

*Studien zur klassischen Philologie*

Herausgegeben von Michael von Albrecht

*Javier Velaza (ed.) · From the Protohistory to the History of the Text**Javier Velaza (ed.)***From the  
Protohistory to the  
History of the Text**

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This volume contains the papers of the colloquium *Protohistory of the Text*, which took place on 28 and 29 November 2013 at the Universitat de Barcelona. Each paper is devoted to the transmission of a major classical Latin text. The contributors are distinguished scholars from around the world such as Paolo Fedeli, Peter Kruschwitz, Marc Mayer, Stephen Oakley, Oronzo Pecere, Antonio Ramírez de Verger and Richard Tarrant. They discuss texts ranging from the comedies of Plautus and Terence through the writings of Cicero, Livy and Virgil to the *Historia Augusta*. Their papers review existing scholarship and offer new insights into the transmission of these texts and especially into their protohistory, the phase of their history that precedes the earliest surviving manuscripts.

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## From the Protohistory to the History of the Text

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Javier Velaza (ed.)

# **From the Protohistory to the History of the Text**



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Carlo M. Lucarini

## Playwrights, actor-managers and the Plautinian text in antiquity

A detailed account of the history of Plautus' text in antiquity has been given by Marcus Deufert (2002), whose book is characterized by accurate knowledge of the previous literature and by sober judgement. Few years ago I undertook a new inquiry on this matter, focusing on the Plautinian philology of the republican age, and my conclusions turned out to differ from those of my predecessors on some crucial points (see Lucarini 2012).

In the present article I will consider again the problems discussed in my previous work, but the bulk of this paper will be the examination of a stage of the Plautinian text that I have neglected before, namely the relations between Plautus and the actor-managers who staged his comedies, as well as those between the poet and the magistrates who ruled the *ludi*. The sources state unanimously that the poets used to sell their dramas (see below), but it is difficult to determine who was the buyer. The main sources about this matter are Terentius' prologues, especially that of *Eunuchus* and *Hecyra*. In addition some passages of Terence's biography by Suetonius premitted to Donatus' commentary as well as this commentary itself offer important stuff. The most relevant passages are:

*Eun.* 17–24:

*habeo alia multa quae nunc condonabitur,  
quae proferentur post si perget laedere  
ita ut facere instituit. Quam nunc acturi sumus* 20  
*Menandri Eunuchum, postquam aediles emerunt,  
perfecit sibi ut inspiciundi esset copia.  
Magistratu' quom ibi adesset octepast agi.  
Exclamat furem, non poetam fabulam  
dedisse et nil dedisse verborum tamen.*

*Hec.* 9–57:

*Orator ad vos venio ornatu prologi:  
sinite exorator sim eodem ut iure uti senem* 10  
*liceat quo iure sum usus adulescentior,  
novas qui exactas feci ut inveterascerent,  
ne cum poeta scriptura evanesceret.*

<i>In iis quas primum Caecili didici novas partim sum earum exactus, partim vix steti.</i>	15
<i>Quia scibam dubiam fortunam esse scaenicam, spe incerta certum mihi laborem sustuli, easdem agere coepi ut ab eodem alias discerem novas, studiose ne illum ab studio abducerem.</i>	
<i>Perfeci ut spectarentur: ubi sunt cognitae, placitae sunt. Ita poetam restitui in locum prope iam remotum iniuria advorsarium ab studio atque ab labore atque arte musica.</i>	20
<i>Quod si scripturam sprevissem in praesentia et in deterrendo voluissem operam sumere, ut in otio esset potiu' quam in negotio, deterruissem facile ne alias scriberet. [...]</i>	25
<i>Nolite sinere per vos artem musicam recidere ad paucos: facite ut vostra auctoritas meae auctoritati faultrix adiutrixque sit.</i>	
<i>Si numquam avare pretium statui arti meae et eum esse quaestum in animum induxi maxumum quam maxume servire vobis commodis, sinite impetrare me, qui in tutelam meam studium suum et se in vostram commisit fidem, ne eum circumventum inique iniqui irrideant.</i>	50
<i>Mea causa causam accipite et date silentium, ut lubeat scribere aliis mihi que ut discere novas expediat posthac pretio emptas meo.</i>	55

Suetonius, *Vita Terenti* (p. 28 Reifferscheid = Donatus, pp. 4–5 W.): *Andriam cum aedilibus daret, iussus ante Caecilio recitare ad cenantem cum venisset, dicitur initium quidem fabulae, quod erat contemptiore vestitu, subsellio iuxta lectulum residens legisse, post paucos vero versus invitatus ut accumberet cenasse una, dein cetera percucurrisse non sine magna Caecili admiratione. Et hanc autem et quinque reliquas aequaliter populo probavit, quamvis Volcarius <in> dinumeratione omnium ita scribat:*

*sumetur Hecyra sexta, exilis fabula.*

*Eunuchus quidem bis die acta est meruitque pretium, quantum nulla antea cuiusquam comoedia, id est octo milia nummorum. Propterea summa quoque titulo ascribitur.*

Donatus, *Ad Hec.* 49 (p. 202–203 W.): *PRETIO EMPTAS MEO aestimatione a me facta, quantum aediles darent, et proinde me periclitante, si reiecta fabula a me ipso aediles quod poetae numeraverint repetant.*

Some scholars believe that these sources are not consistent, since *Eunuchus*' prologue (v. 20) and Suetonius state Terentius sold his drama to *aediles*, while *Hecyra*'s prologue suggests that the buyer was the actor-manager. *Hecyra*'s prologue was

performed by Ambivius Turpio, a well known actor of that age<sup>1</sup>. He praises his own liberality saying that he *numquam avare pretium statuit arti suae* (v. 48) and hinting that it was advantageous to buy dramas at a price fixed by him (v. 57). The exact meaning of these words is by no means clear. I have already quoted the comment by Donatus: according to him Ambivius fixed (or simply suggested?) a price that the *aediles* had to pay to the poet (*aestimatione a me facta, quantum aediles darent*). This explication has been accepted by some scholars<sup>2</sup> and offers the great advantage of conciliating *Hecyra*'s prologue with *Eunuchus*' one and with Suetonius, as it assumes that Terentius sold *Hecyra* to the *aediles* and not to Ambivius.

The reliability of Donatus' statement has been denied especially by Meyer (1902, 69 ff.), who argues that it is nothing but autoschediasm and that the only possible explication of the passage is that Ambivius used to buy the plays from Terence. According to this view Terence (and the other contemporary playwrights) used to sell their comedies to actor-managers (*Theaterdirektoren, impresari*), who then sold them to the *aediles*<sup>3</sup>.

The alternative of the two explications is clearly expressed by Brown (2002, 231): 'Did Ambivius pay Terence for it and then sell it on to the *aediles* (with 'bought at my price' meaning 'bought at my own expense')? Or did his budget include a fee to be paid by the *aediles* directly to the playwright (the play being 'bought at a price suggested by me')?'

It is perhaps impossible to decide if Donatus' statement relies on earlier sources, but the only important thing is to judge if what he says is true. I think that the whole context makes it plausible. Ambivius' words give us a sketch of the relationship between the poet, the actor-manager and the audience, and attentive reading can give us a clue. It is very important to notice that Ambivius, speaking about his relationship with Caecilius and Terentius, says nothing related to the money (vv. 14–27). As these lines aim to emphasize Ambivius' magnanimity, one would expect that the financial point would at least be mentioned, if it was relevant at all, but nothing in this part of Ambivius' speech hints at his generosity towards the poet. The contrast with the last lines (vv. 49–57) of the prologue, where the

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1 For the sources about him, see Leppin 1992, 308 and Brown 2002, 233–234.

2 Ritschl 1845, 327 ff.; Brozek 1960, 145–160; Lebek 1996, 33; see also Brown 2002, 230–231.

3 Already Dziatzko 1894, 562–563 was persuaded that the buyer was the actor-manager and not the *aediles*; see also Osann, 1816, 42; this is a widespread opinion shared by Dziatzko-Hauler 1913<sup>4</sup>, 38, Duckworth 1952, 73 ff., Zwierlein 1992, 208, Deufert 2002, 20 ff. Brown 2002 and Manuwald 2011, 84 seem sceptical about the possibility of finding a solution.

financial point becomes prominent, is evident; it is, I think, also evident, that the lines 49–57 concern the relationship between the actor and the community; in these lines too Ambivius avoids every allusion to his fairness towards the poet (see vv. 44–45: *qui in tutelam meam / studium suum et se in vostram commisit fidem*), while his fairness towards the community is stressed (v. 49: *si numquam avare pretium statui arti meae*). All this makes implausible that the actor-manager used to buy the plot from the poet trying to cut the prise, as one should assume, if one refers the *emptio* of the line 57 to the a purchase by the actor from the poet.

Further evidence in favour of my explanation comes from the first *Hecyra*'s prologue; this prologue was delivered on the occasion of the second presentation, at the funeral games of Aemilius Paulus in 160 BC<sup>4</sup>. We read:

*Hecyra est huic nomen fabulae. Haec quom datast  
nova, novum intervenit vitium et calamitas  
ut neque spectari neque cognosci potuerit:  
ita populu' studio stupidus in funambulo  
animum occuparat. Nunc haec planest pro nova,  
et is qui scripsit hanc ob eam rem noluit  
iterum referre ut iterum possit vendere.  
Alias cognostis eiu': quaeso hanc noscite.*

The words *et is qui scripsit ... vendere* are not perspicuous, and perhaps something has fallen out (see Prete's apparatus and Scarcià's adnotation); Ireland translates: 'and its author didn't wish to restage it just so he could offer it for sale a second time'; if this translation is correct (as I am inclined to believe), it becomes impossible to assert that Terence sold his comedies (at least *Hecyra*!) to the actor-manager. Ambivius tells us that he tried to represent *Hecyra* three times; the third prologue (recited by Ambivius himself) was performed at the beginning of the third representation, while the second one (recited, I think, by a *preco* or by a minor actor, see Carney *ad v. 9*) was performed at the beginning of the second representation. It follows that when the second prologue was recited, Ambivius was trying to represent the comedy for the second time. Now, the prologue states that after the first representation the poet was still the owner of the comedy; at least, if Ireland's translation quoted above is correct, this inference is beyond all

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4 It is well known that *Hecyra* was performed three times during Terence's live; the first time at the *ludi Megalenses* of the year 165 unsuccessfully, the second time at the funeral games of Aemilius Paulus in 160 likewise unsuccessfully, the third time also in the year 160 successfully. The short prologue we are going to discuss belongs to the second performance. Goldberg 1986, 37–38 seems to appreciate it very much; I am not sure he understood the philological difficulties that it offers.

questions. But how could the poet remain the owner of the comedy, if he had sold it to the actor-manager? The same question arises while reading another Donatus' statement. Commenting *Eun.* 6, he writes (266 W.): *et acta est tanto successu, plausu atque suffragio, ut rursus esset vendita et ageretur iterum pro nova proque ea pretium, quod nulli ante ipsam fabulae contigit, octo milibus sestertium, numerarent poetae.* It is not clear how this text must be combined with the Suetonian passage quoted above<sup>5</sup>. Suetonius says that the *Eunuchus* was represented twice in a day (*bis die*), while Donatus seems to think of two representations separated by a wider period, since the words *ut rursus esset vendita et ageretur iterum pro nova* can hardly be referred to two representations of the same day. Some scholars have preferred Donatus' version, deleting *die* in the Suetonian text<sup>6</sup>. Given the higher reliability of Suetonius and since the *didascalía* seems to know nothing of a second *Eunuchus*' representation, I prefer to believe (with Jachmann, 1934, 605–6) that the replay took place at the same day<sup>7</sup>. But this does not matter very much to our inquiry: important is that a replay could improve poet's gain regardless of the period that separated the representations. How could it happen, if at the time of the first representation the poet was no longer the owner of his play<sup>8</sup>?

*Hecyra*'s first prologue and the statements about *Eunuchus*' purchase we have quoted prevent us from believing that after the first performance the playwright lost his rights on the drama, regardless whether the buyer was an actor-manager or the *aediles*. We are rather compelled to assume that the effects of the sale were restricted to one performance and that afterwards the playwright became the owner again. This assumption seems to be more natural, if the buyers were the *aediles*: they were in charge only for a limited period, and they were hardly eager of becoming the owners of a play, whereas that was what an actor-manager really wanted.

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5 I mean *Vita Terenti* p. 28 Reifferscheid = Donatus, pp. 4–5 W. Donatus' text is doubtful and Sabbadini reasonably deleted *octo milibus sestertium*.

6 See f. i. Leo 1913, 236.

7 Manuwald 2011, 82 rightly observes that the connexion of the huge sum with the play's success raises a problem, since the play used to be sold prior to performances. She supposes that 'in the case of Terence's *Eunuchus*, the authorities might have been forced to increase payment after the outstanding success of the first performance, and this was then combined with the second performance as an obvious sign of the play's impact'. If we accept (as I think we should) Suetonius' statement that the revival took place at the same day, we might suppose that the negotiations happened immediately after the first performance.

8 See also Lebek 1996, 33 (whose view is shared by myself) and Manuwald 2011, 82.

The consequence of this inquiry is that the playwrights used to sell their dramas directly to the *aediles*, but the purchase enabled them just to make perform the play once; afterwards the poet became the owner again.

Let us come back to the verses 55–57 of *Hechyra*. Ambivius speaks of comedies *pretio emptae meo*. If my reconstruction is correct and the *aediles* bought the dramas directly from the poets, what does *pretio meo* mean? To which price could refer the actor-manager? Donatus tells us that actor-managers fixed the price of the text itself and that in case of a fiasco they had to refund the amount. The second statement sounds very suspicious, while the first one is not far from the truth<sup>9</sup>. I think, the *aediles* had to deal with the poet as well as with the actor-manager, as the production of a drama requires both a text and a company. Given the tight connections between poets and actor-managers (or, at least, between some of them, see *Hechyra*'s second prologue), it is reasonable to suppose that the *aediles* had to negotiate the price with both at the same time. If so, actors-manager's fairness was as relevant as playwright's one for the *aediles*, since they had to pay both.

Anyway, what I want to stress is that the purchasers referred to by Ambivius at v. 57 were the *aediles* and not Ambivius himself. An historical event can support this interpretation. It is well known, that during the second century BC some laws against luxury of the rich people were introduced (*leges sumptuariae*). The name of the consul of the year 161 BC, C. Fannius, was associated with a law intending to limit the luxury during the *ludi Megalenses*<sup>10</sup> (for the sources see Rotondi, *LPPR*, 287). I do not find measures aiming to cut down the expenses for the games (on the other hand our evidence is scanty), but it seems reasonable to suppose that public opinion was inclined to appreciate general reduction of the

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9 Horace's famous verses *Ep.* 1, 175–176: *gestit [scil. Plautus] enim nummum in loculos demittere, post hoc / securus cadat an recto stet fabula talo* and similar rumours could get people think that the early Latin dramatists did not take any risk representing their dramas. This can be the ultimate origin of Donatus' statement that the actor-manager had to refund to the *aediles* the amount that they had paid to the poets. No doubt that Horace's statement is right; playwrights sold their dramas to a magistrate in the age of Plautus as well as in that of Horace and then nobody asked them to refund the amount, even if the performance was a fiasco. It is just to remark that after several fiascos a poet hardly could find a magistrate willing to buy a play from him ...

10 Gellius 2.24.2: *senatus decretum vetus C. Fannio et M. Valerio Messalla consulibus factum, in quo iubentur principes civitatis, qui ludis Megalensibus antiquo ritu 'mutitarent', id est mutua inter se dominia agitent, iurare apud consules verbis conceptis, non amplius in singulas cenas sumptus <se> esse facturos quam centenos vicenosque aeris praeter olus et far et vinum, neque vino alienigena, sed patriae usuros, neque argenti in convivio plus pondo quam libras centum illaturos.*

expenses for the *ludi*, even if these expenses had to be covered by the *aediles* and not by the spectators themselves<sup>11</sup>. If so, Ambivius' words can be contextualized and interpreted without any difficulty: they aimed to underline Ambivius' fairness towards the community.

Summing up, we have four passages relevant to our inquiry: three of them (scilicet the prologue of *Eunuchus*, Suetonius and Donatus) tell us clearly that Terence used to sell his plays to the *aediles*, while the fourth passage (scilicet the prologue of *Hecyra*) is ambiguous, and some scholars have deduced from it that Terence used to sell his comedies not to the *aediles*, but to the actor-managers. I have attempted to demonstrate that also the prologue to *Hecyra* results more intelligible, if we assume that the buyers of Terence's comedies were the *aediles* and not the actor-managers. Besides I believe that the *aediles* got the rights just for one performance.

If so, the conviction (shared by many scholars and among them by Deufert and by myself hitherto) that after the representations the actor-managers became the only owners of the plays must be dismissed<sup>12</sup>. On this subject, a passage of *Bacchides* deserves mentioning (vv. 211–217):

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- 11 One could suppose that the audience was concerned with the expense undertaken for the *ludi*, because the price of the tickets might rise for that reason. This would have been a very good reason for Ambivius for praising his fairness. Yet it is generally believed that Roman spectators did not pay to enter the theatre see Oehmichen 1890, 219. If they had to pay and if the price of the tickets could change according to the prestige of a company, the *captatio benevolentiae* would not require further explanations.
- 12 Meyer quotes three other sources in support of the theory that the buyer was the actor-manager: Cic. *De off.* 1.114; Iuv. 7.87; Crinag. A. P. 9.542. Cicero's passage is not of real help to Meyer's claim, as it only demonstrates that the actors of Cicero's age could choose which drama to put on (*illi [scil.: scaenici] enim non optimas sed sibi accommodatissimas fabuas eligunt: qui voce freti sunt, Epigonos Medumque, qui gestu Melanippam Clytaemestram, semper Rupilius, quem ego memini, Antiozam, non saepe Aesopus Aiacem*), while the only legitimate inference from Crinagoras' epigram is that a pantomime poet used to collaborate closely with the actor (θάροσει καὶ τέτταρσι διαπλασθέντα προσώποις / μῦθον καὶ τούτων γράψαι ἔτι πλέοσιν· / οὔτε σὲ γὰρ λείψουσι, Φιλωνίδη, οὔτε Βάθυλλον, / τὸν μὲν ἀοιδάων, τὸν δὲ χερῶν χάριτες). A real support to Meyer's view comes from Iuvenal, who says, speaking of Statius 7.86–87: *sed cum fregit subsellia versu, / esurit, intactam Paridi nisi vendit Agaven*. No doubt that Iuvenal presupposes a purchase by Paris directly from Statius. But to use Iuvenal's passage for interpreting a usage of the age of Terence is the same as using Seneca's anapaests to interpret Plautus' ones. Not to mention that after Augustus the magistrate responsible for the *ludi* was the *praetor* and no longer the *aedilis*. Manuwald 2011, 82 quotes Ov. *Trist.* 2.507–510 to show that the system had not fundamentally changed in the age of

*CH.: tanto hercle melior. PL.: immo – CH.: immo hercle abiero potius. PL.: num invitus rem bene gestam audis eri?*

*CH.: non res, sed actor mihi cor odio sauciat.*

*Etiam Epidicum, quam ego fabulam aequae ac me ipsum amo, nullam aequae invitus specto, si agit Pellio.*

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*Sed Bacchis etiam fortis tibi visast? PL.: rogas?*

*Ni nactus Venerem essem, hanc Iunonem dicerem.*

This passage is famous, because it contains an attack of Plautus' himself to the actor Pellio and offers one of the few clues to fix a relative chronology of the Plautinian plays. To our investigation it is worth noting that the poet allude perhaps to a multiplicity of producers for his plays; Barsby (1986, *ad loc.*) comments: 'It seems to imply different productions of the play with different actors and (since it is hard to imagine Pellio being 'rested') different troupes of actors. This contradicts the assumption that actor-managers bought the text of the play from the dramatist and with it the exclusive rights of performance'. Zwierlein (1992, 208) shares this view and sees in the difficulty observed by Bursby an argument in favour of deletion of the verses. I cannot agree with him. First of all, rejecting the assumption that the actor-manager was the owner of the plays, I cannot accept an argument that would delete some verses because they contradict this assumption; secondly, I am not sure that these lines really rule out that Plautus used to sell his comedies; it is well conceivable that he sold the *Epidicus* to Pellio and then they had a quarrel (so already Leo 1913, 94 ff.). Nevertheless, the words *nullam aequae invitus specto, si agit Pellio* seem really to presuppose that there were several possibilities of productions, which would be hardly conceivable, if the actor-manager was the only owner of the play. Anyway, from *Bacchides*' passage it is impossible to take relevant arguments to our inquiry.

Zwierlein and Deufert believe that the actor-manager was the only owner of the plays after the performance and that this fact prevented the text from circulating widely. According to this view Plautus' comedies began to circulate after the first edition (at the end of the second century BC, see below). To maintain this assumption Zwierlein and Deufert have been compelled to rule out that Terence was a reader of Plautus. In my previous paper I have followed their opinion (Lucarini 2012, 261), but as consequence of the present inquiry, I am compelled to regard this conviction as doubtful. *Aediles*' rights on the play lasted only till the end of the performance for which they had bought it; afterwards the play became again a property of the playwright who could make of it what he wanted. In my view

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Augustus, but Ovid explicitly states that it was the *praetor* who bought the plays *scaena est lucrosa poetae / tantaque non parvo crimina praetor emit*.

it is arbitrary to rule out that in the period between Plautus's death and the end of the second century BC at least some comedies of the *corpus* could be read. A certainty about this topic could be reached only by examining Terence's passages that could show a direct knowledge of Plautus' text. They have been listed by Deufert (2002, 25–29) who follows Zwierlein attributing all these passages to an interpolater. Although I am inclined to accept many Zwierlein's deletions (see below), here I have my doubts; certainly I cannot accept that a Plautinian passage can be regarded as suspicious only because Terence seems to know it. I hope to dedicate an inquiry to this topic.

The comedies were bought by the *aediles* and, although the playwrights kept their rights on them, it is believable that a copy of the comedies were preserved in *aediles'* archive. It is well known that all Terentius' comedies (with the exception of *Andria*) are preceded by a *didascalía* and that some rests of *didascalíae* survive also in the Plautinian tradition. The origin of these *didascalíae* is far from being sure, but it is evident that who wrote them had at his disposal a public archive<sup>13</sup>, since the information contained is detailed and it is impossible to suppose that someone could find it elsewhere. The most economical solution is to think that the *didascalíae* were premised to the comedies when the first edition was published and the editor took the text directly from the archive of the *aediles*; but this would be hardly conceivable, if the editor found the comedies in the property of the heirs of the actor-manager. Surely no actor could provide the comedies with the *didascalíae*, though Dziatzko (1866, 91–92) strangely enough supposes this.

Before we move to discuss the following steps of the tradition, there is still a problem that I need to touch. It regards Suetonius' passage quoted above. I have argued that the information that Terence 'gave' (*cum aedilibus daret*) his comedy to the *aediles* can be accepted without suspicion, but the rest of the story (with the recitation in front of Caecilius Statius) does not seem very likely. Apart from the suspicions that arouses every story connecting the beginning of the career of a young poet with a colleague already famous, in this case we have also a chronological problem, since *Andria* was represented in 166, while Caecilius Statius died in 168. Those who believe in the reliability of the anecdote have proposed two solutions. The most obvious solution is to assume that the first performance of the *Andria* took place some years after the composition<sup>14</sup>; nevertheless I cannot accept

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13 See particularly Jachmann 1934, 602. Klose's 1966 hypothesis that the author of the *didascalíae* was Terentius himself is not worth discussing.

14 Thus f. i. Klose 1966; Guardì 1974, 14. The question is complicated by the fact that some scholars do not believe that the preserved prologue of *Andria* was written for the first performance, since some expressions seem to presuppose that the poet did not stage

it, because Suetonius says that Terence went to Caecilius after having attempted to give the comedy to the *aediles*; this means that the play was ready to be recited, and it is hardly conceivable that after the appreciation expressed by Caecilius the young poet decided to wait some years to represent it! A more attractive solution was suggested by Ritschl. We know Caecilius' date of death only through Hieronymus' *Chronicon* (p. 138 Helm): *Staius Caecilius comoediarum scriptor clarus habetur natione Insuber Gallus et Ennii primum contubernalis. Quidam Mediolanensem ferunt. Mortuus est anno post mortem Ennii et iuxta Ianiculum sepultus*. Ritschl proposed to add *anno post mortem Ennii <III> et iuxta*<sup>15</sup>. This solution deserves more attention than the previous one, but I do not see a real necessity to undertake such a change in the text of Hieronymus; moreover, if Hieronymus intended to say that Caecilius died two or three years after Ennius, he had perhaps written *biennio* (or *triennio*) *post mortem Enni*, and such an emendation is a little more complicated<sup>16</sup>. The best solution is to believe that Terence composed *Andria* after Caecilius' death.

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a play for the first time (see Leo 1913, 235). I think that there is no serious reason to believe that our *Andria's* prologue belongs to a second performance; the only important argument in support of this view is given by the line 5 *in prologis scribundis*, but we are facing a *pluralis generalis* see Schöll 1902, 49–50; Ronconi 1981, 162; LHS 16 for some passages, in which the *pluralis generalis* is caused by the previous plural, like in our case: see v. 3 *quas fecisset fabulas*. On the contrary there is a more serious argument to exclude that our prologue could have been written for a second performance, that is, the poet's silence about the supposed previous performance: Toepfer 1916, the best paper on this problem known to me, has observed this striking fact, and I do not think this argument can be overcome. Anyway, this problem is not connected with the supposed recitation in front of Caecilius; scholars who take this recitation for true, think that Terence kept the comedy for some years in his drawer, and not that the performance took place before 166 BC.

- 15 Dziatko (see Dziatko-Hauler 1913<sup>4</sup>, 1)5 prefers to add <III>. I do not believe in this solution, but if a numeral ordinal has to be added, it is perhaps better to put it before *anno*; see 20 a H. *huius XLIII imperi anno*; 34 a H. *Iacob CXLVII aetatis suae anno*; 41 a H. *XXXV Moysi anno*; 59 b H. *cuius regni XVIII anno*; 98 a H. *anno tertio Ioacim*; 112 H. *CCCII anno ab urbe condita*; 114 H. *XXXII anno Artaxerxis regis*; 123 H. *VII anno regni Alexandri*; 127 H. *XII anno regni sui*; 157 H. *decimo mense post C. Caesaris interitum* 164 H. *XLIII aetatis suae anno*; 167 H. *LVII aetatis suae anno*; 168 H. *usque ad centesimum annum*; 170 H. *LXXX aetatis suae anno*; 172 H. *usque ad XC prope aetatis annum*; 176 H. *XXV exilii sui anno*; 186 H. *VII mense imperi sui*.
- 16 See 159 H. *Sallustius diem obiit quadriennio ante Actiacum bellum*; 170 H. *Messalla Corvinus orator ante biennium quam moreretur ita memoriam ac sensum amisit*.

Hitherto we have chiefly discussed evidence related to Terence; the reason is that the only evidence we have about the first phases of the Plautinian tradition is *Bacchides*' passage quoted above (from which it is unfortunately impossible to take valid arguments), while Terence's prologues (combined with the Suetonian *Vita*) offer a lot of important (though often ambiguous) indications. On the other hand, there is no serious reason to suspect that something had changed in the period between the two dramatists; on the contrary, we are certain that the *aediles* were responsible for the *ludi* already in the age of Plautus (see *Amph.* 73; *Per.* 160; *Poen.* 1012). Given that the result of our inquiry has been that Terence used to sell his plays to the *aediles* and not to the actor-managers, all encourages us to believe that the same happened in the age of Plautus.

Now we can move to the following steps of the history of the Plautinian text. After Plautus' death his comedies continued to be staged; albeit I do not believe that the actor-managers were the only owners of the plays, it is certain that for some decades during the second century BC they used to put them on and that they did not abstain from interpolations. That ancient actors used to interpolate the plays they staged is well known, and the interpolations of the Athenian tragedians of the fifth century have been widely studied; the results of these studies have influenced the editors, and almost every page of a critical edition (see especially Diggle's Euripides) exhibits a line suspected of being an actors' interpolation. Interpolations affected the Plautinian text not on so large a scale, but they affected it, and no edition gives an adequate account of this fact.

Two *Bacchides* passages demonstrate the insensibility of many editors for these problems. Lines 506–511 of Mnesilochus' monologue (vv. 500–525) exhibit many problems; the only scholar who has rendered outstanding services to the investigation of the Plautinian interpolations in the last years, O. Zwierlein, writes (1990, 30): 'Bei meiner Analyse des Mnesilochus-Monologs in 500 ff. war ich nach verschiedenen Versuchen, der beträchtlichen Schwierigkeiten Herr zu werden, schliesslich zu dem Ergebnis gekommen, dass die Verse 506–511 zu athetieren seien, und habe dann nachträglich festgestellt, dass eben diese Lösung bereits 1878 von Ussing vorgeschlagen, freilich weder von einem der massgeblichen Herausgeber (Leo, Lindsay, Ernout, Del Corno, Questa) noch von den vielen Interpreten, die sich in jüngerer Zeit mit diesen *Bacchides*-Partien beschäftigt haben, einer Erwähnung für würdig befunden worden ist'. We are facing one case, in which two scholars have come independently to the same solution; just this fact should have compelled the next editor to mention the suggestion at least; but Questa, who edited the *Bacchides* for the second time in 2008, does not quote this proposal. One can suspect that something very important has escaped Ussing and Zwierlein or that new evidence has made their suggestion less probable. The verses sound (according to Questa 2008):

*ego faxo hau dicet nactam quem derideat.  
 Nam iam domum ibo atque ... aliquid surrupiam patri.  
 Id isti dabo. Ego istanc multis ulciscar modis.  
 Adeo ego illam cogam usque ut mendicet ... meus pater.  
 Sed satine ego animum mente sincera gero,  
 qui ad hunc modum haec hic quae futura fabulor?  
 Amo hercle opino, ut pote quod pro certo sciam.*

Since new evidence has not been produced, we can examine Ussing's and Zwierlein's arguments. They are convinced that almost every line exhibits problems impossible to overcome. I am not sure that every argument put forward by the two scholars is right, but I would challenge the defenders of the *paradosis* to explain the meaning of the three last lines at least; what does *futura fabulor* mean, given that no future event has been forecasted by Mnesilochus? How do they translate *opino, ut pote quod pro certo sciam*? In addition to these arguments, Zwierlein (1990, 32–33) points out that the lines quoted above do not have correspondence in the Menandrian original. No one of these arguments has been adequately answered, because, I am afraid, it is impossible to do so.

Lacking of parallels in Menandrian original has been observed also for *Bacch.* 540–551; in this case also the Plautinian tradition is divided, as the *Ambrosianus* does not offer these lines. So we are facing the following situation: the two ancient Plautinian recensions disagree and the Menandrian original accords with one of them. Anybody will admit that, unless strong internal arguments encourage a different solution, the version in agreement with Menander ought to be preferred. In our case, internal arguments support the version in agreement with the Greek poet. This is the text of *Bacch.* 536–552:

*Pl.:* salvos sis, Mnesiloche. *MN.:* salve. *Pl.:* salvos quon peregre advenis,  
 cena detur. *MN.:* non placet mi cena quae bilem movet.  
*Pl.:* numquae adveniendi aegritudo obiecta est? *MN.:* atque acerruma.  
*Pl.:* unde? *MN.:* ab homine quem mi amicum esse arbitratus sum antidhac.  
*Pl.:* multi more isto atque exemplo vivont, quos cum censeas 540  
 esse amicos, reperiuntur falsi falsimoniis,  
 lingua factiosi, inertes opera, sublesta fide.  
 Nullus est quoi non invideant rem secundam optingere;  
 sibi ne invideatur, ipsi ignavi recte cavent.  
*MN.:* edepol ne tu illorum mores perquam meditate tenes. 545  
 Sed etiam unum hoc: ex ingenio malo malum inveniunt suo:  
 nulli amici sunt, inimicos ipsi in sese omnis habent.  
 Atque i se quom frustrant, frustrari alios stolidi existimant.  
 Sicut est hic quem esse amicum ratu' sum atque ipsus sum mihi:  
 ille, quod in se fuit, accuratum habuit quod posset mali 550

*faceret in me, inconciliaret copias omnis meas.*

*Pl.: improbum istum esse oportet hominem. MN.: ego ita esse arbitror.*

Mnesilochus' complain about false friends (vv. 538–9) is directed even against Pistoclus, who has not yet realised it. If we accept the text of the *Ambrosianus*, Pistoclus' *istum ... hominem* (v. 552) refers to Mnesilochus' *homine* (v. 539). Lines 540–551 (not transmitted by the *Ambrosianus*) do not fit in the context, as some scholars have already pointed out. The line 545 (*ne tu illorum mores perquam meditate tenes*) let us understand that the characteristics of false friends given by Pistoclus in the previous lines (540–544) corresponds to the image of a false friend, to which the same Pistoclus corresponds in Mnesilochus' eyes. Nevertheless it is difficult to understand how the *inertia* or the *ignavia* (vv. 542, 544) could be reproached in Pistoclus, who had made too much not to less. About the line 544 Traenkle (1975, 120) observes: 'Selbst wenn dieser merkwürdige Satz den Sinn haben sollte, den ihm A. Thierfelder zuschreibt ('Sie selbst sind solche traurige Kerle, dass Beneidwerden für sie nicht in Frage kommt'), passt er nicht in den Zusammenhang mit Pistoclus' Äusserung; denn jene falsche Freunde müssen doch gewisse Vorzüge aufweisen, um derentwillen sich der Enttäuschte mit ihnen eingelassen hat. Wäre dem nicht so, bliebe ihm nur zu bekennen, dass er selbst ein Dummkopf war'. It seems to me that these lines derive from another context, where the *ignavia* and the *inertia* of some persons were blamed. It is probable that an actor introduced them here and in order to create a connection between them and the new context added the lines 549–551. To my mind it is incomprehensible how Questa could retain these lines: an unprejudiced reader can only admire (and regret) 'wieviel absonderlichste Ungereimtheiten selbst angesehene Gelehrte einem (von ihnen geschätzten) Dichter zutrauen, wenn die Handschriften es so wollen' (Zwierlein, 1990, 33–34)<sup>17</sup>.

On this subject I cannot help complaining the conservatorism of the editors; as reasonable people generally recognise, conservatorism is nowadays damaging classical texts as much as never before. A future editor of Plautus needs to be very careful seeking to eliminate interpolations from the text; a good guide can be offered by Zwierlein's studies, but I am sure that a lot of interpolations have still to be detected.

This magmatic phase of the Plautinian tradition came to an end in the late second century BC, when a Roman philologist prepared the first critical edition

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17 Other verses that have doubtless to be deleted are: *Bacch.* 859–860 deleted by Anspach, see Zwierlein 1992, 81: nothing in Questa's apparatus; *Curc.* 522–524 deleted by Ribbeck, see Zwierlein 1990, 265–266: nothing in the apparatus of Lanciotti 2008.

of our poet. The discovery of this edition is owned to F. Leo (1897), and it can be regarded as one of the most important discoveries of the Latin philology of every time. The editorial technique applied was taken over from the Alexandrian scholarship, and it was the same that the Alexandrian philologists had applied to the Athenian playwrights of the classical age. That means that diacritical marks were used, that the polymetric songs were divided into cola and that the the lines, which the editor regarded as interpolated, were not deleted<sup>18</sup>. About this point there is a general agreement among scholars, and the arguments put forward by Leo (1897, 5–8) and Questa (1984, 23–289) can be regarded as a κτήμα εις αεί in this field.

More difficult is to establish, which comedies this edition contained. Answering this question requires acquaintance with the main problem of the ancient Plautinian philology, scilicet the problem of the authenticity of the comedies. All our evidence on the subject is restricted to a passage by Gellius (3.3.1–14):

*Verum esse comperior, quod quosdam bene litteratos homines dicere audivi, qui plerasque Plauti comoedias curiose atque contente lectitarit, non indicibus Aelii (L. Aelius Stilo, fr. 4 Funaioli), nec Sedigiti (Volcaci Sedigitus, test. 4 F.), nec Claudii (Servius Clodius, test. 7 F.), nec Aurelii (deest apud F.), nec Accii (L. Accius, test. 18 F.), nec Manilii (L. Manilius, fr. 4 F.) super his fabulis, quae dicuntur 'ambiguae', crediturum, sed ipsi Plauto moribusque ingenii atque linguae. (2) Hac enim iudicii norma Varronem quoque usum videmus. (3) Nam praeter illas unam et viginti, quae 'Varroniana' vocantur, quas idcirco a ceteris segregavit, quoniam dubiosae non erant, set consensu omnium Plauti esse censebantur, quasdam item alias probavit adductus filo atque facetia sermonis Plauto congruentis easque iam nominibus aliorum occupatas Plauto vindicavit, sicuti istam, quam nuperrime legebamus, cui est nomen 'Boeotia'. Nam cum in illis una et viginti non sit et esse Aquili dicatur, nihil tamen Varro dubitavit, quin Plauti foret, neque alius quisquam non infrequens Plauti lector dubitaverit, si vel hos solos ex ea fabula versus cognoverit, qui quoniam sunt, ut de illius Plauti more dicam, Plautinissimi, propterea et meminimus eos et ascripsimus. [...] (6) Favorinus quoque noster, cum 'Nervolarium' Plauti legerem, quae inter incertas habita est, et audisset ex ea comoedia versum hunc:*

*scrattae, scrupedae, strittivillae sordidae,*

*delectatus faceta verborum antiquitate meretricum vitia atque deformitates significantium: 'vel unus hercle – inquit- hic versus Plauti esse hanc fabulam satis potest fidei fecisse'. (7) Nos quoque ipsi nuperrime, cum legeremus 'Fretum' – nomen id est comoediae, quam Plauti esse quidam non putant-, haut quicquam dubitavimus, quin ea Plauti foret, et omnium quidem maxime genuina. [...] (9) M. tamen Varro in libro 'De comoediis Plautinis' primo Accii*

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18 Deufert 2002, 384: 'Von den griechischen Philologen hat der Plautusherausgeber das Bestreben ererbt, die ihm vorliegende Tradition so vollständig wie möglich in seine Ausgabe aufzunehmen. Dies bezeugen die Doppelfassungen wie der zweifache Schluss des *Poenulus*, bei denen der Herausgeber nicht die eine zugunsten der anderen verwarf, sondern beide nebeneinander stellte.'

*verba (Pragmatica fr. XV Dangel) haec ponit: 'Nam nec 'Gemini lenones' nec 'Condaliium' nec 'Anus' Plauti nec 'Bis compressus' nec 'Boetia' unquam fuit neque adeo 'Agroecus' neque 'Commerientis' Macci Titi'. (10) In eodem libro Varronis id quoque scriptum et Plautium fuisse quempiam poetam comoediarum. Quoniam fabulae <illae> 'Plauti' inscriptae forent, acceptas esse quasi Plautinas, cum essent non a Plauto Plautinae sed a Plautio Plautianae. (11) Feruntur autem sub Plauti nomine comoediae circiter centum atque triginta; (12) sed homo eruditissimus L. Aelius (L. Aelius Stilo, fr. 4 F.) quinque et viginti eius esse solas existimavit. (13) Neque tamen dubium est, quin istaec, quae scriptae a Plauto non videntur et nomini eius addicuntur, veterum poetarum fuerint et ab ipso retractatae <et> expolitae sint ac propterea respiciant stilum Plautinum. (14) Sed 'Saturionem' et 'Addictum' et tertiam quandam, cuius nunc mihi nomen non suppetit, in pistrino eum scripsisse Varro et plerique alii memoriae tradiderunt, cum pecunia omni, quam in operis artificum scaenicorum pepererat, in mercatibus perditam, inops Romam redisset et ob quarendum victum ad circumagendas molas, quae 'trusatiles' appellantur, operam pistori locasset.*

I am sorry of having quoted such a long passage, but almost all our knowledge about the ancient Plautinian philology relies on this passage. Gellius' source is surely Varro's book *De comoediis Plautinis*<sup>19</sup>. Varro observed that all the previous scholars, who had worked on Plautus, regarded at least 21 comedies as Plautinian; in other words, while all other comedies attributed to Plautus were regarded as spurious by at least one scholar, there were 21 comedies, whose authenticity was questioned by nobody. These comedies were called *Varronianae* already in Gellius' days, and these are the 21 comedies that have survived till now (with the exception of *Vidularia*, of which unfortunately we have only some fragments). This point is clear and does not require further discussions. Gellius says that 130 comedies circulated under the name of Plautus, and Servius (*Praef. in Aen.* ll. 88–89 ed. Harvard) tells us that *Plautum alii dicunt scripsisse fabulas XXI, alii XL, alii C.* Given that the numbers 130 and 100 are likely to refer to the same 'collection' and that the number 21 refers to the *Varronianae*, it remains to determine the origin of the number 40 given by Servius. Previous scholars (from Ritschl onward) have assumed that Varro made up an index of comedies that he regarded as genuine: following the example of the six scholars quoted in the first § (namely Aelius Stilo, Volcacius Sedigitus, Servius Clodius, Aurelius, Accius and Manilius) Varro would have made up his own index coming to the conclusion that the authentic Plautinian comedies amounted to 40. This reconstruction does not satisfy, because Varro's attitude towards the indices provided by previous scholars seems to be derogatory and the appellation *comoediae Varronianae* given to the 21 comedies

19 I have discussed the passage of Gellius in my *Philologus* paper thoroughly; readers wanting a detailed demonstration of the following points may find it there.

that survive discourages from believing that another Varronian collection existed, and particularly that it contained the comedies regarded as authentic by Varro himself, whereas the other one contained the plays selected by other scholars. It seems to be more reasonable to think that Varro did not provide any catalogue of Plautinian comedies that he himself regarded as authentic.

If so, we do not have a collection any more, to which the number 40 given by Servius seems to refer. I think that we can reasonably believe that this number corresponds to the amount of comedies contained in the edition of the late second century BC mentioned above. Unfortunately we do not have a proof that demonstrates this definitely, but some facts seem to become plain, if we accept such a suggestion. It is commonly accepted that a new Plautinian edition containing only the *Varroniana* became the standard one by the beginning of the second century AD, while the republican one is supposed to have remained the only edition at disposal till then<sup>20</sup>. In the period between the end of the second century BC and the beginning of the second AD we have only two works, where Plautus is quoted extensively, namely Varro's *De lingua Latina* and Verrius Flaccus' *De verborum significatu*. Computing the number of comedies quoted in the two works we reach the number of 40 (or perhaps 41); other contemporary sources do not seem to know other comedies besides these 40. This is hardly fortuitous, and it is advisable to suppose that in the first century BC, as well as in the first AD, the only Plautinian comedies at disposal were the 40 plays that I have listed summing the titles found in Varro, Festus and the other contemporary sources. If so, it follows that the republican edition contained 40 comedies and that Servius refers to this edition speaking of people thinking that Plautus wrote 40 plays.

The appearance of the republican edition was an epoch-making event in the Plautinian tradition: as Deufert has pointed out, after this edition the main characteristics of the Plautinian text has become the 'stability' (*Stabilität*): during the first decades after the death of the poet the text was widely interpolated, whereas there are good reasons to think that the text read by Cicero was not much different from the text read by the archaists of the age of Fronto.

As already said, a new Plautinian edition appeared at the beginning of the second century AD: this is guaranteed by archaists like Fronto and Gellius, who

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20 During the discussion at the Barcelona meeting I was asked what I meant speaking of a 'standard edition' in the antiquity; I mean the most used edition in the antiquity, by no means the best one.

quote Plautus often, but seem to have read only the *Varronianae*. This fact can be explained only supposing that in the period between Festus and the second century AD a new edition appeared and that it became the standard one. Leo thought that the philologist who prepared this new edition was Valerius Probus of Berytus<sup>21</sup>. The influence and the intellectual level of this scholar has been much discussed during the last two centuries: while the philologists of the age of Leo inclined to attribute to Probus a wide influence on the *Textgeschichte* of the Latin poets, in the last decades scholars have become more sceptical about this fact and many of them rule out that the Berytian produced numerous and important editions. Our main sources about the philological activity of this scholar are two, the biography, that Suetonius dedicated to him, and some lines of the *Anecdoton Parisinum*. I have discussed them extensively twice, the first time focusing on the Virgilian edition ascribed to Probus (Lucarini 2006), the second time on the Plautinian edition ascribed to him (Lucarini 2012). My conclusions are that Probus prepared an important and influential edition of Vergil (which, by the way, caused the disappearance of the *Appendix Vergiliana* from the Virgilian corpus), but that he did not prepare an edition of Plautus. I have reached this conclusion examining the quotations of the two poets occurring in the sources before Probus and after him, being unprejudiced towards the information given by Suetonius and the *Anecdoton*. In both cases my analysis confirms what the *Anecdoton* says, namely that Probus prepared an edition of Vergil, but not of Plautus<sup>22</sup>.

As already said, the new edition contained the 21 comedies that have come down to us. This is demonstrated by the Plautinian quotations, which from the beginning of the second century onward are restricted to the Varronian comedies<sup>23</sup>. The division into scenes we find in our manuscripts is also likely to derive

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21 About him see Aistermann 1910 and Velaza 2005.

22 *Anecdoton's* text is quite corrupt; after having listed some diacritical marks, the anonymous author writes *Gramm. Lat.* 7.534.4–6: *His solis adnotationibus Enni Lucilii et historicorum usi sunt varrus hennius haelius aequae † et postremo Probus, qui illas in Virgilio et Horatio et Lucretio apposuit, ut Homero Aristarchus*. It is clear that the authors of these lines wanted to stress that Probus had devoted to the Roman literature of the classical age the same kind of criticism that the republican philologists (whose names are unfortunately badly transmitted) had devoted to the archaics and that Aristarchus has devoted to Homer. In my article of 2006 I tried to prove that the *Anecdoton* originates in Probus' school.

23 The only important exception is Iulius Romanus, who seems to have read the not-Varronian *Caecus* (Deufert 2002, 240–244).

from this edition, as it seems to have been conceived by a reader for the use of the readers and no theatrical practice seems to be presupposed. Also the not acrostical arguments, that our manuscripts permit (not unanimously) to some comedies (to *Amphitruo*, *Aulularia*, *Mercator*, *Miles* in the *recensio Palatina*, to *Pseudolus*, *Persa* and *Stichus* in the *Ambrosiana*) probably derive from the edition we are speaking about.

Our ancient manuscript tradition is represented by the famous *codex Ambrosianus* (G 82 sup.), a palimpsest of the fifth century<sup>24</sup>, and by the *Palatini* (some manuscripts of the X–XII centuries, whose archetypus is indicated by the siglum P)<sup>25</sup>. Nobody today doubts that the *Ambrosianus* and the *Palatini* derive from the same archetype: Lindsay's view, according to which the *recensio Ambrosiana* would represent the text of the performances of the time of Plautus, while the *recensio Palatina* would originate from the time of the revivals, has been completely (and rightly) abandoned. Questa (1984, 23–129) and Raffaelli (1982), developing some previous suggestions, have demonstrated that the source from which both the *Ambrosianus* and the *Palatini* derive presupposes that the tradition had passed through a codex-phase<sup>26</sup>. This source is the archetype of our tradition; it is probable that it has to be dated to the third century AD, as already Pasquali suggested (1952<sup>2</sup>, 337 ff.). It is also probable that most of the errors, that occur both in the *Ambrosianus* and in the *Palatini*, appeared for the first time in this archetype (that is, in the third century AD); anyway there is no ground to date back the deep depravation, that characterizes our text, into the first century AD, as Leo did (see Deufert, 2002, 317 ff.).

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24 We have a very useful transcription by Studemund 1889; unfortunately not the whole text is preserved or readable (nothing survives from *Amphitruo*, *Asinaria*, *Aulularia*, *Curculio*, *Truculentus*); the rest of the comedies are transmitted only fragmentary.

25 An older brother of P was the lost *codex Turnebi* (T), see Lindsay 1898.

26 This is demonstrated by the fact that long verses are divided at the same point in both *recensiones*, which could hardly happen if a codex layout had not compelled to a division. The lines of this codex contained about 45–50 letters. As Deufert 2002, 388 writes: 'Derartige Verteilungen begegnen in der Textüberlieferung auf Papyrusrollen nicht, weshalb die Einführung der Verszweiteilung mit den formalen Gegebenheiten des Codex in Verbindung zu bringen ist, der anders als die Rolle Langversen nicht beliebigen Platz gewährte, sondern einen Umbruch der Verszeile vor dem rechten Seitenende bei einer entsprechender schmalen Seite erforderlich machen musste.'

Summing up, three steps seem to have strongly influenced the text of Plautus in the antiquity: the republican edition of the end of the second century BC containing 40 comedies, the edition of the second century AD containing the *Varroniana*, and the transcription on a codex that probably happened in the third century AD<sup>27</sup>.\*

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27 As the reader has perhaps observed, I have avoided the word ‘edition’ speaking about the third step. There is no indication that this transcription involved any critical activity.

\* My previous inquiry (Lucarini 2012) focused on the Plautinian text between the republican edition and Probus; during the meeting at Barcelona P. Kruschwitz suggested to me to reanalyse the precedent period of the tradition, since the common opinion that the *Theaterdirektoren* were the only owners of the plays seemed to him to be doubtful. It has been a good suggestion, I think.

