

AMPHITRYON FROM PLAUTUS TO GIRAUDOUX

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PREFACE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When Jean Giraudoux wrote his play, Amphitryon 38, he justified the inclusion of the 38 in the title by explaining that his was the thirty-eighth version of the drama. A contemporary critic feels that even this estimate is too low. He states:

The legend upon which the exhibit is based is as old as the Greco-Roman hills and when its author indicates his belief that there have been only 38 dramatic paraphrases of it, he displays himself in the dazzling light of a rather dubious mathematician. If there have been less than 75 or even 100, I also must have missed out on my arithmetic lessons. For it seems to me that, in one version or another, I have been seeing it on the stage in different parts of the world since the kid days when I snitched 50 cents from my younger brother's dime bank and first sneaked off, a boulevardier of 9, to the playhouse. It hasn't, true, always literally shown Jupiter descending to earth in the likeness of the husband of the mortal lulu whose nocturnal favors he passionately craves. Sometimes Jupiter has been rechristened Boris Bedhotzki or Sandor Layhayhy; sometimes the scene has been St. Petersburg or Alt Wien or gay Patee; sometimes the costumes have been modern evening dress instead of the accepted mythological mode. But the essence of the venerable fable has always been there just the same and at 11 o'clock the heroine has always duly and righteously concluded, with a sly and somewhat less righteous wink to the audience, that, while the boudoir imposter might perhaps be allowed his points, she still prefers her legal mate.¹

As Nathan suggests, many versions of the Amphitryon drama appear in a somewhat disguised form, while others take the form of a more faithful paraphrase. It is with five dramas of the latter type that this paper is concerned. In the pages which follow, a comparison will be made of the Amphitryon of Titus Maccius Plautus, Jean de Rotrou, Jean Baptiste Molière, John Dryden, and Jean Giraudoux. These five dramas were chosen from the

¹George Jean Nathan, "At Last, by Jupiter," Newsweek, 10 (November 8, 1937), 22.

thirty-eight versions assumed by Giraudoux--from the seventy-five or one hundred estimated by Nathan--for their prominence and for the fact that they are based so obviously on the *Amphitryon* legend.

The first extant version of the drama is that by Plautus, which seems to have appeared somewhere around the year 200 B.C. It seems certain that there were even earlier versions, and that Plautus was by no means its originator. Some difference of opinion exists, however, among various writers regarding the Greek original of the drama. Most writers agree that it was a work of the New Comedy. Nixon suggests that it might have been written by Philemon around 300 B.C.² Bondurant holds a somewhat different view:

The original upon which Plautus founded his drama is not known..... It may not be too much to assume that Plautus did not adapt this play from any single original, but it is probable that he owes most to Rhinton [Greek playwright of late fourth and early third century B.C.] for the *vis comica* in his piece. This writer handled just this class of subjects, and Athenaeus [Greek scholar of the late second and early third century A.D.] is our authority for the statement that he had a play called *Amphitryon* and another *Hercules*.³

Palmer also says that "the most probable view of the origin of the *Amphitruo* is that it is copied from a burlesque of the Sicilian Rhinthon."⁴ Garnett holds a different opinion:

It is surprising that the theme should not have attracted the best poets of the Athenian Middle Comedy. So far as we know, however, it was only treated by a single author, and he not one of the highest reputation, Archippus.⁵

²Paul Nixon, in the preface to *Plautus*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1950), v.

³Alexander L. Bondurant, "The *Amphitruo* of Plautus, Molière's *Amphitryon*, and the *Amphitryon* of Dryden," *Sewanee Review*, 33 (October, 1925), 455.

⁴Arthur Palmer, "Plautus and His Imitators," *Quarterly Review*, 173 (July, 1891), 51.

⁵R. Garnett, *The Age of Dryden*. (London, 1909), 92.

Schwabe and Teuffel say only that "its original and the time of its composition are unknown."⁶

Amphitryon appears in Greek mythology in the account of the birth of Hercules. The extract below contains the theme which was to appear in the dramas by Plautus, his predecessor or predecessors, and his successors:

When Perseus [King of Tiryns] died, he left behind him in Mykenai four sons, Alkaios, Stenelos, Mestor, and Elektryon.....Alkaios had a son Amphitryon; Elektryon, a daughter Alkmene....and Mestor, a daughter who bore....a son, Taphios, the colonizer of the island of Taphos. During the reign of Elektryon in Mykenai, Pterelaos, a son of Taphios, came thither with his people and demanded a share of Mestor's kingdom, but failing ignominiously in their errand, they attacked the sons of Elektryon and slaughtered all except Likymnios. When the battle was over their fellow Taphians sailed away to Ellis with Elektryon's cattle.....Elektryon, bound on exacting vengeance for the outrage, assigned the affairs of state to Amphitryon and betrothed his daughter Alkmene to him on the condition that the marriage be deferred until the outcome of the expedition should be known; but after making these arrangements, and when about to take back his cattle, a missile from the hand of Amphitryon, probably wholly by accident, struck and killed him. With the stain of blood upon him, Amphitryon fled with his betrothed to Thebes.... but in their new home Alkmene promised him she would ignore the strict letter of the terms of betrothal and would wed him should he avenge the murder of her brothers at the hands of the Taphian kinsmen. He met the promise by leading a well-equipped army of Thebans and their allies against Taphos..... In Amphitryon's absence Alkmene had been visited by Zeus in the guise of her husband and by him had become with child, so that when the real Amphitryon returned, he and his wife were confronted with a perplexing domestic riddle which was not satisfactorily solved till more than a year had passed.⁷

In the chapter which immediately follows, biographical information will be given about the five dramatists, and in succeeding chapters, the five plays will be considered individually and comparatively.

⁶Ludwig Schwabe and Wilhelm Teuffel, History of Roman Literature. (London, 1891), 134.

⁷William S. Fox, Greek and Roman, Vol. I of The Mythology of All Races, edited by Louis H. Gray. (Boston, 1916), 76-77.

CHAPTER II
THE DRAMATISTS

Titus Maccius Plautus

Titus Maccius Plautus was born about 255 B.C. at Sarsina in Umbria, a region of north central Italy. His parents were free but poor. Plautus went to Rome at an early age and led an adventurous life as a Roman soldier. Later, for some years, he earned his living working in the theater, probably doing only manual labor. He invested in trade and lost the money which he was able to save. Then he became the servant of a baker and worked in a mill. Some sources say that he wheeled a hand-mill through the streets and ground meal for householders. In his leisure hours he wrote poetry. He was by then about forty-five years old. The first three of his lost plays apparently belong to this period.

After a while he devoted his time completely to literature. From the one hundred and thirty plays that were attributed to Plautus, Varro, the Roman scholar, recognized only twenty-one as genuine. All of these plays were adapted from Greek dramatists, chiefly of the New Comedy. Very few of his plays can be dated. The Miles Gloriosus appeared about 206 B.C., the Cistellaria about 202 B.C., Stichus in 200 B.C., and Pseudolus in 191 B.C. Others of his plays are Amphitruo, Asinaria, Aulularia, Bacchides, and Captivi. Plautus died in 184 B.C.

Jean de Rotrou

Jean de Rotrou was born at Dreux, France, in 1609, of very noble ancestry. It is said that his first inspiration to write came to him while he was translating classical literature. His first two pieces, however, were by no means inspired by the ancient poets. By the time that he was nineteen, Rotrou had already obtained two successes in the theater. His first play, l'Hypochondriaque, was published in 1631. His earlier plays were adaptations from the Spanish of Lope de Vega. Rotrou said that those portions of his plays which were most praised belonged to the Spanish author, and those which were most blamed belonged to him. His later plays were more clearly under classical influences. In 1635, Richelieu made him one of the famous five whom he employed to write tragedies from his plots. It was then that Rotrou met Corneille, by whom he was greatly influenced.

Not many details are available about the private life of Rotrou. He married Elisabeth le Camus and had three children. He had a long fight against poverty and against his passion for gambling. It is said that when he had won at gambling or had been paid for one of his plays, he would throw the money behind the firewood so that it would not be so easily accessible. When Rotrou had finished his tragedy Venceslas and was getting ready to read it to a group of actors, he was arrested and put in prison for debts which he could not pay. He called the actors and sold his play to them for a small sum. When he came out of prison, he found the play such a huge success that the actors to whom he had sold it felt obligated to make him a present.

With so many successes in the theater, Rotrou gained a pension from Louis XIV. In June, 1650, while he was in Paris staging one of his plays, plague broke out in his home town. Over thirty people had been dying daily. Since he was one of the town magistrates, he felt obligated to leave Paris

and offer his help at Dreux. His brother tried in vain to prevent his going. When he arrived, he wrote his brother:

Le péril où je me trouve est imminent. Au moment où je vous écris, les cloches sonnent pour la vingt-deuxième personne aujourd'hui: ce sera pour moi demain, peut-être; mais ma conscience a marqué mon devoir. Que la volonté de Dieu s'accomplisse!¹

In three days, Rotrou was dead.

The more notable of his plays are Hercule mourant in 1632, la Bague d'oubli in 1635, les Sosies in 1636, les Captifs in 1638, le véritable Saint-Genest in 1646, Venceslas in 1648, and Cosroes in 1648.

Jean Baptiste Poquelin Molière

Jean Baptiste Poquelin was born in 1622, fourteen years after Corneille and twelve years before Racine. His father was an upholsterer at the court. This gave him attendance on the king's household for three months of each year and it was this court which young Jean Baptiste was later to satirize so intimately. In 1636, Jean Baptiste Poquelin entered the College de Clermont, which was the best school in Paris. He was instructed by Jesuits, and acquired a firm command of logic and rhetoric. He was required to perform Latin plays written by his professors.

In 1643, he enrolled in an amateur company. This move reflected his long attraction by the Italian comedians who were performing in Paris. He changed his name to Molière, possibly to spare his father the embarrassment of having an actor in the family. At the age of twenty-five, Molière settled down to serious business and created a successful touring company. He was a shrewd showman, and his troupe became the most accomplished comedians of the kingdom in spite of the strong competition which they encountered.

¹Nouvelle Biographie générale. (Paris, 1863), Vol. 42, 700.

In Lyons in 1655, Molière produced his first important work, l'Etourdi. This was followed by another entertaining piece, le Dépit amoureux, in 1656. Molière later brought his actors to Rouen where the Duke of Anjou, Louis XIV's younger brother, took them under his patronage. On October 24, 1658, the troupe finally played before Louis XIV. They played the farce, le Docteur Amoureux, which was such a success that the king let the group use the Petit-Bourbon theater whenever it was unoccupied. In 1659, Molière produced les Précieuses ridicules, which was his first serious essay in social criticism. In this play, which was a tremendous success, he attacked the preciosity which prevailed in the so-called "high society" of his time. It created many enemies for Molière, but it gained for him the king's friendship and favor.

In 1662, when Molière was forty years old, he married an eighteen year old girl, Armande Béjart. This marriage proved anything but happy. It has been said that his next two plays, l'Ecole des femmes and l'Ecole des maris, both of which appeared in 1662, are reflections on his own marital problems. Armande has been described as "a vain, giddy, and cold-hearted opportunist who made her curiously infatuated husband as miserable in private as he seemed light-hearted in public."² But Molière was a comedian and knew that laughter and entertainment must be the object of comedy. In the eleven remaining years of his life, he produced most of his masterpieces: Tartuffe in 1664, Don Juan in 1665, le Misanthrope in 1666, l'Avare in 1668, le Bourgeois Gentilhomme in 1670, les Femmes savantes in 1672, and le Malade imaginaire in 1673, the year of his death.

Molière died on the stage while he was playing Monsieur Argan, the leading role in le Malade imaginaire, during the fourth performance of the

²John Gassner, Masters of the Drama. (New York, 1945), 294.

play. Because he had been an actor, the church denied him burial in the parish cemetery. The funeral was delayed four days, and the king's intercession was necessary before Molière could be buried with a simple ceremony from which the solemn service was omitted.

John Dryden

John Dryden was born in 1631 at Aldwinkle All Saints, in Northamptonshire, England. His parents were Puritans with anti-monarchical opinions. Dryden was educated at Westminster school and later at Cambridge where he took his degree in 1654. He stayed three more years in Cambridge and then went to London. In 1659, he wrote the "Heroic Stanzas" to the memory of Oliver Cromwell. This was his first important piece of writing, although he had written some verses when he was at Westminster. The following year, Dryden wrote "Astraea Redux" and "A Panegyric on the Restoration," congratulatory verses on the coronation of Charles II. Dryden was accused of inconsistency, but Johnson remarked, "if he changed, he changed with the nation."³

In 1663, Dryden was married to Lady Elizabeth Howard. In December of the same year, he produced his first play, The Wild Gallant, and from that time on, he earned his living by his pen. He has commented that only one of his numerous plays was written to please himself. The chief landmarks of his dramatic career are: The Indian Emperor in 1665, Tyrannic Love in 1669, The Conquest of Granada in 1672, Aurengzebe in 1675, All for Love in 1678, Don Sebastian in 1690, The Spanish Friar in 1683, and Amphitryon in 1690.

Little is known about Dryden's private life. He had three children from his apparently not very happy marriage. In 1670, he was elevated to

³R. Garnett, The Age of Dryden. (London, 1909), 8.

the laureateship. He felt it his duty as poet laureate to come to the help of the Court, and in recognition of the obligation, he produced in 1681 "Absalom and Achitophel" which gave him the distinction of being the greatest satirist of his epoch. Almost simultaneously appeared his "Religio Laici" which was a serious argument in verse on the credibility of the Christian religion.

In 1685, Dryden became a Roman Catholic. The apology for his conversion was given in 1687 in the "Hind and the Panther," an argument for Roman Catholicism. During the Revolution, Dryden did not abjure his new faith and lost his office and pension as a laureate and historiographer royal. Dryden kept on working hard, and assisted by the generosity of friends, he at least kept out of disgrace, although he was not able to keep completely out of debt.

In 1700, Dryden put some of Chaucer's and Boccaccio's tales and Ovid's "Metamorphoses" into his own verse. These translations appeared under the title, "Fables, Ancient and Modern," a few months before his death on May 1, 1700. The cause of his death was the mortification of a toe inflamed by gout! He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Jean Giraudoux

Jean Giraudoux was born in 1882 at Bellac in the old province of Limousin in France. His father was a tax collector.

Giraudoux was always at the top of his class in every subject. He obtained his baccalauréat with great distinction and was awarded a scholarship in the Parisian lycée Lakanal. In 1903, he entered the Ecole Normale. Upon graduating, he decided to travel. He explored the world for nearly five years, sometimes as a newspaper man, sometimes as a diplomat, and at

one time as the tutor of the Prince of Saxe-Meiningen. In these five years he visited Germany, Holland, Norway, Austria, Italy, the Balkans, the United States, Canada, and Mexico. From these travels came his first short stories which later he collected under the title Provinciales and l'Ecole des indifférents. As the years passed, Giraudoux decided that it was time to settle down to a job. In 1910, he was appointed élève vice-consul in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He spent the next four years traveling on diplomatic missions. He visited Russia and the Orient. In 1914, he started his first novel, Simon le Pathétique, which is partly autobiographical. When the war broke out, Giraudoux took part in the battles on the Marne, in Alsace, and at the Dardanelles. He was wounded and was cited for bravery on three occasions. In 1917, he was sent to America on a mission of good will. He summed up his war impressions in a little book called Adieu à la guerre.

As soon as the war ended, Giraudoux resumed his duties in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He later was placed in charge of the Press Bureau. In 1922, he wrote Siegfried et le Limousin, which was highly successful. A dramatized version was produced in 1928 and was a great hit. Giraudoux devoted more and more time to the theater. In 1929, he produced Amphitryon 38, which also proved a great success. In 1933, he wrote Intermezzo, and in 1935, la Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu. The best known of his novels are Suzanne et le Pacifique which was written in 1921, Juliette aux pays des hommes in 1924, and Bella in 1926. He died in Paris in 1944.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARIES OF THE PLAYS

Amphitruo by Plautus

Characters.—Mercury, a god
Sosia, slave of Amphitryon
Jupiter, a god
Alcmena, wife of Amphitryon
Amphitryon, commander-in-chief of the Theban army
Blepharo, a pilot
Bromia, maid to Alcmena

Prologue.—Mercury appears in a street before Amphitryon's house and relates that Amphitryon is at the head of the Theban army which has been at war with the Teleboians and that he is now on his way home to his wife Alcmena. Mercury tells how Alcmena has caught the fancy of the father of the gods, Jupiter, who has come to earth disguised as Amphitryon during Amphitryon's absence. Mercury explains that Jupiter is with Alcmena at that moment in his role of Amphitryon, "et meus pater nunc intus hic cum illa cubat," and that Jupiter has ordered him to appear in the guise of Sosia, Amphitryon's slave, in order to delay the imminent return of Amphitryon and Sosia and thus prevent any interruption of Jupiter's liaison with Alcmena during the long night which Jupiter has ordered.

Act I, Scene I.—It is night. Sosia appears outside Amphitryon's house with a lantern in his hand. He peers cautiously about him, obviously very afraid. He complains of his master's lack of thoughtfulness in sending him from the harbor at this time of night:

ergo in servitute expetunt multa iniqua:
habendum et ferendum hoc onust cum labore.

Mercury, who is looking on from the shadows, thinks that he should be grumbling if anyone should, since he has been a free god up to this day, but is now a slave because his father made him one. Sosia decides that he should rehearse his speech to Alcmena since Amphitryon has sent him ahead for the purpose of telling Alcmena about the victory and about Amphitryon's coming. He sets the lantern down, pretends it is Alcmena, and directs his speech to it. He must add a number of lies to his speech because, as he confesses to himself, "nam cum pugnabant maxime, ego tum fugiebam maxime." When he gets his whole speech arranged the way he wants it, he picks up the lantern and gets ready to go into the house to deliver his speech to his mistress. Mercury, whose mission is to prevent Sosia from entering the house and disturbing Jupiter and Alcmena, steps forward in Sosia's form. He has decided that he must use Sosia's own weapon of roguery in order to drive him from the door. Sosia in the meantime is gazing at the stars and wondering why "ita statim stant signa, neque nox quoquam concedit die." He is sure that old Sol is asleep and drunk. This night brings another into Sosia's mind. On this other night, he was whipped and left strung up until morning. As he moves toward the house, he suddenly sees Mercury and halts, very frightened. Mercury, in order to frighten him even more, says that only yesterday he laid four men away to slumber. Although Sosia is terribly afraid, he thinks that the best thing he can do is to speak right up to Mercury and thus make him think that he is talking with a dangerous character. When Mercury asks Sosia who he is and where he is going, Sosia answers that this is his own business. Sosia is persuaded to tell who he is, however, and Mercury beats him, telling him that he cannot be Sosia since he (Mercury) is Sosia. Sosia tries to prove his identity by relating a few facts about the battle, but Mercury knows everything, even about the wine Sosia had stolen

in Amphitryon's tent while all the other soldiers were in battle. Sosia is very confused. He looks at Mercury and it is as if he were seeing himself in a mirror: "sura, pes, statura, tonsus, oculi, nasum vel labra, malae, mentum, barba, collus: totus." He is still convinced, however, that he has not changed but is the same man he always was: "Quis ego sum saltem, si non sum Sosia?" he asks. He decides to try once more to enter the house and moves toward the door. At Mercury's new threats, he finally gives up and leaves for the harbor to find his master and tell him of all these happenings. As he leaves, he says:

nisi etiam is quoque me ignorabit; quod ille faxit Iuppiter,
ut ego hodie raso capite calvos capiam pilleum.

Scene II.—Mercury is very pleased with having succeeded in sending Sosia away and getting him so thoroughly confused. He knows that very shortly Amphitryon will be accusing his wife of being unfaithful to him, but he also knows that the story will end happily, since Jupiter will renew the harmony between Amphitryon and Alcmena, and that Alcmena will give birth to two sons.

Scene III.—Alcmena and the disguised Jupiter come out of the house. Jupiter is getting ready to leave and is telling Alcmena good-bye. To Alcmena's complaint that he has to go too soon, Jupiter answers that he must go back to his men, but Alcmena still insists that since he only arrived at midnight, he should not leave so quickly. To appease her, Jupiter presents her with a golden bowl which was, he says, given him for bravery on the field. It was, however, actually stolen from the real Amphitryon. Jupiter kisses Alcmena, and while she goes into the house, he dismisses the night and orders the day to come forth.

Act II, Scene I.—Half an hour has elapsed. Amphitryon, followed by Sosia, comes onto the scene, and slaves with baggage follow them. Amphitryon

argues with Sosia, telling him that it is impossible for one person to be in two places at the same time. Sosia insists, however, that his account of the previous night's adventure is true, and Amphitryon decides to find out for himself whether there is really a second Sosia.

Scene II.—Alcmena is complaining about the sorrow that always follows every joy. She feels very lonely, but she is happy at the same time because Amphitryon is victorious. She feels that she can bear her loneliness if Amphitryon only keeps on winning. Amphitryon is very happy to see her, and especially to see that she is going to have a child because, as he confesses to Sosia, he was hoping to be made a father. Alcmena suddenly sees him and is very surprised at his quick return. Her interpretation is that he wants to test how much she misses him. She advances slowly toward him, and is very bewildered by her husband's sudden outburst of affection. She asks him why he has returned so quickly, and Amphitryon denies that he has been there since he left for the war. Alcmena insists that just a little while before she had seen both him and Sosia. Amphitryon is convinced that she is mad and Sosia supports him, saying,

*Atra bili percita est.
nulla res tam delirantis homines concinnat cito.*

Amphitryon says that he had just come into the harbor from the war on the previous night, and that he stayed on board ship all night. Alcmena then tells him that not only had he been at home, but that he had eaten with her and had gone to bed with her as well. In order to further support her argument, Alcmena tells him about the outcome of the battle and about the gift of the golden bowl. This is too much for Amphitryon, especially since Sosia is still carrying with seals intact the little chest where the bowl is supposedly concealed. Alcmena has her maid bring the bowl. Amphitryon is amazed when he sees it and says that either Alcmena is the

greatest of enchantresses or his bowl is still inside the chest. He orders Sosia to unseal and open the chest. Sosia says:

tu peperisti Amphitruonem, ego alium peperci Sosiam;
 nunc si patere paternam peperit, omnes congeminauimus.

But the chest is empty. Amphitryon accuses Sosia of having run ahead from the ship, unsealed the chest, and sealed it up again after giving Alceia the bowl. Alceia tells him that he himself gave her the bowl after they had eaten and slept together. Amphitryon becomes angry and accuses her of betraying him, but Alceia swears that she is innocent:

Non ego illam mihi dotem duco esse, quae dos dicitur,
 sed pudicitiam et pudorem et sedatum cupidinem,
 deum metum, parentum amorem et cognatum concordiam,
 tibi morigera atque ut munifica sim bonis, prosim probis.

Amphitryon is still not convinced. He tells Alceia that he is going to find Menocrotus, Alceia's relative who was with him on the ship, to testify and if he denies that things are as she says, then he will divorce her. To his question, "numquid causam dicis, quin te hoc multem matrimonio?" Alceia answers, "Si deliqui, nulla causa est." Amphitryon leaves for the port and Alceia goes into the house, saying to herself as she goes,

Nimis ceuster facinus mirum est, qui illi conlibitum siet
 nec viro sic me insimulare falso facinus tam malum.
 quicquid est, iam ex Menocrate cognato id cognoscam meo.

Act III, Scene I.—Jupiter comes on the scene and says that he is going to help Alceia so that the storm which he has brewed will not descend on her head:

nunc Amphitruonem memot, ut cecepi semel,
 esse adsimulabo, atque in horum familiam
 frustrationem hodie incipiam mactumam;
 post igitur deum faciam res fiat palam
 atque Alceiae in tempore auxilium feram
 facianque ut uno fetu et quod gravida est viro
 et me quod providant pariat sine doloribus.

Scene II.—Alceia comes out of the house. She says that she will not endure such an unjustified accusation and that she will leave Amphitryon

unless he apologizes and swears that he is sorry. Jupiter, in Amphitryon's form, goes to her and takes her in his arms. She pulls away. He tells her that he has come back to set himself right with her and that he never believed her to be immodest, but was only testing her feelings to see how she would take such an accusation. To her question as to why he did not bring Naucrates to testify, he answers that it is not fair to take in earnest something said in jest. He asks her to forgive him. Alcmena pretends that she is still angry and is going to leave him, but she finally gives in to Jupiter's entreaties.

Scene III.—Jupiter tells Sosia that he has made peace with Alcmena and that he wants Sosia to go ask Blepharo, pilot of his ship, to lunch with them. Then Jupiter calls Mercury and orders him to keep Amphitryon away from the house when he comes so that he can once more divert himself with his "wife on loan."

Scene IV.—Mercury promises to keep Amphitryon away from the house in compliance with his father's wishes.

Act IV, Scene I.—Amphitryon comes wearily to his door. He has not found Naucrates, so he has decided to come and ask Alcmena more questions, but he tries the door and finds it locked.

Scene II.—Mercury appears on the roof as a very dishevelled Sosia. He asks Amphitryon who he is, orders him to stop demolishing the door, and threatens to douse him with a bucket of water which he poises on the roof. Here there is a passage missing in the play. Leo, the German classicist, has supplied the following outline of the lost part:

After Mercury has had sufficient amusement with Amphitryon, the disturbance calls Alcmena from within. She has a dispute with her husband—Jupiter had left her earlier so that he might offer sacrifice—and shuts him out of the house. Perhaps Amphitryon went away to summon friends to aid him: at any rate, Sosia appears with Blepharo and gets a bad welcome from his master,

despite Blepharo's patronage, and then escapes. Jupiter comes out of the house. Husband and lover abuse each other vigorously and a scuffle ensues. Blepharo is appealed to by Amphitryon, only to be made ridiculous by Jupiter.¹

Scene III.—Blepharo leaves the two Amphitryons to untangle themselves. To Amphitryon's plea that he stand by and help him, Blepharo answers, "quid opus est advocato, qui utri sim advocatus nescio?" Thus abandoned, Amphitryon decides to avenge himself on the sorcerer:

quem omnes mortales ignorant et ludificant ut lubet.
certuast, intro rumpam in sedis: ubi quemque hominem aspexero,
si ancillam seu servom sive uxorem sive adulterum
seu patrem sive avom videbo, obtruncabo in aedibus.
neque me Iuppiter neque di omnes id prohibebunt, si volent,
quin sic faciam ut constitui.

As he rushes toward the door, a peal of thunder is heard and he falls motionless to the ground.

Act V, Scene I.—Bromia comes out of the house in a panic. She tells about all the amazing things which have happened. She relates that when Alcmene's time had come and she called on the gods for help, there came a loud rumbling and crashing which made everyone fall on the floor in a faint, and a voice called out:

Alcmene, adest auxilium, ne time:
et tibi et tuis propitius caeli cultor advenit.

Then the voice ordered everyone to get up. Bromia goes on to tell that Alcmene gave birth to twin boys without anyone's knowing how it had happened. At this moment, Bromia sees Amphitryon lying on the ground. She helps him up and tells him about his wife's twin boys, one of whom is so strong not a soul could wrap him in his swaddling clothes. She tells him that two enormous crested serpents came to this son as he lay in his cradle, and that he choked them to death. Then she relates that Jupiter has told Alcmene

¹Titus Maccius Plautus, Amphitruo, in Plautus, translated by Paul Nixon. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1950), vol. I, 107.

that he is the father of the stronger of the boys while the other is Amphitryon's son.

Amphitryon is very pleased with all this, and gets ready to make a sacrifice to Jupiter. At this moment, a loud peal of thunder is heard, and Jupiter appears once more. He substantiates Bromia's story. His last words are:

tu cum Alcmena moxve antiquam in gratiam
redi: haud promeruit quam ob tam vitio vorteres;
nea vi subactast facere. ego in caelum migro.

Les Sosies by Rotrou

Characters.--Juno, wife of and sister to Jupiter
Jupiter, father of the gods
Mercury, Jupiter's son
Amphitryon, commander-in-chief of the Theban army
Alcmena, Amphitryon's wife
Céphalie, Alcmena's maid
Sosia, Amphitryon's servant
The Captains

Prologue.--Jupiter's wife, Juno, comes down from heaven and laments over her husband's infidelities. She enumerates all Jupiter's past mistresses and points out the glorious end to which each one of them has come:

L'honneur ne conduit plus en ces champs azurés;
Les vices aujourd'hui s'en sont faits les degrés;
Où la vertu régna le déshonneur habite,
Et le crime a le prix qu'eut jadis le mérite.

Then she tells about Alcmena, Amphitryon's wife, who is going to be Jupiter's next mistress, and about Hercules, who is going to be born from this union. She foretells all the tasks which Hercules is going to perform, the monsters he is going to kill, his glory and his final death.

Act I, Scene I.--It is night. Mercury is speaking to the moon. He tells it to slow down and thus prolong the night, so that his father, who at the moment is in Alcmena's arms in the guise of her husband Amphitryon,

can enjoy himself longer. He tells the moon to help him in this and not to be offended because of the conspiracy, since:

Le rang des vicieux ôte la honte aux vices,
 Et donne de beaux noms à de honteux offices;
 C'est éloquence à moi que de servir ses feux,
 Que de persuader les objets de ses vœux;
 Et non non est celui de messenger du Pôle,
 Qui de non père en terre apporte la parole.

Then Mercury tells himself that in order to help Jupiter further, he must stop being Mercury and change his form to that of Sosia, Amphitryon's servant, who is just coming back from the war against the Teleboians, to which he has accompanied his master. Mercury hopes by this ruse to be able to confuse Sosia and drive him away from the house.

Scene II.—Sosia, a lantern in his hand, advances toward his master's house. He complains about the unjust fate of the great men's servants who have to obey their masters' every whim and run so many dangers. He thinks that Amphitryon could well have waited until morning to send him to announce the battle victory to Alcmena.

Scene III.—Sosia talks to himself. He is trying to polish up the story he is going to tell Alcmena about her husband's victory. Since Sosia has fled from every danger, he is especially preoccupied with making his story of the battles sound true. Mercury, hidden, is watching him. Having finished his speech, Sosia looks up at the sky and wonders why the night seems to have stopped. He is getting ready to go into the house when he catches sight of Mercury. He is very afraid and hurries to go in, but Mercury stops him and asks him who he is, where he goes, etc. Sosia answers very insolently and Mercury tells him to go away for his own good. Sosia then tells him who he is and that this is his master's house, but Mercury beats him and tells him that he is a liar, that he cannot be Sosia since he (Mercury) is Sosia. Sosia tries to defend himself in spite of the beating,

and in order to prove his identity, he starts to give an account of the battle, but to his horror, Mercury cuts in constantly and completes everything that Sosia starts to say. Sosia is totally perplexed and leaves to find his master. He hopes that Amphitryon also will fail to recognize him since this would mean that he could gain his freedom:

De cet heureux malheur n'attiroit sa liberté,
Et ce seroit ne perdre avec utilité.

Scene IV.--Mercury is alone, happy to be rid of Sosia. He muses that it is about time for the sun to come out, since Jupiter must have had his fill of his love.

Scene V.--The door to Amphitryon's house opens and Alcmena and the disguised Jupiter come out. Jupiter is preparing to leave and Alcmena is complaining that he stayed only a short while. Jupiter explains to her that he has to go back to the army because nothing goes well when the leader is absent. He tells her that he stole this short leave only to tell her himself about his victory and offer her with his own hand the golden vase which he had taken from among the treasures of King Pterelas. He bids Alcmena good-bye and leaves. As Alcmena goes in, Jupiter orders the night to finish its course.

Act II, Scene I.--Sosia, in the meantime, has found Amphitryon and has told him about the encounter with his second self. Amphitryon and Sosia are going toward Amphitryon's house. Amphitryon does not believe a word of Sosia's story and wants to find out for himself what has happened.

Scene II.--Alcmena tells her maid, Céphalie, how sad she is because her husband left so quickly:

Quel important besoin, quelle nécessité
Enchaîne ainsi la peine à la prospérité?
C'est la première loi des lois de la nature
Qu'ici-bas un plaisir s'achète avec usure.

Céphalie comforts her, telling her that she should at least be happy that her Amphitryon has come back victorious and that she should hope he will always win. Alcmena agrees that glory is the prettiest of all the pretty things. At that moment Alcmena suddenly sees Amphitryon.

Scene III.---Amphitryon comes in, happy to surprise his wife, but Alcmena only asks him why he changed his mind so soon. Amphitryon cannot understand this welcome and thinks Alcmena is joking. When she tells him that she had seen him shortly before, he does not believe her. When she brings forth the golden vase for proof, Amphitryon starts to wonder what has been going on. He has Alcmena relate all that happened the previous night and then accuses her of betraying him. Now it is Alcmena's turn to get angry. She swears that she is innocent and Amphitryon leaves to get Nausrates, one of his officers, to testify that he had been in the harbour all night. He wants to divorce Alcmena if she is found guilty.

Act III, Scene I.---Alone, Jupiter is reminiscing about his past love affairs and the different disguises he had to take in each of them. When he sees that Alcmena is crying, he wants to comfort her, in his own way, of course:

*Chassons pour quelque temps le trouble de ces lieux,
Mais ne la détournons que pour le tromper mieux.*

Scene II.---Alcmena is desperate because her honor has been assailed. Céphalie tries to comfort her and tells her that the truth will come out and do her justice, but Alcmena goes on complaining. Jupiter comes in, still in Amphitryon's form, and tells her that he wants to talk to her. Alcmena leaves without listening to him and Jupiter follows her. He asks her to forgive him and tells her that he was only joking, but Alcmena will not listen and says that they may as well separate. When Jupiter tells her that he will die if she leaves him, Alcmena is moved to forgive him.

Scene III.—Alcmena tells Jupiter that time does not seem to leave any marks on him, that he does not seem to get older.

Scene IV.—Jupiter orders Sosia to invite all the captains to dine with him and Sosia leaves to get them.

Scene V.—Mercury is coming down from the skies. He tells about the feast which the gods have in heaven in honor of the coming birth of Hercules.

Scene VI.—Mercury comes into the house. Céphalie, who of course mistakes him for Sosia, is surprised that he is alone and did not bring any of the guests with him. Mercury answers that he could not find anyone. They go to the kitchen to eat.

Act IV, Scene I.—Amphitryon returns after not having found Naucrates. He thinks that with all this mix-up, Naucrates must have got lost also:

Je trouve tout changé, tout est ici confus;
 On s'y perd, on s'y double, on ne s'y connoît plus.
 Cet importun destin, qui brouille toutes choses,
 Aura mêlé Naucrate en ces métamorphoses:
 Nous sommes deux doublés; celui-là s'est perdu.

Amphitryon knocks at his door.

Scene II.—Mercury, still in Sosia's form, looks from the window, asks Amphitryon what he wants, and tells him not to make so much noise. Amphitryon is furious that his servant would dare to speak to him in this way. He threatens to break everything if Sosia does not open the door. To make him even more furious, Mercury tells him that he is not Amphitryon and that Amphitryon is upstairs in the bedroom with Alcmena:

Passe, laisse mon maître, en l'entretien d'Alcène,
 Posséder le repos qui succède à sa peine.

Mercury leaves and Amphitryon implores the gods to clear up this mystery and give him back his name and face.

Scene III.—Sosia comes back with the captains who also do not believe his story. As soon as Amphitryon sees Sosia, he wants to revenge himself.

Sosia does not understand this and tells Amphitryon that he had been away from the house, since according to Amphitryon's order, he had gone to the port to invite the captains to dinner. When Amphitryon accuses him of insolence and disobedience, Sosia answers:

Nommez tout autre crime, un vol, un sacrilège,
Des empoisonnements et des assassinats;
J'aurai même raison de ne les nier pas.
N'ai-je pas en ces gens un trop clair témoignage?
Ne les mandez-vous pas? Vient-je pas du rivage?
Vous puis-je faire injure ou vous obéissant?

At the request of the captains, Amphitryon releases Sosia and prepares to go into the house to solve the mystery and chase away the imposter.

Scene IV.—Jupiter comes out and both he and Amphitryon try each in turn to prove that he is the true Amphitryon. Each one relates all that happened during the battle. Everyone is very confused. Amphitryon leaves to ask King Creon to help, saying that in order to get his justice he would kill everybody: servants, friends, wife, children, parents, neighbors, etc.

Act V, Scene I.—Mercury finds Sosia in the kitchen and beats him once more. Mercury tells Sosia that whenever he needs him, his arm is going to be there to furnish him an hour's exercise. As soon as Mercury leaves, Sosia, who up until then had been frightened and cowed, starts gaining courage and shouts that he is once, twice, three, four times Sosia. He leaves to find Amphitryon.

Scene II.—Jupiter tells Alcmena that he has to go back to King Creon and that he is sure he will be proud of his coming son, who is going to be so glorious that people will think Jupiter is his father. He leaves with Mercury.

Scene III.—The three captains discuss the mystery of the two Amphitryons, but do not try to solve it, since in their words, it is above nature.

Scene IV.—Amphitryon returns with Creon's soldiers who do not know whether they should believe his story or not, but are ready to go in and find the imposter if he exists. Amphitryon thinks that Alcmena has committed a crime one way or another and that nothing but death can redeem her:

Elle a failli pourtant d'une ou d'autre façon.
S'agissant de l'honneur, l'erreur même est un crime;
Rien ne peut que la mort rétablir son estime.

As they knock at the door, a loud clap of thunder is heard and they all fall fainting to the ground.

Scene V.—Céphalie finds Amphitryon on the ground and thinks that he is dead, but as she goes near him and calls his name, he answers, "Je suis mort. Qui m'appelle?" She tells him to get up, and as Amphitryon opens his eyes, she says that during the thunder, Alcmena gave birth to two sons. She relates that one of them was much stronger than the other and had freed himself from his wrappings to kill two horrible winged serpents which had attacked him in his crib. She tells him that as Alcmena was wondering who the child really was, a clear voice was heard in the room telling them that this child is to be a god, all his deeds to be wonders, his object to be glory, and his house to be the universe. His name is Hercules and his father is Jupiter. As Céphalie is relating all this, a new clap of thunder is heard.

Scene VI.—Jupiter is seen in the air. He confesses to Amphitryon that he was the one who honored Alcmena's bed and tells him that Hercules should be the name of the young hero who will bring universal respect to Amphitryon. He instructs Amphitryon to love his wife and his son and to live in peace.

Jupiter goes back up to the sky. Amphitryon is very pleased with the outcome of the situation. Sosia seems to think, however, that the whole thing is pretty sad and not an honor at all, even if it comes from heaven.

He wonders who the god might be who took his form. All he knows is that he must be a very malicious god.

Amphitryon by Jean Baptiste Molière

Characters.—Mercury

The Night

Jupiter

Amphitryon

Alcmena

Cleānthis, servant of Alcmena and wife of Sosia

Sosia

Argetiphontidas, Theban captain

Naukrates, Alcmena's brother and Theban captain

Polidas, Theban captain

Posicles, Theban captain

Prologue.—Mercury appears on a cloud. Night is in her chariot pulled by two horses and Mercury is waiting for her to come by. When she comes, he tells her that Jupiter's orders are for her to stop and make this night the longest of nights so that he can stay with Alcmena the longest possible time before the return of her husband from battle. They discuss Jupiter's loves and disguises. Night stops while Mercury comes to earth from his cloud in order to take the form of Sosia, Amphitryon's servant.

Act I, Scene I.—Sosia is all alone with a lantern in his hand. He grumbles a little against his master for having sent him at such an ungodly hour to announce his victory and coming return to his wife Alcmena. Sosia comments that the servants of great men suffer much more than the servants of little men. He realizes that he has to give Alcmena an account of the battle in which he really never took any part, so he puts his lantern down, pretends that it is Alcmena, bows to it, and starts rehearsing his story.

Scene II.—Mercury, who wants to chase Sosia away from the house, makes a little noise. Sosia is frightened and starts to sing to give himself courage. He stops as soon as Mercury speaks to him. He tries not to answer

Mercury's questions and gets beaten for his pains. The two argue for some time. Mercury attempts to persuade Sosia that he is not Sosia while Sosia tries to defend his rights. After having been beaten enough for his taste, Sosia gives up and leaves.

Scene III.—Jupiter, disguised as Amphitryon, is telling Alcmena good-bye. Alcmena tells him that although she is very proud of his successes and of his victory, she still is a little angry when she thinks that because of all the glory, he has to leave her so soon. She objects to having to live in constant fear. Jupiter then tells her how much he loves her and that his love and tenderness surpass those of a mere husband. He wishes that she would regard him only as a lover. Alcmena is unable to understand or accept this distinction. Jupiter leaves, telling her that at least she should think about the lover when she sees the husband because his talk is much more reasonable than what she thinks.

Scene IV.—Mercury is ready to follow Jupiter when Cléanthis comes in. She assumes that he is her husband and accuses him of not performing his duty as a husband. She uses Alcmena and Amphitryon as an example of what lovers should be. Mercury tells her that Alcmena and Amphitryon are newly-weds, while he and Cléanthis have been married for fifteen years:

Eh! mon Dieu! Cléanthis, ils sont encore amants.
 Il est certain âge où tout passe;
 Et ce qui leur sied bien dans ces commencements;
 En nous, vieux mariés, aurait mauvaise grâce.

When Cléanthis tells him that what he deserves is for her to be less honest, he answers that this would be all right with him:

Un mal d'opinion ne touche que les sots,
 Et je prendrais pour ma devise:
 «Moins d'honneur et plus de repos.»

Then he leaves.

Act II, Scene I.--Sosia tries to explain to Amphitryon all that happened to him during the night. Amphitryon does not believe him, of course, and thinks that he is drunk, or that he has dreamed all the story. Amphitryon goes into the house.

Scene II.--Instead of greeting her husband with pleasure, Alcmena merely asks him why he has come back so soon. Amphitryon, who expected a different reception, accuses her of coldness. Alcmena replies that since she showed all her affection to him the previous night and since he just left her at dawn, her surprise is totally justified. Amphitryon thinks that she is joking and when he sees her insisting, he denies that he has been there previously. It is now Alcmena's turn to become angry, and to prove that she tells the truth, she shows him the cluster of diamonds which he supposedly had given her. Amphitryon continues to insist that he has not been home and accuses her of perfidity. Alcmena accuses him of lying and tells him that she is ready if he wants to use this as a pretext for a divorce. Amphitryon leaves to find witnesses to testify that he stayed on the boat all during the previous night.

Scene III.--Sosia worries that possibly his double took advantage of Cléanthis, but he is quickly reassured of her innocence when he talks with her.

Scene IV.--Jupiter returns to appease Alcmena.

Scene V.--Cléanthis tells Sosia that it would be a good thing if all wives would send their husbands to the devil. To this Sosia replies:

Cela se dit dans le courroux;
Mais aux hommes par trop vous êtes accrochées,
Et vous seriez, ma foi, toutes bien empêchées
Si le diable les prenait tous.

Scene VI.--Jupiter pleads that Alcmena forgive him and tells her that he would follow her everywhere she might go to escape him. She answers

that she will flee from him and that she does not want to see nor hear him. Jupiter continues to plead and finally threatens to kill himself with his sword. Alcmena forgives him. Jupiter sends Sosia to invite all the captains to dinner.

Scene VII.--Sosia half-heartedly asks Cleánthis to make up. She rejects him at first and then calls him back, but he leaves. She repeats her lament that sometimes being an honest woman becomes tiresome.

Act III, Scene I.--In a monologue, Amphitryon tells of his doubts, fears, and sorrows:

Ah! qu'on est peu flatté de louange, d'honneur,
Et de tout ce que donne une grande victoire,
Lorsque dans l'âme on souffre une vive douleur!

He is very puzzled by the whole situation and simply cannot see how Alcmena can insist that he was there, in person, only the night before:

Le vol des diamants n'est pas ce qui m'étonne;
On lève les cachets qu'on ne l'aperçoit pas;
Mais le don qu'on veut qu'hier j'en vins faire en personne
Est ce qui fait ici mon cruel embarras.

He hopes that the whole thing is nothing but an illusion of Alcmena's deranged mind.

Scene II.--Mercury decides to play tricks on Amphitryon since it is Jupiter's orders that he be kept away from the house. He locks the door and when Amphitryon tries to come in, Mercury threatens to beat him. He makes Amphitryon even more furious by telling him that he cannot be Amphitryon since Amphitryon is upstairs in the bedroom with Alcmena.

Scene III.--Amphitryon makes up his mind to revenge himself.

Scene IV.--Sosia comes with the captains and Amphitryon tries to beat him for having been so insolent, but the captains intervene. Sosia attempts to prove his innocence by having the captains testify that he had been with them. Amphitryon grows more and more suspicious that something is drastically amiss and asks the captains to help him solve the mystery.

Scene V.—Jupiter comes down and faces Amphitryon. Everyone is completely confused by the two Amphitryon's, and tries without success to decide who is the real Amphitryon. When Jupiter invites them all to dinner, Sosia cries out:

Je ne me trompais pas. Messieurs, ce mot termine
Toute l'irrésolution:
Le véritable Amphitryon
Est l'Amphitryon où l'on dîne.

Amphitryon goes to summon help.

Scene VI.—Mercury tries to chase Sosia away by telling him that he will beat him again if he dares to go into the kitchen. Sosia is desolate because he is very hungry and tries to make peace with Mercury:

Laissons aux deux Amphitryons
Faire éclater des jalousies,
Et, parmi leurs contentions,
Faisons en bonne paix vivre les deux Sosies.

To this, however, Mercury replies,

Non, c'est assez d'un seul, et je suis obstiné
A ne point souffrir de partage.

Sosia leaves when his overtures are not successful.

Scene VII.—Amphitryon comes with Argastiphontidas and Posicles. Sosia meets them and tells Amphitryon of his new difficulty.

Scene VIII.—Cleánthis is frightened suddenly to see Amphitryon downstairs while a moment before she had seen him upstairs.

Scene IX.—Mercury tells Sosia that he is Mercury and the second Amphitryon is Jupiter.

Scene X.—Jupiter appears on a cloud. He makes his confession and prophesies the birth of Hercules:

Regarde, Amphitryon, quel est ton imposteur,
Et sous tes propres traits vois Jupiter paraître.
A ces marques tu peux aisément le connaître;
Et c'est assez, je crois, pour remettre ton cœur
Dans l'état auquel il doit être,
Et rétablir chez toi la paix et la douceur.
Mon nom, qu'incessamment toute la terre adore,

Étouffe ici les bruits qui pouvaient éclater :
 Un partage avec Jupiter
 N'a rien du tout qui déshonore ;
 Et sans doute il ne peut être que glorieux
 De se voir le rival du souverain des dieux.

Amphitryon by John Dryden

Characters.—Jupiter

Mercury (Hermes), heavenly messenger
 Phoebus (Apollo), god of wisdom, music, sun
 Amphitryon
 Sosia
 Gripus, Phaedra's lover and Alcmena's uncle
 Polidas, Amphitryon's general
 Tranio, Amphitryon's general
 Alcmena
 Phaedra, Alcmena's maid
 Bronia, Sosia's wife
 Night

Act I, Scene I.—The scene is laid in Thebes. Mercury and Phoebus come down in machines. They are wondering why Jupiter has chosen them to meet him. They discuss Juno and Jupiter's quarrels. According to Phoebus, "I see Heav'n itself is no priviledg'd Place for happiness, if a Man must carry his Wife along with him."

Jupiter comes down and explains his summons. He confesses that he is in love with Alcmena:

This night I will enjoy Amphitryon's Wife:
 For, when I made her, I decreed her such
 As I shou'd please to love. I wrong not him
 Whose Wife she is; for I reserv'd my Right
 To have her while she pleas'd me; that once past,
 She shall be his again.....
yet, thus far know,
 That, for the good of Human-kind, this Night
 I shall beget a future Hercules.

Jupiter orders a long night so that he can enjoy himself and Phoebus leaves on his chariot. Jupiter explains to Mercury that he, Jupiter, will take Amphitryon's form while Mercury will have to take the form of Sosia, Amphitryon's slave, and try to prevent his entering Amphitryon's palace to

announce Amphitryon's victory and approaching return. Night appears in her chariot and learns from Mercury that she should "put a Spoke into her Chariot Wheels, and order the Seven Stars to halt" because Jupiter ordered a long night. Night goes backward and Mercury also leaves the scene.

Scene II.---Alcmena appears in a room of Amphitryon's palace and in a short monologue expresses her love for Amphitryon as well as her fear for his life. The maid Phaedra comes in, and after making Alcmena promise her a reward, she announces the good news that she saw Amphitryon knocking at the gate. Jupiter comes in disguised as Amphitryon and embraces Alcmena, who does not have the least suspicion that he is not her husband. The rest of the household is fooled also. Bromia asks him about her husband, Sosia, Phaedra asks him about her old sweetheart, Judge Gripus, and Alcmena asks him about the battle. Jupiter gives them the information they want, and presently he and Alcmena retire.

Act II, Scene I.---Sosia appears in front of the palace with a lantern. Mercury, in Sosia's form, also appears with a lantern. Sosia is talking to himself. He is very afraid and complains because his master sent him all alone on so dreadful a dark night to bring his news to Alcmena. Sosia says: "Now I am to give my Lady an Account of my Lord's Victory; 'tis good to exercise my Parts before hand, and file my tongue into eloquent Expressions, to tickle her Ladyships imagination." Sosia puts his lantern down, bows to it, and starts his speech. In the meantime, Mercury comes nearer and stands just before him. Sosia sees him and starts back. He sings to get courage, but as Mercury begins to speak, Sosia's voice drops little by little. Mercury asks him who he is and where he comes from, what he is doing at this house, and who his master is. At Sosia's answer that he is Sosia, his master is Amphitryon, etc., Mercury beats him and tells him, "my Name is Sosia, and yours is not.....When I have a mind to be Sosia no more, then

thou may'st be Sosia again." Sosia tries to be brave, but every time he says something, Mercury beats him. Finally he gives up and leaves to find Amphitryon who, he thinks, will acknowledge him for Sosia. As he leaves, he says:

If he does not, then I am no longer his Slave; there's my Freedom dearly purchas'd with a sore drubbing; if he does acknowledge me, then I am Sosia again; so far 'tis tolerably well; but then I shall have a second drubbing, for an unfortunate Ambassador as I am; and that's intolerable.

Scene II.—Jupiter and Alcmena appear. Jupiter is disguised as Amphitryon. Jupiter says that he has to leave, but Alcmena tries to keep him a little longer by her side. After they talk a while about their love, he bids her farewell and Mercury remains alone on the scene. He starts thinking about Phaedra and when she comes in, he makes love to her openly. Phaedra thinks he is old and ugly and should go to his wife, Bromia. Only when Mercury offers her a golden goblet does she start even half-accepting his overtures. At that moment Bromia comes in and accuses Mercury of not fulfilling his duties as a husband. Finally Mercury is forced to strike her on the shoulder with his caduceus in order to escape. Bromia yawns and falls to the floor. Mercury sighs with relief and says:

But lie thou there, thou Type of Juno: thou that want'st nothing of her Tongue, but the immortality. If Jupiter ever let thee set Foot in Heaven, Juno will have a ratling Second of thee; and there will never be a fair day in

Heaven or Earth after it.

For two such Tongues, will break the Poles asunder;

And, hourly scolding, make perpetual Thunder.

Act III.—Sosia and Amphitryon appear before the palace. Sosia tries to explain to Amphitryon all that happened on the previous night. Amphitryon does not believe him and threatens to beat him. Alcmena enters and is very surprised to see her husband back so soon. When she voices her surprise, Amphitryon protests. Alcmena tells him that he had just left her at the break of day and comments that she has probably been dreaming. As proof of her

statements, Alcmena shows him the buckle of diamonds which he had brought back to give to her and which Jupiter had stolen and given her. Sosia explains the situation as follows: "You, my Lord Amphitryon, may have brought forth another You my Lord Amphitryon, as well as I Sosia, have brought forth another Me Sosia; and our Diamonds may have procreated these Diamonds; and so we are all three double." To this Amphitryon replies:

A chilling Sweat, a damp of Jealousie,
Hangs on my Brows, and clams upon my Limbs.
I fear; and yet I must be satisfied:
And to be satisfy'd, I must dissemble.

Amphitryon makes Alcmena relate to him what had happened on the previous night and then accuses her of being perfidious, of having betrayed her honor. He leaves to get Cripus and his generals to testify that he had been with them on the previous night.

After both Amphitryon and Alcmena leave, Sosia wonders to himself if he should not lie and say that he and Amphitryon have been there before since no good ever seemed to come from telling the truth. Phaedra wonders why Sosia does not make any more advances to her: "He makes no more Advances to me: I begin a little to suspect that my Gold Goblet will prove but Copper." Sosia wonders whether the imposter Sosia had taken advantage of his own wife, Bromia, but upon questioning her, he loses every doubt and concludes that he has not.

Jupiter and Phaedra come in, attended by musicians and dancers.

Jupiter is trying to reconcile himself with Alcmena and wants Phaedra to help him. He promises her a generous reward. He sends Sosia to invite all the generals to a feast in honor of his coming reconciliation with Alcmena.

Act IV.—Jupiter follows Alcmena and begs her for reconciliation.

Alcmena is firm at first and tries to send him away, but she gives in finally and forgives him. They both leave the scene and Mercury and Phaedra remain.

Mercury tries to win Phœdra, but she checks him out of the golden goblet and leaves.

Amphitryon tries to come in, but finds the doors locked. Mercury decides to make fun of him and addresses him as his companion. When Amphitryon calls him his slave, Mercury replies that he is not his slave, that he has never had any master except Amphitryon. Amphitryon asks Mercury for whom he takes him and Mercury answers, "For some Rogue or other, but what Rogue I know not." Amphitryon becomes angry, and Mercury tells him that he is drunk. Amphitryon calls Phœdra and Brouia to let him in. Mercury tells him not to disturb the women since, "At a word, Phœdra and Brouia are very busy; one is making a Gown for my Lady and the other in heating Napkins, to rub down my Lord, when he rises from Bed." When Amphitryon expresses his amazement at this remark, Mercury says:

At what art thou amaz'd? My Master and my Lady had a falling out, and are retir'd without Seconds, to decide the Quarrel. If thou wert not a meddling Fool, thou wou'dst not be thrusting thy Nose into other Peoples Matters. Get thee about thy business, if thou hast any; for I'll hear no more of thee.

At this turn of affairs, Amphitryon laments:

Brav'd by my Slave, dishonour'd by my Wife,
 To what a desperate plunge am I reduc'd,
 If this be true the Villain says? But why
 That feeble, if! It must be true; She owns it.
 Now, whether to conceal, or blaze th' Affront?
 One way, I spread my infamy abroad;
 and, t'other, hide a burning coal, within;
 that rays upon my Vitals: I can fix
 On nothing, but on Vengeance.

At this moment, Sosia, Polydas, Gripus, and Tranio come along the street.

It seems very strange to them that Amphitryon is walking back and forth in front of his own door. At the sight of Sosia, Amphitryon prepares to avenge himself for what Mercury in disguise has done. When the innocent Sosia protests violently, Amphitryon is ready to beat him. Polydas and Tranio hold Amphitryon back, thinking that he is drunk. Amphitryon is convinced

of Sosia's innocence only after Polydas, Gripus, and Tranio say that he had been with them for the past half hour. Little by little Amphitryon is convinced that there must be a second Sosia, and to his great horror, a second Amphitryon. Amphitryon leaves to get soldiers to break down the door after Gripus refuses to permit him to enlist the aid of Tranio and Polydas in doing so on the grounds that he has no warrant and cannot get one since the clerk who issues warrants is off-duty. Jupiter appears as soon as Amphitryon leaves and welcomes them in. They all think that he is Amphitryon and follow him in. Mercury appears and starts talking to Sosia. When Phaedra comes in, she is very puzzled to see two Sosia's. Mercury drives Sosia from the house and reveals himself to Phaedra. After this revelation, Phaedra promises to love him if he promises to keep the affair a secret.

Act V.—Judge Gripus has discovered that Phaedra has the goblet which he had intended to give her but which was stolen from him. He tries to take it from her and she protests violently. When Mercury comes in with two swords and invites Gripus to fight for both the goblet and his claim on Phaedra, Gripus gives up both.

Amphitryon comes in with his guards. When he hears that the other Amphitryon is in the bedroom with Alcmena, he goes upstairs to kill the sorcerer, as he calls him. Jupiter comes out and carries his disguise to the point of utterly confusing everyone in the house. Even Alcmena cannot separate the one from the other, but does, in fact, think that Jupiter is the real Amphitryon. At the end, a big clap of thunder is heard and Jupiter disappears from their sight. After a second peal of thunder, Jupiter appears in a machine, confesses his role in the story, and prophesies the birth of Hercules.

Amphitryon 36 by Jean Giraudour

Characters.--Jupiter
 Mercury
 Sosia
 The Trumpeter
 The Warrior
 Alcmena
 Amphitryon
 Ecclisse
 Léda
 The Echo

Act I, Scene I.--Jupiter and Mercury are on a terrace near Amphitryon's palace. Jupiter points out to Mercury the lighted window through which he can see Alcmena's shadow. Mercury cannot understand why Jupiter loses a whole night amidst cactuses and thorns just to see a human shadow, but Jupiter protests that Mercury does not understand a thing about human love. The two consider how Jupiter can seduce Alcmena when she is so faithful to her husband. Mercury has an idea. He tells Jupiter to take the form of Amphitryon and thus fool Alcmena. There still remains the question of how to get Amphitryon out of the way for a while: "Il est toujours là. Il ne bouge plus du palais. Il n'y a pas plus casanier, si ce n'est les tigres, que les conquérants au repos!" Mercury suggests that a war would present a convenient solution to the problem. The fact that Thebes is at that moment at peace with all her enemies is only a minor difficulty since a friendly country can declare the war: "Faites-lui déclarer la guerre par un pays ami....Ce sont des services qui se rendent, entre voisins." Everything is agreed upon. There will be a war, Amphitryon will head the army, Jupiter will take Amphitryon's form, and Mercury will disguise himself as Amphitryon's slave, Sosia, in order to bring the good news to Alcmena that her husband is really only pretending to be leaving for war while he intends to come back and spend the night with her.

Scene II.—Sosia has a proclamation of peace from Amphitryon and asks the Trumpeter to blow so that he can announce it to the people. As Sosia is reading his proclamation, the Warrior steps behind him. The Warrior has a declaration of war. As the Warrior makes his proclamation, one by one the windows light up. Even Amphitryon and Alcmena get up.

Scene III.—Amphitryon and Alcmena talk about their love, about the sorrow of parting, about the war. Alcmena expresses her fear that Amphitryon may some day love someone else, but Amphitryon reassures her that he will love no one but her. The sound of horses' hoofs is heard and Amphitryon has to leave for battle. As Alcmena gets ready to go into the house, Mercury, disguised as Sosia, approaches her.

Scene IV.—Mercury tells Alcmena that he has a message from Amphitryon. Alcmena is at first puzzled by the message, but Mercury insists that his master only pretended to leave and will actually return to spend the night with her.

Scene V.—Mercury reproaches the disguised Jupiter for not looking too convincingly human. His clothes are not at all wrinkled, he has something brilliant about him, his eyes are too shiny, his skin is too smooth, and his thoughts are too god-like. When these flaws have been corrected, Mercury gives his approval and leaves Jupiter to carry out his deception.

Scene VI.—Alcmena is on her balcony and Jupiter talks to her from underneath. He pretends that he is her lover. She says that she has no lover. Finally Jupiter must identify himself as her husband before he is admitted to the house.

Act II, Scene I.—It is completely dark. Mercury is lying in front of the palace. He is thinking that it is time for Jupiter to wake up since there is daylight everywhere except around the palace. He tells the sun to

let him pick out one of his rays to inundate the palace and in a few minutes the palace appears in full sunshine.

Scene II.—Alcmena tells Jupiter to get up. They start talking about their nights, about the creation of the world, about the gods. Jupiter desperately tries to reveal himself to her as he has done with his other mistresses, but he finds no success in doing so with Alcmena. Everytime he wants to talk to her seriously, she interrupts him. When he asks her if it is true that she would rather kill herself than be unfaithful to her husband, she replies that it is true. Jupiter still wants to reveal himself, but Alcmena is in a hurry to attend to her household tasks and to his telling her, "Alcène! chère Alcène! Les dieux apparaissent à l'heure précise où nous les attendons le moins," she answers, "Amphitryon, cher mari! Les femmes disparaissent à la seconde où nous croyons les tenir." She leaves him.

Mercury, who has been expecting to see Jupiter come out of Alcmena's room in all his godly splendor, is very surprised to find him still in the bedroom. He goes in and talks with him. He suddenly spies a wrinkle on the godly brow and asks: "Que veut dire ce pli vertical entre vos yeux? C'est un stigmate de tonnerre? C'est l'annonce d'une menace que vous nourrissez contre l'humanité?" Jupiter replies simply, "Ce pli?...C'est une ride." Jupiter confesses that he really loves Alcmena and that her child is going to be his preferred son. Mercury answers that the whole universe knows that this will be true. When Mercury expresses surprise that the universe knows of the affair, Mercury tells him that it is not known that the affair has already taken place, and that everyone assumes it will take place that night. All Thebes is celebrating the coming event. Jupiter has a request to make of Mercury: Since Alcmena is going to know of his coming, Jupiter wants Mercury to prepare her for it and tell her of all the love he feels for her. Jupiter

hopes that Alcmena will thus be persuaded to accept him for what he is. When Mercury asks, "Mais enfin que désirez-vous?" Jupiter replies,

Ce que désire un homme, hélas! Mille désirs contraires. Qu'Alcmène reste fidèle à son mari et qu'elle se donne à moi avec ravissement. Qu'elle soit chaste sous mes caresses et que des désirs interdits la brûlent à ma seule vue. Qu'elle ignore toute cette intrigue, et qu'elle l'approuve entièrement.

Scene IV.—Ecclissé tells Alcmena in a roundabout way of her good fortune, but Alcmena does not understand and thinks that Amphitryon has probably won some great victory.

Scene V.—Mercury comes in. Alcmena is surprised and happy to see a god. The two start talking about Jupiter. Alcmena confesses that she likes him best of all the gods and that the fate of Léda, Danaé, and all of his other mistresses is very enviable. Then Mercury delivers his message to her. He tells her to get ready to accept Jupiter that night, but Alcmena tries her best to get out of it. She makes all kinds of excuses and when Mercury does not accept them, she starts crying. He tells her that all the evils in Thebes will perish with her acceptance. She is still not convinced and when Mercury leaves with the words that he will tell Jupiter of her acceptance, she answers that he would be lying since she cannot accept Jupiter but will remain faithful to her husband. She says, "J'aime un homme," and when Mercury asks, "Quel homme?" she replies, "Mon mari." Mercury tells her that even the most faithful wives sometimes call their husbands by the name of Jupiter and Alcmena replies: "Mon mari peut être pour moi Jupiter. Jupiter ne peut être mon mari." Mercury tells her that Jupiter does not necessarily have to come to her as a man, but can become anything she likes: water, a perfume, a plant, etc. Alcmena tells Mercury to leave her alone. He replies that a child has to be born of a union between Jupiter and her, but Alcmena still refuses, saying that she will kill herself first. Mercury gets ready to reveal the truth about the previous night, but he is interrupted by

Eclissé who announces the arrival of Queen Léda. Suddenly an idea comes into Alcmena's mind. Léda is the one person who can help her escape Jupiter.

Scene VI.—Léda, who was seduced by Jupiter when he appeared to her in the form of a swan, comes in and talks with Alcmena about her own affair with Jupiter. Léda is a bit jealous of Alcmena and tells her that she would not want Jupiter to transform himself into a swan a second time. Alcmena asks her if Jupiter ever came back to her after that one time, and when Léda says that he did not, Alcmena points out to her that she should avenge herself on him, that it was a shabby trick on the part of Jupiter to abandon her. To Léda's question, "Comment se venger d'un pauvre cygne blanc?" Alcmena answers slyly: "Avec un cygne noir." Alcmena suggests that Léda should pretend to be she and take her place with Jupiter. Léda seems to think this a good idea. She asks Alcmena under what form Jupiter is supposed to come visit her, but Alcmena does not have the slightest idea. Léda asks her what things haunt her desires and dreams. Alcmena replies that there is absolutely nothing, that she has only one weakness and that is her husband. As soon as Alcmena says these words, Léda hits on it: it is in Amphitryon's form that Jupiter is planning to visit Alcmena. Léda says: "Votre cygne, mais ce sera un Amphitryon." When Alcmena protests that she would easily recognize him in this case, Léda answers: "Il était un cygne immense, et je ne l'ai pas distingué du petit cygne de mon fleuve..." At that moment Eclissé comes in to announce Amphitryon's return. Léda and Alcmena think that no battle could possibly end so soon and are convinced that this must be Jupiter.

Scene VII.—Léda goes into Alcmena's dark bedroom. Alcmena plays along with Amphitryon and then tells him to join her in the bedroom as soon as she calls him. Amphitryon is delighted with such a welcome and rushes in as soon as he hears her call. As he goes in, Alcmena comes from another direction.

She has a big smile on her face. She does not know that she has fooled her husband rather than Jupiter.

Act III, Scene I.—The Trumpeter reads a proclamation about the fortunate outcome, attributed by everyone to Alcmena, of the war. Then a celestial voice announces the future exploits of Hercules. Alcmena comes out on her balcony to listen. When the Trumpeter asks Ecclissé if it is true that Alcmena will renounce Jupiter, Ecclissé says that she is very afraid that it is true.

Scene II.—Amphitryon comes very hurriedly toward the Trumpeter and Ecclissé and asks where he can find his wife. Ecclissé tells him that Alcmena is upstairs.

Scene III.—Amphitryon and Alcmena talk together about how to avoid Jupiter. Amphitryon thinks that just by talking he can dissuade Jupiter, but Alcmena thinks that Jupiter will be more apt to leave her alone if he sees her in her husband's arms because she thinks that he is ignorant of their love. As Amphitryon embraces Alcmena, the celestial voice is heard again, this time announcing the farewell of Amphitryon and Alcmena. Amphitryon and Alcmena talk about their love, their marriage, how they would like to have grown old together, etc.

Scene IV.—With much noise, Jupiter appears, escorted by Mercury. Amphitryon tells Jupiter that he is going to defend Alcmena or die. Jupiter sends Amphitryon out and stays alone with Alcmena. He tells her how much he loves her and Alcmena answers that she offers him something better than love. Alcmena says that he can find love from any woman, but from her alone can he have friendship. They talk for some time about friendship. Jupiter tells Alcmena that he is moved by her courage and persistence and that he is not going to impose his presence on her any longer. As he takes her in his arms to bid her good-bye, the celestial voice is heard announcing the farewell of

Jupiter and Alcmena. Alcmena comments to Jupiter that his embrace seems familiar and asks him if he has ever been her lover. Jupiter denies that he has.

Scene VI.---Jupiter gives Alcmena back to Amphitryon, as he says, intact. He tells them that all the gods want from them is a son. Amphitryon promises that the son will arrive in nine months.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION, SETTING, AND MAJOR DIVISIONS OF THE PLAYS

In this chapter and in the following chapter, the five plays will be compared in an attempt to distinguish both common elements and differences. In this chapter, they will be considered from the standpoint of the general organization and setting and of the major divisions according to action; the next chapter will be concerned with the characters in the various plays.

General Organization and Setting

The play by Plautus is the shortest of the five. The greater length of the other plays is due not only to the addition of scenes which did not appear in the play by Plautus, but it may be accounted for at least partially by the fact that a portion of the Plautine manuscript is missing.

Three of the plays, those by Plautus, Rotrou, and Dryden, are divided into five acts, while those by Molière and Giraudour contain three acts. Four of the dramas, Giraudour's being the exception, have a prologue. In three of these prologues, coming action is foretold. All of the plays have their setting in Thebes. Both Plautus and Molière place the action outside Amphitryon's house. Except for one scene, Rotrou's play also takes place outside. Dryden and Giraudour, however, place a considerable part of the action inside the house. In all the dramas, the action covers less than twenty-four hours. The plays by Plautus, Rotrou, and Molière are written

entirely in verse, while much of Dryden's and all of Giraudour's are written in prose.

Major Divisions of the Plays According to Action

In four of the five plays, the action can be broken down into these eight units:

1. Statement of the situation
2. Lantern scene
3. Farewell scene between Jupiter and Almena
4. Return of Amphitryon and the quarrel
5. Reconciliation of Jupiter and Almena
6. Second return of Amphitryon and scene with Mercury
7. Coming of Sosia and others
8. Resolution of the problem

Since Giraudour's play differs extensively from the other four plays, the action does not break down into these divisions. In spite of this, however, it seems more convenient to compare the development of the action within this framework than within any other.

Statement of the Situation.—In three of the plays, a statement of the situation is made in a prologue. In the other two, such a statement is made in the first act. In the play by Plautus, Mercury appears in the prologue and gives a detailed explanation of the situation, and in Act I, Scene II, he even foretells the final outcome. In the drama by Racine, Jupiter's wife, Juno, tells in the prologue of Jupiter's next mistress and of the coming birth of Hercules. The situation is further explained in Act I, Scene I, in which Mercury tells the moon to slow down and explains the reason for doing so. In Molière's play, the situation is summarized in the prologue in a dialogue between Night and Mercury in which Mercury gives Night Jupiter's orders and explains to her the events which make these orders necessary. In Dryden's play, events are explained in Act I, Scene I, when Mercury and Phoebus

appear and discuss Jupiter's possible reasons for summoning them to earth. They suspect that a love affair must be involved. Their suspicion is confirmed when Jupiter joins them and gives an account of his coming affair with Alcmena. The situation is further clarified when Night appears and is ordered to prolong the hours of darkness. In Giraudoux's play, less action is assumed to have taken place before the opening scene with Jupiter's having decided on no course of action. In the first act in a dialogue between Jupiter and Mercury, Jupiter tells of his love for Alcmena. From there on, the situation develops with Mercury convincing Jupiter that the only way he can succeed in wooing Alcmena is to do so in the guise of her husband Amphitryon.

Lantern Scene.—This scene, which appears in all of the versions except Giraudoux's, is the scene which is the most similar from play to play. There are differences in dialogue and differences in action, but such differences are minor.

In all four plays, Sosia grumbles against his master for having sent him out at night and rehearses his speech to Alcmena. In the play by Plautus, he gives a more complete description of the battle than in the other plays. He carries a lantern in all four plays and in those by Plautus, Molière, and Dryden, he addresses it as Alcmena in practicing his speech. In the dramas by Molière and Dryden, this imaginary Alcmena actively participates since Sosia has her ask questions and make comments. Mercury has assumed the form of Sosia in all four dramas and plays upon the fears of Sosia before giving him a beating. Sosia is thus persuaded to give up his identity and leave. In the plays by Plautus, Rotrou, and Dryden, where Sosia is pictured as Amphitryon's slave, he remarks as he leaves to find his master that should Amphitryon also fail to recognize him, he could thus gain his freedom. The

scene is humorous in all of the dramas in which it appears, the humor being derived from the situation and from the dialogue.

Farewell Scene between Jupiter and Alceon.---This scene also appears in very similar form in four of the plays, Giraudoux's again being the exception. The scene is, however, considerably shorter in Rotrou's version than in the others. The chief difference which appears is in the introduction by Jupiter in the plays by Molière and Dryden of the husband-lover distinction by which he urges Alceon to give her favors not from duty but from love. The dialogue differences which occur hinge chiefly on this distinction. The distinction is also made in the scene in Giraudoux's play in which the Jupiter-Amphitryon appears beneath Alceon's balcony and asks to be admitted as her lover. It does not appear in the plays by Plautus and Rotrou.

Plautus and Rotrou have Jupiter give Alceon a gift in this scene, a golden bowl in the former play, a golden vase in the latter. In the plays by Molière and Dryden, later dialogue shows that Alceon was given a gift by Jupiter, but it is not clear in what scene the gift was given her. In Molière's play, she is given a clasp of diamonds and in Dryden's, a diamond bracelet. In Giraudoux's drama, this scene between Jupiter and Alceon does not occur since the farewell actually takes place between Alceon and the real Amphitryon.

Return of Amphitryon and the Quarrel.---This scene is almost identical in the same four plays. In this scene, Amphitryon is returning from war. He is accompanied by Sosie who is trying to persuade him that his story of the two Sosie's of the previous night is true. Amphitryon refuses to believe him, however, and is angry with him. In all four plays, Alceon does not give Amphitryon a very cordial welcome and puzzles him with her comments about his quick return. The quarrel starts after Amphitryon denies that he had been with her during the previous night. Alceon argues less in Rotrou's play

than in any of the others. She says only:

J'atteste de Jupin la puissance suprême
 Que non lit n'a reçu de mortel que vous-même,
 Ou que vive je brûle en la place où je suis;
 Parce j'ose jurer, mais chaste je le puis.
 Les biens de mes parents sont un vil héritage;
 J'eux la crainte des dieux et l'honneur en partage;
 Ma pudeur, mon respect, ma chaste affection,
 Plus que tout autre bien sont ma possession.¹

In the same four dramas, Amphitryon has Alcmena tell him exactly what happened on the previous night. In the versions by Plautus, Rotrou, and Molière, she has Amphitryon's gift brought as final proof that she is telling the truth. In all four, Amphitryon angrily leaves to find a witness who can prove that he had stayed on board his ship in the harbor all the previous night.

In Giraudoux's play, the situation is completely different since Alcmena thinks the returning Amphitryon is the disguised Jupiter, and to revenge herself, sends him to sleep with Leda. No quarrel takes place.

Reconciliation of Jupiter and Alcmena.---This scene is also similar in four of the plays, Giraudoux's once more being the exception. Jupiter, still in disguise, tries to appease Alcmena's anger, but she does not want to listen to him. Jupiter tells her that he was only joking. In the plays by Plautus and Rotrou, she forgives him quite easily. In those by Molière and Dryden, Jupiter not only has to plead longer, but threatens to kill himself before Alcmena finally deigns to forgive him. In Giraudoux's drama, there is no reconciliation scene since there has been no quarrel.

Second Return of Amphitryon and Scene with Mercury.---In the same four plays, Amphitryon comes back after not having found his witness. He gets ready to go into the house, but finds the door locked. Mercury is still disguised as Sosia, and he asks Amphitryon who he is and what he wants.

¹Jean de Rotrou, Les Sosies, in Oeuvres de Jean Rotrou. (Paris, 1920), vol. III, Act II, Scene III.

Amphitryon grows furious with such treatment from his servant, but the door remains closed. In the plays by Rotrou, Molière, and Dryden, in order to make Amphitryon even more angry, Mercury points out to him that his master, Amphitryon, cannot be disturbed when he is resting upstairs in his bedroom with Alceena.

In the summary which Leo gives of Plautus' missing passage, Alceena is apparently aroused by all this argument, and when she comes downstairs to investigate, she is amazed at the change which she finds in Amphitryon whom she assumes she has just left upstairs in a far different mood.

This scene does not appear in Giraudour's play.

Coming of Sosia and Others.—According to Leo's summary of Plautus' missing passage, Sosia returns with Blepharo, gets a bad welcome from his master, but escapes. Then Jupiter comes out and he and Amphitryon abuse each other. In the versions by Rotrou and Molière, Sosia comes back with the captains. As in Plautus' play, Amphitryon wants revenge on Sosia for his insulting behavior in refusing him admittance to the house, but when the captains testify that Sosia has been with them, Amphitryon releases Sosia and starts to go into the house to find out what is going on. At this moment, Jupiter comes out, still in Amphitryon's form. Everyone is more confused than ever. Both Jupiter and Amphitryon relate events of the battle as proof of identity. When he is unable to win the argument, Amphitryon leaves to summon help. In Dryden's drama, Sosia comes with Polydas, Gripus, and Tranio. Amphitryon again wants to get vengeance on Sosia and the generals interfere. Amphitryon orders them to break the door open, and when Judge Gripus prevents their doing so, Amphitryon goes to get help. When he returns, Jupiter confronts him. As in the plays by Rotrou and Molière, Jupiter and Amphitryon try each in turn to persuade everyone that he is Amphitryon. Even Alceena is fooled.

This scene does not appear in Amphitryon 36 since neither Amphitryon nor Alcmena is ever aware that Alcmena has been visited by Jupiter in the role of Amphitryon.

Resolution of the Problem.—In the dramas by Plautus and Rotrou, when Amphitryon tries to rush into the house, he is thrown to the ground by a peal of thunder. In a few minutes, Alcmena's maid finds him and tells him that the imposter has revealed himself as Jupiter and that Alcmena has just given birth to twin boys. Later Jupiter appears and confesses to Amphitryon. In Molière's play, as Amphitryon starts inside, Jupiter appears on a cloud and confesses, gives Alcmena back to her husband, and foretells the birth of Hercules. In Dryden's play, everyone comes running outside at a peal of thunder. Jupiter appears in a machine, confesses, and foretells the birth of Hercules. In Giraudoux's play, Jupiter never admits to Alcmena or to Amphitryon that he has already been Alcmena's lover. Since the problem here is whether Jupiter may again be her lover, it is resolved in the scene between Jupiter and Alcmena in which she persuades him to accept her as a friend.

CHAPTER V CHARACTERS

In four of the plays, the principal characters are Alceon, Amphitryon, Jupiter, Mercury, and Sosia. The exception is Giraudoux's play, in which Alceon, Amphitryon, Jupiter, and Mercury are the major characters with Sosia playing only a minor role in the action. All of the dramatists introduce minor characters in addition to the five major ones. In the plays by Plautus and Rotrou, however, the minor characters take no important role in any of the scenes. In Plautus' drama, they are the maid Bromia and the pilot Btophoro; and in Rotrou's, they are the Captains and the maid Cophalie. Molière, Dryden, and Giraudoux, however, introduce additional minor characters and provide new scenes to afford scope for their activities. Molière adds Jupiter's wife Juno, who speaks in the prologue, the Theban captains, who, like the Captains in Rotrou's play, take no important role, and Cleonthis, the wife of Sosia. This latter character appears in several scenes and figures prominently in two scenes of considerable length. Dryden adds Phoebus and Night and the generals, Polidas and Tranio, but the characters which he adds who take an important role in several scenes are the maid Phaedra, Sosia's wife Bromia, and Judge Gripus. Giraudoux adds several minor characters: the maid Ecclissé, the Echo, Léda, the Trumpeter, and the Warrior. The last three are of considerable importance.

Each of the five dramatists has a somewhat different conception of the major characters. By no means, however, does any character undergo a complete metamorphosis at the hands of one of the dramatists. In all of the

plays, Alcmena can be best described as a devoted wife. Bondurant gives the following somewhat eulogistic description of this character as she appears in the play by Plautus:

The character as portrayed in this drama is admirable, and she is also thoroughly human and lovable. In the picture which the master has given us of her she has most of those attributes that adorn womanhood at its best. She loves her husband with a single-hearted devotion, and has awaited eagerly his coming. She has a normal woman's appreciation for a gift from the hands of one who loves her best, so she prizes greatly the gold tankard which he has brought her. When her husband, as she judges him, would leave her, she at first expostulates, but convinced that it is his duty to go, acquiesces, and finds her greatest comfort in recalling his achievements. She has the quality of mercy, and gentle compassion, and intercedes for Sosia when he is assailed by the pseudo-Amphitryon.....she has a firm faith in the gods, and a deep pride in her family and is endowed with the spirit of "noblesse oblige."

When her maddened husband persists in his charges against her, the road lies plainly before her, and she determines to follow it even to the bitter end. She bids him divorce her, and take the things that are his. She asks for a companion on her journey homeward from his house, but if not she will go, having "Honor" as her sole companion on the way. But when Amphitryon (Jupiter in disguise) comes to her and pleads forgiveness for the wrong he has done her in jest, she no longer nurses her wrath, but forgives him.¹

In the same passage, Bondurant compares her to Shakespeare's Desdemona:

Thus far she reminds us in her charming naturalness, in her adoration for her lord, and her delight in his martial achievements, of Desdemona, but she is stronger when assailed, and does not shrink into herself in startled and helpless amazement, as does Desdemona. No, she is conscious of her innocence, and though wounded to the quick, retains her self-control, and in a strong scene with her husband, meets proudly his insulting taunts, and rebuts his imputations, without allowing herself to be crushed.²

This characterization of Alcmena applies almost equally well to the Alcmena of Rotrou, Molière, and Dryden. Giraudoux's Alcmena, however, seems more of flesh and blood.

The Alcmena of Plautus is pictured as more simple and child-like than the Alcmena of the other dramatists. Her joy at her husband's gift seems

¹Alexander L. Bondurant, "The Amphitruo of Plautus, Molière's Amphitryon, and the Amphitryon of Dryden," Sewanee Review, 39 (October, 1926), 465.

²Ibid.

essentially child-like; the gift of the golden bowl appears to assuage almost miraculously her grief when her husband, actually Jupiter in disguise, must leave her. She is also capable of petulance. When Jupiter, in the guise of Amphitryon, tells her that he must go back to his men so that he will not be accused of putting his wife ahead of the public welfare, she replies: "Laconbantem ex abitu concinnavit tu tuum uxorem."³ Wright regards Alcmena as "Plautus' finest creation."⁴

The Alcmena of the other dramatists is more complex, but she is still the devoted wife. In the scene in which she is reconciled to the Jupiter-Amphitryon, in the plays of Molière and Dryden, she is less easily persuaded to pardon him than is the Alcmena of Plautus and Rotrou. Rotrou's Alcmena is even more subordinate to her husband than is the Alcmena of Plautus, Molière, and Dryden. This is particularly obvious in the scene in which Amphitryon accuses her of infidelity. Plautus, Rotrou, and Molière show her as taking great pride in her husband's glory while Dryden shows her as being more concerned with the fact that such glory takes him away from her. Her single-hearted, or perhaps single-minded, devotion to her husband is well illustrated in her refusal to accept Jupiter's husband-lover distinction.

The Alcmena of Giraudour has undergone the greatest transformation. She still remains the virtuous wife, thoroughly devoted to her husband, but she is more human, more down-to-earth, more flesh and blood, and more the housewife. In the other four plays, she is subordinate to her husband, while in this play she is pictured as his equal. In none of the other versions is she employed to introduce a comic element, this function being performed chiefly by Mercury and Sosia. In Giraudour's drama, however, her speeches provide

³Titus Maccius Plautus, Amphitruo, in Plautus, translated by Paul Wilson. (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1950), vol. I, Act I, Scene III.

⁴F. A. Wright, Three Roman Poets. (New York, 1938), 37.

one of the most important sources of humor. Her lines also reveal her as a character of intelligence. Giraudoux permits her another trait, jealousy, which is not among those assigned her by the other dramatists. She says: "Je te voyais dans les bras des autres femmes.....Aussi n'était-ce pas les Grecques que je craignais. Je craignais les déesses, et les étrangères.... Je craignais d'abord les déesses."⁵

Of the major characters in the five plays, probably *Amphitryon* is the one who is least clearly delineated. He is shown as a successful, and apparently brave, general. He is devoted to his wife and is meticulous in carrying out his duties to his country. When he faces the calamity of his wife's apparent unfaithfulness, he is overpowered to the extent that he loses command of himself and fails to act rationally. The stress under which he is placed may account for his singular lack of humor.

Beyond this, it is impossible to infer what sort of man he might be. He remains essentially the same from play to play. This is even true in *Amphitryon 38* in which most of the other characters have undergone considerable modification. In this play, however, it is possible to draw inferences about him as a man which cannot be drawn elsewhere. He still seems to fit, nevertheless, the *Amphitryon* mold of the other plays.

The *Amphitryon* of Giraudoux, unlike the *Amphitryon* of the other dramatists, is capable of humor. Often this humor seems to be drawn from him by Alcmena and to come somehow reluctantly so that he still tends, as in the other plays, to take himself rather too seriously. He goes along with Alcmena's bits of humor, but seems to miss the point of some of her remarks and to take her too literally upon occasion. When he is leaving for war and is waiting for his horses, he says, "Cette fois, ce sont eux...Il faut partir." Alcmena replies, "Qui, eux? Ton ambition, ton orgueil de chef, ton goût du carnage

⁵Jean Giraudoux, *Amphitryon 38*. (Paris, 1929), Act I, Scene III.

et de l'aventure?" To this he answers, "Non, simplement Elaphocéphale et Hysipila, mes chevaux."⁶ He loves his wife, but he is not always romantic. As he prepares to leave for war, Alcmena asks him if he is going to stay a little longer and whether he loves her. To this he replies: "Oui, j'attends mes chevaux."⁷

In four of the plays, Giraudour's being the exception, the character of Jupiter remains essentially the same. As father of the gods, he is omnipotent. He frequently takes advantage of his omnipotence to woo earthly beauties and regards such ventures as his prerogative. His attitude is epitomized in Dryden's lines:

Fate is, what I
By vertue of Omnipotence have made it:
And Pow'r omnipotent can do no wrong,
Not to my self, because I will'd it so:
Nor yet to Men, for what they are is mine.⁸

Allen expresses the belief that Dryden increased the nobility of Jupiter:

In Molière the Alcène-Jupiter and the Mercure-Sosie situations.... reveal two different kinds of comic incongruity. Dryden increased the nobility of the first group of characters and made their interrelations much more romantic and poetic than they had been and vulgarized the second group. That is, he heightened the antithetical qualities of the two groups because he wanted them to "set off each other."⁹

There may not be sufficient evidence to support this view. Bondurant does, in fact, hold to the opposite view. He says: "The character of Jupiter appears in a more favorable light in Plautus than in either of the subsequent plays."¹⁰ Dryden has made the relationship between Jupiter and Mercury more

⁶Ibid., Act I, Scene III.

⁷Ibid.

⁸John Dryden, Ambixyon or The Two Sosia's. (London, 1694), Act I, Scene I.

⁹Ned B. Allen, The Sources of John Dryden's Comedies. (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1935), 227.

¹⁰Bondurant, op. cit., 467.

permissive as witnessed in the comments which Mercury makes to Jupiter about his amorous adventures. In answer to Jupiter's speech which was quoted above, Mercury says:

Here's Omnipotence with a Vengeance, to make a Man a Guckold, and yet not to do him wrong. Then I find, Father Jupiter, that when you made Fate, you had the wit to contrive a Holy-day for your self now and then. For you Kings never Enact a Law, but you have a kind of an Eye to your own Prerogative.¹¹

Jupiter is indulgent, however, only to a point. He allows Phoebus and Mercury to comment on his peccadilloes, but he always remains in control of the situation, as is shown by these lines:

My present Purpose and Design you heard:
T' enjoy Amphitryon's Wife, the fair Alcmena:
You two must be subservient to my Love.¹²

Giraudoux's Jupiter deviates from the traditional conception of the father of the gods. He is less sure of himself and his will does not always prevail. He treats Mercury as an equal, and his attitude toward Alcmena goes beyond that of the lover seen in the other plays. Of her, he says:

Elle est la seule femme que je supporterai habillée, voilée; dont l'absence égale exactement la présence; dont les occupations me paraissent aussi attirantes que les plaisirs. Déjeuner en face d'elle, je parle même du petit déjeuner, lui tendre le sel, le miel, les épices, dont son sang et sa chaleur s'alimentent, heurter sa main! fût-ce de sa cuiller ou de son assiette, voilà à quoi je pense maintenant!¹³

In four of the plays, Giraudoux's again being the exception, much of the humor centers around the two Sosia's. In all five plays, Mercury serves as Jupiter's henchman and is subordinate to him except in Giraudoux's play where he is more on the level of a fellow-conspirator. The Mercury of

¹¹Dryden, *op. cit.*, Act I, Scene I.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³Giraudoux, *op. cit.*, Act II, Scene III.

Circudon is still his father's henchman, but is more his equal. This Mercury has been described as "echo and prospector, cynical devote, publicity agent, infatuated with his own enterprise."¹⁴ Rotrou's Mercury, on the other hand, is more subservient to his father than the Mercury of the other dramatists.

This Mercury says:

J'obéis à mon père et viens servir mon maître:
Tel un bon serviteur, tel un bon fils doit être.¹⁵

Dryden's Mercury is more degraded than that of the other dramatists. He is pictured as the god of thieves as well as the heavenly messenger. It is also in Dryden's play that he seeks the favor of the gold-worshipping Phaedra.

In the four dramas in which he has a major role, Sosia is shown as being a coward, a liar, and physically unattractive. He is moderately loyal to his master, he can be keenly humorous, and he is fully capable of laughing at himself. Sosia in Dryden's play, like Mercury in the same play, is more degraded than the other Sosias. This is brought out in the scene in which Sosia objects to Mercury's taking his form and name and in which he begs to be allowed continued existence. Molière's Sosia says:

O cœur barbare et tyrannique!
Souffrez qu'en moins je sois ton maître.¹⁶

In Dryden's version, this is replaced with: "Ah! Then let me be your Bastard Brother, and the Son of a Whore; I hope that's but reasonable."¹⁷

When Molière's Sosia comments on the lot of the servants of great men, he says:

¹⁴Strick Young, "Gods, Golden Lads and Girls," New Republic, 93 (November 17, 1937), 44.

¹⁵Jean de Rotrou, Les Sosies, in Oeuvres de Jean Rotrou. (Paris, 1820), vol. III, Act III, Scene V.

¹⁶Jean Baptiste Molière, Amphitruon, in Théâtre Complet de Molière. (Paris, n.d.), vol. III, Act III, Scene VI.

¹⁷Dryden, op. cit., Act IV.

Notre sort est beaucoup plus rude
 Chez les grands que chez les petits.
 Ils veulent que nous euss, tout soit, dans la nature,
 Oblige de s'imoler.
 Jour et nuit, grêle, vent, soleil, chaleur, froidure,
 Dès qu'ils parlent, il faut voler.¹⁸

In Dryden's version, he says:

Holl! the greatest Pleasur of a Serving-man is to be hir'd to some great Lord! They care not what drudgery they put upon us, while they lye lolling at their Ease, and stretch their lazy limbs in expectation of the Whore which we are fetching them.¹⁹

Both Molière and Dryden give Sosia a wife. In Molière's drama, she is Cléanthis, and in Dryden's, she is Brasia. The two characters are very similar. Both are unattractive, shrewish, and nagging, and both criticize Sosia for his coldness. Sosia is henpecked in both plays, but he is able to meet his wife's nagging with humor and innumerable excuses for his lack of regard for her.

In addition to Brasia, Dryden adds two other characters of considerable importance. The maid Phaedra contributes little to advancing the main action, but she increases the comic effects considerably. She is nony-loving, grasping, and apparently heartless. She is quite willing to sell herself to the highest bidder, whether he be Judge Gripus or the disguised Mercury, although she is somewhat hesitant with the latter because of his unattractive physical appearance. She is clever and witty, and has no question as to what she wants from life. She is always willing to bow to expediency.

Judge Gripus is best described in a speech by Phaedra in the scene in which he is trying to retrieve his stolen goblet. Phaedra says: "Thou Seller of other People: thou Weather-cock of Government: that when the

¹⁸Molière, op. cit., Act I, Scene I.

¹⁹Dryden, op. cit., Act II, Scene I.

Wind blows for the Subject, point'ot to Privilege; and when it changes for the Sovereign, veers to Prerogative."²⁰ He is cowardly and is easily subdued by the disguised Mercury. Bondurant suggests that Dryden is ridiculing the court procedure of his day and that Judge Gripus was modelled on the judges of Charles II's time.²¹

Léda, the Trumpeter, and the Warrior are the important "originals" in Giraudoux's play. Léda serves to advance the main action when she is induced to take Alcmena's place in bed with Amphitryon, whom Alcmena assumes to be Jupiter in disguise. The Trumpeter and the Warrior, however, seem to serve somewhat the same purpose in Giraudoux's play as Judge Gripus serves in Dryden's; that is, Giraudoux uses these characters as a means of commenting on his time. One of the Warrior's speeches can serve as an illustration.

He declains to the people of Thebes:

vous tous, pauvres, que la fortune a injustement traités, venez vous venger sur les ennemis! Vous tous, riches, venez connaître la suprême jouissance, faire dépendre le sort de vos trésors, de vos joies, de vos favorites, du sort de votre patrie! Vous, joueurs, venez jouer votre vie! Vous, jouisseurs impies, la guerre vous permet tout, d'aiguiser vos armes sur les statues même des dieux, de choisir entre les lois, entre les femmes! Vous, paresseux, aux tranchées: la guerre est le triomphe de la paresse.²²

Giraudoux seems to have identified himself with the Trumpeter, who remains unimpressed with the Warrior's eulogy. When the Warrior declains,

Levez-vous, rassemblez-vous. Car qui oserait préférer à la gloire d'aller pour la patrie souffrir de la faim, souffrir de la soif, s'enliser dans les boues, mourir, la perspective de rester loin du combat, dans la nourriture et la tranquillité...

the Trumpeter answers laconically, "Moi."²³

²⁰Dryden, op. cit., Act V.

²¹Bondurant, op. cit., 460.

²²Giraudoux, op. cit., Act I, Scene II.

²³Ibid.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, a comparison was made of five dramas prominent among those which have been written on the *Amphitryon* theme. Summaries of the five have been given and they have been considered comparatively from the standpoint of organization and setting, major divisions according to action, and characters.

The conclusion which is to be drawn from the comparison presented in this paper is suggested in the following sentence by Saintsbury: "The truth is, that the three plays of Plautus, Molière, and Dryden are remarkable examples of the power which great writers have of treading in each other's steps without servile imitation."¹ This statement may be expanded to include the versions by Rotrou and Giraudour, although the latter has taken more liberties with the legend than has any of the others. The similarities which occur in the *Amphitryon* of Plautus, Rotrou, Molière, and Dryden are more remarkable than the differences. Each of the dramatists introduces variations in his play. These include the addition of new characters and incidents, the alteration of dialogue in scenes otherwise identical, and the introduction of modifications in the portrayal of the major characters. Nevertheless, the conclusion that the similarities are more striking than the differences seems inescapable.

¹G. Saintsbury, "Dryden," in *English Men of Letters*, edited by John Morley. (New York, 1894), vol. III, 115.

This conclusion is not applicable, however, to Amphitryon 36. Giraudoux retains the substance of the theme developed in the other dramas, but the variations which he introduces are striking. While the plays by Plautus, Rotrou, Molière, and Dryden deal with the theme of adultery through mistaken identity and its resulting complications, Giraudoux turns the emphasis from the complications which result when Jupiter assumes the appearance of Amphitryon, and places it on his thesis that man's life has elements which a god could envy. He learns from Alcmena that friendship is one of these elements:

Et si je vous offrais mieux que l'amour? Vous pouvez goûter l'amour avec d'autres. Mais je voudrais créer entre nous un lien plus doux encore et plus puissant: seule de toutes les femmes je puis vous l'offrir. Je vous l'offre....L'amitié!²

That Jupiter is convinced by Alcmena's argument is shown by his decision not to reveal that he has been her lover.

One of the most interesting questions which might be considered is why each of the authors chose to write a play on the Amphitryon theme. This question, like most questions relating to human motivation, cannot be answered categorically, nor will this paper attempt to do so. A general and somewhat superficial answer is that each of the authors had something to say and the play provided a convenient means for saying it. This "something" can pertain very specifically to the age in which the writer lived. Allen feels, for example, that Dryden "had the past reigns of Charles or James in mind when he generalized, as he often did in Amphitryon, on the fact that being cuckolded by a monarch was no disgrace."³ With regard to the plays by Molière and Dryden, Allen states:

²Jean Giraudoux, Amphitryon 36. (Paris, 1929), Act III, Scene V.

³Red B. Allen, The Sources of John Dryden's Comedies. (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1935), 235.

It is often claimed that in Molière's play *Amphitryon* stood for the Marquis de Montespan, who was showing considerable pique because of the attentions Louis XIV was paying his wife. The famous jealousy which....Lord Chesterfield felt when James II, then Duke of York, was making advances toward Lady Chesterfield, or the intrigue between the Duke of York and Lady Southesk.... might well have occurred to the audience when they saw Dryden's comedy.⁴

The introduction of "original" characters can add considerably to the usefulness of the play to its author. This is illustrated by Judge Gripus in Dryden's play. As was suggested earlier in this paper, Dryden seems to introduce Judge Gripus for other than dramatic reasons.

The following passage by Phelps illustrates that the "something" which the author has to say need not be so easily traceable to events which take place around him:

He [Molière] is certainly doing something with the *Amphitryon* myth besides merely reproducing it and laughing at it. His interest in the story seems chiefly psychological....He says in it the profoundest things he has to say about jealousy....the most romantic things he has to say about love.⁵

The comments on war which are made through the Warrior and the Trumpeter in Giraudoux's play serve as an example of the expression of this author's reflections on one of the most perplexing problems confronting mankind, the inevitability of war.

Bondurant supplies at least a partial answer to this question of why three of the authors might have used the legend:

Each play mirrors its age. Plautus shows a period in which the home is held sacred, marriage often a union of the heart as well as hand, women honored, and children desired. Molière reflects in his play the France of Louis Quatorze; and Dryden the court of Charles II, with its debauchery and cynicism.⁶

This statement can be developed further to include the plays by Rotrou and Giraudoux. *Les Sosies* illustrates Rotrou's penchant for imitation, in this

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ruth S. Phelps, "Amphitryon and Montespan," Modern Philology, 24 (May, 1927), 460.

⁶Alexander L. Bondurant, "The Amphitruo of Plautus, Molière's Amphitryon, and the Amphitryon of Dryden," Sewanee Review, 33 (October, 1925), 467.

case, imitation based on a theme which he found useful for reflecting the France of Richelieu, who believed that the king's will should be law. Giraudoux reflects a too materialistic age in which man must be reminded that his life contains elements which make it well worth living. These elements—devotion, self-respect, dignity, and capacity for friendship—lie within man himself.

Though it be "old as the Greco-Roman hills," the Amphitryon legend seems to be holding up remarkably well. It is interesting to speculate what digits a dramatist of the next century might feel justified in appending to the title of his version of the legend.

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