

TERENCE AND THE RUNNING-SLAVE ROUTINE*

The running-slave routine of Roman comedy has regularly recurring features which give it a stereotyped character. These features are most fully represented in Plautus. The routine consists of a comic messenger scene in which the messenger, usually a slave but occasionally a parasite, enters with urgent news but then proceeds to perform his business “in as obtrusive, long-winded and stylized a manner as possible”.¹ Its typical features are as follows. The slave delivers a long entrance-monologue in which he stresses the importance and urgency of his mission, warns the public to keep out of his way, inveighs against the present state of the world, and finally has to remind himself not to waste any more time (*quid cesso?*) but to get on with his business. Other characters on stage observe this performance and make aside comments on it; the slave goes past them without at first seeing them, has to be recalled under protest and is slow to recognize them, although they are usually the very people he seeks. Exhaustion and breathlessness may further delay the delivery of his message. Two passages in Plautus confirm that this was already a conventional routine on the Roman stage. At Am. 984 Mercury enters with a warning to the public to keep out of his way, *de via decedite*, and in self-justification claims that he, as Jupiter’s emissary, has as much right to threaten the public as a *servolo in comoediis* who brings news of a ship safely arrived or the approach of an angry old man; Mercury is himself not bringing any news but Plautus plays with convention

*) This paper was originally presented in 1996 in the University of Freiburg at a symposium on “Terenz und die Tradition des Stegreifspiels” as part of Sonderforschungsbereich “Übergänge und Spannungsfelder zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit”. Since the publication of the conference proceedings promised at the time (cf. L. Benz, *Der Parasit in den Captivi*, in: L. Benz / E. Lefèvre [edd.], *Maccus barbarus: Sechs Kapitel zur Originalität der Captivi des Plautus*, Tübingen 1998, 89) can no longer be expected, a revised and updated version of my paper now appears in this journal.

1) E. Csapo, *A Case Study in the Use of Theatre Iconography as Evidence for Ancient Acting*, *Ant. Kunst* 36, 1993, 42.

by making him imitate the typical running slave. In Capt. 768 ff. the parasite Ergasilus proposes to hitch up his cloak on to his neck *ut comici servi solent* in order to be the first to deliver his good news; and he then launches into a typical example of the running-slave routine. Hitching up the cloak was of course a necessary preliminary to running; at Epid. 194 Epidicus urges himself to hitch up his cloak on to his neck before faking a running-slave entrance.²

Terence also refers to the running slave as a conventional motif. In Heaut. 37 he includes the *servus currens* with other conventional rôles, the *iratus senex*, *edax parasitus*, *sycophanta impudens* and *avarus leno*; the prologue-speaker complains that such rôles are hard work for an actor and begs a quiet hearing for a *fabula stataria* which does not involve the violent action associated with the stock rôles listed. Again in Eun. 36 ff. Terence includes the *currentem servom* with other traditional comic rôles and motifs, *bonas matronas*, *meretrices malas*, *parasitum edacem*, *gloriosum militem*, *puerum supponi*, *falli per servom senem*. In four passages Terence uses the running-slave routine himself: And. 338 ff., Pho. 179 ff., 841 ff., Ad. 299 ff.³ The occurrence in all these passages of typical

2) Cf. Fab. incert. frag. 178–80 Lindsay *appende in umeris pallium | et †pergat † quantum valet | tuorum pedum pernicitas*. Poen. 523 *servoli esse duco festinantem currere*, spoken by the leader of the freedmen *advocati*, probably alludes to the convention of the *servus currens*; and the slow entrance of the *advocati* is perhaps a deliberate reversal of the running-slave convention (cf. J. C. B. Lowe, Plautus' Choruses, RhM 133, 1990, 283). I continue to believe the speaking rôle of the *advocati* created by Plautus, despite the arguments of W. G. Arnott, Alexis: the Fragments, Cambridge 1996, 285 f. (cf. E. Rawson, Freedmen in Roman Comedy, in: R. Scodel [ed.], Theater and Society in the Classical World, Ann Arbor 1993, 215–18); I am not, however, persuaded by Lefèvre, Plautus' *Poenulus* zwischen *Néa* und Stegreifspiel, in: T. Baier (ed.), Studien zu Plautus' *Poenulus*, Tübingen 2004, 24 f. that the *advocati*, together with the whole Collybiscus-intrigue, are entirely Plautus' invention.

3) I cannot agree with the view expressed by, amongst others, G. Monaco, Plauto: Curculio, Palermo 1969, 165, that Eun. 643 ff. should be regarded as an example of the routine. Pythias rushes out of Thais' house in a state of agitation looking for the supposed eunuch, but is not bearing news for anyone; and there is no need to suppose that she is running, despite *festinas* (650). That Phaedria makes aside comments on her behaviour is a common Terentian feature, not confined to running-slave scenes (cf. And. 236 ff.). It should be recognized that there are other dramatic situations in one way or another similar to but distinguishable from the stereotyped comic routine under discussion; I am not persuaded by O. Knorr, Metatheatrical Humor in the Comedies of Terence, in: P. Kruschwitz / W.-W. Ehlers / F. Felgentreu (edd.), Terentius Poeta, München 2007, 169–73 that the constant running of Parmeno in the *Hecyra* or even the excited entrances of Chaerea at Eun. 292 and 549 are “creative transformations of the comic *servus currens* routine”.

motifs of the running-slave routine leaves little room for doubt that Terence is consciously using the conventional routine in his own way, although, as usual, he eschews the longwindedness and grotesque exaggeration characteristic of Plautus.⁴ In each case a slave enters with news, watched by other characters who make aside comments, in each case the motif of recall and delayed recognition is used, if only briefly; in Pho. 848 Terence metatheatrically refers to the motif as conventional, *num mirum aut novomst revocari cursum quom institeris?* In Pho. 177 Geta is announced as *currentem*, in 844 f. he exhorts himself to hitch up his cloak on to his shoulder and make haste to find his master, in Ad. 305 Geta is described as *properantem*, in 320 he brings his exhortations against Aeschinus' household to a halt with *sed cesso eram hoc malo inpertiri prope?*, and in 324 he is told to get his breath back.

In the extant remains of Greek New Comedy there is no example of the full running-slave routine as we find it in Roman comedy, although most of its constituent motifs are attested. The nearest parallel is Pyrrhias' entrance at Men. Dysc. 81. Pyrrhias urges the public to keep out of his way and is out of breath (96 f.); but he is running not because he has urgent news to deliver but because he is being chased by Cnemon, a situation with which commentators rightly compare the running entry of Amphitheus at Ar. Ach. 176 ff., pursued by the Acharnian charcoal-burners. When, however, another Pyrrhias enters at Sic. 123 to deliver bad news, there is no need to suppose that he is running, even if we accept the supplement $\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\delta\eta\eta\] \beta\alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega\nu$, or to connect him with the Roman running slaves. Some scholars⁵ have taken Asp. 399 ff. as an example of the routine on the strength of 410 $\pi\omicron\iota\] \tau\rho\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\iota\varsigma$; but the stage action is quite uncertain, there is no indication in the text of the comic business typical of Roman running-slave entrances, and Daos' string of tragic quotations suggests simply parody of tragic messengers.⁶

4) P. Brown, Terence. The Comedies, Oxford 2006, 309.

5) W.S. Anderson, A New Menandrian Prototype of the Servus Currens of Roman Comedy, Phoenix 24, 1970, 231–3, T. Guardi, I precedenti greci della figura del *servus currens* della commedia romana, Pan 2, 1974, 13 f.

6) Cf. A. W. Gomme / F. H. Sandbach, Menander. A Commentary, Oxford 1973, on 409–10, S. M. Goldberg, The Making of Menander's Comedy, Berkeley / Los Angeles 1980, 135 f. n. 5, N. Zagagi, The Comedy of Menander, London 1994, 53 f., M. Krieter-Spiro, Sklaven, Köche und Hetären: Das Dienstpersonal bei Menander, Stuttgart / Leipzig 1997, 108 n. 2, E. Lefèvre, Plautus' *Amphitruo* zwischen

On the other hand, Greek drama does provide parallels for a messenger arriving out of breath⁷ and, in contexts other than running-slave entries, for the *de via decedite* motif⁸ and the motif of recall and delayed recognition.⁹

E. Fraenkel discussed two of the typical running-slave motifs, *de via decedite* and recall and delayed recognition.¹⁰ In both cases he argued for massive expansion by Plautus in his use of the motifs. In the case of the motif of recall and delayed recognition he cited for comparison the Terentian examples and the one Greek example then available, and concluded that Terence, unlike Plautus, was following his Greek models quite closely. He noted that the *de via decedite* motif was typical of *servus currens* scenes and thought it probable that Plautus was elaborating a motif he found in his Greek models. He seems to have assumed, although he does not explicitly state this, that the running-slave routine was already a conventional device of Greek New Comedy and that Terence was essentially reproducing examples from Menander and Apollodorus. So G. E. Duckworth wrote that “it seems likely that Terence more closely reflects the use of the running slave in the Greek originals”.¹¹ The predominant view has been that the running-slave routine was already an established convention in New Comedy,¹² although there have been

Tragödie und Stegreifspiel, in: T. Baier (ed.), *Studien zu Plautus' Amphitruo*, Tübingen 1999, 31 f. That the running character of Men. fr. 690 K–T (462 K–A) was a slave is likely enough but the context is quite uncertain.

7) Soph. Ant. 223 f., Eur. Med. 1119 f., Ar. Av. 1121. Soph. Ant. 229 μένειε αὐῶ; is also comparable with *quid cesso?*

8) ἐκποδῶν Ar. Eq. 1151, Vesp. 1340, πάρες Men. Sic. 189, P. Berol. 11771 (Page, GLP 48.7 f., fr. adesp. 1032.7 f. K–A); cf. Plaut. Aul. 407 *date viam* spoken by the fleeing cook Congrio.

9) Men. Dysc. 551, Sam. 296, P. Hib. 5 (Sandbach, *Menandri reliquiae* p. 338, fr. adesp. 1093.356–8 K–A). The motif is also common in Plautus “in scenes which have nothing in common with the running slave” (Csapo [as n. 1] 45 n. 27). Csapo strangely describes these instances as “inorganic”, “transference”, as if the use in the running-slave routine must be primary.

10) E. Fraenkel, *Plautinisches im Plautus*, Berlin 1922, 130–41, 220–7.

11) G. E. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy*, Princeton 1952 (Bristol² 1994), 107; cf. *The Dramatic Function of the servus currens in Roman Comedy*, in: *Classical Studies Presented to Edward Capps*, Princeton 1936, 102 n. 20, citing E. Schild, *Die dramaturgische Rolle der Sklaven bei Plautus und Terenz*, Diss. Basel 1917, 61 f. “Ich bin der Ansicht, dass das Auftreten der s. c. in der νεῶ τυπisch ausgebildet war, und zwar in der Weise wie wir es bei Terenz haben”.

12) Guardi (as n. 5) 6.

dissenters.¹³ New Comedy is a highly conventional genre and the running-slave routine could well seem but one more convention; and this view has been encouraged by Terence's inclusion of the *servus currens* among other conventional motifs which are certainly derived from New Comedy, such as the *parasitus edax*. When the *Dyscolus* came to light, many scholars saw Pyrrhias' running entry as confirmation of the existence in New Comedy of a running-slave convention and as an example of Menander's subtly restrained use of convention.¹⁴ Nevertheless some have continued to have doubts; R. L. Hunter has written that "A Greek *servus currens*, as we know this character in Roman comedy, seems likely enough, but has in fact not yet been proved".¹⁵

In three articles E. Csapo has attempted to prove the existence of a running-slave convention in Greek comedy. The keystone of his argument is that a convention is presupposed by what he takes to be examples of "ironic transference" of the running-slave motif in Menander and Terence.¹⁶ I am not in the least persuaded that the entry of Cnemon at *Dysc.* 153 is an "ironic transference" of the running-slave motif. Nor am I convinced that Geta's threats in *Ad.* 311–19 are an ironic reversal of the running slave's *de via decedite*, and even if they are, this does not prove that Menander rather than Terence was their author.¹⁷ Csapo tries to refute Fraen-

13) In particular C. Weissmann, *De servi currentis persona apud comicos Romanos*, diss. Giessen 1911, 47, argued for the substantially Roman origin of the routine: "servi currentis figuram a poetis Romanis exultam, fortasse etiam inventam esse puto."

14) E. g. E. W. Handley, *Plautus and his Public: Some Thoughts on New Comedy in Latin*, *Dioniso* 46, 1975, 125, K. B. Frost, *Exits and Entrances in Menander*, Oxford 1988, 42: "The entrance of the running slave was a standard scene in Greek Comedy", *Krieter-Spiro* (as n. 6) 83–5.

15) R. L. Hunter, *The New Comedy of Greece and Rome*, Cambridge 1985, 164 f. n. 35; cf. J. Barsby, *Plautus' Pseudolus as Improvisatory Drama*, in: L. Benz / E. Stärk / G. Vogt-Spira (edd.), *Plautus und die Tradition des Stegreifspiels*, Tübingen 1995, 66.

16) E. Csapo, *Is the Threat-Monologue of the Servus Currens an Index of Roman Authorship?*, *Phoenix* 41, 1987, 399–419. Csapo's arguments have too readily been accepted by C. W. Marshall, *The Stagecraft and Performance of Roman Comedy*, Cambridge 2006, 193 n. 75.

17) Pythias' threat in *Eun.* 647 f. is comparable, if less extreme. Csapo does not exclude the possibility that Terence might use a conventional motif in ironic transformation, although he thinks it unlikely. He also argues ([as n. 16] 411–13) that *Heaut.* 31 f. attest a Greek example of ironic reversal of the convention; but his interpretation of this difficult passage is quite uncertain.

kel's arguments for massive expansion by Plautus of the *de via decedite* motif, but I do not think he has succeeded; even he is willing to concede to Fraenkel the probability of some Plautine expansion.¹⁸ Csapo further supports his case with a number of terracotta figurines and other artifacts which depict slaves of comedy.¹⁹ Some of these slaves are certainly running and provide confirmation, if any was needed, that running slaves were not unknown in Greek comedy;²⁰ but Csapo provides no compelling argument for supposing that the slaves depicted are performing the conventional comic routine with which we are concerned, that is entering the scene with exaggerated haste to deliver urgent news. The iconography of the artistic representations of comic slaves is not so stereotyped that we have to suppose all of them to depict a single dramatic situation. Csapo's attempts to connect details of dress and posture with stock features of the running-slave routine in the texts are unconvincing. On Csapo's own admission the artifacts depict running slaves in several styles of dress, and "none ... certainly depicts the *pallium collectum* described in Roman comedy"; if the running slaves are regularly depicted with cloak hitched up, so also are a number of standing slaves.²¹ Even if a standing slave's posture may sometimes allow us to surmise that he has been running, it cannot tell us that he has just made a running entry of the conventional type found in Plautus and Terence and has now turned to lecture the audience; that is speculative interpretation inspired by a preconceived conviction that the running-slave routine of the *palliata* was already a conventional device in Greek New Comedy.

Csapo thinks that Fraenkel gave Plautus too much credit for originality and underestimated his debt to his New Comedy models; I would criticize Fraenkel rather for overestimating Ter-

18) E. Csapo, *Plautine Elements in the Running-Slave Entrance Monologues?*, CQ 39, 1989, 146–63. He is willing to ascribe to Plautus scurrilous aside comments on the running slave's entrance-monologue and the introduction of the complete routine in Trin. 1008 ff. (159, 161, 163); he supposes, following Fraenkel, that the *Trinummus* passage was expanded by "contamination" from another Greek play, but that is at least very doubtful, even if one does not accept all the arguments of A. S. Gratwick, *Curculio's Last Bow*, Mnemosyne 34, 1981, 331–43.

19) Csapo (as n. 1) 41–58.

20) Csapo (as n. 1) 42 n. 4 notes, however, that the slave on the altar is illustrated far more often.

21) Csapo (as n. 1) 48 with n. 47.

ence's debt to his models.²² I think there are good grounds for believing that in all his examples of the running-slave routine it was Terence who characterized the slave as a conventional running slave by means of one or more conventional motifs. I have argued elsewhere that Terence introduced the running-slave routine in *Pho.* 179 ff.²³ I believe there was an act-division at this point of the Greek play, that Terence bridged it by keeping Antipho and Phaedria on stage from the preceding scene, and that this made possible Geta's running-slave entry by providing him with an audience. Again I have argued that in *Ad.* 299 ff. Terence grafted the running-slave routine on to Geta's entry; it provides some momentary comedy but is hardly consistent with Geta's lateness in reporting back to his mistress.²⁴ In *Pho.* 847 ff. Fraenkel²⁵ was inclined to see Terentian elaboration of his Greek model in the almost Plautine use of the motif of recall and delayed recognition. I suspect that Terence is entirely responsible for introducing the running-slave routine here also; it is particularly unrealistic for a character coming out of a stage-house rather than, as usual, entering from one of the wings. Finally, in *And.* 338 ff. Terence has certainly at least to some extent modified the manner of Davos' entry; during the slave's entrance-monologue (338–44) Pamphilus and Charinus comment on it aside, but according to Donatus (on 301) the rôle of Charinus was added by Terence. It seems very

22) Since Fraenkel wrote, the recovery of substantial new texts of Menander, clarifying his regular adherence to a five-act convention and restriction to three speaking actors in one scene, has left no doubt that Terence made many more changes to his Greek models than are implied by what he says in the prologues and by the statements of Donatus, even if the nature and extent of the changes are much disputed; cf. J. C. B. Lowe, *Terence's Four-Speaker Scenes*, *Phoenix* 51, 1997, 152–69, J. Barsby, *Terence and his Greek Models*, in: C. Questa/R. Raffaelli (edd.), *Due seminari plautini*, Urbino 2002, 251–77, P. Kruschwitz, *Terenz*, Hildesheim/Zürich/New York 2004, 204, Brown (as n. 4) xiii.

23) J. C. B. Lowe, *Terentian Originality in the Phormio and Hecyra*, *Hermes* 111, 1983, 432–4; cf. K. Büchner, *Das Theater des Terenz*, Heidelberg 1974, 315 f., A. Primmer, *Handlungsgliederung in Nea und Palliata: Dis Exapaton und Bacchides*, Wien 1984, 20 n. 27, R. Maltby, *Donat über die Stegreifelemente in Terenz' Phormio*, in: Kruschwitz/Ehlers/Felgentreu (as n. 3) 18.

24) Terence, *Adelphoe*: *Problems of Dramatic Space and Time*, CQ 48, 1998, 483 f.; cf. A. S. Gratwick, *Terence: the Brothers*, Warminster 1987, 242. I agree with Csapo (as n. 1) 52 n. 68 that the wall-paintings from Herculaneum and Pompeii could well depict this scene but not that they must depict a running-slave scene.

25) Fraenkel (as n. 10) 223 f.

likely that Terence has added the aside comments that punctuate Davos' entrance-monologue²⁶ and not unlikely that he also added the faint echo of the running-slave routine in *resiste*. If I am right, Terence provides no evidence for the existence of a Greek running-slave convention. One cannot infer from the Latin plays examples of the convention in Terence's Greek models.

In my view, therefore, there is no firm evidence, whether in the extant remains of Greek New Comedy, in the representations of comic slaves on artifacts, or in the Latin adaptations of Greek comedy, for an established running-slave convention in Greek drama. That individual motifs regularly used in the routine had Greek antecedents is demonstrable and I would not rule out the possibility that they were sometimes combined by a Greek dramatist into something like the routine as Terence used it. The existing evidence, however, suggests that only in the *palliata* did the routine become an established convention, with the combination of various motifs used by Greek comedy in a less stereotyped way. This is by no means an improbable hypothesis. The *palliata* certainly inherited some conventions from New Comedy but it also developed some rather different conventions of its own.²⁷

If the running-slave routine was a Roman development, although "building upon a Greek foundation",²⁸ it is not implausible to speculate that native Italian traditions of improvised drama contributed something to this development. The routine, with its comic business and conventional motifs, would be well suited to improvised drama, a *lazzo* easily adapted to a variety of situations and capable of being extended by the actor *ad lib.*²⁹ I have argued

26) Cf. B. Denzler, *Der Monolog bei Terenz*, Zürich 1968, 96 on Charinus. On the Charinus-Byrrria subplot in general cf. most recently E. Lefèvre, *Terenz' und Menanders Andria*, München 2008, 58–63; I am not, however, convinced by Lefèvre's arguments that Simo's pretended wedding preparations and hence Davos' entrance at 338 were added by Terence from Menander's *Perinthia* (op. cit. 82–5, 101 f.)

27) An important change of performance-convention was the dropping of the Greek chorus and associated five-act structure and the enlarging of the musical element in the body of the play instead; it seems likely that this owed something to Italian traditions of sub-literary drama, even if developments in Greek drama in the third century may well have been a factor also (cf. Arnott, *Menander*, Plautus, Terence, Oxford 1975, 32 f., B. Gentile, *Theatrical performances in the ancient world*, Amsterdam 1979, 39).

28) Hunter (as n. 15) 81.

29) Barsby (as n. 15) 66; cf. Marshall (as n. 16) 272 on the *servus currens* as an "expandable comic routine".

elsewhere that the conventional parasite of New Comedy at least somewhat changed his character in the *palliata*, Terence's *Phormio* included, and that there is some evidence to connect the gluttony of the *parasitus edax* with Dossennus, one of the stock characters of the *Atellana*.³⁰ The influence of improvised drama on several stock characters of Roman comedy has been plausibly suggested.³¹

What are the implications for Terence? When he uses the running-slave routine we should not see him as faithfully copying what he found in his Greek models, but as consciously introducing additional theatrical effects, although with the restraint that characterizes his plays as a whole. Although Terence's comedies mark a reaction against the more farcical tradition of his Roman predecessors and are in general obviously far removed from improvised drama, it has long been recognized that he sometimes made concessions to popular taste, as when he introduced the comic pair, Thraso and Gnatho, into his *Eunuchus* from Menander's *Colax*, or a scene from Diphilus into his *Adelphoe*.³² I believe it

30) Plautus' Parasites and the Atellana, in: G. Vogt-Spira, Studien zur vorliterarischen Periode im frühen Rom, Tübingen 1989, 161–9; cf. H. D. Jocelyn, Horace and the Reputation of Plautus in the Late First Century B. C., in: S. J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace. A Bimillenary Celebration*, Oxford 1995, 236f., M. Deufert, *Textgeschichte und Rezeption der plautinischen Komödien im Altertum*, Berlin / New York 2002, 80. For the exaggerated *edacitas* of Plautus' parasites cf. A. Antonsen-Resch, *Von Gnatho zu Saturio: Die Parasitenfigur und das Verhältnis der römischen Komödie zur griechischen*, Berlin / New York 2004, 213–15. That Terence is responsible for at least some of Phormio's parasitical characteristics is highly probable, even if we can only guess at how his counterpart was characterized in the Greek original; cf. R. H. Martin, *Terence: Phormio*, London 1959, 13, Büchner (as n. 23) 323: "Terenz hat Phormio dem gefräßigen Parasitentypen angenähert", Lefèvre, *Der Phormio des Terenz und der Epidikazomenos des Apollodor von Karystos*, München 1978, 48–51, Antonsen-Resch, op. cit. 195, Kruschwitz (as n. 22) 103 n. 34, Maltby (as n. 23) 22f.

31) Cf. J. C. B. Lowe, *Cooks in Plautus*, *ClAnt* 4, 1985, 72–102 on the transformation of μάγειρος to *coquus* in Plautus. Influence of the preliterate Atellana on the Plautine *uxor dotata* has been suggested by E. Schuhmann, *Philologus* 121, 1977, 60, E. Stärk, *Die Menaechmi des Plautus und kein griechisches Original*, Tübingen 1989, 47–59, on the *senex amator* by Stärk, op. cit. 31–6 (cf. Gratwick, *Light Drama*, in: P. E. Easterling / E. J. Kenney [edd.], *Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, Cambridge 1982, II, 104 "Atellane-type troupe").

32) E. g. F. Leo, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur*, Berlin 1913, 257, H. Haffter, *Terenz und seine künstlerische Eigenart*, Darmstadt 1966, 23–7, P. G. McC. Brown, *Movements of Characters and Pace of Action in Terence's Plays*, in: Kruschwitz / Ehlers / Felgentreu (as n. 3) 175.

can be shown, moreover, that Terence made many other innovations, not involving any Greek model, which show concern for theatrical effect, for example new eavesdropping scenes.³³ I suggest that Terence's running-slave scenes fall into the same category, that they continue, in a modified form,³⁴ a tradition of largely Roman origin, although with Greek antecedents, and that, directly or indirectly, they probably owe something to Italian traditions of improvised drama.

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33) Cf. Lowe (as n.22), Barsby (as n.22) 267f.

34) Goldberg, *Understanding Terence*, Princeton 1986, 18 observes that in Ad. 299 ff. Geta's entrance as *servus currens* not only provides lively action but has "added dramatic point" because "Terence has transferred the generalized aggression of the typical *currens* to the specific situation".