

Plautus and his Public: Some thoughts on Comedy in Latin
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This paper attempts to separate what Handley would call the “scholar’s-eye view and the audience-eye view” by looking at Plautus in a theatrical context at the time. It goes into detail of how Plautus was able to engage his audience. First, he put his actors in Greek clothing although they were speaking Latin and points out the fact that the audience must’ve known that they were about to watch a recreation of a Greek play, although we are not too sure of how familiar they were with the original.

It is also stated that Plautus was not viewed as a model example of writing or playwriting. It could be seen that his comedy was written for the low-brow audience, although it is important to note that his plays were performed for a variety of different social classes. The paper then looks at the theatrical tradition that he followed. It is clear that he was following the tradition of later Greek theatre such as the actor leaving his character behind to address the audience. Plautus also began to introduce those familiar stereotypical characters that we know and that his audience is sure to know of, such as the braggart soldier or the miserly old man.