

## That Guy-us: Gaius Sulpicius Apollinaris as a Reader of Terence

Gaius Sulpicius Apollinaris tends to get short shrift amongst Latin literary critics. His twelve-line summaries of Terence's plays (the *Periochae Terentianae*) earn more criticism than they do acclaim. When modern commentators choose to print the *Periochae* at all, comments like A.J. Brothers's are all too common: "this one, like them all, is a poor synopsis of the plot" (1988: 160). Common to this view is a critical *a priori* assumption: that the only value of the *Periochae* is their literal function as a summary. And yet, recent work on epitomes and *periochae* for other genres suggests important new approaches (e.g. Horster and Reitz 2010, Mallan 2013, Bessone 2015). Rather than view these summaries merely as cliffnotes, then, we ought to consider them as dynamic pieces of reception with their own interests and stylistic aspects. Once we approach Sulpicius Apollinaris as a reader of Terence, new and exciting possibilities arise for the scholar interested in exploring Terentian drama at an important point in its reception, the 2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE. This paper takes up that challenge and, by offering a new and innovative reading of the *Periochae Terentianae*, makes an important contribution to our study of the reception of comedy, and especially of Terence.

Cicero thought of the characters in comedy as real-life figures who could serve as behavioral paradigms for everyday Romans (e.g. *Rosc. Am.* 47; Manuwald 2011: 148), and indeed it is this moralizing/humanistic way of reading Roman comedy which came to be the dominant mode associated with the late-antique commentators, such as Donatus and Evanthius. Sulpicius Apollinaris, however, shows no such interests and thus importantly stands apart from other Terentian reception. While this may be due in part to the limitations of twelve lines of iambic senarii, Sulpicius Apollinaris deliberately chose to write the *periochae* under such constraints, and contained within these 72 lines there is not a single *humanitas* nor *exemplum*.

Instead, while Terentian comedy has a wealth of characters and situations, it is the relationship between the *virgo* and the *adulescens*—often not the focus of the Terentian play in question—that captures Sulpicius Apollinaris’s interest. Not only does the *virgo* receive top billing in three of the *periochae* (*An.*, *Eun.*, and *Hec.*), but he also sidelines—at times literally—other characters that we know were popular amongst Roman audiences. The *servus* Parmeno in the *Eunuchus*, for example, whose actor Donatus identifies as having the *primas...partes* of the play (ad *Eun.*, *praef.* 1.3), receives just two parenthetical words in the *periocha*: *suadet Parmeno* (9). In addition to privileging the relationship between the *virgo* and *adulescens* to the *servi*, Sulpicius Apollinaris displays very little interest in the *matronae* of Terence—even when these *matronae* take center stage. In the *periocha* of *Phormio*, Sulpicius Apollinaris omits entirely any mention of Nausistrata, the aptly named, fiery *matrona* who is central to the resolution of the play by inviting the *parasitus* Phormio to dinner to spite her husband. Nor does Sulpicius Apollinaris mention in his *periocha* of the *Hecyra* the *matrona* whom scholars take to be the eponymous mother-in-law of the play (e.g. Goldberg 2013: 22), Sostrata.

Through these and other approaches, this paper shows that Gaius Sulpicius Apollinaris’s reading of Terence and what he does with Terence’s language, plots, and stock characters provides an important counterpoint to the moralizing readings of Terence prevalent throughout antiquity. They also show a careful reader who nonetheless privileges certain plots and certain characters, often bucking the trends of his contemporaries in the Second Sophistic. In other words, this paper aims to lay the groundwork for viewing these *Periochae Terentianae* as works of literary reception worth studying in their own right.

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