

ANGLO-SAXON GESTURES
AND
THE ROMAN STAGE

C. R. DODWELL

prepared for publication by Timothy Graham



PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK <http://www.cup.cam.ac.uk>
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA <http://www.cup.org>
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

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First published 2000

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in Garamond 11/13pt [CE]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Dodwell, C. R. (Charles Reginald)

Anglo-Saxon gestures and the Roman stage / by C. R. Dodwell;
prepared for publication by Timothy Graham.

p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in Anglo-Saxon England; 28)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 66188 9 (hardback)

1. Terence – Illustrations. 2. Illuminations of books and manuscripts, Anglo-Saxon. 3. Illumination of books and manuscripts, Roman. 4. Latin drama (Comedy) – Appreciation – England. 5. Latin drama (Comedy) – Illustrations. 6. Latin drama (Comedy) – manuscripts. 7. Terence – Manuscripts. 8. Acting – Rome – History. 9. Art, Anglo-Saxon. 10. Codice Bembino. 11. Gesture in art. 12. Gesture – Rome.

I. Title. II. Series.

PA6768.D63 2000

872'.01–dc21 99–12836 CIP

ISBN 0 521 66188 9 hardback

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1

The Vatican Terence and its model

‘The art of gesture’, says Beare in his book on *The Roman Stage*, ‘was carried in ancient times to a height which we can scarcely comprehend.’¹

All scholars would agree on the importance of gestures to the Roman actor. The fact that he had to project his voice over the length and breadth of an auditorium in a theatre which was vast in size and was in the open air, meant that he could not indicate the age, sex, class or mood of the character he was portraying by any modulation of speech. In fact, he declaimed his words and did so, moreover, to the accompaniment of a flute. Nor could he use facial expressions to reveal feelings or moods, since his face was hidden behind a mask. This meant that he had to depend to a very considerable extent on gestures. Yet little is known about these – what they were or what they signified. It was a subject that interested a few scholars before the First World War, but it was one that fell out of favour before the beginning of the Second, and the aim of our present study is to take a new look at the subject, using a resource that has been known for a considerable time but which, for reasons that will appear, has been discounted for several decades. We shall attempt to identify the appearance and meanings of a number of the Roman theatrical gestures and later to show how some of them were adopted by artists in Anglo-Saxon England. And, as we shall end in the Middle Ages, so we shall begin there, for we shall initiate our investigation with the consideration of a specific work of art of the Carolingian Renaissance.

The Carolingian Renaissance began in the late eighth century and continued into the late ninth, and one of its characteristics was a pronounced interest in classical literature. Even a prominent church

¹ Beare, *The Roman Stage*, p. 183.

reformer, sending a letter to an abbot asking him to bring relics of saints back with him from Rome, could append to it a quotation from Ovid's *Ars amatoria*,² and the Carolingian writers themselves were looking to Rome for their models. So, Einhard, one of the statesmen of the time, wrote a biography of Charlemagne in imitation of Suetonius' *Vitae Caesarum*,³ and Carolingian poets, such as Alcuin, Angilbert, Modoin, Hrabanus Maurus, Florus, Paul the Deacon and Sedulius Scotus, based their styles on those of Virgil, Ovid, Horace and Lucan.⁴ There was also an occasional interest in classical art, a good example of which is a verse account, written in the style of Ovid by a bishop⁵ who was also one of Charlemagne's travelling administrators. Along with other inducements to point his judgement in the right direction, he had been offered at Narbonne a Roman bowl having on it a number of scenes from classical mythology (some of them badly rubbed and difficult to discern), and the detailed description and identifications he gives of them would do credit to any scholar of today.⁶ Occasionally, the Carolingian arts themselves displayed close links with those of the classical past. Although not in its original condition, a surviving bronze statuette of a real, or ideal, Carolingian emperor⁷ is obviously based on a larger-scale equestrian statue of a Roman emperor, and we have a sketch for a triumphal arch⁸ which clearly owes much to the Roman arches of antiquity.

Carolingian miniaturists could occasionally reproduce Roman originals, and do so with such fidelity that their own pictures might easily pass as classical ones. Indeed, if they so wished, historians of late antique art could make use of such Carolingian copies in the same way that historians of Greek art have tried to take advantage of Roman reproductions. A tenth-century Carolingian copy (now lost) of a late classical calendrical manuscript included personifications of the months and other illustrations that are believed to have been virtual duplicates of the fourth-century originals,⁹ and the painting of a seated figure, made at a

² This was Alcuin; see Duemmler, *Epistolae Karolini aevi* II, 141.

³ For which see Pertz and Waitz, *Einhardi vita Karoli Magni*.

⁴ See Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry* I, ch. V *passim*, and Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry*, ch. VI *passim*.

⁵ This was Theodulf. ⁶ See Duemmler, *Poetae latini aevi Carolini* I, 498–9.

⁷ Hubert, Porcher and Volbach, *Carolingian Art*, pl. 206.

⁸ See *ibid.*, pl. 29, for a reconstruction.

⁹ The lost Carolingian copy is known from two copies made in the late sixteenth and

studio within Charlemagne's own court circle,¹⁰ is so remarkably antique in style that it has actually been claimed by one distinguished scholar to be itself a late Roman original.¹¹ Again, the portrayal of Perseus in an astronomical collection at Leiden¹² could easily be mistaken for a classical work of art, while the representation of the head of Eridanus, now in London,¹³ is in a style indistinguishable from that of the classical period. Some of this accurate copying resulted in works that I once described as facsimiles,¹⁴ and the most famous, and indeed the most extensive, example of these is a cycle of illustrations of the plays of the second-century BC playwright, Terence, which is now in the Vatican Library (Vat. lat. 3868).¹⁵

Although his comedies were variously received by his contemporaries – on the one hand, the first performance of one was deserted in favour of such trivial attractions as a boxing match and a tightrope walker,¹⁶ and on the other, the appeal of another was such that it was performed twice in a single day¹⁷ – they were such models of clear and elegant Latin and so perceptive in their comments on the human condition that they came to be highly esteemed by the discerning of almost all succeeding

early seventeenth centuries: Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 7524–55, fols. 190–211; and Vatican, Barb. lat. 2154 and Vat. lat. 9135. Stern concluded from his study of these that the Carolingian copy so faithfully reproduced the original that it 'n'a laissé aucune trace dans la tradition des images. Cette copie a dû être l'un de ces manuscrits illustrés dont les dessinateurs reproduisaient trait pour trait leurs modèles antiques.' See Stern, *Le Calendrier de 354*, p. 11; and cf. also Gaspar and Lyna, *Les Principaux Manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique* I, no. 1. For a reproduction of one of the illustrations in the sixteenth-century Brussels copy, see Dodwell, *Painting in Europe*, pl. 11.

¹⁰ Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, 18723.

¹¹ Swarzenski, 'The Xanten Purple Leaf', esp. pp. 22–3.

¹² Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Voss. Lat. Qu. 79, 40v; see Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne*, pl. 46.

¹³ BL Harley 647, 10v; see Dodwell, *Painting in Europe*, pl. 12, and Dodwell, *Pictorial Arts*, pl. 34.

¹⁴ *Painting in Europe*, p. 23.

¹⁵ The complete manuscript is reproduced in photographic facsimile in Jachmann, *Terentius. Codex Vaticanus latinus 3868*.

¹⁶ This is stated in the two Prologues of *Hecyra*: *Prologus (I)* 1–5 and *Prologus (II)* 25–8. The same play later lost its audience to the counter-attraction of a gladiatorial show: *Prologus (II)* 39–42.

¹⁷ Suetonius says this of *Eunuchus*. See Radice, *Terence: the Comedies*, Appendix A, p. 390.

generations; not least by those of the Middle Ages, who have bequeathed to us the earliest surviving copies of his complete works. Some are illustrated, and all students of the subject are indebted to Jones and Morey for publishing a corpus of all the related miniatures made before the thirteenth century.¹⁸ Although, as we shall see in a later chapter, we shall find another illustrated Terence, now in Paris, to be of considerable importance, it is to the one in the Vatican that we shall direct most of our attention in this study.

THE ARCHETYPE OF THE VATICAN TERENCE

According to the generally accepted view of Bischoff,¹⁹ the Vatican Terence was made at Corvey, although it probably later passed to the parent house of Corbie from which Corvey was colonized. He dates it to the period 820–30.²⁰ It has the unusual distinction for a Carolingian manuscript of providing the name of the scribe (Hrodgarius) and of one of the three artists (Adelricus), who gives us his name on fol. 3r, associating with it a prayer for God's mercy. (It was by no means unusual for the scribe of a theological work in the Middle Ages to associate his endeavours with a petition to God, yet, curious as it may seem to us today that an artist should suppose that God would look favourably on a secular and pagan work, this may have something to tell us about attitudes to Terence within medieval monasteries.) The script is Carolingian but the pictures – and, excluding prefatory material, there are no less than 144 of these – are accepted as being remarkably accurate copies of classical originals, characteristic comments being that the cycle represents an 'unusually careful rendition of an antique model',²¹ and that it is 'a most faithful copy' of a late classical original.²² No one will dispute that the pictures are so close to their prototypes that they can be virtually treated as Roman works themselves, although the date of those prototypes is very much a matter of controversy. Indeed, in tracing the numerous scholarly

¹⁸ Jones and Morey, *The Miniatures of the Manuscripts of Terence*.

¹⁹ Bischoff, 'Hadoardus and the Manuscripts of Classical Authors from Corbie', p. 54 n. 3. Koehler and Mütterich, however, prefer to leave open the question of the place of origin of the manuscript: see *Die karolingischen Miniaturen* IV, 76.

²⁰ Bischoff, *ibid.* ²¹ J&M II, 36.

²² Weitzmann, *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination*, p. 13.

pronouncements about the archetype of the Vatican Terence, we are sometimes reminded of the remark made by one of the lawyers in Terence's play *Phormio* that 'quot homines tot sententiae'.²³

If we leave on one side the wildly differing dates suggested in the nineteenth century, we can point to the fact that, in the first two decades of the twentieth, proposals varied from the first century BC, which had the support of an art historian as eminent as Carl Robert,²⁴ to the fifth or sixth century AD put forward by Engelhardt.²⁵ Later, in 1924, Jachmann favoured the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century, chiefly on literary evidence,²⁶ and in the following year, on art-historical data, Rodenwaldt sought to prove that the pictures could not have been made before the second half of the fourth century.²⁷ In 1939, Bieber suggested a date in the fourth or fifth century,²⁸ and in the same year, Byvanck more positively, but on remarkably limited evidence, declared for the years 410–20.²⁹ In 1945, Bethe noted similarities with works of the first century,³⁰ and since then, Weitzmann and Koehler and Mütterich have declared for the fifth century.³¹ These are not all the opinions given, and I have left to the last the most influential of all, which was that of Jones and Morey.

In 1931, they argued for a date in 'the latter part of the fifth century or even *c.* 500',³² basing their conclusions partly on an art-historical

²³ 'There are as many opinions as there are men to give them' (*Phormio* 454).

²⁴ Robert, *Die Masken der neueren attischen Komödie*, pp. 87–108, esp. p. 108.

²⁵ Engelhardt, *Die Illustrationen der Terenzhandschriften*, esp. pp. 57 and 90–1.

²⁶ Jachmann, *Die Geschichte des Terenztextes*, p. 119.

²⁷ Rodenwaldt, 'Cortinae', esp. pp. 47–9.

²⁸ Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theater*, p. 153.

²⁹ Byvanck, 'Das Vorbild der Terenzillustrationen', p. 135: 'Man wird ihn also etwa zwischen 410 und 420 datieren dürfen.'

³⁰ Bethe, *Buch und Bild im Altertum*, p. 61, where he compares the Terence illustrations with the wall-paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Bethe's book was posthumously edited by E. Kirsten.

³¹ Weitzmann, *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination*, p. 13; Koehler and Mütterich, *Die karolingischen Miniaturen IV*, 75.

³² J&M II, 45. Earlier, Morey had said much the same in 'I miniatori del Terenzio illustrato della Biblioteca Vaticana', pp. 50–3. A few pages on (p. 58) Morey remarks (as he does in his later publication) that the cylindrical headgear worn by Thraso in *Eunuchus* is first found used by the military in the porphyry imperial statuettes of St Mark's, Venice. However, it was already in use by civilians in the second century AD as we see from the second-century funeral stele of a merchant from Aquileia in which the

analysis (which, incidentally, led them to claim that the artist was ‘one schooled in the Greco-Asiatic manner, and presumably a Greek’),³³ and partly on a textual criterion, namely on the fifth-century date that Craig had earlier proposed for Calliopius,³⁴ the recensionist of the version of the text to which belong all the surviving medieval manuscripts of Terence, including the illustrated ones. They were here influenced by the view of Jachmann, which had won general acceptance, that the illustrations had been created for a branch of the textual tradition designated as γ , which itself derived from the Calliopian recension. However, in recent years Grant has argued that anomalies in the relationship between the miniatures and the Calliopian recension and its γ branch indicate that the illustrations were created for a non-Calliopian manuscript, and subsequently imported into the γ branch at an undetermined point in its development.³⁵ If this is correct, it would mean that the date of origin of the illustrations need not be later than that of Calliopius, which itself remains a matter of debate. In any event, it is the view of the present writer that there is enough art-historical evidence to establish the date of the miniatures in the third century AD. Two of the indications for this are to be found in the very first picture (pl. I).

Dates of hair-styles, etc.

This is an author ‘portrait’ – a portrayal of Terence³⁶ – in a format which follows a familiar classical formula going back to embossed or painted shields described by Pliny³⁷ and known as the *imago clipeata*,³⁸ in which a bust is presented in a roundel held by two supporters. These could either be centaurs, as on the Dionysiac sarcophagi,³⁹ or winged Victories, as on

latter is shown wearing a fez-like hat: see Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 105. Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, p. 210, thinks that it may be ‘a restylization of the Macedonian *causia*’.

³³ J&M II, 40. On p. 198, they say that he was ‘probably a Greek’.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 200. ³⁵ Grant, *Studies in the Textual Tradition of Terence*, p. 21.

³⁶ A good colour reproduction of it forms the frontispiece of J&M I; see also Dodwell, *Pictorial Arts*, pl. 33.

³⁷ *Naturalis historia* XXXV.iii.4 (ed. Mayhoff V, 232).

³⁸ The standard work on which is now Winkes, *Clipeata imago*.

³⁹ Matz, *Die dionysischen Sarkophage* IV, pls. 286 (nos. 268 and 269), 290 (nos. 270 and 272) and 291 (nos. 267 and 273).

the sarcophagus of the Seasons in Washington,⁴⁰ or winged Cupids, as on a sarcophagus from Roman Gaul,⁴¹ although appropriately enough in the Terence, the supporters are two actors, who hold up a placard resting on a small column and with a portrayal of Terence on it. This is clearly an imagined likeness, and one which no doubt reflected the trends in portraiture of the day. Ovid has an amused reference to the rapidly changing fashions of ladies' coiffures (*Ars amatoria* III.152), but the hairstyles of men in the Roman period also had their vogues. They were presumably set by the ruling class, especially the emperors, and an examination of these will be a positive help in any dating procedures. With this in mind, we might consider those of the third century AD.

The century began with an emperor who boasted flowing locks, which are shown in surviving representations of him. He was Septimius Severus (193–211).⁴² After the much reduced style of his immediate successor, Caracalla (211–17),⁴³ however, the others favoured quite different styles and opted for a very much shorter haircut, which was perhaps better suited to the new race of soldier-emperors – those raised from the army to the purple. Contemporary likenesses show that they set a fashion that dominated the rest of the first half of the third century: one which was a gentler form of the style that we would today describe as *en brosse* – very short without being shaven, and with a pronounced peak at the front. We see it first taken up by Macrinus (217–18),⁴⁴ and – after the rule of the boy-emperor, Elagabalus (218–22)⁴⁵ – resumed in turn by Alexander Severus (222–35),⁴⁶ Maximinus Thrax (235–8),⁴⁷ Gordian III (238–44)⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 72.

⁴¹ Espérandieu, *Recueil général des bas-reliefs* II, pl. on p. 117 (no. 1057).

⁴² Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pls. 64 and 247.

⁴³ See Wiggers and Wegner, *Caracalla, Geta, Plautilla*, pp. 9–92 and pls. 1–23; and Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, pl. 290.

⁴⁴ See Wiggers and Wegner, *Caracalla, Geta, Plautilla*, pp. 131–40 and pls. 30–3; and Poulsen, *Les Portraits romains* II, 138 (no. 138) and pls. CCXX–CCXXI.

⁴⁵ See Wiggers and Wegner, *Caracalla, Geta, Plautilla*, pp. 146–52 and pls. 38–41; and Kent, *Roman Coins*, pl. 117 (nos. 414–15).

⁴⁶ See Wiggers and Wegner, *Caracalla, Geta, Plautilla*, pp. 177–99 and pls. 44–56*a* and 65*a*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 223–8 and pls. 64*b*, 66–9, 70*b* and 72*f*; and Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, pl. 291*a*.

⁴⁸ See Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 13–29 and pls. 1–9; and Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, pl. 292. A good comparison with the portrait of Philip can be made

and Philip the Arab (244–9).⁴⁹ With the turn of the half-century, this particular style went out of fashion and both Decius (249–51)⁵⁰ and Trebonianus (251–3)⁵¹ had quite different, heavily cropped hair, while their successors, Gallienus (253–68)⁵² and Claudius II (268–70),⁵³ had longish hair. Within a specific period, then – from *c.* 217 to *c.* 249 – there was a well defined style – the *en brosse* one – and the significance of this is that the Terence portrayal shows him following this fashion. During the course of its vogue, there were small variations, although both Gordian III and Philip the Arab had exactly the same haircut and we may note that Terence's is remarkably similar to theirs. This we shall see if we compare a marble portrait-bust of Philip in the Vatican (pl. IIa) with the representation of Terence in the Vatican manuscript (pl. IIb). What is more, Philip also had a beard and sideburns resembling those of Terence, although this comes out less clearly in the life-size marble head of him that we illustrate in order to show him full-face as in the miniature than in a profile likeness on a silver medallion now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.⁵⁴ On the basis of these comparisons, we might reasonably suppose that the picture of Terence was made in the first half of the third century and probably in its second quarter.⁵⁵

In the full perspective of history, fashions can, of course, recur and it is therefore important to see that the suggested dating of our Terence picture by reference to the hair-style of Philip the Arab is given some

from the side-by-side reproductions in Van der Meer and Mohrmann, *Atlas of the Early Christian World*, figs. 25 and 26.

⁴⁹ See Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 30–41 and pls. 10–14; and Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, pl. 293.

⁵⁰ See Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 63–9 and pls. 26–8; and Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 8.

⁵¹ See Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 83–91 and pls. 29 and 34–5. The identification of the New York statue as Trebonianus is here rejected by Wegner (pp. 89–90), but it is tentatively accepted by Wood, *Roman Portrait Sculpture*, pp. 43–5. See also Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 21.

⁵² See Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 106–20 and pls. 40–7; and Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, pl. 298.

⁵³ See Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 135–8 and pl. 52; and Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 390.

⁵⁴ BN, Cabinet des Médailles, no. 88; see Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 382.

⁵⁵ We find the Terence style also in the portrayal of Macrinus cited above, but I presume that, at this stage, it had not yet become a fashion.

support when we compare the facial expressions of playwright and emperor.

Before the third century AD, the demeanour and expression of the sitter had tended to be conventionalized or ritualized, by which I mean that they were intended to indicate a frame of mind considered appropriate for the profession or status of the sitter. So, representations of poets had shown them projecting feelings or taking up postures that were considered proper for literary figures. As early as c. 380 BC, therefore, a figure, thought to be that of Aristophanes, was represented in meditation before theatrical masks,⁵⁶ as was Menander much later. The painting of the latter in the House of Menander at Pompeii shows him in a contemplative mood,⁵⁷ and a poet in the mosaics of Sousse⁵⁸ is characterized in the same way. The famous portrayal of Virgil, also at Sousse,⁵⁹ presents him, too, with the air and posture appropriate for poets: namely looking outwards, as if for inspiration, as he sits between two Muses, a scroll containing an extract from the *Aeneid* on his lap. There is nothing as stereotyped as this about the image of Terence. He is simply presented as a human being with ordinary human feelings and, indeed, is made to look quite lugubrious, like a sculpted head made a few years earlier and described by Vagn Poulsen as a 'portrait d'un homme mélancolique'.⁶⁰ The same is true of the portrait of Philip the Arab in the sense that his expression is not one that the world would associate with a powerful emperor but rather that of a human being with all his strengths and weaknesses. Hekler, indeed, sees chiefly his weaknesses and claims that the 'false look of the eyes and the choleric expression tell us much more of the Emperor's disposition than do the scanty records of the texts'.⁶¹ He claims that the period when the inner feelings of a man could be exposed in this way seems to bridge the years between c. 215 and c. 250,⁶² and he contrasts the portrayals made then with 'the nerveless refinement of the Antonine portraits' that came before, and also with the anti-individual,

⁵⁶ Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theater*, fig. 201.

⁵⁷ Maiuri, *La Casa del Menandro* I, frontispiece and pp. 106–21, and II, pl. XII.

⁵⁸ Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, fig. 131. ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, fig. 130.

⁶⁰ Poulsen, *Les Portraits romains* II, 178 (no. 181) and pls. CCXCIII–CCXCIV.

⁶¹ Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, p. xl.

⁶² *Ibid.* Hekler actually says from the bust of Caracalla (211–17) to c. 250. For the continuing influence of the images of Caracalla on those of his successors see Wood, *Roman Portrait Sculpture*, pp. 27–48.

rigidly symmetrical portraits that came after.⁶³ Certainly, as the third quarter of the century began, so portraitists dropped the idea of revealing the human qualities of their imperial sitters and chose instead to present them as the recipients of divine inspiration.⁶⁴

It is not only the image of Terence, but also the depiction of the actors who hold the placard on which it is painted, that offers evidence of a third-century date and we can see this if we compare them to the carvings on a small sarcophagus in the Ince Blundell collection of the Merseyside Museums.⁶⁵ Its lid is ornamented with six stage masks. On the two ends are depicted a comic and a tragic mask, each on a table. The main carvings, on the front, present us with two figures standing on either side of a central door and gesturing towards it. They are dressed as actors, and behind each is a flute-player playing his instrument to accompany them. Clearly, the sarcophagus was intended for the remains of someone associated with the theatre, perhaps a writer, and if we compare the left-hand figure here (pl. IIIa) with the left-hand figure in the miniature (pl. IIIb), we shall see some close resemblances, as Webster has already noted.⁶⁶ There is, in each, exactly the same positioning of the right arm, and surprisingly enough, exactly the same concealment of the left arm behind the back so that it is lost to view below the elbow. There is also the same backward inclined stance of the body and the same type of chiton. In each, this falls down to the ankles, is decorated near the hem, is bunched up over the stomach, and is gathered at the waist with a sash which falls in folds at the back. Each chiton, furthermore, is decorated with a medallion on the chest. These comparisons are very close indeed, and difficult to reconcile with the remark of Jones and Morey that the style of the Terence miniatures is 'wholly un-Latin'.⁶⁷ Webster dates the sarcophagus between 250 and 300.⁶⁸

One very unusual feature of the Vatican manuscript is that, before the texts of five of the six plays, there is an illustration in which the various masks that will be required by the different actors are displayed on

⁶³ Hekler, *Greek & Roman Portraits*, pp. xl–xli.

⁶⁴ Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, p. 27.

⁶⁵ Ashmole, *Catalogue of the Ancient Marbles at Ince Blundell Hall*, p. 89 (no. 232) and pl. 50. We should, nevertheless, note that doubts have been cast on the authenticity of this sarcophagus by Koch and Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*, p. 123.

⁶⁶ Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, IS 50 (p. 218).

⁶⁷ J&M II, 198.

⁶⁸ Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, p. 219.

shelves. The only parallel that I know to this is a similar exhibition of masks on a shelf in the Maison des Masques at Sousse.⁶⁹ Foucher assigned this to the years around 220–30,⁷⁰ a dating adopted by Dunbabin in her study of the mosaics of Roman North Africa.⁷¹

During the middle years of the third century, a particular fashion held sway among the wives of the ruling class. It was one in which a heavy length of hair was looped up from the back of the head to form a flat bun at the top in such a way that the front view simply shows the bun over a central parting. There are good representations of it in surviving heads of the period represented in metal and marble. We can, for example, follow its vogue among women of the imperial families as they are represented in profile on coins. Thus Tranquillina exhibits this style on a coin struck in 242,⁷² Otacilia on one of 248,⁷³ and Etruscilla on two of *c.* 250.⁷⁴ Supera is seen following the current mode on a coin of 253,⁷⁵ and Salonina on coins of *c.* 255, *c.* 265 and *c.* 267.⁷⁶ From this evidence, we might say that the style prevailed between *c.* 242 and *c.* 267. We have already discussed the hair-style of the emperor Philip the Arab, and on the coin of 248 referred to above, we are given a side-view of that of his consort, Otacilia. The same coiffure is even more satisfactorily represented in three dimensions in contemporary sculpted heads of imperial consorts. One such head in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, is thought by Vagn Poulsen to be that of either Otacilia (244–9) or her predecessor, Tranquillina (238–44), although he finally opts for the latter,⁷⁷ a choice favoured by both Wegner⁷⁸ and Wood.⁷⁹ Another head, also said by two scholars to be that of Tranquillina and now in the British Museum,⁸⁰ has the same coiffure. We ourselves have chosen to illustrate as an example of it that on a marble head in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek (pl. IV*a*) which

⁶⁹ Foucher, *La Maison des Masques à Sousse*, p. 14 (fig. 19). ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁷¹ Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, p. 271.

⁷² Kent, *Roman Coins*, pl. 125 (no. 451). ⁷³ *Ibid.*, pl. 125 (no. 453).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pls. 127 (no. 463) and 128 (no. 468). ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pl. 129 (no. 478).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pls. 130 (no. 482) and 132 (nos. 491 and 492).

⁷⁷ See Poulsen, *Les Portraits romains* II, 165–6 (no. 169) and pl. CCLXXI. On the portraits of Otacilia generally see Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, pp. 57–62 and pls. 21*d–f* and 24–5.

⁷⁸ *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, p. 54. ⁷⁹ *Roman Portrait Sculpture*, p. 131.

⁸⁰ See Bernoulli, *Die Bildnisse der römischen Kaiser* III, 138–9 and pl. XLIII; and Wegner, *Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, p. 54.

Poulsen believes depicts Salonina⁸¹ although there is no complete agreement about this.⁸²

However, such accurate identifications are of less importance to us than the fact that all the scholars concerned would agree with Vagn Poulsen's comment that this is 'une coiffure propre au milieu du III^{ème} s[iècle]'.⁸³ This is what chiefly matters to us since it will enable us to give a general date to the three representations of the style which appear on female masks in the displays before the Terence plays. Two of them are to be found on the extreme left of the middle and lowest shelves in the array before *Hecyra*,⁸⁴ and a third in the aedicula before *Phormio*.⁸⁵ In pl. IV *a* and *b* we compare the first mentioned of these masks with the marble head in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, and if we disregard in the miniature the jewelled adornment of the head and also the straggling tresses at the neck, which were part and parcel of masks of the second and third centuries⁸⁶ and led to the hair being taken over the ears, then the resemblance between the two is obvious.

Another female mask in the Terence miniatures can be compared with one represented in a different part of the empire. This is at Vienne, in a floor mosaic discovered during the excavations of 1966 at the Place Saint-Pierre, and now in the Musée Saint-Pierre of the town. It is a large work of art, with a central octagon depicting Hercules and the Nemean lion. This has eight squares around containing depictions of theatrical masks, and a further eight octagons beyond with figures of a boxer and other triumphant athletes, a juxtaposition which ironically reminds one of Terence's complaint that the first production of *Hecyra* was forced off the stage by the rival attraction of a boxing match. There are representations of the seasons at the corners, but it is the athletes who have given the

⁸¹ Poulsen, *Les Portraits romains* II, 173–4 (no. 178) and pls. CCLXXXVII–CCLXXXVIII.

⁸² Wegner (*Gordianus III. bis Carinus*, p. 131) disagrees, as does Wood (*Roman Portrait Sculpture*, p. 112).

⁸³ *Les Portraits romains* II, 173. ⁸⁴ Vat. lat. 3868, 65r, J&M I, no. 583.

⁸⁵ 77r, J&M I, no. 679.

⁸⁶ See, for example, Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theater*, figs. 802, illustrating a mask from the Lateran mosaic of Herakleitos, and 808, showing a mask from a mosaic of the Villa of Hadrian, now in the Vatican. See also masks 1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 21 and 22 in the *Maison des Masques* at Sousse illustrated by Foucher, *La Maison des Masques à Sousse*, figs. 88, 91, 92, 93, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 106, 108 and 109.

mosaic its name as that of the 'Athlètes vainqueurs'. In his close examination of the decoration, choice of motifs, type of composition, colours and style of the mosaic, Tourrenc has come to the conclusion that it belongs to the first part of the third century, and more particularly, to *c.* 220.⁸⁷ Now, this is of interest to us. Of interest because, among the Vienne comic masks, we find exactly the same rolling hair-style (pl. Va) that we see represented in masks in the aedicula before *Andria*⁸⁸ (pl. Vb) – another general indication that the Terence pictures belong to the third century.

The male masks also point to the same century and can have close resemblances with a mask pictured in the Menander mosaics at Mytilene.

The excavations at Mytilene, the chief city of Lesbos, which commenced in 1961, uncovered a building whose reception hall was decorated with a large mosaic showing Orpheus surrounded by animals and playing a harp. Its triclinium had portrayals in mosaic of a bust of Thalia, the Muse of poetry, with a comic mask, and of Menander, and also three brief scenes from his comedies, together with a representation of three figures from Plato's *Phaedo*, all made by the same workshop, if not by the same artist. They must have been made before *c.* 300 since there is evidence that the house was destroyed then, and on the basis of their style, iconography, and what is known of the history of the edifice, Charitonides, who made the original discovery, has argued for the end of the third quarter of the third century.⁸⁹ He himself remarked on the fact that there were resemblances between the Menander scenes and the Terence miniatures in the Vatican manuscript.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, we would for the moment like to focus attention on the coiffure of the comic mask held by Thalia.⁹¹ In it, the hair, which is schematized into a parallel pattern of line, has a high crown – rather like the close-fitting cloche hats of the 1920s – and then descends over the ears (pl. VIa). We find the same in a third-century terracotta statuette from the Athens agora (T 36350) reproduced by Charitonides in his pl.

⁸⁷ Tourrenc, 'La Mosaïque des Athlètes vainqueurs', pp. 139–41. See also Lancha, *Recueil général des mosaïques de la Gaule III.2 (Vienne)*, pp. 58–70 (no. 264) and pls. XI–XX, especially pl. XX (in colour).

⁸⁸ 3r, J&M I, no. 7, on the extreme left of the second shelf down.

⁸⁹ Charitonides, Kahil and Ginouvès, *Les Mosaïques de la Maison du Ménandre à Mytilène*, p. 12.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 102. ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36–7 and pl. 3 (3).

25 (5), in a third-century statuette warrior also from the agora reproduced by Bieber (her fig. 369*a*) and – very much to the point – in our own illustrations. We instance here the style of Syrus (pl. VI*b*) as seen in the illustration on fol. 56r to Act III, scene 3, v. 364 of *Adelphoe*. The same fashion is given to a mask in mosaic in the Maison des Mois at El Djem (pl. VII*a*) which is attributed to the third century.⁹² We can compare this with the hair-dress of a mask in the Terence (pl. VII*b*), the one in the array before the text of *Heauton timorumenos* (fol. 35r) and which is in the top range, second from the left. The vogue is also seen in a terracotta comic mask in the Metropolitan Museum (pl. VIII*a*) which Webster has described as ‘one of the not very large group of monuments which attest to the existence of dramatic performances in the third century AD’.⁹³ He dates it partly on the basis of technique and we may note the resemblance between the hair-style here and that in a mask in our own miniatures: the one in the display before *Hecyra* which is to be found on fol. 65r in the second row down, the second to the left (pl. VIII*b*). The fact is that this was a style that was particular to third-century masks and it is certainly the dominant one in the Terence. Here, we already find seventeen examples of it in the displays of masks prefacing the texts of *Heauton timorumenos*,⁹⁴ *Adelphoe*,⁹⁵ *Hecyra*⁹⁶ and *Phormio*,⁹⁷ and numerous other examples of it are presented by the different players acting out the various scenes of all six plays. It makes an appearance in the first three illustrations of *Heauton timorumenos*, being used by the Prologue,⁹⁸ by both Chremes and Menedemus in Act I, scene 1,⁹⁹ and by Chremes addressing Clitipho in Act I, scene 2,¹⁰⁰ as well as by characters elsewhere.¹⁰¹ In *Adelphoe*, we find it adopted by practically all the male characters at one or other stage of the play: by the Prologue,¹⁰² by Micio,¹⁰³ by Demea,¹⁰⁴ by Ctesipho,¹⁰⁵ by

⁹² Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, p. 260.

⁹³ Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, UT 110 (p. 238).

⁹⁴ 35r, J&M I, no. 323. ⁹⁵ 50v, J&M I, no. 449. ⁹⁶ 65r, J&M I, no. 583.

⁹⁷ 77r, J&M I, no. 679. ⁹⁸ 35v, J&M I, no. 326. ⁹⁹ 36v, J&M I, no. 331.

¹⁰⁰ 37v, J&M I, no. 338.

¹⁰¹ As Clitipho in II, 1 (38r, J&M I, no. 344), and Syrus in IV, 2 (44r, J&M I, no. 392), IV, 6 (46r, J&M I, no. 412) and IV, 7 (46v, J&M I, no. 417), etc.

¹⁰² 51r, J&M I, no. 452.

¹⁰³ In IV, 3 (59r, J&M I, no. 520), V, 2 (61v, J&M I, no. 549), etc.

¹⁰⁴ In III, 3 (56r upper, J&M I, no. 496), IV, 3 (59r, J&M I, no. 520), etc.

¹⁰⁵ As in IV, 1 and IV, 2, both on 58r (J&M I, nos. 510 and 515).

Hegio,¹⁰⁶ by Syrus,¹⁰⁷ by Dromo¹⁰⁸ and by Geta.¹⁰⁹ It occurs also in the case of the main characters in *Andria*, Simo,¹¹⁰ Chremes,¹¹¹ Davus¹¹² and Crito.¹¹³ Laches,¹¹⁴ Chaerea,¹¹⁵ Parmeno¹¹⁶ and Gnatho¹¹⁷ make use of it in *Eunuchus*, Demipho,¹¹⁸ Chremes,¹¹⁹ Antipho,¹²⁰ Davus¹²¹ and Geta¹²² in *Phormio*, and the Prologue,¹²³ Laches,¹²⁴ Phidippus¹²⁵ and Parmeno¹²⁶ in *Hecyra*.

In yet another sense, evidence can be produced to show that some of the Terence masks are of the third century, for no less an authority on the subject than Webster avers as much. He tells us quite unequivocally that one of the masks in the aedica before *Andria*, the one of a wavy-haired old man with a pointed beard which will be worn by Chremes in this play (and by Menedemus in *Heauton timorumenos*, by Hegio in *Adelphoe* and by Dorio in *Phormio*) 'is a third century mask', and he compares it with a terracotta mask from the Athens agora and a marble mask from Ostia.¹²⁷ He also says that the pseudo-onkos (the setting of the hair forward over the forehead) that appears, for example, in the illustration of Act IV, scene 5 of *Andria* (fol. 15v) is 'a stylisation which first appears in the second century and is very common in the third', and in this connection, he refers us to the Herakleitos mosaic in the Lateran.¹²⁸

¹⁰⁶ As in IV, 3 (59r, J&M I, no. 520).

¹⁰⁷ As in II, 2 (53v, J&M I, no. 471), V, 1 (61r, J&M I, no. 544), etc.

¹⁰⁸ As in V, 2 (61v, J&M I, no. 549), etc.

¹⁰⁹ As in III, 2 (55r, J&M I, no. 491), V, 6 (63r, J&M I, no. 564), etc.

¹¹⁰ As in III, 3 (11v, J&M I, no. 98) and V, 3 (17r, J&M I, no. 149).

¹¹¹ As in IV, 4 (15r, J&M I, no. 133), V, 4 (17v, J&M I, no. 155), etc.

¹¹² As in III, 2 (11r, J&M I, no. 92), III, 5 (12v, J&M I, no. 111), etc.

¹¹³ In V, 4 (17v, J&M I, no. 155). ¹¹⁴ In V, 5 (32v, J&M I, no. 293).

¹¹⁵ As in II, 3 (22v, J&M I, no. 193), III, 5 (25v, J&M I, no. 221), etc.

¹¹⁶ As in II, 1 (21r, J&M I, no. 180), V, 4, v. 943 (32r, J&M I, no. 287), etc.

¹¹⁷ In II, 2 (21v, J&M I, no. 186) and V, 7 (33v, J&M I, no. 305).

¹¹⁸ In II, 1 (80r, J&M I, no. 705) and V, 2 (87v, J&M I, no. 768).

¹¹⁹ In IV, 5 (86v, J&M I, no. 758).

¹²⁰ In IV, 4 (86r, J&M I, no. 753) and V, 4 (88v, J&M I, no. 778).

¹²¹ In I, 1 and 2 (both on 78r, J&M I, nos. 686 and 691).

¹²² As in IV, 4 (86r, J&M I, no. 753), V, 6 (89r, J&M I, no. 788), etc.

¹²³ 65v, J&M I, no. 585.

¹²⁴ As in II, 2 (68r, J&M I, no. 604), V, 2 (75r, J&M I, no. 664), etc.

¹²⁵ As in III, 5 (71r, J&M I, no. 634), IV, 1 (72r, J&M I, no. 639), etc.

¹²⁶ As in III, 4 (70v, J&M I, no. 629), V, 3 (75v, J&M I, no. 669), etc.

¹²⁷ Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, p. 210. ¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

Dates of garments

Then, apart from the way in which the imagined portrait of Terence is presented, apart from the style of the actors supporting his 'portrait', apart from the hair-styles of both men and women and the beards of the elderly, there is another factor which points to a third-century date for the original of our miniatures. This is the forms of dress of the characters, most particularly the slaves.

So, the long tunic worn by slave girls in the illustrations to *Eunuchus* – whether Pythias, the servant of Thais (pl. IXa),¹²⁹ or the black girl who has been presented to her¹³⁰ – has the shape, the decorative *clavi*, and the wide sleeves embroidered with two bands, which make it exactly like a garment seen in a painting in the Catacomb of Priscilla (pl. IXb)¹³¹ which practically every scholar from Wilpert onwards has agreed is third-century. Writing in 1903, Wilpert thought that he could place it in its second half, and sixty-seven years on, Tolotti felt that he could fine-tune it to between the years 280 and 290.¹³² More cautiously (and more acceptably) Grabar simply says that it belongs to the mid-third century.¹³³

The fact that the attire of the male slaves, like that of the female, is of the third century can be demonstrated by reference to a conclusion which Webster draws from his researches, namely that the wearing by slaves of a long chiton 'with a small mantle like a scarf' is a third-century feature.¹³⁴ With the exceptions that we shall come to later, the slaves in our miniatures usually wear the long chiton, and the mantle to which Webster refers is its normal concomitant (see our pls. XIIa and XIIIb which illustrate different contexts). The main slave in *Hecyra* is Parmeno, and he never appears without his mantle;¹³⁵ when he is joined by two other slaves,¹³⁶ they have their mantles, too. Again, the chief slave of

¹²⁹ In V, 1 (30r, J&M I, no. 265) and V, 4 (31v, J&M I, no. 282).

¹³⁰ In III, 2 (24v, J&M I, no. 204).

¹³¹ Wilpert, *Die Malereien der Katakomben Roms*, Tafelband, pl. 81 (in colour).

¹³² *Ibid.*, Textband, pp. 206–9; and Tolotti, *Il cimitero di Priscilla*, p. 198.

¹³³ Grabar, *The Beginnings of Christian Art*, pl. 117 and p. 320.

¹³⁴ Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, p. 37.

¹³⁵ He appears in I, 2 (66v, J&M I, no. 594), III, 1 (69r, J&M I, no. 614), III, 2 (69v, J&M I, no. 619), III, 4 (70v, J&M I, no. 629), V, 3 (75v, J&M I, no. 669) and V, 4 (76r, J&M I, no. 674).

¹³⁶ In III, 4 (70v, J&M I, no. 629).

Phormio, Geta, has his mantle with him on all but one of his fifteen appearances in the play.¹³⁷ Indeed, the mantle is so much part of the 'uniform' of the slaves of our miniatures that the interesting point is not to identify the occasions on which it appears but the rare ones on which it does not, and to try to understand why. The answer to this is usually a sensible and practical one: namely that the slave concerned needs to keep both hands, or at least one of them, free, so that, as with Davus in *Andria*, he can present the small baby to Mysis (IV, 3),¹³⁸ or offer up both hands in supplication (IV, 1),¹³⁹ like Parmeno in *Eunuchus* (V, 5)¹⁴⁰ or Geta in *Adelphoe* (III, 4);¹⁴¹ or so that, like another Geta in *Phormio* (V, 6),¹⁴² he can sling his cloak over his shoulder. With Syrus in *Adelphoe* (V, 1),¹⁴³ it is different. He is simply drunk.

From this evidence, supplied by Webster, we can say that our miniatures seem to belong to the third century, and we can draw on him still further for an indication that they belong to the earlier part of that century.

As we have already said, the male slaves in our miniatures almost always wear the long chiton. Nonetheless, the short one does make a rare appearance, albeit with some inconsistency. So, the very first illustration of a scene in the manuscript – that to Act I, scene 1 of *Andria*¹⁴⁴ – shows Sosia with two figures (presumably domestic slaves) carrying kitchen equipment. Of these, one wears the long chiton while the other has the short. Elsewhere, we find that even the same slave can wear either form of attire. Davus, in the miniature to Act IV, scene 4 of the play,¹⁴⁵ wears a long chiton, but in the previous scene he has been seen with a short one.¹⁴⁶ On the recto and verso of fol. 32 illustrating Act V, scenes 4 and 5 of *Eunuchus*,¹⁴⁷ Parmeno is depicted in a short chiton, whereas on the adjacent folios on either side he appears in a long one.¹⁴⁸ On rare occasions also, both Syrus and Geta can wear the short chiton as well as

¹³⁷ He appears in I, 2 (78r, J&M I, no. 691), I, 4 (79v, J&M I, no. 700), II, 1–4 (80r, 81r, 81v and 82v, J&M I, nos. 705, 710, 715 and 720), III, 1–3 (83r–84r, J&M I, nos. 724, 728 and 733), IV, 2–5 (85r–86v, J&M I, nos. 743, 748, 753 and 758) and V, 2 (87v, J&M I, no. 768). For the exception – V, 6 (89r) – see below.

¹³⁸ 14v, J&M I, no. 126. ¹³⁹ 13r, J&M I, no. 117.

¹⁴⁰ 32v, J&M I, no. 293. ¹⁴¹ 57r, J&M I, no. 505.

¹⁴² 89r, J&M I, no. 788. ¹⁴³ 61r, J&M I, no. 544. ¹⁴⁴ 4v, J&M I, no. 17.

¹⁴⁵ 15r, J&M I, no. 153. ¹⁴⁶ 14v, J&M I, no. 126.

¹⁴⁷ J&M I, nos. 287 and 293. ¹⁴⁸ 31v and 33r, J&M I, nos. 282 and 299.

the long, this in illustrations to *Adelphoe*.¹⁴⁹ (Our pls. XIX^b and XXVI show them wearing the short.) Now, Webster tells us that this change of style actually took place in the third century,¹⁵⁰ and since he describes some appearances of the long chiton as being 'early third century',¹⁵¹ we must allow that the vogue was already in being soon after the third century had begun. And since, as we have seen, the artist was aware both of the old fashion and of the new, we may further infer that he was working in a transitional stage, which would be in the early part of the century or at least in its first half.

A further consideration: the representation of ground-lines

There is another indication of this in the representation of the ground on which the characters stand. It is often shown more like a shadow than solid earth so that, as Phaedria and Parmeno address each other in the very first scene of *Eunuchus*,¹⁵² they seem to be standing on nothing more substantial than a very faint vestige of ground, and we find the same in other illustrations of the play, such as those to Act IV, scene 3, which features Pythias, Phaedria and Dorias,¹⁵³ and Act V, scene 1, which shows Pythias with Thais.¹⁵⁴ This representation of ground is found in other miniatures to the play and in those to other plays, as well. For instance, in those to *Andria*. Here, it can be seen in the pictures for Act I, scene 4,¹⁵⁵ Act II, scenes 1 and 2,¹⁵⁶ Act II, scene 4,¹⁵⁷ Act III, scene 5,¹⁵⁸ Act IV, scenes 1 and 2,¹⁵⁹ Act IV, scene 5¹⁶⁰ and Act V, scenes 3 and 4.¹⁶¹ As far as the other plays are concerned, we can take as a few random examples the illustrations to Act II, scene 1,¹⁶² Act II, scene 4,¹⁶³ and Act III, scene 1¹⁶⁴ of *Heauton timorumenos*, those to the first three scenes of Act III

¹⁴⁹ Syrus wears the short chiton in the illustrations to II, 3 (54r, J&M I, no. 476), II, 4 (54v, J&M I, no. 481) and III, 3 (56r, J&M I, no. 501). Geta wears the short chiton in III, 2 (55r, J&M I, no. 491) and III, 3 (56r, J&M I, no. 505).

¹⁵⁰ Webster, *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*, p. 29.

¹⁵¹ 'All these are early third century', he says of the examples he is citing (*ibid.*).

¹⁵² 19v, J&M I, no. 168. ¹⁵³ 27r, J&M I, no. 239.

¹⁵⁴ 30r, J&M I, no. 265. ¹⁵⁵ 6v, J&M I, no. 35.

¹⁵⁶ 8r and 8v, J&M I, nos. 50 and 57. ¹⁵⁷ 9v, J&M I, no. 64.

¹⁵⁸ 12v, J&M I, no. 111. ¹⁵⁹ 13r and 14r, J&M I, nos. 117 and 121.

¹⁶⁰ 15v, J&M I, no. 138. ¹⁶¹ 17r and 17v, J&M I, nos. 149 and 155.

¹⁶² 38r, J&M I, no. 344. ¹⁶³ 40v, J&M I, no. 362.

¹⁶⁴ 41r, J&M I, no. 369.

of *Adelphoe*,¹⁶⁵ those to the first thirteen scenes of *Hecyra*¹⁶⁶ and those to Act V, scenes 3, 4 and 6 of *Phormio*.¹⁶⁷ The artist does also have other ways of indicating ground, and in large areas of the manuscript gives no indication of it at all: this is true of almost all the miniatures for *Adelphoe* and of the miniatures from Act III, scene 3 of *Heauton timorumenos* to the end of the play (fols. 42v–49v). Nevertheless, it can be said that the primary means of indicating the earth beneath the characters is by the shadow-ground that I have described above. In this, we are reminded of the indication of ground in a vividly sketched painting which helped decorate the vaulting of a villa at Dar Buc Ammera near Zliten (a North African recension of an Alexandrian style),¹⁶⁸ which is not certainly dated but which has been attributed to the end of the second century, or beginning of the third. The representation of a stud farm in a North African mosaic of about the end of the second century from the Maison de Sorothus at Sousse also has the same kind of shadow-ground.¹⁶⁹ In the latter context, it is worth quoting one of the comments made by Dunbabin after her investigations into the mosaics of Roman North Africa. 'It is', she writes, 'an almost universal practice on African mosaics of the second and third centuries to represent ground-lines or shadows beneath the feet of the figures, especially when they form part of a coherent scene.'¹⁷⁰

Possible provenance of the archetype

There seems, then, enough art-historical evidence to indicate that the models of the Terence pictures were made in the third century AD, and although the various testimonies do not all agree as to the particular decades of that century, we might perhaps be reasonably safe in suggesting the middle ones. This would be given some support by the fact that the comparative material which can be dated most reliably –

¹⁶⁵ 55r and 56r, J&M I, nos. 486, 491, 496 and 501.

¹⁶⁶ 65v–72v, J&M I, nos. 585, 589, 594, 599, 604, 609, 614, 619, 624, 629, 634, 639 and 644.

¹⁶⁷ 88r–89r, J&M I, nos. 773, 778 and 788.

¹⁶⁸ See Bianchi Bandinelli, *Rome: the Late Empire*, pl. 241 and p. 434.

¹⁶⁹ Now Sousse, Musée Archéologique, Inv. no. 57.120. Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, pl. XXXI (fig. 81).

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

that of the coiffures – belongs to these years: the hair-style of the Terence ‘portrait’ is particularly close to the one favoured by emperors between 238 and 249, and that of three of the female masks mirrors one that was in fashion between *c.* 242 and *c.* 267.

There are also slight indications that the models for the Vatican miniatures may derive from North Africa. The similarity in the approach to the representation of ground in the illustrations and in North African mosaics has just been commented on, and the only parallel to the way in which the Terence artist gives a display of masks on shelves is also to be found in North Africa – in the *Maison des Masques* at Sousse. There were occasions when the original Terence artist simply omitted the mask and presented the character as he was in the flesh, and this happened in his portrayal of one of the young men, Ctesipho, in the illustrations to *Adelphoe*.¹⁷¹ He appears with his hair shaped in a high dome over the crown and then falling in an S-profile down the nape of the neck, and exactly the same style is worn by the acolyte holding a dish at the top of a Dionysiac scene portrayed in another North African mosaic. This is one in Djemila,¹⁷² which, incidentally, Leschi tentatively dates to ‘le début du troisième siècle de notre ère’,¹⁷³ and which Dunbabin gives to the second or third quarter of the second century.¹⁷⁴ Parallels between the Terence miniatures and the North African mosaics at Sousse will be noted in the next chapter, but perhaps of more consequence is an association of a more direct kind relating to the very unusual garment worn by the bogus eunuch in the play of that name. It has coloured stripes throughout and, to the best of my knowledge, this finds its only parallel in the mosaics later installed in the villa of Piazza Armerina in Sicily, which scholars agree were made by North African artists.¹⁷⁵ On this kind of evidence, there can of course be no certainty, and we need to remember that it is only because of the accidents of history that so many mosaics survive from North

¹⁷¹ See II, 3 (54r, J&M I, no. 476).

¹⁷² Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, pl. LXX (fig. 179).

¹⁷³ Leschi, ‘Mosaïque à scènes dionysiaques de Djemila-Cuicul’, p. 169 and description of pls. VIII and XI.

¹⁷⁴ *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, p. 256.

¹⁷⁵ See Wilson, ‘Roman Mosaics in Sicily: the African Connection’, especially p. 413 and n. 2; and, for a general account of the Piazza Armerina mosaics, Dunbabin, *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa*, pp. 196–212.

The Vatican Terence and its model

Africa to give us a potential for related material. Fortune has been less kind to mosaics in the former European provinces where the ravages of Goths and Vandals and the continuity of urban settlements have all taken their toll.