freedom as comprising several rights, and of slavery as lacking one or more of these rights. See Ancient Views on Slavery in my Introduction pp.26-27.

Tyndarus is temporarily successful in his new identity as Philocrates, Hegio is deceived and Philocrates escapes.

5. Tyndarus is capable of sustaining the role of a master but not able to sustain the particular assumed identity of Philocrates for long, and is betrayed by his physical appearance and name and is exposed by a supposed compatriot.
6. Tyndarus defends his assumed identity and deceit on the grounds that *fides* towards his earlier master takes precedence over *fides* towards his newer master. He refuses to alter his moral stance, despite Hegio's threats of the utmost torture, because of his conviction that his actions are morally correct and because they are in accordance with his values of *uirtus*. Tyndarus is prepared to defend his values with his life and displays even more *arete* than either of his masters.⁹⁶
7. Tyndarus is consequently condemned on account of his *fides* by his own father, who is still in ignorance of his slave's identity as his son, to heavy labour in the mines, with the likelihood of imminent death.
8. From a motive of *fides*, Philocrates returns in his own identity as the master of Tyndarus to free his slave, and together with Hegio discovers the true identity of Tyndarus as Hegio's abducted son.
9. When Tyndarus is recalled from the mine, the fact that fate has caused his tormentor to be his father is difficult for Tyndarus to assimilate properly and also makes it difficult for Tyndarus to rejoice in his freedom and new identity as Hegio's son, and in turn Hegio, on learning his slave's identity, suffers guilt and remorse which temper his joy.

The issues of slavery, the role of fate and war are mentioned too frequently in *Captiui* to be mere coincidence, and must be considered in tandem with the identity question and seen as part of the play's multivalency in that different members of the audience would have appreciated the play on different levels, starting from pure comic enjoyment of the farcical aspects of Ergasilus all the way up to philosophical consideration of the questions of war, fate and slavery and maintaining one's values. Plautus' audiences were second-generation theatregoers, familiar with stock motifs and characters and versed in Greek culture and mythology.⁹⁷ That Plautus wrote primarily to amuse his audience by means of comedy is certain, but equally certain is the fact that Plautus wished to call attention indirectly to certain contemporary issues to those of his audience who were receptive to innuendoes. Gruen notes that Plautine plays could serve as vehicles to address, promote, mock or satirise items that held public attention or provoked

⁹⁶ See the ancient view of the lack of virtue in slaves in my Introduction pp.23-25.

⁹⁷ Handley (1975) 125-126. Chalmers (1965) 23-27.

public debate. Plautus had a medium with which to expand awareness and augment discussion.⁹⁸

When reference is made to slavery in *Captiui*, it is not on the usual farcical level with ghoulish extravagance in cataloguing possible punishments awaiting the slave as occurs in other Plautine plays. When slavery is mentioned in *Captiui*, it is usually in a serious vein, concentrating on the realistic aspects of slavery rather than the conventional Plautine exaggerated aspects and is not entirely without value judgements. The slaves are described as booty being divided up and disposed of by the quaestors.

Emit hosce e praeda ambos de quaestoribus.

(l.34)

The lowly parasite Ergasilus, whom one would not expect to be judgmental of his patron, twice comments unfavourably on Hegio's new practice of trafficking in slaves and describes it as *inhonestum*.

nunc hic occepit quaestum hunc fili gratia

inhonestum et maxime alienum ingenio suo:

homines captiuos commercatur, si queat

aliquem inuenire, suum qui mutet filium.

(ll.98-101)

Aegre est mi hunc facere quaestum caecerarium

Propter sui gnati miseriam miserum senem.

(ll.129-130)

Plato condemns agricultural labour, commerce and industry as banausic demeaning occupations for the citizen, and he particularly singles out trade as causing or encouraging men to pursue their appetites beyond the measure of reason. Aristotle specifically condemns retail trade and the unnecessary and 'unjust' acquisition of wealth and property.⁹⁹ Certainly, for a senator, Hegio is excessively preoccupied with mercenary matters, and enthusiastically tallies up his

⁹⁸ Gruen (2001) 86-87.

⁹⁹ See my Introduction p.26.

profits on slave dealing and frequently speaks in banking and financial terms.¹⁰⁰ Hegio goes off to inspect his slaves – directly after he has inspected his bank balance (ll.192-194). He displays a consciousness of the cost of things and needlessly repeats the price paid for Tyndarus twenty years previously.¹⁰¹

In defending his assumed identity against the accusations of Aristophontes, Tyndarus points out that the state of slavery is due to an accident of war and the superior force of the enemy, not due to an innate baseness and he implies that to be a slave does not in itself necessarily indicate a baser nature. This is in line with Aristotle's own thought.¹⁰²

Pergin seruum me exprobare esse, id quod ui hostili optigit?
(l.591)

Finley discusses the first formal attempt by Greeks to justify slavery in Aristotle's first book of *Politics*, where he notes that despite an attempt by Aristotle to justify the 'natural' fitness of slaves for their servile state, Aristotle has to concede that slavery is frequently due to accident, (the result of war, piracy or kidnapping), rather than baseness of nature of the person in slavery. Finley concludes that thus slavery was justified pragmatically and conventionally practised rather than morally justified. Schlaifer notes that towards the end of the fifth century, views were expressed, opposing the concept of natural slavery, and instead expounding the doctrine that slavery was an accident, and not due to the intrinsic nature of the slave, and quotes fragments from the *rhétor* Alcidas and the writer Philemon.¹⁰³

In *Captiui*, slavery is even described as a disease by Aristophontes.

Sed hoc primum, me expurgare tibi uolo, me insaniam
Neque tenere neque mi esse ullum morbum, nisi quod serui.
(ll.621-622)

¹⁰⁰ There are numerous references in *Captiui* to money, profits and the protection of Hegio's investments in his slaves - '*homines captiuos commercatur*' (l.100). '*Intus subducam ratiunculam, quantillum argenti mi apud trapezitam siet.*' (ll.192-193, '*an uero non iusta causa est, ut uos seruem sedulo, quos tam grandi sim mercatus praesenti pecunia*' (ll.257-258), '*edepol rem meam constabiliui*' (l.452), '*res ac rationes meas*' (l.674).

Gruen (2001) 90-94 notes the comic treatment accorded by Plautus to bankers, moneylenders and usurers, and I believe that some of this same criticism is implied by Plautus regarding Hegio's concern with money and profits.

¹⁰¹ McCarthy (2000) 205.

¹⁰² See my Introduction p.25.

¹⁰³ Philem. frg 95 K, *Alcidamas Messeniac* in Schlaifer (1936) 199-200.

Captivity and freedom are discussed fairly extensively in *Captiui* and there is ample mention of the chains of slavery.¹⁰⁴ The *lorarius* and Hegio talk about caging wild birds (*ll.*123-124). The *lorarius* advises the captives not to chafe against the will of the gods but to accept their slavery and loss of freedom and to accept that whatever their master did was the right action (*ll.*195-200). As slaves they would not be allowed to hold individual values, since they would be compelled to adopt the values of their master, and these values would automatically be regarded as the correct ones for his slaves to follow, even if these values were in fact ‘*indigna*.’

*Nunc seruitus si euenit, ei uos morigerari mos bonust
Et erili imperio eamque ingeniis uostris lenem reddere.
Indigna digna habenda sunt, erus quae facit.*

(*ll.*198-200)

When Tyndarus complains about the disgrace of being in chains (*l.*203), the *lorarius* reminds him that he has been bought and paid for, and that his master's investment must be protected.

*At pigeat postea
Nostrum erum, si uos eximat uinculis,
Aut solutos sinat quos argento emerit.*

(*ll.*203-205)

References to war are generally bound up with these references to slavery, as when the *prologus* is informing the audience of Tyndarus' real identity, and in mentioning the war, he states that slavery is an inevitable consequence of war (*l.*25). The same statement is made by Philocrates later (*l.*245). By referring to the audience in the closing lines of the prologue as ‘*iudices iustissimi domi duellique duellatores optumi*’ (*ll.*67-68), the audience is simultaneously being flattered as a brave and just nation of warriors in a spirit of *captatio beneuolentiae* as well as being including in the category of war-mongers who, in their military prowess, will inevitably be involved in the capture of more slaves and so will perpetuate the misery of slavery of fellow creatures.¹⁰⁵ By involving the audience in this manner, Plautus is inviting them to reassess

¹⁰⁴ Ketterer (1986a) discusses the various types of chains described in *Captiui* and notes that the varying progressive degrees of harshness of Tyndarus' treatment as a slave at the hands of Hegio are reflected by the corresponding degrees of harshness shown in the various types of chains Tyndarus endures.

¹⁰⁵ Bradley (1989) 21 states that from the middle of the third century to the close of the Republic, Rome was involved in continuous expansionist warfare. Polybius and Livy record the number of slaves taken in

themselves as a warrior nation, and so introduces another level of meaning that is operational throughout the play.

Man's helplessness against fate is stated several times. The *prologus* introduces the theme in the prologue.

Enim uero di nos quasi pilas homines habent.

(l.22)

Homunculi quanti sunt, quom recogito!

(l.51)

The *lorarius*, probably a slave and a victim of war and chance himself, is not unsympathetic to the reversal of fortune that the pair of captives has suffered, and in advising them to adjust to their new identity, speculates on the vagaries of fate.

Si di immortales id uoluerunt, uos hanc aerumnam exsequi

Decet id pati animo aequo: si id facietis, leuior labos erit.

(ll.195-196)

Philocrates, in his entreaty to Tyndarus to maintain his loyalty despite the fact that they are both now slaves, attributes his descent from freedom to slavery to the immortal gods and the chances of war.

Quoniam nobis di immortales animum ostenderunt suum,

Ut qui erum me tibi fuisse atque esse nunc conseruom uelint,

Quod antehac pro iure imperitabam meo, nunc te oro per precem-

Per fortunam incertam et per mei te erga bonitatem patris

Perque conseruitium commune, quod hostica euenit manu,

Ne men secus honore honestes quam quom seruibas mihi,

Atque ut qui fueris et qui nunc sis meminisse ut

memineris.

(ll.242-248)

In assuming his master's identity while deceiving Hegio, Tyndarus assumes his philosophical outlook as well and expresses sentiments identical to those of Philocrates regarding fate and war in a manner simultaneously dignified and amusing, as the audience is aware that Tyndarus the slave is echoing his master successfully. At the same time, there is emphasis on the transience of the social status of man in the vicissitudes of war.

*Uis hostilis quom istoc fecit meas opes aequabiles;
Memini quom dicto haud audebat: facto nunc laedat licet.
Sed uiden? Fortuna humana fingit artatque ut lubet:
Me, qui liber fueram seruom fecit, e summo infumum;
Qui imperare insueram, nunc alterius imperio obsequor.*
(Il.302-306)

Again fate is regarded as capriciously hurling a free man into slavery as Tyndarus defines the very narrow margin between freedom and slavery when he relates his own assumed experience of being a free man one day and a slave the next due to the accident of war. Of course, the audience is aware that Tyndarus has been describing the fate of Philocrates, and also that Tyndarus himself has experienced, and will experience, far greater vicissitudes of fortune than his master.

*Tam ego fui ante liber quam gnatus tuos,
Tam mihi quam illi libertatem hostilis eripuit manus,
Tam ille apud nos seruit, quam ego nunc hic apud te serui.*
(Il.310-312)

By including Hegio's son as a victim of war, Tyndarus, although assuming the role of Philocrates to deceive Hegio, is uttering words truer than he realises and at the same time is illustrating the universality of the results of war. Each slave is the son of some father, and Dumont extends this concept of common humanity still further to state that within each slave is a potential son.¹⁰⁶ Hegio himself has lost not one but two sons to slavery, and as Dumont points out, Hegio himself is a victim of war in that he has turned to slave-dealing in an attempt to regain one of his sons¹⁰⁷. Tyndarus has received better treatment at the hands of strangers as a slave than he has as a slave in his own father's house. Plautus himself would

¹⁰⁶ Dumont (1974) 508 n.15.

¹⁰⁷ Dumont (1974) 509.

have seen almost constant warfare during his lifetime. In *Captiui*, the issues of slavery and freedom are considered, and we have seen that it is possible for the slave and free man to possess equal virtue. Using the vehicle of identity, the consequences of war are clearly conveyed in *Captiui* to the discerning members of the audience, but this theme is a facet of the identity problem of a free man being the slave of his own father, and it does not intrude on the main identity problem.

We have also considered other aspects of identity which have been raised for our possible attention in *Captiui*. These are:

1. The relevance of names and appearance in evaluating identity
2. The adoption of roles in response to the demands of the situation
3. The adoption and upholding of values as a commitment to self
4. The relationship of the social and material selves to the spiritual self and the unity of the self.

1. Name and Appearance in Identity

The name is significant as a means of classifying and establishing identity, and even as a means of maintaining identity. The name enables the characters in the play to identify other characters while enabling the audience to organise its frame of reference with regard to the characters named.

When Tyndarus and Philocrates exchange identities, they do so by exchanging names and clothes and roles, and perhaps masks. When Tyndarus is exposed as an impostor, it is because he lacks the ability of the *uorsipellis* to transform his identity afresh, but it was his physical appearance and the name Tyndarus that convinced Hegio that he had mistaken the identity of his slave. When Stalagmus' treachery is discovered, it is the name Paegnium that helps to establish the true identity of Tyndarus as Hegio's son. Thus through the name, both the false identity of Tyndarus as Philocrates is discovered, and the true identity of Tyndarus as Paegnium is established. Whilst in *Captiui* empirical evidence is less emphasised than the name as a criterion for assessing identity, nevertheless the physical appearance is relevant when the pair exchange appearances by switching clothes, and when Aristophontes describes the physical appearance of Philocrates which differs from the appearance of Tyndarus. However, just as Plautus told us in the prologue to expect a play that is different from other plays and one which will not contain the usual store of stock characters from the *demi-monde*, and then, completely

overturning our expectations, he opens *Captiui* with the disreputable parasite Ergasilus who announces that his name is Scortum, so Plautus again has a little joke with our expectations regarding the name of Tyndarus and the appearance of Philocrates. It is apparent that Plautus is playing with the audience while also emphasising that things are not always exactly as they appear and should not be taken at face value.

It is evident that the general philosophical concept of the self as being totally divorced from the body does not tie in with the concept of self as projected in *Captiui*. Butler's concept of the body no more belonging to the self than any other surrounding material would be an astonishing principle to Roman slaves in real life and to Tyndarus the stage slave, as the realities of physical punishment would prove the body to be very much an integral part of the self to them.¹⁰⁸

Tyndarus disproves another philosophical concept regarding the self if we consider the philosopher Hume's concept that change negates the possibility of establishing any real identity. Tyndarus went from free status to slave to an even lower status of slave and finally to a free man of good social standing, all the while maintaining the same intrinsic self and values of *fides* and *uirtus* throughout the fluctuations in his social status.

2. The Adoption of Various Roles

As we have noted, Tyndarus and Philocrates adopt various roles for the purpose of deceiving Hegio and attaining Philocrates' freedom. While role distancing, the playing of a role without inner commitment, is normally associated with *serui callidi*, in *Captiui* we have role distancing by a master in conjunction with his slave. While the audience's expectations of the clever slave are partly fulfilled by Tyndarus, he does not succeed in being a *uorsipellis*, and goes on to be punished. Tyndarus and Philocrates display role distancing when they are in the presence of Hegio as part of their planned deception, but they extend their role distancing further than absolutely necessary as they revel in this superiority over Hegio and find distancing to be a way of preserving some of their dignity in their undignified status of slavery. This deliberate deceit is the only means that the pair possess of exercising any power in their new status as Hegio's slaves, and it is obvious that they enjoy hoodwinking their captor. It is interesting to note that the deception in *Captiui* is an exchange of status as the 'free man' and 'slave' exchange rank, rather than the impersonation of a particular character. Tyndarus impersonates his master, not to ape his physical appearance or his character, but to convey a certain social status in order to convince Hegio of his identity.

¹⁰⁸ See my Introduction pp.5-6.

3. Value Orientation

Whilst certain aspects of the social self are involuntary, such as one's racial or gender group, the individual nevertheless has freedom of choice over the value orientation that he holds, and this value orientation is a vital aspect of identity in that it is a major construct in motivating behaviour and attitude and is a unifying factor in identity.¹⁰⁹ In the social self, a value orientation is regarded as the integration of the values which have been chosen into one perspective and this is an important aspect of the social self, as identity is inextricably linked with such values as truth, beauty, freedom, duty and order. While Tyndarus had no choice regarding his social status and was indeed a helpless ball in the game of the gods, yet he consciously chose a value orientation of *uirtus* and *fides* which dominated and directed his actions and attitudes throughout. Tyndarus is an example of Rokeach's argument that a person with a strong value orientation is committed to himself as a certain kind of person with strong convictions of how he should behave in certain situations with beliefs about some end state of existence that is worth attaining.¹¹⁰ Strauss has noted that self sacrifice often signifies the firmest concept of identity and the most total commitment, and Tyndarus, despite being a slave, displays this total commitment to his value orientation without wavering, despite the transience of his social status. By contrast, Hegio's value orientation fluctuates with the change in circumstances, and he veers from admiring the devotion between Tyndarus and Philocrates when it seems to further his own ends, to condemning it when it appears to thwart his aims. Tyndarus is prepared to offer the greatest form of commitment and the highest form of sacrifice, self-sacrifice with the possibility of death, and states his commitment and sacrifice clearly:

Qui per uirtutem, periit, at non interit.

(l.690)

Despite being a comedy designed to amuse an ancient audience, *Captiui* is one of the less farcical plays of Plautus. The diminished amount of farce in *Captiui* is provided almost exclusively by the parasite Ergasilus, whose entrances contrast with serious preceding scenes. Simplistically viewed, *Captiui* is composed of two elements, comprising the Tyndarus scenes and the Ergasilus scenes, and alternates between relatively serious and more humorous and farcical scenes, and as Ergasilus disappears after his crescendo of assuming total command of Hegio's provisions, the final scene of recognition adds to the overall relatively sombre note of

¹⁰⁹ See my Introduction pp.15-16.

¹¹⁰ Rokeach (1968) 233.

restraint, in comparison with other Plautine plays.¹¹¹ The resolution of the problem of the identity of Tyndarus at the end of the play does not resolve the other problems brought to our attention in *Captiui*, such as man's common humanity, and the issues of war and slavery and the concept of *fides* have also been explored via the identity problem. While it has certainly been Plautus' intention to amuse his audience, that it has also been his intention to provide food for thought for those members of his audience who were receptive to these deeper issues is substantiated both in the prologue and the epilogue, where we are told firstly that this is no ordinary play and lastly that this play will make good men better.

Although the multivalency of *Captiui* has been illustrated, with identity being used as a vehicle for drawing subtle attention to the other issues of slavery and the helplessness of man at the hands of the gods, it is by no means possible to deny that *Captiui* is a comedy, designed to amuse the Roman audiences of the time. It seems that Plautus while wishing to entertain the populace, felt moved also to highlight these other issues in an understated manner, allowing those who wished to, to take home a deeper message than pure amusement alone.

¹¹¹ Thalmann (1996) 113 notes that the festive pattern in *Captiui* is mainly carried by Ergasilus and that his celebratory feast on the return of Hegio's son and Philocrates is solitary, not communal.

CHAPTER THREE: MENAECMI

The Prologue

Menaechmi is the only extant comedy of errors attributed to Plautus, and is based on repeated mistakes in identity occurring, not because of deliberate, planned deception but as a result of errors due to accidental circumstances. The play does not revolve around the mistaken identity of a young girl initially ineligible for marriage, but uniquely centres on the mistaken identity of a married man, Menaechmus, and that of his identical bachelor twin of the same name. The theme of twins appears elsewhere in Plautus, as in *Miles Gloriosus* (ll.238, 383-384), where Palaestrio passes Philocomasium off as her own twin sister to Sceledrus, and in *Persa* (l.695), where Sagaristio informs the audience that he is looking for his twin brother. In *Bacchides*, the two sisters are featured with identical appearance and the same name, Bacchis, and they are also mistaken for each other, and are often considered as twins. However, despite the element of twinship, the theme of mistaken identity in these other plays is not central to the play but is incidental. In *Amphitruo*, there are two sets of identical twins, with the mortals Amphitruo and Sosia and their divine impostors, Jupiter and Mercury, but these twins are deliberately created by divine machination for furthering intrigue, whereas the plot of *Menaechmi* centres around the confusion in identity of the identical brothers due to chance resulting in their unwittingly being simultaneously in the same town. In *Captivi*, the mistakes in identity occur as a result of deception by doubles, and the deception is discovered relatively early in the play, but by contrast in the *Menaechmi*, far from plotting to impersonate each other, the twins are totally unaware of each other's presence in the same town until the end of the play where chance again is instrumental in the revelation of their relationship and identities.

While there is a similarity between *Captivi* and *Menaechmi* in the fact that both prologues outline how a small boy, stolen at a young age, assumes a new identity in his new country, and after reaching manhood is eventually recognised in terms of his former identity, yet the treatment of this theme varies vastly between the two plays.¹ The prologue of the *Captivi* hints at tragic implications by stressing that the young boy concerned becomes an unrecognised slave in the chains of his own father, and by remarking on how the gods use men as footballs and on the helplessness of mortals in the hands of fate. Having built up this prelude to tragic tendencies, Plautus humorously alludes to the presumption of his trying to present a tragedy in

¹ *Capt.* ll 5-10, *Men.* ll.24-33, 57-62.

comic circumstances, but a link of *Captiui* with tragedy has been established, and cannot be altogether erased.² Similarly, in *Amphitruo*'s prologue, Plautus flirts with the notion of tragedy because the play features Jupiter, and Mercury teases the audience with the idea of calling it a tragedy, but announces that he will make it a tragi-comedy, because there are also slaves featured in the play.

Like *Captiui* and *Amphitruo*, *Menaechmi* concerns itself extensively with problems of identity, but unlike these other two plays, the prologue of *Menaechmi* makes no attempt to suggest possible tragic or tragi-comic implications in the forthcoming play, nor promises a very unusual play, but instead, the prologue explicitly labels the play a comedy.³ In keeping with the light-hearted tone of the play, the *prologus* jokes extensively with the audience beyond the expected measure of *captatio benevolentiae* while setting out the details of the identity problem for the audience. The plot of the play and the problems of identity are set out for us in a very straightforward manner, and the prologue does not encourage us to view the play as anything but a play offering light-hearted entertainment. However, we are given clues in the prologue regarding the identity problems to be played out in the play. We learn how extremely alike in appearance the twin Menaechmi boys were as babies and young boys, to the extent that neither their own mother nor their wet-nurse was unable to tell them apart.

As we have noted in our examination of *Captiui*, the commonest criteria for judging personal identity in Plautus are physical appearance and names. These two most important aspects of identity have also been emphasised in the prologue to *Menaechmi*, and throughout the play, physical appearance and name are the only criteria considered valid by the inhabitants of Epidamnus in assessing the identity of the Menaechmi brothers. In the prologue, Plautus emphasises the extreme physical likeness of the twins.

*Mercator quidam fuit Syracusis senex,
Ei sunt nati filii gemini duo,
Ita forma simili puerei ut mater sua
Non internosse posset quae mammam dabat,
Neque adeo mater ipsa quae illos pepererat.*

² *Capt.* ll.5, 21-22, 29, 50-51, 54, 61-62.

³ *Capt.* ll.51-62, *Am.* l.50-59, *Men.* ll.7-10, 49-56, 72-77.

(ll.17-21)

A hint is also given to us in the prologue regarding the importance of another facet of identity in *Menaechmi* – the twins’ names. We are told how the twin remaining at home was given his missing brother’s name and we are reminded that the twins share the same name. Within the space of twelve lines, the key word ‘*nomen*’ appears six times in various forms, emphasising the importance of this element of personal identity.

Postquam Syracusas de ea re rediit nuntius
Ad auom puerorum, puerum surruptum alterum
Patremque pueri Tarenti esse emortuom,
*Immutat **nomen**, auos huic gemino alteri;*
Ita illum dilexit qui subruptust, alterum:
*Illius **nomen** indit illi qui domi est,*
*Menaechmo, idem quod alteri **nomen** fuit;*
*Et ipso eodem est auos uocatus **nomine***
*(Propterea illius **nomen** memini facilius,*
Quia illum clamore uidi flagitarier.)
Ne mox erretis, iam nunc praedico prius:
*Idem est ambobus **nomen** geminis fratribus.*

(ll.37-48)

Unlike the mutual exchange of names and clothing which is emphasised in the prologue to *Captiui*, in *Menaechmi* ‘s prologue the exchange of names is not mutual, but one-way, and despite the later interchange of the mantle between the twins via third parties, no mention is made in the prologue of clothing as a component of identity.

The prologue insists on the ordinariness of the play and sets the light-hearted tone for the rest of the play, hinting at merry mix-ups in identity resulting from twins with the same physical appearance and the same name being unknowingly in the same place at the same time.

Physical Appearance and the Name as Criteria of Identity in *Menaechmi*

1. Plautus' penchant for the use of *redende Namen* is also evident in *Menaechmi*.⁴ The prologue has specifically mentioned the locale for the play's action as being Epidamnus by name four times (*Il.*33, 49, 70, 72), the adjective *Epidamniensis* is used twice (*Il.*32, 57), and in the prologue, Epidamnus has been presented to us as an unusual city. In the play itself, Messenio reinforces this aspect as he warns Menaechmus II against the dangers of this town, all of which eventually befall his master despite the slave's gloomy warnings.

Nam ita est haec hominum natio: in Epidamnieis

Uoluptarii atque potatores maxumei;

Tum sycophantae et palpatores plurumei

In urbe hac habitant; tum meretrices mulieres

Nusquam perhibentur blandiores gentium.

Propterea huic urbei nomen Epidamno inditumst,

Quia nemo ferme huc sine damno deuortitur.

(*Il.*258-264)

Plautus has played with the name Epidamnus as a meaningful name and Messenio recognises the importance of the name as an indicator of quality, class and category, a distinctive appellation, and is apprehensive of the 'damned' city of Epidamnus (*Il.*258-264).⁵ His master, Menaechmus II, has no such presentiments and is determined to continue his search for his twin brother.

Other names in *Menaechmi* that indicate quality, class and category are those of Matrona, Peniculus and the Menaechmi brothers themselves. The fact that Menaechmus' wife does not receive a personal name but is simply called 'Wife' is indicative of her belonging to a stereotyped Plautine class of dowered, nagging wives. By contrast, Menaechmus' mistress, Erotium, has a name denoting Pleasure, which suits her calling in life as an obliging courtesan. Further, despite the fact that he does not give his wife a name, Menaechmus has the pet name 'Uoluptas' for Erotium, which Segal notes as very apt for the contrasting atmospheres of

⁴ Segal (1969) 79 comments on Plautus' use of meaningful and often humorous names to add an extra dimension to the audience's appreciation of his plays.

⁵ See my Introduction p.16.

uoluptas in Erotium's house and *industria* in Menaechmus' own house.⁶ Peniculus is aptly named 'Little Brush', because as a true parasite always on the quest for a free meal, he sweeps everything clean before him. Menaechmus is a characteristic soldier's name and is suitable for the two protagonists of the play, also indicating their marriageable age.

2. In *Captiui*, the name of Tyndarus is significant in that it first betrays and then finally restores the identity of Tyndarus (*ll.*541-536, 983-984) but it does not have other extensive significance throughout the play. In *Menaechmi*, the name Menaechmus has pervasive significance from start to finish because, during the entire play, the series of mistakes in identity occurs because those who address one or other of the brothers do so on the basis of apparently recognising physical appearance correctly, while the brothers respond on the basis that they apparently have been addressed by the correct name. As he is always addressed as 'Menaechme', (which he knows is the right name but we know it is applied to the wrong person), Menaechmus II decides he **will** adopt the identity which is being imputed to him and exploit it, and so he unwittingly embarks on adopting his brother's identity as well as his brother's name which he took on as a young child. Menaechmus II would have dismissed without further consideration or dialogue the fact that he is frequently mistaken for another person, were it not for the fact that he is always addressed by the right name, Menaechmus. By contrast, his brother Menaechmus, also always addressed by the right name, acknowledges the name and identity attributed to him to be correct, but in vain denies the accusations of the actions undertaken by his twin but attributed to him instead. In the case of Menaechmus, he repudiates the deeds of which he is accused rather than the identity, which is attributed to him.

3. Menaechmus II refers twice to himself as an unknown man when denying acquaintance with Cylindrus, '*homini ignoto*' (*l.*293), and again '*hominem ignotum*' (*l.*374), when denying that Erotium knows him, thus helping to sustain the pattern of comic ritual. Despite the fact that he has been addressed by his apparently correct name, Menaechmus II insists that he is an unknown man. He is not unsure of his own identity, but is refuting the acquaintanceship that Cylindrus and Erotium, (and later his parasite, wife and father-in-law) claim with him, and he is also refuting the identity that they impose on him and in so doing, he contravenes the comic norm in Plautine theatre that one can always claim to know someone's identity if one knows his name and is familiar with his physical appearance.

⁶ Segal (2001b) 116-117.

4. While the name ‘Menaechmus’, and the physical appearance of the brothers are the most important criteria for judging or confirming personal identity in *Menaechmi*, other aspects of identity also come into play. In his encounter with Erotium, although she knows his name, Menaechmus II initially regards her as being demented, daydreaming or inebriated when she refers to his parasite, stolen mantle and wife. However, the fact that she knows his father, Moschus, his hometown, his fatherland, its incumbent king and the previous three kings, impresses Menaechmus to the extent that this becomes the motivating factor for him to accept the hospitality and favours extended by Erotium and he enters her house as it seems to him to be his destiny to accede to her wishes, as this woman is in possession of all these facts regarding his identity (*Il.*373-421).⁷

*Non ego te noui Menaechmum, Moscho progenerum patre,⁸
 Qui Syracusis perhibere natus esse in Sicilia,
 Ubi rex Agathocles regnator fuit et iterum Phintia,
 Tertium Liparo, qui in morte regnum Hieroni tradidit,
 Nunc Hiero est?*

(*Il.*407-412)

5. In the recognition scene, Messenio uses the extreme physical similarity of the young men and then their common name, Menaechmus, followed by their common origins of the same city, Syracuse, and common country, Sicily, and then their common parent, Moschus, (in this order) to identify the kinship and twinship between the brothers. A further corroborating attribute of identity is the fact that Menaechmus recalls being separated from his father in a crowd at the age of seven in Tarentum and being kidnapped. However, the final confirming factor of identity is the common memory of the twins’ mother being named Teuximarcha. Thus, the name of Menaechmus, which originally led to confusion of identities, also plays a role in

⁷ Webber (1989) 1-13, discusses the ancient ritual described in Homer, whereby according to ancient heroic society’s norms, the host provided food and drink before enquiring about his guest’s identity and purpose of visit, and whereby the guest after eating and drinking, was considered under an obligation to impart this information. A very specific formula existed for the host to initiate the questions, and she discusses the episode where Odysseus meets the Cyclops to illustrate the formula (*Od.*3.71-74), where the first question is about personal identity, the second about homeland and parentage. The result is a three-part question: What is your name? Who is your father? Where are you from?

⁸ Cf. Sosia in *Am.* 1.365 for a humorous contrast in declaration of Sosia’s ancestry as an attribute of identity to convince Mercury of his identity – ‘*Sosiam uocant Thebani, Davo progenerum patre.*’

resolving and restoring identities together with the physical appearance of the twins and the assistance of the other ancestral names, as well as the boyhood memories recalled by the Menaechmi brothers. This is the most comprehensive array of factors contributing to identity to be found in the three plays, *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, as more than just physical appearance and the person's name (and perhaps the parents' name) is considered in assessing and confirming identity.

6. In *Amphitruo*, where there are two sets of identical characters, Plautus aids the audience with specific visual signposts by distinguishing between the physical appearance of each identical pair as he has endowed the gods with distinctive features on their hats. Jupiter wears a golden tassel on his hat and Mercury wears a feather.⁹ In *Menaechmi*, the audience is offered no overt distinguishing features, but Plautus does distinguish between the twin from Syracuse and the twin from Epidamnus in several ways for the audience. Following stage convention, the twin arriving from over the seas would enter from the harbour, the entrance *a peregre*, while the local twin, involved in business and legal affairs, would enter *a foro*. Further, the brothers differ in their style of speech, and Menaechmus II is much bolder and more direct in his speech than his brother.¹⁰ Beare goes so far as to insist that it is impossible for the audience to mistake the one twin for the other in view of their differing styles of speech, separate entrances, and the 'stolen *palla* which one or the other carries in turn helps further to identify him.'¹¹ Moorhead gives a detailed description of the *palla* used as an identifying prop through the entrances and exits of the brothers, as does Ketterer, who also describes the symbolic significance of the *palla* as it varies throughout the play.¹² Firstly, to Menaechmus it symbolises victory over his wife, and pride in his own cleverness, (*ll.*127-134), and secondly the *palla* becomes a source for jest by Peniculus, (*ll.*160-169, 197), and then to Menaechmus II, the *palla* epitomises his success at obtaining both dinner and sex at no cost or effort to himself, (473-476). As a means of corroborating identity, it is important for the audience to know where the *palla* is at all times.

⁹ *Am.* *ll.*142-147.

¹⁰ Moorhead (1953-1954) 123.

¹¹ Beare (1950) 181.

¹² Moorhead (1953-1954) 123. Ketterer (1968b) 51-56.

The Roles of the Menaechmi Brothers

Neither brother undertakes extensive role-playing as this play focuses more on a smooth flowing, extremely well structured plot rather than on detailed characterisation. In addition, as the play concerns mistakes in identity driven by fate, rather than by deceit, there is less reason to role-play. However, there is some minor role-playing by each brother as follows:

1. Menaechmus plays the role of a triumphant *seruus callidus* when he escapes from the house, successfully stealing his wife's *palla*, and orders Erotium to furnish a rich feast (ll.127-213). He boasts of his prowess in his venture in military terms as the *serui callidi* do.

Auorti praedam ab hostibus nostrum salute socium.
(l.134)

*In eo uterque proelio potabimus;
Uter ibi melior bellator erit inuentus cantharo,
Tua est legio: adiudicato cum utro - hanc noctem sies.*
(ll.186-188)

Menaechmus also indulges in further boasting, just as *serui callidi* do after attaining success in their stratagems, and he resorts to mythological hyperbole, (generally uttered by clever slaves), where amongst other boasts, in stealing his wife's *palla*, he claims to surpass Heracles in his obtaining the girdle of Hippolyta.¹³

*Nimio ego hanc periculo
Surrupui hodie. Meo quidem animo ab Hippolyta subcingulum haud*
(ll.199-201)

¹³ Plautus' use of mythological hyperbole from the mouth of slaves denoting an heroic deed, which is said to surpass that of a god, is discussed in Zagagi (1980) 16-57. Zagagi notes that Heracles, as a stock figure in Attic comedy, was represented as 'mostly a glutton, a brute and a libertine.' I regard these first and last attributes as rather fitting for Menaechmus also, as he arranges a feast to contravene sumptuary laws (ll.210-211), and also plans a dalliance with Erotium. Furthermore, this comparison of Menaechmus' accomplishments with this particular labour of Heracles is apt in one sense, as both deeds involve the winning of an article to be given as a gift, but as stated above, the comparison of domestic pilfering with one of the labours of Hercules is ridiculous.

The fact that Menaechmus feels the need to role-play his victory in military terms is indicative of his lack of freedom under the watchful eyes of his customs-officer wife who regulates his every move. Boasting of the theft of the *palla* in fact amounts to bathos, as this is a pathetic domestic matter of pilfering from his wife, rather than being a courageous deed, and reveals Menaechmus as a man subject to the influence and authority of a dowered wife, which he resents, but lacks the will to remedy matters.

2. After initially denying the identity attributed to him by the cook and the parasite, in his encounter with Erotium, Menaechmus II perceives that it will be to his advantage to role-play and to take on the identity of the married man Menaechmus whom Erotium believes him to be and whom everyone insists that he is (ll.360-441). After enjoying the favours of Erotium, he continues to role-play in his assumed identity when Erotium's maid asks him to take the bracelet to the jewellers. By this self-interested role-playing, he not only gains entrance to Erotium's bed and dining table, but also acquires the *palla* and bracelet. When he emerges triumphantly from her house, he too adopts the military language of the victorious *seruus callidus*, just as his brother has done.

Habeo praedam: tantum incepti operis.

(l.435)

In this case, the role-playing by Menaechmus II signifies his triumph at overcoming the dangers of the 'damned' city and having been given the mantle, at no cost to himself, together with the anticipated feast and prospective favours of Erotium. This boast of Menaechmus II forms a parallel with the earlier boast of his brother, each triumphant in having gained possession of the *palla*.

3. Menaechmus II again embarks upon role-playing when he needs to escape from the Wife and her father (ll.831-871). As they regard him as being insane because he denies knowing either of them, Menaechmus II resolves indeed to play the role of a madman and pretends to be driven by the behest of Apollo to be on the point of attacking the pair violently driven by tragic madness when he falls to the ground in a feigned fit. He thus escapes from the attentions of the Wife and her father as they flee in terror.¹⁴

¹⁴ Tyndarus in *Captiui* also resorted to the device of madness to escape from a tricky situation when he

Unlike his brother, Menaechmus II has no fear of the Wife (or her father), and has no hesitation in trading insults with her. However, he wishes to terminate the encounter with the pair, and seizes on the opportunity offered by her comments on his apparent insanity to play the role of a madman with gusto. The Wife thinks that he is insane due to his spirited and insulting replies to her accusations, as she is accustomed to his brother's meeker demeanour.

4. Menaechmus II briefly adopts the role of a *seruus callidus* when he appeals to the audience directly not to reveal the direction he is taking to escape the Wife and her father.¹⁵

*Uosque omnis quaeso, si senex reuenerit,
Ne me indicetis qua platea hinc aufugerim.*

(ll.879-880)

By adopting the role of a fugitive *seruus callidus*, Menaechmus II wins the sympathy of the audience while underlining the agelast role that the Wife plays, as well as adding to the comic content of the passage.

1. The Encounters of the Citizens of Epidamnus with Menaechmus II and the Recurring Themes of Waking and Dreaming, Drunkenness, Sanity and Insanity

Menaechmus II meets the various inhabitants of Epidamnus in turn, and there is a definite common pattern to these encounters, which is as follows:

1. Menaechmus II is mistaken for his brother based on his physical appearance and is greeted by their common name, Menaechmus.
2. Menaechmus II is confused because he has apparently been addressed by the right name and acknowledges this but categorically denies knowing the identity of the person greeting him with familiarity. It is important to note that there is an unusual preponderance of the use of

unsuccessfully attempted to convince Hegio that Aristophontes was insane, (ll.592-617). Unlike Menaechmus II, Tyndarus was not successful in his ploy.

¹⁵ Slater (1985) 148 notes that improvisatory comic forms in New Comedy always insist on retaining the option of direct stage audience communication. Menaechmus II has just improvised his role as the married Menaechmus and chooses to address the audience directly, almost as a fugitive slave.

the vocative case of Menaechmus by the Epidamnians in their encounters with him. The citizens of the city address Menaechmus II as 'Menaechme' twelve times during the course of the play, thus emphasising the degree of confidence they feel that they are familiar with Sicilian Menaechmus' identity.¹⁶

3. Menaechmus II annoys the people claiming to know him well by addressing each of them as '*quisquis es*', signifying that he does not know them at all.
4. Menaechmus II and the Epidamnians whom he encounters indulge in accusing and counter-accusing each other of being mad, drunk, or daydreaming because Menaechmus II denies the identity, which they attribute to him, and he also denies knowing who they are. When Menaechmus II fails to recognise an inhabitant's identity, the immediate reaction of the Epidamnian or Menaechmus II is to accuse the other person of insanity, drunkenness or daydreaming, and very frequently, in self-defence, the same accusation is later levelled by the other party in return.

Like *Amphitruo*, *Menaechmi* has many instances of mistaken identity, and in each case, there are accusations and often counter-accusations of being drunk, insane, asleep or dreaming. The most common recurring theme in *Menaechmi* is of insanity, with occasional instances of daydreaming and drunkenness and these themes are interwoven into the twins' encounters with the inhabitants of Epidamnus.¹⁷ These accusations occur when a character's statements about his identity or his actions are disbelieved, and represent the conflict between appearance and reality that the players in *Menaechmi* experience.

The first error in identity occurs early in the play when Menaechmus II is mistaken by Cylindrus the cook for his brother, and this first encounter by Menaechmus II with an Epidamnian establishes the comic ritual described above that is repeated with minor variations

¹⁶ Cylindrus, the cook, addresses him as '*Menaechme*' four times (*ll.* 278, 286, 309, 313), Erotium and the parasite do so once each (*ll.* 382, 503), Erotium's maid four times (*ll.* 524, 541, 910, 914) and the *senex* twice (*ll.* 809, 825).

¹⁷ Slater (1985) 171 states that 'in both *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, references to sleep and dreams abound.' This statement is not quite true in that references to sleep and dreams appear a mere four times in *Menaechmi*, (*ll.* 395, twice in *l.* 503, *l.* 1047), compared to twenty-one references to insanity which are used also used as manifestations of disbelief in identity (*ll.* 198, 282, 292, 309, 312, 325, 373, 507, 510, 517, 633, 738, 818, 819, 831, 832, 833, 872-874, 877), if we exclude the doctor-Menaechmus scene where insanity is discussed more in terms of being a disease, than as an indication of unreality. References to drunkenness when expressing a sense of unreality appear three times (*ll.* 373, 563, 628). It is interesting to note that, with only one exception (*l.* 1047, where Menaechmus comments on how like a dream his day has been), these expressions of disbelief are used solely in the encounters with Menaechmus II, as his twin has fewer problems concerning his identity and more problems concerning both his behaviour and that of his twin.

in the ensuing encounters by Menaechmus II with the other citizens of this city.

When Cylindrus addresses him by his correct name, Menaechmus II is surprised but polite, and replies, '*Di te amabunt quisquis es*' (l.278), but then rather irritably, as the unknown cook insists that Menaechmus II does know him, he denounces the cook to Messenio as mad, '*Certe hic insanust homo*' (l.282). Menaechmus II then repeats two aspects regarding identity; accusing the cook of insanity, and denying that he knows the cook's identity, saying 'whoever you are.' He suggests that Cylindrus has himself purified of his insanity.¹⁸

*Nummum a me accipe;
Iube te piari de mea pecunia.
Nam equidem insanum esse te certo scio,
Qui mihi molestus homini ignoto, quisquis es.*
(ll.290-293)

The name Menaechmus is crucial to the question of identity, as without this confirming aspect of identity, Menaechmus II would not be as surprised at strangers claiming to know him, and would not even stop to consider the identity of those claiming to know him. Menaechmus refutes the claim that he and Cylindrus are acquainted, '*ego te non noui, neque nouisse adeo uolo*' (l.296). Cylindrus insists that as he is the cook and known to Menaechmus II, Menaechmus II should know his name (l.294), and Cylindrus adds that he himself does know Menaechmus II because he knows his name, '*est tibi Menaechmo nomen, tantum quod sciam*' (l.297). Menaechmus II acknowledges that Cylindrus has called him by the correct name, '*pro sano loqueris quom me apellas nomine*' (l.298), but heatedly refutes any further claims to know him that the cook makes, to the extent that he apparently curses his own house and its occupants (l.308). It is then the turn of the cook to class Menaechmus II as insane (*nam tu quidem hercle certo non sanus satis*) because he curses himself (l.309), and to advise him in turn to cleanse himself by sacrifice (ll.310-315). Messenio too joins in the fray, and as both he

¹⁸ Padel (1995) 39-49, 158 discusses the ancient Greek concept of madness as a disease getting into the body, with cures designed to get the madness out of the body, often by means of emetics such as hellebore. In the 5th century and later, madness and epilepsy were purified by ritual at the hands of professional purifiers. The doctor in *Menaechmi* refers to the alleged madness of the supposed Menaechmus as a disease that has entered the patient, using the terms, '*morbi*', (l.889) '*morbo*' (l.911) '*laruatus*', '*cerritus*' (l.890) and pronounces Menaechmus' case of insanity to be beyond the powers of a wagonload of hellebore to cure (l.913). See also pp.100 and 187 n.96 for further discussion of ancient views on madness.

and Cylindrus agree that they do not know each other there is no question of mistaken identity, but the slave also pronounces Cylindrus as mad, (*non edepol tu homo sanus es, certo scio*) (l.325), and refers to him as '*insanus*' (l.336). Messenio airily explains away the coincidence of Cylindrus' using the name of Menaechmus as an artful ploy of courtesans to use their servants to entice strangers in this strange 'city of the damned' (ll.338-343).

The second case of mistaken identity concerning Menaechmus II occurs when Erotium claims to know him and invites him in to her house. Menaechmus II is puzzled at the invitation, and this time he does not address the person greeting him with '*quisquis es*' but refers to her repeatedly in his conversation with Messenio as '*haec mulier*' (ll.369, 373, 390, 395), and informs his slave that 'this woman' is certainly either drunk or insane to show such a degree of familiarity to a perfect stranger (*certo haec mulier aut insana aut ebria est*) (ll.373-374). Menaechmus II would simply have dismissed Erotium's claim to have known him in Epidamnus for a long time as ridiculous were it not for the astonishing fact that this unknown woman addresses him by the correct name, 'Menaechmus' (l.382), '*haec quidem edepol recte appellat meo mulier nomine*' (l.383). Menaechmus denies having ordered lunch and accuses Erotium of having lost her wits, '*certo haec mulier non sanast satis*' (l.390). He also vehemently refutes her statement that he had earlier brought his wife's stolen mantle to her, and demands to know if she is sane and he accuses her of dreaming the incidents, adding insultingly that she dreams as horses do, while standing up, '*Sanas es? Certe haec mulier cantherino ritu astans somniat*' (ll.394-395).

The cook Cylindrus had the bold manner of a valued servant and did not hesitate to accuse Menaechmus II of insanity in return (ll.309, 310-315). Erotium, however, as a courtesan, is anxious to retain the favours of her wealthy sweetheart whom she finds very useful (ll.358-359) and as such is the only Epidamnian not to accuse Menaechmus II of insanity. While puzzled by the denials of Menaechmus II regarding his identity, the gift of the mantle to her, having a wife or parasite or living in Epidamnium, she nevertheless uses blandishments and coaxing to get him into a better humour and to enter her house for the feast (ll.360-368, 381-382, 386, 405). However it is the fact that she not only knows his name but also his ancestry and the history of his fatherland that makes Menaechmus II decide that he should no longer resist her appeals to come to a lovely lunch inside her house. It is as though Menaechmus II feels at this point that it would be churlish to refuse Erotium as she can recite his family and country's history (ll.414-

415). This is the turning point for Menaechmus II, as he decides to adopt the identity of the married Menaechmus, which has been attributed to him by Cylindrus and Erotium, and he consciously and deliberately assumes role distancing in order to partake of the pleasures offered by Erotium, and he suppresses any further attempts at justifying his true identity. By his role playing and deliberate assumption of the identity of the Menaechmus attributed to him, Menaechmus II puts an end to the arguments about his real identity, partakes of Erotium's feast and favours and as a bonus he also gains the *palla* and bracelet from Erotium, all with no financial outlay on his part.¹⁹ Menaechmus triumphantly exits Erotium's house of pleasure gloating over his good fortune.

Prandi, potaui, scortum accubui, apstuli
Hanc, quoui heres numquam erit post hunc diem.
 (ll.476-477)

Minore nusquam bene fui dispendio.
 (l.485)

When her maid entrusts him with Erotium's bracelet to be refurbished, just as he accepted with alacrity the *palla* for embroidering, so he immediately agrees to take charge of the bracelet, and does not put himself to the trouble of denying the identity that she imputes to him by calling him 'Menaechmus' (ll. 524-529). He again acts purely from self-interest, and initially denies stealing the bracelet earlier from his wife, but changes his stance immediately to avoid losing the opportunity of filching the bracelet for himself, and tries to capitalise on the situation by insinuating that there should also be armlets to go with the bracelet (ll.529-540).

The third inhabitant of Epidamnus to mistake Menaechmus II for his brother is the parasite Peniculus who, without preliminary greetings or wasting of time calling him by his name, scolds him severely for lunching without him.²⁰ Peniculus has based his judgement of identity

¹⁹ Segal (2001b) 125 notes that, without legal consequences, Menaechmus II enjoys what would 'normally be illegal: *furtum*, *scortum* and *prandium* (l.170). As a foreigner, Sicilian Menaechmus is able to enjoy illicit fare with delicacies (*glandionidam suillam laridum pernonidam, aut sincipitamenta porcina aut aliquid ad eum modum*), (ll.210-211) which were forbidden to citizens under sumptuary laws described by Pliny (NH 8. 78. 209-210).' Segal (121) also comments on the fact that, for Menaechmus II, his stay in Epidamnus has been the complete opposite of '*damnum*.'

²⁰ Hunter (1985) 56 admiringly describes this scene with Peniculus as forming a neat chiasmus in the play,

on the physical appearance of Menaechmus II together with the fact that his patron is carrying the *palla*, which Menaechmus had earlier triumphantly stolen from his wife to carry off to Erotium. The parasite assumes that the man emerging from Erotium's house wearing a festive garland, exulting in his good fortune and carrying the *palla* is the same man who had promised to share his feast with him. An astonished Menaechmus II replies by addressing the parasite too with '*quisquis es*', asks him what his name is, '*quid nomen tibi est*', denies having ever seen the parasite before (ll.498-502), and again refers to himself as a complete stranger, '*homini ignoto*' (l.495). Incredulously Peniculus then addresses Menaechmus II by name and tells him to wake up, '*Menaechme, uigila*' (l.503), and Menaechmus II responds by telling the parasite again that he does not know him and that the parasite is insane, '*non tibi sanum est, adolescens, sinciput, intellego*' (ll.506-507). Although it suited Menaechmus II previously to waive his claims to his personal identity where Erotium was concerned, he defends his identity resolutely against the claims of the parasite, who has nothing to offer him except reproach.

When Menaechmus II denies having a wife, stealing a mantle or giving it to Erotium, the enraged parasite in turn accuses Menaechmus II of being mad, '*Satin sanus es*', (l.510), again questions Menaechmus II on his identity as the bearer of the mantle, (l.511), and in turn is advised by Menaechmus II to get himself purified and is called '*insanissime*' (l.517). The parasite is so incensed by this refusal to acknowledge his identity, in addition to being deprived of his dinner, that he resolves to take revenge on Menaechmus II by betraying him to his wife (ll.518-521).

The Wife is the fourth inhabitant of Epidamnus to mistake the identity of Menaechmus II and when she sees him approaching, bearing the *palla*, she too bases her judgement of identity on physical appearance confirmed by the *palla* and mistakes the identity of Menaechmus II for that of his brother and thinks it is her husband contritely returning home with her *palla* to seek a truce, '*salua sum, palla refert*' (l.705). She does not greet him specifically by name but addresses her presumed husband as '*flagitium hominis*' (l.709), '*impudens*' (l.710) and '*o hominis impudentem audaciam*' (l.713). In fact, nowhere does she address her husband by name or refer to him by name, and when her father asks by whom she has been made an object of ridicule, she designates Menaechmus II by '*ab illo, quoi me mandauisti, meo uiro*' (l.782). It

due to Menaechmus having encountered first Peniculus and then Erotium who converses with her cook. This order is reversed by Menaechmus II who encounters first the cook, then Erotium and finally the parasite.

seems to confirm that the name was an extremely important component of identity for Plautus and just as the Wife is not given an individual name of her own, but comes to represent the Roman comic class of overbearing, nagging unaffectionate wives with a dowry, so too, for the Wife, her husband is not an individual but is a member of the class of husbands as providers of material goods in the marriage, and therefore she gives him no designating name. Menaechmus II rather rudely denies her accusations of stealing her mantle and of outrageous behaviour. He questions her sanity, '*sanan es*' (l.737). This time, Menaechmus II does not call himself a perfect stranger, but denies that he is who the Wife thinks he is, and also by comic hyperbole, in turn denies that he knows who the Wife is.

Quem tu hominem (med) me arbitrere nescio;

Ego te simitu noui cum Porthaone.

(ll.744-745)

Menaechmus II also denies knowing the Wife's father by the same method of comic hyperbole, '*Noui cum Calcha simul*' (l.748), and is prepared to deny knowing the Wife's grandfather too. Menaechmus II is not consciously acting out a role for the Wife's benefit, but is displaying without reservation his natural anger and annoyance at false accusations by strangers. The Wife is annoyed that her supposed husband is behaving badly and worse still, that he is brazen about his behaviour, showing no remorse for his unconventional misconduct. She has previously been able to browbeat her husband into a submissive attitude, but Menaechmus II is quite open in his defiance and forthright in his speech and in fact routs the Wife. She is unable to cope with his boldness and his denials that his behaviour is strange and so she summons reinforcements in the shape of her father to aid her against Menaechmus II.

On his arrival at the scene, unlike his daughter, the father, (the fifth Epidamnian to mistake the identify of Menaechmus II), immediately addresses him by name (l.809), and while Menaechmus II initially reverts to his comic pattern of challenging the identity of the person greeting him by addressing him as '*quisquis es*' and adding '*quidquid tibi nomen est, senex*' (l.811), he goes on in his anger at having his identity mistaken to swear that he has done the Wife no wrong, and to apparently call down a terrible curse upon himself if he has done wrong

(ll.812-817). The old man, failing to perceive that he is not speaking to his son-in-law, is horrified at the curse and calls him '*insanissime*' and questions his sanity, '*sanus es*' (ll.818-819). When Menaechmus II bursts out with total denial of acquaintanceship with either the Wife or her father, the Wife is frightened by the passion of his denial and she excitedly remarks on symptoms of madness that she perceives in Menaechmus II.

*Uiden tu illi oculos uirerer? Ut uiridis exoritur colos
Ex temporibus atque fronte, ut oculi scintillant, uiride.*
(ll.829-830)

Throughout the play thus far, we have noted how people have accused each other of being inebriated, daydreaming or, (most frequently), insane when the other person has not conformed to the expected behavioural and social requirements, and has not acknowledged the identity of the other person. However the Wife goes a lot further and attributes stage symptoms of madness to her supposed husband because he is enraged when she begins to scold him and she is not accustomed to this rage from her real husband. The glittering green eyes and greenish hue of his face that she mentions are classic stage symptoms of madness.²¹ The Wife also is afraid of her supposed husband who has hitherto been outwardly meek, but is now displaying the symptoms of an uncontrollable madman, '*ut pandiculans oscitatur*', (l.833).

Tyndarus in *Captiui* tried to convince Hegio that Aristophontes was mad in order to protect his own assumed identity (ll.547-615), but Menaechmus II pretends that he himself is mad in order to defend his own true identity and to escape from a situation where an identity is imposed on him by two strangers who are extremely insistent that they know him and all about him (ll.750, 752, 818-819, 821) and that he has wronged the Wife (ll.737, 739-741). In both plays, accusations of madness are accompanied by descriptions of alarming physical symptoms, which

²¹ Leach (1969b) 39-40 cites parallels in *Capt.* 547-635, *Cas.* 665ff., and points out that Menaechmus II echoes phrases from Greek tragedy, especially Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Heracles*, thus contributing to the humour by adding an element of literary parody. Leach further explores parallels between Menaechmus II and Hercules and between Menaechmus II and Pentheus. Hunter (1985) 128 says that this scene of madness is an interesting mixture of tragic and comic traditions and points out a similar scene in Aristophanes' *Clouds*. Padel (1995) 147 notes that in 5th century Athens, it was customary to expect to discern madness from physical signs, and that the insane displayed physical changes in eyes, hair and limbs. She also comments on the frequent occurrence of incidents of hyperbolic madness, the exaggeration of symptoms of madness, in tragedy.

add to the comic effect.²²

When he resolves to escape from the situation in which the Wife and her father have placed him, Menaechmus II embarks on conscious role playing and adopts the role of a dangerous madman, embellishing his chosen role with parodies of tragic scenes of madness, notably Euripides' *Bacchae* and *Heracles*.²³ Menaechmus II manages to drive the Wife off and intimidates the father by apparently following the urges of Bacchus and Apollo (ll.835-871), and so escapes their attentions. The father is astonished at the apparent madness of his supposed son-in-law and attributes the sudden attack of madness to disease.

*Eu hercle morbum acrem ac durum! * * **

** * * di, uostram fidem!*

Uel hic qui insanit quam ualuit paullo prius!

Ei derepente tantus morbus incidit.

(ll.872-875)

As the relieved Menaechmus II makes his escape, he begs the audience, by addressing them directly, not to disclose which way he has escaped.

Uosque omnis quaeso, si senex reuenerit,

Ni me indicetis qua platea hinc aufugerim.

(ll.879-881)

This is the only instance in the play (outside the prologue) of the audience being addressed directly, and this is significant as Plautus delights in his characters addressing the audience directly in metatheatrical style.²⁴ By having Menaechmus II speak to the audience directly, our sympathy for the fugitive is aroused as well as opposition to the Wife and her father. The Wife

²² *Capt.* ll.557-558, 594-596, *Men.* ll.828-830.

²³ Leach (1969b) 39-41 notes that Menaechmus II is convinced of his position of superior sanity to the Wife and her father, and 'the more able he is to convince the *matrona* and the *senex* of his feigned madness, the more certain he is that they are the ones truly mad', (l.843). Menaechmus II resembles 'Pentheus under the spell of Dionysus as he hears the call of Bromius to hunt in the forest' (ll.835-871) and 'like Heracles, he pretends to mount a chariot and gallop about the stage' threatening the old man with violence.

²⁴ E.g. Chrysalus in *Bacch.* (ll.1072-1073). Again, due to the lack of planned deceit in *Menaechmi*, the metatheatrical element is limited in the play.

and her father become agelasts and oppressors.

The last person to mistake the identity of Menaechmus II with that of his brother is his slave, Messenio, who on the basis of physical appearance, thinks that Menaechmus II is the same man he has rescued from being bound and dragged off to the doctor's house for treatment for his supposed insanity and who has supposedly granted him his freedom (*ll.*1050-1057). The slave is aggrieved that his master denies that he is the same man who was rescued and also denies that he granted the slave his freedom. Messenio, to explain the amazing reappearance of his supposed master, complains that his master has run ahead to meet him again, in order to deny that he granted the slave his freedom.

2. The Encounters of the Citizens of Epidamnus with Menaechmus and the Recurring Themes of Waking and Dreaming, Drunkenness, Sanity and Insanity

It must be noted that in the scenes where Menaechmus meets the citizens of Epidamnus in the reverse order in which his brother met them, there are no recurring references to insanity, drunkenness or dreaming.²⁵ This is because no one casts doubts on his identity, neither does he reject their claims to know him nor insist that he does not know them. Consequently, there are no accusations that he is insane, drunk or daydreaming, which would indicate disbelief in appearances, nor does he level these same accusations at the Epidamnians.

When Menaechmus returns from his lengthy business with his *clientes* at the forum, and resolves to bypass his own house and join Erotium at the feast that he has ordered, but instead meets the same Epidamnians as his brother has done, but in inverse order.²⁶ As with his brother earlier, they all also mistake his identity and again, a common comic pattern to the encounters may be observed, although the patterns differ for each brother, as Menaechmus II has used ritualistic phrases while his brother follows certain rituals of behaviour.

²⁵ There are no recurring references but there are two instances only where reference is made to dreaming in one case and insanity in the other. Menaechmus mentions how dream-like the experiences of his day have seemed, and in the scene where Menaechmus is set upon by the doctor's slaves, the doctor and father-in-law are convinced that they are dealing with the other brother who convinced them that he was violently insane by feigning a trance induced by Apollo.

²⁶ Segal (1974a) 97 points out that by attending to business in the forum (*industria*), instead of simply abandoning himself to the pleasures which he planned for himself (*uoluptas*), Menaechmus single-handedly precipitates the course of events that ensues.

1. Menaechmus is mistaken for his brother by all the Epidamnians, but is not aware of it, and does not deny knowing the identity of those whom he encounters.
2. Identity is not challenged and so there are no accusations of madness, insanity, drunkenness or daydreaming.²⁷ Instead, Menaechmus is accused of committing acts, which have in fact been committed by Menaechmus II.
3. Menaechmus' actions, which he had performed furtively, are revealed and he does his best to refute accusations, which are true, without actually denying his misdeeds.
4. Menaechmus denies the accusations levelled at him, which are not true, concerning his supposed behaviour, but is not believed by his accusers.
5. Menaechmus suffers the consequences of his brother's actions and behaviour without experiencing any of the benefits, which he had planned for himself.

On his return from the forum, the first people that Menaechmus meets are the Wife and parasite who are lying in wait for his return. He is verbally attacked by both as they have overheard him announcing that he has stolen the *palla* from his wife and taken it to Erotium (ll.601-601A). Peniculus believes that Menaechmus is the same person whom he saw emerging from Erotium's house earlier who flatly denied lunching without him or knowing him (ll.469-515), and he bases this belief on the physical appearance of Menaechmus. Peniculus makes the accusation that Menaechmus has dined without him and paraded himself in front of Erotium's house, drunk and wearing a garland (ll.605-629). The Wife announces that a mantle has been stolen from her house by a certain Menaechmus and accuses him of giving the mantle to Erotium (ll.645-660). Menaechmus tries to extricate himself from trouble where the accusations are true, (regarding the mantle), and to ingratiate himself with his wife, he pretends not to know what is troubling his wife or anything about the mantle that he is accused of stealing. However, he does indignantly deny that he has committed the acts undertaken by his

²⁷ It is interesting to note that while his brother, the stranger, is addressed as '*Menaechme*' twelve times during the play, the Epidamnian brother is only addressed by name twice in the play, both times by the doctor (ll.910, 914). This is due to the fact that it is not Menaechmus' identity that is in question, but the acts and behaviour of his brother, which have been attributed erroneously to him.

brother, of which the pair falsely accuses him. In strong contrast to his brother earlier, at no stage does Menaechmus deny knowing the identity of either his Wife or his parasite. The encounter of Menaechmus with his wife and parasite differs from the encounters of his brother in that more emphasis is placed on behavioural issues than identity issues. Peniculus confuses the identity of Menaechmus with that of his twin and condemns his behaviour in dining without him. The Wife has not seen either Menaechmus or his brother misbehaving and, in denouncing her husband's behaviour, is motivated largely by reports from the parasite. Menaechmus does not deny knowing the identity of the Wife or Peniculus and does feebly deny stealing the mantle but forthrightly rejects the accusation that he has dined without his parasite, and entered Erotium's house. When his wife issues the ultimatum that he is barred from his own house until he returns with the mantle, Menaechmus is unperturbed as he plans to console himself with Erotium, and eventually to retrieve the mantle from her to return both it and himself at a later stage to his wife (*Il.*661-673).²⁸

When Menaechmus calls on Erotium, she thinks that it is the same man whom she has just entertained, and appears pleased to see him and is prepared to resume the pursuit of pleasure with him. Erotium is the third inhabitant of Epidamnus to mistake the identity of Menaechmus. When he requests her to return the stolen *palla* to him, while at the same time offering to replace it with a more expensive article, it is evident that Erotium confuses Menaechmus with his brother, as she insists that she has already given him the *palla* together with the bracelet (*Il.*676-682). She does not believe him when he strongly denies taking her *palla* and bracelet (*Il.*683-686). This is the second time that Menaechmus' denials are not believed when he is actually telling the truth and not trying to deceive someone, but Erotium, like the parasite, believes that Menaechmus is trying to cheat her and make a fool of her, and, like the Wife, she too shuts him out of her house (*Il.*688-695), and so Menaechmus is punished again for the actions of his brother. Menaechmus wryly calls himself '*exclusissimus*', and in a manner reminiscent of the conventional dupe, decides to consult his friends to see what they have to say about his dilemma (*Il.*698-700). Like the Wife, Erotium is concerned over the material aspect of losing the *palla*. To both women, it represents material loss, and neither woman evinces any sorrow at the potential loss of Menaechmus' affection.²⁹

²⁸ Amphitruo, like Menaechmus, is shut out of his own house, and, (at the hands of the gods), is also made to look like a dupe. Amphitruo too decides to consult others in the hope that a solution might be found for his dilemma (*Am.* *Il.*849-852).

²⁹ It is pertinent to note that the Wife has a predominantly mercenary streak. When challenging her

The Sicilian Menaechmus II chose to encourage the assumption of the Wife and her father that he was mad because he did not recognise them, and deliberately undertook the role of a raving madman to drive the pair off and make his escape. The Epidamnian Menaechmus is next mistaken for his brother by his father-in-law and the doctor together who presume, on the grounds of physical appearance, that this is the same man who earlier apparently displayed symptoms of raving madness (ll.898, 909-909). The doctor also addresses Menaechmus by name (l.910), and, unlike his brother, Menaechmus does not deny knowing the father or the doctor, but angrily dismisses the doctor's meaningless persistent questions regarding his habits by replying wildly and equally meaninglessly with absurd exaggerations, and in so doing, unintentionally convinces the pair that he is indeed mad. The doctor says, '*Iam hercle occipit insanire primum*', (l.916), and the father asks the doctor, '*Audin tu ut deliramenta loquitur*' (l.919). Menaechmus further strengthens the pair's conviction that he is mad when, in addition to talking nonsense wildly, he rejects accusations that he had previously supposedly behaved like an insane man, and counters these accusations with even wilder accusations, thus sealing his fate as a mad man. This encounter is marked by expressions of insanity, when the father and the doctor provoke an angry reaction from Menaechmus who himself believes that he is dealing with two lunatics and answers their outrageous accusations in an even more outrageous manner in an attempt to outdo them and show them how ridiculous their accusations are. The word *insanire* and its cognate forms abound in this passage: *insanire* (ll.916, 931, 945, 953), *insania* (l.921), *insanus* (l.934), and the concept of madness is also expressed twice in *deliramenta* (l.919, 920). The doctor at one stage temporarily grants some degree of sanity to Menaechmus, '*Hoc quidem edepol hau pro insano uerbum respondit mihi*' (l.927), and Menaechmus pronounces that as a sane man dealing with lunatics, he is doing rather well, '*pro sano*' (l.945). Left in temporary peace and solitude, Menaechmus insists to himself that he is indeed sane and has never been sick in his entire life.³⁰ In itemising to himself the proofs of his sanity, he inadvertently hits on the very reason why Menaechmus II has been regularly regarded as insane by the inhabitants of Epidamnus -- unlike his brother, Menaechmus II did not

husband regarding the theft of the mantle, she does so in financial terms, threatening her husband that he will have to pay interest on the theft of the *palla*, (*Ne illam ecator faenerato apstulisti* l.604), demanding that the mantle be restored to her house, rather than that Menaechmus immediately cease relations with Erotium. Plautus exploits this mercenary streak for full comic benefit when he has the Wife heroically exclaim that she is saved from her plight -- not by the return of her errant husband but by the return of her *palla* l.705.

³⁰ Again, this is the ancient concept of linking madness with illness.

recognise the Epidamnians and, by doubting their identity, aroused their ire, thus causing them to regard him as insane.

*Quid illuc est quod med hisce homines insanire praedicant?
 Nam equidem, postquam gnatus sum, numquam aegrotavi unum diem,
 Neque ego insanio neque pugnare neque ego litis coepio.
 Saluus saluos alios uideo, **noui (ego) homines**, adloquor.
 An illi perperam insanire me aiunt, ipsi insaniunt?*
 (Il.958-961)

Menaechmus has highlighted one of the chief problems of identity in *Menaechmi*, namely that while he himself does recognise the people whom he encounters, his brother has not and this non-recognition by Menaechmus II leads the people to accuse Menaechmus II, and later his brother also, of being insane. Menaechmus, on the other hand, recognises the people whom he encounters, but denies having encountered them earlier or having done the things they accuse him of, and as his identity is regularly confused with that of his twin brother, his sanity too is questioned by the inhabitants of Epidamnus. In his soliloquy, Menaechmus reflects on the question of sanity, and he too like the doctor links insanity with illness, (Il.911, 959). Unlike Sosia in *Amphitruo*, Menaechmus does not doubt his own identity after being frequently mistaken for his double, but instead rationalises the issue aloud and concludes that he is not insane, and that the more likely solution is that the other people are themselves mad to accuse him of being mad.³¹ Despite the lack of recognition given by his father-in-law and the doctor to his social self when they pronounce him to be insane, Menaechmus has a strong sense of self-identity and this does not waver, despite lack of social recognition. Neither Menaechmus brother questions his own sanity, as both have a strong sense of self.

Menaechmus II has been unconcerned with the effect his words have on his accusers and in refuting the accusations of the Wife that he has wronged her, amongst other insults, he calls his supposed wife a rabid bitch and his supposed father-in-law a bald-headed old goat who regularly perjures himself (Il.837-839). Menaechmus II does not pay the price of this offensive behaviour but it is Menaechmus who later suffers the consequences of his brother's encounters

³¹ *Am.* Il.455-457. After Mercury has stolen his identity, Sosia forlornly asks himself, 'Ubi ego perii? Ubi immutatus sum? Ubi ego formam perdidici?'

with the parasite and the Wife and her father, because Menaechmus II has not recognised them and has been rude.

Messenio is the next person to mistake the identity of Menaechmus as he sees his 'master' being dragged off to the doctor's house by the father's slaves. Messenio immediately plunges to the rescue and addresses Menaechmus as '*ere*' (l.1003), and refers to him as '*meum erum*' as he castigates the slaves for trying to abduct his supposed master (ll. 1004-1005). In calling for help as he is being dragged off by the slaves, Menaechmus refers to himself as a citizen of Epidamnus, while Messenio, rushing to his rescue, calls for help in rescuing his master who is a visitor to the town (ll.1000-1005).

For the first time in Menaechmus' encounters with people who mistake his identity, he uses the same phrase as his Sicilian brother has always done and he addresses the unknown person speaking to him as '*quisquis es*' (ll. 1007, 1021), and in so doing, Menaechmus establishes links with his twin by similarity of behaviour as well as similarity in appearance. It is as though the brothers are drawing closer in behaviour as they draw closer towards meeting each other. The loyal Messenio, unlike the citizens of Epidamnus who have all been affronted at not being recognised by the Sicilian Menaechmus, does not take umbrage at being addressed as '*quisquis es*', and does not counter this term of address with accusations of madness, but instead plunges vigorously to the physical defence of his supposed master (ll.1089-1020). When, due to the exertions of the slave, Menaechmus is rescued and in thanking his rescuer again addresses him as '*quisquis es*' (l.1021), Messenio is again not offended nor does he accuse his supposed master of being insane, but quickly and very astutely takes advantage of his supposed master's gratitude to request his freedom (l.1023).

Menaechmus denies the identity which Messenio imputes to him as his master (ll.1025, 1027), and for the second time addresses Messenio as '*adulescens*' (ll.1021, 1025), thus placing him on practically equal terms with himself, and as an equal grants Messenio his freedom at his request, to please him (l.1029). The supposedly freedman Messenio, still mistaking Menaechmus for his master, now addresses him as '*patrone*' instead of '*ere*' (l.1032) and begs him to continue ordering him about just as before. When Messenio announces his intention of fetching the wallet containing the travelling money for his supposed master, Menaechmus displays a streak that is as calculating and mercenary as that of the Sicilian Menaechmus II when he took advantage of

Erotium to obtain her *palla* and bracelet for himself. In an identical fashion, Menaechmus decides to assume the identity of the person for whom he is mistaken for the purpose of gaining the wallet (l.1037). When the slave has sped off to fetch the wallet and baggage, Menaechmus wonders about the strangeness of his life in terms of his identity.

*Nimia mira mihi quidem hodie exorta sunt miris modis:
 Alii me negant eum esse qui sum atque excludunt foras
 Etiam hic seruom se meum esse aiebat quem ego emisi manu,
 (Uel ille qui se petere argentum modo, qui seruom se meum
 Esse aiebat, (med erum suom), quem ego modo emisi manu.)
 Is ait se mihi adlaturum cum argento marsupium;
 Id si attulerit, dicam ut a me abeat liber quo uolet,
 Ne tum, quando sanus factus sit, a me argentum petat.
 Socer et medicus me insanire aiebant. Quid sit mira sunt.
 Haec nihilo esse mihi uidentur setius quam somnia.³²*

(ll.1039-1047)

Despite the fact that he has received no support in sustaining his true identity and no social recognition, Menaechmus, unlike Sosia in *Amphitruo*, does not waver in his concept of himself. Instead he comments on the dream-like quality of this extraordinary day in his life³³ when some people have denied his identity, and others have tried to foist another identity on him, when he has been shut out both from his own house and that of his mistress, and when not only has he has been declared insane but an attempt has been made to incarcerate him to receive treatment for his insanity.³⁴

³² It is interesting to compare this soliloquy of Menaechmus with Sosia's outpourings (*Am. ll.*438, 441-448, 455-458) regarding his identity. Sosia is unsure of his personal identity and, as he has suffered the loss of his own identity at the hands of Mercury, who has impersonated him completely, he wonders who indeed he then really is – '*Quis ego sum saltem, si non sum Sosia?*' Despite having an identical double and having his identity mistaken frequently, Menaechmus does not doubt his own identity or sanity.

³³ This is the only reference to dreaming in the encounters which Menaechmus has with the citizens of Epidamnus, but this has a counterpart with the references to waking and dreaming in the scenes where Menaechmus II meets the Epidamnians.

³⁴ Segal (1969) 126 comments on this dreamlike quality mentioned by Menaechmus, and draws the conclusion that in fact the whole play is a dream, and that the benefits and pleasures experienced by Menaechmus II, the eligible bachelor, are a product of the married man Menaechmus' longings and desires. While this is an interesting Freudian argument, I cannot agree as it is not substantiated in the play nor does it take into account the final scene with both brothers (not just one) setting sail for home to start a

The Recognition Scene of the Menaechmi Twins

The final person to confuse the identity of Menaechmus II with that of his brother is his own faithful slave Messenio. Messenio has previously mistaken his master's twin brother for his master when he rescued Epidamnian Menaechmus from the slaves intent on carrying him off to the doctor (ll.1003-1022), and when he sees the two brothers together he is amazed at the similarity in their physical appearance, and remarks on it.

Speculom tuom.

Tuast imago. Tam consimilest quam potest.

(ll.1062-1063)

Having been impressed by the completely identical physical appearance of the Menaechmi brothers, Messenio seeks to confirm the identity of the newcomer by requesting his name, as a validation of identity.

Adulescens, quaesio hercle eloquere tuom mihi nomen, nisi piget.

(l.1066)

Messenio not only marvels at the identical physical appearance of the two men but when he discovers that they also share the identical name and that the other man too is called Menaechmus, '*mihi est Menaechmo nomen*' (l.1067), and that the stranger's birthplace is also Syracuse (l.1068), the slave is momentarily confused as to which twin is actually his master. The mistakes in identity made in *Menaechmi* reach a crescendo when Messenio mistakes the identity of both brothers simultaneously. Faced with two men with identical appearance, name, family name and country of origin, Messenio is bereft of his normal criteria for determining identity and arbitrarily claims first the one twin and then the other for his master. Messenio

new life together. Bertini (1983) 311 also subscribes to the view that Menaechmus II disappears while his twin resumes his real name of Sosicles and that the reality principle triumphs over the pleasure principle, with Menaechmus II disappearing, leaving his brother to face the real world of Epidamnus alone again. Again, this view of Freudian wishfulness is not supported by the text of the play, and it would be interesting to ascertain how these critics would apply these same Freudian principles of analysis to *Amphitruo*, with its two sets of *simillimi*, in particular the plight of Sosia with his loss of identity.

originally makes the Epidamnian twin his first choice of master, but when in contrast with the courtesy and gratitude that Menaechmus has shown him, his own master crossly tells him that he is mad (l.1074), on the basis of his irritable outburst, Messenio recognises his irascible master and realises that he has made a mistake and turns from his supposed master to his real master, pronouncing **his** name to be Menaechmus, signifying that **he** is the true Menaechmus and his true master, ‘*hunc ego esse aio Menaechmum*’ (l.1077).³⁵ The fact that both brothers lay claim to the same name, Menaechmus, and the same father’s name, Moschus, as well as their identical appearance and mutual country of origin at first bewilders Messenio, then enables him to solve the identity puzzle, ‘*Nam nisi me animus fallit, hi sunt gemini germani duo*’ (l.1082). It is mainly the identical name Menaechmus and the identical physical appearance of the brothers that impresses Messenio but he also takes into account the fact that they share Sicily as a homeland and Moschus as their father’s name as further validations of identity.³⁶

*Nam ego hominem hominis similiorem numquam uidi alterum
Neque aqua aquae nec lacte est lactis, crede mi, usquam similis,
Quam hic tui est, tuque huius autem; poste eandem patriam ac patrem
Memorat.*

(ll.1088-1091)

Messenio has used his intuitions regarding the brothers’ identities to assume authority over them and to embark on a reversal of roles, culminating in his assuming command of the investigation to validate the brothers’ identities, with the full co-operation of both brothers, now both humbly anxious that Messenio should succeed in his investigation of their possible relationship. Both brothers simultaneously adopt the conventional deference of the comic *adolescens* who is dependant on the improvisation and cunning of the *seruus callidus* when they address Messenio, ‘*perge operam dare, obsecro hercle*’ (l.1093), ‘*tam quasi me emeris*

³⁵ Gratwick (1973) 123 amusingly notes how Messenio struggles to identify his master correctly, and turns from the one to the other four times in one line each time that he says, ‘tu’ in ‘*tu erus es; tu seruom quaere, tu salueto; tu uale*’, (l.1076). Gratwick also points out that as he eventually correctly identifies his master, Messenio uses the traditional language of a master claiming his slave as his own property, ‘*hunc ego hominem (ex iure quirritium) meum esse aio*’, the legal formula for *uindicatio*, and that the audience would have expected the initial syllable ‘me-’ to end in ‘-um’ forming ‘me-um’ instead of Messenio’s ‘Me-naechmus.’ This adds to the humour of the role reversal between master and slave that Messenio now assumes.

³⁶ Leach (1969b) 32 notes that the adventures of the twin brothers ‘have shown that the face is not a reliable index of the self.’

argento, liber seruibo tibi (l.1101). The slave, in his newfound importance, prolongs the procedure and again goes over the details of establishing the brothers' common name, father and fatherland (ll.1107-1109). Messenio then goes on to confirm another aspect of identity, namely early childhood memories, and confirms that Menaechmus had gone with his father to Tarentum, had been kidnapped and been adopted, and that he remembers having a brother, who was a twin (ll.1107-1119).³⁷ Messenio uncovers a further corroborating name in the fact that both brothers remember that Menaechmus II originally had been called 'Sosicles', but the final decisive factor in validating the identity and relationship of the brothers is the establishing of their mother's name, 'Teuximarcha' (l.1131), and this leads the brothers to completely accept their identity and relationship as twin brothers.

This recognition scene differs vastly from the conventional scene of recognition that is typical of New Comedy. Instead of the unsuitable girlfriend now being found to be eligible after all, as in *Rudens*, we have in *Menaechmi* the recognition of **two** young men in terms of their relationship and true identity. In the other Plautine comedies featuring recognition of characters, the recognition scene is not developed as thoroughly as in *Menaechmi*. In fact, in *Casina*, the recognition scene does not take place in the play at all, but instead, the recognition is hinted at in the prologue, and is summarily dealt with in the epilogue, where the audience is informed that *Casina* will be found to be the neighbour's daughter, and that she will marry Lysidamus' son.³⁸ In *Cistellaria*, Demipho is the last to hear that his daughter has been found, and the reunion is again dealt with off stage and in a few lines (l.774-780). It is obvious that the reunion in these two plays is handled in a cursory fashion to enable Plautus to expand on other issues. In *Curculio*, Planesium is discovered to be freeborn and the sister of Therapontigonus and thus free to marry Phaedromus, and the recognition is joyful but brief and more superficial than in *Menaechmi*, and while it is harmonious, there is no suggestion of two souls now being united and complete (ll.657-673), as is manifest in *Menaechmi*. The recognition of Telestis in *Epidicus* as the sister and not the sweetheart of Stratippocles is also dealt with briefly and is joyful for one party only (ll.648-657). The reunion of Telestis with her father takes place offstage and is understood to have occurred rather than being described

³⁷ *Captiui* also features a child stolen at a young age and brought up in another country, but *Menaechmi* differs in that it does not deal with literal loss of status of Menaechmus as a free man reduced to slavery through the kidnapping. Instead, Menaechmus experiences figurative loss of freedom due to the demands of the Wife, parasite, mistress and his *clientes*.

³⁸ *Cas.* ll.79-83, 1012-1018.

(*Il.*712-722). In *Rudens*, the recognition of Palaestra by her father Daemones is joyful and profound on both sides (*Il.*1161-1183), and after taking her in to meet her mother, Daemones emerges from the house again to burst into a song of joy at finding his daughter, and also describes the joyful reunion of mother and daughter with much kissing and hugging, and intends holding a thanksgiving to the gods with a feast (*Il.*1191-1208). The reunion in *Rudens* is treated as important and described with sympathy, and Plesidippus' gladness at the news that Palaestra had found her parents and was thus free to marry him is also dealt with fairly extensively. This has the effect of building up the impression of the good forces, consisting of Daemones, Palaestra, Plesidippus and his slave, triumphing over the bad *leno*, Labrax, rather than creating the impression of soul mates being reunited.

In *Menaechmi*, the recognition is joyful (*Il.*1123, 1132-1134) in strong contrast to the sombre recognition scene of *Captivi*, and both brothers express their previous mutual longing and loneliness by the frequent use of word '*multis*.' Menaechmus has waited for this event for so long, '*multis annis*' (*l.*1132), and Menaechmus II has searched for so long with many hardships, '*multis miseriis laboribus*' (*l.*1133). Menaechmus II sums up the contentment that he feels at having found his brother after a long and weary search, '*usque adhuc quaesiui quemque ego esse inuentum gaudeo*' (*l.*1134). The bonds between the brothers are strengthened and not weakened when they discover that in addition to sharing the same name, appearance and ancestry, they have shared the same girl, and less directly, the same *palla* and bracelet and also, lunch (*Il.*1139-1142). This amicable sharing among the twins will continue as they will be sharing Messenio between them, and will return home together (*l.*1152), and it is understood that having found each other at last, that they will be sharing their lives together from now on. Certainly, Menaechmus abandons everything from his previous life without a qualm when his brother suggests returning home, and instantly resolves to sell everything up and to depart from his adopted country and lifestyle of many years.

Frater, faciam, ut tu uoles.

Auctionem hic faciam et uendam quidquid est.

(*l.*1152).

Further spiritual bonds between the brothers are demonstrated by the ease with which they enter a relationship of mutual accord despite just having met each other for the first time.

Menaechmus rejoices that his brother has had a good time at his expense, enjoying all the good things that he had planned to enjoy himself (l.1143), and ignores the fact that he himself has suffered for his brother's actions while his brother has not suffered in the least.³⁹ Menaechmus II immediately grants Messenio his freedom at his brother's request (ll.1146-1148), despite the fact that he had earlier sworn never to free Messenio, having said that he would rather enslave himself first (ll.1058-1059). When either brother makes a suggestion, '*in patriam redeamus ambo*' (l.1152), '*eamus intro frater*' (l.1154), the other agrees with alacrity. The impression is given that they will be in complete harmony in all matters.

Conclusion

Roman Comedy does not normally explore the issues surrounding the recognition and its consequences, other than mentioning the immediate result, which is usually to render marriage possible, but the reunion of the Menaechmi brothers is dealt with more extensively than in the other plays of Plautus involving recognition. In *Menaechmi*, the actual process of establishing identity is more detailed and lengthy, the denouement contains the brothers' expressions of yearning for each other for many years and joy at finding each other again, willingness to share their possessions, pleasures and slave, their intention of going off to start a new life together, the fact that Menaechmus is prepared to leave behind all the trappings of his previous life and finally the harmonious amicability with which they make all their decisions. In *Menaechmi*, the reunion described is the union of souls as well as the physical recognition of people long estranged and the reunion is dealt with in the most detail of all the extant Plautine plays.

The recognition scene in *Menaechmi* differs from the conventional New Comedy scene also in that the way is not being cleared to a marriage, but instead a marriage is dissolved. Other relationships are also dissolved and Menaechmus abandons his lifestyle in Epidamnus, the Wife, his parasite, his mistress and his *clientes* without regret.⁴⁰ This is the only extant Plautine

³⁹ Ketterer (1986b) 55 points out that it is typical of the luck of Menaechmus in this play that he is not able to enjoy any of the delights, which his brother does, and even the wallet, with its contents, promised by Messenio (ll.1035-1036) never reaches him.

⁴⁰ Leach (1969b) 33, n.22 notes that the ending of *Menaechmi* is in accordance with Fry's satiric mode in that there is no integration of the characters into society, and the problems that faced the twins are not resolved, but are merely left behind as they sail off together. She also describes the society of Epidamnus as 'unregenerate, unendurable.'

play where we are to presume a divorce as a consequence of recognition and reunion, and this underlines the strong and instant bond that has arisen between the brothers despite the fact that they have been separated for so long. We are not encouraged to feel any sympathy for the Wife, as she is depicted as the stereotype of *uxor dotata*, with the additional attributes that she allies herself with her husband's parasite to spy on her husband, and she complains, not of sharing her husband's affection with his mistress, but of losing her *palla*. Her chief complaint is of a mercenary nature, '*palla mi est domo surrupta*' (l.645), and she bars Menaechmus from entering his home unless he brings the mantle back with him (l.662). We have seen earlier that when she threatens Menaechmus with punishment for his misdeed, she does so in financial terms and tells him that he will have to pay interest on his theft, (l.604).⁴¹ It is significant that as a wife she is unable to distinguish between her husband and his twin brother. The parasite Peniculus is equally mercenary and does not hesitate to suspect the worst of his hitherto generous patron, and swiftly turns on his patron, betrays him to his wife, taunts him vengefully and urges the Wife to take a far more severe stance toward her husband (ll.607-609).

Menaechmi is generally regarded as one of the most successful Plautine farces, and the neat symmetry of the scenes of mistaken identity, first with the one twin and then the other contributes to the farcical effect. However, despite the light-hearted atmosphere prevailing throughout *Menaechmi* and the fun caused by the many cases of mistaken identity, the comedy also contains several serious underlying elements that are available to any discerning members of the audience. While *Menaechmi* is indubitably a comedy for the amusement of the audience, at the same time, it is not entirely superficial and it examines some serious issues as well.

The identity problem in *Menaechmi* is pervasive throughout the play and consists in the twins being repeatedly mistaken for each other and thus incurring the consequent punishments, in the case of Menaechmus, and reaping the consequent rewards, in the case of Menaechmus II. The problem of identity is not just an isolated aspect of *Menaechmi* but recurs constantly with first the one brother and then the other being mistaken for his twin by all the inhabitants of Epidamnus in turn. In Plautine comedy in general, physical appearance and the name are each very important criteria in establishing and confirming identity. In *Menaechmi*, name and appearance are both equally important, as the Menaechmi twins not only have identical names

⁴¹ Segal (1968) 83 notes that compulsive money-mania is a characteristic of Plautine agelasts, and cites Dordalus the *leno* in *Persa* and Misargyrides the banker in *Mostellaria* as prime examples. Menaechmus' wife is certainly an agelast and is concerned with the financial implications of relationships.

but also are also identical in appearance. The emphasis placed on physical appearance by the Epidamnians stems from a very practical view and differs considerably from the loftier general philosophical concepts of the duality of personal identity throughout time, where the body is generally regarded as inferior to the soul or to the consciousness of self, and the body is not an integral part of the concept of personal identity. For Plato the soul was complete, the source of all movement and the first-born of all things, and the soul was prior to the body and the body secondary and derivative. In fact, far from appearance being an important aspect of identity, for Plato the soul was housed in successive bodies in hierarchical lodgings as the soul was immortal and the body mortal, and the body was an impediment to man's true nature. For Aristotle, the body was closely integrated with the soul and was directed by the soul and the potentiality of the body to do anything was rendered actual by the soul. St. Augustine followed Plato's theory of the body's relationship with the soul, and Locke developed St. Augustine's view of the relationship between the soul and body to the extent that he believed that personal identity did not consist in body or soul but in sameness of consciousness or memory. Descartes rejected the inclusion of the body as a component of personal identity in his definition of a person as a particular thinking being which does not necessarily have to be united with a particular body. Butler developed this view further by stating that our bodies do not belong to our self any more than any other material surrounding us. Hume rejected the possibility of the existence of personal identity as he viewed the self as a bundle of different perceptions in a constant state of flux with only a felt bond linking them.⁴²

The more modern views of sociologists like Strauss would support the emphasis placed by the Epidamnians on the importance of the name as a means of establishing identity, as Strauss believes that to name is to know and also to place the named object or person within a category.⁴³

The general psychological view sees a sense of personal continuity and a sense of distinctness from others to be vital to the concept of personal identity. Despite several encounters challenging their identity, both Menaechmi brothers display a strong sense of self throughout the play, and neither brother is confused at any stage about his identity in the face of the doubts

⁴² See my Introduction pp.3-6

⁴³ See my Introduction p.16.

and taunts of the Epidamnians.⁴⁴ Each brother is mistaken for his twin brother by the parasite, Erotium, the Wife, her father and Messenio, and Menaechmus II is also mistaken by Cylindrus. Despite the accusations of insanity or drunkenness that are exchanged when they deny the identity or the actions that are being attributed to them, neither brother wavers in his sense of personal identity, sense of personal continuity and sense of uniqueness. Menaechmus, in the face of repeated accusations that he is insane, explicitly states he has never been saner and that it must be that everybody else is insane (*Il.*958-962). Menaechmus finally in effect decides that his social self in Epidamnus, (denoting the recognition given to him by his wife, parasite and mistress), and his material self in Epidamnus, (representing all that he possesses, including his body and his wife, clothes and friends), are less important to him than his spiritual self, (his states of consciousness and values), and thus chooses to go home with his brother rather than to continue with his unfulfilling relationships in Epidamnus.⁴⁵

Besides featuring as the main problem in *Menaechmi*, the identity question in the *Menaechmi* also serves to highlight another issue, that of freedom.⁴⁶ Although the question of freedom is not treated as directly in *Menaechmi* as in *Captiui*, nevertheless, it is present throughout the play and Plautus has used the identity problem as a vehicle to discuss some concepts of freedom. The parasite Peniculus is the first to introduce the topic of freedom right at the beginning of the play when he discusses at length the physical fetters that bind prisoners of war and the invisible ties of food and drink that bind men to loaded tables (*Il.*79-97). Peniculus the parasite is a slave bound to food and drink and is dependent for his living and his happiness on the bounty of Menaechmus. Menaechmus is bound by marriage to his wife, who behaves like a customs officer and scrutinises all his movements (*Il.*110-119), and he is also fettered by duty at the forum and his *clientes* (*Il.*571-594), and so misses out on all the pleasures that he had stored up for himself in happy anticipation of flouting all the conventions and restrictions that surrounded him. On the other hand, Menaechmus II is bound by his inner drive as a twin to

⁴⁴ Both *Menaechmi* twins have a very strong sense of self and form a vivid contrast to Sosia in *Amphitruo* under very similar conditions. Sosia is unable to maintain his sense of self when impersonated by Mercury.

⁴⁵ See my Introduction pp.7-8.

⁴⁶ Segal (2001b (116-122) sees the issues in *Menaechmi* as being the contrast between the *industria* typified by Menaechmus and his house, and the *uoluptas* exemplified in Menaechmus II and the house of Erotium, and the effects caused by Menaechmus' attempts to escape the *industria* of his trammelled life for one day. Lowe (2000) 192, while commenting on New Comedy in general, has a comment that I feel pertains to *Menaechmi* also. He notes that the plots of New Comedy focus on houses, rather than individuals, and on 'the relations of power, competition and collaboration between the two or three *oikoi* represented onstage', with emphasis on the house's supervisory ego and sexually active id.

search for his brother until he either finds him or proves his death, and in his quest he has denied himself pleasure while he has searched for many years and seems liable to search for many more (*Il.*230-246).⁴⁷ Messenio is a slave who is truly bound to his master, and in fact, Menaechmus irritably defines Messenio's servitude with no choice over any aspect of his life.

Dictum facessas, datum edis, caueas malo.

Molestus ne sis, non tuo hoc fiet modo.

(*Il.*249-250)

Messenio acknowledges his servile position (*Il.*250-253), yet it is Messenio the true slave who nobly and zealously looks after his master's purse, guards his moral welfare and although he is outnumbered, with just his fists, the slave valiantly rescues his supposed master from being carried off to a horrible fate by the doctor's slaves. Messenio was technically enslaved, while enjoying a large amount of freedom to grumble, offer advice and order the brothers around. It is also Messenio, the enslaved, who ultimately solves the identity problem of the twin brothers, and so frees them both, the one from his wife and former life and the other from his long quest, and yet when granted his own freedom, Messenio nominally accepts the freedom given him but resolves to carry on just as before with the difference that he now will be gladly serving his two masters.

Another issue, that of the comparison of the differing styles of the twins' mastery is also considered in *Menaechmi*. In accordance with her theory of the uneasy relationship between Roman masters and their slaves, McCarthy describes the play in term of 'the central dramatic tension as a contrast between two styles of mastery' of the twin brothers. Menaechmus has based his relationships with his dependants - his parasite, girlfriend and wife - on promises of material rewards, with the result that they have come to expect these rewards as their due right. His brother, by contrast, has based his relationship with his slave on the principle of the slave's absolute obligations to his master, with the consequence that Messenio throws himself wholeheartedly into the service of his master, regardless of state of his master's finances. It is

⁴⁷ Leach (1969b) 36-41 notes that both companions of the brothers, Peniculus and Messenio, comment on freedom in their songs and that Menaechmus' father-in-law, the *senex*, also touches on the issue of freedom in that he chides his daughter on Menaechmus' lack of freedom due to her incessantly watching him. Leach also states that although Menaechmus claimed an heroic freedom for himself in escaping with the *palla* from the watchful presence of his wife to the house of his mistress, it is in fact Menaechmus II who achieves the real victory over the wife by intimidating her.

Menaechmus' style of mastery that creates his problems in Epidamnus, and it is his Sicilian brother's style of mastery that solves these problems through Messenio, who throws himself into the breach to rescue his supposed master and who facilitates the recognition process. Menaechmus also represents the farcical mode, whereby there is no fundamental change to the characters' situations and conflict is acknowledged to be permanent and unchanging. His Sicilian brother, on the other hand, represents the naturalistic mode, whereby, in its extreme form, the virtues such as nobility, generosity and piety are affirmed. *Captiui* is an example of an extreme naturalistic play.⁴⁸

While some aspects of *Menaechmi* may seem farcical and far-fetched, many of the features in the relationship of the Menaechmi brothers are supported by modern studies of twins, and it appears that *Menaechmi* accurately portrays the main features regarding the relationship between twins that modern research has confirmed, especially the 'psychological thread between twins' and 'the twinning bond' discussed in the psychological aspect of the self.

The salient features of the relationship between twins as portrayed in *Menaechmi*:

1. In Paluszny and Beht-Hallahni's study of twins, it was established that twins who were closest to each other did not marry, as the separation from the other twin was too traumatic.⁴⁹

In the case of the Menaechmi twins, Menaechmus II could not rest or form serious relationships until he was reunited with his twin and so scoured the world for him. Although Menaechmus did marry, he did not settle down and found the marital state unsatisfactory and so was happy to forsake his wife. He unhesitatingly gave up all aspects of his life in Epidamnus to join his twin brother in his new life.

2. Schave and Ciriello's compilation of the studies of twins deals with six categories of twin identities, and the first category, that of unit identity, describes the Menaechmi twins best.⁵⁰

Again, to the detriment of other relationships, the regressional pull towards each other is mentioned and this is also present in the relationship of the Menaechmi twins. While the Menaechmi twins' personalities have not merged completely, there have been aspects of their

⁴⁸ McCarthy (2000) 11-14, 36-37.

⁴⁹ Paluszny, and Beht-Hallahni (1974) 'An Assessment of Monozygotic Twin Relationship by the Semantic Differential', in: *Archives of General Psychiatry* 31: 110-117, referred to in Schave and Ciriello (1983) 14-15. See my Introduction p.21-22.

⁵⁰ See my Introduction pp.21-22.

personalities that have been very similar and at least partial merging has occurred. The Menaechmi twins do display similarity in character and outlook, as we have seen in the fact that both brothers resorted to subterfuge to gain their own ends; Epidamnian Menaechmus with his wife and Sicilian Menaechmus with Erotium. Further similarity in character is displayed by the brothers when Menaechmus and his twin brother are equally prepared to deceive Messenio and Erotium respectively by assuming the identity of another person in order to gain something, namely the wallet and its contents in the one case and Erotium's favours and a free feast in the other. When Menaechmus adopts the conventional language of his Sicilian twin by addressing Messenio as '*quisquis es*' (l.1065), he is assuming some of his brother's characteristic behaviour. As the twins are drawn nearer to physically encountering each other in this imbroglio, so they draw nearer to each other in character. In some other respects the Menaechmi twins could be regarded as assuming each other's characters, if we consider the fact that the dutiful brother, Sicilian Menaechmus, having denied himself the pursuit of pleasure while toiling at his self-appointed task of finding his twin brother, (or at least proving his death), with alacrity throws off his duties and plunges into the treats offered to him by Erotium, while the hedonistic Epidamnian brother, having arranged a store of pleasures for himself with his mistress and parasite, uncharacteristically places duty before pleasure, and is consequently delayed by duty and misses all his intended pleasures and is furthermore punished for his brother's misdeeds.⁵¹ The twin brothers have taken on aspects of each other's characters in terms of choices between pleasure and duty and this exchange has further contributed to their being mistaken for each other.

3. Another aspect of unit identity mentioned in the Schave and Ciriello study is the willingness shown by twins to share, expressed by one pair's statement, 'There isn't anything we can't share.'⁵² The Menaechmi twins have unwittingly shared Erotium and the feast but they thereafter willingly share the bracelet, the *palla*, Messenio and their future life together.

4. While there has been criticism of the credibility of *Menaechmi*'s plot featuring the many scenes of mistaken identity with the truth being discovered only at the end, Scheinfeld's studies of identical twins who have been united after being reared apart have shown similar amazing

⁵¹ Segal (1968) 50, 71, 79 notes the conflict in *Menaechmi* between *industria* and *uoluptas*, and regards Menaechmus as having brought his troubles upon himself by having gone to work on a holiday, and by attending to business, he has forfeited pleasure.

⁵² See my Introduction p.21.

cases of twins coming together by accident later in life and finding each other only after repeatedly being mistaken for each other.⁵³ In these cases, the empathetic bond between the twins has been such that it is stronger than other relationships, and has led to the decision to leave their previous home to live henceforth together or in the same city. Scheinfeld quotes two extreme examples of twins brought up in very divergent circumstances and different backgrounds, in the case of Tony, (Italian), and Rodger, (Jewish), or with very different education levels, in the case ofalle and Peter. In each case, the twins, after finding each other as adults, decided to move to be together.⁵⁴ These incidents make the plot of *Menaechmi* seem less improbable and less fantastic, and *Menaechmi* features the two main aspects of identical twins who have been reared apart and have found each other at last as adults. Firstly, the instant rapport that is found between identical twins when they find each other, despite being brought up in different backgrounds, as is displayed by the amicability and the instant harmony of the Menaechmi brothers in deciding to grant Messenio his freedom, and in deciding to return home together. Secondly, the feeling of fulfilment and of two halves coming together is another common characteristic feature of reunited identical twins and in *Menaechmi*, the expressions of rejoicing, relief and the feeling of how long the period preceding the reunion seemed, as expressed by both Menaechmi brothers, serves to link the Menaechmi twins with the modern textbook cases.

Cases of mistaken identity involving doubles occur also in other plays of Plautus, *Bacchides* and *Amphitruo*, but these cases are not parallel to *Menaechmi*. In *Bacchides*, twins occur who also share the same name, and identity confusion also arises from chance and error. There is confusion between the Bacchis twin sisters when Mnesilochus mistakenly believes that his friend Pistoclerus has cheated him out of his girlfriend, Bacchis, but the confusion in identity occurs only once in the play and arises from hearsay, unlike *Menaechmi*, where the twin

⁵³ The fact that Menaechmus II is in his sixth weary year of his quest to find his brother also helps to explain why he fails to stumble on their relationship as an explanation for all the mistakes made in identity. Messenio has presumed that the quest is hopeless and that Menaechmus is no longer alive, and Menaechmus II himself on his arrival at Epidamnus seems only marginally more hopeful of success and is doggedly continuing the task as a process of eliminating possibilities rather than really anticipating the prospect of being successful (ll.230-248). Duckworth (1952) 149 also notes that 'the basic implausibility that the newcomer and his slave Messenio should not realise they have reached the goal of their search is somewhat lessened by Messenio's warning that Epidamnus is filled with tricksters and seductive women on the watch for strangers. As Menaechmus II grows more confused and angry, he is less apt to think of the true solution.' Menaechmus II has been warned by his slave that Epidamnus is so named because almost every visitor to the city becomes damned (ll.263-264).

⁵⁴ See my Introduction - Unit identity p.21 and Scheinfeld's case studies of identical twins p.23.

brothers are regularly and rhythmically mistaken for each other throughout the play and where identity is not an incidental issue but an integral element of the play as a whole. *Amphitruo*, like *Menaechmi*, also features identical twins but with a difference, in that there are two sets of twins, and these sets are not fraternal twins but are artificially created by deceit for the purposes of further deceit and the pairs of twins consist of a god and a human in each set. The mistakes in identity made in *Amphitruo* are as extensive as in *Menaechmi*, but arise from the deception of the gods and do not occur by chance. There is symmetry in both plays in the encounters with people mistaking the identity of the twins, but the symmetry is even more extensive in *Menaechmi* as the meetings are more frequent, and as Arnott points out, each brother in *Menaechmi* is confronted in turn by all the major characters in the play, with the exception of the doctor who confronts only Menaechmus.⁵⁵

In conclusion, Plautus has provided us with a superbly crafted, smooth flowing farce where identity plays a crucial role as the twin brothers are mistaken for each other in a systematic hilarious sequence of scenes. However, as we have seen unduly, underneath the hilarity, there lies the issue of freedom, which Plautus has not emphasised, but has brought to our attention indirectly and we are free to note the underlying theme if we so wish. Further, we have seen that the identity problem of identical twins having been separated at a young age and later being joyfully re-united, after being frequently mistaken for each other is credible as history has shown comparable examples. Despite having flourished towards the end of approximately the third century, Plautus has shown a sound understanding of the bond of twinship.

⁵⁵ Arnott (1975) 38. The doctor in *Menaechmi* has possibly been introduced to extend the humour of the scenes of supposed madness, and is referred to by Segal (1969) 90 as a 'sort of psychiatrist *gloriosus*.' I conjecture that since he has probably been included in a type of cameo appearance to extend the comic aspect, the doctor meets only the one brother.

CHAPTER FOUR: AMPHITRUO

The prologue to the *Amphitruo* is unusual in its length, (one hundred and fifty-two lines and the longest Plautine prologue), and in the way that the prologue forms an integral part of the play.¹ In the extant plays with long prologues,² Plautus utilises the length of the prologue to introduce the audience to more complicated plots involving deception and to equip the spectators with the superior knowledge to appreciate the ironies of the dramatic situations and to grasp the errors of the characters, as the audience is now better informed than the characters of the play.³

In the *Amphitruo* prologue, Mercury does far more than outline for the audience the action that will follow. Generally in the Plautine plays with prologues, the narrator is anonymous, or a protactic character and consequently does not appear in the main body of the play at all, while Mercury is one of the main protagonists in *Amphitruo*.⁴ The extra length of the *Amphitruo* prologue not only prepares the audience for the complicated deceptions that follow, but also allows Mercury to display his showmanship. It gives him an opportunity to demonstrate his talent to entertain and his power over mortals and it makes him the sole focus of attention, which he clearly enjoys. Its unusual length is also utilised to set the tone of the whole play to follow, with Mercury playing with the expectations of the spectators in a teasing fashion and slipping from role to role with ease from the very start of the play.⁵

Mercury's Identity in the Prologue

In the prologue, Mercury cajoles, compliments and enlightens the audience as narrator, but as Mercury's self varies, so does his attitude towards the audience change depending on which aspect of self is uppermost and which role he is playing. The versatility that Mercury displays in the prologue foreshadows his skill in the rest of the play, where he assumes a multitude of

¹ Some Plautine plays dispense with the prologue entirely (*Mostellaria*, *Curculio*, *Mercator*, *Epidicus*, *Miles Gloriosus*, *Stichus*, *Persa*), while others have very brief prologues ranging between two and thirty-nine lines, where the audience is supplied with scant information, and the format of the prologue is stylised (*Pseudolus* (2 ll.), *Cistellaria* (11 ll.), *Asinaria* (15 ll.), *Truculentus* (20 ll.), *Trinummus* (22 ll.), *Aulularia* (39 ll.). The prologues of *Bacchides* and *Vidularia* are too fragmentary to bear scrutiny.

² *Menaechmi* (75 ll.), *Rudens* (80 ll.), *Captiui* (88 ll.), *Casina* (88 ll.), *Poenulus* (128 ll.), *Amphitruo* (150 ll.). It can be noted that these other plays with long prologues are nevertheless only approximately half the length of the *Amphitruo* prologue.

³ Duckworth (1952) 213.

⁴ With three exceptions, namely the Lar in *Aulularia*, Arcturus in *Rudens*, Luxuria and Inopia in *Trinummus*.

⁵ 'He shocks, flatters and accuses them in turn.' Schoeman (1998) 41.

roles with ease. Some of these roles are undertaken simultaneously, and in the body of the play, Mercury continues to sustain effortlessly his multiple roles with the same resourcefulness and adaptability that he displays in the prologue.

1. Mercury as *prologus*

Mercury's primary role in the prologue is that of *prologus*. In this capacity, his function is that of *captatio beneuolentiae*, as well as introducing the action to follow. In his initial role of *prologus*, Mercury enthusiastically goes about his task of winning the audience over with jokes and making comic threats unless the audience settles down (*ll.*13-15). He gradually enlightens them in an amusing and tantalising manner, by promising to reveal the argument of the forthcoming play (*l.*50) and then digressing instead, and only resuming the argument nearly fifty lines later, when he goes into great detail regarding the plot, and sets the *milieu* for the next fifty-one lines. Mercury does a great deal more than merely introduce the action of the play or settle the audience. He gives the audience extensive background to the play, and we are told about Jupiter's mortal-like fear of trouble, presumably for poor performance as an actor if the audience is displeased (*ll.*26-29), and of his habit of not reminding his subjects of his favours towards them, but regarding them as grateful and deserving (*ll.*46-49), and Mercury invites us to an intimacy with Jupiter as he confidentially reminds us of his father's tendency to have a roving eye and to be an impetuous lover (*ll.*104-106), with the audience being given a clear picture of Jupiter, in his guise as Amphytruo, at dalliance with Alcmena, and enjoying himself to such an extent that the night has been extended to prolong his *uoluptas* (*ll.*107-115, 131-132). In the prologue, Mercury not only lures the audience into the world of the play but it also prepares them for the mood of mischief that prevails throughout the drama. Although he finally ends with the prologue's traditional request for the audience's attention and goodwill, Mercury is no ordinary *prologus* and he intends the audience to realise his importance. Mercury does his duty as narrator, but goes further and effectively draws the audience with him into the world of the play and exerts himself to win the sympathy and admiration of the audience for himself and his father in a superb demonstration of *captatio beneuolentiae*. The prologues of Plautus have as their primary goal, not information, but induction, and the aim of his prologues is to draw the audience into the world of the play.⁶ This is particularly true of the *Amphytruo* prologue, which uses its superior length to flatter the audience by taking them into Mercury's confidence, as he reveals the human frailties and impetuous nature of his father,

⁶ Slater (1985) 149. 'The function of most Plautine prologues is far more inductive than expository. They ask the audience's favour, but can also attempt to change audience expectations.' Slater (1990) 105.

Jupiter, (*ll.*26-29, 104-109, 112-114, 131-139). The audience is further drawn into the play by being admitted to the secret of the double impersonations, with Jupiter the skin-changer posing as the mortal Amphitruo and Mercury posing as the slave Sosia (*ll.*115, 12-124). The audience is put in a position of superior knowledge over the characters in the play by being given the secret identifying signs that the two gods have adopted, the feather in Mercury's hat and the gold tassel in Jupiter's hat, (*ll.* 142-145).⁷ As the finale in the prologue to his process of drawing the audience into the play with him, Mercury explains how he is going to waylay Sosia and prevent him from reaching the house and disturbing Jupiter.⁸ Mercury invites the audience to watch him closely as he assumes the character of an actor (*ll.*148-152), and so takes the audience with him into the play as it commences.⁹

2. Mercury as deity

Mercury combines his function as narrator with his the role as deity. In a mildly threatening manner, Mercury reminds the audience that he is Mercury, the god of commercial undertakings and also the messenger god, able to wield power over the people either to their advantage or disadvantage as he so chooses, and that the spectators will do well to sit still during the performance and judge the play fairly if they hope for Mercury's favour in success in business and good news (*ll.*1-15). He also points out that he is an omniscient deity, able to read the minds of the spectators (*ll.*56-58). Due to his divine powers of omniscience, he can sense without having to be told that a tragedy would be unpopular with an audience expecting to be amused. The fact that he has the ability to alter the play from a tragedy to a popular tragicomedy to suit their preferences, (which he has divined), without even altering a line is

⁷ Mercury's feather symbolises his traditional winged helmet as messenger god, and the gold of Jupiter's tassel represents his status as chief deity. Duckworth (1952) 90 sees Jupiter as wearing the *petasus*, the traditional stage travelling hat of the soldier, and presumes therefore that Sosia as his accompanying slave would be wearing a form of the *petasus* too. Moore (1998) 257 comments on the further distinction that Plautus makes between the divine and human pairs. The gods Jupiter and Mercury are invariably unaccompanied by music when alone on the stage, while the mortals are always accompanied by music while they are on stage.

⁸ In *Menaechmi*, the induction of the audience into the world of the play is less thorough despite the fact that the *Menaechmi* twins are also identical in appearance. We are offered no secret distinguishing signs and must deduce the difference in identity by their difference in speech and by their entrances, as the travelling twin enters from the harbour and the resident twin from the forum. As the *Menaechmi* prologue is shorter, there is also less explanation of the ensuing action.

⁹ Slater (1992) 133 notes that the Plautine prologue, when Plautus chose to have one, carried 'a heavy responsibility. It negotiated the conditions of its own reception with its audience. It created the frame through which the audience would view the rest of the performance. It drew the invisible but magic circle surrounding itself and its audience, which, (if successful) closed them off from the competing sights and sounds of the festival, and drew the audience into the world of the play.'

further proof of his power as a god (*Il.*57-60).¹⁰ Further, this playfulness with altering the genres unsettles the expectations of the audience. Although Mercury offers the audience a compromise between tragedy and comedy by settling for tragicomedy, nevertheless, tragedy has been hinted at, and this notion does not disappear entirely during the course of the play.

Mercury takes care in the prologue to emphasise his status as deity by frequently alluding to it (*Il.*39-44, 57, 61). He opens his prologue with a 'sixteen line contract between players and audience.'¹¹ If the spectators are attentive, as god of commercial undertakings, he will cause their business affairs to prosper, and as messenger god he will ensure that they receive only good news (*Il.*1-16). As god of eloquence, Mercury excels himself in the prologue and playfully adopts legal language when offering the audience his contract and by playing with *ius* and its derivatives with nine repetitions in five lines (*Il.*33-37), he flatters the spectators with the assumption that they will be just and give the play a fair hearing.¹²

3. Mercury as son of Jupiter

Mercury also frequently reminds the audience that he is the son of Jupiter, and it is clear that he is somewhat ambivalent about the relationship.¹³ He sometimes proudly presents his father as the supreme god whom men should revere and fear, and basks in his father's reflected glory, and at times, he expresses a very lively respect toward his father, tinged with his own fear (*Il.*20-31, 39-40, 44-49). Conversely, he also shows a certain amount of disrespect towards the supreme god when describing his father's dalliance with Alcmena and his implied propensity for love affairs such as this (*Il.* 104-106) and Mercury describes his father as an adulterer (*moecho*, *l.*135).

Mercury emphasises the fact that he is the son of almighty Jupiter himself, and as his father's emissary, despite Jupiter's absolute power to command, he has come in humility to request a favour from the audience (*Il.*16-25). Mercury flatters the audience by his request and goes on to identify himself with his audience by emphasising his very human qualities in that he too,

¹⁰ In raising the issue of the play's genre, Mercury has opened an interesting discussion, which challenged scholars, regarding the classification of *Amphitruo*'s genre. According to Mercury, the play should be a tragedy because the gods have taken to the boards, but in view of the slave also taking part in the play, the play should now be called a tragicomedy as a compromise, since a mere comedy would be disrespectful to the gods.

¹¹ Slater (1990) 105.

¹² *iustam, iustae, iustis, iustus, iniusta, iustis, iusta, iniustis, ius*, Schoeman (1998) 36

¹³ *Il.*20, 30-31, 40, 44, 46, 81, 104, 112, 120, 126, 131, 133, 135, 139, 144.

despite being a god, is under the *potestas* of his father, and may suffer his displeasure (*ll.*26-31). Teasing the audience all the while by the delay in revealing the nature of his request, Mercury reverts to a lofty reminder of his divine status as son of the mighty beneficent Jupiter and the benefits that his father has conferred upon all men, expressing admiration for his father's deeds (*ll.*39-49). Mercury also contrives to make the audience feel that they should be honoured that Jupiter himself has descended to the theatre as an actor, using the analogy that his father came to the rescue of actors only the previous year (*ll.*86-92), probably as a *deus ex machina* in a play staged in Rome the previous year.¹⁴ By exploiting his relationship with the mighty Jupiter to the maximum, Mercury aims to add to his own stature in the eyes of the audience.

4. Mercury as actor

Amphitruo is a highly metatheatrical play and throughout the prologue, Mercury emphasises the fact that we are watching a play, and employs numerous theatrical terms in the prologue. The play is referred to as a play (*fabula ll.*15, 93) with a plot (*argumentum l.*95), actors (*histrio ll.*69, 82, 87, 91), in costume (*ornatus l.*119, *ornamentum ll.*85, 116), (*seruili schema l.*117) and masks (*imago ll.*121, 124, 141), on the stage (*proscenium l.*91), with an audience watching (*spectator ll.*66, 151).¹⁵ There is also discussion of theatrical genres (*tragoedia ll.*41, 51, 52, 54, *comoedia ll.*55, 60, 88, 95, *tragicomoedia ll.*59, 63, and *histrionia ll.*90, 152). The audience is led into a position whereby the spectators' functions are clearly defined as watching the play, giving it due and fair attention and enjoying and appreciating the artistic skill of the playwright and actors in executing the play (*ll.*13-15, 64-66, 94-95, 151-152). Mercury's performance in the prologue is a perfect example of Abel's definition of 'metatheatre as theatre about theatre, theatrically self-conscious theatre' and also fits Slater's definition of metatheatre as 'theatre which is aware of its own nature as a medium and capable of exploiting its own conventions and devices for comic and occasionally pathetic effect.'¹⁶

The fact that the audience is in fact watching a play is reinforced by the dramatic way in which Mercury builds up suspense when he delays revealing the nature of Jupiter's request (*ll.*33-64), and discusses transforming the play from a tragedy to a tragicomedy (*ll.*50-63). The

¹⁴ Christenson (2001) 157 notes that the earlier play may have been Euripides' *Alkmene*.

¹⁵ *Ornamenta* may be a technical term for 'costume' but when accompanied by metatheatrical comments on the play as a play, *ornamenta* designates dress that is also used for disguise. (Muecke (1986) 219).

¹⁶ Abel (1963) 77, Slater (1985) 14, (1990) 103. See also Schoeman (1998 & 1999) for a detailed exposition of Mercury and metatheatre in the prologue.

atmosphere of theatricality is further heightened by Mercury's eventually revealing that Jupiter's request is for a fair hearing, and the seeking out and punishment of any *clagues* discovered, with the punishment stipulated as having the actor's costume ripped to pieces and the actor himself receive a beating for hiring the *clagues* (ll.65-85). This all serves as a build up to the surprising statement that Mercury makes, informing the audience that both he and his father Jupiter will be taking the stage as lowly actors.¹⁷ Thus Mercury announces that he will be taking on another role in the prologue, that of actor (ll.89-94). He comments on his slave's costume (ll.116-119), and describes his role as the slave Sosia for the purposes of protecting his father during his tryst with Alcmena (ll.124-130). Mercury has been defining his role as an actor who is going to play a character, and does so again later as he exhorts the audience to watch him, when, together with his father, he will be assuming the role of an actor playing a slave (ll.116-117, 151-152). The inference is that because they are gods, they will excel at anything they turn their hands to, and in this case, it will be acting and well worth watching.¹⁸ However, Mercury's contribution to the role goes further than just an actor's performing of a part. He announces that, like Jupiter who is a *uorsipellis* and has turned himself into the image of Amphitruo,¹⁹ he himself is not only going to play the part of Amphitruo's slave,²⁰ but in order to protect Jupiter's identity as the Theban general, is going to assume the **total** identity of Sosia to deceive everyone (ll.120-130).

Nam meus pater intus nunc est eccum Iuppiter;

In Amphitruonis uortit sese imaginem

Omnisque eum esse censent serui qui uident:

Ita uorsipellem se facit quando lubet.

*Ego serui **sumpsi** Sosiae mi **imaginem**,*

Qui cum Amphitruone abiuit hinc in exercitum

(ll.120-125)

¹⁷ Lowe (2000) 171 notes that 'after *Eumenides* and *Prometheus*, gods do not share the stage level with mortal characters unless in mortal disguise, nor do they appear in the episodes between prologue and finale.'

¹⁸ The dramatic illusion is not shattered, because Mercury has deliberately not created a dramatic illusion. Instead, he has emphasised the metatheatricality of *Amphitruo* and that we are watching a play. We see an actor playing Mercury, who announces that he will be taking the role of an actor playing a slave, Sosia, and who invites us to enjoy his performance as an accomplished god.

¹⁹ Slater (1985) 104 renders *uorsipellis* as skin-changer, with the connotation, derived from Apuleius, of possessing the magical power to transform into anything. Chrysalis, the clever slave in *Bacchides* who is constantly transforming himself, also regards himself as a '*uorsipellis*' l.657.

²⁰ Mercury also announces that, in his guise as Mercury, he will be serving as a slave to his father Jupiter (l.126), as well as performing the role of Amphitruo's slave disguised as Sosia.

There is a parallel to this in the *Captiui* prologue where an impending impersonation is described, but the difference between the *Captiui* impersonations and those in *Amphitruo* is that Tyndarus and Philocrates will merely bear each other's masks, while Mercury and Jupiter as actors will assume the physical forms of Sosia and Amphitruo and steal their whole identities.²¹

Itaque inter se commutant uestem et nomina;

Illic uocatur Philocrates, hic Tyndarus:

Huius illic, hic illius hodie fert imaginem.

(*Capt. ll.37-39*)

The impersonations in both *Amphitruo* and *Captiui* are deliberate and planned, in contrast to the strong element of pure chance in *Menaechmi*. In *Captiui*, Tyndarus and Philocrates will attempt to assume each other's status, appropriate manner and language, by exchanging of masks, clothes and names, and so to a limited extent they will exchange identities (*ll.35-41*), but only for a short while, but there is no question of actually assuming each other's physical features and characters, other than wearing each other's masks. Initially the pair is successful

²¹ Lewis & Short (1966) 888 side-step the issue of *imago* in its dramaturgical usage and do not quote Plautus in this context in their interpretation and translation of *Imago* despite his frequent use of the word to indicate that a character is going to assume the mask, appearance or identity of another character. L&S translate *imago* variously as: 'an imitation, copy of a thing, an image, likeness (i.e. a picture, statue, mask), representation, likeness (of a person), statue, bust, picture, ancestral image (of a distinguished Roman), an image or likeness (of a thing formed in the mind), conception, thought, imagination, idea, also a mere form, image, semblance, appearance, shadow (of the original).' We have to decide in context between image, mask, appearance, and consider whether Plautus himself meant different things by his use of the word *imago*, and whether for example in *Captiui* he meant 'mask', and in *Amphitruo* he meant 'identity.' We also have to decide in fact whether masks were generally worn in Plautine plays. While lack of precise evidence means that we do not definitely know the one way or the other, Beare (1949) 30-31 opts for the view that masks were worn in the plays of Plautus, and Wiles in his *Masks of Menander* (1991) 129-149 asserts that the Romans adopted the Dionysiac mask together with the incorporation of the Dionysiac festival into their plays. He sees Tyndarus as not wearing a slave mask as a freeborn Greek reared together with Philocrates as both would thus have identical noble natures. The masks of the two young men however are not identical, as is shown by the description of Philocrates given by Aristophontes to Hegio (*ll.696 ff.*). Wiles reads *imago* as mask, the same as *persona*. Duckworth (1952) concurs with Beare, interprets *imago* as mask and says that, to Plautus, *persona* represented by contrast a sense of personage. Fantham (1973) 197-200 believes that this reference in *Amphitruo*, together with *Mil. Glor. ll.150-151*, and *Capt. l.39* present very powerful proof that masks were worn in the time of Plautus. Schoeman (1999) 48 suggests that *imaginem* in *Am. l.12* is best translated as indicating an abstract likeness, but that *imaginem* in *Am. ll.458-459* refers to a death mask. In conclusion, it seems likely that masks were worn in Plautus' plays, but there is no conclusive proof yet. I am following Wiles in believing *imago* to represent a mask or *persona*, and that here Mercury intends *imago* to represent *persona*, particularly if we consider his use of *imago* in *ll.120-121*, where Jupiter turns himself into the *persona* of Amphitruo, and where 'mask' would be insufficient.

in the exchange of status but it is the difference in their physical appearance that betrays them and reveals the deception.²² In contrast, in *Amphitruo*, because Jupiter and Mercury assume the identical physical appearance of those whom they are impersonating, the deception endures successfully to the end of the play, and causes numerous mistakes in identity and misunderstandings. The difference in the terminology used in the two plays to describe the impersonations makes it clear that those in *Captiui* are on a far more superficial level than those of *Amphitruo*. In *Amphitruo*, Mercury describes a more intensive form of assuming the identity of another person, as he is going to assume the identical physical appearance of the slave Sosia so that distinguishing signs will be necessary to tell them apart. We see in *Amphitruo* not just the outline of a brief type of charade (as when, under Pseudolus' direction, Simia passes himself off as the soldier's slave Harpax), but the intention to undertake the complete ongoing usurpation of a whole *persona* to the extent that the original possessor of that *persona* begins to question his own identity and sanity (as both Amphitruo and Sosia later do).²³ What Mercury is outlining in the prologue in his role as actor extends far beyond the normal realm of the role of an actor.

5. Mercury as playwright

In many respects, in the main body of the play, Mercury resembles Plautus' *serui callidi* in that he assumes the role of playwright, and constructs schemes and performs these as a play-within-a-play, creating a comic poet on-stage, while playing with the expectations of the audience. In the prologue of *Amphitruo*, Mercury plays with audience expectations by promising the spectators rewards if they pay attention, flattering them as fair judges, asking favours from them, reminding them of the gratitude they owe Jupiter, promising them a performance well worth watching, and providing them with tantalising glimpses of what will follow. In particular, Mercury toys with the expectations of the audience in commiserating with them regarding the forthcoming tragedy and then as artful theatre director, he playfully transforms the play to a comedy. 'Mercury's anticipation of the audience's reaction is an exquisite piece of gaming which gives the impression of improvisation, even as he guides audience response' (ll.52-53).²⁴

²² *Capt.* ll.647-648.

²³ *Pseud.* ll.960-1016, *Am.* ll.402-408, 455-459, 1081-1082.

²⁴ Schoeman (1998) 37.

In conclusion, while other prologues contain impersonal and anonymous narrators, Mercury thoroughly stamps his personality on the prologue. As *prologus*, he flatters the spectators and partially informs them about the forthcoming action. As powerful god, capable of great mischief, he threatens the audience and transforms the genre of the play. As son of the supreme god, he experiences both pride and a certain amount of cautious fear, but derives satisfaction from the increased status the words, 'my father', brings. As actor, Mercury is able to display his talent for showmanship to full advantage, and derives pleasure from employing theatricality and he is also determined to involve the audience in the plot, first by divulging background details, then by inviting the audience, by addressing them directly, to watch and admire his skill as an actor. Plautus uses the prologue to introduce the play, set the tone of sheer mischief and pleasure seeking, and to launch Mercury's roles that he sustains and develops in the play.

Mercury's Identity in the Main Body of the Play

In the prologue we have seen Mercury feature chiefly as *prologus*, but have noted that he has also adumbrated various further roles in the play to come and these roles merit investigation.

1. Mercury as Sosia

In *Amphitruo*, as discussed, there is no attempt at dramatic illusion, but on the contrary, we have been deliberately reminded that we are watching actors acting in a play and we have been invited to admire their prowess (ll.116-152). Mercury frequently reminds the audience that he is playing the part of the *alter ego* of Sosia and he constantly comments on the action and tells us how he is going to play a part and what he is going to do as Mercury playing Sosia. Mercury describes how he will not only assume the appearance of Sosia, but also will adopt further aspects of his identity in assuming his personality and habits.

*Quando imago est huius in me, certum est hominem eludere.
Et enim uero quoniam formam cepi huius in me et statum,
Decet et facta moresque huius habere me similes item.
Itaque me malum esse oportet, callidum, astutum admodum
Atque hunc, telo suo sibi, malitia a foribus pellere.*

(ll.265-269)

When Mercury, posing as Sosia, encounters the real Sosia, the god adopts an aggressive, intimidating approach in order to drive Sosia away from the house. Mercury begins to terrorise Sosia, who overhears the god's growled threats, even before he actually speaks to the slave directly. Mercury-as-Sosia, softens the slave up by aggressively preparing for the encounter (*Il.*307-308), loudly soliloquising how ready his fists are for fighting (*Il.*302-304), how he is spoiling for a fight (*Il.*308-309), and how powerful his fists are (*Il.*312-318, 323). Once he starts speaking to Sosia, Mercury-as-Sosia adopts a sneering, bullying approach that is compounded by calling Sosia, 'uerbero', 'sceleste', 'audaciai columen', and 'carnifex' (*Il.*344-367). Mercury completes his subjugation of Sosia by physically attacking him with fisticuffs (*Il.*370-379). Although he has physically cowed Sosia into submission, Sosia has still mentally retained his sense of identity, and knows that he himself is Sosia despite Mercury's laying claim to be he.

*Certe edepol tu me alienabis numquam quin noster siem;
Nec praesente nobis alius quisquamst seruos Sosia.*
(*Il.* 399-400)

Mercury has resolved to adopt Sosia's traits of character (*Il.*265-269), in addition to assuming his physical appearance, and proceeds to do so by being extremely cunning and crafty, further aided by his gift of divine omniscience. The god even steals the words out of Sosia's mouth before he speaks, when he calls Sosia 'uerna', and in the next line, Sosia describes himself as 'uerna' (*Il.*179, 180). The god is able to steal Sosia's memories also and when Mercury proceeds to recount accurately what the slave was supposedly doing in his tent on the night of the battle, Sosia is now defeated physically and mentally, and acknowledges that he has lost his identity to Mercury. By a combination of physical bullying and aggressive psychological warfare, Mercury-as-Sosia contrives to convince Sosia that his look-alike is in fact another Sosia, and that somehow he has lost his identity to his double (*l.*456).

When Mercury is playing the part of Sosia in the presence of people other than the real Sosia, he changes his bullying, aggressive attitude and modifies his approach in accordance with the nature of his protagonists. In fact Mercury's manner as Sosia varies according to whether he is dealing with the real Amphitruo, (his supposed master), or with the counterfeit Amphitruo, (his real father), and as such he plays two entirely different Sosias to the two different Amphitruos.

Jupiter-as-Amphitruo distinguishes between the divine and mortal Sosias when he summons Mercury to pose as Sosia and drive Amphitruo from his own door.

Nunc tu, diuine Sosia, huc fac adsies,

(l.976)

Mercury-as-Sosia follows his father's instructions to repel his supposed master from the house by whatever means he chooses, and having instructed the audience to watch him make sport of Amphitruo (ll.1005-1006), proceeds to behave in a very provocative, saucy manner. The supposed Sosia, garlanded and in an inebriated fashion, leers down from the roof top, calls his supposed master, '*fatue*' and '*solide*', berates him soundly for beating at the door, and denies all knowledge of his identity (ll.1021-1030). Despite the gaps in the text, it is clear that Mercury-as-Sosia leaves no stone unturned to provoke and infuriate Amphitruo, and that he takes a mischievous delight in obeying his father's orders to prevent his supposed master Amphitruo from entering his house to disturb Jupiter, and succeeds in this mission. In repelling Amphitruo under the guise of being an inebriated Sosia, Mercury undertakes yet another slave role, that of the drunken slave abusing his master.²⁵

Mercury-as-Sosia in the presence of Jupiter-as-Amphitruo (ll.506) is again saucy, but stays within bounds. He makes a few asides to the audience that comment on Jupiter's affair, and the risk that he runs of Juno's learning about it (ll.506-507, 510-511), and also announces his intention of acting as parasite to aid his father's affair (l.515). Mercury's role as parasite will be discussed separately further on, but this role is simultaneously played with that of Sosia, slave to the counterfeit Amphitruo, and consists in inserting pert remarks into the conversation that Jupiter-as-Amphitruo is having with Alcmena.²⁶ Ostensibly the purpose is to aid the affair, but in fact, Mercury slips in a double entendre and a sly remark (ll.516-517, 537), which infuriate Jupiter as he is quick to understand the underlying meaning. The annoyed Jupiter is roused to address Mercury-as-Sosia in terms of slave abuse such as would have been appropriate for the real Sosia, '*carnifex*', '*uerbero*', '*furcifer*' (ll.518, 519, 539). In fact, Mercury himself had addressed Sosia as '*carnifex*' and '*uerbero*' earlier, so the god has completely assumed the character of a slave.

²⁵ Slater (1990) 116.

²⁶ See my discussion on Mercury as parasite p.137 ff.

2. Mercury as *seruus callidus*

Mercury has stated in the prologue that he will be playing the part of a slave, (*ll.*124, 150-153) and will see to it that Jupiter's amorous pursuits are not disturbed by hindering Sosia from entering the house, thus hinting that he will be adopting the improvisational and directive aspects of the clever slave.²⁷ Mercury also displays the conventional clever slave's relish for the task that lies ahead of him.

When Mercury describes how he will play the part of the slave Sosia, he includes some of the qualities of the conventional *seruus callidus*, and resolves to behave like a cheeky slave who is *malus*, *callidus*, *astutus* and who conducts himself with *malitia* (*ll.*268-269). There is no *seruus callidus per se* in *Amphitruo*, although Sosia aspires to be a clever slave (*ll.*153-154, 197-198, 287-288, 342). This is evident when, in order to bolster his confidence, he remarks on his courage in being abroad at night, but he does not succeed in his bid to feel more courageous, nor does he attain his aspirations (*ll.*153-154). He does not manage to outmanoeuvre Mercury nor does he ever actually get the opportunity to relate his carefully rehearsed story of the battle to anyone. Mercury, on the other hand, at all times displays the ability of the *seruus callidus* to improvise effortlessly and he is frequently very pert, just as if he were a true clever slave.

Mercury immediately displays this talent for improvisation and witty banter on seeing Sosia for the first time as he returns home from the harbour fresh from the campaign against the Teleboians. Mercury launches into a series of asides (*l.*175ff.), as clever slaves often do.²⁸ This informs and amuses the audience, but at the same time invites them to empathise with Mercury regarding his reduced status, and to admire his gifts of versatility and ingenuity.²⁹ Mercury notes that it ill becomes Sosia, a born slave, to complain about his servile status, when he himself has suffered a far greater loss of status, as he has descended from being a god to becoming his father's slave (*ll.*175-178). Mercury again comments on the difference in their status when he takes umbrage at the slave Sosia's wondering whether the god Sol was asleep or drunk because of the late dawning. He highlights Sosia's lowly status by accusing him of judging others by himself and his own propensity to overindulge in drink and he abuses him with the derisive epithets, '*furcifer*' and '*uerbero*.' These terms are typical terms of abuse used

²⁷ Dupont (1976) 134 notes that Jupiter and Mercury reflect the characteristic couple of comedy, the master and his slave.

²⁸ *ll.*175, 185, 248, 263, 277, 284, 289, 293, 294, 300.

²⁹ Slater (1985) 81 notes that the aside is often a 'direct challenge to the audience and an appeal for sympathy.'

by a master towards his slave, and they further demonstrate that though Mercury may be adopting the role of a slave with slave garb and slave craftiness, he has retained his sense of self as a god with considerable status.

Ain uero, uerbero? Deos esse tui similis putas?
Ego pol te istis tuis pro dictis et male factis, furcifer.
Accipiam; modo sis ueni huc: inuenies infortunium.
 (Il.284-286)

Mercury's asides provide a running commentary on Sosia's performance and character and so direct the reactions from the spectators (Il.248-249, 284-285, 293). He encourages the audience to regard Sosia as a braggart, blustering, cowardly slave. At the same time, in a self-conscious manner, Mercury provides a commentary on his own performance, on how successfully he is intimidating Sosia and how he will manage his role, with flair (Il.294, 300-301).

Et enim uero quoniam formam cepi huius in med et statum,
Decet et facta moresque huius habere me similes item.
Itaque me malum esse oportet, callidum, astutum admodum
Atque hunc, telo suo sibi, malitia a foribus pellere.
 (Il.266-269)

Nullus hoc metuculosus aequae.
 (I.293)

Timet homo: deludam ego illum.
 (I.295)

Clare aduersum fabulabor, auscultet hic quae loquar;
Igitur magi' modum maiorem in sese concipiet metum.
 (Il.300-301)

The chief characteristic of a *seruus callidus* is the ability to improvise, and Mercury does this with ease. When he encounters Sosia on his way to Amphitruo's house (I.148), he at once formulates a ploy to waylay him. He browbeats him mentally and engages in fisticuffs with the

slave, intimidating him physically and mentally so that Sosia abandons his task of reporting to Alcmena and instead goes back to the harbour to report on the strange circumstances to his master. When he spies Amphitruo on his way home (*l.*1005), Mercury immediately devises a strategy to prevent Amphitruo from entering the house and disturbing his father with Alcmena. While there are gaps in the text (*ll.*1035-1035) for this scene, we have Mercury's intentions clearly stated that he will pose as a very drunk and disorderly Sosia who will make a fool of his supposed master, soak him and repel him from his own door.

*Capiam coronam mi in caput, adsimulabo me esse ebrium;
Atque illuc susum escendero: inde optume aspellam uirum
De supero, quom huc accesserit; faciam ut sit madidus sobrius.
Deinde illi actutum sufferet suo' seruos poenas Sosia:
Eum fecisse ille hodie arguet quae ego fecero hic. Quid mea?*
(*ll.*999-1003)

Sosia-Mercury apparently does not recognise his own master, grossly insults Amphitruo, and then refuses him entry to his own house on the grounds that Amphitruo is inside already and busy (*ll.*1005-1034).

3. Mercury as *seruus currens*

Mercury, as the slave Sosia, also adopts the role of *seruus currens*. When Jupiter summons the divine Sosia, Mercury is quick to respond, but cannot resist poking fun at the stage *seruus currens* and adopting some of his characteristic features. He pretends to elbow out of his way people who would impede his progress on his important mission, and compares himself to the conventional messenger bringing the important news of the arrival of the ship or the approach of the angry old man, with the difference that he is a god and is doing the bidding of Jupiter and consequently has even more right to buffet people out of the way (*ll.*984-991). Mock-heroic iambic octonarii are used to good effect to heighten the humour.³⁰ Plautus has employed one of his favourite devices here - that of framing his musically accompanied *seruus currens* scene with unaccompanied passages before and after this scene, in order to denote to the audience that this is a distinct comic unit, set apart to be enjoyed for its humour.³¹

³⁰ Knapp (1919) 49.

³¹ Moore (1998) 252.

4. Mercury as the dutiful son

Throughout the play, Mercury plays the part of the dutiful son aiding his father, Jupiter. In the prologue, while appearing as *prologus*, he informs us that he is appearing at his father's behest to plead with the audience for a favour (l.18). Mercury contrasts his dutiful acceptance of his new servile status, which has been brought about by his father, with Sosia's grumbling about his lot as a lowly slave (ll.175-178). Plautus pokes fun at the Roman concept of *uirtus* in a son by having Mercury extend his concept of filial duty to include assisting his father in his adulterous affair with Alcmena, and in having Mercury consider this to be part of the normal duty of a son. Mercury encourages Night to continue aiding his father in his affair, and as part of the comic inversion of values, uses the Roman words *gere morem*, which conventionally signify *pietas*.

Perge, Nox, ut occepisti, gere patri morem meo.
(l.277)

This inversion is continued when Mercury describes his father as having acted '*recte et sapienter*' (l.289), and again refers to himself as *morigerum* (ll.1004).³² Later Mercury refers once more to his task of aiding his father's affair by driving Sosia away from the door (ll.463-465, 470-473). Jupiter too comments on Mercury's task of aiding him.

*Mercurium iussi me continuo consequi,
Si quid uellem imperare.*
(ll.880-881)

While he is responding to his father's summons, pretending to be a comic *seruus currens*, Mercury discusses his filial duty with the audience.

*Pater vocat me, eum sequor, eius dicto, imperio sum audiens;
Ut filium bonum patri esse oportet, itidem ego sum patri.*
(ll.991-992)

Meo me aequomst morigerum patri, eius studio seruire addecet.

³² Plautus also has Menaechmus overturn convention by using the term *morigera*, which should conventionally apply to his wife, when referring to his mistress (*Men.* l.202).

Mercury sounds reminiscent of a comic slave moralising on the duties of a good slave, as Messenio does in *Menaechmi*.

*Spectamen bono seruo id est, qui rem erilem
Procurat, uidet, conlocat cogitatque,
Ut apsepte ero rem eri diligenter
Tutetur quam si ipse adsit aut rectius.*

(*Men.* ll.966-969)

Indeed Mercury is playing the part of a comic slave and by overdoing it, he adds to the comic effect.

By emphasising his filial sense of duty, and describing himself as *morigerus*, Mercury presents a strong contrast to the conventional Plautine sons, whom Segal describes as ‘always overjoyed when their fathers are away’, and as having ‘no compunction whatsoever about robbing and/or ruining their sires.’ While Plautus usually overturns convention by poking fun at filial *pietas* and patriarchal *potestas* in Segal’s spirit of Saturnalia, here he is subverting the overturned convention again but with a difference by presenting a dutiful son, Mercury, whose idea of duty consists in aiding and abetting his father’s amour by whatever means are necessary.³³

5. Mercury as parasite

Mercury combines his roles as dutiful son and Sosia the slave, and by his own admission, further undertakes the role of parasite in order to aid the love affair of his father and master, Jupiter.

Accedam atque hanc appellabo et subparasitabor patri.

(l.515)

³³ Segal (1968) 9-39.

Subparasitor means to flatter or fawn a little like a parasite according to Lewis and Short, and Mercury certainly does indulge in overt flattery towards Alcmena (*Il.* 516-517, 538).³⁴ Guilbert puts forward a convincing argument that when Mercury announces that he is going to play parasite, he is basing his notions on the original concept of the parasite in early comedy.³⁵ This early parasite's function was to aid his patron unquestioningly wherever possible, and especially in his love affairs. The original parasite does not display a gargantuan appetite and does not even mention hunger, but enters enthusiastically and uncritically into all his patron's enterprises in return for food as payment. He is even quite prepared to commit violent acts if necessary. Guilbert maintains that it is this early parasite and not the later conventional greedy parasite that Mercury has decided to emulate. In fact, Guilbert sees a parallel between the early parasites of Timocles, Aristophon and Antiphanes, (in that they do not hesitate to use violence to aid their patrons' love affairs), and Mercury, (who easily subdues Sosia by physical and mental bullying, and who shows no compunction in reducing Amphitruo to a shivering wreck outside his own house in order to further his father-master's love affair).³⁶ Forehand comments that 'Guilbert shows that the role played by Mercury is in the tradition of the early comic parasite and that it is really in this role that the god serves his father. Hence, Mercury's change of condition is even more ironic: he takes the form of a slave and plays the role of a slave as well as a parasite.'³⁷

Much later in the play, Mercury makes a further reference to his duties, again using the word *subparasitor*.

Ut filium bonum patri esse oportet, itidem ego sum patri.

Amanti subparasitor, hortor, adsto, admoneo, gaudeo.

Si quid patri uoluptas, uoluptas ea mihi multo maxumast.

Amat: sapit; recte facit, animo quando obsequitur suo,

³⁴ Lewis & Short (1966) 1813.

³⁵ Guilbert (1963) 52-58 also propounds that the parasite appeared further as a major character definitely in two lost Plautine plays, probably in two more, and perhaps even in a fifth, as well as appearing as a minor character in others.

³⁶ Guilbert (1963) 56. Timocles *Drakontion* fr. 8, vv.4-8. Aristophon fr.3. Antiphanes *Progonoi* fr.195 vv.4-6. Timocles' parasite pronounces that he supports his patron's views completely, especially his views on his amours, and backs him up as enthusiastically as possible. Aristophon's parasite announces that when attacking a house, he is a battering ram and when aiding his patron to seduce beautiful women, he is perfume itself. Antiphanes' parasite states that in order to aid his patron, to hit, he is a thunderbolt; to dazzle, he is a flash of lightning; to abduct, he is the wind; to suffocate, he is a noose; to burst open the gates, he is an earthquake.

³⁷ Forehand (1971) 642.

Quod omnis homines facere oportet, dum id modo fiat bono.

(ll.992-996)

Here Mercury defines his duties as parasite together with those of a good son. While it is difficult to separate the two completely, the duties of a parasite, according to Mercury, appear to encompass aiding a love affair and encouraging, supporting, advising and rejoicing with the lover as well as deeming him to behave correctly in whatever he does, thus confirming our view of the early parasite. Guilbert however goes further and maintains that Mercury even adopts the appearance of Sosia as part of his duties as parasite. In support of this, Guilbert cites Curculio as an analogy of a parasite donning disguise as the freedman of the military bully and adopting the language and tone of an inferior when negotiating for the purchase of his patron's sweetheart.³⁸ However, I see no need to suppose that Mercury adopts slave garb mainly as part of his parasite role because when he discusses his slave costume in the prologue, no mention is made of his intention to play the parasite. Mercury informs us that his intention is to play the part of the slave (*praeseruire* l.126) in order to assist his father's amour. It is more plausible to follow the text and take Mercury's motivation for donning disguise as his conception of a son's duty towards his father.

Nunc ne hunc ornatu uos meum admiremini,

Quod ego huc processi sic cum seruili schema:

Ut praeseruire amanti meo possem patri.

(ll.116-126)

Despite vowing to play parasite, Mercury's ego, and possibly his ambition as an actor, will not prevent his overstepping the mark of what is pleasing to Jupiter and Alcmena. Thus, he cannot resist slipping in a barbed reference to the fact that Jupiter is the impostor husband.

Numquam edepol quemquam mortalem credo ego uxorem suam

Sic ecflectim amare, proinde ut hic te ecflectim deperit.

(ll.516-517)

³⁸ Guilbert (1963) 59. *Curc* ll.371-461.

This remark passes by Alcmena unnoticed but annoys Jupiter. Mercury arouses the wrath of Jupiter by his use of *mortalem* in relation to Jupiter and *suam uxorem* in relation to Alcmena, as both gods are fully aware that Jupiter is certainly not mortal and that Alcmena is not his wife. By reiterating *ecflectim*, Mercury emphasises that Jupiter is indeed crazy to pursue this affair with Alcmena in case the notoriously jealous Juno finds him out. Despite Jupiter's annoyance, Mercury cannot resist another attempt at inserting himself into the conversation (l.557), which meets with Jupiter's further wrath. Jupiter in fact becomes so irate that it seems that he is over-reacting to lend credence to the slave-master impersonation as he threatens to give Mercury a beating (l.520). In all, Mercury's success as a parasite is very limited, as he himself notes.

Nequiter paene expediuit prima parasitatio.

(l.521)

It is difficult to distinguish between Mercury the dutiful son, Mercury the *seruus callidus* and Mercury the parasite as the three are intermingled, but Guilbert is taking liberties with the text when he portrays Mercury appearing chiefly as a parasite in the play. In my view, this is a minor aspect of Mercury's total *persona*. Mercury adopts the role of parasite to add a further dimension to his theatrical *persona*, but pokes fun at it by parodying the role of parasite, (just as he, tongue-in-cheek, takes on the role of *seruus currens*). The role of parasite is one role amongst other roles that he plays, but he brings to it his own peculiar brand of mischief and the pertness usually found in clever slaves.

6. Mercury as *prologus*

Mercury does not confine his adoption of the role of *prologus* to introducing the action in the prologue, but extends this role into what is sometimes called the 'second prologue' when, more or less halfway through the play, he gives a synopsis of the action thus far, informs the audience of what will happen next and gives an outline of the rest of the play (ll.463-498). Mercury uses this second prologue almost as an intermission period to update the audience on the next half of the play, and to continue where he left off in the first prologue. He gives us the success rate of his support for his father's affair, and as the omniscient deity predicts how Sosia will make the excuse that he has been driven off by the other slave Sosia, and how angry Amphitruo will be and how he intends to muddle both Amphitruo and Sosia, together with the whole household. We are told that Chaos will reign until Jupiter has had his fill of Alcmena, when order will be restored, Alcmena will have twins, one from each 'Amphitruo', and the truth will finally be

revealed. As more trouble was taken in the first prologue to establish the background and mood of the play than to give specific details of the events to follow, this intermediate prologue does serve to provide the audience with more information and it again highlights the theatrical nature of the play, where we are reminded again that we are watching a play as Mercury outlines the roles each will play.³⁹ Again, we are expected to assess and admire the craft of the actors and playwright. Mercury congratulates himself on his success in promoting his father's affair and seems to expect us to join in the admiration (*Il.463-466*). This 'second prologue' is strikingly metatheatrical as it is very self-conscious re theatre as theatre, and abounds in direct addresses to the audience, comments on role-playing, outlining of the future course of the play's action and references to theatrical conventions (*crepit foris I.496*).

Mercury addresses the audience directly again and gives them further information to keep them abreast of the action, when he pretends to be a *seruus currens* responding to his father's summons to drive Amphitruo away from the house (*Il.997-1008*). Again the audience is reminded that they are watching a play as Mercury addresses the audience as '*spectatores*' who will enjoy the performance that he and Jupiter will put on to fool Amphitruo before their eyes.

*Nunc Amphitruonem uolt deludi meu' pater: faxo probe
Iam hic deludetur, spectatores, uobis inspectantibus.
(Il.998-999)*

Mercury again urges the audience to pay attention to the clever way in which Amphitruo will be fooled (*Il.1005-1006*). He also further informs the audience what will happen next -- he will pretend to be a drunken Sosia, who, from the rooftop, will repel Amphitruo and prevent him from entering his own house, with the consequence that Sosia will be blamed and punished. By Mercury's drawing attention to the play as a play and how well he will be performing in it, the focus of the audience is drawn, not so much to what will happen, but to how it will happen and in particular to how skilfully Mercury will handle all his roles.

In *Amphitruo*, Mercury sustains a large repertoire of roles, as we have seen him variously (and sometimes simultaneously) project himself as different selves. Despite this assuming of

³⁹ 'It is Mercury in particular who, by consciously adopting the role of the *seruus callidus* and repeatedly commenting on his own actions and on those of the other characters, makes the play a metaplay.' Schoeman (1998) 33

multiple roles as the dutiful son, the slave Sosia in various aspects, *seruus callidus*, *seruus currens* and the parasite, one of the selves of Mercury has remained constant and that is Mercury the deity. Throughout the play, we have seen Mercury the god turning actor and playing various roles very successfully, and bringing a love of mischief that is borne from his capacity as god of trickery, to all these roles. Whatever other role he has assumed, Mercury has nevertheless remained very conscious of the fact that he is a god. It is borne out by his reminding people that he is powerful, (*Il.*1-17, 39-43), is a god, (*Il.*53, 57, 61), has omniscience (*Il.*56-58), and is a very good actor because of his special powers (*Il.*151-152). Despite assuming the appearance and behaviour of a slave, he is at pains to maintain the difference in status between the slave Sosia and the god Mercury playing the slave Sosia, as we saw in his encounter with Sosia. Mercury was critical of the fact that Sosia, a mere slave was complaining about his lot (*Il.*176-179), and was outraged at Sosia's presumption in criticising the god Sol (*Il.*284-286), and he is careful to denigrate Sosia's courage and veracity to emphasise the gap between them (*Il.*185, 248-249, 293, 295).

Mercury has a relatively modern and sophisticated concept of identity compared to the other Plautine characters examined so far. We have seen that New Comedy did not concern itself with the division of the body and the soul or whether the soul was non-corporeal or not, but was content to base identity largely on physical appearance, followed by the name, and ancestry. In *Menaechmi*, identity was judged purely on physical appearance, together with the name and the person's antecedents. In *Captivi*, the name and social status were used as criteria for determining identity. In *Amphitruo*, Mercury considers the identity of Sosia to consist, not only in his physical appearance, but also in his clothes and hat, his personality, his name and even his memories (*Il.*410-445). Consequently, he takes on the identical physical appearance of the slave as well as his personality traits of *malitia*, *astutia*, etc. (Even if these traits have been exaggerated for comic effect as the hallmarks of the slave, nevertheless Mercury does go on to display these very traits as the *seruus callidus*).

Mercury's character comes closest to the social view of the self, due to his self being largely socially constructed, malleable and liable to change with changes in his social milieu. Goffman's concept of the self in social interaction in terms of drama with masks and role-playing, with the participants as actors responding to various cues and promptings, performing in scenes and settings before an audience who are present at every social interaction both front-stage and back-stage, although intended for social interaction rather than role-playing on stage

would describe Mercury's self-conscious performances well. Mercury's role-playing is self-conscious and deliberate and although he is playing before a real audience, he is also playing before the mirror with how he thinks he should be responding to each situation. He obviously wants to play each role well both for his own satisfaction and to win the admiration of the audience whose good opinion he values. Mercury's case is a bit different in that his role has not been assigned to him by society and he is not confined by limitations of birth, but because of his divine powers, he can transform himself completely at will, and because of his ability to read the minds of the other characters and to see both into the past and future, he is able to project himself into his various roles to gain the maximum advantage from each. The biggest difference between Goffman's and Berger's role-playing and Mercury's role-playing is the role-distancing, which Mercury displays.⁴⁰ For Goffman and Berger, commitment to the role was vital, that the actor should **be** what he is playing. For Mercury however, it is far more important that he played the role well, to his own satisfaction and for the audiences' pleasure, (as well as to avoid a beating for poor acting skills). It is also important to him that his role-playing has the desired effect of driving Sosia and Amphitruo off, and of completely confusing them, in order to fulfil his duty to his father, Jupiter. Tyndarus in *Captiui* adopted the role of Philocrates without inner commitment for the purpose of saving his master. Mercury adopts his various roles tongue-in-cheek to serve his father in assisting him with his love affair, and also for the enjoyment that he derives from displaying his showmanship and from stirring up mischief. Mercury relishes the opportunity of displaying his talents and versatility by means of the many roles that he undertakes, but he retains his sense of being a god of elevated status throughout his many roles.

The Identity of Jupiter

Jupiter, like his son, Mercury, plays a variety of roles in *Amphitruo*. Just as the prologue foreshadows the roles of Mercury, so it also introduces the various roles that Jupiter will undertake in the play.

We also see how Jupiter's character fluctuates between that of an awesome majestic god and that of a very human character, also subject to mortal fears and overcome by desire for Alcmena. Although in theory he is the most important person in the play, Jupiter plays a less

⁴⁰ See my Introduction pp.13-15.

extensive role in *Amphitruo* than Mercury, even taking the *lacunae* into account. In his guise as Amphitruo, Jupiter nevertheless also plays a variety of roles, including the lover, the ruler of the gods, as well as the actor.

1. Jupiter the powerful god

In the prologue, we are introduced to Jupiter as the father of Mercury, and as the ruler of the gods, who nevertheless pleads with the audience for favour (*Il.*17-86). Mercury informs us that Jupiter is an omnipotent but benevolent deity, who has the might to enforce his wishes but chooses to beg the audience for their goodwill.

*Pater huc misit ad uos oratum meus;
 Tam etsi pro imperio uobis quod dictum foret,
 Scibat facturos, quippe qui intellexerat
 Uereri uos se et metuere, ita ut aequom est Iouem;
 Uerum profecto hoc petere me precario
 A uobis iussit leniter dictis bonis.*

(*Il.*20-25)

This same powerful god is nevertheless also subject to some human weaknesses and we are presented with an image of an omnipotent god, who, due to his human parentage, has some human qualities with some human weaknesses, and is afraid of trouble, whether that trouble will arise from his poor performance as an actor or whether his vengeful wife Juno will discovers his infidelity.

*Etenim ille, quoniam huc issu uenio, Iuppiter
 Non minus quam uostrum quicquid formidat malum:
 Humana matre natus, humano patre,
 Mirari non est aequom, sibi si praetimet;
 Atque ego quoque etiam, qui Iovis sum filius,
 Contagione mei patris metuo malum.*

(*Il.*26-31)

Jupiter is also presented to us in the prologue as the powerful *deus ex machina*, who previously came to the aid of actors during a performance (*Il.*91-92). This announcement not only paves

the way for Jupiter to re-appear on the boards as an actor but also serves as an introduction for further appearances by Jupiter as a divine intervener. In what amounts to a virtual third prologue (ll.861-881), Jupiter reappears as a parody of a *deus ex machina* to bring a suitable ending to the comedy out of regard for the audience, and also to come to the aid of poor Alcmena, who although innocent, is being unjustly accused by her husband.⁴¹

*Nunc huc honoris uostri uenio gratia,
Ne hanc incohatam transigam comoediam;
Simul Alcumenae, quam uir insontem probri
Amphitruo accusat, ueni ut auxilium feram;*
(ll.867-870)

Despite the human foibles of Jupiter previously noted, in his role as supreme god, Jupiter is often majestic and is the ruler of the skies and hurler of thunderbolts. In the finale, Jupiter intervenes again miraculously, when Amphitruo, maddened by jealousy and rage, is about to attack his entire household, but instead is knocked to the ground by a tremendous peal of Jupiter's thunder. In tragic fashion, akin to the herald's speech by Sosia, Bromia renders an account of Jupiter having kept his word to intervene divinely to make Alcmena's travail easier to facilitate peace between husband and wife. Bromia informs us of the miraculously easy birth of the twins and the words and voice of the great god reassuring them that he had come in peace, revealing that he had secretly shared Alcmena's bed and that he was the father of one of the twins (ll.1046-1124).

When Amphitruo decides to consult Tiresias the prophet about these events, Jupiter causes another clap of thunder and this time appears in person as *deus ex machina* again (ll.1131-1143), to resolve the situation where 'Alcmena's resentment and Amphitruo's jealousy are bound to be deadlocked' and to reassure Amphitruo of his wife's innocence and of his own future of glory.⁴² True to the ending which was forecast in the prologues, Jupiter the *deus ex machina*, with a magical stroke, restored order in place of the disorder, doubt and confusion that he caused.

⁴¹ This 'third prologue' is a further testament to the metatheatrical nature of *Amphitruo*. This time it is Jupiter who presents this prologue, (ll.861-881), two-thirds of the way through the play. Unlike Mercury in his second prologue, Jupiter does not recap the action, but appears to reassure the audience that he will eventually be putting matters right.

⁴² Romano (1974) 879.

Jupiter the god is also in supreme command of the elements of nature. Having initially prolonged Night in order to dally with Alcmena longer (*ll.112-114*), later, when taking his first leave from her, Jupiter pronounces his orders to Night to depart to give way to Day, displaying his power over nature. His whole tone is far loftier here when addressing Night, than when he is undertaking other roles, and is in keeping with his elevated status as king of the gods and ruler of all nature.

*Nunc te, nox, quae me mansisti, mitto ut concedas die,
 Ut mortalis inlucescat luce clara et candida.
 Atque quanto, nox, fuisti longior hac proxuma,
 Tanto breuior dies ut fiat faciam, ut aequae disparet
 Et dies e nocte accedat. Ibo et Mercurium supsequar.*

(*ll.546-550*)

Jupiter the god also momentarily surfaces when, as the lover, he is bidding Alcmena farewell, and he presents her with the golden bowl, which Amphitruo had won for bravery on the field. It is part of his divine whimsicality to give to Alcmena the very object that will deny Amphitruo the proof of his alibi, and which will cause great mischief and dissension between the married pair. Jupiter the omniscient god is also able to steal Amphitruo's experiences, as he poses as the brave general who was distinguished for his *uirtus* in slaying King Pterelas, thus detracting from Amphitruo's moment of potential glory in recounting his exploits to his wife himself (*ll.522-536*).

As Jupiter the god, after he has despatched the real Sosia on an errand to Blepharo, Jupiter has power over the divine Sosia and instructs him to drive Amphitruo away from the house by whatever means he chooses. Because of their divine powers, Mercury is able to be aware of these orders although he is not present while the orders are issued.

*Nunc tu, diuine Sosia, huc fac adsies,
 (Audis quae dico, tam etsi praesens non ades),
 Face iam Amphitruonem aduenientem ab aedibus
 Ut abigas; quouis pacto fac commentu' sis.
 Uolo deludi illunc, dum cum hac usuraria*

*Uxore nunc mi morigero. Haec curate sint
 Fac sis, proinde adeo ut uelle med intellegis,
 Atque ut ministres mi, mihi quom sacrificem.*
 (ll .976-983)

Jupiter humorously comments on the fact that while posing as Amphitruo, he will be sacrificing to himself as Jupiter (ll.976-983).

Despite the *lacunae*, in the fragments available to us, it is clear that with Jupiter's divine strength and powers, Amphitruo the brave general, but a mere mortal, is no match for him. The powerful omniscient god and *uorsipellis* triumphs so that Amphitruo's wife, relative and household are unable to distinguish between the real general and the impostor. The result is that Amphitruo the mortal is rejected as an impostor by all who come into contact with him (fragments XV-XVIII), and Jupiter the divine goes into the general's house to be with Alcmena in her delivery, leaving Amphitruo alone and shut out of his own house.⁴³

2. Jupiter as the lover

Our first meeting with Jupiter is as he is about to take his first departure from Alcmena, and the god is a tender, affectionate and suave lover towards Alcmena, expressing regret at having to leave her, and telling her how dear she is to him.

Satin habes, si feminarum nulla est quam aequae diligam?
 (l.509)

*Clanculum abii: a legione operam hanc surrupui tibi,
 Ex me primo (ut) prima scires, rem ut gessissem publicam.
 Ea tibi omnia enarraui. Nisi te amarem plurimum, non facerem.*
 (ll.523-525)

Alcmena responds to these blandishments by clinging to him and begging him not to go. So skilful is Jupiter as a skinchanger, that even Alcmena does not perceive that he is not her

⁴³ We have noted the similarity between Amphitruo here and Menaechmus in *Menaechmi* (p.104) as both husbands are locked out of their own houses by their wives due to mistaken identity and an identical double, but Menaechmus is '*exclusissimus*' as he is also shut out of the house of his mistress.

husband but an impostor. Jupiter the lover presents his sweetheart with a gift calculated to please – the golden bowl (*l.*534).

When Alcmena has been thoroughly upset by Amphytruo's accusations of infidelity and shamelessness, for his own ends Jupiter the lover decides to calm her in order to restore Alcmena to her former loving self by pretending that the accusations were merely a joke and a test of her feelings (*ll.*891-917). When he is unable to mollify her in this jocular manner, and Alcmena prepares to leave her home and supposed husband, requesting her possessions and attendants, Jupiter is forced to take stronger measures and begs for forgiveness and swears that he thinks that his wife is virtuous.⁴⁴ The turning point comes when he invokes a curse on Amphytruo, which Alcmena hurriedly averts, thinking all the while that she is talking to the real Amphytruo, and forgives her 'husband', Jupiter (*ll.*923-937). This incident reflects the essential character of both players, in that Alcmena, however irate she might be with her 'husband' could not bear to see him harmed, while Jupiter remains unmoved by Alcmena's display of loyalty and tender emotion for her 'husband', and goes on to triumph in his successful deceit of both mistress and slave.

Iam hisce ambo, et seruos et era, frustra sunt duo,

Qui me Amphytruonem rentur esse: errant probe.

(*ll.*973-974)

Jupiter specifically comments on the fact that he has successfully fooled both Alcmena and Sosia into thinking that he is Amphytruo (*ll.*974-975). His use of the phrase *errant probe* denotes both the meaning 'thoroughly' as well as the implicit moral approval of 'rightly', indicating the lack of empathy that he feels for the hapless mortals.

3. Jupiter the master

When Mercury intervenes in his attempt at playing parasite in the amatory pursuits of his father (*ll.*516-517, 538), Jupiter displays all the wrath proper for a master to show towards an

⁴⁴ The divorce formula uttered by Alcmena is discussed further in the section concerning The Identity of Alcmena. See Cohen (1994) 177-187 for detailed discussion of *Amph.* *ll.*898-945, and Jupiter's begging for 'amorous reconciliation' and forgiveness as a 'speech-act' and an attempt at 'amorous reconciliation' with Alcmena. He notes the comic aspects of Jupiter on his 'divine knees' begging a mortal woman to forgive him and not to divorce him by walking out of the home, although Jupiter's speech is 'lexically and morpho-syntactically formulaic.'

impertinent slave. Jupiter uses the conventional terms of abuse towards slaves such as *furcifer*, *carnifex* and *uerbero*, while he vigorously abuses Mercury in the likeness of Sosia the slave (ll.518, 539). Later Jupiter gives peremptory orders to the real Sosia just like his real master, and sends him away from the house on the pretext of finding Blepharo the pilot and also addresses Alcmena and the other servants just as though he were the master of the house, successfully fooling them all (ll.949-971).

4. Jupiter the actor

The contrast between the divine and the mortal qualities of Jupiter is extended in the prologue, with Mercury reminding the audience of the benefits the great god has conferred on the human race, and then going on to inform the audience that Jupiter will be appearing on the stage as he had done the previous year when he came to the rescue of the actors and moreover, that the king of gods will be turning to the lowly profession of acting in *Amphitruo* (ll.66-93). We are also told what a great lover Mercury's father is (l.106), and that Jupiter will be pretending to be Amphitruo in order to indulge his fancy for Alcmena (ll.114-115). Mercury informs us that the gods will be worth watching when they take up the characters of actors (ll.151-152),⁴⁵ and that his father has the talent to be a skin-changer,⁴⁶ and has in fact turned himself into Amphitruo for the purpose of deceiving Alcmena and her household.⁴⁷

Nam meus pater intus nunc est eccum Iuppiter;

In Amphitruonis uortit sese imaginem

Omnesque eum esse censent serui qui uident:

Ita uorsipellem se facit quando lubet.

(ll.120-124)

⁴⁵ Schoeman (1998) 41 points out that the very idea of Jupiter appearing on stage in the *palliata* was shocking, as no free Roman had ever done so before, and that the very word *histrion* was loaded with contempt.

⁴⁶ Chrysalus in *Bacchides* (l.657) was the arch *uorsipellis* or skin changer with the ability to transform himself into anything he chose, with amazing powers of improvisation and acting. Jupiter is a skinchanger because as a god he is able to turn himself into Amphitruo's double, and to act as an actor successfully playing the role of lover towards Alcmena and the role of powerful god also.

⁴⁷ We have previously noted Mercury's lack of respect towards his father in labelling him as a '*moechus*' l.135. Jupiter's character is not extensively delineated as he represents the figures of a powerful deity and a mortal lover, and in the latter role, Jupiter is reminiscent of the stock *senex amans*, such as Lysidamus in *Casina* or the *senex* in *Asinaria* whom Plautus gently holds up as objects of ridicule. Certainly, Jupiter is not revered in *Amphitruo* and lacks a certain measure of respectability.

As befits his status as the ruler of the gods, Jupiter will have a gold tassel on his hat in order to distinguish him from Amphitruo (ll. 144-145). We are directly addressed and urged to watch Jupiter and Mercury assume the character of actors.

*Adeste: erit operae pretium hic spectantibus
Iouem et Mercurium facere histrioniam.*

(ll. 151-152)

In his 'third prologue', (ll. 861-881), Jupiter explains the future action to the audience and simultaneously exploits the situation for further humour. He begins his 'prologue' as an actor, and then enumerates his roles; firstly as the impostor Amphitruo, and secondly as Jupiter, changing his clothes to adapt to the part of Amphitruo.

*Ego sum ille Amphitruo, quoui est seruus Sosia.
Idem Mercurius qui fit quando commodumst,
In superiore qui habito cenaculo,
Qui interdum fio Iuppiter, quando lubet;
Huc autem quom extemplo aduentum adporto, ilico
Amphitruo fio et uestitum immuto meum.*⁴⁸

(ll. 861-866)

By referring to his abode as *superiore cenaculo*, he makes a play on his heavenly abode as Jupiter as well as the humble high garret he occupies as a poor actor.⁴⁹ The changing of dress embraces the actor's change of costume as well as the skin-changing abilities of the god.

So far, we have seen a very human Jupiter with mortal desires and appetites and the only difference is that he has superhuman powers of skin changing, omniscience, and power over events, fate and the elements. Although he too has many roles in *Amphitruo*, Jupiter's roles are

⁴⁸ This passage with its use of the words *commodumst* and *quando lubet* also serves to further illustrate the capricious nature of Jupiter the god, who acts on whim and disregards the confusion and turmoil that he creates among the mortals.

⁴⁹ Dupont (1976) 136 comments on this shattering of the dramatic illusion by the actor who leaves his miserable attic on the top floor of an *insula* in order to play Jupiter and Amphitruo. Dupont sees this passage as conveying three voices, namely those of Jupiter of the play, as well as the actor, who in his personal capacity, communicates with the audience, and thirdly, the Jupiter of the theatre, whose likeness was wedged high in the upper part of the scenery and visible to the audience.

shallower and less developed than those of Mercury, and his character is less thoroughly delineated than those of Mercury, Sosia, Alcmena or Amphitruo. Despite *Amphitruo* being ostensibly a mythological travesty, Jupiter's part in the play is almost mechanical.

The Identity of Sosia

Despite the fact that he is not a *seruus callidus* and does not undertake grandiose and crafty plans to rescue his master, Sosia plays a surprisingly prominent role in *Amphitruo* in that although he is an ordinary slave, his role is as large as that of his master, a grand Theban general, and both master and slave are equally routed by Mercury in separate contests.

1. Sosia as *Seruus Gloriosus* and *Seruus Timidus*

When we first meet Sosia, it is upon his return from the mighty battle against the Teleboians on his way to convey the news to Alcmena. From his first words onwards, he displays some preliminary symptoms of the dichotomy of self that is later to befall him, and he wavers between attempting to be bold and brave like the *seruus callidus* he longs to be, when he tries to adopt the role of *seruus callidus*, and reverting to his more usual timid, browbeaten, anxious self. He congratulates himself on being bold enough to be abroad alone in the dangerous dark and then immediately worries about being arrested, imprisoned or worse.

*Qui me alter est audacior homo aut qui confidentior,
Iuuentutis mores qui sciam, qui hoc noctis solus ambulem?
Quid faciam nunc, si tresuiri me in carcerem compegerint?*

(*Il.*153-155)

This swing in moods continues when Sosia is bold enough to complain at length about the lot of a slave, and the ingratitude of his master (*Il.*156-173), and then becomes very fearful in case he has incurred the wrath of the gods for not giving thanks for his safe return (*Il.*179-184). Plautus skilfully changes the metre to denote mood, with *Il.*153-158 in iambic octonarii to indicate heroic exaggeration, which contributes to the effect of Sosia's attempts to be bold and brave. This is followed by the use of bacchiacs in Sosia's speech (*Il.*173-174), which Tobias terms Sosia's bacchiac lament, to be immediately followed by Mercury's parodying lament (*Il.*175-

178), where Mercury mockingly echoes Sosia's metre.⁵⁰ While it is part of the comic convention to have slaves complain about their lot in life, Plautus has gone further and has already skilfully delineated Sosia's character as a combination of swagger and cowardice, a sort of *seruus gloriosus*. Plautus sets the tone for the Mercury-Sosia contest of self-identities throughout the play, when Mercury copies the slave's style of speech in his very first words in his aside after seeing Sosia, and turns his words upside down, as he later turns Sosia's whole sense of self topsy-turvy.⁵¹

Sosia:	<i>Ergo in seruitute expetunt multa iniqua: Habendum et ferundum hoc onust cum labore.</i>
Mercury:	<i>Satius me queri illo modo seruitutem: Hodie qui fuerim liber, Eum nunc potiuit pater seruitutis, Hic qui uerna natus est queritur.</i>
Sosia:	<i>Sum vero uerna uerbero: numero mihi in mentem fuit, Dis aduenientem gratias pro meritis agere atque adloqui?</i>

(ll.173-181)

Relieved that he has not been punished for lack of piety, and as he thinks he is alone, Sosia then veers to the extreme end of the mood scale by grandiosely rehearsing the battle scene aloud in preparation for telling the tale to Alcmena (ll.203-261). This speech has often been compared to popular messenger speeches in tragedies, notably *Heraklides*, and has been discussed extensively, but for our purposes, we need to note the expansive imagination and glibness of the *seruus callidus* that Sosia can summon up. It is this very creativeness and mendacity that proves his undoing, as later on no one will believe him when he speaks the truth.

In Sosia's magnificent account of the battle scene, with tales of bravery and heroic fighting on both sides, we could be swept away by the brilliance of the tale, if it were not for the fact that Plautus recalls us every now and again with bathos (ll.199, 254), with Mercury's cutting aside about the slave's veracity (ll.248-249), or with the use of traditional words of trickery associated with slaves such as *mendacium* and *simulabo*, (ll.198, 200).

⁵⁰ Tobias (1979) 13.

⁵¹ Moore (1998) 111 notes that the two characters are also competing for the audience's attention and sympathy.

*Ea nunc meditabor quo modo illi dicam, quam illo aduenero.
 Si dixero mendacium, solens meo more fecero.
 Nam quom pugnabant maxume, ego tum fugiebam maxume;
 Verum quasi adfuerim tamen simulabo atque audita eloquar.
 Sed quo modo et uerbis quibus me deceat fabularier,
 Prius ipse mecum etiam uolo hic meditari. Sic hoc proloquar.*
 (Il.197-202)

*Haec illic est pugnata pugna usque a mani ad uesperum –
 Hoc adeo hoc commemini magis, quia illo die impransus fui –
 Sed proelium id tandem diremit nox interventu suo.*
 (Il.253-255)

Two things are striking about Sosia's detailed account of the course of the battle with the Teleboians. While Plautus indulges both himself and us with a magnificent and detailed description of the stirring battle scenes, it cannot escape us that this heroic account trips off the tongue of a mere slave, one who was not even present at the battle and who, by his own admission, is not averse to a lie or two. The other aspect of great comic irony is that his careful preparation and rehearsal of this account of the battle is in vain because Sosia does not ever get the chance to relate his polished version to anyone at all, as he is soon intercepted and then routed by Mercury. Furthermore, from here onwards, nobody believes anything that Sosia says, even when he is telling the truth.

After his magnificent bragging version of Amphitruo's conquest, Sosia catches sight of Mercury and immediately reverts to his timorous self.

*Perii, dentes pruriunt;
 Certe aduenientem hic me hospitio pugneo accepturus est.
 Credo misericors est: Nunc propterea quod me meus erus
 Fecit ut uigilarem hic pugnis faciet hodie ut dormiam.
 Oppido interii. Obsecro hercle, quantus et quam ualidus est.*
 (Il.295-299)

Sosia again briefly attempts to adopt a bold and saucy approach in the hopes of outfacing Mercury in bravado (*Il.*339-344) and indeed mimics Mercury's style of speech, if only momentarily, then, due to physical threats, retreats to his other timid self, with only one or two other short-lived attempts at bravado. Sosia veers between being bold and fearful, but the comic irony prevalent in the play ensures that all the fears that he now expresses are later fulfilled. Unwittingly Sosia predicts his own future by fervently hoping that the gods do not assign someone to give him a beating for failing to give thanks for his safe return (*Il.*179-184), and this is exactly what will happen at the hands of Mercury.⁵²

Being fey, Mercury confirms this prospect of a beating by commenting to the audience on how unusual it is to find slaves who know what they deserve (*l.*185). The nervous Sosia is alarmed by the god's 'second sight' (*l.* 323) and fears that he will be put to sleep by Mercury's fists.

*Credo misericors est: nunc propterea quod me meus erus
Fecit ut uigilarem, hic pugnīs faciet hodie ut dormiam.*
(*Il.*297-298)

Mercury, to intimidate the slave, boasts that he has put four men to sleep already.

*Iam pridem uidetur factum heri quod homines quattuor
In soporem conlocastis nudos.*
(*Il.*303-304)

Mercury's calculated boasting causes Sosia again to express the fear that he will be the fifth man to be put to sleep (*Il.*306-307). While this fear can be taken literally as an expression of physical fear, that he will be knocked unconscious or even killed by Mercury, throughout Plautus we find that expressions of sleeping in contrast to being awake are used with the connotations of dreaming, delusions and insanity as opposed to being alert, in full possession of one's faculties, and lucid. The association of sleep with insanity is so common that it is impossible not to infer the association here also, particularly as phrases containing words of waking and sleeping abound later also in *Amphitruo*. In the subsequent encounter between

⁵² Cf. Sosia's words to Amphitruo '*Fateor, nam sum obtusus pugnīs pessume.*' (*l.*606).

Sosia and his master, Amphitruo accuses the slave of dreaming the whole encounter with his self and Sosia denies this charge hotly.

*Non soleo ego somniculose eri imperia persequi.
Uigilans uidi, uigilans nunc ut uideo, uigilans fabulor,
Uigilantem ille me iam dudum uigilans pugnis contudit.*
(ll.622-624)

Amphitruo specifically associates dreaming and sleeping with delirium when he is cross-examining Alcmena, who denies that she has seen Amphitruo only in her dreams and announces that on the contrary she is perfectly well and sane (ll.696-730). Thus while Sosia is expressing the fear of being knocked out cold by Mercury, the hapless slave in his ignorance again prophesies his fate, that of being considered insane.⁵³

Sosia expresses another fear concerning a loss of identity, that of having his name changed from Sosia to Quintus, the fifth man to be put to sleep by Mercury's fists.

*Formido male,
Ne ego hic nomen meum commutem et Quintus fiam e Sosia;
Quattuor uiros sopori se dedisse hic autumat:
Metuo ne numerum augeam illum.*
(ll.304-307)

Sosia does indeed suffer identity theft in that Mercury steals his entire identity by taking over his name, physical appearance, character and memories.⁵⁴ This foreboding does not occur completely in that he does not have his name changed, but his name is usurped by Mercury, and Sosia in fact mourns the fact that Mercury has stolen his name (l.600), and thus part of his identity. Sosia's concern is significant in that the name is a very important universally accepted

⁵³ Cf. Amphitruo's later accusation '*Satin tu sanus es?*' (l.664).

⁵⁴ Mercury has stolen Sosia's name together with his looks, which are two very important facets of identity. Furthermore, Mercury stole Sosia's memories and experiences of the battle, and his ancestor Davus. When he adopted Sosia's character, Mercury also stole the characteristics of the *seruus callidus* for himself that Sosia would have liked to exhibit, and consequently Sosia does not have the ability to be really insouciant, to improvise or to escape the consequences of folly. Mercury also robbed him of the chance to be the important herald relating to the admiring household the tale of the battle that he had carefully rehearsed.

facet of identity, particularly in the ancient world, and in worrying about losing a part of his identity, Sosia is again being partially prophetic.

2. Sosia's Loss of Sense of Identity

We have noted the swings in Sosia's attitude between bluster and fear, and this is indicative of a poor self-image, but nevertheless, thus far Sosia has been perfectly confident of his own identity. It is only during his encounter with Mercury that Sosia starts experiencing a progressive loss of sense of self. Early in the encounter, Sosia is fully confident of his own name and identity. When Mercury menacingly says that '*Nescio quis*' is speaking, Sosia triumphantly states that Mercury certainly cannot be referring to him, as he is not '*Nescio quis*', but has a definite name, 'Sosia.'⁵⁵

Saluos sum, non me uidet:

Nescioquem loqui autumat; mihi certo nomen Sosia est.

(ll.331-332)

Sosia also defiantly declines to reveal details of his mission to Mercury, apart from stating firmly that he is under his master's orders and he is his master's slave (l.347), and confidently insists to Mercury that he is the family servant and points out his master's house (ll.356, 359). As further proof of his identity, Sosia is moved to cite by name his master, Amphitruo, commander of the Theban army, and the general's wife, Alcmena (ll.363-365). When asked for his name, Sosia produces his name in a flamboyant manner, expecting this to be the ultimate criterion of identity, and to further impress his inquisitor, Sosia grandly adds his ancestry, despite being a mere slave.

Sosiam uocant Thabani, Davo prognatum patre.

(l.365)

⁵⁵ These words of Sosia's are reminiscent of the encounter of Odysseus with the Cyclops, where the wily Greek avoids telling Polyphemus his real name, but later inadvertently boastfully reveals his name, thus enabling the Cyclops to take revenge and to lay the curse of Poseidon on him. Here Sosia feels that if Mercury does not know his name, he is safe, as to be in possession of another person's name gives one magical properties over that person. Ironically, Sosia lacks the wiles of Odysseus and is no match for the omniscient Mercury. Docherty (1983) 61 comments on the magical properties of the name in primitive culture, exerting power over the physical world.

Unlike Sicilian Menaechmus in *Menaechmi*, who is swayed by the fact that Erotium is able to recite his lineage correctly as proof of knowing his identity (II.407-412), Mercury is not appeased by Sosia's presenting his name and ancestry as proof of his identity. Instead, Mercury, following his stated intention, uses Sosia's own characteristic traits of cunning and malice against the slave and accuses him of lying and playing tricks (II.366-368). As this is not sufficient to convince Sosia that he is not Sosia, the god goes further and gives Sosia a beating in order to intimidate him into yielding up his identity to him, ceasing intermittently in his beating to see whether Sosia is ready to give up his name yet. The first time Mercury stops beating Sosia, the slave is still clinging tenaciously to his name and identity as Amphitruo's servant.

Amphitruonis, inquam, Sosia.

(I.378)

The next time Mercury stops drubbing Sosia to see if he is still being stubborn about his identity, the god thinks that he has made progress, because the cowed Sosia now seems prepared to submit to Mercury. Sosia concedes that his name and his master can be anyone Mercury likes, and allows Mercury to lay claim to be Sosia himself (II.381-387). However, Sosia has only temporarily been subdued and in fact still retains his sense of self, because when he thinks that he has negotiated a truce for himself, he stubbornly declares his identity.

Amphitruonis ego sum seruos Sosia.

(I.394)

Sosia still maintains a strong sense of self when Mercury accuses him of being insane, and refutes this accusation (I.401), but the fact that Mercury so strongly insists that he himself is Sosia starts to take its effect, leading Sosia to start counting all the reinforcing features of his identity that he can muster (II.402-408). These include the recalling of events (the fact that his ship had docked that night with him on it, and that his master had despatched him) as well as empirical sensations (the fact that he is standing in front of his own house, with a lantern in his hand, talking, with aching jaws after the beating). As he reaches a conclusion of recounting his empirical experiences as criteria of identity, Sosia is convinced of the reality of his own identity and prepares to enter the house, but is outdone by Mercury, who, as he had undertaken to do, uses the slave's own weapons against him. Aided by his gift of divine omniscience, Mercury

presents Sosia with an overwhelming collection of empirical evidence to counter Sosia's memories. When Sosia then seeks to justify his retention of his own name by catching Mercury out with a series of questions regarding the physical objects of the golden bowl, the casket and the seal of the signet ring, Mercury is easily able to outwit Sosia by supplying all the correct answers promptly (ll.418-422).⁵⁶ All the physical objects, which Sosia hoped to use to verify his identity are used against him by Mercury in overwhelming evidence against him. Sosia is so shaken by the accuracy of Mercury's knowledge, that he temporarily doubts his identity, and because Mercury insists that Sosia is **his** name, decides to find a new name for himself.

Argumentis uicit, aliud nomen quaerundum est mihi.

(l.423)

However, Sosia decides to put Mercury to the ultimate test, that of recounting Sosia's secret memories, his actions when he was entirely alone in the tent, with the proviso that if Mercury gets this right, the god will have won and the slave will have been defeated (ll.424-428). Nevertheless, when Mercury, with his divine gift, triumphantly recounts all the details accurately, Sosia is still reluctant to yield up his identity, and in a bid to cling on to his self as Sosia, appeals to Mercury's logic.

Quis ego sum saltem, si non sum Sosia? Te interrogo.

(l.438)

Throughout this struggle for possession of his identity, Sosia has attempted to justify his identity through empirical deductions and rational arguments, but Mercury has capped all Sosia's attempts at empirical tests and refuted all rational arguments by simply resorting to brute force or threats. He is indifferent to Sosia's dilemma and does not bother to argue logically with Sosia but maintains his claim to be Sosia and threatens him instead.

Ubi ego Sosia nolim esse, tu esto sane Sosia;

Nunc, quando ego sum, uapulabis, ni hinc abis, ignobilis.

(ll.439-440)

⁵⁶ Ketterer (1986b) 47 points out that, whereas in other plays, objects serving as tokens of identity serve to establish the identity of characters, in *Amphitruo* the lantern and golden bowl serve instead to disprove identity, and Sosia loses his identity to Mercury.

Faced with this cool confidence, Sosia starts to feel uncertain and begins to note all the similarities in their appearances – their identical hats, clothes, legs, feet, height, haircut eyes, noses and lips, jaw, chins, beards, necks and whole appearance (ll.443-444). However Sosia puts aside this uncertainty and makes a classic definition of identity, associating it with continuity and consciousness of self.

Sed quom cogito, equidem certo idem sum qui semper fui.

(l.447)

This sounds rather like a rudimentary form of Descartes' famous rationalist statement, ' *Cogito, ergo sum*', and embodies Locke's concept of personal identity consisting in the sameness of consciousness.⁵⁷ Sosia continues to argue on rationalist lines, and by deduction, concludes that he is perfectly sane and therefore he will act accordingly.

Noui erum, noui aedis nostras; sane sapio et sentio.

(l.448)

The two things that Sosia used to convince himself of his sanity, his master and his house, are the very things that Mercury uses to defeat Sosia by insisting that he himself is standing outside **his** mistress' house (l.453). In conjunction with undermining Sosia's sense of reality, Mercury physically threatens him with the prospect of being turned into a 'hipwreck', *lumbifragium* (ll.453-454). This is the turning point for Sosia. From now on he ceases to lay claim to being the only Sosia, and observes that somewhere he has lost himself and lost his appearance and that Mercury has taken possession of his *imago*.

Ubi ego perii? Ubi immutatus sum? Ubi ego formam perdidi?

An egomet me illic reliqui, si forte oblitus fui?

Nam hic quidem omnem imaginem meam, quae antehac fuerat, possidet.

(ll.456-458)

⁵⁷ See my Introduction p.5 for Locke's belief that personal identity consisted in the sameness of consciousness, i.e. memory.

When the slave returns to his master after his encounter with his Mercury posing as Sosia, despite the threats Amphitruo uses, and the accusations of being drunk or diseased he makes, he is unable to shift Sosia from his stubborn stance that there are two Sosias, one here with his master, and one at his master's home (ll.557-578).⁵⁸

Equidem decies dixi:

Domi ego sum, inquam, ecquid audis?

Et apud te adsum Sosia idem.

Satin hoc plane, satin diserte,

Ere, nunc uideor

Tibi locutus esse?

(ll.576-579)

Sosia has been convinced that Mercury is also Sosia, due to the god's ability to recount all the details of the battle perfectly, and due to the fact that there are now two Sosias in different places at the same time and he marvels how alike they are (ll.594-600). Sosia has lost his sense of uniqueness, that he always has been Sosia and always will be Sosia and that he alone can be Sosia. Erikson viewed a sense of uniqueness as being a central component of personal identity together with a sense of personal continuity. Marcia also regarded the sense of uniqueness as important to personal identity. To have a sense of self, a person must be confident that he is the same person as he was five years ago, and will be the same person in five years hence, and that no one else will be that future person.⁵⁹ By accepting that there are two Sosias identical in appearance (l.601), with identical memories (ll.599-600), and the identical parent, Davus (l.614), Sosia has lost his sense of self. As he says, Mercury has stolen his appearance together with his name (l.600). In fact, Mercury has stolen his identity. It contributes enormously to the farcical humour of the comedy to have Sosia recount with a perfectly straight face how his one self beat his other self up, to the consternation of his master who cannot believe that he has now acquired two Sosias as slaves. However, Sosia is very earnest about his double identity. Despite the accusations of insanity (l.604), disease (l.580), drunkenness (ll.574-575), lying

⁵⁸ Segal (1987) 179 describes Sosia at this juncture as being 'in the midst of an identity crisis, not to say schizophrenia.' Abse (1976) 167-168 states that the illusion of a doubling of the self is a way-station on the road to regressive disintegration of the personality. He comments on Dostoevsky's profound treatment of the theme of self-doubling in *The Double*, where Golyadkin has a double with identical appearance, name, clothing, voice, memories who continuously works at cross purposes. In my opinion, Golyadkin and Sosia have much in common, including a 'lapse into a confused and delusional state.'

⁵⁹ See my Introduction pp.8, 11-13.

(*ll.*571-572, 589), and daydreaming (*l.*619-621), that Amphitruo heaps on Sosia, he doggedly sticks to his story regardless of the fact that no one will believe him now although for once he is telling the truth. Here Sosia's character is being used against him by Mercury, as previously the slave has tended to insert a lie or two into his tales, according to his own admission (*l.*198). In addition, Mercury with fiendish cunning has undermined the slave with his own weapons, those of lies, bragging and cowardice, just as the god resolved to do when he took on the identity of Sosia (*ll.*298-269).

For a short while after he and Amphitruo meet Alcmena, it seems that Sosia may have sorted out his identity crisis, as he does not refer to it for some time. He initially appears to soothe Alcmena, but in fact, he calls her a Bacchante, and a crazy woman (*ll.*700-704). Sosia displays no sympathy for Alcmena although she is in a position identical to his, where she too is disbelieved by Amphitruo although she is telling the truth when she insists that she has seen them both a short while before. Sosia is quick to join Amphitruo in doubting her and attacking her sanity. He calls her insane (*ll.*719, 770), insists that she has been dreaming and suggests that she purify herself (*ll.*738-739), and in general seems confident of his own identity, but when Alcmena produces the golden bowl as evidence of their earlier visit, Sosia's concept of his double self resurfaces. He earnestly proposes the existence of not only two Sosias, but also two Amphitruos and two golden bowls, all having given rise to doubles.

*Tu peperisti Amphitruonem (alium), ego alium peperì Sosiam;
Nunc si patera pateram peperit, omnes congeminauimus.*
(*ll.*785-786)

Sosia presumes that, as Amphitruo has suffered from the same problem as himself, in that he has been seen in two places at the same time, that there must also be two Amphitruos (*ll.*828-829). From his own experience, he warns Amphitruo to guard against losing his self, as everything is so topsy-turvy since their return from battle that people are liable to be changed very easily (*ll.*845-846). As the final proof of his loss of sense of identity, Sosia confidentially enquires of Alcmena whether his other self is inside her house, the other Sosia who is identical to himself (*ll.*855-856).

By his total impersonation of Sosia, in adopting his appearance, dress and character as well as usurping his memories and ancestry, Mercury has succeeded in driving Sosia away from

Alcmena's door to give his father time to enjoy his romance. In the process, Mercury has stolen Sosia's identity, so that faced by his identical double, Sosia initially wonders who he himself is, and then proceeds to solve the mystery by firmly believing that he has two identical selves.

The Identity of Amphitruo

Amphitruo is introduced to us as an accomplished general during Sosia's rehearsal of his account of the mighty battle against the Teleboians. Even before Sosia plans to embroider his tale of the battle scene (*Il.*202-261), he depicts Amphitruo as a skilful, brave general who has won renown for himself and for his country (*Il.*188-194). Further references to the general's bravery are made when Sosia mentions the golden bowl that was presented to Amphitruo on account of his valour, *ob uirtutem* (*l.*259), and Jupiter uses almost the identical phrases (including the words *ob uirtutem*) to Alcmena in describing how he supposedly obtained possession of the bowl, but at the same time also unintentionally describing the bravery of Amphitruo (*Il.*534-535). Alcmena soliloquises on the benefits of being married to a brave, renowned man who is a hero, and she expounds on the glories of *uirtus*, which she attributes to her husband.⁶⁰

Uirtus praemium est optimum;

Uirtus omnibus rebus anteit profecto:

*Libertas, salus, uita, res et parentes, patria et prognati
tutantur, seruantur:*

Uirtus omnia in sese habet, omnia adsunt

Bona quem penest uirtus.

(*Il.*648-653)

⁶⁰ Earl (1960) 236-239 discusses the concept of *uirtus* in a political context in literature from around the era of Plautus, including Plautus' *Trinummus*, *Il.* 642-651, and concludes that *uirtus* is connected with 'the family, with *honos*, with the obligations of *amicitia*, with the public life of the forum and with a certain standard of conduct.' Ennius defines *uirtus* as 'the pursuit of personal pre-eminence in the service of the *respublica*.' (*Ann.* 200-2). There is also an emphasis on *gloria* 'won by the commission of great deeds in the service of the *respublica* according to certain standards of conduct (*Ann.* 333-5.) *Uirtus* as applied to the military would include it being the duty of a good commander to maintain discipline and of a good soldier to comply with this discipline (*Ann.* 434-435).

Despite his great military prowess, courage and status, Amphitruo's next words following Alcmena's soliloquy on *uirtus* indicate that he is being set up as the conventional dupe.⁶¹ Amphitruo proudly speculates on how pleased his wife will be to see him on his return, the more so since he has been victorious (*ll.*654-658). He is comically unaware that in his absence, she has been kept very busy by his double, and so far from being delighted to see him, she is rather puzzled by his return. (So too Theopropides in *Mostellaria* thought his libertine son would rejoice on his return *ll.*440-441, only to be also locked out of his own house and thoroughly fooled by his household). This homecoming signals the start of Amphitruo's downfall from status of glorious general to conventional dupe, while Jupiter amuses himself with the general's wife.

Amphitruo has a stronger sense of self-identity than his slave and so, at this stage, totally rejects Sosia's claims that he has two selves, and instead accuses Sosia of lying, being drunk, having the plague, being bewitched and being asleep (*ll.*553-621). When Alcmena insists that she has recently seen him, actually in his own house (*ll.*682-698), Amphitruo accuses her too of being insane, and dreaming, and reproaches her with *stultitia* and *superbia* and insinuates that she is an immodest and undutiful wife (*ll.*696-713).⁶² Amphitruo is still perfectly confident of his own sense of identity and so accuses the other two of being irrational. He maintains this sense of identity despite their denials. He attempts to rationalise the situation by questioning his wife and stating his own movements, but when he discovers that his own memories have been usurped by his impostor, and that Alcmena has already heard all the details of his great battle, his sense of identity wavers (*ll.*730-745). The great general turns to his slave, (although he has previously declared him insane, drunk and daydreaming), and appeals to Sosia to confirm his activities and identity (*ll.*748-752). In contrast, Alcmena relies alone on her sense of identity and replies that she believes herself, rather than the combined evidence of her husband and his slave, despite the fact that she is one voice against two people (*ll.*756-757).

⁶¹ See my next section on the Identity of Alcmena pp.170 ff. where I have discussed Phillips' theory on the undercutting of the nobleness of Alcmena's soliloquy on *uirtus* by contemplating the sexual appetite suggested by the '*uir*' of *uirtus*. I consider this soliloquy to be multivalent thus simultaneously painting a picture of the great general while raising a good laugh by referring to the sexual appetite of the married pair. This contributes to the concept of Amphitruo as a figure of fun.

⁶² Amphitruo displays irrational behaviour in insisting that his wife is both insane *and* unchaste. If she was in fact drunk, mad or dreaming, then she has only imagined that she slept with another man, and if she is correct in her assertions that she dined and slept with her supposed husband, then these other accusations hold no ground. He is intent on believing the worst of her and 'demands the worst of both worlds.' Slater (1990) 114.

Despite his apparent confidence in his sense of self, Amphitruo again seeks Sosia's corroboration of his identity and verification of his presence on board the ship the day before (ll.822-823). When Amphitruo refuses to believe his wife's account of his supposed activities the previous night, to prove her claims, Alcmena mentions the golden bowl, won by Amphitruo from King Pterelas in the battle. Amphitruo refuses to believe her, as this is private knowledge, and instead accuses Sosia of secretly going ahead and informing his wife about the bowl (ll.762-767). When Alcmena triumphantly produces the golden bowl, apparently from the general's sealed casket, as proof of her husband's earlier presence at home, Amphitruo is mystified but convinced that there must be some logical explanation, and proceeds to cross-examine Alcmena anew (ll.772-800). When Alcmena reveals that she has slept with her 'husband', Amphitruo realises that he has been cuckolded, as he knows that he was on the ship at the time.⁶³ When Alcmena steadfastly sticks to her story, Amphitruo accuses her of being bewitched and Sosia puts forward the theory of there being two Amphitruos to match the two Sosias that he believes exist (ll.799-830). When Alcmena continues to protest her innocence and offers to produce witnesses to corroborate her version, Amphitruo begins to be more puzzled and then starts to doubt his identity in a minor way as he wonders who he is and whether in fact it is he who has been bewitched and not his wife.⁶⁴

Delenitus sum profecto ita ut me qui sim nesciam.

(l.844)

Amphitruo's role of conventional dupe is sustained when he goes to seek Naucrates to confirm his identity and to provide an alibi, but instead is totally unable to find Alcmena's relative and returns lamenting at length on his long fruitless search (ll.1009-1019). The great general has descended in status from presiding triumphantly over battlefields, with thousands under his command, to toiling on foot alone through the town only to return defeated. Indeed, he is reminiscent of the parasite Ergasilus, who spends the day scouring the town for suitable sources

⁶³ Hough (1970) 95-96 has an amusing article on the effectiveness of the repetition of the syllable 'cu' in ll.735-809 to produce a striking effect of mimicking the cuckoo, and invoking the lazy parasitic bird with its additional sexual connotations of extramarital sexual behaviour, which he believed Plautus intended his audience to hear. 'Cu' appears three times in l.735 when Alcmena replies to her husband's questioning her activities the previous night, '*immo mecum cenavisti et mecum cubuisti*' and appears again, when he questions her in l.808 with '*Ubi tu cubuisti?*' she replies with '*in eodem lecto tecum una in cubiculo.*'

⁶⁴ We may strongly contrast Menaechmus' reaction in *Men.* ll.958-962, when he comments on how strangely everyone else is behaving that day, accusing him of being insane. He denies emphatically that he is insane and instead wonders if everyone else is mad.

for a meal and who, on his return, also bewails his lack of success.⁶⁵ The fact that Amphitruo is shut out of his own house and is confronted by his own supposed slave, in a drunken state, leering down at him from his own rooftop adds to the farcical aspect of Amphitruo's downfall.⁶⁶ Mercury has been instructed by his father to drive Amphitruo away from the house by whatever means he chooses (*ll.*975-979) and Mercury obeys with gusto. Consequently, Amphitruo's sense of self-respect suffers further diminution when his supposed slave boldly berates him for banging at his own locked door, addresses him as '*fatue*' and '*solide*' and then goes on to ask his supposed master who he is (*ll.*1021-1028).

At this stage, Amphitruo is still largely confident of his own sense of identity, and therefore threatens to have Mercury beaten for asking such an impertinent question of his 'own' master (*ll.*1029-1030). While the text has gaps for the next scene (*ll.*1035 ff.), it is evident that Amphitruo's humiliation continues, with Mercury posing as his slave Sosia and being as audacious and confrontational as possible, with Amphitruo helpless to retaliate against the god.⁶⁷ It seems likely that in addition to being goaded by Mercury, Amphitruo is also taunted by his identical double, Jupiter.⁶⁸ Like Sosia, Amphitruo is defeated in the physical confrontation with his divine counterpart. Amphitruo's sense of identity is undermined as his own supposed slave does not recognise him and he is faced with his complete look-alike who is comfortably installed in **his** home, enjoying **his** wife. Furthermore, it then appears that neither his wife nor his pilot is able to identify him as being the real Amphitruo, nor to distinguish

⁶⁵ *Capt. ll.*461-497.

⁶⁶ Mastronarde (1990) 247-294 notes the dramatic tradition of the use of the *skene* roof by gods to denote their superior position to mortals. Mercury's appearance on the roof as Sosia is both fitting for his status as deity and total parody of his role as the slave. Stewart (1958) 371 comments on *Amphitruo* being unique among the 26 other extant Plautine plays in requiring the action to be split into two levels. Plautus has utilised this skene scene to the maximum benefit.

⁶⁷ The *lacunae* in the manuscript *ll.*1034 ff. are a tantalising loss, despite the few fragments of intervening lines that have been preserved, although Leo has supplied a summary of the lost lines to the effect that Mercury has more fun at Amphitruo's expense, and then Alcmena does not recognise her husband, quarrels with him and then shuts Amphitruo out of his own house. The long-awaited Blepharo the pilot also fails to distinguish between the identical Amphitruos, and Jupiter reappears to taunt his rival for Alcmena's affections.

⁶⁸ Fantham (1973) 202-214 provides credible suggestions for the missing text and describes Mercury taunting Amphitruo from the roof until Amphitruo is goaded into coming within reach of Mercury's missile of water, resulting in his being ignominiously routed, followed by an unsuccessful physical tussle with Jupiter, and Blepharo being unable to distinguish between the two and so abandoning his general. Fantham visualises the scene with Blepharo unable to distinguish between Amphitruo and his double as very similar to the scene in *Menaechmi* (1060-1084) where Messenio is unable to decide which Menaechmus is his master and in turn claims each as his master, while both twins answer to the same name. Dupont (1976) 137 sees in the missing text in the *Amphitruo* a scene, which is similar yet inverted, where Amphitruo is unable to decide whether to claim Mercury or Sosia as his own slave

between the true Amphitruo and the impostor Amphitruo. The golden bowl, the symbol of his military prowess, fails to confirm his identity and in fact practically disproves his identity. The wheel comes to a full circle when both his wife and his supposed slave turn the tables on him and call him insane and bewitched as he had called Alcmena and Sosia, even using the same language that Amphitruo had used in his accusations (*ll.* 770-771).

Quaeso aduenienti morbo medicari iube:

Tu certe aut laruatus aut cerritus es.

(frag. 8)

Amphitruo's sense of identity has been severely dented by his wife's revelations, his supposed slave's lack of recognition and outrageously audacious behaviour, his wife's and his pilot's failure to distinguish his true self and the humiliating showdown with his double. He is again denied access to his own house by Alcmena, and reminds us of Menaechmus, who is also denied access to his marital home.⁶⁹ However, the general retains his concept of his own identity sufficiently to maintain that he is sane, and, unlike Sosia, does not consider the possibility of a second Amphitruo, despite the appearance of an identical physical double, and he is certain that it is his entire household that has been bewitched. Unlike Sosia, he does not posit the existence of a second self as a solution to all his problems, despite having engaged in battle with his physical double and been defeated. In contrast to his slave, (who accepts the apparent existence of his double with stoicism, probably due to his lack of status as a slave, and definitely due to his lack of confidence in himself), Amphitruo believes that he is perfectly sane and that everyone else is insane.⁷⁰ Goaded and derided, deserted by his wife, friends and household, Amphitruo instinctively opts for a military solution in keeping with his vocation, training and temperament. He will avenge himself on his household, since they are all bewitched, and will put the whole lot to the sword (*ll.* 1039-1050).

The final stage of the ridicule of Amphitruo is played out when, in his furious attempt to burst into his own home, he is struck down by Jupiter with a bolt of lightning. The proud general,

⁶⁹ We have noted earlier the parallel between Amphitruo and Menaechmus in being denied access to their houses by their wives, with Menaechmus being further also shut out of his mistress' abode. Menaechmus too is disbelieved when he is telling the truth (*ll.* 662, 698).

⁷⁰ For Greek slaves not being regarded as 'human', see my Introduction pp.23-24 where Aristotle describes the natural slave as lacking part of the soul, and consequently is not wholly a man, although he is above an animal, which has no soul.

renowned for his bravery and military skills, is reduced to lying face down in the dirt in a very unheroic fashion outside his house. Having reached the nadir of his experiences and final loss of identity as not being recognised by his wife or associate, being barred from his own home by his drunken, brazenly audacious slave, taunted by his double who, like the cuckoo, has taken possession of his wife, house and household, Amphitruo reaches the turning point when Bromia discovers him, lying outside his house. In contrast to the glory that he has won by his *uirtus* in battle, he is pathetically excited that his wife's maidservant appears to recognise him, as this is the first recognition of his identity that he has had from his household since he stepped off the ship with Sosia.

Agedum expedi:

Scin me tuom esse erum Amphitruonem?

(*ll.*1081-1082)

With this recognition of his identity, the re-instatement of Amphitruo to his former status commences. The truth is revealed to Amphitruo, and he considers it an honour to have shared his wife with the supreme god, and in addition, the future fame prophesied for the general, as the acknowledged father of Hercules, greatly restores his sense of esteem.

In Amphitruo's downfall, there are certain parallels but also differences between the encounters of the general and Sosia with their doubles and their struggles to maintain their personal identity. Just as Mercury usurps Sosia's identity in the Mercury-Sosia encounter, so Amphitruo too has attacks made on his sense of self by his identical double, Jupiter. The reactions of master and slave to these attacks on their identities by an identical double also differ.

Unlike Sosia, Amphitruo does not start off with physical confrontation with his double. Instead, he is alarmed to learn from his wife that she has recently seen him, dined with him and slept with him although he was away fighting the battle or was on board his ship in the harbour (*ll.*682-808). Unlike his slave's encounter with Mercury, Amphitruo's identity is undermined more in his absence by Jupiter's masquerading as the husband than by the actual Jupiter-Amphitruo face-to-face encounter.

Amphitruo is far less susceptible than Sosia to the possibility that he has a second self. Consequently, his reaction of disbelief, tinged with scorn, when Alcmena insists that she had

previously seen him only a short while before, is identical to his previous reaction when Sosia recounted to him his tales of a second self. He hurls the same accusations at Alcmena of being insane and of dreaming as he did at Sosia, and he also accuses his wife of succumbing to *stultitia* and *superbia* (ll.696-697, 709, 726-727, 771).

Like Sosia, Amphitruo is confident of proving his unique identity by means of the golden bowl, and just like Sosia, the golden bowl appears instead to provide insurmountable proof of the existence of another self (ll.760-794).

Unlike Sosia, Amphitruo is so confident in his sense of self, that he does not feel that his identity is threatened by the convictions expressed by others. The general's self-identity is not undermined by what Alcmena, aided by the golden bowl, reveals. Instead, he takes the stance that his wife is lying and that she is a brazen hussy, or that she is insane or else is bewitched (ll.771, 798, 818-819, 830, 835-836).

Amphitruo lost the physical struggle with his double, Jupiter, due to the impostor's divine powers, but refused to be beaten in the mental struggle. Although he was unable to prove his identity by empirical means, either with his physical appearance itself and his memories, or with physical tokens such as the golden bowl, and he was powerless to maintain his identity without the social recognition bestowed by his wife and household, yet Amphitruo remained largely confident to the end in his own sense of self. Sosia was less fortunate, and succumbed to both the physical and the mental struggle. Mercury bullied him physically and stole his identity, to the extent that Sosia, in his lack of confidence in his sense of identity, believed that the only explanation of the mystery could be the existence of two selves.

After Jupiter's revelation, Amphitruo was content with the comfort that he had shared his wife with the supreme god and that his sons would be blessed. However, Sosia is not represented as being integrated back into society, probably because it was not important to portray the restoration of a slave to his former sense of self. Nevertheless, we are left with the sense that Sosia will never be the same again, and will always wonder about his other self and refer to it often.

The verbs '*ludo*' and '*lubet*' appear frequently throughout the play and Mercury announces that he will take on Sosia's identity and will have fun making a fool of him, thus underlining the fact that the gods are making sport of men for their own ends and amusement.

Quando imago est huius in me, certum est hominem eludere.

(l.265)

Amphitruo declares that he is disowned and made sport of by everyone as it takes his fancy.

Quem omnes mortales ignorant et ludificant ut lubet.

(l.1047)

The gods were having fun, and when they were tired, the game ended. The gods are represented as being somewhat amoral, yet not entirely heartless, (ll.473-495, 869-879, 1131-1143), as Alcmena is exonerated from adultery and Amphitruo is restored and compensated.

Amphitruo has not lost his sense of identity. Although it has been shaken a few times, he has retained his sense of self throughout, even though he was unable to get his wife, slave or pilot to confirm his identity. Consequently, he was unable to gain access to his wife or house, as his identity was not confirmed by his immediate society and he was unable to sustain it on his own. Amphitruo's sense of self would tie in with Locke's philosophical view of personal identity consisting in the sameness of consciousness, not in any material or immaterial substance but in memory. Amphitruo tried to vindicate his identity with the golden bowl, but when that failed, he resorted to the sameness of memory, and knew that he was the same person he had always been. If we consider Amphitruo's sense of self in terms of James' concept of the self as divided into 'I', the knower and 'me' the known, we find that Amphitruo largely maintained his sense of self as being distinct from others and a confidence in his personal continuity, which James considered to be basic components of the sense of personal identity, closely associated with the 'I', the self as knower.⁷¹ If we compare Amphitruo with the 'me', the known, with the self as object composed of the material me, the social me and the spiritual me, we find that there was no problem with his body and clothes, but that his 'friends', namely his wife, slave, pilot were unable to confirm his identity, leading to some loss of sense of self in terms of the

⁷¹ See my Introduction pp.7-8.

social me. Amphitruo lacked the recognition normally bestowed on the social me by his friends. One of his possessions, the golden bowl, also failed to confirm his identity. Compared to his slave Sosia, Amphitruo was fairly strong regarding his sense of self as related to the spiritual me in terms of the synthesis of one's states of consciousness, psychic facilities and dispositions.

The Identity of Alcmena

Alcmena first appears to us as an affectionate wife who clings to her supposed husband, on his departure (*ll.* 502-532), and then embarks on a soliloquy on the pain of parting from him (*ll.* 632-652). Alcmena goes on to console herself with the thought of the glory that her husband will gain and as we have noted earlier, she expounds at length on the rewards of *uirtus* (*ll.* 641-652). There is a contrast between her affectionate attitude towards Jupiter and her far cooler attitude towards her real husband on his arrival, which occasions comment from Sosia (*ll.* 670-680). Her less affectionate attitude towards Amphitruo could be largely attributed to the fact that she believes that her husband is making sport of her and is also testing her by returning unexpectedly. The fact that Amphitruo is altogether more pompous and less suave and charming than Jupiter (*ll.* 676-679) could be a contributory factor to her more reserved behaviour.⁷² When her husband does not believe her assertions that he had just previously left her, but accuses her of raving or daydreaming, (*ll.* 696-697), Alcmena is assertive in her version of the truth (*ll.* 682-699). She is steadfast and even defiant in maintaining that her version of events is correct and chides her husband and his slave for not taking her seriously and not believing her when she is telling the truth (*ll.* 708-726). Despite the fact that she is at a disadvantage in being alone in her version of events against the pair of them with their accusations, Alcmena vigorously protests her sanity, veracity and virtue, and does not waver for one instant in her concept of self. She twice confidently asserts that she is perfectly sane and sound.

Equidem sana sum et deos quaeso, ut salua pariam filium.

(*l.* 720)

⁷² Compare Jupiter's affectionate, admiring style with Amphitruo's more fulsome, pompous compliment (*ll.* 509, 522-524, 676-679, 681). Segal (1987) 179 cleverly compares Jupiter and Amphitruo as 'the dream of a lover to the nightmare of a husband', which is an especially apt description because it embraces their opposing qualities as 'husbands' as well as the 'waking-dreaming' tensions in the play.

Equidem ecastor sana et salua sum.

(l.730)

Unlike the conventional Plautine *matrona*, Alcmena stops short of directly calling her husband a liar in his version of events but implies this by proxy when she avers that his slave is telling lies when he corroborates his master's versions of events (ll.755). When she says that she believes herself most of all, she again expresses a very confident sense of self, and she shows no wavering in the face of the accusations and doubts of both Sosia and Amphitruo.

Eo fit quia mihi

Plurimum credo et scio istaec facta proinde ut proloquor.

(ll.756-757)

As final proof of her truthfulness and sanity, Alcmena produces the golden bowl (l.772). In his struggle for identity with Mercury, Sosia had tried to use the golden bowl to corroborate his identity order to convince himself almost as much as to convince Mercury (ll.417-423), but Alcmena does not need to convince herself in any way regarding her identity. She successfully uses the golden bowl to refute the accusations and apparent lies of her husband and his slave, rather than confirm her identity to reassure herself.⁷³

Age aspice huc sis nunciam

Tu qui quae facta infitiare; quem ego iam hic conuincam palam.

Estne haec patera qua donatu's illi?

(ll.777-779)

So assured is Alcmena that she is right and the other two are both wrong, that she is steadfast in her statements and conviction. She does not feel the need to bring in any one else to confirm her statements, but causes Amphitruo to turn to his slave for corroboration of his identity and his activities the preceding day, (ll.822-823). She also causes Amphitruo to offer to bring her relative Naucrates to swear to his identity and whereabouts (ll.848-850). The fact that Alcmena, in her state of innocence, is prepared to swear by the two most powerful gods, Jupiter

⁷³ In contrast to Alcmena's strong sense of self, the golden bowl now serves to underline Sosia's lack of confidence in his self-identity in that he sees it as reinforcing the possibility of the existence of two Amphitruo's and two Sosias with the further possibility of two golden bowls (ll.784-786).

and Juno, that she has not been with any mortal man except her rightful husband, is indicative of her strong feeling of being entirely innocent.

*Per supremi regis regnum iuro et matrem familias
Iunonem, quam me uereri et metuere est par maxime,
Ut mi extra unum te mortalis nemo corpus corpore
Contingit, quo me impudicam faceret.*

(ll.831-834)

Schumann points out the tragic style of this denial, and notes the power of the oath⁷⁴, but this tragic style is undercut by the choice of the two gods to whom she unwittingly appeals. Jupiter has demonstrated his very frail human qualities and we know also that he would not scruple to act according to his own interests at that time. The other deity invoked, Juno, is a notoriously jealous wife who would unhesitatingly wreak her wrath on the objects of her husband's desire. Further indications of Alcmena's very strong sense of self are the calm, confident manner in which she replies to her husband's questions and accusations, and the fact that she is very open in her account of the details of her encounters with her supposed husband despite the evidence that her husband obviously does not believe or trust her and is becoming very angry (ll.786-811). To his angry, demeaning accusations of adultery and shamelessness, she replies with conviction and dignity, stating her innocence firmly (ll.815-824).

*Quid ego feci qua istaec propter dicta dicantur mihi?
(l.815)*

*Istuc facinu, quod tu insimulas nostro generi non decet.
Tu si me inpudicitiai captas, capere non potes.
(ll.820-821)*

She is also not without a spark of fire in that, when she asserts that she is descended from a well-bred, well-behaved family, she implies that his conduct suggests a lack of breeding and manners in his family (ll.820-821). She herself avers that a woman who is chaste and has not done anything wrong ought to be bold and assertive in her self-defence (ll.836-838) and she has

⁷⁴ Schumann (1977) 142

total confidence in her sense of self, despite her husband and his slave joining forces in attempting to browbeat her. Alcmena confidently states that she believes herself more than she believes the combined declarations of Amphitruo and his slave (l.757). However, she comes close to despair when she cries out, questioning the value of speaking the truth and knowing that she is right, when no one will believe her (l.835).

Uera dico, sed nequiquam, quoniam non uis credere.

(l.835)

These words have a tragic ring to them, but it is notoriously difficult to define Alcmena as a character and opinion is divided between regarding Alcmena as noble and tragic or as a farcical figure. Critics have noted the uniqueness of some aspects of Alcmena, namely the fact that she is the only Roman *matrona* in Roman Comedy to stand accused of adultery, as well as the noble and tragic way in which she defends herself from the accusations.⁷⁵ The difficulty of classifying Alcmena's character is part of the difficulty in defining the genre of the *Amphitruo* itself, as they both contain simultaneous elements of tragedy and comedy, which compete for supremacy despite the fact that some would argue that the position of the divine characters in *Amphitruo* precludes them from being mere objects of ridicule as their dignity must be preserved, and thus 'Alcmena is clearly not meant to be a comic figure and her style has its closest counterpart in Greek tragedy.'⁷⁶ It is my opinion that Alcmena is a curious mixture of the tragic and the comic, and it is she, more than any of the other characters, who represents the tragic-comic elements promised by Mercury (ll.54-63). She stands as a tragi-comic figure, sometimes prone to declaiming in tragic style, but with the effect inevitably undercut by a sense of the ridiculous.

When Amphitruo first glimpses her on his return, she is expounding in tragic style on the pain of parting from her supposed husband and on the glories of *uirtus* (ll.633-652), and is reminiscent of Alcestis in Euripides' tragedy.⁷⁷ Just as we are admiring the lofty sentiments expressed by Alcmena, Sosia undercuts the tragic aspects by remarking on her well-fed appearance, implying her satisfaction with her sexual activity with Jupiter as well as referring

⁷⁵ Stewart (1958) 358. Hunter (1985) 126 describes Alcmena as 'the epitome of the respected Roman *matrona*.'

⁷⁶ Romano (1974) 875.

⁷⁷ See earlier in this chapter p.162 n. 60 for further comments on *uirtus*.

to her pregnancy indicated by her ballooning abdomen (*l.*667). It is vital to note that she sings of *uoluptas* no less than three times in her encomium on *uirtus*.⁷⁸

In her refutation of their accusations of untruthfulness, Alcmena expounds on her dowry of chastity, purity, and self-control, respect for the gods, affection towards her parents and harmony with her family, as well as being a dutiful wife (*ll.*839-842). While her sentiments are noble and justified, they are not usual material for comedy, and one can't help contrasting the other Plautine dowered wives, such as Artemona, wife of Demaenetus in *Asinaria*, Menaechmus' unnamed Wife in *Menaechmi*, and Dorippa, wife of Lysimachus in *Mercator*, who are all demanding and overbearing wives.⁷⁹ Alcmena's moralising is comically reminiscent of the moralising that Plautine slaves, like Messenio in *Menaechmi*, take pleasure in sharing with the audience.

Alcmena's tragic stance takes on comic proportions by being out of place in the otherwise farcical comedy, and her insistence that, despite her large abdomen, she has behaved with *pudicitia* and *pudor* adds to the farcical aspect, contributing to the unusual blend of comedy and tragedy that prevails in *Amphitruo*. Phillips sums up the situation well when she points out that, when read in the abstract as printed words on the page, Alcmena's words decrying her husband's absence and her encomium to *uirtus* (*ll.*633-653) could be interpreted as a tragic aria, but that when the original visual impact is taken into account, the sexual and comic elements are obvious and prevalent (but, in my opinion, do not override the tragic elements completely.)⁸⁰

Christenson bases his view of Alcmena on Bakhtin's concept of grotesque realism, whereby the 'high, spiritual, ideal, abstract' is lowered and degraded to 'the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity,' and this degradation relates to acts of defecation, copulation, pregnancy and birth.⁸¹ Christenson thus maintains that the presentation of Alcmena's character is 'thoroughly farcical', as he supports Phillips' view that the actor portraying Alcmena would have been

⁷⁸ Segal (1987) 179, *Am.* *ll.*635, 637, 641.

⁷⁹ The Plautine stereotype of the comic dowered wife is outlined by Periplectomenus in *Miles Gloriosus*, *ll.*680-700 where dowered wives are described as haughtily shouting orders from their sumptuous carriages, or by Megadorus in *Aulularia* *ll.*167-169, who describes the continual demands made by dowered wives.

⁸⁰ Phillips (1985) 125.

⁸¹ Christenson (2001 243-259) discusses Bakhtin's concept of grotesque realism outline in Bakhtin (1984) *Rabelais and his World*.

grotesquely padded to represent the imminent arrival of the twins. He notes that Alcmena is the only pregnant character appearing on stage in Greek and Roman comedy and that she is on stage for a large part of the play, not just heard giving birth offstage. He thus sees Alcmena as very suitable material for Bakhtin's theory of grotesque realism, and he enlarges on the farcical aspect of Alcmena's character by pointing out the references that suggest that Jupiter's hands are repeatedly wandering over Alcmena's body. Christenson also suggests that the actor playing Alcmena, or Jupiter himself, probably patted her large belly to contribute to the broad humour. Christenson, in fact, maintains that Plautus portrays Alcmena as 'sexually insatiable', arguing convincingly that, if one interprets Alcmena metatheatrically, in the light of her padded costume and large belly, her words are suggestive of insatiable *uoluptas*. He refers particularly to Alcmena's complaint that her 'husband' is leaving her after a 'short' time of pleasure, whereas the audience knows that this night has been considerably lengthened to suit Jupiter's pleasure (ll.112-114).

*Satin parua res est uoluptatum in uita atque in aetate agunda
Praequam quod molestum est?*

(ll.633-634)

Christenson sees a theme of sexual satiety (or insatiety) revolving around the words 'satietaem', 'satin', which in conjunction with the use of 'uoluptas' and 'uirtus', render Alcmena as an 'extremely pregnant and seemingly insatiable voluptuary', and he links Alcmena's use of *satin* here in l.663 to Jupiter's earlier use of *satin* in l.509 where he asks Alcmena if she is not satisfied that he loves no other woman on earth as much as he loves her.

Satin habes si feminarum nulla est quam aequae diligam?

(l.509).

Christenson further associates the motif of satiety with Sosia's description of Alcmena to Amphitruo (on their return from abroad) as being stuffed full already, (*Alcmenam saturam* l.667), which implies both an excess of food and pleasure, as well as drawing broad attention to her large abdomen. Thus, Christenson argues convincingly for a metatheatrical presentation of a sexually caricatured woman. However, Christenson's contention that Alcmena is thoroughly farcical does not hold completely true. While Alcmena is often interpreted as embodying the ideal Roman matron, Christenson views her chiefly as a farcical figure in a 'bloated and

caricatured form'; and as a sexually insatiable carnal woman. He offers several powerful arguments for viewing Alcmena as a vehicle for Bakhtin's grotesque realism, and Plautus does take many opportunities to poke fun at the traditional ideal Roman *matrona*, but Alcmena is not painted by Plautus as only a grotesque figure of parody.⁸² Bond fleetingly alludes to a mixture of the emotions of pity and amusement, which were elicited by a recent live performance of *Amphitruo*. He also makes the point that whereas Jupiter and Mercury are identified as comic characters because they frequently address the audience directly, neither Alcmena nor her husband Amphitruo breaks the convention that performers in tragedy do not address the audience.⁸³ In general however, Christenson tends to concentrate on the farcical aspects of Alcmena and to overlook the other aspects of her character, which are not 'thoroughly' farcical, such as her wifely pride in her husband and her genuine love for him, as well as her *pietas*.

Plautus has also taken pains to present a picture of a Roman *matrona* who acts with *pietas*, as she prepares a sacrifice for her husband to pay his vows after returning home safely (ll.946-949), and is described by her serving-maid as '*piam et pudicam uxorem*' (l.1086). Alcmena also calls on the immortal gods for help in her labour with 'clean washed hands and covered head' (ll.1091-1094). Moreover, her own husband, on his return, before he becomes crazed with suspicion, describes her as the best of all the Theban ladies and rightly known as virtuous by the citizens of Thebes (ll.676-678). Alcmena is presented as a mixture of the farcical and the noble, and as basically a decent, virtuous woman, whose sensual side is brought to the fore and encouraged by her liaison with Jupiter as he turns the lives of Alcmena and Amphitruo upside down in order to assuage his own lust for her. It must be noted that Alcmena occupies a unique position amongst the Plautine *matronae*. In contrast to the shrewish nameless *matrona* in *Menaechmi*, who has a dowry of financial substance and who is intent on making her husband's life a misery, Alcmena is presented as a loving wife and a woman of *pietas* and virtue, whom Jupiter is compelled to deceive in order to further his *amour* with her. Alcmena

⁸² Christenson (2001) 244-259 mentions the positive aspect of regeneration proceeding from the degradation principle, and discusses Bakhtin's insistence that grotesque realism is essentially regenerative, and brings with it the opportunity of a 'new outlook on the world' and to offer entry to a completely new order of things.' However, disappointingly Christenson does not cover this regenerative aspect adequately in his discussion of *Amphitruo* and only concludes that our scant social historical records do not allow us to evaluate whether *Amphitruo* challenged the traditional Roman notions of marriage or divinity.

Although his argument in favour of Bakhtin's theory has several valid points, it does not adequately account for the lack of regeneration in *Amphitruo*. Christenson weakly concludes that 'a play such as *Am.* that grotesquely caricatured figures of authority who normally command respect in both the human and divine spheres could have served, more generally, to expose these social roles as cultural constructions.'

⁸³ Bond (1999) 211-213. Bond notes that this mixed response is a typical response to the problems laid out by tragi-comedy.

states that her dowry is chastity and purity. She is also presented as having considerably more dignity than the sharp-tongued, vigorous Cleostrata in *Casina* who is intent on taking bawdy revenge on her erring husband. While Plautus does create some humour at her expense, making fun of the size of her belly and her aria to her husband's '*uirtus*', nevertheless Alcmena is presented to us as an unusually decent *matrona*. This decency serves to highlight Alcmena's plight and the helplessness of mortals against the whims of the gods.

The inference is that, in a Saturnalian vein, disorder has reigned temporarily, but that with the ending of the affair with Jupiter, matters will return to normal, and that Alcmena will revert to the decent *matrona* that she basically was and will be a model upright mother of her twins and an excellent wife to Amphytruo. Bond maintains that Alcmena is potentially as much 'a source of cruel amusement', as Amphytruo and that this amusement arises from the incongruity of the situation in which these normally virtuous people have been precipitated, rather than from the characters *per se*.⁸⁴ He also maintains that this applies more to Amphytruo than to Alcmena, and in my opinion, this view makes sense, as Alcmena remains a decent loyal loving wife throughout the play with none of the foibles of *hubris* shown by her husband.

In terms of a sense of identity, Alcmena relates most closely to the social view of the self, where an appropriate socio-identity is created by choosing a value orientation resulting from the integration of selected values into one perspective, which is a focal facet of the social self. Identity is closely bound with such values as truth, beauty, freedom, duty and order, which give the individual a sense of knowing who he is because he knows what he stands for.⁸⁵ Despite the fact that she has been accused of behaving shamefully by two people, her husband and his slave, she does not waver in her conviction that she is right and they are wrong. She feels so strongly that she is prepared to leave home, without her possessions if necessary, accompanied only by her maid and her honour, if her husband does not apologise (ll.882-890, 930). Rosenmeyer points out that due to her intolerable situation at home, Alcmena invokes a legal phrase for instituting divorce, and that this divorce is averted only by Jupiter's blandishments. The fact that Alcmena utters the words normally used by husbands, and more appropriately spoken by the person staying behind rather than the person leaving, points to the fact that

⁸⁴ Bond (1999) 210

⁸⁵ See my Introduction pp.16-17.

Alcmena is assuming the stronger masculine role and taking charge of the situation.⁸⁶ This is more than just a comic reversal. It is an indication of the strength of her character in that she is not prepared to suffer passively while her husband accuses her of shamelessness and adultery. In this regard, Alcmena is similar to the tragic heroine Alcestis of Euripides in her defence of values, despite the fact that their men do not fully value them. While Alcmena is somewhat of a tragic figure, Plautus does not allow tragedy to predominate in this scene. The man that Alcmena is divorcing is not her real husband, but the doppelganger Jupiter, which undercuts the tragic aspect. As Rosenmeyer notes, 'levels of confused identity cloud the issue.'⁸⁷

Tyndarus too in *Captiui* was prepared to suffer for his actions as he stood by his values, regardless of the consequences. Despite the comical aspects introduced by her bloated abdomen and her parody of Alcestis, Alcmena remains as an integrated personality who is confident in herself and her values and on the whole she is not a comical figure but is a serious-minded *matrona*. Plautus is careful to preserve her *pudicitia* by emphasising her innocence as a pawn in the hands of Jupiter, even to the extent of preserving her from swearing a false oath to her innocence by including the word 'mortal' in her oath,⁸⁸ and also by having Alcmena innocently swear by the wife of the man with whom she was unwittingly having an affair, the jealous goddess who would definitely seek extreme revenge if the adulterous affair were to become known.

Per supremi regis regnum iuro et matrem familias

Iunonem, quam me uereri et metuere est par maxume,

⁸⁶ We have noted the parallels between Alcmena and Cleostrata in *Casina* in that, as Plautine *matronae*, both display unusual strength and depth of character and both achieve unusual prominence on stage. However, Cleostrata is an 'exultant gamester and plotter' (Slater 1985 84) who directs the action, while Alcmena does not plot or direct the play, but defends herself vigorously from her husband's accusations. Plautus breaks new ground in comedy with these females of unusual strength of character.

⁸⁷ Rosenmeyer (1995) 201-211, 213-215 comments on the legal phrase signifying intention to divorce, *res tuas tibi habeto*, and Alcmena's use of the divorce formula with an additional request for her own personal possessions and servants to be returned to her, *valeas, tibi habeas res tuas, reddas meas* (l.927). The very utterance of the words '*tuas res tibi habeto*' according to the Twelve Tables constitutes *ipso facto* a *repudium*. (Cohen (1994) 183). While there are numerous 'threats and blusters' regarding divorce on the Plautine stage, particularly in connection with *uxores dotatae*, the actual use of the divorce formula itself on stage is rare. (Rosenmeyer (1995) 202-203). Rosenmeyer supports the view that in a marriage *sine manu*, the Roman wife could initiate a divorce if she were *sui iuris*, otherwise her father could on her behalf if she were *in patria potestas*. The act of divorce consists of two phases, namely the utterance of the legal formula repudiating the spouse, and then the actual act of abandonment. Alcmena accomplishes the first stage, but Jupiter averts her actual departure, thus cancelling the divorce proceedings initiated by Alcmena.

⁸⁸ Schumann (1977) 142.

*Ut mi extra unum te mortalis nemo corpus corpore
Contigit, quo me inpudicam faceret.*

(ll.831-834)

Recurring Themes of, Waking and Dreaming, Sanity and Insanity

The *Amphitruo* abounds with deceptions and cases of mistaken identity, and in each case, there are corresponding accusations and counter-accusations of being drunk, insane, asleep, bewitched or dreaming, which are closely bound with the mistaken identity incidents. These accusations occur when a character's statements about his identity or his alibis are disbelieved, and represent the conflict between appearance and reality that the protagonists experience in *Amphitruo*. Padel in her comments on Greek and tragic madness notes that 'the idea of madness is commoner in tragedy than its occurrence' and she calls this 'hyperbolic madness', due to the fact that tragic characters frequently accuse each other of madness in a sane context, as the only possible explanation of inexplicable behaviour or statements.⁸⁹ In my view, the same concept of hyperbolic madness is interchangeable with the concepts of dreaming, being diseased or bewitched or drunk and it may equally be applied to *Amphitruo* also, which, as a *tragicomoedia*, includes many tragic aspects despite being a Plautine comedy. As Slater points out, it is only the mortals who doubt their own and each other's sanity, sobriety or wakefulness.⁹⁰ Jupiter and Mercury do not speak the language of waking and dreaming, etc., as they are the ones in control, with a firm grasp on reality and their self-identities while they pull the strings of their human puppets.

Accusations of Sleeping

The theme of waking and sleeping begins when Mercury intimidates Sosia and the god boasts of his ability to put men to sleep with his fists. The timid Sosia fears that he will be sent to dreamland, as he has been awake for so long on his master's business.

*Credi misericors est: nunc propterea quod me meus erus
Fecit ut uigilarem, hic pugnīs faciet hodie ut dormiam.*

(ll.297-298)

⁸⁹ Padel (1995) 194.

⁹⁰ Slater (1990) 117.

*Iam pridem uidetur factum heri quod homines quattuor
In soporem comlocastis nudos.*

(ll.303-304)

Quattuor uiros sopori se dedisse hic autumat:

(l.306)

Quid si ego illum tractim tangam, ut dormiat?

Nam contuas has tris noctes peruigilaui.

(ll.313-314)

Mercury uses the metaphor of sleeping to instil the fear of being beaten to death into the cowardly slave who understands the message only too well, but makes an effort at bravado by joking about the literal aspect of being awake or asleep. Thus far, the theme of waking and sleeping has not had any implication regarding any aspects of identity. However, later in the play, the theme of waking and sleeping comes to represent truth and reality versus imagination and fantasy. When Sosia attempts to explain to his master how he was prevented from entering his house by another Sosia, Amphitruo is baffled by this tale of two Sosias and suggests that Sosia had only experienced this in his dreams. The indignant Sosia replies most eloquently that he was wide-awake the whole time.

Non soleo ego somniculose eri imperia persequi.

Uigilans uidi, uigilans nunc te uideo; uigilans fabulor,

Uigilantem ille me iam dudum uigilans pugnīs contudit.

(ll.622-624)

This scene of doubt and disbelief with Amphitruo and his slave is echoed with Amphitruo and his wife. When Alcmena's veracity is in question, Sosia cheekily advises his master to wait until Alcmena has had one more sleep. In a parallel to the scene when he accuses his slave of dreaming the Mercury encounter, just as he did with Sosia, Amphitruo accuses his wife of being awake while dreaming up his previous visit. Alcmena echoes Sosia's reply when she indignantly insists that she is fully awake and has not been dreaming and has been telling the truth.

Paulisper mane, dum edormiscat unum somnum.

Quaene uigilans somniat?

Equidem ecce ego uigilo, et uigilans id quod factum est fabulor.

(II.696-698)

So emphatic and so sure of her self is Alcmena in her protestations that she is awake and that she has already seen them both at dawn that morning that Sosia is impressed. Influenced no doubt also by his own sensation of being two Sosias, he waivers and suggests the possibility that she may be telling the truth and that he and his master were carried home in their sleep on the earlier visit that Alcmena describes.

Quid si e portu nauis huc nos dormientis detulit?

(I.701)

It is apparent that, of the three, Sosia has the least strong sense of identity, as both his master and his mistress are very confident in their assertions of being correct in their opposing versions of events. When Amphitruo continues to doubt and cross-examine her regarding his supposed previous visit, Alcmena returns emphatic and defiant answers, insisting that not only was she awake, but so was her husband. Alcmena echoes Sosia's earlier protest against being accused of daydreaming. Again, the waking and sleeping motif represents the contrast between reality and illusion.⁹¹

Tu me heri hic uidisti?

Ego, inquam, si uis deciens dicere.

In somnis fortasse. Immo uigilans uigilantem.

(II.726-727)

Notwithstanding his own earlier experience of telling the truth but not being believed, Sosia also describes Alcmena's version of her 'husband's' earlier visit as a dream and, ironically, an experience which should be cured by sacrificing to Jupiter, the god of prodigies.

⁹¹ The comic irony is that Alcmena believes that she has been watchful, vigilant and wide awake, but, as a mortal, she has proved to be powerless against the wiles of the disguised Jupiter.

*Recte dicit, ut commeminit: somnium narrat tibi.
Sed, mulier, postquam experrecta es, te prodigiali Ioui
Aut mola salsa hodie aut ture comprecata oportuit.*
(ll.738-740)

Again, this reference to dreaming implies fantasy and unreality. This is the last reference in the play to waking, sleeping and dreaming, but throughout the play, the characters also accuse each other of being bewitched, drunk or insane when they cannot believe a person's version of events or even when a person's identity is doubted.

Accusations of Insanity

Mercury is the first to make an accusation of insanity when, in an attempt to destabilise the slave, he accuses Sosia of being insane. Sosia, in a vain attempt to retain his identity, has just stated that he is Sosia, the family servant and the only servant named Sosia in the family, (ll.399-400). Mercury, as part of his campaign to drive Sosia away by intimidating him, both physically and mentally, calls the slave insane.

Hic homo sanus non est.
(l.401)

In this instance, it is not that Mercury actually doubts Sosia's identity, but he pretends to doubt it in order to undermine the slave's belief in himself. Sosia is unsettled by this accusation but instinctively returns the charge of being insane.

Quod mihi praedicas uitium, id tibi est.
(l.401)

This counter-accusation of insanity by Sosia is more of a reflex action than a conviction, as Sosia then commences trying to convince himself of his own identity by recalling his movements and trying to rationalise his sense of self (ll.402-408). Mercury is so successful in his bid to confuse Sosia that the slave later declares that he has lost himself and been transformed into someone else (l.456).

Madness is again discussed when Mercury confides to the audience his intention of confusing Amphitruo, his slave and the general's entire household and of driving them to insanity while his father enjoys the company of Alcmena, undisturbed.

*Erroris ambo ego illos et dementiae
Complebo atque Amphitruonis omnem familiam,
Adeo usque satietatem dum capiet pater
Illius quam amat.*

(ll.470-473)

Amphitruo again calls his slave insane when Sosia persists in his notion of two Sosias, identical in appearance, name and memories.

Satin tu sanus es?

(l.604)

When Amphitruo cannot believe his wife's statement that he had just paid her a previous visit also, he tells Sosia that she is raving, and Sosia goes further by likening his mistress to a frenzied Bacchante, implying orgiastic behaviour as well as elements of madness.⁹²

Haec quidem deliramenta loquitur.

(l.696)

*Non tu scis? Bacchae bacchanti si uelis aduorsarier,
Ex insana insaniorem facies, feriet saepius;
Si obsequare, una resoluas plaga.*

(ll.703-705)

When Amphitruo and his slave disbelieve Alcmena's statement that she had just recently welcomed them both home (ll.714-717), Sosia jokes that she is not carrying a son, but insanity itself (ll.718-719). When Amphitruo refutes his wife's statement insisting that she saw him the previous day, he bewails the fact that his wife is insane.

⁹² Schumann (1977) 143. Padel (1995) 28-29 comments on the Greek verb *bachao* as denoting frenzy and raving, and being possessed by a *daimon*, notably Bacchus.

Delirat uxor.

(l.727)

Sosia is so surprised to hear Amphytruo asking him to verify whether he heard his master uttering the words that Alcmena alleges, that he in turn asks Amphytruo whether he is insane to be asking these questions.

*Quaeso edepol, num tu quoque etiam insanis, quom id me interrogas,
Qui ipsus equidem nunc primum istanc tecum conspicio simul?*

(ll.753-754)

The two men do not believe Alcmena's version of events and are even more sceptical when she mentions the golden bowl as a means of proving that she is telling the truth, and they describe Alcmena as having a crazed brain and being full of evil spirits.

*Quaeso, quin tu istanc iubes
Pro cerrita circumferri?*

(ll.775-776)

Nam haec quidem edepol laruarum plenast.

(l.777)

Amphytruo has thus far felt totally confident of his own sense of identity and reality, and when his version of reality has conflicted with that of his wife or his slave, he has called them insane, asleep or drunk. However, he starts to feel unsettled and to have feelings of doubt regarding his own sense of reality when Alcmena actually produces the golden bowl as proof of her veracity. As evidence of his wavering feelings of reality and sense of self, he applies the epithet of insanity to himself and remarks that his wife is driving him insane with the things that she says.

Nam haec quidem nos delirantis facere dictis postulat.

(l.789)

The two men attempt in different ways to deal with the shock of having the golden bowl produced as evidence and overturning their sense of reality. Sosia accounts for the golden bowl by accusing the general of secretly giving it to Alcmena (ll.795-797), and Amphitruo angrily accuses the slave of aiding his wife's insanity.

Ei mihi! iam tu quoque huius adiuuas insaniam?

(l.798)

Alcmena is unable to account for the difference in behaviour between her supposed husband, when he tries to caress her affectionately, and her actual husband, who has sternly accused her of immodesty and so she questions the sanity of Jupiter, masquerading as her husband.

Nam certo, si sis sanus aut sapias satis,

Quam tu impudicam esse arbitrere et praedices,

Cum ea tu sermonem nec ioco nec serio

Tibi habeas, nisi sis stultior stultissimo.

(ll.904-907)

When Alcmena has been goaded beyond endurance by accusations of infidelity and shamelessness by her husband and she is in the act of divorcing her husband and leaving her home, Jupiter steps in quickly to avert the crisis by expressing incredulity and asking her if she is sane and thus saves the marriage.

Sanan es?

(l.928)

Accusations of Drunkenness

Drunkenness is mentioned early in the play when Sosia wonders if the god of Night is drunk, resulting in a long night (l.272), and later suggests that Sol has been drinking and is now late as a consequence (l.282). As a further means of expressing doubt and disbelief, and as an alternative to accusations of insanity, accusations of drunkenness also are exchanged in

Amphitruo. Based on these frequent references to drunkenness and madness Stuart sees strong links between this play and Euripides' *Bacchae*.⁹³

When Sosia reports to his master that there are two Sosias, one of whom is with him and the other at his house, the irate general denounces his slave as being drunk, refuses to believe the slave's denials and demands to know where he obtained his drink.

Homo hic ebrius est, ut opinor.

(l.574)

Ubi bibisti?

(l.575)

Stewart notes a further reference to drunkenness. When Amphitruo and Sosia do not believe Alcmena's statement that she has recently just seen her husband, ll.694-695, Amphitruo accuses her of raving insanely, and Sosia advises his master to wait until Alcmena has had one further sleep.

Paulisper mane,

Dum edormiscat unum somnum.

(l.697)

Stewart points out that *edormire* frequently has the connotation of 'sleeping off the effects of wine', so Sosia is insinuating that his mistress is inebriated.⁹⁴ Wine was forbidden to Roman women by legislation and Gellius notes that Cato the Elder comments on the fact that women were judged and punished by a judge for drinking wine as severely as if they had been caught in adultery. The implication is then that a husband was entitled to kill his wife if she was found to

⁹³ Stewart (1958) 348-371 uses the continuous references to drunkenness and madness in *Amphitruo* to link the play to Euripides' tragedy *Bacchae*, which could account for the 'nearly tragic action and tone' of *Amphitruo*. Other links between the plays are prologues spoken by gods disguised as men who inform the audience that gods will be participating in the forthcoming play, the action of both plays occurring outside a large building in Thebes, women apparently bewitched by a foreign sorcerer and thence drawn into promiscuous behaviour, Pentheus and Amphitruo each making a frenzied attempt to burst into the building to put the sorcerer to the sword. Further, Slater (1990) 117 notes that both plays 'possess Theban heroes, who resist the invasion of their homes by what they characterize as foreign magicians' and that 'the language of both plays is dominated by themes of madness and drunkenness.'

⁹⁴ Stewart (1958) 355.

have been drinking wine or committing adultery.⁹⁵ Thus, Alcmena is comically belittled on three fronts – she is accused by her husband and slave of being drunk, unfaithful and bewitched.

Accusations of Being Diseased or Bewitched

Another response indicating disbelief and denial is that of suggesting that the person making the incredible statements is diseased or even bewitched. When Sosia hotly denies being insane, but persists in his story of two Sosias, as an alternative accusation, Amphitruo accuses his slave of being under an evil spell.

*Huic homini nescio quid est mali mala obiectum manu,
Postquam a me abiit.*

(II.605-606)

Insanity, and not being able to believe what is being said, is frequently associated with ill health and disease. Sosia attributes Alcmena's insistence that she has just seen them both to an attack of bile (II.727-728).⁹⁶ In defending these charges of being insane and mistaken in her version of events, Alcmena insists emphatically and repeatedly that she is perfectly sane and of sound mind and body.

Equidem sana sum et deos quaeso, ut salua pariam filium.
(I.720)

Equidem ecastor sana et salua sum.

⁹⁵ Russell (2003) 78, discussing Gellius in *Noctes Atticae* 10.23.3.

⁹⁶ Padel (1995) 48-159 comments on the close association of black bile with madness from Aristophanes onwards. 'Doctors in the Greek tradition thought of cause and treatment in terms of invasion and eviction. Disease got in. Doctors had to get it out.' The presence of madness was thought to be indicated by black bile, which could be cured by the use of black hellebore. The 4th Century Hippocratic writers, in their exposition of the humoral theory in *On the Nature of Man*, stated that the body of a human being consists of four humours, namely blood, phlegm, yellow and black bile. The manifestation of black bile was seen as a result of the imbalance of these humours and was treated with of black hellebore as an emetic and particularly as a treatment for madness. Bearing in mind that *melas* means dark-coloured as well as black, Hippocratic doctors may have thought they saw black bile with the presence of dark-coloured urine, due to blackwater fever, a form of malaria, or dark-coloured faeces or *vomit*, due to the presence of blood caused by bleeding gastric ulcers or carcinoma of the stomach. After Hippocrates, black bile became regarded as the organic source of madness.

(l.730)

When Alcmena insists that she is telling the truth and goes off to fetch the golden bowl as proof, Amphitruo and Sosia are disconcerted and, while waiting for her to return, decide amongst themselves that she is crazed and also full of evil spirits.⁹⁷

Quaeso, quin tu istanc iubes pro cerrita circumferri?

Edepol qui facto est opus;

Nam haec quidem edepol laruarum plenast.

(ll.775-776)

When Alcmena insists that she has dined and slept with him, Amphitruo's sense of self begins to waver, and he asks Sosia twice for corroboration of his identity and alibi, but when Sosia affirms the general's identity, Amphitruo comes to the conclusion that his wife has been bewitched by a magician.

Nescioquis praestigiator hanc frustratur mulierem.

(l.830)

In the fragmented section of *Amphitruo*, it appears that Amphitruo pays retribution for insisting that his slave and wife were crazed, as first Mercury, (posing as his slave), and then his wife, in turn accuse him of being bewitched and urge him to consult a doctor, and Alcmena also calls him crazed (frag. 8).

Amphitruo's feeling of being the only sane one in an unreal nightmarish world reaches a crescendo when his identity is doubted in rapid succession by his wife, his apparent slave, his pilot Blepharo and his own identical double. In addition, he has been thoroughly trounced and humiliated by his apparent slave and by his identical twin. In this topsy-turvy world, Amphitruo concludes that his entire household has been bewitched by the other Amphitruo, and he therefore decides to avenge himself on the wizard who has cast this spell on everyone.

Ego pol illum ulciscar hodie Thessalium ueneficum,

⁹⁷ Madness, disease and physical pollution from unknown causes or divine anger were virtually interchangeable to the ancient Greeks and could be purified by ritual (Padel (1995) 158-159).

Qui peruorse perturbauit familiae mentem meae.

(ll.1043-1044)

Amphitruo's world only starts to right itself after he has been struck by the lightning bolt, when his maid Bromia recognises him and calls him by name and identifies herself as **his** maid, Bromia (ll.1075-1082). This is a return to the real world as Amphitruo knew it, but it is such a strong contrast to the non-recognition and demoralising experiences he has just suffered, that Amphitruo is overwhelmed and makes Bromia twice repeat that she recognises him as her master, Amphitruo (l.1082). The fact that her version of reality agrees with his version induces Amphitruo to call her sane, the only one of the household to evince any evidence of sanity thus far.

Haec sola sanam mentem gestat meorum familiarium.

(l.1083)

When Bromia pronounces that the entire household are indeed sane, this signals a return to the status quo, the convergence of everybody's sense of reality, and the reintegration of Amphitruo into normality and harmony and no further accusations are levelled of being asleep, dreaming, being drunk, insane or bewitched.

Conclusion

While mistaken identity is a hallmark of Plautine comedy, in *Amphitruo* mistakes in identity are especially abundant, due to the presence of not just one set of identical twins, as in *Menaechmi*, but two sets of identical twins.⁹⁸ In addition, in contrast to *Menaechmi*, where the identical twins cross paths by accident, the gods in *Amphitruo* deliberately set out to confuse everybody with their impersonations, and furthermore this confusion is ongoing throughout the play. The resultant farcical atmosphere is hilarious. However, *Amphitruo* is not purely comical farce, but simultaneously combines farce with more serious elements. The continuous mistakes in identity afford great amusement to the audience but also illustrate the helplessness of mere man when struggling against the will of the gods and raise several problems of self-identity. The

⁹⁸ The theme of duality is prevalent throughout the play until the very end, where Alcmena gives birth to twins and the baby Hercules strangles the two snakes that approach his cradle, and of course the duality of the play's genre, a *tragicomoedia*.

plights of Sosia, Alcmena and Amphitruo in varying degrees highlight the importance of a strong sense of identity and self.

In *Amphitruo*, identity is exploited by the two gods for their own ends when they assume the exact physical appearance of the general and his slave, with the result that the mortals are helpless against the machinations of the scheming, omniscient Jupiter and Mercury. Mercury in the prologue describes his father as *architectus omnibus*, which Galinsky points out ‘connotes clever and unscrupulous manipulation.’⁹⁹ Sosia, who is presented to us as a weak, boastful, timid, swaggering slave, has the most fragile sense of self. When Mercury beats him with his fists, bullies him with threats, outdoes him in his lying and cunning behaviour, and steals his memories as well as his master, house, name, dress, physical appearance and behaviour, Sosia falters in his confidence that he is a unique being. Instead, he finds a solution for himself in believing in the existence of two identical Sosias in different places at the same time. Alcmena, despite being outnumbered by her husband and slave with their disbelief and accusations, refuses to be swayed from her strong conviction that she is right and they are both wrong. In her staunch avowal of her version of events, Alcmena displays the strongest sense of self, notwithstanding the united front that her husband and slave present against her. Unlike Amphitruo, she does not wonder if she is dreaming, bewitched or drunk, but steadfastly sticks to what she knows is the truth and defends her reputation and morals vigorously. She announces firmly that instead of believing her husband and slave, she believes herself most of all, because she knows that she is speaking the truth (*ll.*756-757).¹⁰⁰ Amphitruo does not have as strong a sense of self as his wife, as he occasionally wavers in his conviction of his being right, and he sometimes asks Sosia to corroborate his version of events and appeals to Sosia and Bromia for recognition of his identity as their master (*ll.*822, 1082-1083). In addition, Amphitruo at one stage admits that he is so bewitched that he does not himself know who he is (*l.*844) and in vain hopes to rely on the testimony of Naucrates to establish his identity and actions beyond doubt (*ll.*849-851). However, Amphitruo’s sense of identity is far stronger than Sosia’s, as at no time does he consider the possibility of the existence of two Amphitruos despite the fact that he too receives a drubbing from his identical double. Amphitruo’s solution to the dilemma of his double is a military one, and he resolves to slay every member of his household with his sword.

⁹⁹ Galinsky (1966) 213.

¹⁰⁰ We have earlier noted the similarity between Alcmena’s determination to stand by her principles and those of Alcestis pp.173, 178.

If we consider the question of identity in *Amphitruo* from a philosophical point of view, Locke's view that personal identity consisted in the sameness of consciousness and not in any material or immaterial substance, would have had some validation in the play, as when Sosia's physical appearance fails to substantiate his identity, the slave falls back on his memories in an effort to convince Mercury of his identity.¹⁰¹ Alcmena and Amphitruo have severe disagreements resulting from differences in memory, with Alcmena remembering very clearly when she last saw her supposed husband, and Amphitruo remembering his activities on the previous day equally clearly. Amphitruo, in vain, hopes that the pilot's memories of Amphitruo's being with him on the previous day will serve as an alibi to convince Alcmena that he had only arrived home on that day.

When we consider the play from a psychological perspective of identity in the light of William James' view that a sense of personal continuity and a sense of distinctness from others are basic components of personal identity, we can see that Amphitruo possesses both these senses fairly strongly.¹⁰² This is evident in his confidence that he is the same person who was victorious on the battlefield and who sailed home the previous day, and in his refusal to accept Jupiter as his other self, and instead classing him as a sorcerer and impostor. Sosia on the other hand, while having some sense of personal continuity, is lacking in the sense of being distinct from others in that he is quite easily beaten into accepting Mercury as a second self. When we examine James' view of the 'me', with the material me, the social me and the spiritual me, we can see that both Sosia and Amphitruo attempt to validate their identities by placing their hopes on their material selves being confirmed by means of the lantern, and the golden bowl, as well as Amphitruo's appealing to Blepharo for recognition of his self. Both Sosia and Amphitruo suffered loss of identity to some extent when their social selves were not recognised; Sosia when Mercury refused to recognise him as Sosia, his master's servant, and Amphitruo when his wife, supposed slave and pilot were unable to distinguish between him and his impostor. The play raises such issues as the criteria that make up personal identity, and explores personal identity in terms of physical appearance (Sosia and Amphitruo's identical twins), in terms of physical objects (Sosia's lantern and the golden bowl), in terms of memories (Sosia's memories of his experience in the tent during the battle, Alcmena and Amphitruo's separate memories of

¹⁰¹ See my Introduction p.5

¹⁰² Erikson (1980) 127-128 supported and developed these basic principles of James. See my Introduction pp 8-9.

their doings the evening before), in terms of one's name (both impostors are accepted on their appearance and recognition of their names, and Sosia fears that he will lose his identity if he loses his name or has his name changed to Quintus), and in terms of social recognition (Amphitruo is not recognised as the rightful Amphitruo and is shut out of his house and taunted).

From a sociological perspective, Amphitruo has found it very difficult, but not impossible, to sustain his identity without the confirmation of his identity by society.¹⁰³ When his wife insisted that she had dined and slept with him on the previous evening, Amphitruo accused her of being drunk, insane or being bewitched, but maintained his sense of self, largely through the support of Sosia. When confronted by his perfect double, attacked by his supposed slave and not recognised as his own self by his real slave and his pilot, Amphitruo finds it increasingly difficult to maintain his identity without social support. This is evinced by his gratitude later that at least one of his servants, Bromia, confirms his identity.

In tandem with considering aspects of personal identity, *Amphitruo* also raises the question of genre. In the prologue of *Amphitruo*, Mercury informs the audience that the play is a tragicomedy, and this label has perplexed critics who vary in their assessment of the play and the level of its comic versus tragic content.¹⁰⁴ According to Mercury, the play was originally a tragedy, and indeed, he starts introducing the play in melodramatic mock-tragic tones, and then offers to convert the play to a comedy to please the audience (*ll.*39-55). In fact he goes on to call the play a tragi-comedy, explaining that the tragedy aspect would be fitting for the gods appearing on the stage, and comedy would be appropriate in view of the fact that there is a slave part in the comedy (*ll.*59-63). This mixing of genres is typical of the whole play, which seems to be unique in Roman comedy in its combination, often simultaneous, of aspects of tragedy and comedy.¹⁰⁵ The dual genre in the prologue is symbolic of the whole play where all the mortals become confused by the gods' behaviour, and where the expectations of the audience are overturned as the play is unconventional in genre and action and moves incessantly between comedy and tragedy or even combines them. By moving outside the confines of conventional genre, Plautus is able to exploit both genres for greatest effect. Segal

¹⁰³ Berger (1963) 115-121 notes that identity is socially bestowed and sustained. See my Introduction p.14.

¹⁰⁴ Barnes (1957) 19.

¹⁰⁵ *Amphitruo* resembles Euripides' *Alceste* in its dual nature of tragedy blended with comedy, although *Amphitruo* is predominantly comic with tragic aspects.

regards Mercury's words regarding turning the play into a tragi-comedy as merely a humorous aside, not to be taken seriously, but in my view, there are too many elements of both comedy and tragedy to disregard Mercury completely.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, this type of explanation of genre is unique in the extant collection of Plautine plays and a long passage is devoted to explaining the term.¹⁰⁷

The comedy aspect of the tragi-comedy is dominant over the tragedy aspect in the play and the comedy is sustained by the continuous confusions in identity, the wit of Mercury, the incongruity of the god Mercury playing the slave, the king of gods playing the conciliatory husband regarding offences he had not committed, and the great general being reduced to playing the dupe. The tragedy aspect of the tragic-comedy is represented ostensibly by the fact that the gods have descended to take part in this play, but there are also elements of mock tragedy present in the play. A prime example of the unconventional combination of comedy and tragedy is the scene where Mercury, posing as a drunk, dishevelled and disorderly Sosia, leers down at Amphitruo from the rooftop of his own house, taunts him and pours water over his supposed master, while denying him access (*ll.*1020-1034). Traditionally, the *skene* is reserved for the gods appearing in tragedy, and Mastronarde discusses the significance of the rooftop of the *skene* as the site for divine appearances in tragedies, with the distance between the rooftop and the ordinary stage representing the disparity between gods and mortals and the tragic separation between them.¹⁰⁸

There are further elements of mock-tragedy in *Amphitruo*, where tragic elements are undercut by the ludicrous reality of the scene. An example of the tragic element of the play being subverted for comical exploitation is Alcmena's soliloquy on *uirtus* (*ll.*633-653), which is ostensibly tragic in tone and metre and lofty in sentiment. However, Phillips points out the sexual undertones in the aria created by Alcmena's huge belly, so that the tragic nobleness of her encomium on her husband's *uirtus* and military glory is undercut by references to her husband's masculine prowess. She envisages this scene as visually very humorous, with Alcmena, hugely pregnant, standing silhouetted in the doorway, her large abdomen providing a strong contrast to the tragic aspects of her speech.¹⁰⁹ In many respects, Alcmena's soliloquy on the pleasures and pain of parting (*ll.*633-653), is reminiscent of Alcestis' soliloquy on her last

¹⁰⁶ Segal (1987) 175.

¹⁰⁷ Manuwald ((1999) 179.

¹⁰⁸ Mastronarde (1990) 273-275.

¹⁰⁹ Phillips (1985) 121-126.

night, except that immediately after this apparently lofty soliloquy, Amphitruo presents himself as the dupe returned from abroad, and Sosia describes his mistress as appearing as '*saturam*' (*Il.*654-658, 667).¹¹⁰

Sosia's famous epic description of the battle scene (*Il.*203-260) is declaimed in 'heroic' metre and is frequently likened to the heralds' announcements in tragedy. However, the tragical aspects of this declamation are overturned by the fact that it is uttered by a slave who was not even present but was cowering in his tent at the time, and by Mercury's aside and by the bathos of Sosia's reference to having had to miss his lunch due to the battle.

Other tragic elements are Amphitruo drawing his sword in fury to avenge himself on the wizard who has bewitched his wife (*Il.*1043-11052),¹¹¹ the peals of thunder, the disembodied voice promising aid to Alcmena and revealing the truth to Amphitruo, and the appearance of Jupiter as *deus ex machina* from the rooftop of the skene.¹¹² Bromia's tale of events has tragic antecedents with messenger reports in tragedies in general and in particular in Euripides' *Bacchae*, with parallels between her story and the messenger's report of the madness of the queen mother and her followers.¹¹³

There are also other tragic aspects of *Amphitruo*, which are intrinsic to the identity problems in the play. There is a very strong sense of the mortals being mere helpless playthings of the gods, as Amphitruo, Alcmena and Sosia, each to a varying extent, are duped and manipulated at the whim of the gods.¹¹⁴ Amphitruo comes closest to the conventional protagonist in Greek tragedy, who has achieved great things and is at the zenith of his potential. We meet him as the victorious general returning as conqueror, when an act of fate beyond his control robs him of his greatness, and he is swiftly robbed of his *uirtus* and is presented as a ridiculous cuckold and dupe by Jupiter who strikes him down physically by his lightning bolt and figuratively by

¹¹⁰ Alcmena, like Alcestis, is married to a man who does not appreciate her fully and possibly does not deserve her either. Both women are paragons of virtue as seen through Roman eyes.

¹¹¹ 'Half of all extant tragedies culminate in revenge killings.' The extant tragedies that end thus are *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi*, *Ajax*, *Trachiniae*, *Medea*, *Heraclidae*, *Hippolytus*, *Andromache*, *Hecuba*, both *Electras*, *Heracles*, *Ion* (attempted revenge killing), *Orestes*, *Bacchae*, (Van Wyk Louw (2000) 175). Plautus plays with the audience, as *Amphitruo* appears to be heading towards this tragic ending with the revenge slaying of his rival and household.

¹¹² Fantham (1973) 213. Euripides was notorious for ending his dramas with a *deus ex machina*, (Baldry (1979) 8), which strengthens *Amphitruo*'s association with tragedy.

¹¹³ Stewart (1958) 349-350 also points out that Dionysus is continually referred to as Bromius in *Bacchae*.

¹¹⁴ Segal (1987) 188 reminds us that, 'however we look at it, Alcmena has been compromised and Amphitruo cuckolded.'

seducing his wife.¹¹⁵ The general who was introduced at the beginning of the play as victorious and conquering, vows to ask Jupiter, *summus imperator* (l.1121), for peace at the end of the play, despite the fact that he has been humiliated and cuckolded (l.1127).¹¹⁶ Alcmena, the dutiful wife, is innocently led astray by Jupiter, and is consequently accused of adultery and shameless behaviour, with the result that she is prepared to walk away from the marriage without her possessions, rather than be falsely accused by her husband.¹¹⁷ This determination to stand by what she knows is the truth places Alcmena with other tragic heroines like Antigone. However, Jupiter reveals the truth to her husband, so that he no longer doubts her, and she is granted an easy birth of her twin sons by divine dispensation. Amphitruo is reintegrated into society with the denouement at the end of the play, as he is blessed by Jupiter with twin sons, and with the prophecy that his divine son will bring great glory on his house. In fact, despite the humiliation that Amphitruo has endured, at the end of the play, Jupiter's promise of *immortali gloria* (l.1140) restores Amphitruo to his former status in keeping with the quality of *uirtus* as brave military conduct, which was associated with him when we first met him on his return. Alcmena is re-integrated into the play to a minor extent in that although she remains offstage, Amphitruo is reconciled with her and the fact that she has shared her bed with another man.¹¹⁸

Despite being the most comical character and affording great amusement to the audience, in a mode of comic reversal, it is Sosia the slave who is the real tragic figure, because he is robbed of his entire identity, name, appearance, dress, characteristic behaviour, duties, memories and sense of self by Mercury.¹¹⁹ For the purpose of delaying Sosia and preventing him from disturbing Jupiter, Mercury assumes the entire self of Sosia, with all its aspects of identity, and unlike his master and mistress, Sosia is not reintegrated into society at the end of the play but is

¹¹⁵ Forehand (1971) 642.

¹¹⁶ Galinsky (1966) 220.

¹¹⁷ Phillips (1985) 122 comments on 'Jupiter's deliberate exploitation, in the most intimate fashion, of her devotion to her husband.'

¹¹⁸ I disagree with Slater (1990) 124 who notes the parallels between *Bacchae* and *Amphitruo* but regards Amphitruo as a 'resoundingly comic and healthy response to man's dilemma in the face of the caprices of the gods', with *Amphitruo* being 'a celebration of the powers of comic theatre', and a joyous celebration of the traditional Roman theatre itself, with its adultery plots, clever slaves and mass confusion. He regards Amphitruo as 'the perfect comedy' as it permits the adultery, 'yet re-unites husband and wife with no regrets.'

¹¹⁹ Bond (1999) 209-212 identifies Alcmena with Andromache in Euripides' *Trojan Women*, as they both have a reputation for beauty and chastity. He sees Amphitruo too as a tragic figure as he starts the play as a successful general and ends in the 'role of a cuckolded *miles gloriosus*.' Bond comments on the fact that neither Alcmena nor Amphitruo ever addresses the audience directly as Mercury and Jupiter do and this fact surprisingly separates the mortal couple as tragic figures from the comic figures of the gods.

sent off to the farm to be punished.¹²⁰ When we last see him, he has possibly the first classical symptoms of schizophrenia and accounts for his double by believing that he has two identical selves in different places at the same time. His sense of being a unique being is not strong enough to withstand the pressure he is placed under by Mercury and he yields up his identity to him. Whereas Amphitruo always knew that he was the true Amphitruo and that Jupiter was an impostor, Sosia is unable to take this distinction between his true self and Mercury, and thus provides the solution of two selves and so earns the wrath of his master. Barnes suggests that Sosia is not only in conflict with his alter ego, Mercury, but is also in conflict with his own self and does not understand himself.¹²¹ Although he provides most of the mirth, Sosia is the most tragic figure in the tragicomedy. He plaintively enquires from Mercury earlier on in the play, '*Quis ego sum saltem, si non sum Sosia?*'¹²² This question of Sosia's identity is never resolved (unlike his counterpart in *Menaechmi*, where Messenio is granted his freedom and sails back home as the twins' companion and equal). The fragile sense of self, which Sosia had when we first met him, has been shattered by Mercury.

Barnes contends that tragicomedy is not merely a blend of tragedy and comedy, but is a totally separate genre, and she cites *Alcestris* as one of four Greek works that she regards as indisputable tragicomedies.¹²³ In each drama, the playwright has chosen to work with a genuine problem, for which he provides a solution that virtually denies its seriousness: that is, he wipes out the fundamental discrepancy.¹²⁴ This statement is also true to some degree of *Amphitruo*, in that the problem of man being the plaything of the whimsical gods is not resolved in the play. There is an instant solution for Amphitruo and Alcmena, in that the claps of thunder and voice from the heavens solve their immediate marital problems. Alcmena is granted an easy childbirth, and will no longer be subjected to a tussle between her husband and Jupiter, and Amphitruo forgives Alcmena for her supposed adultery, and has the promise that he will obtain glory from his semi-divine son. However, the questions of Amphitruo's lack of trust in his wife and Alcmena's treatment as a toy at the hands of Jupiter are not answered.¹²⁵ Barnes notes that

¹²⁰ Fantham (1973) 204 points out that Mercury predicts that the mortal Sosia will be punished for the god's misbehaviour, *l.*1002.

¹²¹ Barnes (1957) 19.

¹²² *Am.* *l.*438.

¹²³ Bond (1999) 205 also regards tragicomedy as a distinct genre, 'not simply the juxtaposing in the one text the formal elements of tragedy and comedy', but a 'genuine *tertium quid*.'

¹²⁴ Barnes (1968) 22-31, 28. The other three are *Helen*, *Ion* and *Orestes*.

¹²⁵ Ketterer (1968) points out the divisive nature of the golden bowl, which Jupiter uses to drive a wedge between man and wife, and labels the bowl as a false token and a symbol of Jupiter's interference in their marriage. Bertini (1983) 314 notes that the divine doubles are present while the mortals Amphitruo and

in *Alcestis*, 'the solution to the play is accomplished by a sort of magic which cancels out all tragic dilemma' and the same is true, in my opinion, of *Amphitruo*.

Barnes also notes that one of the possible hallmarks of a tragicomedy is the discrepancy 'between the content as it is normally judged and the attitude towards it which is induced by the behaviour of the characters and the overall dramatic style.'¹²⁶ To a certain extent, this disproportion is present in *Amphitruo* where the conventionally taboo topics of adultery and infidelity by a Roman matron are exploited fully for the sake of humour. Further, Jupiter and Mercury refer to Jupiter's affair with this Roman *matrona* in terms of financial transactions,¹²⁷ and Phillips labels these as metaphors for adultery, but these terms nevertheless portray the treatment of Alcmena as an object or an item of property. Segal in fact calls Jupiter a 'sexual embezzler.'¹²⁸

While she does not discuss *Amphitruo* specifically, Masters argues very convincingly that Plautine comedy embodies the dialogic interaction between two opposing modes of comedy. The first of these is the naturalistic mode, in which the hierarchies ordering society are based in universal and transcendent moral certainties. This naturalistic mode avoids change, and demonstrates that conflict of values has been illusory all the time. Masters describes this naturalistic mode as humane, while describing the opposing mode, the farcical mode, as cynical. The farcical mode views these hierarchies as merely arbitrary, with farce acknowledging the permanent and unchanging nature of conflict. A strong element of *malitia* is present in the farcical mode. While the naturalistic mode idealises the familiar world of the spectators, the farcical mode focuses on the theatrical artifice of the play itself, rather than the content of the play, thus reducing the transcendent meaning of the play. In the naturalistic mode, the resolution of the plot affirms moral values, while in the farcical mode, these values are mocked by farcical trickery, and the situation of the characters is left unchanged. In Plautine plays, neither mode fully triumphs, but the two modes are in perpetual dialogue for supremacy.¹²⁹

Sosia confront the painful experiences of their own reduplication, but that the gods sometimes take malicious pleasure in these scenes but are more often indifferent to their human sufferings

¹²⁶ Barnes (1968) 26-28.

¹²⁷ Mercury refers to his father's dalliance with Alcmena as '*usuraria uxor*' (l.498), and these words are echoed by Jupiter '*usuraria uxore*' (ll.980-981). Jupiter describes his affair with Alcmena as '*usuram corporis*' (l.1135).

¹²⁸ Phillips 1985 124. Segal (1987) 177.

¹²⁹ Masters (2000) x, 12-13.

In my opinion, In *Amphitruo*, we can see the struggle between the naturalistic mode, represented by Amphitruo, Alcmena and to a lesser extent, Sosia, and the farcical mode represented by Mercury and Jupiter, with the farcical mode triumphing. As demonstrated earlier, *Amphitruo* abounds with metatheatrical references, particularly by Mercury, to the play as a play, and as we have seen, the situation of the characters in the play remains largely unchanged. There is no affirmation of moral values, but in fact, Alcmena's values of purity and truthfulness and Amphitruo's qualities of leadership and bravery are challenged. *Amphitruo* reflects the ongoing dialogue between the naturalistic and farcical modes with the farcical and cynical mode prevailing.

Opinions differ regarding *Amphitruo*'s main themes and significance. It is frequently cited as the only extant example of a mythological travesty. Galinsky regards the play as a simultaneous example of mythological travesty and parody of tragedy, and maintains that there is a strong relationship between the play and Scipio the Elder, based on epigraphic and literary evidence relating to Scipio. Galinsky offers several cogent examples of words and concepts that he believes link the play to the man, and argues that the 'Scipionic allusions are not rigorously applied to one character, but are used rather more subtly to intensify the atmosphere peculiar to this *tragicomoedia*, i.e. the continual interaction between the divine and human protagonists.' However, Galinsky fails to elaborate on what possible significance these Scipionic themes in *Amphitruo* could have, and he views the play as a *tragicomoedia* because of its more serious themes of 'divine machinations, the impact of Greek religious ideas, the virtues of a Roman matron, the concept of apotheosis.'¹³⁰

Lowe classifies *Amphitruo* as one of a group of Plautine plays 'in which the citizen identity of the householder himself is threatened, undermined, or systematically degraded by exclusion from his own house, and thus from his own social identity, his position as *paterfamilias*, and his ownership of his own sexual property and even his own person.' He views the play as revolving around Amphitruo's 'frustrated attempts to pass through that door and into the arms of his wife, whose body and womb have already been occupied' by a doppelganger rival.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Galinsky (196) 203-235.

¹³¹ Lowe (2000) 195.

Barnes regards the theme of *Amphitruo* as being indubitably about self-identity, and cites Alcmena's dilemma of knowing she was speaking the truth but being unable to communicate it to anyone, while Sosia is confronted by Sosia, and since he cannot logically or empirically prove his own identity as Sosia nor disprove the identity of the other Sosia, Barnes notes that Sosia resorts to admitting the existence of two Sosias and refers to both of them in the first person singular, yet refers to them as two separate people.¹³²

Bond sees *Amphitruo* as dealing largely with power and its effect on the relationship between differing groups of differing status with different and often conflicting aims, and in particular the differences between slave and free, human and divine and male and female, Segal argues that the play primarily is about adultery, quoting several Aristophanic comedies in support of the popularity of adultery as a theme in Attic comedy.¹³³ However, in my opinion, while the play focuses on Jupiter's affair with *Amphitruo*'s wife, it is not exclusively about adultery but raises questions regarding personal identity too, such as who I am and what makes me essentially me (apart from physical appearance). *Amphitruo* also deals with man's inability to flout the will of the gods.

Dupont recognises the duality of the play as pervasive, with dual themes of the myth of the birth of Hercules and the questioning of personal identity, perpetually ambiguous language with double meanings, and action taking place on two levels, the comic and the tragic, for example the story of a cheated husband and the birth of Hercules.¹³⁴ (However, Segal is at pains to point out that *Amphitruo* 'is *not* about the birth of Hercules', and states categorically that '*Amphitruo* presents nothing more elevated than an act of adultery and the joys of Alcmena's body', and that 'Plautus' interests are limited to sex and cuckoldry').¹³⁵ Mercury himself is a complex figure as the *prologus*, god of commerce and messenger god, son of Jupiter and impostor of Sosia the slave. Dupont also sees the Saturnalian aspect of the scene where Mercury, exploiting his double identity as a god posing as a slave, taunts *Amphitruo* from his own roof top, where he is supposedly inferior to his 'master', but is infinitely superior. As a perfect example of the dualism of the play, Dupont points out that, on the comic plane, *Amphitruo* is represented as the jealous old man while on the tragic plane, he is represented as the victorious general.¹³⁶

¹³² Barnes (1957) 19-20

¹³³ Segal (1987) 172-173.

¹³⁴ Dupont (1976) 133-139.

¹³⁵ Segal (1987) 173-174.

¹³⁶ Dupont (1976) 134.

Despite having elements of both comedy and tragedy, the tragicomedy is not reduced to being a mere parody of tragedy. The aspects of tragedy serve a double purpose in *Amphitruo*. The tragedy components contribute to the comical value of the scenes as they provide a contrast between the superficial content and inherent reality. They also serve to provide greater depth and meaning to the play as a whole, as the tragedy aspects cannot be ignored at any time, and are present throughout the play. The very fact of the dualism of the genre and tone of the play gives the audience some pause for thought. Barnes notes, 'Tragedy and comedy, each in its own way, give distinctive answers. Tragicomedy indicates that when all has been said on all sides, the question remains, and one still does not quite know whether or not to take it seriously.'¹³⁷

It is clear that the duality of *Amphitruo* is pervasive throughout the play. It is a unique blend of comedy and tragedy, with hilarious farcical scenes, and including parodies of tragedy as we have seen. While these parodies of tragedy increase the humour, the other tragic elements point the way to take the play seriously together with the laughter raised. The dual character of the play is also typified by the blend of comedy and tragedy, two sets of identical twins, who are gods and mortals, the twin baby boys born to Alcmena, and the twin serpents, as well as the dual role of the play, to both amuse the audience and raise further questions in an unobtrusive way. A further example of the duality of the play is the contrasting themes of appearance and reality which we have considered in the treatment of the motifs of waking and sleeping, drunkenness and sobriety, saneness and insanity and being bewitched. We have noted that the play defies exact categorisation, and in the same way, Plautus does not drive issues home hard but touches on them and leaves them for the audience's consideration for those who desire to explore elements that are more serious.

¹³⁷ Barnes (1968) 30. Moore (1998) 108 comments on the gods' 'ruthless and hilarious deceptions on the mortal characters.'

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this investigation has been to examine the pervasive identity issues in *Captiui*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, and to determine how Plautus has used these identity issues to bring other relevant themes to our attention. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of Plautus' use of identity problems, we have compared the identity issues in these three plays with earlier and current philosophical, psychological and sociological views on personal identity.

In *Captiui*, we have a unique physical exchange of identities (names, garments and possibly masks) and roles between master and slave, in order to bring about the deception of Hegio and so the freedom of Philocrates. Master and slave together plan the deception and identity switch, and most unusually, the master, Philocrates, succeeds in being a *vorsipellis* while the slave, Tyndarus, fails in his attempt to be a *seruus callidus*, and is the only Plautine slave actually to be punished for deception and trickery, although he has acted from pure *fides* towards his master. While other slaves plan trickery due to a love of mischief, or in order to promote the love affairs of their masters, Tyndarus is prepared to risk his back, his freedom and his life in order to serve his master and in so doing, demonstrates his inherent nobility of character, thus countering Aristotle's theory of the slave being unable to display any innate *arete*.

¹³⁸ Tyndarus undergoes various identity vicissitudes in that he began life as a wealthy man's son, prior to being abducted at four years of age and being sold into slavery and given a new name, and then being captured in war and suffering a more intense form of slavery in Hegio's household as he was chained and confined, before being even more heavily chained and sent off to unduly heavy hard labour in the mines and finally being restored to his true identity as a free man and his tormentor's long lost son. Throughout his trials, Tyndarus steadfastly maintains his loyalty to his former master, Philocrates, although he would have benefitted more by switching his loyalty to his current master, Hegio, and displays strong commitment to the values of *uirtus* and *fides*. An ironic twist to the issues of identity in the play is the fact that Tyndarus is slave to his own father who orders dire punishment for his unbeknown son. In *Captiui*, it is the slave Tyndarus, not the girl, who is discovered to be of free birth and who is now entitled to take his place as the companion and not slave of his former master, noble by birth and noble by character.

¹³⁸ See my Introduction p. 24

When we examined *Captiui* for comparison with current and previous views on identity, we found that names and clothing are regarded as important aspects of identity, and Tyndarus was first betrayed by his name 'Tyndarus' and then had his identity as Hegio's lost son confirmed by the name 'Paegnium'. Plautus' predilection for meaningful names is evident in *Captiui* in that both Tyndarus' names have significance – 'Paegnium', Plaything, describes how Tyndarus, of free birth, was pitched by fate into slavery and captivity, and 'Tyndarus' with its connotations of pounding is apt for one who was sentenced to delve underground in the mines, and also has associations with Tyndareus, the legendary hero who returned from the dead and from his visit to the underworld.¹³⁹

We have also noted that Tyndarus played a larger range of roles than Philocrates, and that the sociological view holds that the range of an individual is indicated by the number of roles he is able to play.¹⁴⁰ Social psychology also regards moral decisions and value orientations as profoundly indicative of strong commitment to one's self, often ending in sacrifice, and this identification with exalted values such as *uirtus* and *fides* has been one of the chief characteristics, which Tyndarus has displayed.¹⁴¹ There is an unusual amount of discussion of *fides* and *uirtus* in *Captiui* when Tyndarus justifies his actions to Hegio. Throughout the play, Plautus also frequently alludes to issues of slavery, the consequences of war and the role of fate in lives, and the frequency of these allusions compels us to consider these issues together with the identity problems.

Ergasilus describes Hegio's trafficking in slaves as '*inhonestum*' (l.99), and slavery is described as a disease by Aristophontes (ll 621-622), and there is frequent mention of chains and captivity. Tyndarus is at pains to point out that being a slave is due to an accident of war and not a result of inherent baseness of character (ll.302, 591). Slavery is mentioned three times as an inevitable result of war (ll.245, 310-312, 591). Man's helplessness against fate is mentioned six times (ll.22, 51, 195-196, 242-248, 302-306, 310-312), with particular reference to the precarious state of man vulnerable to capricious fate, liable to be hurled into slavery at any stage. Hegio, although a man of influence, lost two sons to slavery and he himself became a victim of war as he resorted to dealing in slaves in order to regain his elder son. We are drawn into a world where there is a very narrow margin between freedom and slavery, and *Captiui* highlights the influence of war and fate on identity. While *Captiui* is an amusing comedy, Plautus uses

¹³⁹ See my Introduction pp.7 and 16 for James and Strauss' views on names and clothing as aspects of self.

¹⁴⁰ See my Introduction pp.14-15.

¹⁴¹ See my Introduction p 8, 15-16.

identity issues to also touch on issues that are more serious and we are reminded, if we so wish, that slavery is an inevitable consequence of war.

Menaechmi features a series of exquisitely paired incidents of mistaken identity where the Menaechmi twin brothers are routinely mistaken for each other. Thus we have an identity problem that extends throughout the play, owing to the ongoing hilarious mix-ups in identity due to *errores*, as the identical twins share the same name and appearance and are unwittingly in the same town at the same time. The fact that the criteria of physical appearance and the name are the most important factors to the Epidamnians in evaluating personal identity contributes to the hilarity. Menaechmus II is mistaken for his brother by Cylindrus the cook, Erotium, the parasite Peniculus, Messenio's wife, her father and then Messenio, as they all base their assessment of identity on physical appearance and the name Menaechmus, while Menaechmus II refutes any claim to acquaintanceship. In addition, Erotium appears to know Menaechmus' ancestry and the history of his fatherland (*ll.*407-412), and this is a convincing factor for Menaechmus as he then decides to assume the identity which she has attributed to him, and to benefit from her advances and so enjoy her favours and her lunch and gain possession of the bracelet and mantle. These encounters between Menaechmus II and the Epidamnians are accompanied by lavish accusations and return accusations of dreaming, being drunk or insane as Menaechmus II denies the identity which they attribute to him and also denies that he is acquainted with them, underlining the conflict between appearance and reality. On his return from the forum, his brother Menaechmus meets all the same citizens of Epidamnus (with the exception of the doctor), but the sequence is reversed. Menaechmus II is also mistaken for his brother, based on appearance and his name, but he does not deny knowing who the Epidamnians are, but does refute their accusations that he is responsible for the actions and words, which they mistakenly attribute to him, which causes the doctor and his father-in-law to accuse him of being insane. However, at no stage does Menaechmus II doubt his own identity. Instead, he believes that the citizens of Epidamnus are very peculiar.

The strength of Menaechmus' confidence in his self can be seen when despite the facts that he has been mistaken for his twin brother and been blamed for his twin's misdemeanours numerous times, and his father-in-law and the doctor have pronounced him to be insane and attempted to have him locked away, and he has been shut out of his own house and that of his mistress, still he does not waver in his confidence in his self. Instead, he pronounces that everyone else must be insane and be behaving irrationally (*ll.*958-962).

After Messenio has resolved the identity problem by examining the Menaechmus brothers' identical name, father's name, country and town of origin, and mother's name he concludes that they are twins and that his master's search for his brother is over. The ending of *Menaechmi* is rather different to the usual endings in the extant Plautine corpus as, instead of the girl finally being found to be eligible, we have the recognition of two young men in terms of their relationship to each other, and instead of the path being cleared to marriage, we have the obstacles to divorce removed.

Modern studies of identical twins being reared apart have confirmed many of the aspects of twinship found in *Menaechmi*, notably the joyful recognition, the desire to share the rest of their lives together, the ease of the relationship although it has just begun and the cordial readiness which they display with regard to sharing things (the bracelet, *palla*, lunch, Erotium's favours in the past, and Messenio's services in the future), as well as the bizarre coincidence of the twins being in the same city simultaneously and frequently being mistaken for each other.¹⁴² The fact that the identity problem has resulted in Menaechmus II reaping the rewards which his brother had taken pains to arrange for himself as well as Menaechmus being punished for all his brother's misdemeanours does not interfere with the very harmonious relationship which the brothers instantly embark upon. The regressional pull towards each other to the detriment of other relationships found in twins with unit identity is present in the Menaechmi brothers as the one had an unfulfilling relationship with his wife and the other could not settle down to a normal life until his search for his brother was over. While complete assimilation of each other's personalities has not occurred, there has been definite partial merging as the dutiful brother Menaechmus II throws off caution and plunges into the pleasures arranged by his brother and the normally hedonistic brother Menaechmus uncharacteristically defers pleasure in favour of duty at the forum. Neither brother hesitated to utilise deception in order to trick Menaechmus' wife and Erotium respectively, and at their reunion both brothers experienced the feeling of fulfilment that characterises unit identity, serving to strengthen the parallels between the Menaechmi brothers and modern twin studies.

Menaechmi displays the typical Plautine criteria of personal identity, which would follow the lines of folk psychology, namely the name and physical appearance, yet Plautus has demonstrated that neither is completely reliable as measures of personal identity, not even when used in tandem with each other.¹⁴³ James, the social psychologist, would describe

¹⁴² See my Introduction pp.20-23.

¹⁴³ See my Introduction p.18.

Menaechmus' decision to leave Epidamnus and go home to Sicily with his brother as a decision that his social self in Epidamnus (the recognition given to him by his Wife, parasite, clients and mistress), and his Epidamnian material self (his house, clothes, wife, and all he possessed) was less important to him than his spiritual self (his values) and that is why he would choose to go home with his brother rather than be bound by his demanding relationships in Epidamnus with his wife, parasite, mistress and clients.¹⁴⁴ There is a remarkable affinity between Plautus' identical twins and those of modern studies in psychology who were separated in childhood.

While the general tone of *Menaechmi* is light-hearted and hilarious, Plautus again uses the vehicle of identity to draw attention in an understated way to an issue – this time that of freedom. All the characters in *Menaechmi* suffer from a lack of freedom in varying degrees when we first meet them. Both Peniculus the parasite and Messenio the slave discuss freedom in soliloquies. Peniculus discusses the physical bonds binding the prisoners of war, and intangible ties, which fetter men to tables set with food, and he himself as a parasite is a slave to food and drink and he is bound to Menaechmus, dependant on him for his subsistence and happiness. Messenio is literally a slave, and thus dependant on Menaechmus II for his very existence, yet he has the freedom to advise and reproach his master, and despite his lack of freedom as a slave, he zealously guards his master's purse and life and, as a reward, gains his freedom, although he intends to continue exactly as before but will now serve two masters instead of only one. Erotium and the Wife are dependent on Menaechmus for his bounty and Menaechmus himself has very little freedom as his Wife is like a customs officer, querying all his doings, and in addition his mistress, parasite and clients are all very demanding and encroaching. Menaechmus II is bound by his sense of duty to continue searching for his brother until he either finds him or obtains proof of his death, and spends years searching around the world for him, with his own life suspended in the meantime. When Messenio rescues his supposed master from being borne off to incarceration, with this one action, the slave sets everyone free. He himself achieves his freedom from slavery, sets Menaechmus II free from his self-imposed task, and paves the way for Menaechmus to liberate himself from the demands of the forum and his opposing houses of *industria* and *uoluptas*. Again, Plautus' main intention is to amuse his audience and he does so very ably, but simultaneously he holds up for our perusal the issue of freedom, if we so wish.

In *Amphitruo*, the identity problems reach a crescendo, as we have not one, but two sets of identical doubles and in addition, the divine doubles exploit identity for their own ends and so

¹⁴⁴ See my Introduction pp.7-8.

take every opportunity to impersonate their mortal doubles. The impersonation is complete in that they assume the physical appearance and whole persona of the mortals. *Amphitruo* is a highly metatheatrical play, and in the prologue, Mercury invites us to watch the showmanship of the two gods as they perform on stage (*ll.*151-152), and we see the two gods, and Mercury in particular, as actors undertaking a variety of roles as they impersonate the two mortals and occasionally return to their roles as gods.

Mercury's brief is to impersonate the slave Sosia and prevent interruptions to his father's dalliance with Alcmena, but he throws himself into his mission wholeheartedly and assumes Sosia's garb, physical appearance, character traits. Sosia attempts in vain to retain his identity by pointing out his master's house, naming his master and mistress, citing his own lowly ancestry, and insisting that his own name is Sosia (*ll.*356-378). He also tries recalling events of the day before as empirical evidence (*ll.*403-408), and then tries to adduce physical objects to prove his identity (*ll.*417-422). In a final attempt to retain his identity, Sosia clings to the hope that his secret memories, known only to him, would indubitably establish his identity (*ll.*425-428), but he is helpless as he faces a remorseless, indifferent, omniscient god as an opponent and doppelganger. Mercury steals Sosia's words out of his mouth as well as his memories, and due to his divine powers, Mercury is even able to subvert the physical objects that Sosia hoped to use to prove his identity, and turns the use of the golden bowl, the casket and the seal of the signet ring against the slave, having also stolen his master, house, dress, physical appearance and behaviour.

The name also plays an important part in Sosia's loss of identity, as he first confidently asserts that Mercury cannot be referring to him in his threats since the god refers to him as '*Nescio quis*', (*ll.*331-332), while Sosia is perfectly confident that his name is Sosia, but later, subdued by the combination of physical and mental bullying by Mercury and the way that the god surpasses him in lying and cunning as well, Sosia yields up his name to the god. Mercury steals Sosia's entire personal identity, leading Sosia to question his own identity, asking '*Quis ego sum saltem, si non sum Sosia?*' (*l.*438). In an effort to explain the duplication, Sosia goes on to believe in the existence of two Sosias (*ll.*456-460, 565-609). We have noted how the psychologists have insisted on a sense of uniqueness as a central facet of personal identity, and we can see how Sosia has, due to his fragile sense of self, lost his identity to Mercury.

Alcmena has the strongest sense of self of all, and never doubts herself or that she is right, despite the combined efforts of her husband and slave to prove her wrong. She defends her

morals and reputation spiritedly, and does not wonder at any stage whether she is dreaming, insane, bewitched or drunk. She avows that she is speaking the truth and stands by her statements.

Amphitruo has a stronger sense of self than his slave, but he also waivers in his commitment to his sense of self when confronted by the seemingly incontrovertible evidence against him. On occasion, he wonders if he has been bewitched, and is bewildered when none of his household appears to be able to recognise him. However, at no stage does he suppose the existence of two selves as his slave does.

From a psychological perspective of identity, where a sense of personal continuity and a sense of distinctness from others is essential, we can see that Alcmena possesses these in abundance, that Amphitruo possesses these to a lesser extent and that while Sosia has had some sense of personal continuity, he lacks a sense of distinctness from others. In terms of the social self, Amphitruo struggled to sustain his identity when his social identity was not confirmed by his household, by Blepharo or even by his wife as they all were fooled by his divine double. This loss of social identity caused him to feel unduly grateful when finally the maid Bromia recognised him in the denouement.

As we have seen, *Amphitruo* deals with the issues of personal identity and raises questions like “Who am I?” and ‘What makes me essentially me?’ In addition, interwoven with the identity questions is the question of genre. Mercury himself raises the question of genre, and then pretends to solve the problem by calling the play a tragi-comedy. This question of genre has been unresolved for centuries but I believe that *Amphitruo* is a true tragi-comedy in that its dualistic nature includes both aspects of comedy and tragedy, such as the absurdity of the god Mercury playing a lowly slave, the mighty king of the gods on his knees apologising for marital offences which he had not committed, the mighty general lying face down in the dust as a dupe, the mock tragic elements such as the slave Sosia’s eloquent herald’s speech, Bromia’s account of the strange events following Jupiter’s thunderbolt and Alcmena’s soliloquy on *uirtus*.¹⁴⁵ Tragi-comedy chooses unique problems to be dealt with, and then solutions are provided that practically obliterate the original seriousness of the problem; and *Amphitruo* falls into this genre. Following Euripides’ predilection for the *deus ex machina* ending, which effectively ends the play without resolving the problems, Plautus uses the thunderbolt and mighty voice of Jupiter to end the dilemma of Amphitruo about to storm his own household and put every living

¹⁴⁵ LI.923-924, 1072, 242-247, 1053-1071, 633-653.

being inside to the sword, without actually resolving many of the issues considered in the play. The issue of man being a helpless toy in the hands of capricious gods is not resolved if we consider the final situation of the three main characters.

Sosia the slave, who has suffered total identity theft in that his name, appearance, dress, personality, duties, memories and sense of self have been appropriated by Mercury, is never re-integrated into society and in fact probably has punishment looming. By virtue of Jupiter's dispensation, Alcmena has an easy birth, and Amphitruo forgives his wife for her supposed adultery, but Alcmena has had her veracity and honour questioned mercilessly and Amphitruo the renowned general has been demeaned and cuckolded and there has been no affirmation of moral values.

The duality of *Amphitruo* is intrinsic as it combines, in a unique fashion, comedy and tragedy, with many farcical and amusing scenes and some parodies of tragedy, and also combines the myth surrounding the seduction of Alcmena with the questioning of personal identity. The duality is heightened by having two sets of identical twins, who are gods and mortals, twin serpents, Alcmena giving birth to twin baby boys, and having dual themes of waking and sleeping, drunkenness and sobriety, saneness and insanity. There is no doubt that *Amphitruo* is primarily a comedy, but due to its tragi-comic qualities, it raises questions that are not fully resolved, and the seriousness of these questions is almost, but not quite, eradicated by the *deus ex machina* device.

These three plays of Plautus, the *Captivi*, *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, all have much more extensive identity problems than the other Plautine plays. Plautus exploits these identity issues for maximum comic value, adding to the humorous impact, yet all three plays are multivalent and have individual underlying issues, which Plautus touches on and leaves available for those in the audience who wish to note the deeper issues.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Texts and Dictionaries

Christenson, D. (ed.) 2000. *Plautus Amphitruo*. Cambridge: CUP.

Copley, F. (ed.) 1956. *The Menaechmi*. New York: The Bobs Merrill Company, Inc.

Cornford, F.M. (ed. & tr.) 1941 (repr. 1961). *The Republic of Plato*. Oxford: OUP.

Goldenson, R.M. (ed.) 1984. *Longman Dictionary of Psychology and Psychiatry*. New York/London: Longman.

Gregory, R.L. (ed.) 1988. *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*. Oxford/ New York: OUP.

Gratwick, A.S. (ed.) 1993. *Plautus Menaechmi*. Cambridge: CUP.

Grimal, P. 1986. (tr. Maxwell-Hyslop, A. R.). *The Dictionary of Classical Mythology*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R. and Lamb, R. (edd.) 1983. *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Lewis, C.T. and Short, C. 1966. *A Latin Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Lindsay, W.M. (ed.) 1900. *The Captiui of Plautus*. Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Ltd.

Lindsay, W.M. (ed.) 1921 (Impression 1930). *T.Macci Plauti Captiui*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Lindsay, W.M. (ed.) 1904-1905. *T. Macci Plauti Comoediae* Vols. 1 & 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Lodge, G. (ed.) 1924, (repr. 1962). *Lexicon Plautinorum* I & II. Hildesheim.

Roscher, W.H. (ed.) 1977. *Aüsführliches Lexicon der griechischen und romischen Mythologie*,

V. Hildesheim/ New York: Georg Olms Verlag.

Warrington, J. (ed. & tr.) (1959) 14. Aristotle - *Politics*. Everymans Library 605. London: J.M Dent & Sons.

Warrington, J. (ed. & tr.) (1961) 14. Aristotle- *Metaphysics*. Everymans Library 1000. London: J.M Dent & Sons.

GENERAL

Abel, K. 1963. *Metatheatre*. New York: Hill and Wang.

Abse, D.W. 1976. 'Delusional Identity and the Double.' *Psychiatry* 39.2, 163-175.

Alexander, R.G. 1997. *The Self, Supervenience and Personal Identity*. Aldershot/ Brookfield USA/ Singapore/ Sydney: Ashgate.

Alston, W.P. 1977. 'Self Intervention and the Structure of Motivation,' in: Mischel, T. (ed.), *The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 65-99.

Anderson, M. 1978. 'The Comedy of Greece and Rome,' in: Howarth, W.D. (ed.), *Comic Drama: The European Heritage*. London: Methuen, 22-39.

Anderson, W. S. 1993. *Barbarian Play: Plautus' Roman Comedy*. Toronto/ Buffalo/ London: University of Toronto Press.

Armstrong, A.H. 1957. *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*. London: Methuen and Co.

Arnott, W.G. 1972. 'Targets, Techniques, and Tradition in Plautus' *Stichus*.' *Institute of Classical Studies* 19, 54-79.

Arnott, W.G. 1975. 'Plautus the Entertainer.' *Lampas* 5, 306-315.

Babad, E.Y., Birnbaum, M. and Benne, K.D. 1983. *The Social Self*. Beverly Hills/ London/ New Delhi: Sage Publications Inc.

Back, K.W. 1977. 'Self, Self-Esteem, Self-Concept, and Ageing,' in: Wolman, B.B. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis, and Neurology*, 10. New York: Aesculapius Publishers Inc., 100-101.

Bakhtin, M. M. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bain, D. 1979. 'Plautus Vortit Barbare,' in: West, D. and Woodman, A. (edd.), *Creative Imitation and Latin Literature*. CUP, 17-34.

Bakhurst, D. and Sypnowich, C. 1995. 'Problems of the Social Self' in: Bakhurst, D and Sypnowich, C, (edd.), *The Social Self*. London: Thousand Oaks/ New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1-17.

Baldry, H.C. 1979. 'Theatre and Society in Greek and Roman Antiquity,' in: Redmond, J. (ed.), *Themes in Drama* 1. Cambridge/London/New York/Melbourne: CUP, 1-21.

Barnes, H.E. 1957. 'The Case of Sosia versus Sosia.' *CJ* 53, 19-24.

Barnes, H.E. 1968. 'Greek Tragicomedy,' in: Wilson, J. R., (ed.), *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Euripides' Alcestis*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Baron, R.A. and Byrne, D. 1994. *Social Psychology: Understanding Human Interaction*. Boston/ London/ Toronto/ Sydney/ Tokyo/ Singapore: Allyn & Bacon.

Baumeister, R.F. 1999. 'The Nature and Structure of the Self: An Overview,' in: Baumeister, R.F. (ed.), *The Self in Social Psychology*. Philadelphia/ Levittown/ Hove: Psychology Press 1-20.

Beacham, R.C. 1991a. *The Roman Theatre and Its Audience*. London: Routledge.

Beacham, R.C. 1991b. 'Violence on the Street: Playing Rough in Plautus,' in: Redmond, J. (ed.), *Themes in Drama* 13. Cambridge/ London/ New York/ Melbourne: CUP, 47-68.

- Beare W. 1928. 'Plautus and His Public.' *CR* 42, 106-111.
- Beare, W. 1949. 'Slave Costume in New Comedy.' *CQ* 43, 30-31.
- Beare, W. 1950. *The Roman Stage*. London: Methuen.
- Beare, W. 1965. 'Plautus, Terence and Seneca: A Comparison of Aims and Methods,' in: Anderson, M.K. (ed.), *Classical Drama and Its Influence*. London: Methuen, 110-118.
- Berger, P. 1963. (repr. 1968). *Invitation to Psychology*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England/ Victoria, Australia: Penguin Books.
- Bertini, F. 1983. 'Les Ressources Comiques du Double Dans le Theatre de Plaute.' *LEC* 51, 307-318.
- Bond, R.P. 1999. 'Plautus' *Amphitruo* as Tragi-Comedy.' *G&R* 46:2, 203-220
- Brinkoff, J.M.G.M. 1966. 'De Parasiet in Plautus' *Menaechmi*.' *Hermeneus* 38, 44-66.
- Bradley, K.R. 1989. *Slavery and Rebellion in the Roman World, 140 B.C.-70 BC*. London: B.T. Batsford Ltd.
- Bradley, K.R. 1992. 'The Regular Daily Traffic in Slaves.' *CJ* 87, 125-138.
- Bradley, K.R. 2000. 'Animalizing the Slave: the Truth of Fiction.' *JRS* 90, 110-125.
- Brophy, R. 1975. '*Emancipatur Feminae*: A Legal Metaphor in Horace and Plautus.' *TAPA* 105, 1-12.
- Chalmers, W.R. 1965. 'Plautus and His Audience,' in: Dorey, T.A. and Dudley, D.R. (edd.), *Roman Drama*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 21-50.
- Christenson, D. 2001. 'Grotesque Realism in Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *CJ* 96:3 243-259.

Clark, G. 1981. 'Roman Women.' *G&R* 28:2 193-212

Claridge, G., Canter, S. and Hume, W.I. 1973. *Personality Differences and Biological Variations: A Study of Twins*. Oxford/New York/Toronto: Pergamon Press

Cody, J. 1976. 'The *Senex Amator* in Plautus' *Casina*.' *Hermes* 104, 453-476.

Cohen, R. 1994. 'Speech Act Theory and the Plays of Plautus,' in: de Jong, I.J.F. and Sullivan, J.P. (edd.). *Modern Critical Theory and Classical Literature*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 171-206.

Copleston, F. 1956. *Contemporary Philosophy*. London: Burns and Oates.

Copleston, F. 1961-1966. *A History of Philosophy*, Vols. 1-8. Vol 1 – Greece and Rome – 1961; Vol 2 – Augustine to Scotus – 1959; Vol 3 – Ockham to Suarez – 1963; Vol 4 – Descartes to Leibniz – 1956; Vol 5 – Hobbes to Hume – 1965; Vol 6 - Wolf to Kant – 1965; Vol 7 Fichte to Nietzsche – 1963; Vol 8 Bentham to Russell – 1966. London: Burns and Oates.

Costa, C.D.N. 1965. 'The *Amphitryo* Theme,' in: Dorey, T.A. and Dudley, D.R. (edd.), *Roman Drama*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 87-122.

Coulson, M.A. and Riddell, C. 1970. *Approaching Sociology*. London/Boston/Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Csapo, E. 1989. 'Plautine Elements in the Running Slave Entrance Monologues.' *CQ* NS 39, 148-163.

Denzin, N.K. 1984. 'Self: Looking Glass Concept,' in: Corsini, R.J. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Psychology* 3. New York/ Chichester/ Brisbane/ Toronto/ Singapore: John Wiley & Sons.

Deschamps, J-C. and Devos, S. 1998. 'Regarding the Relationship Between Social Identity and Personal Identity,' in: Worchel, S., Morales, F., Paez, D., and Deschamps, J-C., (edd.), *Social Identity*. London/ Thousand Oaks/ New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1-23.

- Docherty, T. 1983. *Reading (Absent) Character*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Duckworth, G.E. 1952. *The Nature of Roman Comedy: A Study in Popular Entertainment*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Dumont, J.C. 1974. 'Guerre, paix et servitude dans les Captifs.' *Latomus* 33, 505-522.
- Dupont, F. 1976. 'Signification Theatrale Du Double Dans *L'Amphitryon* De Plaute.' *REL* 54, 129-141. ==Dupont, F. 2001. 'The Theatrical Significance of Duplication in Plautus' *Amphitruo*,' in: Segal, E. (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Menander, Plautus, and Terence*. Oxford: OUP, 176-188.
- Earl, D.C. 1960. 'Political Terminology in Plautus.' *Historia* 9, 235-243.
- Earl, D. 1967. *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Elliott, A. 2001. *Concepts of the Self*. Oxford: Polity Press.
- Erikson, E. 1980. *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York/ London: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Esteves, V.A. 1966. 'Senex as Spouse in Plautus and Terence.' *CB* 42, 73-76.
- Fantham, E. 1968. 'Act IV of the *Menaechmi*: Plautus and His Original.' *CPh* 3, 175-183.
- Fantham, E. 1973. 'Towards a Dramatic Reconstruction of the Fourth Act of Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *Philologus* 117, 197-214.
- Fantham, E. 1975. 'Sex, Status and Survival in Hellenistic Athens: A Study of Women in New Comedy.' *Phoenix* 29, 44-74.
- Farber, S.L. 1981. *Identical Twins Reared Apart - A Reanalysis*. New York: Basic Books Inc.
- Finley, M.I. 1959 (repr.1964). 'Was Greek Civilization Based on Slave Labour?' *Historia* 8, 145-164.

- Fitzgerald, W. 2000. *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Fogelson, R.D. 1979. 'Person, Self, and Identity: Some Anthropological Retrospects, Circumspects, and Prospects,' in: Lee, B. (ed.), *Psychosocial Theories of the Self*. New York/ London: Plenum Press.
- Fontaine, M. 2006. 'Sicilicissitat (Plautus, *Menaechmi* 12) and Early Geminate Writing in Latin.' *Mnemosyne*, 59: 1, 95-110
- Forehand, W. 1971. 'Irony in Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *AJPh* 92, 633-651.
- Foster, V.A. 2003. *The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy*. Studies in European Cultural Transition, 18. Aldershot/ Burlington: Ashgate.
- Frangoulidis, S.A. 1996a. 'Counter-Theatricalization in Plautus' *Captiui* III.4.' *Mnemosyne*, 49: 2, 144-158.
- Frangoulidis, S.A. 1996b. 'Food and Poetics in Plautus' *Captiui*.' *L'Antiquite Classique* 65, 225-230.
- Franke, G.F. 1995. 'Fides, Aetolia, and Plautus' *Captiui*.' *TAPA* 125, 155-176.
- Galinsky, G.K. 1966. 'Scipionic Themes in Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *TAPA* 97, 203-235.
- Gedda, L. 1961. *Twins in History and Science*. Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.
- Gergen, K.J. 1968. 'Personal Consistency and the Presentation of Self,' in :Gordon, C. and Gergen, K.J. (edd.), *The Self in Social Interaction*. New York/ London/ Sydney/ Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 299-308.
- Gergen, K.J. 1977. 'The Social Construction of Self-Knowledge,' in: Mischel, T (ed.), *The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 139-169.

Glover, J. 1988. *The Philosophy and Psychology of Personal Identity*. London: Allen Lane, Penguin Press.

Goffman, E. 1959. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Middlesex/ Victoria/ Ontario: Penguin Books Ltd.

Goffman, E. 1961. *Encounters: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction*. New York: The Bobs-Merrill Company Inc.

Goldberg, S.M. 1996. 'The Fall and Rise of Roman Tragedy.' *TAPA* 126, 265-286.

Gosling, A. 1983. 'A Rather Unusual Old Man. Hegio in Plautus' *Captiui*.' *A.Class* 26, 53-60.

Gow, A.S.F. 1912. 'The Use of Masks in Roman Comedy.' *JRS* 2, 65-77.

Gratwick, A.S. 1973. '*Quis Erus Est?*' *CR* 23, 123.

Gratwick, A.S. 1990. 'Diminishing Returns: Plautus' *Menaechmi* 1161.' *LCM* 15, 27-28.

Grawe, P.H. 1983. *Comedy in Space, Time, and the Imagination*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Gruen, E.S. 1993. *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*. London: Duckworth

Gruen, E.S. 2001. 'Plautus and the Public Stage' in Segal, E (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Menander, Plautus, and Terence*. New York: OUP, 83-94.

Guilbert, D. 1963. 'Mercure-Sosie Dans *L'Amphitryon* De Plaute.' *LEC* 31, 52-63.

Haberman, D. 1981. '*Menaechmi*: A Serious Comedy.' *Ramus* 10, 129-139.

Habinek, T.N. 1985. 'Aspects of Intimacy in Greek and Roman Comic Poetry,' in: Redmond J. (ed.), *Themes in Drama* 7. Cambridge/ London/ New York/ Melbourne: CUP, 23-33.

Handley, E.W. 1975. 'Plautus and His Public.' *Dioniso* 46, 117-132.

- Hansen, W.F. 1977. 'An Oral Source for the *Menaechmi*.' *CW* 70, 388-390.
- Hanson, J.A. 1959. 'Plautus as a Source Book for Roman Religion.' *TAPA* 90, 48-101.
- Hanson, J.A. 1965. 'The Glorious Military,' in: Dorey, T.A. and Dudley, D.R. (edd.), *Roman Drama*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 51-86.
- Hart, D. Maloney, J. and Damon, W. 1987. 'The Meaning and Development of Identity,' in: Honess, T. and Yardley, K. (edd.), *Self and Identity: Perspectives Across the Lifespan*. London/ New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 121-133.
- Harter, S. 1996. 'Historical Roots of Contemporary Issues Involving Self-Concept,' in: *Handbook of Self-Concept: Developmental, Social and Clinical Considerations*. New York/ Chichester/ Brisbane/ Toronto/ Singapore: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1-37.
- Henderson, M.M. 1975. 'The Comedy of Plautus.' *Akroterion* 20.1, 2-13.
- Hjelle, L.A. and Ziegler, D.J. 1981. *Personality Theories*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Howarth, W.D. (ed.) 1978. *Comic Drama: The European Heritage*. London: Methuen.
- Hough, J.N. 1970. 'Jupiter, Amphitryon, and The Cuckoo.' *CPh* 65, 95-96.
- Hunter, R.L. 1985. *The New Comedy of Greece and Rome*. Cambridge/ London/ New York/ New Rochelle/ Melbourne/ Sydney: CUP.
- James, W. 1968. 'The Self,' in: Gordon, C. and Gergen, K. (edd.), *The Self in Social Interaction* 1. New York/ London/ Sydney/ Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 41-49.
- James, W. 1999. 'The Self,' in: Baumeister, R.F. (ed.), *The Self in Social Psychology*. Philadelphia/ Levittown/ Hove: Psychology Press, 69-77.
- Jones, A.H.M. 1956. 'Slavery in the Ancient World.' *The Economic History Review*, 2nd series,

9 185-199.

Jones, W.T. 1952. *A History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co.

Juniper, W.H. 1935-6. 'Character Portrayal in Plautus.' *CJ* 31, 276-288.

Ketterer, R.C. 1986a. 'Stage Properties in Plautine Comedy II.' *Semiotica* 59, 93-135.

Ketterer, R.C. 1986b. 'Stage properties in Plautine Comedy III.' *Semiotica* 60, 29-72.

Knapp, C. 1919. 'References in Plautus and Terence to Plays, Players and Playwrights.' *CPh* 14, 35-55.

Konstan, D. 1976. 'Plautus' *Captiui* and the Ideology of the Ancient City State.' *Ramus* 5, 76-91.

Konstan, D. 1983. *Roman Comedy*. London: Cornell University Press.

Leach, E.W. 1969a. 'Ergasilus and The Ironies of The *Captiui*.' *C&M* 30, 263-296.

Leach, E.W. 1969b. '*Meam Quom Formam Noscito*: Language and Characterization in the *Menaechmi*.' *Arethusa* 2, 30-45.

Lelièvre, F.J. 1958. 'Sosia and Roman Epic.' *Phoenix* 12, 117-124.

Lever, K. 1956. *The Art of Greek Comedy*. London: Methuen.

Levin, J.D. 1992. *Theories of the Self*. Washington: Taylor & Francis.

Lintott, A. 2002. 'Freedmen and slaves in the light of legal documents from first-century A.D. Campania.' *CQ* 52:2, 555-565.

Lofberg, J.O. 1920. 'The Sycophant-Parasite.' *CPh* 15, 61-72.

Logan, R.D. 1987. 'Historical Change in Prevailing Sense of Self' in: Yardley, K. and Honess, T.

- (edd.), *Self and Identity: Psychosocial Perspectives*. Chichester/ New York/ Brisbane/ Toronto/ Singapore: John Wiley & Sons, 13-26.
- Lowe, J.C.B. 1991. 'Prisoners, Guards and Chains in Plautus' *Captiui*.' *AJPh* 112, 29-44.
- Lowe, N.J. 2000. *The Classical Plot and the Invention of Western Narrative*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Manuwald, G. 1999. 'Tragodienelemente in Plautus' *Amphitruo* - Zeichen von Tragodienparodie oder Tragikomedie?' in: Baier, T. (ed.), *Studien zu Plautus' Amphitruo, Script Oralia* 116, 177-202.
- Mastronarde, D.J. 1990. 'Actors On High: The *Skene* Roof, the Crane and the Gods in Attic Drama.' *CA* 9, 247-294.
- McCall, G.J. 1977. 'The Social Looking Glass: A Sociological Perspective on Self-Development,' in: Mischel, T. (ed.), *The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 274-284.
- McCarthy, K. 2000. *Slaves, Masters, and the Art of Authority in Plautine Comedy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- McDonnell, M. 1986. '*Ambitus* and Plautus' *Amphitruo* 65-81.' *AJPh* 107, 564-576.
- McKinney, J.P. 1984. 'Identity Formation,' in: Corsini, R.J. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Psychology* 2. New York/ Chichester/ Brisbane/ Toronto/ Singapore: John Wiley & Sons, 181-182.
- Meltzer, R.N. Petras, J.W. and Reynolds, L.T. 1975. *Symbolic Interactionism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Merrill, E.T. 1916. 'Plautus' *Amphitruo* 551 ff. and Simultaneous Action in Roman Comedy.' *CPh* 11, 340-341.
- Mischel, T. 1977. 'Conceptual Issues in the Psychology of the Self,' in: Mischel, T. (ed.), *The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 3-27.

- Mittler, P. 1971. *The Study of Twins*. Middlesex, England.: Penguin Books Ltd
- Monge, R.H. 1977. 'Self-Concept: Emergence during Adolescence,' in: Wolman, B.B. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis, and Neurology* 10, 104-106. New York: Aesculapius Publishers Inc.
- Moore, T J. 1998. 'Music and Structure in Roman Comedy.' *AJPh* 119:2, 245-273.
- Moorehead, P.G. 1953-4. 'The Distribution of Roles in Plautus' *Menaechmi*.' *CJ* 49, 123-126.
- Moxon, T.A. 1955. *Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric*. London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd.
- Muecke, F. 1986. 'Plautus and the Theatre of Disguise.' *CA* 5, 216-229.
- Muecke, F. 1987. *Plautus' Menaechmi*. Bristol: Bristol Classical Press.
- Murray, G. 1943. 'Ritual Elements in New Comedy.' *CQ* 37, 46-54.
- Noonan, H. W. 1989. *Personal Identity*. London and New York: Routledge.
- O'Daly, G. 1987. *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co.
- Padel, R. 1995. *Whom Gods Destroy: Elements of Greek and Tragic Madness*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Parker, H. 1989. 'Crucially Funny or Tranio on the Couch: The *Servus Callidus* and Jokes About Torture.' *TAPA* 19, 233-246.
- Phares, E.J. and Chaplin, W.F. 1977. *Introduction to Personality*. New York/ Massachusetts/ California/ England Ontario/ Sydney/ Mexico City/ Madrid/ Amsterdam: Longman.
- Phillips, J.E. 1985. 'Alcumena in the *Amphitruo* of Plautus: A Pregnant Lady Joke.' *CJ* 80, 121-126.

- Prescott, H.W. 1913. 'The *Amphitruo* of Plautus.' *CPh* 8, 14-22.
- Prescott, L. 1968. 'The Theory of Self-Consistency' in: Gordon, C. and Gergen, K.J. (edd), *The Self in Social Interaction*. New York/ London/ Sydney/ Toronto: John Wiley & Sons, 297-298.
- Romano, A.C. 1974. 'The Amphitryon Theme Again.' *Latomus* 33, 874-890.
- Rogers, R. 1970. *A Psychoanalytic Study of the Double in Literature*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Rokeach, M. 1968. *Beliefs, Attitudes and Values: A Theory of Organisation and Change*. San Francisco Jossey-Bass.
- Rorty, A.O. 1976. 'A Literary Postscript: Characters, Persons, Selves, Individuals' in: Rorty, A.O. (ed.), *The Identities of Persons*. Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press 301-324.
- Rosenberg, M. 1987. 'Depersonalisation: The Loss of Personal Identity,' in: Honess, T. and Yardley, K., (edd.), *Self and Identity: Perspectives across the Lifespan*. London/ New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul 193-207.
- Rosenmeyer, P.A. (1995) 'Plautus' Use of the Divorce Formula.' *Phoenix* 49: 3, 201-217.
- Ryder, K.C. 1984. 'The *Senex Amator* in Plautus.' *G&R* 31, 181-189.
- Sandbach, F.H. 1977. *The Comic Theatre of Greece and Rome*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Samuel, W. 1981. *Personality, Searching for the Sources of Human Behavior*. Auckland/ Bogotá/ Guatemala/ Hamburg/ Johannesburg/ Lisbon/ London/ Madrid/ Mexico/ New Delhi/ Panama/ Paris/ San Juan/ Sao Paulo/ Singapore/ Sydney/ Tokyo: McGraw-Hill International.
- Schave, B. and Ciriello, J. 1983. *Identity and Intimacy in Twins*. New York: Praeger Publishers.

- Scheinfeld, A. 1967, (repr. 1973). *Twins and Supertwins*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books.
- Schlaifer, R. 1936. 'Greek Theories of Slavery from Homer to Aristotle.' *HSCPh* 47, 165-204.
- Schoeman, A. 1998. 'Mercury and Metatheatre: The *Antelgium* in Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *Akroterion* 43, 32-42.
- Schoeman, A. 1999. 'Mercury and Metatheatre II: The *Argumentum* in Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *Akroterion* 44, 38-55.
- Schuhmann, E. 1977. 'Hinweise auf Kulthandlungen im Zusammenhang mit plautinischen Frauengestalten.' *Klio* 59, 137-148.
- Schultz, D. 1986. *Theories of Personality*. Monterey: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Seaman, W.M. 1942. 'Some Names in the *Captivi*.' *CW* 35, 197.
- Seaman, W.M. 1960. 'On the Names of Old and Young Men in Plautus,' in: *Classical Studies Presented to Ben Edwin Perry by his Students and Colleagues at the University of Illinois, 1924-1960*. Urbana 114-122.
- Sedgewick, W.B. 1930. 'The Dating of Plautus' Plays.' *CQ* 24, 102-106.
- Segal, E. 1968. *Roman Laughter: The Comedy of Plautus*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Segal, E. 1969. 'The *Menaechmi*: Roman Comedy of Errors.' *YCS* 21, 75-94.
- Segal, E. 1974a. 'The Business of Roman Comedy,' in: Galinsky, G.K. (ed.), *Perspectives of Roman Poetry*. Austin/ London: University of Texas Press, 93-103.
- Segal, E. 1974b. 'The Purpose of the *Trinummus*.' *AJPh* 95, 252-264.

- Segal, E. 1975. 'Perché *Amphitruo*'. *Dioniso* 46, 247-267.
- Segal, E. 1987. *Roman Laughter: The Comedy of Plautus*. New York/ London: OUP.
- Segal, E. 2001a. *The Death of Comedy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: London: Harvard University Press.
- Segal, E. 2001b. 'The *Menaechmi*: Roman Comedy of Errors,' in: Segal, E. (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Menander, Plautus and Terence*. Oxford University Press, 115-126.
- Sheets, G.A. 1983. 'Plautus and Early Roman Tragedy.' *ICS* 8:2, 195-209.
- Shero, L.R. 1956. 'Alcmena and Amphitryon in Ancient and Modern Drama.' *TAPA* 87, 192-231.
- Shoemaker, S. 1983. 'Personal Identity,' in: Harré, R. and Lamb, R. (edd.), *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 458-459.
- Shoemaker, S. and Swinburne, R. 1984. *Personal Identity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Shrauger, J. & Schoeneman, T. 1999. 'Symbolic Interactionist View of Self-Concept: Through the Looking Glass Darkly' in: Baumeister, R.F. (ed.), *The Self in Social Psychology*. Philadelphia/ Levittown/ Hove: Psychology Press, 25-42.
- Slater, N.W. 1985. *Plautus in Performance: The Theatre of the Mind*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Slater, N.W. 1987. 'Transformations of Space in New Comedy,' in: Redmond, J. (ed.), *Themes in Drama* 9. Cambridge/ London/ New York/ Melbourne: CUP 1-10.
- Slater, N.W. 1990. '*Amphitruo*, *Bacchae*, and Metatheatre.' *Lexis* 5-6, 101-125.
- Slater, N.W. 1992. 'Plautine Negotiations: The *Poenulus* Prologue Unpacked,' in: *Yale Classical Studies, Beginnings in Classical Literature* 29, 131-146. Cambridge: CUP.

- Slugoski, B.R. 1983. 'Self: Psychological Usage,' in: Harré, R. and Lamb, R. (edd.), *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 558-559.
- Smith, N.D. 1983. 'Aristotle's Theory of Natural Slavery.' *Phoenix* 37, 109-122.
- Stace, C. 1968. 'The Slaves of Plautus.' *G&R* 15, 64-78.
- Stewart, Z. 1958. 'The *Amphitruo* of Plautus and Euripides' *Bacchae*.' *TAPA* 89, 348-373.
- Stewart, Z. 1960. 'The God Nocturnus in Plautus' *Amphitruo*.' *JRS* 50, 37-43.
- Stewart, Z. 2000. 'Plautus' *Amphitruo*: Three Problems.' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 100, 293-300.
- Strauss, A.L. 1977. *Mirrors and Masks*. London: Martin Robertson.
- Sutton, D. F. 1993. *Ancient Comedy: The War of the Generations*. New York: Twayne Publishers.
- Tanner, R.G. 1962. 'Plautus' *Captiui* 659-666.' *Mnemosyne*: 4 15, 270-272.
- Taylor, C. 1989. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Taylor, C. 1994. 'The Politics of Recognition,' in: Gutmann, A. (ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 25-73, reprinted in: *Academic Learning in English*, Faculty of Human Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban 2004, 34-39.
- Thalberg, I.G. 1983. 'Self: Philosophical Usage,' in: Harré, R. and Lamb, R. (edd.), *The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 556-557.
- Thalmann, W.G. 1996. 'Versions of Slavery in the *Captiui* of Plautus.' *Ramus* 25:2, 112-145.

- Thierfelder, A. 1975. 'Su Alcuni Generi Particolari del Comico in Plauto.' *Dioniso* 46, 89-109.
- Tobias, A.J. 1979. 'Bacchiac Women and Iambic Slaves in Plautus.' *CW* 73, 9-21.
- Torrance, R.M. 1978. *The Comic Hero*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Toulmin, S.E. 1977. 'Self-Knowledge of the 'Self', in: Mischel, T. (ed.), *The Self: Psychological and Philosophical Issues*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 291-317.
- Tripp, E. 1970. *The Handbook of Classical Mythology*. London: Barker Ltd.
- Tucker, H. (tr.) 1971. *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*. Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press.
- Turner, J.C. and Onorato, R.S. 1999. 'Social Identity, Personality, and the Self-Concept: A Self-Categorisation Perspective,' in: Tyler, T.R., Kramer, R.M. and John, O.P. (edd.), *The Psychology of the Social Self*. New Jersey/ London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 11-46.
- Turner, R.H. 1968. 'The Self-Conception in Social Interaction,' in: Gordon, C. and Gergen, K. (edd.), *The Self in Social Interaction*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 93-106.
- Tymms, Ralph 1949. *Doubles in Literary Psychology*. Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes.
- Ullman, B.L. 1916. 'Proper Names in Plautus, Terence and Menander.' *CPh* 11, 61-64.
- Vernant, J.P. and Vidal-Naquet, P. 1981. (tr. Lloyd, J.) *Tragedy and Myth in Ancient Greece*. Sussex: Harvester Press.
- Vesey, G.N.A. 1974. *Personal Identity*. London/Basingstoke: MacMillan.
- Vesey, G.N.A. 1988. 'Personal Identity,' in: Gregory R.L., (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*. Oxford/ New York: OUP, 611-613.
- Viljoen, G. van N. 1963. 'The Plot of the *Captiui* of Plautus.' *A. Class* 6, 38-63.

- Vlastos, G. 1941. 'Slavery in Plato's Republic.' *The Philosophical Review* 50, 289-304.
- Webber, A. 1989. 'The Hero Tells His Name: Formula and Variation in the Phaeacian Episode of the Odyssey.' *TAPhA* 119, 1-13.
- Wellesley, K. 1955. 'The Production Date of Plautus' *Captiui*.' *AJPh* 76, 298-305.
- Westermann, W.L. 1943. 'Slavery and the Elements of Freedom in Ancient Greece.' *Quarterly Bulletin of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America* (January 1943) 1-16.
- Wiedemann, T.E.J. 1987. *Slavery. G&R: New Surveys in the Classics* 19. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Wiles, D. 1988. 'Taking Farce Seriously: Recent Critical Approaches to Plautus,' in: Redmond, J. (ed.), *Themes in Drama* 10. Cambridge/ London/ New York/ Melbourne: CUP 261-271.
- Wiles, D. 1989. 'Marriage and Prostitution in Classical New Comedy,' in: Redmond, J. (ed.), *Themes in Drama* 11. Cambridge/ London/ New York/ Melbourne: CUP 31-48.
- Wiles, D. 1991. *The Masks of Menander*. Cambridge/ New York/ Port Chester/ Melbourne/ Sydney: CUP.
- Williams, B. 1993. 'Games People Play: Metatheatre as Performance Criticism in Plautus' *Casina*.' *Ramus* 22:1 33-59.'
- Williams, G. 1958. 'Some Aspects of Roman Marriage Ceremonies and Ideals.' *JRS* 48, 16-29.
- Williams, G. 1968. *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Wylie, R.C. 1984. 'Self-Concept,' in: Corsini, R J (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Psychology* 3. New York/Chichester/ Brisbane/Toronto/Singapore: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 282-285.
- Yavetz, Z. 1988. *Slaves and Slavery in Ancient Rome*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction

Books.

Zagagi, N. 1980. 'Tradition and Originality in Plautus: Studies of the Amatory Motifs in Plautine Comedy.' *Hypomnemata* 62, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.