criticism. I have followed their advice closely, but all errors remain my own. Thanks, too, to Jim Burr, Sherry Wert, and the editorial staff at the University of Texas Press for their enthusiasm and guidance for this project. My thanks to Henry Schwab Publishers for allowing me to reprint, with changes, "Staging Brutus" in chapter 4, which originally appeared as an article, "Staging Brutus: Roman Legend and the Death of Caesar," in Elizabeth Tylawsky and Charles Weiss, eds., *Essays in Honor of Gordon Williams: Twenty-Five Years at Yale* (2001). Financial assistance for my research came from the Social Sciences and Research Council for the Humanities (SSRCH) of Canada and a Yale University Dissertation Fellowship, for which I am grateful.

This study is aimed at a diverse readership interested in the Roman theatre. All Latin citations in the main text, therefore, are translated into English, and I have tried to keep Latin citations in the notes to a minimum. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own.

THEATRE TO THEATRICALITY

In the *De finibus* (1.2.4), Cicer claims that Roman dramatists copied their Greek originals "word fc word." If we read further in the same passage, however, Cicero state that Romans did more than merely translate from the Greek:

> What strikes me first about [those who claim to despise Latin writings] is this: why does their native language not please them on serious topics when not unwillingly do they read Latin tragedies that have been translated word for word from the Greek? Indeed, who is so hostile practically to the name Roman that he would despise or reject Ennius' "Medea" or Pacuvius' "Antiope" because he claims to enjoy the very same plays written by Euripides, and hate Latin literature? "Am I to read," he says, "the 'Synephebos' of Caecilius or Terence's 'Andria,' rather than the corresponding plays of Menander?" I disagree with such people so much that, although Sophocles has written an "Electra" best, nevertheless I think the version by Atilius, however badly translated, ought to be read, whom Licinius calls an "iron writer," but all the same a writer, I think, and deserving to be read. To be sure, complete ignorance of our own poets is the sign either of total laziness or of extreme rare taste. In my opinion, no one seems sufficiently learned who is ignorant of our native authors. If we read the line from a Latin tragedy, "Would that in the forest . . .," no less eagerly than we do the same line in the Greek, would the same passages in which Plato discusses morality and happiness be less effective if translated into Latin? And what if we do not perform the mere task of translation, but taking care to preserve what was expressed in the original by those of whom we approve, we add to them our own opinions and style of com-

position? What reason could they offer for preferring Greek over what is brilliantly written and not merely translated in Latin from the Greek?

(*FIN.* 1.2.4–6)

How should we interpret Cicero's remarks? The context of the passage makes it clear that Cicero was looking for a Roman *exemplum* to follow in order to justify his translation of Greek philosophy into Latin. He appeals, therefore, to the precedence of tragedians at Rome, who have already "copied" Greek literature in the form of plays. Cicero's statement early in the passage that Roman dramatists copied their originals "word for word," however, is qualified further by his insistence that Roman versions contain something more, namely their own opinion and style (*nostrum iudicium et nostrum scribendi ordinem*). Does *iudicium* refer to changes made to a play, based on the dramatist's own opinion, in order to make terms or concepts from Greek passages comprehensible to Romans, or to changes made to Greek originals that anticipated audience expectation or enjoyment, in the form of spectacle or offstage allusions? The two are not mutually exclusive.

Roman tragedy needs to be understood in its cultural context from a performance-criticism perspective: Roman tragedians *adapted* rather than translated their Greek originals, unless they were composing original Roman plays.[1] The Roman term "emulation" (*aemulatio*) in a literary context means to engage an original and improve upon it, versus mere imitation (*imitatio*), which seeks only to copy an original without any distinction.[2] Roman writers, whether engaging a Greek or a Latin model, always attempted to emulate rather than imitate their models. In the case of Greek tragedy, Roman dramatists added distinct Roman elements to make the plays intelligible to a Roman audience. In addition, Roman dramaturgy differed significantly from Greek practice: the chorus appears on the stage in Roman tragedies, not the orchestra, as in Greek plays, thus necessitating scenic and metrical changes. A Latin play for a Roman audience required the inclusion of Roman culture onstage to make a connection with the audience. From Livius' first plays, which influenced Naevius and Ennius, Roman dramatists altered Greek originals for a Roman audience—indeed, there could have been no success, in either tragedy or comedy, if there were no connection with the audience.[3]

The Roman context of performance, which differed significantly from Greek practice, gave greater access to the stage (and more importantly, to an audience) to more people on more occasions for a variety of purposes, in particular political exposure. In Athens, an annual lottery determined who would be *chorēgos* to provide the financial backing for the plays presented at the Great Dionysia. Dramatists submitted plays for competition, and prizes were awarded following the dramatic program.[4] Besides religious festivals, there were no opportunities for the production of plays by citizens for private occasions. In Rome, however, plays formed part of a greater number of *ludi,* or religious festivals, from April to November. Plays were selected by the aedile or *praetor urbanus,* and it was his prerogative to choose which plays made it onto the stage. There was no competition, and the dramatist was compensated directly by the aedile or a stage manager if his play was selected.[5] Individual Romans could also stage scenic entertainment at occasions such as triumphs, votive, and funeral games.[6] The plays performed on these occasions were selected by an individual wealthy enough to afford the costs associated with producing *ludi,* thereby allowing him greater control of the dramatic program, from the thematic appositeness of plays to the emphasis of scenes, than any Athenian could at the Great Dionysia or any other religious festival. Without the original performance dates for most plays from the early to mid-Republic, it is difficult to reconstruct an aedile's or a private individual's motivation in selecting a specific play or dramatic theme, but ample evidence survives from the late Republic and early Empire to illustrate the importance of his and the actors' role in incorporating offstage allusions into the theatre and into the plays themselves in order to shape the reception of either the plays as a whole or particular passages from them.

From a performance-criticism perspective, theatre precedes theatricality in the same way that something cannot be understood as dramatic before one defines or recognizes something as drama. We should not confuse the lavish displays found in processions that predate the arrival of theatre in Rome with the terms "theatrical" or "dramatic." Today, the terms are synonymous with "breathtaking," "unexpected," or even "exaggerated." Theatricality proper, however, is the connection of a person, thing, or event with the theatre, which is itself a combination of text, actors, and audience. Once offstage reality pervades dramatic reality, reciprocity ensues—culture informs the theatre and theatre permeates society to the extent that one identifies the dramatic in everyday life or history, as Plutarch observed on the role of Tyche as dramatist.[7] Dramatic reality is understood as relevant offstage in order to interpret actual words or actions, and it leads to the recognition of theatricality *outside* of the theatre (actions interpreted in relation to the theatre, therefore, are perceived as theatrical rather than realistic).

The theatricality of the late Republic and early Empire is only understandable as a development of the earlier tragic tradition, which made theatrical allusion sensible *outside* the theatre (versus the staged reality of *praetextae,* which made outside reality sensible *inside* the theatre). When earlier "texts" and performances were combined with contemporary productions under the late Republic, the result was the reciprocal mixing of theatre and reality. At variance with literary allusion, which depends upon a verbal or thematic echo of an earlier "text," theatrical allusion depends both upon a relationship with earlier texts and plays with similar subjects, and upon allusions arising out of previous or contemporary performances that are recognized as having significance to current production/restaging or to events offstage. How else could the earlier plays of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius, like the plays of Shakespeare today, remain popular and relevant to later audiences and culture in general?[8] Restaged plays with performance traditions were "used" for specific occasions to produce a correspondence between real people and mythological characters, between current events and mythological events, and between the current stage production and a previous stage production. As I explore in chapter 4, the numerous productions (new and restaged) of the Thyestes myth, in particular Augustus' choice of *Thyestes* for his triple triumph in 29 B.C.E., and the cultural context(s) of Accius' *Brutus,* especially the play's later role as an inspiration to Caesar's assassins, point to the important role previous productions played in interpretations of contemporary stagings.

The relationship between onstage and offstage reality is one of coexisting and competing realities: Onstage reality is the reality of the actors on the stage, which does not refer to or acknowledge the reality of the audience (= illusory drama).[9] Offstage reality is the reality of the audience—life going on in the audience or outside of the theatre while dramatic reality is presented onstage. One might argue that the convergence of these realities can originate from the stage or the auditorium: offstage reality may be admitted or incorporated into dramatic reality, whether by design of the dramatist or the stage manager, through props or set design (= nonillusory drama), or by the audience's perception of an allusion, whether intended or perceived. In both cases we have the emergence of metatheatre as a self-conscious construct of theatricality, which is common in Plautus' comedies: actors intentionally break the dramatic illusion of a play by acknowledging the presence of the audience within the dramatic action or by interacting with the audience in its own reality.[10]

Since the incorporation of the audience's reality onstage is apparen from the beginning of Roman tragic productions, the audience faced th interpretive challenge of "competing realities"—in other words, distin guishing between rhetoric and realism—from the earliest tragedies.[1] Character delineation and scene drawing characterize the importance c rhetoric to the Roman tragedians' approach to dramaturgy. We find th rise of self-fashioning heroes who make the audience question the exis tence of the actors' "rhetoricized" stage reality. In Pacuvius' *Antiopa* for example, shepherds are steeped in rhetoric and sneer at the very rus ticity that should characterize their actual, and hence dramatic, exis tence, and in Accius' *Medea sive Argonautae,* a shepherd describe a ship that he has never seen before in language that reflects his ignc rance. Such observations are, of course, from a modern dramatic "rea ism" point of view, but the problem that concerns us here is that the au dience's reality is at odds with the dramatist's use of rhetoric, since, fro a dramatic point of view, the question of whether such speech or cha acterization is convincing or appropriate arises when one should be fc cusing on the dramatic action of the play.

The term "metatheatre" has been understood differently by class cists: Gentili used the term to signify "plays constructed from previous existing plays."[12] Slater, however, broadens the definition of metath atre to account for the performance contexts of plays: "Theatrically sel conscious theatre, i.e. the..tre that demonstrates an awareness of its ow theatricality."[13] Here, performance criticism helps us to supplement philological analysis of Roman drama. Metatheatre may emerge fro the play itself: allusions to personalities or events outside of the theat or to the dramatic action of the play are needed to understand the pla If the relevance of the allusion was not inherent to the text or theme c the play, it could be supplied by an actor who interpolated or emph sized a line through gestures, or by the audience, which understood re evance whether intended or not. Cicero provides a ready example c comic actors' incorporation of the audience's reality into their own:

> For when the comedy *Pretender* was being performed, so I recall, the whole actor's troupe shouted in unison, staring at the face of the foul man: "This, Titus, is the limit and end of a vicious life." He sat lifeless, and he, a man who earlier was accustomed to filling his own assemblies with the clamor of singers, was himself thrown out by the voices of singers themselves. And since mention was made of spectacles, lest I should omit anything, in the great variety of opinions there was not a single place in which

what the poet wrote did not seem to have relevance to our own time, because it did not escape the audience altogether or the actor himself gave emphasis.

(*SEST.* 55)

It may be easy for comic actors to improvise somewhat fluid dramatic texts and alter performances, but how could tragic actors make apposite allusions in plays that were, in some cases, at least a century old? Were these allusions voluntarily made by the actors performing in a tragedy, or did they reflect the views of the praetor? The most notable examples occurred in July 59 B.C.E., when Pompey was attacked with the line: "In our misery, you are great" (*nostra miseria tu es magnus*), and at the *ludi Apollinares* of 57 B.C.E., when the tragic actor Aesopus altered dramatic texts to rouse the audience for the recall of Cicero.

Events surrounding the latter performance deserve fuller attention. On the day of the performance, the senate was deliberating on Cicero's recall at the Temple of Virtue, but news of the senate's decision reached the theatre and the stage (*ad ludos scaenamque*) only after the audience had assembled and presumably just prior to the delivery of the opening lines of Accius' *Eurysaces*.[14] In any case, neither the audience nor the actor knew the result of the senate's meeting until the last minute, raising the question of whether Aesopus made provisions beforehand, depending on the outcome, as to what lines he would emphasize and interpolate, or whether his actions were spontaneous. Many lines from Accius' play were highlighted—Aesopus, for example, pointed to the assembled senators and knights with a line alluding to Cicero: "Who aided the republic with determined soul, upheld it and stood with the Achivi" (*qui rem publicam certo animo adiuverit, / statuerit steterit cum Achivis*), and he was encored when he added, "In doubtful circumstance, he did not doubt to offer his life nor spare his person" (*re dubia / haut dubitarit vitam offerre nec capiti pepercerit*).[15] Apparently, the audience applauded this line so much that it neither noticed nor considered the implications for the drama being staged when Aesopus interpolated his own tribute to Cicero: "Our great friend, friend in this great war, endowed with great genius" (*summum amicum summo in bello summo ingenium praeditum*). Later in the same play, Aesopus added lines from Ennius' *Andromache* in which Andromache addresses Eetion: "O father—I saw all these things in flames. By the immortal gods! (*O pater—haec omnia vidi inflammari. pro di immortales!*). Returning to the text of the *Eurysaces* again, Aesopus pointed to all sections of the theatre, in

effect making all members of the audience members of the cast, and declaimed with force: "O you ungrateful Argives, undutiful Greeks who are forgetful of a kindness!" (*O ingratifici Argivi, immunes Graii immemores benefici!*), and "You allow him to be an exile, you secured his expulsion, you suffer him to be in exile" (*exculare sinitis, sistis pelli pulsum patimini*).

The importance of Aesopus' interpolations is twofold. First, Aesopus demonstrates how a fixed dramatic text, significantly tragedy rather than comedy, could be turned into a topical performance text (= nonillusory drama). Unlike the mime, which incorporated a large amount of improvised material, the mythical themes and characters of tragedy confined the actor, but did not entirely prevent him from altering the text to suit his purposes. Second, the audience on this occasion received news of Cicero's recall while seated in the theatre just before the performance began, making it primed to read allusions and accept interpolations referring to Cicero. In semiotic terms, this can be explained as a tension between dramatic and performance texts.[16] The dramatic text is the play written by the dramatist, while the performance text is that which is actually delivered onstage with actors' deletions or interpolations. In the late Republic, the distinction between intended meaning (authorial intent) and understood meaning (audience interpretation and topicality regardless of authorial intent) was sharply perceived by the audience, with the latter exercising more influence outside of the theatre and leading to a recognition of theatricality off the stage, in society at large.[17]

What happens, however, when the flow is reversed and the audience's reality, in the form of historical dramas, enters the stage? Was there, for example, a recognition of the dramatic fallacy of "realism" that what one is seeing is not what actually happened, even when historical persons did participate? Since real or historic people become characters in plays, the dramatizing of events alters the perception of on- and offstage reality and intentionally breaks down the separation between the stage and the audience (= nonillusory drama). This is especially the case if a character representing a real person is onstage watching "himself" in the audience or vice versa, or if a real person, whether or not he is in the audience, is alluded to onstage. As I explore in chapter 4, Pompey used the spectacle of the triumphing Agamemnon in a restaging of Accius' *Clytemnestra* as a pretext (and substitution for a *praetexta*) to "restage" his own triumph, with enormous consequences for the use of tragedies as allusive commentaries of contemporary politics.

Where does dramatic allusion end? At what point is offstage reality,

when it occupies the stage, recognized as "dramatic" rather than "realistic," especially when the audience's reality is perceived as a theatricalized reality? The distinction is difficult to pinpoint, especially when the distinction itself is intentionally blurred, as in the case of Nero, who performed onstage wearing masks, including those of his own likeness.[18] Suetonius, furthermore, reports that the audience had difficulty in distinguishing theatre from reality, even while seated in the theatre watching Nero perform onstage, since it was not sure even then when Nero was "acting."[19] It can be no surprise, therefore, that later historians viewed Nero's reign as "theatrical," deliberately suggesting that there was no difference between Nero's behavior and interpretation of that behavior, on and off the stage.[20]

The incorporation of theatricality onto the stage leads to the creation of Seneca's metatragedy, in which the characters acknowledge their own theatrical reality as they incorporate the audience's own theatricalized reality into their own. Boyle's "actor-audience" arrives on the Senecan stage via theatricalization of tragedy and contemporary rhetoric. Following the murder of her children, for example, Seneca's Medea remarks that her actions cannot be considered a crime since they were not witnessed by Jason (*Med.* 986–994). In other words, Medea needs Jason to supply the text and the context for her actions. The spectators in the audience are irrelevant in a drama where characters have become their own audience. Where exactly does one draw the line between theatre and reality?

Just as tragic texts and the dramatic traditions of certain plays were achieving a remarkable level of intertextuality, the curtain rose on the writing of new tragic plays. This was due in part to the enormous success of pantomimic productions, but one must also take into account waning Imperial patronage and the role that rhetoric and theatricality played in exhausting the genre, and perhaps even in alienating the audience. Even if dramatists wanted to write tragedy after Seneca, could dramatic reality successfully compete with the theatricality of offstage reality to attract an audience? The implications of this question will be considered through a study of the evolution of tragedy to metatragedy and the cultural importance of theatricality on and off the stage.

CREATING TRAGEDY

LIVIUS ANDRONICUS

mirum videtur quod sit factum iam diu?

(LIVIUS *AJAX MASTIGOPHORUS* FRAG. 1)

Does it seem wonderful because it was done a long time ago?

So a character in Livius' tragedy asks of the value of an early deed in r
lation to the present. Should something be admired solely because of
age, or rather because it possesses some other quality besides antiqui
to deserve commemoration in the present? Perhaps the character re:
ized that the question actually requires an understanding of the prese
against which the value of an earlier event can be measured. Livi
plays, already ancient by the late Republic, are important for more th
their antiquity. As the first Roman dramatic works, they influenced t
form of drama that was to follow, but their relative neglect, even in C
ero's day, has obscured their contribution to the Roman theatre.

If we look forward from the perspective of Livius, rather than ba
from the perspective of Senecan tragedy, we find that Livius' plays are
once examples of theatre and metatheatre that greatly influenced t
plays of Naevius and Ennius, and later those of Pacuvius and Accius,
which the audience's reality (and later theatricalized reality) comes to
ter the perception of dramatic reality onstage. The reciprocity of the
realities on and off the stage during the late Republic and early Empi
contributed to the metatheatricality of Seneca's plays, but his pla
emerge as products of the tradition rather than as aberrations. It is u

ROMAN TRAGEDY

Theatre to Theatricality

MARIO ERASMO

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PRESS
AUSTIN