Hiatus is now generally admitted in the text of Plautus. Three groups are given, the prosodic, the metrical, and the logical. Of the logical, Alfred Klotz,\(^1\) on p. 355, says ‘Den logischen Hiatus nahm mein Vater in folgenden Fällen an: 1. Bei Aufzählungen, in Anaphora, in scharfen Gegensätzen; 2. Vor und nach Eigennamen; 3. Bei Personenwechsel.’ Fr. Crusius\(^2\) limits it to ‘Personenwechsel’ and ‘Sinnpause’. But Lindsay, in a more detailed treatment of the subject,\(^3\) throws much light on the question of what the logical hiatus really is. For our present purposes, it is sufficient to consider in the first place Lindsay’s statement that there might be a pause before a bizarre word, an unexpected turn of the sentence, etc.:

\[\textit{Most. 1032} \]
\[(\text{numquid Tranio})\]
\[\text{turbávit? Ímmo/éxturbávit ómníá.}\]

\[\textit{Poen. 443} \]
\[\text{nam istí quidem hérce orátióni/Oédió} \]
\[\text{(opust conjectore).}\]

This is the meat of the logical hiatus, the proof of Plautus’ artistic use of hiatus.

What makes it effective is the pause which characterises both it and syllaba anceps (Lindsay, p. 327). The pause emphasises the pithy remark by which it is followed. Perhaps A. Klotz, on p. 356, guessed half the truth when he said ‘Gewiss bedient sich der Dichter manchmal des Hiatus auch als Kunstmittel’, for there may, theoretically speaking, be an artistic intention behind every true hiatus in Plautus. \[\textit{Poen. 474, for example, illustrates how Plautus uses dramatic pauses to bring out the shocked surprise Lycus feels when he hears Antamoenides’ story about winged men:}\]

\[\text{sexaginta milia homínim uno die} \]
\[\text{volaticorum manibus occidi meis} \]
\[\text{volático rum/hóminum?/ítâ dicó quidém.}\]

Examples of this nature show that the mere systematisation of Plautine

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hiatus is by no means an end in itself. We should therefore not only say that hiatus occurs at such and such a place in the line, leaving it at that; but we should ask ourselves further what purpose Plautus had in mind in using such a break when he could so easily have avoided it.

Quite often, however, one finds such pauses occurring where the following word or word group is not apparently loaded with the essence of the joke or the calculatedly unexpected remark. What is the conclusion? A pause in the enunciation of a line must have some emphasising effect except perhaps where there is a natural pause, a change of speaker for example, or at a sense pause. Is it not possible that a pause in what would normally be a closely-knit sentence, followed by colourless words, which in themselves have no real significance relative to the point which the speaker is making, is it not possible that such a pause throws its emphasis back to the preceding word?

II

One might start by examining *Poen.* 988:

pro di inmortales! plurumi/a illunc modum
(periere pueri liberi Carthagine).

The pause is particularly clearly marked coming as it does at the diaeresis, and the following three words are of no vital significance. But when we read this line in its context, we see that all Hanno’s thoughts are concentrated on the word *plurumi*. He has overheard Agorastocles’ chance remark to Milphio that he cannot speak Phoenician because *sexennis perierim Carthagine*. Hanno of course, has been searching for his two daughters who had suffered the same fate, and his oath and remark express his dismay at the thought that this sort of incident was quite common.

Even more convincing is *Poen.* 328:

AG. ecquid amare videor? MI. damnum quod Mercurius minime amat.
AG. námque edepól lucrúm/amáre núllum amátorem áddecét.

The lines form a couplet in which Milphio and Agorastocles exchange cut and thrust remarks on the worth of Agorastocles’ girl Adelphasium. It is true that each remark is based on the idea of *amare*, and that *amare* is therefore a common element brought out by isolation, but I do not think that this is the most satisfactory explanation. More properly, *amare* is the foundation for a progression of witty retorts. Agorastocles speaks of his

love, and Milphio seizes on the remark and builds upon it a cutting reply ‘you love a *damnun* which Mercury, the god of profit (cf. *Stich.* 403f.):

*Neptuno grates habeo et Tempestatibus*

*simul Mercurio, qui me in mercimonias (iuutit))*

loves not at all.’ But Agorastocles is just as quick to turn this against Milphio by bringing in the opposite ‘lucrum’, which is certainly not a ‘fit thing for a lover to love.’ And so *lucrum* is the peak to which the argument builds up and after which it relaxes; and this one word is silhouetted very carefully—it is the most important word, the climax of the joke. The clash of verse ictus with the natural accent of the word also serves to make *lucrum* a very marked word indeed.

*Astinaria* 85 is an example which bears examination:

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cupis id quod cupere te nequiquam intellego.
dotalem servom Sauream/juxta tua
(adduxit)
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Both its position in the verse and the discovery of R. and A. Klotz, that hiatus can occur ‘vor und nach Eigennamen’, prove the legitimacy of the hiatus. Here too, no real significance is attached to the words following the hiatus. Libanus and Damaenetus have been discussing the latter’s wife (from v. 60), and Damaenetus has said that he would like to help his son as his own father had helped him when he was in love. The point upon which the conversation hinges is that Damaenetus’ good wife is in control and no funds can be put at the disposal of the adulescens, who wants to buy his girl. ‘Now’, says Libanus, ‘I can see that your wanting to give your son money is just wishful thinking. That Saurea slave that came with the dowry—your wife’s brought him along to be in charge of things over you.’ It is clear that it is the part of the hiatus to create a pause (we would use a dash) which emphasises the preceding word (the proper name), thus making it unnecessary to conjecture *domum* at the end of the line as Müller does for example.

Metrically less certain, but interesting from the point of view of sense, is *Pseudolus* 493:

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eloquar.
quia nolebam ex me morem progigni malum
erum/ut servos criminaret apud erum.
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The line is framed by the words *erum*...*erum*, (each referring to a different master—the first Calidorus, the second Simo), and contains in a nutshell the gist of the *morem malum* which Pseudolus is at pains to avoid. And so not unnaturally, we find the first word (already strongly emphasised by its abnormal position at the beginning of the line, heading its clause, and

preceding even the conjunction) being given additional stress by the hiatus which follows it. It is stressed in order to clarify the correspondence between itself and the other *erum*. When Callipho asks Pseudolus why he had not informed him immediately of Calidorus’ love affair etc., Pseudolus’ reply is calculated to show how *innocentem... atque innoxium* (460) he is. He did not want, he says, to create a precedent for something so wicked as a slave telling lies on his master, to his master!

Once this explanation has been accepted, it sheds new light on other similar and hitherto disputed verses, e.g. *Pseudolus* 449:

iam istaec insipientiast,
irám /in prómptu gérere. quánto sátius ést
adire blandis verbis...

Lindsay enends the text of manuscript P (promptu) in favour of the Ambrosian Palimpsest’s version ((p)ro(pr)om(pt)u), by which the hiatus is eliminated. However, whereas *promptu* (Cistellaria 111), and in *promptu* (Cic. Off. 1,27,95; Sall. C.7,1, i.a.) appear commonly enough, *propromptu* is not otherwise to be found. If a hiatus after the first iamb and likewise after a stressed word together with the abnormal ictus on the last syllable is permissible, as *Pseud. 493* seems to indicate, then this line too, has found its explanation, and Camerarius’ clever conjecture (*sic*) *iram* also becomes unnecessary. We shall then be able to read the line in the ‘excellent sense’ which Lindsay does not accept (ELV, p. 223).

In considering the ictus question, we may find *Poen. 1019* of some interest:

HA. palumergadetha. AG. Milphio, quid nunc ait?
MI. palas vendundas sibi ait et mergas datas,
ad méssim crédo, nisi quid tú/aliúd sapís,
ut hortum fodiat atque ut frumentum metat.

Two possibilities exist. According to the law of Bentley and Luchs, the penultimate foot of the Senarius may not exhibit word ending on an iamb, 7 e.g. *ita facit mihi*, but regularly shows a spondee or an anapaest – *quantum potest; animum meum* (to use Drexler’s examples). Now Drexler shows that if the penultimate foot is anapaestic, a preceding short syllable will not be taken together with the anapaest to form the resolved long element of a cretic, (e.g. *ad a-nimûm meûm*), but that syllaba anceps and hiatus can occur there (the Jacobsohnsche Stelle). Hence we might scan *tú aliúd sapís* (Drexler, p. 37) and say that the pronoun *tu*, falling under the ictus and being followed by hiatus, is brought out very clearly indeed. That this would give excellent sense we can see from the above passage, where Milphio is pretending to translate Hanno’s Phoenician.

Another of Drexler’s examples is *diceré veniánt*, but one wonders whether the last syllable of such an infinitive can really be *syllaba anceps*, especially considering the position of the word.

The possibility must be considered that this a prosodic hiatus, not *syllaba anceps*, and that the emphatic pause is not really there. Granted even that this is so, one might yet ask oneself, since *tu* is still prominent under the *ictus*, whether some device similar to the ‘dramatic’ type of hiatus is not at times concealed even in prosodic hiatus.

These views have been expressed in an attempt to take a new line of thought on the question of Plautine hiatus, namely to try to escape from the largely systematic way in which the subject has been handled in the past, and to look for meanings and devices behind every true hiatus that may be found. Why, once more, should we suppose such a skilled poet as Plautus to have been unable to avoid writing hiatus? And since he did not avoid it, what was his purpose for each one? There are many baffling questions which remain unanswered until now, but perhaps the study of hiatus is a way along which to find the other Plautus, the careful, meticulous planner, as opposed to the exuberant, fancy-free comedian.
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