

SEM-II MIC ENGLISH

Introduction to Plautus Pot of Gold

Plautus biography

Plautus , (born c. 254, Sarsina, Umbria?—died 184 bc), Roman comic playwright. Little is known for certain about his life, but tradition holds that he was associated with the theatre from an early age. Like other Roman playwrights, he borrowed plots and dramatic techniques from Greek authors, especially New Comedy playwrights such as Menander. His plays, written in verse, were often farces marked by cases of mistaken identity and opportunities for slapstick, and he popularized character types such as the braggart soldier and the sly servant. Twenty-one of his comedies—among the earliest surviving works in Latin—are extant, including *The Pot of Gold*, *The Captives*, *The Two Menaechmuses*, *The Braggart Warrior*, and *Pseudolus*. His work influenced European comedy from the Renaissance onward, notably William Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (1592–93) and Molière's *The Miser* (1669).

comedy, Genre of dramatic literature that deals with the light and amusing or with the serious and profound in a light, familiar, or satirical manner. Comedy can be traced to revels associated with worship in Greece in the 5th century bc. Aristophanes, Menander, Terence, and Plautus produced comedies in classical literature. It reappeared in the late Middle Ages, when the term was used to mean simply a story with a happy ending (e.g., Dante's *Divine Comedy*), the same meaning it has in novels of the last three centuries (e.g., the fiction of Jane Austen). Compare tragedy