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TERENCE

HECYRA

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
 978-0-521-89692-4 — Terence: Hecyra
 Terence, Edited by Sander M. Goldberg
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
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www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521896924

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First published 2013

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data
 Terence.

Hecyra / edited by Sander M. Goldberg.
 pages cm. — (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics)

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN 978-0-521-89692-4 (hardback)

1. Mothers-in-law — Drama. 2. Terence — Criticism and interpretation. 3. Latin drama
 (Comedy) — History and criticism. 1. Goldberg, Sander M. II. Title.

PA6756.H6G65 2013
 872'.01 — dc23 2013007966

ISBN 978-0-521-89692-4 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-72166-0 Paperback

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CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	ix
Introduction	i
1. Comedy at Rome	i
2. The career of Terence	10
3. The <i>Hecyra</i>	15
4. Language and style	25
5. Metre	32
6. Donatus	40
7. Text	43
P. TERENCE AFRI HECYRA	49
Commentary	84
<i>Appendix I: Philumena's pregnancy</i>	203
<i>Appendix II: Greek analogues</i>	205
<i>Works cited</i>	209
<i>Index</i>	221

PREFACE

The act of reading connects a drama, a lyric, a novel, and a psychological or political treatise, and when we read drama, we treat it the same way we would any other literary text intended for reading, and we demand, first of all, to be satisfied as readers. But the very act of reading a drama is directed toward a goal different from that of reading lyrics or novels. Drama is written to be played on a stage, and as a literary form it functions only if it offers the possibility of performance.

(Hristić 1972: 348)

When Ovid, shivering to death on the Black Sea, sent his third book of *Tristia* back to Rome, he knew that the physical object leaving his hands would from the beginning help shape the public's experience of his work. Terence's *Hecyra* was not from the outset a text in that sense. It was first a script created for a very different type of performance.¹ As a play, its meaning was not established by the author's words alone or by a partnership limited to author and audience. There were significant intermediaries. Actors, director, and composer all contributed to the final product, and in the rough-and-tumble of Roman festivals, what happened on the stage was never entirely sheltered from whatever else was happening in the vicinity. Nor was any one performance necessarily *the* performance or any one version of the script necessarily *the* script. Our modern text of Terence is therefore both more and less than it seems, not simply a book but not in itself an altogether reliable record of the play Roman audiences knew. One thing is nevertheless clear: as the written remains of dramatic performance, it invites different interpretive strategies from those designed for more familiar objects of academic attention. It thus makes additional demands on a commentary. Grammar and syntax, vocabulary and metre, textual transmission and textual criticism are as much the commentator's business as ever, but understanding a dramatic text requires more than simply reading it accurately. We must not only grasp what its characters say, but consider how they look, how they sound, and what they do. All that requires imagination, and while the results of that imaginative process may be less amenable to absolute demonstration than philologists might wish, ignoring questions of performance, refusing to frame hypotheses about how a scene was (or could be) played, certainly misrepresents the significance of the surviving text and the dramatic art to which it is a witness. Performance-based criticism, though hardly the only valid approach to Roman comedy, reveals aspects of the

¹ Contrast what we know about the role of books and reading in Roman literary culture (Hutchinson 2008: 20–41, Parker 2009) with what seems to have been the early status of performance scripts (Deufert 2002: 18–29, Goldberg 2004, Marshall 2006: 274–9).

dramatist's art likely to pass unnoticed in more traditional styles of criticism.² This commentary keeps performance in mind throughout, and even at its most philological never entirely forgets the specific idiosyncrasies of performance in second-century Rome and their role in shaping the text before us.

The present work began taking serious shape through a commentators' workshop on Latin poetry directed by S. Douglas Olson and Alex Sens at Georgetown University in 2008. I am grateful to the directors and participants in that workshop for providing such a productively gruelling experience. Special thanks are due to Brent Vine and Tim Moore for critiquing early drafts of the entire commentary and to their students at UCLA and the University of Texas at Austin, who took those drafts as their guide and freely told me what they thought of them. As did, with his customary acumen and tact, my editor for this series, Philip Hardie. Various sections of the Introduction were read in whole or part by John Barsby, Peter Brown, Bob Kaster, and Brent Vine, who proved indefatigable in catching errors and more than once saved me from myself. What errors, infelicities, and errant flights of fancy remain are entirely my own responsibility. There are also the inevitable debts to predecessors. Aelius Donatus, to whom we all owe so much, gets his due throughout, but I have been less assiduous in crediting more recent colleagues. I nevertheless learned much from consulting the editions of *Hecyra* by T. F. Carney and Stanley Ireland and acknowledge with pleasure and thanks my debt to them.

² Then again, a performance-based criticism is unlikely to note the 'responsions', i.e. scenes corresponding in length and theme, noted in the text by Kruschwitz 2001 (none in *Hec.*) or to attribute the same thematic significance to the repetitions of *Hec.* as Sharrock 2009: 242–9. In imagining ancient theatre practice, it must also slip between the Scylla of anachronism and Charybdis of naive historicism noted by Taplin 1978: 172–81.

ABBREVIATIONS

Barsby	J. Barsby, ed. <i>Terence</i> , 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: 2001
<i>GLK</i>	H. Keil, ed. <i>Grammatici latini</i> , 8 vols. Leipzig: 1857–70
<i>NLS</i>	E. C. Woodcock, <i>A new Latin syntax</i> , Cambridge, MA: 1959
<i>OLD</i>	P. G. W. Glare, ed. <i>Oxford Latin dictionary</i> , Oxford: 1982
<i>PCG</i>	R. Kassel and C. Austin, eds. <i>Poetae comici graeci</i> , vol. II: Agathenor – Aristonymus, Berlin: 1991; vol. VI.2: Menander: Testimonia et fragmenta apud scriptores servata, Berlin: 1998
<i>SEL</i>	C. E. Bennet, <i>Syntax of early Latin</i> , 2 vols. Boston: 1910, 1914