

A Phenomenology of Power: Recovering Sulpicia

The identity of “Sulpicia”—the persona and possible author of eleven poems in the *Appendix Tibulliana*—has been notoriously difficult to pin down, and recent work on an epitaph of the *lectrix* Sulpicia Petale has productively problematized the question of whether a woman named Sulpicia wrote any or all of these poems; it may have been two women, or even a group of women, that authored *Corp. Tibull.* 3.8-18 (Fulkerson 2017; Fielding 2020; Fabre-Serris 2022). Here, I attempt to reconstitute the *Lebenswelt* of “Sulpicia” through the lens of critical phenomenology (see, e.g., Salamon 2018; Magrí and McQueen 2022). Elements of the poems offer a concretized sense of life at Rome: the Matronalia, a birthday, an illness, clothing and hair styles, letters on tablets. And while we can analyze these elements to nuance our understanding of a feminine, Roman lifeworld (whether imagined by men, lived by women, or somewhere in between), we can also use them to frame considerations of an intersectional and multifarious Sulpician identity, one alluded to by the freedwomen *lectrices* Sulpicia Petale represents.

Works Cited

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