

## Misrepresentation and Metatheatre in Terence's *Andria*

Terence engages in metatheatre, defined as “theatrically self-conscious theater” (Slater 1985), to characterize his genre-subverting characters. He does this by incorporating rhetoric in his works through the practice of *ethopoeia*—the use of persuasive speech to define character. In this paper, I argue that Terence uses *ethopoeia* to craft speech that reinforces another character's stock characterization; at the same time, however, that speech may misrepresent the character thereby allowing opportunity for that character's own speech to counter the mischaracterization. This juxtaposition between the actual character's actions and the reinforced stock characterization draw attention to the audience's theatrical expectations of character roles, while providing definition of the “actual,” not stock, character. In this way, Terence's use of *ethopoeia* subverts the audience's expectation of stock characterization to demonstrate a subtler form of metatheatre than that associated with Plautine plays (e.g. “breaking the fourth wall”), drawing attention to generic expectations and casting a non-Plautine light on our shadowy notion of the rest of the *palliata*.

Scholarship relevant to this topic is divided into two main categories: metatheatre and rhetoric. Scholars usually associate metatheatre with Plautus (e.g., Slater 1985; Moore 1998) but generally overlook it in Terence (but see Moodie 2009). Moodie recognizes metatheatrical self-awareness in some of Terence's *senes*, including Terence's Simo from *Andria*, but she is not concerned with rhetoric or the role metatheatre plays in Terence's program for characterization. Past scholarship on Terence's use of rhetoric has focused mostly on the prologues (Focardi 1972; Goldberg 1983; Barsby 2007). More recent scholarship on the subject of rhetoric and comedy (Batstone 2009; Fantham 2002) suggests that characterization is a useful focus for rhetorical analysis because of the relationship between acting and oratory—including *personae*, self-

fashioning, and the use of oratorical terminology to create identity. In my paper, I seek to unite these two categories to address the role rhetoric and metatheatre play in Terence's characterizations within his *Andria*.

My paper involves a close reading of two scenes tied to the characterization of the *Andria*'s Davus as a *servus callidus* ("clever slave") that exemplify Terence's broader use of character misrepresentation and *ethopoeia* for metatheatre. Both instances present characters who expect Davus to be playing the role of the *servus callidus* and so deny actual events, thereby anticipating trickery that is not in practice. In the first example, Simo, the *pater*, accuses Davus, the *servus*, of "tricking" him in the manner consistent with births on stage, while simultaneously mischaracterizing the *virgo*, Glycerium: he suggests that she only pretends to be the traditional comedy *virgo* in labor (*And.* 473-507). In another, Charinus, an *adulescens*, believes he has been fooled by Davus' and Pamphilus' promises to rearrange the marriages so that both young men may marry the girl they desire (*And.* 625-51). In this instance, he accuses Davus, the *servus* "callidus," and Pamphilus, the main *adulescens*, of tricking him for Pamphilus' benefit. This accusation characterizes Davus (and Pamphilus by association with Davus) as a *servus callidus* working to assist his *adulescens* by whatever means necessary. But in this instance, they are not working against Charinus. Davus does *attempt* to play the role of the *servus callidus* but is repeatedly accused of deceptions that he did not enact. It is the contrast between the expectations regarding his character by a speaker and his actual intentions, speech, and actions that provide the more accurate characterization of Davus as a failing *servus callidus*. The characters use rhetoric in the form of *ethopoeia* to create persuasive characterizations that contrast to illuminate the "real" character. In this way Terence uses metatheatre to advance characterization without

breaking the illusion of the play's reality while elevating rhetoric's role in the creation of *palliatae*.

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