

PLAUTINE STAGE SETTINGS (*ASIN.*, *AUL.*, *MEN.*, *TRIN.*)

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In order to appreciate Roman comedies as the dramatic works which they are we must continually visualize the actors' movements. To do this we must be aware of the generic conditions of the Roman stage, type of theater, conventional significance of the side exits, etc. We must also know the exact stage setting of the original performance, what buildings are represented on stage, where they are located, what besides the conventional countryside and/or port lies beyond the side exit to the audience's left, what besides the forum lies to the right.

A playwright must, as Aristotle (*Poet.* 1455A22–25) says, construct his play setting the stage situation before his own eyes; thus visualizing the situation as clearly as possible, as if present at the stage events themselves, he would find what is suitable and the inappropriate would least escape his notice. If we assume that Plautus did visualize his stage as he wrote, the language of the play, such as the use of the words "right" and "left," would indicate the setting Plautus had before his mind's eye. We will also be able to gather evidence for the stage setting of a play by analyzing scenes where there are appropriate alternatives in staging and inappropriate ones (e.g., a character leaving the stage in the same direction from which someone whom he wishes to avoid is entering). On these two bases, the hints which the language of the plays provides and the visualization of situations where one may speak of what is fitting, reasonable or natural, we can in most cases establish the precise stage settings of individual plays.

Although editors of the various plays frequently provide stage settings, they usually do not give the reasons for their choices. A comprehensive attempt to demonstrate the correct stage settings of the

plays of Plautus (and Terence) has been made by Mary Johnston.¹ Johnston however limited herself to the respective locations of the stage buildings and was not concerned with off-stage locations beyond the conventional countryside/port and forum. Even within this limited sphere several of her conclusions are unsatisfactory. It is the purpose of this paper to reexamine the full stage settings, including offstage locations, of four plays of Plautus, the *Asinaria*, *Aulularia*, *Menaechmi* and *Trinummus*.

In the following, "left" and "right" are from the audience's point of view unless otherwise specified. All citations from Plautus are according to the edition of Lindsay.² The stage settings given by Nixon in the Loeb edition and by the Thoresby Jones and Moseley-Hammond editions of the *Menaechmi* are cited as a representative sample of easily accessible texts.

Asinaria

The houses of Demaenetus and Cleareta are on stage. Demaenetus refers to Cleareta's daughter Philaenium as his next door neighbor (*e proxumo*, 53). Johnston³ feels that "there is nothing to show a definite location for either house." Nixon⁴ has both houses on the stage with "a narrow lane" between them; the relation of the two houses is not otherwise given.⁵

The situation is not as uncertain as Johnston feels. At the end of II.2, Libanus and Leonida are on stage. Libanus has already told

¹ M. Johnston, *Exits and Entrances in Roman Comedy (Plautus and Terence)* (Geneva, N.Y. 1933) 20-33, hereafter cited as EXITS. Other abbreviations used in this paper are NIXON, PLAUTUS I = P. Nixon, *Plautus*, vol. I (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass. 1916); NIXON, PLAUTUS 5 = P. Nixon, *Plautus*, vol. 5 (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass. 1938); BEARE, STAGE = W. Beare, *The Roman Stage*³ (London 1964).

² W. M. Lindsay, *T. Macci Plauti Comoediae* (Oxonii 1904-5).

³ *Exits* 20.

⁴ *Plautus* I 127.

⁵ Nixon, in his various stagings, appears to believe that the plays were performed in a permanent theater with three openings in the backdrop; when only two houses are required, the third opening is assigned to an *angiportum*. Beare, *Stage* 256-63, has demonstrated that in those plays where an *angiportum* is mentioned, it is to be considered as a street behind the houses running parallel to the stage street. "It appears abundantly clear that the 'alley' of which editors so often speak could have had neither place nor function on the Roman stage. The only means of entry and exit were the house-doors and the side-entrances" (263). See also W. Beare, "Angiportum," *CR NS* 4 (1954) 6-8.

Leonida to go to Demaenetus in the forum and inform him of their plan to trick the *mercator* out of the twenty minae, and Leonida has agreed to do so (367–69). While they continue to talk, Leonida catches sight of the *mercator* about to come on stage (378–79). Leonida reaffirms his intention of finding and informing Demaenetus (*uoli seni narrare*, 380) and then leaves. Since Leonida must not encounter the *mercator* until he has had his plan confirmed by Demaenetus, it is necessary for him to leave by the side opposite that by which the *mercator* is about to arrive, to avoid giving the audience the impression that the two meet in the immediately offstage wings. Since Leonida is leaving for the forum (367), i.e., by the side exit to the right, the *mercator* must be entering from the left.

As the *mercator* enters he says that the house to which he has come (the emphatic *hasce aedis*) should be that of Demaenetus (381–82). But his language shows his uncertainty (*ut demonstratae sunt mihi . . . esse oportet . . . ubi dicitur*, 381–82). The *mercator's* *puer* is about to knock on the door when Libanus, who has apparently been unnoticed up to this point, intervenes and addresses the *mercator* (384). Were Libanus standing near the *mercator*, it would seem odd to the audience if the *mercator* did not notice him. Nor is it likely that the *mercator* would see Libanus and ignore him. Given the *mercator's* uncertainty about the exact location of Demaenetus' house, one would rather expect him to ask Libanus for directions. Since the *mercator* has entered from the left, the only possible staging which allows the *mercator* not to notice Libanus is:

Dem.

Clear.

*puer**merc.* ←———— Lib.

The *mercator* has entered from the left and gone to the nearest house. He does not see Libanus who is standing at the far right of the stage, having just seen Leonida off to the forum by the exit on that side. At 384 Libanus moves across stage to address the *mercator*. Were the houses reversed, with Demaenetus' on the right, an awkward juxtaposition of the *mercator* and the unnoticed Libanus would be impossible to avoid.

Of the offstage locations, the *tostrina* from which Leonida enters at

267 (cf. 343) and from which he pretends to enter at 407 (cf. 408) must be placed off to the right, in the same direction as the forum. Leonida, as we have seen, exited to the forum at 380; at 407 he would return from the same direction.⁶ The *balineae* to which the *mercator* was to go before coming to Demaenetus' house (357) must be off to the left since, as we have seen, it is from this direction that the *mercator* makes his first entrance at 381.⁷

We may likewise suppose that Diabolus' house lies off stage to the left. At 919 the *parasitus*, having revealed to Demaenetus' wife Artemona the party taking place at Cleareta's house, leaves for the house of Diabolus (cf. 913). Whatever the staging of the party scene may be, it is clear that Artemona moves from her house towards that of Cleareta, i.e., towards the right. In these circumstances the natural movement of the *parasitus* is to stand apart from Artemona while giving his monologue (911-19) and then to slip away (*subducere hinc me*, 912) in the opposite direction to the left.

The stage would then be arranged as follows:⁸

⁶ Although Libanus enters at 249 from the forum (cf. 251), and later (265) catches sight of Leonida entering from the *tostrina* (cf. 343), the passage cannot be used as evidence for the location of the *tostrina* since it is possible for Libanus to move about on stage as he attempts to determine his future course (252-64, especially in reaction to the birds of augury, 259-64). We have no way of knowing which way Libanus is finally facing when Leonida appears.

⁷ Leonida had met the *mercator* at the *tostrina* (343-44); Leonida proceeded directly to meet Libanus at Demaenetus' house while the *mercator* went first to the *balineae*. One's initial reaction is to place the *balineae* in the same direction as the *tostrina*, but the evidence discussed above is against this. The mention of the *balineae*, beside being a convenient excuse to explain the delay in the arrival of the *mercator*, may also be a device to explain his entrance from a different direction. Cf. the analogous use of the *angiportum* to explain Demaenetus' presence in Cleareta's house (741-43), although he had last been seen exiting toward the forum at 126 (cf. 125).

⁸ Although the stage setting is clear, one major problem in the actual staging still remains, how Argyrippus comes to be with Philaenium entering on stage from Cleareta's house (585-86) when he was last seen leaving for the forum at 248 (cf. 245). The alternatives are either recourse to the same *angiportum* his father will later use (741-43) or some lacuna in the text. Realizing that Argyrippus has been in Cleareta's house, we should understand that at 504-44 Cleareta has taken Philaenium aside, outside, and instructed her to have Argyrippus leave. In this context, perhaps Cleareta's words to Philaenium (*ultra amas, ultra expetessis, ultra ad te accersi iubes*, 526) are intended to explain how Argyrippus arrived within. If this is so, this indication is certainly far from the normal crystal clarity of Plautus. The other staging difficulties have parallels in other plays. The direct entrance of the *parasitus* into Demaenetus' house at 827 without any onstage knocking or dialogue at the door is duplicated e.g., at *Men.* 520 where

	Dem.	Clear.	
to			to
balineae			forum
Diab.			tostrina

Aulularia

For this play Johnston⁹ arranges the stage:

	Meg.	Euc.	fan. Fid.	
to				to
rus				City

Nixon¹⁰ places the two houses of Megadorus and Euclio on stage with a lane between them and an altar in front. In Nixon's setting, the *fanum Fidei* appears to be off stage on the same street the stage represents.¹¹

The houses of Euclio and Megadorus and the *fanum Fidei* are on the stage. In the prologue the *Lar familiaris* points out the houses of both Euclio (2-3) and Megadorus (31). At 617 Lyconides' slave says that Euclio has hidden the pot of gold *hic intus in fano Fidi*.

Megadorus and Euclio are next door neighbors. The *Lar familiaris* calls Megadorus *hic senex de proxumo* in relation to Euclio (31), and Megadorus' slave Strobilus speaks of *uicini huius Euclionis hinc e proxumo* (290). The relation of the two houses is established by 328-30. At 280 Strobilus has entered with the cooks Anthrax and Congrio, their assistants and the flute girls whom Megadorus has hired *apud forum* (281). Strobilus and the troupe thus enter from the right, the forum side. At 328-30 Strobilus orders some of the cooks to Euclio's house and the rest to Megadorus':

tu Congrio,

hunc sume atque abi intro illo, et uos illum sequimini.

uos ceteri ite huc ad nos.

Peniculus goes directly into Menaechmus I's house. The party scene apparently on stage and unnoticed by Artemona although she herself is on stage (851-80) is paralleled in *Stich.* 58-87, where Antipho fails to notice Panegyris and Pamphila whom he is going to visit (cf. 66), although they are seated on stage (near the end of the scene, Panegyris suggests *abeamus intro*, 147). On the party scene in the *Asin.* see also Beare, *Stage* 179; the opening scene of the *Stich.* is discussed by Beare, *Stage* 283.

⁹ *Exits* 28.

¹⁰ *Plautus* 1 237.

¹¹ See the stage directions to IV.4 (*Plautus* 1 299).

The use of *illo* (329) contrasted with *huc ad nos* (330) shows that Strobilus and the troupe are standing nearer to Megadorus' house. Since there is no reason given in the text for Strobilus and the troupe to move across the stage, and since there would be a considerable inconvenience in such a move,¹² we may assume that Strobilus and the troupe are standing on the right near the forum entrance. Since they are also standing closer to Megadorus' house than to Euclio's, Megadorus' house must be to the right of Euclio's.

Since the houses of Euclio and Megadorus are next to each other, the *fanum Fidei* must be at either the extreme left or the extreme right of the stage. Such a position fits the relative unimportance of the *fanum*. The scenes in which the *fanum* is used are somewhat contrived in their staging. At 608 Euclio comes on stage from the *fanum*. After saying enough to allow Lyconides' slave to overhear where the gold is hidden he returns to his own house at 615 to prepare to sacrifice (cf. 612). But from the point of view of the development of the plot, the only reason why Plautus has Euclio return to his house is to permit Lyconides' slave to enter the *fanum* at 623. At 624 Euclio comes from his house and at 627 reenters the *fanum*, supposedly following the warning of the crow's omen (cf. 624-27), but, again from the point of view of the plot, in order to catch Lyconides' slave inside the *fanum*. Euclio brings the slave out from the *fanum* but then at 660 he suddenly goes inside the *fanum* in response to sounds he thinks he hears within¹³ (cf. 655-59) without waiting to be sure that the slave has left the stage. This slip in the character of the cautious Euclio is glossed over by Euclio's orders for the slave to leave (660). The playwright's real reason for Euclio's sudden departure is to permit the slave to hide in the doorway of one of the houses (*ad ianuam concessero*, 666) in order to overhear Euclio when he returns on stage and announces his intention to hide the pot of gold in the *Silvani lucus* (667-76).

¹² The troupe must include Anthrax and his assistants Dromo, Machaerio and an unnamed *tu* (398-401), Congrio and an equal number of assistants for him (cf. the "half and half" notion of 282, 291 ff. and Congrio's insistence that he get his fair share, 330 ff.), the two flute girls Phrugia and Eleusium (333), ten persons plus Strobilus plus the *opsonium* which includes two lambs (328). The lambs are alive (cf. 565-68). Whatever the production conditions of the Plautine stage were, it would be difficult enough to get a procession of eleven people and two live lambs on stage at all, and pointless to march them all across the stage if there was no need.

¹³ The cause of these sounds is never explained.

Despite the contrived nature of the stage actions, it is clear that in these scenes dealing with the *fanum* Plautus has been at pains to maintain the verisimilitude of Euclio's actions, notably through the use of "excuse" lines (612-13, 624-27, 655-59, 660). In this context we may consider the alternatives presented by the two possible locations of the *fanum*. If the *fanum* is at the extreme right of the stage, at 615 Euclio would pass the entire length of the stage going from the *fanum* to his own house without noticing Lyconides' slave who is seated on stage (cf. 606). Similarly, since the *Silvani lucus* is *extra murum* (674), i.e., in the countryside, and hence beyond the exit on the left, at 676 Euclio would again walk the full length of the stage from the *fanum* to exit to the *Silvani lucus* and not notice the slave hiding in one of the doorways. Conversely, if the *fanum* is at the extreme left of the stage, the entire right side of the stage is available for the slave to lurk and not be noticed by Euclio as he goes from the *fanum* to his house at 615. At 676 Euclio would turn directly from the *fanum* to the countryside exit and not pass the houses and the spying slave. The *fanum* is used only in these scenes and could have been placed anywhere on the stage without interfering with the other action of the play. It is conceivable that the *fanum* could have been placed on the right, the first alternative above, and that the difficulties were overcome by good acting. But there is no reason why Plautus should have created these difficulties for himself in the first place. Plautus, as we have seen, has used extreme care in contriving ways for Lyconides' slave to enter the *fanum* and later to overhear Euclio. Euclio possesses an overfearful and watchful character which would make not noticing the slave unreasonable if he were to come close to him on the stage. There is no reason why the *fanum* could not be placed at the extreme left of the stage, the second alternative above. In the light of these considerations, it seems necessary to assume that the *fanum* was in fact at the left of the stage. This would create an arrangement:

<i>fanum Fidei</i>	Euclio	Megadorus
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Euclio's house is in the center of the stage, as we would expect since Euclio is the principal character of the play.¹⁴

¹⁴ Johnston, *Exits* 28, seems to argue as follows in placing the *fanum* on the audience's right: Euclio has dug up the pot of gold from his own house to enter from there at 460; he explains how he has rescued the gold and then at 473 turns towards the *fanum* to

Of the offstage locations, the house of Eunomia and her son Lyconides lies offstage¹⁵ beyond the exit to the right. Both enter from their house on the right at 682, clearly not having encountered Lyconides' slave who exited towards the *Silvani lucus* on the left at 681.¹⁶ Moreover, after the slave has stolen the pot of gold from the *Silvani lucus* he passes via the stage at 701-12 on his way to Lyconides' house. At 712 he sees Euclio returning from the *Silvani lucus*, i.e., from the countryside entrance on the left. The slave continues on to Lyconides' house (*ibo ut hoc condam domum*, 712). The slave must leave by the exit on the right in order to avoid Euclio who is entering from the opposite side.

At 119 Euclio leaves the stage to go to a distribution of money by his *magister curiae* (cf. 107-8). He returns from seeking the distribution at 178 (cf. 179-80). Johnston assumes that such a distribution should take Euclio towards the forum.¹⁷ However, it is in no way certain

rebury the money; he now sees Megadorus returning from the forum; in order to see Megadorus Euclio must be facing towards the audience's right, and hence the *fanum* is on the right. It is uncertain where Euclio is headed at 473. Destinations of characters in Plautine comedy are usually announced. The only significant exception to this rule occurs when characters are going to their own houses, and even under these circumstances their destination is made known more often than not. (In the *Aul.* the destination of every actor is announced from the stage except that of Eunomia when she exits to her own house at 176 and that of Euclio when he exits to his house at 444.) We would therefore expect some statement of Euclio's intention to go to the *fanum* if he were headed there at this point, but no mention of the *fanum* is made. Euclio speaks of burying the gold in the *fanum* only at 580-86 after Megadorus has left the stage. We may conclude that Euclio formulates his plan only at 580-86. It should also be noted that in a monologue situation the actor is addressing the audience and hence is in a position to see either side entrance (cf. e.g., the staging situation at 712 where Lyconides' slave, at the end of his monologue, sees Euclio coming from the direction from which he himself has come and opposite to the one in which he intends to go).

¹⁵ Some scholars, misunderstanding the *nostras* of Lyconides' *quinam homo hic ante aedis nostras eiulans conqueritur maerens* (727, spoken as Lyconides comes from Megadorus' house), have argued that Eunomia and Lyconides live in Megadorus' house. W. Ludwig, "Aulularia-Probleme," *Philologus* 105 (1961) 259-62, in discussing these arguments, points out that Lyconides is Megadorus' nearest living male relative and "gegenüber dem Mann auf der Strasse rückt das Gemeinsame der Familie in den Vordergrund" 262). Ludwig examines the various entrances and exits of Eunomia and Lyconides and conclusively demonstrates that they must have a separate house located off stage (toward the forum).

¹⁶ However, if there is an empty stage "act" break between 681 and 682 the present passage could not be used as evidence for the location of Eunomia's house.

¹⁷ *Exits* 28. Johnston's placement of Euclio's and Megadorus' houses depends on this assumption. At 176-77 Megadorus, as he moves from his own house to that of Euclio,

that the distribution should have occurred in or near the forum. If the distribution of money by the *magister curiae* was a feature of Plautus' Greek original, *magister curiae* would be a Latin translation of *φρατρίαρχος*. Each of the Attic phratries had its own meeting place and shrine in a particular locality.¹⁸ The distribution would more likely take place at the meeting place of Euclio's phratry than in the agora. This meeting place could as easily be to the left as to the right. If on the other hand Plautus is dealing with a Roman setting, the distribution would probably not take place in the forum (or the adjacent comitium, the voting place of the *curiae*) but rather at the *Curiae*—structures constructed for the religious services of the *curiae*—either the *Curiae ueteres*, probably located at the northeast corner of the Palatine, or the *Curiae nouae*, probably located opposite the *Curiae ueteres* on the Caelian.¹⁹ Since we really do not know where in Rome the *Aulularia* was first produced, we cannot say in which direction from the stage the *Curiae* lay, but it is possible to imagine numerous locations where the forum was to the audience's right and the *Curiae* to their left. Moreover, wherever the *Aulularia* was first produced, we have no guarantee that the exits had necessarily to correspond to local topographical conditions. It is clear that we cannot assume *a priori* that the distribution of money by the *magister curiae* necessarily was to take place off stage in the direction of the forum. The actual direction of the supposed distribution can only be determined on the basis of the text of the play itself.

If the relative positions of the houses of Euclio and Megadorus have been correctly established above on the basis of 328–30, then 176–77 can be used to show that the distribution of money was in fact to take place off stage to the left. At 176–77 Megadorus is moving from his own house towards that of Euclio, i.e., from right to left, when he catches sight of Euclio returning from the left, and it is in this direction

catches sight of Euclio returning from the money distribution. If Euclio is returning from the right, Megadorus must be facing in that direction, and hence Euclio's house stands to the right of Megadorus', according to Johnston.

¹⁸ G. Gilbert, *The Constitutional Antiquities of Sparta and Athens* (London and New York 1895) 210.

¹⁹ S. P. Platner, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (completed and revised by T. Ashby, London 1929) *Curiae ueteres* 147, *Curiae nouae* 146.

that the distribution must be placed. Megadorus will be on the right and Euclio on the left during their following scenes together. Conveniently, Megadorus, without upstaging Euclio, can exit first to the forum (264), followed later by Euclio going in the same direction (273-74). We may also note that Eunomia's exit to her own house on the right at 176 tends to confirm that Euclio returned from the distribution from the left at 178, since the same side entrance is usually not used for an exit followed immediately by another character's entrance.²⁰

The last item in the stage setting is the altar on which Lyconides' slave sits at 606. There is little in the text definitely to establish the location of the altar, but a position in front of Euclio's house in center stage would best serve the needs of the slave who wishes to get a full view of the scene (cf. 607). The altar before a private house would be similar, e.g. to that before the house of Demipho in the *Mercator*.²¹

We may arrange the stage in the following manner:

	<i>fan. Fid.</i>	Euc.	Meg.	
<i>to</i>				<i>to</i>
countryside		altar		forum
<i>Curiae</i>				Eun./Lyc.
<i>Silvani lucus</i>				

Menaechmi

The houses of Menaechmus I and Erotium are on stage. Johnston²² arranges them:

Men. I	Erot.
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²⁰ This rule is generally observed except at the ends of "acts" when the stage is empty and there is at least the illusion of passage of time. In the *Aul.* the same side exit is used only once for an exit and an immediately following entrance, at 279-80, when Euclio exits to the forum (279) and Strobilus with the troupe of cooks enters from there (280). Here an empty stage intervenes and there must be at least the illusion of a passage of time for Megadorus who leaves at 264 to go to the forum and hire the cooks and for Strobilus and the cooks to return at 280.

²¹ *Merc.* 676.

²² *Exits* 22-23.

Moseley-Hammond²³ arrange the stage:

	Erot.	Men. I	
to			to
harbor	altar		forum

Thoresby Jones²⁴ agrees with the arrangement of Moseley-Hammond except that no mention is made of the altar and an *angiportum* is added between the houses.²⁵

There are several indications that Moseley-Hammond's location of the houses is correct. At 226 Menaechmus II and Messenio enter from the port on the left.²⁶ As they discuss their arrival in Epidamnus, Erotium's cook Cylindrus enters on stage at 273. He is returning from his shopping (cf. 273) and hence presumably enters from the forum entrance on the right.²⁷ At 275 he catches sight of Menaechmus II *ante ostium* (276), in front of Erotium's door. At this point Cylindrus is still at some distance from Menaechmus II (cf. *adibo atque adloquar*, 277). Whatever the size and shape of Plautus' original stage was, it is certain that this scene can be played more easily with Moseley-Hammond's staging, with Menaechmus II and Messenio standing before Erotium's house on the left side from which they have entered, and Cylindrus entering from the opposite side of the stage.

At 555 Menaechmus II is quite explicit in placing his flower crown *ad laeuam manum*, that is, to his left and to the audience's right,²⁸ before

²³ N. Moseley and M. Hammond, *T. Macci Plauti Menaechmi* (Cambridge, Mass. 1968) 17. No reason is given beyond the fact that "the play's action is best suited" by this arrangement.

²⁴ P. Thoresby Jones, *T. Macci Plauti Menaechmi* (Oxford 1918) 17.

²⁵ On the *angiportum*, see above, note 5.

²⁶ There is no direct statement that they enter from the port but the whole conversation in 226-72 is intelligible only in the context of such an entrance.

²⁷ That Cylindrus did his shopping at the forum is not specified but this would be the normal spot for such shopping. To my knowledge, in all cases where the direction of shopping is specified, it is towards the forum except at *Most.* 66-67. In the non-specified cases the shopping can or must be located in the direction of the forum. *Most.* 66-67 is a special case required by the plot of that play: Tranio must go to the Piraeus to be able to see Theopropides returning from abroad, thus setting off the train of developments leading to the haunted house ruse.

²⁸ Wherever Erotium's house is placed, Menaechmus II will throw his crown as close as possible to the forum exit to make the point of the false trail clear to the audience. Peniculus and the *matrona* find the crown (565) and then see Menaechmus I re-entering

going off in the opposite direction towards the port on the left. At 701 he returns on stage from this direction. At 704 the *matrona* comes on stage from Menaechmus I's house to which she had gone at 664 (cf. 663). She is at some distance from Menaechmus II and approaches to speak to him (*adibo*, 707). In the course of their conversation, the *matrona* moves away from Menaechmus II, either simply retreating from his bluster or with the specific purpose of going to her house to order Decio to summon her father at 736-37.²⁹ The *senex*, the *matrona*'s father, arrives shortly and finds them in these same locations, the *matrona* before Menaechmus I's house (*eccam eampse/ante aedis*, 772-73) and Menaechmus II standing at some distance from her (*ille . . . aps te . . . destitit*, 777). As the *senex* comes on stage the *matrona* is talking to Menaechmus II. She tells him to turn around and look at the *senex* (*quin respicis*, 747). The *senex* therefore enters from the side of the stage where Menaechmus II is standing and opposite the side where the *matrona* is standing in front of the house of Menaechmus I. As will be seen below, it is most probable that the *senex*' house, from which he is now coming, is off stage to the left. Menaechmus II would therefore be standing on the left, as we would expect from his entrance from that side at 701. The *matrona* and the house of Menaechmus I are on the right at a distance from where Menaechmus II is standing at both 707 and 777. If Menaechmus I's house stands on the right, Erotium's is on the left. This agrees with our analysis of the scene between Menaechmus II and Cylindrus.

At 436 Menaechmus II orders Messenio to take the *nauales pedes* who are watching his baggage in *tabernam . . . deuorsoriam*. Messenio does so, exiting at 445. The *taberna deuorsoria* is to be placed off stage to the

from the forum (567). They step back out of his way (570), and he passes them as he enters on the stage. It is not unusual that Menaechmus I does not notice the pair as he comes on. 571 ff. are a *canticum* and verisimilitude on the stage breaks down during the singing of *cantica* much as it does during the "musical" numbers of our own musical comedy. We may compare Menaechmus I's failure to notice Peniculus during his *canticum* 110 ff. and Erotium's remarks on how to profit from a lover (*amanti amoenitas malost, nobis lucrost*, 356) in the presence of Menaechmus II, her intended victim, during her *canticum* 351 ff. Numerous examples can be cited from other plays.

²⁹ It is impossible to determine from the text if Decio was on stage with the *matrona* from the start of the scene or if the *matrona* merely calls into the house to Decio at 736 as Moseley-Hammond (above, note 23) and Thoresby Jones (above, note 24) suggest in their notes to 736.

left. As we have seen, at 555 Menaechmus II exits in that direction to find Messenio (cf. 557–58). It is from this direction that Messenio reenters at 966.

The house of the *medicus* lies off stage to the right. It would be in the forum or thereabouts that one would expect to find a *medicus*. Moreover, after the *senex* leaves to fetch the *medicus* at 875, Menaechmus II, who is most anxious to avoid any further meeting with the *senex* (cf. 879–81), would leave in the opposite direction from that in which the *senex* had gone. Since Menaechmus II goes towards the port (*ad nauem*, 878) the *senex* should have gone towards the forum on the right to find the *medicus*.

After their attempt to examine Menaechmus I the *senex* and the *medicus* leave, the *medicus* to his house, the *senex* to get slaves, presumably at his home:

MED. immo ibo domum, ut parentur quibu' paratis opus est.
tu seruos iube hunc ad me ferant. SE. iam ego illic faxo. MED. abeo.
SE. uale. (954–6)

It is clear from the language that the *senex* and the *medicus* set off in different directions as such leavetaking would be pointless if they were leaving together. Since the *medicus* is returning to his house which apparently is in the direction of the forum, the *senex*' house must be in the opposite direction, off stage to the left towards the port.³⁰ When the *senex* returns with the *lorarii* at 990, Menaechmus I is seated in front of his house on the right (cf. 965). The *senex*, who has entered from the left, orders the *lorarii* to bring Menaechmus I to the *medicus*. They run across stage (*quid illisce homines ad me currunt*, 997) to seize Menaechmus I. It is difficult to see how this running could be staged if the *senex*' entrance from his house was not at the side of the stage opposite Menaechmus I's house.

³⁰ Both Moseley-Hammond (above, note 23) and Thoresby Jones (above, note 24) in their notes to 753 have the *senex* enter initially from the right at this line, but give no reason for doing so. In their note to 956, Moseley-Hammond attempt to explain away 954–56 by having the *medicus* hurry off while the *senex* totters after him. If the *senex*' exit is put towards the left, no such problems arise. We may also note that any great speed on the part of the *medicus* here would be inconsistent with the arrival of the *medicus* and the *senex* at 882–8 where the *senex*, who is first on the scene, must tell the *medicus* to hurry (888).

We may arrange the stage:

to port <i>taberna deuorsoria</i> <i>senex</i>	Erot.	Men. I	to forum <i>medicus</i>
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Trinummus

For this play we must locate the house which Callicles has purchased from Charmides' son Lesbonicus, the house of Megaronides and the house of Philto and his son Lysiteles. Johnston³¹ arranges the stage:

Phil./Lys.	Cal./Les./Char.	Meg.
to Port		to City

"One house (that of Callicles/Charmides) must have a second entrance through a *posticum*, which perhaps may be reached through an *angiportum*."³² Nixon³³ has on stage the houses of Callicles/Charmides and Megaronides separated by a "lane" leading to an "annex" where Lesbonicus lives.

The house which Callicles has purchased from Lesbonicus must be on stage (cf. 124-25). Lesbonicus lives in a *posticulum*³⁴ behind Callicles' house (cf. 193-94) but reaches the stage from his *posticulum* through the entrance of Callicles' house. At 400 Philto is on his way to Callicles' house, believing it still to be the house of Lesbonicus,³⁵ when Lesbonicus comes on stage through Callicles' door:

sed aperiuntur aedes quo ibam: commodum
ipse exit Lesbonicus cum seruo foras. (400-1)

There is nothing in the context here to show that it was extraordinary for Lesbonicus to reach the stage by coming through Callicles' house. Conversely, there is no place in the play where it would be inconvenient

³¹ *Exits* 30-31.

³² Johnston, *Exits* 30.

³³ *Plautus* 5 101.

³⁴ The word *posticulum* occurs only in this play. It cannot be the diminutive of *posticum* in its most common meaning of "back door" but must mean either "back room" or "house in back."

³⁵ Philto realizes that the house has been sold only at 422.

for Lesbonicus to enter and exit to his *posticulum* in this same manner, through Callicles' house.³⁶

There is no need for Megaronides' house to be on stage,³⁷ and good reason to believe it is not. At 819 Megaronides exits to the forum to hire a *sycophanta* (cf. 815). The *sycophanta* first appears at 843. Referring to Megaronides in the course of his initial monologue the *sycophanta* says: *ill' qui me conduxit, ubi conduxit, abduxit domum* (853). Megaronides has also given him letters to deliver (848-50). Conceivably, either Megaronides could have led the *sycophanta* to his house while the stage was empty between the third and fourth acts, or he could have brought him there by a back door and set him back out by the same way.³⁸ But these are awkward expedients and totally unnecessary since there is no need of Megaronides' house on stage.³⁹ The staging behind 853 can be explained most conveniently by having Megaronides' house offstage to the right. Megaronides exits to the forum on the right, hires the *sycophanta* and brings him to his house, also offstage right. The *sycophanta* is coached on the role he is to play and now enters from that direction for the first time (843). The audience identifies the exit to the right with their route to Megaronides' house and so no confusion arises.

³⁶ Aside from the textual evidence discussed above, there is no place on stage for a separate entrance to the *posticulum*. By its etymology the *posticulum* must be behind Callicles' house and hence could not directly communicate with the stage. The *angiportum* upon which Johnston (above, note 32) and Nixon (above, note 33) depend does not in fact open on the stage (see above, note 5).

³⁷ Johnston, *Exits* 30, says that Megaronides may "possibly" first enter from his own house, implying that his house is on stage. She confirms her statement by noting that "the *Andria* is the one play . . . in which, we may be certain, a *senex* who comes on in the first scene does not come from his own house . . ." This is irrelevant. Megaronides may very well enter from his own house, but from off-stage. Moreover, numerous other characters enter from off-stage in the first scenes of other comedies and the unique nature of an initial entrance by a *senex* is in no way established.

³⁸ When Charmides catches sight of the *sycophanta* he says *quis . . . in plateam ingreditur* (840). Not too much should be made of this accusative which can simply mean the *platea* represented by the stage as opposed to the *platea* on which the *sycophanta* was walking before he came on stage. The *sycophanta* must enter from offstage. If Charmides saw him enter from an onstage house at 840, his later questions *unde es? . . . unde aduenis?* (879) would be pointless.

³⁹ The present situation differs in this important respect from the situation in the *Asin*, discussed above (note 8). In the *Asin*, Argyrippus must come to Cleareta's house by the backstage (or silently across the stage) because the text requires it. Here there is no such requirement.

It is likewise difficult to imagine that the house of Philto and Lysiteles is on stage. Although Lysiteles is a friend of Lesbonicus, Philto does not know him and it is necessary for Lysiteles to point out to his father Lesbonicus' house (now sold to Callicles) and to tell him Lesbonicus' name (*haec sunt aedes, hic habet; / Lesbonico est nomen*, 390-91). If Philto's house were on stage, it would be very odd that he did not even know the name of his neighbor's son. Conversely, if it is assumed that Philto lives off stage, the directions given by Lysiteles are quite natural.

At 1102-8 Charmides emphatically orders Stasimus to hurry off to the port (*curre in Piraeum atque unum curriculum face*, 1103). In the following act Lysiteles says that Stasimus has just stopped at his house (*modo me Stasimus Lesbonici servos conuenit domi*, 1120) and announced the return of Charmides. Although the word *domi* here is a conjecture of Ritschl, it does fit the metric and has been adopted by Lindsay. It is difficult to imagine where else Lysiteles would go at his exit at 716.⁴⁰ If we accept Ritschl's conjecture (as I am inclined to do), 1120 would indicate that Lysiteles' house is off stage to the left on the way to the port. Stasimus can stop off at Lysiteles' house on his way to the port where he was sent at 1102-8. In the context of Charmides' emphatic orders, we would expect an explanation from Stasimus if he were to exit to an onstage house rather than off to the port.⁴¹ Stasimus does stop at Lysiteles' house on the way to the port, but the first we hear of this is Lysiteles' statement at 1120. What would have been odd in the context of the stage situation is not odd in Lysiteles' incidental description of an offstage action.⁴²

⁴⁰ As noted above (note 14), the destinations of characters are usually announced unless they are going to their own houses. The only unannounced destinations in the *Trin.* are Callicles' exit to his house at 198 and Lesbonicus' exit to his *posticulum* at 716. See also the following note.

⁴¹ That Stasimus stops at Lysiteles' house does not violate the rule mentioned in the preceding note since, we may suppose, Stasimus was then to continue on his way to the port. The trip to the port itself is of no importance in the development of the play and Stasimus does not return on stage. From the point of view of the development of the plot, to send Stasimus in the direction of the port is important as a mechanical device to have him leave in the proper direction so that he can inform Lysiteles at his offstage house. If Lysiteles' house is placed on stage, Stasimus' trip towards the port is pointless.

⁴² Johnston, *Exits* 30-31 appears to believe that Philto's first words (*quo illic homo foras se penetrauit ex aedibus*, 276) indicate that Philto enters directly from his house as he comes on stage looking for Lysiteles, i.e., that his house is on stage. Although these words

The stage setting of the *Trinummus* is therefore:

Cal./Les./Char.

to
Phil./Lys.
port

to
Meg.
forum

With its single house, the stage setting of the *Trinummus* is like those of the *Amphitruo* and the *Captivi*.⁴³

would fit the staging described by Johnston, in view of the evidence presented above we must assume that Philto has come from offstage looking for his son, a situation in which the quoted lines could also fit.

⁴³ See Johnston, *Exits* 20.