



MENAECHMI

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SUMMARY



The play starts off with the arrival of the second Menecmo and his servant Messanione in the city of Epidamno, where his long-lost brother lives, although he doesn't know yet. Even though they've been at sea for six straight years, and even the slave suggests taking a rest, Menecmo II insists on not stopping until he finds his brother or he is certain of his death and so he wanders about the city.

They eventually meet Cilindro, Erozia's cook, and the first misunderstanding takes place: Cilindro is sure to be talking to his master's lover and Menecmo II is unsure about how this stranger knows so much about him and insists on knowing him. They end up telling each other they're crazy and Cilindro eventually goes back home to tell Erozia about his so thought lover, so she goes out and sees Menecmo II and, thinking she is referring to her actual lover, she invites him in.

Menecmo II is caught by even more surprise when Erozia specifies his father's name and his Sicilian origins, still not understanding how these people know anything about him, he decides to play along anyway and admits to be playing the role of the one who doesn't know her so as not to exploit their relationship.

At this point the real Menecmo's, the one this Menecmo is searching for and the actual lover, wife's coat comes into play as Erozia asks him to take it to the embroider for a rework, even though his servant suggests otherwise for fear of getting caught lying. Menecmo agrees and sets off with the coat and the promise to be there the following day.



COMEDY'S STRUCTURE

In the *argumentum* we can read the anticipation of what the author will speak about in the play. We can already see the theme of the double. We can read the story of Mosco, who is a Sicilian merchant and father of two twins, Sosicle and Menecmo. when the latter was kidnapped, Mosco died of pain. After this, Sosicle was renamed Menecmo. In the prologue the plot of the play is repeated. At the beginning he addresses the audience and recommends them to pay attention to his words. This technique is called metatheatre. The setting of the comedy is also introduced in the prologue. *“Gli autori fan finta che tutto succeda ad Atene, perché tutto abbia l'aria più greca che è possibile. Io invece dirò soltanto dove il fatto avvenne.”* Plautus uses the technique of the *contaminatio*, a completely Greek comedy could have been boring for the spectators and a Roman one could have offended tradition. For this reason Plautus, like other Latin playwrights, inserted scenes from different comedies, blending them together. *“In realtà sicilianizza.”*

TITLE, SPACE, CHARACTERS AND THEMES

The title of the play is clear, it is the name of one of the twins, which later becomes the name of his brother as well; that is why in the play we have *Menecmo* the first and a *Menecmo* the second.

The comedy of *Menaechmi* is set in Epidamno. The places mentioned are: the port where *Menecmo II* lands, the *forum* from which *Menecmo I* returns, the house of *Menecmo I* and the house of *Erozia*.

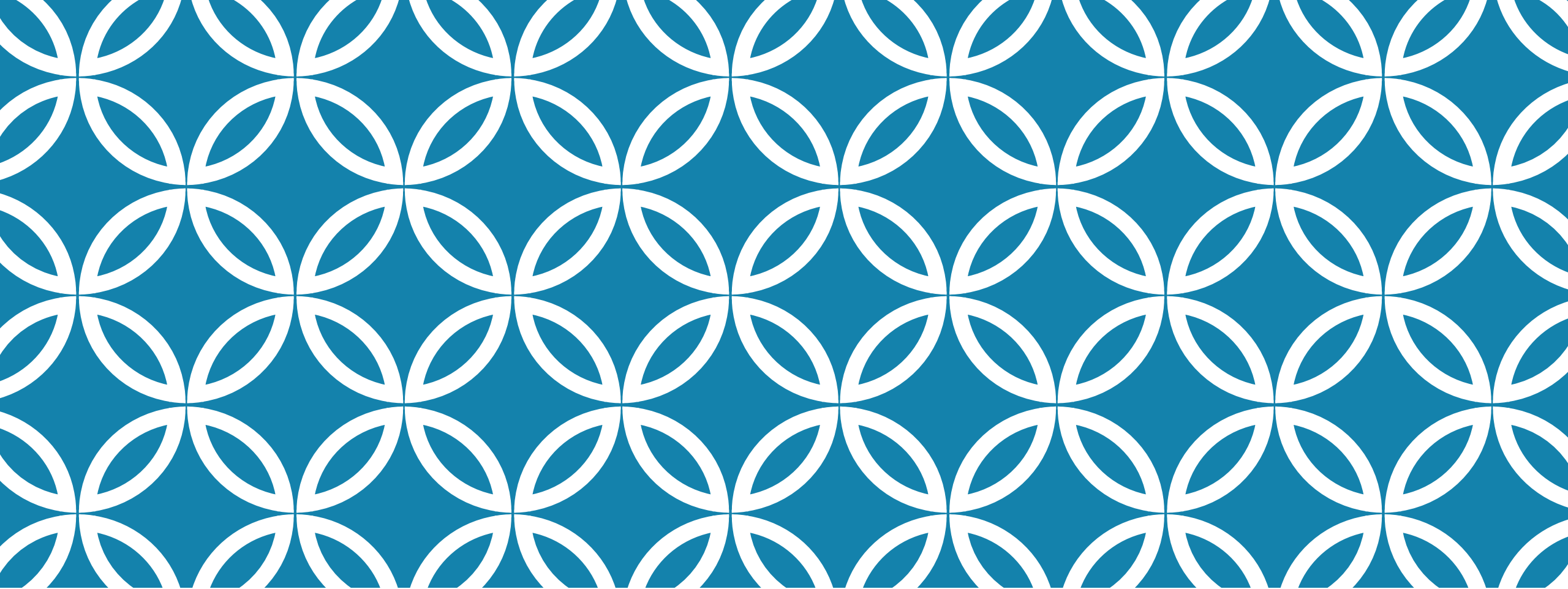
In *Menecmi* it is easy to identify some of the characters most frequently used by Plautus in his works. The characters found are the old man, the servant and the courtesan.

The main theme is that the double. Plautus mainly uses it to make the audience laugh: indeed, the likeness of the two twins creates many comical situations and misunderstandings.

COMIC MECHANISMS

COMIC MECHANISMS	LATIN	ENGLISH
EXCHANGES OF CHARACTERS AND TWISTS	<i>„sed eccum Menaechmum video; vae tergo meo, prius iam convivae ambulat ante ostium”(v.275) „Cylindrus ego sum: non nosti nomen meum?”(v.294)</i>	„uh-oh, I see Menaechmus, I’ll get whipped for sure coming back from shopping”(v.275) „I’m Cylindrus, don’t you know my name?”(v.294)
PARODY, A CARICATUREL IMITATION OR ACCENTUATION OF THE PROTAGONISTS’ DEFECTS	<i>„In scirpo nodum quaeris ” (v.247) „ si acum, credo, quaereres, acum invenisses, si appareret, iam diu” (v.238)</i>	” You’re grasping at straws” (v.246) „I think if you had been looking for a needle in a haystack you would have found it a long time ago by now”(v.238/39)
PUNS AND PLAYFUL IDENTIFICATIONS	<i>Cylindrus-Coriendrus Penniculus-vidulo salvom fero Penniculus-parasitus</i>	Cylindrus-Coriendrus Moocher-parasite Menaechmus-basket case Peniculus-old whisk broom

<p>METAPHORS</p>	<p><i>"in scirpo nodum quaeris"</i> <i>„quaereres acum invenisses"</i> <i>„Oboluit marsuppium</i> <i>huic istuc quod habes"</i> <i>„ Minime hercle mirum. morem</i> <i>hunc meretrices habent:</i> <i>ad portum mittunt servolos..."</i></p>	<p>" You're grasping at straws" „you had been looking for a needle in a haystack" "she smells the purse that you have" "sirens have this gimmick, they send both sexes down to the harbor..."</p>
<p>COMBINATION OF REFINED AND CRUDE WORDS</p>	<p><i>mulieres-parasitos</i> <i>Mulieres-meretrices</i> <i>Sycophantae-palpatores</i></p>	<p>Prostitutes-seductresses Cheats-bootlickers Trolls-scammers</p>
<p>VULGAR JOKES AND EXASPERATION OF NATURAL FEELINGS</p>	<p><i>„Ei mihi,</i> <i>quom nihil est qui illi homini</i> <i>diminuat caput " (v.304)</i> <i>„Eu hercle hominem multum, et</i> <i>odiosum mihi" (v.315)</i> <i>„Vt eas maximam malam</i> <i>crucem"</i></p>	<p>"pity there's nothing around to smash this guy's head in with" (v.304) "sonfoabitch" (v.315) "I'd like for you to go to Hades"</p>
<p>DOUBLE MEANINGS, ESPECIALLY OF A SEXUAL NATURE</p>	<p><i>„saepe excussam malleo"</i> <i>„adsentabor quidquid dicet</i> <i>mulieri, si possum hospitium</i> <i>nancisci"</i> <i>„est hic praeda nobis"</i></p>	<p>"the boat has been banged on a lot with a hammer", "I'm going to get along with the lady whatever she says so long as I can get a good time out of it", "we've got some easy picking here"</p>



THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

N. C.
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SUMMARY



At the beginning of the second act of “The Comedy of Errors”, Adriana is with her sister Luciana and they are arguing that her husband is with another woman because he has never returned home. Then enters Dromio E, who announces that her husband does not want to come home and that he has beaten him. Then Adriana, not believing him, beats him too. Luciana and her sister then begin a discourse on the role of women and men and Luciana urges her sister to be patient.

Later in the second scene, Antipholus S sees again Dromio S, who tells him that he has brought all the money to the "Centaur", but that afterwards he has never seen the master who was seen by the other Dromio. Antifolo S meets Dromio S, who beats him, believing him to be his own servant. At the end, Adriana forces Antifolo to go home and have lunch with her and then she orders Dromio to not let anyone in while the couple has lunch upstairs.

COMEDY'S STRUCTURE

The act we will examine is the second. The first difference between these two comedies is that the prologue is not present, in fact the comedy presents a general index, an introductory note and a presentation of the characters to facilitate understanding to the reader. Reading the comedy it is evident how it was inspired by two comedies by Plauto: *Menaechmi* and *Amphitruo*, introducing, however, a fictional note coloured by the story of the old father of the twins who came to Ephesus in search for them, risking death sentence because of the conflict between Ephesus and Syracuse.



TITLE, SPACE, CHARACTERS AND THEMES

The title is «The comedy of errors». This title fully expresses the argument around which the whole story revolves. It's a clear meaning used to express a dark situation that is full of errors and misunderstandings.

The whole story takes place in one day, from dawn till dusk.

The play is set in the hellenistic hera, and it is evident in the settings, which have many inns where you can eat and with the possibility of staying overnight, as the two inns mentioned “the phoenix” and “the centaur”. Another places can be Adriana and Antifolo's house or the market of the city. The characters of this act are Antifolo of Siracusa, his wife Adriana, Adriana's sister Luciana, Dromio of Ephesus and Dromio of Siracusa. We can recognize the fixed mask of the “**servus callidus**” that sometimes could be irreverent, but may be considered the main protagonist, as many speeches, such as that on the difference between being bald but wise and having many hair, but being ignorant, are held by him. There are no real antagonists, because throughout the play the characters get in the way of each other causing misunderstandings without even realizing it.

COMIC MECHANISMS

COMIC MECHANISMS	ITALIAN	ENGLISH
EXCHANGES OF CHARACTERS AND TWISTS	<p>ANTIFOLO S. - <i>Bella signora, è a me che stai parlando? Ma io non ti conosco... Io sono in Efeso da non più di due ore e tanto estraneo alla città che a tutto il tuo discorso; che se pure ho seguito attentamente parola per parola, francamente non trovo in me acutezza sufficiente a intenderne una sola.</i></p> <p>LUCIANA - <i>Ah, vergogna, cognato! Quanto ti vedo mutato! Quando mai t'ho sentito, prima d'ora, trattare in questo modo mia sorella? T'ha mandato a chiamare per il pranzo da Dromio.</i></p>	<p>ANTIFOLO S. - Beautiful lady, are you talking to me? But I do not know you ... I have been in Ephesus for no more than two hours and so much a stranger to the city than to all your talk; that even if I have carefully followed word for word, frankly I do not find in me sufficient acuity to understand a single one.</p> <p>LUCIANA - Ah, shame, brother-in-law! How much I see you changed! When have I ever heard you treat my sister like this before? He sent for you for lunch at Dromio's.</p>
PARODY, A CARICATUREL IMITATION OR ACCENTUATION OF THE PROTAGONISTS' DEFECTS	<p>DROMIO S. - <i>Quella del pelo è una benedizione di cui esso gratifica le bestie; negli uomini compensa con lo spirito quello che ha tolto loro coi capelli.</i></p>	<p>DROMIO S. - That of the hair is a blessing of which it gratifies the beasts; in men he compensates with the spirit what he has taken away from them with their hair.</p>

COMIC MECHANISMS	ITALIAN	ENGLISH
PUNS AND PLAYFUL IDENTIFICATIONS	DROMIO S. - <i>Per una zucca calva di natura non c'è tempo per mettere i capelli.</i>	DROMIO S. There is no time for a man to recover his hair that grows bald by nature.
METAPHORS	ADRIANA - ... <i>E basterebbe invece un solo sguardo dei suoi occhi di sole a restaurare sul mio volto la mia beltà svanita. Ma lui, come un cerbiatto incustodito, rompe la staccionata per trascorrere a più lontani pascoli. Io son solo il suo povero trastullo.</i>	ADRIANA- And instead, a single glance from a sonny look of his would be enough to restore my vanished beauty to my face. But he, like an unattended fawn, breaks the fence to go to more distant pastures. I am only his poor plaything.
COMBINATION OF REFINED AND CRUDE WORDS	ANTIFOLO S. – <i>“La tua padrona vada ad impiccarsi! La tua padrona io non la conosco! Che vada al diavolo!” -Razza di canaglia! E ancor poc'anzi insistevi a negare d'averlo avuto da me, quel denaro! E mi parlavi d'una tua padrona e d'un pranzo; per cui avrai sentito, almeno spero, quanto m'è</i>	ANTIFOLO S. - <i>“Your mistress is going to hang herself! I do not know your mistress! Go to hell! ” - Race of rogue! And just a moment ago you insisted on denying you got that money from me! And you talked to me about a mistress of yours and a meal; so, you will have heard, at least</i>

COMIC MECHANISMS	ITALIAN	ENGLISH
VULGAR JOKES AND EXASPERATION OF NATURAL FEELINGS	<p>DROMIO DI S. - <i>Ci fu mai uomo tanto bastonato come me, così fuor di stagione, se al perché e al per come non s'accorda né rima né ragione? Comunque ti ringrazio.</i></p>	<p>“thus... out of season”, “out of time”</p>
DOUBLE MEANINGS, ESPECIALLY OF A SEXUAL NATURE	<p>DROMIO E: <i>“Padrona, ahimè, sicuramente il mio padrone oggi ha le corna messe per traverso.”</i> ADRIANA: <i>“Ha le corna! Che dici, manigoldo!”</i> DROMIO E: <i>“Non intendevo dire che è cornuto; ma certamente è pazzo da legare.”</i></p>	<p>DROMIO E: “Mistress, alas, surely my master today has his horns placed sideways.” ADRIANA: “It has horns! What are you saying, rascal! ” DROMIO E: “I didn't mean that he's a cuckold; but he is certainly crazy to bind. ”</p>
THE FREQUENT USE OF HALF LATIN AND HALF GREEK WORDS OR WORDS FORMED WITH SEVERAL ROOTS. OR NEOLOGISMS, OR HYPERBOLIC AND RIDICULOUS SUPERLATIVES	<p>DROMIO S. - <i>No, padrone; l'arrosto ha ancor bisogno, di quel che ho preso io.</i> ANTIFOLO DI S. - <i>Sarebbe a dire?</i> DROMIO S. - <i>Un buon “battuto”.</i></p>	<p>DROMIO DI S. - No, master; the roast still needs what I got. ANTIFOLO DI S. - That is to say. DROMIO DI S. - A good “beaten”.</p>