

QUANTUM MUTATUS AB ILLO: TERENCE IN HROSWITHA

Hroswitha was born around 935 A.D. and was the offspring of a noble family. She became a canoness in the convent of Gandersheim which, founded about the middle of the ninth century by Duke Liudolf of Saxony and his wife Oda, was very famous during the tenth century.

In the introduction to her plays Hroswitha gives us the programmatic lines of her work. Her intention is to imitate Terence, so that those delighted by the sweetness of Terence's style and diction will not be stained any longer by learning of wicked things. Within the limits of her little talent, as she characteristically asserts, she intends to depict the laudable chastity of sacred virgins in the same form of composition in which the shameless acts of lascivious women were depicted by Terence¹.

In this paper I shall try to argue not only that Hroswitha imitated Terentian techniques and motifs but also many times inverted their function so that she could achieve her goal.

1. *Terence in the Middle Ages*

In medieval schools Terence was a popular stylistic model. As Young² claims, the clarity and finish of his style and his terse sentences made him the only ancient dramatist who retained «something like his full name» throughout the medieval period. According to Duckworth³, the purity of Terence's Latin and the moral excellence of his verses made him a favourite. Plautus, on the other hand, was neglected. Notker Labeo, cousin of Ekkehard II, translated into German Virgil's *Eklogae*, *De nuptiis* of Martianus Capella and Terence's *Andria*. Gerbert⁴, in Rheims, at the end of tenth century, drew up a canon of authors which contained Virgil and Statius, Persius, Juvenal, Horace, and Terence. In the eleventh century, in Cologne, an abbess was given as a prize a *Terentium cum Servio*. In Oxford there is a manuscript of Terence (Bodleian Library, Auct F.6 27) on which there are written the names of three

1. Despite Hroswitha's claims, some scholars believe that Terence's influence on her is superficial. Cf. A. J. Roberts, «Did Hrosvitha Imitate Terence?», *Modern Language Notes* 16 (1901) coll. 478-481; C. C. Coulter, «The Terentian Comedies of a Tenth Century Nun», *CJ* 24 (1928-29) 528.

2. C. Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, vol. 1-2, Oxford 1962.

3. G. E. Duckworth, *The Nature of Roman Comedy*, Princeton 1952, p. 396.

4. G. Waitz, *Richeri Historiarum libri III*, Hanover 1877, pp. 101-102.

princesses, *curiales adulescentulae*, Adelheit, Hedwich and Matthild.

It is generally accepted, as Duckworth⁵ points out, that in Terence there is a seriousness of thought that seldom appears in Plautus. Terence⁶ presents on stage through his characters' behaviour what is useful in life and what on the contrary ought to be avoided. He also satirises the vices of individuals and the corrupt customs of the times⁷. Donatus⁸ in his commentary thinks that Terence's comedies are sometimes very close to tragedy⁹. As a result, even though Hroswitha speaks about the moral destruction that Terence's comedies can provoke, she found in Terence a playwright who used the dialogue and the dramatic form in order to promote some of his moral ideas. Even though she does not agree with Terence's morality – indeed she does not think that he has any – she used, as Terence did, dialogue and dramatic form in order to promote her moral ideas. And this, I think, brings her close to her model. Terence often uses *sententiae* and moral precepts. As Donatus¹⁰ holds, in the preface of *Hecyra*, this play contains many *sententiae* and figures. Therefore it not only delights the spectators but also offers profitable instruction. Like Terence, Hroswitha uses in her plays *sententiae*, maxims and moral precepts for moral instruction too. Pafnutius' disciples think that

5. Duckworth, op.cit., p. 304.

6. Cf. Don., *ad Ad.*, praef., I, 9.

7. Don., *ad Eun.*, praef., 1,9,232,244.

8. The earliest reference to Donatus' commentary on Terence is found in a letter of Lupus of Ferrieres to the pope Benedict, in ninth century. As Beeson holds (Ch. H. Beeson, «The Text Tradition of Donatus' Commentary on Terence», *CPh* XVII [1922] 284-285), Lupus' acquaintance with Donatus dates back to Fulda where Lupus was student of Rhabanus Maurus. This means that in this monastery in Germany Donatus was known. Besides, one of our lost manuscripts was in Mayence, which was under the influence of Fulda. In a ninth century-manuscript of Terence, Vat. Lat. 3868 (C), written in Corvey in Westphalia we find among the annotations items derived from Donatus, a Donatus-lore, as Lindsay holds (W. M. Lindsay, «Donatus Extracts in the Codex Victorianus (D) of Terence», *CQ* XXI [1927] 189). This annotation is according to Umpfenbach *eiusdem aetatis* as the text. So in Germany at least in some monasteries there was a tradition of Donatus' commentary. Unfortunately the library in Gandersheim was destroyed by a fire and we do not know its holdings. However (cf. J. W. Thompson, *The Medieval Library*, Chicago 1939, passim), there was a widespread practice among monasteries of lending books for reading and transcribing. As a result the Gandersheim library had remarkable resources. It is plausible to suppose that Hroswitha could have read Donatus' commentary. There are a lot of Terentian techniques as well as Terentian figures of speech and thought (*aposiopesis*, *diaporesis*, *exarithmisis*, *ironia* etc.) in her dramas that are commented on by Donatus. I agree with Sticca (S. Sticca, «Sacred Drama and Comic Realism in the Plays of Hroswitha of Gandersheim» in *Acta VI: The Early Middle Ages*, ed. William Synder, Binghamton, Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York, 1982, p. 137) that «towards the vision and conception of classical comedies Hroswitha may have been directed by the cumulative commentary of the fourth-century Evanthius -Donatus on Terence».

9. Cf. Don., *ad Phorm.*, 137,750, *ad Hec.*, 281, *ad Ad.*, 288, 297.

10. Don., *ad Hec.*, praef., I, 3.

Haut raro contristatur, qui curiositatem sectatur;¹¹ and Calimachus' friends say that *Qui simulat, fallit et qui profert adulationem, vendit veritatem*¹².

2. Does Hroswitha have a dramatic prologue?¹³

Before each of Hroswitha's plays there is a short synopsis which summarizes the plot of the play. This synopsis is not, I think, part of the play. It is not a kind of dramatic prologue. Firstly there is no address to the audience of a potential performance or recitation and thus this small synopsis does not remind us of the dramatic prologues, as we know them from the plays of Plautus. Secondly these synopses are often followed by a catalogue of *dramatis personae* in order of appearance. If these synopses were a kind of dramatic prologue it would be more natural for these catalogues of *dramatis personae* to precede and not to follow. Thirdly during this century scribes of Terence's plays usually put Donatus' arguments before the first scene of the plays¹⁴. Hence, it is plausible to hold that the scribes of Hroswitha's plays, following the fashion of their time and imitating the manuscripts of Terence, who was Hroswitha's model, put these *argumenta* before every play and therefore that Hroswitha, like Terence, did not use a dramatic prologue.

3. Protasis

The *protasis* is the first part of a comedy: Donatus¹⁵ holds that *protasis* is the first action of the play in which part of the plot is made known and part is concealed so that the audience may be held in suspense. Donatus comments on Terence's ability in giving, by means of *protasis*, an exposition of the plot and setting forth the argument. In *Andria*¹⁶, Donatus comments on the first scene of the play, pointing out Terence's ability to introduce *fundamenta*, that is the background of the events in the play, without the help of a prologue or *deus ex machina*.

Hroswitha, like Terence, employs only these protatic scenes and not a prologue, as Plautus does for example. However more surprising is that she

11. *Paf.*, sc., 1,22.

12. *Cal.*, sc., 2,4.

13. Dramatic prologue is the prologue that summarizes the plot. Terence did not use dramatic prologue. He used his prologues in order to attack his enemies or to commend his work.

14. Geppert, «Zur Geschichte der terentianischen Texteskritik», *Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik*, suppl. 18 (1852) 31.

15. Don., *De comoed.*, VII, 4.

16. Don., *ad And.*, 28.

does not use *deus ex machina*, but she follows instead her model Terence. This is important because she uses *deus ex machina* in other parts of the plot of her dramas but not in the protatic scene. In *Calimachus* for example God is presented and foretells the resurrection of Calimachus and Drusiana. Sometimes the characters of a play report the appearance of a *deus ex machina*. In *Dulcitius* for example, Sisinnius gives his soldiers the order to consign Hirena to a brothel. God, however, sends two handsome young men who lead Hirena to the peak of a mountain. In *Calimachus* too God's intervention prevents Calimachus from his horrible deed.

The protatic scene enables the audience to learn the background of the plot as well as giving some information indispensable for the audience of a recitation, or even a performance, to understand the unfolding of the plot. In *Gallicanus* for example the scene between Gallicanus and Constantinus introduces the theme of Gallicanus' love for Constantia and also gives an account of Gallicanus' previous war-exploits. In *Dulcitius*, the scene between Diocletian and the three girls, Agape, Chionia and Hirena, introduces the theme of beauty and perservation of virginity and faith. In *Calimachus*, the scene between Calimachus and his friends presents Calimachus' illicit passion for Drusiana. In *Abraham*, the scene between Abraham and Effrem gives some information about Maria's life and poses the problem of her beauty, anticipating in this way Maria's moral downfall. In *Pafnutius* the scene between the hermit and his disciples gives Hroswitha the opportunity to describe Thais' life and introduces Pafnutius' efforts to convert Thais. Finally in *Sapientia* the scene between Hadrian and Antiochus presents Sapientia's previous activities which make the emperor admit that Sapientia is a danger.

Donatus also often comments on another device of Terence, that of the protatic character, a technique that enables him to avoid a long expository monologue. In *Phormio*, for example, during the first part of the play Geta informs the audience of the background of the plot by explaining it to Davus, who is the protatic character. Donatus¹⁷, explaining the function of a protatic character, says that in almost all comedies in which there are complex plots it is customary for Terence to use a protatic character. A protatic character is not integral to the plot. His function is to enable the audience to learn the context and connection of events and to be prepared for the rest of the action.

In Hroswitha's plays too protatic characters can be found. In *Calimachus*, in the first scenes there is the chorus of Calimachus' friends, who try to discourage Calimachus and prevent him from loving Drusiana. These scenes

17. Don., *ad Phorm.*, 35.

are not found in Hroswitha's source and therefore can be considered as her original contribution. In *Pafnutius*, there is also the chorus of Pafnutius' disciples to whom the hermit delivers a lecture on music. Even though the chorus of disciples appears twice, its function is similar to that of a protatic character, that is enabling the audience to learn the background of the plot and to be prepared for the unfolding of the story. A protatic character breaks up a potentially long monologue into dramatic dialogue. The protatic characters often interrupt the speech of the protagonist. In *Calimachus*¹⁸, for example, Calimachus reveals his love and says *Amo*. His friends immediately ask *Quid*. Later within the same scene, Calimachus goes on to reveal the name of his beloved. *Drusianam*. The chorus of the friends immediately interrupt the speech by posing the question *Andronici huius principis coniugem*. In *Pafnutius* as well, in the first scene, his disciples often interrupt Pafnutius' speech with questions that prevent him from delivering a long speech about music; in this way, the lecture is delivered by means of a question and answer format which makes the lecture more easily understood by the audience of the play.

Hroswitha many times resorts to characters which even though they cannot be called protatic, since they are not found in the protatic scene, are, however, not essential to the plot and help Hroswitha to develop the dialogue: for example, the chorus of consuls and princes in *Gallicanus*, the chorus of young men that helps Pafnutius and the chorus of Thais' lovers.

4. Themes

In Terence, sensual love is the basis for the typical characteristics of the young man. In Hroswitha sensual love is always associated with pagans and the pagan period of her protagonists' life. Gallicanus for example wants to marry Constantia before he converts to Christianity and devotes himself to asceticism. He displays the same emotions as *adulescentes* of New Comedy, fear, impatience and at last joy when Constantinus tells him that his wish will be fulfilled. Calimachus rejects his love for Drusiana after his resurrection. Even within marriage sexual relationships are not permitted. Drusiana, being a Christian and a disciple of Saint John, does not visit the bed of her husband. While in *vita*¹⁹ Andronicus, Drusiana's husband, tries to make her to visit his bed, in Hroswitha's drama he has accepted to live in a chaste marriage. Gongolf, in one of Hroswitha's legends, leads his marriage without

18. *Cal.*, sc. 2

19. J. A. Fabricius, *Codex apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, vol. ii, Hamburgi 1719, pp. 542-557.

physical union, and Antiochus, in the first scene of *Sapientia*, reports to Hadrian Sapientia's exhortations to Roman wives not to sleep with their husbands any longer. However, there is in Hroswitha's plays another kind of love that motivates her characters. It is the love for the Heavenly Bridegroom. It is very important that in Terence, as in New Comedy, dramatic realism denied young virgins a major role in comedies. Hroswitha, inverting this convention, made virgins protagonists of her plays and, just as young men in Terence's dramas look forward to their union with their beloved, Hroswitha's virgins long for their union with Christ. They display the same impatience as young men in Terence for this union with Christ. Fides not only does not fear but also exhorts the executioner to kill her, reminding him of his duty *Percussor, accede et iniunctum tibi officium me necando imple*²⁰.

In Terence the heroine is often described as a paragon of beauty and modesty, e.g. *Eun* 132 *forma honesta virginem* or *Eun*. 230 *facie honesta*. Hroswitha's young heroines' beauty is also remarkable. Diocletian²¹ points out Agape's beauty and therefore suggests that she should be married to one of the foremost men of his court. Dulcitus²² is captivated by the beauty of Agape, Chionia and Hirena and expresses his admiration very emphatically, by means of repetition and anaphora (*papae, quam pulchrae, quam venustae, quam egregiae puellae*).

In Terence's plays, there is always a problem which the young man has to face and which keeps him away from his beloved. This problem can be a severe father, as in the case of Pamphilus in *Andria* or in the case of Clitipho in *Heautontimoroumenos*. The problem could also be a pimp as in *Adelphoe*, a rival as in *Eunuchus*, or even a misunderstanding as in *Hecyra*. In Hroswitha's plays as well her heroines have to face a problem that keeps them away from their Heavenly husband. This problem can be the love of an earthly man, as in the case of Constantia in *Gallicanus*; illicit passion on the part of a pagan official, as in the case of Agape, Chionia, and Hirena in *Dulcitus*; or a sin that leads the young heroine to prostitution, keeping her away from Christ, as in *Abraham*. Almost always in Terence there is a happy ending and, with the exception of Clitipho in *Heautontimoroumenos*, every young man is finally allowed to continue his life with his beloved, married or not. In Hroswitha too in the end her heroines give their virginity to Christ and become Christ's wives, by means of martyrdom or real penance. Her mothers also become Christ's mothers-in-law, as is explicitly stated by

20. *Sap.*, sc. 5,14.

21. *Dulc.*, sc. 1,1.

22. *Dulc.*, sc. 2,1.

Sapientia for example²³. Evanthius²⁴ defines the *catastrophe* as the resolution of complications into a happy ending. This is the happy end of Hroswitha's plays and is presented as such. Young martyrs express their happiness at being crowned with the palm of their martyrdom. Whereas Terence's protagonists declare that they will die if they cannot acquire their sweethearts, like Phaedria, in *Phormio*²⁵, or Pamphilus in *Andria*²⁶, Hroswitha's heroines do die and by means of their death meet their beloved, the Heavenly Bridegroom.

Love in Roman Comedy is often associated with the rape of a *virgo*. In *Eunuchus* for example Chaerea raped Pamphila, in *Hecyra* Pamphilus has raped his wife without realising it and in *Adelphoe* Aeschinus raped Pamphila. The rape-motif, so often employed in Roman Comedy, is also found in Hroswitha's plays. However, there is an important difference. Pagan characters try to rape Christian martyrs, but their attempt does not succeed. Calimachus attempts to rape Drusiana's dead body, but at the end dies and does not accomplish his horrible deed. Dulcitus tries to make love to the three young virgins, but his mind is confused and, thinking that he is enjoying the young girls' embraces, he embraces the pots and the pans, and gives them tender kisses. Besides in Terence young men are presented as being affected by *nox, amor, vinum, adulescentia*²⁷, i.e. human nature, which leads them to the rape of a young woman. Even respectful persons could rape a virgin, as Chremes for example in *Phormio*; and as Micio says in *Adelphoe* v. 688 *fecere alii saepe item boni*. In Hroswitha, it is Devil that leads people to horrible deeds.

Love at first sight is very common in Roman comedy. Syrus in *Heautontimoroumenos*²⁸, trying to deceive Chremes, tells him that Clinia will pretend that he has seen Chremes' daughter and fallen in love with her at first sight. In *Phormio*²⁹, Geta informs Davus about Antipho's love at first sight for Phanium. Chaerea, in *Eunuchus*³⁰, as soon as he catches sight of the young Pamphila, falls in love with her. Love at first sight can also be found in Hroswitha. Dulcitus, the moment he sees the three girls, is captivated by their beauty and wants to enjoy their love. As Parmeno at the beginning tries to dissuade Chaerea, however without success, similarly the chorus of

23. *Sap.*, sc. 4,3.

24. Evan, *De fabul.*, IV, 5.

25. *Phorm.*, vv. 551ff.

26. *And.*, vv. 241ff.

27. *Ad.*, v. 470.

28. *Heauton.*, vv. 771-774.

29. *Phorm.*, vv. 104-110.

30. *Eun.*, vv. 302ff.

soldiers tries at the beginning to inform Dulcitus about the firmness in faith of the three virgins, telling him that they will despise his flattery or even tortures³¹. In both cases, Chaerea and Dulcitus are not persuaded. However Chaerea achieves his goal whereas Dulcitus loses his reason.

Deception is a very important feature of New Comedy that helps in developing the errors and complications of the comic plot. The main aim of deception in Roman Comedy is to enable the *adulescens* to acquire his beloved. Deception in Hroswitha has a similar objective, that is to enable young heroines to acquire their beloved, the Heavenly Bridegroom. A kind of deception is found in *Gallicanus*. De Luca points out the importance of Davus' schemes for the relation of Hroswitha to Terence in general³². However, more specifically, the most important scheme of Davus that brings Hroswitha very close to Terence is the «pretended agreement to marriage». Simo uses a feigned marriage in order to punish his son for his love affair with Pamphila. Davus³³, in order to counter the plan of Simo, devises the scheme of pretended agreement to the marriage. Thus, later in the play, when Simo asks Pamphilus to marry the daughter of Chremes, Pamphilus pretends to agree. Constantia's³⁴ decision to pretend to go along with the plan of marrying *Gallicanus* alludes to this Terentian scheme. It is, however, worthwhile pointing out how Hroswitha inverts this motif. In Roman Comedy, with the exception of Micio in *Adelphoe*, there is often a contrast between *senex* and young man. The *senex* does not approve of the young man's love-affairs and, as in *Andria* and *Heautontimoroumenos* for example, he also contrives another marriage for his son. In *Andria* Simo is against the love-affair of his son with Glycerium; in *Phormio*, Demipho is angry about his son's marriage with Phanium; in *Heautontimoroumenos* Chremes does not approve Clitipho's love-affair with Bacchis. In Hroswitha however, Constantinus not only is not in opposition to his daughter but is prompt to help her to preserve her virginity for the Heavenly Bridegroom. While in *Andria* this scheme is directed against the *senex*, in *Gallicanus* the *senex* participates in the scheme directed against Gallicanus. Besides while in *Andria* the scheme is invented by Davus, the *servus callidus*, Hroswitha's young heroine, does not need an adviser. The scheme is due to her cleverness and an inventiveness that demonstrates her superiority and leading role in the play. Whereas in Terence it is a *servus* that invents a scheme, in Hroswitha it is either the Christian hero that, being *servus Domini*, invents the scheme (Constantia,

31. *Dulc.*, sc. 2.

32. K. de Luca, «Hrotsvit's imitation of Terence», *Classical Folia* 28 (1974) 101.

33. *And.*, 380ff.

34. *Gall.*, sc. 2,5.

Abraham, Pafnutius) or the deception is due to Divine intervention, as in *Dulcitius*, where Dulcitius embraces the utensils instead of the three young girls and where two young men deceive Sisinnius' soldiers and lead Hirena to the peak of the mountain.

Another kind of trickery is impersonation. In Hroswitha, as has been pointed out, the impersonation of Abraham and Pafnutius³⁵, who disguised as lovers try to make two prostitutes repent, alludes to the disguise of Chaerea in *Eunuchus*, who disguised as an eunuch gains admission to Thais' house and violates the maiden. Whereas in Terence Chaerea uses the disguise-motif in order to rape Pamphila, in Hroswitha, in a kind of a «reverse imitation» as de Luca points out³⁶, the two monks are disguised in order to help Maria and Thais to repent and devote themselves to the Heavenly Bridegroom. It is also worthwhile pointing out that whereas in Terence, even though Chaerea appears on stage disguised, the disguise-scene and the rape of the maiden take place off stage, in Hroswitha, whilst the scene of Maria's seduction by the disguised monk is only reported, the disguises of Abraham and Pafnutius are a very important part of the action of the play, since they lead to the redemption and the penance of the two *meretrices*. Both of the hermits use language very appropriate to lovers, that could have shocked Hroswitha's audience. While in *vita*³⁷ it is Maria who starts giving kisses, in Hroswitha's adaptation it is Abraham that demands a kiss from Maria. As Abraham says, even though he practised silence for so long, when he was disguised as a lover he used to make jokes and speak merry words³⁸. Hroswitha shows how the same means can be used for different purposes, and stresses the profitable use of the disguise motif.

The motif of self-deception, often associated with old men in New Comedy, such as Simo in *Andria*, can also be found in Hroswitha. However, here the self-deception is associated with the illicit passion of Calimachus, which leads him to believe that he will be able to seduce Drusiana. Drusiana herself points out Calimachus' self-deception and characteristically says³⁹: *O insenate et amens, cur falleris? cur te vacua spe illudis?*

5. Characters

In Hroswitha's plays there are, as in Greek and Roman New Comedy, stan-

35. Cf. Coulter, *op.cit.*, p. 527.

36. de Luca, *op.cit.*, p. 101.

37. *PL* 73, coll. 651-660.

38. *Abr.*, sc. 7,8.

39. *Cal.*, sc. 3,5.

dardised characters: (a) Hermit, like Pafnutius and Abraham, (b) Prostitutes, like Thais and Mary, (c) Martyrs, like Ioannis and Paulus, Agape, Chionia and Hirena, Fides, Spes and Caritas, (d) Pagan emperors and officials, like Iulianus, Diocletian, Hadrian, Antiochus, Dulcitus and Sissinius, (e) Pagans who convert to Christianity, like Calimachus, Gallicanus, Terentianus.

One type in Roman Comedy is the *senex* as helpful friend, and this role can also be found in Hroswitha. As in Terence, these characters are not main characters but help with the unfolding of the plot. Crito comes on stage to reveal very important information, that Glycerium is a free-born citizen girl, thus enabling her marriage with Pamphilus to be accomplished. In *Abraham* as well, an unnamed friend of the hermit comes to reveal very important information. He reveals the place where Maria lives, thus enabling the accomplishment of Maria's redemption and her reunion with the Heavenly Bridegroom. Crito, is according to Donatus⁴⁰ *persona ad catastropham machinata*. The same applies to Abraham's friend. In the same play Hroswitha develops the role of Effrem, Abraham's cohermit. In the *vita* there is neither the first scene where Abraham expresses his fears about Maria's beauty to his friend Effrem nor the second scene between Abraham, Effrem and Maria, a scene where the three protagonists discuss Maria's significant name. I think that Hroswitha developed the role of Effrem on purpose, having in mind how important is the role of the advisor in Terentian comedies. In *Pafnutius* as well, there is the hermit Antonius who, by means of the vision of his disciple Paul, helps Pafnutius to foresee Thais' future.

Hroswitha also borrows and inverts the motif of the young men's friends. Terence's *adulescentes* usually have friends that not only do not try to prevent them from their love affairs but also help them to acquire their beloved as soon as possible. These friends of the *adulescens* are also in love and have to cope with a similar problem to that of the main protagonist. In *Heautontimoroumenos*, there is Clinia and Clitipho, in *Phormio*, Antipho and Phaedria who is also Antipho's cousin, in *Andria* Pamphilus and Charinus. In *Calimachus*, the protagonist is presented as asking for his friends' help and advice, in a scene that does not exist in Hroswitha's source⁴¹. Calimachus' friends, however, unlike Terence's friends, not only do not help him but also try to prevent him from revealing his love to Drusiana.

One of the main functions of slaves in Roman comedy is their willingness to help a young man in his love-affairs. In Hroswitha, there is one slave, Fortunatus in *Calimachus*, who gives Calimachus the opportunity to rape

40. Don., *ad And.*, 796.

41. *Cal.*, sc. 2.

Drusiana's dead body. This conduct of Fortunatus can be identified with the typical function of a Terentian slave, that is enabling a young man, full of passion and love, to rejoice in his beloved's favours. While in Hroswitha's source it is Calimachus that starts undressing the dead body of Drusiana, in the play, as Dronke asserts⁴², Calimachus came only to see Drusiana for the last time. It is Fortunatus that facilitates Calimachus' attempted necrophilia. Giving the initiative to the slave brings Hroswitha closer to Terence. Fortunatus understands Calimachus' passion and like a Terentian slave conceives and suggests to the young man the way to satisfy his lustful passion. However he does so out of greed for money and leads Calimachus to necrophilia and not to simple physical intercourse. «Il freddo e irridente cinismo» of Fortunatus does not allude to the Terentian slaves, as Bertini holds⁴³. It is what differentiates him from the Terentian slaves and this is how Hroswitha inverts the motif. Davus, in *Andria*, Syrus in *Heautontimoroumenos* and Syrus of *Adelphoe* try, by means of a scheme directed against a *senex*, to help their young masters. In this conflict between *adulescens-senex* they choose to support the *adulescens* and are devoted to him. In *Andria*⁴⁴ in spite of many insults and threats to his slave, at the end of the play Pamphilus looks for Davus because he wants to tell him the good news. He is sure that his slave will be very happy for him. In *Heautontimoroumenos*⁴⁵ Clitipho asks his father to forgive Syrus because what the slave did was for Clitipho's sake. In *Phormio*⁴⁶ Geta says that he is not only afraid for himself, but he is worried to death for Antipho. He is what is keeping him there. This is very different from the case of Fortunatus. Fortunatus is a mean character and Hroswitha presents him in a worse light. Terence's slaves are likeable persons who at the end, even though old people usually threaten them with a punishment, escape this punishment and get the audience's applause. Like the Terentian slaves, at the end Fortunatus is given forgiveness. However he does not accept the forgiveness. He cannot accept Drusiana's resurrection and Calimachus' regeneration in Christ and therefore rejecting his life says *vitam repudio mortemque sponte eligo, quia malo non esse quam in his tantam habundanter virtutum gratiam sentiscere*⁴⁷. Hroswitha's message is clear. The Terentian slave, the *adulescens'* assistant in his love-affairs, must be condemned and she does so.

42. F. Bertini, *Rosvita Dialoghi drammatici*, Milano 1986, p. xxxv.

43. F. Bertini, *Medioevo al femminile*, Roma 1989, p. 84.

44. *And.*, vv. 963-964.

45. *Heauton.*, vv. 1066-1067.

46. *Phorm.*, vv. 187-188.

47. *Cal.*, sc. 9,28.

Another stock character in Roman comedy is the *meretrix*. In Terence, the main *meretrices* are Bacchis in *Hecyra*, Thais in *Eunuchus* and Bacchis in *Heautontimoroumenos*. In Hroswitha, as has been pointed out⁴⁸ there is Maria in *Abraham* and Thais in *Pafnutius*. A feature of prostitutes is blandishment. Donatus, in a comment on *Hecyra* 862, notes that prostitutes are most given to this technique. Blandishment is also a feature of Hroswitha's prostitutes. Maria, for example, trying to wheedle her disguised uncle, welcomes him uttering *Quicumque me diligunt, aequalem amoris vicem a me recipiunt*⁴⁹ and Thais in a similar way addresses Pafnutius⁵⁰ *Quicumque me amore colit, aequam vicem amoris a me recepit*. However the most important characteristic of Terence is that he presents *meretrices interdum non malas*. Bacchis, for example in *Hecyra*, helps her ex-lover to save his marriage, explicitly stating that she doubts if any other woman of her profession would do the same⁵¹. Thais in *Eunuchus*, fears that Phaedria will misjudge her, judging her character by other women⁵². There is something that differentiates these two *meretrices* from other women of their profession. However, in Hroswitha, I think, there is nothing between the extremes of a *meretrix* and a woman devoted to the christian way of life. There are no *meretrices interdum non malas*. Maria and Thais enjoyed themselves in their lives as courtesans. Thais in the first scene of *Pafnutius* is described like a serpent that could harm even the hermit himself. According to Pafnutius, Thais makes not only young men dissipate their families' few possessions, but even respected men waste their costly treasures by lavishing gifts on her⁵³. This description recalls the behaviour of a *meretrix* in Roman comedy. However, this initial presentation of Thais alludes more to Plautine *meretrices*, like Phronesium in *Truculentus* or at least Bacchis, the Terentian *meretrix* of *Heautontimoroumenos*, and not to Thais in *Eunuchus*. Even though Parmeno comments on Thais' greed for money, Thais does not seem to be motivated by financial greed. She is motivated by a sense of family. She does not prefer Thraso because he gives her more money than Phaedria. Her interest is to find Pamphila's family and protect the virginity of this girl that *soror est dicta*⁵⁴. That brings her closer to Hroswitha's heroine. However, Hroswitha's Thais, while she is prostitute, is *mala*. Thais in *Eunuchus*, despite

48. Cf. Coulter, op.cit., pp. 526-527.

49. *Abr.*, sc. 6,2.

50. *Paf.*, sc. 3,1.

51. *Hec.*, 756ff., 775ff.

52. *Eun.*, 197ff.

53. *Paf.*, sc. 1,25.

54. *Eun.*, 146.

her negative initial presentation, displays nobility of character. Hroswitha's Thais does not do so. Her behaviour verifies her initial presentation by Pafnutius. Even though she knows about God, she continues to be, without any hesitation, a greedy *meretrix*. Her ex-lovers comment on her lasciviousness and greed. She stops being *mala* only after she repents, due to Pafnutius' intervention, and devotes herself to the Heavenly Bridegroom, trying to get his forgiveness through penance and hard fasting. Thus, in this way, the Divine munificence is more emphatically shown. The penance of Maria and Thais recalls also that of Menedemus in *Heautontimoroumenos*, who repents for the wrong he has done to his son, toiling like a slave.

A common character in New Comedy is the adopted child. In Terence's *Adelphoe*, Micio is presented as having adopted Aeschinus, the first son of his brother Demea. Abraham in the protatic scene of that play reveals to his cohermit Effrem that he has an adopted daughter, his niece Maria, whose parents have died. Pafnutius as well, while addressing Thais after her penance, calls her *adoptiva filia*⁵⁵. Micio is also the most characteristic example of the type of lenient father, a character-type that Terence developed successfully. Abraham, like Micio, is also a lenient father who is prompt to forgive his adopted daughter and, just as Micio helps his son to acquire his beloved, Abraham helps Maria to come back to the embraces of the Heavenly Bridegroom.

6. Significant name

In Terence, many times the name of a specific character has a reason and etymology. In a comment on *Adelphoe*, Donatus⁵⁶ explains the use of names that signify the attributes of characters. In Terence for example, the faithful slave is Parmeno, that is one who stands beside, the soldier is Thraso, a name that indicates his boldness, the young man is Pamphilus, that is one who loves everyone. In Hroswitha the use of the significant name is very apparent. In her last play the central protagonist has the name Sapientia, that is wisdom. It is very important that in Hroswitha wisdom is almost always associated with Christian characters. Sapientia for example delivers before Hadrian a lesson on arithmetic that is not found in Hroswitha's source and Pafnutius delivers a lecture on music to his disciples, based, as is Sapientia's lecture, on Boethius. It is worthwhile pointing out that even though Hadrian was one of the most well-educated emperors, in this play he is presented as not being able to

55. *Paf.*, sc. 12,1.

56. *Don.*, *ad Ad.*, 26.

understand even a lesson of arithmetic. In *Abraham*, there is a whole scene (sc. 2), not found in the original *vita*, dedicated to the etymology of Maria's name. According to the hermit Effrem, Maria means *stella maris*, that is the star of sea. Maria has to imitate the virgin Mary, whose name, as is explicitly stated, Maria bears, and with whom, as Effrem suggests, Maria is joined through her name's secret mystery. Sapientia as well points out the importance of her daughter's name. While addressing Fides, she tells her that she prays that Fides will preserve the holy mystery of her name⁵⁷. Thus even though Hroswitha draws the names of her protagonists from her sources, she tries to make them more significant.

7. Contrast and repetition

Contrast and repetition are also devices frequently used, as Wilner⁵⁸ pointed out, as a means for character portrayal in Roman Comedy generally and in Terence specifically. In Hroswitha's plays there are always repetitions of her heroines' motives, that is the love for virginity and the desire for the Heavenly Bridegroom and repetition of martyrdom scenes. However, the technique of contrast as a means of character portrayal is more important. Contrast characterises Hroswitha's thought. Male vs female, heathens vs Christians run through all Hroswitha's works. It is noteworthy, however, that while Terence usually contrasts characters of the same sex or status and their different reactions (e.g. two *adulescentes*, like Ctesipho and Aeschinus in *Adelphoe*, or two *senes*, like Demea and Micio in *Adelphoe*⁵⁹ or Menedemus and Chremes in *Heautontimoroumenos*), Hroswitha develops a contrast usually between a male and female character; this contrast always shows the female role as superior. In *Gallicanus* for example, Constantinus is very disappointed at not being able to cope with Gallicanus' proposal to marry Constantia. To this inability of the male emperor to find a solution Hroswitha contrasts the female inventiveness of Constantia, who finds the solution by pretending to go along with the plan of marrying Gallicanus.

8. Conclusion

As I have shown, Hroswitha chose her sources with care, looking for motifs and character types that could allude to Terence's comedies – rape, *senex* as

57. *Sap.*, sc. 5,13.

58. O. L. Wilner, «Contrast and Repetition as Devices in the Techniques of Character Portrayal in Roman Comedy», *CPH XXV* (1930) 56-71.

59. Cf. *Don.*, *ad Ad.*, 81.

helpful friend, – love at first sight – and, what is more important, she inverted the function of many Terentian motifs, handling them in such a way that she could achieve her goal, to chasten Terence.

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