

READING 28 *Terence was born in North Africa and came to Rome as a slave, but was later freed because of his education and abilities. He wrote six comedies that have survived, including the Heauton Timoroumenos (“Self-Tormenter”), which was produced in 163 B.C. and was modeled on an earlier Greek play. This reading comes from the prologue, in which the speaker does not summarize the plot of the play, as most prologue-speakers did. Instead he explains that the poet wants him to be an “advocate,” to convince the spectators they should judge the play themselves, rather than relying on critics who complain that the author was just copying earlier Greek plays.*

Ōrātōrem voluit esse mē, nōn **prologum**.

Vestrum iūdicium fēcit; mē actōrem dedit.

Sed hic actor tantum poterit ā fācundiā,

Quantum ille potuit cōgitāre commodē

Quī **oratiōnem** hanc scrīpsit, quam dictūrus sum. 5

Nam quod rūmōrēs distulērunt malevolī,

Multās contāminasse Graecās, dum facit

Paucās **Latīnās**, id esse factum hic nōn negat,

... et deinde factūrum (esse) autumat.

Vocabulary:

ōrātō, -iōnis <i>m.</i>	advocate	rūmor, -ōris <i>m.</i>	rumor
voluit (<i>subject is the poet, Terence</i>)		differō, -ferre, distulī	to spread abroad
prologus, -ī <i>m.</i>	prologue speaker	malevolus, -a, -um	spiteful (people)
ōris <i>m.</i>	advocate	multās	many (plays) actor, -
tantum poterit	“will have as much power”	contāminasse, -āre	to blend, unite
fācundia, -ae, <i>f.</i>	eloquence	(<i>infinitive in indirect statement with Terence as the understood subject</i>)	
quantum	“as”	paucās	few (plays)
commodē (adv.)	skilfully, well	Latīnus, -a, -um	Latin
ōrātiō, -iōnis <i>f.</i>	speech	hic	= Terence
nam quod	“as for the fact that”	deinde (adv.)	“again”
		autumō, -āre	to say