TERENCE AND THE FAMILIARISATION OF COMEDY

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Let me start by quoting a paragraph from a century old edition of Terence, which will serve as a reminder of changes in our background knowledge of both comedy and this particular comic playwright:

Of the six extant Terentian comedies the Andria is the most pathetic, the Adelphoe in general more true to human nature than the rest, the Eunuchus the most varied and lively, with the largest number of interesting characters, and the Hecyra the one of least merit. All six are remarkable for the art with which the plot is unfolded through the natural sequence of incidents and play of motives. Striking effects, sharp contrasts and incongruities, which meet us in many plays of Plautus, are almost wholly absent. All is smooth, consistent and moderate, without any of the extravagance of exuberant humour or even creative fancy which characterizes the writing of the older poet. But Terence was essentially an imitative artist and his distinguishing feature was his artistic finish, a fact fully recognized by Horace (Epistle 2.1.59).1

There is plenty here to question, if not correct. What does it mean to call Adelphoe more true to human nature? What defines an ‘interesting character’? And do present day readers still find Hecyra the play of least merit? As for the art with which Terence’s plots are unfolded, we still cannot guess how much of this is his own contribution rather than derived from Menander (whose plays were still unknown when this edition was written). However, scholars have used both the evidence given by Terence in the prologues and his commentator Donatus to identify where he has himself innovated in his plots—removing the expository prologues to replace irony with suspense, introducing a second lover and slave into Andria, working a braggart soldier and his parasite into Eunuchus and inserting an abduction scene into the second act of Adelphoe. And yet it was Terence’s immediate predecessor Caecilius whom Varro, most learned of ancient critics, praised for his superior plots.2 Certainly Terence does not indulge in the extravagance of Plautus, but is this because he is ‘essentially an imitative artist’? On the other hand I would not challenge the editor’s evaluation of his scripts as ‘smooth, consistent and moderate’ or his praise for the playwright’s ‘artistic finish’. Instead I would ask if this is what we want, or ought to want from comedy.

While the great writers of the previous generation, Ennius, Plautus and Cato, were clearly strong personalities whose power over words and ideas shines out even from damaged texts and half-line fragments, men we feel we know and admire for their sheer vitality, Terence is strangely muted. I was working on Terentian comedy when I first heard Professor Goldberg lecture, and have enjoyed

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and profited from his work ever since, not least his monograph on Terence, but even so I confess I have not succeeded in Understanding Terence and this is why I have returned to reviewing the ancient evidence for Terence's life in the cultural context of his generation, so as to offer a slightly different take on who he was and what he was aiming to achieve by his plays. And to do this, I shall also need to consider his nearest contemporary, Caecilius Statius.

Let me start, then, with the life of Terence preserved by the commentator Donatus from Suetonius' De Poetis. On the more disputed aspects of Terence's life and work, Suetonius quotes eleven different authorities, but probably none of them lived before the last century BCE, and most scholars have followed Friedrich Leo in believing that Suetonius was relying on Varro, the most learned of these sources, for his quotations from some or all of the others. But he quotes no single authority for the essential fact that Terence was born at Carthage (Karthagine natus) and served as a slave at Rome to the senator Terentius Lucanus, whose name he took on manumission, nor for the equally important comment that his talent and good looks won him a liberal education. Since he also reports that Terence died aged twenty-five (though some texts make this thirty-five) his education is a crucial issue. How did this slave born overseas acquire sufficient command of Latin and Greek to translate—or better adapt—a Greek comedy by 166, if he was only nineteen? The date cannot be put back, if we accept the circumstantial anecdote that he read the script of his first play, the Andria, to the leading playwright Caecilius, who died in 168. Now the natural inference from Karthagine natus is that Terence was a native of Carthage, whether Semitic or Berber, and yet, as the scholar Fenestella pointed out, a man born in 185 (or even 195) could not have been a Roman prisoner of war, and since Romans had not begun to trade with Carthage, would hardly have been sold to Terentius Lucanus by African captors. I return to the question: how did Terence come into Lucanus' household, and what singled him out for special education? One suggestion, made by Tenney Frank in the 1930s, was that Terence was the Latin-speaking child of a South Italian prisoner of war. It is possible that Terence's mother was captured as a small girl by Hannibal's forces and taken to Carthage: she might even have been a Greek speaker from Apulia or Sicily, giving him the language which would in turn privilege him for access to education. Or if we disregard Karthagine natus, we could assume that Lucanus favoured the child because he had taken Terence's slave mother as a concubine (was she both Carthaginian and darkly attractive?) and fathered young Terence—hence his early manumission and the aristocratic friends he would make almost as soon as he left the schoolroom. The similar problem in the case of Caecilius, who is said to have been a slave and an Insubrian Gaul from Milan, requires less explanation of his Latinity only because Caecilius lived to middle age and enjoyed a sort of apprenticeship (contubernium) with Ennius; there is a longer period for Caecilius to acquire fluency in Greek, but if he had in fact been a Gaul he would also have had to learn Latin from scratch. A persuasive article by Donald Robson has shown that Caecilius was most likely...
the child of a Samnite or Sabellian from Southern Italy displaced by the Romans and resettled in Gaul—so that, like Ennius, he could have been a native speaker of Oscan and Greek, if not Latin. Be that as it may, both Caecilius and Terence match the provenance of Rome’s first adapter of drama, two generations before them, the Tarentine prisoner, Livius Andronicus, and can be contrasted with the freeborn Italians Naevius, Ennius and Pacuvius. I shall return to the implications of Terence’s slave origin shortly.

The text of Suetonius reflects earlier disputes over several aspects of Terence’s work and life. The mystery of how he came to Rome led to the mystery of why he had received this literary education, or even whether he was capable of composing the plays produced under his name. Terence himself quotes in the prologue to *Adelphoe* (15-18) allegations that noblemen collaborated with him on his composition, and chooses not to deny this. But his tactful prevarication may have given rise to later allegations. In the early first century Porcius Licinius claims, in eleven lines of verse quoted by Suetonius, that Terence had been taken up by Scipio Aemilianus, Laelius and Furius for his sexual charms, but left in poverty, a story rejected by Fenestella. In turn two of Cicero’s contemporaries, the biographer Cornelius Nepos and the orator-politician C. Memmius, quoted claims by Aemilianus and Laelius to have written specific passages of Terence’s scripts. To this, arguing only from probability, the scholar Santra retorted that if Terence had needed help he would have sought it not from men as young as himself, but from his elders like Sulpicius Gallus, consul in 166, or Laboe and Popilius, men who were both consuls and poets! It seems then that Roman gentlemen were already diverting themselves by composing poetry, but it is more likely that they attempted epic than demeaned themselves by composing for the stage. If Terence’s noble young friends offered contributions to his dialogue it might have been difficult to refuse them.

Suetonius also records favourable posthumous judgment of Terence’s plays by Afranius in the prologue of his *Compitalia*, by Varro who prefers the first act of Terence’s *Adelphoe* to the original of Menander, in the famous appraisals by Caesar who praised his love of *purus sermo* but notoriously lamented his lack of *uis* (or *uis comica*), and by Cicero, praising his refined emotions (*sedatis motibus*). But both Suetonius and Gellius (15.24) acknowledge that Volcacius Sedigitius downgraded Terence to sixth in his canon of comic dramatists, below not only Caecilius (whom he puts highest), Plautus and Naevius, but also Licinius and Atilius (it may be some comfort that he puts Terence’s *bête noir* Luscius ninth). When we come to look more closely at the remains of Caecilius we may wonder why he was placed so highly by the otherwise unknown Volcacius, by Varro and by Horace.

After the production of his six plays between 166 and 160, Terence apparently left Rome in 159 to go to Greece or perhaps to Asia, either because his fancy friends had left him penniless, or simply to acquire more Greek scripts. But he did not return, having either died at Stymphalus in Arcadia (a very circumstantial detail for anyone to invent) or drowned in a shipwreck, or in despair.
at the loss of the Greek scripts he was carrying home. But Suetonius, or rather Varro, knew better than to believe in Terence’s poverty, arguing that he left hortuli of 20 iugera on the Appian way, and his daughter married a Roman knight.

How can we make sense of these contradictory and unlikely tales? Neither now nor then could a man support himself by composing plays. What did Terence do when he finished being educated and/or was manumitted? The obvious way to make a living was as a household tutor to the wealthy, but such private positions were not likely to be or remain a matter of public record. In the first century, men like Cicero and Caesar acquired their literary education first from grammatici, then from rhetores, in both cases usually in Greek and from Greeks. But whereas the grammatici taught boys to read, that is, to read the poets, and gave them some elementary composition exercises, they did not really learn to write, in the sense of composing texts for oral delivery, until they moved on to the rhetores. How early were these professions recognised? The practice of teaching reading and composition surely evolved before the professions were either identified or separated. Suetonius tells us in his introduction to De Grammaticis that Livius and Ennius were Rome’s first literary critics, explaining and commenting on Greek texts and giving critical readings of their own work in public discourses. Now the freeborn Ennius had his own house on the Aventine and is generally reckoned to have been financially comfortable, but Livius seems to have begun his life at Rome as a slave tutor, composing his Latin Odissea before he was invited to adapt the first Greek tragedy and comedy for public performance at the games of 240 BCE, and receiving a commission in 207 BCE to compose a hymn to Juno Regina, when he was already old. Both men are poets, but we have Suetonius’ reports on them not from what survives of his De Poetis but from his separate study of grammarians and rhetoricians, and it is clear that he found very little information at all about even the second century BCE. This returns us to the larger question of the emergence and identification of distinct professions, one implicit in some of Suetonius’ own comments in De Grammaticis 4. There he tells us that grammatici were once called litterati, and cites the authority of Nepos, who distinguished litterati from eruditi: litterati, Nepos said, were commonly regarded as those who could either speak or write carefully and precisely, whereas the name properly was applied to men who interpreted the poets.

When Livius was first commissioned to adapt Greek plays he had the essential knowledge of a litteratus: he could read and write both Greek and Latin; he did not call himself a poeta, and may not have thought of himself as a literary artist. In this raw world men who could write clear characters were already distinct as scribae, whether they were simply copyists, or had enough language skills to serve as clerks and draft a business letter or legal document, or could also interpret or translate from Greek. In the absence of Greek dictionaries Romans used Greek slaves or freedmen as their dictionaries—what Nicholas Horsfall has called ‘Rent-a-Greek’.11 That translators of Greek plays were also called

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scribae seems to follow from the Senate's decision to honour Livius Andronicus by giving scribae histrionesque a club room in the temple of Minerva 'because Livius both wrote plays and performed in them'. 12 What I am suggesting is that in the first generations of Rome's awakening to Greek literature men with the requisite skills in reading and writing Greek and Latin either taught privately, or performed whatever linguistic or literary chores were needed by the masters of their households, or once freed, worked free-lance at all or any of these linguistic crafts.

So what would have happened to the young Terence when he had received all the education available to Terentius Lucanus' children? His prologues show that he was clearly well trained, not only in grammaticike but in rhetoric, 13 and the moment would come when he passed from learning to teaching, from pupil to teacher's assistant and if he lived long enough, Terence would become a teacher in his turn. I shall argue in due course that this activity would shape the kind of plays he wrote, either from his own inclination or at the encouragement of his patrons.

There is evidence that knowledge of Greek and even instruction by Greeks was fairly common among the Roman elite by the time of Terence's youth. 14 We know, for example, that Scipio Africanus the elder enjoyed Greek culture and idled away some of his period commanding in southern Italy in the entertainments of Greek cities; he certainly sent an official letter to Philip of Macedon in Greek, but may have used a native translator. According to Polybius Aemilius Paullus debated with king Perseus in both Latin and Greek, and later confiscated the king's library on his defeat in 167 to send home for the education of his sons, including the same Scipio Aemilianus who supposedly associated with Terence. By 161 there were apparently so many Greek teachers of rhetoric and philosophy at Rome that the Senate decreed their expulsion. 15 Had they all arrived only after the victory over Macedon in 167? They had probably begun to appear in Italy after 191, and might hope to remain undisturbed so long as they kept their heads down and were content to teach in private mansions: it was surely public lecturing that made them unwelcome. To what extent then did the activities and persons of teachers and poets converge? Poets had begun to make claims for themselves soon after 200 BC. Plautus has the intriguing slave-hero of the Pseudolus (performed in 191) compare himself to a poeta who takes up his writing tablets and devises something out of nothing. 16 Ennius associates himself and his poemata with the poeta Homerus in the preface to his Annales (1-4 Sk), and when he returned with Fulvius Nobilior from Nobilior's conquest of Ambracia in 187, he probably helped to inspire Fulvius' project of transferring the shrine of the Latin goddesses of poetry, the Camenae, into the temple of Hercules, now renamed Temple of Hercules Musarum. Horsfall is prepared to believe that this led to the transfer of self-styled poets from the artisan association of scribes and actors to their very own Collegium Poetarum, but such associations usually worked by cooption. We do not know
when this organisation began, or that Ennius himself was a member, or any other known poet before Accius.

Did Terence live long enough to gain admission? When did he gain enough from the sale of his scripts to live like a gentleman, free from the demeaning status of employment? The answer is probably only after the runaway success of Eunuchus. According to the didascaliae he had Andria presented at the Ludi Megalenses of 166, then Hecyra failed to hold the stage in 165: after a gap of two years Heautontimoroumenos was presented in 163, then after another two-year gap Eunuchus at the Megalenses of 161. Its success and deliberate repetition explains the performance of a second play in the same year (Phormio, at the Ludi Romani), followed by a private commission to present Adelphoe and the revived Hecyra at the funeral games for Aemilius' father Aemilius Paullus in 160, and a last, successful, attempt to present Hecyra at the Ludi Romani. So he may not have approached financial independence until a year or two before his departure on the voyage to Greece from which he never returned.

Why have I lingered over this attempt to reconstruct Terence's short life? Because I believe the ethical and social tone of his plays can best be explained not simply in terms of his elite associations but—and here I think I am saying something new—by the role as an educator that I am positing for him. If we consider the plots and dialogue of Terence's six plays it is difficult to miss his obsession with the maturing of the filiusfamilias, and problems attending the emergence of young men into adulthood and a new relationship with their fathers. Four of Terence's plays come from Menander, and two from Menander's follower Apollodorus, yet Menander himself, to judge not from Latin adaptations but from the plays and scenes surviving in the papyri, had broader interests in e.g. socio-economic differences and citizen-alien relations, and was relatively uninterested in young men's passions for hetaerae, or in the father-son relationship. He can create the type of spoilt lad called Moschion in Perikeiremone and Samia, but only Samia offers the Terentian form of rape-plot leading to a serious misunderstanding and reconciliation between the father and son. In Dyskolos, for example, Sostratus' pursuit of the virgin daughter of Knemon has to face opposition from her misanthropic father, but obtaining permission from his own father is a walk-over. Samia comes closest to a Terentian scenario, but what most distinguishes Menander's play from the comedies of Terence is that the adoptive father Demea has actually wronged his son by accusing him of seducing Demea's Samian concubine, so that when the fifth act brings the reckoning between father and son, although the son is guilty of raping the neighbour's daughter during a festival, it is the father who has to apologise, and the son apparently learns nothing.

All Roman comedy puts more emphasis on the loves and escapades of young men. From Plautus' corpus, for example, only six plays (Amphitruo, Captiui, Casina, Menaechmi, Persa, Stichus) do not concern the loves of young men still dependent on their fathers. The others are equally divided between escapist
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tales in which young men or their slaves deceive their fathers to obtain money in order to enjoy the favours of meretrices (Asinaria, Bacchides, Epidicus, Mercator, Mostellaria, Pseudolus), and recognition plays (Aulularia, Cistellaria, Curculio, Poenulus, Rudens, Truculentus) in which the beloved turns out to be a citizen available for marriage—if not actually the well-dowered daughter of his father's best friend or neighbour—and the young man loses his sexual liberty with his father's blessing. The escapist comedies do not trouble with morals, or even with the financial implications when the spendthrift son, the asotos, needs to buy his girl—at the end all is forgiven. The recognition plays usually observe a more serious ethos and end in the moral redemption of the offending lover through marriage.

We have the titles of forty two plays by Caecilius, who died in 168: supposing that he presented two plays in most years, this would suggest he overlapped for several years with Plautus. Since Terence gives his producer Ambivius Turpio an extended special plea in the second prologue to Hecyra (10-27) arguing from his perseverance and ultimate success in producing Caecilius' comedies, despite initial public rejection, to justify a sympathetic reception of this new play, I would suggest that we should expect strong continuity between the types of plot staged by Caecilius and those of Terence. Like Terence Caecilius seems to have based many of his plays (apparently 14 out of 42) on Menandrian originals, and the only way in which the younger dramatist may have broken the precedent of Caecilius is in his willingness to introduce elements, scenes or characters from a second play into his primary original.20

Like Terence, for whom the Eunuchus is very different from his other plays, Caecilius may have written widely different kinds of comedy; certainly his best known adaptation from Menander, the Plokion, is cited extensively by Gellius 2.23.10-20 for its distortion of Menander’s refinement. If it was a recognition play, this aspect does not emerge from the forty surviving lines, which focus on the lecherous old husband. As Leo noted, Caecilius seems to have adapted the script speech by speech, but to have changed the tone as well as the phrasing and versification of his model.21

More relevant to Terence is the high proportion of Caecilius’ plays that concern themselves with young men’s love affairs, whether ending in recognition and marriage or depending on slave intrigue to obtain money for the spendthrift from his father. Caecilius was famous for his angry fathers, and Cicero makes capital out of quoting such fathers from at least two comedies in his defence of Caelius.22 But this anger does not seem to be ethically motivated. The father rages not in moral but in material terms, scolding the son for the havoc his financial waste will wreak on the family estate: ‘Why did you betake yourself to that whorish neighbourhood? Why didn’t you run right away when you learnt of the allurements there?...Why did you get to know any strange woman? Scatter and squander your money for all I care...if you fall into want it will be your funeral; I’ve got enough to keep me content for the rest of my life.’23 Of course Cicero has picked out the lines appropriate to Caelius’ situation, and ones that
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will not suggest his client’s moral danger but only his potential extravagance. This father is closer to the materialist Chremes of Terence’s *Hautontimorumenos* than to his good fathers Simo, Micio or even Demea.

From the titles or fragments of Caecilius’ other plays we can see that seventeen dealt with young spendthrifts or rapists (or lads who were both?), and many have Greek titles, like the *Asotos*: add *Chryson*, named after a *hetaira*, Davus, including a rape (23W), *Gamos, Harpazomene* (another rape, cf. 57f.W), *Hymnis* (a father imposes marriage at 59f.), the much cited and multi-titled *Hypobolimaes*, in which a father (probably one of the angry fathers cited in *pro Caelio*) keeps one son, Eutychus, at hard labour in the country, while his brother is pampered and receives a fancy education in the city, 

24 *Imbrii* (a pregnancy, 91f.W), *Karine* (a recognition), *Meretrix*, the *Obolostates* or *Faenerator*, *Pausimachus* (a courtesan speaks in 128f., 130f.W), *Synaristosae*, (the same original as Plautus’ *Cistellaria*), *Synephebi*, *Syracosii* (cf. 208W) and *Titthe* (another rape, 214f.W, 216W). We can soon expect to have a better understanding of the *Obolostates*, in which a young man has borrowed heavily from a moneylender to buy his girlfriend, because Knut Kleve is working on the publication of a Latin papyrus from Herculaneum containing more than fifty lines of this play, but their content, apparently the objection of a co-heir to the father paying off the son’s debt to the moneylender, is so far rather difficult to understand either in legal or psychological terms—it is quite anomalous that the father should be willing to pay off his son’s debts, and is only prevented by the mysterious *heres*.

It seems, then, that even more than Plautus, Caecilius transmitted to Terence a tradition of comedies focused on youthful love affairs and friction between father and son. Did this reflect current social change? Certainly the years from Cato’s censorship in 184 are full of conflict over public and private expenditure, attempts to build stone theatre auditoriums that had to be abandoned, sumptuary laws, and tales of luxury in food, furnishings and slaves. Is this why Terence concentrated on adapting plays about young men tempted by sexually available women, like Clitipho in *Hautontimorumenos* and Chaerea and Phaedria in *Eunuchus*, Antipho in *Phormio* and Ctesipho in *Adelphoe*? In fact these boys are only the secondary leads in his plays, whereas the leads are the honourable Pamphilus in *Andria*, Clinia (in *Hautontimorumenos*), Phaedria (in *Phormio*) and Aeschinus (in *Adelphoe*) who will end in marriage to the newly recognised citizen they have loved.

But before we focus on Terence’s presentation of his young men we need to consider his handling of entire casts. We will see that apart from the parasite Phormio, and the braggart Thraso with his sidekick, Terence plays down the lowlifes in his dramas: there are decent loyal slaves (i.e. *Phormio* and *Adelphoe*), and even his intriguing slaves are not impertinent; indeed Davus in *Andria* and Parmeno in *Hecyra* are not even successful schemers, and survive in spite of themselves.
Sixty years ago P.S. Dunkin proposed an interpretation of Roman comedy which opposed Plautus, as a man of the theatre and true democrat, to the snobbish or elitist Terence, pointing to Terence’s respectful treatment of father figures.26 It seemed to follow from Terence’s association with an aristocratic patron and young noblemen like Scipio that he would favour the upper class or at least bourgeois characters in his plays. So Terence has no dirty old men like Lysidamas in *Casina*: his only adultery occurs in the prehistory of Demipho in *Phormio*, while Simo and Menedemus and Micio are well-meaning, and even the foolish Chremes of *Hautontimorumenos* and the irascible Demea vindicate themselves by their firm decisions in the finale of their plays. The two old fathers of *Hecyra* may deserve reproach for their automatic tendency to blame their wives for the family crisis and assume the viciousness of the *meretrix* Bacchis, but like Chremes they make their mistakes without the playwright drawing attention to them through overt comment or criticism by other characters.27 No father in Terence is mocked by slaves or makes lewd remarks and coarse boasts. Of the freeborn men, only the outsider Thraso in *Eunuchus* is ridiculous. But is this proof of social prejudice? Let us turn to the wives. Good wives and respectable women in general make poor comedy, which is more easily extracted from nagging or bullying shrews like the wife of Plautus’ *Menaechmi*. Terence actually eliminates the wife from his first play, when he turns the expository monologue of Menander’s Simo into dialogue like that of Menander’s *Perithia*, but replaces the wife of that play with a freedman: he may have chosen this as a way to show gratitude and loyalty to his own patron Terentius, or he may simply have wanted not to introduce a wife and mother for whom he had no further use. Both the *matronae* of *Hecyra* are decent and modest, as is the pregnant victim’s mother in *Adelphoe*, and the soft-hearted *matrona* Sostrata of *Hautontimorumenos*, who disobeyed her husband before the play began because she could not bring herself to kill her baby daughter, and will indulge her errant son in the last act. In *Eunuchus* the father of the two young men is an amiable cipher and there is no mother. Only in *Phormio* is there a wife of some spirit, and Nausistrata shows dignity and restraint in her sarcastic reaction to the stepchild produced by her husband’s old infidelity. Even the independent women in Terence are decorous, ranging from the humility of Antiphila in *Hautontimorumenos* and generosity of Thais in *Eunuchus* and Bacchis in *Hecyra* to the honest realism of the subordinate figures. So do we blame him for sparing the elite males, or praise him—as I once wanted to—for appreciating the needs and circumstances of his women?

Neither, I think. Terence is trying to preserve decorum and keep the proper balance of power within his families: but why is he so keen to do so? Does he want to maintain the respect of the plebeians in the audience for their social betters? If Sander Goldberg is right28 that there was only room on the steps of the temple of Cybele for one to two thousand spectators at the Megalensia, were there enough repeat performances to include many ordinary Romans in the audience? I am going to suggest a different purpose—the maintenance of respect for
authority within the Roman family: that Terence’s target audience was really
the fathers and more particularly the sons of Rome’s elite. We might note
that the author of the Rhetoric for Herennius illustrates the figure of maxim in
4.17.25 with an elaborate maxim about the firm correction of adulescentium
peccata, and that Augustus, a century later, took pains to set aside special seat­
ing for these young men (and a parallel block of seats for their pedagogi) in his
theatre. The same preoccupations are reflected in many scenarios of the con­
trouersiae that exercised young elite Romans in the declamatory schools. Where
Plautus aimed to entertain, Terence was aiming to educate, or better to edify. It
is time for us to look more carefully at Terence’s young men.

The young hero Pamphilus of Terence’s first play, Andria, shows as much
concern for his father as Simo has already shown for his son in his introductory
speeches describing Pamphilus’ emergence into manhood. We see that Pamp­
philus is a good boy, and that Simo himself feels restraint in tackling the deli­
cate issue of marriage: unwilling to accuse his son outright he imagines out
loud the reply that Pamphilus might legitimately make to any sudden reproach.
Simo himself does not name his own inhibitions, but you cannot read very far
in Terence without coming upon the concept of shame. Menedemus in Hau­
tontimorumenos feels no less when his son has yielded to his scolding and gone
to fight as a mercenary; HT 121-35 reflects this (reuertor maestus atque animo
ferelperturbato...praæ aegritudine,...I returned sad and pretty much disturbed in
my mind...in this distressing situation’, 122f.). He reproaches himself for driv­
ing his son away from the comfort he himself is enjoying: gnatum unicuml
quern pariter uti his decuit aut etiam ampliusl...eum ego hinc eieci miserum
iniustitia mea (‘My only son, who should have been enjoying these things just
as much or even more...I have driven him out, the poor boy, with my unjust
 treatment’, 131-34). Many times, often without justice, characters in Terence
ask ‘aren’t you ashamed?’ but it is the young men themselves who feel and
acknowledge their shame before the fathers they have deceived. Thus Pamphilus
is moved in Andria by shame both before his father (patris pudor
262) and
towards his unacknowledged mistress (...ut neque me consuetudo neque amor
neque pudorlcommoueat neque commoneat ut seruem fidem, ‘...so that neither
familiarity nor love nor shame moves me or urges me to keep my word’, 279f.). In the crisis of act 5 scene 3 his father first reproaches Pamphilus, des­
pairing of seeing any sign of pudor, but then rejoices when his son is shamed
into obedience (tibi pater me dedo, quiduis oneris impone, impera, ‘I surrender
to you, father; impose any burden upon me, command me!’ , 897). It is this
emotional surrender that provides the climax of the play. In Hautontimoru­
menos young Clinia, believing that his Antiphila has sold herself, feels shame
at the memory of his father’s warnings about foreign women (quoius nunc
puDET me et miseret, qui harum mores cantatab mihi, ‘on whose account I now
feel shame and regret, as he it was who kept on at me about the way they
behave’, 260), but it is his silly friend Clitipho who must learn shame when
his father realises that the gold-digging Bacchis is his son’s girlfriend, and this
is developed to the full in the play's climax: 'Weren't you ashamed to cheat and bring before my eyes a—I'm ashamed to use a dirty word in your mother's presence, but you did not feel any shame at all.' The moment has come for Clitipho: 'Alas, how utterly I loathe myself, how ashamed I feel.' The Eunuchus is perhaps least typical of Terence's natural manner, and the rapist Chaerea, who really does have cause to feel shame, diverts the issue by volunteering his desire to marry the girl he has just raped; Thais herself handles him delicately by distinguishing between what might be fit treatment for her profession and what behaviour was proper for him (864-66), and later, when he does not want to be seen by his brother wearing the eunuch's costume, gives Pythias the chance to rib him 'What, does it make you feel ashamed?' (907). The special circumstances of Hecyra, in which one man is both wronged husband of his pregnant wife and wronging rapist, calls instead upon a parallel moral value, that of pietas: from the expository opening when Terence stresses his 'respectful and loyal nature' (pudicum et pium ingenium, 152) to the expression of pietas towards his mother at 301, and again at 447, 'provided I can observe family loyalty (pietatem), for I should pay attention to my mother not my own love', (481) (where family loyalty has become a pretext to avoid his wife) and 584 where his mother volunteers to take herself out of the way as a reward for his loyalty (apud me praemium esse positum pietati scias). But Hecyra is different in several ways: the hero, Pamphilus, has no moment of self-knowledge, and the audience itself is denied the knowledge to evaluate the actions of its characters because Terence has suppressed the expository prologue that would have told them of Pamphilus' own offence and guaranteed a happy ending. Instead they do not know why Pamphilus' wife has left his home until he repeats the extenuating narrative of her mother at 382-401 (perhaps adapted from the argumentum of Apollodorus' prologue). Even when they learn that she has been raped and impregnated they cannot guess that he is himself the rapist. This is only reported in Act 5 scene 3, 50 lines before the end of the play (821-32), after Bacchis tells Parmeno that Myrrina has recognised the ring, and goes on to tell the audience about how Pamphilus snatched it from his victim—and gave it as a gift to her. When Parmeno incomprehendingly repeats what he has been told to Pamphilus he simply rejoices in his luck (845-48); not only does he have no further encounter with his father, or mother or in-laws or wife, but he decides to keep the story from the old folk: 'I don't like things happening the way they do in comedy when everyone finds out everything.' Donatus reports that Terence has converted action into narrative at this point, but this does not affect Pamphilus' escape from a reckoning. Modern parents would be ashamed if their young son raped a strange girl when he already had a mistress whom he claimed to love, and even more ashamed if he stole the girl's ring and gave it to his mistress, but New Comedy seems to have accepted such behaviour as predictable. Even if Terence cut short Apollodorus' dénouement it is unlikely that the Greek Pamphilus had a moment of shame or self-realisation or expressed any apology. Nor do the old men ever apologise for their unjustified suspicions of
their wives, just as neither Demea nor Moschion in Menander’s *Samia* apologises to poor Chrysis: the females have served their purpose in the action and can be forgotten.

But the crowning example is *Adelphoe*, the play perhaps closest to Caecilius’ *Hypobolimaeus* in its pointed antithesis between the behaviour of true brothers subjected to contrasted upbringing. Nine times the verb *pudere* recurs, four times on Demea’s lips: first in indignant denial that his son feels any shame (84), then in shame over his brother’s indulgence (speaking to the indifferent slave: *fratris me pudet pigetque, ‘I’m ashamed and dissatisfied with my brother’, 392), thirdly and more appropriately for shame over the wronged girl’s rape as he talks to her kinsman (485), and finally in reproach towards his indulgent brother (754). The weak Ctesiphon confesses to his brother Aeschinus that he was ashamed to admit his desperation (274), just as we hear later that Aeschinus was ashamed to tell his father that he had got the girl pregnant (690): but the crucial moment comes not in Act 5 but slightly earlier (Act 4 scene 5) when Micio catches his adopted son coming to visit the girl, and the boy blushes with shame (*erubuit: salua res est, ‘he blushed: it’s going to be all right’, 643). Micio pretends that the girl is to be taken away by a kinsman, then confronts his blushing son with his knowledge and forgiveness of the boy’s act. It is this that finally drives the youth to confession: but then it seems that this confession alone is sufficient atonement for all that the boy has done and failed to do (*id mihi uehementer dolelet me tui pudet, ‘I’m desperately sorry about this, and ashamed before you’, 683f.).

In this scene, as in the moments of reconciliation in Terence’s other plays, the message is the need for sons to honour and obey their fathers, and the guarantee of forgiveness if there is true repentance and submission. Surely only a professional teacher could so persistently harp upon this particular aspect of the Roman family, writing not so much to gratify the fathers in his audience as to impress their young sons, who must be encouraged to grow up as good citizens and given hope that their sins of youth could be outgrown and forgotten. What I would like to suggest is that Terence’s dramatic scripts—whether they are entirely his own adaptation from the Greek plays, or were influenced by the company he kept—are moved by the same didacticism that shapes many of the Augustan declamations known to us from the elder Seneca. Hence Cicero may praise his skill in economical and effective narrative, both in *De Inuentione* and the later *De Oratore*, but he includes no word of Terence in his extended survey of wit, nor does Quintilian, in his study of humour (6.3). Indeed Quintilian’s interest in Terence is limited to citing the mild Terentian father from *Pro Caelio*, a comment on a proverbial phrase from the *Andria* narrative, and four citations of the famous lover’s soliloquy from the opening of *Eunuchus*.39

But if this is an explanation it does not provide a justification. However moral his motivation, Terence was depriving his comedies—or most of them—of their vitality and power to offer release from earnest reality. He may also have thought as a teacher in offering to his audience a model not only of good

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manners but of plain and elegant dialogue—one that would in fact provide a
template for Latin speech as late as the renaissance. But moral or even stylistic
teaching are poor bedmates for comedy, and I can only agree with Sander Gold­
berg's regretful verdict that Terence 'won his lasting fame as a stylist, not as a
playwright, and his dramatic tradition does not long survive so boohish an
achievement.'

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NOTES

A version of this paper was given at a colloquium on Post-Hannibalic Rome at the University of
Southern California in April 2005. I would like to thank Tony Boyle, Sander Goldberg, Tom
Habinek, Siobhan McElduff and other members of the lively audience for their stimulating con­
tributions and criticisms, which I have tried to answer.

1. Ashmore (1908), italics original. 'Artistic finish' corresponds to arte in Horace's comment
uincere Caecilius grauitate, Terentius arte ('[it is said that] Caecilius gets the prize for serious­
ness, Terence for art', Ep. 2.1.59).

2. Varro ap. Nonius 374, in argumentis Caecilius poscit palmam, in ethesi Terentius, in ser­
monibus Plautus ('Caecilius claims the prize for plots, Terence for characterisation, and Plautus
for dialogue').

3. This would adopt the alternative MS reading quintum et tricesimum annum in Suetonius' re­
port of Terence's final voyage and death (Rostagni line 80).

4. Frank (1933), 269-73.

5. We know that in the last century BCE Roman masters might educate chosen uernae as
readers and secretaries, as did Crassus, who personally supervised their training (Plut. Crassus
2.6). But it is more surprising that Terence received a liberal education (in both grammaticae and,
as I will argue, rhetoric) in this earlier generation.

6. Cicero does in fact call Caecilius, like Facuvius, male locutus ('linguistically poor', Brutus
258) and malus...auctor Latinitatis ('a bad model for Latin usage', ad Att. 7.3.10), but Caecilius'
defects are not obvious from the surviving excerpts.

7. Robson (1938), 301-08.

8. Compare Quintilian 10.1.99, licet Terenti scripta ad Scipionem Africanum referantur, quae
sunt in hoc genere [i.e. comedia] elegantissima ('even though Terence's writings, the most
tasteful in this genre, are attributed to Scipio Africanus').

9. Popilius is presumably either the consul of 173 or his brother, consul in 172; Labeo is Fabius
Labeo, praetor 189, consul 183, and so more than old enough to be Terence's father. But the
comment only shows the scholar's lack of realism about Roman society, in which young men
would be far more likely to collaborate in devising dialogue or versifying a drama than senior
statesmen.

10. Cn. Cornelio Dolabella et M. Fuloio Nobiliore consulibus ('in the consulship of Cn. Cor­
elius Dolabella and M. Fulvius Nobilior').


12. Itaque cum Llius Andronicus bello Punico secundo scribisset carmen quod a uirginibus
est cantatum, quia prosperius respublica geri coepta est, publice adtributa est [ei] in Avventino
eaedis Mineruae, in qua licuerit scribis histriomibusque consistere ac dona ponere, in honorum Liiui
quia is et scribebat fabulas et agebat ('So when Livius Andronicus had composed a hymn that was
sung by maidens during the second Punic war, because affairs were going more successfully, the
temple of Minerva on the Aventine was officially assigned as a place for scribes and actors to
gather and make votive offerings: this was done to honour Livius because he both composed and
performed plays', Festus 446.29 Ly). On this early Collegium and the shadowy Collegium Poet­
arum see the somewhat negative article of Horsfall (1976).

13. On the rhetorical power of the prologues see Leo (1960), 134-49, esp. 136: Teren­
tius...succincias et oratorias et ex arte compositas atque controversiis etiam iudicialibus similes
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fabulis praemittit...haec quidem ipsius Terenti poemata sunt ac nullo Graeco poeta praeeunte concepta (‘Terence prefaced his plays with concise speeches artistically composed, rhetorical and like those in private lawsuits...for these are compositions by Terence himself, not following the model of any Greek poet’).

14. This argument for some rhetorical education in the first half of the second century seems to go against the evidence of Cicero in De Oratore 1.14. He lists a sequence of three stages in the acquisition of rhetorical skills at Rome without attaching them to a specific generation: first after hearing Greek envoys (auditus oratoribus Graecis), as they did with the three leaders of the Athenian schools in 155 BCE, then from acquaintance with Greek texts (cognitis eorum litteris), and finally in the employment of Greek teachers (adhibitisque docturibus).

15. Suet. Gramm. 25.1 calls the acceptance of both grammar and rhetoric at Rome belated (serru) but notes that rhetoric met more resistance, quoting the proposal of the praetor M. Pomponius and consular decree of 161 BCE. Kaster (1992) stresses the scanty information available to Suetonius, which we might contrast with the abundant earlier discussions available to him of Terence’s career as a poet.

16. Plautus Ps. 401-04: sed quasi poeta, tabulas quom cepit sibi. Quaerit quod nusquamst gentium, reperit tamen fasic illud ueri simile quod mendaciumst, nunc ego poeta fiam (‘but just as a poet, when he has taken up his writing tablets, seeks something that does not exist, yet finds it, making a fiction/lie plausible, so I shall now become a poet’).

17. These gaps invite speculation. Did Terence take two years to compose Hautontimorumenemos and Eunuchus, or did he offer them to producers in 164 and 162 and find no takers? This might make business sense after Hecyra in 164, but would be most unlikely in the case of Eunuchus.

18. In fact Plautus himself tells us that he has eliminated from his action the young son of the family and his love for the unrecognised citizen Casina.

19. In two plays, Trinummus and Miles, the young lover does not need to deceive a father. Pleusicles in Miles is independent of any parent and regains his girl-friend by trickery from the rascally soldier who has kidnapped her, while Lysiteles in Trinummus has his father’s support in his desire to marry the sister of the impoverished Lesbonicus.

20. On Caecilius the only detailed study since that of Leo (1913), 217-26, is the chapter by Wright (1974), 87-126.

21. Gellius’ citations of Caecilius’ Plokion are the best evidence for the way in which translation can be viewed simultaneously as faithful and divergent. On Terence’s views of his own and others’ ‘translations’, see McElduff in this volume, with which I am basically in agreement. But I would see Terence as distinguishing between faithful translation and literal translation. Luscian may have been a clumsy and literal translator, or, as McElduff argues, Terence may be exploiting a stock accusation against his opponent. Thus while Terence accuses Luscian of literal translation, he also blames him in Eun. 10-13 and Phorm. 6-8 for inept presentation of the action in his Phasma and Thestaurus that can only have arisen from radical changes within the action of his model.

22. Pro Caelio 37 runs through four excerpts from unnamed plays; cf. Quintilian 11.1.39.

23. Caecilius 228-35 W, in Warmington’s translation. Note especially the emphasis in the last two lines on extravagance and the need to preserve inherited income for the rest of life: si egebis, tibi dolebit, mihi sat est qui aetatis quod reliquum est oblectem meae.

24. There are significant quotations in Cic. Rosc. Am., Varro R.R. 2.2, and evidence for Menander’s play at Quint. 1.10.18. This refers to a scene where the father demands the return of his son from the old townsman who has been educating him, and in return the townsman asks for reimbursement on his expenses for teaching geometry and lyre playing—presumably the young man has abused his time in the city in extravagance and debauchery. It would be interesting to know how Caecilius adapted this speech!

25. See however Kleve (1996). I owe information about this play to Gualtiero Calboli, who kindly showed me an advance copy of his forthcoming article associating this play with the faen­erator Alfius of Horace, Epode 2. For the role of the moneylender, compare Plautus’ Mostellaria.


27. On Chremes’ bad judgment but ultimate recovery of good sense see Fantham (1971). Terence represents him as boasting of his misdeeds to his son, something Plutarch disapproves of strongly in fathers (cf. Bettini [1991], 12).


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29. It is significant that the exceptional act of T. Manlius Torquatus (consul 165) in demanding his right as paterfamilias to try his own son for a public offence of embezzlement while commanding in Macedonia must have occurred during the years of Terence’s productions. (He condemned his son, who then killed himself out of shame). I owe this reference to Bettini (1991), 10f., citing the detailed summary of Val. Max. 5.8.3.

30. Rhet. Her. 4.25 (the ‘double maxim with a reason’): qui adulescentium peccatis ignosci putant operiorte falluntur, propriae quod aetas illa non est impedimento bonis studis. at si sapien­ter faciunt qui adulescentium maxime castigant, ut quibus uirtutibus onnem tueri uitam possint eas in aetate maturissima uelint comparare (‘Those who think we should pardon the sins of youth are mistaken, because that age is no obstacle to good pursuits. But men act wisely in severely punishing young men, so that they will want to acquire as soon as possible the virtues with which they will be able to protect their entire life’). On special theatre seating for youths cf. Suet. Dia. Aug. 44.2, praetextatis cuneum suum et proximum paedagogis (‘[the assigned] the young boys their own section, and one next to it to their attendants’).

31. The definitive study on shame is now Kaster (1997); compare his comment that pudor is the test-quality of the adult elite male (12) and definition of pudor as ‘a displeasure with oneself caused by vulnerability to just criticism of a socially diminishing sort…generated from within’ (4f.). Kaster sees pudor as the counterpart of reuerentia for another, saying that is surely another Roman father from Varro’s Menippae 449 (non te tui saltem pudet, si nil mei reuereatur?, ‘aren’t you even ashamed on your own account, if you feel no respect for me?’).

32. Cf. And. 871 (age Pamphilus, exi Pamphile, ecquid te pudet?, ‘Come, Pamphilus, come on out, aren’t you ashamed?’); 877f. (num cogitat quid dicat? num facti piget?uide num eius color pudoris signum usquam indicat, ‘Is he thinking about what he is saying? Is he discontent with his actions? See whether his complexion shows any sign of shame’); and Hec. 231 (cum puella suscipisse inimicitias non pudet?, ‘Aren’t you ashamed to quarrel with a young girl?’). On this type of question, common in Roman comedy and oratory from Plautus on, see Kaster (1997), 11f. The dènouveo of Phormio offers a nice contrast between Demipho’s indignation at his son’s marriage (nee meum imperium, ac mitto imperium, non simulatem meam reuereret saltem! non pudere! o facinus audax!), ‘Does it seem so improper to you even ashamed on your own account, if you feel no respect for me?’)

33. And. 878, quoted n.32 above. Donatus draws special attention to this moment: paterno animo dicit, namque patribus uelle erubescere filios pudentesque esse familiare est. cui contrarium est [Ad. 643] erubesce: salua res est. hoc ergo dicit nec timet inquit neque eum paenitet nec pudet (‘He is speaking in a fatherly spirit, for it is natural for fathers to want their sons to blush and feel proper shame. The opposite is “He’s blushing: it’s going to be all right.” So this is what he is saying: “He isn’t afraid nor discontented nor ashamed.”’).

34. HT 1041-44: CH: non mihi per fallacias adducere ante oculos—pudet/ducere hoc prae sente urberum turpe; at te id nullo modofacere puduit. CL: cheu quam nunc tenuis displaceo mihilquam pudet. But Chremes has already shown that his own sense of shame is superficial and misplaced at 576 and 581.

35. Hec. 866f.: non placet fieri hoc item ut in comoediis/omnes ueri resciscunt. Donatus on 825 notes breuislai consului Terentius, nam in Graeca haec aguntur non narratur (‘Terence has shown concern to keep things short, for in the Greek play these things are performed, and not reported’). But what is haec? The dialogue between the girl’s mother Myrrha and the meretrices Bachcis? If so there is no reason to assume that Pamphilus ever has to account for his actions.

36. See Fantham (1975), 68-71, on the probable difference in emotional and moral impact between Terence’s comedy and his Greek original.

37. As late as 662 Laches is still pontificating: censen te posse reperire ullam mulierem/quae careat culpa? ‘do you think you can find any woman free of blame?’

38. De Inuentione 1.27, De Oratore 2.326-28. (cf. also 2.172 citing Terence for an argumentum e minore).

39. Quint. 11.1.39 for the comic fathers; 8.3.35 and 8.5.4 for Andr. 68, obsequium amicos ueri­tas odium parit (‘obsequiousness gains friends, trust enemies’); 9.2.11, 9.3.16, 9.4.46 and 11.3.182 for Eun. 46, or 46-48.